



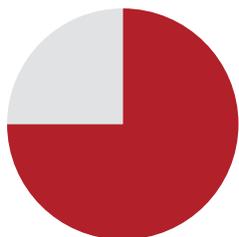
# The Philadelphia Partisan

Volume 1, Number 1  
WINTER 2018

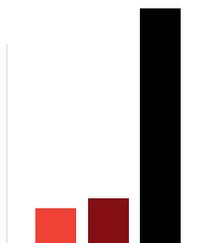
## black freedom struggles then and now

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PHOTO BY CHRIS BAKER EVENS



Rojava's restorative justice system utilizes direct democracy to resolve 75% of disputes outside of a state or prison apparatus



Three 2016 budget items for Philadelphia municipal departments from left to right: \$103m for the Department of Human Services, \$130m for the Public Health Department, and \$643m for the police



The per capita income levels for Jackson, Mississippi (\$19,768), Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (\$21,117), and the United States (\$27,334), according to U.S. Census Data

# Justice 4 Tyree Carroll

*Inside a Campaign Against Police Brutality in Philadelphia*

by Avery Minelli



*On the night of April 3, 2015, Tyree Carroll was riding his bike in Germantown near his grandmother's house when undercover police officers abruptly stopped him. What transpired that night could have been another overlooked instance of police violence until it later made headline news when witness video footage of the incident surfaced several months later.*

The footage begins with Tyree being held down by four cops as he screams for his grandmother. The officers quickly escalate the situation, with more and more officers joining in kicking and punching Tyree while threatening to tase him, calling him “motherf—er” and “piece of s—.”

By the end of the video, the camerawoman counts 11 police cars and 26 officers, most of them white; Carroll is Black. According to the NY Daily News, Carroll sustained a swollen ankle as well as back and leg injuries as a result of the violent incident. However, when he was taken to the hospital, only his heart rate and pupils were examined. After the beating, Tyree was arrested and charged with assault, resisting arrest, reckless endangerment, and drug possession. He was jailed and held for over four months until he was released on bail.

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**women engaged in justice work for loved ones beaten by police or prison guards have been central to the organizing work**

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But as Black radical Assata Shakur once said, “where there is oppression, there will be resistance.”

Tyree's support system have responded to this blatant act of racism by organizing the Justice 4 Tyree

Carroll Campaign (J4T), a coalition effort by family, friends, community and anti-police brutality activists. J4T is coordinated by the Global Women's Strike (GWS) and Women of Color in the Global Women's Strike (WOC/GWS), which Tyree's grandmother has worked with for over a decade, together with Tyree's family. Mothers and other women engaged in justice work for loved ones beaten by police or prison guards have been central to the organizing work. In addition to organizing a mass rally in July 2015, the grassroots campaign has mobilized for Tyree's court appearances and held press conferences.

Carroll was arrested again in November 2015 on drug charges. According to GWS organizer and long-time friend of the Carroll family Pat Albright, in a phone interview with *The Philadelphia Partisan*, “They didn't find any money or drugs on him. And one of the officers who arrested him was one of the ones who beat him.”

Police backlash against this campaign has reached not just Tyree, but also his supporters and neighbors. Tyree's sister Ebony said that her teenage daughter was on her way to school when she was stopped by police. “They stopped my daughter one time, ‘Oh, your last name is Carroll, we know who you are,’ detaining her,” she explained in a phone interview with *The Partisan*. Albright was also pulled over by police one afternoon after dropping off Tyree's grandmother Nancy. The officers wrote Albright a \$300+ citation for having a broken tail light.

The ordeal has exhausted the entire Carroll family and their community. “We've been going to courtrooms

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# Letter from the Editors

Happy one-year anniversary to the *Philadelphia Partisan*! In 2017, we published nine print issues under themes of intersectional feminism, local corruption, and radical education, to name a few. We also want to thank the donors who have supported us on Patreon and Chuffed. You've helped us expand and grow.

Every February, institutions all over the country celebrate Black history, but only for a month. Growing up, many of us learned about prominent Black leaders, including Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King Jr., but typically only through a narrative of a historical struggle. Many of the Black liberation movement's gains, like voting rights, affirmative action and public housing, have been worn down for decades, and our schools are more segregated than ever.

*The Partisan* rejects the notion that racial justice has already been attained in the United States – that we live in a color blind, post-racial society. That's why we chose the theme *Then*

and *Now* to recognize that Black history isn't just something from the past, but something happening right now, in the present moment, through the labor of local Black activists and organizers. In the words of lifelong revolutionary Angela Davis, "Freedom is a constant struggle."

In this issue, we report on the current organizing of the Justice for Tyree campaign and Mississippi-based grassroots organization Cooperation Jackson, in addition to lifting up Black revolutionaries in Philly's history like Ben Fletcher, who organized fellow dock workers a hundred years ago.

Feeling strongly about a piece we published? We want to hear from our readers. As always, we welcome submissions to the Letters to the Editor column, which can be sent to: [phillysocialistslocal@gmail.com](mailto:phillysocialistslocal@gmail.com) or *Philly Socialists*, PO Box 3731, Philadelphia, PA 19125.

Find content from past issues online at [PhillyPartisan.WordPress.com](http://PhillyPartisan.WordPress.com) as well as on Facebook and Twitter. 🇺🇸

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COVER PHOTO  
PEOPLE TAKE TURNS FILLING A GLASS  
JAR WITH SOIL FROM THE LOCATION  
WHERE ZACHARIAH WALKER WAS  
LYNCHED.



Members of the Philadelphia Tenants Union fight City Hall for better protections against evictions

PHOTO BY MADDIE ROSE

# Ben Fletcher

## Philadelphia Labor Leader

by Sasha Berkman

*"Between these two classes [the working class and the employing class] a struggle must go on until the workers of the world organise as a class, take possession of the means of production, abolish the wage system, and live in harmony with the earth."*

— Preamble to the Constitution of the Industrial Workers of the World

In the spring of 1913, the Philadelphia docks were abuzz with activity after 1,600 workers launched a wildcat strike. Organized labor had brought life and resistance back to the docks. The spontaneous strike—protesting poor wages and dangerous working conditions—helped usher in a new era of unionism in Philadelphia. According to organizer and local leader Ben Fletcher, the longshoremen “re-entered the labor movement after an absence of 15 years.”

