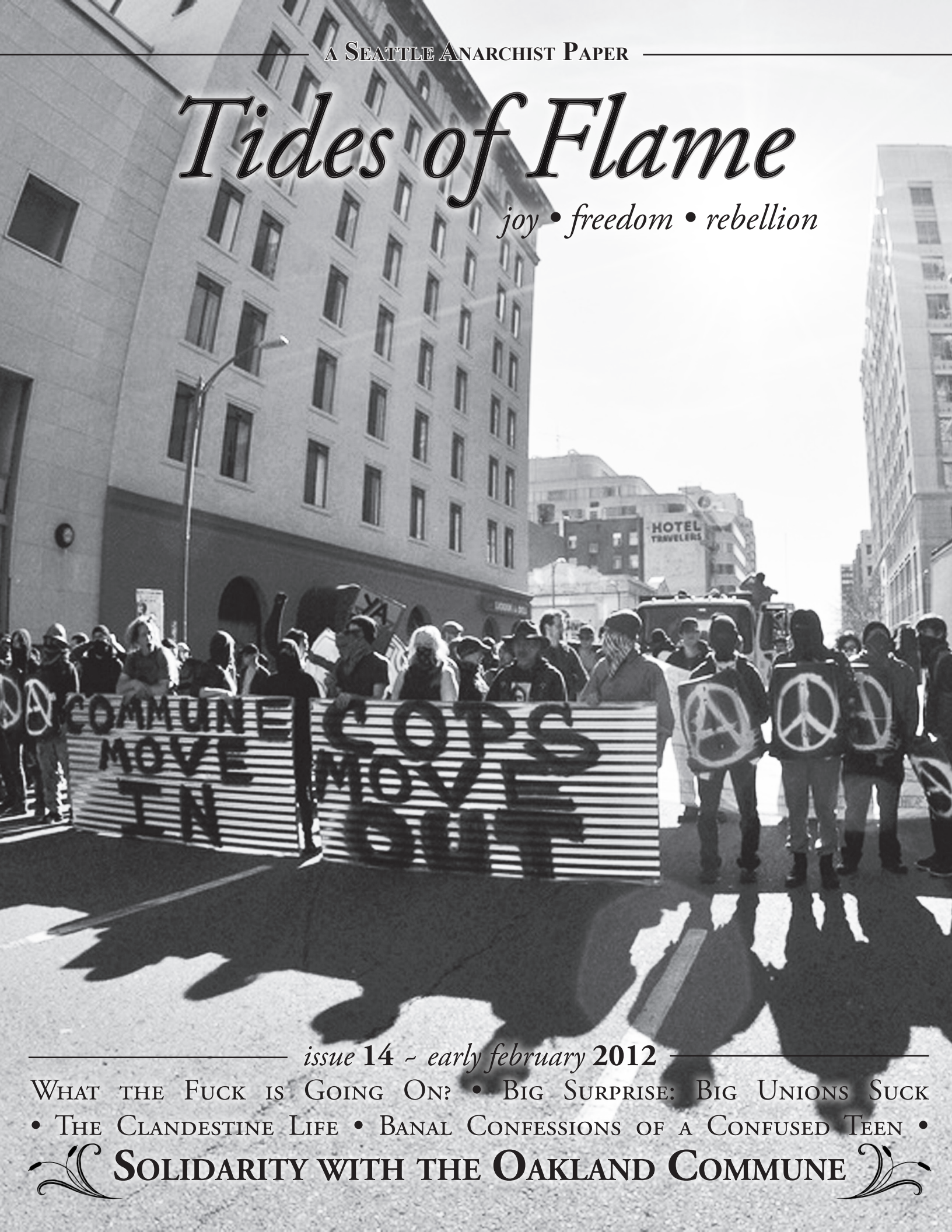


A SEATTLE ANARCHIST PAPER

Tides of Flame

joy • freedom • rebellion



issue 14 ~ early february 2012

WHAT THE FUCK IS GOING ON? • BIG SURPRISE: BIG UNIONS SUCK
• THE CLANDESTINE LIFE • BANAL CONFESSIONS OF A CONFUSED TEEN •

SOLIDARITY WITH THE OAKLAND COMMUNE

ABOUT

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

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



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

Come!

