

The Rumble, Issue 1

Fifth Estate Collective

1997

Anti-Racist Action Challenging The Right (*Fifth Estate Collective*)

Detroit Anti-Racist Action (ARA) formed over a year ago. Since its formation, it has been involved in campaigns against the gentrification of downtown Detroit with all the money going to rich folks (Illich, Ford, etc.) who don't live in the city or really care about the welfare of people who live here. We have been involved in supporting groups like UPSET, which is fighting for a decent education for Detroit's children. We have done support work for the Diné people in the Southwest who are facing forced relocation to benefit big business so they can strip mine the land for coal. We have been involved in fighting the upsurge of right wing groups in the U.S. and the Midwest by working to shut down Nazi and Klan rallies. A recent campaign succeeded in getting Nazis out of an Eastside clubhouse in Detroit.

The need to fight back is more pertinent today than in the past. Many hard won victories from past struggles are being lost so bosses can make even higher profits.

PRISONS

We are already seeing the resurfacing of slave labor in America's largest growth industry—prisons.

* In 1980 there were 400,000 inmates nationwide; today 1.5 million Americans languish behind bars (an average of 455 people per 100,000, with a prison population growing by an average of 250 a day.) Between 1975 and 1985 violent crime dropped 1.42% while the prison population doubled.

* While only making up 13% of the U.S. population, African-American males are over half of state and federal prisoners.

* In 1994, 72,461 inmates created \$1.35 billion worth of products, up from \$362 million in 1980. Jobs that left the U.S. during the beginning stages of NAFTA are now returning as enslaved prison labor paying only nothing to \$1.15 per hour.

WELFARE REFORM

Welfare is being attacked with the end result being people going hungry and homeless in a country with empty buildings and food rotting in warehouses. Welfare reform in the form of workfare is being used to break unions. In

New York City, people in the Work Experience Program (so-called workfare), who receive welfare must add their cash benefit to their food stamps, divide by minimum wage, and work that number of hours per month for the city.

This gives the impression of regular, part time jobs, but consider: they have no choice of where to work, no health or safety protections, no guarantee of childcare, no grievance procedures, no 'days off, no exemption for education, and no job when their benefits and workfare end. It is not surprising that "these welfare recipients are being used to break the city workers union.

RISE IN THE RIGHT

In the past several years we have seen what results from a well funded, organized and armed right wing movement. Recently, anti-choice terrorists have been actively upping the stakes on the issue of a woman's right to control her own body and life by bombing several clinics across the U.S. Last Summer over 30 black Southern churches were. With the passage of California's Prop. 187 and armed thugs patrolling the U.S.-Mexican border, we see more organized and violent actions against immigrants. In Lansing this past November, well-funded right-wing groups overturned a civil rights ordinance that protected queers, one that the majority of Lansing citizens supported.

What this all adds up to is an environment where people of color, wimmin, queers, the poor, and other oppressed people are scapegoated and attacked for the problems that the bosses and the state hand down to us.

ANTI-RACIST ACTION (ARA) SOLUTIONS

ARA is taking direct action against the problems that confront us today and organizing to make a real change for tomorrow. Not changes that have the same problems resurfacing with different people getting screwed, but solutions in which people make the decisions that effect their lives and help build an anti-authoritarian, egalitarian society. When the police brutalize a community, we will take action against them, but we will also organize in communities so real solutions can be found to get rid of the occupying force for good.

WHAT IS ARA ALL ABOUT?

Anti-Racist Action is a multiracial, anti-sexist, pro-queer organization dedicated to fighting oppression in all forms through direct action. ARA has over 40 chapters in the U.S. and Canada; all are autonomous, but communicate and coordinate actions through the Anti-Racist Action Network.

ARA PRINCIPLES OF UNITY

- 1.) Fight against racism, sexism, homophobia, imperialism, and other forms of oppression.
- 2.) No reliance on the cops or courts.
- 3.) Non-sectarian defense of arrested, anti-fascist activists.
- 4.) Same time, same place direct action against fascist mobilizations.

GET INVOLVED!!

To get in touch with Detroit ARA, please write:

ARA

PO BOX 321211

Detroit, MI 48232

Big Mountain Under Attack (*Fifth Estate Collective*)

Midwest Lends Support

In February, a group of ten people ranging in age from 5 to over 50 left their homes in the Great Lakes to offer support and accompaniment to the Dine still engaged in a struggle for land and self determination that has lasted for over a hundred and thirty years.

