

Firestorm

March '09 News from the Valley Class War Free



People's Bailout
City and pigs attempt to shut down event. Over one hundred come out.

Stolen Food Given Away in Airport
A group calling itself the "Robin Hoods" leaves food and a message behind.

Modesto Needle Exchange
New community program fights disease.

Danny Armenta
Turlock man attempts to take back food in times of recession.

Police Repression in Stockton
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Eric McDavid
Anarchist prisoner faces new challenges.

City of Modesto Attempts to Shut Down 'People's Bailout'

On Saturday, January 17th, Modesto Anarcho Crew organized an event called, the 'People's Bailout.' The event featured free groceries, workshops on foreclosure and squatting, and also a discussion on working class responses to the ongoing economic crisis. Free literature tables were set up and a hot meal was also served to everyone. Over 100 people attended the event, which was totally free.



Presenters included a local community organizer who works for a small real estate company, who gave a Q & A workshop for those facing foreclosure. Modesto Needle Exchange was also on hand, talking about the need for community based responses to the growth of needle sharing related diseases.

Despite the obvious need for such an event, the local police and city government showed where their true interests lie, as police on motorbikes continually drove through the event and city officials attempted to shut it down. Despite these attempts, the crowd remained steadfast and after about an hour city officials realized that their efforts would not scare people away. The event continued uninterrupted throughout the afternoon.

Whenever working people start to organize to take action against a system that exploits and abuses them, the structures of power will be there to try and keep us in our place. Our greatest weapon against them is our solidarity between ourselves and our collective ability to fight back in a variety of ways.

'Appropriated' Food Given Away in Airport

In late February, a group calling itself the 'Robin Hoods,' posted this communique' on Central Valley Indymedia.

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



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

We believe that solidarity with others means attack against common enemies. We have thus carried out this action not only to attack the capitalists directly and distribute food free of charge to our friends and neighbors, but also to denounce the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors, which recently voted down a needle exchange program that would help stop the spread of HIV and Hepatitis and give direct aid to those addicted to various drugs. This decision directly affects those living in the Airport Neighborhood, as it is an area with a high amount of heroin use. We were also inspired to carry out this action by the recent case of Turlock man, Danny Armenta, 48, who was arrested after attempting to walk out of a store with over \$100 in groceries.

They can get one of us, but they can't get all of us. As the recession heats up - so must our resistance. From the ongoing job layoffs in the valley to the recent closing of Teel Middle School in Empire due to budget cuts, if we don't start fighting directly - soon we will have nothing left to fight for.

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

-The Robin Hoods"

Firestorm

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

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

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

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

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Needle Exchange Program Fights Spread of Hepatitis and HIV in Working Class Areas

Several months ago, the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors voted against a Needle Exchange program in this area. Enraged by this decision and also aware of the continuous spreading of Hepatitis C and HIV through the sharing of needles, local anarchists decided to organize a needle exchange program in the Airport District, known for high amounts of heroin users. So far, the group has distributed hundreds of clean needles out into the community and has successfully collected many dirty ones and disposed of them properly. The group has also distributed biohazard containers which encourages people to store them safely, as opposed to leaving them littered around the neighborhood, possibly risking infecting or injuring someone. Many within the community have already expressed their support for such a program, knowing that a needle exchange service will help cut down on the spread of disease and discarded needles. Modesto Needle Exchange happens every two weeks at Mono Park in the Airport District at 3pm. Upcoming exchanges are March 14th and 28th. For more info, email: anarcho209@yahoo.com, or check out myspace.com/209Wingnuts.



Danny Armenta, A Hero For Our Time... We Only Need to Steal Back Our Lives!

The following text is from a new poster/flyer produced by Modesto Anarcho Crew, that is available for download on our website at: www.myspace.com/modanarcho or upon request at anarcho209@yahoo.com.

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

We support the actions of Danny Armenta, because we support poor and working people appropriating (taking back) what belongs to them: the products that we as working and poor people create, distribute, and are forced into buying. This is a system of wage slavery, in which the rich hold all the cards and we struggle just to survive.

And no one knows better about survival in this brutal economy than those living in the Central Valley of California. We are facing the brunt of the economic crisis brought

on by capitalism itself. The rich have created this perfect storm, along with the looming ecological disaster that is starting to unfold now and threatens to set fire to the future. Everywhere we face an ongoing social war waged at us by those who benefit from this pyramid scheme of repression and misery. In the work place, in the streets, and across the globe. For those that would dream of not playing by the system's rules, the rich are happy to flood our communities with millions of police, check points, prisons, detention centers, and surveillance systems.

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

"Shoplifters of the World - Unite and Take Over!"
-Morrissey



Another Police Murder in the Central Valley

In December of 2008, Stockton Police shot to death a man who came out of his home in a high crime area of Stockton with a handgun, after he saw police arresting a man in his front yard. More recently in February, Stockton police were reported by witnesses to have savagely beaten a 45 year old man and then proceeded to taser him repeatedly after he attempted to flee from arrest. The man later died as a result of the incident. According to a recent University of California, San Francisco study of 50 U.S. cities showed that in-custody sudden deaths increased six times in the first year after law enforcement started using stun guns compared to before their use.