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

**This world
will explode.**

~ A. Rimbaud



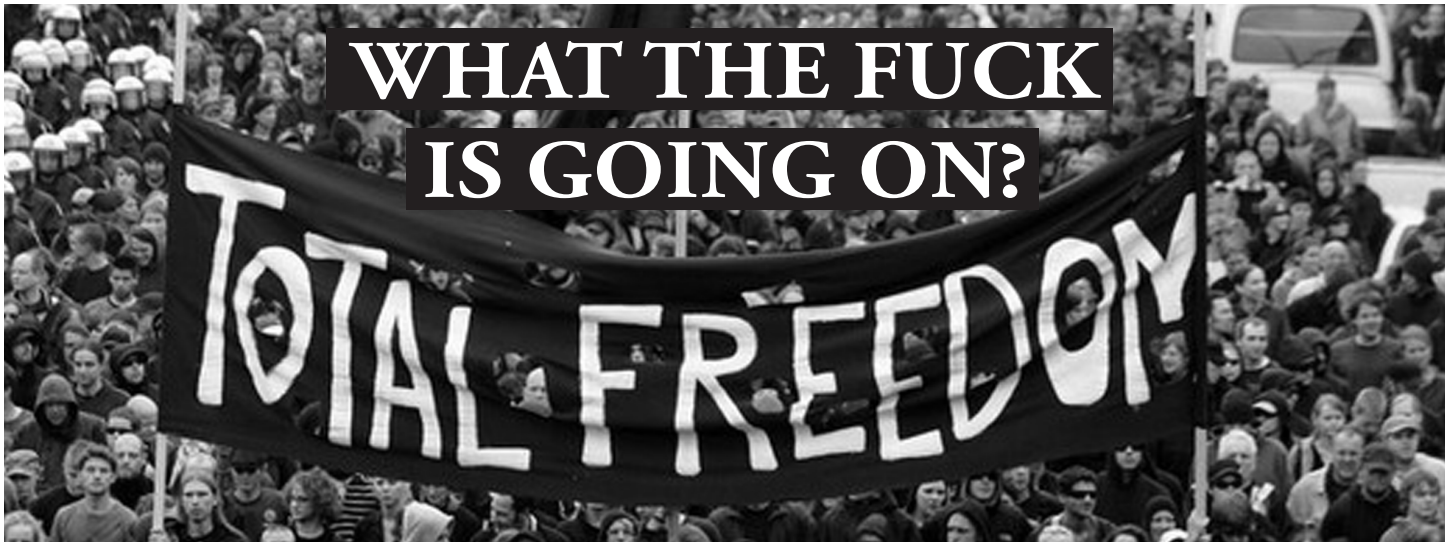
MADISON PARK - On January 28th, 2011, an attempt by Occupy Oakland to take over an abandoned building to use as a social center ended with the OPD arresting 400 people (many of them our comrades) and brutalizing even more.

On the evening of January 29th, anonymous individuals spray-painted and smashed the front window of a Wells Fargo in Madison Park. Some of the slogans written on the bank included "No Banks," "No Cops," and "Occupy Oakland." The next morning, a communique claiming the action was sent to local anarchist websites. Almost immediately after this, Dominic Holden, the relentless antagonist of Occupy Seattle, began blogging about how the vandalism was the work of anti-Occupy provocateurs. Given that he has single-handedly done a good job of publicly discrediting the efforts of Occupy Seattle, we view his constant blogging as an attempt to externalize his own hatred of the movement onto others.

