

Writings on Repression



*By the
First of May Anarchist Alliance*

The following is a collection of the various articles and fliers from the First of May Anarchist Alliance (M1). Included, and where indicated, are personal positions made by members of M1. We have reproduced these documents in the hopes of furthering debate and discussion as well as simply making our views known to a broader audience.

M1's affinity is built around four principles:

- 1) a commitment to revolution
- 2) a working class orientation
- 3) a non-doctrinaire anarchism
- 4) a non-sectarian and multi-layered approach to organization

Repression

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September 27th, 2010

First of May Anarchist Alliance: Hands off the Anti-War movement! Defend FRSO! Anarchist Solidarity against the Political Police

We stand firmly opposed to the raids carried out by the FBI, America's political police, against a number of anti-war and labor activists across the country on Friday, September 24th, 2010. We give our solidarity to those threatened by these raids and to those subpoenaed to appear before a government Grand Jury next month. These attacks must be resisted.

The FBI claims the raids were done in order to combat terrorism. We reject that lie. We know many of the activists attacked personally and have shared the frontlines with them in struggles against war and poverty and for freedom and justice. We have had, and will continue to have, serious disagreements with them. But let no one doubt - WE HAVE THEIR BACKS.

The FBI, and the government they serve, are the real terrorists. It was the FBI that carried out a program of assassination, repression, and disruption of the Black Panther Party and other movements for Black Liberation. It was the FBI that waged a brutal campaign of harassment, intimidation and murder against the American Indian Movement and other Native activists.

It is the U.S. government that operates as an empire with military occupations of countries all over the world like Iraq, Afghanistan, & Haiti and underwriting repression and occupation in Palestine, Colombia, Somalia and elsewhere.

The U.S. empire and their agents have no moral standing whatsoever to label these activists "terrorists" - and no right to dictate to anyone who around the world we can and cannot visit, dialogue with, or support.

It should be clear to those with open eyes that the Obama regime has more in common than not with Bush. They both serve the same capitalist system and imperial state. Obama's government has now extended the undemocratic attacks begun under Bush against Muslim communities and organizations to groups and networks of the Left.

We should carefully analyze the government's choice of timing and targets, and also begin building solidarity and defense. We must make it clear that "An Injury to One is an Injury to All". We must give our friends the resources and support to fight this unjust harassment – and also begin preparing or re-preparing our communities and organizations for social self-defense against this kind of repression, including the basic principal that we do not co-operate with or talk to the FBI.

The dedicated organizing in defense of the RNC 8 in Minnesota is a good example that can be built upon. We should begin discussing what it would take to unite all those (excluding the fascists and white supremacists) that have faced state repression into some common action. From the Muslim community, to the targets of the "Green Scare", to the spied upon anti war activists in Iowa, to those activists hit by these most recent raids – we need to push back together.

Solidarity!

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First of May Anarchist Alliance is a new anarchist organization being built on four pillars:

- 1) a commitment to revolution
- 2) an orientation to the working classes
- 3) a non-doctrinaire brand of anarchism and
- 4) a non-sectarian and multi-layered approach to organization.

09/27/2010

December 20th, 2011

Self-Defense is Not a Crime!

Stand up Against Racism and Transphobia!



An important case demands our support. Crishaun "CeCe" McDonald, a young Black transgender woman faces two counts of second degree murder for defending her friends and herself from physical attacks by a group shouting ugly racist and homophobic insults.

Please contact the Hennepin County Attorney Michael Freeman and demand he drop the charges against CeCe:

612-348-5540 fax * 612-348-2042 *
citizeninfo@co.hennepin.mn.us

Please bring this case before local GLBTQ groups, Black Community organizations, Unions and community groups, Occupy assemblies and anywhere people are struggling for freedom and justice. An Injury to One is an Injury to All!

According to the [Support CeCe website](http://supportcece.wordpress.com)
<http://supportcece.wordpress.com>:

"Around 12:30 am on June 5, CeCe and four of her friends (all of them black) were on their way to Cub Foods to get some food. As they walked past the Schooner Tavern in South Minneapolis, a man and two women (all of them white) began to yell

epithets at them. They called CeCe and her friends 'faggots,' 'niggers,' and 'chicks with dicks,' and suggested that CeCe was 'dressed as a woman' in order to 'rape' Dean Schmitz, one of the attackers."

"As they were shouting, one of the women smashed her drink into the side of CeCe's face, slicing her cheek open, lacerating her salivary gland, and stinging her eyes with liquor. A fight ensued, with more people joining in. What happened during the fight is unclear, but within a few minutes Dean Schmitz had been fatally stabbed. CeCe was later arrested, and is now falsely accused of murder."

The coroners report showed Schmitz had a large nazi swastika tattoo.

CeCe now faces a Justice system that is anything but. African-Americans are imprisoned in Minnesota and the U.S. at rates far disproportionate to the population. Black defendants incur greater rates of conviction and harsher sentences than whites, especially when the alleged victim is white. In fact the CeCe Support Committee has documented four separate recent instances when the local Hennepin County Attorney has declined to press charges when a white person killed an alleged attacker.

