

# *Modesto Anarcho*

the valley's insurrectionary journal of class struggle

as  
repression  
grows...



revolt spreads like wildfire #10



# What We Believe

**We want a stateless and classless society.** We want to live in a self-governing 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. 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 freedom - in which groups and communities brought together by mutual aid, solidarity, and cooperation can live lives as they see fit - liberated from domination, repression, coercion, and control. We want to build genuine human relationships in which people can discover their self-worth, realize their potential, and liberate their desires - and also fight against their current conditions.

**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, the military, and borders. Through these systems of domination, governments of the world ensure that working class and oppressed people stay in the roles designed for them: subservient workers and passive citizens. We are against capitalism, because it is based upon *class society*; a world where a few own everything that we need in order to survive and the rest of us are forced to work for them. This is a system of wage slavery - in which we trade our time and lives for wages and then buy back what we need to survive with those wages. Capitalism deforms and contorts all human relationships by turning everything into a commodity, including the Earth, living things, and our very lives. Capitalism cannot exist without government - it needs the government's violence to protect the privileged position of those who benefit from it. We reject the reformism of the Left - we are revolutionaries. We do not desire a seat at the table of politics; **we desire working class power.** Thus, we believe that class society can only be destroyed by a mass movement of all working, poor, and oppressed people. We believe in people self-organizing for the purpose of taking direct action.

**Modesto Anarcho** is a project to document and expand resistance to class society, specifically in the Central Valley of California. We want to use this publication to focus on local struggles and highlight what regular people are doing in this area to confront and combat the misery of working class life. **Modesto Anarcho** seeks to increase the confidence of working class and oppressed people in regards to our ability to fight back, self-organize, and resist collectively and as individuals. This project is open and participatory - we invite all who share in our ideas to take part in this magazine. Above all, we seek comrades in our struggle.

***We have no demands for this system; we seek only its destruction.***

They say now with Obama in office things will be different. We've been told that the new President gives us a new opportunity; that by putting pressure on him, things will swing in our favor. Sorry, but that's not how politics and capitalism works and most people know it. Since Obama was elected in this country, the US war in Iraq and Afghanistan has continued to rage on. Thousands of people have been locked away in cages with millions more already in prison or in some way connected to the system of imprisonment. The environment continues to be degraded and destroyed for the sake of profit - even as Obama and much of the Left hold up fake solutions to the crisis such as "clean coal" and a "greener, nicer" capitalism. Since Obama's election we've seen the US supported state of Israel invade what is left of the Palestinian territories - massacring hundreds with bullets and bombs - all while Obama plays golf and flirts with the media. In California, BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit) Police shot at point blank range Oscar Grant, a young, unarmed, black man who was handcuffed at the time. While the system may claim over and over again that America's past problems with racism have been overcome with a black President now in office, it is clear that the structure of this system itself is still clearly based upon continued brutality and violence against poor and of color people. Locally, home foreclosures in the valley continue to go on, as many are pushed out of their homes by predatory banks and firms. The recession is driving many into the red, as millions feel the effects of low paying jobs, prolonged unemployment, and the high cost of living. If it hasn't been made clear already - it should be clear now. Obama has changed nothing. Class society is still structured around sucking us dry for the sake of generating more profits and power for the rich and powerful. Many may have placed their dreams within the ballot box, but they will have to keep dreaming if they wish for "change" and "hope" to be more than just slogans and buzz words.

But there are rumblings - signs of a coming clash between people and capital. In Miami, a group called Take Back the Land, that successfully squatted a vacant lot and created a make-shift city out of pallets and discarded items, has begun to squat foreclosed homes. This activity has successfully housed many families and occupations of vacant homes continue. In Chicago, workers successfully occupied their workplace for six days after they received lay off notices and forced their workplace to provide them with millions in severance pay and health insurance. In Georgia and Oakland, people rioted against the police murder of black people, holding the streets, fighting the police, and attacking property. Finally, back in the distance, the fires of Greece have been burning, as the police murder of an anarchist youth in an anarchist controlled neighborhood has lead to a full on social war between youth, students and workers on one side, and the police and the government on the other. We also must not forget the string of solidarity demonstrations, actions, attacks, and occupations that have happened throughout the country and the world in solidarity with the above events. Solidarity, if it means anything,



equates to active resistance with shared enemies and targets; building our collective power towards our own goals and interests. With the specter of anarchist revolution floating over Greece as workers occupy their union halls in solidarity with the rioters and towns folk occupy municipal buildings - anything now seems possible. Despite how bad so many things are across the world, millions have shown that there still are people out there who are willing to buck up and fight. They have shown that we can accomplish so much more by directly attacking and fighting against our class enemies than we ever could by voting for a politician - no matter how much they hold out the carrot and stick of "hope" and "change." Once again, class struggle is on the streets of the world in a real way, involving millions of people. We need to be part of this movement - this global push against the rich and their control over all our lives.

There is much to be excited about in the coming days, months, and years. This project continues to move forward and we as the Modesto Anarcho Crew are still committed to our ongoing activities and our participation in ongoing struggles now more than ever. As always, we hope to meet more and more people who are fed up with the current state of affairs and ready to start to resist in a variety of ways. Hopefully, as more people start to reject the horrible conditions which make up our lives, they will also see that the political system offers us nothing but empty promises and more of the same. Direct and uncompromising class conflict should be our only way forward - if we are only willing to take the up the banner of revolt. After all, the trick is really to begin.

-crudo

***Party like it's 2009.***

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*Modesto Anarcho* is written, produced, and distributed by the Modesto Anarcho Crew (MAC), a crew of local working class hooligans hell bent on raising class consciousness and participating in social struggle. This magazine is published quarterly, and is distributed freely throughout the Modesto area. We operate several free boxes throughout the city, and copies can also be obtained at Modesto Junior College and the Modesto Library. If you would like to distribute *Modesto Anarcho* at work, where you live, in prison, or at school, write to us or email us with a request. We ship free to prisoners in California and distribute a variety of anarchist and class struggle publications. Prisoners, write to us for more info. Submissions to *Modesto Anarcho* #11 should be in by late March. We accept articles, poetry, artwork, and letters. To contact us by mail, write to us at: Modesto Anarcho, PO Box 3027, Modesto, CA 95353. Email us at: [anarcho209@yahoo.com](mailto:anarcho209@yahoo.com). Visit us on myspace at [www.myspace.com/modanarcho](http://www.myspace.com/modanarcho). *Modesto Anarcho* is a not for profit project and has many expenses. Please consider making a donation of well hidden cash to us for any amount.

## **What We've Been Doing**

*by crudo*

In order to keep everyone up to speed with the ongoing exploits of the Modesto Anarcho Crew, I'm bringing you yet another installment of 'What We've Been Doing.' Regular readers of this magazine will note that this issue is lacking a prisoner letters section as well as a poetry section. While we greatly value both of these sections of the magazine, due to space restrictions and also time restraints, we were not able to fit them into this issue. We apologize to those that wrote letters and poems and submitted them to us - we hope to feature them in the next issue.

Now, on to the exciting stuff. During the Fall, we were graced with the presence of anti-capitalist revolutionary comrades from France and England who came out to view the epicenter of the foreclosure crisis and see the effects on the community in the last year or so. We showed them around and also took them to see a friend of ours who deals in a small real estate company and works with many working class families who have been foreclosed on. Meeting these comrades was an extraordinary experience, as we discussed the possibilities of autonomous direct class action in both of our areas.

Our support for the occupied [chican@indigenous](mailto:chican@indigenous) DQ-University has also remained constant. Over the Fall and into the Winter, the Modesto Anarcho Crew made several trips up to the campus, which remains the largest occupied/squatted area of land in California (and possibly the United States - to our knowledge), and donated food, supplies, and work hours. As we write this, we prepare for another trip in late January, where our friends in Copwatch LA will come up to the campus and show a documentary film that they have created.

During the Fall, protests against Prop 8, which made gay marriage illegal in California, broke out. Some of these interested us, because many people lead unpermitted marches, held streets from the cops, and in some cases, attacked churches and other institutions that were backing the proposition. Hoping that the struggle against Prop 8 would turn more into an all on struggle and away from just an electoral fiasco, we crafted a flyer that articulated this view and handed them out at local demonstrations and provided many anarchist publications regarding queer issues. Several of us also made and held a banner at the largest demonstration that read "Smash Homophobia."

Over the Fall and Winter, the Modesto Anarcho Crew also started a theory discussion group that has since met twice, once in November and again in December. In early December, we took a trip down to LA, where we tabled at the LA Anarchist Bookfair. We received lots of donations for our publications, but more importantly, we made many connections with a variety of comrades. Also in December, our Crew organized a march in solidarity with Greek anarchists and the ongoing insurrection that is gripping the country.

As we go to print, we are poised to put on our biggest public event yet as the Modesto Anarcho Crew, entitled the Peoples' Bailout. The event will feature free grocery and food goods, as well as several workshops on the foreclosure crisis and squatting. We hope this event will be the start of serious community involvement with the Crew in the wider Modesto area and also hopefully generate more interest in our ideas and activities. Be sure to check out *Modesto Anarcho* #11 for a report back from the event! See you in the streets.





**Ripon Robbers Give Themselves a Bailout:** In Ripon on October 10th, a bank was robbed. We are always glad to see people starting Fall off right and bailing themselves out while the rich suck us dry.

