

A look at the evolving movement to defend the Atlanta Forest and how people can push back on evolving police and media narratives attacking the struggle.

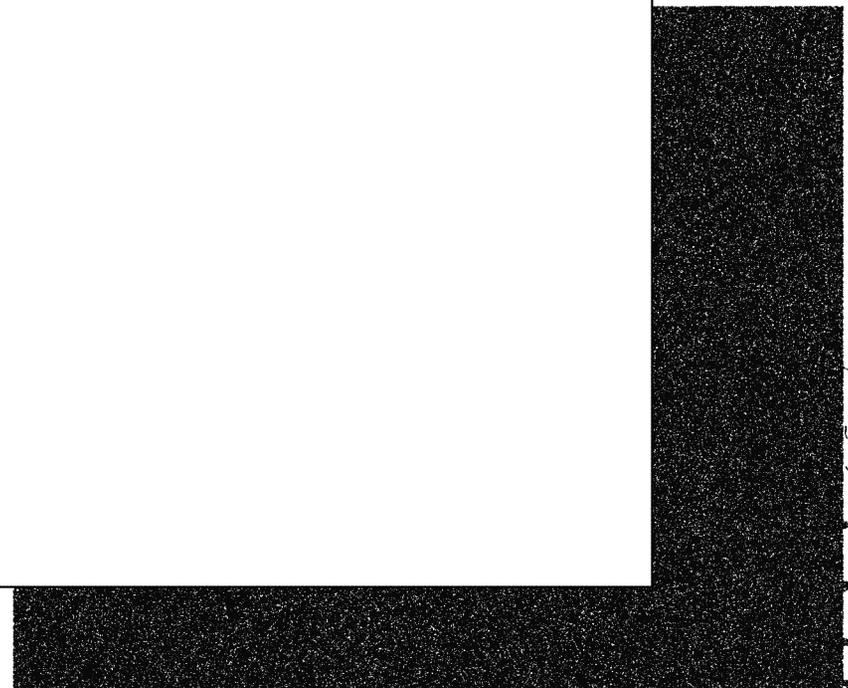
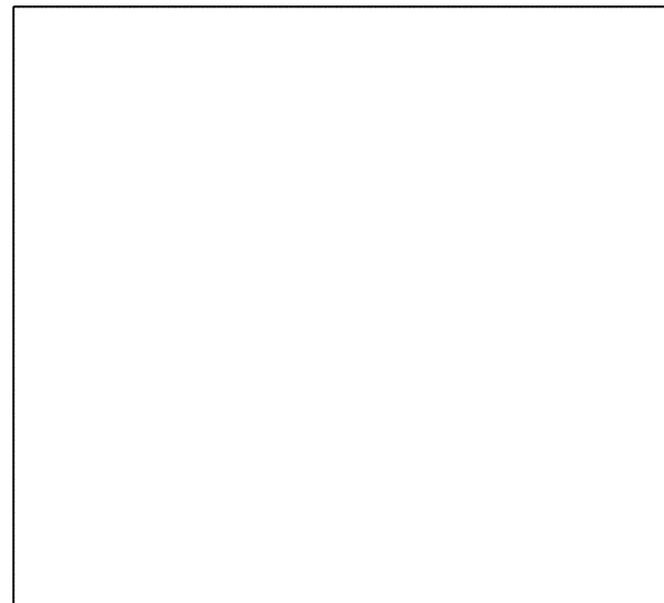
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Talking Back



A Pre-Emptive Response to Forthcoming Media Attacks on
Defend the Atlanta Forest/Stop Cop City

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Talking
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Mayor's office, and for all of the bureaucrats who rule by spreading confusion and deceit everywhere.

In order to keep the path clear, we will need to retain an honest perspective of what risks and obstacles we face on our long walk to victory. Let the truth be our frontline, and everything else will follow automatically.

– **Committee for the Defense of the Offensive**

Putin was behind the protests. Scare-quotes around the word “activist” is a fast way to demonize and discredit the enemy. Finally, pulling in unrelated hot-button issues allows local journalists to mobilize popular sentiment for the sake of sheer demagoguery. Careful not to push too hard in this direction. Some forces in the movement seem to benefit from the perception that they are frighteningly powerful with recourse to vast networks of support.

