June 10th Counter-Demonstration

LANSING, MI —

On June 10th an unfortunate coalition of fascists, militia, alt-Righters, Trump supporters, and police organized and facilitated an anti-Muslim demonstration on the south side of Lansing. This was part of a national anti-Muslim day of action and the Lansing event was organized by Stephanie Rowe, a precinct delegate at Michigan Republican Party. Although this group tried to disguise their Islamophobic message underneath the cover of being against “Sharia Law,” community members and anti-racists from around the Midwest saw through this shameful lie.

Confronting MICHIGAN’S ISLAMOPHOBES

Concerned citizens and committed revolutionaries alike were especially worried about the event because the proposed site of the march was in a neighborhood that a huge number of Muslims, refugees, and immigrants call home. The right-wingers chose that location to scare and intimidate our neighbors and friends.

Additionally, this hate march demanded a bold anti-racist response because of the escalating national context of violence from far right wingers. In the days and weeks leading up to the demonstration we saw an increase in racist violence on the part of both fascists and the state.

In Portland, Oregon, a fascist stabbed and killed two passengers on a train after they spoke up to stop him from harassing young women on a train.

It is increasingly obvious that the Trump campaign and election has encouraged previously quiet racists to come out into the streets. At the same time, we have seen an increase in the state’s “legal” anti-immigrant violence, including immigration raids, police brutality, and travel bans. Amid the international context of anti-Muslim hate and violence, there was no way that we could let this event go unopposed in Lansing. It’s critical that we build the power to turn back this racist violence. Building this power starts in our neighborhoods.

Organizers from Solidarity & Defense began a massive outreach campaign to both targeted as well as Muslim communities across the Metro-Detroit area. We translated flyers into Arabic, Somali, Farsi, and English.

Continued on P2

“As the commitment to community self-defense spreads, so will our capacity to both defend ourselves and fight for a world in which we can have both our safety and our freedom.”

JEFF SESSIONS’ FALSE PROMISE OF A SAFER LANSING

LANSING, MI —

On June 20, 2017, the Department of Justice (DOJ), led by Jeff Sessions, announced a new “Public Safety Partnership” with the stated intent of curbing violent crime across the U.S. Lansing was chosen as one of 12 partnering cities who will receive additional police support from the federal government. The DOJ will assign a “Law Enforcement Champion” to both provide training and resources for Lansing’s police force and increase coordination between city, state, and federal law enforcement officials.

At surface level this may seem like a step towards making our community safer. The thought of a ‘Champion’ of public safety may help fulfill some of us to sleep. However, policies such as this reflect the disturbing priorities of the Trump administration: gutting federal programs such as healthcare and education to pump more money into putting more uniformed bullies on the street, more bodies in the prison system, and more surveillance programs watching over us.

If we rely on this “solution” to crime, their solution to crime, it will merely result in more friends and family members locked up. It will not get to the root causes of the crimes themselves.

The truth is this: violent crime thrives in a system where people are kept unemployed and constantly insecure. In our economic system of racial capitalism, millions of people are forbidden access to healthcare, good education, and other fundamentals for survival.

Proposals like this “Public Safety Partnership” are merely bandaids for a festering, open wound. In capitalism, some people are able to be safe and secure whilst millions go to sleep with empty stomachs and go bankrupt when they get sick. This is the world that makes violent crime possible.

If the federal government seriously cared about making Lansing safer, then it would direct funds towards social programs instead of more police.

Trump and Sessions, like so many politicians before, are using fear as a means to manipulate us, to make us believe we are incapable of addressing the needs of our communities on our own.

The empty rhetoric of ‘cracking down on violence’ has been instrumental in garnering public support for sprawling police forces and racist laws since the beginning of the ‘war on crime’, and is continually reinforced when police are not held accountable for their rampant violence against communities of color.

Increased collusion between Lansing and federal forces also implies increased cooperation with immigration police, which directly goes against Lansing’s professed sanctuary city status. Though our community has not yet suffered from mass deportations, this program presents a very real threat to immigrants and other marginalized people.