**French Camp Youth Prisoner Bashes Back:** According to the *Stockton Record*, a 16-year-old boy could face felony battery charges after he attacked a detention officer at the San Joaquin County Juvenile Detention Center. The youth was already in custody at the detention center when he assaulted the officer in early October. The officer suffered several lacerations on his face, a broken nose, two black eyes and a gash to his lip.

**Workers Picket in Patterson:** Workers began picket actions in Patterson at the Walnut Grove School construction site at Walnut Avenue and Hartley Street on October 22nd. According to the *Patterson Irrigator*, "About five men carried signs in front of the site and inflated a large inflatable rat. The men would not identify themselves except to say if people wanted information, they should read the signs and call Union Local 81. The signs read, 'Horizon Roofing Inc. does not meet conditions established by roofers and water-prooferers in this area.'" Workers have been picketing at various locations each Friday, over a dispute over wages. As one picketer stated, "We'll be back."

**Merced Bank Robbers Attempt Proletarian Bailout:** According to the *Merced Sun Star*, on October 23rd, two unarmed men robbed a bank in Merced. After getting the cash they fled on bikes, only to have an ink cartridge that was inserted inside the appropriated funds explode, causing the

two men to drop the cash. Isn't it time the bank tellers and the bank robbers started working together so we can all get a piece of the pie that the rich are taking?

**Modesto Pro-Squatting Graffiti Found near Dry Creek:** In late October, it was reported that pro-squatting and anti-police graffiti was found along Dry Creek in Modesto, where many homeless people squat down by the river. Slogans included, "187 on Pigs," "No War but Class War," and "Squat the City." It was also reported that anti-camping signs were also defaced.

**Woodland Republicans Beat Up From the Feet Up:** According to the *Daily Democrat*, "Overnight, an unidentified vandal threw what looked like a lead flower pot through the lower half of the glass window at the Yolo County Republican Headquarters Friday morning. This is the culmination of months worth of rude phone calls, sign stealing, and vandalism against members of the...Party."

**Modesto Republican Office gets To' Up from the Flo' Up:** According to an anonymous communiqué posted on indybay.org, the Stanislaus County Republican office had it's windows broken out on Halloween night. The communiqué stated:

"On Halloween night the Republican storefront in Modesto was attacked. Two railroad spikes were thrown through the window. As about eight workers waited outside their place of work a black clad figure walked by. It took one spike to weaken the window, and one more to drop it.



Nobody gave chase.

Its time we take the power we want. To show that Obama nor McCain will ever have our interest at heart. We interject the new ballot. The ballot that demands to be counted in monetary damage. We are everywhere. We are sick of you. Children go hungry while you rot in decadence. Feel threatened, be afraid, because you make us feel that way every time one of your cops rolls down our streets, every time that bright spotlight hits our face. The war is on.

We love all of you who are also resisting in Tacoma, Santa Cruz, Minneapolis, Indiana, and everywhere else. May the moon stay behind the clouds and streetlights stay dim.

We will win."

**Banner Drop and Slogans Appear in Modesto in Solidarity with Chicago and Greek Revolts:** In Modesto, a banner was placed on I and 10th Streets, apparently in solidarity with the actions of workers in Chicago who occupied their workplace in opposition to lay offs. The banner read, "Chicago was Awesome! Take over everything and fight the rich!" Graffiti also appeared throughout the city in support of the Greek insurrection (more info about Greece located in this issue) and in opposition to US government bailouts and home foreclosures. Slogans read, "From Modesto to Greece - Destroy Class Society!," and "Kill Cops Who Kill Kids! Alex was here."



**Sonora Banner Dropped in Solidarity with Greek Revolt:** A banner was dropped in downtown Sonora off of the city hall building in solidarity with the Greek uprising. It read, "Greece is only the Beginning! RIP Alexis."



**Modesto Anarchists take to Streets in Support of Greek Insurrection:** According to a post on indybay, anarchists in Modesto responded to a call by Greek comrades to demonstrate on December 20th. The report back read:

"For nearly two years anarchists have stayed off the streets of Modesto as an organized presence. That is until last night. After a gathering of about 30 people at a local coffee shop, where comrades discussed the situation in Greece and read aloud a text from a prepared flyer on the revolt and how it relates to what is happening in the Central Valley of California, about 20-25 people took to the streets of downtown Modesto. Many of those in attendance that night had never engaged with others or organized themselves for such an activity as taking over a street for a march, so for many of the working class hooligan youths who marched for about 10 minutes to the downtown area of 10th and J Street, last night was a learning experience. Marchers held a large banner in front reading, "Solidarity With Greece! For Global Resistance!," carried signs such as, "No Justice, No Peace! From Modesto to Greece," and several youths carried anarchist black flags. The group chanted, "Who's Streets? Our Streets," and variations of, "From Modesto to Greece: Fight the Police!"

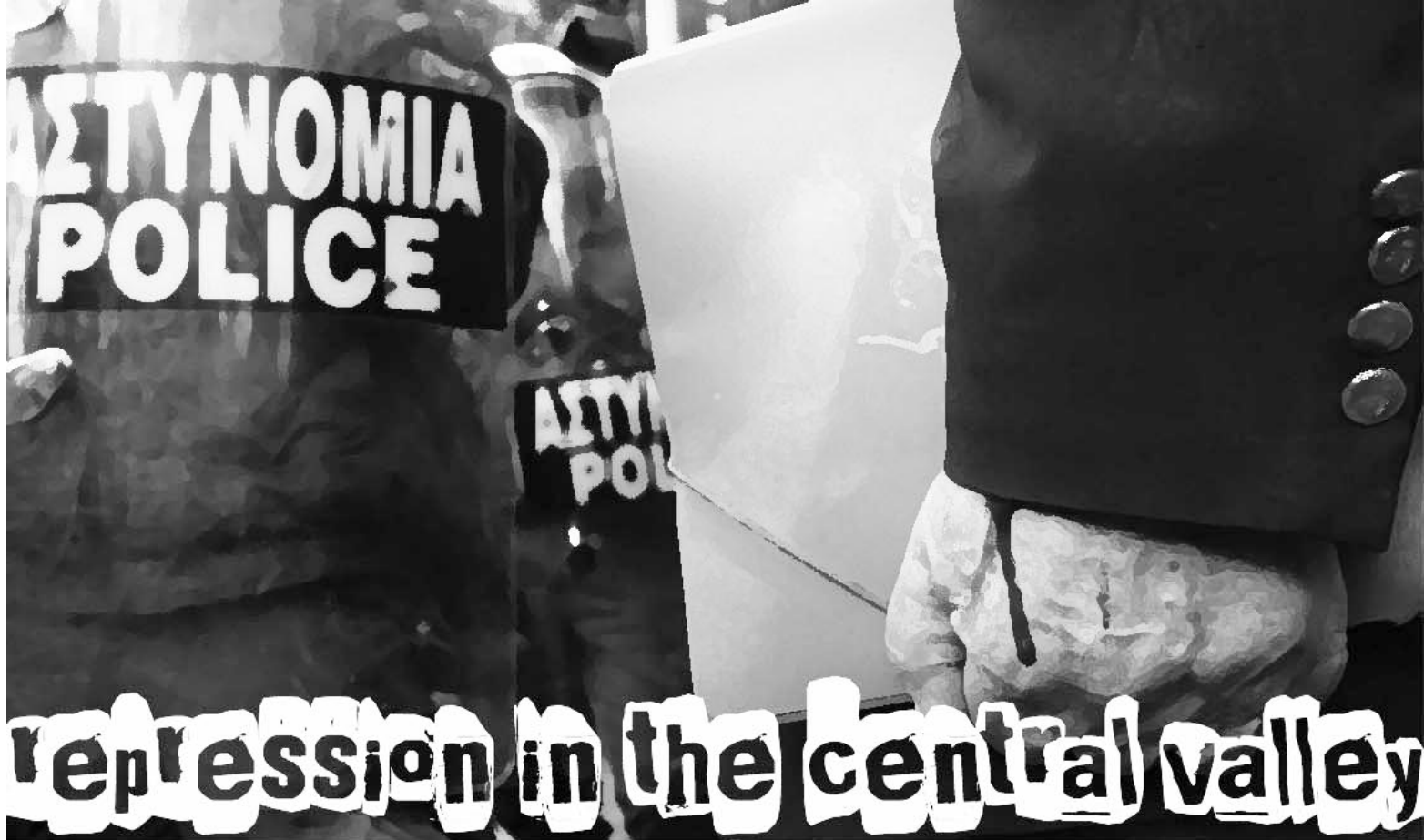
Right as the group approached it's desired endpoint, the police showed up. The group did not stop and marched into the downtown blocked off street of 10th and J Street. There, youths engaged with the public and passed out several hundred flyers on car windows and to passersby. Although it was cold and not many people were about, we still accomplished our goal of taking the street, holding it, marching to our destination, and then engaging with people.

Members of Modesto Anarcho Crew (MAC - wat wat) also made it clear that the conditions in the Central Valley are just as ripe for insurrection and revolution as Greece. Several people pointed out that a young man of color was just shot to death by pigs in Stockton (about 20 minutes north of Modesto) when he came out of his house in a high crime neighborhood with a licensed firearm during the arrest of another man. The Greeks should not have all the fun. We have buildings to occupy, police to fight, and resources to appropriate as well.

Being that this demonstration was organized in less than three days mainly through social networking websites and friend networks - I would say last night was a success and hopefully only the start of things to come. Until I can light my cigarette on my own burning barricade, keep bringin da soc war - here, there, and everywhere."

