

It's Not Just A Wal-Mart Problem **continued**

worker organization in our community and eroding the fat-cat, monopolistic stranglehold on the world. This is one of the biggest companies in the world. It didn't get that way by playing nice. So use precaution—we only have the rights we stand up for and protect. When Wal-Mart gets richer, the pool of wealth available to the rest of us gets smaller. When Wal-Mart becomes more powerful, we lose a little more power over our lives and our world. It isn't only Wal-Mart that is the problem, but Wal-Mart is a behemoth, the destroyer of communities, a parasite that kills its host. Though many point out that capitalism and the police state are the overarching problem, we must take this Wal-Mart invasion seriously. Wal-Mart will try and suck our community dry, and then close their doors, just to open them in another host community. Let's get them to shut their doors much sooner than that. The only way to reverse this miserable, impoverishing trend is to organize as a community in solidarity, making plans, decisions and acting together. We have to take back the right to choose what happens in our community; to decide for ourselves how we will address problems. It is our right as human beings to decide what institutions are allowed to exist in our community. If we organize together, we can change the balance of power, and we will all be empowered to decide what comes next. Remember Quebec, the location of what would have been the first union at a Wal-Mart in North America? Look at Quebec today, they've shown us a model, a participatory democratic direct action model, to build popular power to overcome any obstacle even their government and the police on the streets, the law makers and their laws. Nothing can stop a well-organized populace who refuses to be dominated by corporate rule, and who will not back down. It sounds like a tall order, but it starts small, with a conversation or two. Have a potluck or show up at the open discussion group, taking place every other Tuesday at the Humboldt Grassroots Info-Shop. Located at 47 W3rd and commercial. Get together with some friends and use your imagination. It can be scary, but it can also be quite fun. It is time to connect with people and build a strong

organized resistance. Whatever you do, don't wait for a request or an order to act, we all must do what we can. We need you. Solidarity is the working classes greatest strength and weapon; let's build it by using it.

Inspiration Cont'

me coming from someone who was one of the co-founders of Common Ground. In the process of founding and organizing such a successful Anarchist inspired organization, (that created something amazing in a situation most couldn't imagine), they experienced fear, doubt and despair, common emotional responses when facing repression, and showed us that we too can make it through and win together. His book, Black Flags and Windmills, tells the story of Common Ground and the hope that grew out of the ruins of the disaster in new Orleans. Blending the Anarchist Movement, the Black Panthers and the Zapatistas ideas and methods of organizing into common ground, Common Ground grew from three to tens of thousands. Common Ground was founded in Malik Rahim's kitchen. He was a former black panther and resident of New Orleans. Common Ground grew out of the absolute necessity of people to help themselves rebuild their lives after the natural disaster and the neglect that caused the devastation. The levees failed because they hadn't been maintained. Neither had the drains roads or any other infrastructure one should expect in a modern 1st world nation. After Katrina and the following storm the police and military did little but kill, imprison and be an obstacle for relief for the residents of new Orleans.

This is where Common Ground provided services and resources that had never been available to the community before. The organization was composed primarily of local community with volunteers coming in solidarity.

Scott will be speaking at the 5th Humboldt Anarchist Book Fair on December 8th in manila

November 14th cont'

complicity and fear under the protection of a national myth of benevolence toward a common good, and the moral authority of law. As if one needed to be highly moral and accountable to make a law, or care deeply for the community to enforce the law. Unfortunately, the opposite is often true.

Traumatic brain injuries are bad for organizing and bad for your relationships. That is why we can be sure as we wake up, the police state will try to beat our heads

in, like they did to Scott Olson. Olson is a two-tour Iraq vet turned occupy protestor who's skull was fractured by police when he was shot in the head at an occupy Oakland protest. He marches on with so many others who continue fight on bravely, in spite of having been gravely injured.

As we struggle on, let us not be fool-hardy or naive. Use strategies that will predictably achieve the desired results, and keep people out of danger. Some of us will be hurt, maybe even killed in the fight, but let this not be for a lack of trying to preserve our own and each other's safety. Scott Olson and I will wear helmets to protests from now on, and we encourage others to as well. We cannot decide how the state behaves; we can only determine our own actions. Be smart, be brave. Take action but stay safe. We're all counting on you, as you are counting on us. This fight for freedom, solidarity equality and a sustainable society is a war even if our side decides not to use violence.

We shake the foundations of the power structure; after all each of us is part of the oppression. This system requires our acceptance—if that is not possible, it must keep our rejection of their system from spreading to more people. The State knows how serious our challenge to their existence is. Just as in dictatorships, words spoken in rejection of this system could spark a rebellion that could spell their end.

I am so proud of the brothers and sisters on the front lines, behind the barricades, standing strong in the courtrooms and cages. I have love for those new to the struggle and undying respect and admiration for those who have kept up the fight for years. We will see you soon. In the info-shops, in the streets, workshops, at work and school, parties and shows, and art nights. Social problems are all social.

I'm looking forward to more people getting together in a non-hierarchical way to solve their own problems directly. I'm here and my head is better. I can lend a hand.

-Andrew Hamer