Since 1864 when Kit Carson forced the Dine people to march from their ancestral lands to Fort Sumner in New Mexico, the Dine have been embattled for control of their land and livelihood. When the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in 1962 approved an exploration lease for 75,137 acres of Navajo Tribal land just north of the 1882 reservation (which later became Peabody's Kayenta Mine), a new cycle of devastation had been set in motion. Lines began to be drawn for a twenty year dispute between those who welcomed the corporations and "development" and those who wanted to honor and preserve the ways of their ancestors. Our local group had been in contact with the Sovereign Dine Nation office and they had related incidents of harassment and violence against those who stood in the way of the mine's current operation and expansion. Homes had been mysteriously bulldozed when residents were away, leaving their owners homeless (it is currently illegal for repairs or building to take place on the lands still in dispute). Animals had been poisoned or impounded at great cost to their owners. In one instance, a van used to transport elders to organizing meetings had been set afire and destroyed.

An important series of legal proceedings were being held in Phoenix, Arizona February 10-13 where testimony as to the impact of relocation was being solicited.

Residents of Hopi Partition Land and organizers were anxious to attend to go on public record as being in opposition to the "Fairness Act" that would rob them of their homes. In an attempt to secure the safety of Dine homes in the absence of their owners, the SDN office sent out a call internationally for activists to come and help. During the week we were there, approximately 100 people from all over the U.S. (even a few folks from Germany and Denmark) answered the call.

We arrived in the evening in Flagstaff, where the SDN office is located. We were given maps with directions to take us onto the reservation and to the homesite of one of the organizer's families. We did not realize at the time how easy it is to get lost (even with explicit directions) for an outsider. The Dinetah is big country, beautiful and treacherous to those not used to its hazards of muddy and rocky roads. It was late and completely dark when we found the Tso's residence. The situation had changed, even since we had left the SDN office a few hours before, and the families we had been assigned to (and which would have placed our group together in one geographic area) no longer needed the assistance of supporters. Frances Tso, a Dine organizer and our benefactor for the duration of our stay, quickly reassigned members of our group to various homesites. We parted company and supplies and separated into smaller groups of two and three. It was not until morning that it became clear we would maintain only minimal contact between the sites.

It is exactly these factors of distance and lack of telecommunication that make defense and support of the Dine resistors so challenging. But it is also these same things which make the Dine traditional life so worthy of preservation.

For my part, I was prepared for a week of facing down confrontational rangers, of taking photos of suspicious vehicles, of doing my best to nonviolently protect the home of the family where I had been placed. I was warned that the Dine are intolerant of freeloaders and expected supporters to help with the work of running a sheep ranch.

Even so, it was only some small help in preparing me for the type of physical work that sheepherding, cooking, cleaning on a traditional Dine homesite might entail.

The morning after I arrived, I had a few hours to talk with our soon to be absent hostess, Leta O'Daniel. She told me of her work doing support for the elders of her community. Because of the legal restrictions on building and the herd limitations imposed on the Dine living on HPL, many families find that the young adult members

have to move off the reservation to find work and places to live (it not being possible for their families to build them houses or feed them). This encourages their assimilation into Western culture and makes it more difficult for them to maintain ties to their families and the land. With these young people gone, there is less of a support system for the elders to depend on. Organizers like O'Daniel are trying to cover these responsibilities by caring for the elders, even as they work to make it possible for the young folk to return. In addition to this work, O'Daniel and her family work on a permaculture project that attempts to replace the plants that were present on the land before the current mining projects. It is her hope that the traditional Dine diet of gathered plants for teas, food and medicine can someday be returned to. Then the Dine would be able to be less dependent on animal husbandry, and would therefore be less vulnerable to restrictions on herd-size as a way to chase them off the land.

The Dine group left from Hardrock Chapterhouse by mid-morning headed for the Fairness Hearings and we were left behind (with the exception of one supporter from our group who went to help with transportation logistics in Phoenix), to attempt to manage things.

