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# CREEKER: Volume 1

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CREEKER: Volume 1  
December 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021

<https://creekerzine.wordpress.com/>

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told them they wouldn't be charged. Due to the less transparent nature of criminal charges, no information was available about whether anyone caught and released was later charged with a criminal offense.

Most people arrested up to and through October 2021 have had their first appearance/preliminary hearing. These hearings have generally had anywhere from 10 to 200 defendants at once. The first trials are set for late January 2022 and some are already being scheduled into February 2023. If people plead guilty any time before their trial, they instead get a sentencing hearing in lieu of a trial (which only lasts a few hours). Those hearings are mostly being scheduled in April 2022. In a few cases where the defendants were very motivated to expedite the process, they have plead guilty and pushed for sentencing hearings as soon as possible.

***"It depends on a person's ability to say nevertheless,  
to do one small thing that seeks beyond them,  
and for a moment, break the grip of time."  
— Richard Powers, *The Overstory****

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Rest in Power, Fungus  
Water Falls and We Shall Rise

“Once I spoke the language of the flowers,  
Once I understood each word the caterpillar said,  
Once I smiled in secret at the gossip of the starlings,  
And shared a conversation with the housefly  
in my bed.  
Once I heard and answered all the questions  
of the crickets,  
And joined the crying of each falling dying  
flake of snow,  
Once I spoke the language of the flowers...  
How did it go?  
How did it go?”  
— Forgotten Language, Shel Silverstein, 1974

You've probably noticed the recuperation by now. How the dominant culture twists, co-opts, absorbs, defuses, incorporates, and commodifies resistance in order to heal the rupture opened up by radical ideas and action. These sorts of processes can sneak up on you. Blink and the motherfuckers will try to normalize the most mind blowing experience of your life. An environmental organization riding the coat tails of direct action, collecting donations that will never be used for grassroots or direct action purposes. The Green Party speechifying, trying to siphon momentum to tempt you back into the voting booth.

They're trying to lure you out of the woods and into a place of consumer/citizen/ spectator comfort. Why bother getting cold and wet, risking arrest, draining your savings, when a product can give you all the sense of identity you could reasonably hope for within society?

Take Tentree for example. They'll repackage the rhetoric of the blockade and sell it= right back to you. Join the movement of Earth First clothing, cover up the bruises of police brutality with this season's Lorax Collection of sustainable apparel. Let's give a shit and shop sustainable for this year's Black Fri-, I mean, Green Friday...

It can catch you off guard sometimes. What's next, a special blockader-themed issue of GQ? Ten new camo designs for the discerning covert operator? Five perfect gifts to help someone forget they saw their friends be choked out by cops? As if it wasn't hard enough staggering back into the city to begin with. How best to rest, nurture new friendships, and integrate our experiences? I think telling our own stories can play a part in that. Claw back some of that mental real estate so coveted by our screens. And let's do it soon, before the immediacy of our experiences fade. By all means, gather with each other around beach fires and let's tell each other some tales. Let's not stop at that. Let's argue, apologize, compare notes, analyze, and support the hell out of each other, especially those caught up in the court system. But for those of us that can't be there at the fire right now, let's at least put some of it into print and cast some spells of sharing and remembering.

This zine is dedicated to the Elaho Valley Anarchist Horde. They probably didn't make their zine for us, but it was a hit at the blockade this summer. Perhaps the scattershot of offerings here will be useful to the next generation. I hope so. But really this zine is for us, here and now, as a shield against isolation, self-doubt, and recuperation.

#### **WHAT FOLLOWS ARE SUBMISSIONS ANONYMOUSLY RECEIVED.**

All were unattributed unless otherwise noted. None of the views represent anything or anyone. Something something entertainment purposes only. It's probably all made up anyway. Fever scribbles and refracted light.

Total arrests are approaching 1200. Even in the numbers, there is much to dispute. The majority of arrests were of the 'catch and release' variety. Despite never charging the majority of people arrested, the RCMP breakdown of arrests is 919 arrests for breaching the injunction (contempt of court) and 269 for criminal offenses. Curious that they don't just say 800 bullshit arrests, but maybe they prefer not to make that an official category. That is to say, roughly 800 of those arrests either were not for any charges or the charges were later dropped (unfortunately the numbers weren't available to distinguish between the two categories).

Release conditions for those charged with contempt have all been geographical restrictions based on the injunction area. In the brief period of time between injunction in late September/early October, release conditions were even more narrowly defined geographically, since there was no injunction zone at the time. If any criminal charges resulted in different release conditions, it has not been brought to the attention of the Rainforest Flying Squad Legal Support team.

The number of arrests is more than the number of individuals arrested. Some were arrested two, three, or more times. The total number of different people arrested is around 450. So far 350 charges have been approved. Of all the charges dropped, way more criminal charges have been dropped than the civil charges (contempt). This partially reflects the fact that the burden of proof is higher for criminal charges than civil charges. Of the charges dropped, many were because the arrests were outside of the injunction zone, or included 'RCMP abuse'. Less charges have been dropped so far than hoped.

Of the 269 arrests for criminal charges, probably less than 20 seem to be proceeding to court, which is great news. However, some of those that were caught and released (but whose information was taken, which wasn't always the case) were surprised to later find out through the grapevine that they had court appearances scheduled for contempt charges, even though the cops had

No further detail were given. It is assumed that her assailant considered her to be worth more not standing. Source: *Vancouver Sun*

The Sea to Sky Gondola was a controversial development for multiple reasons, one of which was the fact that a provincial park (Stawamus Chief Provincial Park near Squamish) was made smaller in order to accommodate the privately-operated resort. In 2019, somebody climbed the tower in the middle of the night, and cut the main gondola cable, causing millions of dollars in damage, resulting in the resort being shut down for an entire year. In 2020, a few months after it re-opened, somebody again climbed a tower at night and cut the cable, again causing millions of dollars worth of damage, shutting down the resort, and raising their insurance costs considerably. The resort reopened again in 2021, leading many people to ask what the sabotage really accomplished. Source: *Squamish Chief*

Nobody knows what the motives were for the sabotage against the gondola, but it could be argued that the motivation is beside the point. It can safely be assumed that any resort developers in the province will take notice, as will their potential investors. After all, cutting a gondola cable twice makes for a fairly comprehensive solo divestment campaign, does it not? ‘Garibaldi at Squamish’ is a similarly controversial proposed resort (which will also likely try to expand into a park, this time Garibaldi Provincial Park) and it’s safe to assume they understand better than most the long term deterrent of such actions.

## **Legal Update of Arrests and Charges as of Mid-December 2021**

The following numbers are based on rough estimates only and the legal interpretations here should be taken with a grain of salt as this has not been reviewed by a lawyer.

## **Love and Rage in the Rainforest**

August 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021 Ada’itsx (Fairy Creek), Unceded Pacheedaht Territory—So-called “Vancouver Island”, so-called “British Columbia”, so-called “Canada”

A year of continuous blockades against logging, on the invitation of hereditary chief Victor Peter and elder Bill Jones. Three months of police invasion (aka “injunction enforcement” for logging company Teal Jones). 1000+ arrests and counting. Thousands of participants, visitors, supporters... numerous solidarity actions near and far, and logging blockades underway in various other locations across this colonial province: british. columbia.

The RCMP’s pension fund owns TimberWest, one of the largest logging companies on the island. The RCMP’s Orwellian “Community Industry Response Group” (CIRG) was created in 2017, the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Canada’s genocidal statehood, to facilitate militarized policing of resistance to colonial resource extraction. Recently it has made significant incursions against the courageous land defenders dug in around the ancient Ada’itsx (Fairy Creek) rainforest, including a major assault on the blockade HQ and nearby camps begun on August 9<sup>th</sup>, the one year anniversary of the first Ada’itsx blockade.

