

UCHICAGO REPORTBACKS AND LETTER TO THE ENCAMPMENT (updated)



1. Free Palestine
2. Abolish the University
3. Land Back
4. Fuck Gentrification
5. FUCK 12



29-30 April 2024

Northwestern University 2.0???

Uchi's encampment has been very disappointing. For starters, the community agreements are not community agreements. They are rules. One silly thing that they have decided for the quad is that no one can smoke or vape when it's the norm. They have also decided to declare that people will not engage with any form of authority while they behave as such. Organizers and marshals have formed an internal divide within the encampment. On day one of the encampment, members decided to take down the israeli multi-flag display, and marshals chased them down and took pictures of them. It says on the community "agreements" that people are not supposed to take pictures of others without consent. Does that only apply to people who do what they say? Zionists eventually put them back up with UCPD guards. If marshals are supposed to "keep the camp safe," wouldn't it have been a great time to block them from taking the flags down?

that? No. Did non-Black SJP organizers step in when their friends were racist? No. Black people who wanted to focus on mutual aid and community care this summer left the SJP encampment with anxiety and doubt. Black people left a lot of these encampments with anger, grief, and despair. Non-Black SJP organizers left that encampment with a lot of misguided twitter followers and a chip on their shoulders.

The last question we'll ask is: what's SJP going to do with the money they raised and can we see the receipts? :)

shut down the autonomous zine table, because "you're distributing anarchist media" and accused them of tagging one of the enclaves with an anarchist A & the words "Escalate for Gaza". Accusing someone of "criminal" activity and then trying to remove them from a camp is kinda wild. What does this behavior remind you of? Accusing people with insufficient evidence...basing the findings around profiling...telling people to leave because they don't want to do things exactly they want you to? Sounds like cop behavior to us.

But what do you expect from anti-Black racist fools? Anything outside of white supremacist standards has to be eliminated, right?

Several Black organizers, internal and external, were shut down during the encampment. They were silenced during meetings and only given the time of day when they had full-on breakdowns. Faculty walked around gripping their colorist bias harder than their purses when a Black man walks past. Did SJP do anything about

It was stated that the unnecessary dichotomy between students and non-students is irrelevant and would not be applied here. However, undergraduate organizers have been silencing grad students, community members, and other radical individuals who came to support the cause. They say that they want people to escalate for Gaza. They don't.



It was decided on day two that people could build certain kinds of barricades. When individuals decided to autonomously move the art installation a little to the left and stop people from walking within the encampment as if it ceases to exist, FJP came over. They policed and asserted respectability politics. They expressed worry about people walking through the flowers. As if they are not making that choice! As if people do not have free will! As if it is not a decision of the self! To blame community members for the actions of one is a pattern that has happened within this encampment. They expressed that they (they said “we” but there is no *we* here) want to lessen escalation, and we don’t want the university to retaliate against the camp.” This is not how the majority of the camp feels. The organizers agree with the faculty, as they have cemented the same points towards encampment members. The word autonomy has been abused tremendously within the last couple of days. Marshals have told people they can do things and they support autonomous action, but “we should all have a meeting about something before acting.” Organizers have said that autonomous actions need to be a group decision, autonomous actions are okay, and people want to escalate. But, individuals have to “assess the risk it causes the group.” People should “think about the safety of the group.” This is one

Great. However, most of you who wanted to have conversations wanted to silence those darker than you and those who have to deal with your drunken blabbering on our streets during the school year. The word "autonomous" was constantly whispered as if autonomy should be hidden and not embraced. The term "community" was either followed with the word agreement or prefaced with "outside". You guys were not too keen when it came to non-undergrads making decisions or voicing their opinions. The respectability politics in that camp were disgusting; they started with the disrespect of street medics and ended with state violence towards Black people with no support from the yellow yests. **Weren't marshals supposed to protect the camp?** Most organizers seemed to be focused on badjacketing and silencing anyone with the ability to understand why you should wear a mask and cover your face (newsflash: state repression sucks).

There was a lot of fear-mongering about "anarchists". Individuals were told not to check in on the Black southsider who was attacked on the quad, because "they're one of the anarchists". Two whites attempted to

It wasn't disappointing to see or technically not see many of UChi's SJP organizers say anything about the IOP. It was expected. It wasn't their event. It didn't support the hivemind they so desperately want. It made sense considering some of SJP's main organizers barely wanted non-students there. It wasn't disappointing, because alumni and year-round southsiders were already disappointed. As community members, we think it is comical that so many of these third-year and fourth-year organizers wanted to impress their radical predecessors with... what? a performative encampment? lack of community? anti-Blackness? We don't know. We do know this though: we've been laughing and rolling our eyes for weeks about that shitshow of a camp.