After many decades of unsuccessful attempts at organizing the waterfront, the controversial Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) met the longshoremen of Philadelphia to finally organize the docks along the Delaware. Ultimately, the strike of 1913 would win the longshoremen a ten hour work day, time and a half for overtime, and union recognition. But most importantly, it began the run of one of the most successful anti-racist and anti-capitalist unions in US history: Local 8 of the IWW.

At the time, Philadelphia was one of the most active ports on either side of the Atlantic, while its longshoremen were among the worst paid in the U.S. Philadelphia’s business community, politicians, and police department waged a brutal class war against the workers primarily through direct violence, propaganda, but also, importantly, through encouraging racial tensions. According to historian Peter Cole:

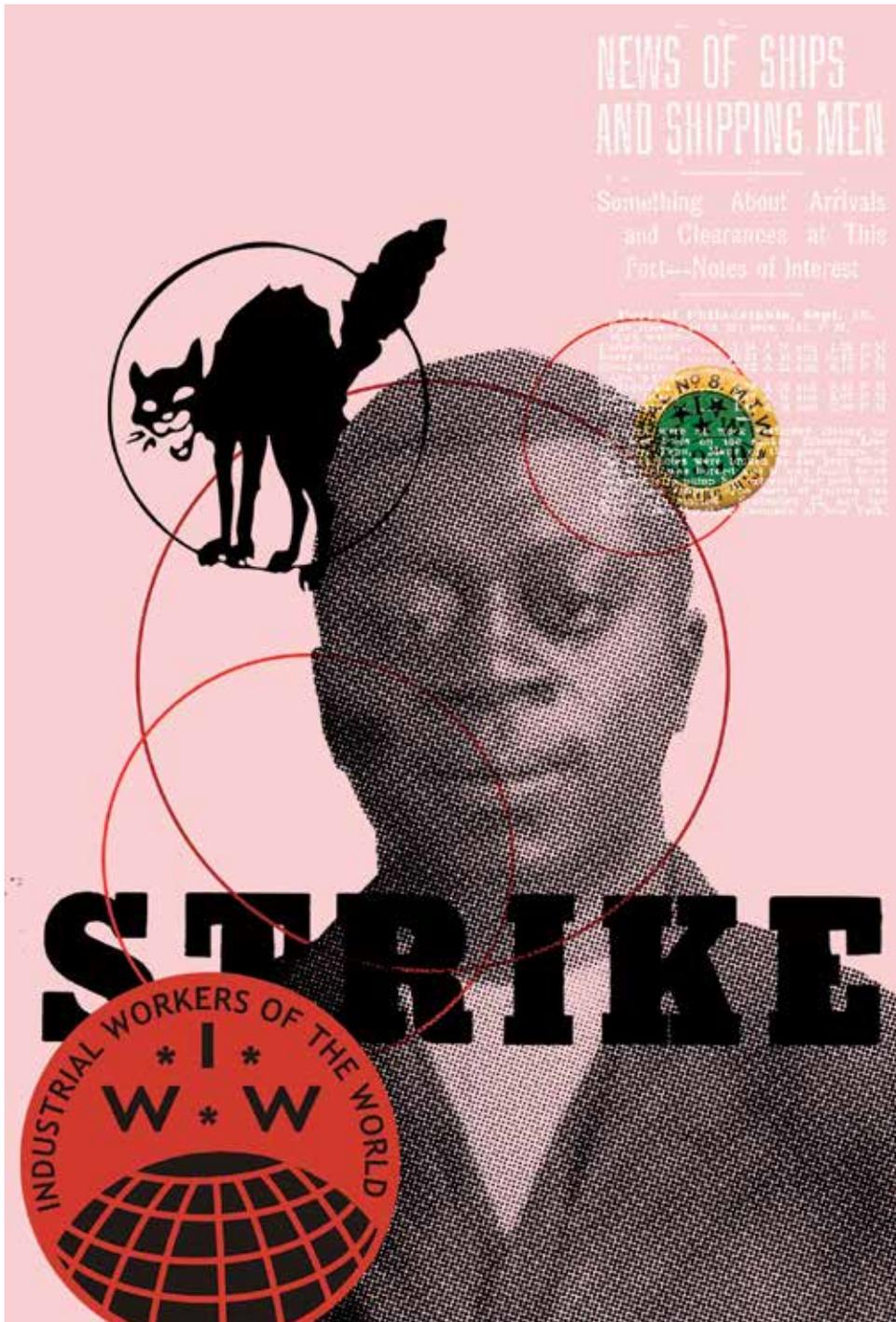
*[Bosses] sought even greater control over the labor supply by encouraging ethnic and racial divisions among workers...workers labored in segregated groups in most, if not all, of the city’s workplaces.*

He goes on to quote longshoremen who refer to the atmosphere at the docks as a “slave market [where employers] play one guy against the other.” Another stated that it was not uncommon for longshoremen to “be pitted against each other, white against black, Irish against the Polish.” Sowing racial tensions became an important tool for bosses to more easily exploit their workers. White identity was in part defined by a worker’s wage, against solidarity, and in a commitment to anti-black racism (often taking the form of violent attacks).

In contrast to the American Federation of Labor (AFL), the IWW embraced interracial unionism, rejected no-strike contracts, and were militantly anti-capitalist. Even the most “progressive” unions at the time kept black workers in segregated unions, often giving them the most difficult and worst paid jobs. This partially explains the prevalence of black and immigrant workers on the docks, as longshoring was extremely dangerous and [sometimes literally] backbreaking work. True to their credo of uniting the workers of the world, the IWW actively encouraged workers of other races to join.

Local 8 would become one of the “jewels in the crown” of the IWW, becoming one of its most active and lasting branches. Key to this success, as argued by Dr. Cole, was their embrace and active practice of creating an interracial union of blacks, whites, and other ethnic groups: “Local 8’s power came from its commit-

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# The Jackson Model: Building a Black Liberation Economy

by Andrew Sejong



Mississippi stands at the symbolic heart of white supremacy. From the enslavement of African peoples, to Jim Crow, to the bloody suppression of the Civil Rights Movement, to today's economic apartheid against Black people, Mississippi remains one of the most brutally racist states in the country. It also remains one of the poorest states in this country. According to US Census data, the per capita income within Jackson stands at \$19,768.

Against this bleak backdrop, one of the most radical projects in political and economic self-determination has emerged – Cooperation Jackson.

Founded in 2013, Cooperation Jackson emerged from the Jackson-Kush Plan, an organizing strategy built by the New Afrikan People's Organization and the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement. Its name pulls from its focus on the city of Jackson and the surrounding eighteen majority Black counties (i.e., Kush Counties) that border the Mississippi River.