While we would never count out this generational movement which has already proven its resilience time and again, the situation at the blockades seems dire at times lately. Our hearts are heavy, but our will is strong. At this time we offer a brief analysis of some overlooked aspects of this conflict, our deepest respect to many courageous rebels involved, and some criticism to the recuperative tendencies which, while not surprising to encounter, should nevertheless be discussed as the blockade movement evolves.

It hasn’t been well documented that the CIRG, while appearing superficially as just one component of the RCMP task force

that's been attacking the blockades since May 17, is in command of the operation, strategically deploying counterinsurgency personnel, material and tactics on unceded Indigenous lands. As much as some might have wished it to be, this isn't the early '90s anymore. This isn't Clayoquot Sound, where mustachio'd mounties carried away a few people a day for weeks on end, until the legal system was clogged. Anti-logging sabotage and storming the legislature in Victoria were also decisive forces of successful resistance in Clayoquot, but have been all but completely whitewashed from history by movement sellouts and campaigners, ENGOs, the non-profit industrial complex, and the modern day cult of "nonviolence".

Thirty years have passed since then, thirty years of clearcuts, ENGO compromises, globalization, neoliberalization and corporate capture, police militarization, the so called war on terror and its attendant domestic counterinsurgencies, climate and ecosystem collapse in the context of predatory delay, extreme resource extraction, extreme inequality, etc. In 2021 at Ada'itsx, the CIRG conducted mass arrests, but mass incarceration of land defenders isn't their only method of repression. While many reformists in the movement see mass arrests inside the confines of a media-focused civil disobedience campaign as the only strategy for some kind of victory, the CIRG are not limiting themselves to playing that game. They are waging broad spectrum attrition warfare of a different kind.

There have been media-friendly civil disobedience type arrests, especially in the first few weeks, but since the beginning of the RCMP invasion, and with a seemingly ever greater tendency in recent weeks, arrests have been increasingly arbitrary, brutal, and hazardous. The media spotlight has faded greatly, and journalists themselves have been brutalized, arrested, or denied access. The RCMP (wearing banned white supremacist "thin blue line" patches and covering their name and badge numbers), acting with total impunity and disregard for the admonishment and rulings of the courts, have continued to use extra-judicial "exclusion zones".

lions

Average annual precipitation for Port Renfrew: 3670mm

Typical rainfall for Port Renfrew in November: 580mm

Actual November 2021 rainfall: 1189mm

Average annual rainfall for Victoria, BC: 880mm

Fastest Known Times

Heli to Ridge — 50min

Mario Trail — Uphill, 20min30sec

Marmot Trail — Uphill, road to road, approx 22min

Blue Egg Trail — From 2000/2100 junction to Pacific Marine, 1hr22m

## Action Report and Analysis

Disclaimer: Included here are a few recent actions that have not been reported widely. They are included simply to give a broader context. All details given here were found online. The actions mentioned here are all illegal and therefore could never be condoned.

On November 11 a feller buncher (logging machine) was found to have been burnt overnight and completely destroyed, near the First Nation community of Ditidaht. The value of the machine is reported as being \$500,000. Heavy rainfall had occurred overnight. Details of the exact location and the logging companies involved has not been made public. The RCMP did not put out a news release until Nov 23, which suggests they only did so as a last resort in trying to round up any information. Source: *Lake Cowichan Gazette*

There has long been suspicion that industry and police will often try to keep successful industrial sabotage actions from being reported in the media, so as not to encourage 'copycat' actions. Whether or not the media is also complicit in this is debated.

Around December 8, BC Forests Minister Katrine Conroy was knocked to the ground while walking home from the legislature.



guess we all have the forest to thank for weaving us together into the tapestry that we have become. May we continue to fall in love with strangers, especially those that engage in civil disobedience, for grandmother and grandfather trees.

## Ode to Screech

I was there when you were just a few tents and a block or two  
But soon you became home to much more than a few  
I only once heard the owl to which you were named  
It was ever-so magical, wild and untamed  
You were the heart of the movement in so many ways  
Taking in the ones who might have gone astray  
Supporting multiple pushes down passed Waterfall  
And somehow the frontline never got by you at all  
Even when your creek was no more than a drip  
You still let us come down to drink, bathe and dip  
I saw when the green guys came to take you down  
You persisted, came back and rose from the ground  
Oh Screech, I love you more than you will ever know  
You brought me my family whom I will never let go.

## Statistical Data

Most concrete carried in one backpack: 2.5 bags (140lbs total)  
Longest time spent in a trench hard block: 55hrs  
Longest time spent in a continuous tree sit: 9 days?  
Money RCMP claim to have spent on enforcement as of Nov 2021:  
\$8.9 million  
Money paid to PFN band council from Teal Jones for revenue sharing: \$235,000  
Potential profit claimed lost by Teal Jones due to blockades: Mil-

With these they deny access to media, and illegally card, search, detain or arrest people, many without charge, often releasing them within hours nearby, in unpredictable ways and locations. The RCMP have characterized these as preventive measures, or in other words, preemptive arrests. The courts have stated that the RCMP has no duty to prevent injunction violations, only to stop them when they happen, but the RCMP continue to illegally card, search, detain, and arrest people who haven't violated the injunction. Most egregiously, Pacheedaht and Ditidaht people have been denied access to their own territory by the colonial RCMP.

*"We're surprised at the RCMP's determination to crush us... It's not just us they're wanting to crush – they want to protect the economic and regulatory process that the Canadian government uses to get what they want off the land, under the directions of the large corporations."*

— Pacheedaht Elder Bill Jones, as quoted in the Guardian

"Legal observers" and the movement's "police liaisons", medics, etc are not guaranteed any special status, and are frequently denied access, or in some instances brutalized and swept up in detention and arrest along with everyone else. People not even within an "exclusion zone" or participating in injunction-breaching activity have been detained or arrested nearby, contributing to a climate of fear and uncertainty, and a blurring of boundaries around the blockade actions. The RCMP's so called "Division Liaison Teams" (dressed in less threatening garb and postured to facilitate "safe protest" and "communication" between land defenders and the RCMP) have shown themselves to be full fledged combatants in the counterinsurgency, sowing confusion with more blatant than usual treachery and unpredictability, conducting sudden arbitrary arrests and other interdictive actions.

Along with hundreds of arrests, the RCMP have carried out hundreds of direct actions and psychological operations without arrests, such as: plainclothes and camouflaged officers conducting night raids to sabotage, steal, or destroy blockade infrastructure, equipment, tools, shelters, supplies, and personal items... and to utter threats, shine lights, blare sirens, brandish weapons, bluff charge at people with police vehicles, etc. Meanwhile hundreds of vehicles near the blockades, most of which are not blockading anything, have been illegally towed and impounded until extremely exorbitant "fees" of \$2500 per vehicle are paid. Cops have smashed car windows to arrest people sleeping inside, steal people's phones, and several blockaders' vehicles have been destroyed with heavy equipment. Tonnes of blockaders' supplies and personal possessions have been illegally seized and discarded at nearby dumps.

Officers and ATVs have been inserted behind blockade lines via helicopter, and there have also been extremely low helicopter flybys, using rotor wash and noise as weapons against blockaders. On at least one occasion, blockaders used their own helicopter to drop supplies for an isolated blockade camp. Trees have been felled dangerously close to treesitters, who have also been threatened with tear gas and rubber bullets, and pepper spray has been deployed against crowds who successfully stormed police lines to reoccupy lost ground. The RCMP have also deployed Stingray devices, which mimic mobile phone towers to aid in tracking and surveillance.