Likewise the Criminal Justice system is grossly discriminatory against transgender defendants. Trans people are routinely placed in isolation and/or subjected to increased sexual violence, harassment, and abuse at the hands of prisoners and corrections facility staff. CeCe herself “was kept in solitary confinement “for her own protection”; she had no say in this matter. Finally, she was transferred to a psychiatric unit in the Public Safety Facility. It was nearly two months before she was taken back to a doctor to check up on the wound on her face, which by then had turned into a painful, golf ball-sized lump”, according to the CeCe Support Group website.

The Hennepin County Attorney, Mike Freeman, is the Democratic Farmer-Labor Party politician responsible for prosecuting CeCe. Previously Freeman unsuccessfully prosecuted an Anti-Racist Action activist for defending himself from a neo-nazi at an anti-fascist demonstration in 1993. Freeman’s office also led the racist railroading of the young African-American men known as the “Minnesota 8” for the shooting of a police officer in 1992.

CeCe had every right to defend herself and her friends from this assault. Black folks, queer folks, and trans people deal with enough insult and abuse from bosses, the police, school, and other official institutions without having to worry about physical attacks just for being who they are. Racist and transphobic violence cannot be tolerated. Silence and inaction will only aid the perpetuation of white supremacy, sexism, homophobia and transphobia inherent in the structure of this oppressive and exploitive system. The necessary unity to defeat this system requires the solidarity of all of us – not just lowest common-denominator unity that favors the most privileged – but defense of the most oppressed and exploited. As the social crisis sharpens, the need for self-defense from both individual bigots and from a system built on white supremacy and patriarchy will only increase.

A strong support group, based among young transgender activists and including anarchists, has come together to defend CeCe. First of May Anarchist Alliance pledges our solidarity as well. We will work to make this case well known among working class activists and organizers and help to raise the costs for the prosecutor and the system he represents for carrying out this injustice.

First of May Anarchist Alliance

mlaa.org

July 27th, 2012

DEFEND THE ASHFORD HOUSE FIVE!

SHOULDER & SOLDIER IT UP WITH HOOSIER ANTI RACISTS.



First of May Anarchist Alliance statement.

For any who may not yet be in the know, on Saturday May 19th, in the environs of Chicago's South suburban town of Tinley Park, Illinois, police arrested 5 militants from Indiana's Hoosier Anti-Racist Movement, an Anti-Racist Action affiliate. They are Alex R. Stuck, John S. Tucker, and brothers Jason W. Sutherland, Cody L. Sutherland, Dylan J. Sutherland. The five are being charged with an array of serious charges stemming from a confrontation that occurred at The Ashford House Restaurant.

Part of the Ashford House's facilities were being used for an undercover meet up of representatives of several Nazi and white supremacist groupings. Their supposedly secret tête-à-tête blew up in their faces when faced with 20 uninvited "guests". Anti-Racist Action claimed responsibility for the action.

Now weeks on, it is imperative solidarity with those charged be stepped up, in particular from in and around the anarchist movement. We say this because ARA was largely the creation of and has carried along over the years as an overwhelmingly anarchist endeavor. The defendants and ARA are family. The state, the media and the fascists are clear about this. Whatever our various groupings present relationship/commitments are to anti-Nazi work at present, we, as anarchists, cannot afford to ignore Tinley Park.

This case is occurring amidst ongoing and increasing state security agency attempts to tar and target the anarchist and combative wings of the wider rising social movement. Witness government and police agency actions in regards to the set up and arrests in Cleveland and Chicago. Consider the moves by liberals closely identified with the Occupy and anti war movements, like Chris Hedges, trying to vilify and in effect marginalize

anarchism and militancy by attacking the straw man of some Black Bloc actions. Also, do not forget the Nazis themselves who have been threatening the families and friends of the five and have murdered ARA militants in the past.



Many of us cut our teeth on anti-fascist activity; we have learned much from it both positive and negative. While we are working at present on developing a range of arenas vital to constructing a liberation movement we cannot afford to pay insufficient attention to issues rising from the events of May 19th. In addition to rallying support for the five we need to begin to take steps to ensure the circles and formations we are part of devote some measure of activity, resources and what we may have learned to this area. Our solidarity and engagement as well as our questions are called for.

The Tinley Five Park Five Need Your Support! Here's how:

Stay informed with the Tinley Park Five solidarity webpage: <http://tinleyparkfive.wordpress.com>

And the Hoosier Anti-Racist Movement (HARM): <http://indianaantifa.wordpress.com>

Donate money to the defense: <https://www.wepay.com/donations/legal-defense-fund-for-the-tinley-park-five>

June 29th, 2013

M1 Collective Statement: Organize to Resist Anti-Gay Attacks and Violence!



Summer's here and that means celebrating; from annual Pride festivals and street parties to the recent Supreme Court's striking down of the Federal anti-gay Defense of Marriage Act. There is a growing sense that people everywhere can be who we are, love who we choose, on our own terms and in our own ways. But a string of attacks and murders in New York City against gay men and women has shocked us!

