

FIREWORKS

A BAY AREA
ANARCHIST
NEWS MAGAZINE



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LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

As spring breaks in the Bay, *FireWorks* launches our third issue. Across the region, we see a relentless attack on the vast majority of the population as wages and benefits are slashed, people are foreclosed on, evicted, and entire neighborhoods are changed overnight. Places that once fostered resistance are now paved over in favor of the interests of developers and speculators. Workers see their wages fall as their unions, if they have them, make sweet heart deals with their bosses and many are forced into working several jobs just to survive. Homeless people find their camps broken up and evicted to make way for the more affluent. In communities of color that for decades have been bombarded and attacked by everything from government repression to housing discrimination – the situation continues to worsen. From San Francisco to Albany, we see an economic social war being waged. The end result: wealth and power being accumulated in fewer and fewer hands.

But with such inequality – comes resistance. Responding with riots, strikes, and occupations, people in the bay area are fighting back. The State's attempt to stifle dissent effects not only marches and pro-

tests, but also takes the form of near daily police shootings, checkpoints, raids on immigrant workers, and gang injunctions. In Oakland, the elites have attempted to crystallize such a project of counter-insurgency by building a central hub to monitor the entire city, filter social media, and track peoples' movements; the Domain Awareness Center (DAC). In this highly digitized age, it is important to explore different forms of spreading counter information .

In this issue we take a closer look at surveillance and the tech-fueled displacement in the Bay. Here you will find news about recent anti-capitalist and anti-tech actions, an anarchist analysis of the DAC and cuts to Food Stamp benefits, various interviews with comrades, artwork, and a special insert called *FireWorks Inside*, inspired by the 2013 prison hunger strike, featuring content dedicated to prisoners and the fight to destroy their cages. We aim to create a forum in which people can continue to strengthen their affinities with each other, as well as heighten hostilities towards a world that seeks to exploit and dominate every aspect of our lives.



TIMELINE OF

Transit General Strike Held Back by Bureaucrats and Government

The summer and fall 2013 BART strikes showed the power of workers on strike – but it also showed the ability of the union bureaucracy to contain action. Both BART and AC Transit workers contracts end at the same time and many workers were excited by the possibility of a joint strike. With the Port of Oakland Truckers and city workers going out around the same time, a new wave of labor unrest seemed poised to take the bosses head on.

However, the union leaders were quick to kill militancy by creating a wedge between workers and Occupy. This strategy was an attempt to keep the strike from spreading to wider sections of society. The unions did nothing to bring up concerns of riders over fares, police brutality, and service cuts. The union is a police force of the workers, not a vehicle of struggle against their conditions.

The BART strike also showed the inside role of the government, which put strike freezes upon both BART and AC. With the help of the corporate media, soon public opinion had turned against the strike. At a time of unparalleled class anger at the rich, workers lost a huge opportunity as the union leaders refused to connect with other poor and working people. Now, many politicians are calling for bans on transit strikes while both BART and AC workers have now accepted concessionary contracts.

While the role of the unions and the government is clear, so is the task of workers who want to fight to win as well as others who want to expand struggles beyond one workplace or industry.

We need to hold mass meetings to plan actions and coordinate strikes. Both transit workers and riders need to fight and struggle together, demanding free transit for all and an end to the brutality of BART police. In doing so, these struggles will come up against the power of the government, the union apparatus, and the media which will try and demonize any sort of direct action as the work of ‘outside agitators.’ Workers, let’s throw the bosses under the bus!

October 2nd, 50-75 people gathered at the Albany Bulb to participate in a general assembly to plan actions to defend the Bulb from eviction and stage a solidarity camp-out. The Albany Bulb is a former landfill which has been squatted since the 1990’s. It is also home to various art, statues, graffiti, and structures.

October 5th, a small group of protesters demonstrate outside of Robert Cheasty’s home in Albany against his backing of the Albany Bulb eviction. Cheasty is the former Mayor of Albany.

October 7th, people march from the Albany City Council to Solano Ave where they stage a one night camp-out on the street against the eviction of the Albany Bulb.

October 8th, the Sierra Culb of Berkeley, one of the groups backing the eviction of the Albany Bulb, is vandalized with slogans against the eviction.

October 8th, BART workers and their supporters marched through the streets as they fought against government attempts to stop a second BART strike and against the firing of strike Captain George Figueroa.

October 9th, about a dozen protesters carrying hand-drawn signs were locked out of the MacDonal Avenue Wells Fargo bank branch in Richmond as demonstrators protested in support for Genny Zentella, a San Pablo resident who is facing foreclosure.

October 10th, Homes Not Jails (SF) hangs

SQUAT MANSION AT THE ALBANY BULB





ANTAGONISM

banners throughout the city on a day of action to call attention to homelessness.

October 10th, "...a few days ago, we repainted a billboard as a message of solidarity to those avoiding subpoenas for the grand jury in the northwest and to the person currently imprisoned for refusing to cooperate with the grand jury in NYC." For more information on Grand Jury Resistance: saynothing.noblogs.org.

October 11th, protest outside of the Sierra Club office against eviction of Albany Bulb.

October 13th, 30 homeless youth living in Golden Gate Park participated in a loud rally outside of the Ranger Patrol Unit headquarters over claims of abuse against homeless.

October 17th, a group of young, undocumented immigrant activists temporarily halted a deportation bus from leaving downtown San Francisco.

October 19th, several hundred people marched through the Mission District for a day of action called by 'Our Mission, No Eviction.'

October 19th, BART workers went back on strike. At the Port of Oakland, BART workers picketed and successfully blocked a BART facility and the picket was honored by the ILWU workers.

October 21st, members of the Port of Oakland Trucker Association, as well as a large contingent of supporters from Occupy Oakland and various labor unions participated in successfully shutting down the SSA terminal and held a dawn picket at several bays of the Port of Oakland. In August, independent truck drivers that work at the port of Oakland took part in a work stop-

page that cost the bosses millions of dollars. The strike centered around poor conditions, rising fees, low wages, abuse from management, and lack of access of bathrooms and other basic necessities.

October 23rd, in San Francisco, around 20 or so students and their mentors marched on the Board of Education to demand a stop of suspensions over willful defiance, which largely target youth of color.

October 22nd, on the same day as large police brutality protests across the US, Andy Lopez, a 13 year old Latino boy was killed after being stopped by a Sonoma County Sheriff, Erick Gelhaus. Lopez was carrying a toy gun at the time. Erick Gelhaus was also a firearms instructor with a history of pulling his gun on community members, links to racist gun groups, and has written in firearms magazines "how officers must respond to justify shooting a child with a toy gun," a recent lawsuit alleged.

Marches and protests began quickly and have been ongoing for several months. Many of the marches were organized by young people and high school students who knew Andy. By late October, the marches had grown to 1,000 people, shutting down large parts of Santa Rosa. By November, members of Lopez family and his supporters were calling for charges to be brought against Gelhaus as police attempted to come down hard on youth by making arrests at self-organized protests.

In early December, supporters of Lopez numbering about 100 marched from City Hall to the County Jail where children ages 4-10, according to mainstream news, broke out the windows of the jail's main lobby. One person was arrested and soon the group marched to Sheriff's main office. Protests continue. Check fireworksbayarea.com for further details.

October 25th, on the second anniversary

of the raid on the Occupy Oakland camp, people gathered to protest the Urban Shield Conference which brought together police agencies and departments to train and try out new tactical gear and weapons. Protesters organized a counter-rally as well as a "Pedal Against the Pigs" bike ride.

October 27th, machinists at the Ford Store in San Leandro went on strike against wage freezes and attacks on benefits.

November 2nd, in the Mission District, many people formed a large contingent against evictions and gentrification within the larger annual 'Day of the Dead' procession.

November 11th, people gathered outside of Twitter's headquarters in San Francisco on the first day of its stock being traded on the NYSE to protest the connection between the tech industry and rising rents and evictions.

November 14th, the Port of Oakland Truckers Association held a noise demonstration outside of Oakland City Hall with dozens of truckers encircling city hall while honking their rigs.



PORT TRUCKER KIDS SHOUT
DOWN COPS GIVING TICKETS AT
NOISE DEMO

SQUAT DEFENSE IN OAKLAND



November 18th, family and friends of D'Paris Williams protested outside of the Valencia Police Station in San Francisco after Williams was brutally attacked by police near the 24th and Mission BART plaza while walking home. Williams was found armed with only juice and a cupcake.

November 18th, in Albany, rock barricades were erected on two of the main roads used by police to enter the Albany Bulb in an effort to prevent the eviction of the space. The action took place after a march through the streets of Albany.

November 20th, thousands of patient-care, graduate student instructors, and service workers staged a one-day unfair labor practices strike across the University of California system.

November 27th, in their third work stoppage of 2013, Oakland Port Truckers and their allies fought to maintain a roaming blockade to shut down the Oakland Port despite Oakland Police Department repeatedly moving the picket line with force.

November 27th, "in the early hours... "Smash Kono" was spraypainted on the windows of the Kono Office at Telegraph and 27th. The other windows were then smashed with a hammer and the door was broken.

This office bears partial responsibility for the ongoing gentrification of West Oakland along Telegraph Ave. They openly facilitate "development" in a historically working class community, causing the vile symptoms of rent raises, high-rise condos, coffee shops and all the useless yuppies that come with."

November 28th, over 3,500 people gathered on Alcatraz island to celebrate and remember the historic occupation by Native militants from 1969 to 1971.

November 28th, residents and supporters organized a 'Festival of Resistance' at the Albany Bulb which included a camp-out, film-showings, work-shops, general assemblies, and large shared meals. Osha Neumann and Amber Whitson also led art and history tours of the Bulb.

November 28th, East Oakland residents gathered outside of the Neptune Society to protest the planned construction of a crematorium which they stated would harmfully affect people in the surrounding neighborhoods.

December 5th, fast food workers at the Oakland McDonald's near Civic Center went on strike and were joined by other fast food workers and labor supporters.

December 10th, residents and supporters at the Albany Bulb fought back against the eviction and destruction of several people's homes. Bulb defenders managed to turn back several city work trucks and police cars.

December 14th, in East Oakland, about 100 people rallied and marched against the murder of a teenage woman, Renisha McBride, who was shot and killed in a white neighborhood when she asked for help after having been in a car accident.

December 17th, anti-techie graffiti is found throughout the Mission District in San Francisco.