Days are long, beginning at dawn. A traditional (octagonal, one room) hogan has its doorway opening east, so the first view of the day is the rising sun. The concept of "beauty" is a cornerstone of Dine culture and there could be no more clear way of setting your mind in the proper frame to appreciate and contemplate beauty than to wake to an Arizona sunrise each day. The hogan I stayed in had a gas stove as well as a wood stove, so cooking was not too different than what I'm used to. There is no running water, so all cooking, cleaning and bathing entailed chopping water out of the ice in the storage barrels and heating it on the wood stove. The outhouse, which stands a bit outside the compound, had two fist sized holes punched into it. The owners joke that the vandals are taking their spying duties to an extreme. Breakfast and cleaning is done by 9 am or so, and then the sheep are released from their corral and basically followed to go where they want to begin grazing. Because of the fact that many livestock had been impounded recently by the Hopi Tribal Council, I was asked to keep the sheep away from the roads and to stay close. This proved to be quite a challenge as one sheep in particular seemed to know what a novice I was and purposefully kept me running to always keep one step (literally) ahead of him. I had been told to sit down to let the sheep graze, that they would go slowly if I did. Sometimes that worked. Often I had to figure out where my obstinate friend wanted to go and get there sooner (if it was an "off limits" place, like a neighbor's land or a road). It was mostly serene and contemplative to walk with the sheep, however.

The smell of sage as it was chewed by thirty sheep is pungent and fresh. The wind and the sun feel good and everywhere there is unspoiled natural beauty. When evening falls, the sheep are brought in. Usually this is around 5 or 6 pm. They are fed scraps and penned back in the corral, with the dogs for protection from coyotes. Then there is dinner, dishes, some good conversation and bed.

It was the first time in my life that I lived without money, stores, traffic, noise pollution, the sounds of factories, the voice of advertisement persuading me to buy something, the unnatural routine of modern work and ever-present police. In short, it was lovely. The rhythms of a good life were healing even to an outsider like me. It was hard to match this experience with expectations of conflict that I had come with. But things seem to change quickly in this country, as many people were quick to assure me.

During my stay, I spoke with Dine supporters and residents who had in the past seen satellites hovering over the homesite where I stayed. Although things were relatively peaceful, twice planes buzzed the sheep scaring them. On one occasion, a truck slowed down to watch me and the sheep, drove on and then turned around to drive past us again. There was a sense of hush and anticipation, as if at any time the situation could become very different. Long-time residents told me that the cycles of violence had come and gone for as long as they could remember.

Because of our particular mission this time out, we got to spend very little time with Dine resisters. We hope in the future to organize another group to go out and participate in the fight to maintain sovereignty for the Dine, to preserve their lands from unwanted development and to protect them from harassment from Peabody, non-traditional Hopi's or other agents that come between them and the continuance of their traditional way of life.

The Sovereign Dine Nation office has put out a call to everyone to participate in a May campaign to create a human shield between the Dine resisters and the forces of relocation. Please contact the SDN office in Flagstaff at:

SDN

PO Box 30435

Flagstaff, AZ 86003

Class War OR Compromise (CAI)

While the plug has been pulled on the Detroit newspaper strike, the picket line persists. The Detroit newspaper strike, now in its twentieth month, has become the Detroit newspaper lock-out. In mid-February word came down from the union brass that an offer of unconditional surrender was fast coming. And it did. Why would the 2,000 workers who have been striking for almost two years want to make an offer to return to work at pre-strike conditions, still without a contract? Well, most of them didn't, but five out of six of the unions involved are non-democratic, and don't accurately represent the wishes of the rank and file. Being on strike without permission from the internationals would mean an end to all the resources that these organizations represent (strike benefits and legal representation, for example).

Gannet-Knight Ridder accepted the offer less than a week after it was made. The company plans on keeping all its scabs. To date, the company has only offered ten people their jobs back, or rather jobs period—one out of two of the formal offers would include demotions so severe that it is clear that they are creating a situation in which it would be impossible for anyone to accept the offered positions. If a return-to-work offer is rejected, it carries the same legal ramifications as officially quitting would. Not that any of this affects the 1,990 workers who have not heard, and are not likely to hear, from the papers. The only thing that changes for them is the word used to describe their reality. The strike becomes a “lock-out”, but you still don't have a job.

The union management is pursuing unfair labor practice complaints with the National Labor Relations Board. The hope here is that the NLRB will force the company to bring back any worker that hasn't been fired for picket line misconduct, and shell out back-pay from the date that the unconditional surrender offer was made. Even if this plan is successful, it won't be much of a victory since it would allow the company (and the union) to rid itself of the people who have been most active in the strike. The locked-out workers who have been fired are the people who have been the most consistent and vehement in organizing to win this thing, and walking the picket line.