No one thinks that homophobia and anti-Queer prejudices are gone, but the recent attacks should make us step back and take a close look at what is

going on around us. In one horrible incident on May 17 of this year, Mark Carson, a young gay man was followed, harassed and then shot to death by a homophobe. This happened while Mark and a friend were walking in the neighborhood of Greenwich Village, NYC. Since Mark's murder several other outrageous attacks have happened. One attack included a man being yelled at and taunted as being a "faggot" before being smashed in the face. In another, a gay couple was attacked in the SoHo district just hours after thousands marched to protest Mark Carson's murder and anti-gay hate. In one of the most recent, a woman in the Brooklyn neighborhood of Greenpoint was assaulted at knife point by a man claiming he was raping her for being a "gay".

Being gay can be dangerous in New York at any time. Some of these attacks involved anti-gay persons apparently set off just by seeing two gay men walking together. In other situations gay men have been attacked by a "drinking companion" or a gay man who left home without ID at midnight and was in a car with three men—suggesting pickup and cruising situations.

It's all these attacks that remind us of how often situations can trigger sexist violence.

It's a jolt when we hear about anti-gay violence in big cities like NYC, San Francisco or Chicago. There has been a great sea change in popular consciousness, where more and more people either have open minds and embrace Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Trans and Queer (LGBTQ) folks or in other ways don't care what someone's life, identity or sex preferences are. We welcome this! As anti-authoritarian and anarchist revolutionaries who are fighting to break down hetero-patriarchal social norms, some of us LGBTQ ourselves, we have and will continue to fight for everyone to be who they want to be and love how they want, whether it's LGBTQ, straight, or off the grid gender bending without identification. On this we will continue to unite with others in the struggle for both individual and social freedom.

But while we welcome these open and pro-LGBTQ moves on the parts of millions, the realities are that anti-gay hatred and violence is as rampant as ever. Major shifts in society are happening and there is a polarization between what is seen as "liberalization" on one hand and a conservative patriarchal and heterosexist reaction on the other.

This System we live under is an authoritarian, hierarchical, racist and hetero-patriarchal capitalist order. It has established itself through slavery, colonization, war, exploitation and an anti-human violence perpetrated against the masses of people – the working classes and poor. It both incorporates age old social values when it's necessary and adopts and absorbs new ideas when it's in the System's interests, thereby co-opting the more radical dimensions. This dual tendency of a system attempting to transform itself to stay alive creates conflict and confusion. In regards to anti-gay attacks, large sections of the population who feel they benefit – socially, economically, or psychologically – from the system see being gay as a danger to their status and the old system itself. These people want to attack the enemies of their way of life. What's even more confusing is that large sections of the population see pro-gay popular culture as being part of the current ruling class and the Democratic Party. The conservative reaction sees the Government as endorsing gay culture. Loads of people feel that the current ruling classes are part of the destruction of traditional societal values.

And as the system faces a growing social-economic crisis, and more and more people feel abandoned and losing out on what they think of as being a more stable (and often mythologized) past, anti-government sentiment gets wrapped up with hatred of anything and everything seemingly associated with it. This is the popular danger.

As the crisis deepens and we see more anti-government opposition, a major section of it will take on a reactionary, racist and anti-gay character. It's not anti-government ideas we're opposed to, just the opposite. What we're for is an anti-government, anti-system politics and program that is fighting for justice, dignity and freedom. What we are against are politics, ideas, and movements that are racist, anti-LGTBQ, patriarchal or

national chauvinist. On this you better bet we're serious and we don't cringe or cower at any would be oppressor's fists and bashings!

So what is some of the thinking behind these anti-gay attacks? An incomplete view is,

1) It is an out and out defense of the System's long held values and practices. As society changes it throws the old order into a type of chaos. Being against LGBTQ folks is seen as a defense of the old order.

2) It is a way to enforce hierarchy. Being gay is seen as non-masculine. Attack, rape, and murder are ways to terrorize people (gay, perceived gay and even straight folks) into hetero-sexist social structures. There is a long history of "straight" men raping and sodomizing other men as a way to enforce a hierarchical discipline. This rape is based in macho traditions and happens in various hazing within sports, gangs, fraternities and military institutions. It is part of a Masculinist culture that reproduces a gender-sexual binary: men and women. Masculinist culture is ego driven and prizes a dominant and domineering masculinity. Femininity is considered its opposite: submissive. Rape is used to enforce this binary and establishes a hierarchy.

3) It makes the individual homophobes feel somehow reassured, that they are fine and normal and not somehow less of a "man" (or "woman" for those female identified homophobes).

Carson's murder is part of a larger more bloody history. From big cities to small towns, from the streets to the classrooms, anti-gay thinking is still here. Through coercion, threat and force those of us who are gay or don't conform to society's expectations of love, sex and heterosexism, have been forced to hide and mask our true selves. We have had to pretend we are someone else because to be open and honest has risks. In the past these risks could be government sanctioned attacks like laws banning homosexuality and queerness. This has resulted in the locking up of gay people in jails or institutional facilities. Or as is often the case, anti-gay violence is independent of the official State. Whether alone, or in mobs, gay people have been the targets of violence. Many gay people have been assaulted outright or living with the threats, have succumbed to these pressures. Mental health issues and suicide are real risks for LGTBQ people. The overall issue is that for a long time in the United States, being gay was a crime. And when the laws changed, the conservative reaction didn't. As the laws change here, we must expect a backlash.

