



## WORKS

should reduce their own politics for the sake of deferring to people on the basis of identity when these politics are not revolutionary, despite how uncomfortable it may make us feel. I do feel that I had a sort of vanguardist attitude towards the Black masses with my emphasis on the need for revolutionary “infrastructure.” To be clear, I was never a self-identified authoritarian; I always considered my politics anarchist. Despite this, when the rebellion came, I initially lagged behind the masses in terms of ferocity, strategy, and power. I do not want that to happen again.

Prior to the rebellion, I spent my time connecting with other Black anarchists and trying to develop an analysis around the Progressive Plantation and the lack of a Black liberation tendency within the anarchist movement. I felt myself drawn to abolitionism in the tradition of the Revolutionary Abolitionist Movement which learned from Nat Turner and the BLA or the Militant care of the Anarkatas who learned from Marsha P. Johnson and Kuwasi Balagoon. I read DuBois, Cedric Robinson and the Combahee River Collective. I watched documentaries about the Black Panther Party. All of these ideas shape this essay and I’m grateful for all of those revolutionary contributions as they shape my outlook in this moment.

I never understood my abolition rooted in reform. However, we did not live in a revolutionary era as I understood it. So, prior to the rebellion, I felt that there were many ways forwards for abolition whether it was “non-reformist” reforms or through the insurrectional attacks. If you had asked me prior to the rebellion if I supported “Defund,” I would have said yes. I did not see the actions in the rebellion as opposed to “non-reformist reforms,” but the rebellion revealed to me that they were. In reality, those reforms were not achieved. Defund became nothing. It was easily co-opted. #DefundThePolice was used to distract from the power of the insurrection.

The activists and organizers and academics (abolitionist industrial complex as I call them) co-opted the George Floyd rebellion. Every day, there is a new abolitionist book published which repeats the same tired lines about how cops don’t keep us safe and all that. Despite claiming to be revolutionaries, these academics do not defend the actions of the black rebels; instead they focus upon the actions of activists. Robin Kelley’s new intro to Black Marxism is a good reference for what I mean. He focuses upon the #DefundThePolice activists as the continuation of the Black Radical Tradition in his intro instead of the black rebels who fought police and engaged in looting. It is tiring. The Black proletariat stands alone. The audiences for these abolitionist books are the mostly non-Black petit bourgeois activist class who consumes them with vigor. Most of these books want us to “imagine a world beyond prisons or police” and to push for socialist democracy or whatever in the United States. While I’m not against imagining a new world, real solidarity means supporting the masses in their revolutionary action against the

