

# NIGHTFALL

FREE

An Agitational Newspaper

Nov/Dec 2017



## SUPER BOWL BLUES

On February 4th, 2018 the Super Bowl is coming to Minneapolis and the city is already busy preparing for this big event. For almost a year the city has been advertising how important this event will be not just for the Twin Cities but for the entire state of Minnesota. There is talk about new jobs being created, money from visitors and businesses supporting the Super Bowl flowing into communities all across the state and last but not least the new Stadium that was

built especially for this occasion but that will be there for a long time to host all kinds of large events. The advertising makes it seem that the Super Bowl is truly like winning the lottery for this state, and everybody living here will see how much it benefits them.

That is not at all true. The organizers of the Super Bowl don't care at all about supporting the local population and making the city a better place for those who live here. The city

Inside: Thoughts on Police Abolition, Gentrification, and more!

government and the developers behind the Super Bowl are only interested in making money, and to do that that they have shown themselves willing to spend a lot of money first. That's why there is a new stadium to make Minnesota is worthy of hosting the Super Bowl. That's why there are endless new condos being built all across the Twin Cities with security gates, fancy rooftop swimming pools and rent so high most city residents can't even dream about living in one of them. In order to build these condos older houses that have affordable rent prices and cater to low income folks are destroyed, making it plain that poor people are not welcome in a city preparing to host the biggest sport event in the United States. These people have to go to make room for those who are welcome. Urban professionals, mostly white, who have the necessary wealth to afford the fancy condos, the hip restaurants and tickets for the new fancy stadium. Gentrification is nothing new, but the Super Bowl accelerates the process and makes large parts of the city unlivable for anybody who is not a white wealthy professional. What's more, gentrification doesn't stop at new condo buildings and fancy restaurants that are unaffordable.

The cops are also preparing for the Super Bowl. In recent months the police presence, especially in Downtown Minneapolis, has increased. Cops specifically target people of color and houseless people and harass and arrest them in order to get these people out of downtown in time for the big game. To help them with this mission, the cops will be receiving \$3.1 million from the Super Bowl Host Committee, a conglomerate of NFL representatives, developers, and politicians, that will go towards paying for overtime for MPD officers and those brought in from around the state to assist, a command center, trainings, and fancy new toys of repression, the latter of which will remain in the hands of MPD and continue to negatively impact those oppressed by then far beyond the end of the game. Some of this money will also be going towards purchasing police liability insurance, so that the police will be protected from consequences should they find themselves compelled to venture outside of the bounds of the law to ensure an orderly urban playground for those attending the big game.

In these ways the Super Bowl mirrors the last national mega-event to take place in the Twin Cities, the Republican National Convention in St. Paul in 2008. In preparation for the RNC every officer in St. Paul was equipped with a taser, which they kept after the event was over. Furthermore, as part of the agreement to host the event the city demanded that the RNC purchase \$10 million of police insurance for its officers, which emboldened them to attack protesters repeatedly over the course of the event and make hundreds of arrests of questionable legality.

These tactics always come with big events, especially sports events. In 2016 the Super Bowl was hosted in San Francisco. This was not just any Super Bowl, it was the 50th Super Bowl, and the event was to be even bigger and more spectacular than any before. In the months and weeks leading up to the game the city of San Francisco and the cops started a strategic campaign to clean up the streets and push homeless and low income folks out of the city. In an area like the Bay Area that is

already heavily gentrified, with rent prices so astronomical that most people can barely afford to rent a closet, the homeless population is very big and poverty is omnipresent. By pushing out poor people the city of San Francisco was trying to hide its massive poverty and homeless problem and instead make the city look clean to not scare away white wealthy sports fans coming for the super bowl. But anti-gentrification activists and anarchists in the Bay Area made sure the City didn't get away with hiding the problems gentrification created, starting a campaign against the Super Bowl. People made call outs for marches against gentrification, Super Bowl statues that were set up around the city advertising the 50th anniversary of the game were vandalized or destroyed and most importantly people organized to show up when homeless camps were facing eviction or raids.

