



informal networks that exist in Rockford have provided an essential base to keep the protest movement going.

One group, the May 30th Alliance has done demonstrations outside of Rockford City Market, which has lead to it closing. This tactic has been particularly effective. The crowds at these demonstrations have been smaller but the vibes have still been very disruptive and abolitionist. The City Market is an event that began in 2010. It has been a part of the effort by city leaders to gentrify downtown to make it more attractive to businesses, white professionals and white people from out of town. The choice to target City Market in a sustained fashion is very effective. It is clearly upsetting the white power structure. On July 31st and August 1st, there were more arrests albeit these arrests occurred due to protestors blocking East State Street and due to clashes between “Blue Lives Matter” demonstrators on August 1st aided by the police. The “non-violent” nature of these arrests has lead to more supportive from mostly white professionals to provide legal and financial support.

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There is no reason for demonstrators to put themselves on a platter for State repression as some protest leaders have indicated. It is not the 1960s in a small Alabama town. The non-violence of the 1960s did not exist in a vacuum. They can fill these jails up and they have been charging demonstrators with felonies. Demonstrators should try to avoid arrest at all costs. There will be more revolt in the next few months as a result of anger around elections and continued economic insecurity, we do not want our people to be tied up in charges when that happens.

Revolutionaries in Rockford need to be engaging in political education and deepening our own mutual aid/community defense networks as the economic crisis continues to deepen. There were a few teach-ins in early June which were very successful in building relationships and bonds. In terms of political education, focusing upon deepening a local analysis of racial capitalism as it relates to the police and the prisons is going to be very essential in our city. The protests here although they are very abolitionist in their rhetoric and character do not seem to have fully developed class-consciousness. There has been no explicit critique of capitalism by these organizations. There needs to be deep development of political education around the tactics utilized by radicals and security culture. Both of these elements seem to be deeply lacking in the current moment which has made repression of the State more effective as participants are not doing enough to guard themselves and one another from repression.

