

# *Modesto Anarcho* the valley's insurrectionary journal of class struggle

#11



Stay in line?



# Welcome

We want a stateless and classless society. We want to live in a world of autonomous communities without any forms of hierarchy. We desire a world where all people have agency and control over decision making and their lives and where power is spread out horizontally to all, not concentrated at the top. A world in which all resources that people need to sustain themselves are owned and cared for in common and in harmony with the Earth. We want to see human labor and creativity put towards real needs and desires - not profit.

We are against all governments and capitalism. We are against all governments because they are based upon controlling people through complete and total violence by means of the police, prisons, racism, patriarchy, military, and borders. Through these systems of domination, governments of the world ensure that working class and oppressed people stay in the roles designed for them: subservient workers and passive citizens. We are against capitalism, because it is based upon class society; a world where a few own everything that we need in order to survive and the rest of us are forced to work for them. This is a system of wage slavery - in which we trade our lives for wages and then buy back what we need to survive with those wages. Capitalism deforms and contorts all human relationships by turning everything into a commodity, including the Earth, living things, and our very lives. Capitalism cannot exist without government - it needs the government's violence to protect the privileged position of those who benefit from it.

We reject the reformism of the Left - we are revolutionaries. We do not desire a seat at the table of politics; we desire working class power. We believe in people self-organizing for the purpose of taking direct action. Class society can only be attacked and destroyed and we must organize ourselves to carry out this attack and to maximize our own power. We believe that class society can only be done away with through the collective mass revolutionary action of all working, poor, and oppressed people that creates an international human community through social revolution.

*Modesto Anarcho* is a quarterly journal produced in Modesto California by Modesto Anarcho Crew (MAC). MAC is a street based organization that exists to create revolutionary propaganda, foster class consciousness, and participate and engage in class and community based struggles in our area. This publication is free to all. We also produce a monthly tabloid entitled *Firestorm*, which is also free. For more info:

**Modesto Anarcho**  
**PO Box 3027**  
**Modesto, CA 95353**

**[anarcho209@yahoo.com](mailto:anarcho209@yahoo.com)**  
**[myspace.com/modanarcho](http://myspace.com/modanarcho)**  
**[www.geocities.com/anarcho209](http://www.geocities.com/anarcho209)**

One of the things that Modesto Anarcho Crew (MAC) prides itself on, is our ability to get a lot of shit done. We are engaged in multiple projects, produce, copy, edit, design, and distribute not only *Modesto Anarcho*, but also our monthly tabloid *Firestorm*, all on our own. We keep a pretty hectic pace around here and it shows in our activity. That said, this issue of *Modesto Anarcho* took a little longer than we hoped to finish. As we write this, we are gearing up for a 'symposium' (mini conference) on anarchism at California State University Stanislaus (located in Turlock), as well as the Santa Cruz anarchist convergence. We've also been busy tabling at a variety of places, speaking at multiple events, setting up new squats, and continuing old projects. It is a good time for us comrade, but it is also a busy one. Our mail box (both real and electronic) receives more and more feedback on what we have to say and what we are doing. When we table at community events, we are getting more and more responses from those in the local area who are feeling what we are doing. More and more we are finding that our desire to attack and destroy a system that represses, impoverishes, abuses, imprisons, deports, and works us to death is shared by a large amount of people. More and more, we are finding that people are not satisfied with what is offered to us - instead we are hungry for *actual human life*.

With this issue, we decided that we wanted to focus on a single subject, as opposed to writing about a wide variety of topics. Police and prisons are thus the focus of the issue that you now hold in your hands. Many of our detractors will claim that we simply "hate police," based solely on who they are as people. These critics miss the point of our critique about the role of police and the function that they serve in upholding the inequalities that exist between the exploited and the dispossessed and those that own and control this system. Having said that, we, like the majority of poor, working, and oppressed people, know from experience that our day to day interactions with the police are far from "nice" or "enjoyable." The police are the force that deports your family from this country. They are the ones that help evict you from your home if you become foreclosed on. The cops are the force that will police your picket line if you go on strike, arrest you for shoplifting food, stop you from putting up graffiti and political posters, imprison you for squatting a vacant home, pull you over and give you a ticket, and so on forever. Police often are not "nice" people, nor are they pleasant to be around while they are 'working.' Perhaps this is because they spend their working hours using violence to make people do things they don't want to do and are hated for it. Perhaps this is also why police have such a high suicide and spousal abuse rate. So, while as people they may be just as nice as your friends that you have a beer and shoot the shit with, as a force within society, they exist to uphold the inequalities



that keep the rich in power and us powerless. Police are a force of class rule. They are the occupied army that stalks our streets.

When we critique the police, decry them as pigs, and call for their abolition and the creation of true community control over our neighborhoods, we do not do so as part of some juvenile hatred of the police. We do this out of an understanding that those who have the power to murder us and get away with it play a role in this society that benefits our enemies. It's not that we hate you dear officer, it's just that as long as you point that gun in our direction and not at the real monsters in this society – you'll always be our enemy.

And our enemies are growing stronger. They are shutting down schools and building up prisons. They are equipping their forces with more surveillance and more tasers. They are cracking down on those who would loot and steal from corporations to get food and stopping those who would take over vacant buildings for housing. But, with control and repression comes an equal reaction. A cop in West Side recently found this out when he approached a group of people who gathered around a man who was caught stealing a car and cried, "I can kill all of you right now!" He then was punched, had bottles thrown at them, and then had his walkie talkie broken and then told he "wasn't getting out of there alive." Sure they have the guns, but we have the numbers. Sure they can try and stop us from taking back what we need to survive, but they also aren't hungry for *life over survival* like we are. When the jailer dies, the jail also dies. Everyday, we grow more tired of *this* prison.

-crudo

**Contributors:** Brennus, crudo, Fox, Kevin, Ben Saari, Wingnut Willy, Modesto Copwatch.

*Modesto Anarcho* is produced quarterly by Modesto Anarcho Crew (MAC). We accept letters, articles, analysis, and interviews. The next issue we will publish sometime in July. Please have all submissions in by late June. You can send all submissions into us at Modesto Anarcho, PO Box 3027, Modesto, CA 95353. You can also email us at [anarcho209@yahoo.com](mailto:anarcho209@yahoo.com). Add and talk to us on myspace at [www.myspace.com/modanarcho](http://www.myspace.com/modanarcho). Our pdf files can also be viewed at [www.geocities.com/anarcho209](http://www.geocities.com/anarcho209).

If you are interested in distributing *Modesto Anarcho* or our monthly tabloid *Firestorm* at your school, where you live, where you work, or in prison, please contact us. We will send you bulk copies of both publications for you to distribute, *for free!*

If you are interested in Modesto Anarcho Crew coming out with literature at your event, concert, or social gathering, please contact us!

# PRISONER FEEDBACK

Modesto Anarcho,

Hello again from your number one fan and overall social malcontent.

Could you please send me your latest issue, and anything else that is informative?

I really appreciate the last issue from a few months ago, and also the previous issues that you were kind enough to send, that helped me to lay the groundwork for my plans for world domination. Just kidding.

Anyway, this reformed counterfitter is going to re-enter society in a few months as a more socially aware individual, thanks to you people.

If I can ever return the favor, please don't hesitate to ask.

Thanks again,  
Kurt

Modesto Anarcho,

Hello there. I got your hook up from my good buddy buddy, and he told me to write you. Just like you, I'm also an anarchist and would like to get whatever it is ya got. And thanks again.