**Graffiti in Response to Gaza Bombing:** In early January, it was reported that graffiti slogans appeared in North Modesto in response to the Israeli bombing of Gaza (Palestine) and massacre of the people living there. Slogans reported included, "Fuck Racism - Fuck Israel! Free Palestine, Intifada!" and "Burn Israel - Intifada!"





**More Police Surveillance Technology for Lathrop:** According to the *Manteca Bulletin*, the mayor of Lathrop wants to install cameras at "all entrances and exits of the city" that would be used to get the license plates of vehicles coming in to and leaving the city. This would be used to help the police catch suspects and better issue tickets, increase the ever expanding power of the police over all our lives, and give the city elites another way to sap money from us. Lathrop, like many Central Valley cities, have taken their cue from the city of Ripon, which received grants from the Department of Homeland Security and various corporations to put in an expansive surveillance system throughout the small town. For more info on surveillance, see *Modesto Anarcho* #3.

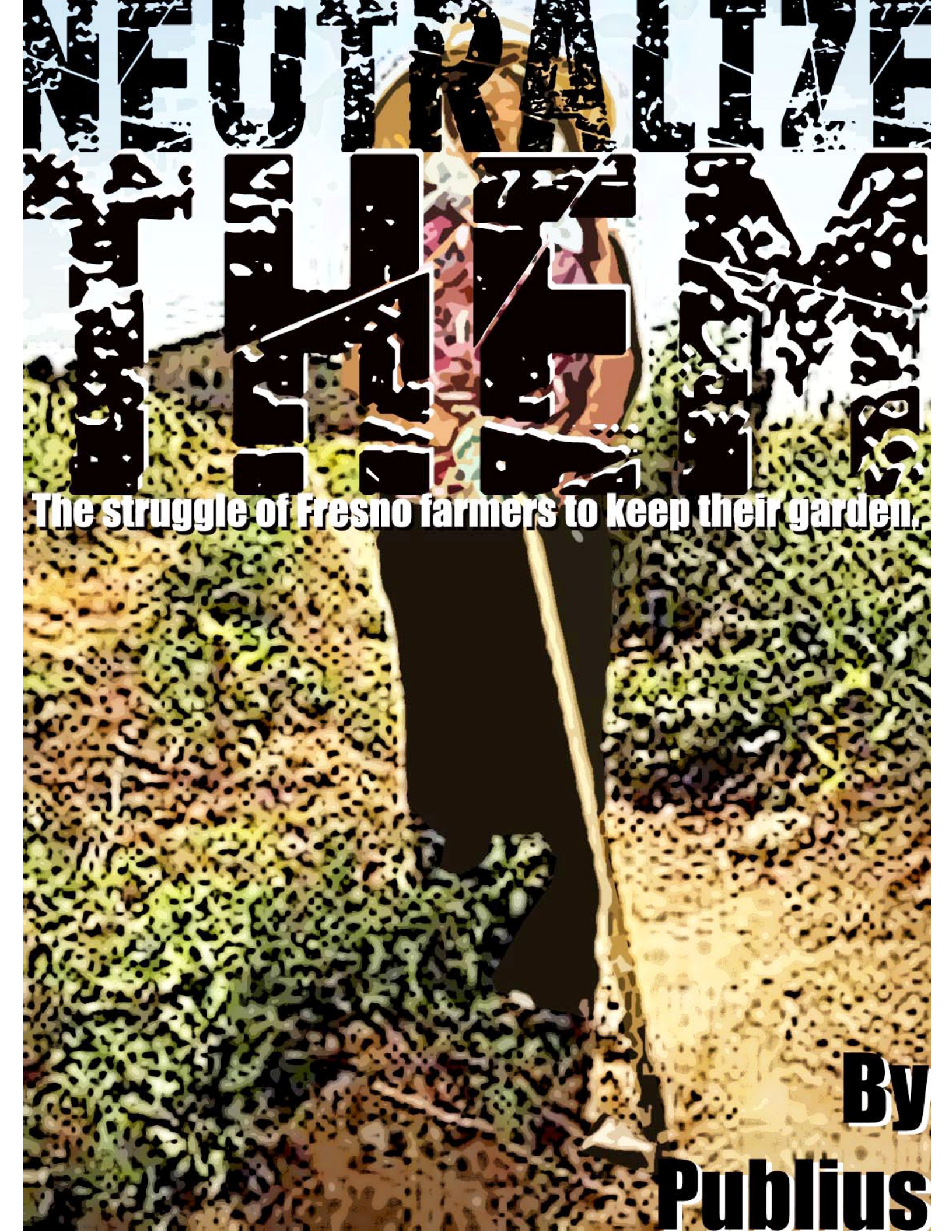
**Stockton Man Killed by Police:** According to the *Stockton Record*, a young man was killed in Stockton after he came out of his home in a high crime neighborhood with a legally licensed firearm during the arrest of another man in front of his home. Police shot the man to death in cold blood. Another police murder of a poor person of color. As Greece and Oakland erupt in fury over police killings, we must ask when the Central Valley will explode in working class anger as well.

**Modesto Man Arrested by Immigration Police After Standoff:** According to the *Modesto Bee*, a man was arrested after a standoff with police and immigration agents. Agents from Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) called Modesto police officers for help when they tried to arrest the man after he refused their orders to surrender and face deportation. Officers shot a beanbag and a taser at the man, who was with his two small children. This is yet another example of how the police work closely with the government (ICE agents) to break up and deport families and re-enforce the racist foundations of the power structure.

**DQ-University Still Under Attack:** The occupied chican@/indigenous DQ-University is still facing problems from the corrupt Board of Trustees which claims to control the school, according to indybay.org. Representatives with the Board showed up at the school and attempted to enter the dorms of students to get documents and other items. Threats of violence and racial slurs were hurled at occupiers, but those who bravely are defending the campus stood their ground and eventually forced the intruders to leave. Support at DQ-University is still needed by way of people occupying the space, funds, and basic supplies. For more information check out *Modesto Anarcho* #7 and [www.myspace.com/dquniversity](http://www.myspace.com/dquniversity).

**Pesticides Linked to Spread of Disease:** According to the *Merced Sun Star*, researchers have found a strong connection between debilitating neurological diseases and long-term exposure to pesticides, particularly to a fungicide that is sprayed on thousands of acres of almonds, tree fruit, and grapes in the Central Valley. According to one article, "More than 660,000 pounds of ziram were used on crops in Fresno, Kings, Madera, Merced, Tulare and Kern counties in 2006, the most recent year for which figures are available. About 1.3 million pounds of the fungicide were used statewide, according to the California Department of Pesticide Control. In Stanislaus County, 48,800 pounds of ziram were applied to crops in 2006, including 41,000 pounds on almonds. The fungicide was used on peaches and apricots, too. More than 52,000 pounds were used on crops in San Joaquin County. The research showed the fungicide kills certain brain cells, and their death has been associated with Parkinson's disease." Industrial agriculture not only enslaves millions of migrant workers and destroys the environment - but also puts all of us at risk.



A photograph of a person's legs and feet in a field, with a large, stylized title overlaid. The person is wearing a patterned shirt and dark pants. The ground is dry and dusty. The title is in large, bold, black letters with a white outline, reading "NEUTRALIZE THE STRIKE".

# NEUTRALIZE THE STRIKE

The struggle of Fresno farmers to keep their garden.

By  
Publius



Understand first of all that capitalism is the enemy of nature. The first rule of capitalism is to exploit the natural world; transform nature into commodities. Understand, secondly, that capitalism is the enemy of humanity. Just as nature is a depository of "resources," humanity is a source of labor power for the conversion of nature into commodities. The second rule of capitalism is to exploit labor; transform humans into efficient laboring machines. Capitalism can thus be defined as an economic system based on the furious conversion of ourselves and everything around us into money.

Probably nothing is more antithetical to capitalism than a garden. A garden gathers the elements of nature into a continuous whole; capitalism and its handmaidens, science and technology, divide, separate and manipulate. A garden brings plants and humans alike into the air and sun and creates beauty. Capitalism isolates people in fluorescent cubicles and factories and creates ugliness and deformity. Gardeners organize their own work and enjoy directly the literal fruits (and veggies) of labor. A laborer's work is organized by an external force to whom the product of labor is delivered. Life in a garden is self-sufficient, Life in capitalism needs alcohol, television, and religious mania.

Naturally, gardens must be destroyed and replaced by police stations. Welcome to the corner of Belmont and Dewitt in east Fresno.

If you go out to Belmont and Dewitt you will see a rare and beautiful sight. Over the past thirteen years Hmong gardeners—mostly elders, refugees from the secret CIA wars in Laos and Cambodia-- have transformed a four and a half acre, weed-strewn city lot into a thriving community garden. Purple tinged Thai basil and colorful hot chiles, squashes and bitter melon, elegant leaves of sugar cane and lemon grass--the garden is an oasis in the midst of run down apartments, convenience stores, and mean streets. It is also an important basis of food security for three hundred family members, friends and neighbors of the Hmong gardeners. At press time, the gardeners have some confidence that they may have won a new location for their valuable work to continue, though nothing has been certain in the brief history of the Hmong Community Garden. Here is the sordid story.

Over a decade ago the city of Fresno used federal community block development grants to purchase the Belmont/Dewitt lot for \$100,000, intending, they said, to build a park. The city gave permission to Hmong people to garden (the Hmong have paid for water at very high rates). Nearby land was being rezoned for a new development by notorious Fresno developers Ed Kashian and Tom Richards of no river, no park, no Chinatown redevelopment fame. As part of the Fancher Creek plan Kashian-Richards promised to provide space for a substation and aid in its construction. A clear financial arrangement was never provided, however, and the city believed Kashian was aiming to charge exorbitant interest rates for the money put up front for the cost of building the station. The police and a budget crisis intervened and the substation was moved to "a more convenient location"—Belmont and Dewitt with the Hmong garden now

being "sold" by Parks and Rec to the Police for \$720,000. This budgetary sleight of hand, barely legal under state law, freed up money for the construction of the sub-station to begin. Gardens have compost piles; city halls are developer cesspools.