Simultaneously, also on the 29th, Working Washington, a group affiliated with the SEIU and the Democratic Party, staged a series of small protests against Wells Fargo. In one instance, a Working Washington organizer dressed as Uncle Sam stood in front of Capitol Hill Wells Fargo ATM and held a sign that read "Wells Fargo: \$0 In Income Tax: Ask Me How." Unlike the anonymous vandals, this group believes that symbolic protests like this will cause Wells Fargo to reform itself and begin to do something along the lines of "serving the people." Working Washington wants the big banks to continue to exist, albeit in an

altered and more "just" form. Totally absent from their critique of Wells Fargo is the fact that, regardless of taxes paid or not paid, the bank funds the GEO Group, the private prison company that runs the Northwest Detention Center for undocumented immigrants in Tacoma. If Working Washington has its way, there will still be people awaiting deportation after being stolen from their struggling families. The only thing that will change is Wells Fargo paying more taxes to the same government that pays for these prisons.

Working Washington disassociated itself from the vandalism and condemned it, saying, "people have reason to be frustrated with Wells Fargo not paying their fair share, but vandalism is not the way to make progress in the fight for good jobs and economic justice." It is no secret that Working Washington and the SEIU support Obama and the Democratic Party. These unions and groups do not want to destroy capitalism. If they did, they would be negating their own existences as the hustlers and pimps of the exploited. Any expression of uncontrollable anger towards capitalist institutions is seen by them as a variable that will inevitably harm their efforts to organize the population of the US into a force that will re-elect Obama and win some minimal gains in the workplace. The efforts of anarchists are aimed at the destruction of the capitalist system. While petty vandalism will not accomplish this, we view it as the seedling of a strategic mindset that is far more promising than the efforts of the Democratic Party-sponsored unions. 🐦



Many of you might not know what's going on with these crazy anarchists who keep appearing, year after year, decade after decade. You still might have some not-completely-unfounded associations with anarchists and crust punks and teenagers. In fact, the entire philosophy might be a cliché to you, a childish belief system that will never work and is thus unworthy of your time. However, we are here to inform you that despite what you think, anarchism is thriving, spreading, and infecting every corner of the world. From Cairo to Tokyo to Seattle to London, anarchists are on the ground making life complicated for the capitalists, bureaucrats, and politicians and striving to bring their new worlds into being.

In Cairo, for example, the local anarchists come from every niche in Egyptian society. Some are college professors and students, others are street youths aligned with the Ultras, an anti-police, anti-authoritarian group of football hooligans. Recently, with the democratic elections underway, the Muslim Brotherhood has taken to publicly demonizing the anarchists, viewing them as a threat to religious hegemony. For the last years, anarchists have been organizing with workers and more recently they have been agitating on the streets during the rebellions that have occurred throughout 2011. Now that democracy has arrived, the Egyptian anarchists can join the rest of us in being the ultimate enemy of every group of petty tyrants

vying for power within the system (as this issue goes to print, the Ultras have helped instigate an assault against the Interior Ministry in Cairo, seeking revenge against the police for aiding rival football fans start a deadly riot at a soccer stadium. Thousands of people recently flooded Cairo to fight the police near Tahrir Square).

As we write these words, anarchists have just set off incendiary devices at a pawn shop in Athens, Greece. The Athenian anarchists have bombed and burnt down banks for decades, causing so much damage that now all of the banks in Athens have massive steel shutters over their windows and ATMs. Now, it appears some of the anarchists are attacking the petty exploiters leeching off the broke and future-less population. Greece is the country that is the worst off in the European Union, and its government has implemented austerity measures (spending cuts) to pay back its debts. These measures have been causing massive social upheaval. Politicians are randomly attacked on the streets, the police have their motorcycles burnt in front of their houses, and grocery stores have started to become routinely looted by groups of anarchists. Naturally, this food is all given away to people on the street. Greece is the future of all western nations and keeping up on events as they develop is certainly worth your time.

Down in Mexico, the anarchists are taking advantage of the police being

completely absent from some towns and cities. While the drug cartels who have taken the place of the police are in no way admirable people, they also did not care when a Mexican anarchist group burnt down a Walmart in November. Mexico City is one of the central hubs of anarchism and has several anarchist social centers within its vast body.