Sessions’ “solution” is not a real solution. More police will not implement the change we need. We can fight back against this. Through assessing our own needs, through mutual-aid, and through community accountability, we can build a safer and more supportive community without police and nazi-ass jeff sessions.
CONFRONTING MICHIGAN’S ISLAMOPHOBES

CONTINUED FROM PG1
On June 10th an unfortunate coalition of fascists, militia, alt-Righters, Trump supporters, and police organized and facilitated an anti-Muslim demonstration on the south side of Lansing.
This was part of a national anti-Muslim day of action and the Lansing event was organized by Stephanie Rowe, a precinct delegate at Michigan Republican Party. Although this group tried to disguise their Islamophobic message underneath the cover of being against “Sharia Law,” community members and anti-racists from around the Midwest saw through this shameful lie.
Concerned citizens and committed revolutionaries alike were especially worried about the event because the proposed site of the march was in a neighborhood that a huge number of Muslims, refugees, and immigrants call home. The right-wingers chose that location to scare and intimidate our neighbors and friends.
Additionally, this hate march demanded a bold anti-racist response because of the escalating national context of violence from far right wingers. In the days and weeks leading up to the demonstration we saw an increase in racist violence on the part of both fascists and the state. In Portland, Oregon, a fascist stabbed and killed two passengers on a train after they spoke up to stop him from harassing young women on a train.
It is increasingly obvious that the Trump campaign and election has encouraged previously quiet racists to come out into the streets. At the same time, we have seen an increase in the state’s “legal” anti-immigrant violence, including immigration raids, police brutality, and travel bans.
Amid the international context of anti-Muslim hate and violence, there was no way that we could let this event go unopposed in Lansing. It’s critical that we build the power to turn back this racist violence. Building this power starts in our neighborhoods.
Organizers from Solidarity & Defense began a massive outreach campaign to both the neighborhood that was directly being targeted as well as Muslim communities across the Metro-Detroit area. We translated flyers into Arabic, Somali, Farsi, and English.
The message that we wanted to spread was related to building the revolutionary ethic of community solidarity and community self-defense: we wanted to send the message loud and clear that “We Love Our Muslim Neighbors” and that “Islamophobes Are Not Welcome Here.” We were also determined to stop the racists from marching through the neighborhoods.
When the morning of June 10th arrived, tensions were high. Many of the families in the predominantly refugee neighborhoods surrounding the site were bussed out for their safety and for a day of soccer games and picnics. At the same time, the crowd that gathered to oppose the fascists was large and diverse. Supporters arrived all the way from Traverse City and Cleveland.
The crowd was multi-racial, multi-generational, and ready to confront the racists and get them off of our streets. The banners read “We Love Our Muslim Neighbors,” “Queers Against Islamophobia,” and “Islamophobes GTFO.” Thanks to the scouting efforts from friends in Redneck Revolt and various other antifascists we were able to keep constant tabs on the movement of the right-wingers.
The community defense march of 150 people was more than three times the size of the gathering of Islamophobes. The racists tried to compensate for their embarrassingly small size by arriving armed to the teeth. After a few tense hours on opposing sides of a police barricade, the Islamophobic group began to become demoralized.
It had become clear to them that no one else was coming to their party and they would not be able to embark on their planned march. Also, of interest for continued anti-fascist organizing, was the obvious divisions growing within the ranks of the far right. On their side of the barricade, confrontational conversations occurred between members of the Alt-Right losers, neo-nazis, and the militia.
In high spirits, our forces marched out from the site as a solid bloc, all the time remaining physically between the Islamophobes and the most high-density refugee neighborhood down the street. Without escalating into physical confrontation, we surrounded the fascists, embarrassed them, and made them think twice about trying to again intimidate our Muslim neighbors in Lansing.
As violence increases against immigrants, Muslims, black and brown bodies, leftists, anarchists, and poor people generally, we hope that the action on June 10th represents the potential to organize swiftly but also comprehensively in defense of communities under attack.
The action on June 10th was not a small street battle between the far-left and the far-right. Instead, it was a genuinely popular confrontation in which people from all walks of life came together to confront and oppose the most reactionary and violent forces in our society.
As the struggle for survival and for freedom continues, let’s continue the efforts that spurred the successful demonstration on the 10th. As the commitment to community self-defense spreads, so will our capacity to both defend ourselves and fight for a world in which we can have both our safety and our freedom.
FUCK THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY, HERE’S THE REAL RESISTANCE

ABOLITIONISTS RALLY OUTSIDE HOME OF PRISON DIRECTOR IN EAST LANSING

On June 11th, a “solitary is torture” demonstration was held Sunday outside the East Lansing home of Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC) Director Heidi Washington amid police presence and curious neighbors.

