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A GUIDE TO
KEEP PORTLAND POWERFUL
IN THE FACE OF TRUMPISM



THE RISE OF TRUMP: WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR PORTLAND?



The rise of Trump to power in the United States has given witness to an explosion of hate crimes directed against communities of color and misogynistic attacks directed against women across the country. Today we are facing drastic roll backs in civil rights, workers rights, environmental protections and a growing assaults against immigrant, muslim and LGBTQ communities by both state and non-state actors.

Growing white supremacist movements in peripheral communities such as East Portland, Gresham and Hillsboro have resulted in an explosion of violence. The recent murder of a black youth Larnell Bruce at the hands of members of the white supremacist gang European Kindred in Gresham is just one major example. This in addition to growing racist militia movements, epitomized by the Bundy occupation in rural Oregon, threaten to engulf our communities in extra-state violence at the hands of organized and armed right wing tendencies who the government is all too quick to let off the hook of any accountability for their political tactics of intimidation. Combined with the already grotesquely high rates of police violence and incarceration directed against communities of color and working class whites have produced an increasingly violent and dangerous situation in the Portland area.



Larnell Bruce Jr, 17 years old



World Systems Analysis - Immanuel Wallerstein

World Systems Analysis is a school of thought and a mode of critical analysis in understanding local changes in the context of the global economy. Its emphasis on world-systems rather than nation-states, on the need to consider historical processes as they unfold over long periods of time, and on combining within a single analytical framework bodies of knowledge usually viewed as distinct from one another—such as history, political science, economics, and sociology. He describes the world-system as a social reality comprised of interconnected nations, firms, households, classes, and identity groups of all kinds. He identifies and highlights the significance of the key moments in the evolution of the modern world-system: the development of a capitalist world-economy in the sixteenth-century, the beginning of two centuries of liberal centrism in the French Revolution of 1789, and the undermining of that centrism in the global revolts of 1968.

Right to the City Movements

“The right to the city is far more than the individual liberty to access urban resources: it is a right to change ourselves by changing the city. It is, moreover, a common rather than an individual right since this transformation inevitably depends upon the exercise of a collective power to reshape the processes of urbanization. The freedom to make and remake our cities and ourselves is, I want to argue, one of the most precious yet most neglected of our human rights” - David Harvey



RELEVANT THEORY/MOVEMENTS

Libertarian Municipalism - Murray Bookchin, Adolf Gasser

Libertarian municipalism is a political program developed by Libertarian Socialist theorist Murray Bookchin, to create democratic citizens' assemblies in towns and urban neighborhoods. The assemblies in these free municipalities join together to replace the state with a directly democratic confederations. Organizations within many cities in the United States are already banding together through coalitions such as the Right to the City Alliance (RTTC), which has put together a progressive platform around issues as wide-ranging as the commons, economic, indigenous and environmental justice, police harassment and migrant rights. Under the banner of "Democracy and Participation," the RTTC proposes "the right of community control and decision-making over the planning and governance of the cities where we live and work, with full transparency and accountability, including the right to public information without interrogation."

Libertarian municipalism is also based on the proposition that we now have the technology for a post-scarcity economy—one that can potentially abolish mindless toil and possibly most of the work that enters into industrial production today -- Think of the joy of having an 8 hour work week or less. Most labor performed in the United States today isn't necessary, and many would define their jobs as pointless or not serving any social good, if we had a rational economy it could be eliminated and instead we could all enjoy the fruits!

Democratic Confederalism - Rojava Revolution, YPG

Democratic Confederalism is a social, political, and economic model of self-administration of different peoples, pioneered by women and the youth. It attempts to practically express the people's will by viewing democracy as a method rather than an aim alone. It is democracy without the state. It is heavily influenced by the ideas of Murray Bookchin. This vision for a new society is actively being put into practice in northern Syria by the Kurdish people of Rojava who have implemented the model to run entire cities such as Kobane and organize inter ethnic and religious models of directly democratic governance. All the while being very successful in fighting of the extremist forces of ISIS.