The Jackson-Kush Plan has three programmatic goals:

- 1 **Establishing People's Assemblies** to create a mass democratic counter-power to the local and state government
- 2 **Creating an Independent Political Force** that can challenge the two corporate parties, i.e. the Democrats and the Republicans
- 3 **Building a Solidarity Economy** that would support worker power and a degree of economic independence

This has led to not only the development of Cooperation Jackson, but also to the election of Mayor Chokwe Lumumba (2013 - 2014) and his son Mayor Chokwe Antar Lumumba (2017 to present) to the city of Jackson. Under Chokwe Lumumba, the city experimented with co-governance between the Mayor and the Jackson People's Assembly (a mass democratic institution where citizens could directly and democratically

assist in determining the city's budgetary matters).

While the electoral gains made through the Jackson-Kush Plan have received the greatest attention, Kali Akuno (co-founder of Cooperation Jackson) told the Atlanta Black Star that without an economic base, the political program cannot maintain its independent and revolutionary character:

*"Cooperation Jackson is the vehicle we have collectively created to insure that we do more than just espouse good rhetoric, but engage in a concrete struggle to create a democratic economy that will enable Black and other colonized, oppressed and exploited people to exercise self-determination in Mississippi (and beyond)."*

Establishing a firm foundation for economic self-determination and political independence is daunting. Cooperation Jackson seeks to accomplish four concrete goals:

- 1 **A Federation** of local cooperatives and mutual aid networks
- 2 **A Cooperative Incubator** that can assist the development and support of new cooperatives
- 3 **A Cooperative School and Training Center** where students can receive political and technical training
- 4 **A Cooperative Credit Union** that will financially undergird the activities of Cooperation Jackson

On nearly every front, Cooperation Jackson has made strides. Already, Cooperation Jackson operates *Freedom Farms*, an urban-farming cooperative, and owns 25 vacant lots as part of their Community Land Trust project. With the Lumumba Center for Economic Democracy and Development, they have begun the process of developing a cooperative school where they can further develop their strategic platform and offer

members political and technical educations. And, amazingly, Cooperation Jackson have managed to gain technician certifications for three of their members in digital fabrication (e.g., 3-D printing, electronics design) to begin classes and workshops for students and future cooperatives.

Fulfilling the ambition of Cooperation Jackson is absolutely possible and necessary. Possible because it has happened before. Cooperatives like Mondragon, in 2017, employed more than 73,000 workers and made nearly \$300 million in profits. However, Cooperation Jackson's aim is not to be the most profitable business, but to provide the economic independence that can support the political self-determination of Black working-class people in the Jackson-Kush area.

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**without an economic  
base, we cannot secure  
our liberation**

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We can learn much from Cooperation Jackson. Without an economic base, we cannot secure our liberation. This is not about building our own personal utopias within the wasteland of white supremacist capitalism. We are sowing the fields with our economic vision, so that once we seize the political means, we may harvest our future. 🇺🇸



# “Serving the people”

from Mao Zedong to the Black Panthers

By Tim Horras

*We must not regard our survival programs as an answer to the world problem of oppression. We don't even claim it to be a revolutionary program. Revolutions are made of sterner stuff. We do say that if the people are not here revolution cannot be achieved, for the people and only the people make revolutions.*

— Huey P. Newton, “We must survive until we can transform society” (1970)



40th Reunion of the Black Panther Party in Oakland, California, 2006

Philly Socialists' free English as a Second Language class

The present day revolutionary conception of mutual aid traces its lineage back to mid-20th century China, when the Chinese communists popularized the slogan, “Serve the people.”

As the New Left of the 1960s searched for an alternative to what was perceived as the rigid Stalinism of the Soviet Union, they inevitably sought guidance from another socialist society which was putting itself forward as a superior model: the People's Republic of China.

The Black Panther Party for Self-Defense was one of the revolutionary groups which were influenced by Chinese communism (often referred to as “Maoism”). As founding Black Panther Huey P. Newton wrote in his memoir, *Revolution and Suicide*, Newton's conversion to socialism “was complete when [he] read the four volumes of Mao Tse-tung to learn more about the Chinese Revolution.”

Taking inspiration in part from Chinese communism, as well as drawing on the long tradition of African-American self-help, the Black Panthers embarked upon a series of campaigns

to “serve the people,” directly providing for the needs of the black community. According to Joshua Bloom and Waldo E Martin Jr., in their book, *Black Against Empire: The History and Politics of the Black Panther Party*, the Panthers conceived of their “serve the people” programs as a key component in support of a strategy for expanding and cohering the party under conditions of state repression, improving its public image, garnering political support, and finding meaningful activity for its members to engage in.

In late 1968, the Black Panthers embarked on an ambitious campaign to directly address malnourishment in black communities by providing free breakfast to neighborhood youth. The program was a huge success, and eventually expanded to 36 free breakfast programs operating nationwide by 1971.

And free breakfast was just the beginning. As journalist Andrea King Collier notes in *National Geographic*, the Panthers eventually “developed more than 60 Serve the People programs, including efforts to provide free clothing and

shoes, medical services—including drug and alcohol awareness—legal aid education, and what was thought to be some of the first true early childhood education programs in the nation, preceding Head Start.”

The Free Breakfast for Children program threatened the status quo in a way no protest could have. Embarrassed and threatened in the face of Panther propaganda, and seeking to neutralize the threat posed by independent initiative, the federal government formally rolled out their own School Breakfast Program in 1975. The program catalyzed much-needed changes more rapidly than would likely have been possible if the Panthers had stuck to a traditional protest/lobbying/elections framework.

There's a lesson to be learned here. There are situations in which mutual aid can win concessions from the state more rapidly than formal recourse to protest and lobbying. In other words, direct action (sometimes) gets the goods.

But mutual aid was not justified simply only on the grounds of its effectiveness in achieving

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# From Selma to Socialism

by Clarence Harold Jones



"MLK on Lancaster Avenue" mural by Cliff Eubanks at 40th and Lancaster

PHOTO BY AVERY MINNELLI

"What good is having the right to sit at a lunch counter if you can't afford to buy a hamburger?"

This is the question that Dr. Martin Luther King had to face on that long road from Georgia to Alabama to Mississippi as he saw the multitude of poor people, black and white, across the South.