The council member from the Belmont Dewitt area, Caprioglio, used a Hmong staff member to mistranslate Hmong gardeners' statements, claiming that the gardeners had agreed to a move to nearby Melody Park. This would have been surprising since there is no cultivable land there. The intended gardening space is a fraction of the size of the B-D garden and is currently a ponding basin. If the ponding basin is ever filled in, the rows will be provided by lottery. The gardeners may wind up without even limited space. Moreover, the park is three miles away; bus service there is poor and most of the gardeners do not drive. They walk to the current site. Caprioglio's statement that he is caring for the Hmong by providing them shade, bathrooms and barbecues at Melody is pure condescension. The gardeners did not ask for and do not need the Melody Park amenities. As several gardeners have said, "We come to work, not to play." The decision to terminate the garden at B-D was concealed in a small budget item and voted on last June. But Hmong gardeners only recently learned that they were to vacate. Community members read about the eviction in the paper, well after the deed was done. The city held no community meetings nor did it inform the gardeners, surrounding residents, or the public at large. Councilmember Blong Xiong voted against the garden claiming that he had not heard from the gardeners. But any doubts about the feelings of the Hmong community and community activists on the matter were erased during a series of council meetings and staff meetings. It became evident that the gardeners and their supporters would defend the garden if necessary. As a result of the growing public pressure, the Council directed city staff to work with the gardeners and find a solution; it now appears that a nearby, suitable site will be developed.

The threat to the Hmong Community garden and the actual destruction of many prominent community gardens around the state (the Mandela garden in Sacramento and the South Central Farm in L.A. come to mind) and the nation is inherent in the logic of capitalism. Capitalism wants dependence and obedience not self-sufficiency and defiance. Gardens are a source for the latter. In the same way that roof top solar allows persons to become energy independent, local gardens allow people to become increasingly food-independent. Utilities and agribusiness want dependency on their high priced, low quality products. The beauty and simplicity of a garden are an affront to the harsh ugliness and gigantism of capitalism. What's more, late stage capitalism faces an array of ecological, economic, social, and political crises. Gardens are a focal point for reorienting ourselves in the capitalist maelstrom and provide a meeting ground for multiple dissident com-  
*(Piece continues after "The Housing Crisis" article.)*





# The housing crisis

## *From Antioch Arrow #1*

The current housing crisis has left many of us in shambles. Homes are getting foreclosed on at rates that leave many real estate agents in absolute shock. A quick internet search brings you to a listing of foreclosed and pre-foreclosed homes. Pre-foreclosure just means that you have a grace period to either find the money to pay your debt or to sell your house. The website [www.foreclosuredeals.com](http://www.foreclosuredeals.com) states that it has 279 houses listed as foreclosures and 1,647 as pre-foreclosures. Yahoo.com real estate reports 3,700 pieces of foreclosed land. This is in Antioch [which is located in the East Bay area] alone, not including Brentwood, Oakley and Pittsburg. Antioch is a town of 100,000.

This situation has been in the making for some time now. In the late 90's, we saw a sudden boom of residential buildings in Antioch, Oakley, Brentwood and Pittsburg. It happened everywhere. The houses they built in many places all looked alike; they were thrown together with shoddy carpentry and sold off as soon as they could be, with little inspection. Consequently, many of the houses are eyesores. They were built with 10 ft gaps between each house and sprayed on, stucco exteriors. They were very obviously thrown together. The construction of the homes was extremely shortsighted - nobody building the homes asked what would happen if and when people weren't able to afford them. It was assembly line home building.

Since 2000 Antioch alone has seen an over 10% increase in population. People began getting loans and many were able to purchase whatever they wanted.

Then in 2007 it all hit a huge wall. Many of the loans that were given out were given with little or no proof of income or variable rates. Variable rates meant that the interest rate on the loan would "balloon," or dramatically increase, over the years. So these loans offered absolutely no security if someone were to lose a job or not be able to make a payment. The Sub Prime Loans that were given out were especially disturbing. These loans were aimed at people with poor credit scores. A few years ago you might remember seeing the signs that read, "Buy a House Now, With NO MONEY DOWN Regardless Of Credit!"

These loans were traps.

Most people that applied for these loans were approved, once again with little to no proof of income. Predatory lending by greedy banks and loan agents led to this whole disaster. Washington Mutual, Citi Bank and Century were huge culprits.

So as they aimed the loans at poor people and those in situations that made them vulnerable, the loan agents made promises of nice houses and stable lives - of security. The deal was that you would get a loan with a reasonable interest rate, that rate however wasn't fixed, it was the variable. If you missed a payment your interest rate and mortgage payment would double or, as in a lot of cases, even triple.

The problem seems so obvious in this concept. If people are low income or have bad credit, it is much more likely that they will be in a position where they will miss or be late on a payment.



The banks knew this, but only saw the money. Home prices were skyrocketing but wages were staying the same, so obviously people's wages wouldn't allow them to buy these houses without these loans. They fed off of the working class by exploiting our want for a home and stability. They stepped on all of our backs to get money - we trusted them and now the major companies are getting bailed out by the federal government, with our tax money, money that could open schools or lower college tuition. They step on our backs and now they have come to fatten themselves off of our corpses.

In Mountain House, near Tracy, they built huge homes that they made signs for saying things like, "From 600K and Up!" They portrayed these houses as some luxury for rich people, so that we would want them more. Now 90% of the people in Mountain House owe more on their houses than their houses are worth. The *New York Times* even did an article on it.

If anything, this proves that there is an upper class. All of us who were comfortable for those few years now live paycheck to paycheck and are not part of that upper class. There are people behind the scenes, pulling strings, controlling markets, crashing economies, and hustling us for everything we have.

This is why we call for class war, a war to hold those responsible accountable for their actions. To create a situation where these greedy pigs are not rewarded with bailouts but instead face the power and wrath of the very people whose lives they have destroyed.

Once the markets started to fail companies began selling off and trading debts to other companies. With little regulation, this made it damn near impossible to connect banks to their predatory loan policies.

Empty homes now litter neighborhoods, but homeless people still line the streets. People are forced out of their homes at the point of a gun. The market has been collapsed by rich people trying to become richer as we lose our homes and now have the impossible task of trying to find a job in a failed market.

This is the perfect storm, the merging of fire and gasoline.

It seems that a lot of peoples' pain has been subsided and put off by the new "hope" of Barack Obama. What we must remember however, is that Obama is a capitalist. Capitalism is a system where there is an elite upper class that makes money by getting the lower class, us, to work for them for as little as possible. Its a system that is only concerned with maximizing profits and a religion that only worships the dollar. As a capitalist, Obama has a personal interest in keeping the current system alive.

I recently asked a real estate agent the very question: "Do you think a stimulus plan by the Obama Administration would keep poor and working class people in their homes?" The answer was an almost laughing, "Absolutely not."

We are out of money. The promise of free and affordable healthcare, tax credits, and affordable schooling cannot

happen with a poor economy. We have used that money to bail out corrupt banks and predatory mortgage institutions for One Trillion Dollars. Its the same as if EVERY person (children included) in the US gave the banks 4,000 dollars. Now the auto industry is getting around 25 Billion Dollars as well. It is Government assistance and Socialism for rich companies and the ruling class that created this mess, but it's Capitalism for the rest of us.

When we ask for money we are told to "work harder," "get a job," and "stop being lazy." People throw around the term "Welfare Junkie" and even "Un-American."

If you're a multibillion dollar company, Government assistance is fine, while they continue to destroy us. They are a perpetual machine that will kill all of us if we do not stop them.

Now is the time to stop them. It is time we end this.


*(Continued from "Neutralize Them" article.)*

-munities. We see this emerging in the Hmong garden issue as liberal and radical folks are joining in solidarity with the Hmong. As Ken Lawrence has explained in "The New State Repression," such solidarity, in the eyes of the new police state, amounts to a preliminary stage of insurgency. Police today, by contrast, are engaged in a "permanent counterinsurgency." What better symbolism of new state power than to replace a community garden with a police station, herbs with swat teams.

Permanent counterinsurgency is an intensification of the basic response by the bourgeois state to any hint of opposition. Such opposition famously was captured in a top secret, August 1967 internal security memo from FBI director J Edgar Hoover to his top lieutenants. Of leading black nationalist figures, Hoover wrote, "The purpose of this new counterintelligence endeavor is to expose, disrupt, misdirect, discredit, or otherwise neutralize" them. Cointelpro was extended to civil rights groups and figures: the American Indian Movement, the SDS, the Weather Underground, the Brown Berets, and many other organizations.

Today's "counterintelligence" is much more sophisticated and much more far reaching: countless surveillance cameras from the seven-eleven video camera to the satellite, NSA eavesdropping, Patriot Act black bag searches, Military Commissions Act permanent detention of enemy combatants, the transformation of local police forces from peace officers to a domestic paramilitary force equipped with helicopters, armored personnel carriers, automatic weapons, and full battle gear, the infiltration of groups from Peace Fresno to anarchists, and the labeling of eco-defense activists as "top domestic terrorists" in the U.S. Any direct action that may become necessary to save the Hmong Garden in Fresno will almost certainly be countered by some aspect(s) of the permanent counterinsurgency state. At the same time, defending the garden may truly constitute defense of a way of life that is rapidly being eroded.





