

Modesto Anarcho

the valley's insurrectionary journal of class struggle

#12

POLICE

the time for dialog is over

Welcome

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 preserving the division between rich and poor; in protecting the economy. Through the violence of the state, 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 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. 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 done away with through the collective mass revolutionary action of all working, poor, and oppressed people that creates an international human community through social revolution.

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

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We already know what side of the line we are on. We hope you do as well. The question remains, what are we going to do about the other side?

The crisis is upon us. Around every corner, another neighbor loses their home, another sister loses her job, one of our cars breaks down yet again and we don't have the money to fix it. Obama's messianic promise of hope and deliverance from this nightmare has long ago been abandoned by everyone we know. Cops roam the streets freely, bankers drive home from their downtown offices without a care, and the politicians still have the power to fuck us over at every possible opportunity. Chief Wasden is getting a new job as City Manager of Turlock, making over two-hundred-thousand dollars a year, plus car and housing allowances, while workers everywhere receive pink slips and lose hours. Banks like Goldman Sachs and health insurance companies like United Health are recording record profits. This is the ebb and flow of capital - it is clear to all. While we empty our pockets to feed our families and friends, the rich fill their coffers far beyond capacity. While we suffer, they prosper. We seek to turn the tables on our enemies; we seek to end their days of decadence, in exchange for our own survival. We will wage war on their heaven, and unleash the hell that is our vengeance.

Everywhere, this war is started. In Stockton, the last remnants of the California Valley Miwok tribe have occupied their headquarters, which was foreclosed on earlier this year. In Merced, a man unleashed a lifetime of rage against a police station. All around the valley, the poor, the homeless, those disenfranchised with the system organize against it. Everywhere, people resist the conditions imposed upon them by the forces of capital; everywhere, we find each other, and grow stronger.

Comrades, we hope your summer has been fruitful; we hope you've found the money to get by, and the friends to support you when you need it. This issue is packed with new articles, letters, and interviews. We look forward to seeing you at the next Firehouse Friday (read on to learn more), and until then, solidarity to all.

-Brennus

PRISONER FEEDBACK

Modesto Anarcho,

Hey guys! I'm just writing to say whats up to Modesto Anarcho Crew. I hope this letter reaches you all in the best of health and high spirits.

I recently got contacted by East Bay Prisoner Support publisher/distributor: PO Box 22449, Oakland, CA 94609. They sent me their distro list. Then they sent me three zines.

They got lit. available I haven't seen on MAC's distro list. You have lit. that ain't on their distro list.

I'm not sure if MAC knows about east bay. But I feel by contacting them it could only further our cause and struggle.

Also, there are times that I get harrassed by the cops for receiving lit. from MAC sometimes. They deny me the package y'all are sending. I have to go talk to them at times and advise them of my rights so that I can read the lit. y'all supply me. I've been denied certain jobs for being an anarchist. The letters I receive from MAC and some of the lit. have been copies and placed in my central file. This has caused discrimination against me. I feel it is not right on their part. They got a goddamn constitution and they don't even follow it. Where is my freedom of political belief?

I know this is messed up and has happened to other prisoners. I'm wondering what MAC has heard about and prisoners in California are doing about it? Has there even been 602s filed? Is so, what did they say?

Has MAC had any problems for providing support to prisoners? I know wrong shit is going on in the system. As a prisoner, I know it is happening to a few of us. As a group we need to figure out how to fix it. Even if it is a multi-facility class action 602.

Any one can file a 602, even citizens! Does MAC have a copy of the title 15? If not, please let me know.

MAC provides an awesome amount of support to California prisoners. I'm so grateful and I appreciate everything MAC has done for me.

I hope to hear from you soon! Until then, when pen meets paper, I send all my upmost. Punk rock love and respect!

-Birdi

Crudo responds:

Dear Birdi. Every prison is different, and judging from who works the mail room, their control over mail can vary from place to place. Prisons have a rule that all publications cannot promote violence, revolt, or the overthrow the prison system. Being a revolutionary working class publication, this often makes it hard sharing our perspective with people locked up. Often, prisons will send literature back that violates these rules. Other prisons will not care and accept pretty much anything.

We feel that the best way for groups of prisoners to get organized is to put pressure on the prison system to allow them to receive literature. This means everything from strikes, to petitions, to having people on the outside create call-in and letter writing campaigns. If people in prison are interested in MAC being involved in these struggles, let us know.

We are unaware of what a 602 is or even what a title 15 is. We encourage you to enlighten us or consider writing something about it.

-crudo

Dear MAC,

Thank you for the packet; I enjoyed reading summer 09 Firestorm. I undertand that you do not normally mail material outside your area (state). I have been receiving zines from Quiver distro, and other contact info. I would like to share some news of Anarchist struggle here in Washington State Prison System. To be open, their is not many of us @, at least here in the Closed Custody Prisons, which is swimming with skinheads (racism, Nazis). Being a revolutionary, I have been in over 15 fist fights in the last two years with them (Locus, Nazis), because I will not join them (switch up) like a lot of others do, nor will I ever.

So thanks again for all that you do. I will share the packet with others when I can to spread the spirit (freedom) of resistance.

-Ski

Sorry We've Been So Late!

Many of the orders that prisoners sent to us have taken us months to fill. This is because we've been having issues getting funds coming into us in order to ship stuff out. In order to support our prisoner program, sent well hidden cash or blank money orders/checks to: Modesto Anarcho, PO Box 3027, Modesto, CA 95353.

IN THIS ISSUE

Editorial Collective: Brennus, RevTerry, crudo.

Contributors: Ashley, Central Valley Immigrant Rights Network, crudo, Brennus, RevTerry.

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Action and Resistance

Man Takes Out Rage Against Merced Police

In May, a brave man was sadly arrested after he attacked the Merced Police Department's north area substation. The man launched a barrage of rocks at the pig pen, breaking and damaging several windows. According to the Merced Sun Star, "[Police] didn't know if someone was shooting at the facility or throwing rocks." When asked why he assaulted the police station with rocks, the attacker stated that he did not have a reason. However, we ask, with the rise of police violence in the Central Valley, do we really need a reason to attack the police and their infrastructure? Those that stand up to the police and the violence that they represent in our communities are working class heroes.

California Valley Miwok Tribe Occupies Foreclosed Home

Members of the California Valley Miwok Tribe have barricaded themselves inside their foreclosed home after being unable to pay their mortgage on the house. The home, which is located in an upscale neighborhood between Stockton and Lodi, is the only property that the tribe has left, and contains an office and the living quarters of various tribe members. Tribe members have stated that they are not moving, and will stay until either the eviction is called off or they can find other living arrangements. We find this act of resistance inspiring, as foreclosure rates this summer have exploded, leaving hundreds more people out of their homes and possibly on the street. Solidarity with the occupiers – resist all evictions and squat all foreclosures!

Protests Follow Sacramento Tent City Eviction

Reprinted from LibCom.org: "On July 2, 2009, hundreds of homeless Californians marched on the Sacramento Town Hall to demand "safe ground". It has been about three months since city officials shut down a large "tent city" occupied by Sacramento's homeless people. Now, some of the tent city's residents say they feel like refugees, with no place to go. They staged a loud demonstration Wednesday, in hopes of pressuring Sacramento officials to find them a new place to camp.

Philip Grice, 45, has been on the move ever since the tent city closed. "When we moved out, we moved over to a

private area two fields over. They wanted us off of there too. Just like shuttling cattle, that's all it is," said Grice, a carpenter by trade, who wears a T-shirt that reads, "Where am I supposed to live?" "We're supposed to be the eyesore, but actually we're citizens and we're human beings. We're supposed to have rights like everybody else; it don't matter what we have in our pockets."