December 22nd, local Oakland squatters rallied in support of the Rota Flora squat in Germany which is facing eviction

December 31st, people marched on the Glenn Dryer County Jail in Oakland to make some noise for those locked inside and also shot off fireworks. This was the third annual New Years Eve march for prisoners in Oakland. Like minded rebels took to the streets in Los Angeles, Omaha, New York City, Seattle, and elsewhere.

January 1st, people gathered at the Fruitvale BART station to remember the life of Oscar Grant, killed by a BART police officer on New Years Day in 2009.

January 1st, in the Mission District of San Francisco, protesters marched against

the "Clean Up the Plaza" campaign, a push by business owners to remove homeless people from the plaza as condos are being built throughout the neighborhood. Marchers chanted, "Cops and Condos go Hand in Hand!"

January 1st, a business in the SF Mission District that refused service to a Latina woman and her family was attacked. The communiqué reads: "We hope the owner feels a bit of the humiliation he inflicted on Sandra and her family."

January 17th, opponents of the Albany Bulb eviction held a march and campout along Solano Ave in Albany, close to the law office of Robert Cheasty.

January 17th, a solidarity rally is held in San Francisco with the South Korean general strike being carried out by workers.

January 24th, family members of Antonio Mestas, who was shot and killed by CHP officers in East Oakland on January 14th, gathered at an Oakland park to share food and raise money for funeral costs.

January 26th, "...[o]ver the weekend, vandals defaced the California Highway Patrol station in north Oakland. This occurred out of rage against the police, especially after CHP officers murdered two people in separate incidents last week in east Oakland. In a town once known for rioting against killer cops, this action is a humble response. FUCK THE POLICE!"

Late January - Early February, the direct action based group, East Bay Solidarity Network continues its work with West Oakland tenants who are battling a slumlord that re-



fuses to make repairs, take out black mold, deal with bed bugs, and readily sexually harasses female tenants. Members and tenants have filled various complaints against the landlord and also dropped a banner from the side of the building reading, "Slumlord."

February 1st, rally at 16th and Mission BART plaza by a variety of groups and residents angry over plans to build condos in the area.

February 4th, after the Oakland City Council again delays the vote on the Domain Awareness Center, a group of around 50 people gathered outside take to the streets, march on the jail to make noise for those inside, and hold the streets for about an hour.

February 7th, West Oakland billboard remade with anti-police slogans.

February 8th, "...In the early hours of February 8th, the glass door of an OPD office in Fruitvale was shattered. Joy in our hearts at seeing the symbols of authority smashed, we fled into the darkness under cover of rain."

February 11th, dozens of people gathered throughout the day to hold off the eviction of a group of residents by police. A report-back on the action stated: "Unfurling a banner that read, 'They Can't Evict Us All,' people brought food and coffee to share with residents and other supporters... Radicals and activists mingled with the residents and their friends who had come to support them. Sheriffs drove by during the day, but made no action to evict the house. The racialized nature of these events is unavoidable. The family living at 625 is the last black family on the block."

February 12th, in Berkeley people marched through the streets and disrupted a Police Review Board meeting in memory of Kayla Moore, a black trans-woman who was killed by police a year ago. A report read: "The meeting was stormed by participants in the angry march as they shouted 'Cops! Pigs! Murderers!'" and took over the hearing to speak about Kayla's murder and the review board's inaction in investigation."

February 13th, several people are arrested in Downtown Oakland at the State building demanding that California's Attorney General prosecute killer cops.

February 13th, after marching through UC Berkeley against UC President Janet Napolitano, former governor of Arizona and Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, students took over Blum Hall on Campus. About 11 students stayed in the building for about a day, with about 40 supporters keeping watch outside. Students issued a statement as to why they were taking over the hall which can be found at www.fireworksbayarea.com.

February 22nd, at McClymonds High School, both the Mayor and Oakland Police Chief Sean Whent were disrupted during the first in a series of forums on 'public safety' by people screaming, "We Don't Need More Police!"

February 22nd, "...dozens of opponents to the increasing surveillance and policing of Oakland gathered in DeFremery Park. After a speaker, detailing the plans for the DAC, a group took the street with a banner declaring "No Cameras In Our Community." At one point, a police cruiser that was monitor-

ing the march was run upon by a youth in a mask who threw a flare at the vehicle and quickly departed.

February 25th, in San Francisco, union members and community supporters held a solidarity rally at the Korean consulate with workers on general strike.

February 26th, members of Eviction Free SF marched on a landlord's office who uses the Ellis Act to remove tenants.

February 27th, in East Palo Alto, protestors marched and blocked traffic to demand reform to immigration laws.

February 28th, in Atherton (near Palo Alto), one of the richest cities in California, police investigated a string of graffiti reading "Fuck the 1%." Police stated they were contacting the FBI to see if there was any connection with the Occupy Movement. Atherton is the home of Google CEO Eric Schmidt.

February 28th, "...the windows of Vanguard Properties in the Mission were smashed out. Vanguard thought it was pretty funny to build some luxury condos..., but we thought it was more funny for their property to get smashed. Vanguard thought it was pretty funny to buy foreclosed houses in Oakland and flip them at a profit. We think its more funny to bring the fight to the developers themselves." A group calling itself Brigada Anti-Gentrification took credit for the action on IndyBay.org.



PEOPLE TAKE TO THE STREETS AGAINST THE DAC

THE ANARCHIST CASE AGAINST THE DOMAIN AWARENESS CENTER



The project of the Domain Awareness Center (DAC) is as simple as it is ominous; a completely surveilled city and population. It is a sign of what is coming for all of us. If constructed, it will act as a center for collecting and correlating electronic information across Oakland on people that live there. It will record and document where people travel via their car license plates, facial recognition technology, listening devices, as well as filter and monitor social media in one central location. It is no wonder that Oakland has been chosen to be the testing ground for such a project as Oakland is racially diverse, has extreme pockets of poverty, and in the past several years has been the site of mass riots, strikes, and occupations. A variety of social struggles and spaces have flourished here. Government surveillance and repression, from the COINTELPRO program that targeted groups like the Black Panther Party to the bombing of Earth First! activist Judi Bari, is nothing new. And, as we will show, it is something that is continuing and will proliferate with or without the DAC.

But repression is not simply something that is dished out only against revolutionaries or activists. From ICE deportations, raids on public housing in West Oakland, a network of informants in Muslim communities, to gang injunctions that help facilitate gentrification, repression by the State is as much a means of counter-insurgency as it is a way to uphold the white supremacist nature of modern American capitalism. It is a project that attempts to keep resistance from brewing to begin with as well as being a conscious waging of social war against communities that could or have represented a threat to the power structure.

Against a backdrop of almost daily revelations of spying by the federal government in which the emails, text messages, social media, and phone calls of millions of Americans are being logged and cross-referenced by the State, many people simply fade into a state of shock or indifference. Like climate change or a variety of other seemingly catastrophic problems brought on by capitalism, many people believe that they can do nothing. Others simply continue to place their faith in the democratic process and

on “holding the politicians accountable.” Surveillance is not caused by a lack of government oversight; surveillance is about social control and managing dissent. It is no surprise then that in leaked emails many officials speak nothing of stopping crime and everything about the DAC monitoring and containing protest. For anarchists, at the heart of the struggle against surveillance lies a struggle against the State itself.

The DAC has come to Oakland because of the continued power of social struggles and individuals to disrupt capitalist society and a growing desire to confront the power of the State in everyday life. From BART strikers costing the bosses millions of dollars a day, to youth of color rioting against another racist murder in the downtown, more and more the State sees the entire population as potential insurgents.

Battlefield Oakland

Police and federal agencies have many tools at their disposal for disrupting revolutionary movements and conducting surveillance. They make extensive use of technology including wiretaps, the ability to read emails, and GPS tracking. They also have an extensive network of informants and embedded police agents in a variety of struggles and political groups. Since the birth of the Occupy Movement, the State has targeted revolutionary groups with a new-found zeal as well as expanding previous networks such as those among Muslim Americans.

As the Lighthouse Mosque of Oakland wrote in a recent piece against the DAC, “From Oakland to New York City the Muslim community has been spied on whole scale, we have had infiltrators and informants in our mosques, we have been singled out at political protests and we have even had people in our community entrapped by the FBI.” The Mosque goes on to mention, “... Our members have been racially, religiously, and politically profiled and targeted during protests, such as the case of the Trayvon 2 and Harun Aرسالai, who was pulled out of a crowded street at Occupy Oakland when he was wearing a headband with Arabic writing on it.” According to a recent *Mother Jones* article, “After years of emphasizing

informant recruiting as a key task for its agents, the bureau now maintains a roster of 15,000 spies—many of them tasked...with infiltrating Muslim communities in the United States. In addition, for every informant officially listed in the bureau’s records, there are as many as three unofficial ones, according to one former high-level FBI official, known in bureau parlance as “hip pockets.””

For revolutionaries that fought and died during the COINTELPRO era of the 60s and 70s as well as the Muslim people who now face years in prison or worse, the repression that has been dished out against anarchists, squatters, and those with the Occupy Movement cannot be compared because it is nowhere near on the same level. However, we can see that police and federal agents are taking notice of radical currents and targeting them for disruption and harassment. For instance, in the past several months local police departments have used the *FireWorks* website as a tool and a pretext to shut down two anarchist events in the East Bay. Several weeks ago, police arrived at a squat in Oakland with a letter that demanded that the event planned for the night be shut down. They stated that they heard about the event through *FireWorks* and they would arrest people if the event was not canceled. Several months before, police sent another letter to a landlord of a space in Emeryville that included a copy of an event description directly from the *FireWorks* website, and stated that the event did not have the proper permits and needed to be canceled. Either directed by those higher up to target these events or on their own volition, it is clear that police are watching anarchists much more closely.

In Oakland, we still do not know much about the level of infiltration of the Occupy Movement because the FBI refuses to release the information. According to the ACLU who has requested documents about FBI monitoring of the movement in Oakland, the FBI refuses because it wants

to protect confidential informants. What we do know, according to documents that have been released by the FBI, is that it was chiefly concerned about disruptions to the Oakland Airport and the Port of Oakland. And, it is the Port of Oakland to where the idea of the DAC was born – and where it may first find its home.

In regards to informants within social struggles, again from ‘...And Now They’re Coming for You’ wrote: “The current wave of struggle in the Bay began three and a half years ago, and almost immediately evidence of informants was apparent. At the height of the Oscar Grant movement we learned that the FBI expressed a great deal of interest in the anarchist tendency in the Bay. It was uncovered that someone was feeding information about anarchist participation in the uprising to law enforcement. It was suspected that this source was close to or within the anarchist movement.” We can be sure that there are informants among us, trading money for information and also attempting to entrap people in various crimes.