On December 6th, Greek police entered an anarchist controlled neighborhood and several minutes later, an anarchist youth lay dead of a gun shot wound. Soon, Greece was on fire, buildings were being occupied, and thousands of people were out in the streets fighting the police. Students, workers, and youths have all joined the insurrectionary movement and social revolution in Greece seems possible. The following articles discuss what this means to those of us in the United States.

# MY BIG FAT GREEK INSURRECTION

## Willing to Fight

by *Brennus*

On December 6th, 2008, 15-year-old Alexandros-Andreas Gregoropolous was shot dead by a Greek police officer in Exarchia, an Anarchist neighborhood in Athens, the Greek capital. Exarchia is a neighborhood with a long history of community control, such that the police are no longer necessary; the people resolve their own conflicts without the cops. In fact, whenever police do enter Exarchia, it is in the role of foreign invader; they harass or attack community members, often singling out young anarchists. The people of Exarchia have learned to respond to this kind of abuse with force; cops are often seen fleeing the neighborhood under a hail of bottles, rocks, and molotov cocktails.

So on that fateful night in December, when two cops were out walking the beat, harassing youths, they were confronted.[1] Though they had been ordered to leave the neighborhood by their own commanding officers, these two cops insisted on sticking around.[2] So a group of around 30 youths took matters into their own hands. The cops trash-talked the youths, and some say they responded with bottles and rocks. Eye-witnesses talking to Greek media, however, say that cops were not attacked.[3] Either way, one of the police drew a weapon and fired three shots, one of which struck and killed Alex. While he would later claim these as "warning shots," "fired into the air," both an autopsy and a ballistics test have now shown that the bullet which killed Alex entered his body in a straight trajectory. Basically, the cop must have fired directly at him.[4]

Alex died just fifteen minutes after he was shot, in the

## Comrades, Athens is Burning!

From *Antioch Arrow* #1

On the 6th of December 2008, after a police car had rocks thrown at it, 15 year old anarchist Alexandros Gregoropolous was shot by a Greek police officer. He died 15 minutes later. This act would not go unpunished. Soon after the unrest began, anarchists and others took the streets. Outrage over the death of our beloved friend has spread like fire. In almost no time every major city in Greece has been seized by the public. Fueled by a failing economy and government bail outs of private businesses, the Greek public has had enough and will no longer simply beg for justice, they will take it! The first reports by the officer said that he had only fired once, he later said it was actually twice and that his partner had reminded him of a third. He claims all of the shots were into the air, he calls them "warning shots." The cop's lawyer (whose office is now burnt to the ground) said that an unreleased investigation shows that the bullet, that hit Alexandros, was a ricochet. The many eyewitnesses have said this is a lie; they saw this murderer point directly at the 15 year old.

The Kathimerini newspaper stated that the results of forensic tests on the bullet indicated that it had been fired directly at the teenager. Athens' Bar Association condemned the policeman's lawyer, Alexis Kougiass, for "desecrating the dead" by claiming that the 15-year-old had been a troublemaker. We now know that, with no uncertainty, Alexandros was intentionally murdered by this state funded executioner. Basic gun safety and training teaches you to NEVER point a firearm at a target that you are not



### ***(Willing to Fight Cont.)***

arms of his comrades. Within hours, hundreds and then thousands of Greeks took to the streets enraged. The riots quickly spread to every major city in Greece, and they haven't stopped as of my writing this, after raging for more than three weeks. Banks and corporate stores have been burned and otherwise destroyed. Hundreds of police stations have been attacked all over Greece, many burned to the ground. Government buildings have been attacked. While the cop who shot Alex was being arraigned, hundreds of angry Greeks assaulted the Courthouse with Firebombs and other projectiles. Every day and night, Riot police clash with bands of youth and workers, and they are losing ground each time. Police forces have taken to arming gangs of Fascists from the Golden Dawn and other groups, with knives and tear gas to use against demonstrators. But it's not enough. Greece will not rest until the authorities have paid for Alex's life.

This is a battle the Greek authorities cannot win. The combatants on one side are the Greek Police, the State behind them, and Fascist organizations like the Golden Dawn, best known for attacking young immigrant youth. On the other? The entire population of Greece. The state cannot, and never will, win a battle against the whole of its people.

Greeks have a history of defending their communities. The last time Greek police shot a youth, in the mid-70s, the country erupted in similar riots, and the ruling military junta was destroyed, paving the way for a new "democratic" government. And it's taken over 30 years for them to repeat the mistake. When Greek police step out of bounds, when they abuse their authority, they are punished. Not by their courts, but by the people. Greeks fight back. And it works.

This kind of direct resistance is not confined to Greece; we can find it much closer to home. On December 15th, in Augusta, Georgia, police killed 23-year-old Justin Elmore. Vigils against police brutality organized by family friends and community members led to an invasion of their neighborhood by 90 armed police officers. Community members responded by attacking the occupying force and their corporate media with rocks and bottles, while blocking off major intersections with flaming cars and dumpsters.[5] Now every time a cop in Augusta starts to pull his weapon, he will remember his fellow officers who were injured in these riots. They'll remember that the community does not want cops to shoot their kids. They'll remember that if they pull the trigger, they'll actually be held responsible for their actions.

What happened when Sammy Galvan was shot here in Modesto 4 years ago? We held vigils, we held demonstrations, we filed complaint report after complaint report. But the officer who shot Sammy never saw any consequences to his actions. As Ward Churchill, former professor at the University of Colorado and long time American Indian freedom fighter, says:

*"What I Want is for civilization to stop killing my people's children. If that can be accomplished peacefully, I will be glad. If signing a petition will get those in power to stop killing Indian children, I will put my name at the top of the list. If marching in a protest will do it, I'll walk as far as you want. If holding a candle will do it, I'll hold two. If singing protest songs will do it, I'll sing whatever songs you want me to sing. If living simply will do it, I will live extremely simply. If voting will do it, I'll vote. But all of those things are allowed by those in power, and none of those things will ever stop those in power from killing Indian children. They never have, and they never will. Given that my people's children are being killed, you have no grounds to complain about whatever means I use to protect the lives of my people's children. And I will do whatever it takes."* [6]

### ***(Comrades, Athens is Burning! Cont.)***

willing to destroy, and that you DO NOT fire a weapon in an unsecured location, unless you are willing to take responsibility for the death of another person. The riots continue, but they are not unorganized. Groups of people have begun to set up living quarters for those fighting police. Many of these have taken the shape of occupations at the universities. In Athens alone, most of the banks have been firebombed and destroyed. Most of the big chain stores like Starbucks, Abercrombie, GAP, Old Navy, any of those companies not owned by local people, are now destroyed. Windows remain shattered. The merchandise was taken by those who, for so long, were only able to dream about it through ¼ inch thick windows. These stores are not people, this property destruction is not violence, this is not the tragedy. The loss of a 15 year old child is the true tragedy! This is the true reason to be enraged!

Within the first few days the school children refused to go to school, many of them preferred to fight the Police in the streets, with their comrades, their friends. Younger kids have started to seek out the anarchists, asking them to please teach them how to make molotov cocktails. The labor unions planned and executed a general strike, the whole economy of Greece was brought to a standstill. Even the reformist labor unions allowed the strike, for fear of workers striking without their consent. Government buildings have been gutted and burned down. Thousands have marched through the streets chanting "Cops, Pigs, Murderers." Government buildings are now occupied by people fighting back. Police have become so desperate that they have started to fight WITH fascists and nazis, against the people who are resisting. Fascists still exist and so do the nazis. The police are fighting with them, some even say providing them with tear gas, as the fascists attempt to attack people who were fighting back with knives.

The most amazing and inspiring part of this resistance is that everyday, average people are heading to the streets to join the resistance. One article read: "It's not just 20 or 30 people, we're talking about 1,000's of young people. These are not people who live in the dark, they are the sort you see in the cafes. The criminals and drug addicts turned up later, to loot the stores. The children were very angry that one of them had been killed; and they wanted the whole society not to sleep quietly about this, they wanted everyone to feel the same fear they felt. And they were also expressing anger towards society, towards the religion of consumerism, the polarisation of society between the few haves and the many have-nots."

For the past seven days each day has brought more and more resistance to the police. The amount of attacks on police have increased. Space is being won. Many will say that Anarchism or community controlled neighborhoods, based on Horizontalism, cannot work. My only response is that we can't say that. We must take the space in order to make these wants and desires real. We do not have the opportunity to simply try this in the United States, because the police and the government would never allow us the FREEDOM to do so. If we want the chance to control our own communities we must TAKE that chance. They will never simply give it to us. As I write this it is now day 8 of the Greek takeover. I sit in California and can't help but feel a sense of urgency, something very important is happening in the world right now, and I think the winds may be shifting. Without checking I can be certain people are in the streets of Athens right now. The cops have recently ran out of teargas. Those staying in their homes may be stepping outside, into their



### ***(Willing to Fight Cont.)***

The next time that the Modesto Police Department takes one of our children from us, what will our response be? Will we stand up for our children, our friends, our communities? Or will we file the same complaint report again, and hold another vigil, just hoping against hope that they won't strike again? Think about it. Are you willing to fight?