Blockaders using conventional civil disobedience tactics like tripods and sleeping dragons can no longer count on a "peaceful" arrest scenario, as the RCMP increasingly use threats, taunts, violence, life threatening extraction methods, and torturous pain compliance techniques on people in these physically vulnerable positions. The RCMP, illegally colluding with Teal Jones to enforce the injunction, have gone from using excavators and chainsaws in extremely hazardous ways (the business ends of such equipment often running within inches of blockaders' faces) to extract people from tripods and lockdowns in trenches, to chainsawing or knock-

The trees fell, but for a few days we got to imagine what it was like to have saved them. And that experience is worth a lot. Years compressed into days. We'll all be processing and unpacking these experiences for years. But I know where I was when the giants fell. And I wouldn't trade those tears for anything.

Hedging out bets, we started walking down the road towards River, enjoying the last light of the day. The 7pm ride hadn't materialized (it often didn't), but someone would be along eventually. After a short while, we could hear the evening's convoys coming up the road. People were always so excited on that drive up. Hanging off every corner of a vehicle, just so stoked to be heading into the unknown. On the driver's way back, we caught a ride down.

It was dark when we got to River, but you hadn't swam in Renfrew Creek yet and I convinced a driver to wait for us before driving down to HQ. The dip was great, a form of daily self-care. People always went naked, there never seemed a second thought. There was always this moment after a chilly dip where you could just sit there, breathe deep, and begin to process a fraction of what was unfolding around you. A great day and lots of ground covered, literally and metaphorically. You were great company. But I still don't even know your name.

## Dear Lovers

I don't know if it was your unwashed hair or the fact that you hadn't changed your underwear in over a week. But somewhere, in between the night raids, build crew bashes, and tea as the sun rose, I fell in love. My entire heart pulsed for all of your edges, even the rough ones. Some of my lovers didn't communicate well, and after 48 hours of little to no sleep, they would get snappy with people while others would simply cry. I still love you. Even in your shadow, the sun still kisses you because we are only human. Each of us has many weaknesses that are tethered to a strength. I

people wanted passed on. We packed some of screech's garbage and recycling into our packs and hit the trail. On the hike, we talked about other direct action camps that had happened in other places and other times, wondering how much of the magic that was present at Fairy Creek was also present at the smaller, shorter lived blockades.

Mario trail had some new ropes installed, that was nice. No surprises at Hawk and the welcome mats still stood, Hawk having had a similar origin story to Heli. Seeing all the camps in one day always helped my perspective. Something about getting the endorphins, checking in with everyone along the way, getting caught up on news, and seeing how differently each camp felt to be present at. I wanted to soak up this wild, temporary, sci-fi experience as much as possible. It's a lot to take in. Inevitably, you'd see often see someone having some sort of breakdown: grief, anxiety, or burnout. Then there was the genius guerilla artistry and camaraderie of build crew, playing Home Alone in the woods, engulfed in their own tactical universe. The timelines had been permanently altered here at Fairy Creek. We were vast and contained multitudes. Anything was possible. The blockade would end eventually but we'll carry these moments forever, right? Or will we need to remind each other? Will the transformation we've all been part of feel different depending on the outcome? How long before the legacy of all this can even be known? Would we become bitter? What secrets have yet to be told?

After the pop-up at 2000 that stopped logging for a few days, I did some recon and was consolidated some stashes while logging resumed higher up in the valley. I was alone again and the sound of the giant trees falling kilometres away was out of all proportion. When I heard the first tree hit the ground, the noise was so crisp and loud that I thought someone had dropped the tailgate open on a truck nearby that I hadn't noticed, so I reflexively hid in the bushes for a bit, not realizing what I was hearing. It took me a few minutes to realize what was happening.

ing over tripods until people fall, burying trench occupants with dirt and gravel, and ramming people with vehicles, resulting in serious injuries, for which medical treatment is denied or delayed. Some blockades with people locked down in trenches have been neutralized by cops placing boards above them so they can be driven across, even while people are still locked down beneath them. Many people have also been denied access to food and water, subjected to prolonged sun and heat exposure, and been locked in police vehicles parked in the sun until they pass out from heat exhaustion.

Indigenous and other marginalized people are usually blatantly targeted for the worst brutalities. There have been many incidents of officers sexually assaulting women. There is no overstating the degree of violence and brutality that police (and in some instances, loggers) are using against land defenders. Ruthless beatings, choking people into seizures, pepper spraying people at point blank range in the face and genitals, dragging people by their hair and neck, etc. Only recently have ambulances been allowed to attend the scene. Most blockaders have had to seek medical care from comrades or at nearby hospitals. It's only by chance that no one has been killed at the blockades yet. An Indigenous youth who was denied access to their seizure medication while arrested, died of cardiac failure weeks later. A youth who was arrested and whose phone was smashed by the RCMP, died of an overdose a few days later.

There is no such thing as nonviolence. Blockading is economic violence. Some logging industry workers have lost their jobs due to the blockades. Digging trenches in logging roads is economic violence in the form of sabotage. "Peacefully" obstructing the RCMP's invasion for three months is economic violence against the state. Offering one's self up to be beaten to a pulp by a cop or a logger while in a lockdown is violent, to one's self and one's community. Blockaders voluntarily suturing their arms together to dissuade ar-

rest is not only violent to themselves, but potentially to other blockaders and police via blood-borne illness.

Courageously, some land defenders are breaking free from the theatre of the absurd that is the cult of nonviolence. Some folks have been resisting arrest, de-arresting comrades, pushing police as they push past police lines (using a tactic called “the blob” which is somewhat similar to the black bloc), holding steady at a blockade position and then vanishing into the bush before they can be arrested, etc. Strategically, gates have been locked, others have been cut free of their locks, and increasingly, the police themselves are the target of the action, whether it’s a clandestine lock on the gate to their compound, or a blockade setup specifically against their vehicles. Just as we can’t overstate the level of police brutality at the blockades, we can’t overstate the amount of rebellious courage, bravery and fortitude that land defenders bring to the frontlines every single day. The movement has also has a deep understanding of the need for a holistic approach to resistance, developing meaningful capacities for grassroots aftercare and sanctuary for frontliners, and a broad spectrum of frontline and non-frontline resistance that people from a diversity of backgrounds and identities can participate in.

Some in the movement, some of whom have political ambitions, and are generally some of the more privileged people involved, are more terrified of this than of the invading genocidal paramilitary known as the RCMP. Like party whips, they try to enforce the dogma of nonviolence and non-escalation, equating sabotage with violence, blaming victims of police violence who act in self defense, demanding evidence of police violence and seeking repentance from those who physically resist... oblivious to – or in denial of – the reality that the movement has been escalating its tactics for many months. Blockade tactics that were once thought of as “too radical” are now so frequent as to be mundane. Something as simple as piles of logs and rocks left to block a road, without people there to take responsibility and offer themselves up for arrest, have

rest with us when we left. You wanted to chill out by the kitchen, so I wandered down the road by myself past all the hardblocks. The frontline was far enough away to provide a nice buffer from Screech, but closer than it had been on my last visit. I stopped at each hardblock to offer chocolate and see if anyone had any special requests I could pass onto the people helping source supplies on the outside. Lots of chats and catching up with people along the way. The conversations were never too broad reaching though. Being near the frontline puts certain blinders on you, and the sleep deprivation doesn’t help either. But you also get to see people evolve and change. Some people I’d see before they ever got to Screech. Seeing them after they’d been there a few days was always inspiring and hearing how their worldview had been blown wide open was always worth the time it took. Turns out getting the cops to retreat once in a while really does wonders for how we view the horizons of possibility.

