

Call for Community Defense

Revolutionary Abolitionist Movement

September 22, 2020

In the wake of the murder of George Floyd we have seen a tectonic shift in the terrain here in the US. The brutal murder of Floyd at the hands of the police seemed to be the final straw for people. In response, rebellion erupted and spread like fire across the American plantation. The magnitude of this rebellion is unlike anything we have seen here on US soil and marks a new front in the struggle for liberation. The rebellion of Minneapolis ushered in a new stage in the people's war against the State.

While the rebellion marks a new stage in the struggle for emancipation, the state has also heightened its repression of the rebellion from propaganda about conspiracies of anarchists and anti-fascists to unleashing federal gestapo on protesters in Portland as well as in other cities across the nation, all in the name of law and order.

Despite the rage and fury of the oppressed facing off with the state's sanctioned violence, pigs continue to murder black and brown people in cold blood as we have seen with the attempted execution of Jacob Blake by a Kenosha pig unloading 7 shots into his back in front of his children. This in turn has sparked a new wave to the rebellion.

Aside from direct repression from the state we are seeing an armed white militia response to the rebellion similar to what has happened in the past when slave revolts erupted against the status quo. We can look back to the Nat Turner Rebellion in Southhampton that shook the planter class to their core. Fear of slave insurrections spread from plantation to plantation leading to the brutal massacre of over 100 slaves at the hands of militia.

In Kenosha we have already seen the deadly outcome of a white militia response to the rebellion with the 17-year-old Kyle Rittenhouse murdering two protesters and injuring another as well as violence from Proud Boys and other fascists in other cities such as Portland. All with the stamp of approval from the police and the state.

This response from the far right demonstrates that there is an urgent need for us to start building up our defense capacity in order to defend the rebellions as well as the communities in general from right wing militia and state violence. There is a critical need to take seriously the situation at hand and develop strategies for defense in the face of state and state sanctioned repression from militia and vigilantes.

We as revolutionaries and abolitionists should be developing decentralized networks of local neighborhood defense units to defend against this repression and to advance our stronghold in the struggle for liberation.

Defense is the central pillar of our resistance. The State tries to consolidate its monopoly on violence by claiming to have the unique ability to protect its “citizens,” but it has become clear, there is no such thing as protection that one does not provide oneself. Defense is not only the barricade against an oppressive force, but also the means for the collective development that is an integral part of revolutionary change.

There are many historical as well as present examples we can learn from, adapt and apply to the immediate situation at hand. For example, the neighborhood defense committees in Barcelona from 1933 to 1938 during the Spanish Civil War which were the clandestine militant groups of the CNT. These defense committees were reorganized based on a more serious methodical “revolutionary preparedness” in opposition to the tactical spontaneity of what was called “revolutionary gymnastics” of the action groups previous to 1934 in order to meet what was said by the National Committee of Defense Committees (CNCD) “a State that has experience, heavy weaponry, and a greater capacity for offensive and defensive combat”.

This demonstrates the importance of being prepared to match and defend against the repression of either the state or militia/vigilante terror unleashed at protests or in the communities most vulnerable to this violence. Being unprepared in such a serious situation can lead to major consequences as well as far right forces gaining a stronger foot hold and digging their roots into communities that can be future obstacles to the movement for liberation.

Other lessons can be drawn from other formations such as the HPC (Civilian Defense Forces) in Rojava. The HPC are directly responsible for the protection of their own communities and deal with issues and disputes within those communities. Building neighborhood defense units can work and contribute to the abolitionist movement by making police obsolete in our communities as we learn to deal with conflicts and become more advanced in our training in defense bringing more community members into the fold to participate in our own protection against threats like police terror.

At a time of rebellion against the state and its repression there is an urgency to maneuver appropriately against the force of the state and successfully repel any attempts to suppress our movement for emancipation. Building up our decentralized forces for defense on the local levels that can be the “barricades against an oppressive force” and “an integral part of revolutionary change” is vital to our success. To quote Raul Zibechi in his book *Dispersing Power*:

“The insurgency is a moment of rupture in which subjects display their capacities, their power as a capacity to do, and, deploy them, revealing aspects hidden in moments of repose, when there is little collective activity.”

In this moment of insurgency are we going to display our capacity necessary to defend and advance our movement for abolition and liberation against the state and other forces seeking to crush the rebellion and maintain the status quo?

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