In 2014 Brazil hosted the soccer World Cup. It was supposed to be a big event that drew thousands of people from all across the world to celebrate soccer and Brazilian culture. To make all these tourists feel welcome and maybe convince a few to come back in the future for vacations the country invested a lot of money to build new soccer stadiums, highways, expanded public transit in a lot of cities and got a lot of foreign investors to build new housing, hotels and other entertainment locations to make all these wealthy tourists feel more at home. The problem with all these investments was that in order to fund all the new projects the government had to use over \$4 billion that was taken away from schools, hospitals, etc. Many thousands of people were forced to leave their homes without being offered an alternative to make room for all the costly new buildings for the World Cup, most of which wouldn't have any further use once the World Cup was over. As early as 2007 groups and committees with the help of many anarchists began organizing resistance against the World Cup and the gentrification that comes with it. The movement exploded in 2013, a year prior to the World Cup, in protests against proposed transportation fare hikes, where hundreds of thousand of people took to the streets all across Brazil. Riots continued in the weeks leading up to the games, along with protests led by indigenous activists resisting colonization.

Another example of radical resistance against big sports events were the protests against the Winter Olympics in Vancouver in 2010. Leading up to the event indigenous activists and anarchists joined forces to fight the gentrification and the further take-over by capitalism of the stolen lands of Canada. Several riots against the gentrification caused by the Olympics wreaked havoc through downtown.

We need to see the Super Bowl for what it is: an event that caters to the upper white class that city leaders are hoping to attract to the city in larger and larger numbers at the expense of everyone else. It accelerates the process of making the city uninhabitable for the rest of us. We hope that we can glean insight into these past examples to agitate social tensions as we fight against this process.

# RESISTING DEATH

*In lieu of our Global News of Resistance section we've chosen to print an excerpt from a reportback from the recent rebellion elsewhere in the Midwest. It began in response to the not-guilty verdict in the murder of Anthony Lamar Smith by a St. Louis police officer in September 2017.*

*Not guilty.* It makes sense; most of us knew what was going to happen. It doesn't surprise so much anymore. The legal system, that is ultimately built to keep the interests of those with power and money intact, performed exactly as it should. The sooner we move away from being hopeful for it to deliver, the sooner we can create our own world.

Starting at the courthouse, the march immediately after the verdict was "led" by Anthony Shahid and Zaki Baruti, both older black nationalists who were crucial in getting Stockley charged and put on trial. We marched around a mostly dead downtown for a few hours, since they shuttered the courthouses, city hall, and most businesses before dropping the verdict. Anytime it got a little tense with police, leaders ordered us to move on. Eventually we made our way back to the courthouse to rest awhile.

In addition to the old figureheads, this verdict response was also partly led by those calling themselves the "Ferguson Frontline"—an arrogant, surreal and laughable designation if you were in Ferguson too. If there were any sense of humbleness, it would be easy to see that the "frontline" was and is not a cohesive form. The legacy of Ferguson has led some to use this term as a way to claim authority and pacify people. It's sad and stifling. Thousands of people participated in 2014, not this small cadre with loud voices and political connection that is whittling something so much bigger than them into an informal organization. It is ultimately a good weapon at subduing many newcomers who know no better. This group includes reformist politicians, organizers, white activists, etc. who became notable during the uprising—many of whom told us to be peaceful, go home and threw the uncontrollable and unaffiliated participants under the bus. Yet, here they are, cashing in on a rebellion that blew past them.

Resting for a while, eventually we started to march again. This time the march was bit more uncontrolled. Barricades were pulled into the streets. When this started to happen, something started to click in people. Like, "oh shit, we can get away with this?" [...]

Some black guys in masks are calling for the crowd to take it to the wealthy and white. "We burned down Ferguson, a poor black neighborhood. It didn't get us shit! It's time we burn down the white neighborhoods! Burn this shit down!" [...]

There is something about the sound of a window breaking that strikes fear in people. It's the same with a shop window. The façade that protects power and profit is not even really that thick and to shatter it makes for some pretty extreme mental breakdowns. Power and profit not only need police, prisons, cameras to stop us. They also need people to actively believe in them and do their bidding. Funny...to break this stupid glass, from a universal perspective is literally *space dust* in the grand scheme of things. But to those who believe in it,



it's a traumatic and terrifying event. To others, who don't give a shit, who have every reason to have no love for any white, or in general, authority figure, it's an empowering moment.