Grice joined about 250 other homeless people and their supporters for a march through the northern end of Sacramento. Their action coincided with the closure this week of a temporary shelter where many of the tent city residents had found a roof for the winter. Now these individuals say they need a year-round legal camp on what they call "safe ground."

The march ended up in a hot and dusty city-owned lot next to a police station, where organizers set up a symbolic occupation. Val Jon Farris, founder of a group called iCare America, set up a tent on the lot.

"There is no legal place for people to live unless they own, rent or lease a home. So if you're homeless it's illegal to exist. You can't even lay your head anywhere without getting arrested, prosecuted or criminalized," said Farris. "So this is a demonstration in order to create a civil liberty that ought to already exist, which is [that] people have the right to be, to live without the threat of being incarcerated in their own country."

The idea of a safe ground for homeless campers divides officials in city hall. The mayor, Kevin Johnson, has been receptive, but others, including the city manager, Ray Kerridge, is not. There is also a disagreement over how much it will cost at a time when the city and county are already slashing basic services. What is not in dispute is that this week Sacramento has 200 more people with no place to sleep."

Youth Take Over Park for Hip Hop Night

In late July, during the last night of Concert in the Park, Modesto youths took over the gazebo area of Graceada Park, for a night of rocking the mic with freestyle hip hop. About 20 people got down, as the group set up a large sound system and a mixer. Several local MC's got up to the plate to spit, even as the police rolled through the park demanding that people leave the area. The space was occupied for a good hour, as local MC's took (verbal) shots

police.

Kettleman City Marches Against Environmental Racism

A march and rally were held in Kettleman City on Saturday, July 18 to protest a cluster of birth defects which participants say is probably connected to pesticide used on nearby farms or a toxic dump site located just outside of town. Five out of twenty children born in Kettleman City in the last 18 months had birth defects. Three of them died. The following article was written by indybay.org reporter Mike Rhodes:

Kettleman City is a small town in the southwestern San Joaquin Valley. The city is next to the I-5 Interstate Highway and is the site of the largest toxic waste dump in the western United States. About 200 residents held a march and rally on Saturday to protest a cluster of birth defects that have recently been exposed. Maricela Mares-Alatorre is a mother and has lived in Kettleman City for 31 years. She also helped organize the march. Mares-Alatorre said "in the past we have fought a lot of issues with our local toxic land fill, which is the largest in California. Currently they are in the process of an expansion, but what we are asking for is a moratorium on all of those permits until there is an investigation as to why there are so many children being born with cleft palate. We have had a cluster here - in a 14 month period from 2007 to 2008 five children have been born with cleft palate. We just found out this morning that there is another woman who is pregnant who will also have a child with cleft palate and we believe that until that is investigated and they know why it is happening that there shouldn't be any more permits issued."

On Friday Kings County health officials said they were on a fast track to investigate the high incidents of birth defects in Kettleman City. The US Environmental Protection Agency also released a statement on Friday saying that they will be working with the county and the state to determine if the incidents are related to environmental factors.

But, Dr. Benjamin Hoffman, chief medical officer for Waste Management, the corporation that runs the toxic waste dump in Kettleman City said "I'll make a guess that you'll not find that cluster, that it does not exist." Bradley Angel, the executive director for Green Action for Health and Environmental Justice, one of the groups who helped organize the march, responded to Hoffman's statement by saying "this so-called medical spokesperson had the outrageous nerve to say there is no cluster of birth defects and dead kids here. This is outrageous. It is so outrageous that this morning a number of the parents, some of whose children had died, confronted the local Chem Waste representative. She was shocked and told the parents and myself that her own company statement was insulting to Kettleman City. We are demanding a retraction."

After the rally, marchers headed for the main business district in Kettleman City, many of them holding signs demanding environmental justice and green flags from the Center on Race, Poverty, and the Environment, another group that helped organized the march and rally. Bradley Angel said "this rally here today is to oppose the expansion of the largest hazardous waste dump in the western United States, run by Chem Waste, to oppose the proposed Avenal Power Plant which would be the second biggest air polluter in the southern San Joaquin Valley and oppose the environmental racism that is associated with this. We are

also here to plea for the government agencies to stop the dumping on this community due to all of the dead kids we have in Kettleman City, all of these kids with birth defects. Enough is enough!"



July 18th 2009: A young girl from Kettleman City who doesn't want to die tomorrow. Five out of twenty children born in Kettleman City in the last year had birth defects. Three of these children have died. The Valley is rife with environmental racism. Dump sites like this, and incinerators like Covanta always benefit the rich, while the rest of us suffer. Trash Covanta! Trash Toxic Waste!

Haters and Class Traitors

Repression in the Central Valley

Robert "Civil Rights Activist" Stanford Calls Cops on Downtown Youth

In a recent video recorded by Modesto Copwatch, Robert Stanford, who refers to himself as a "civil rights activist" and (according to Stanford) is involved in groups such as the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), called the police on a group of youths in the downtown of Modesto. Stanford claimed that the group of youths were gang members, based on their dress. He also claimed that one of the youths had a knife, was "throwing gang signs," and was about to get in an "escalation" with a rival group of youths. Police detained the youth and took pictures of him and his clothing, but did not find a weapon. Police told Copwatchers that the youths were out past curfew, but when Copwatch members responded that it was in fact before 10pm, the police let the youths go. When asked why he called the police, Stanford stated on camera that he "knows what gang members look like" and that he "deals with them everyday." He quickly became hostile with the Copwatchers behind the camera; pulled out his NAACP card and stated that the Copwatchers should be "grateful" for the "work" that he does. He then left the conversation by stating that, "You guys are fucked up," then returning to tell them to "suck my dick." Anyone who works actively with the police to further push youth into prison does no service to the cause of freedom and liberation – they hinder it. It is no surprise that Stanford is running for a City Council seat currently; as he seems most interested in cozying up to the police in order to score political points. Do you really want someone who tells people with cameras asking questions to "suck his dick" telling you what to do? To watch Modesto Copwatch videos on youtube, go to: www.youtube.com/user/rhhrorg

Former Police Chief Gets Over 200K For New Job While Others Get Pink Slips

Former Modesto Police Chief Roy Wasden has recently left his job in Modesto and has now taken a position as the Turlock City Manager. Wasden, who lead the Modesto Police during such atrocities as the police killing of 11 year old Alberto Sepulveda during a drug raid, the police murder of Sammy Galven, and the beating of youth of color in 2006 after a DJ event in downtown Modesto, is now making over \$200,000. Wasden will also get cash allowances for cars, cell phones, and other "expenses." Meanwhile, less well connected folks are getting laid off. In June, at least 23 people were laid off in Turlock as the city cut back on spending by getting rid of some of "the little people." Workers should not stand by while pigs like Wasden rake in the cash and working class people are laid off. Occupy your workplaces now against layoffs, cuts, and attacks on pay.

Modesto Police Kill One of Their Own

In April, when Craig Prescott was taken to jail, his wife had hoped his arrest would help her husband get the mental health care he needed. According to the Modesto Bee, Prescott never received that care, and died after a struggle with other deputies. According to his wife, "He defiantly died in the jail, at the hand of fellow deputies." Prescott stopped breathing during a struggle in which deputies deployed tasers and pepper spray. According to head sheriff pig, Adam Christianson, "Our intent was to protect him," and claims that police were trying to calm Prescott down. Two days after Prescott was attacked by his fellow officers in jail, he then was taken off life support without the consent of his family. Again, according to the Bee, "Family members got to Craig Prescott's bedside in time to see hospital staff turn off the machines that were keeping him alive, but his wife said she had no chance to weigh in on that decision or discuss the possibility of donating his organs."