Needing to be put in to the bigger picture as well is the international attacks and repression of LGTBQ folks. From mob attacks on Gay Pride marches and celebrations in Russia and Macedonia, to Uganda's proposed "Kill the Gays" legislation which calls for life in prison, and in some cases death, for people with "the intention of committing an act of homosexuality," there is a violent campaign against gay people and their allies.



In France this past month, the Far-Right conservative and quasi-fascist, National Front, has staged protests and riots against legislation that allows for same-sex marriage. A French fascist committed public suicide at the historic Notre Dame Cathedral saying that homosexuality and same-sex marriage would destroy French national identity. Several days later, French neo-Nazis attacked and murdered a 19 year old antifascist organizer, Clement Meric. Clement was a dedicated antifascist, student activist and had helped organize recent LGTBQ solidarity actions. He was also affiliated with the French section of the international anarcho-

syndicalist (union), National Confederation of Workers/Confédération Nationale du Travail (CNT). Clement's death brought thousands of striking workers, students, radicals and everyday people into the streets in his memory with the vow to fight the fascist and anti-gay movements.

In another high profile case, an attack was met by defense! CeCe McDonald, a Black Transgendered woman, was attacked in Minneapolis while walking past a bar. A group from the bar confronted CeCe and her friends for being Black and Trans. CeCe's attackers shouted racist and homophobic slurs and then smashed a bottle across CeCe's face. Attempting to defend themselves, someone in CeCe's crew pulled out a pair of scissors (because of the risks and history of anti-gay violence many working class and poor LGTBQ folk carry any number of items to defend themselves). During the fight, one of CeCe's attackers was stabbed and later died. Unfortunately, CeCe was arrested and charged with her attacker's murder. CeCe was subjected to a biased, transphobic prosecution. CeCe accepted a plea deal in an attempt to escape spending decades in prison. She is serving out her sentence. Despite her unjust imprisonment, CeCe is alive and receiving ongoing support!

That she and her crew defended themselves and fought back is a big example of what we need! Self-Defense is No Offense! There is only one answer, Organize and Fight Back!

There has to be maximum resistance to anti-gay ideas, ideologies, attacks and violence. The solution isn't in gay cops or a pro-gay government. The police and the System they serve are perpetrators of institutional violence and injustice. We have to be in the struggles for LGTBQ freedom and equality. Whether as LGTBQ folks or as allies, we must be connecting with the millions of people who are fighting for personal and social dignity and justice. As attacks and murders are committed, we must work to either highlight and encourage or organize ourselves those initiatives and projects that mobilize and act – whether in outright street based self-defense or in mass organizations that confront government and social laws! We need to make it rough for anyone who thinks they can bash us!

We need movements that fight for independence, autonomy, self-organization and freedom! We need broad based social movements based on solidarity, defense, and resistance! LGTBQ folks have to rely on ourselves and forge active and organized relationships with any and all who can be allies. In the schools, workplaces, the clubs, and on the streets, we need to bring together and create a diverse, militant and uncompromisingly pro-gay movement!

In Order to Live and Love... We Must Fight!

July 13th, 2013

M1 Collective Statement: THERE IS NO JUSTICE FOR TRAYVON MARTIN UNDER THIS SYSTEM

George Zimmerman, the stalker with a loaded gun, killed Trayvon Martin, a 17 year old African-American youth who was unarmed and minding his own business. Trayvon Martin is in his grave; Zimmerman is on trial for the murder. There will be no justice for Trayvon Martin.

The capitalist media and the attorneys seem to be saying that the only issue at trial is who was screaming for help and if George Zimmerman felt he was facing bodily harm. The media and the attorneys say that if Zimmerman was crying for help and if Trayvon Martin was hitting him, if Trayvon was on top, then Zimmerman had the right to kill Trayvon Martin because it was self-defense or because Zimmerman was "standing his ground." This is total bullshit.

Zimmerman was the stalker, the bully, the attacker, the racial profiler. Zimmerman in his SUV with his loaded gun and his delusions of being cop in training saw a young African-American man wearing a hoodie and walking through the neighborhood. Zimmerman in his SUV followed Trayvon Martin and called the police on Trayvon Martin. The police told Zimmerman to stop following the young man. Zimmerman ignored this, got out of his SUV with his loaded gun and went after Trayvon Martin, shot him and killed him. Trayvon Martin had been to the corner store and was walking back to the house where he and his father were staying – the home of his father’s fiancé. He was doing nothing wrong and like any of us, had every right to walk through the neighborhood.

Zimmerman stalked, harassed and came after Trayvon Martin for one reason: because Trayvon Martin was a young African-American man. Zimmerman had no right to self-defense or to “stand his ground” because Zimmerman was the



stalker coming after Trayvon Martin. Trayvon Martin was the only person who had the right to self-defense or to “stand his ground”.

If you are sitting in your house watching TV and you see a stranger sizing up your house and then coming into your house, then you have every right to defend yourself against the intruder. If you hit the intruder in the nose when he’s coming through your door or already in your house, then you have every right. And, after you pop the intruder in

the nose, if the intruder gets up, pulls a gun and shoots and kills you, then it’s murder. The intruder has no right to self-defense, no right to “stand his ground.” It’s ridiculous to even consider that the intruder could claim self-defense and get away with murder.