In Berlin, Germany, anarchists still inhabit several of the squats that have existed since the wall came down and a temporary vacuum appeared in the space between the communist East Germany and capitalist West Germany. Over the past twenty years, massive gentrification has occurred, leading to the destruction or eviction of many squats and the sterilization of once vibrant neighborhoods. The anarchists have taken to setting fire to fancy cars parked around these new developments. This fire-starting has become viral, with posters detailing how to do it being pasted on walls all over Berlin. The Berlin anarchists do not kid around when it comes to their city being invaded and cleansed.

Anarchists across the world are all working to create as much instability and doubt in the current order as possible. Some anarchists concentrate on social projects like social centers, squats (free housing), dinners, parties, plays, people's kitchens (free food), and wealth redistribution (theft/organized expropriation). Others take a different approach and choose to attack the institutions

TRANSMISSIONS

The Clandestine Life

In our previous issues we have detailed two groups that have engaged in clandestine guerrilla warfare against capitalism and the state: the George Jackson Brigade in the 1970's and the Earth Liberation Front in the late 1990's and early 2000's. We have tried to present the actions of these groups as being undertaken by normal people, not by mythical warriors. In order to make clear the type of stress and adventure that normal people undergo when living like this, we present the following text, written by a woman living the clandestine life.

It is not recommended that you catch the night train for many reasons. But if you are in a hurry it is the only train that allows you to go through the whole country in one night. It is always full of clandestine people trying to cross the border, people full of hope and desperation like me.

I resolve to catch this train because otherwise I will be obliged to spend the night in the cold or pay for a hostel. It is something past one AM when we arrive at [...]. There are few people on the train tonight and we are three or four in the compartment. As usual, two or three groups of youths get on the train and wander among the seats, clearly with shady intent. As I know the route quite well, I keep my rucksack safely between my legs, whereas my documents and money are next to my body. As I live in the street I'm quite wary. In this no smoking section there is also an old woman with parcels and suitcases well placed between the seats. She has also noticed the strange movements. An hour's journey later I realize that someone, one of the kids, sits down behind me. I'm half asleep, so I wake up and see that another one is sitting in front of me. I look at them without saying anything. The lights are off but I can guess they are looking at me too, in defiance. They must be fourteen or fifteen, but they are already adults with their short hair, their older brother's trousers and ordinary jackets and shoes. I see them getting up and going to the next coach. I take advantage of the passage of the ticket inspector and go to the toilet to have a big spliff that makes me quite stoned. It is very good grass and I have to pay attention not to let the smoke out.

'Cowards': the old woman is cursing the same kids who have tried to

threaten her. 'I'm in the street too, shit!' She looks at me disconsolately and I understand that she doesn't trust me either. The first daylight brightens up the mountains far away. Even if there is a lot of snow, it is going to be a nice day. It is early in the morning when we arrive at [...]. A group of pupils going on holiday are standing on the platform with their bags. The train starts again; a few more hours and I will be able to get out and eat something.

I hear the doors open behind me, and then I see them. There are three of them with hats, uniforms and the badge on the jacket. While the first asks the old woman for her documents, the other two point to me. There are three passengers in the carriage, and three cops. 'Good morning, passports,' they say with forced courtesy. They have just started their day's work, as I can smell coffee and cigarettes on their breath when they transmit my details to police headquarters.

I've got an upset stomach, and sweat is dripping from my chest and armpits. They stare at me for a few minutes, ask for my details then wait for a communication from the headquarters. We are going through an area full of tunnels and there are disturbances. I must keep quiet, I say to myself while looking at the landscape and trying to absorb its colors. I concentrate on the houses made of stone and their characteristic roofs. I am thinking this the last time I will be able to enjoy a landscape.

I wonder if my partner wrote to me and I also wonder how she'll know that I've been captured.

The youngest cop is not married, whereas the other two are: they have well-ironed shirts. They have given a kiss to their wives before going to work. They are hunters and I'm the prey.

