



Anarchist Atlanta

newsletter of the the Capital Terminus Collective

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A Southern US Anarchist Statement on the Gulf Coast Disaster

The State leaves 100,000 to drown like rats, while people everywhere open their hearts and homes.

As many as 20,000 people have been abandoned in the New Orleans Convention Center with no resources and no anticipated relief. Meanwhile, National Guard units with submachine guns and body armor prevent people from taking necessary food from places where it would otherwise go to waste, and call it “urban warfare.” Under capitalism, there is no such thing as “natural” disasters; horrible and unavoidable events are exacerbated by the callous acts of the ruling class. Examples include: the Irish potato famine of the 19th century, and the Somalian famine of the 20th, where food was taken by imperialist countries, like Britain and the US, instead of being used to save the starving population; the more recent hurricane disasters in Haiti shortly after the U.S. ousted the only government which might have marshaled any aid to the Haitian people and replaced it with a military junta; the tsunami disaster, which was aggravated by years of IMF and World Bank domination in the region that resulted in severe underdevelopment; and the present situation in the Gulf Coast.



How did the ruling class contribute to this disaster? Having full knowledge that this would be a devastating hurricane season, they chose to sink the 79 million dollars designated to repair the antiquated levee system into the Iraq quagmire. Furthermore, although they knew ahead of time that the hurricane would be at least a category 4 hurricane, and that the levee system could withstand no more than a category 3, the ruling class did not invest any serious resources into evacuating the city of New Orleans and the surrounding area as the storm approached (and rich politicians have the gall to accuse working-class people of carelessly staying in the city)! As we mentioned, their first priority is to mobilize heavily-armed National Guard units who will shoot people that are merely trying to find food, rather than to bring the necessary aid to the estimated 20,000 starving people at the Convention Center who will die if nothing is done (not to mention other people in similar situations throughout the city). The politicians continue

lying in a desperate attempt to save their careers, making it increasingly clear that they have no concern for the lives of the people they’ve abandoned.

In contrast, thousands of people have opened their homes to survivors in an amazing gesture of solidarity and compassion. Despite the State’s citation of its ability to channel aid in times of need as a justification for its existence, it has again demonstrated how the constraints of capitalism interfere with its ability to provide any sort

of assistance. The incredible display of mutual aid on the part of

the people gives further support for the anarchist argument that people can indeed develop a stateless society based on the adage “from each according to ability, to each according to necessity.” We hope to see that society become a reality someday, but for now we declare our solidarity with those who have been abandoned, and, in hopes that others will join us, we demand the following:

•That the government immediately commandeer

the necessary resources, such as transportation and shelter, in order to evacuate people from the city and ensure that they have adequate accommodations until it is possible to return to their homes or move on

- An immediate end to national guard and police units attacking those looking for food
- Immediate distribution of ALL necessary items (water, food, clothing, etc.) during the process of evacuation
- The immediate resignation/dismissal and punishment of all decision-makers who neglected the responsibility of repairing the levees or coordinating evacuations from the city while it was possible, or who are responsible for National Guard and police units attacking those who are “stealing” necessary items
- No conviction for any who were arrested while “stealing” food or any other necessity
- An end to the price-gouging of oil which is affecting working-class people across the country, by price fixing if necessary

(continued on the next page)

Welcome to the first issue of Anarchist Atlanta, the newsletter of the Capital Terminus Collective, here in Atlanta, GA.

Here, we will inform our readers about the progress we're making with the various local projects we're working on. You'll be able to read about our counter-recruitment campaign, our women's health and self-defense project and be kept informed about our monthly study groups.

We'll also provide an alternative perspective about local, regional and national issues. As well as discuss anarchist theory and the practical applications of that theory.

As we progress and grow this publication will change and grow with us. To providing a calendar of up coming events, news about projects (outside of the CTC) that our members are involved in, flyers that can be reproduced, and whatever else might be needed by our organization and our communities.

in solidarity,
lggy



WHO ARE WE?

The Capital Terminus collective is an anarchist-communist group in Atlanta, GA. We believe that there can and will be a revolution in which the people overthrow their rulers and create a society in which the oppressive forces of the state have been destroyed and in which everyone "Gives according to their ability and receives according to their need". We believe that a specifically anarchist organization can play an important role in organizing for this revolution and in fighting the "battle of ideas" with those who would create a new USSR or who would subvert the revolutionary movement into the Democratic Party. We encourage you to get in touch with us if you are interested in what we are doing, or to receive announcements.

Contact: Capitalterminus@gmail.com

Curious about anarchist-communism? Check out www.anarkismo.net, a global news and discussion site.

Why We Do Not Belong To a Larger Organization, and Why We Need To.