- “Advocates Say New Police Training Facility Will Help Ease Racial Concerns in Policing.”

This is the big one. In the previous decades, it is Black struggles specifically that have formed the main vector of social discontent. Social anger tends to pool into this low spot in the room of American democracy. If the Police Foundation can somehow convince people that opponents of police militarization are the real racists, then surely they could escalate operations against them, goose-stepping all of us into their unhappy future. This is a hail mary. If it works, it could be the death blow. The issue is that millions of young people already mock this framework on social media.

If the Police Foundation cannot engineer new mythologies about their project, they will continue to lose at every step. The movement to oppose Cop City has already made several serious victories in this regard, and consistently retains the initiative on information gathering and reporting. The current struggle will likely attract OSINT/OSINV specialists and independent researchers. This couldn't come at a worse time for the Police Foundation, for Brasfield & Gorrie, for the



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“We are on the timeline in which everyone loses,” a friend once said. It always felt that way. Even though we always tried, all of us, our victories were always innovations in methods, in discourse. Something is changing. In the forest. Across the city. Even more, it’s as if an astral plane has opened up. This plane, if it exists, seems to spiral outward in every direction. Everything is growing from one simple fact: we really intend to win. We won’t let them take everything from us, to pave over everything with condos and parking lots.

Hundreds of people ride dirtbikes and ATVs on a Sunday afternoon, giving shared meaning and purpose across three generations of small-time mechanics and adventurers. Music pulses through the trees as small groups find their way down the walking path, dimly lit by glow sticks, dancing beneath the stars for free; no doorman, no cover fee. On the edge of town, apartment complexes split the cost of bounce houses so that all of the children can celebrate birthdays together, sharing food and community in the warm Georgia sun, despite whatever challenges the work week holds. In innertubes and inflatable mattresses, thousands of people float slowly down the Chattahoochee with their roommates and friends, drinking beers in the cold water, a welcome joy from the downtown traffic.

Atlanta, this kind of framework could go far, because the power structure is maintained by so many grifters. Second, it reframes the most popular radical currents in US movements as something frightening. Cheap tricks perhaps, but probably sufficient for alienated audiences. On the other hand, millions of people across this region remember the uncompromising revolts for Black life triggered by the murders of George Floyd, Rayshard Brooks, and too many others. This particular lie would have to leap this tall hurdle to gain genuine traction.

- “Squatters Leave Litter in Local Forest They Claim to Defend”

Even though the Cop City and Blackhall soundstage complex would destroy the forest completely, it is always good to point out contradictions wherever you can. People are always looking for reasons to criticize things, and if you can manage to make them think that the people who are defending the forest are actually destroying it, this will probably be good enough for someone who needs a convenient excuse. Careful though. If people think too closely about the health of the land, this kind of story just may backfire.

- “Leaked Information: Are Local ‘Activists’ Mimicking Russian Cyber-Warfare?”

Once again, a question mark. In this case, probably necessary because obviously the answer is “no.” Happily, the reader may not read it correctly and since they obviously will not open this poorly-written screed, they will believe they read an article saying

readers to forgive themselves for not participating in the movement, since it's already full of disputes and hardships. Shame being so greatly available in the world, this is really a headline with mass appeal. At the same time, the movements decentralized nature seems to build diversity into its development strategy. Highlighting shortcomings may only lead to new mutations.

- "Who is Behind the Movement Against the Police?"

This framing has plenty of benefits. Most of what needs to be said is already in the headline: some conspiratorial group (maybe a wealthy banker you can imply without stating directly) is controlling protests, therefore the protests are not really sincere; this specific phrase doesn't name the movement, so it doesn't drive the viral nature of what's occurring; it recenters law enforcement in a movement that seems to imagine an entirely new set of priorities and possibilities for society as a whole. Still, perhaps it's not wise to kick the beehive given that movement researchers seem readily capable of tracking down paper trails and conflicts of interests among their opponents.

- "Racial Justice, or Anarchist Extremism?"