When a gazelle feels the lion's teeth sinking into her neck she abandons any attempt at resistance. I'm suddenly wrapped in a strange calmness. I feel like laughing and say to myself; 'After all I knew this moment would arrive sooner or later, it was even too good but now the day of reckoning has come.' Where



will they take me? It is the first time since I left that I have been subjected to such a control.

They obviously have problems of communication with the headquarters. The youngest gives me back my document and apologizes. I look at him as though I wanted to say that they know where they can find me and that I've nothing to hide. As they go, I get up to relax and have a cigarette in the corridor. I ask myself whether I should sit down or to get off at the next stop. But the route is still long and I don't have any chance of escape. If they get an answer from the headquarters they will come

Reflections on Two Local Workers' Struggles

Undocumented Farm Workers vs. Darigold /// Longshoremen vs. EGT

On Friday, January 27th, about 150 people converged on Westlake Plaza for a rally in support of workers at Ruby Ridge dairy farm in Pasco, south-eastern Washington. This dairy farm is one of many suppliers to Darigold Inc., head-quartered here in Seattle. Ruby Ridge workers, many of whom are undocumented economic refugees, have been engaged in a long struggle against their bosses for better wages and work-



ing conditions. The rally and march was intended to put pressure on Darigold to in turn pressure Ruby Ridge to make the improvements the workers are seeking, namely access to drinking water, lunch breaks, and shorter working days.

The rally at Westlake began with speeches from dairy workers themselves, in both Spanish and English, about their experiences at the farm, as well as comments from local activists about undocumented workers' issues. Speakers stressed that the conditions at Ruby Ridge are in no way unique and that economic refugees experience abuses and super-exploitation in most workplaces.

The dairy workers present at the march had already been fired for attempting to organize and are now black-listed and unable to find work in the Pasco area.

The Ruby Ridge bosses have responded to requests for drinking water with, "Drink from the troughs where the cows drink," and have threatened workers with guns for attempting to form an organized resistance to this kind of treatment—treatment which includes instances of outright wage theft. United Farm Workers (UFW), the union formed by farm workers' movement organizers in the late 1960's, has been working to support the Ruby Ridge workers' organizing efforts. A huge problem facing these workers is their undocumented status—because they have no real legal protection they may face severe consequences for unionizing or making any waves regarding their conditions.

This is in fact what makes economic refugees appealing to bosses—their precarious legal status means that they can be paid and treated poorly, and if they complain, it is easy to cast them aside. (This, it is important to note, keeps wages low for *everyone*.) Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) presents a constant threat, and the possibility of ending up in a detention facility and getting deported is a very real danger. In essence, what the UFW is fighting for is the "right" of these workers to maintain their crucial function in the capitalist economy, albeit with more protections and safeguards against mistreatment, incarceration, and deportation. They fight for the welfare of ultra-precarious and undocumented workers, but they also fight to maintain one of the worst aspects of capitalist society: economic slavery in the form of waged farm work.

Before the rally, a police officer approached some protesters to ask them to please stay on the sidewalk since the cops "did not have the resources available to keep the march safe." This was

a pretty obvious attempt at scaring the protesters into good behavior. It didn't work. The march immediately took the streets upon leaving Westlake, effectively gumming up downtown traffic for at least a half hour. The reason for this should by now be clear: it is much harder to ignore a protest when it effects the regular flow of everyday life.

The march stopped in the middle of the street in front of the Wells Fargo tower on 2nd Ave, and a woman gave a speech about the bank's role in GEO Group, a private prison corporation that runs the Northwest Detention Center (NWDC) in Tacoma. Each year, the NWDC imprisons and "processes" thousands of immigrants who do not have the legal right to be living or working in the US. Some in the crowd wanted legal rights to be granted by the state to workers (rights that can be arbitrarily extended or revoked) while others wanted the abolition of borders and the destruction of prisons. These two poles delineate the spectrum of people present on the street that day.