But that’s what happened to Trayvon Martin who was minding his business while walking through the neighborhood. Zimmerman was the intruder, the stalker, the attacker.

Trayvon Martin called his friend to say some strange white guy was following him, stalking him in his SUV. It was Zimmerman who escalated. He got out of his van with his loaded gun and went after Trayvon Martin. If Trayvon Martin defended himself against this attacker, then Trayvon Martin had every right to defend himself. Trayvon Martin was doing nothing wrong. When Zimmerman, the stalker and attacker, pulled his loaded gun and shot and killed Trayvon Martin it was murder, clear and simple.

But the media and the attorneys and the courts want you to think this is some difficult problem; they attempt to sow confusion. They claim that if Trayvon Martin hit Zimmerman, then Zimmerman had every right to shoot and kill Trayvon Martin in self-defense. Or Trayvon Martin was on top so Zimmerman had every right to pull out his gun and kill him. Don’t believe a word of it. Trayvon Martin had every right to defend himself against the attacker, George Zimmerman. Zimmerman was a bully who stalked and killed Trayvon Martin. Watch how this all gets turned around so that Zimmerman is the victim and Trayvon Martin the attacker. A total lie, but “justice” under this system is a total lie. Trayvon Martin is dead; he did nothing wrong; and he will not receive justice. Justice under this system is reserved for

the stalkers and the racial profilers. It is not for African-American youth who are the victims of stalking and racial profiling.

Now the defense attorneys and the media, again, are trying to focus on whether Trayvon Martin might have smoked weed. This has nothing to do with the case. Whether or not it happened, so what? It had nothing to do with Zimmerman's decision to stalk, attack and murder Trayvon Martin. Make no mistake, even if the jury finds Zimmerman guilty of something, he will go to jail for a while and Trayvon Martin will still be gone. The racists and the profilers will continue to argue that Zimmerman was right and Trayvon Martin caused his own death. Trayvon Martin will still be dead.

There is only one way to achieve any justice for Trayvon Martin and the thousands of other young, African-American men and women who have been profiled, attacked or killed because they were walking or driving while Black, and that is to resist, to rise up, and to rebel.

If we want justice for Trayvon Martin and if we want to confront racism, racial profiling and the wholesale attacks on young African-Americans and people of color, then we must bring it. There is no justice for Trayvon Martin under this system. Be prepared. What we have to say, all of us is: Justice is coming and we are all bringing it.

That's the only way there will be any justice for Trayvon Martin and for our brothers and sisters, friends, children and neighbors! We must organize and enforce it. We must bring the justice ourselves, in the streets and across this country.

July 18th, 2013

Trayvon Martin—A Personal Response

By Christopher Z. Hobson, New York City

This piece first appeared in the Utopian utopianmag.com

It is very difficult to write about the outcome of the Trayvon Martin case. What happened hurts more than anything in years. My most basic thought is simply: that poor boy. And his parents—what they are going through would be unimaginable, except for the long line of Black parents and family before them who have suffered the same way: a son blown away by the police, by vigilantes, by a mob, youths lined up by dealers and executed on outdoor basketball courts, drive-by shootings, little children killed by stray bullets. All this is horrible beyond words and yet for one's son's killer to be indicted, tried, and then acquitted adds insult and dishonor—a weighing of the precise importance of a Black person's life in the United States—to the pain of death. And so Trayvon Martin's parents had to use the stoicism of so many thousands before them. It is all they have.

My sense is that Martin was as good as dead the moment Zimmerman spotted him. It was only necessary for something to go wrong, and something almost always does. The friend Martin spoke to by cellphone advised him to run for his father's fiancée's house; he said, "I'll walk faster." He was right—to run would have been to invite attack—but the decision didn't help him. We don't know what happened next and we never will. It is possible that stopping and meekly answering questions from an unknown white man would have saved Martin's life, and it is possible that it wouldn't have, or that Zimmerman gave him no chance to answer questions.

What happened later was more predictable. I myself expected an acquittal from the moment Zimmerman was indicted. My reasons were: the sense that the prosecution would never try the case seriously—that is, would never make race the center of the case; the sense that unstated stereotypes of Black male criminality would control the case; the sense that defense of property (white property) is sacrosanct in the United States. I believe the prosecution was embarrassed into bringing charges and never for a moment understood the case from the viewpoint of Black people—that is, as one of the thousands of killings of Blacks who were in "the wrong place" over the last century, almost always with full exoneration

of the white perpetrators. I think the prosecution never understood the prejudices mobilized by the case—that if a young Black male in a gated community is not necessarily a criminal, it’s not unreasonable to think he might be; that a “neighborhood watchman” is a purely conscientious citizen without prejudices of his own. I think the prosecution never expected a conviction and never seriously fought for one. Why was there no Black prosecutor? Why didn’t the prosecution fight to get at least one Black person on the jury, with the hope that, if necessary, that person could hang the jury? Why didn’t the prosecution say the case was all about race, all about the long history of official and vigilante attacks against Black men—yelling it out to the jury, if need be, and letting the judge disallow it, just so it got said? Without these attempts, the jury could ignore race and yet vote the logic of race, at the same time.