A group of thirty demonstrators from around the state marched to Washington’s home in a comfortable cul-de-sac neighborhood in East Lansing. The demonstration drew attention to the 70 alleged participants in the Kinross Uprising who are still being held in solitary confinement 9 months after the rebellion.

The demonstration also follows the suicide (still under investigation) of a young man on May 2nd at Oaks Correctional Facility in Manistee. Supporters cited psychological abuse, racist harassment by guards, and withholding of physical and mental health care as among the deplorable conditions endangering the health and lives of the prisoners.

NEW YORK CITY SUBWAY CLERK REFUSES TO HELP COPS IN PURSUIT OF SHOPLIFTER, INJURES LIEUTENANT’S THUMB

On Tuesday May 18th, NYPD Lt. Richard Khalaf was chasing a suspected shoplifter through the 57th St. train station near Eighth Ave. As he ran down into the station, he waved at booth clerk Darryl Goodwin to open the gate. Even though the cop was in uniform, Goodwin didn’t acknowledge him. Khalaf demanded Goodwin open the gate a second time, but the 27-year MTA veteran ignored him, according to court papers. Finally, after the lieutenant ran over and rapped his badge against the booth’s Plexiglass, Goodwin responded.

He “stared at the lieutenant for several seconds, grimaced and slowly moved his hand to push the button to open the gate” as the cop stood in front of him. By the time the gate was opened, the shoplifter was long gone. Khalaf demanded Goodwin show him his MTA badge, but the clerk refused and tried to exit the booth. When cops stopped him, Goodwin pulled out his badge and shoved it in the lieutenant’s face. After Khalaf grabbed it, the clerk ripped the badge back from the lieutenant’s hand, injuring the officer’s thumb.

ANGRY AND DISABLED BLOCKADE OF ASSHOLE MITCH MCCONNELL’S OFFICE AS HE SLASHES ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

On June 22nd, a group of protesters blocked the hallway outside Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell’s office on Capitol Hill in a demonstration against the Republican health-care bill.

The sit-in was organized by ADAPT, which advocates for people with disabilities and brought several dozen participants to Capitol Hill on Thursday. As Capitol Police conferred about what to do, the protesters chanted: “No cuts to Medicaid — save our liberty!” In some cases, police officers physically removed protesters as the refused to cooperate.

MINNEAPOLIS SANITATION WORKER BLOWS WHISTLE TO SUPPORT BLACK LIVES MATTER OCCUPATION

In November 2015 after Jamar Clark was executed by Minneapolis police, a powerful movement erupted in response in which community protesters built an occupation encampment outside the 4th Precinct police station.

Al Ditty, a long-time employee of the City of Minneapolis sanitation department and a member of Laborers Local 363, played a crucial role in supporting this movement. When Ditty heard of the city’s plan for riot-police to attack the encampment, arrest or chase out those seeking Justice for Jamar, and send in a wave of sanitation workers to scoop up the tents, chairs, picket signs and banners, food and supplies and whatever else was left behind, he could not stand idly by.

Ditty opposed this plan – he objected to Minneapolis sanitation workers participating. He feared for their safety and he also understood many sanitation workers connection to the community. The night before the weekend of the scheduled raid he forwarded the cops’ plans to KARE 11 News – the NBC affiliate in the Twin Cities. For this brave act of whistleblowing, he was fired from his job, causing him to sink into a deep depression which tragically ended in his suicide.

THE CORPORATE SHITSHOW OF “PRIDE” PARADES IS DISRUPTED

Annual pride parades this year were disrupted by queer & trans POC activists, bringing attention to unaddressed problems that the queer communities face nationwide: police brutality, increased corporate influence and the co-opting and dilution of queer pride for profit, and also showing solidarity with other oppressed liberation movements.

Many folks were arrested, reinforcing their message that pride is only acceptable and celebrated when convenient and profitable to the ruling class. #transupfront #nojusticenopride

G20 SUMMIT: CITY IS FIGHTING BACK AND POLICE ARE LOSING

HAMBURG, GERMANY —

The annual G20 leaders summit, in which the leaders of global capitalism come to plan their trade agreements and our collective misery, faces fierce resistance in Hamburg, Germany (July 7-8).