James

Modesto Anarcho,

My name is Christian. I have been incarcerated for 12 years now, and have recently been informed of your publications. A friend of mine in here, gave me some of your reading material and I found it quite interesting. I have no money but was told you give free books to the incarcerated. If so these are the titles that I would like...I appreciate you taking the time to listen to us and helping to educate us.

Sincerely,  
Christian



# LINES IN THE SAND

“The desert cannot grow anymore: it is everywhere. But it can still deepen. Faced with the evidence of the catastrophe, there are those who get indignant and those who take note, those who denounce and those who get organized. We are among those who get organized.”

Call



## RESISTANCE NEWS FROM THE CENTRAL VALLEY

**Students Protest ICE Pigs:** On February 3rd, students at CSUF (California State University Fresno) protested against ICE (Immigrations and Customs Enforcement), at a job fair. As they wrote in their call out for the protest: “For the last six years ICE has been invading neighborhoods,...racial profiling and kidnapping people who they consider to be “illegal.” ICE holds immigrants in corporate “for- profit” concentration camps, where they are denied medical care, given tainted food leading to food poisoning, and [have allowed] over 80 people to suffer and die in their custody since 2003. ICE officials [have] established illegal traffic checkpoints, stalk community members of color, raid grocery stores, work places, schools and daycares...” Hopefully next time the students on campus will not just hold signs, but will attempt to shut ICE and the job fair down for good.

**Workers Fight Cuts:** In February, workers and community members in Modesto and Stockton purposely packed school board meetings in order to stop decisions on job lay offs and cuts to school funding. According to the *Modesto Bee* in regards to the actions in Modesto, “The teachers were concerned about a proposal to cut 58 positions. Those who could lose their jobs include 33 elementary teachers, seven music teachers, four art teachers, two librarians, a counselor, two deans and an elementary school assistant principal. The cuts could affect 64 employees. District officials are planning to cut \$4 million from the \$63 million budget for the 2009-10 school year.” Cuts to the school budget will result in smaller class room sizes, reduction in art and music educa-

tion, and massive lay offs for many teachers and other educational employees. Community members and workers realized this at aboard meeting for Sylvan Union School District and “[during a] speech, about 25 people pushed into the portable, an apparent attempt to get the meeting called off for violating the fire code that limits the room's capacity.” This show of force worked, and the meeting was delayed, thus holding back the layoffs for a bit longer. This tactic was again used in late February at a similar Stockton meeting, where again community members and workers shut down the meeting and delayed lay offs and cuts. But delaying meetings is not enough to stop the state from shutting down schools and laying us off. We must amplify and expand our tactics so that we can start to reclaim some of the space that the government is attempting to take from us. Hopefully the people engaging in these actions can find each other and we can start to link up our struggles against capitalism and become even more dangerous.



**Turlock Man Attempts to Liberate Food and Fights Cops:** Danny Armenta, a Turlock man who attempted to liberate a whole shopping cart full of food stuffs, was caught by store security and later fought with police who attempted and finally succeeded in arresting him as he tried to escape. For more info, check out the flyer on the next page.



# Danny Armenta, A Hero for Our Time...

In early February, police arrested a 48 year old Turlock man after he attempted to walk out of a grocery store with a cart full of goods without paying for them. Armenta was not just taking several items, but over \$100 worth of stuff including meat, beer, and other foods. When workers at the store approached Armenta and asked him for a receipt, Armenta took off running. Two clerks quickly gave chase as Armenta crossed the street into another parking lot and then finally turned around and pulled out a knife to get the two clerks off his back. Police then arrived on the scene and found Armenta trying to scale a wall in order to escape. Officers ordered Armenta to stop and face imminent arrest, but Armenta remained steadfast and again tried to escape. At this point, Ceres police used a police attack dog to bring Armenta down. Armenta then attempted to defend himself by throwing his small knife at the animal. This act proved useless, as the police dog quickly overtook Armenta and brought him to the ground and into the hands of the authorities. He was then taken to the hospital for wounds inflicted by the police dog and was held on \$75,000 bail.

We support the actions of Danny Armenta, because we support poor and working people appropriating (taking back) what belongs to them: the products that we as working and poor people create, distribute, and are forced into buying. We exist in a world where the rich and powerful own all the things that we need to survive: shelter, food, water, land, and even living things. We, those who are exploited and excluded by this system, are forced to sell our time and labor to this ruling class in order to make money through wages; wages which we then use to buy back the products that we create and pay for everything from health care to a place to sleep. This is a system of wage slavery, in which the rich hold all the cards and we struggle just to survive.

And no one knows better about survival in this brutal economy than those living in the Central Valley of California. We are facing the brunt of the economic crisis brought on by capitalism itself. The rich have created this perfect storm, along with the looming ecological disaster that is starting to unfold now and threatens to set fire to the future. People are being pushed from their homes as more and more are faced with foreclosure and homelessness. People are losing their jobs as millions join the ranks of the unemployed or face cuts in pay and work hours. People are feeling the effects of a rising cost of living, transportation, and a reduction of access to basic services. Everywhere we face an ongoing social war waged at us by those who benefit from this pyramid scheme of repression and misery. In the work place, in the streets, and across the globe. For those that would dream of not playing by the system's rules, the rich are happy to flood our communities with millions of police, check points, prisons, detention centers, and surveillance systems.

In times like this, people like Danny Armenta are heroes, because they attempt to hit back against the current conditions that are imposed on all of us. While individual acts of sabotage and appropriation against the bosses and the rich help keep us from having to buy more things back from them, (and also give us a sense of power and autonomy), we need to start thinking about how we can make these acts not just individual, but collective. In this way, these actions can involve more and more people and build more and more power against the rich and their economy of exploitation. We can start to organize to stay in our homes when we become foreclosed on and help to take back the ones that are already vacant. We can organize with our neighbors to take back land to grow food and network with co-workers and friends to channel goods out of the economy and into our hands. We can organize at work and go on wildcat strikes and occupy our workplaces; maximizing our own power while fighting against the daily conditions of our lives. We have to start acting for our own interests and against those of the rich - before we're all pushing shopping carts down the street with everything we own.

**Modesto Anarcho Crew**

[www.myspace.com/modanarcho](http://www.myspace.com/modanarcho) - [anarcho209@yahoo.com](mailto:anarcho209@yahoo.com)



# ...We Only Need to Steal Back Our Lives!



**Stolen Food Given Away in Airport District:** The following communique' was posted on [www.indybay.org](http://www.indybay.org). It read: "People of the Valley, Everywhere the desert of capital expands – we offer an oasis to drink from.

We, the Robin Hoods, take credit for providing the massive amounts of free food that was left in the Airport District park of Modesto California last week, early in the morning. The food we left ranged from rice, beans, and other staples, and was available free of charge to anyone who wished to take it. To make our intentions for the action clear, we left behind a banner at the scene which read, "Resist the Recession! - ROB THE RICH!" The food was appropriated from various capitalists - and was thus free (and very easy) to obtain.

We chose to distribute this food free of charge because the Airport District is one of the neighborhoods hit the worst by the ongoing recession. Our communities are suffering from homelessness and foreclosure, poverty and job layoffs, police brutality and environmental pollution. Let this act be just a note in the chorus of resistance that will soon bring this system down. We believe that solidarity with others means attack against



common enemies. We have thus carried out this action not only to attack the capitalists directly and distribute food free of charge to our friends and neighbors, but also to denounce the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors, which recently voted down a needle exchange program that would help stop the spread of HIV and Hepatitis and give direct aid to those addicted to various drugs. This decision directly affects those living in the Airport Neighborhood, as it is an area with a high amount of heroin use. We were also inspired to carry out this action by the recent case of Turlock man, Danny Armenta, 48, who was arrested after attempting to walk out of a store with over \$100 in groceries. They can get one of us, but they can't get all of us. As the recession heats up - so must our resistance. From the ongoing job layoffs in the valley to the recent closing of Teel Middle School in Empire due to budget cuts, if we don't start fighting directly - soon we will have nothing left to fight for.