Neo-Zapatismo - EZLN

On January 1 1994, the previously unknown Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional (EZLN, or Zapatista National Liberation Army) captured seven cities and towns in the state of Chiapas, Mexico - and with them the imaginations of progressive activists around the world. In the sixteen years since the Zapatista uprising, the Zapatistas' distinctive political discourse and practice, known as 'neo-Zapatismo', has had an enormous influence on the generation of activists identified with the counter-globalisation movement, perhaps especially in the North.

The continual negligence by state and business entities to address the dire issue of global warming and the continual assault on indigenous rights and sovereignty in favor of the extraction industries demonstrate the complete negligence and criminal nature of those in power. The unresponsive and corrupt tendencies of our established "representative" democratic structures have proved that the United States political system is designed to only serve the interests those with wealth and power. The election of a billionaire through a self funded presidential campaign can only serve to emphasize this point.



The unrelenting assault of developers and landlords against renters in the city of Portland has created waves of gentrification, displacement and rising housing prices. A process administered by discriminatory and racist urban renewal policies and city planning institutions such as the Portland Development Commission. It is a situation which continues to define our urban geography, threatening to make our city a Disneyland for the global elite while working people are pushed further and further out of their own city.



We understand our economic system to be in a state of prolonged structural crisis. The rise of the far right in Europe as embodied in Brexit and the rise of extreme right parties to power in many European parliament's demonstrates that our situation in the United States is not unique. Instead it is a result

of the failings of the global capitalism to provide an equitable life for all as was promised with trade deals such as NAFTA and the upcoming TPP. While the average citizen has been disproportionately disadvantaged by the project of global capitalism a small percentage of the global elite have flourished with increasing wealth. The rise of the far right is a misguided popular anger at the world's current economic and political situation. As such we must organize to engender a vision for a better world with a more realistic understanding of the situation we are in.

We believe we must take ownership over our communities and leverage people power to counteract what seems at times to be an overwhelming and constant assault on our personal bodies and communities health and well being. We believe we have power and that in fact we are at a crossroads in deciding what comes next for our planet and for our communities, either something far worse, or far better. It's up to us to decide how that turns out and we cast a vote with our actions over the next four years under Trump. As such we have seen the need to engender a new institution for people in the Portland area to come together to address the real problems our communities and region face so as to enable us to leverage and manifest real solutions.

SOME LOCAL HISTORY

Portland is a city with a long history of active and vibrant social and neighborhood movements. It is these vibrant communities that have created a city where thousands flock to every year to participate in our beautiful queer communities, to join in our amazing music and art culture, to join with the vibrant latino community in Rockwood or the east asian community in East Portland. It is a place where it is a given that you care for the natural environment, a city that urgently wants a new sustainable infrastructure and to eliminate car culture. A rebellious town known to some as Little Beirut.



But Portland wasn't always the place it is today. It is a place marked by a history of white supremacy, violence and discriminatory housing policy. A city founded as a colonial occupation of native lands in 1845. Named by its founders Francis W. Pettygrove and Asa Lovejoy who created the settlement as a small port town. A city which policed the local native americans out of the Multnomah Valley area through incarcerating and criminalizing their existence. A city that actively participated in the Cayuse war of 1847 that saw the Nez Perce tribe confined to the reservation system. A city where the the last words of the Nez Perce leader Tiloukaikt were recited at the gallows in neighboring Oregon City "Did not your missionaries teach us that Christ died to save his people? So we die to save our people."



- We believe community self defense is the best approach to navigate threats to our communities. Individuals who live in neighborhoods and are directly accountable to those around them should be the ones who keep themselves and their communities safe out of a desire to simply do just that, not individuals who live out of town and get paid large salaries from the government; therefore, serving interests who are not directly accountable to the citizenry they claim to serve.



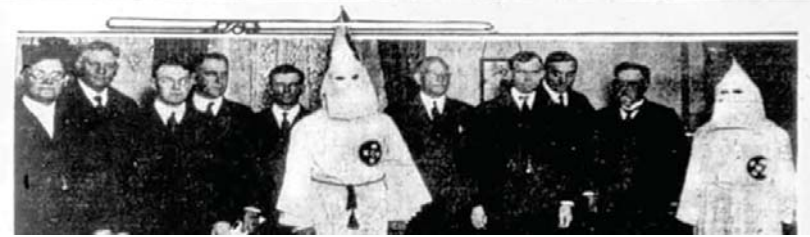
- We believe in supporting a diversity of tactics. We believe all forms of activism and direct action are important and essential in keeping Portland powerful.
- We recognize the city of Portland as settler colonial entity. We strive to outreach to sovereign indigenous communities and to struggle as accomplices with indigenous peoples in the Multnomah valley, to have them included in this process if they so wish or to work alongside them.