But what has happened is more fundamental than the specifics of this case. It is 150 years and a few weeks since the battle of Gettysburg, just under fifty years since King’s “I Have a Dream” speech, five years into the Obama presidency, and this is—yes, this is—justice for Black people in America. Make no mistake. In 2013, race is, as it always has been, the issue above all other issues in U.S. life, as anti-Semitism was the issue above all other issues under Hitler; because no other group, not even Hispanics or Native Americans, has been deprived of human rights as consistently and systematically as African Americans—not now in the lofty precincts of constitutional law, but where it counts: on the street, in the police station, in the ordinary criminal courtroom, in the gated community, in the everyday discrimination that continues without pause. Whether the United States can make room for African Americans to live in real equality and with real freedom will determine whether this society has a future worth the name.

For a very long time—since about half a century before the Civil War—the great majority of African-descended people in the United States have defined themselves, for better or worse, foolishly or wisely, as Americans. They have insisted that they are entitled to the full rights of citizens and that they mean to have them. Against this opinion of the large majority, a minority have argued that so long as events like this week’s can happen, the United States “can never be accepted as a civil, much less a Christian country” (AME Bishop Henry M. Turner, 1883, on the Supreme Court’s invalidation of the 1875 Civil Rights Act); that “I’m not an American. I’m one of the 22 million black people who are the victims of Americanism” (Malcolm X, 1964). The separatist minority argued that the United States could never become more democratic and it was necessary either to emigrate, to form a separate Black state or nation, or, more recently, to form a spiritually, culturally, and economically distinct Black presence within the United States. (Malcolm X himself evolved in a different direction before his murder, favoring some undefined model of world anticolonial and class revolution.) These views deserve full consideration and respect. I personally, however, don’t believe any of the separatist strategies is viable—most African Americans are thoroughly intermeshed in the U.S. economy and share in U.S. culture in distinctive African American form. But even more important than these objective factors is the decision of Africans in the United States to call themselves and to become Americans in the full sense. This decision, as mentioned above, was made long ago and has never come close to changing.

This means there is no alternative to the struggle for full rights and freedom in the United States, and after messing around with this idea for a long while (and after a long earlier sympathy with Black nationalism, some of which shows above), I’ve decided to call this position by its right name, integrationism. But integrationism does not necessarily mean begging for inclusion, as it’s often understood by leftists. Rather, the basic goal of African Americans for two hundred years has been what I would call prophetic integrationism—working ceaselessly for full rights and equality in a society that is pushed and goaded to change to make these possible, and working to gain and hold as many rights and as much leverage as possible in the meantime. Prophetic integrationism means an integrationism that projects and works for a future society in which what is impossible today becomes possible. This is the integrationism of Francis Grimké, who in 1919 wrote, “The colored man has no idea, not the remotest idea of accepting [present conditions] as a finality”; of Reverdy Ransom, who in 1935 said African Americans’ goal should be to “level the walls of wealth and privilege, of bigotry and pride, of color and race”; and of many others besides them. I think this type of prophetic integrationism is the goal all of us should be working for, in terms of the race issue in the United States. Beyond this we are working for what James Baldwin, in the title of his 1962 novel, called *Another Country*. For Baldwin, *Another Country* referred to the biblical New Jerusalem in a secular form—a new society of love that Baldwin believed we could possibly achieve in the future. That is my goal too. But I believe we also need the burning anger and contempt people like Malcolm X and Henry M. Turner felt for the United States and its virtually limitless violence and hypocrisy. Otherwise I think we can be thrown off guard, we can fail to anticipate what I think most Black Americans knew in their bones—the acquittal of Zimmerman was always the most likely outcome. We need anger and rage to clarify our understanding.

In the meantime the boulder we have been pushing up the mountain of racial justice for so long has rolled back down—not to the foot of the mountain, but some way down. The protests, prayer meetings, vigils, demonstrations that have occurred round the country in the short time since the Zimmerman verdict are, I hope, the start of something much bigger that will wipe away the insult. It will, I hope, not take another two hundred years to roll the stone back up the mountain, but we must put our shoulders to the stone now. But I hope too that we can take time just to mourn: that poor boy.

July 18th, 2013

RACISM AND THE ZIMMERMAN TRIAL

By Bob, Detroit

The judge was white, the prosecuting attorneys were white, and the defense attorneys were white. There were NO African-Americans on the jury or in any position of responsibility in the trial. The outcome was all but inevitable. The judge ruled that racism and racial profiling could not be mentioned in the trial; the prosecuting attorneys and defense attorneys agreed to this. As a result, the truth, that racism and racial profiling were the reasons Zimmerman stalked and murdered Trayvon Martin, was excluded and was not mentioned. Insane.

The one juror who has been interviewed empathized with Zimmerman and thought he had a good heart and was just trying to protect his wife and his community from crime and criminals; in other words, from Trayvon Martin. The juror could not empathize with Trayvon Martin. She thought Trayvon Martin decided to attack Zimmerman and that Zimmerman had every right to defend himself. She had no understanding or comprehension of why Trayvon Martin would have felt threatened or afraid when he was being followed and stalked by a strange white man. Talk about two different worlds or two societies! Her concern was with crime, and she believed Zimmerman was on her side, protecting his neighbors, while Trayvon Martin was a danger and a threat. She agreed with Zimmerman's assessment; she had no problem with racial profiling and probably would deny that racism was involved.