In solidarity with those from the streets of Greece, China, Iceland, Mexico, the United States and beyond who are fighting this monster we call capitalism.

**People Fend Back Police Officer:** In early April, a large group of people in West Side confronted a man that they suspected of stealing a car in their neighborhood. While they

were standing around him and deciding what to do, a police officer rolled up to the scene. The police officer attempted to make arrests and approached the crowd with his gun drawn, declaring that he "could kill anyone there." People responded to the police by throwing bottles and also successfully broke the officer's radio so he could not call out to other police. People taunted the officer, who still had his gun out, joking that he should "shoot them," and also told the officer that he was not "getting out of there alive." The officer also attempted to subdue the crowd by sicking the police attack dog on the crowd, but the crowd quickly dispatched the animal. Individuals in the crowd also successfully un-arrested people that were caught by the police. Eventually, more police backup arrived at the scene and several people were arrested.

**Eviction Office Smashed Up:** In April, people angry over foreclosure and evictions broke the windows at the downtown eviction office. A communique posted on [indybay.org](http://indybay.org) read: "the sounds of breaking glass rang out as two bricks dropped two windows owned by the eviction office in downtown Modesto last week. we attacked

it because they help the pigs evict people from their homes. we are against the foreclosures in the area and the banks taking people's homes away from them. the feeling that we got from attacking them was great because we know that we hit them where it hurts. this is just the start. the central valley is a front line and we have taken a side."

**Youths Protest Covanta Plant:** On Saturday April 18th, at the Modesto "Earth Day Celebration," youths from Patterson and from Modesto Anarcho Crew participated in a short protest against the Covanta Incinerator Plant, which is located in Patterson California. The Covanta Plant burns trash from across the region, and pumps out pollution including the cancer causing agent, dioxin. In a disgustingly ironic twist, Covanta is also one of the major sponsors of Earth Day, even while at the same time they are also one of the major polluters in the Central Valley. As soon as youths began holding signs and passing out flyers, Covanta volunteers were quick to get on their cell phones to warn their corporate masters what was going down, and Earth Day volunteers threatened the protesters with expulsion. For more information, see the flyer on the next page.



# Trash Covanta Not Grayson!

The Covanta waste-to-energy plant on Fink Road, South of Modesto, is a toxic waste incinerator which emits countless tons of toxic chemicals & metals, including dioxin. Dioxin is one of the most toxic chemicals known to modern science, and a cancer-and-birth-defect-causing carcinogen. In addition to everyday trash, they burn things like car tires and used computer parts made of silicon. In 2001 they even tried to burn a large amount of medical waste imported from across the state, but residents on the West Side organized themselves to stop it.

The working class communities of the West Side like Grayson, Westley, and Patterson are the most affected by this plant. Many children in Grayson in particular are diagnosed with asthma before they reach middle school. The West Side is primarily home to black, brown, and poor white families who cannot afford to live elsewhere in the county.

Covanta Energy, based in New Jersey, owns the plant, which burns more than 800 tons of solid waste every day. They routinely import and burn waste from all across the Western U.S., including the states of California, Oregon, and Washington. In California they commonly import from the counties of Alameda, Contra Costa, Fresno, Mariposa, Merced, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Santa Clara, Solano, Tuolumne, Yolo, and waste from all across Stanislaus County.

Covanta and the Fink Road Landfill imported 27,507 tons of waste in 2003 from outside of Stanislaus County. Covanta incinerated 16,395 tons of imported waste in 2003. Fink Road Landfill accepted 11,112 tons of imported waste in 2003.



The Covanta Plant is a prime example of Environmental Racism put into practice. Our kids are getting asthma so that their CEO in New Jersey can make some extra cash. Why do our kids have to suffer for his profit? Why can't he? In spite of all of this, Covanta is a chief sponsor of Modesto's annual Earth Day celebration. They're trying to hide their horrible impact on our communities and our environment behind a pretty face. Go tell them what you really think!





# Like Guns to Our Heads

repression news in the central valley

**Ripon Surveillance System Having No Real "Success":** Recently Ripon used a series of grants from Homeland Security and major corporations to build an extensive "real time" surveillance system. In spite of this, the small town's crime rates have actually risen. According to the *Modesto Bee*, "Ripon's 76 police cameras are mounted at major intersections, parks, schools and city offices. A few are inside businesses such as Ace Hardware." Local students protested the system when cameras were first installed in schools. Police have remained silent as to the location of all the cameras, in fear of swift action from community members. The \$500,000 camera system is just another useless burden on those who pay taxes to the rich and another way for the tentacles of police power to further entrap us.

**More Police Murders in the Central Valley:** Police in the valley have killed again since our last issue, both in Modesto and Stockton. According to the *Stockton Record*, 45-year-old Garrett Wade Jones Jr. died in early February after a struggle with deputies in front of his home where he lived in unincorporated north Stockton. Stockton police were responding to a call from a friend of Jones. The friend had stated he was acting "crazy," had damaged property, and had stolen a bicycle. When deputies arrived on the scene, they tasered the man, supposedly after he had "failed to comply" with their orders. Police then began to wrestle with Jones, who then stopped breathing. He was dead by the time the ambulance arrived. Another person dead at the hands of the police for a minor violation. This latest police murder comes hot on the heels of the shooting death by

Stockton police of a young man who was killed when he came out of his home in a high crime neighborhood with a legally licensed firearm. The young man was responding to the police arresting a suspect in his front yard when police opened fire, killing him in front of his very own home. In January, police in Modesto shot and killed a mentally disturbed man wielding a sword - more information has not been released by the MPD, but it appears that he made no threats towards police or anyone else.

Fresno police, who had a black eye earlier in the year after three police officers in the narcotics unit were arrested in a car theft operation, were caught on tape beating a homeless man. Glen Beaty, the victim, was caught on camera as two Fresno Police officers held him down and repeatedly beat him. Fresno police state that Beaty attacked the officers and has a history of run-ins with the police. We say, even more of reason to buy this man a drink! The video made the nightly news, and once again the Fresno police were in hot water. As we have reported in the past, police in Fresno have been coming down hard on the homeless community for years, savagely beating them, leveling their squats and encampments, and destroying personal property. More info at: [www.indybay.org/centralvalley](http://www.indybay.org/centralvalley).

In the wake of these controversies, in late March, activists in Fresno managed to pressure the Fresno City Council and also the Mayor to support and create an Independent Police Auditor (IPA), that many hoped would end the system of the police policing themselves. In the



past, complaints were investigated by the internal affairs office, which was a branch of the local police department. In Fresno, the IPA that was created, the "Council of Independent Review," (which really isn't a council, but a position for one person), has no investigative power (meaning they can't investigate complaints and they can't get police in trouble), and reports to the City Manager's Office (the same office that the police report to). The appointee can sit in on internal affairs interviews, but cannot directly ask any questions. Some critics of the plan say the independence of the position will be compromised by having to report to the City Managers office, while others (including ourselves) decry the whole thing as a way for the politicians to push the issue of rampant police brutality under the rug while claiming that they are "dealing with the problem." While many Leftists see the creation of the IPA office as a "step in the right direction," or "progressive," the IPA is simply a fresh coat of paint over a system that lets the police get away with murder. The IPA has no real power to investigate or criminalize various officers, and simply acts as a lobbying group within the wider city government, if it even chooses to go that far. If we desire justice in our communities and an end to police violence, we'll have to start taking our neighborhoods back from these pigs by any means necessary; street by street, block by block.