This isn't as alarming a possibility as it sounds, however, because it would still entail the federal government of the U.S. to come down on the side of labor. There is no real precedent for that happening. From its very inception, the union movement in this country began its demise, as it curtailed wild-cat strikes and made worker-boss relationships a governable process. It's all been downhill from there. Legally, some people never get to strike (“threat to national security”), some strikes can be called off by the government and all picket line activity is strictly regulated. Companies can permanently replace their workers and the government plays a leading role every time a union is destroyed. So, as weak a victory for labor as a government-forced rehiring might be, there is little reason to believe that the government would do even that much.

The unions were harassed enough to throw the rank-and-file a bone even as it sold them down the river. As a result of much agitation on the part of locked-out workers, there will be a national march on Detroit this June. Tactically, little has changed. The only real recourse that “locked-out” workers have is to find a way to make it more inconvenient to crush the unions than not to.

Since the company has already spent a quarter of a billion dollars on busting this union, it's clear that applying pressure directly to the source has been ineffectual. Gannet-Knight Ridder have shown us that they are willing to do whatever it takes to end organized labor in this country. No price is too high to pay upfront, when in the end they will never again have to pay out a living wage at any of their businesses.

There are people who could force them to the bargaining table, however. The city could stop spending money on cops to defend the company, or it could tell them that until this is settled that the papers aren't going to be sold on city property, or it could make it impossible for business as usual to continue. But why would the city want to do all that? Well, they might want to do that if we, instead of shutting down the ambassador bridge as a symbolic act of resistance for an hour or two, took it hostage. They might want to because all of the highways got shut down, and big money conventions were disrupted, or a general strike was executed. There are lots of ways to get the attention of the powers that be, and we have already seen several actions along these lines carried out. A formal campaign to shut down motown has been formulated and begun. A general strike committee has been formed. If we can step

up this campaign of inconvenience and embarrassment in the city of Detroit and culminate it with an even mildly successful general strike, we can still turn this situation around.

This strike is going to end soon and it's either going to end as a victory for the ruling class of this county or the working class, and that has nothing to do with newspapers.

If you want to be involved in this struggle, please come to Detroit and participate in the general strike on June 20 and the national march on Detroit on June 21. For more information, please call 313.831.6150.

Black & Green (*Fifth Estate Collective*)

Recently, the Earth First! Journal ran a four page insert featuring the Black and Green collective (a biocentric anarchist group based in Harmony, Maine) and their projects. Members of the Trumbull Plex collective found their perspective insightful and inspiring. Due to a shortage of space in this issue, we were not able to reprint the fine articles contained in the EF! insert. However, we would like to entice *The Rumble* readers to find out more about the group by giving them a taste of Black and Green's take on several topics.

It is essential to stress that B and G does not profess a homogenous strategy, but rather encompasses a diversity of tactics as anarchists fighting for the natural world.

They state:

"We come from different places and viewpoints. Some of us are militantly opposed to technology, while others aren't so militant. There are biocentric anarchists who work with MOVE and others who support their struggle against the State, but do not agree with their philosophy...We believe in the principles of biocentrism. We also believe that the entire power structure needs to be dismantled and replaced by a nonhierarchical society based on the principles of biocentrism.

"We are not part of the typically left-based, eco-anarchist contingent... or the anthropocentric social ecologist movement, and although we do share the central principle of biocentrism, we are not deep ecologists. We are, simply, anarchists fighting for the natural world."

B and G pokes fun at the EF! movement by commenting on tactics and strategy.

They state:

"I suggest that we shift our focus from defense to offense. All those hours spent dragging logs onto the road in a short lived attempt at de fending a place could be better spent attacking the buildings, vehicles, heavy machinery, and other assets of earth-destroying agencies and corporations...Learn to carefully play with matches and diesel fuel. If that is not your style, try neighborhood organizing. Leave the media out of the picture and take the offensive going door to door. Don't go there asking for money, Organize and patiently show people how to fit into the resistance."

They remind us that we fight a corrupt system and, at the same time, have become co-opted and corrupted by that same system.