According to a poster of the Modesto Bee website and thehive.com, "I was in jail and watched the jailers beat the living crap out of a guy, then dump him in a single cell by himself, just because he didn't give a yes or no answer quickly enough. If you need medication here they will not give it to you for days if at all. The Safety Center has had a severe case of diarrhea for the last ten years and nobody seems to know why or care. The road camp has boils and other things that form scabs the nurse isn't allowed to tell staff about it..." For more information: www.myspace.com/justicewillbeserved_presc

Riot Police Called out to Fat Cat in Modesto

In early July, riot police were called out to the Fat Cat nightclub in Downtown Modesto, after several club members were ejected during a birthday party. Police used crowd control techniques, as they tried to contain the crowd which began spilling outside as the police showed up. According to police, the crowd become rowdy, as officers responded by beating several people. Several of those arrested received cuts and bruises as officers attacked people with batons. "They treated us like animals," stated one person in the Modesto Bee. One of the officers repeatedly told a woman, "Back off, b----, back off. Go back to the Bay Area where you belong." To watch a video of the police attack, go to: <http://www.modbee.com/local/story/783264.html>.

Stanislaus Sheriffs New Jail house Policy Angers Many

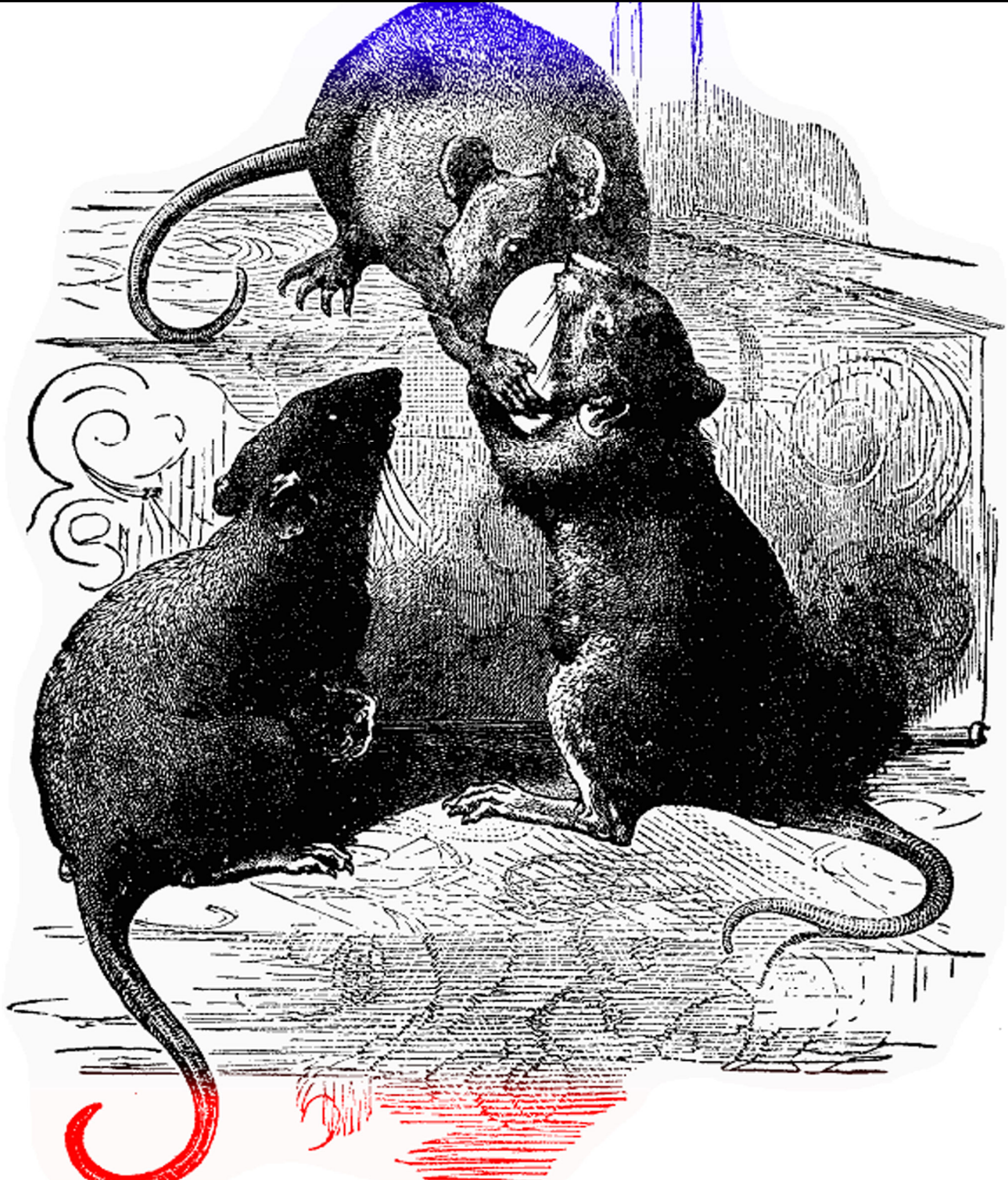
According to the Modesto Bee, "Instead of talking in person, inmates and their lawyers, separated by thick glass, will have to make do with telephones and mail slots. Some area attorneys say the new policy by the Stanislaus County Sheriff's Department is keeping them from effectively reviewing evidence and talking with their clients. "I find this appalling," said Jeanette Sereno, president of the Stanislaus County Bar Association. "This is a pretty serious decision by the sheriff's office. In my mind, it borders on unconstitutional."

Atwater Teachers Laid Off, Unions Complacent

According to the Merced Sun Star, ten teachers in the Atwater Elementary School District were laid off Tuesday night, bringing the total number of laid-off educators in the district to 30. The school board passed a resolution authorizing the move by a 4-0 vote. The district originally sought to lay off 16 teachers, but was only granted permission by an administrative law judge to reduce the staff by 15. Union leaders, in a concession to forgo pay for larger class sizes and accept new work hours, reduced the layoffs to 10. Instead of acting as vehicles of struggle to stop attacks on our pay, working conditions, and livelihoods, unions in the valley are acting as businesses in which the exploitation of the bosses is managed and mitigated. We need new forms of organization that move us forward against capitalism – not except the last indignities.

Fees at MJC and CSU Stanislaus Go Up, Unions Accept Pay Cut

Fees at both Modesto Junior College and California State University Stanislaus have gone up again. At CSU Stanislaus, fees have been rising by 10% over the past ten years, while the CSU executives has been giving themselves hefty pay raises the entire time. CSU Presidents often make more in car and house allowances, than many of the professors at the school. With cuts to financial aid due to the budget crisis, working class students are facing the most raw brunt of the class war in years. The teachers union representing CSU Stanislaus professors also disgraced themselves by accepting to take furlough days, which for the teachers means more work loads for less pay. What is needed now is worker and student unity, united in struggle against out enemies.



repression in the central valley cont.



by Brennus and crudo

Everyone agrees: it's here. Modesto's newest proletarian hangout and anarchist social center is open and full of revolutionary people, pamphlets, and atmosphere. Firehouse 51 is located right in downtown Modesto, and awaits your next visit! As "the hottest new spot on the West Coast," since early summer, the spot has been open, and features a large library, which includes titles such as War on Misery, Fire to the Prisons, Modesto Anarcho, Subversion, Class War, Aufheben, and many, many, more. Our zines and books are abundant, with titles on a variety of subjects. The space features free wi-fi for those using the internet, and a large surround sound system, complete with mixer and mic for freestyling. Our distro is out and ready to be looked through; and features a wide variety of "the hottest insurrectionary shit, from all over the globe." Firehouse 51 also features many luxurious couches and even bunk beds, making your stay the most relaxing ever! While other anarchist infoshops and spaces leave you stuck talking to some wingnut about "9/11 Truth" and checking yourself for scabies, Firehouse 51 remains refreshing, original, and unrefined. Firehouse 51 is already acting as a space for local groups to meet, traveling revolutionaries to stay, and touring radicals a place to present their ideas.