@ (most, not all) UChicago SJP: You failed. That encampment was embarrassing. Your predecessors think you were misguided and shady. Your neighbors want nothing to do with you.

We heard some of you were open to conversations and growth from older/more experienced/outside organizers.

example of how infantilizing yellow vests and organizers have been. This presumption that people taking autonomous action have no regard for the rest of the group is fatuous. The people escalating and taking autonomous action are thinking about the group. They are thinking about how to support the group with a diversity of tactics.

Autonomous actions do not happen after a "group meeting." It seems like people do not understand what autonomy means. Autonomous actions do not need a damn coordinating meeting and a schedule. They happen whenever and wherever someone feels comfortable. Mind your business, and you'll be fine. It feels like the organizers want this encampment for clout-chasing purposes instead of standing with people who deserve liberation. They do not want individuals who know what they are doing to spread their knowledge base throughout the camp. This could be a learning experience for all, but they are halting this educational process.

After encampment reflections:

The Casbah Basel al-Araj encampment seemed to be the high point and only southside encampment focused on liberation. It was led by radical alumni, southsiders, and comrades who care about the south side outside UChi's oppressive bubble. The division between student and non-student was non-existent. It doesn't matter when it comes to Indigenous solidarity. Barricading the "IOP building" was more than just shutting down a building; it was an example of what southside actions are capable of. It was an example of what determination can look like. SJP's encampment harmed people? Well, we're going to have fun and fuck with the university. Even though no one got to stay the night, we still messed with the university and their delusion about on-campus resistance ending.

Back to autonomous actions being shut down, there are zine tables distributing different kinds of materials. People are passing out flyers, zines, and stickers all around the camp. One table was approached by marshals and was asked to leave because someone painted "Escalate for Gaza" in a breezeway and circled one of the As in an anarchist fashion. The autonomous table was told that they should leave because, *obviously*, this table did it because they've been distributing anarchist media. This particular table is not a collective or an organization. It has been random people holding the table down and putting out tactile information that has frustrated certain marshals. They want to act as if this is a decentralized community while forcing hierarchy upon others. Not all of the marshals wanted people to leave, but the sheer fact that people felt like it was okay to accuse others of illicit acts outside the camp is not cool. People around them did not want them to leave, and this is another instance of the internal divide, with marshals saying that they're protecting the camp but choosing peace police instead. They say that they want to protect the camp, but they want everyone to focus on the respectability politics that they have encouraged. "We don't want to look bad. We don't want to give the university justification to shut us down." The encampment already looks bad. The

encampment is already antagonistic. These respectability politics help no one. It may give organizers and marshals peace of mind for everyone to contain their anger against the state by exhibiting passive behavior, but that's not what everyone's okay with.

Bring the Intifada Home

*Statement of Principles
from the Liberated
Casbah of Basel Al-Araj*

1. Escalate

We must escalate our actions against all governments, institutions and corporations who participate in, profit off of, and enable genocide. There must be consequences to their property income, reputation, privacy, and safety.

2. Interconnected Struggles

The u.s. and israel function similarly to create apartheid through policing, surveillance, land theft, displacement, and beyond. The Palestinian struggle is interconnected with the struggles of Black and Indigenous people on Turtle Island, the unhoused, disabled people, poor people. We are stronger when we struggle together. If you seek liberation, you belong with us.

3. Anti-State and Anti-Collaboration

We have nothing to gain by working with government, cops, or the administration. We do not negotiate. We do not share information about each others' identities. We do not seek permission to act. We lean on each other - not the state in any of its forms- for radical care, safety, and support.