This terror...is it something about breaking that façade of personal safety, that deep societal contract we are taught from early on? The one about not infringing upon the privacy of others, especially those who claim to rule us? To not ever go where they are in a vulnerable position, where they relax, shit, eat and love their precious families? I imagine such people who were opposed to what happened would call people in this crowd juvenile, that this is not the way of doing things, that people are just making the world harder to change by inviting more police repression. That people should go to city hall—that enemy terrain where we have to speak in the tongue of *civil dialogue*—a dialect that is so often used against us. It's true, this is not civil dialogue—it's a righteously angry mob realizing that the people ruling over us have addresses. This is why they need police, jails, rent, prisons, etc, because if they were unprotected, we would get the right idea and easily attack. [...]

For the last three weeks, there has been ongoing resistance against the verdict. The first nights were more combative, with people going toe to toe with police and destroying property. Even though this has more or less ended, it hasn't softened the police much. The police have been more apt to engage in hand-to-hand combat, tackling and macing us whenever they can. [...]

Let's be real, though: *This is to be expected. We are not innocent and we don't want to be.* In many of the rebellions of the last years, people have done a lot of things that are not constitutional or lawful. But looking at the history of law and constitutions, you can see slavery, poverty and oppression. [...]

For many, what it is happening is a lawless harbinger of an unraveling society—all the normative understandings of race, property, gender and class are being upended and it feels like its the end of the world. The nightmares they feel right now are actually our wildest dreams getting a chance to bloom. Let's not back down.

Full article:

[antistatestl.noblogs.org](http://antistatestl.noblogs.org)

## LIGHTING UP LAKE STREET

Gunshots are loud. Murder is shocking. When a police officer execute someone in the streets, it is an *event*. People notice, people protest. If the circumstances are right, people *fight back*.

The bullets that exit the officer's gun are not simply made of metal. They are created from a convergence of practices that created this system of control and exploitation (with all of its racist and gendered dimensions). Police murder is only the most visibly brutal act in a world that is white supremacist to its very core. Many of the practices which constitute this world are actually taken for granted and largely unquestioned.

Two issues back, we published a piece on the gentrification of Lake street, mentioning the recent placement of a Minneapolis Police camera tower at the Hiawatha underpass, complete with a bright spotlight, aimed at discouraging homeless folks from staying there. Not long afterwards, City Pages ran an article wherein commuters described the *nuisance* of these undesirables, bemoaning how traumatizing it is to see people without access to houses or bathrooms relieving themselves in public. This was followed by a consistent police presence at the intersection. Since then, brand new lights have been installed by the city along the underpass.

There is no arguing with a streetlight. It's not a controversial feature of the urban landscape, there are no heated public forums arguing whether or not to install them. One day the lights are simply there. No doubt the implication being made here—that a connection exists between street lights and police murder—seems ludicrous. Hear us out.

Let's make another connection: in pre-revolutionary New York City "lantern laws" requiring slaves to carry lanterns when traveling after dark were implemented after the slave revolt of 1712. Black feminist author Simone Browne has rightly compared between these laws and New York's more recent initiative to install floodlights in housing projects. Yet we can see that the legacy of lantern laws expands far beyond such an extreme example. The state requires visibility to facilitate the surveillance of space, whether by cameras, potential snitches, or the police themselves. Light is explicitly used as a preventative measure against crime.

This shows us that something as unremarkable as street lights are in fact a weapon used by the state to maintain control. Many weapons of the state are similarly taken for granted—like the construction of highways that divided and isolated black and brown neighborhoods from other parts of the cities, highways that are now simply part of the landscape. Murals, like we discussed in the last issue, are a weapon used to fight against graffiti which subverts the illusion of total control.

If we take these crime-fighting measures to task, it is not a blanket endorsement of crime. The state defines what is criminal and what is lawful—it is no surprise then that the state uses criminality to reinforce racial oppression, and punish those who would resist it. Every mundane detail creates the larger world we find ourselves in, and opportunities to resist this world exist in every neighborhood, on every street corner, every single day.