The firehouse itself is one of the oldest buildings in the Modesto area. Already we've had several events such as the Eric McDavid support tour featuring Ozark-based bands Spoke Pants of the Flowering Skillet and Nora & Gnoll. The Firehouse also serves as a space for community members to organize; providing space not only for the Modesto Anarcho Crew, but also other local groups. Firehouse 51 is not only a space for us to keep our things and build our power, but a place where all working class people can come and organize.

But the Firehouse isn't just for special events; it's an everyday hangout for all of Modesto's down-ass-

motherfuckers, and everyone wants to be there. Towards that end, Modesto Anarcho Crew is now happy to announce, "Firehouse Fridays!" We meet every Friday from 7pm until late. It's a time for weekly potlucks (feel free to bring any food item – some are provided), weekly meetings and discussions about campaigns and events, a time to pick up new literature and magazines, and a place to watch revolutionary films and documentaries. Firehouse Fridays have been happening for the past month, and have succeeded in bringing together people from various groups and the Modesto area more generally into a radical space for the purpose of discussion, planning, and also busting mad chills.





Journal of the Modesto Anarcho Crew

by crudo

So far, the we've had a big summer for all of us involved with Modesto Anarcho Crew (MAC), keeping busy with organizing events, publishing literature, and our most exciting news, opening up a new space. In May, we organized a one day conference at CSU Stanislaus, located in Turlock. The conference featured speakers from the Central Valley and around California. Mike Becker, a local professor from CSU Fresno spoke on radical environmentalism, Jim Cook of CSU Stanislaus spoke about trends of anarchism in different religions, and the event concluded with Barry Pateman speaking about anarchism in history and working class resistance. A member of MAC also addressed the crowd and the group ran a literature table. Over 100 people attended the event, including students and people from the local area.

In May and June, we also participated in local community meetings about the rise of police brutality in the Modesto area. We made it clear that local police have no interest in regular people having more control over the police (through citizen review boards) and that if people want justice they are going to have to fight for it; not beg. We continued our support for DQ-University, the chican@/indigenous university that has been occupied by students since 2005, by bringing large amounts of canned food out to the campus. We also organized support for those facing charges for doing a needle exchange program in Modesto (see past issues of Modesto Anarcho and Firestorm), by asking people to attend court hearings of those facing charges. We also published Modesto Anarcho #11, which we were very happy with and got many copies out on a local, national, and international level, thanks to friends and comrades across the world. In June, we became aware that the California Valley Miwok Tribe had occupied their home/office which had been foreclosed on in Stockton. After a few phone calls, we contacted the tribe and kept up relations with them (check out our interview with them in the next issue).

Over the summer, we developed a closer relationship with our comrades in the Revolutionary Hip Hop Report (RHHR), and participated with them in their Copwatch program. They continue to produce an excellent publication, which can be obtained for free throughout the Central Valley at a variety of stores. Their continued dedication to the project is an inspiration and we can only hope that more people will take it upon themselves to create revolutionary media. On the propaganda front, we also released a new line of posters, flyers, and stickers, entitled, "Stop Broke on Broke Crime," (check out the article located in this issue). We also spent the summer going to a variety of events, from the Santa Cruz Anarchist Convergence, to the LA Anarchist Conference, to the Bay Area Anarchist Olympics. MAC also participated in a march in Woodland against the police murder of Luis Gutierrez. We'd like to thank everyone along the way that we have met and talked to and especially those who have given us donations which keeps projects like this running.

Probably the largest project that we undertook this summer was the creation of Firehouse 51, a social center located in Downtown Modesto. If you haven't been to the Firehouse yet, please make a trip out and come see the building. The space itself is about 625 square feet and two stories tall. The Firehouse has free wi-fi, and a extensive selection of anarchist and revolutionary literature to take home, a comfortable chill zone of chairs and couches, and an extensive library. For more information on the space, please check out the article later in the magazine. As we go to print, we are busy working on a variety of upcoming community events, such as another Anarchist Cafe', a block party, and a concert featuring of variety of hip hop acts and speakers. The summer was just the start!

PROTECT YOUR NEIGHBORS

STOP BROKE ON BROKE CRIME

This is your town, your community. If we want to get the pigs off the block then we are going to have to prove to our neighbors that we no longer need the police. That we can share this block and whats more build it up to better then what it is now. That the parks can be safe for our kids, friends and families to enjoy themselves without worry or paranoia. We can work with each other instead of shooting each other dead in the gutter over nothing. That we can put out our hands rather then board our doors. And instead of taking advantage of each other we can collaborate to create better lives for us and our loved ones. Its simple, your ability to rape, rob and murder your own, allows the police and rich/powerful to enter our communities and bring more of the same, while we could stand together and all come up!

Our community is instantly around us as soon as we open our front doors.

Unfortunately, not every enemy-prepared to attack is as easy to identify as a local police officer. We must work from the inside out; starting with the distance to the liquor store. How do you expect our neighbors to want to get rid of the police when they're the ones who tell them everything is OK when something horrible happens at the local park? The local PD being the sly and durable extortion ring that they are, have generally found a way to make us pay for the privilege of having more fees and fines while the working class neighborhoods are destroyed from inside. Their song and dance of portraying themselves as modern day knights fighting against the hordes of psycho killer thugs and child rapists has many of us fooled, as they tend to stay with the easy money such as traffic tickets, and locking up obvious addicts. To the worker who spends their time worrying about their sleeping lovers and children while working the night shift for a few extra hours at work; removing what he or she believes is their one line of defense (the police) is the last thing they have in mind for social change. No matter how difficult the task, we must first be given an alternative to the current system of community welfare before we go about destroying the old one.

Action undertaken towards this end can often blur the imaginary lines between attacking the system and community building. It can be as large as full scale defense against those who would do us harm, badge or not, or it can be as simple as changing our lifestyles. We can begin by cleaning up needle refuse and broken glass, avoiding drunken altercations at our local parks, thus making them once again a place that all the whole neighborhood could enjoy through various activity. We can carry out actions such as teaching free self defense classes or setting up a consensus run neighborhood watch in on your block for protection not only against class traitors such as thieves and rapists, but also the local police. We can also create systems of mutual aid that stop crime at its source; poverty. Avoiding the trademarks of the earlier 'radical charity' projects such as Food not Bombs; the free food program with a media friendly touch and a Christian outreach-like ideological catch. Instead, we can go about creating the world we claim to seek without all the bullshit. Not creating a new political party or organization such as the ones that have failed the working class in the past but instead the proletariat as a class doing what needs to be done, to have the lives we desire. And, although most actions call for a direct action and an infinity group or a "crew," we must take steps against becoming just another destructive street gang which seeks power. Between cops and gangsters we as a class have enough of that kind of culture working against us from the inside. Just as we had seen the liberation of land in the rising flames of construction fires, we can envision liberation from fear, rising like smoke from working closely together to protect our own neighborhoods.