**Nazi Scum Vandalize Place of Worship:** According to the *Modesto Bee*, youths caught on video defaced the Beth Shalom synagogue in Modesto with white power messages and hate graffiti. By our count at the Modesto Anarcho Crew office, this is the second time in three years that this place of worship has been defaced with racist vandalism. Hopefully those who attend the synagogue won't wait for the police to try and catch those responsible (because they never do) and take matters into their own hands if they can come across these racist filth. Neo-nazis and other racists divide the working class into races, putting whites on top. We are stronger together and our enemies are the rich, their system of repression, and wage slavery. Remember that, whenever you see these pieces of shit on the streets or when you hear co-workers, friends, or community members spouting off racist remarks.

**Foreclosure Rates Rise in Valley:** In spring, the *Modesto Bee* reported that "[d]ata...released [shows] that notices of default — the first step in the foreclosure process — spiked dramatically in January, February and March compared with the last three months of 2008. Mortgage defaults rose nearly 58 percent in Stanislaus, 54 percent in Merced, and 66 percent in San Joaquin county. There's typically a six-month lag between the filing of default notices and repossession by lenders, so the region could be slammed with foreclosures starting midsummer. During the past two years, 36,313 homes in the three counties have been lost to foreclosure....In the past six months, an additional 14,420 homeowners have defaulted on their mortgages and been formally warned that they are in jeopardy of having their property repossessed."

Now is the time to build the organizations and networks needed to not only take over vacant homes — but also more importantly for those facing foreclosure, to get organized and stay in their homes. Together, we have an army. Let us start using it.

**Sacramento Tent City Evicted:** Homeless squatters in Sacramento were evicted from their make-shift homes next to the Sacramento river in April, despite the protest of homeless advocacy groups. Police threatened arrests and tickets to homeless people who did not want to pack up and move into the Arco Arena, which was a temporary housing solution for the hundreds of people who called the vacant field in Sacramento home. After just one week of warning, city workers cleared out the area, destroying property and forcibly removing people from the lot. City workers even tore down a new encampment that was set up further down the river. Homeless advocate groups staged a protest in front of the State Capital building, where several protesters were arrested while engaging in civil disobedience that blocked doors. Our hearts go out to all the people in Sacramento who have been displaced by the eviction and we hope that they will again find somewhere that they can call home.





# Journal of the Modesto Anarcho Crew: What we've been up to in the last couple months. And shit.



by Brennus

Saturday, January 17th. As I arrive at Graceada Park, community members surround the stage. I see my crew stocking the stage with food, bringing in box after box after box of everything from bulk bags of rice, oranges, packages of bacon and cheese, plus a full array of hot dishes to feed everyone who showed up. Today is the People's Bailout, and it's going to be good.

Wednesday, March 9th. New faces surround the table as we talk about our experience with Insurrectionary Anarchism. We discuss our favorite authors, and most importantly praxis, or the synthesis of theory and practice. We share memories of May 1st 2006, the first week of September 2008, and the December Oakland Rebellion, reminiscing on our experiences of what happened, and wondering at the possibilities of what could have. Our weekly theory group has come into it's own.

Sunday, March 15th. It's the second day of the San Francisco Anarchist Bookfair, and we're tabling next to comrades from all over the country. Reuniting with old friends and meeting new ones. Yesterday a couple of us helped some of the most highly-respected Anarchists on the West Coast kick out some antagonistic Maoist scum from the event. It felt good. It felt damn good.

Thursday, April 2nd. Tonight we squatted a vacant, bank-owned house for a comrade's birthday, and held a party for them. Neighbors came to say hi, and some even sent their kids over. Yesterday we held a series of in-class presentations at the College, invited by a local history professor. We're rallying the troops to start a student group on campus. We got the numbers.

Saturday, April 4th. I'm sitting in the garden at DQ University outside of Davis, where a group of Indigenous & Chicano students and their allies have been occupying their campus since 2005, in spite of the corrupt board's attempts to remove them. We brought food and other supplies with us, tabled, and built relationships with all those involved here. We are strong.

Saturday, April 18th. Today we tabled at Modesto's Earth Day celebration in Graceada. Kids and grown-ups alike flocked to our table to pickup the latest issue of

Firestorm, and across the park there are people from Grayson protesting Covanta's sponsorship of the event. This week we tabled at two separate events in support of the Cesar Chavez movement, meeting comrades and community members alike. More and more people recognize us as a presence in the community, recognizing our fliers and publications. It's great to meet new people.

Saturday, April 25th. I'm sitting behind a table full of the newest local and international insurrectionary lit around. We're at 10th & J in downtown Modesto, and an ever-larger crowd is circling around in a reclamation of public space. Beltaine's Fire, a Celtic Hip Hop band from Oakland is going at it and the kids are wild. A comrade from the newly-formed Modesto Copwatch group tells young kids how to take care of themselves in the face of police repression. Earlier today we had one of our biggest MA meetings to date. I get up to play my set. We're right in front of the Modesto Police Department's newest station. It has a new "For Lease" sign in the window. It's coming.

Thursday, April 30th. We're putting the finishing touches on this issue, as well as the May edition of Firestorm. This week has been spent in late-night editing & design sessions. What spare time we have is spent making copy after copy of all our shit for the upcoming Santa Cruz Anarchist Convergence. As a crew, we're feeling stronger than ever.



# Take.

# Don't Ask.

# by fox

During the most brutal and direct enslavement of African people by western colonization, it goes without saying that for those enslaved, it took much more than simply asking, to be liberated. In fact, no demands of the captives' would ever be met by their self-titled masters. It rang true that the only form of liberation they would ever see would come from a direct confrontation with the power held over their lives. Stepping back into the modern day, we also find ourselves with little control over our daily lives; much of it spent as wage slaves and all of it spent rebutting the constant order of cops, judges, landlords and bosses.

As the distresses of a boom and bust economy weigh down, we watch our wages subside as the cost of life goes higher. Daily, there are commodities flowing freely over invisible borders that humans cannot cross. Forcefully, institutions the world over defend private property over the well being of human existence and as we walk across any area of the known world, we are now alien trespassers of our own planet. Prisoners have become more common than farmers and clean water has been privatized into ownership by a few. When all is said and done we're left with a small amount of 'free time' that we have to ourselves, which is further subjected to the boredom and lack of imagination that a capitalist world system provides.

Some consider that these social inequities of our world can be solved within the government by leaving it to the political Left, or feel that it is the terrain of social justice NGO's (Non-Governmental Organizations). Anarchists and revolutionaries also many times find themselves at a roadblock when pushing for radical social change. The ideals and tactics employed by those seeking a different world are many, undoubtedly, but one element should be understood in order to take back what has been stolen from us.

To take back our lives from capitalism, we must use force when necessary, never posing a question or even a demand while addressing the ruling class. Truly, making demands of the elite is an acceptance of the 'groveling

slave and concretizes the 'masters' position. To merely accept these inequities because "that's just the way the world works" is a resignation to action; a pitiful notion of one's powerlessness. However, to make zero demands and communally seize our desires on our own terms is an exercise of our collective power and an acknowledgement of our shared position. We have nothing more to say to world 'leaders;' no further dialogue, except to share of course the cataloging of our resistance and the course of their demise.