And not just in the South. When Dr. King brought the Civil Rights movement to the cities of the North, he saw the same multitude of poor. He saw them at the intersection of 40th Street and Lancaster Avenue here in Philadelphia in August 1965. And he saw that the marches for Civil Rights had to take on an additional focus. The following is in King's own words:

*"Call it democracy, or call it democratic socialism, but there must be a better distribution of wealth within this country for all God's children."*

*"We are saying that something is wrong with capitalism... There must be better distribution of wealth and maybe America must move toward a democratic socialism."*

*"You can't talk about solving the economic problem of the Negro without talking about billions of dollars. You can't talk about ending the slums without first saying profit must be taken out of the slums. You're re-*

*ally tampering and getting on dangerous ground because you are messing with folk then. You are messing with captains of industry. Now this means that we are treading in difficult water, because it really means that we are saying that something is wrong with capitalism."*

*"Negroes are not the only poor in the nation. There are nearly twice as many white poor as Negro, and therefore the struggle against poverty is not involved solely with color or racial discrimination but with elementary economic justice."*

It was becoming increasingly clear that the problems of racial injustice and economic injustice could not be separated.

*"The Southern aristocracy took the world and gave the poor white man Jim Crow, and when his wrinkled stomach cried out for the food that his empty pockets could not provide, he ate Jim Crow, a psychological bird that told him that no matter how bad off he was, at least he was a white man, better than a black man."*

*"...one day we must ask the question, 'Why are there forty million poor people in America?...' And when you begin to ask that*

*question, you are raising a question about the economic system, about a broader distribution of wealth. When you ask that question you begin to question the capitalistic economy."*

*"[A slum exists] because someone profits from its existence."*

*"...we must face the fact that the movement must address itself to the question of restructuring the whole of American society."*

*"...we must develop a program that will drive the nation to a guaranteed annual income."*

Many people at the time would say that just giving people money would make them lazy and unproductive. This is King's reply:

*"The problem indicates that our emphasis must be twofold: We must create full employment, or we must create incomes. People must be made consumers by one method or the other. Once they are placed in this position, we need to be concerned that the potential of the individual is not wasted. New forms of work that enhance the social good will have to be devised for those for whom traditional jobs are not available."*

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# An Homage to Rojava:

## Interview with a YPG Volunteer from Philadelphia

by Eian Weissman

*Militan Karker (Kurdish name) is a union organizer and political activist. He recently returned from volunteering with the YPG in Syria, participating in the retaking of Raqqa and driving of ISIS out of Syria.*

*The YPG is a democratic, socialist militia formed out of the struggle by Syrian Kurds for self determination. YPG is an acronym in Kurdish for "People's Protection Units." They control an area in northern Syria of approximately 4 million people. **The YPG subscribes to the political philosophy espoused by Abdullah Öcalan, an iconic Kurdish resistance leader from Turkey. Öcalan was imprisoned on a Turkish prison island in 1999 by the Turkish government and initially sentenced to death, which was later commuted to a life sentence. He converted from a Marxist-Leninist political philosophy to a version of anarchism that was influenced in part by the writings of Vermont anarchist Murray Bookchin. Bookchin was an anarchist, labor organizer, and writer; he also founded the Institute for Social Ecology in Vermont. He was a pioneering voice for ecology in the anarchist movement.***

**How did you hear about the YPG in Syria? Can you talk a bit about your motivations for joining up with them? Your training? Can you tell us a bit about the process of reaching Syria?**

**Karker** When I was 19, I invited a Kurdish activist from Turkey to speak to my college. He spoke about the injustices and oppression that the Kurdish people have been facing and continue to face, throughout the Middle East. I have been following their struggle ever since. After ISIS moved to conquer Kobane, a Syrian Kurdish city on the Turkish border, the world first began paying attention to the Kurdish resistance in Syria. It is where the US first began to support them with airpower. I remember watching this battle unfold and feeling moved.

The YPG's defeat of ISIS in Kobane was a major turning point in that war and was the start of the downfall of ISIS. Soon after their defeat, an ISIS suicide bomber struck a gathering of leftist activists just over the border in Turkey, killing 33 people, and their faces stuck with me. A couple years later I began hearing about internationals volunteering with the YPG. When fellow union organizer Michael Israel was killed by a Turkish airstrike while he was fighting ISIS, I decided I should go.

The political shift you talked about earlier, to a more democratic and libertarian socialism, was another deciding factor. While ISIS is obviously objectively terrible, replacing their terror with a new system based on democracy, socialism, and freedom was a contrast hard to pass up. It was something different, something exciting, something worth putting your life on the line for.

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Getting into Syria is extremely difficult for obvious reasons. The only way in is through a small stretch of border with Iraqi Kurdistan. Further complicating matters, Iraqi Kurdistan is split into two spheres of influence. The right of center KDP to the West, and the left of center PUK to the East. Unfortunately the border is to the West, so the journey starts in the Eastern city of





PHOTOS BY MILITAN KARKER

Slemani. From there you are smuggled across northern Iraq and cross into Syria overnight to avoid detection. From there you get a good month of training.

**I got the impression from some of your posts on Facebook, that you were involved in the retaking of Raqqa, and have heard that this was a difficult fight to dislodge ISIS. What was that like?**

**Karker** While the occasional bullet would whiz over your head, Raqqa was/is a city full of mined houses. It made fighting and movement extremely dangerous. Once ISIS fighters felt overwhelmed, they would heavily mine houses and withdraw further into the heart of the city. Taking territory proved to be extremely deadly, and most casualties were the results of mines.

**I have read that the YPG were very much in need of volunteers in their fight, and so the foreign volunteers were quickly put into the fighting. Were you heavily involved in the fighting?**

**Karker** As the Raqqa offensive had just gotten underway, many foreign fighters were quickly put into fighting. While I was training four were

lost, including one I knew from the group that left just prior to mine. I first was dispatched to Al-Shaddadi, a strategic town to the East recently liberated from ISIS and a YPG HQ of the eastern front, but only after a couple weeks I found myself in Raqqa with a battalion of international YPG fighters.

The battalion's assault team, made up of fighters braver than I, saw most of the fighting. On operations, we would follow them into the fighting downtown, but I spent most of my time in Raqqa guarding our various bases and helping to keep the battalion functioning logistically. There is a saying that war is 95% waiting around and 5% terror, that's accurate.

Most of what I owe to getting out alive is luck and timing. On one operation into the middle of Raqqa, our SDF escort took a sniper round to the chest a block or so away and died a few hours later. We were held up in a forward base and ended up pulling out, only to retake the territory later. After about a month in Raqqa, our commander got injured during an operation and the battalion headed to the Shaddadi front for training and to regroup. In the building where I slept the first night there was a black mark on the sidewalk and burned shrapnel impacts ev-

erywhere along the building. It turns out that just a few days prior ISIS had infiltrated the base with suicide bombers and one had detonated himself feet from where I would be sleeping.