Such community defense against crime, in which we organize as a class without help from the police is not just a fantasy. In working class communities in Chiapas Mexico and Northern Ireland, revolutionary groups have in the past and currently do, engage in systems of community policing and justice, holding thieves and sexual predators accountable to the communities that they hurt and the people they brutalize. This places power in the hands of people affected by crime, not the state. The police department, like all government agencies, is also a business, which seeks to expand itself. That is why the police push for more laws, fines, surveillance, and the criminalization of petty offenses such as dumpster diving. Historically, we have also seen the police repress those who would call for gang truces and for greater community unity. In the aftermath of the LA riots in the early 1990's, police actively worked against the gang truce that was started by the Bloods and the Crips, breaking up meetings and even carrying out drive-bys to keep the gang feud going. More recently, police in LA have even arrested organizers for the group Homies Unidos, which works to end gang warfare. The police are afraid of us uniting and organizing ourselves. They want us to kill and sell drugs to each other, the police see this as job security. For all of us on the street, this means jail time, fines, arrests, gang injunctions, and more incarceration. Meanwhile, California spends more money on prisons than education and our jails continue to fill with more and more people of color and the working class. Our desire to "Stop Broke on Broke Crime," is not just a desire to stop crime where we live, but to start to become the collective force of a united class against our real enemies: those who would brutalize and exploit us.

Let us start now...

Stop Broke on Broke Crime Quit Ripping Off Your Own

In times of economic recession, layoffs, and foreclosure - as poor and working people we all feel the strain of the daily grind. However, our situation is made worse when people faced with similar conditions decide to steal, assault, and jack things from others like them. This gives the police more excuses to flood our streets, put surveillance cameras throughout our cities, and make neighbors afraid of each other. By standing together, we can stop crime in our communities and begin to deal with issues in our own neighborhoods without relying on the police or the government. We can come together to organize and share food and resources - fighting poverty, the cause of crime.

This Neighborhood Is Off Limits To Muggers, Robbers, and Car Thieves



BRUTALITY AND CONSEQUENCES

By Brennan and crud0

Another day and another atrocity. 28-year old Luis Gutierrez took six bullets from undercover cops before he fell on April 30th in Woodland, just outside of Sacramento. The shot that killed him ripped through the back of his head and neck. Luis, a farm worker from a working-class family, is yet another victim of the Central Valley's Gang Suppression Units. Cops originally said that Gutierrez had attacked them, but no one believed them; not even the county coroner, who performed the autopsy, which showed that the shot that killed him was one right in the back. Community members have called for everything from an "independent investigation," to shutting down Yolo County Sheriff Department's Gang Suppression Unit and undercover cops. Recently, people in Woodland have staged protests and marches against the police outside of the DMV where Luis was killed, calling for justice in his case.

In Fresno, police broke a homeless man's wrist in early June, in yet another case of police violence. Randy Johnson was arrested and released several times, without cause. In the course of the arrests, the cops broke his wrist. Officers then entered his wife's home, and attempted to force her to press charges against him. She refused. Johnson, his wife, and an independent witness say the cops were violent, using "excessive force." This latest act of brutality comes on the tails of a video showing Fresno police savagely beating another homeless man, who was then arrested and charged with assaulting the police officers.

A 75-year-old woman is suing Stanislaus Law Enforcement agencies for the use of excessive force over a year ago, when cops from the DEA and other agencies entered her home with a warrant and left her with full-body bruises and hip pain. Officers were supposedly in search of one of her tenants, who did not live at the house. In Modesto, police and local sheriffs were also guilty in the taser death of a former fellow officer at the county jail in April, taking him off life support in the hospital before his family could intervene. This summer, riot police in Modesto also beat and attacked a group of party goers at the Fat Cat nightclub in downtown Modesto. Reading the headlines in the newspaper or hearing stories from friends, we shake our heads and continue on with our day. Unsure of how to confront armed force of class rule that controls our streets.

New Downtown Surveillance System

But now, police power isn't just concentrated on the streets; it's an ever watching eye following our every movement. Taking a walk through the downtown of Modesto, you may notice some new signs that read: "Notice: Monitored by Video Camera." Taking a closer



look you will then find that the cameras stationed up about two stories off the ground peer down at the street below. Like other Central Valley cities such as Fresno, Ripon, Manteca, and Livingston, Modesto (according to the Modesto police at a recent public meeting), now boasts about 70 surveillance cameras throughout the city. According to a press release from the Wi4Net Corporation, "Wi4Net...[has] implement[ed]...a wireless video surveillance network for the City of Modesto, California. The first phase of the project implements cameras throughout the downtown section of the City and features a full-scale monitoring center at the Police Department." The new camera system cost the City, according to the Modesto Bee, "\$340,000 for 10 cameras."

According to the police, this surveillance system is part of an effort in "redeveloping" the downtown and making it safe and attractive for business interests and upscale establishments such as the Gallo Center. As Lieutenant Ron Cloward stated, "After significant redevelopment efforts in our downtown area over recent years, we are extremely proud to add this safety tool to further spur economic development and improve security in this part of our City." In other words, the surveillance system makes the downtown safer for business interests and acts as a tool for the police against the poor, the youth, the homeless, and those who would use the downtown to congregate without buying and selling. This same logic also led the police to install a sub-station in the downtown area after people started using the 10th and J Street area as a hangout space on weekends. Lieutenant Ron Cloward even stated in the Modesto Bee that the substation was instrumental in kicking youth out from the downtown area.

While the papers are quick to lap up reports from the police that surveillance make us safer, in reality, surveillance systems do not reduce crime. In a recent study reported in the Modesto Bee, it was found that in the small Central Valley town of Ripon, despite the massive amount of surveillance cameras placed throughout the city, crime actually rose by 4% in the last year. In countries like England where surveillance cameras are even more prominent, similar statistics exist, with crime not being drastically affected by the rise of police power on the streets. At the borders, in the workplace, and in our communities: the police and the rich are looking for more ways to control, direct, and restrict our everyday actions and movement. This has nothing to do with keeping us safe, and everything to do with keeping us in line.



Resistance and Recuperation

People in poor communities face the brunt of police violence. We must find forms of organization and action that remove the power of the police from our areas and place power back into the hands of the people living there. But many within the Left are not interested in this; instead they are concerned with recuperating this anger back into the government and 'fixing' these problems in order to make class society function better. Thus, in the midst of this ongoing repression, a series of public forums and marches throughout the central valley have been organized. In Modesto, a new Copwatch group has also sprung up to combat police harassment (see last issue of Modesto Anarcho). But the question remains, will these actions give people the opportunity to come together and resist the police, or do they seek to recuperate anger against the police and back into the system?

We first became aware of the public forums about police brutality in the Central Valley through friends. We have continued to see these types of events for years; usually after some police murder or brutality case, and sometimes in response to specific allegations. The dynamic for the events are always the same. Police would be charged with taking a hard line on "the homeless" or "people of color," (although never on poor and exploited people as a whole), or police would get caught beating people up or harassing certain groups or individuals. In these forums, former Police Chief Roy Wasden would field questions after stating that "his door was always open," and that people were encouraged to talk with him about any concerns that they had. Despite the smiling public face of the police, this did nothing to change the fact that street cops can beat, murder, and harass at will, knowing full well that the networks of police power will exonerate them. .

Another problem with these public forums, was that these events were almost entirely organized, monitored, and controlled by local groups like the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) or the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). While the NAACP is a diverse group with many people involved with a deep commitment to community and class based struggle, we find the nature of these groups in these forums problematic. We feel that these forums have done nothing to get people together to talk about the abuses that they have felt at the hands of police and then act in a way that confronts police power. Instead, these forums



help to create a dynamic where people are required to grovel before their exploiters and abusers. It is truly disgusting to see police officials who often are paid more than \$100,000 a year, being spoken to by poor and working people as if they are all powerful parent figures. In the final analysis, these forums seek to include the police themselves in the dialog about police violence and brutality. This adds to the lie that there are 'bad apples' within the police, and if these problems can be removed, or if there is "more dialog and better training," the police will function better. This will never be the case however, because the purpose of the police in this society is to keep the divide between the rich and poor protected. Their business is the arrest and imprisonment of poor and working people. As long as that business is good – things will be bad for us.