The DAC must be stopped, but not simply because it is based on the violation of the rights of Americans, or that it does nothing to stop crime, or that its stated basis for existence is the monitoring of political activity – but because it is the continuation of the project of control and domination. The reason that we must oppose the DAC is the same reason we must destroy the State.

From a Struggle against Surveillance to a Struggle against the State

It is clear that the pressure put on the city council has managed to shift the local dialogue around the DAC from one of indifference to generalized anger against surveillance. But many contend that what is needed to win, i.e. defeat the DAC, is simply to “hold politicians accountable.” The problem with such a strategy is that it won’t work. Counter-insurgency as well as the build-up of surveillance technologies has been something that has been growing in the US since the 1970s as a response to mass unrest. It is an intrinsic part of the State. As class struggle has declined, (as thus channeled into “democratic” means), so has the State been free to evolve without direct opposition. Again from A Murder of Crows, “...following the upheavals of the 1960s and 1970s, the state switched to a strategy of permanent repression, or...counter-insurgency. Learning from their past failures, the police developed a preemptive model of repression which sought to prevent insurgency before

it happened.” The militarization and growth of surveillance technology is not caused by a lack of democratic accountability but by the desire of the State to contain the population. This drive will not be defeated without destroying the State. The answer to repression is quite simply – more resistance.

Even if the DAC is defeated in the halls of the Oakland City Council, or more realistically it is simply set up first at the Port, (before expanding out from there later), many of the things that it would have carried out will continue to proliferate within American society. As we now know, government monitoring of electronic communication and social media is widespread. Fusion centers across the US coordinate between federal officers and local police departments. Informants exist throughout the country in a variety of social settings. More public and private places come under the watch of surveillance cameras every day. And of course, all of these technologies are at the finger tips of every FBI agent, police officer, and DHS bureaucrat.

REPRESSION BY THE STATE IS AS MUCH A MEANS OF COUNTER-INSURGENCY AS IT IS A WAY TO UPHOLD THE WHITE SUPREMACIST NATURE OF CAPITALISM.

The struggle against the DAC is important, make no mistake. It is an opportunity to create dialogue and action around a very real and visible aspect of American repression with everyday people. But the quality of that dialogue and action is also important. We must fight against the DAC with the understanding that even if it is defeated many of its most egregious aspects are already spreading across the social terrain. Instead of seeing our project as one of education and holding politicians “accountable,” we should see our role as making the situation ungovernable. We will not allow those in power to build the DAC. We will physically organize among each other to remove surveillance technologies from our neighborhoods, workplaces, and very lives. And, we will also give material support to communities, groups, and individuals facing repression from the State. This strategy means picketing a workplace to get a comrade their job back, raising funds to fund lawyers and showing up in court to support the Trayvon 2, and organizing against police terror, gang

injunctions, ICE raids, and prisons.

In many ways, a city council meeting is a microcosm of the larger society. The vast majority of us sit below. We who work, who are policed, who are watched, or are talked down to and given orders. Watching us with guns and batons in hand, are the police, shooting us at first with their video cameras and later with the tasers and guns if needed. Giving them orders and directing them are the city council members who claim they “represent” us. But our real power lies in being able to organize together, horizontally, not upwards in a hierarchy. Our power lies in our ability to refuse our roles as citizens and workers; to strike and to disobey. The power of authority – the State, comes from the top of the hierarchy and is the amount of violence it can wield against us. The power of anarchy – an organized base with no hierarchy, comes instead from the ability of those below to topple those above.

It is not coincidence that the social struggles and movements which have frightened the State so much, from the dual power of the community programs of the Black Panther Party to the communal solidarity of the Occupy Oakland camp which also led to a reduction in crime – are all part of the reason that the DAC is coming to Oakland. The DAC has nothing to do with keeping us safe. It has nothing to do with making us free. Thus, our response to the DAC should not be to look within the State structure for reform and “accountability.” Instead, we need to push our subversive and revolutionary associations which have scared the State so much to their logical conclusion: social revolution.

We do a disservice to the Ohlone people on whose land we stand, to those who were assassinated and murdered under COINTELPRO, and all our comrades and all those locked in prison, jail, facing deportation, or in detention facilities by pretending that this government can ever be “accountable.” It will never be and it never has. At its core, the struggle around the DAC shows a powerful elite that is afraid. Despite their vast armies and their squadrons of police, they know that their empire is built upon a shoddy foundation. They may have forced tens of thousands into ghettos and thrown millions more into prisons, but these people may also link up, organize, and fight back. They may force all of us to reproduce this society day after day, but at any point we may instead tear up the concrete and rediscover our relationship with the land. They are afraid – of what we may become together. The growth of the surveillance State is only a testament to fear.

TWAT TAKES ON OAKLAND'S SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS

ANTI-SURVEILLANCE ACTIONS IN THE BAY AGAINST THE DAC

REPRINTED FROM WWW.INDYBAY.ORG

December 6th

In the early morning hours of December 6th, paint bombs sailed into a camera tower protecting the gentrification condos on 36th and Adeline St. in Oakland, CA. Pink paint splattered onto the instruments of surveillance, and the bandits left a cryptic tag before disappearing into the night.

As women moving through this society, we find ourselves constantly under the male gaze. Strangers evaluate our bodies everyday. Our images are taken, altered, and force-fed back to us everywhere we look. Men in government and business further invade our lives with surveillance cameras whenever we dare to move out of the domestic sphere and into public space. Our autonomy is being leeched from us. Security is terror.

As anarchists, we recognize increasing surveillance as an attempt to suppress dissent. The imminent creation of the Domain Awareness Center - a public-sponsored, privately run entity that aims to integrate all surveillance footage in Oakland - exposes the complete and total enmeshment of state and corporate interests. With the DAC, there will no longer be any "private" cameras. All images will be aggregated, and mined for information. This means that everything is fair game.

As Oakland anarchist women, we're sick of the machismo and militant posturing combined with little concrete action to back it up. We're sick of proving our competence and radicalism enacting an agenda written by anarchist men. It's time to go back to basics. It's time to remember who our enemies are.

To the state we say nothing.

To all those fighting the DAC, who have seen their pleas at city hall fall on deaf ears, we issue an invitation to join us in taking the next logical step.

To all the radical women and transfolks fighting for space and respect, stop relying on men to validate you. They don't own militancy. Get with a few badass ladies and git'er done. It's way funner. We promise.

And to all the insurrectionary dudes negating from their armchairs, we issue a challenge. Form a Camover team and come get it. We will whoop your fucking ass.

Give the State Pink Eye.

Much love from the

Technophobic.

Women's.

Action.

Team.

February 14th

Cupid took a couple minutes from his busy schedule tonight to stop by West Oakland and erect a monument of OPD's love for surveillance and the Domain Awareness Center.

Early this night a purple heart, red tinsel and balloon were hung from one of West Oakland's many surveillance cameras. A sign reading "OPD <3s DAC", CAMOVER pamphlets and further glittery bullshit was fixed to the supporting lamp pole. This display was erected as a monument to Oakland Police Department's love affair with the Domain Awareness Center.

March 4th

Geysers of pink paint accompanied by hushed giggles erupted at two separate locations in Oakland. Tragically, three traffic cameras were rendered inoperational by the petrochemical gunk.

When we see the site of the new Domain Awareness Center - a public-sponsored, privately run entity that aims to integrate all surveillance footage in Oakland - we see the machinery of gentrification. Gentrifica-

tion is not an accident that happens because single moms, queers, and punks rent where they can afford. It is a deliberate process engineered by business interests and city policies. DAC and the gentrification process are both based on control of public space that threatens to destroy the beautiful, vital, and often messy Oakland that we know and love. The first targets and the other squeezes out people of color, the poor, the marginalized, and the subversive.

Unfortunately, we didn't win in any sense at the city council meeting on March 4th. Funding has been approved for the spycenter. Although there was some posturing that the center will only affect the port, once the DAC is built and funded it can be used for data from pretty much anywhere, and Quan has indicated that she will seek to add more systems to the DAC "one at a time" in the future.

Honestly, victory wasn't even theoretically on the table, as "Phase One" of the DAC has already been approved, and phase one includes the integration of city traffic cameras.

There is now no legal avenue to even pretend to fight the capture, aggregation, and analysis of our images and personal information.

We believe that there is still hope yet. The government of our fair city and its police department have proven themselves to be rather inept, no matter what toys they are given by the feds.

There are only forty or so of these traffic cameras. The city of Oakland has a limited budget allocated for this project. We can nullify the DAC.

We invite you to join us on a grand adventure. Get together with one, two, or three of your closest friends.

Stay calm, be quick, and don't get caught, love, T.W.A.T.

Technophobic Women's Action Team

FIREWORKS INSIDE **after the strike**

- 60 days
- over 32,000 prisoners
- 33 locations
- the murder of inmate Billy "Guero" Sell
- though the strike has been suspended, prisoners maintain that they will resume if necessary

FireWorks Inside would like to facilitate dialogue with folks currently or formerly incarcerated, inside and outside, about and against prisons and the world that creates them. If you would like to submit an article, please send it to FireWorks c/o East Bay Prisoner Support, PO Box 22449, Oakland, CA, 94609 or email it to fireworks@riseup.net.



HEALTHCARE FAILS PRISONERS, MISDIAGNOSIS, MISTREATMENT

BY GANSETT

A former prisoner at Central California Women's Facility (CCWF) was diagnosed as HIV+ by CCWF staff. Stricken with this diagnosis, her mental health deteriorated. For ten years she maintained the rigorous drug regimen, and watched others around the yard fall to the same fate. Eventually, she was transferred to a facility in southern California.

She saw the next prison's health staff and they asked to do an HIV test, and responded saying it will come back positive. They did the test. It was negative. They did the test again. It was negative. She was taking brutal medication for HIV, which she did not actually have for a decade. She later learned that CCWF had contracted with a pharmaceutical company that sold HIV medication. Decade long corporate driven interests affect the physical and mental health of prisoners throughout the California prison system.

On December 11, 2013 a three judge panel of court medical experts [Physician Joe Goldenson MD, Madie LaMarre MN, FNP-BC, and Mike Pusic, DO], released a health care evaluation report, prepared by the Court Medical Experts, on the dismal conditions inside CCWF. Overall the panel found that CCWF "is not providing adequate medical care, and that there are systemic issues resulting in preventable morbidity and mortality, and that present an ongoing serious risk of harm to patients" (CCWF Health Care Evaluation pp.5)

The fifty-seven page report outlines serious failings in the quality of healthcare that include insufficient beds in the Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF), not enough nursing staff, disorganized medical intake processes, overcrowding and poor timeliness.

