

An aerial black and white photograph of Olympia, Washington. The city is densely built with a grid of streets and numerous trees. In the foreground, there's a large industrial area with several marinas filled with boats, some docks, and large industrial buildings. A river or bay curves around the city, with more marinas and industrial facilities along its banks. The overall scene is a mix of urban development and natural water bodies.

# AGAINST THE PORT AND ITS WORLD

*actions against  
fracking in  
olympia*

*from* 10/31/16

*to* 4/20/17

*The following is a set of communiqus from the blockade set up to stop the shipment of proppants through the Port of Olympia Washington. We present this compilation as a gesture towards building collective memory, and to celebrate the recent struggles that have taken place.*

*more updates at  
[pugetsoundanarchists.org](http://pugetsoundanarchists.org)  
[itsgoingdown.org](http://itsgoingdown.org)*

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## How To

### *From Montreal Counter-Info*

Trains are one of the main ways that oil is transported across Turtle Island. Physical blockades of the tracks have been used effectively many times to hamper ecocidal projects of “resource extraction”.

We can also block the rails in a sneaky way: by tricking the signaling system into thinking there is a train on the tracks. This trick will force train traffic to come to a halt until the signal blockage is cleared. It can be done in under a minute, and repeated many times to have a significant impact on train circulation. It can take hours to find and remove this blockage, stopping all train traffic in the meantime.

Here's how their system works:

A low velocity current runs through each rail. The electricity runs across the junctions of an individual rail with copper wire connections. When a train passes, it forms an electrical connection between rails and signals its presence.

Here's how we can block the signal:

Get some 6-gauge booster cables. You can paint the wire black to make it harder to find. Rust on the tracks can prevent a solid connection, so connecting directly to the tracks might not work. To avoid this problem, find a section of rail where two junctions are side by side, and connect the copper wires with the booster cable. You can hide the wire with snow or rocks. The connection will lower railway crossing barriers that are nearby.



## The Blockade

### *Olympia, WA: North Dakota Fracking Equipment Blocked, Train Tracks Barricaded*

November 12, 2016

Around 12:30 on the afternoon November 11th, 2016, a small group of people blocked a train carrying hydraulic fracturing (“fracking”) proppants from exiting the Port of Olympia. The two Union Pacific engine operators claimed that the grain cars were carrying corn, but the group knew better and stood their ground. As word of the action spread and more and more people arrived, the blockade gathered in strength. Eventually the engine reversed back into the Port of Olympia yard, the gates locked, and the engine operators went home.

Fracking proppants are tiny ceramic beads resembling sand. The fracking process involves injecting high-pressure fluid into the ground; the pressure fractures the rock and allows natural gas or oil to flow into a well. The proppants are used to “prop” open the cracks during extraction. Without them the cracks

would collapse and no gas or oil extraction would be possible. These particular proppants are bound for North Dakota's Bakken Oil Fields; Bakken oil is set to flow through the Dakota Access Pipeline. The blockaders have joined Sacred Stone Camp at Standing Rock and Mississippi Stand in Iowa in the fight against the Black Snake.

There is only one set of tracks into the Port and it runs straight through the center of downtown Olympia. The first blockade camp was built and maintained at State and Jefferson, a major intersection. Though police circled and surveilled the crowd, they did not intervene and have thus far been very hands-off. This will likely change, however, as the blockade has no intention of moving.

Soon after the blockade began, a white single-engine plane began to circle downtown Olympia. It did so for several hours. Although there is no direct confirmation, the FBI has recently begun circling protest sites (Ferguson, Baltimore, etc.) with white single-engine planes that act as cell phone towers and suck up all cellular communication within their range.

In the early evening, a nearby anti-Trump demonstration passed by the blockade and numbers temporarily swelled into the hundreds. The march took off down the tracks, stopping at the Port of Olympia before going on to block traffic at the choke-point between the east and west sides of town. Meanwhile, back at the barricade, the party continued. A sound system, couches, and a steady flow of pizza kept spirits high and a small crew held it down through the night.

On the morning of November 12th the group decided to move further down the tracks to the corner of 7th and Jefferson near the split in the train line. At the time of this writing the tracks are barricaded and a rotating group of people maintains a constant presence. More people are needed to hold the space and make it stronger. Bring tools, banners, supplies, food, tarps, building materials; anything that will help the barricades hold.