Recently, a march organized in Woodland against the police murder of Luis Gutierrez was attended by members of Modesto Anarcho Crew (MAC). To us, this event also showed the power of recuperation on the street. At this event, which was attended by over a hundred people, instead of an open mike inviting the community to talk and discuss their own experiences with the police, the crowd was addressed by a variety of church leaders, low level politicians, and career activists. One local Democratic leader was even heard saying after being asked why they were there by another speaker, "Shut up and smile, we're just here to take pictures." But we weren't there to take pictures and smile, either with signs or anarchist banners. We were there to meet and talk with other people from our area and take action against police violence; building a working class movement that resists the power of capitalism and its guards in the process.

After the speakers had finished talking, instead of taking to Main St. and shutting it down, protesters were then herded to the street behind the park which was a small residential street, with hardly any traffic. We were then told like children to march in rows of five by five in the street and to not block any incoming traffic. The march then walked slowly up two blocks, where people were then again spoken to in front of an empty courthouse. Nothing about this march was in any way a threat to power. It was a symbolic act, that while putting forward the demand that an independent investigation be launched into the murder of Luis Gutierrez, did nothing to impose that demand upon the power structure. Indeed, march organizers must have thought so little of the people that they sought to corral at their protest, that they did not even trust them to march down the street without supervision. This is the ultimate regression of social movements and change; when we begin to do the work of the state and the police for them. Policing and controlling our own movements and events. Treating neighbors and fellow working class people as little children to be directed. And putting faith in politicians and bureaucrats to lead our struggles and change things for us. But if the forums that seek to include police in the dialog of stopping police brutality and marches which seek to control and direct our rage are not a way forward – what is?

Copwatch – A Culture of Resistance

How can we find forms of action and organization which put power for working and poor people back onto the street? Copwatch is one such local example. The idea of Copwatch is simple (see *Modesto Anarcho* #11), and is based around the concept that people can monitor and video-tape police interactions in an effort to minimize abuse and violence. But Copwatch is more than this; it acts as a body of people who are publicly against police control over movement, space, and people. This helps build a collective working class culture that resists the dominant order and logic of capitalist life and space. In Modesto, Copwatchers hand out information and flyers when they go out on patrols, inviting others to join them and assert themselves on the street.

But the culture of Copwatch must also involve a culture and forms of organization which make the police obsolete in our communities. This means that we fight against sexual assault and abuse where we live. We don't rob people in our neighborhoods or vandalize or steal their stuff. We work to build forms of organization that allow people in working class areas to come together and talk about



...ALLOW PEOPLE IN WORKING CLASS AREAS TO COME TOGETHER AND TALK ABOUT IT.

their problems and work to solve them. It means that we create forms of organization which hold those who screw over other working and poor people accountable to the places that they live in. This makes police and prisons obsolete, and creates communities where we can build our own power against capitalism.

Consequences – The Lesson from Oscar Grant

The actions of the youth and working class in Oakland in early January 2009 show the power of people when they impose their rage and desires against the system – instead of trying to make pleas towards it. After BART police murdered Oscar Grant, a young father and union member of a bay area grocery store, people came out to a protest called by reformist groups who wanted nothing more than to simply “speak truth to power,” have a peaceful march, and do nothing to confront or fight the police. However, the people of Oakland showed their rage in January; rioting several times, attacking and fighting police and symbols of capitalism, and also launched night-time attacks against BART stations. The streets of Oakland came alive with graffiti denouncing the police state and celebrating the insurrection. Out of these actions, the city was forced to actually prosecute the officer who killed Oscar Grant with murder – something that has hardly ever happened in this country. By creating consequences for the police – the proletarians of Oakland forced concessions from them. They also created a rupture that in the future could allow them to gain more territory and control over their communities. This is the way forward, not by groveling and playing by their rules, but by being in total opposition to them.



We are not interested in engaging in dialog with the police. We are not interested in working with them. We are not interested in any of this because we are instead interested in creating our own power and solving our own problems. We are not interested in allowing a group of middle class 'middle men' to control and direct our struggles – we want to direct and control them ourselves. Most of all, we want to work towards complete control over our communities and towards the destruction of the system which causes poverty, the cause of crime. With each new atrocity, the role of the police and those that say that we should work with them in this society becomes more and more clear:

THEY ARE OUR ENEMIES.

YOU GET THE BACK WE'LL TAKE THE FRONT

Downtown Modesto is a contradictory place. While the homes of the upper middle class of La Loma tower and glisten above us, we also watch the homeless and drug addicts walk by; pushing shopping carts and carrying backpacks. We see people in suits on their way to the court house; we see people leaving the court house in tears. We see police on the prowl, and we also catch glimpses of families waiting to see loved ones locked up inside the jail. We see the high price of food, yet drive by workers toiling for next to nothing in the fields. We are told through the media that racism has been defeated; but yet we live in the realities of a city separated by race and class lines. It is not just the aesthetics of this city which are contradictory – but the whole of society as well. In fact, we, who spend our lives working for wages that we survive on, are the contradiction in this society. We are the contradiction because while our labors make the rich, rich, at the same time the meager pay that they give us in wages in essence keeps us in poverty. They work us long enough to make the most profits off our labors – but never pay enough for us to truly live. They work us just under the time that would require them to pay us benefits – ensuring that our lives are even more precarious. Thus, our lives become organized and dependent on work: on simply surviving. Despite what little hustles we have on the side; from selling weed to collecting cans, we never seem to have enough – and this is the point. All we really own is our ability to sell our labor. We are the working class in this society, the group whose purpose is to work and produce for the benefit of others. We exist in a system of wage-slavery; as we are dependent on that which keeps us in poverty.

But, through the daily misery, we hear that capitalism is in crisis. This is a lie - capitalism is the crisis. It is the crisis of our everyday lives. It is the bill in the mail, the ticket on the car window, the meager pay check, the price at the pump and the checkout line. It is the boss at work and in the union office, the voice on TV enticing you to buy products and to vote for the politicians of those products. It is the police coming to evict you, the police coming to deport you, and the police coming to arrest you. There is nothing within any of this that is not crisis for us. One thing is true about the present conditions of our lives: as things become harder, the rich are pushing the costs onto us. They are making us pay for their crisis. We foot the bill for higher energy and food costs. We must learn to live with less hours and fewer jobs. We are forced to deal with higher pollution and more police. Faced with this everyday class war, class conflict emerges. People organize on the job and go on strike or occupy their workplaces. People steal from work and steal from other stores. People break into vacant homes and live in them for free. People also help out their friends, neighbors, and families, as they attempt to live in this class divided society. This means everything from driving your boyfriend to work to visiting your mom in prison.

Recently, on a day like no other, a point in that conflict emerged at the Save-Mart located in Downtown Modesto by 5-points. A person walked into the store and exited with a shopping cart full of food without paying. When approached by a worker who then tried to stop the person from stealing the food, the person with the items pulled a knife and stabbed the worker. After the worker was left bleeding, the person with the goods then escaped without capture. This situation pains us; not only because of the risk that the person stealing the food put themselves in, but also because of the danger and pain that they inflicted upon the worker who was stabbed. We do not celebrate this situation; we see it as an act of desperate people. It is desperation which forces us to risk jail time in order to feed ourselves through theft and it is also desperation which forces us to defend the property of those who exploit us as workers.

Petty theft will never be a solution for ending capitalism – but as long as people sell their labor power while creating commodities and then in turn buy back those commodities, people will steal.