One of the hard parts for me these days being back home is running into people I know. I don’t always mention that I was at Fairy Creek but when I did, their first question is usually to ask if ‘the protests’ actually stopped any logging, and that was if they’d even heard of the blockade at all. Not, “Oh wow, tell me about what it’s like to live in a sci-fi universe!”. Results-oriented. Did we stop logging? Yeah, at times I guess, for what it’s worth.

I remember after Occupy, random people would offer the peanut-gallery opinion that what we the movement really lacked was a good leader. Nevermind that Occupy was a explicitly anarchistic, leaderless, decentralized movement where transparency, inclusivity and horizontal organizing were explicitly front and center. The juxtaposition can be shattering at times .

All the catching up on my way down to the frontline and back up took time. I didn’t stay long at the front, because I just couldn’t relax around the cops, though I was grateful that the folks there were doing their best to. We were starting to run a little behind on time, so it was time to say some goodbyes, collecting messages that

than the status quo allows. Exploring a sense of agency and empowerment absolutely absent from daily life. The Choose Your Own Adventure aspect of a decentralized movement is a lot of fun, there I said it. The sense of immersion living without distractions and with such unwavering focus. The joy of waking up each day, checking in with my desires, and then following them to their natural conclusions. And in the woods this time instead of the fucking city!

Back during Occupy, I actually genuinely believed a revolution had begun, that's how novel (read: naive) it was for me at the time. The entire experience taught me how many pockets of resistance and autonomy must have existed throughout history, and to realize the value of these temporary autonomous zones. It might feel like the whole world is watching, but they really aren't. That something forming such a break with consensus reality can happen and then be absorbed back into the fold of society unacknowledged is heartbreaking.

But even with tempered expectations, the joy and openness I experienced this time around, even knowing we probably wouldn't win, the all-consuming passion would flow just as freely. I just know now to soak it up while it lasts and not count on some sort of externally validated victory.

You never really knew what you'd be walking into at Screech, but we approached from the friendly side and had our radios turned on just in case. Turns out no greens were on the Mario Trail towards Hawk and the blues were all down at the frontline. It was great to arrive early enough that we didn't have to rush. Even though we still had a ways to go before getting back to our tents later that night, we wanted to enjoy our time at Screech. I usually left wanting more, but in hindsight, that was probably the best way to dose the magic of it.

So we dropped off some spices that Ridge had sent down, as well as some extra radios. I audited the battery stash with a battery tester to save the ones that were still fine and pack out the

moved from outliers to commonplace. Naturally it's much easier to do things like this before the cops are on site!

An influx of radical youth, frequently comprising a majority of blockade participants at a given time or place, including many Indigenous youth, have brought a much needed grassroots Landback grounding, and have called bullshit on "pro-industry, pro-old growth", and pro-police movement marketing, flipping the script on all counts, while some resistance inspired by the Ada'itsx blockades targets logging that isn't just token remnants of old growth, and has no love for the racist colonial money pigs (RCMP).

The saturation of reformist nonviolence dogma contributes to deflection of resistance vs state forces to recuperative diversions... nauseating, ill-informed and/or misleading calls for police reform, "accountability", post-action lawsuits, an attempt without precedent to nullify the injunction through legal channels, and slogans that reinforce the carceral state like "lock up the real criminals" (ie. the logging industry and its captured politicians). The pervasive notions that "bad policing" or "dishonest politicians" are to blame, obscure the reality that this colony's police and politicians are doing exactly what they've been mandated to do. They sharpen their knives and attack, as inequality and repression increase, resources are depleted and the planet dies.

The cops are the army, are the industry, are the government, are the predator, are the enemy, and this is nothing if not a war for our very survival... BC's perennial "war in the woods" is not just a catchy, metaphorical brand. We hold the enemy accountable by defending the land, defending ourselves, and fighting back. We are accountable to ourselves when we realize that there is no such thing as justice, only liberation, and do what is necessary to make it happen.

Along with our criticism, we offer huge shouts to the Ada'itsx blockade movement... for its strong anti-colonial and feminist values, its ingenious creativity, its logistical wizardry, its rebellious

spirit, its relentless mobilization, its proven abilities to outmaneuver cops and retake lost ground, and its absolute commitment to throw down hard on the land for over a year now. May it continue for many more!

We continue to push back against ENGOs and politicians who weasel their way in, and those who enable them. The grassroots autonomy of this movement is vital to its strength, and its very existence. A generation has been lost to repression, gentrification, transphobia, nihilism, mind-numbing ENGO politics and protest routines, and colossal ENGO compromises like the “Great Bear Rainforest” agreement. Perhaps a new generation of resistance is being forged in the frontlines at Fairy Creek.

Shout out the Gitksan blockade...Skoden! Shout out the Tliá'mon and Homalco youth who blockade Western Forest Products. Shout out the grassroots Nuxalk taking a stand for their land, and calling bullshit on the horrifying sellout that is the GBR deal. Shout out Hiladi Village... Landback, no more treaty-making! Shout out Old Growth Revylution... direct action gets satisfaction! Shout out the rebels who blockade the RCMP in Castlegar! Shout out Sutikalh and Voice for the Voiceless!

For a diversity of tactics. For unmediated hostility against the state. For total liberation.

— some anarchists

[Editor's Note: This piece appears on [bcblackout.wordpress.com](http://bcblackout.wordpress.com), which is well worth browsing. See especially [bcblackout.files.wordpress.com/2020/07/smashtealjones2016-web.pdf](http://bcblackout.files.wordpress.com/2020/07/smashtealjones2016-web.pdf) for a previous zine that was put out in 2016 when the same company, Teal Jones, was trying to log in the Walbran.]

## Civilization

We are capable of great grace and resiliency that is only taught by nature to those who commune with it. Civilization teaches us to

course. There'd been more art popping up on this stretch of road and the Elk was strange and haunting to behold.

We got a lot of uninterrupted one-on-one time on this walk, a luxury at the blockade for me. We discuss how much of a mixed bag the social media updates usually are. Catching up on the news is good, but how they frame the police, the media, and politicians is so banal and disempowering. We discuss our own psychological entry points to the blockade, our backgrounds, perspectives. We talk about plants, wilderness. How it's great to spend so much time outside this summer, even if it's mostly on logging roads. I don't ask what you do for work because I honestly don't care to know.

We both recognize that it's the unity that heightened conflict provides that allows such different people to get along so well for the most part. There seems to be a need for all types of people and that's a lesson I'd been learning this summer. Finding out what it is you want to do at the blockade is such a personal decision, if you can withstand the wafts of guilt and desperation that come from folks. Most are trying their best to respect everyone's personal decisions though and that feels good. We talk about consent for a while. How much consent is possible in such a dynamic situation? Is there room for pushing people to challenge their comfort zones when you don't really know them? Are we each doing enough to make sure people know what they're getting into when they go to the frontlines? What does it even mean to 'know what you're getting into', given that any predictability we've discovered at the blockade is of course subject to change, like everything else.

The last time I felt this way was 10 years ago when I got swept up in the Occupy movement. I would cry just as often back then and it felt so good, but eventually it fell apart, normalcy was re-established, and I allowed myself to become hardened again. Similarities with Occupy abound, leaving me to believe that there is really something truly exceptional and desirable about existing in a space that has been carved out to challenge normalcy itself. Living in contested space, relating to people in such different ways

my pack definitely felt different than it did with a bag of concrete in it. Lighter but harder to manage, always having to fight the water's momentum. I got to show you the big tree by Ridge, you were pretty excited. It was no behemoth, but impressive nonetheless. I recalled to you a tree I'd read about in the Capilano Valley in 1886 that was measured at 20 feet across right before they cut it down. I made sure to pace that out in front of you just to see the expression on your face.

