

Waiting passively for the final verdict of history is not making revolution. It flies in the face of revolution. It ignores the existence of bread and circuses, terror from the right, and the racism and animalism of the ruling-class pigs. It doesn't take into account the fact that they know we are coming. They know how to hold on to their privilege, could they have held it this long otherwise? We are being repressed now. Courts that dispense no justice and concentration camps are already in existence. There are more secret police in this country than in all others combined—so many that they constitute a whole new class that has attached itself to the power complex. Repression is here. It's time to move with determination.

GEORGE JACKSON



**A CONSCIOUS MESSAGE to the
UNDERGROUND:
"IT'S TERRIBLE! AND IT'S FINE."**

STOP COP CITY



—I.C.L.A.

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However, the question remains whether this substratum of clandestine workers can work smarter, meaner, and with more cunning than the combined forces of federal, state, and local agencies determined to make an example of them, who are willing to take the state of Georgia directly to hell in the process. Either they'll educate themselves into a real answer or they'll be annihilated. Those are the lofty encouragements and demands of clandestine work.

When the armed struggle inevitably spreads, the way we live and work will be forced up to its standard whether we like it or not. The revolutionary underground will no longer be able to stake life and death on spontaneity, schemes, and mildewy, piss-stained couches. The people who left us with this mess didn't do a very good job. The infrastructure will have to be laid out by hand, patiently and cautiously. Ideas will have to be inspected and criticized. People will have to be cared for and argued with. Funds will have to be extracted one way or another and carefully accounted for. Every move will have to be calculated and methodical, maximized for time and value at minimum cost. The distinction between aboveground and underground will have to be sharper. There's extensive historical precedent and documentation of what our elders did, and some of them are still alive to talk to.

They'll understand you, too.

On March 5th, 2023, the sky over Weelaunee Forest exploded and the screams of roughly a hundred people, diving from gas cans in terror, ripped through the treeline. In a matter of minutes, barely an hour, the casual Woodstock vibe of the South River Festival, cultivated and well-maintained over the previous day by the sheer concentration of upper-middle class hippies and bohemians, collapsed under the yoke of the Atlanta Police Department's retribution. In those minutes, without having to move an inch, the entire political mass—over two hundred ravers, tourists, journalists, oogles, forest defenders, and children—migrated from a somewhat transgressive concert to a militarized cordon, the terms and limits of which had been set by squads and columns of vindictive pigs. The mood of the crowd shifted on reflex: from the short-lived euphoria of momentary triumphs to panics that drove them to flee wildly into the trees or back to camp.

As the hours passed and night approached, it was clear to at least a handful of us that the cops intended to wear us down by attrition. They had deployed a sequence of tactics that would successively shock-and-awe the crowd, siphon off the less radical elements by giving them a legal exit, then reinforce the parameter to cast a wide net for trapping potential evacuees. Whoever they could grab among the frontlines in the field were detained and charged with “domestic terrorism,” whoever found themselves stumbling towards the safety of the adjoining residential streets, unknowingly into the web of armed columns, were simply gassed and beaten. That was what they wanted.

Organizers, catapulted against their will and idealism into the role, worked feverishly and haphazardly towards secreting people to safety. An anxious throng of small kids and their parents were led by a few scouts through a pitch-black clearing to a caravan that shuttled them back to the other side of the city. The bulk of the crowd didn't vacate so much as disappear in a disjointed free-for-all while the ancillary police lines were called back in the hours that followed.

For a time, the constant insectoid hum and clicks of the surveillance drones were the only clear and present danger for those who remained with us at camp, which felt more in service of indignity than our case files. By 5AM, all that remained of the crude siege were the pigs' leftovers dotted along the main artery of the field and the glorious monument to wreckage in the packed parking lot, very tired and very grumpy. Our fear, anxiety, and rage—an accumulation that gave us urgency, community, and only a few squabbles over nearly thirteen hours—had given way to a more generalized sense of despair and fatigue, then an acceptance of uncertainty, a diffident resolve.

While the rest of the camp finally rested, there was silence. The untended embers of the bonfire went out and the dark, cloaked in mist, fell everywhere. *"No light, but only darkness visible."* Faceless, nameless, and struck by the beauty of the looming pines and the dew-soaked needles under my boots, I felt free. I stretched my fingers out into the air to feel the soft breeze move through my hands, and I felt love. When the pig sets foot in the forest, on the contrary, the pig feels fear, hate, and confusion. For this reason, the pig was driven out and barred from the woods with much ease and little effort. This was, is, and will be the essence and spirit of Weelaunee.