If you've known about us for awhile, then you'll probably know that recently we tried to create a southern anarchist federation. This is not a summary of our lessons from that (which can be found at nefac.net/node/1780), rather it is intended as a brief summary of the outcome. Most of our mistakes can be wrapped up in this: we worked too unilaterally, rather than building organic links with groups in other cities. As a result, we could not create an anarchist federation which would only exist on paper.

However, we do still think such an organization would be a good force on a regional, national, and international level. Historically, anarchists have had the most impact in revolutionary organizing when they were well-coordinated and had a large number of organizers. To this end, one step we are taking is setting up a discussion list for anarchists in the southeast, with the goal of building ties which will eventually lead to the creation of a revolutionary organization.

This list is for folks who are serious about organizing for a popular revolution and the creation of a classless, stateless, non-hierarchical society. It is not another 'pan-anarchist' discussion list, and you are not welcome if: you believe humans are a scourge on the planet and that the 'revolution' will only come about through killing a majority of the population; you engage in blatantly sexist, racist, or anti-working class behavior; you think every organization is inherently authoritarian; or if to you anarchism means a lifestyle and nothing else. The CTC stands in the 'Platformist' tradition, meaning that we believe an effective organization should have unity of theories, unity of tactics, federalism, and direct democracy. This list is not reserved for people who identify with the 'Platform', but you should think the four ideas mentioned above are good ones to practice.

You can subscribe to this list at <http://lists.riseup.net/www/subrequest/ERASE>. Please send an introduction detailing your political background, what kind of organizing you are currently involved in or wish to be, what city you are in, and how you heard about the list.

(continued from front cover)

•Adequate aid to all people wishing to rebuild homes lost due to the negligence of capitalist politicians

Solidarity with the victims of the Gulf Coast disaster! Solidarity with those who remain in precarious positions months after the tsunami disaster! Solidarity with those all across the globe who have lost family or remain in refugee camps due to the disasters which the ruling class magnifies or the wars which it engineers!

The Capital Terminus Collective (Atlanta, GA)



Supporting Sgt. Benderman

a brief account of the CTC's efforts in solidarity with a uniformed hero

Early in 2005, members of the Capital Terminus Collective became aware of the Kevin Benderman case. Benderman is a sergeant in the Army who, after ten years of military service with a spotless record, returned to the U.S. from a tour of duty in Iraq, but declined to go back to the Middle East when ordered.

Our collective took an interest because he was stationed in Georgia. For some time we had thought that the most effective way to subvert the government's war effort, lay in "supporting the troops". Supporting the troops who refused to fight, that is. Brave men and women like Sgt. Kevin Benderman.

As we soon learned, Kevin did not just up and quit, back his bags, and leave his unit. Nor did he bail out while under fire. Instead, after returning to the U.S., and then spending some alone in reflection, and also spending some time in consultation with friends and loved ones, he made the decision to apply for conscientious objector (CO) status. The record shows that not only was his application summarily denied, but from the time he made the application, he became a target of scorn and abuse from his superiors. Even a chaplain called him a coward! He reports that his peers, unlike his superiors and religious "advisors", for the most part came to accept, and even admire his decision. Finally, those same spiteful superiors who ridiculed him, had him charged with desertion when he declined to catch a flight going back to Iraq.

The first two decisions Capital Terminus made in this instance were to contact Kevin by e-mail, and also to begin producing flyers in his support, to distribute around Atlanta. Following some intense discussion, an e-mail of support was drafted and sent. We soon received a response, a note of thanks for our support, and we then began distributing the corresponding flyers at anti-war marches and other events. Later, when several members of our collective met Kevin at a speaking engagement in Atlanta, our admiration of him was only strengthened by his plainspoken demeanor and sincerity.

His court-martial (which I attended) largely hinged on the details of whether or not a superior, explicitly or implicitly, released Sgt. Benderman to go home and work on his CO application, rather than getting on the flight to Iraq. The verdict, when announced, was not guilty of desertion,

but guilty of "missing movement by design". (For personal reasons, I had to leave shortly thereafter.) The following day's newspaper reported that after the sentence was announced, Kevin was led away by MP's to serve a sentence of 15 months, with no chance of early release, in addition to facing a reduction in rank, and a dishonorable discharge.

I would have preferred that the defense put the US government on trial, for having a CO process that is nothing short of farcical. But, it was not the defense attorney's job to play to the crowd, to score political points and woo the audience (and in the process, likely arouse even greater antagonisms with the military brass who are bent on wrecking havoc in Kevin's life.) No, the task before that attorney on that day, was to try to do whatever was most likely to minimize the brutal vengeance that the U.S. government was going to take on Kevin. Given that reality, it is perhaps unseemly to criticize. Lawyers make such easy targets, after all. It is unlikely that a military judge, any military judge, would have found in Kevin's favor, regardless of the defense. No one could have prevented the Army from, in the words of the judge (as quoted in the Savannah paper on the following day), making an "example" of the courageous Sergeant.