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#### **For more information on the Greek Uprising, check out:**

[news.infoshop.org](http://news.infoshop.org) - [www.occupiedlondon.org/blog](http://www.occupiedlondon.org/blog)  
[directactiongr.blogspot.com](http://directactiongr.blogspot.com)

### ***(Comrades, Athens is Burning! Cont.)***

streets, seeing their neighbors in a completely new way. They have won space that they can truly do whatever they want with. Eight total days with the government not being able to enforce laws. In this uprising that looks like chaos, nobody has gone insane and started to murder all of their neighbors. Why would they?

I can also say, without checking but with confidence, that a bank in Greece is on fire right now, as well as a Police station. All of this may either sound wonderful, or dreadful, but the fact is that a 15 year old boy, full of life, no longer walks the streets. He is dead, and will never come back. His skateboard still rests in his closet waiting for somebody to use it, his CD's will go unplayed. Never again will he wake up with the sun in his face and realize how wonderful each day is. Alexandros is gone forever. He is gone, but his memory is there, and even if this ended tomorrow he has sparked the closest thing to real revolution in recent history. I'm sure that he would approve of our actions and be thankful to those reading this. We can only hope that our Greek comrades remain safe, and that this realization of power, by everyday people, happens here as well. The last time a minor was murdered by police, in Greece, was in 1986, 8 years before Alexandros was born. Riots erupted that time, they didn't last nearly as long as these ones, and it has been 22 years since then. Youths on our streets get murdered by police on a regular basis. Maybe the reaction by the Greek people is the right one. When will we fight the police in order to keep our children alive? This cop had a choice. Most cops have tasers and pepper spray, but no, this fucking murderer chose the gun, the one action that would silence this child forever.

Actions in solidarity with Alexandros have already taken place in Berlin, Italy, London, France, Tacoma and Olympia, WA, New York and Portland. There are others as well. We must not let the media isolate this revolt. If State power is global, then so must be our resistance!

Solidarity must be complete, and stern.

Rest In Peace Alexandros.

Even though I have never met you, I feel as if you were my Brother.

Goodbye, Comrade.





# how we fight the police



an interview with la copwatch  
members joaquin and dangelo



**MA:** *How did your experiences growing up working class shape your political ideas?*

**Joaquin:** I think that my life experiences in general had everything to do with my political development. I'm a 25 year old Chicano male, who parents migrated from Michoacan, Mexico. I grew up in South Central Los Angeles, where I experienced racism and harassment by the police. As a teenager I spent five years in Fresno County, California, where my family worked in the fields and where we lived in the projects. It was clear to me, that the people working these back breaking jobs were Mexicano, and the ones with the institutional power were White folks. The police harassed me always. At an early age of 13 years I was constantly arrested and was put on probation and into the juvenile in-justice system. It was the time of Proposition 187, an anti-immigrant law passed in California, which had a huge effect on me and on the Mexicano and Centro Americano community, it denied people work, housing, health care, school and all these other basic needs. This threw me and many other people into political life, because this WAS about our lives. I ended up getting kicked out of High School and Continuation School (even though I was placed in "honors" programs and "advanced" courses) for challenging teachers and others on racist lies being taught to us about my own people and other colonized people. While I was home, I spent time reading, in particular on the Mexican Revolution, Chican@ history, and other revolutionary movements like the Black Panther Party. I had my preconceptions of anarchism and anarchists, but it wasn't until I read Ricardo Flores Magon that these ideas made sense to me, how he connected to peoples daily lives and communal living. I think that was how I got involved in activism and later revolutionary community organizing, as it became more clear that we are all searching for new and horizontal models for organizing not only ourselves but society as a whole. This is why I identify myself as an anarcho-communist [someone who wants a classless and stateless society], and now organize with the Revolutionary Autonomous Communities as well, because we want to begin discussing and popularizing these ideas. Our experiences have helped shape our world outlook and has helped start to create a vision and strategy for revolutionary change. Working class indigenous and people of color are in a specific position in this empire to bring it down because of the concrete conditions that exist within the neo-colonies: the ghettos, barrios, and the concentration camps they call reservations.

Personally I feel that a popular movement is the only way people will realize that they have power, but we have to create those councils and peoples' institutions in the process to sustain that movement, so it won't get co-opted by some who wish to create similar power structures to that of capitalism-imperialism-patriarchy-white supremacy. That's why it is important to create these horizontal relationships amongst ourselves and create this model and example in our communities.

**D'Angelo:** I think my experience growing up working class had a huge effect on my politics and ideas. And it wasn't only being "working class," but being a black male born in the belly of the beast. It wasn't too hard for me to become politicized based on my experience living in Chicago where I had my father taken away from me at an early age, in his early age. To living with a single parent who had to work two jobs to take care of and feed her children (construction work in the day and a waitress at night). I grew up in a very matriarchal family, which made me even more aware of the conditions and experiences of women living in a patriarchal-misogynistic society. Which in turn helped shaped my anti-authoritarian/anarchist principals and ideas.

I got shot in 2000 and at that moment in my life I decided to dedicate my life to the struggle and liberation of not only my people, but oppressed and forgotten people in general.

**MA:** *How did you come to the decision as a group to start Copwatch LA?*

**D'Angelo:** CopWatch Los Angeles was a collective of the Southern California Anarchist Federation Los Angeles chapter which disbanded a little over 3 years ago now. Lead by a majority of folks of color. We collectively created CW as a response to police/state terrorism in and around our respective communities or Amer'ikkas neo-colonies. Not only to observe the police, but to create a popular movement where folks in the community watched and patrolled the pigs themselves. Mainly to create models where we didn't have to rely on the state/police, and moderate conflicts ourselves.

We always maintained the position that we should not do patrols in neighborhoods and communities where we weren't invited into or lived in. Because at the end of the day we can leave, but folks in that neighborhood have to live there and face the oppressor everyday. We feel it's important for us to do CW and know your rights trainings to our people who live in different regions to create cop watch collectives in their own communities which reflects their conditions. Cop watching is simply a tactic, a tactic that may not be needed in some communities.

A tactic which walks in the foot steps of revolutionaries like the Black Panther Party, the Deacons For Defense, Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, and other people who decided to take direct action and not rely on governments.

**Joaquin:** I think D'Angelo put it well.

I can only add that it was created mainly as a necessity. The police relate to us as an occupying army, they do not live in our communities so therefore they do not know how to solve the problems that exist in our neighborhoods. Cop Watch LA is a process where people can



start to resist police terrorism, and take direct action so we can stop police terrorism before it happens. It is a step in building the fighting capacity in the people so they can see that we are stronger than the police state and we can eventually take back our neighborhoods. We can create liberated zones or autonomous territories where the people can secure and defend their block without the need of an oppressive institution like these law enforcement agencies. Cop Watch LA came from the working class youth of color who participated in SCAF-LA and the STOP Coalition (Stop Terrorism and Oppression by the Police) after the individual murders of youth and children like Suzie Lopez Pena, Devin Brown, Gonzalo Martinez, and Deandre Brunston (who are only a few of the too many killed in Los Angeles and in other cities and towns by law enforcement). We wanted to not only say "ENOUGH!", we wanted to put our words into a praxis.

The idea is that the people can create the patrol units themselves, we would support, give resources, and training to anybody who wants to begin to defend themselves from the police.

**MA:** *What are the types of ways the police in the LA area brutalize the communities in which you live?*

**D'Angelo:** In Hollywood it's been gang injunctions on the street tribes (gangs), and an open attack on vendors who try and make a living by selling ice cream and Corn. If anyone knows anything about Hollywood, you'll know that Hollywood has a huge homeless population and a non-gender conforming community which has been under constant attack.

To understand the conditions of Hollywood we have to look no further than the rise of gentrification/land grab. The gentrifiers and yuppies move in and they move us (poor folks of color) to the desert, i.e. Palmdale, Lancaster, etc). With the gentrifiers not only come the bike shops, yoga studios, and lofts....but also a larger police presence, the criminalization of young people of color and LGBTIQ folks, gang injunctions, and all the damn Starbucks you can drink.

Every condition I named isn't isolated to Hollywood, you can look at Pico Union, Mid City, South Central, The J's, Inglewood, Harlem, and South Chicago. Land grab and Immigration and Customs Enforcement raids keep our people in constant fear and terror. Families are dealing with being broken up due to not only ICE raids but home foreclosures.

**MA:** *In what ways has Copwatch built a sense of power within your communities against the police?*

**Joaquin:** Its a process where people can realize that they are the only ones who can stop police brutality. We cannot rely on some politician, on the state, or the police themselves to deal with our problems. The reality is that they do not care about us, so when we begin to start standing up, we begin to see that we outnumber them and that we don't need them. The idea again, is to have this be organizing that happens on a block to block basis, where people can step out of their

homes and their cars when they see the police harassing, arresting, and/or brutalizing us. We can point cameras at them and shine the light on specific cases but understanding that we're fighting a system and we're building community at the same time.

**D'Angelo:** In general, Cop Watch LA helps to build the self-organization, self-determination, autonomy, and self-defense of our communities.

When we do patrols our main focus has never been exclusively on shooting back at the police with our cameras, but talking to folks who are walking by and are curious about what were doing. A lot of times when we arrive at a scene where the pigs are harassing someone, we encourage people to pull out their cell phones and cameras and take pictures, and if you don't have a camera, just stand at a "safe distance" and just observe.

We once did a patrol where the pigs stopped two young Afrikan males on a bike. They let the brothers go and some members went up to them after the cops left, and they were really interested in the know your rights info we gave them and about starting a cop watch. Then there has been times when people tell us they don't want to be filmed, and we have to respect that individual's words. One time the cops told a young male that "They (Cop watchers) could be terrorists filming you." Which made the man not want to be filmed.