Eventually the tears would come on for all sorts of reasons, but it was always something I chose to celebrate. Being open to the world and the possibilities and the intensity and the weight of it all. Choosing to be more than just a goddamn spectator in the industrial juggernaut that is civilization, and instead part of a war launched against it. Allowing myself to drop the cynicism for a period of time, giving in to imagining and visualizing a future very different than what I usually reconcile myself to. Allowing myself to temporarily let the world in and settling into a sort of vulnerability that I would normally find far too risky in less tumultuous times. There were tears of sadness and tears of empathy, the latter normally strictly rationed for the sake of self-protection. Ridge was happy to see us. They always appreciated visitors and supplies since they were the camp least traveled to. We had a few nice conversations while we took a break, and then carry on, managing to beat the heat of the day so far. Ridge was the only camp that I got to visit where you weren't on a logging road and that offered a certain mental buffer, both visually from helicopters but in other less obvious ways too.

Once on the road again, the day was clear enough to see the mountains around Port Alberni to the north and Cape Flattery to the south. Seeing such far away points is always something that's helped me feel grounded in life, though the irony of such views being provided by a clearcut weren't lost on us. We didn't stop long at Cookie, and stopped only to say a quick hello with the person on watch at Owl. Everyone graciously received the chocolate, of

listen to our mind and not the wind. Civilization forces us live high up and not listen to the stories of the winged beings. Civilization teaches us to seek the edges of technology and not to seek the textures of the trees. I have learned that the ceremony of the settler is to create our own relationships with the land, to have authentic creative connection to the land and not to borrow from traditions. I have learned our basic needs are the basic needs of plants.

## **May We Find Our Way Back to Our Mother**

I am currently taking a rest day from the frontline blockade at Waterfall camp. Making time to recharge and heal is essential because giving is easier when your cup is full. It feels rather strange to be in the city. A place where traffic never stops and locals sip lattes while grandmother trees are slaughtered in silence. I have this feeling deep inside my stomach; something must die for our consciousness to be reborn. I'm not sure if it's greed, desire, or culture of consumerism, but our mother is dying. We all must come together to ensure that our government helps us heal her wounds. We cannot bathe our cities in blood to cleanse the concrete jungle. Water is god, and water is life. Carve out time to protect this entity. Isn't it absurd that we call filtered water clean? When we could sip from a crystal stream in the heart of the old-growth. I prefer the taste of minerals to fluoride. Most of the world is backwards. Indeed, there is chaos on the frontlines. However, there is also respect and care for our mother. We fight to protect her beating heart and sacred waters. Love overcomes every act of violence that the RCMP imposes. Industry haunts our nightmares, and we still stand to wake. The law has deemed us criminals, because the law no longer reflects justice. Corporations have bought out our courts. It is more than time to demand justice and liberation for Nature and her children.

May flowers bloom in oil fields.  
May birds sing lullabies to clear cuts so the sun can soak their bleeding bodies.  
May we see the river run clear and free.  
May we find our way back to our Mother.

## **Talk and Log: Sometimes the Carrot, Sometimes the Stick**

It is my strong opinion that one of the biggest reasons why the Fairy Creek nlockade has become such a high-water mark of decentralized struggle is that it was organized on a grassroots level without ENGO (Environmental Non- Government Organization) involvement. The Choose Your Own Adventure ethic that is so celebrated at Fairy Creek is a direct result of this decentralized style of resistance. And these just aren't things that Ancient Forest Alliance, Wilderness Committee, Stand.Earth or any other ENGOs are capable of providing. You simply don't have people experiencing this level of community and having such powerful experiences in campaigns run by the industrial non-profit complex, full stop. When it comes to these sorts of developments, I believe Fairy Creek has the potential to become a major turning point in the history of land defense in BC. But for that potential to be realized, it is helpful to understand how movements become co-opted and how uncommon decentralized struggles have become over the past 20 years.

One classic example of ENGOs co-opting direct action in BC was the fight for the Great Bear Rainforest that took place from the mid-90's to the mid-2000's. This remains relevant to Fairy Creek today as many of the same organizations are involved. However, it's hard to come across a history of the Great Bear Rainforest that isn't based on the narratives established by the ENGOs and government.

more importantly your mood. I saw it as a supply hub, a fork-in-the-road stopover, and a place where people could hold space and others could fend off burnout without having to go home. Some people lived an hour or two away, but not everyone had the luxury of going home for a shower, a load of laundry and a good night sleep. I always admired that River seemed to be the only camp still holding a circle each day and wished there was less of a sense of urgency (albeit self-imposed, always self-imposed) so that I could figure out a way to get in on the check-ins, etc. I also found it inconvenient to arrive in the middle of circle and I imagine I wasn't alone in that, considering how much of a transient place River often functioned as. But we got to check in on a few folks and get more updates before deciding to do our lap clockwise, since there was probably water that needed hiking to Ridge.

Up to Heli we went on the next ride. Heli now had running water, which was pretty cool. The camp had started when someone happened to be present in the cutblock when a helicopter tried to land. They managed to fend it off singlehanded, but the need for continued presence there became broadly acknowledged. This morning, most people had already started working on various hard block projects, so we didn't stay long. We filled up our water at the bathtub pool and carried on up. Just as we entered the forest, the helicopter did a few fly by's but thankfully didn't stick around. Despite being at the blockade for a month, you still hadn't done this trail yet, hadn't even been fully inside the Fairy Creek watershed. I looked forward to seeing how it would affect you.

The trail's condition had improved. A certain someone had been doing some proper trailbuilding on their own and some sections now had steps cut out of fallen trees. The thing I liked about this trail was that you could never really get a full view down the valley. There was always something left to the imagination. The water source had less flow each time I did this trail, but the hose still allowed for water jugs to be filled easily enough. I decided to carry one of those 20L water jugs, since my legs were feeling good, but



just too many unsettled vibes and people complaining about being stuck doing jobs they didn't want to do. So I suggested we do a lap of the camps. Once we finished our 10 minutes on the wifi to get caught up, we waited around by the kitchen for the next vehicle heading up to River, which never took long. We'd grabbed some stuff at HQ that we knew was needed further up the mountain, and then checked in again about supplies at River. We weren't going with the usual rhythm of supply runs, but it also never hurts to be carrying a lot of extra chocolate, amirite?

I still tear up every few days since my time at the blockade began. In the beginning it was always tears of joy. It's not that I ever believed we would stop much old growth logging, but to think there was even chance of that was a novelty worth savoring. To be able to squint and pretend to have a sense of purpose greater than myself would just bring these waves of emotion welling up. The first time I hiked alone between Ridge and Heli, through a watershed that was being actively fought for, was a powerful experience that easily opened my inner watershed. In this moment of history, the sense that I could have an impact was overwhelmingly powerful, especially to be perhaps the only person in the Fairy Creek watershed for that hour.

There was something about using all my skills, fitness, and experience in the outdoors that I had accumulated for more personal reasons now being of such use in such a communal endeavour, and with complete strangers. Strangers that were happy to see me because even if we hadn't met, I was assumed to be on side, of value, contributing, witnessing, or at least delivering chocolate. That feeling of encountering people in a context where I actually cared what everyone's story was and they mine. Feeling the horizon of possibility shifting, imagination running wild. How often do I get to experience tears of gratitude back in the hellscape that is 'the real world'?