Shaddadi was attacked twice while we were there, but ISIS was never able to infiltrate the base again. Soon after we arrived in Shaddadi, the neighborhood where our first operations base in Raqqa was situated was attacked, including the YPG media center, a place I had been several times. I lost a friend and comrade in that attack, UK based Kurdish activist and radical democratic socialist Mehmet Askoy. Luck and timing...

**Is there anything that American leftists can do to support the struggle of the YPG in Syria, short of volunteering militarily? Is it still possible to volunteer as you did?**

**Karker** As talked about above, the biggest threats to them at the moment are Turkey and the Syrian regime. Turkey is a NATO country and has strong military and political ties to the US. It has also been spiraling into fascism since Erdoğan seized power and began cracking down on the left, civil society, and the Kurds. American leftists should be pressuring their government to

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# Community Remembrance Project Recognizes Victim of Lynching in PA

by Chris Baker Evens



A community member breaks ground during a South Coatesville Community Remembrance Project.

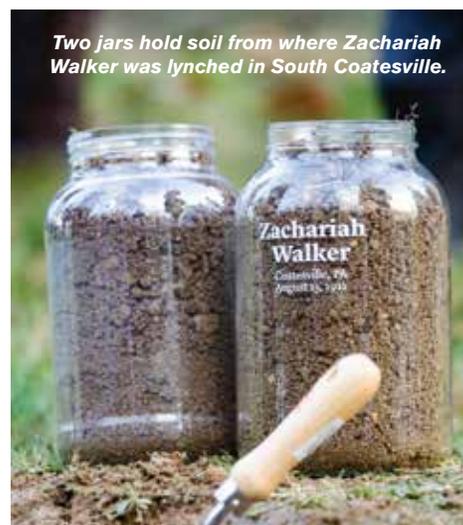
Lynching, usually remembered as a form of sanctioned racial terror in the South following the Civil War, was also carried out in the North. The Equal Justice Initiative is constructing a Legacy Museum “that explores the legacy of slavery, racial terrorism, segregation, and contemporary issues of mass incarceration, excessive punishment, and police violence.” The museum opens this year in Montgomery, Alabama.

Zachariah Walker was a steel worker lynched on August 13, 1911 in Coatesville, Pennsylvania. On November 12, 2017, a group of about 50 people gathered at the site of his lynching to remember and to collect soil as part of Equal Justice Initiative’s Community Remembrance Project. One jar of soil will remain with the local NAACP chapter. The other jar will become part of an exhibit at the Legacy Museum.

Zachariah Walker’s lynching is described in the book, “No Crooked Death,” whose title is taken from his final recorded words before he was thrown in a fire and burned to death. Public outrage led to the NAACP’s anti-lynching project, and the state of Pennsylvania passed an anti-lynching law in 1923.

The November event was organized by a coalition from Merion Friends Meeting, congregations in Coatesville including the Greater Deliverance Church, the local NAACP and the Equal Justice Initiative, based in Montgomery, Alabama. 🇺🇸

*Editor’s note: Coatesville, like the country, continues to struggle with its racism. Last October, hundreds of Coatesville Area High School students walked out in protest of incidents of anti-Black racism at the school and inaction by school administrators.*



Two jars hold soil from where Zachariah Walker was lynched in South Coatesville.

# “Wet Sandwich” Policing

21st century cops want a soft, soggy image, but they've got a choke hold on the city budget

by Jack Grauer

Police officers block a high pedestrian-traffic corner in Center City. This complicates a well-dressed person's evening commute. That person asks an officer why the road's closed. “Another protest,” he yawns, noncommittal. “We just stand here until they get tired. Yeah, it's a bore. At least we get overtime.”

So goes the refrain of the political event chaparrone cop, suspended on display to answer dumb questions and goad slow marchers to keep pace.

It's not “catching bad guys.” It's political trash duty. Call it “wet sandwich policing.”

“Yeah protesting, the new fad. It's like the new jeans brand or something. Go back to Doylestown. Go back to your parents' basement.” You'll hear such side banter at almost any demonstration large enough to warrant a police babysitting detail.

## Wet sandwich protesters

But Philly cops didn't just recently invent the idea that anyone who cares about politics other than the government is dumb, obnoxious, rich, or has an insincere, dishonest and/or financial interest. This negative stereotype has been

around for a while.

In a 1910 *Washington Post* op-ed, an anonymous critic argued that people who thought women should be allowed to vote were “professional protesters” who just wanted to get attention at posh public events.

The wet sandwich argument was later applied to the spread of the U.S. counterculture and its literature. Jerry Wilson in a 1975 police PR manual warns of the emerging underground press. “Anti-government, anti-establishment theme[s]” pervade the medium, he writes. The publications contain “political and non-political cartoons and articles bordering on gross obscenity.”

## Wait, who's a threat to the public?

But drug use and obscenity no longer command the public anger they used to. To what images, then, should political dissidents be connected? In 2000, *The Police Chief* magazine described dissenting youth as “more affluent, mobile and educated than their 1960's counterparts.”

A 2004 public notice by the FBI cited water guns filled with urine as a threat at public demonstrations. However, this was totally made

up. Sociologist Lesley Wood searched police and court documents for evidence of such a practice and found none. Regardless, the image also re-appeared in judges' rulings and police intelligence briefs.

The floppy slices of wet sandwich police language hide a legitimacy struggle. If organizers can be painted as trust-funded poop throwers, the wet sandwich police wish to depict themselves as a group with no choice but to enforce order as the public interest's realest, truest representation.

Philadelphia Police Department (PPD) ranking officer Michael Cram has argued his officers today bear more responsibilities than before. He likened his police district's work to political organizing.

“I see us as getting out of our role as law enforcement into more of an activist [sic] for the neighborhood,” he said. “Somebody's got to fight for them. Remember, in some of these neighborhoods the only government officials they see are... us and the paramedics.”

Cram made these comments at a meeting of the Police Advisory Commission in July of

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The march Cram mentioned at the Police Advisory Commission moves north through Kensington

PHOTO BY JACK GRAUER

# STYLE OF ATTACK REPORT

## by Metropolarity

Reviewed by Suzy Subways



What if millennials had their own Audre Lorde, Sun Ra, Octavia Butler, Samuel Delany, Ursula Le Guin? What if this sci-fi crew called themselves Metropolarity, and they were from Philly, and you could hear them read live – in your neighborhood – their stories of the magic and dystopia that is our city now, our city in the future?