Resistance to this many-tendriled death machine has and must take many forms. Some have set their goals narrow and try just to stop the port from shipping proppants. We are aiming beyond, for a liberation that destroys all vestiges of oppression and colonization leaving us free to experiment with ways of living in cooperation on our own terms. We want to unlearn the legacies of domination that we have inherited. We need a diverse and vibrant resistance composed of more forms of destruction, mutual aid and solidarity than we can yet imagine.

This action and actions like it are quite easy to do yourself. This only took a few hours and a little bit of planning. The hardest part was calming our nerves. Particularly easy was placing wire on the tracks to send a signal to the train company that the tracks were blocked. This action can and has been easily repeated wherever train tracks are. For more info on how to do this check out this explanatory video.

Concrete on the tracks is just a start  
Rest in Power James Marker!  
Free Red Fawn!

*-some anarchists*



## **Olympia, WA: Train Tracks Sabotaged To Stop Fracking Equipment**

April 20, 2017

Early in the morning of April 20th we poured concrete on the train tracks that lead out of the Port of Olympia to block any trains from using the tracks. We took precautions to notify BNSF (the train company) – we called them and we used wires to send a signal that the tracks were blocked. We did this not to avoid damaging a train, nothing would bring bigger grins to our faces, but to avoid the risk of injuring railway workers.

This action was done to disrupt the movement of trains carrying proppants used in natural gas fracturing. These train tracks are part of a system of pipelines, fracking wells, mines, clearcuts, control centers, fiberoptics, dams, highways and factories that cover the planet and are physical manifestations of a process that is destroying the ecosystems, cultures, and inhabitants everywhere. Behind this network of infrastructure there are politicians, CEOs and bureaucrats who have private security, cops, prison guards, non-profit directors, PR consultants and the legacy of 500 years of colonization to back them up. We oppose all of these manifestations, infrastructural, personal and ideological. We blocked the train tracks because we want to blockade the entire web of domination that is slowly killing us.

We were inspired to take this action by acts of resistance taking place across turtle island and the world, particularly the fierce indigenous resistance of water protectors against the Dakota Access Pipe Line, the encampment blocking a train full of fracking material on these same tracks in Olympia this past November, and the clandestine attacks against pipelines in Florida, South Dakota and Iowa.

We also were emboldened by the spirit of all those who have risen against the white supremacist police in Ferguson, Baltimore, Oakland and elsewhere, as well as by the riotous opposition that has characterized the first few months of Donald Trump's reign.

## **Olympia, WA: To Block the Train, Fight the Police**

November 15, 2016

To stop the train, to stop fracking, to be together on the track, we must fight the police. As we hold down the tracks in Olympia, we resonate across more than one time and place. We stand on the same physical tracks that trail into North Dakota where the Standing Rock Sioux and Comrades also block a path – between a poisonous pipeline and their lands. But we are also at the Port of Olympia, where in 2007 people blocked the way of shipments to the American Military in Iraq. There is a real force that shares power between these times and places where people have and continue to resist authority.

As we continue to refuse to let these trains pass, it is likely that tension will grow between the blockade and the port. In the coming days we should remember that the police are here to protect the interests of property, not our interests and certainly not the interests of the earth. Let's remember how they attacked anti-war protesters on this very street in 2007, and that the police are currently attacking the people at Standing Rock who are defending their own land and the well-being of us all. The police usher in environmental devastation. The police enforce colonialism. They are an institution of racism. The role of the police has always been to protect and serve capitalism, the state and white supremacy. The police are our enemy.

For this reason, we should turn to each other, talk to each other and try to trust each other. WE should not talk to the police. We should not call the police if we have a problem. WE should develop the skills and resources necessary to support and problem solve together, instead.

When we take control of the train tracks, saying that we refuse to passively support fracking in North Dakota, the police will push us back. They want us to be quiet and afraid. But it is even more important now than ever, with a literal fascist in the white house, to stand up together against the powers that be. We say fuck the police, and fuck the law. We block the train in memory of PMR 2007, in resonance with the power at Standing Rock, against the police.

<3 some pnw anarchists.