Folks had a variety of attitudes towards River, but to me it simply depended what incarnation of the camp you'd experienced and

Off the coast of Bella Coola is an area known to Nuxalk people as Ista (aka King Island) and it is considered the center of their territory and culture. In 1995 and again in 1997, members of the Nuxalk First Nation set up a blockade on Ista against logging being done by Interfor, one of BC's recurring resource extraction baddies. Combined there were over 60 arrests, including multiple Nuxalk chiefs. During the latter blockade, the RCMP deployed 40 cops as well as a helicopter, plane, boats, and kept the Coast Guard on standby.

Early on in the struggle Greenpeace, ForestEthics, Sierra Club, and several smaller ENGOs signed a basic protocol agreement with the Nuxalk. However in 2000, in clear violation of that agreement, the three major ENGOs banded together, unilaterally declared an end to direct action, and started negotiating with industry and government behind closed doors. This major about-face undermined blockade donations and the ensuing confusion eventually led to the end of the blockades, leaving the Nuxalk and their supporters with nothing to leverage, while also cutting the smaller ENGOs out of the equation.

For the first time in modern history in BC, there would be no public planning process deciding the fate of massive expanses of forest (6.4 million hectares in this case). In addition, the BC government would only allow the Nuxalk Nation a seat at the negotiating table if the nation agreed to join the BC Treaty Process. The Nuxalk had already previously rejected the Treaty path and would not be coerced, so they were left out of the talks entirely. According to Chief Qwatsinas, the Nuxalk "could see that it wasn't what we wanted because it was very limited, was kind of corrupt and really bent towards the industry."

Not only would this cabal of major ENGOs refuse to inform the Nuxalk of the ongoing developments (which was in violation of the protocol agreement), they also signed a confidentiality agreement with government and industry, such that they weren't allowed to badmouth the logging companies, the logging practices, or the mar-

keting of the wood products that were produced. Dru Oja Jay, an independent journalist, sums up the process:

*“So what happened was there was direct action, there were blockades, there was an international marketing campaign that put a lot of pressure on the companies that were logging in the Great Bear Rainforest but the end result was that that all fed into a closed-door negotiation with Tzeporah Berman leading the negotiation as chief negotiator on the conservationist side, where a lot of the groups that actually did the work (the direct actions and the market campaigns) were shut out of the process. Public oversight was removed and the protocol agreements that were signed with First Nations and with conservation groups were basically shunted aside ... The protocol agreements gave the negotiators a mandate to negotiate 40–60% conservation but what happened was they agreed to 20%.”*

The negative consequences of the reduction in conservation were significant. For the Nuxalk in particular, as if being sold out by the ENGOs wasn't enough, Ista and four other primary heritage locations throughout the territory were all left without any protection at all. Ista itself was clearcut by Interfor not long after. Speaking in hindsight, Chief Qwatsinas said of the whole affair:

*“I believe the so-called Ecologically Based Management and Great Bear Rainforest Agreements were only to buy some time for the industry and wait for the resistance to the clearcut logging to stop. Of course neither of these phoney deals save the forests: they are a farce because logging continues as before... The process on the table is a legal contract with an official gag order... It is disappointing that big environmental groups go against their word and say negative things about First Nations. I don't believe that this representation is good for their campaigns as environmental groups nor is it good that they are signatories to the disreputable Great Bear Rainforest Agreement... The phoney Great Bear Rainforest deal is yet another example. Like most of Indian history; it is hidden or concealed so that the general public is not aware of it.”*

Let us grieve the death of our greedy selves  
Let us be free from capital over lives lost.  
Let us live in harmony with the mother,  
Who created us all  
Learn to love the forest,  
Before humans fall

## Watershed Moments

I suspect that for the rest of my life, the song of Swainson's Thrush will bring me back to the memories of waking up in my tent at HQ. I would gauge how many more days I could stay at the blockade by seeing how I felt upon waking up. If I wanted to spring to my feet and hit the ground running, that was a good sign. But if I could feel the tug of the abyss that so many of us feel waking up in this world, then maybe it was time for me to go home, rest, and take care of myself. But this was a good day and I'm rearing to go. I was up before the generator was fired up and wifi turned on, well before breakfast would be served.

After my first all-nighter, a pop-up at 2000, I remember getting back to HQ just before dark and even though I should've gone straight to bed, I decided to rummage for a quick snack in the food trailer. I was too braindead to know what to eat so I was just fumbling around with my headlamp. Someone happened into the trailer and I still wasn't entirely sure how food was being distributed so I started to justify my existence, “Oh I was just-“, but the person cut me off with, “You don't have to explain anything” and I almost cried.

This morning though, I knew the lay of the land better, so I grabbed some trailer snacks, made some tea, and paced until I saw someone I wanted to talk to. You weren't sure what you wanted to do that day. I knew I didn't want to hang around HQ. The physical labor spent there was always better spent elsewhere, and it was

## Untitled

Lumber bodies  
Lay in a soil made bed  
Sacred, silent  
Torn off head  
Death was violent  
A means to an end  
    Bark skin surrenders  
Swallowed, hollow  
A cycle  
Cannot begin again  
I cry for the trees  
Lying in wait  
Desperate screams  
Echo over the lake  
    Wind carries their voices  
Through mountains, meadows and valleys  
A confused bear wanders  
Through blasted alleys  
    When will we realize?  
That we've become blind  
Deaf to the details  
And undermined  
By the NDP  
Ignoring desperate pleas  
We can't destroy nature  
Without killing ourselves  
    We must wake up  
The destruction cannot be undone  
    Once the old growth is gone,  
We are left with none  
Empty hearts and scattered minds  
Old-growth trees help us see the divine

Fast forward to 2010 and the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement. Participants include Greenpeace, ForestEthics, CPAWS and the David Suzuki Foundation. This time it's the fate of 72 million hectares being negotiated in secret, without participation of any First Nations groups and without any public planning process. The agreement is only really a deferral and doesn't reduce the overall rate of logging whatsoever. Sound familiar? Despite this, it is touted by Greenpeace as "the biggest forest conservation agreement on earth. Ever". But really, it's classic "Talk and Log" politics, as the decades-long criticism of the BC government's forestry policy sums up. At least this time, the ENGOS and industry publicly acknowledge the non-interference pact they've entered into.

As the CEO of the Forest Products Association says during a press conference announcing the agreement, "*One interesting piece of the agreement is with [the ENGOS] on our side, when someone else comes and tries to bully us, the agreement actually requires that [the ENGOS] come and work with us in repelling the attack and we'll be able to say 'fight me, fight my gang'.*"

These types of outcomes shouldn't be all that surprising, provided we take a step back and look at the history of ENGOS as a colonizing force that has consistently undermined direct action.

Paul Watson breaks it down nicely:

*"I personally have no use for large institutionalized environmental organizations. I think they're more of a problem than a help. They're just eco-bureaucracies and you know I won't name any because I don't like to badmouth organizations except for one which I feel that I can and that's Greenpeace. And the reason I can criticize Greenpeace is I am a co-creator of Greenpeace and therefore I feel like Dr. Frankenstein sometimes and I feel that since I helped create the thing, I could certainly criticize it. And I think that Greenpeace has become the world's biggest Feel-Good organization now. People join it to feel good, to feel "I'm part of the solution, I'm not part of the problem". Greenpeace brings in close to \$300 million a year and*

*what do they do with that money? Generate more money ... And the people who are at the top of the totem pole now are not environmentalists, they're fundraisers, they're accountants, they're lawyers, they're business people... It's not strange to me when people tell me that well you know that the former president of Greenpeace now works for the logging industry of Canada, or the former president Greenpeace Australia now works for the mining industry. The former president Greenpeace Norway works for the whaling industry. See because it's just one corporate job to the next."*

While the police (or the military in the case of Oka and Gustafsen Lake) will always be the final boss in any particular land defense, one of the biggest threats to decentralized movements continues to come from the non-profit sector. Much of how people understand environmental movements is completely shaped by the ENGO worldview. Moneyed interests will always shape the history in the textbooks and so many budding activists grow up understanding environmental resistance from perspectives that are inherently co-opted, sanitized, and institutionalized.

