

Tides of Flame

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Capitalism is Death.

○ About

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

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

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

Come!

*New friends: this will
please you.*

*We will never work,
oh tides of flame!*

**This world
will explode.**

Arthur Rimbaud



Capitalism is death.

Capitalism is the cancer eating your family, the cops kicking down your door, the skeletal grin of the banker. Capitalism is the slum lord, the wine bar, the crumbling apartment building. Capitalism will kill you, rob you, make you its slave. Capitalism will destroy the world, eat its soul and spit it out as slime, oil, electronics. Capitalism brings devastation, despair, emptiness. Capitalism hollows out life, selling it back as shit commodities, tacky styles, sterile images, plastic smiles, and inverted desires. Capitalism destroys forests, lakes, oceans, rivers, mountains. Capitalism milks us like cows, shaves us like sheep, and ultimately slaughters us like pigs. Capitalism steals the beauty it can find and leeches out its essence, its magic, its charm. Capitalism is the end of all beauty. Capitalism is death.



Leased convicts (slaves) expand the market.

It's been three years since the recession started. Before 2008, the economy was still functioning smoothly, having recovered from the burst of the IT bubble. The US was able to invade Iraq and Afghanistan without any significant opposition surfacing within its borders. In retrospect, it appears that the Bush administration made a grab for scarce natural resources, anticipating the collapse that would eventually occur once the next bubble burst. Indeed, the philosophy of the high capitalists is such: **"TAKE EVERYTHING YOU CAN BEFORE WE DESTROY IT ALL."** During those years before 2008, the capitalists encouraged and helped each other rob the earth, promoting a culture of wealth, extravagance, and greed. And then what they always knew would happen finally happened. Their game was up.

Luckily for the banks, the governments of each country bailed them out. There was no other choice for them. The rampant speculation of the bankers spurred development and propelled the capitalist world system onward in its expansion. The bankers did only what the capitalist system had trained them to do. They made money, financed impossible projects, and expanded the market as far as possible. In every country, these people fulfilled the logic of capitalism, working as its agents, promoters, and pimps.

And now we can all see their handiwork. For the past 500 years (let alone the last 10), North America has been subject to the whims and experiments of these agents of capitalism. Whether they wore the steel helmets of the conquistadors or the flashy suites of Wall Street, these agents had the same basic mandate: **EXPAND THE MARKET.** The first colonies in Virginia, the slave ships arriving in New York, the building of the railroads

and the first paved roads were sequences in the expansion of this market. And that same market is now nearing its limits. The consumers stuck inside this market are bored, restless, impoverished, and hungry. The rulers of the market are scared, knowing there is no direction to go but into the very heart of destruction. The most lucid of them have always known that death was the ultimate goal of capitalism.

Slaves hanging from trees, revolutionaries behind bars, graveyards filled with generations of working class families: this is the vision of capitalism. This system is a giant work camp. The whip that scarred the back of the slave is now more subtle, intricate, and macabre. We

are compelled to work for this system out of fear of starvation, poverty, and death. And if we work but a mere 40 hours per week, we can have a few drinks at the bar, a bike, a car, an apartment: a very luxurious slave's quarters. But in the end, what will we have? Nothing. Our entire lives will have been spent enriching others.

We are unlike every other generation. We are in a unique position and have a perfect vantage of the disaster that awaits us all over the next year. There is no retirement for us, no savings, no future. This system will provide us with nothing, nor will it be reformed to do so. It was built to use us, rob us and ultimately murder us. The task of our

generation is not fix what is broken. We will not fall for that trick again. The task of our generation is to deliver to this system what it has dispensed for hundreds of years: **DEATH.**

Together, we, the lovers and protectors of life, possessed by chaos and anarchy, will discover how to deliver death to this morbid system of dollars and cents. The more of us there are, the more we will see fires on the horizon and frenzy on the streets. Join us in our final assault, our ultimate push to end the current nightmare. Help us destroy what has destroyed the world. This truly is a global assault on capitalism. May we be successful. 🖤



MADISON PARK - In the early hours of Wednesday, November 9th, someone set fire to a Bank of America ATM. The bank was located in Madison Park, one of the wealthier neighborhoods of Seattle. The fire spread from the ATM into the interior of the building, causing extensive smoke damage. In total, the fire cost the bank \$150,000. No one claimed responsibility for the attack.

Later on that same Wednesday, a protest against banks and cuts to education took place in the University District. When the protesters reached a Chase Bank, they found it surrounded

by dozens of riot police.