To support others here that came from afar, we do not hold signs asking "citizenship for all" - we attack the border as an institution and organize directly against ICE raids and racist groups like the Minutemen. When we feel we cannot provide for our communities, and ourselves, we refuse to bear messages of "guaranteed income" - we instead occupy factories and loot stores. We understand that there is no need to improve the current system or appeal to it's operators for the ends that we envision, for only we can reconnect ourselves to the means in which we exist. For ourselves and our communities, we'll take all things back for all people, no questions asked.





As The

Recession Heats Up So Must Our Resistance

## The State Builds Prisons While Closing Schools

by Brennus and crudo

Day after day we hear the same thing, see the same headlines, and walk past the same tired, sad, and depressed faces of those around us. The words foreclosure, lay-offs, recession, and cut backs seem to haunt us on the daily. Meanwhile, the government is busy trumpeting “hope” and “change,” as it plans to continue the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, and beyond, for years to come. Locally, while the city governments in the area shut down schools, lay off teachers, and cut hours for workers – police are raking in the dough, putting up more and more surveillance cameras to issue more tickets, and are hard at work building more prisons. Modesto police recently received an almost \$400,000 grant for its “gang suppression unit,” while a new youth prison is scheduled for construction in Stanislaus County. As life in this capitalist system gets harder, the state knows that it has to beef up repression to keep us in line – or it will simply be a matter of time before people start to take back what is theirs.

On March 3rd, the Modesto Bee reported that the Modesto School Board had OKed \$11.3 million in education cuts, in spite of public and internal protests. The budget cuts will target “high school counselors, elementary and junior high school music teachers, and elementary school librarians and their assistants.” The cuts will not eliminate programs district-wide, but instead “reduce offerings,” which we can expect to mean that programs will be cut primarily in poor schools, like those on the West and South sides. Teachers and students are most affected by the cuts: classified employees union President Aaron Castro said that over the last six years the district enrolled 4,000 fewer students, and employed 22 more managers. The cuts will affect between 50-100 workers in Modesto City Schools. Obviously the bosses are more concerned with saving their own asses than helping our children.

In the same issue, the Modesto Bee also reported that Stanislaus county had been awarded \$18 million for a new 60-bed Youth Detention Camp. Neighboring Tuolumne County was also given \$16 million, while four other valley counties received a total of \$30 million. The article glorifies the construction of another prison to house our children who they've stolen, citing that Stanislaus county is ranked only 40th of 58 California counties for juvenile prison size. All the pigs are trying to attach their names to this project, from Modesto Police Chief Roy Wasden, to the county's chief probation officer, Jerry Powers. They claim the new prison will be a vocational training center, and a way to keep kids close to home, but really they're just trying to put a smiling face on oppression.

So, we lose some of the only valuable aspects of the school system: counselors who encourage our kids to hang on, librarians who are often the real people teaching our kids to read, and music teachers who show our kids that creativity is actually a good thing. At the same time, we suffer the building of another prison in our county. The message is clear: the state would rather imprison our children than encourage them to dream, or to be anything else but another wage slave on the assembly line, behind the coffee counter, or in the delivery truck. Children should not aspire to be creative individuals, but instead should submit, be broken, and take on the life that the state gives them. The state doesn't care about our children any more than it cares about us.

Despite the daily reality that repression is growing, there are signs that resistance is already brewing - at a Stockton school district budget meeting in late February, teachers and students gathered to protest proposed cuts and lay offs. By packing the room with people -

*Continued after Modesto Copwatch Interview*





# Our Enemies in Blue

## An Interview with Modesto Copwatch

*Formed in the wake of the murder of Oscar Grant by BART police in January of 2009, Modesto Copwatch has patrolled the streets of Modesto and the wider area documenting police abuse and harassment and educating the public about what they can do to resist. Two Copwatchers conducted this interview through email with MAC member crudo.*

**MA:** Why did you decide to start a Copwatch group in this area? Can you explain what the group does?

**B:** We are a group of friends who have experienced police brutality in and out of Modesto, CA. Although we have all done copwatch unofficially, we now recognize ourselves as official Copwatchers. What really got us together was Oscar Grant. On New Years Day of 2009 Oscar Grant was shot in cold blood by now an ex-BART cop in the city of Oakland, CA. He was shot in the back after being beaten and while handcuffed. What tripped us out was that despite all the video of the execution, Officer Johannes Mehserle and the other officers involved would not be held accountable. That's when we decided that the community will have to protect itself and hold those who terrorize our communities accountable for their abuse. If we don't who will?

What we do is document and archive police interactions with the people. On the weekends we walk the streets of downtown Modesto and record police activity and educate people about their rights. We have also started a newsletter/zine that addresses issues that pertain to the Hip Hop community.

**T:** I had heard of the need for Copwatch from several people who said that black and brown youth can't stand on a sidewalk in downtown Modesto without MPD or the security guards harassing them. I happen to have a friend of a friend that was already doing it so we got together with some friends and made it official.

**MA:** How do you think that Copwatch gives regular people a sense of power against police violence?

**B:** When we go out there we show the people that we know our rights and that we are not afraid. The police have tried to arrest us, they have tried to intimidate us, but we keep coming back. After we got detained in front of a lot of people for "loitering" in late January downtown Modesto, we came back to the streets, and the people asked about it. We shared our story and now more people know what's good. That's how we plan on empowering the people, by telling their story. You are not alone, we are not silent either because the Revolutionary Hip Hop Report (our newsletter/zine) is loud and clear. We are here and we are not going anywhere...We have a commitment to the people, and this is how we manifest that commitment. It has been proven over and over that if you want anything done you got to do it yourself. The people have to step up and hold community leaders accountable for their promises, and the police have yet to serve and protect the community. The cops fear video cameras because it is an indisputable tool to hold them accountable. Your word versus their word isn't shit in a court of law,



so a way to document the interactions between cops and citizens is a necessity. The cops would rather have somebody pull a gun out on them, than a video camera, because then they have the opportunity to kill you without getting in trouble.

**T:** A lot of people don't even know that they have the legal right to observe (and record) any police officer or public official as long as they are on public property and are not interfering with them. Making that common knowledge would be very empowering, that and just knowing what to say and what NOT to say to the cops when they ask you questions. We've told people before "you don't have to answer the cops' questions, they have no reason to ask you that, just say "I don't consent to this conversation, am I free to go?" and when they do the cops get mad because they don't get to feel like they're in charge for at least a brief moment.

**MA:** What are some of the things that you have documented since you've been involved with Copwatch in Modesto?

**B:** Mostly we have documented the manner the police officers interact with the folks downtown and the manner they carry themselves as people too. Some shady things of course. For example we witnessed MPD, Officer Oaxaca and others detain a woman in a skirt on 10th st in front of a bar. They took pictures of her tattoos and possibly scrapes, her butt, and her chest. (And you know how girls dress on a Friday night in downtown Modesto!). They then drove away down to the WACHOVIA / BANANA JOE'S Parking lot. Who knows what they did away from the camera. As soon as we got to the scene, we thought they had taken her to the county jail, but she was placed her in the van by two male cops. All the officers were male and its all on-line. Go to [youtube.com/rhhrorg](https://www.youtube.com/rhhrorg) (and type in Modesto Copwatch) to see that and other incidents, including the video from when they detained a couple of us. We also record them doing dumb and dangerous things like making unsafe u-turns and taking off rapidly with no siren to alert the pedestrians and drivers, blocking traffic just to chit chat. They take advantage of their position, they actually think they are the law, but they sure don't know the law. Additionally, we have recorded cops illegally confiscating a video camera and refusing to identify themselves.

