

Response to “Why are we still standing outside precincts?”

Rose City Counter-Info

2022

See also: Why are we still standing outside of precincts?

Standing outside precincts in Portland hasn't been effective since the time some comrades attempted to light the North Precinct on fire. Standing outside precincts will NEVER be effective without the threat that they will burn.

For a brief moment, all of Portland was on our side. Neighborhood kids in Kenton spontaneously joined the marches; mothers and fathers in Laurelhurst came out with water and words of solidarity. Now? Now the black bloc is the monster under every Portlander's bed. Now those same Portlanders who for a fleeting second believed another world was possible are demanding more cops on the ground. That only matters if we're concerned about a mass mobilization. We should be, but I don't think that should be our immediate focus. Our immediate focus should be meeting one another.

The pandemic put a wrench in things at a critical time when thousands were enraged enough to get out of their houses and take to the streets. In past years, Portland's anarchist milieu has been quick to organize social events to further radical the frenzied mob. That hasn't been able to happen on a similar scale, and the result is that those with the loudest voices on Twitter command the attention of the masses.

At this turning point, as we've learned to cope with the constraints of a pandemic and as we begin the slow crawl out of winter, I urge Portland anarchists to think of creative ways to meet each other. Convergences, vegan potlucks, radical game nights, radical book fairs: all of these come to mind. Some of these things have been happening, and with great success. The thing is, we must meet each other in order to develop affinity. We know how to do this safely, from an opec standpoint. We know not to discuss burning down a precinct with a complete stranger with our phones around. Instead, these social events provide the opportunities to develop relationships with one another, beyond the superficial kinds that exist online behind an anonymous handle or in the streets behind an anonymous black mask. Our strength is in our collective power.

As we reflect back on the successes of the George Floyd Uprising, the biggest thing that stands out is just the sheer numbers of people in the streets. That is what an effective mass mobilization looks like. We're a far cry from that now. Instead of doing the same things that worked when we numbered thousands, our strategies need to reflect things that will work for groups numbering 10. This is no longer a frontal assault waged against the city every night; now we must embrace guerrilla tactics. We must be nimble, and that requires us to be organized.

-some anarchists

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