What was a temporary retreat for me, at what has ultimately been its breaking point, has been a hard-fought home for many others in the past two and a half years. It has been lost, retaken, and lost again in perpetuity. This is a zone where defenders have attempted to flow freely between various modes of protest, occupation, and liberation, united by a singular strategic purpose but only an incidental sense of political direction. It's for this reason that the forest has served as a semi-stable nexus for clandestine organization and its concrete defense a centrifugal force in the development of clandestine work on a countrywide scale.

The movement in Atlanta to halt the construction of Cop City and combat the rising repression and state terror following

through which revolutionary consciousness can build and develop but they did it.

At the end of its political employment as an occupation, Weelaunee had seen to the cultivation and production of two types in close circulation: those defined by their exceptional skill, fanaticism, and dedication as revolutionaries, and nihilists who distinguished themselves by their utter devaluation of human life and preoccupation with boredom and fun. There was also a fraction who convinced themselves that wielding a middling command of ideology and propaganda was a revolutionary conspiracy, referred to as "tiqqunists." To a large extent, these forces comprise the volatile social base of the euro-american underground.

A convoluted ideological march has moved through the nihilists and tiqqunists to entertaining basic politico-military questions, as self-described urban guerrillas engaged in armed struggle, gradually dispensing with bubbly detachment in favor of increasingly severe pronouncements. It's a familiar situation. The reality of the repression is severe, and the Atlanta pigs seem to respond to everything by stampeding through bystanders and soft targets. This precipitates harsher and more determined resistance from the underground, which in all likelihood is untouchable for the time being. The underground is naturally porous, abstract, and frustrating.

The APD has an established pattern of attempting to cast a wide net and simply brutalizing anyone they can get a hold of. For all intents and purposes, they seem to exist in a world where the tactics most counterintuitive and disruptive to counterintelligence and counterinsurgency strategies are the most appealing and effective. Their conduct is grotesque and blindly terroristic, motivated by puerile sadism and driven by the brainpower of cartoon henchmen. They are colonial pigs and rapists, through and through, and they are not human. Relatively speaking and simply on the level of a limited engagement, these are not intelligent people.

occupation was conceived and wielded as a vehicle for “having fun” rather than serving people’s needs and spurring political action.

Crucially, it failed the moment that *helping people* became an urgent necessity in the crisis. It was a problem of the consciousness and mentality at work. No one seemed to realize what the stockpile of resources and tools at their disposal *really were*, or even how they could be used to solve immediate, pressing problems that fell screaming at their feet. In such circumstances, the environment, food, tables, chairs, potable water, and all were obstructions to the shifting masses of temporary evacuees, who panicked and at times gasped, “*They’re coming for us!*” The zone we occupied was, in that time, impenetrable, secure, and advantageous so long as it was reinforced and its means were utilized. Without conscious direction, it had become a playground under siege.

Conversely, at least the urban guerrilla understands, however dimly, that joy is often inimical to life. Sometimes the notion is enough to lend lucidity to the work at hand. The work will only ever fail a cell of three to five people, and the underlying principle that *an enemy wages war* is something you can count on in a bad spot.

In spite of many shortcomings, the conception of Weelaunee as a kind of “project,” originally touted by some of the first occupiers and forest defenders, enabled many young comrades to acquire necessary skills, experiences, and political education through real forms of practical struggle in an environment that’s almost unparalleled in its freedom and possibility. At the time, there were two training centers in the forest and only one of them was still hypothetical. As the struggle matured the endogenous zone of the forest produced, unevenly and sporadically, a genuinely revolutionary community between militants from every possible background, who formed independent networks, talked out their ideas at length, and tested them. They might not know that this was a proven process

the uprisings of 2020 comprises many components, many organizations, and many campaigns. Its strong showing of unity between fractions, ideologies, and layers of activity is principally indebted to the city’s rooted revolutionary culture and history, seeds planted before and at the height of the New Afrikan Independence Movement and nurtured through successive generations.