- We want to see an ethical and ecologically sustainable development model. City plans should be generated from communities and neighborhoods themselves and be centered around a directly democratic process that includes the houseless community and works to halt harmful displacement; therefore, we support the community control of institutions such as the Portland Development Commission and city Urban Renewal Zone process or their abolition tending towards an alternative directly democratic models.
- We prioritize protecting the land from harmful and destructive industrial projects.
- We believe in standing in solidarity with marginalized communities such as the LGBTQQA, femmes, POC and disabled who face bigotry and violence on a daily basis.
- We prioritize defending our immigrant community from state and street violence and harassment. We want to keep Portland a sanctuary city where all are welcome regardless of official "immigration statuses".
- We stand for the radical reform and transformation of the police and prisons as institutions or their abolition. As these institutions have proven to be completely unaccountable to the general citizenry. The city's inability to even fire Ronald Frashour who was responsible for the murder of unarmed citizen Aaron Campbell, after the police union waged a legal battle with the cities costing millions of dollars, and the police union driven effort to have the PPB refuse to participate in the Citizens Review Board in recent months demonstrate this institutions complete lack of any form of citizen control or accountability of its officers and the city government's inability to enforce such accountability. There exists many well research alternatives to addressing harmful behaviors in our communities, we believe these alternatives that address cycles of traumatization, harm reduction and focus on restorative justice should be prioritized, funded and supported over these older dysfunctional models that squander city resources while not addressing the fundamental causes of harmful behavior and trauma in our communities. Instead these current models only reproduce these social ills by furthering cycles of violence and brutality with a policing model that primarily serves the interests of those with wealth and power.



A city that still holds traditions such as the Rose Parade that started as a KKK rally where crosses were burned on Mt. Tabor. A city that had all conservative mayors until the 1970's and was widely noted as the most racist state north of the Mason Dixie line for its extremely large numbers of active KKK members.

CHIEF KLUXERS TELL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS JUST WHAT MYSTIC ORGANIZATION PROPOSES TO DO IN CITY OF PORTLAND



(August 2, 1921, Mayor George Baker (1917-1933) in KKK regalia photograph from the Portland Telegram.)

A city that was embroiled by racist violence and white supremacist gangs in the 1980's and 1990's who terrorized the streets of Portland with impunity culminating in the murder of Ethiopian immigrant Mulugeta Seraw at the hands of the racist gang known as East Side White Pride.

A city that holds many aspects of this legacy to this day. A city that has been informed by a struggle against these tendencies to produce the place we now all enjoy, for better or worse. A struggle that we all must carry forward now.



AMT

According to Charles Abbot (Professor at PSU) The face of this old Portland all began to change with the advent of "Portland's political revolution". In the 1960s and early 1970s community members first organized to stop destruction of their older neighborhoods as part of urban



Community members protesting the expansion of Legacy Emanuel Hospital.

renewal plans of the time and then to champion revitalization of these neighborhoods. During this time working class whites and the black community in east Portland came together in what was known as the neighborhood movement. These movements often banded together to fight destructive urban renewal practices such as the Emanuel Hospital Expansion in North Portland and the construction of the 205 freeway in Lents through the formation of neighborhood associations which at the time were considered radical grassroots organizing bodies.

These neighborhood movements also incorporated a growing environmentalist perspective. They became so powerful that in 1974 through a direct action campaign which included families making picnics on the freeway, the city was forced to shut down Harbor Drive and convert it into what we now know as Waterfront Park. These movements also forced the City of Portland to become one of the first and only cities that includes neighborhood associations at any level of city governance, as they became such a strong political force. It was from these mobilizations that the culture of the city of Portland began to change and take on a more progressive character.