Over the past several weeks, the public has grown accustomed to the sight of police guarding banks. By doing this, the police have revealed their true role as the protectors and servants of capitalism. They sometimes even act as bodyguards for the rich—the night JP Morgan Chase CEO Jamie Dimon spoke at the downtown Sheraton, the cops were out in force, arresting and pepper-spraying the angry demonstrators.

From the siege of the Sheraton to the firebombing of the Bank of America, we are now seeing a broad spectrum of

tactics in the struggle against capitalism in Seattle. Hopefully this remains the case and people learn more and more how to best support and compliment each other's actions instead of crying "provocateur" everytime someone does something risky and brave.

Just as we have for every other action we report on, we would like to applaud the author(s) of this fine act and wish them good luck in all of their future ventures. 🖤

Also on this day...

- Seven ATMs were smashed in Milan, Italy. From the communique: "Crisis or no crisis, it's the existence of any economic system that disgusts us, a system that we're not interested in saving or reforming but only in destroying."
- A gas bomb was put in front of the ATMs of a bank in Santiago, Chile. From the communique: "We placed [the bomb] between the ATMs of the branch, lighting it directly there with the only hope of turning to ash every last paper in those machines."

d **Free Barcelona, 1936** b

In 1936, a civil war broke out in Spain. Segments of the military led by the fascist Francisco Franco attempted an armed insurrection against the republic of Spain. While they were successful in some areas to the south of the country, they were crushed in many other regions. One place where the fascists were stopped was Barcelona, and the only reasons the fascists did not win was because that city had been an anarchist stronghold for decades. After days of intense gun battles, Barcelona was finally taken and became, for a brief and beautiful time, an anarchist and worker-controlled commune.

We could attempt to list and describe all that the anarchists accomplished in that one city, but instead we will quote a good man whose opinion we trust:

It was the first time that I had ever been in a town where the working class was in the saddle. Practically every building of any size had been seized by the workers and was draped with red flags or with the red and black flag of the Anarchists; every wall was scrawled with the hammer and sickle and with the initials of the revolutionary parties; almost every church had been gutted and its images burnt. Churches here and there were being systematically demolished by gangs of workman.

Every shop and cafe had an inscription saying that it had been collectivized; even the bootblacks had been collectivized and their boxes painted red and black. Waiters and shop-walkers looked you in the face and treated you as an equal. Servile and even ceremonial forms of speech had temporarily disappeared. Nobody said 'Senor' or 'Don' or even 'Usted'; everyone called everyone else 'Comrade' or 'Thou', and said 'Salud!' instead of 'Buenos dias'. Tipping had been forbidden by law since the time of Primo de Rivera; almost my first experience was receiving a lecture from a hotel manager for trying to tip a lift-boy. There were no private motor-cars, they had all been commandeered, and the trams and taxis and much of the other transport were

painted red and black. The revolutionary posters were everywhere, flaming from the walls in clean reds and blues that made the few remaining advertisements look like daubs of mud. Down the Ramblas, the wide central artery of the town where crowds of people streamed constantly to and fro, the loud-speakers were bellowing revolutionary songs all day and far into the night. And it was the aspect of the crowds that was the queerest thing of all.

In outward appearance it was a town in which the wealthy classes had practically ceased to exist. Except for a small number of women and foreigners there were no 'well-dressed' people at all. Practically everyone wore rough working-class clothes, or blue overalls or some variant of militia uniform. All this was queer and moving. There was much in this that I did not understand, in some ways I did not even like it, but I recognized it immediately as a state of affairs worth fighting for.

Those words were written by George Orwell soon before he was wounded in battle fighting the fascists. We could narrate to you the betrayals that soon followed the taking of Barcelona. There are countless stories of communists sell-

ing out their anarchist comrades and of the Western powers refusing to intervene to stop the spread of fascism. But we will not tell you those stories now, because now is the time to remember that the free commune of Barcelona once existed, and when it did it was marvelous. We will end this with a song sung by the free women of the anarchist militias:

*Fists upraised, women of Iberia
towards horizons pregnant with light
on paths afire
feet on the ground
face to the blue sky.
Affirming the promise of life
we defy tradition
we mold the warm clay
of a new world born of pain.*

*Let the past vanish into nothingness!
What do we care for yesterday!*

*We want to write anew
the word WOMAN.*

*Fists upraised, women of the world
towards horizons pregnant with light
on paths afire
onward, onward
toward the light.*



Repression, Recuperation, Revolution, *and the Occupations Movement*

Over the past couple of weeks, mainstream media outlets across the country have focused their coverage of the #Occupy movement on exaggerated horror stories of bad sanitation, drugs, and violence within the campsites. Meanwhile, and not coincidentally, police harassment and evictions of the occupations have suddenly increased.