The march then moved on down towards Pioneer Square, then through the International District, up Dearborn towards the Darigold headquarters on Rainier Avenue. Marchers flooded the parking lot and headed straight for the main entrance of the building. The pallid desk-jockeys inside could be seen gaping out at the crowd and scrambling around to hide. There was some confusion about whether the march intended to enter the building or not, but then the decision was made by one individual who suddenly ran towards the door and broke past the huge, very stupid-looking security guard who was attempting to hold the doors closed. A mad rush into the lobby ensued, and control of the front doors was wrestled away from the milk thug and a rabid desk jockey in a skirt-suit. Some protesters mobbed into the building, but most stayed outside.

CONTINUED ON PG. 6 ▶

My So-Called Life presents...

BANAL/CONFESSIONS/OFA/CONFUSED/TEENAGER

Am I a person?

Capitalism says no. I am your plaything. Buy me, exploit me, derail my lust for life with nonsensical material things, replace my being with your profits. I go to school seven hours a day, five days a week, forty five weeks a year, for nearly twelve years with the sole intent of becoming an active member of my "community" and achieving a high paying role in your little game of life. Rob me of my innate passion and bar me with deceit so you may prosper; long live the king!

What do I want from life, why, only the best, my sir, what can you spare me? Can I have a house? Can I have a family? Can I have stability? Can I have love? Can I be free? Yes? You'll give those to me? But at a negotiable price. It comes on a sliding scale, you see. Be my bitch and I'll grant you all the riches of the world, all the power to exploit the miserable slouches who suffer by birthright! Doesn't that sound like a dream come true? Well it was, once upon a time, but now it is our reality, yours and mine combined. Try not to flee, I'll hunt you down. You cannot escape, I am all around you, I surround you.

But what if this isn't the life for me? What if I graduate from my dark prison cell and embrace the real world, the world of adults and money and suffering and homelessness and food stamps and you cut me off? What if my degrees mean nothing to those who sit in glass castles and they simply toss me aside, deleting my nine digit identification number from their records and leaving me to check groceries in my local Safeway, drowning under the weight of my mortgage and failed expectations? Don't forget your change, sir! Here, take a dream as you leave.

I want out! Leave me a tunnel, leave me an escape route, please! This is not the life for me! I try to flee, but my total

escape requires an enraged, fiery awakening of the masses! So revolt, fellow lovers of life, revolt in your homes and workplaces and public spaces! I beg you all, see camaraderie and not authority, humanity and not slaves! However, I fear an awakening of this sort will not come soon enough.

Luckily I've been grasped and shaken, but even so, you, my precious dollar sign, have extended your tendrils around those closest to me, locking me with a guilt you created into a life I do not want. Even my dissent is synthesized by you!

My loving parents want only the best for me; they want to educate me; they want me to attend a good college; they want me to find the economic stability I grew up without; they want me to find whatever happiness I can salvage. They want me to thrive. But we lack common ground. My happiness is no longer defined by their dreams. Of course they attribute that deviation to youthful naiveté, which it may very well be—after all, I am not omniscient, but right now this passion is what drives me.

For my entire childhood I lived with the goals of my family. I wanted the Harvard education, the six figure job in a skyscraper, the golden buckets of extra money. But now, in my enlivened state, these new passions and my old dreams seem entirely incompatible. Is that a navigable schism? I assume it must be; I talked with living proof just today. But how?

I guess time will tell, as that seems to be the only constant known to existence. But until then, I thrash around in a sinking ship waiting to stamp definitive understanding on a concept with no right or wrong answer.

What will become of me? 

My So-Called Life is an irregular column detailing the misery, banality, and absurdity of everyday life in capitalist society. Submit your story! >>> tidesofflame@riseup.net

Darigold

◀ CONTINUED FROM PG. 5

Eventually, protesters lined up to create a clear pathway into the building, and a young kid, presumably the child of one of the dairy workers, delivered a huge stack of petitions to the Darigold front desk. Demonstrators chanted for the higher-ups to come down and face the people whose suffering they profit from, but of course they were too ashamed or too cowardly to show themselves.