Thus, the rate of theft in stores always occurs more from the workers in the stores themselves, not from the customers. Still, statistics show that 1 in 8 people who walk into a store do it with the intention of robbing it. We ask, why not a truce? Since workers are more likely to take back items while on the job and workers that are off work inside stores are more likely to do so while in the store, why not give each other a break? You get the back, while we get the front. In the end, there's no division between "us" and "you." There is only a "we" that is the we of our shared conditions of misery and exploitation. Let us turn that into rage which we can hurl towards our real enemies. Let us work together towards the day when we labor for needs and desires, not profits and bosses. Let us push towards the taking back of not just commodities - but everything in this society.



GRUDO



Helping Immigrant Communities Fight La Migra

By Central Valley Immigrant Rights Network

Many of us are probably too familiar with bailing friends and family out of jail. Many of us are aware that the cops put innocent people in jail all the time. And we often have to put forward our money or raise funds to get them out. Many of us also know how important it can be to have a good lawyer.

Jails and the necessity to raise bail money affect many communities. Immigrant communities face this problem as well. But add to that the threat of being deported, your family getting separated, and facing greater financial obstacles to affording legal costs and courtroom representation. This is what immigrant communities throughout the country are up against.

La Migra, or ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement), part of the Department of Homeland Security, is a terrorist organization. They decide who is "legal" or "illegal" and if you happen to not possess a certain piece of paper which determines whether you "belong" on the "right" side of an arbitrary border line, then you are a target. ICE may come to your home, work, or school, steal you from your family (even if you're a child), lock you up in a jail or detention center, possibly far away and under inhumane conditions and human rights violations, and deport you. If you're a mother, they may be nice and put you under house arrest until deportation, giving you a nice ankle monitor. La Migra is ruthless and careless. Over 80 people died in ICE detention from 2003 – 2008. ICE has mistakenly detained citizens as well. Acting in solidarity to fight this monster is essential for immigrant communities.

But immigrant communities in the Central Valley have more problems still. The Valley lacks the resources which the Bay Area and Southern California have. There are few attorneys here willing and able to take on cases representing immigrants. It's hard for attorneys to do pro bono (donated) work. There are fewer nonprofits than in other areas. Some nonprofits are legally restricted from assisting undocumented folks. People facing detention and/or deportation usually have to go to court in San Francisco or a detention center in Arizona, so travel expenses can be exorbitant. Immigrants residing in the Central Valley obviously face many obstacles to getting financial assistance and legal support and representation when their communities are under attack and terrorized by ICE, facing detention and deportation.

This is why Central Valley Immigrant Rights Network (CVIRN) started the Central Valley Immigrant Legal Fund: to connect people and their attorneys with financial resources to ensure they receive adequate representation and support. We kicked off the Fund with a fundraising dinner and speaker event on May 24. We are so far working with Fresno-based attorneys to put together a core group of attorneys who will be part of the Fund and take on cases they may not otherwise be able to without funds. We will continue to raise money for this objective.

You may be thinking about the Fund and what might be considered the reformist nature of it. It's true that by helping immigrants afford lawyers we won't change the

capitalist system which uproots migrants and criminalizes them in the first. But most people I know wouldn't hesitate to help bail their friends, families, and comrades out of jail should they get arrested. Additionally, sometimes revolution isn't enough.

One of the speakers at the fundraiser, David Bacon, a journalist and long-time immigrant rights activist from the Bay Area, brought up a good point. Although we must abolish capitalism to have equality and justice, when you talk to workers in the fields about problems their communities face—detention, deportation, work-related deaths in the fields, families split apart, government terrorism, the everyday awareness that you are "illegal" and despised by many—talking to them about revolution doesn't satisfy their immediate need for justice and human rights. We need to organize against and attack the system, but we need to act pragmatically to help immigrants improve their lives right now.

Making sure they have good legal representation when facing detention and deportation is one such act. You can take part in this process via the Central Valley Immigrant Legal Fund. You can donate to the Fund, organize fundraising and awareness events in your community, or let us know of any attorneys or organizers who could be part of the Fund. If you can help with any of this, contact CVIRN at cvirn@riseup.net.

For the dignity and autonomy of immigrant and all working class communities!
No border, no nation, stop deportation!



¿Illegal, y que?



Illegal, and what?

When the workplace is the street

An interview with an organizer from Fresno's Bad Date Sheet



Can you give us a general overview as to what the Bad Date Sheet is, and what it seeks to accomplish?

A Bad Date Sheet is a resource for sex workers that helps working women communicate with one another about dangerous men posing as clients. We speak with women working primarily on the streets about their experiences, getting detailed descriptions of men who have attacked, raped, attempted to rape, or robbed them, and then compile the descriptions on a sheet. We then distribute the Bad Date Sheet among sex workers throughout Fresno. The idea is to create a network that will allow women who trade sex for basic survival needs to protect themselves and one another. Hopefully in time we can build solidarity among the women and maybe even a movement for sex workers' rights in Fresno.

Why work with sex workers?

This question can be answered a couple ways, depending on who within the sex industry you're working with. Our project works with street walkers, who are often the most marginalized and vulnerable women in society. These are most often women living in poverty who trade sex for food, shelter, protection, drugs, or basic survival needs. Often they are in a position where few other options are available to them, whether it be because they or their families have fallen on hard times and have to find some way to make ends meet (and women are typically paid less than men while none of us are making living wages to begin with), or it can be because they have an addiction they have to feed (addiction often being a response to past trauma such as childhood sexual abuse), or there are women who find themselves coerced into it by boyfriends, drug suppliers, or pimps, or maybe they don't see themselves as sex workers,

but part of their hustle to survive on the streets involves exchanging sex. Or it could be any number of other reasons, but ultimately none of us are in a position to judge what another person does to get by when times get tough. And yet, so many folks do judge.

Often people reduce sex workers to being nothing more than sluts or dirty people, society looks at them as solely one-dimensional objects reduced to nothing more than their job. I had friends growing up who would drive down G Street to laugh at the hookers, how cruel is that? To laugh at other people's misfortunes or hard times? Of course they wouldn't drive around laughing at homeless people, but if they were women perceived to offer sex then it was fair game to laugh or taunt, or even throw things at them.

Which gets to other reasons for working with sex workers. Women enter the sex industry for a variety of reasons. Because it pays better than many jobs available to women (if you're someone who thinks sex work is degrading, try waitressing, then tell me an "honest" job is less oppressive), or because they love sex, because they are dealing with issues, or because the hours are flexible. Whatever the reason, it's a job, but one with a hell of a lot of stigma attached. A lot of that stigma comes from living in a Christian based society that tells us that women are supposed to remain virtuous and virginal for the man they one day marry, and they damn well better get married to a man, because that is a woman's place. And then of course you are meant to provide sex for your husband (whether you want to or not), as well as cook, clean, etc for him. These are the underlying ideas that to

that to this day still shape what we are taught about women's sexuality, that it is meant to belong to a man. Sex work is part of a variety of ways of being or lifestyles that reject those archaic notions and return women's sexuality to women, where it belongs. All women, including women with no interest in sex work, benefit from having the rigid roles and expectations placed on us confronted and deconstructed. And of course, I work with sex workers because as a feminist, and as an anarchist, I have a duty to support women, particularly the most vulnerable. Challenging prostitution laws and decriminalizing sex work are necessary parts of challenging

"YOU still have the right to say NO."

the police state and the criminalization of poverty.

Why is more control over their work needed by sex workers? What kind of challenges do they face while on the job?

It's a safety issue. When women are attacked on the job, most are too afraid to speak out about it because they're afraid they'll be dismissed or even arrested for prostitution. Worse, cops are often perpetrators of violence against sex workers, so going to the cops is that much more of a risk. In San Francisco in the 90s, some folks interviewed a lot of sex workers around town and found that the majority of them had been violated (verbally or physically assaulted) by cops, were routinely harassed, solicited then arrested, even attacked while trying to report an attack. Their trauma gets amplified. In my own research I've heard similar stories. Also, because there's so much stigma attached to sex work, it's difficult for women to get adequate health care, both because of the discrimination they experience from health care professionals who bring their prejudice to the workplace and because many don't disclose that they trade sex in the first place. Obviously they have an increased risk of contracting STIs or of other strain to their reproductive organs, so health care professionals need to be trained to sensitively deal with their needs.