"We found significant problems related to the timeliness and quality of care in several systems, resulting in an assessment of inadequate care at CCWF. We believe that the majority of problems are attributable to overcrowding, insufficient health care staffing and inadequate medical bed space" (5)

The independent health care evaluation was performed in response to the January 2013 report conducted by Gov. Jerry Brown's office that deemed the health care conditions at CCWF passable, "overcrowding and health care conditions cited by this Court to support its population reduction order are now a distant memory." Brown's office filed this response to evade a federal court order to reduce dangerous overcrowding.

The conversion of Valley State Prison for Women (VSPW) into a men's facility in 2012 funneled women prisoners into CCWF and California Institution for Women (CIW). Since then CCWF's overcrowding percentages have skyrocketed to 184.4%. Instead of releasing prisoners from the VSPW, over 1,000 women and transgender prisoners were packed into the already overcrowded remaining women's prisons. Aside from severe problems with lack of space, the health care staff is slow to respond. In a health care emergency, the patients suffer from the lack of staff urgency. "I would assume that during an emergency you would run toward the emergency," said M, who wishes to remain anonymous, who was released from CCWF three months ago "but no, 95% of the time they walk. Stroll."



She did much of her prison work time as comfort care staff in the SNF, and gives us an inside glimpse of how negligent health-care plays out every day in lives of women prisoners at CCWF.

When nurses respond to an emergency, they will only provide care if the patient is incoherent and cannot get up. M described an instance where her roommate waited to get treatment for an earache. It became so painful she passed out and hit her head on her bunk. "She was trying to be seen and was ignored. Don't get up, because you won't be seen," M said.

Even if a prisoner is seen, the chances that she gets the appropriate care are slim. A basic tenet of administering medication is the 5Rs: Right Patient, Right Medication, Right Time, Right Dose, Right Route.

According to the report, as well as first hand accounts, CCWF routinely prescribes expired medication, the wrong medication, and not enough medication.

"You go in and say: 'I don't feel well because XYZ,'" explained M. "They'll give you a cold pack and you may have a migraine" she said. "They were given the wrong medications at times. Kind of like test this and see if it works and if it doesn't work we'll try something else." M cared for someone who is paralyzed down the left side as a result of being given the wrong medication.

Aside from blatant misdiagnosis, M recounted a regular experience for prisoners waiting in the pharmacy line and having their prescribed medications withheld. They'd get to the front of the pharmacy line, watch the staff pull up mugshots and arrest history on Google, dislike what they saw, and send them to the back of the line.

Horrid healthcare conditions on the inside are nothing new, but this report can be used to engage the greater healthcare community to advocate for better healthcare and early release. Prisoners are routinely withheld from the right medication, enough medication or any medication at all.

Prisoners with chronic illnesses and disabilities are consigned to the Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF) into further

HEALTH CARE EVALUATION OF CENTRAL CALIFORNIA WOMEN'S FACILITY FINDS SYSTEM RISKY, HARMFUL TO PATIENTS

isolation within the prison system, and especially further alienation from their families.

"They are sometimes thrown back there and don't know why they're back there," said M, "they have little or no communication with their families." The SNF is regularly locked down with no explanation, said M, further isolating already poorly cared for prisoners within the prison system.

"They are confined and don't have the rehabilitation opportunities that we have because of their medical conditions," said M.

The report outlines problems in health-care infrastructure, which for prisoners with chronic illnesses is an uphill battle to get regular care. In more than half of the chronic cases the three judge reviewed, they found

"Medical providers did not address abnormal lab findings that reflected poorly controlled diseases...Internal audits show lapses in continuity of chronic disease medication. We also found concerns related to expiration of chronic medication orders" (7).

The infrastructure of health care provision is fractured and failing on many levels at CCWF, from lack of space, slow response times, limited supplies, misdiagnosis, inadequate prescriptions, and negligent staff. M explained that the health care staff inside does not treat patients as humans, which long term results in exacerbated chronic illness and premature death.

"I would like to see people have the opportunity to have a better quality of life," said M "and not have them have a slow death sentence as a result of not being taken care of."

Prison abolition group California Coalition for Women Prisoners is actively working on a campaign that calls for: Health care staff to be held accountable, health care to be improved to the standards of care outside of prison, and prisoners release in lieu of overcrowding. They also plan to engage the greater medical community as a way to galvanize support towards health care advocacy in the prison system.

"It's corrections but it's not meant to be cruel and unusual punishment," said M "And sometimes that's what it turns into." Fireworks interviewed M on her experiences with healthcare on the inside. Below is an excerpt.

"I WOULD LIKE TO SEE PEOPLE HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO HAVE A BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE," SAID M, "AND NOT HAVE THEM HAVE A SLOW DEATH SENTENCE AS A RESULT OF NOT BEING TAKEN CARE OF."

FW: *What were some of your experiences with healthcare on the inside?*

M: There are people that live in SNF which stands for skilled nursing facility and they are unable to be in general population as a result of their healthcare needs. It's not always the nicest place to live because they are confined and don't have the rehabilitation opportunities that we have because of their medical conditions. They're locked down sometimes, one woman was given the wrong medication she's now paralyzed down her left side, and she's been back there for 15 years.

FW: *How did staff treat people who needed medical care?*

M: They felt like if we were doing a lengthy amount of time we didn't need the medical care because we were going to die in that place anyways. Medical definitely needs to be upgraded medical staff needs to be held accountable for when they do fall short and people are dying as a result of poor medical care.

FW: *Did prison staff withhold medication out of ill will?*

M: If it was prescribed. And some of the nurses are spiteful if they didn't like you you were put to the end of the line or they'd look you up on google and you'd see your dear own face on screen. They're people and they do have their own preconceived notions about us and we are viewed as the scum of the earth as a result of the decisions we have made that put us there. And it's corrections but it's not meant to be cruel and unusual punishment. And sometimes that's what it turns into.

FW: *Do people get in punished if they try to help each other?*

M: Yes. People OD in the yard and bring them back and you weren't supposed to be on drugs anyways so you broke a rule and now you're in trouble for that or if a person gets a tattoo and it gets infected you weren't supposed to have a tattoo and now you're in trouble.

FW: *Did you see any of the health conditions change because of overcrowding?*

M: I noticed that what they did was they took our risk, high risk, low risk, medium risk for our health concerns and some of us were under chronic care, [once] they had that, they changed the criteria so they were rated under different terms and that's how they started shipping people out. High risk medicals went first. If you were in a wheel chair or had an oxygen mask anything that made you require extra attention they shipped them first.

Another version of this story was originally published in the *East Bay Express*.



PRISONERS

"Our compliance and recognition of the prison's power over us is our downfall. If we have any power over us via refusal to work, refusal to follow orders, then these prisons are our downfall."

JULY 1 - (HIGH DESERT) Prisoners at High Desert State Prison precede statewide hunger strike by launching theirs on July 1st. They presented a list of 30 demands.

JULY 8 - [CA] 30,000 prisoners went on hunger strike.

JULY 13 - (CORCORAN) March and solidarity rally outside Corcoran State Prison, which holds 1,367 people in the SHU.

JULY 31 - (OAKLAND) Solidarity rally and speakout at Oscar Grant Plaza followed by march to the CA State Building.

JULY 4 - (OAKLAND) Noise demo and march from Oscar Grant Plaza to the North County jail. Demonstrators called for an end to the SHU, chanting "fire to the prisons," while shooting fireworks at the jail.

JULY 11 - (CORCORAN) Strike leaders moved to debriefers block full of snitches, state agents, and informants. Hundreds of dollars of their property was lost in this move. Strikers are written up for 'gang activity' for refusing to eat.

JULY 15 - (PELICAN BAY) Billy "Guero" Sell dies as a result of the hunger strike. Authorities try to frame it as a suicide, and that he was not on strike, but his fellow prisoners confirm that he was on hunger strike and was not suicidal. Sell had requested medical treatment days before his death and was denied.

AUG. 7 - (OAKLAND) General hospitalization of prisoners from kitchen demonstrations, and several disciplinary actions which resulted in the doctor's refusal to refeed prisoners.



SON STRIKE

*We collectively refuse to comply, and refuse to recognize the prisoncrats having
can not operate!" - Pelican Bay Hunger Striker*

AUG. 8 - (CORCORAN) At least one prisoner, after hospitalization in the Acute Care Hospital (ACH) was placed in a 2x2 stand up holding cage. The doctor pressured him to sign a Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) form - "so you can die."

AUG. 22 - (CA) A federal judge approved the use of force feeding. In Oakland, people rallied and marched to Jerry Brown's condo against force feeding of those on strike.

AUG. 29 - (SACRAMENTO) Rally outside Sacramento County Jail against the use of force-feeding.

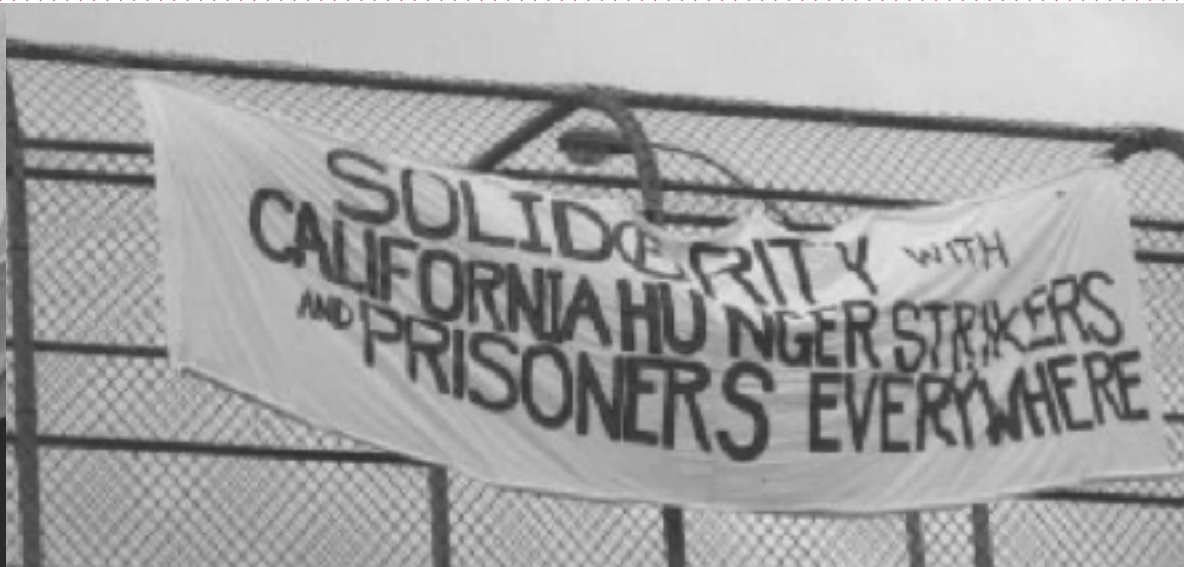
SEPT. 5 - (60 DAYS) Prisoners end the Hunger strike, most of their demands unmet.

