

FREE PALESTINE STOP COP CITY

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PALESTINIAN YOUTH MOVEMENT
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Knowledge must be presented in a manner that enlarges the horizon instead of restricting it.

-Louise Michel

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Enforcement Exchange (GILEE) program, the APD has sent hundreds of police to train with the Zionist occupation forces. And in October 2023, after Tufan al-Aqsa, the Atlanta Police Department engaged in hostage training inside abandoned hotels, putatively intended to “defeat Hamas,” in an advancement of tactics for the targeting of Black people.

With every such expansion, the ability of counterinsurgency doctrines to counteract people’s liberation struggles grows. The purpose of counterinsurgency is to marshal state and para-state power into political, social, economic, psychological, and military warfare to overwhelm both militants and the popular cradle—the people—who support them. Its aim is to render us hopeless; to isolate and dispossess us and to break our will to resist it by any and all means necessary. This will continue apace, unless we fight to end it.

Stop Cop City remains undeterred: on Friday, an APD cop car was burnt overnight in response to the police operation on February 8; yesterday, two trucks and trailers loaded with lumber were burnt to the ground. An anonymous statement claiming credit for the former, stated: “We wish to dispel any notion that people will take this latest wave of repression lying down, or that arresting alleged arsonists will deter future arsons.”

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In South Dekalb County, Georgia, the South River forest forms a canopy so lush and life-giving that it is referred to as one of the “four lungs of Atlanta.” This sprawl of green space was known as “Welaunee” by the native Muscogee people, who were forcibly displaced in the 1830’s. Swaths of Welaunee Forest were settled and cleared to make way for a cotton plantation.

This history encapsulates the twinned imperatives of the American colonial project: the displacement and genocide of indigenous populations and the stolen labor of enslaved Africans. Today, the Welaunee forest is once again imperiled.

On February 10, the Atlanta Police Department (APD) raided the home of Stop Cop City activists in the Lakewood Heights neighborhood of Atlanta. This comes on the heels of APD and FBI targeting of the Stop Cop City movement last Thursday morning, with the execution of one arrest warrant and three search warrants. Strugglers from the community have been repeatedly denied bond and subjected to unjust and humiliating collective punishment at the hands of the police and federal government.

The Stop Cop City movement has sought to prevent the expropriation of part of the Welaunee Forest for the development of an 85-acre police mega training center: a model town to prepare the state’s repressive arms for the urban warfare that will ensue when the contradictions of their exploitation and extraction become uncontainable, as they did in 2020 after the APD murdered Rayshard Brooks.

That murder, and all those that came before, were the lodestars of the Black-led movement during the George Floyd uprisings; their demands were no less than the dismantlement of the entire carceral system. Unable to effectively manage or quell the popular street movements, the Atlanta Police Foundation set out to consolidate and expand their capabilities for surveillance, repression, imprisonment, armed violence, and forced disappearance. One result is Cop City, which has been racked by militant sabotage, land occupation, arson, and popular mobilizations, in an attempt to end the construction and return Atlanta to its people.



As the Atlanta Police Foundation was unable to contain the 2020 Black rebellion, so too have they been unable to quell the resistance against Cop City. The press reports that the project is hemorrhaging money and is mired in delays and difficulties. For their part, the city, the state, and the federal government, have in turn employed every tool in their power to destroy the movement. Last week, the Georgia State Senate passed a bill to effectively criminalize bail funds in the state; RICO charges have been contorted to target networks of

support and care that surround the fighters; and last January, APD assassinated the comrade Tortuguita in cold blood while they rested in their tent in the forest. It is clear that Stop Cop City represents one of conjunctural spear tips for expanding the existing systems of counterinsurgency that span Africa, Asia, and the Arab world.

Today the system's belly rests atop Gaza, whose rumblings shake the earth upon which we walk. Through its Georgia International Law