Portland has always found its greatest power in its neighborhood movements. From the city wide protracted against racism in the 1990's that saw the elimination of visible white supremacists from the city center to its ongoing vibrant activist communities we have today. We have power and strength to transform this city to new and better heights!



Harbor Drive before the creation of Waterfront Park

NOT JUST A REACTION: AN ALTERNATIVE VISION FOR "NEW" PORTLAND

- We believe in embracing and encouraging an active citizenry through the development of direct democracy. We live in an age of democratic crisis. We have witnessed the lowest voterturnouts in history in recent election cycles. This is understandable if we consider the development of massive voter disenfranchisement mechanism such as occurred after the repeal of the Voting Rights Act and with the implementation of Voter ID laws all over the south, the gerrymandering of voting districts which has enshrined the hegemony of a two party system and the increasing corporate influence over democratic process on city, state and federal levels as manifested in the Citizens United Supreme Court Ruling. As such the average citizen is all but completely shut out from all the means of influencing the decisions made on not only a national level but a local one as well. To counteract this we believe in developing an active citizenry. Defined not by legal statuses but by the level of involvement and care for one's communities well being. We believe that through collective action and the development of directly democratic structures we can re-capture our power in society and break the cycles of alienation, depression, uncertainty and anxiety that come from living lives dispossessed from the power and voice that resides in all of us. To take back Rip City.
- We take issue with the city of Portland having city councilmen elected through city wide elections as opposed to being elected on a more representative municipal scale as is the case in almost all major cities. This structure has created a system where the voice of marginalized communities such as those in East Portland go perpetually unheard. As such we advocate for the implementation of a new directly democratic model or the replacement of the current city council structure as it is currently conceived in favor of a model that has city councilmen act as directly recallable delegates to each neighborhood association recognized by the city of Portland.
- We support worker owned and controlled business, co-operatives, farms and tenant owned housing and unionization efforts. We wish to see a city wide economic development model that does not just privilege the wealthy; instead, one that works for financial independence of Portland's communities free from corporate and capitalistic control by incentivizing and organizing towards these alternative forms of local business and housing.





The meetings will be broken down into two sections.

- One for the general spokescouncil (discussed above)
- And one for break off organizing groups, focused around particular issues or aspects of organizing.

These organizing groups may include but are not limited to

1. Environmental
2. Anti-racist
3. Feminist
4. LGBTQ+
5. Defense
6. Neighborhood Organizing
7. Immigration
8. Labor
9. Resource Sharing (food programs, health item initiatives etc.)
10. Policy

These breakout groups will provide an opportunity for wider community inclusion. Participants do not have to be representatives of an associated organization to participate in an organizing group. As such this portion of the Portland Assembly meeting shall happen before the Spokescouncil portion. These organizing groups then have the ability to send their own delegate to the following spokescouncil to share their group's work after the Organizing Groups portion of the meeting.

These Organizing Groups allow for participant organizations and collectives to collaborate on specific topics, to bring in new people to their specific organizing and to discuss nuts and bolts organizing around a focused topic; therefore, the Organizing Groups can function as either a simple coordinating and discussion body or a body where organizing is taking place under the Organizing Group banner itself.



"The assumption that what currently exists must necessarily exist is the acid that corrodes all visionary thinking."

- Murray Bookchin

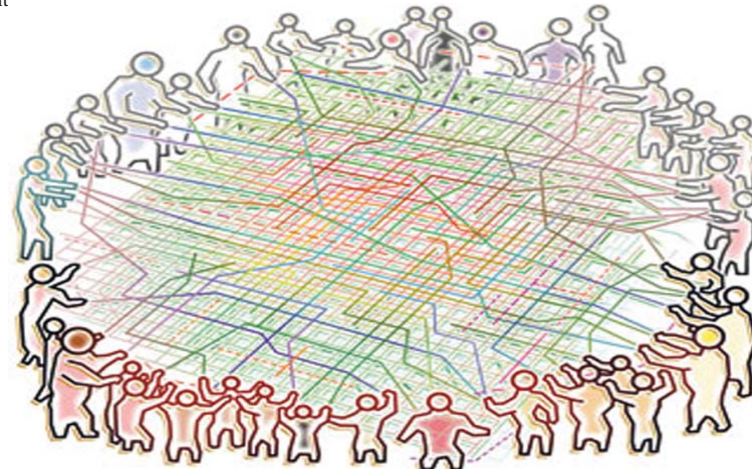


WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?