A suicide in Vermont, a shooting in Oakland, and drug overdoses in several occupations have been used to justify the police assaults. Barring such incidents, bad sanitation is trotted out as public enemy number one. In Seattle, a hypodermic needle found in the Seattle Central Community College's childcare center play yard has been blown up to newsworthy proportions. But according to an Occupy Seattle press release, a former teaching assistant at the childcare center had this to say about the needle: "Every day as part of our jobs, we picked up drug paraphernalia, needles, used condoms, cigarette butts, anything that threatened the safety of the kids. All that stuff was there way before Occupy Seattle." Huh.

The fact is that the problems being blamed on occupations in cities throughout the country already existed before the first tent even popped up in Liberty Plaza, NYC. The media hype is just the latest strategy to bolster support for police action among the foolish and easily frightened. The time has evidently come for the police and the mainstream media to faithfully carry out their roles as the servants of capitalism. The mainstream media vilifies, and the police, in turn, take care of the villains.

In just the past week, two of the largest and most influential camps in the United States, Occupy Portland and Occupy Oakland, were cleaned and cleared by hundreds of riot-clad police. Even the flagship Occupy Wall Street camp in New York City has been lev-



"STOP TAKING ORDERS, START TAKING OVER"

A group of anarchists and other occupiers march to take a building in Chapel Hill, NC, on the night of November 12. The following day, a SWAT team armed with assault rifles evicted the occupation, arresting seven comrades.

eled.¹ Certainly police have evicted other occupations in smaller cities without much national attention. Seattle's own occupation is under vague threat of eviction as the SCCC administration consults with the Washington State Attorney General on how the school can untangle the legal loophole currently allowing the occupation to continue.

Thanks to a little slip by Oakland mayor Jean Quan, we now know that at least 19 city administrations and police departments have been working together with the FBI and Homeland Security to figure out how to evict their local encampments. Those surprised at these revelations shouldn't be—the entrenched political structure has every reason to desire the destruction of this growing proto-revolutionary movement. Where the state fails to destroy or significantly weaken it, we can expect to see more and more politicians moving in to recuperate the movement's energy. The state will send in master manipu-

lators like Seattle City Councilmember Nick Licata to wrangle control of the uncontrollables and funnel all of this subversive activity into the established democratic-capitalist channels. They'll push for reform in the hopes that they can stave off full-blown revolution.

Luckily, it is clear that many occupiers have rejected politics as usual and have embraced a method of anarchistic self-organization that actively rejects leadership and Democratic co-optation.² This doesn't mean the fight is over—far from it. It just means that those of us who want to push the occupations movement in new and more exciting directions have a great opportunity set before us. The evictions have forced the question, "What will we occupy next?" 🦋

1. At this writing, a judge has ruled that the protesters can reassemble, with tents.

2. Of course, there is some push-and-pull in the national occupation discourse, and each occupation is unique, some with Democrats and liberals already in leadership positions.

Occupy Seattle: *What's Happened Since Our Last Issue?*

A lot has happened, actually. We'll share a few of our favorite (and least favorite) events from the past two weeks.

On **Wednesday, November 2nd**, the day after we released our previous issue, a group of people from the newly established occupation at Seattle Central Community College marched down to the Chase Bank on Broadway (the same Chase that anarchists have repeatedly attacked throughout 2011). When the crowd arrived, they found a group of five inside the bank with their arms locked together inside PVC pipes. This effectively shut down the bank for the rest of the day.

When police eventually removed the people in the bank and marched them to a waiting police van, the crowd began to cluster around the vehicle to prevent it from leaving. This triggered a reaction from the cops, and a fight started. The police pepper-sprayed the crowd, people punched cops in the face, bottles were thrown and one of the most wonderful things we have witnessed on Broadway took place: the people pushed the police down the street and forced them to retreat!

After this victory, the crowd marched to Westlake Plaza where they met up with various unions and prepared to surround the Sheraton Hotel. Jamie Dimon was speaking to a UW business club and lecturing them on how great he was, how great they could be, and why capitalism is the best. The crowd of hundreds got off the sidewalk (thanks to those pesky anarchists), marched to the hotel, and proceeded to block each entrance of the building. This set off a long night of cat and mouse with the police. People were pepper-sprayed and beaten and some were arrested while a bunch of rich mummies listened to their spiritual leader in the hotel. By the end of the night, the police had brought in all of their riot forces and were preparing to tear gas the crowd. But before they could do this, everyone returned to their

new home at SCCC to relax, change their clothes, and get dry. All of this happened on the day of the Oakland General Strike, when tens of thousands of protesters swarmed the streets, shutting down the Port of Oakland. Smaller groups smashed banks and briefly occupied a former Traveler's Aid building.