*STYLE OF ATTACK REPORT*, the 2017 Lambda Literary Award finalist compilation from the Metropolarity crew's four founding members, Ras Mashramani, Alex Smith, Rasheedah Phil-

lips and M Téllez, just might set your brain on fire. Instead of writing a traditional review, I'll give you a few glimpses inside the book.

"Abduction was a compliment for a lonely little stick girl like me," the narrator of Ras Mashramani's alien-insemination-story-with-a-twist, *InsemNation*, tells us. "The other girls, the pretty ones with older boyfriends who bought them acrylic nails and bus passes, they came back blithering and idiotic, and you doted on them and you called their cargo disposable monsters."

Rasheedah Phillips, who works by day as a mom and a housing advocate/Managing Attorney at Community Legal Services [see next page], offers an interactive exercise for creating a Do-It-Yourself quantum time capsule, with blank space for you, the reader, to add your own words. She writes in the essay, "Is Sci-Fi Political?": "Because we know science fiction to be social commentary on the (d-)evolution of society through the use of parable, it is easy to see where the lines split between the Science of the haves and the have nots, and thusly where the lines split between traditional and DIY sci-fi."

"YOU ARE NOT PROPERTY," Téllez invokes in their prose poem, "A Cross Thru." "PROPERTY IS THE TECHNOLOGY OF THE EMPIRE DADDY COLONIZER. THIS TECH-

NOLOGY DOES NOT BENEFIT NOR CONCERN YOU. YOU MUST FORGE YOUR OWN. REPLACE SUCCESS AND PRODUCTION AND PROGRESS WITH ABUNDANCE, CUNNING, STILLNESS."

Alex Smith's short story, "In the Grips of the Star, Shining" soars over Philly's skyline: "He is lifting towards the heavens, leaving a comet's streak exploding behind, truly flying. Off, over the wires where worn out Air Jordans dangle in their final phase of life. As he flies, he thinks about the Burmese children who have to stitch those shoes together; about the construction worker whose hearing slowly fades from too much jack-hammering; about the politicians asleep in their warm beds, wrapped in a 1,000 thread count cocoon and hemorrhaging their own dreams with the nightmares of the people. Rom thinks about an Asian boy he wanted to kiss in the eighth grade, about the time his stepfather threw him against the wall when he thought Rom was 'walking like a fag.' And he's still flying."

More stories and art by the crew pack this unassuming 122-page book. Order a copy for \$15 at [metropolarity.bigcartel.com](http://metropolarity.bigcartel.com) or look for it at the library, Wooden Shoe Books, Bindlestiff Books, Penn Book Center, and Omoi Zakka Shop. 📖



Rasheedah Phillips, M. Téllez, Ras Mashramani and Alex Smith.

PHOTO BY MARK STEHLE (MARKSTEHLE.COM)

# A 'Good Cause' Passes Committee, Moves to City Council

by Sasha Berkman



PHOTO BY MADDIE ROSE

"This is THE event to show [up] to in the fight against gentrification," according to the facebook event page urging Philadelphians to attend the Good Cause Bill Hearing before the city's Law & Governance Committee. They go on to explain that "Good Cause is a bill that would prevent landlords from evicting tenants without a good reason...in other words, good tenants should stay in their homes." The organizers, Philadelphia Tenants' Union (PTU) and Philadelphia for a Good Cause, probably slept a little easier last night as Good Cause passed committee and moves on to city council.

The victory marks a decisive win in a protracted battle against gentrification. The campaign for Good Cause legislation has been one of the rallying cries of the Philadelphia Tenants' Union, who see the deck as unevenly stacked against tenants, especially more vulnerable tenants such as mothers, Black families, the dis-

abled, the elderly, and others. With eviction rates in some communities over 15% in recent years, and rates of evictions in majority Black communities three times higher than others, it's hard not to sympathize with the notion.

The hearing was the culmination of at least two years of canvassing for thousands of signatures, tenant organizing, and advocacy spearheaded by the PTU to increase protections for tenants. The fight broke through the apathy of City Council when 230 tenants of Penn Wynn were summarily evicted to make room for a ritzy, pool-bedecked apartment complex for nearby university students. The tenants, with the help of the PTU, managed to directly confront the new landlords who evicted them – and in the process, confront City Council – demanding "No eviction without 'good cause.'" City Councilman Curtis Jones, who represents the district Penn Wynn is in, introduced the legislation.

Its first major hurdle was passing the Law & Governance Committee before being introduced at City Council. The PTU and supporters packed Council chambers and put pressure on the City Council members present. Intermittent chants of "Housing is a human right!" and "Stop gentrification now!" filled the hall during the hearing. Rasheedah Phillips of Community Legal Services as well as Jarrett Smith, Margaret Nersten, and Barry Thompson of the Philadelphia Tenants Union testified on behalf of the bill. After the hearing, PTU president Klyde Breiton told the Partisan the PTU was now "further than any past attempt at Just/Good Cause." He attributed the victory to the PTU's councilroom pressure, which "sway[ed] the mind of Councilwoman Cindy Bass, who remained undecided until the day of.... Next up, we fight for the rest of the City Council votes we need and plan to have a march demonstrating the need for this bill!"

continued

# Recommended Reading

## ***When They Call You a Terrorist: A Black Lives Matter Memoir***

by asha bandele and Patrisse Khan-Cullors

## ***How We Get Free: Black Feminism and the Combahee River Collective***

by Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor

## ***Assata: An Autobiography***

by Assata Shakur

## ***Freedom Is a Constant Struggle***

by Angela Davis

## ***Left of Karl Marx: The Political Life of Black Communist Claudia Jones***

by Carole Boyce Davies

## ***Sojourning for Freedom: Black Women, American Communism, and the Making of Black Left Feminism***

by Erik S. McDuffie

## ***Betty Shabazz: A Remarkable Story of Survival and Faith Before and After Malcolm X***

by Russell J. Rickford

## ***My Life, My Love, My Legacy***

by Coretta Scott King and Rev. Dr. Barbara Reynolds

## ***A Taste of Power: A Black Woman's Story***

by Elaine Brown

## ***The War Before: The True Life Story of Becoming a Black Panther, Keeping the Faith in Prison & Fighting for Those Left Behind***

by Safiya Bukhari

## ***My Face Is Black Is True: Callie House and the Struggle for Ex-Slave Reparations***

by Mary Frances Berry

## ***Conquest: Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide***

by Andrea Smith

## ***Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change, Changing Worlds***

by adrienne maree brown

## ***Jackson Rising: The Struggle for Economic Democracy and Black Self-Determination in Jackson, Mississippi***

by Kali Akuno and Ajamu Nangwaya



Good Cause | from page 13

And while the bill may have notable limitations (Councilman Jones commented at the meeting that he was not for rent control: "...I don't want to be New York..."), this campaign represents the victory of a direct struggle. It shows the capacity of folks willing to organize

where they work and, in this case, where they live to build power and confidence. This ultimately represents a bigger win than any one piece of legislation, it represents the power of an organized community to define its neighborhood. 🌟