The Portland Assembly will be bridging the gap between "what is" and "what can be" by facilitating an ongoing city wide spokescouncil. The Portland Assembly will create a space for building affinity groups, sharing projects, discussing topics we are organizing around, promote collaboration and solidarity, incubate initiatives and build our collective capacity as an organizing force. This is a space to plug in and organize with other members of our community around the most critical issues.

A spokescouncil is a collection of community organizations, collectives and affinity groups (a group formed around a shared interest or common goal, to which individuals formally or informally belong) who meet together for a common purpose. Portland is a city with many different organizing projects and unaffiliated individuals who care about the city and desire to act. Many of these projects are focused on particular areas of expertise and understandably so. But to confront the growing threat of the extreme right and the ebbing onslaught of Trumpism, we believe it is time to develop a united front



Out of this urgency comes long term action. We believe we must organize in bigger and better ways than ever before to keep our communities safe against the threats that have been presented to us. As such we believe in a necessity to immediately develop a citywide directly democratic infrastructure to facilitate the development of dual power structures to assist in the creation of programs to provide material necessities to our communities when food stamps, health care and access to reproductive rights inevitably come under attack. We believe we must organize city wide community self defense initiatives to protect our communities from groups who desire to perpetuate hate crimes and right wing political violence, we must engender systems of mutual aid and solidarity to keep Portland a sanctuary city and defend against attempts to remove undocumented people from their homes and families.



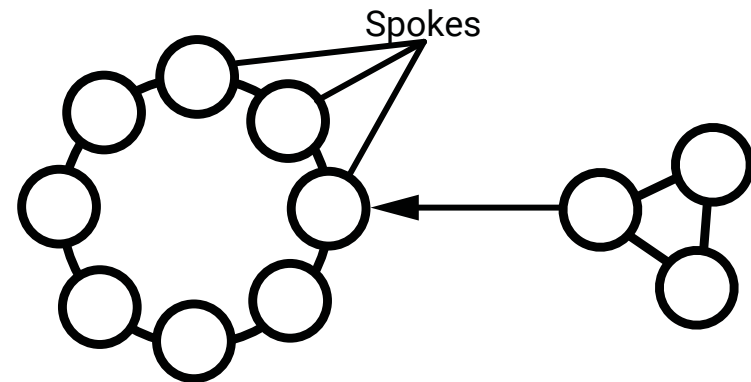
Rather than create a new political party or hierarchical centralized organization to perpetuate this work we seek to generate an inclusive framework that allows for a multiplicity of political perspectives and forms of organizations to take autonomous actions while having access to one another to better coordinate and gain needed resources so as to engender the formulation of the various projects and programs that must be created to survive Trumpism.



Furthermore, we hope to create a space that is inclusive to both seasoned activists and people new to the movement who are eager to get involved. To use this structure as an incubator for neighborhood organizing and to assist the already developing and ongoing neighborhood assemblies/meetings that have been taking place through the city in the weeks since Trump's election.

HOW IT WILL FUNCTION

The Spokescouncil will meet no less than once every two months. The different community organizations, collectives and affinity groups and neighborhood assemblies who comprise the spokescouncil shall each send one directly recallable delegate to each spokescouncil. At these meetings the different members shall discuss ongoing work, develop strategies and opportunities for collaboration. These groups will have the option to come to agreements on what and how to do work as a larger body under the banner of the Portland Assembly, if so desired. The spokes will operate on a 2/3 majority vote basis so work is not being done in the name of the larger Portland Assembly body that the wider body does not agree on. Agendas will be set ahead of time so that all participants have the opportunity to discuss the agenda with their associated groups.



Spokescouncil

A democratic body consisting of Spokes or representatives from various Organizing Groups.

Organizing Group

The Organizing Group elects a Spokesperson, aka "Spoke", to attend the Spokescouncil.