ENGOS have the money to get ads printed, the media ties to get their sound bites aired, the long-established mass mailing lists, and the books written after the fact to ensure their narrative is the one that prevails. In short, they have the content creators working under capitalist deadlines to saturate the public imagination. Consequently, they have colonized much of what is seen as environmental "resistance" and in doing so have greatly limited what we imagine to be the limits of possibility when it comes to conflict with industry, government, and colonization. All the while, accounts from people who have actually played a part in unsanctioned direct action are much harder to come across.

These institutions function as pressure release valves for resource extraction politics within capitalism. By only going after the low-hanging fruits, they ensure the bare minimum is done in order to pre-empt civil unrest. In doing so, ENGOS sellout any momentum gained by grassroots movements. There are many

age their privilege and prove their solidarity with oppressed peoples. But this begs the question: How does getting arrested build solidarity between folks? I would argue it weakens those potential bonds when the basis of solidarity is mediated by the police – a veritable prisoner's dilemma. It becomes rather clear that the call for arrestables is tacitly, and a lot of the time overtly, a call to sacrifice oneself. A call to martyrdom. From what is ostensibly an act of solidarity, getting arrested becomes a means to expiate one's guilt/privilege.

The Zapatistas in Chiapas have a definition of solidarity that has resonated with me: "Solidarity is not just coming here and joining our struggle, solidarity is recognizing our common struggle everywhere." Struggling together is cultivating the seeds of resistance everywhere, not ceding resistance in futile gestures. Struggling together is more than just being a replaceable body, an arrestable. Struggling together is taking literally the call "Who keeps us safe? We keep us safe!" Solidarity does not mean getting arrested. Getting arrested doesn't keep us safe.

We make our way up to River Camp hoping to overwhelm the police access control point at night. The pigs cry "Stop or you are under arrest!". Despite the pepper spray and attempts to knab us, we've congealed ourselves into an unassailable phalanx. There's an exhausted shit eating grin on everyone's face when we make it through the gauntlet. No one arrested, no one sacrificed to the tender mercies of the cops.

is at stake. It is not so much being arrested that is the goal but what it represents, hence “symbolic” arrest. Inexorably, the symbolic nature of the arrests becomes an end to itself, for example celebrity activists and politicians crossing a police cordon in a photogenic but ultimately benign exercise.

It is a curious state of affairs. How did surrendering ourselves to our enemies become a page in the playbook? Perhaps it is time to question the fetishization of symbolic arrest and its repercussions.

“RBC is financing the Coastal GasLink pipeline and violating indigenous rights on Wet’suwet’en territory. We are hoping to give a relatively easy opportunity to people who are new to land defense to deal with police first-hand and get arrested. Empowerment is key to this campaign. We want anyone to feel like they have power in their actions and can fight for a better world.” #GlueYourselfToAnRBC

Every struggle worth fighting for will eventually involve the cops. Symbolic arrest equates fighting the cops with getting arrested by the cops, perversely turning the self affirmation of struggle into self abnegation. It goes against every tenet of asymmetrical conflict to openly confront our adversaries when and where they expect us, let alone willingly be bagged and tagged by them. The subsequent consequences of arrest, even at its most lenient, risks further surveillance and persecution, curtailing the possibility of future action, to say nothing of the more immediate threat of being brutalized at the hands of the pigs.

During my time at the blockades on Pacheedaht and Wet’suwet’en territory, symbolic arrest was positioned as a delaying tactic. People chained themselves into hard blocks in an attempt to delay industry by placing their bodies in precarious situations, forcing the police to painstakingly remove them. Yet throwing people as grist in the arrest mill to buy time is hardly sustainable, a war of attrition that we are sure to lose.

Calls for “bodies on the line” in service of symbolic arrest have also been a conscious attempt by white able bodied allies to lever-

factors influencing the methods and outcomes of these organizations: philanthropic donors often have socially conservative values and have no interest in rocking the boat; the top-down hierarchy of ENGO structures reproduces disempowerment and cynicism at every turn; there is a fear of civil suits and of losing a non-profit/charitable status if they support activity that they cannot entirely control; and there is tendency for institutions to become an end unto themselves.

Combined, these factors mean that ENGOs will always aim low/shoot low in any campaign. The mechanisms by which they operate all tend towards the weak outcomes, all the while undermining direct action, grassroots organizing, and local indigenous groups.

There were people involved early on at Fairy Creek keeping ENGOs at arm’s length and I thank them for their foresight. Some of these organizations, like Ancient Forest Alliance, capitalized on the old-growth trend to raise money for themselves while in no way actually providing material support for the blockade. However Wilderness Committee, Stand.Earth (formerly ForestEthics), and in particular Tzeporah Berman all tried to insert themselves at various points during the Fairy Creek blockade. These are groups that have repeatedly excluded grassroots and First Nations groups from the negotiating table. So while we can’t be entirely sure of their ulterior motives and grand schemes this time, it’s safe to assume none of these groups are doing anything fundamentally different than they have in the past and that they will continue, in some way or another, to perpetuate their own green capitalist colonial ideology that completely undermines grassroots direct action.

Case in point: A February 2021 letter to the BC government signed by Ancient Forest Alliance, Stand.Earth, Wilderness Committee, Sierra Club, and UBCI asked for provincial funding in developing a provincial old growth strategy:

*“We urge the Province to turn to examples like the Great Bear Rainforest Initiative where \$120 million in funding — \$60 million from conservation organizations, \$30 million from the federal government,*

*and \$30 million from the province — helped Indigenous communities (emphasis added) develop new businesses and undertake stewardship and restoration programs associated with protecting a third of the Central and North Coasts of BC.”*

None of these groups or individuals have ever apologized for the role they played in the Great Bear Rainforest or Canadian Boreal Forest agreements and instead they continue to spin it as a shining example. Nothing has changed. For all we know they are still under a gag order to this day. Their own individual salaries and institutional longevity are contingent on prioritizing donors being able to feel good because a certain percentage of forest is ‘protected’ thanks to their donations. How much forest actually get spared the scourge of conventional industrial logging matters little to them on a practical level.

In response to criticism of her part in the Great Bear Rainforest deal, Tzeborah Berman has said, *“What we say to our critics is, if you can get a better result, do it”*. Which is true only because ENGOs are looking for very different results than the rest of us. And whatever results they do get, they will undoubtedly announce as a Huge Win. They are looking for marketing opportunities for their own brand in order to leverage donations from the ultra-rich. And even when smaller groups aren’t funded by philanthropists, the hand-me-down ideology remains the same: collect signatures and email addresses to show you’ve got a large following, drop an occasional banner or hold a rally for photo ops, and try to convince the government that you are worth collaborating with, to the exclusion of the unruly grassroots.