# Olympia: Solidarity Needed with Ongoing Fracking Blockade

November 15, 2016

At the time of this writing, on November 14, 2016, railroad tracks leading into the Port of Olympia have been barricaded and a camp erected in an effort to prevent a shipment of hydraulic fracking proppants from reaching the Bakken oil fields in North Dakota. The tracks belong to the Union Pacific Railroad and are under the jurisdiction of the Union Pacific Railroad Department. Those on the blockade anticipate special agents will eventually arrive and attempt to clear the barricades. They will most likely be backed up by the Olympia Police Department, the Thurston County Sheriff's Department, and the Washington State Patrol. It is likely that local law enforcement will attempt to encircle the barricades while the Special Agents of the Union Pacific Railroad supervise the clearing of the tracks.

The Union Pacific Railroad was established in 1862 and helped to colonize the last remnants of free land in the United States. Cities and farms sprang up wherever the company built a train station or laid new tracks and by the 1870s the Union Pacific was one of the main engines driving capitalism westward to the Pacific Ocean. During this time period, Union Pacific train were under constant attack by indigenous people, bandits, and saboteurs. There were not enough US Marshals to police all the tracks and every train in the country, so private companies began to spring up to meet this need. The most notorious of these was the Pinkerton Private National Agency. Their symbol was the all seeing eye. Their first job was providing security for Abraham Lincoln.

This private company helped track down and stop the banditry and sabotage plaguing the Union Pacific Railroad. By the 1880s, the era of the western outlaw and the indigenous bandit had been all but extinguished. At this point, the Pinkerton National Detective Agency had expanded its client base from railroad tycoons to captains of industry like Andrew Carnegie, the steel baron of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. In 1892, the Pinkerton Private Detective Agency sent 300 of its agents to break a strike at the Homestead Steel Works outside of Pittsburgh. In the battle that followed, 9 members of the steel workers union were murdered before the Pinkertons surrendered. Following this incident,

of pernicious and death-dealing goods being brought in or shipped out from the Port of Olympia, whether in the form of military hardware or ceramic proppants—a key component used in the fracking process.

## *We smashed several windows of their headquarters with impressive joy*

We decided that our energy was best spent that morning directing our rage against the physical manifestation of the desolate Port bureaucracy in tandem with these other, more public actions. We targeted the Port of Olympia Offices for obvious reasons. We smashed several windows of their headquarters with impressive joy, evaporating at once the façade of a power too formidable for us to fracture. We proceeded to tag NODAPL on the brick wall, delivering our message with unequivocal clarity.

It has been ten years since the pivotal Port Militarization Resistance effort that first put Olympia activists, anarchists, and humans who just give a shit about the Earth within earshot of the bureaucrats who allow and profit from the trading of weapons for their wars and LITERAL poison through our port, commodifying and turning to an industrial wasteland the last vestige of the Puget Sound going south, where otherwise more marine life might teem and one would be able to glimpse unobstructed the awe of the Cascades.

Now, new generations of Olympia residents join the fight, with renewed rationale; the collective “we” will not allow ourselves to be passively complicit in the comings and goings of war shipments or materials used in the rapacious pillaging of our Earth.

Let our action, and all that has been and will be done in solidarity with the struggle of Standing Rock, convey an unambiguous message of noncompliance and absolute defiance of their agenda, until there is nothing left to defend—not even ourselves. We implore others to become inspired and send messages of your own solidarity with #NODAPL and other indigenous struggles—First Peoples are at the front lines of the battle for the Earth. It’s too late to wait for opportunities to defend the earth, it’s now time to strike against those harming the Earth. Do not let this struggle, which is literally a battle of life and death, fade under the shadows of the next media distraction. #NODAPL!

~Some Olympia Anarchists



## **Under The Cover of Darkness**

### **Rage Against the Port of Olympia!**

October 31, 2016

Early on the morning of October 30, 2016, we set out into the perpetually damp PNW darkness to respond to the call for solidarity actions with the Standing Rock Sioux and their brave battle against the venomous Dakota Access Pipeline, in which riot cops from five states wielded unprovoked and appalling violence against the peaceful campers of the 1851 Treaty Camp just two days prior.

Our action took place against a backdrop of marches and demonstrations in the Olympia and Greater Seattle area in solidarity with not only Standing Rock but the many struggles against various incarnations of ecocide that the Coast Salish Peoples (on whose land we now stand) have been fighting for years, under the radar of most people living around the Puget Sound. This is also part of a larger resistance effort local to this small port city: the unending issue

the private detective agency became the most loathed in the US and the term "Pinkerton" is still widely used within the labor movement to designate a scab or private enforcer of capitalism.