If working women had more control, they'd have more ability to avoid dangerous men and have their rights protected. Sex workers' rights are human rights, and just like any other worker or woman, they deserve protection on the street and while working. Actually, prostitution is only a misdemeanor, whereas assaulting someone is a felony. But as it is the cops or court just blame the woman for it. Judges have even been quoted saying you can't rape a sex worker because they're out there having sex in the first place. Which goes back to what I was saying about this being an issue for all women. Women who are sexually active are seen as asking for it, something we all need to be challenging. No matter how many people one sleeps with or how many times you've been with a particular person, You still have the right to say no.

Another important part of having control over sex work is that because it is illegal, all forms of sex work are treated as being the same. Women and children who are forced into sex work are hidden compared to women who choose to. Decriminalizing sex work will make it a hell of a lot easier for forced prostitution and sex trafficking to become apparent or for women and youth to come forward without fear of repercussions.

For indoor sex workers, it's important to have control over the work place just like anywhere else. Somewhere like the Lusty Lady in San Francisco or at a brothel, women need to have job security, fair wages, safe working conditions, etc. There's a great documentary about the unionizing process of the Lusty Lady called Live Nude Girls Unite.

In what ways do you hope that this project gives sex workers more power over their work and also breaks up the divisions between workers?

Mainly I hope to create a support network among the women. I've seen communities where the women more or less look out for one another, pick up condoms at the Needle Exchange for other workers and that kind of thing. I've also seen it be far more competitive. When every date is how you make rent, food money, and find ways to self-medicate, other women can be a threat to your job. So I hope this project creates more of an atmosphere of looking out for one another. They're all just out there trying to survive, get by, maybe get out, so I hope from this they see that they can work together more or less, look out for each other. In reality, when they work together and support each other, there is more ability to charge more. If everyone is agreeing to not charge below a certain amount, they all make more off of each trick.

I also hope to create more of a consciousness about sex work among people not in the industry. We have a lot to learn from women in this industry, about sexuality and gender, about understanding poverty and oppression, about resisting the police state. But first folks have to see street walkers and other sex workers as more than just their profession, their bodies, more than just sex, and stop seeing women as a whole through the lens of a society drenched in porn and strip clubs. Obviously we're gonna have a stronger community when we don't see each other as commodities or objects.



Strike, Occupy

In Modesto, as across California and the world, the ruling class has made one thing clear: we must pay for their crisis. Obama and the rest of the rich continue to bailout the banks and corporations, all the while cutting basic services such as women's shelters, elder care, and education. Despite all the talk of universal health care, the government has also cut funding to the Healthy Families program, which gives cheap and free care to low income children. Soon, the state "will have to begin terminating coverage for more than 60,000 children on Oct. 1. Nearly 670,000 children could be dropped..." according to the LA Times. As lessening access to wages, jobs, and cuts to work hours continue, more and more people are having trouble paying for their homes. Again, according to the LA Times, "A mortgage trade group reported... that more than 13% of the nation's mortgage holders were delinquent on their mortgages or in the process of having their homes repossessed during the second quarter of this year." But of course, the rich have found a way to capitalize off of this, according to the Associate Press, "U.S. productivity surged in the spring by the largest amount in almost six years while labour costs plunged at the fastest pace in nine years." What this means, is that capitalism is working just as it always has: paying us less while making us work harder and harder.

The amount of brutality we face at the hands of this system is a result of the low level of struggle that we can dish out against it. But what of the so-called, 'loyal opposition?' The managers and bosses of the trade unions would like nothing more than to capitalize on this crisis as well. During this time, they are hoping to build up their business - the unions themselves. This gains them more power and influence, as well as more money through union dues. They are hoping to control and direct any sort of conflict between the people and the bosses and the exploitation that they represent. Thus, the union bosses and the capitalists "negotiate" while hundreds of workers have their voices ignored and their lives impoverished. In the Central Valley, unions have repeatedly worked with management in order to cut hours, jobs, and implement furlough days, meaning workers are temporarily laid off,

and then return to work with a larger workload. In this way, capitalism is making us work harder for less pay. Thus, any fight against this system will also have to be a struggle to self-organize and control our own struggles. Not only against capitalism, but also a struggle that is autonomous from the organizations which seek to contain true working class power. But the question remains - how do we do this?

Ongoing mass strikes and workplace occupations across the world have shown that there is still power in the mass refusal of workers to sell their labor. However, we need a general strike - a mass strike by all working people in solidarity with not only the workers in struggle, but also in order to better our own conditions. The occupations at the Republic Windows and Glass factory in Chicago, at the Vestas plant in the UK, and most recently in Ssangyong, South Korea show that not only by striking, but also by taking over workplaces we gain power; not only over our own struggles but also our lives. In France, workers have even kidnapped their bosses in order to gain concessions! These occupations and strikes can also move beyond just the confines of the workplace, and become genuine social strikes: People refuse to pay transportation fees in the city and workers refuse to collect. Neighborhoods organize mass appropriations of food and other goods and redistribute them in their communities. The homeless take over vacant homes and live in them. In short, we turn this crisis around on the rich - we push for rupture with all capitalist relations. When one group of workers goes into struggle, we must all show solidarity. This means much more than honoring picket lines; it means engaging in a struggle against the system that exploits and controls us all.

-By some wage slaves from the valley and the bay.

For more information on workplace occupations and mass strikes, go to: www.libcom.org.

TAKEOVER

SO JUST CHILL

Firehouse 51

Modesto's own anarchist social center. Firehouse 51 is "the hottest new spot on the West Coast." Come check out our extensive book and magazine library, our free literature distro, and enjoy the free wi-fi and friendly atmosphere. Firehouse 51 acts as a space for revolutionary events and meetings. If you would like to use the space for your group or event, contact us! We host weekly open house nights every Friday from 7pm - Midnight. Come check it out! For more info and directions, email us at: anarcho209@yahoo.com.

Anarchist Cafe!

Saturday, October 10th (the day before the Keep Ya Head Up Festival), make sure to come to the Anarchist Cafe' in Downtown Modesto. The event will feature live hip hop performances from local artists, as well as free food, literature tables, and speakers from local groups. The event is completely free, and goes from 7pm -10pm. Meet at 10th and J Street, in Downtown Plaza. For more info: anarcho209@yahoo.com.

3 Year Anniversary Issue!

Modesto Anarcho turns 3! We're going to pull out all the stops for the next issue. So if you want to have an article in an issue for the record books, be sure to get it to us! Send all submissions to: anarcho209@yahoo.com.

Hand Out Modesto Anarcho!

Would you like to distribute bulk copies of Modesto Anarcho and Firestorm for free? Give them out at school, work, where you live, or in prison? Simply write to us for bulk copies. Modesto Anarcho, PO Box 3027, Modesto, CA 95353.

KEEP YA HEAD UP

THIS IS AN ANTI-COLONIAL EVENT...Y QUE?

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TIL THE NEXT EPISODE...

A group of people is walking away from the camera down a city street during sunset. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and blue. The people are silhouetted against the bright light. In the foreground on the right, a person is walking towards the camera, their face and body are heavily blurred, creating a sense of motion and depth. The overall mood is contemplative and hopeful.

Modesto Anarcho
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Some ask, "What will we do?" With tears in their eyes and a sense of powerlessness. We ask, "What is to be done?" With an understanding that the world must be undone and remade. In our own image - not theirs.