Since then, however, various police departments, the FBI, and the Department of Homeland Security have orchestrated the destruction of the Oakland, Portland, and Wall Street occupations, among others. As of this writing, the energy from Occupy Oakland has been transferred to the UC Berkeley Campus. Just like Occupy Seattle, our comrades in Oakland are finding refuge in a college campus.

Saturday, November 12, Occupy Seattlites showed up en masse to an evening Town Hall meeting about the movement, alternately booing moderator and City Councilmember Nick Licata and cheering their comrades on the panel. Some rebels in the Process and Facilitation workgroup attempted to turn the meeting into a General Assembly, but were defeated. Though a certain little creep from *The Stranger* seemed to think the disruption was a bad thing, we reveled in the joyful chaos that erupted during the otherwise snore-worthy event.

Two days later, on **Monday, November 14**, the Seattle City Council unanimously passed Nick Licata's non-binding (and therefore basically meaningless) resolution in support of Occupy Seattle. Considering the recent pepper-spray massacre, we're thinking that either this pledge of support was a callow attempt at milking the occupation for political capital or the City Council's support doesn't extend to street demonstrations. We're betting on the former.

In the early evening of **Tuesday, November 15th**, in response to the raid on Occupy Wall Street, a group of 150 people left the Capital Hell Commune

and headed downtown. The police continuously tried to push everyone in the street onto the sidewalk but were largely unable to do so. People simply ran ahead of the police line and continued on the street. When the march arrived in Belltown, en route to Seattle's very own and rather insignificant Wall Street (sigh!), the police decided to attack everyone and arrest those who were nearest them. This pattern continued until the group had left the desolation of Belltown and returned to the downtown core. Rush hour traffic was halted as the march took over the street in front of Nordstrom's. In a move of complete stupidity, the police started beating and pepper-spraying everyone in the center of the commercial shopping district. In the process, a pregnant woman, a blind woman, an elderly woman, and a priest were pepper-sprayed, making international headlines.

All is well at the SCCC occupation. The first campus General Assembly will happen on **Thursday, November 17**. People from the camp are agitating against the closure of the school's child-care center using the slogan, "SAVE THE CHILDCARE CENTER. DESTROY CAPITALISM." And finally, the actual residents of the occupation have come a long way towards living together peacefully in an area where there are no police. This last part, we feel, is more valuable than everything else. 🦋

COMING UP:

Rise and Decolonize! Let's Get Free!
presented by Hip Hop Occupies &
the Occupy Seattle People of Color Caucus
Friday, November 18
5-10PM, Westlake Plaza

March Against Eviction & Repression
Part of a National Day of Action
Saturday, November 19
2:30PM, meet at SCCC

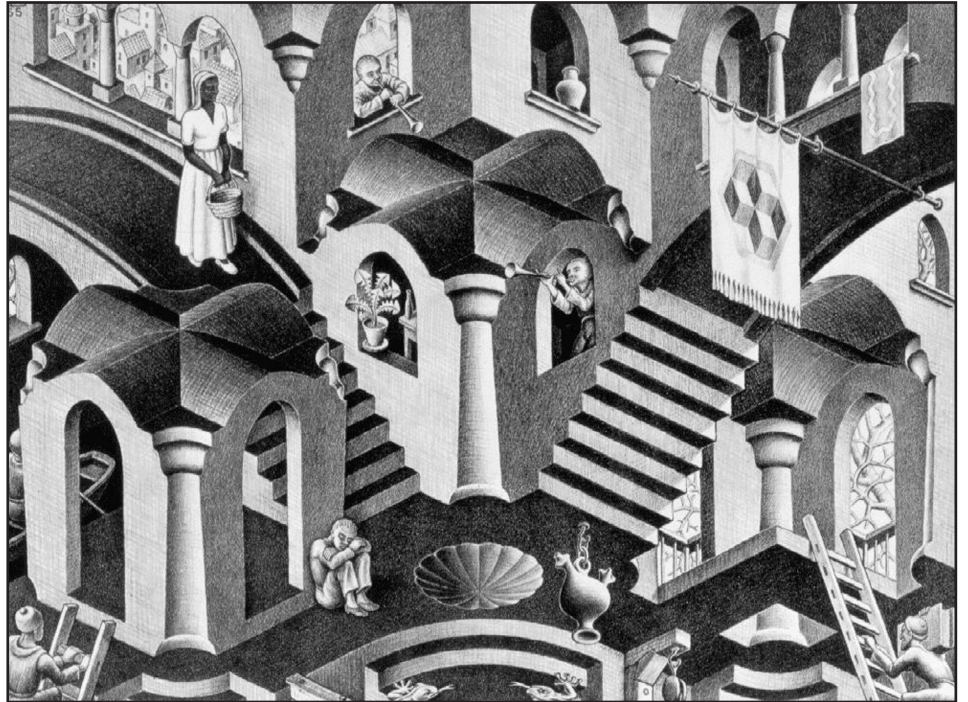
Day of Action at the Olympia Capitol
Monday, November 28