Eventually the Union Pacific Railroad created its own police force separate from the Pinkertons. It was made up of Special Agents who were dedicated solely to protecting the Union Pacific. These agents were deputized by the federal government and thus subject to more oversight than a private agency. They were given all the power of a US Marshall and had permission to evict farmers, shoot bandits, and investigate any potential acts of sabotage. The model of this organization was soon emulated by a new organization called the Bureau of Investigation, the precursor to the FBI. Just like the Union Pacific Police Department, the FBI still retains the designation of Special Agents for its employees.

Today, the Special Agents of the Union Pacific are currently investigating the barricades erected on the railroad tracks in Olympia. They have access to the FBI's National Crime Information Center database and can investigate anything related to the railroad tracks. They are coming to Olympia and will attempt to remove the barricades so the fracking proppants can reach North Dakota.

It is appropriate that the blockade be facing the same agency that birthed both the FBI and every major private security company in the US. All of them were created to protect capital and for no other reason. This is their only function. When the Pinkertons come, be ready to converge on downtown Olympia and help maintain the blockade. Support those locking down on the tracks or defending the barricades. Engage in swarm tactics and create new barricades further down the tracks. Help keep people out of jail, help everyone stay safe, help stop the proppants from reaching North Dakota.

For more information, frequently check #OlympiaBlockade on Twitter for word of a police raid and follow Black Spring on Instagram.

# ***Anonymous Communiqué from Olympia Stand to Officials***

November 21, 2016

To Olympia officials who attempted to invade our spaces to present the meaningless gray dribble you call a resolution.

You are mistaken to assume any claim of communication with Olympia Stand. We do not accept any compromised official into our action spaces for public relations purposes. Not one of you was ever invited in. Do you think

we would come this far only to invite you in to hear more lies? Clearly the City of Olympia and the Public Port of Olympia have no intention of honoring any agreement to protect Earth.

***We take special offense  
that your paper  
describes our recent  
event as a “standoff,”  
this is a colonizer’s  
portrayal of resistance,  
presented falsely, to  
confuse the oppressor  
and the oppressed.***

We do not believe a word spoken by your officials as your intention is to serve those who function to destroy Earth while pretending to do the opposite. Your individual benefit is tied to the very monster that destroys us, by economy and by belief. Your resolutions are presented in bad faith and carry no structural changes. They are presented as a ruse. Why would Olympia Stand waste time with you? Possibly you are

entertained by your resolutions, but we are simply bored. In regards to this letter, you appear only foolish speaking this gibberish, you are faced with the destruction of Earth and you continue to babble. What a waste of fragile time, what a waste of beauty.

It is not rational for you to believe you can change where we are by telling more lies and speaking more babble. This is very sad to us. It is sorrow. You can release yourself from sorrow by seeking direction from the Protectors with Olympia Stand to end your relationship with the destroyers.

controlled by the Democrats. In the unlikely event that it does pass the House, the Democratic governor has no desire to reward the local campaign manager for Donald Trump by signing his bill into law.

We are living in a changed context, more volatile and dangerous, but also rife with possibility. The encampment and blockade in Olympia is a perfectly contained, easily replicated model that can be used to stop petroleum from moving across rail lines. What allowed it to work was the intention of staying. There were no leaders to manage what happened, no professional activists taking charge. For those six days, everyone saw functioning, militant, conscious anarchism in play. All six days of it were glorious. Those six days will last forever once enough of you get the memo. Good luck.

***Check out the video Olympia Blockade: Direct Action in Defense of Mother Earth.***

## *Against The Port and it's World*

to climb on the train, the beat anyone who came close, they outnumbered the small number of masked rebels who held the streets until the sun came up and the morning commute began. Those lucky drivers were treated to a rare sight in Olympia. It is not every morning that the cops and the sheriff have to escort a train out of town.

This type of thing is only going to keep happening. It cost the city tens of thousands of dollars to clear the camp. The economic impact on the Port of Olympia is not fully clear. The ILWU longshoremen feel their jobs are being threatened, the conservative Port Commissioners want all commodities to be able to come through, the friendly Port Commissioner wants to ban all petroleum related products, and the hydraulic fracking proppants now sit under tarps waiting to be loaded for the next shipment. Nothing has moved since the blockade. The proppants are still there.