The police, meanwhile, were moving to protect Darigold HQ, and in doing so, they once again made their role as the armed servants of capitalism very clear. At some point, someone in the crowd kicked and shattered the Darigold sign, a small action that is but a tiny glimpse of what this particular corporation—and all capitalist institutions—actually deserve.

The protesters stayed for a while, Ruby Ridge workers again shared stories, Food Not Bombs provided a wonderful meal, and later some traditional music and dance filled the parking lot with the sounds of life and laughter.

The Long View of Longview

Meanwhile, the ILWU (International Longshore and Warehouse Union) Local 21 in Longview, WA, has won a victory... of sorts... against multinational grain corporation EGT. The union's labor dispute with EGT has been resolved after threats of a mass Occupy-organized action in the small Washington port town. Labor activists and occupiers up and down the coast were mobilizing to descend on the town when a Coast Guard-escorted ship entered EGT's new terminal at the Port of Longview.

After the intervention of Governor Gregoire and rounds of negotiations, EGT finally relented and agreed to recognize the union as the bargaining representative for workers at its Longview

facility. Not coincidentally, the governor also intervened in the Tacoma teacher's strike in September 2011, hastening its conclusion and the return to normalcy. This is but one of a politician's many roles within capitalism—cutting deals between capitalists and workers, greasing the gears that grind us all down.

Many northwest anarchists were initially quite taken with the Longview ILWU, very impressed at their acts of sabotage and daring physical confrontations with the police. It was this fighting spirit, the same one we still see on the streets of Oakland, that spurred us to participate in the shutdown of the Port of Seattle on December 12. And, make no mistake, it was impending rebellion that forced EGT to make this deal. But what are the results, exactly, and what does this “deal” mean for the great, dangerous potential harnessed within us as enemies of capital? We were excited at the prospect of the mass action, at the potential break with business as usual, at the potential of a rupture, a breaking away from the role of “workers” into the role of “insurgents.” Unfortunately, with this new deal between the union and EGT, it seems that business as usual reigns... *as usual*.



We prefer our ports occupied.

Oakland
11/2/11

...we are committed to developing a long-term relationship with EGT—one that benefits the community, establishes local union jobs for years to come, and contributes to the stability of the Pacific Northwest grain export industry.

- ILWU International President
Robert McEllrath

For unions there was never a question of either evolution or revolution, still less of socialism. Unions go no further than attempting to obtain, for the exploited worker, conditions of labor which are less intolerable and less humiliating, but also, as time has demonstrated, more profitable for capital.

- Unions Against Revolution,
G. Munnis, J. Zerzan

This recent episode brings up a lot of questions for anarchists looking to act in solidarity with rebellious workers. If one is fundamentally opposed to work and to capitalism, how does one effectively interact with struggles whose end-goals appear as only slightly improved versions of today's sickening reality? To those of us who dream of a completely different world, it matters little which union works at this or that port terminal—*our dreams do not fit in shipping containers*. We are certain that there are some longshoremen out there who also want something more, who hate working for corporations like EGT, and who want to see the destruction of industrial agriculture, global capitalism, and the transnational exploitation of economic refugees.

We recognize the importance of workers coming together to fight the boss and take much inspiration from the Longview longshoremen and the Ruby Ridge dairy workers. We see elements of our own struggle in theirs. We only hope that we can contribute to a longer view of our shared fight against capital and the state and that those who are not satisfied with one step towards dignity will keep running with us towards a world where there are no wage slaves or bosses, no nations or borders. 🌀

What The Fuck?

◀ CONTINUED FROM PG. 3

of the reigning order. These anarchists blow up police cars, burn down banks, sabotage train systems, build burning barricades on main roads, destroy tax offices, torch government offices, and other assorted mayhem. While some may try to say there are good anarchists and bad anarchists, there is only a difference of methods; the intention and objectives are the same: the destruction of the capitalist world system and the establishment of anarchist areas where there is no law, no hierarchy, and no control.