Revolutionary consciousness, in the proper sense, has been the key link in the struggle as a whole. The subjective elements, otherwise known as human beings, which comprise the core of the movement’s activity and, to whatever extent, guide it to objective ends have fostered and developed enough discipline, organization, patience, and clarity of purpose to weld a number of contradictory groups into a public and political force. The high level of solidarity and resolve extended from the aboveground workers to the underground in Atlanta can’t be taken for granted nor underestimated: it is a plain expression of advanced political consciousness which has been hardened, educated, and elevated through years of struggle, by the organization and development of a revolutionary community in New Afrika. It’s this lineage which has qualitatively distinguished the Stop Cop City movement as a *mass movement* and a *revolutionary movement* where many other historic efforts in the recent past have failed to endure the repression or collapsed under the weight of internal contradictions.

The movement’s impressive endurance is also due to the social elasticity and distance between groups, fractions, and cliques that would otherwise collectively fracture and implode if they spent any extended time in each other’s presence. This is the universal social and political situation of the forest defenders themselves. They have comprised a loose, eclectic, and erratic agglomeration of individual militants and affinity groups (a theatrical euphemism for “having friends”) with diverging goals and levels of experience and consciousness. Their activities have broadly accumulated into a clandestine wing of the movement rather than an organization informally integrated with it, which was

often the case during the armed clandestine movement between the '60s and '80s.

Whereas our elders derived the entirety of their project, infrastructure, and activity from programmatic demands and conscious political education, we seem to contrive political consciousness and the whole practical framework of our movement only in the wake of the action itself. Partly due to historical amnesia and partly due to reckless idealism, the foundations of clandestine work are being forged on the fly in a rapid response to intensifying repression and combat. The pigs execute Tortugueta, a car blows up, the pigs retaliate and move into some more sophisticated angles within the establishment, some more fires and explosions, more repression and terror: the elementary dialectic of the urban guerrilla on cruise control, an arrow without a target. The overwhelming impression is that clandestine workers have had to move into the armed struggle—stumbling through its nascent stage—without much choice but to wing it against each subsequent escalation by the enemy state.

The armed struggle was only initiated in earnest after Tort's assassination and the coordinated crackdown on forest defense in January last year. It has been an organic outgrowth of effective repressive operations against the foundational elements of both the occupation and its ecotage-oriented tactics. A kind of romantic political orientation had flowed from the earliest waves to move into Weelaunee forest and, among other things, establish a staging area for actions to disrupt and complicate ongoing construction. At the time, the range and register of the campaign was essentially reformist and quasi-legalist. If you were heading down there in 2021, you might as well have been going on vacation. The effective closure of the forest and decline of the practices appropriated from the ELF changed the nature of that struggle by directing it into the streets. The inciting incidents provoked the first offensive armed action within the city, leading to a beautiful phrase: *"They just blew up Atlanta!"*

The appalling wave of state terror had unexpectedly amplified

the image and narrative of forest defense on a national scale, and at a time when the usual treesitting and monkey-wrenching enabled by waves of occupation, which made up the whole vocation of the "forest defender," had been *de facto* outmoded. Additionally, a number of enraged, grieving people were exiled from the woods and confined to the city indefinitely. The migration from purely disruptive operation to politico-military action was presumably an instinctual process and a means through which to answer the preliminary question of whether you're allowed to hit them back. (And from a purely historical standpoint, the answer is always yes, and most of the time it works.) On the other hand, extensive coverage of Tort's execution as well as the subsequent brutality and legal repression that steamrolled over forest defenders' lives and aboveground infrastructure lent an abundance of publicity and popularity, therefore legitimacy, to the *ideal* of saving Weelaunee.

The confidence and motivation that anticipated the South River Festival was founded on the notion that a reinvigorating injection of popular legitimacy could persuade a rather relentless, hyperlocalized repressive force to focus-group their optics for a handful of days instead of subjecting a crowd of unarmed civilians to half a day of sustained collective punishment. Hence, on March 5th, anyone who knew anything, namely "our troops," had vanished quickly and gracefully before the panic, which was not only good practice but also reflective of a well-rounded wariness. As word spread the following day, the resurrection received another lifeline through public furor but the whole effort was short-lived. Though, the sweet myth of legitimacy-as-moral armor took too long to die off in other corners.

Prior to March 5th, the forest defenders had organized and coordinated a somewhat elaborate logistical powerhouse for supplying, securing, and establishing a zone in Weelaunee that, if directed and economized, could've been sustained as a type of base area for mounting organized resistance, according to terms clearly imposed by circumstance but deflected or dismissed for various reasons. The problem was the entire edifice of the