In the middle of the encampment, a conservative senator from Ferndale (north of Bellingham) told the media he was going to introduce a bill against what he called “economic terrorism.” This senator believes that anyone who stops commerce in any way is an “economic terrorist.” This senator also happens to have been the Trump campaign manager for the State of Washington. While the blockade was ongoing, a rumor circulated that a trainload of sugar had been unable to reach a Pepsi manufacturing plant because of the barricade. A small rail spur extends off the Union Pacific line at precisely the spot where the encampment was located. This spur is owned by the Genesee-Wyoming Railroad and travels through Olympia into the neighboring city of Tumwater.

The spur does not go directly into any Pepsi manufacturing plant or bottling facility. However, it does service the plastic company (AMCOR) that provides the bottles in which the locally produced Pepsi products are distributed. Oddly enough, all of the Pepsi products in Thurston, Pierce, and south Mason counties are manufactured in and distributed out of the Mottman Industrial Park in Olympia (by L & E Bottling Co.).

This Genesee-Wyoming rail spur also services a metal company, a pipe company, and a Bonneville Power Administration electrical substation. One small disturbance on the railway was enough to threaten all of this. Whether in North Dakota or Washington, someone clearly called in a favor to the Trump-loving senator from Ferndale and the result is this “economic terrorism” bill. It is unlikely to pass, given that the Washington House of Representatives is still

## *Actions against fracking in Olympia*

We take special offense that your paper describes our recent event as a “standoff,” this is a colonizer’s portrayal of resistance, presented falsely, to confuse the oppressor and the oppressed. We carried no weapons. We have taken a stand to protect and you sent in your militarized police force to destroy. You used public dollars to escort a private interest train carrying weapons-ammunition to be used for Earth’s destruction, you then take more public dollars as personal compensation for the horrible things you’ve done. While charging their chemical weapons in our direction, responding to facts that they are in control of nothing, your military did you no service. You have only exposed your interests and allegiances clearly.

We honored every code of humanity. You sent papers and voices filled with lies to hide the lies that were told before the last lie spoken. You sent liars masked in human faces, where our humans are only masked. You entered our spaces without permission, like thieves, you tried to trick entry, you openly violated our spaces with your uninvited presence.

As long as you serve to profit from the destruction of Earth, as long as you serve those who do, you grow weak as we remain strong. We do not acknowledge any imagined position you hold for yourself as authority or ally. No more compromises until our demands are met whole. You will see us again.

*Anonymous Affinity  
Olympia Stand, Protector*



# Olympia: Report Back From Barricade Standoff

November 19, 2016

Early in the morning of November 17, 2016, a coalition of law enforcement agencies, including local and railroad police, violently evicted the Olympia Stand rail blockade encampment in downtown Olympia, Washington. The camp lasted nearly a week and temporarily blocked the shipment of oil-fracking sand from the Port of Olympia to the Bakken Basin of North Dakota, where it would be used to extract oil.

The blockade action was, in part, the result of Port Fracking Resistance's years-long campaign against the Port of Olympia's complicity in fossil fuel extraction. But it was the groundswell of energy arising from both Standing Rock's struggle against the Dakota Access Pipeline and Donald Trump's presidential win that made the blockade possible. In the current context, everything has suddenly become that much more urgent.

Around 3AM on Friday morning, it became apparent that the raid we'd all been expecting was imminent. Police surveillance of the camp escalated and scouts observed police vehicles moving towards camp. The police forces mobilized a large number of officers and several dozen vehicles for the raid, including a handful of paddy wagons and charter buses for potential mass arrests, as well as many police cruisers and both marked and unmarked SUVs. For the duration of the blockade, including during the raid, a single engine plane suspected to be a federal surveillance craft circled above. This underscores the importance of railroad infrastructure and the threat posed by the blockade to the continuation of business-as-usual. Without this highly coordinated and militarized law enforcement operation, the train could not have left the port. The riot-clad cops secured a perimeter around the camp with crime scene tape and formed lines across the roads leading to camp. About 20 campers locked arms at the entrance to the camp and 8 were subsequently arrested. Small crowds gathered together outside of the police cordon, having received word of the raid. They chanted "Water is life!" and yelled at the police to let the arrested go. As the numbers grew, so did the tension and ferocity of antagonism toward the police. The crowd first blocked the police van taking the arrestees to jail,

initiators of "violence" and tried to disempower the encampment through guilt based identity politics meant to cause paralysis and inaction.