PHOTO BY MADDIE ROSE

MLK | from page 7

*"The fact is that the work which improves the condition of mankind, the work which extends knowledge and increases power and enriches literature and elevates thought, is not done to secure a living. It is the work of men who somehow find a form of work that brings a security for its own sake and a state of society where want is abolished."*

In 1967, Dr. King began to speak out publicly against the war in Vietnam:

*"... I knew that America would never invest the necessary funds or energies in rehabilitation of its poor so long as adventures like Vietnam continued to draw men and skills and money like some demonic, destructive suction tube. So I was increasingly compelled to see the war as an enemy of the poor and to attack it as such."*

*"Increasingly, by choice or by accident, this is the role our nation has taken, the role of those who make peaceful revolu-*

*tion impossible by refusing to give up the privileges and the pleasures that come from the immense profits of overseas investments. I am convinced that if we are to get on to the right side of the world revolution, we as a nation must undergo a radical revolution of values. We must rapidly begin the shift from a thing-oriented society to a person-oriented society. When machines and computers, profit motives and property rights, are considered more important than people, the giant triplets of racism, extreme materialism and militarism are incapable of being conquered."*

*"Let us be dissatisfied until the tragic walls that separate the outer city of wealth and comfort from the inner city of poverty and despair shall be crushed by the battering rams of the forces of justice."*

*"Let us be dissatisfied until slums are cast into the junk heaps of history, and every family will live in a decent, sanitary home." 🌟*

cut military ties and all arms deals with Turkey. Politically, we should be mobilizing support for Rojava and the Kurds amongst the population.

**I was reading a history of the Spanish Civil War recently, entitled *Spain In Our Hearts*. The author, Adam Hochschild writes that the peasants in many parts of Spain were open to anarchist ideas as they already meshed with some very old, pre-modern notions of communal property, with practices that persisted in many Spanish villages such as the sharing of communal fishing nets in many fishing villages. Do you think there were similar reasons why the anarchist philosophy of Öcalan has taken hold so strongly in that region?**

**Karker** Possibly? The Kurds, if you look at recent history, really needed to unite or die. The right wing of the Kurdish movement (the KDP) is in full retreat and the left is on the rise. I think Öcalan is right with his pivot away from the traditional authoritarian left, not only politically and morally, but it gives his movement more practical credibility with the population.

I didn't get to spend a huge amount of time researching and experiencing civil society and the transformations happening in Rojava. I did, however, meet with two people in charge of restructuring the criminal justice system to a more direct democratic model.

They said they were able to resolve 75% of disputes informally that normally would have gone through a state/court/prison apparatus. Further, a good chunk of the other quarter dealt with trying to figure out what to do with captured ISIS fighters.

Even then, they have been trying hard to rehabilitate the youth fighters, many of whom are in their early teens whose parents migrated to Syria to fight with ISIS. These kids, some orphans, are offered voluntary classes in women's rights and democratic confederalism. Many have taken to them, and with careful monitoring and communication, some have been released back into society with no ill effects.

**they were able to resolve 75% of disputes informally that normally would have gone through a state/court/prison apparatus**

**To close this interview, I just want to thank you for taking time to answer these questions. If there is anything else you would like to add, please feel free.**

**Karker** Thanks Eian for your interest in the struggle in Rojava and the opportunity for this interview. biji berwedana!! 🇺🇸

ment to solidarity, especially racial and ethnic equality, which always proved a challenge to maintain." Their success was also due in part to the tireless leadership of organizer and orator Ben Fletcher.

Born in Philadelphia in 1890, Ben Fletcher became one of the key figures in organizing Local 8 of the IWW, rising to a leadership position by his early twenties. In 1913, he became the secretary of the IWW District Council in Philadelphia, and in that role, he helped lead Local 8 and the longshoremen of Philadelphia through many successful strikes winning bold demands for better pay and more humane working conditions. They helped lead solidarity strikes with teamsters and sugar workers, and at their height began organizing other trades such as sailors. According to Cole, "refusing to sign contracts, acting at the point of production, extending their power along the waterfront, trying to bring all maritime workers into the One Big Union—the longshoremen of Local 8 were squarely within the era's wave of new unionism."

His success, and the threat he posed to the business class, may be best evidenced when the state arrested IWW leaders for the crime of organizing workers during wartime: of the 100 IWW leaders arrested and convicted, Fletcher was the only black man. Amusingly, as the presiding judge was giving a statement mid-trial, Fletcher, in an aside to IWW General Secretary-Treasurer "Big Bill" Haywood, remarked that the judge used "poor English" and "long sentences." He was a master orator to the end.

Fletcher would ultimately serve three years of a commuted ten year sentence. Local 8's strength declined in those years due to attacks from the state and employers and internal turmoil. Fletcher would remain a member until his death in Brooklyn in 1949. At his funeral, fellow worker and Wobbly\* Sam Dolgoff spoke: "Ben, we won't forget the great part you played in the struggle to emancipate the workers and we will carry on inspired by your example."

This period in Philadelphia's history is truer to the assumed principles of the United States than any dusty old documents or cracked bells. While the era of organized labor in the traditional sense of factory workers may never return, the lessons of how race came to be a central pillar in maintaining the economic and social order will always be important for those who want to change the world. 🇺🇸

*\*informal term for a member of the IWW*

*Sources:*

*Wobblies on the Waterfront*, Peter Cole (book)

*No Jobs on the Waterfront: Labor, Race, and the end of the industrial city*, Peter Cole

*Ben Fletcher 1890-1949*, LibCom.org

*Ben Fletcher: Portrait of a Black Syndicalist*, Jeff Stein

2016, shortly after a march against police brutality in North Philadelphia. The police captain claimed the action "disrupted the neighborhood and didn't have any support." But this author's photo, printed here, shows youth from the neighborhood spontaneously joining—and even leading—the march.