(CORCORAN) After severalizations of hunger strik- kidney failure, heart palpids erratic blood pressures, discussed a refeeding treat- h they ultimately refused or did not even know the policy and treatment.

AUG. 9 - (CORCORAN) Sgt. Vogel released memo stating Security Threat Group (STG) in the SHU will now be included in monthly case by case reviews to get out of the SHU. It also states that unsubstantiated confidential information from a single source cannot be used as a basis to confirm gang activity.

AUG. 24 - (OAKLAND) Anti-repression hunger strike solidarity march, 300 strong.

SEPT. 4 - Strike leaders voted to end the strike after 2 CA lawmakers pledged to hold public hearings on prison conditions and SHU isolation.



VOICES FROM SANTA RITA

BY ABBA LISHIN

The first Sunday of December, I met with Rick at a coffee shop to discuss the Police Agencies of Alameda County and the situation within Santa Rita County Jail. Rick (who does not want his real name to be used for fear of retribution) is certainly no stranger to Santa Rita- "I've been in the drunk tank over a dozen times," he said, "and in general population three times."

One of the first documents he shows me is a form instructing him to arrive for his reincarceration in a week a half. "I'll end up serving a couple weeks, maybe nine days." But despite its short length, his upcoming stint is a source of serious worry for Rick. "They won't give me my stomach pills in there. And I've got a prescription for benzo-diazepine too but they won't let me have it inside. I could go into a seizure."

The threat of medical neglect is very real for inmates denied their medications in Santa Rita, and the lack of compassion can run from the guards to other inmates. "I heard a guy having a seizure and [both guards and prisoners] were telling him to shut up." Rick said. He went on to charge Santa Rita guards with failing to provide a bare minimum of care for inmates.:

"They should at least give you your psych meds, they should at least give you a blanket if you're sleeping on a stone floor. My best friend since 2nd grade killed himself [inside Rita] because they wouldn't give him his psych meds. He was begging for his pills and the guards just laughed and told him he was going to die. And then he hung himself."

The inhumane regime of Santa Rita has sparked a fire in Rick, and for the first time he's begun to organize against the police of Alameda County, as well as the harsh conditions inmates endure in its sprawling mega-jail. He's printed out a questionnaire for former inmates to share information about their stints, with a long term view towards a class action lawsuit. The form he shows me is marked 15, and he claims that the first fourteen were already filled out by inmates he had approached over the past several months.

Rick has struggled in the past with heroin addiction. He puts his clean time at "over a year" and credits a methadone maintenance program with his success. However, Rick is

quick to insert that "I hate being stuck with the label Drug Addict. There are so many jobs I can't get. The state uses that label to incarcerate the poor. I'm on three different probations. I should be off of one of them but can't pay the restitution. Meanwhile, rich people can get away with anything."

I'm scribbling notes as quickly as I can while Rick jumps in conversation from conditions inside Santa Rita to worries about his future. He talks about incidents of police harassment in Pleasanton, and recounts the eviction of a homeless encampment he slept at along the railroad tracks in Livermore

He speaks in sweeping terms of "starting a cause" and "building a movement", and

"THEY SHOULD AT LEAST GIVE YOU YOUR PSYCH MEDS, THEY SHOULD AT LEAST GIVE YOU A BLANKET IF YOU'RE SLEEPING ON A STONE FLOOR."

cites KRON 4's "People Behaving Badly" segment as an appropriate venue for the local police. Other customers in the coffee shop look over at our table snobbishly, their noses turned up to Rick's E-cigarette vapor and the anti-cop tenor of our conversation.

We traded ideas, and I tried to lower his expectations- an indie media blitz wasn't going change the system over night. "I can write something up for you and get it on IndyBay, and submit it to CopWatch, and I can try to get it reposted on anarchist sites. We could get in touch with people already organizing against the police and conditions in Rita, because organizing against this stuff is not new," I told him, trying to be frank and explain my opinion. "But as far as KRON-4 goes...the mainstream media is not going to help us on this. In general, they protect the police and advocate for them instinctively. The same goes for the prisons." I went on to talk about the function of the media in my view, as an anarchist, and said I was also skeptical that the counter information outlets that might repost his story would gener-

ate much buzz.

By the end of our meeting, Rick was undaunted, and urged me to interview other former inmates of Santa Rita. I promised to do more research and get back to him. At home, the next day, I started to go over my notes and pondered the situation faced by inmates at Alameda County's roughest and biggest jail.

I flipped through a chapbook written by my friend Wendy Trevino. "From Santa Rita 128-131", the titular prose-poem, refers to the weekend of January 28th 2012. That Saturday, over four hundred people were arrested in downtown Oakland and detained for several days, including Wendy. This came after a long day of marching for what Occupy organizers had promoted as an "Oakland Move-In Day": a thwarted attempt to inhabit the long vacant Kaiser Convention Center en masse.

"From Santa Rita 128-131" presents itself as a six page prose-poem that also doubles as a lucid, stoic, account of Wendy's experience in jail:

"I spent 47 hours under bright fluorescent lights. / I was cold approximately 43 hours. / I heard someone with epilepsy was being denied medication. / I watched two people go through withdrawal. / I met 2 people with serious illnesses who were denied medication. / I met 3 women who were still in high school. / I heard 2 women were put in solitary confinement. / I heard I had 1 welt on my back. / I saw 5 bruises on each wrist. / I heard 1 pig threaten a mentally ill man. / I heard 1 pig make fun of a woman praying. I saw 2 bologna faces. / Staying positive was equated with preparing for a class action lawsuit at least 3 times.

The shadow of repression and abuse hovers throughout the events that surround this poem, but they couldn't stop prisoners from making bologna faces.

Finding the lighter side in a lock-up is perhaps a more difficult task for Rita inmates serving multi-month sentences. Prisoners lucky enough to see visitors or receive a little money on their books can take some relief in knowing folks on the outside care about them. But many inmates have no resources, no visitors, and little recourse against a Jail and Prison Industrial Complex that rules through violence and justifies itself with empty moralism.

IN THE FACE OF REPRESSION, SOLIDARITY IS THE BEST WEAPON

INTERVIEW WITH BAY AREA ANTI-REPRESSION COMMITTEE

BY GANSETT

FireWorks sat down with the Bay Area Anti-Repression Committee to learn ways to resist the surveillance amped, trigger happy, police state that is our world. Bail funds, community strength, solidarity, and of course, revolutionary dreams - not nightmares.

FW: What is the Anti-Repression Committee?

ARC: We originally formed to support Occupy Oakland actions, the Bay Area Anti-Repression Committee (ARC) stands against political repression and is in solidarity with all those who challenge the State, capitalism and other forms of systemic oppression and domination. We support actions that are anti-patriarchal, anti-racist, anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist.

While we work closely together with the National Lawyer's Guild Demonstrations Committee (if you don't know about them check them out at <http://www.nlgf.org/content/demonstrations-committee>) to provide some legal support, we see ourselves more as a political collective and less as a service provider. Our desire is to build a broad culture of resistance and solidarity across movements.

We are a group of people who come from different political perspective and different communities but found each other through our common understanding that with resistance, repression will always follow. Therefore resistance movements need to have anti-repression activities as a central piece

of their strategies.

FW: What does repression look like to the ARC?

ARC: Repression is the violence the State uses against us to destroy our movements, especially the ones that have revolutionary aims. Throughout history the one constant is that the State will use any means to destroy those that resist. Any work the ARC does is predicated on this understanding. The State has learned many insidious tricks from programs used against the Black Liberation movement, the Puerto Rican Independence movement, the American

“REPRESSION IS THE VIOLENCE THE STATE USES AGAINST US TO DESTROY OUR MOVEMENTS, ESPECIALLY THE ONES THAT HAVE REVOLUTIONARY AIMS.”

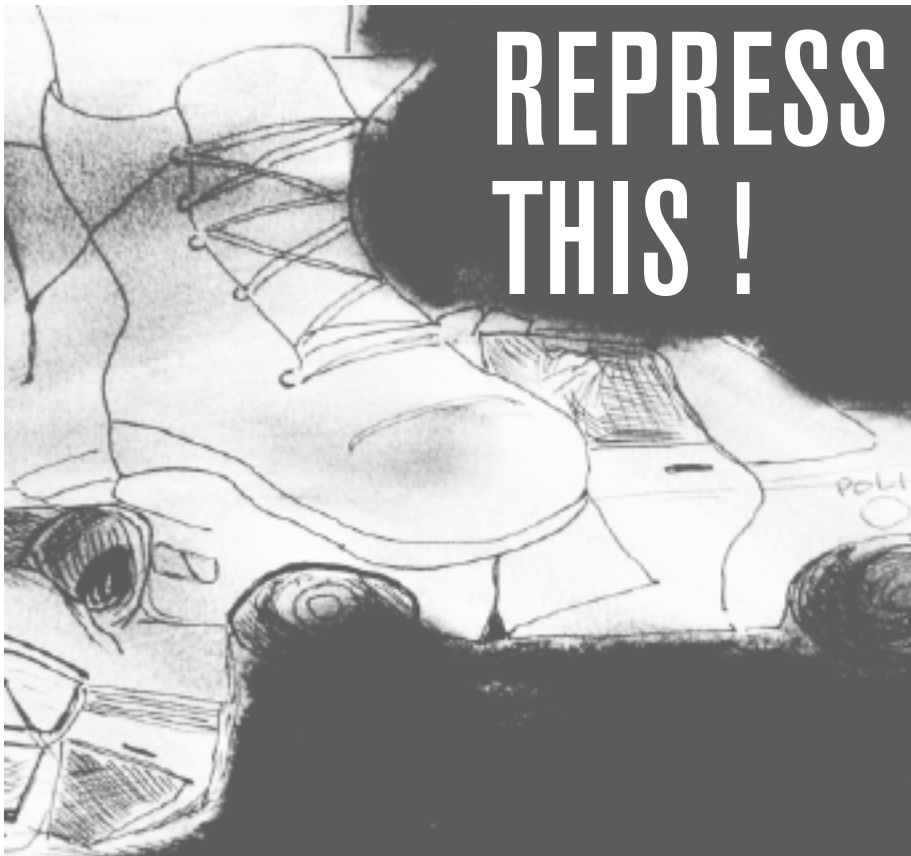
Indian Movement, and Anti-Imperialist groups just to name a few. One example of this is COINTELPRO.