Since his imprisonment, Kevin has been declared a prisoner of conscience by the organization Amnesty International. An international campaign of support is under way. Meanwhile, he has also been moved to a prison in the state of Washington. That's right, Washington, diagonally across the country from Georgia. They put him just as far away from his wife, and his home, and his friends as they could. The malice demonstrated by the United States Army towards one of its own, is downright frightening. I suppose we should just be grateful that he is not at Guantanamo Bay. Or in Iraq.

Details regarding the campaign in support of Kevin Benderman can be found at bendermandefense.org

Prole Cat



Kevin Benderman and his family deserve your support.



Sgt. Kevin Benderman of Hinesville, GA "has served in the US Army for the past ten years. His record has been honorable" before and during combat in Iraq. "Sgt. Benderman was also recognized as promotable to Staff Sgt. by his current command."

However, Sgt. Benderman "witnessed many things in Iraq. From seeing a young girl... her left arm burned black... to viewing mass graves filled with bodies... Sgt. Benderman saw what war does to humanity."

Kevin Benderman has applied for Conscientious Objector status. He is being rewarded for his honesty and courage with a court-martial!

Learn more about his case, and how you can help at www.bendermandefense.org

Support the troops who refuse to fight!
The Capital Terminus Collective
pc@prolecat.com



ANARCHIST-COMMUNISM FROM A TO Z:
This month our letter is "A"!

"Autogestion"

Autogestion is a term used to describe workers self management, or the concept of production being controlled by workers for workers. It originated as a concept developed by farm and industrial workers immediately after the Algerian fight for independence. In the aftermath of the French imperialist expulsion workers took over production, without bosses, centralized leadership, or state control. Current examples of autogestion include AK Press in Briton and the USA, and Zanon in Argentina (Adapted from STRIKE! Issue #3)

"Autonomy"

Autonomy is another word for self-reliance. It means that groups which are affected by a decision are involved in making that decision and are responsible for carrying the decision out. It can be used to describe status within an organization or within the larger society; for instance, a local branch of a revolutionary organization is autonomous when acting out the policies of the organization independently but still with a responsibility to the larger organization, or people struggling with the ruling class for control of their lives are fighting for their autonomy.

Anarchist-Communists struggle because every aspect of production is used against us: the ruling class raises the rent on the houses we build; they overcharge us for the food we grow; and at the same time they try to pay us poverty wages and pit us against each other for scraps. On top of this they force a rape culture upon us; they send racist police into poor neighborhoods; they create artificial borders and then complain about "immigration problems"; and they start wars based on lies and power motives. Anarchist-Communists fight for a world in which the people have destroyed these twisted social norms and replaced them with autogestion and autonomy.

ALL SORTS OF THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW

By Angelina

The women's health/self defense work group has coordinated a free women's self defense class with a volunteer instructor! The date will be set at his convenience, after a preliminary class solely for the members of Capital Terminus to get our instructor warmed up. The class will be advertised as broadly as possible, once the date is set, and we will help to provide transportation to those who need it.

Additionally, the group will be planning a flyer-making get together. We'll be making flyers with "the kinds of things people feel too awkward to talk about but need to know" facts about STDs, contraception, and similar topics. Then we'll go on an info-bombing escapade and drop these flyers in bathrooms all around the city. It should be a rockin', and educational, good time.

The media work group will be producing a monthly newsletter, the Atlanta Anarchist (the very publication you have before you), and upkeeping a website. Both of which will be used to keep people up to date on the CTC's projects; to introduce our readers to the ideas of anarcho-communism; and to offer an anarchist perspective about local, regional and national issues.

The media work group is also responsible for hosting the CTC's monthly study groups. We have an introductory discussion group about anarchism, and a more in-depth theoretical discussion group, which is still in the planning stages.

The introductory discussion group is currently meeting at Joe's Cafe in the East Atlanta Village the third wednesday of every month at 7pm. All are encouraged to attend though the location is always subject to change. If you have internet access, email us and request to be added to our announcements list so you can be kept up to date.

Currently, the CTC's counter recruitment campaign has been working closely with the Georgia Peace and Justice Coalition, in their efforts against military recruitment. First, by attending their weekly pickets outside of military recruitment centers, in the cities of both Atlanta and Decatur. Secondly, both the CTC and the GPJC have been going to the friday night football games at Grady High School. Before each game we hand out flyers, to both students and their parents, about how to opt out of the "no child left behind" act, the truth about the sales pitches that the military recruiters use to entice their children into the military.

You can help with this campaign by volunteering to help with the flyering at Grady HS every friday night at 5:15pm and 8:15 pm. Or, you can contact us or the the GPJC about starting an informational flyering at your or child's school.

You can reach the CTC by email at Capitalterminus@gmail.com, or you can reach the Georgia Peace and Justice Coalition at info@georgiapace.org or by phone at (404) 522-4500.

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