Despite massive police violence, crackdowns, and raids, over 100K people have mobilized in Hamburg against the world’s leading neoliberal politicians and bankers to reject a world of austerity, war, ecological collapse, and capital.

Porsches are burned, streets are blockaded and defended, with protestors NOT police gaining control of portions of the city. As we see how intense and widespread the clashes have been in Hamburg over the last 48 hours, as we witness people’s determination to regather every time the police push them back, and particularly the joy with which they resist when told to stay away.

It is clear that this struggle in Hamburg is more than just a struggle against G20. For more G20 updates, follow CrimethInc. and Unicorn Riot.
DETROIT, MI — On Sunday June 11th, more than 100 Iraqi Detroiters were kidnapped by the police as part of a larger roundup of 1,444 Iraqis nation-wide by Immigration Customs Enforcement (ICE).

The state wants to deport these people back to Iraq, a country where they will likely be persecuted and possibly killed. This attack is part of Trump’s new agreement with Iraq to take Iraq off of the so-called travel ban. Trump is attempting to hold up his end of the agreement: the deportation of Iraqi nationals with criminal records living in the US.

On the 11th, protesters, largely comprised of the friends and family of those detained, turned out in droves at Detroit’s ICE facility. As nighttime fell, a group attempted to physically stop a bus filled with detainees from leaving the center.

While we were unsuccessful in our efforts to stop the bus entirely, we did manage to stall it for about an hour, sending a strong message to the state that we will not stand by when they come for our friends and neighbors.

At the time of this publication, those who were stolen from their families on the 11th are currently still being held in Ohio while lawyers and political leaders decide their fate.

Many of the detainees were Chaldeans, (pronounced kæl’di:ens) an ethnic minority of Iraq. They are the only native Christian peoples to Iraq. Coverage of this issue has largely been framed around respectability politics, ranking different immigrant communities into a false hierarchy of importance.

In that hierarchy, some see Chaldeans as more able to be assimilated into US society. This is in part due to their reputation as having conservative politics and so-called Christian values.

Additionally, some are mishusing the reputation of Chaldean conservatism to emphasize the severity of this violence, as if to say that the danger of deportation is worthy of resistance only when it affects the most respectable.

Yet another vein of rhetoric has been that of “I-told-you-so”, playing on the irony that many from this community voted for Trump, the guy who is now responsible for the deportation of their neighbors and loved ones.

We need to not buy either of those messages. We need to show up for each other regardless of any identity politics. While all of these detainees have criminal records, many have offenses as minor as possession of weed decades ago.

But we also need to show up for those who have more serious offenses. We need to act in solidarity with any person that the state targets merely because the state has deemed this person “illegal.”

As crowds gathered around the fence separating the detainees from their loved ones, last words were shouted from mothers to their sons and from brothers to brothers. Occasionally heard over the collective chants for asylum was an “I love you, Dad” in the cracked voice of a kid saying goodbye. As the bus pulled out onto the streets protesters used their bodies as a barricade to deter the bus while pigs shoved us to the ground.

We blockaded the bus for about an hour. As the night wore on, the pigs grew in numbers. They soon began to aggressively make threats of violence and arrests.

When one of the cops shoved a blockader to the ground, she quickly got up and filtered in through the back of the human barricade.

Standing on the side of the bus, you could clearly hear the cries from those on board. “Stall this bus” one man cried, “they’re sending me back to be killed”.

As the bus sped past at the end of the night, many of us were left outraged, and scared, but also energized. Families and friends consoled one another as we tried to put as much distance between ourselves and the lingering pigs. Despite the bus getting away this time, we saw what we could do with 40 people. We will be an even stronger force the next time they come for one of us.

If you’re interested in getting involved in immigrant rapid response resistance in Lansing, email lansingimmigrantdefense@gmail.com

UPCOMING EVENT
Benefit for J20 Inauguration Protest Defendants
Mac’s Bar / July 19 at 9pm

PERFORMANCES BY
Half Tongue MikeyyAustin
Bad Infinity MAN VS WILD
$5-$20 cover
*all proceeds go to defendants legal expenses

CONTACT
EMAIL US DIRECTLY AT nomoreillusionslansing@gmail.com

with questions, concerns, or to submit your own article!