**T:** Yeah the lady being arrested and then taken to a parking lot 2 blocks away where there was no one around and then taken out of the car and questioned, that was very shady! I can't think of one good reason for them to have done that. One young African-American woman surrounded by 6-8 white (maybe 1 Latino) male officers, and then quickly leaving TWICE when the cameras start rolling.

**MA:** How have the police responded to you?

**B:** Very cautiously. At first we would get the sarcastic wave

and "how are we doing?" and then we got detained. But they were very organized about it. In one of the police cars where we were detained, the computer screen displayed a warning to the other officers that we were out filming them. After we made an official complaint to the police department, the officers would not look at us. They are starting to get their confidence back. I think we got a wave by Officer Lemus the last time we were out.

They still try to intimidate us, but we know our rights so its kind of hard to actually accomplish intimidation. They have started to get the people they detain against us, by asking them things like: "Do you know these guys?," "Are they your friends?," "Are you ok with them video taping you? They're gonna put you on youtube." We are not sure if they have offered for people to be released with a smaller citation or something similar in return for asking us to leave. We don't want to intervene, we just want to observe.

**T:** That seems to be their latest strategy, trying to turn their victims against us by saying, "These guys are going to put you on youtube," which is completely FALSE! Anyone can look at our videos on youtube. We purposely edit out the "everyday citizens," so the only people on film are the cops, us, and others that have agreed to be taped. We have no interest in putting videos of people getting arrested on youtube, just officer harassment and abuses of power. Besides, the cop's dash camera is already recording you, the dozens of cameras posted up all over downtown Modesto are recording you, the store cameras are recording you, the satellites are recording you, and then they act like we're doing something wrong. Most people are smart though and know better and tell us things like "make sure and keep that camera rolling", "thanks for having my back", or "don't let another Oscar Grant happen." Another thing that we were told by a couple of the cool security guards (most of them are just as bad as the cops) is that MPD goes to the downtown business alliance meetings and tells the security guards that they need to do a better job of making people move off the sidewalk, that way the cops don't have to deal with us, but they eventually see that we're not afraid of them, so why would we be worried about security guards...?

**MA:** How can people get involved with what you are doing?

**B:** We have a couple of suggestions. Mainly we suggest that you take your own camera or cell phone and observe police conduct when police are detaining or simply talking to someone in your local community and on your streets, and sharing that with us so that we can network at a broader range, in larger numbers. We have been trained, all of our life, to go in the opposite direction of cops, because nothing good has ever come out of communicating



with cops for people of color. We need to start doing something different. Just walk towards the cops and document what is happening. Every time a person lets a cop abuse his/her power and stomp all over one's rights, it makes it that much easier for the cop to harass and abuse other people. Speak up and step up.

Another thing you can do is help us archive police abuse. If you have any questions, ideas, comments, submissions for the newsletter or would like to know more about us you can reach us at [modestocopwatch@live.com](mailto:modestocopwatch@live.com) and [rhhorg@live.com](mailto:rhhorg@live.com).

Most importantly we encourage you to remind everyone that these are OUR STREETS and WE ARE WATCHING.

**T:** Yeah, take it into your own hands. Copwatch can't be in every neighborhood 24/7, but if the folks in those neighborhoods become their own cop watchers, then we can have eyes and ears everywhere. Try to have some other people around because if you are alone the police feel they can easily intimidate you by saying, "this doesn't have anything to do with you, get out of here". Just reply "I have the right to observe the police in public." If the cops still do something to you and violates your rights, contact us and we'll do everything we can to help.



*(continued from 'Recession and Resistance' article...)*

and taking collective action, they forced the fire marshal to cancel the meeting, thus delaying the decision. While the meeting went ahead a few weeks later and the cuts went through despite massive protests, this type of direct action shows the way forward. This tactic was also repeated at a Sylvan Union (Modesto) school board meeting, much to the same results. Like the recent factory occupation in Chicago at the end of last year, which won severance pay and benefits for laid off workers, this form of direct struggle with our enemies is our most powerful weapon. Besides the actions in Stockton, there have also been numerous protests across the valley at board meetings, demonstrations by teachers in Modesto, and marches conducted by college students in Sacramento.

What is missing from these struggles however is a rejection of dialogue with our enemies. We have to stop being the sad people with signs at meetings asking nicely for those in power not to screw us over – and start becoming a physical force against capitalism. We must also resist those who claim to be on “our side” but have no real intentions of fighting back, such as the unions who are more concerned with maintaining peace with the bosses and the rich. Unions across the valley and the state have brokered deals with management which, while saving some jobs, opt instead for losses in benefits and force workers to take “furlough” days. These are days that workers aren't paid for; making them lose up to 10% of their wages. For thousands of workers this simply amounts to having to do more work for less pay. There have also been massive cuts in education, as schools are closed and already crowded class rooms grow larger. Fees and expenses at college campuses around the state also continue to rise. The “solution” to the crisis that has been developed by the ruling class is simple: we must pay for their crisis. Their solution is what it always has been, suck us dry while putting more cops on our streets, more prisons in our towns, more cameras on our block, and making us work harder for less pay. The time has come to stop paying for their crisis. The time has come to stop playing by their rules and start creating our own.





# STREET BY STREET, BLOCK BY BLOCK, TAKING IT ALL BACK

## an interview with ben saari from santa rosa copwatch

*Ben Saari is a long time community organizer and anti-capitalist based in Santa Rosa California. He has been involved in a wide variety of community based projects, and currently works with Santa Rosa Copwatch and the Free Mind Media Center. Through email, Ben answered these questions about Copwatch in Santa Rosa. Representing MAC, was Agent Wingnut.*

**MA:** When did Santa Rosa Copwatch form and what prompted it's formation?

**BS:** The current incarnation of Santa Rosa Copwatch grew out of a couple places: there was a group of us who would get together every year to copwatch on Cinco De Mayo, and there was another group that got together to try and develop a common (and explicitly anti-capitalist) understanding of the politics and social movements of today. The study group kind of fizzled; we kept agreeing to do things and the next time we met nothing would be done, and the process would repeat. We decided that if we had something more concrete to do, then maybe the conversation about ideas could move along. It was spring 2007, Cinco de Mayo and May Day were approaching, along with the annual police clampdown in public places to make them 'safe,' empty, and unused. Copwatching was an obvious activity, it also gave us a focus for the reading/discussion group.

**MA:** In the post-9/11 police state, how effective do you think Copwatch is?

**BS:** Copwatching is just a tactic. How effective it is depends on a lot of variables. For instance, in Santa Rosa we have found that when we patrol regularly, as soon as a cop is aware we are watching, the cops change their behavior. Cops are more respectful and polite to whoever they have stopped; often the police give back the person's ID and tell them they are free to go. Usually the cops try to end the stop before we have a chance to get close enough to explain who we are and why we are there. This is good. But this kind of quick disengagement prevents us from being able to talk to people about how police treat them while the experience is fresh. It also keeps us from being able to tell people about what copwatching is immediately after copwatching made a real difference in how the police treated them. This is bad.

When whole communities adopt the tactic of copwatching it can be really effective, but it can also be used to ghettoize complaints. In Santa Rosa in the early 90's the punks really diligently copwatched, and for awhile it changed the way cops acted. Then the cops realized that punks were pretty much socially and politically isolated and they went back to harassing any kid in a park.