## Taking a bite out of the budget

Philadelphia allotted the PPD \$643 million in 2016. The City's Department of Human Services ran on only \$103 million that year. Our Public Health Department ran on \$130 million.

The PPD gets more than twice the funding of these two non-violence-oriented city services combined. It's not surprising that police find themselves trying to do the jobs of departments that don't get enough funds.

Per-year spending by Philly government on policing, judicial functions and imprisonment has doubled since 1972. Philly in 2016 allotted \$1.95 billion for those purposes.

This is a lot of spending—and a large labor force to justify. And yet, despite a net population loss in the city since the 1970s and a sustained drop in violent crime since the mid 1980s, policymakers predict the force will continue to expand.

PPD employed about 3,400 officers in 1988, according to data the police union that year gave *The Inquirer*. PPD in 2017 employed more than 6,300 officers. Philly's 2016 Five-Year Plan predicts the PPD will hire even more.

## A softer image

Though the PPD's language and posture have become increasingly muted, budget and labor power available to them have grown larger. Is the force trying to appear harmless so the city will keep coughing up money?

In the '60s, cops didn't try to seem less threatening. Soon after Rizzo became police commissioner in 1967, two busloads of police violently broke up a 3,500-student call for an independently run Black school board and a Black history course. PPD injured 22 people and arrested 57. Most of those injured and arrested were high school students.

Rizzo described the arrests and injuries as "a beautiful thing" in a personal interview with a local church group. "If they get tough, we're tougher," he told *NBC News* in a segment on the policing of political organizers and gangs that aired after the school board demonstration.

PPD kept Rizzo's promise by killing 29 residents in 1974, according to use-of-force researcher James Fyfe.

The department's public tone has cooled from however you'd describe Rizzo's shtick to the modern wet sandwich routine. City finances, however, show the opposite trend. Law enforcement draws more funding away from vital city services almost every year. 🇺🇸

*Editor's note: For the author's citations, see this article on [phillypartisan.wordpress.com](http://phillypartisan.wordpress.com).*

faithfully for the last two and a half years and it's taken a toll on everybody. Some of us work, we have families," said campaign organizer Kai Akwei-Bey (WOC/GWS) in a phone interview with *The Partisan*.

The incident has left the whole family traumatized. Ebony Carroll described the situation as "stressful" and "scary," expressing that she doesn't feel safe around the police. "I have a teenage daughter, I have nieces, I have nephews," she added. "And myself, I feel like I never can tell them to go to the cops if they're in trouble... Sometimes I have nightmares, flashbacks about it, wake up in cold sweat. It's never going to go away."

Additionally, Ebony added her brother is "terrified" of further retaliation by the police. "Thank god he didn't get killed," she said. Akwei-Bey believes that Tyree "should be compensated" for the months he spent in jail.

"It's obviously taken the biggest toll on him and his family," Albright said. "His grandmother, Nancy Carroll... is not well at all. I'm sure the stress and heartache of having loved ones in prison and beaten like that takes a toll. She was at every hearing until she just couldn't travel anymore... The whole family is affected, his children and all that... it's just devastating," Nancy Carroll died on February 7th of this year.

Despite the serious burden this situation has put on Tyree and his family, the campaign celebrated a major victory in early 2017. According to Philly.com, Judge Kai Scott ruled that the police had illegally stopped Tyree the night they beat him and thus cleared him of all charges from that night. However, Carroll still faced charges from the retaliatory November 2015 arrest.

The campaign won another major victory on January 29th, 2018. Tyree was set to

stand trial for his remaining charges, but his legal team (Shaka Johnson, Berto Elmore, and Michael Wiseman) filed a motion to quash his charges on the grounds that the prosecution had no case. Judge Kai Scott granted this motion, exonerating Tyree of all charges. After four months in jail and nearly three years of court dates, Tyree can finally begin to put this process behind him.

## to date, none of the officers involved in the beating have been held accountable in any way.

Now that all of Tyree's charges have been dropped, the campaign seeks further justice. To date, none of the officers involved in the beating have been held accountable in any way.

"Police brutality, it's outrageous, it needs to be stopped," stressed Ebony Carroll. "[Police are] supposed to protect and serve, and they don't... I just want the violence to stop." She wants justice served "so nobody has to go through this."

Pat Albright said the campaign seeks to "hold the police to account... we don't want to stop here." Campaign organizers hope that with longtime movement lawyer Larry Krasner acting as District Attorney, they will be able to effectively leverage for change. Tyree Carroll's life will never be the same, but organizers and supporters hope that such heinous institutional racism will one day be a thing of the past through building community power. 🇺🇸

reforms. These programs were justified variously on the grounds of raising the consciousness of the masses, as well as in terms of ensuring the survival of their communities.

## the free breakfast for children program threatened the status quo in a way no protest could have

In addition, the Panthers' mutual aid programs provided their cadre with practical training, which allowed them to develop a wide variety of logistical, technical and administrative skills. As Huey Newton stresses in *To Die for the People*, "We recognized that in order to bring the people to the level of consciousness where they would seize the time, it would be necessary to serve their interests in survival by

developing programs which would help them meet their daily needs. For a long time we have had such programs not only for survival but for organizational purposes."

What did Huey Newton mean by the phrase "organizational purposes"? To take an imaginative leap, we might conjecture that the experience of running mutual aid programs in the very heart of the communities in which they were seeking political support provided the Panthers with a greater exposure to the day-to-day concerns of the masses, a wider variety of opportunities for skill development and more of a sense of meaning than they could have ever received from, say, simply phone banking elected officials in support of a bill or door-knocking for a candidate's election campaign. 🇺🇸

*Editors' note: This is an excerpt from a longer essay, "To serve the people": Contribution to a defense of mutual aid, revolutionary culture, and survival pending revolution." Check the whole essay on our blog, [phillypartisan.wordpress.com](http://phillypartisan.wordpress.com).*

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March 1

7pm

### Good Cause Planning Meeting

REPAIR THE WORLD

March 3

3pm

### Winter Fire Garden Party

CÉSAR ANDREU IGLESIAS  
COMMUNITY GARDEN

March 4

3pm

### South Philly General Info Meeting

CHI MOVEMENT ART CENTER

March 6

6:30pm

### Philly Tenants Union General Meeting

LOCATION TBA

March 8

6:30pm

### Dolphin Caucus Book Club

LOCATION TBA

March 12

6:30pm

### Communications Committee Meeting

JERRY'S ON FRONT

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