



cars across the street and form lines behind them. I remember at one point two young girls parked their cars hood to hood blocking all four lanes of traffic and on the other side of the cars, facing the police, everyone had guns. The cars were used as barricades to shoot from, as a means to stay mobile, as celebratory parade vehicles, and in general a way to confuse and intimidate the police. So I really think these two things particular to Ferguson, the gun culture and the car culture, helped to create and keep this autonomous police-free zone. Not to mention the fact that there were thousands of people participating.

Nikola: I'm under the impression, from a few accounts, that it wasn't just the QT that the police were afraid to enter. I've heard that they mostly limited their activity to West Florissant and that there were certain streets and certain neighborhoods they wouldn't enter.

Bart: That's definitely true. Particularly the neighborhood where Mike Brown lived, Canfield Apartments, off Canfield Ave. The police would not drive down that street. People quickly learned that, but enforced that also. And so as the night went on and the police would force people off the main strip, people would fall back a block or half a block and that was often where people would shoot at the police from. They'd drive down the strip and get shot at from the side streets. Anytime a cop did come into the side streets, people would fall back further into the neighborhoods. If a cop tried to follow further they'd get shot at from the bushes, from the houses, from cars. People burned trash in the streets so they couldn't come in. And so it was a repeated thing, night after night, that people would be fighting in west Florissant until the overwhelming police presence (including teargas and rubber bullets) forced them off the main street. They'd then either fight to keep the police out of the neighborhoods or they'd wait until the gas cleared to go fight on the street again.

Nikola: Thinking back to the Oakland Commune encampment, it is obvious that creating a space where police couldn't enter was crucial to that struggle. But what I found especially wonderful was that it was more than just a defensive zone; that it became a base of sorts from where other attacks could be carried. On several occasions demonstra-tions would leave from the camp; because media cameras weren't al-owed in, it was relatively safe for people to change clothes and put on masks there. On probably a dozen instances in the first few weeks of the camp, nearby police offices and vehicles were trashed. Do you feel that the space carved out in Ferguson, at the QT and elsewhere, helped to spread offensive maneuvers, beyond being a space to gather and to defend?