Needless to say, there are many types of anarchists as there are people. Some anarchists adopt a consistent style of dress (usually hip, punk, or gothic), while other anarchists blend into the background and are indistinguishable from the anonymous crowds walking down the sidewalk. Regardless of how they dress, the only way to know if someone is an anarchist is to talk to them and find out.

If anarchism were a religion it would be pantheistic, but it is not a religion. If it were a religion, its leading figures would be contradictory, erratic, and seemingly mad people. There is no possible way to force anarchism to be a religion. The most minimal scrutiny is all that would be necessary to demolish any attempted worship of a particular anarchist or their creed. Anarchism is rich and varied, containing a multitude of ideas and concepts. Anarchists fought for birth control before anyone else. Anarchists invented the car bomb. Anarchists were the first to fight fascism in the 1930's before the rest of the world realized they had left Europe to the rising horror of Naziism. And behind all of these events were people like Emma Goldman, Mario Buda, and Buenaventura Durruti. A cursory examination of these people will allow you to see that they had little in common aside from their firm belief in total freedom and the power of people like you to band together, reclaim their lives, and remake their worlds. 🌀

Clandestine

◀ CONTINUED FROM PG. 4

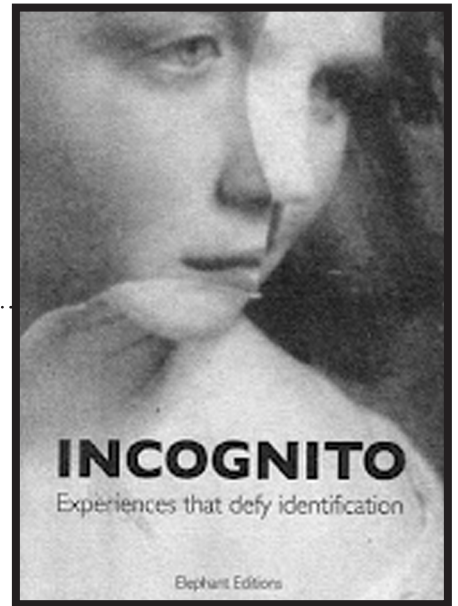
back to me. I think of the possibilities that are left open to me: pull the emergency brake and jump out of the train, lock myself in the toilet and destroy anything compromising that I have on me.

The old woman was looking at me suspiciously when the cops were trying to identify me, and saw how nervous I was afterwards. When we arrive at [...], the old woman gets ready to leave the train with all her luggage. I offer her my help but she firmly refuses, while I notice with great relief that the cops are getting out too. I will be at the border in a few hours.

I resolve to not think to think about what to do next; I've got the entire day to do that.

There are no cops at the station but I prefer to take a walk. I eat a sandwich and look at the sea and its waves in front of me. The weather is fine here. I enjoy the last spliff I have. It tastes so sweet, like freedom. 🐦

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*This narrative is taken from the book **Incognito: Experiences that defy identification.** It is available online from *Elephant Editions* >>> digitalelephant.blogspot.com*



It is hard to remember now,
the city-noise powdered and dull,
the bright night that lit us up
raw and pink and shrieking.
We were shining animal-children again.

Now it has melted away to reveal
the shit and cement underneath.
It has sunken into the streets and
gone downhill
like the last days of childhood
we rushed to escape
only to miss so bitterly, later on.

As always, there were those who wished
the snow would fall and fall forever,
stalling and stilling the whole world—
And those who itched and ticked,
thinking only of the danger
and of all the hours lost.

If it had stuck
we would have lit so many fires,
moved closer together to share our heat,
and taken to sliding faster and faster
headfirst and wild
into the cold, low unknown.

*pugetsoundanarchists.org
anarchistinternational.org
anarchistnews.org*

*theanarchistlibrary.org
continualwar.wordpress.com
waronsociety.noblogs.org*