My So-Called Life:

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

It's 8:30am on the 10th floor of the Seattle Municipal Courthouse. I'm watching the clouds recede over the sound. Frigid and snuggling, I woke at Occupy Seattle, pulled a wrinkled and mismatched suit out of a bag and awkwardly dressed before hobbling out of the tent to the nearest bus stop. I've been sleeping at the occupation on and off since its encampment at Seattle Central Community College began. There I've been staying up late into the night urgently pursuing conversations with new friends and comrades about what to do and how we can push the occupation in more interesting directions. Its a mockingly beautiful day that I will be forced to endure before a judge.

A General Strike called for by Occupy Oakland is taking place today with solidarity actions planned in Seattle, across the United States, and in cities in Europe and Egypt. Tens of thousands of people will be taking the streets, marching on banks and expressing their collective outrage. Meanwhile, I'll be wasting away waiting for my trial to begin for bogus charges from an arrest at a



protest earlier this year. It's my second consecutive day in court though my trial has yet to begin. Set back twice already, I've sat half awake and hungry in this empty hallway two days in a row and for dozens of cumulative hours since these charges were first filed against me.

A few hours pass and I sleep on a cushioned bench outside the court, waiting for my turn. My public defender informs me that the trial will be postponed until next week, and I need only sign a paper before a judge to make it real. As I leave I am summoned back into court and told to return again in a few hours. I return late and sit in the court pew. The judge summons me forward and arbitrarily has me sit beside my lawyer, then sends us away the next moment. We go

room to room, are given different dates for return, shuffled like paperwork being processed.

Courtrooms we are sent to have no judges, and the bailiffs ignore us while officials eat lunch in the back. The public defenders and prosecutors fraternize openly and make lawyer jokes in an empty court waiting for instructions on whether trial will start now, next week, or perhaps in a month or two.

The courts are an established process of boredom and coercion whose theft of time and threat of incarceration hang heavy above any defendant's head. At any moment, we are all susceptible to the invasive reach of the law. When summoned by these tribunals, the choice is to appear or to be hunted. I say nothing and decide nothing. I am held captive by the process and am simply there to witness the court's judgment. The whole ordeal feels increasingly absurd and surreal considering its contrast with the political happenings occurring outside. With the General strike in Oakland, the solidarity demonstrations in Seattle, and the growing occupation at Seattle Central, what on earth am I doing sitting here in this suit waiting for a trial to begin? 🐉



That Justice is a blind goddess
Is a thing to which we black are wise:
Her bandage hides two festering sores
That once perhaps were eyes.

- Langston Hughes

Anarchy is Life.



A Soul, half through the Gate, said unto Life:
“What does thou offer me?”
And Life replied: “Sorrow, unceasing struggle,
Disappointment; after these darkness and silence.”
The Soul said unto Death: “What does thou offer me?”
And Death replied: “In the beginning what Life gives at last.”
Turning to Life: “And if I live and struggle?”
“Others shall live and struggle after thee
Counting it easier where thou hast passed.”
“And by their struggles?”
“Easier place shall be for others, still to rise to keener pain
Of conquering Agony!”
“And what have I to do with all these others? Who are they?”
“Yourself!”
“And all who went before?”
“Yourself.”
“The darkness and the silence, too, have end?”
“They end in light and sound; peace ends in pain,
Death ends in Me, and thou must glide from Self
To Self, as light to shade and shade to light again. Choose!”
The Soul, sighing, answered: “**I will live.**”

*Voltaire de Cleyre, anarchist and poet
November 17, 1866 – June 20, 1912*

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