This trend of brutality is nothing new, and is something happening throughout the Central Valley. In Woodland last year, police tasered a mentally disturbed man to death after he proved 'difficult' to officers during an investigation. Modesto police shot to death a mentally disturbed 44 year old man after he was seen downtown with a sword, claiming he made threatening motions towards a police officer. The police refuse to release the footage of the incident. In Fresno, police were recently caught on tape savagely beating a homeless man. The question that we must ask ourselves when these things happen is: do we have to put up with any of this? What should our response be when the police beat, torture, and murder people in our communities? What should we do when the police gain more power over our lives through new laws and ordinances? What should we do when city governments install new networks of surveillance cameras throughout our cities that give the police more control over our day to day movements and freedoms?

Recent events in Greece, where anarchists, youth, immigrants, and workers launched a insurrection after police killed a young anarchist in an autonomous neighborhood, show the way forward. People occupied schools, union halls, and government buildings, fighting the police and attacking symbols of capitalism. In Oakland, people rioted and fought police in the wake of the BART police killing of Oscar Grant. These explosions of working class power show that revolt against the police is possible. We can get together with friends and attack the systems of social control as they spread throughout our cities. We can get organized to make our neighborhoods no go areas for the police to enter. We can organize where we live to try and resolve problems between each other so that we don't have to call the police. More importantly, we need to build our own power and start to fight back when the police kill, torture, and murder our friends and neighbors. If they are afraid of what we will do when they kill one of us - they'll think twice the next time they're about to pull that trigger.



Eric McDavid: 3 Years Later

Eric McDavid was arrested in Auburn, CA in January of 2006 as part of the government's ongoing Green Scare (wave of repression against non-reformist environmental activists) campaign. He was convicted of "conspiracy to destroy property by means of fire or explosives," despite no crime actually taking place. With conspiracy charges, you don't have to actually prove a crime took place; only that someone was maybe thinking about a crime taking place. This amounts to Thought Crime; criminalizing our thoughts. Eric's trial (for which members of Modesto Anarcho Crew were present) was riddled with lies, misconstrued evidence, and prejudice on the hands of the government. He's now serving a prison sentence of nearly twenty years.

Eric was arrested with two co-defendants, Zachary Jenson and Lauren Weiner. The government's case is based on the word of a single FBI informant who was paid over \$75,000 to fabricate a crime and implicate the trio. Both of Eric's co-defendants have since caved under the threat of being imprisoned for 20 years and plead guilty to a lesser charge, as well as agreeing to testify against Eric.

For two and a half years, Eric was held in an isolation unit at Sacramento County Jail, in solitary confinement. Eric is a Vegan, and doesn't eat meat, dairy, or eggs, and struggled with obtaining proper food, suffering numerous health issues. On June 6th of 2008, he was finally moved to the Federal prison at FCI Victorville, where supporters hoped he'd have better living conditions. However, the prisoners at Victorville have been the focus of heavy government reprisal lately.

Since June, Victorville has undergone lockdown after lockdown, during which prisoners have no access to the outside world, including phone, internet, and even visitation. On December 23rd 2008, prisoners rioted, resulting in 6 of them being taken to an outside hospital, and 17 to be treated in the prison for injuries ranging from stab wounds to blunt trauma. Friends and family of Eric waited for two weeks, not knowing if he was ok.

On February 13 2009, Victorville's Medium II facility, where Eric was being held, went on lockdown. Media reports indicated that an improvised explosive device (IED) detonated upon detection, but that no injuries were reported. In a recent letter, however, Eric detailed his version of the story.

On Saturday the 14th, at around 1 pm, the prison began block-

ing out windows on the cells so that inmates couldn't see into the day room. Shortly after, the water to the toilet in Eric's cell was turned off. At around 2pm they pulled the cardboard from Eric's window, revealing squads of cops in full riot gear waiting outside of the cell. Eric and his cell mate were made to strip. His cell mate was thrown in the hole, and Eric was escorted to a van. He and two others were taken to the hole at the Medium I. Eventually, he was escorted into a room where two FBI agents were waiting to question him. They claimed that an IED had injured a staff member at the Medium II (contrary to media reports which claimed no one was injured) and that they would need to take DNA samples as part of their investigation. Eric denied their request and they threatened to get a court order. At that point he gave them his lawyer's information and Eric was taken back to his cell. There's a sign taped to the door of his cell, demanding that he must be escorted by three guards anytime he leaves the cell.

Supporters have no way of knowing how long the investigation will take, or if Eric can receive visitors. This is one more in a series of struggles for him. Eric never committed any crime. Eric never hurt anyone. He faces spending the next 20 years of his life in jail, not because he did anything wrong, but because the government wants to use him to prove a point. Eric's case is in appeal, and supporters are hopeful. He is joined by other victims of the Green Scare such as the SHAC 7, Marie Mason, and the resent AETA arrestees in the Bay Area, not to mention the 3/4 of american prisoners who are incarcerated for non-violent crimes.

Rather than serving as examples of government power, let these few men and women serve as examples of people taking control over their own lives, and impacting the world around them. Let them also serve as a reminder; for every person they imprison, there are hundreds more of us they'll never catch.

For more on Eric's case, and how you can help, visit www.supporteric.org

you may find us among those who resist. who fight back. who refuse to lie down and accept their lot.



RECESSION OR REVOLUTION?

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we are workers against work. we are citizens against the state. we are voices of the coming insurrection.