Revolutionary Autonomous Communities has a food program in Pico Union/ MacArthur Park area. There are also CW patrols going on during this mutual aid based food program where the community (well over 150 people/families) has been Cop Watcher and Gentrify Watchers themselves. Not only do we have to watch the pigs but also the gentrifiers themselves, who wants to claim public space for themselves and work in hand with the state to move out the people who build Pico Union.

**MA:** *How have the police reacted to Copwatch LA?*

**D'Angelo:** They reacted to us by beating up members who were apart of the South Central Farm struggle, by attacking not only CWLA but the whole community of Pico Union during May Day of 2007 which is documented in our documentary "We're Still Here, We Never Left." Quite a few time we've been doing patrols in South Central or Pico Union and come across the police harassing someone and we'll observe from a "safe distance" and the pigs will call more pigs to try and intimidate us or the person who's being harassed so they won't talk to us after. Another time the Long Beach Pig Department pulled over a couple of our members and took them out of the car at gun point and of course let them go because they didn't do anything. Yet the most common thing for them to do is drive by and flash their spotlights to try and blind the camera.



**Joaquin:** I think that they've reacted in different ways. Since we exposed some cases of police terrorism, in particular the case of William Cardenas in Hollywood where the police held him down, choked him, and punched him repeatedly. His family along with us helped put their video out on the internet and the corporate media caught on, so it put them on the defensive. The chief of police, William Bratton was responding to our public statements and our press conferences. When we were patrolling it also caught them by surprise at first. They would radio in to all the cops on shift to announce that we were patrolling. They would try to follow us to our cars, and they arrested me for spitting on the sidewalk when we were patrolling, but the "watch commander" did not let the arresting officers book me, because "they didn't want this to blow up in their faces." So they were always careful when dealing with us when patrolling, because people knew who we were due to cases where we helped support families who were victimized.

Recently the police and supporters of the police have tried to target us and isolate us. Even gentrifiers who work with the police have tried to attack other community programs of RAC (Revolutionary Autonomous Communities), in particular the food program.

On May Day 2007, after we were asked to observe, the police brutally attacked an immigrant rights march, and young anarchists were blamed for provoking the police. In particular the organization who was invited by organizers of the march to observe the police, Cop Watch LA, who is seen as an organization of young anarchists, even though it was clear that this was an act of state repression, where the police attacked the protest to intimidate people there. They want to stifle the growing popular movement for "immigrant" rights.

They've arrested me recently on a weapons charge (unlawful possession of an assault rifle), after they searched my car illegally and stopped me for no reason, even though they knew the rifle was a bought and registered legally.

Then later at a benefit show for our defense fund, the police raided the event and targeted people for arrest. I was the first person that was pulled out after they kicked the door open. They then arrested two leading members of the Black Riders Liberation Party. The excuse first used by police was that someone had stolen beer from a nearby liquor store. At the station the police were making jokes about breaking up an "anarchist party."

So the police are trying to try to stop us from organizing, or are at least trying to intimidate and isolate some of the organizers because that is their nature, and that is the nature of the state. This in no way will stop us from continuing the work that is being done.

**MA:** *For people reading this that have been brutalized by the police, what advice would you give them in regards to fighting back?*

**D'Angelo:** Organize, organize, organize!!! "You only get what you're organized to take." If you've been brutalized by

the police, fill out a complaint form about the officer. Don't expect any significant change from filling out a complaint form, but do it because when that pig goes up for a review to get a higher position it will come up on his/her records, and this pisses pigs off who want a promotion.

That's just one thing. Another thing you could do is start a cop watch patrol unit or a watch a pig program. Something that's participatory and community related. Without community participation there is no CW. Know your oppressors laws. Magon wrote about revolutionaries being outlaws or not limiting ourselves to our oppressors' laws because we could never get free working within the confines of the state's laws, but it's good to know them just to use them against our enemies. And remember their laws can change anytime they don't suit them, so be conscious of that.

And if you can, put the pig on blast. If you can get a name and picture of the kkkop(s), put it online, pass out fliers of the pig(s) profile and badge number. The people have to and should know who these brutal pig(s) are and what he/she's doing to our communities

**Joaquin:** I agree with D'Angelo, lets get organized. No Pigs in the Hood!

**MA:** *Anything else that you would like to add?*

**Joaquin:** It is not just about watching the police or reacting to the state it is about building with our community the institutions and infrastructure for popular power. It is about abolishing the police, the prison industrial complex, and the state, and yes about overthrowing this system; it is about revolution. It is about realizing that this rebellious process has begun already, and that responsibility falls collectively on all of us. It is about getting rid of the physical colonial conditions and those that exist inside our minds. So, it is not just about the work, and it is not just about the ideas. It is people surviving and fighting back through building different social relationships and co-operation/mutual-aid. It is about building trust through struggle; building stronger and healthier relationships with one another. We can't just jump into being a community without the police, or a society without oppression and exploitation -- we have to do that with our people and with ourselves. It is about land, and understanding that without it there is no life and no self-determination. We have to build those alliances with others, and a revolutionary organization made up of the liberated communes. All power through the people, and only through the people.

**D'Angelo:** Let's take back our communities and the land. In Southern Cali we're on Tongva First Nations peoples' land and we have to show respect not only to them, but acknowledge the fact that some of us are settlers and others enslaved and brought here against our will. There is no revolution until we show respect to the original people who inhabited what we now call the United Snakes.

Fuck the police!



# WE'RE STILL PROLES:

THEIR ELECTIONS ARE NEVER OUR VICTORIES

By crudo

Last night I watched with several other anarchist friends as Obama became the next President of the United States Government. As someone who worked as a community organizer, counterpoised to someone like McCain and Palin who own several houses and planes, (while claiming to be 'just like us'), it's easy to get excited about things changing in this country. After all, just the idea that a half African-American President will be in office is enough to make many people think that the fundamental nature of the power structure in this country will change in a significant way. Some even believe that the very essence of their lives will change in this country. After all, that's what Obama sold us on. Yes we can, change, hope...

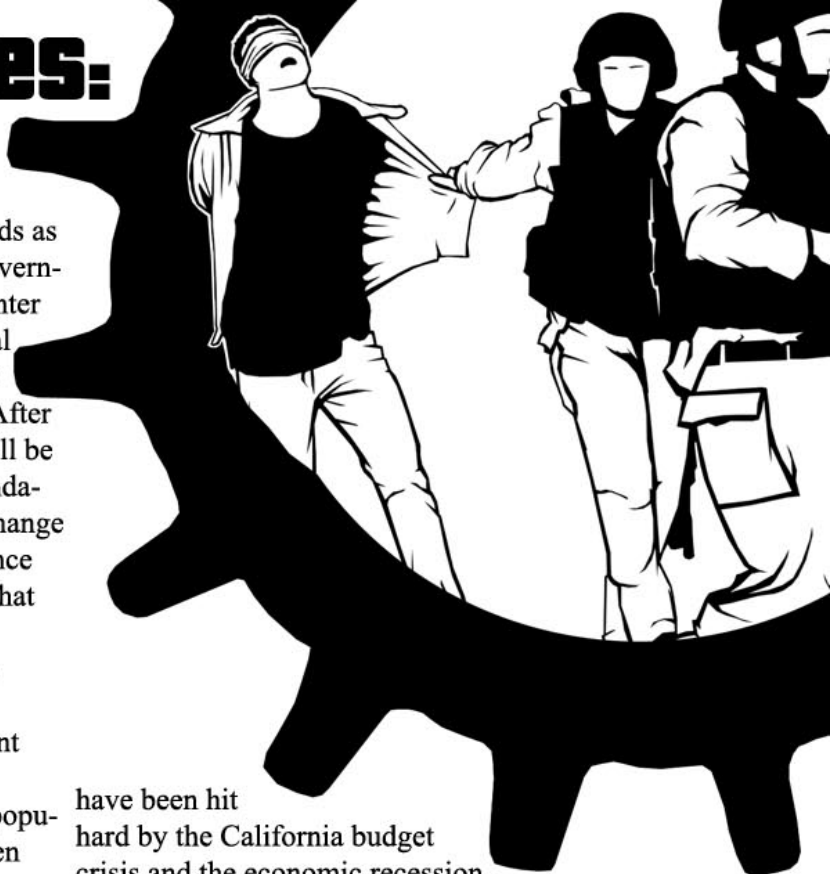
But our lives have changed in the past year, even with Obama already in office. Let us not forget he has already served in the halls of power (the Senate), as the government launched wars into other countries, increased repression against US citizens, deported migrants, and as the prison population within this country continues to grow and grow. Even Obama's platform for election offers threats against Pakistan and Iran, calls for more corporate mercenary groups like Blackwater to go into Iraq, the buildup of the ground war in Afghanistan, new 'clearer coal' and nuclear energy (ha!), and continued attacks against immigrants. While many were excited by the fact that a person of color would possibly be heading the government, many failed to look past Obama's color themselves and see that he (like all politicians) still represents the interests of the rich and not the working class.

Here in the Central Valley of California, things have only been getting worse for us. We lead the state in poverty. We lead the nation in foreclosure. We face problems with drugs, pollution, air quality, jobs, police brutality, racism, and more. We

have been hit hard by the California budget crisis and the economic recession.