This program targeted unresolved tensions within and across groups breeding distrust, disagreements and created vulnerability to informants.

Although COINTELPRO has been revealed and deemed illegal, the State is still guilty of using these tactics to destabilize people who engage in resistance. With this history in mind we believe that it is vital for people to participate in face-to-face conflict resolution rather than over the internet. We also believe that contradictions and tensions should be addressed in a principled manner; they should not be rooted in individual's egos or personal attacks.

We have seen that when these types of problems go unaddressed or turned into interpersonal drama, their effects on communities mirror State repression. Of course, this does not mean that we support the silencing of efforts to address oppression within our political communities. We are likely to have less skepticism about using the word community to describe ourselves when we actively struggle to make the word a reality.





We believe that racist and patriarchal behavior in our communities are the real source of instability and division, not efforts to respond to them, and that working to address oppressive dynamics is in itself an important aspect of anti-repression work, since we know that the State is good at taking advantage of these dynamics. We have also noticed a general ambivalence around notions of community building; we feel this as well. We recognize that one of the reasons for this is our collective experience of not feeling supported. We believe that people should not use these feelings as excuses for not behaving like community members. We are likely to have less skepticism about using the word community to describe ourselves when we actively struggle to make the word a reality.

FW: *What does the ARC do?*

ARC: It's hard to define exactly what ARC does. We organize court and jail solidarity for comrades who have been arrested. We use various mediums to educate people around how repression has functioned against political movements in the Bay Area and how we can defend ourselves against the state's assaults. For an example of this check out the REPRESS THIS! zine at www.oaklandantirepression.wordpress.com/publications. We recognize that repression

does not function just on a local level and that one of the mechanisms that it operates under is the prison system. We recognize that the function of the prison system is to disconnect people from their communities. We also know that despite this isolation, resistance still flows from behind prison walls and we consider support of prison movements central to our struggles. Some ways that we do prisoner support is through letter writing campaigns, organizing solidarity actions around the 2013 California Prisoner Strikes, and working with other groups who work against the Prison Industrial complex. We will be holding a fundraising event for Mexican Political Prisoners on April 6th at Qilombo in Oakland. Most commonly we are known for maintaining a Bay Area Bail Fund, which is used to bond out activists arrested at actions, with priority to those who do not have the resources to post their own bail or bond. We've noticed that often times political actions are seen as events that only the most privileged among us can participate in, so in order to make participation more accessible we reserve the bail fund for those who are arrested that otherwise would be sitting in jail until their trial. If the ARC bail fund is utilized, we believe that anyone who participated in that action, arrested or not, should help replenish the fund.

Our bail policy and a way to donate can be found here:

www.wepay.com/donations/275088.

FW: *How can people help?*

ARC: People always ask us what can they do to help the ARC or if they can join. We look at our work less as a one of a kind collective and more as an example of what anyone can do to support their comrades.

We want to change the conversation, and remind people that we do not hold a monopoly over this type of work, rather we are a model of how a group of people can do things to support their specific community struggles. For example anyone can start a bail fund for their comrades. We are against specialization. The work we do is actually the work that anyone involved in a resistance movement should be participating in.

When organizing or participating in a political action we believe it is everyone's responsibility to support those that may face repression. This support should not only be considered after the repression occurs but should be a part of all action planning and involved in all tactical and strategic conversations.

We believe that through solidarity, the isolation that we experience from everyday life and from repression is lessened and our political movements feel more like strong communities that have each other's backs.



SUPPORT THE TRAYVON 2 IN COURT ON MARCH 19TH, 8 A.M. AT THE WILEY MANUEL COURTHOUSE, DEPARTMENT 104, ON 7TH AND WASHINGTON STREETS IN OAKLAND.

BOAT SQUATTERS FACE EVICTION

GENTRIFICATION SPILLS INTO THE WATER

BY GANSETT

In September of 2013, thirty boat squatters floating at the Jack London Aquatic Park were served with eviction notices. They had thirty days to clear out or else their boats would be impounded and scrapped. An ad-hoc committee of the EPA, state police, and OPD formed a campaign to clean up the waterfront. Instead of dealing with the severe pollution of diesel emissions at the port or raising sunken ships, they targeted the boat community.

The city of Oakland had decided that the small boat community was too unsavory for the upcoming condo developments to look at from their 18th story windows. The city evicted these squatters from the Jack London Aquatic Park, which is right along the Oak St edge of the 5th Avenue Development Project. Fireworks sat down with one of the evicted boat squatters who told us about boat squatting, the eviction process and its connections to rapid gentrification in Oakland.

FW: How does one boat squat?

J: One learns to boat squat by randomly running into a person who happened to be boat squatting who was kind enough to let me stay on his boat for about 6 months until I got my own boat. So basically we would just go from dock to public dock to public dock, or guest docks and city marinas. We'd stay there for a week or two then move to the next dock, going back and forth, developing relationships with the people there.

FW: Where were you squatting when they served you an eviction notice?

J: They served me when I was at Jack London Aquatic Center. We'd made friends with one of the guys who lived there. Nobody is supposed to live there but he works for the city. Anyways he was allowed to be there and nobody messed with him and he like helped out with the docks and stuff over there and projects so it's kind of his job there and we made friends with him and he gave us the heads up that there was going to be this meeting and that most likely everyone was going to get kicked out at a certain time, a time frame he didn't know.

FW: What kind of meeting was it?

J: So the EPA was there, OPD was there, sheriffs were there, state police were there. To my understanding it was this ad-hoc committee that came together under the guise of "oh, we're going to clean up the Oakland waterfront all of these sunken ships that are environmental hazards." They were awarded money for cleaning up the waterfront and getting rid of pollution, but the majority of the money was going to was kicking people out of their homes and taking peoples boats and basically paying for the storage of our boats. After they take them, we were told that after 30 days they would hold our boats for thirty days and if we didn't claim them that we had a new space to keep our boats that they would recycle them, crush them for

parts. I don't know if they ever raised a single boat or eliminated a single hazard. I know they just go around and ruin people's lives.

FW: How many people were kicked out from that squat?

J: There were three of us that were on the actual dock and were forced to leave, but a total of thirty boats spread out along the estuary. Some that were anchored out, some that just dropped anchor - but not like you just stopped your car in the middle of the street. It was an area that wasn't high trafficked or impeding any boat's flow or endangering anyone, and the majority of the people were anchor outs to my knowledge. There were maybe 5 or 6 boats that were at a dock, illegally at a public dock.

FW: What happened after they served you?

J: There was a phone number on the eviction notice to the lawyer or whoever was in charge of the whole operation and conveniently after he gave everyone their notices we called his office and they said, "Oh actually he's on vacation so you can leave a message and when he comes back he'll call you. So it was like "Here's this notice, fuck you guys, I'm on vacation."

FW: So what would have happened if they came after thirty days and you were still there on your boat?

J: He didn't think that on day 30 they would come and take people's boats because they didn't have the resources I guess or the storage to just keep 30 boats for 30 days so he told me that but he couldn't promise me anything.

FW: How can you fight boat squat evictions?

J: People who live on their boat say that Oakland has given them the most trouble and has the most uppity boat community. I don't think there's really a big precedent for fighting boat squats because I feel like it's sort of now a new thing with gentrification

of the land and now it's going to the water. They're trying to clean up the waterways and build all these condos. It could happen more frequently that I'm not aware of, but all the people I was living with who got the notices, this was their first time dealing with anything like this. So we're kind of in the dark about the process to go through.

FW: What would cleaning up the water mean to you?

J: Cleaning up the water would mean destroying the oil companies and the need for oil. Just looking at the gulf spill and all of these oil companies polluting the water and contaminating our life source in plastic just pollution. I think that there's way better ways to clean up the water than getting rid of thirty people who live peacefully on their boats and actually care about the environment as opposed to corporations who profit off the environment.

FW: What do you think the evictions are really about?

J: The evictions are really about portraying this image of upscale and poshness to developers, anybody who builds condos or shopping malls; "oh look this area is waiting to be inhabited." It's a money maker. Say you invite somebody to come look at a plot of land and you have all these basically homeless people living on their boats that you're trying to turn into a fucking luxury hotel. It's about looks, it's about image. They don't want people to know that there is homelessness, they don't want people to know that it's spread out from the streets to the water; but people have to live wherever they can live. Because of the water here people are learning they don't have to sleep on the streets, they can find a boat. The first guy I lived with, he rescued his boat. It's just about getting money in their pockets even if people get displaced by it.

NEVER TRUST A SPY:

DEMYSTIFYING OBAMA'S NSA REFORM SPEECH



Seven months after *The Guardian* and *The Washington Post* first broke stories based on top secret documents leaked by former NSA-contractor Edward Snowden, his disclosures have already been hailed as “the biggest intelligence leak in history.”

Reports based on Snowden's documents have been published at a steady clip by media outlets around the world since they began in June, in an apparent blindside to Obama and the NSA. The US government has been in damage control ever since, prompting Obama to deliver a lengthy speech announcing minor spying reform on January 17th. Using the text of this speech as a jumping off point, I'll examine the underlying assumptions that drive US surveillance policy.

Cloaked in the rhetoric of American exceptionalism, Obama paints a deceptive picture of the spies at the NSA. He presents government analysts as “patriots,” and “Our friends and our neighbors” who form an integral part of the secretive apparatus Obama fondly calls the “intelligence community.” He takes up a spirited defense of the government surveillance state in the name of fighting terrorists. In his own words:

“Intelligence agencies cannot function without secrecy... Yet there is an inevitable bias...among all of us who are responsible for national security, to collect more information about the world, not less.”

He defends the lack of transparency while at the same pointing to reforms that supposedly increase transparency. He defends the character of NSA analysts and other spooks while simultaneously implying that he's reeling in their behavior (if not their capabilities, which are virtually limitless). He then lays a groundwork for his vision of a morally superior, paternalistic United States. A nation that has the whole world under surveillance for its own “safety”:

“My administration has spent countless hours considering how to approach intel-

ligence in this era of diffuse threats and technological revolution.”