In my view, analyzing and confronting police power is a way to understand what is happening socially and politically. That understanding is going to have to be flexible and always growing, and honest about it's limits. But where individual people and larger groupings are in their



explanation of what police are, why they exist, why they do what they do, and who gives them power to do it, is a good measure of how much I have in common with an individual or group. I'm going to be much more excited about copwatching with someone who sees it as an effective way to resist capitalism and white supremacy, than I am about copwatching with someone who sees it as a step to a city council seat. Ultimately I'll copwatch with either, but I'll have a better time with someone who is also strategizing about how to eliminate police.

Police have always gotten away with whatever they want; if they didn't they wouldn't be police. They may have had more audacity since the World Trade Center was destroyed, but Jim Crow, open membership in the Klan, Red Squads, Cointelpro, the Palmer Raids, fugitive slave laws, assaults on striking workers, and assaults on sex workers are all abuses that date back to the origins of modern policing. Anyone looking for a long view at the history of policing in America should check out the book *Our Enemies in Blue* by Kristian Williams (<http://www.kristianwilliams.com>).

**MA:** What do you think is the most effective thing about Copwatch and how would you pass these tactics on to others?

**BS:** Copwatching is portable, personalizable, you can do it anytime, and you can walk away from it any time. This is something that I don't think gets emphasized enough. Anyone can copwatch any time. All you have to do is watch what they are doing. You don't have to intervene, and you don't even have to record it. Of course you'll be more effective if the cops know they are being watched and if they at least think they are being recorded. *Beat the Heat* by Katja Komisarek is a great primer for copwatching and other interactions with law enforcement. It has a bunch of different outlines for trainings in it. Most of those can be found on the Midnight Special Law Collective website (<http://www.midnightspecial.net/>).

As portable and temporary as copwatching can be, I think it's greatest benefit can be had when groups of people organize around copwatching. Locally, Petaluma Copwatch instigated a big change. Petaluma CW got copwatch trainings into a bunch of local schools, received some favorable press coverage in the alt-weekly, built a strong reputation in the community, and did some legal support for people who were beaten by the cops. This is the kind of ongoing community building and organizing that can't be done by somebody with a cell camera who copwatches whenever the mood strikes them.

I think there is importance in both individual and organizational action. I also think it's crucial that copwatchers not be half-assed, that we look at what we do critically and try to improve it, that we talk to the people who see us watching cops and get their input about what we are doing, and that we

think and talk about what happens next.

**MA:** What is your critique of the growth of the use of tasers, and why are they being used more and more against people in police encounters?

**BS:** I have a problem with any armed professional police force. I think solving social and political problems with that kind of force and fear is always dangerous. It also replicates itself by making problems bigger than they really are. For instance, if you call the cops on a loud neighbor, now the neighborhood has two problems: the loud neighbor and the cops on the street looking to set all the loud people straight.

Anyhow, back to tasers. Tasers became popular as a "less lethal" weapon. The casual use of them has led to wide misuse. Some supporters of the cop that killed Oscar Grant say that he didn't mean to shoot Oscar, that he thought he had pulled his taser. Tasers deliver a massive electrical shock that can be life threatening to folks with epilepsy, anyone that's high, or anyone that might fall when they get hit with a massive electrical shock.

I think the taser ban movement is largely pragmatic. Meaning it exists and is popular because it is win-able. However, cops without tasers won't be much better; they'll just use more bullets. This is a complex and contradictory place for someone who has the view of police that I do. I don't want cops to have any weapons, so why focus on taking one away? Because it is possible? Because it is fresh? Because there are calls for it from folks who have been tasered, and the families of folks killed by tasers? And that's where I sign up, largely out of solidarity, because people who have felt those things want them gone, and I'm cool with that.

**MA:** In your opinion, could we live in a society without police and what do you think could replace them?

**BS:** Hell yes. People solve problems everyday without cops. There is this idea that without cops we'd all make babies into crack pipes and eat dog shit sundaes... I think we'd do better than that. It'll take a massive social and political transformation, and that scares people off. It is easier to wait for a collapse and predict devastation than it is to imagine and create a better future. The strategies and organizational forms of the past have had pretty crappy results, and taking responsibility to try out new ones opens yourself to the probability of failure, but not struggling is surrendering to a system built on misery.

How do I see a community keeping itself safe without cops? Eliminating cops in and of itself would make things

*(article continued in two pages...)*





# Now That I'm Free

an interview with former *modesto anarcho*  
prison subscriber

*Kevin was a reader of Modesto Anarcho (and a Central Valley native) during his incarceration in a California prison. Upon his release, he agreed to conduct this interview about some of his experiences while incarcerated. On the MAC end, is crudo.*

**MA:** Why were you imprisoned?

**Kevin:** That is an easy one. I was imprisoned because of our government's war on drugs. How else could they possibly create jobs for prison guards, have 10 times more cops than are needed, etc. I feel if someone wants to do drugs, what the fuck's business is it to anyone else? A free country - my ass. The cop lied on the witness stand. The jury was basically picked by the prosecution, and the judge allowed none of the evidence I had to be used in court. What a corrupt system.

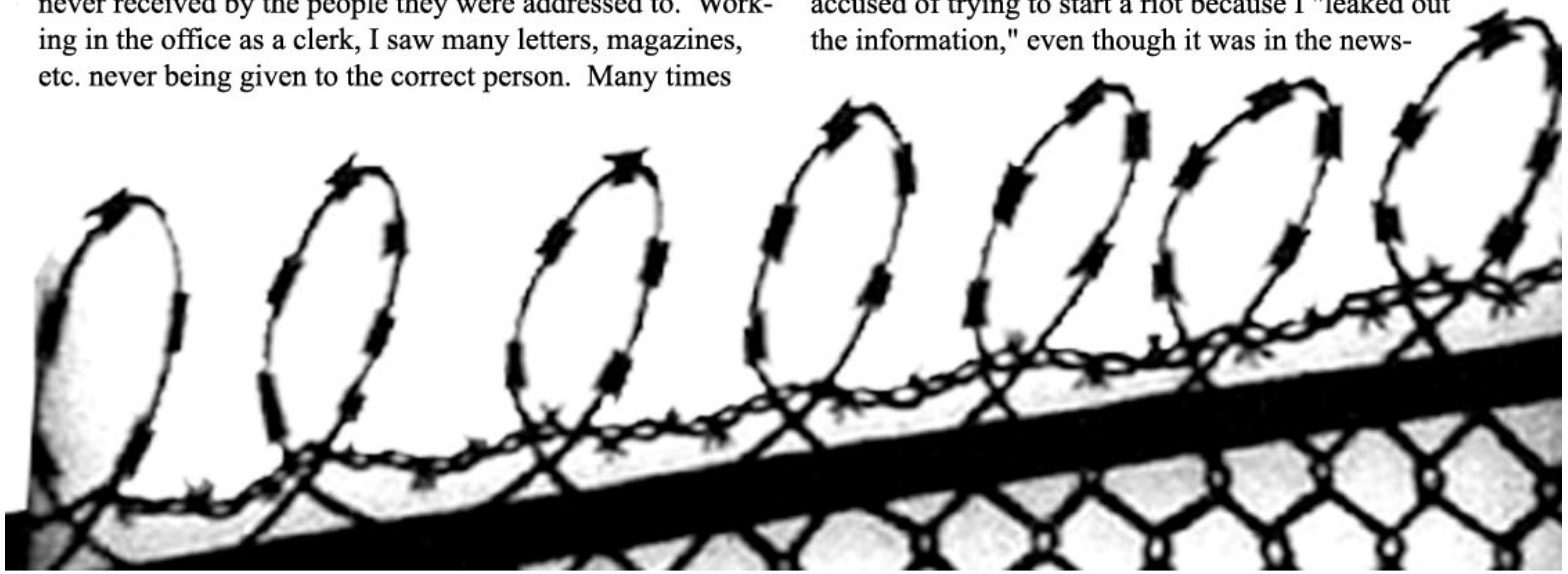
**MA:** In what way did the guards try to control or stop the distribution of *Modesto Anarcho*?