These efforts were ultimately counteracted, in large part due to the presence of indigenous people who were very pleased with the blockade and wished it to continue. Several members of local and distant tribes had already addressed the camp and expressed their gratitude, but for some reason this small faction of non-violent activists insisted something was wrong. The formal assembly was the only venue through which this faction could attempt to implement its ideology. Like all politicians, they need a legislature to legislate. Without this, their ability to act crumbles. These attempts at co-optation consumed two entire evenings worth of discussion. In total, the encampment lasted six days. Had those final nights been free of this bureaucratic constraint, the encampment would have been better able to prepare for what was coming.

The morning of November 17, 2016 was a delirium, half-dream, half-hallucination. Screams filled the air once the riot cops entered the camp. There were dozens of these cops, almost a hundred, and there were less than twenty people guarding the tracks. Group by group, people in masks left their houses and gathered along the edge of the police lines. The camp was entirely surrounded, there was no way to get close to those trapped inside. This was a huge operation for both the Olympia Police Department and the Thurston County Sheriff. It involved the Union Pacific Railroad Police Department, various City of Olympia employees, and an unmarked FBI surveillance plane.

Despite all this, a group of people in masks blocked the garbage trucks and forklifts entering the camp, they climbed over the equipment like wild animals, they ran from police pepper-balls and concussion grenades. People screamed at the police with all of their hatred and anger. They built barricades and lit fires in the streets, they chased unmarked police cars away, they tried to hold the tracks for as long as possible. But once the barricade was cleared two lines of riot police escorted the engine out of Olympia. They shot anyone who tried

*They built barricades and lit fires in the streets, they chased unmarked police cars away, they tried to hold the tracks for as long as possible.*

## *Against The Port and it's World*

During the first night of the blockade, a poor man who lived in a nearby shack walked down the railroad tracks towards the encampment. He approached the sound van and got into a fight with several people. Once he was taken away from the barricade, a few people tried to talk with him. The man claimed it was not a protest, that it was a party. He claimed everyone was part of the Illuminati, that they were sent to discredit real protest. When he was told that the Illuminati were not real, that the Illuminati was in fact just a centuries-old monarchist slur used against anyone who threatened their arbitrary authority, the man did not know how to respond. Unfortunately, another argument began after this and the homeless man said to the assembled crowd “mock me some more!”

The next morning he reappeared and began throwing rocks and slashing at tents with a knife. He claimed that the barricade was going to result in the police evicting him from his shack along the railroad tracks. After he was talked down from this conclusion, those assembled decided to move the camp further down the tracks. All of the couches and supplies were moved by foot and by car five blocks to the south. It was rainy and miserable that morning, everyone was delirious, but soon there were strings being tied onto every pole and in every direction. Tarps were hung up against the rain, all the tents and gear was sorted, and more people began to arrive. By the middle of the day, a massive impediment was placed along the tracks. Made of pallets, soil, couches, rocks, and wood, it seemed to grow on its own, culled from supplies gathered across town by countless hands.

People began to wear masks inside the camp. This was never questioned, given the constant surveillance of the barricade. Informal assemblies would occur, mostly based on need. Different committees were formed, the majority of them informal. The construction committee appeared but its purpose was soon diffused. Everyone built everything. The other committees fluctuated, consensus was never forced among the group, and an anarchist encampment was successfully established. Security was a matter for all and the dreaded “peace and safety committee” never managed to form. Only later, towards the end of the blockade, did the assembly become formalized.

A small faction of people began to spread a non-violent discourse in the camp. They demanded the blockade issue a letter of apology to “the indigenous” for endangering their struggle with reckless action. They demanded that the camp officially accept non-violence as its ideology. They claimed certain people were

## *Actions against fracking in Olympia*

then later blocked a garbage truck and climbed on a trailer of equipment, all of which was being used in the demolition of the camp. The police responded by firing pepper balls into the crowd and forcing people off the equipment and onto the sidewalk.