This is not a discourse, but it still has a lot of potential. For one thing, it implies that radical politics and anti-racism have nothing to do with one another and could lead the reader to believe that radicals were strange interlopers, instrumentalizing the common concerns and experiences of millions of people. In

This is the real Atlanta. The City in the Forest. And it is in danger. Of displacement, demolition, defeat. Everyone knows it. And we are fighting back.

And it is precisely this fight-back, this generalized determination to live a free and joyous life, that has produced so much resistance to the destruction of the South River Forest, the construction of Cop City and the Blackhall soundstage monstrosity. If you depended on the news, you would never know any of this.

Perhaps it is not too early to say that the media spin against the current movement (which will be driven completely by whatever public relations firm the Police Foundation hires) will be poorly written and unimaginative. So completely has the consolidated media apparatus degraded over the last forty years, one can hardly imagine that police spokespersons, editors, or city representatives will manage to construct fascinating, clear-headed, or invigorating lies. Since the articles are all hidden behind paywalls, the real talking points must be reducible to headlines and captions alone. Lucky for them, considering that the articles are all filled with embedded Tweets, misattributions, and inane quotations. Unless actual writers are given control of these companies, they will surely be totally replaced by decentralized social media platforms in a decade.

WHAT THEY ARE LIKELY TO SAY

We can already imagine the headlines they will serve up to the TV-viewing public. These headlines will be dully crafted by uncreative people, because they are

not designed to describe reality, nor to induce critical thinking; rather, the dominant media culture fabricates wholesale a consumer base for its commodified information system. It is the consumer who is carefully constructed, and not the prose, nor the images, nor even the headlines.

In this sense, the architects of this system are not actually writers or orators, they are more like advertisers, infamous for their poor taste. Even in this, even in the art of advertising, they are driven to the lowest and most generic market share, the middle road, the center of all opinions. Which is to say, they speak to nobody. They address a hypothetical audience. Only Fox News has managed to identify a real niche, even if they are all lunatics. The situation is pathetic. We can imagine an engaging informational system controlled by informed humanity as a whole, providing informed insights and research to people who need it produced by a community of peers and especially creative individuals. Instead, we suffer from the mind-numbing drivel of the ruling-class double-speak.

Some likely stories from the coming days, which will only add to the general stupefaction of the public:

- “City Officials Say Outsiders Behind Local Protests”
- “Community Members Divided About New Public Safety Center”
- “Officials Say Criminals Have Hijacked Local Protest Movement”
- “New Plans Reduce Carbon Footprint of Public Safety Center”

knowing, because commodities are not exchanged or sold based on their usefulness, but on their commercial value.

You cannot rule what you do not understand. You can only exterminate it, ignore it, incorporate it, or succumb to it. These dynamics we understand quite clearly. Our information is better, our imagination superior, our writing more clever. They work for paychecks and a bit of prestige. We are fighting for the things we love. For these reasons, we will win.

PROPOSED ALTERNATIVES

We have digressed from our original intent. We set out only to address the aesthetic shortcomings of mass misinformation. Naturally, there are reasons for those shortcomings, so it's understandable they would come up here. In any case, we believe that future stories about the movement, generated with the interests of the Atlanta Police Foundation in mind, could benefit from a new dose of creativity and genius. Since that is not likely to emerge from the opposing camp or the “intelligence” grifters they hire from the internet, it seems we will have to develop them ourselves. Here are a few headlines that may attract new followers to the cause of tyrannical police omnipotence:

- “Trouble in Paradise? Experts Say Internal Disputes May Destroy Local Movement.”

A question is always popular in the context of click-bait coverage. Furthermore, this kind of framework allows

ing feeling, that significant and lasting social transformation is impossible. If that were really true, they would not put so much effort into propping up the status quo with tazers and batons.

WHY THEY WILL FAIL

It is likely that our movement has brought more people to the forest in the past year than have visited the zone in the past decade. Furthermore, the research conducted by participants feels overwhelming. Typically the bureaucrats rely on movements losing themselves in discourse and political formalities. Not this time.