**Kevin:** Well, they did allow it to get to us. Sometimes, that is. The only problem was, we who received it were hassled constantly because of it. They would hold up the magazines for a few days, claiming they had to screen them for contraband. What a friggin' joke that was. Also, when locker searches were done they would mysteriously disappear. They would read the articles aloud in the office, making nasty comments about the articles and the convicts receiving them. I have no way of proving it, but many times they were never received by the people they were addressed to. Working in the office as a clerk, I saw many letters, magazines, etc. never being given to the correct person. Many times

magazines were given to the cops' snitches. It was one of the ways they were rewarded for snitching.

**MA:** You mentioned to us that the prison officials moved you around to various prisons often, and they also alleged that you once tried to organize a riot against the guards. Why do you feel that they accused you of doing these things? Was there any sort of organizing going on in prison that you want to talk about?

**Kevin:** I was moved around a lot because I was accused many times of being a troublemaker because of my dislike of cops. One incident in particular: In 2006 grooming standards were abolished. I was at fire camp at that time. Just coming from the main prison in Susanville, I knew about the new law coming into effect. I let all the inmates at the camp know that they no longer had to get haircuts and could now grow beards. That caused a huge uproar with the guards. I was called into the office and questioned as to why I leaked out the information. It was a law passed by the legislature. I didn't know it was a secret. I told the Sergeant at the camp that it was a done deal, that there were no more grooming standards. His answer to me was: "Don't you remember the Alamo?" I know of one camp in particular where to this day if you try to grow your hair out or grow a beard, you will be threatened and sent to a disciplinary camp for trying to exercise your rights to grow long hair. Many camps will roll up clerks and even sometimes firefighters who try to exercise this right. They will get rid of you in a second. I was accused of trying to start a riot because I "leaked out the information," even though it was in the news-





papers.

**MA:** It seems to us that the way prison is organized divides prisoners by their color, thus making it easier for prisoners to direct rage at each other as opposed to the system of incarceration. Your thoughts?

**Kevin:** The prison guards are the ones that encourage races to be divided. It is their way of keeping inmates against each other instead of being against them. They are probably the most bigoted people I have ever run across in my life. Everything in prison is divided up by color. Northern Hispanics, Southern Hispanics, Northern Blacks, Southern Blacks, Whites, Others, Indians. Take the rule of making sure, supposedly, that in the housing areas, races are intermingled. This rule is used as punishment. If you don't do what they say they will bunk you up with another race so you either go to the hole or are beaten up. If they don't like you, or take for instance that you are a skinhead, then, (at fire camps anyway), they try to bunk you up to get rid of you. Integrated housing is nothing more than a tool for the guards to use against the inmates.

**MA:** What would you say to prisoners on the inside reading this who are interested in acting against prison? And also to those on the outside looking to support those struggles?

**Kevin:** Unfortunately, there is not much that prisoners on the inside can do. Because the guards have so many tools to use against you, you are between a rock and a hard spot. Any comments you make will get you more time. Why a guard would have the power to keep someone incarcerated longer is beyond belief. If nothing else, they will lie. It is not uncommon for them to lie. I was a disciplinary clerk for a while and the wording of the guards in reports was drastically changed by the higher ups in order to charge guys with more serious offenses. Many times the whole writeup was changed. The person doing the changes was also the person that heard the offense in the "Mock courts" that they hold, and he did it so the offense would be more serious and more disciplinary time could be given. It is a total joke. People outside need to be made more aware of the gross injustices given to inmates. Take me for instance: They tried to bunk me up. It is not that I was against being bunked interracially. I could personally care less. But the choice I was given was: Bunk up, become a snitch for the cops, be shunned, be beaten up, or give up the camp program for a while, be sent back to the main yard and get more time. So what choice did I have? I ended up doing 50 something more days on an already long sentence. The reason I received 11 years for possession for sale is that I took my case in the courtroom to a jury trial, which was my right. With the cop lying and all they gave me the maximum sentence allowed by law.

***Donate to Modesto Anarcho today and ensure that we can continue to send literature into California prisons.***

*(continued from Santa Rosa Copwatch interview...)*

a lot safer. If it was normal for people that live near each other to talk to each other, honestly and regularly about concerns and dreams, a lot of the petty bickering cops get calls for could be resolved other ways. If all of the ways power is used to pacify one group by giving it control of another group were actually eliminated, another big chunk of cop calls would go away. Looking at crime statistics, property crimes (theft, robbery, vandalism, possession, solicitation) account for 60-80% of crime. So if it was legal to: trade sex for money, deal weed, take a loaf of bread when you are hungry, take a flat screen from the house in the hills with one in every room, squat the empty house, grow food in the empty lot, or shoot hoops in the park after dark, then a bunch more cop calls would dry up.

Security ultimately rests in the hands of the community. Right now the community has given that responsibility to the cops, but that can change if the people who think it should can popularize their ideas and vision.

**MA:** Any last comments?

**BS:** Thanks for giving me a chance to shoot my mouth off. I hope my ideas came across clearly. Anyone that wants to reach me can get me at [laidoff@sonic.net](mailto:laidoff@sonic.net).



**They want you to vote so when they rule you, you'll accept people telling you what to do. They want you to keep going to work. They want you to get used to cops on your street and cameras outside your home, so when the military comes down the street you'll feel even safer. They want you to feel more closeness to their politicians than your neighbors. They want you to know the products in the store and not the plants outside your apartment. They want you to forget about the smog in the air and the pesticides in your lungs. They want you to keep going to work. They want you to stay in line as a woman to keep going to work. They want you to go to city council meetings and feel like you're a part of making decisions. They want you to feel safe when the police shoot people. They want you to be afraid of other poor people and people that don't look like you. They want to convince you that stealing from work is wrong. They want you to keep going to work. They want you to think that the interests of the company are your interests. They want you to feel like the boss is your buddy and you could be like him with the president. They want you to feel good when a nuclear war that "we" bombed another country. They want you to feel good that we're stopping immigrants from taking "our" jobs. They want you to feel bad about the fat on your body and be hungry for that fat in their foods. They want you to hate your job and drink yourself to death. They want you to keep going to work. They want you to have problems with the system and work within it to "make it better." They want to sell you a house and then take it away. They want you to choose between being a slave and going hungry. They want you to choose between being homeless and paying rent. But who is this "they" that "you" are talking about? The rich motherfucker. The rich. The last time they see us, our only banners will read: "Behold, your future executioners." This is the start of a new proletarian resistance.**



# Links and Resources

[www.prole.info](http://www.prole.info), [www.anarchistnews.org](http://www.anarchistnews.org), [zinelibrary.info](http://zinelibrary.info)  
[www.crimethinc.com](http://www.crimethinc.com), [news.infoshop.org](http://news.infoshop.org), [www.libcom.org](http://www.libcom.org)

**To distribute free copies of Modesto Anarcho and Firestorm, write to us at:  
Modesto Anarcho, PO  
Box 3027, Modesto, CA  
95353**

**Modesto Anarcho Crew meets in weekly discussion groups at Graceada Park, 5pm, every Wednesday. We also have a montly general assembly at Graceada Park (under gazebo) at 1pm, last Saturday of every month. Next meetings are on May 30th, June 27th, and July 25th.**





**Modesto Anarcho**  
**PO Box 3027**  
**Modesto, CA**  
**95353**