## INSTEAD OF THE COPS

*Well of course the police are terrible, but if we got rid of them what would we do when...* Anyone who has tried to wrap their heads around what it would mean to live in a world without police has at some point been forced to confront this line of thinking, whether we find it bubbling up in our own heads, in spite of ourselves, or coming from the mouth of a potential ally. The first response to this argument is to point out the absurdity of its unstated assumption, that the police are in some way adequately responding to the various crises we experience as a part of modern life. In reality we all are aware of endless examples from our lives and communities, in situations ranging from cases of sexual violence to mental health emergencies to drug addiction, where the police come into difficult situations in people's lives and make them much worse. Despite this, there is a kernel of significance in the question as posed that demands our attention. What can we do instead of calling the police? Rather than using this dilemma as an excuse for inaction, we need to take it as a prompt for activity.

Centuries of indoctrination in the Western myth that humans are inherently competitive brutish beasts fated to destroy each other if not for the presence of a brutal central sovereign power have left our capacities for collective conflict resolution appallingly stunted. Parallel with the spread of this myth, the police (and their social worker counterparts) have expanded to dip their fingers into the provision of numerous key services that at one point were distributed horizontally throughout communities, from healthcare to housing to sustenance. Creating a world without police, and a world without the state, means reclaiming our ability to care and look out for each other instead of turning to the so-called experts any time we confront an unstable situation that we wish to wash our hands of. With this in mind we want to offer a few practical principles that we hope might be helpful in our collective journey towards a police-free world.

The first and most important principle for destroying reliance on the police is to communicate with those around you before you find yourself in any situation in which the police might normally intervene. Talk to your neighbors and make it clear to them that you aim to resolve problems that arise within your communities without involving the police. Encourage teachers, coworkers and others you interact with to avoid inviting police into classrooms, workplaces and public spaces. Not everyone can be swayed to the cause of total police abolition, but going over concrete situations ahead of time in which even holdouts can see that there are better options than calling the cops will decrease the likelihood that the police end up intervening.

In tandem with this sort of outreach it is important to talk with trusted friends with whom we share ideals of police abolition to establish networks that can respond quickly when needed. This can be as simple as setting up an emergency loop on an encrypted messaging app like Signal, but can also take the form of a more formalized and expanded response network. Being able to quickly mobilize a crew expands the range of problems we can feel comfortable with confronting, wheth-

# THE AGITATOR TOT



The Cops, continued from pg 4.

er the situation is one in which police would typically be involved or one in which the police themselves are the problem that needs to be confronted.

A second principle that can guide the work of forcing the police out of our lives is to look for the contexts where they insert themselves into people's lives and see how they can be headed off. If you see someone pulled over with car trouble or in another situation where the police might intervene and end up giving punitive tickets, targeting those without papers or worse, stop and see what you can do to help, such as calling a tow truck or giving a lift. If you see someone who is experiencing a mental breakdown see what you can do to get them help before the police find them and make the situation worse. If something of yours is stolen and you need to file a report for insurance or other purposes, consider going to the police station instead of bringing cops into your community. And if you know or encounter someone who is experiencing domestic violence see what you can do to help the person being victimized to escape their situation, whether this involves offering a ride, a place to stay, or help caring for kids. Situations of domestic violence especially tend to be ones in which people can feel that they have no option other than to call the police, only to find that the police often do nothing other than escalate the violence and tension they are seeking to treat.

A third more vague principle is to attempt as much as possible to check yourself anytime you feel the impulse rising within you to police someone else's behavior. Ask yourself, *is this person actually causing harm to another person, rather than simply to someone's property? Is their race, gender, ethnicity, class, or housing situation influencing your reaction to them? If they are causing actual harm to another person, how can I intervene without perpetuating destructive cycles of violence?* This last question often doesn't have an easy answer, but living with uncertainty and ambiguity is unavoidable once we commit ourselves to the dismantling of all that is destroying us.

With mayoral and city council elections coming up in both Minneapolis and St. Paul, there are a range of politicians trying to convince people that they will succeed where no politician has before, that they will turn the police into something other than a violent militia upholding white-supremacy and the destruction of the earth. Some even claim that they could see the abolition of the police entirely, as if the authority of the city government were not directly founded upon the power of the police. Rather than putting an ounce of our effort towards electing those who will ultimately betray us, lets see what we can do in the here and now with those around us to develop less harmful ways of living our lives.