Which leads into an assertion of responsibility for the world's safety:

“.. A number of countries, including some who have loudly criticized the NSA, privately acknowledge that America has special responsibilities as the world's only superpower, that our intelligence capabilities are critical to meeting these responsibilities and that they themselves have relied on the information we obtained to protect their own people.”

IN A TIME OF UNREST, THE ANSWER LIES IN WHAT THE GOVERNMENT FEARS: RESISTANCE. THE GOVERNMENT HAS OILED THE GEARS OF ITS SPYING APPARATUS TO ANTICIPATE UNREST AND ANALYZE NETWORKS OF SUBVERSIVES. WHERE RESISTANCE BREAKS OUT, NEW SURVEILLANCE SYSTEMS ARE QUICK TO THE SCENE.

The message: Obama is your patriarch, your protector, and your threat analyst. The NSA spies for your safety. Internet surveil-

lance is for the safety of everyone. NSA Analysts are your friends. Your neighbors. Patriots. Decent folks – To hell with that. Obama is correct in heralding a “technological revolution,” but the revolution isn't emancipatory—it is the realization of a dystopian nightmare. A good example of this is the Xkeyscore program, a software tool used by the NSA, FBI, CIA and other spooks to search through internet communications.

Searches can narrow in on an email or IP address, unique hardware identifiers, or even a Facebook profile. Xkeyscore acts as a gateway program for government analysis of web visitations, browsing history, email content, metadata, and social networking chats.

But the government isn't the only culprit here. The big tech companies have been under gag orders about the extent of their collaboration, until very recently when the restrictions were loosened slightly to allow disclosures of government requests in ranges of 1000. On February 3rd, *The Guardian* reported:

“Tens of thousands of accounts associated with customers of Microsoft, Google, Facebook and Yahoo have their data turned over to [the US] every six months as the result of secret court orders, the tech giants disclosed for the first time on Monday... In the most recent period for which data is available, January to June 2013 –Google gave the government the internet metadata of up to 999 customer accounts, and the content of communications from between 9,000 and 9,999 customers...Facebook disclosed that during the first half of 2013, it





turned over content data from between 5000 and 5999 accounts – a rise of about 1000 from the previous six month period.”

Meanwhile, the mass-collection of phone company data and metadata on NSA servers continues, despite being “sharply rebuked” by the US Privacy Board.

In an editorial published the same day as Obama’s speech, *The New York Times* summed up several of his proposed reforms as such: “The president announced important new restrictions on the collection of information about ordinary Americans.” But doesn’t their implicit acceptance of the category “ordinary Americans” provide cover for the politicians and spooks *The Times* is supposedly meant to critique? I don’t desire an end to surveillance of just “ordinary Americans,” “citizens,” or “law-abiding folks.” I want an end to the surveillance and data-harvesting of all the world’s people, citizens of the US or not.

By accepting the notion of the “ordinary American” unchallenged (the subject deemed especially worthy of spying protections), *The Times* reveals their true class interest: maintaining the status quo and perpetuating the mechanisms of power. *The Guardian’s* reportage on the findings of the US Privacy Board is illustrative of this:

Not only did the board conclude that the bulk surveillance was a threat to constitutional liberties, it could not find “a single instance” in which the program “made a concrete difference in the outcome of a terrorism investigation.

“Moreover, we are aware of no instance in which the program directly contributed to the discovery of a previously unknown terrorist plot or the disruption of a terrorist attack.”

So if the US government’s own review board could not find a “single instance” of mass phone data collection contributing to “the disruption of a terrorist attack,” why does Obama find it necessary to continue

them, and why do so many accept at face value his claims that the surveillance programs keep the US safe?

In the age of austerity and worldwide unrest, the answer lies in what the government fears: not only terrorist attacks from abroad, but resistance within the country. The government has oiled the gears of its spying apparatus to anticipate unrest at home and analyze the online networks of subversives. Where resistance breaks out, new surveillance systems, and more police, are quickly ushered onto to the scene.

Much of this has already been well documented, such as the exposure of the Tartan program, used to map the social networks of anarchists and other rebels within the United States. Documents released by the FBI under Freedom of Information Act requests show the government targeted Occupy factions throughout the country for surveillance during the height of protests in 2011 and 2012. Government repression of radicals is nothing new- the FBI’s COINTELPRO program, beginning in the 50s, worked to destroy radical networks throughout the country.

WE CAN'T TRUST THE GOVERNMENT TO KEEP US SAFE, AND WE CERTAINLY CAN'T TRUST OBAMA. ALL OF THE ACTIONS HE'S TAKEN TO "REIN IN" NSA SPYING ARE MERELY ATTEMPTS TO COVER HIS OWN ASS. DON'T LET THE POLITICIANS PULL THE WOOL OVER YOUR EYES ON THIS ONE.

But the tools available to today’s spooks are an order of magnitude higher. Surveillance cameras loom over an increasingly larger part of public space that was once thought of as a commons. Social connections are intermeshed (or constructed!) with email accounts, cell phones, and online memberships and profiles. And according to a report from *Wired* supported by documents Snowden leaked, “the NSA has managed to thwart much of the encryption that protects telephone and online communication”. This leak has implications for the kinds of information you’d imagine is the most secure: think bank transactions, money orders, or anonymous donations.

None of this is to say that domestic surveillance is the primary focus of NSA activities - no doubt much of their energy goes into collecting intelligence abroad, as

they vehemently insist is the case. But in the era of PRISM, Xkeyscore, and bulk collection of phone company metadata, it is important to recognize that the US spying apparatus, from a technical standpoint, is fully capable of turning its lens to the domestic front at a moment’s notice.

Obama’s favored tactic is to wrap up the surveillance state in a bloody American flag: classic misdirection. But his poisonous commitment to antiquated ideas of American exceptionalism and US-as-world-policeman are more likely to bring attacks on this country than standing down and ending the War on Terror would.

We can’t trust the government to keep us safe, and we certainly can’t trust Obama. Lets take care to remember that if Edward Snowden hadn’t leaked classified information, he would still be refusing to acknowledge the existence of these surveillance programs, much less attempting to reform them. All of the actions he’s taken to “rein in” NSA spying are merely attempts to cover his own ass. Don’t let the politicians pull the wool over your eyes on this one.



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GOOGLE NEWS ROUND-UP

BUSES BLOCKED, CONVENTION DISRUPTED, GLASS WEARING TECH WRITER ATTACKED

October 28th

A report by CNET launches flurry of speculation over a mysterious barge owned by Google docked near Treasure Island in the San Francisco Bay. In the coming weeks, Google reluctantly issues a statement calling the project “An interactive space where people can learn about new technologies.” Many take this as tacit confirmation of plans for a floating Google Glass store.

November 17th

FireWorks feature “Glass War” poses the question “How long before pigs in the street are outfitted with their own version of Glass... [and] use their head-mounting computers to identify parole violators and folks on the run simply by looking in their direction?” The answer came on February 8th, when NYPD issued a statement: “The New York Police Department has procured two pair of Google Glass specs, the experimental head-mounted computers, to determine possible applications to police work” - CNN

December 4th:

“Google has launched an aggressive effort to develop a new class of robots, acquiring seven companies in the last six months and putting the man behind Android in charge, according to a *New York Times* story published Tuesday night.” - SF Gate Online

December 11th

“Protesters Block Google Bus at 24th and Valencia St... accusing Google and other tech companies of illegally using the city’s bus stops.” The protests point towards a rising tide of anger over gentrification and rising rents. - Mission Local

December 21st

“At 7:45am, over 50 protesters swarmed a Google bus picking up highly-paid tech workers at MacArthur BART station in Oakland. They successfully blocked it for over half an hour before OPD arrived...The action was planned to coincide with other Google Bus blockades across the Bay this

morning as an escalation in the fight against gentrification” - IndyBay

The same morning, tech buses are blockaded in San Francisco, and a second IndyBay post details, “an autonomous anti-gentrification action to block a Google Bus at 7th and Adeline in West Oakland. “ The rear window of the bus is shattered during the brief blockade. The crowd dispersed and no arrests were made.

“ALL OF GOOGLE’S EMPLOYEES SHOULD BE PREVENTED FROM GETTING TO WORK. ALL SURVEILLANCE INFRASTRUCTURE SHOULD BE DESTROYED. NO LUXURY CONDOS SHOULD BE BUILT. NO ONE SHOULD BE DISPLACED.”

January 21st

A third round of anti-Google bus protests break out. In San Francisco, after blocking buses, people march throughout the city.

In Berkeley, a group calling itself ‘CounterForce’ protests outside of an elite Google engineer’s home and holds a banner while handing out flyers in the neighborhood. Afterwards, a Google bus is blocked near Ashby Ave. The engineer in question is a Anthony Levandowski, the creator of Google’s self-driving car, who has deep ties to the Department of Defense’s experimental research arm DARPA.

The flyer distributed at the action read in part: “All of Google’s employees should be prevented from getting to work. All surveillance infrastructure should be destroyed. No luxury condos should be built. No one should be displaced.”

February 17th

In San Francisco, members of Eviction Free SF briefly disrupted a talk by Google at the Wisdom 2.0 conference. After smuggling in a banner disguised in a large bag, Protesters took to the stage and unfurled their message: “Eviction Free San Francisco”

February 21st:

Tech writer Sarah Slocum attacked by patrons at San Francisco bar Molotov’s after refusing to remove the device.

“OMG so you’ll never believe this but... I got verbally and physically assaulted and robbed last night in the city, had things thrown at me because of some wanker Google Glass haters, then some *bleeeeeeeeeep* tore them off my face and ran out with them then and when I ran out after him his *bleeeeeeeep* friends stole my purse...” she said on her Facebook Page.

“Slocum said she retrieved the Google Glass, but her purse and phone were stolen in the melee.” - *The Los Angeles Times*



Google Glass Is Banned On These Premises

BEYOND THE BUS:

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE STRUGGLE AGAINST GENTRIFICATION IN THE MISSION

BY DOUG GILBERT

Having a sense of the historical struggle against displacement can help shine a light on the path ahead of us. As Fernando Marti wrote in *A History of Resistance*, “The first recorded eviction in what is now called the Mission District occurred in 1776. The Spanish arrival forced the Ohlone, who had lived in the region for at least 5,000 years, to flee across the Bay.” (2) Soon after, Ohlone people were forced into slave labor at the Mission Dolores, which now sits next to Dolores Park. While Native people launched uprisings, by the 1800s the Ohlone population was decimated.