The Police Foundation still thinks they are building the Cop City. That is the real comedy. Brasfield & Gorrie and all the other contractors will obviously drop out of this development because all of the obstacles that lie before them.

The government believes they will win because they believe that money can buy strength. They will lose specifically because they do not understand that you cannot simply create power with annual budgets and a bit of technology. For every tool they have, we have something cobbled-together, something open-source, something free or discovered. They spend millions on what we neutralize for practically nothing. They are victims of the commodity system, they believe that their weapons and body language trainings will give them the competitive advantage they need to rule everything. If those weapons and those trainings were any good, they would have no way of

- “Public Workers Struggle to Protect Local Business as “Activists” Attack Police”
- “New Facility Aims to Teach Officers Less-Lethal Techniques”
- “Construction Company Under Attack, Just Trying to Do Their Jobs”

In just a few hastily-delivered “reports,” it would not take long for the Police Foundation to lull thousands of people to sleep. Aside from tiresome prose and excessive repetition, consider the ridiculous and drab photos they post of the South River Forest (We-launee). It’s hard to even imagine how they capture such ugliness from such a place. It doesn’t take long to find beautiful and captivating photography and films on the internet. Better still, it takes no time to venture into the zone oneself, especially now that it has attained a rather impressive autonomous status vis-a-vis the City Government.

Tarkovsky, a world and forty years away, captures the South River Forest in much clearer terms than the Atlanta Journal Constitution: “I don’t know what’s going on here in the absence of people, but the moment someone shows up, everything comes into motion. Old traps disappear and new ones emerge. Safe spots become impassable. Now your path is easy, now it’s hopelessly involved. That’s the Zone. It may even seem capricious. But it is what we’ve made it with our condition.” This is likely the feeling all living beings have down there, but you would never know it by reading the reports.

Condolences to those who have heard the Police

Foundation directly speak about this place. Perhaps this is the actual skill of the state-driven reporting strategy: convince perfectly reasonable people to believe in something empty and ridiculous.

WHAT THEY WANT YOU TO THINK

Imagine life if you actually managed to conform to the absurd demands the bureaucrats whip together with their clumsy talking points and half-baked speeches. You could have all the freedom to think, as long as it doesn't affect your life. You could express any idea, except for something true. You could do anything you want, as long as it was insignificant. You could sleep wherever you want, except for in the shade of some trees. Imagine having everything except for the people and places you love. They want us to plan for the future, while they torch every inch of the free Earth.

That some intelligent and captivating people are openly refusing this arrangement should surprise no one. It should go without saying that the average person does not even hear the strange and idiotic things the police compel journalists to say. But both the police and journalists constantly speak anyway. They are obsessed with us, but we are not concerned with them. So humiliating this must be for all of the repressive forces gathering against the movement today. The reign of the police is truly confirmed when the revolutionaries can imagine nothing greater than a veritable fight with the boys in blue.

But we do not suffer from a lack of imagination. Rather than embrace a back and forth with the shock troops

of the system, the current movement has ripped the mask off the Cop City project completely, targeting contractors, visiting the homes of CEOs, sabotaging infrastructure, embracing truly enthusiastic partisanship in the city, the forest, and all places of creative and collective life. When it has been necessary or opportune, the forces rising against the Police Foundation have not missed the chance to drive law enforcement out of the forest completely. This has been, by no means, the primary factor driving the current struggle, which will tend to become more ambitious and totalizing the more it advances. Naturally, this has been upsetting for those pushing from the other side of the barricades.

Attacks against this movement are completely generic. "Defend the Forest" (or however they will decide to name the forces taking shape all around them) will simply be the whipping post against which the stupefying pressure of the system will soon direct itself. This pressure, tested time and again against the Black struggles, the labor strikes, the wild resistance movements of the last 400 years, has some standard features and characteristics, and it also encircles all of us daily, beaming constantly from our phones and laptops. In general, the coming coverage is designed to pathologize free and brave people in the eyes of spectators so that the use of outright violence against them seems more reasonable.

They do not intend to isolate or discredit a specific group or movement, although that is what they say. Media operations are designed to give the impression, to give all of humanity the impression, the sink-