Decentralization has been a strong point of Fairy Creek. It is a feature, not a bug. One of the advantages is that the government, Teal Jones, and the RCMP have no idea how to control it. They want to meet adversaries on certain battlefields, preferably in courts, or at least in an urban space, and certainly with designated leaders. And if no one steps forward as a leader, they will strong-arm someone into that role so they can co-opt them and trot them out at press

## **Stalemate: The Agony and Ecstasy of Getting Arrested**

“The isolated Pawn casts gloom across the entire chess-board” – Aron Nimzowitsch, 1925

Amidst the asphyxiation of the world with the advent of COVID-19, the larger and more lethal pathogens of state and industry have only intensified their assault on our forests and rivers — the lungs that sustain us. To survive falling margins, the death machine must all the more rapaciously pillage the earth, laying bare the poverty and inanity of the logic of the market. Still, there is a long and storied history of people refusing to sit idly by as the land is sterilized into private partitions of desolation.

Despite the myriad ways to throw a wrench into the machine, there is the strangely pervasive tactic of symbolic arrest. What characterizes symbolic arrest is that, quixotically, one intends to be arrested, as opposed to the regular risk of arrest stemming from direct action.

I just finished turtling some supplies up Sasquatch trail when a new face arrives at Camp. He approaches me introducing himself as “Fresh Meat”, no shit. He just got here and asks where’s the best place to get arrested as he needs to get back home by Monday. I wince at the idea but he’s so keen I hate to burst his bubble. I’m anxious to see he doesn’t get hurt as fresh meat does spoil quickly. I get down to the brass tacks, “Don’t get pressured into anything if your gut tells you otherwise. If you’re set on it, at least don’t get arrested alone cuz the pigs will hurt you and throw the book at you. Take in the lay of the land, you might have to bushwhack your way outta trouble soon enough.” He smiles off my concerns politely.

Proponents of symbolic arrest make the case that the criminalizing of conscientious protest lays bare the injustice of the carceral state for the wider public, an exercise in raising awareness of what

and way of relating to people that I had only dreamt about doing in the city—sharing meals, struggles, and lives in a communal and intimate way.

When I returned home, I was struck by the noise, smell of car exhaust, and overstimulation of all the people. I'd look at the skyline and be confused why I could see that much sky at all. The empty skyline where trees must have once lived! Most of all, I was struck by the loss of communal living at River Camp. I spent my dinners by myself or with a lover or friend, but everything was separated with hard concrete lines. The opposite of intimacy.

Even in spaces of shared struggle, there is a lack of intimacy—not that intimacy can be forced, but we have no conditions for it to grow if it wanted. Not a romantic intimacy, but the intimacy of care, trust, and shared life. Further, in all spaces of struggle I've encountered in the city, there is only a sense of emergency, of always giving oneself completely to an action. No space for building the world we wish to thrive in, cooking dinner, walking in the trees, making art, self-regulation. No place for pleasure, joy, rest, or care, essentially.

But spaces like that, like I found briefly at River Camp, are so needed to reduce burnout, create a sense of belonging, and make our selves and struggles resilient. Spaces like that also provide more inclusion and access to disabled folks or people with children, and anyone with their own needs and reasons for not being on the so-called frontlines, where people aren't excluded because they can't/don't want to put their bodies on the line, and everyone's participation and emotional and intellectual contributions can be welcomed and valued.

River Camp wasn't this total utopia I'm dreaming about right now, but it did show me new ways of being in a struggle that I had never experienced before, and it put me on this path of dreaming and envisioning what I want in my life.

conferences. Then they will ask for the blockades to come down temporarily as a good faith gesture, the negotiations will happen in secret, without any anti-capitalist or anti-colonialism that can be so tricky to work around.

Beyond the advantage of being less susceptible to co-optation, decentralization also has the kinds of prefigurative benefits that captivated so many people this summer. Having no formal organization, self-determination allows for the types of empowerment and sense of agency that exists in semi-autonomous, contested spaces like the Fairy Creek blockade. There is much to reflect on about how we affect change, what it is we even want (we don't all want the same things), and what it means to try to be in community with each other.

If, however, we allow the powers that be to deputize and seduce a few naive individuals, then we should be ready for the disappointment and resentment when some awful deal is signed, the movement is snuffed out, and a new agreement is held up by the BC government as a 'success story'. Friends don't let friends become collaborators. The ENGOs seek to disrupt our movements by bribing the most articulate and charismatic among us with paid jobs. "We'll just pay you to do what you're already doing!", they'll say. But the offer of such carrots is but a long bid to slowly convert the idealism of youth into a sort of crude pragmatism. A pragmatism that slowly devolves into the sort of opportunism that perpetuates careerism on a small scale and the perpetuation on the status quo on the larger scale.

The difference between the carrot and stick diminishes when we realize that both are wielded by the same hand. Anyone who spent more than a few days at the blockade during active enforcement this summer has a very visceral understanding of the good cop/bad cop strategy. But in a larger sense, what are ENGOs if not the colonial power structure's good cop? After all, the ENGO has become one of industrial capitalism's most reliable methods of healing itself.

If having a seat at the table with industry and government is the goal, Talk and Log will be the outcome. The trajectory of idealism to opportunism is the fuel that keeps the beast alive. On the other hand, if our more radical instincts are left to mature for too long without intervention, we become impossible to co-opt and control. Don't let the state, police, media, or ENGOs mediate how we fight. Decentralized direct action has and continues to be our best option.

#### Land Back

A movement of beautiful people all coming together in a chaotic ballet of relearning the art of community and cohesion collectively.

Coming from all the extremes of the medicine wheel, unbalanced and dangerously difficult for anyone not yet brave enough to navigate, the hurtful and broken terrain to finding true reconciliation.

The settlers as we've been called, myself a non-assimilated nomad bordering someplace precariously close to an 'outlaw' stuck between the world of privileged 'euro stock' and full blooded indigenous, non the less proud of both bloods coursing through my veins, knowing that I am a bridge through intention and action. I love the people of this land and this movement is bigger than this continent has ever known, in that history is rewriting itself before our very eyes.

The people have spoken and the atrocities of church and state can no longer be covered up. No money will ever pay for the crimes committed and no longer will the world turn a blind and privileged eye, pretending or excusing the aberrant behavior of the powers that be.

Fuck the state.

Fuck the police.

And especially,

Fuck your willingness to sit idly by knowing that you could have made a difference...

— Napiquon

## An Ode to River Camp

by Laurel

River Camp was nested perfectly in between the trees, river, and roads. If I walked into the trees, I felt the coolness held deep in their trunks and roots. Back on the road, exposed to the direct sun, I'd overheat and have to return to the trees or take a dip in the glistening blue of the waterfall. The intersection of roads called River Camp held the tallest trees I'd ever seen. I felt connected to the earth in a way I only dream about when back in the city.

I felt welcome with the trees, people took me a minute longer. I spent the first evening anxious, unsure if I'd connect with any people. I met a couple folks who told me to stay away from them with their glares, but by nightfall I'd met and connected with people who welcomed me and by the time I said goodnight and walked to my tent it felt like we had been friends for years. By the next morning, I felt welcomed by everyone, and sharing breakfast and words in the morning circle felt like a tradition I had taken part in my whole life.

For a variety of reasons, I could not go to any other camps. One reason being my chronic illnesses. I saw people frantically coming to River Camp from other camps or leaving River Camp in a hurry after inviting as many people as possible to leave River Camp and join other camps. Some came to River right after being stuck in a hard block all day, and then left right away to go back where they were arrested from. Those people seemed frantic and talked hurriedly on the go and always under a sense of emergency.

I loved River Camp because it never felt like an emergency. In my experience, there was space for me and everyone else to bring only what they wanted to contribute and be a part of. I spent the days cooking meals, cleaning, taking shifts at the gate, meeting people, sharing zines, talking about beliefs and strategies and our lives, walking in the forest. In my brief time there, I began to have dreams of building a period pantry and a library. It was a space