In the post-Gold Rush period, the Mission became a working-class haven. As American capitalism became more industrialized, the Mission also grew as a center for working-class militancy with the Red Stone building being used in the 1934 San Francisco General Strike.

“The first wave of Latinos began arriving in the Mission during World War II, some coming...through the bracero program or by fleeing US funded civil-wars in Central America.” (5-6) The Mission grew as a hotbed of organizing inspired by the farmworker struggle and the battles against imperialism in Latin America. This took the form of the militant occupation at SF State, the indigenous takeover of Alcatraz, and the creation of groups such as El Comité para Liberar a los Siete de la Raza, modeled after the Black Panthers. When seven Mission youths were accused of killing a police officer, the Los Siete de la Raza was formed, becoming a milestone in the neighborhood. In the 80s, the Mission was a stronghold of solidarity with revolutionary struggles, with residents even training to join insurgent forces. It was within that context that a battle against gentrification began.

“Throughout the 70s, battles raged against the gentrifiers, with gangs chasing Anglos out of local taquerías and activists

stopping an [upper-income] bar...on 24th Street. The parades of low-riders...made Mission Street the line that stopped gentrification... Eventually, Anglo homeowners,

WHAT IS CLEAR IS THAT THE STRUGGLE AGAINST DISPLACEMENT IS A CLASS STRUGGLE; OR ONE IN WHICH ONE CLASS DOES BATTLE WITH ANOTHER OVER CONTROL OF THEIR LIVES.



the Mission Merchants Association, and police harassment forced the low-riders to leave.” (6)

With the coming of BART to the Mission, groups from the Brown Berets to tenants banded together to stop displacement of working-class families and halted much of the construction. Throughout the 1970s, organizing continued in the face of a rash of hotel fires, such as the fire at the Garland Hotel, which led to the creation of the “Garland Pit,” an open air arts space that was also a

center for organizing. By the 1990s, cycles of divestment and reinvestment lead to a wave of evictions of unprecedented proportions as the bay-area experienced the dot-com boom. At the same time, California was in the midst of an anti-immigrant xenophobic backlash, as politicians attempted to pass Proposition 187, which would deny benefits to immigrants and their families. The Mission remained a hotbed of organizing and action both against gentrification and anti-immigrant backlash. This was expressed in a variety of ways, from posters calling for attacks on yuppie businesses and cars, to public marches, mass assemblies, disruption of government meetings and the occupation of buildings, and even the attempted arson of condos.

In the current period, people have used graffiti, rallies, block parties that with Google bus piñatas, blockades against eviction, picketing of businesses, and marches that attacked various businesses. This struggle has also been informed by various riots and struggles against police brutality in the Mission and across the city and also the battle to save urban gardens and farms from eviction to be turned into condos. The several-week long occupation of Gezi Gardens, formerly the Hayes Valley Farm, featured the largest urban tree-sit in the US and was carried out in solidarity with the Turkish insurrection of June, 2013.

What is clear is that the struggle against displacement is a class struggle; in which one class does battle with another over basic interests, conditions, and control over their lives. The popular struggles against BART construction show that even in the face of what the rich call “progress,” everyday people can still come together and win. This fight has always used a variety of tactics, most of them aimed at being disruptive and stopping business as usual.

STARVE THEM OUT

ATTACKS ON FOOD STAMPS ARE AN ATTACK ON THE PEOPLE OF OAKLAND

At a time of record unemployment, rising hunger and poverty, job layoffs, wage freezes, and government cut backs to basic services, those in the two ruling parties have pushed to slash millions of dollars for food stamps. Recently, food stamp benefits will be scaled back in a 13% reduction as the 2009 stimulus package boost to the SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) expires. This reduction will hit hard: a family of four will lose \$36 worth of food per month. But this could just be the start. Up to 4 million Americans will face even stiffer cuts if a bill pushed forward by the Republicans in the House of Representatives is passed into law. The bill proposes to slash \$40 billion from SNAP over the next ten years.

CONTROLLING PEOPLE'S MOST BASIC BIOLOGICAL NEEDS IN TIMES OF SOCIAL UNREST CAN EITHER ADD TO OR RELIEVE THE TENSION THAT EXISTS BETWEEN THE RICH AND THE POOR.

Many Americans would also become ineligible to receive food stamps in the first place as millions of poor and underemployed adults, the unemployed, low-income families, seniors, and veterans would all be taken off of benefits. Hundreds of thousands of children would also lose free school lunches and unemployed people that are unable to find jobs would lose them as well. While Democrats have stated they will block such a bill from passing in the Senate, in June of 2013 they agreed to cuts of \$400 million in the next five years. In the bay area, Oakland has the highest percentage of people on federal food assistance programs in Alameda County. With 26% of Oakland-

ers receiving food stamps, that's 61,869 people, a vast majority people of color. Nationally, the number of people receiving aid is staggering. Up to 47.76 million are on food stamps, climbing from 26 million around 2007 when the recession hit, with half of those receiving benefits being children and teenagers in low-income families.

This is not the first time that Food Stamps have come under attack by those in power. It was Bill Clinton that took migrant workers off food stamps and also restricted the welfare system. The current attacks by Republicans mirror this same assault. Both parties are united in attacking both workers and the poor, while demonizing certain groups as an enemy to either. The politicians tell us that our enemies are the immigrant, the unemployed, the homeless, and the poor in general. This is the same demonization of various sections of the poor and working class that the media has tried to push in the BART strike, as we have been told that transit workers are the enemy while those in the real positions of power are our friends. At a time when the Obama administration is gearing up for a continued assault in the Middle East, either in Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, or Syria, we can also see how the system is designed to take our money and funnel it into war, surveillance, prisons, police,

PEOPLE TOOK TO THE STREETS, BRINGING MANY URBAN CENTERS TO A STATE OF INSURRECTION AS THEY FACED OFF AGAINST THE NATIONAL GUARD. THE GOVERNMENT PASSED THE FOOD STAMPS ACT IN 1964, AS AN ATTEMPT TO PACIFY THE POOR POPULATION.

and domestic spying, while leaving us with nothing. As 2pac said, "They got money for wars, but can't feed the poor."

Controlling people's most basic biological needs in times of social unrest can either add to or relieve the tension that exists between the rich and the poor. The question of more or less government benefits is irrelevant; we deserve everything that our class creates. The government has always been an obstacle to this end, to the free fulfillment of our most basic needs. This doesn't mean that austerity gives us no strategic advantages to exploit; we must turn the management of social tension into a full-blown insurrection.





**BLACK PANTHER PARTY FREE
BREAKFAST PROGRAM**

History of Food Stamps

During the Great Depression, the mass movements of the 1930's pushed the government to release food and money to those without work. This resistance took many forms. Millions of everyday Americans, out of work and without opportunities, took over and lived in vacant homes, occupied workplaces and went on strike, and disrupted welfare centers and demanded benefits. In the 1960's, millions of people revolted against racism, poverty, and the war in Vietnam. Poor and working class African-Americans took to the streets en mass, bringing many urban centers to a state of insurrection as they faced off against the National Guard and racist police. The government passed the Food Stamps Act in 1964, as an attempt to pacify the poor population, especially people of color in the US.

Counter-Insurgency

In Oakland, the state aimed itself especially at the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense using the COINTELPRO (Counter Intelligence Program), which used assassinations, police violence, infiltration, and imprisonment to disrupt revolutionary groups. By the 1980's, the government had succeeded in disrupting the group's organizing efforts and moved to flood the streets with crack-cocaine as a means of destabilizing the black community and funding a proxy war in Latin America. This project of counter-insurgency continues to this day. Attacks on benefit programs continue this assault on poor and working class people and in a period when many people are often not organized to fight back. At a time when we are weak, those in power move to take even more away from us.

Effects in the Bay Area

In the coming years, city planners, politicians, and developers want to add over 200 hundred thousand more people to San Francisco - although they know full-well that many of the poor and working class residents will be forced out. This ongoing gentrification of San Francisco is adding to the ongoing gentrification of the East Bay. As foreclosure has pushed many out of their homes, real estate agents have snapped them up, transforming entire neighborhoods. As developers make millions, what better way to push out the poor from their neighborhoods than to literally starve them out. With benefits being cut, many people will continue to find the rising cost of living in the bay area to be unbearable and they will be forced to leave.

In order to not merely just survive, but to sever the hand that feeds us and win our freedom, we must lend our actions toward

making visible the contradictions within capitalism. It is the system that has forced us into poverty, not us. But it is the struggles and revolts of those before us that won us the crumbs that we depend on now. But we must break out of this cycle of constant crisis. Confrontations with capital have and will continue to occur, from building occupations, defense from eviction of foreclosed homes, going out on strike against poor wages and conditions, and organizing against police terror.

In Oakland's rich history of resistance, people undertook a general strike in 1946 in solidarity with other workers and against poor conditions. The Black Panthers formed community programs to feed children, treat the sick, and deal with community problems. The Occupy Oakland camp fed thousands, provided free health-care, and held a space against the police and the government. Occupy the Farm on UC Berkeley property planted and reared crops in the face of government repression. Across Oakland, people have squatted and taken homes abandoned by landlords and banks. We must find other collective ways to meet our needs against the daily realities of poverty and a rising cost of living.

**COME TO THE MUTUAL AID
FOOD PROGRAM AT QILOMBO,
A RADICAL SOCIAL CENTER
IN OAKLAND, AT 2313 SAN
PABLO (BY CORNER OF WEST
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12:30. QILOMBO.ORG**



**OCCUPY OAKLAND
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ISSUE 3

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✧ **Assembly of** ✧
Bay Area Residents
planning resistance to the tech takeover

come to find others taking action

meet other tenants fighting displacement

resist the proliferation of surveillance

combat racist 'redevelopment'

come to plan actions with others

Saturday,
April 5th
at Two PM
24 and Mission
BART Plaza

defendthebayarea.org
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Radical Spaces:

qilombo.org (Oakland)

thepublicschool.org (Oakland)

station40events.wordpress.com (SF)

boundtogetherbooks.wordpress.com (SF)

thelonghaul.org (Berkeley)

justiceforalanblueford.org (Oakland)

Support:

thetrayvon2.wordpress.com

supporttheacac19.wordpress.com

eastbayprisonersupport.wordpress.com

justice4tristan.org

Media Projects:

bayareaintifada.wordpress.com

slingshot.tao.ca

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