## LOCAL ACTIONS

- Sept 2<sup>nd</sup>** Pioneer Statue is vandalized in Northeast Minneapolis.
- Sept 7<sup>th</sup>** During rush week, dozens take to the streets around frat row with a sound system and a banner declaring "Kill Rapists." Graffiti against frats and rape culture is spray painted along the march route.
- Sept 10<sup>th</sup>** Shots are fired at a Grand Rapids police officer's squad car and house.
- Mid Sept** Anti-fascist posters are wheatpasted and graffiti is painted around south Minneapolis.
- Sept 27<sup>th</sup>** Posters are wheatpasted around the University in memory of Scout Schultz, a queer anarchist murdered by campus police at Georgia Tech. During a memorial in Georgia for Scout, a masked contingent confronts the police and sets a cruiser on fire.
- Late Sept** Graffiti against the Line 3 pipeline planned for northern Minnesota appears in south Minneapolis.
- Oct 1<sup>st</sup>** Pioneer Statue is vandalized again, accompanied with the word "Decolonize."
- Oct 5<sup>th</sup>** Right-wing student murals are vandalized on campus the first day after being painted.
- Oct 6<sup>th</sup>** The student murals are vandalized a second time, anarchist slogans also painted alongside them.
- Oct 9<sup>th</sup>** Pioneer Statue is vandalized once again, on Columbus Day.
- Oct 25<sup>th</sup>** Fights break out between anti-fascists and supporters of alt-right personality Lauren Southern who spoke at the University.
- Oct 28<sup>th</sup>** Anti-police graffiti is spray painted outside the Minneapolis police union offices.
- Oct 31<sup>st</sup>** Gentrifying businesses are vandalized with paint around Powderhorn Park.



## UPCOMING EVENTS

- Nov 9<sup>th</sup>** Midwest Trans Prisoner Pen Pal Project twice-monthly letter writing night. Write letters to and potentially start friendships with queer/trans prisoners in the Midwest. *Boneshaker Books - 2002 23rd Ave S at 6:00pm.*
- Nov 16<sup>th</sup>** Radical Movie Club screening "Set It Off" a story of four black women who fight back against the system by robbing banks. *Boneshaker Books - 2002 23rd Ave S at 6:00pm.*
- Nov 17<sup>th</sup>** Premiere of Unicorn Riot's first feature-length movie "Black Snake Killaz: A #NODAPL Story." The film will be followed by a Q&A. *Parkway Theatre - 4814 Chicago Ave S at 6:30pm.*
- Nov 30<sup>th</sup>** Radical Movie Club screening "THX-1138" a dystopian sci-fi movie directed by George Lucas. *Boneshaker Books - 2002 23rd Ave S at 6:00pm.*
- Dec 6<sup>th</sup>** First reading group for brand new book *Now* by the Invisible Committee, infamous authors of *The Coming Insurrection*. The reading group will take place for the first three Wednesdays in December. *Boneshaker Books - 2002 23rd Ave S at 6:00pm.*
- Dec 14<sup>th</sup>** Radical Movie Club bi-weekly screening. Movie TBD. *Boneshaker Books - 2002 23rd Ave S at 6:00pm.*
- Dec 28<sup>th</sup>** Radical Movie Club bi-weekly screening. Movie TBD. *Boneshaker Books - 2002 23rd Ave S at 6:00pm.*
- Dec 29<sup>th</sup>** All ages folk, spoken word, and drone show to benefit water protectors fighting Line 3 in northern Minnesota. *Boneshaker Books - 2002 23rd Ave S at 5:30pm.*
- Dec 31<sup>st</sup>** For over a decade, New Year's Eve has been marked by anarchists and other radicals across the world as a day of solidarity with prisoners. In many cities, noise demos take place to remind those locked up that they will never be forgotten.

### Links

**NightFall**  
[nightfall.blackblogs.org](http://nightfall.blackblogs.org)

**Conflict MN**  
[conflictmn.blackblogs.org](http://conflictmn.blackblogs.org)

**Belli Research Institute**  
[belliresearchinstitute.com](http://belliresearchinstitute.com)

**It's Going Down**  
[itsgoingdown.org](http://itsgoingdown.org)

**CrimethInc.**  
[crimethinc.com](http://crimethinc.com)