The same juror said Trayvon's friend, the young woman he was talking to on the phone, while Zimmerman was stalking him, was a terrible witness who was not credible. The juror said the young woman was uneducated and didn't talk right and she felt sorry for her. The juror's response to the young woman was arrogant, condescending and racist; she could not and would not hear what the woman was saying. It truly was Trayvon Martin who was on trial, and the jury found him guilty of causing his own death.

The prosecutors, at times, appeared to be putting on the defense case. Several of the prosecution witnesses acted as defense witnesses. And it was the prosecutors who put the video statements of George Zimmerman into evidence, the videos where Zimmerman was explaining his version of what happened. These video statements may not have been allowed into evidence except for the fact that Prosecutors put them into evidence. The juror said the jury played Zimmerman's video statements over and over again in the jury room, and that they jury believed Zimmerman's version of the events. And when the prosecutors said race was not a factor, they threw out the truth and sided with the defense. It appeared the prosecutors didn't want to bring the case and brought the case only because they were ordered to after millions of people around the country were demanding justice for Trayvon Martin. When it was over, the prosecuting attorney said the jury has spoken and we respect the jury's verdict and this is the greatest country in the world with the best criminal justice system.

The defense attorneys were explicitly and aggressively racist, telling jokes, ridiculing Trayvon's friend when she testified, and attacking the state for daring to bring such a case. They painted Zimmerman as the victim and Trayvon Martin as the attacker. They turned the truth on its head, and the jury agreed with them. They and Zimmerman are now the darlings of the Klan and the racist right. Zimmerman is a hero to these thugs. Newt Gingrich chimed in that the demonstrators who supported Trayvon Martin were "lynch mobs." Gingrich knows quite well who does and who has done the lynching in this country.

This was a racist trial, and the court system in this country is racist to the core. We should be clear on this. And from the prosecutors to Obama to all representatives of the state, they are saying the jury has spoken, it was a fair trial and we all must respect the verdict. It was not a fair trial, it was a racist travesty, and we can have no respect for this trial or this verdict or this justice system or this state.

One thing that may be jarring to many people, especially many young people, is that the President is African-American and the Attorney General is African-American, but the racist murders continue and are getting worse. The racial profiling continues and is getting worse. Now with “stand your ground” and the Zimmerman verdict, racists will be emboldened to step up and increase their attacks on African-Americans and people of color. Racism and racist attacks and murders are on the rise. The Supreme Court is gutting Affirmative Action and the Voting Rights Act, claiming racism is in the past, just at the time when racism and racist attacks are on the rise and out of control.

Obama and Holder say respect the jury’s verdict, and we will look into this. The NAACP and National Action Network and many others play into the same script, saying the focus now should be on asking the Department of Justice to charge Zimmerman with a hate crime or civil rights violations. People went into the streets when Zimmerman killed Trayvon Martin and was not charged, demanding that Zimmerman be arrested. Under this pressure, the state brought the charges against Zimmerman and now says we had a fair trial and respect the verdict. Under pressure from the streets, again, the feds say they will investigate. They may bring a charge but it’s doubtful. And if they do bring charges, the result may be the same: it was a fair trial and the jury has spoken. Or it could be a slap on the wrist to Zimmerman, but that’s doubtful, too. More likely, the feds will say we did investigate but there is not enough evidence to bring a charge. The NAACP and the NAN are telling people in the streets to rely on the feds and to ask the feds to bring charges. They continue to rely on the state for justice when the state is responsible for and embodies injustice. Nothing has changed, except racism and racist attacks are getting worse. The feds won’t save us and the court system won’t save us and the politicians won’t save us, we will have to save ourselves and protect our own children and our own neighborhoods.

Some commentators are worried because many African-American youth seem “alienated” from the state. I’ve heard those specific words. We should encourage alienation from the state, because the state represents the rulers and the racist system. But we should also encourage solidarity within our communities and among our communities and against the racists and their state.

These are important and difficult discussions. We should continue. One thing about the Trayvon demonstration here in Detroit on last Sunday was the make-up of the demonstration. It was Black and white and Latino and Asian. It was young and old with an emphasis on young. And there were many from the LGBT community there in solidarity. The demonstration was one of the most united I’ve seen; that is uniting different sections of the working class in solidarity with Trayvon Martin. And I don’t think it seemed surprising to most people; it was the way it should be and not much was said about it. This is encouraging. And from the reports I’ve seen from other cities, there seemed to be this kind of unity around many sections of the country.

But if the movement continues to build, there will be attempts to divide the movement and to direct the movement into safe channels of asking the feds to do something. We should oppose the attempts to divide: the whole working class must be united against racist attacks and racial profiling. And we should oppose the attempts to direct the movement into safe channels and relying on the feds. We should urge more alienation from the state and more reliance on our own forces and our own communities and uniting our forces to fight the racist attacks and the racial profiling. And it’s not enough to say unite our forces and don’t rely on the feds; we need to develop ideas and proposals on how to move forward, how to build an independent and organized movement, a movement based on direct action against the state and the racists instead of relying on the state. This is the most difficult part.