The crowd hurled insults at the police while a new impromptu barricade was built across the tracks in the middle of Jefferson Street. Police then fired several flash-bang grenades and advanced forward, removing the barricade from the tracks and slowly driving the crowd towards the downtown core. A stand-off ensued. Soon, the cops advanced again as fires were lit and more debris was thrown onto the train tracks. Another line of riot police stood guard on the tracks ahead. The eerie, heartbreakening sound of the train’s horn could be heard in the distance, moving closer. Eventually it rolled into view through the early morning mist, flanked on either side by a line of riot police. A few people tried to climb atop the moving train but were shot with pepper balls and jumped off. The train passed through the scattered remains of the barricade and the camp, headed towards the oil fields of North Dakota. The sun rose, and as the day brightened, the resistance faded into the city like a dream.

The camp existed for seven days. Within its tarp and pallet walls, behind the barricade, we saw what was possible when people gather together to collectively obstruct the normal functioning of capitalism. It is clear that direct action is necessary and that this is not a fight that will be easily won. We must continue to use a diversity of tactics, to develop our capacity for self-defense within the increasingly violent political terrain, to learn and share skills and analysis, to connect our struggles across issue and distance, and to find each other.

Giant piles of fracking sand remain at the Port of Olympia. The struggle continues...

# The Olympia Commune and the Blockade of the Port

December 19, 2016

From Transmetropolitan Review

It started out simply enough. Someone ran in front of the tracks and stopped a train. The grain cars attached to the engine were going to be filled with proppants for oil fracking and shipped off to North Dakota. It wasn't difficult to stop the engine, but there was no one else around, just two workers from the train company guiding the engine into the Port of Olympia. It was the afternoon of November 7, 2016.

One of these workers wore a t-shirt with the Weyland-Yutani corporate logo written on it. This is a fictional corporation from the movie *Aliens*. In those films, Weyland-Yutani is desperate to get its hands on the perfect weapon: a black, snake-like alien that stands taller than a person and has acid for blood. This alien weapon brings only death. It cannot be controlled. It will destroy anyone who tries to harness it. The train company worker wore this Weyland-Yutani shirt without affect or self-consciousness. He was simply doing his job. His coworker pleaded for the person to get off the tracks, he claimed they were only in Olympia to pick up some organic corn. This train worker was obviously lying. There was no one else around to help block the tracks and the police were sure to come so the person ran away. At that point, word of the shipment had gone out and people began to arrive with signs, face masks, and banners. While the train engine was being coupled to the grain cars, the blockade of the train tracks grew to almost one hundred people. When the train finally tried to leave the Port of Olympia, there were far too many people for the police to handle and the train was backed up.

The worker with the Weyland-Yutani shirt rode on the front of the engine through the gates of the port. He and his coworker went home eventually, having not lost any wages and perhaps even garnered some overtime. Inside the gates of the port, the ILWU longshoreman had already been paid for loading the proppants into several grain cars and were home for the evening. The

only people complaining at the moment was the fracking company in North Dakota, the politicians at the Port of Olympia, the Union Pacific Railroad, and a company called Rainbow Ceramics in China. In this manner, the blockade of the port began.

First a pile of rocks were stacked on the railway. These rocks were considered private property by the owners of Acme Fuel Co., the propane business adjacent to the blockade. The owners returned their private rocks to their private drainage gutter, but at that point a private citizen had brought their private couch to the private railroad tracks to block the private fracking proppants bound for North Dakota. All the while a private FBI surveillance plane circled the blockade, sucking up all digital communications.

Over the course of the day and on into the evening, the barricade grew to include tents, tables, food, music, and more couches. Every resource available began to flow from every person who wanted to stop the shipment of proppants and help the indigenous warriors assembled in North Dakota. Olympia sprang into motion as it has in the past, with every sympathetic house coming to life. The small locality spread information within itself, it assembled what was needed, it prepared itself for a long struggle. The Olympia Co-Op donated food, as did several other small businesses, and there was widespread support for the blockade among the local population.

The Olympia Police Department employs around 60 officers. On a random day, only half of them are on duty in a city of 50,000 people. Once the blockade was established, the Olympia Police Department simply didn't have enough officers to do anything about it. Their only option would be to ask for mutual aid from the Thurston County Sheriff's Department. However, there are only 54 sheriffs employed by the department and on a random day only half of them are presiding over 700 square miles of land. All of these officers would have been necessary to clear the blockade, leaving the entire county vulnerable to every sort of crime and disorder. It would ultimately take them six days to assemble the necessary resources.

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