They state:

"The technological-industrial empire, driven by the kulture of profit and "progress," of taking more than we need and destroying or enslaving the rest has left this planet with the life systems failing and sustainable humyn communities devastated. Ecological and social crisis surround us and are met by the system with only a steady and purposeful tightening of controls. We must continue to resist the destruction of humyn-cultural and biological diversity, but we must also free our minds and our lives of the ideology of technology and progress, and we must direct and evaluate our tactics and our strategies mindful of two things: that the system will never allow us more than short-term and superficial gains, and that while we are busy fighting on their terms, in their institutions the powers-that-be are tightening the noose that they know will be necessary when enough people have had enough of lies and misery and murder. Our resistance must stay grounded within our reverence for life and refuse any compromises from the empire of death."

For more information, please contact

Black and Green
POB 183
Harmony ME

Detroit Women's Action Collective (*Fifth Estate Collective*)

Detroit Women's Action Collective is a new group in Detroit. It was formed in response to a need to build a community of women who support each other as they put their ideas into action. Not intended as a "NOW" type organization fighting to be equals in an oppressive society, the group hopes to create a unique women's culture based on shared power and an egalitarian society. Though planning to work on more than "women's" issues, the first project the DWAC has undertaken is a public education/harassment campaign against a phony abortion clinic. Theater, leafletting and protests have already alerted the community and demoralized the right to lifers at the clinic. The phony clinic has also been hit at least twice by pesky mischief makers, liberally festooning it and the offensive billboard out front with paint. Also, a conference including workshops on the intersection of race and gender and alternative health systems is in the works for early summer, so stay tuned. If you are interested in DWAC, you can email them at BLTesta@aol.com or attend twice monthly meetings on the first Sunday and third Tuesday of each month held at the Trumbull Theater in Detroit at 4210 Trumbull Ave. (@ the corner of Trumbull and Willis.)

YOU KNOW WHERE YOU CAN PUT YOUR PATRIARCHY!!

Detroit Anarchist Black Cross Formed (*Fifth Estate Collective*)

The Anarchist Black Cross (ABC) is an international network of autonomous groups working to ensure the imprisoned faction of our movement is not forgotten.

The origins of the ABC date back prior to the Russian Revolution. An Anarchist Red Cross was formed in Tsarist Russia to organize aid for political prisoners and their families and as defense against political raids by the Cossack army. During the Russian Civil War, the organization changed its name to the Black Cross to avoid confusion with the Red Cross who were organizing relief in the country.

After the Bolsheviks seized power, the Black Cross moved to Berlin. It continued to aid prisoners of the Leninist regime, as well as victims of Italian fascism and others. Despite the increasing demand for its services, the Black Cross folded in the 40's due to a decline in available finances. In the late 1960s, the organization resurfaced in England where it initially worked to aid prisoners of the Spanish resistance to Franco's fascist regime. In the 80's, the ABC expanded and now has groups in many different regions of the world, including the U.S. and Canada.

Recently, a new chapter was formed in Detroit. This chapter will support the struggles of prisoners in general and of political prisoners/prisoners of war in particular. We believe prisons serve no function but to preserve the ruling elite. We also believe that a free society must find an alternative, effective way to deal with anti-social behavior.

But a decrease in crime is only likely to happen (and therefore prison abolition can only be a realistic option) accompanied by a dramatic change in our economic, social and political system. These conditions lie at the root of both anti-social crime and the reasons for a prison system. We work as anarchists for a stateless, cooperative

society free from privilege or domination. But it's not enough to build the grassroots movement necessary to bring about these changes in society. We must also be able to defend. ABC aides those who are captured and persecuted for carrying out acts on behalf of our movements.

If you want to get involved, donate some time or resources to support this important work, please contact:

Detroit ABC c/o Fifth Estate 4632 Second Ave. Detroit MI 48201

Direct Action Defense Fund (*Fifth Estate Collective*)

“As a movement It is essential that we do not abandon our brave comrades who place their own freedom second to those of the animals and Earth.”

— Rod Coronado

The Direct Action Defense Fund was established in direct response to the increased activities of groups such as the Animal and Earth Liberation Front's and other individuals who have chosen the path to animal and earth liberation, It is critical to offer support (and bail) in the first few days after arrest to a captured warrior so that they can be better physically and psychologically prepared to launch a legal defense. The Direct Action Defense Fund recognizes that what is most important for the direct action warrior is to return to the battle for earth and animals as soon as possible.

But this fund can only offer its support if its coffers are not empty. 100 percent of all contributions are used to directly aid activists. It is not enough to voice our support, we must make that support real with action. Please contact and contribute to

Direct Action Defense Fund

P.O. Box 57357

Tucson AZ 85732-7357

(502) 795-5171

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