4. Diversity of Tactics

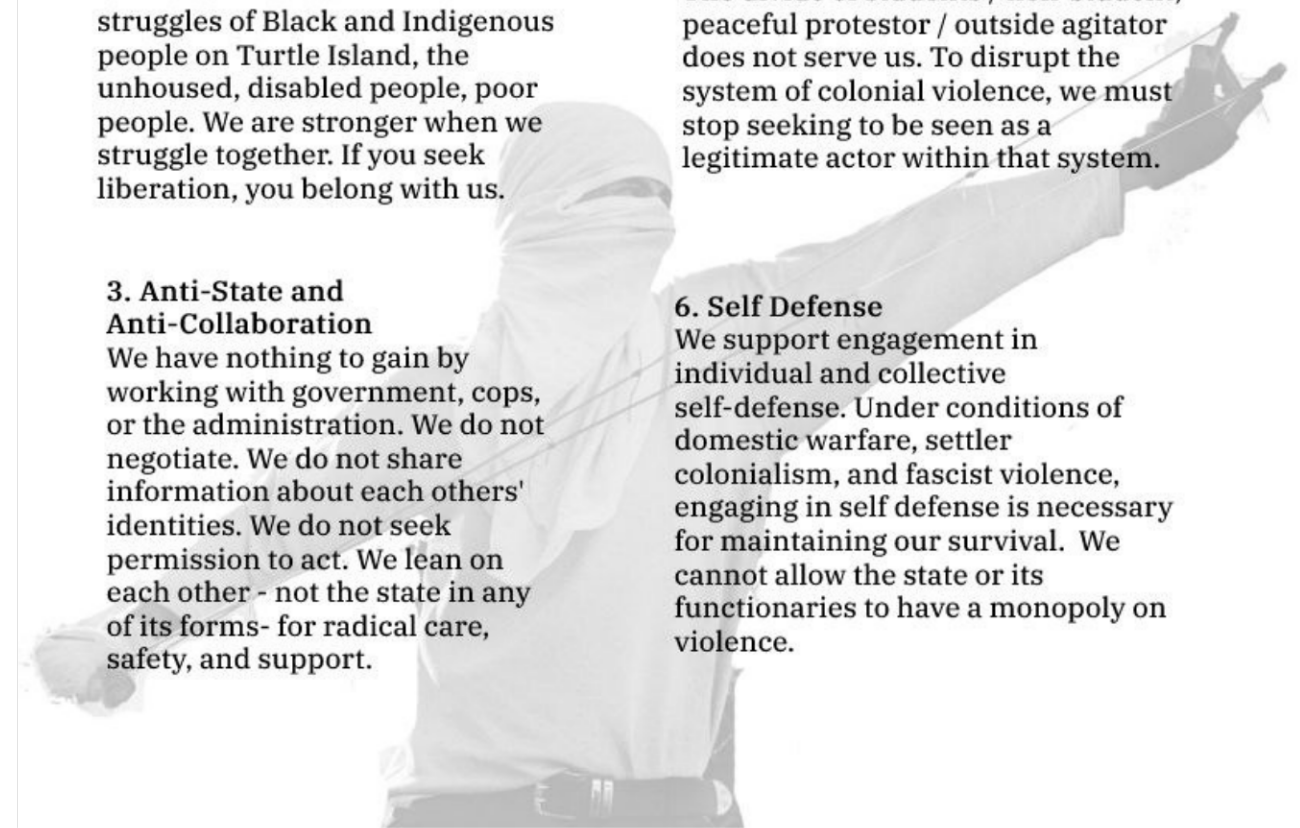
We embrace many methods of attacking our enemies. Whatever is effective, destructive, fun, creative, creates leverage, disrupts power, or changes minds is welcome. We refuse to police and surveil each other and remember the enemies are the state, the pigs, and the war profiteers.

5. We are all Outside Agitators

We reject the university's, the pigs' and the state's attempt to divide us to legitimize repression and violence. The divide of students / non-student, peaceful protestor / outside agitator does not serve us. To disrupt the system of colonial violence, we must stop seeking to be seen as a legitimate actor within that system.

6. Self Defense

We support engagement in individual and collective self-defense. Under conditions of domestic warfare, settler colonialism, and fascist violence, engaging in self defense is necessary for maintaining our survival. We cannot allow the state or its functionaries to have a monopoly on violence.



On the 3rd of May, the university emailed students about a possible meeting and told them it would not be recorded by either side. The university is attempting to intimidate and cause even more controversy/conflict within the group. Do not let them scare you. Form your AGs (affinity groups), read up on autonomous tactics: paint the walls, throw what you want, and barricade a damn building if you need to. You know your body and its capabilities. Listen to yourself and your trusted comrades!

Do not listen to anyone you do not trust and stay safe.

Tips: put an alphanumeric password on it NOW, put disappearing messages on for everything, delete all apps off your phone, better yet: put your phone in your house and leave it there.

Stop using safari and only search through duckduckgo.

Bloc up, wear gloves, and cover your forehead.

This is the south side of Chicago. You can tell who has left the UChi bubble and who hasn't. People are going to do what they want. Shit is going to go down here this summer. When students leave, UCPD does not. They continue to police and harass the south side. On day two, the police were attending to something outside of the camp. Someone on the megaphone decided to alert people to not worry after individuals went to check it out and exclaimed, "It has nothing to do with us." This is NOT true. It has everything to do with UChicago. UChicago is the reason why UCPD exists. This is a gentrified neighborhood because of this filthy campus. These rich kids and out-of-state attendees are part of the reason the south side is so policed. Anytime UCPD harasses somebody within the boundaries of Hyde Park and the surrounding neighborhoods, it is a student's problem. UChi students need to hold themselves accountable for their sheer presence and understand the privilege that they have. The amount of displacement that the university has assisted with is disgusting. This encampment should be for everyone. This encampment should challenge the university to hold itself accountable for not only helping out with genocide but also the destruction and displacement of racialized people everywhere. They have helped displace people in Gaza and on the south side of Chicago.

