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CONFRONTING FEAR

... and recognizing the implications of being in struggle



"Confronting Fear: And Recognizing the Implications of Being in Struggle," Fire to the Prisons: An Insurrectional Quarterly, Issue 6, Summer 09, pgs. 33-35.

with whatever weapons at hand



**“OF COURSE
WE ARE AFRAID;
BUT WE HAVE
ALWAYS BEEN
AFRAID. BUT THIS
WAY, EVEN IF
FOR JUST ONE
SECOND; WE GET
TO MAKE THOSE
WE’RE SCARED
OF AFRAID TOO.”**

Fear is the largest barrier between our internal desires and our abilities to physically manifest them. I listen to sirens almost everyday. I’m constantly distracted by the images of importance lighting up the metropolis that surrounds me and I think violent thoughts, I feel violent feelings. I envision smashing every department store window; wanting to let a little air of my animosity inside them. I want to spit in the face of every suit wearing motherfucker who floods the streets rushing to get to their comfortable homes between 5 and 7:30. I want to beat every cop doing their job. I want to materialize my rage. I want to communicate my love and my hate the same way anyone would find satisfaction in doing so: physically. The only reason one would not is the fear of the set consequences by the state for doing this. Fear is what makes a struggle; it is a battle between fear and desire. A desire pushing you in the direction to act and fear turning this need to act into a struggle.

Struggle is a force that acts without concern for a set of recognized possible consequences. Fear is the stability of a mediated society. Fear is something required to uphold social peace and normalcy within a regulated world. The effect and significance of a struggle is weighed by our abilities to confront our own fears, as individuals and as communities, with the intention to strengthen the force of confrontation you are posing to what you are struggling against.

Political displays of dissent like permitted pickets or marches are the most specific opportunities I can think of that I’ve had as an individual and self-appointed member of an active minority to test my fear. I attend these events, like most similar to me, with the sole intention to be a force for fearlessness or lawlessness. I was, have been, and probably will always be an incredibly anxious person when envisioning how I am to produce this force or the possible consequences of sharpening the threat of these events. Just like every criminal or enemy of law, I will always be so fucking scared of me or my friends going to jail. The morning of each time I know I might break the law, especially when I’m expecting to do it in very police controlled space like a permitted protest or state recognized space for dissent, are horrible mornings. Peeing constantly, being unable to focus, or visualizing every possibility of arrest or jail time that could happen. My hands are shaking right up until the planned moment begins, and right then, say when the first window is broken or the first dumpster or newspaper box is thrown into the street, I ask myself, “will I act on fear or will I act on desire? Will I re-enter the unfortunate reality once this

moment unfortunately dissolves, feeling a feeling of empowerment or a feeling of self-hatred and regret?”

Speaking to the particularly active minority of the world that looks to spread a recognized frustration with everyday life (organizing riots, writing propaganda, conducting sabotage, engaging in active opposition against the current order) after awhile, when risk is essential to strengthening your struggle, many begin to feel a subtle but consistent feeling of paranoia. Wondering if a car is following you, why people you haven't seen for awhile or just met are so interested in certain aspects of your life, why your cell phone is clicking, more or less wondering why you are not in jail, and who or what intends to put you there, and how. Twenty year sentences for conspiracy and evidence against arrested comrades you never thought would of held up makes apathy seem more appealing than struggle.

Some of your friends don't understand your anxiety. They ask you where you were or what you did and are offended when you are not comfortable sharing. Of course most formal strikes against the current order are claimed or written about in some way to guide public response to them, but people do love to warstory. As fun as it is (cause it is), sometimes our anxiety really silences us (literally) and sometimes you can feel isolated and alienated from everyone through distrust. This is what the state wants: more isolation, more alienation, more distrust among more communities. This is struggle and in overcoming fear individually, it's important to recognize that although insurrection is something to not specialize in, but an all inclusive permanent holiday trip in the form of ruptures in the social reality forced upon us; it's important to pay attention to circumstances. Drug dealers, thieves, and professional criminals of the like choose to keep aspects of their lives secret whether or not their friends or families are offended. This is to help protect themselves, their friends, and family and keep their lifestyle going. Insurrectionists look to act now. Although strikes against police, surveillance, work places, and so on are all things most people might subtly support, most people are not acting now. There is an active minority that does not look to form a vanguard or social program, but to produce an attack model for the liberation of everyday life. Something like this, that is so vulnerable to growth, is something the state looks to tear apart. It's dumb to expose ourselves when our interests are so currently unique, when our numbers are weak, and resistance is limited. Strength

can come in an awareness and embrace of this knowledge in struggle.

But how close to home can it get? When people you are close friends with become headlines. When you see yourself on the news, while police say they're actively looking for who's responsible for so and so crimes.

Fear is something we must confront internally and externally.

Consequence is something that must be evaded at all costs (we are not martyrs), but something that must be understood when being a part of an active minority known to be enemy of the state.

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Confronting my fears has always been hard, but to confront fear is to struggle and struggle is defined by a task that is not easy. When we challenge fear, we lose control. The forces that govern are only material at this point because the only way for them to be existing beyond the physical is through our acceptance of them. The conversation I'm trying to have here is something I know we all have with ourselves.

I know the battle becomes harder when we read of new arrests and absurd sentences. I know the battle becomes harder when we hear of new informants, new surveillance technology, new police funding, or new laws against us. But the only excuses are excuses because if we are to declare war against the world as we know it, we are responsible for accepting the position of being in a war. We are responsible for working through the hardship and never accepting an easy way out.

Of course we should be smart, especially since the capabilities of repression by conventional policing are so well known, but we need to weed out the cop in our heads that looks to fuel our anxiousness; that makes it so our hands shake even when nothing has happened.