The expansion of “stand your ground” laws and the Zimmerman verdict mean the racists and the racial profilers will feel it’s open season, and we, unfortunately, can expect more racial profiling, more racist attacks and more

racist murders. The country is divided. This is class war with the racists focusing attacks on African-American youth and people of color. This is class war with the religious right focusing attacks on the LGBT community and women. This is class war with the state and the rulers focusing attacks on poor people and the disabled and organized workers. We have to find the ways and point the ways to uniting our forces to defend ourselves and to resist and to organize our side of the class war. And we have to find the ways to oppose those forces which urge reliance on the state or elections or politicians to save us. This is a dead end which plays into the hands of the rulers and the racists. The only path of resistance which has any chance of success is independent action, direct action, defending ourselves and our communities and building a new society based on justice and freedom and solidarity in the fight against the stinking, decaying society of the rulers and the racists and their state.

July 26, 2012



(MI endorsed the following statement. For the full text and list of supporters see: <http://nopoliticalrepression.wordpress.com/2012/07/26/hello-world/>)

Solidarity Statement Against The Raids and Grand Jury

On Wednesday July 25th, the FBI conducted a series of coordinated raids against activists in Portland, Olympia, and Seattle. They subpoenaed several people to a special federal grand jury, and seized computers, black clothing and anarchist literature. This comes after similar raids in Seattle in July and earlier raids of squats in Portland.

Though the FBI has said that the raids are part of a violent crime investigation, the truth is that the federal authorities are conducting a political witch-hunt against anarchists and others working toward a more just, free, and equal society. The warrants served specifically listed anarchist literature as evidence to be seized, pointing to the fact that the FBI and police are targeting this group of people because of their political ideas. Pure and simple, these raids and the grand jury hearings are being used to intimidate people whose politics oppose the state's agenda. During a time of growing economic and ecological crises that are broadly affecting people across the world, it is an attempt to push back any movement towards creating a world that is humane, one that meets every person's needs rather than serving only the interests of the rich.

This attack does not occur in a vacuum. Around the country and around the world, people have been rising up and resisting an economic system that puts the endless pursuit of profit ahead of the basic needs of humanity and the Earth. From the Arab Spring to the Occupy movement to now Anaheim, people are taking to the streets. In each of these cases, the state has responded with brutal political repression. This is not a coincidence. It is a long-term strategy by state agencies to stop legitimate political challenges to a status quo that exploits most of the world's people.

We, the undersigned, condemn this and all other political repression. While we may have differences in ideology or chose to use different tactics, we understand that we are in a shared struggle to create a just, free,

and liberated world, and that we can only do this if we stand together. We will not let scare tactics or smear campaigns divide us, intimidate us, or stop us from organizing and working for a better world.

No more witch-hunts! An injury to one is an injury to all.

June 26, 2013

Solidarity Against the Persecution of the Federação Anarquista Gaúcha in Brazil

(M1 endorsed the following statement. For full text and list of supporters see, <http://www.anarkismo.net/article/25786>)



In Porto Alegre, on June 20 last, about 15 officers from the Civil Police raided the Ateneo Batalha da Varzea, the political and social premises where the *Federação Anarquista Gaúcha* is located, without a warrant.

In this city where, since the beginning of the year, there have been massive demonstrations for popular demands concerning public transport, health, education, against corruption, with the aim of creating social change for their locality and their country.

This is a country where thousands of people are taking to the streets to denounce that everything is rotten and that it is necessary and urgent to change it. Faced with so much opulence of the powerful, with the stadiums being built for the Confederations Cup and the FIFA World Cup, faced with so much sustained repression, displacement and militarisation of working-class neighbourhoods, the almost total neglect of public health and education, the usury and theft that – as a corollary – is the cost and quality of transport.

And now they are seeking to criminalise the FAG, and make it responsible for all the anger and fury that the population of the whole

country feels. They are seeking to accuse the FAG, saying that they came across anarchist literature in their premises. What did you think you would find in anarchist premises? The FAG is accused of being in collusion with the far right, when its work has been in places that the right rejects, such as the Popular Resistance

committee, the waste collectors movement, trade unionism, the peasant movement, the student struggle, activities to involve more comrades in practices of a libertarian nature.

And there are more and more things that separate the FAG from that which has been its enemy in a historical constant, such as the raid that occurred in 2009 under the orders of governor Yeda Crusius, when the anarchist organisation held her responsible for the assassination of activist Elton Brum.

So, it has itself been against the powerful, those at the top and their allies in power. This raid is above all ideological, because it is the persecution of our ideas that is principal. It is this that they want to erase: all meaning of rebellion and liberation that our struggles can adopt; class independence, direct democracy, the building of people's power.

We therefore express our greatest concern and alert on the issue and will follow up on the matter by responding where we find the stories of our struggles!

Down with the repression of the Brazilian people's movement!
Down with the criminalisation of the FAG!
Forward with those who struggle!
Arriba los que luchan!



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