Indigenous liberation includes Black people. Indigenous liberation is about embracing autonomy. Indigenous liberation cannot happen with white supremacist values. Indigenous liberation when others are trying to force respectability politics down the throats of radicals. This is bigger than the atrocious deaths of Hind and Refaat. The true radicals in this camp will not be silenced. We will continue to dissent. Escalate for Gaza. Give Palestine back to the Palestinian people. End the invasion now. Fuck a ceasefire! End the IDF and for the love of everything on this planet, BLOC UP!

Another Black person, on May Day of all days, was assaulted by police while attempting to dearrest someone while a radical act was happening outside of the camp. They grabbed him by the throat and restrained him. A singular fucking person helped him dearrest himself. The rest attempted to tell him KYR training in the moment, which was somewhat helpful. The marshals again were nowhere to be fucking found. No one cared except for afterwards when the individual made an announcement.

Later, a Black organizer saw three Zionists circling the camp and heading towards the children's tent and rushed to the the scene to force the Zionists out of camp. They did not use force but were told by marshals to leave the man alone and walk away. The organizer broke down in tears and begged the marshals to fence off the camp to protect protestors. They left the quad because they felt unprotected. They were tired of trying to warn organizers about the possibility of sexual assault in the encampment.

We do not need peace police. We need community and autonomy. Do not trust the organizers and again, do not trust a yellow vest. If you want to be trusted, take off the vest and do what is fucking right.

Several community members have tried to tell organizers and marshals alike how encampments work. We tried to give them knowledge outside of academia and into the streets. South siders and lifelong Chicagoans who have spent their entire adult lives have passed through this camp to support, but felt excluded and unwanted. If we did feel welcome, we could have helped educate others and facilitated conversations about encampments and occupations that we have lived in/supported/loved. The organizers of this display were spoken to about their lack of transparency around finances. They spoke to them about their logistical strategy. Apparently, the organizers did not expect the encampment to change with the involvement of community members. This camp was never supposed to be hierarchical. Same thing as Northwestern. These meetings that happen every morning are performative. They planned out escalations with the assumption that everyone would center them, their expensive degrees, and their stuffy scared attitudes.

1 May 2024

Dear Plebs and other actual radicals,

We heard that organizers have been on a manhunt to find who wrote the first reportback.

Well, we're back.

This reportback/letter isn't just about organizers. It is about the gentrifying entitled atmosphere of that quad. Before we start, we want to say if you feel called out: this reportback is about you. If it doesn't apply, let it fly by. We also want to state that any mental decision to denounce this in the name of the moral crimes committed at Columbia and UCLA; you know for a fact that doesn't apply here because they are actually escalating for Gaza, UChi is not.

Reportback:

On the first day of this ~~occupation~~ performance, the vibes were okay until someone tried to actually show up for Palestine. By the 3rd day, the energy of that quad was weak and suffocating. It makes sense, though. Anti-Black spaces are always like that. A homeless community member was camping out with us (which is what an encampment is *supposed* to be about: building fucking space for everyone). Unfortunately, this man was arrested after harassment from a white custodian. Marshals were nowhere to be found during this incident. We thought that marshals were supposed to protect the camp from oppressive bodies and repressive forces, but obviously that only applies to UChicago kids. Organizers-without bloc as usual-ran around trying to find out the name of this man so people could provide jail support. What a beautiful gesture. Maybe it would have been easier for you to give him jail support if you all had given him the time of day and spoke to him. But wait! That would mean leaving your little trust fund bubble for even a second, right?

Throughout the day, zionists came in and out of the camp with ease. There was no protection around the camp. The amount of marshals that are stationed around that camp policing people for taking action and reading anarchist literature (which for the last damn time, we are not a monolith. That's kind of our whole thing). You see, there are organizers of anti-carcerality all over the city who want to organize, because they hated the cops, not these new organizers. The original SJPs of this fake nation state (not all) wanted to organize, because they wanted justice for Palestine. These newer ones do care about these issues, but some of the energy that came with planning this performance seems like a claim to fame.

For example, there is soooooo much concern over not graduating and the "repression from the University", while there are actual, raw af activists who have been in prison since they were 18 and never got the chance to go to school. There are activists and members of the south side who have never met their parents, because of the prison system. There are members of the community who cannot come to protests because of conditional release and probation. But, we're supposed to care about a degree that your dad paid for? we're supposed to care about a degree that you might have gotten on scholarship, but made you a gentrifier in the process?