The Governor of this state repeatedly launches attacks on unions and workers. We are the front line of the attack by the rich against the rest of us. At the same time, 'our democracy' locally has been hard at work - against us! In the past year or so, as regular readers of *Modesto Anarcho* know very well, local governments in the Central Valley have managed to criminalize dumpster diving, shoot down needle exchange programs, further criminalized squatting, shut down medical pot co-ops, beef up surveillance technology and police weaponry with grants from Homeland Security, round up and deport immigrants, launch attacks against the homeless, and so on. Of course, none of these things have been done with our say or even our vote. The landscape of our lives is not our own. Our terrain is decided upon largely by outside forces made up of people of a higher class than us. They make the laws, they put them in place, they own the police, courts, and prisons, and they own everything else. We work for them, we go to war for them, and we are killed by them. But every four years we seem to forget all that, and instead believe that we are somehow participating in a system that allows us to really change this society, albeit in a small, symbolic way.

But, on the tips of many people's tongues will come the cry, "But if we don't vote, we have no voice!" This is a confusing statement, because voting in it's essence takes away our voices and gives it first to the electoral college and then to the candidate that it puts in power. We have no voice, only a free pass to the rich person of our 'choosing.' Besides, even if we voted for the leftist, most liberal candidate, we'd still be a wage slaves. We





can't vote against being forced to sell our time, energy, and labor in order to survive. Under capitalism, a system where the rich control every aspect of our lives and livelihoods, elections only change some of the bosses on the top, not the system that is below them. After Obama is sworn into office, people will still rot in prison. The bombs and bullets in Iraq and everywhere else will keep exploding. The planet will keep getting hotter. Immigrants and the poor will still be targeted. People will still be harassed and attacked by pigs. People will still lose their homes. Capitalism needs poverty, destruction, and war to continue - but it also needs presidents and people willing to give them power. Isn't it time we stop being the passive voters that they want us to be? Let's stop validating their system and believing in it. From the bailout to the horrors of everyday life - we know that their democracy is nothing but slavery to capitalism.

The alternative to electoral politics has always been direct action. We must organize as a class of people against the ruling class. We must break the divisions within ourselves such as racism, sexism, and homophobia. Our true power lies in our ability to suppress and destroy class society, to gain space and territory for ourselves. We have felt this power on the streets of Modesto and elsewhere during the May Day marches and walkouts that involved tens of thousands and brought the city to a standstill. We have seen it in the ongoing occupation at DQ-University, where poor people of color are leading a struggle to take back the land. We have experienced it in the community struggles to shut down the Tallow Plant, the Covanta Incinerator, and also stop racist groups like Save Our State. We have watched it in the rent strikes in Ceres, homeless tent cities in Fresno, riots against the police in Stockton, and the Copwatch programs against police brutality in Modesto.



Now, more than ever, the system of capitalism wants us to feel good about the election. That "we the people" have elected one of our own, we have brought change to America. We can forget about the past 8 years and go back to our lives as passive workers, consumers, debtors, and renters now. Our eyes, ears, and thoughts will be filled with a thousand empty slogans about how a great victory has been reached and obtained for us as a people. But it is not our victory, it is a victory for the elites and the rich. If we believe that it is a victory for ourselves, then we are living in a fantasy land. We have to understand that the system is trying to manufacture a belief in ourselves that we have something in common now with the power structure. Hopefully, we will see that this is bullshit. The rich want nothing more than to hold hands with us and gallop into the sunset, despite the fact that a economic and ecological disaster lies just on the horizon. Our victories will always be when we drive the police out of our neighborhoods and set fire to the prisons. When we take over the means of production and share the resources as a community. When we take back what has been stolen from us, day after day. These are our victories, we need only start to make them real.

#### **General Links:**

Infoshop News - [news.infoshop.org](http://news.infoshop.org)  
 Crimethinc - [www.crimethinc.com](http://www.crimethinc.com)  
 LibCom - [www.libcom.org](http://www.libcom.org)  
 Anarchist News - [www.anarchistnews.org](http://www.anarchistnews.org)  
 Indybay - [www.indybay.org](http://www.indybay.org)  
 Prole - [www.prole.info](http://www.prole.info)  
 Social Rupture - [socialrupture.blogspot.com](http://socialrupture.blogspot.com)

#### **Anarchist and Autonomist Publications:**

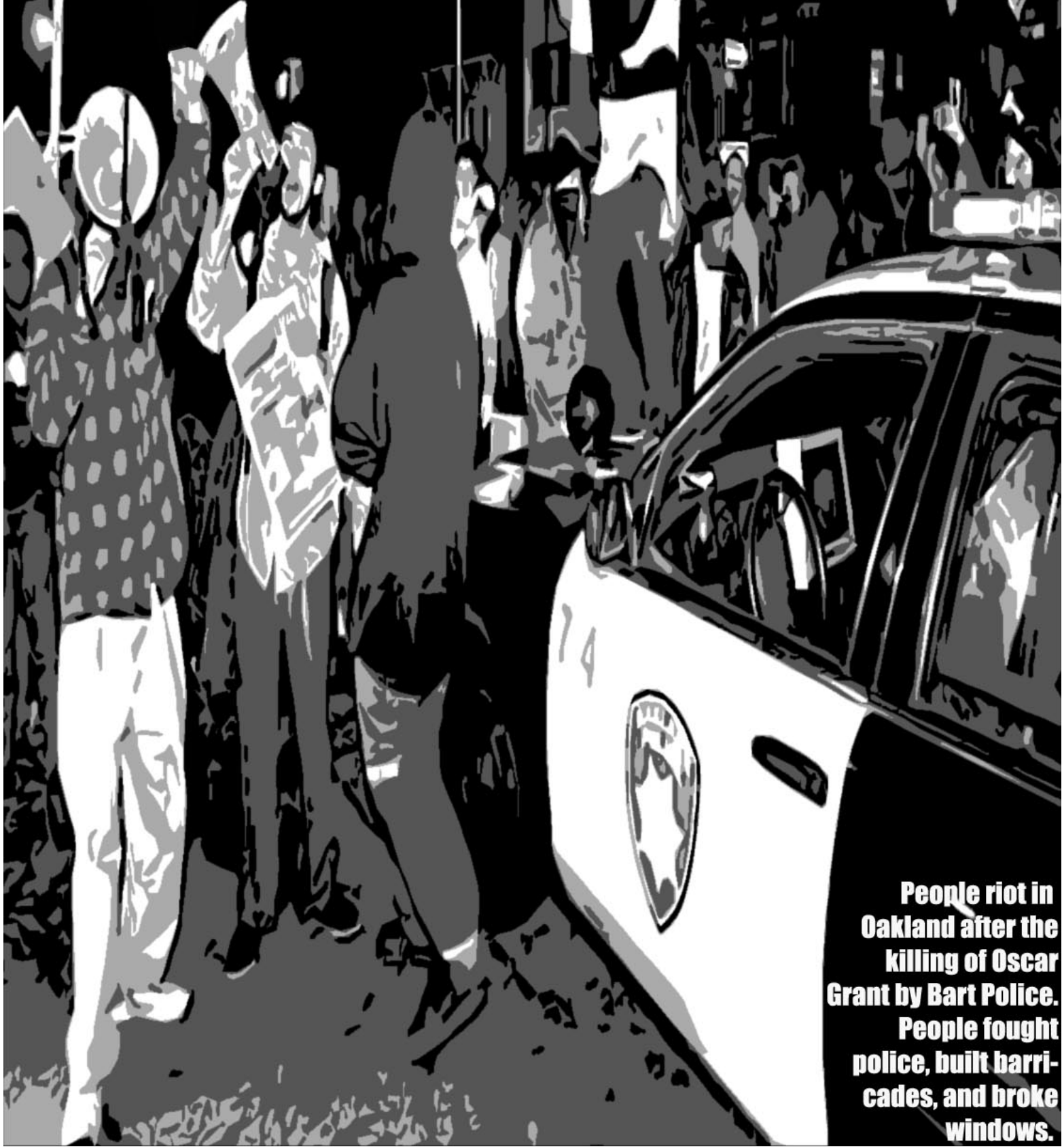
Antioch Arrow - [www.myspace.com/925arrow](http://www.myspace.com/925arrow)  
 The Rebel - [www.myspace.com/rebelperiodical](http://www.myspace.com/rebelperiodical)  
 A Murder of Crows - [www.geocities.com/amurderofcrows1](http://www.geocities.com/amurderofcrows1)  
 Politics is Not A Banana - [anti-politics.net](http://anti-politics.net)  
 Rolling Thunder - [www.crimethinc.com/rt/](http://www.crimethinc.com/rt/)  
 Aufheben - [www.geocities.com/aufheben2](http://www.geocities.com/aufheben2)  
 325 Collective - [www.325collective.com](http://www.325collective.com)  
 Fire to the Prisons - [www.myspace.com/alongingforcollapsepress](http://www.myspace.com/alongingforcollapsepress)

#### **Crews and Projects:**

DQ-University - [www.myspace.com/dquniversity](http://www.myspace.com/dquniversity)  
 LA Copwatch - [www.myspace.com/copwatchla](http://www.myspace.com/copwatchla)  
 Shoelacetown ABC - [www.myspace.com/shoelacetownabc](http://www.myspace.com/shoelacetownabc)  
 Quiver Distro - [www.anti-politics.net/distro](http://www.anti-politics.net/distro)  
 Insurrectionary Anarchists of the Coast Salish Territories  
[www.geocities.com/insurrectionary\\_anarchists](http://www.geocities.com/insurrectionary_anarchists)



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**People riot in  
Oakland after the  
killing of Oscar  
Grant by Bart Police.  
People fought  
police, built barri-  
cades, and broke  
windows.**