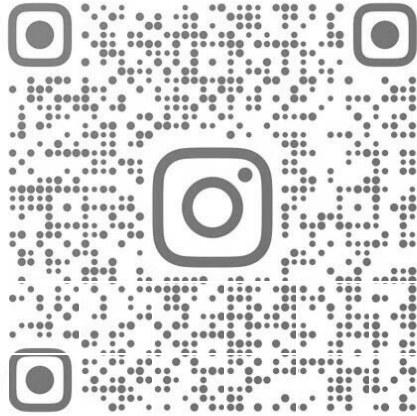


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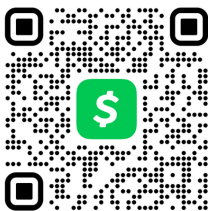
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OUT OF THE SHADOWS AND INTO THE STRUGGLE:

**Unite the homeless in
the fight for shelter
and against the system**



**DARE TO
STRUGGLE**

Unite all who can be united to demand:

SHELTER FIT FOR HUMAN BEINGS

STOP the dehumanization, Brutality, and Murder of Homeless People by Police and Vigilantes!

STOP harassing and destroying the encampments!

STOP the sweeps, roundups, arrests and evictions!

STOP the criminalization of poverty!

On the streets and in the encampments, the conditions that homeless people are subjected to grow more desperate every day. The brutality of police raids, evictions, and roundups keep the homeless “out of sight and out of mind” instead of addressing any of the real problems people are facing. Vigilantes stalk the streets. Shelters provide only band-aid solutions, and are often sites of abuse. Nearly 600,000 people in the U.S. are homeless on any given night. More than 170,000 are in California alone. Between 2007 and 2022, the homeless population in California increased by 22%. From people “couch surfing” or sleeping in bank lobbies to living in large tent cities, *how* they end up in this position has everything to do with the workings of the system we are forced to live under.



Tent city in Santa Monica, CA, 2021

Why is it so hard to find dignified shelter?

Under this system, housing is treated as a *commodity* - something which is bought and sold, not a basic necessity. There is no “right to shelter” let alone a right to shelter fit for human beings. Under capitalism, *nothing* gets produced unless somewhere in the process some capitalist can turn a profit.

The 2008 recession began dramatically with thousands thrown out of their homes, and the cost of housing across the country has gone up year after year since then.



Developers and landlords make obscene amounts of money from renters, who every year give up more and more of their paychecks to these parasites. The COVID crisis led to some temporary relief in the form of eviction moratoriums, but these were largely ended after outcry from landlords and capitalists who demanded a return to “normal”.



Photo: Sanitation and Police clear a homeless encampment in Placentia, CA. Sent from a resident of the encampment.

As for the police, enforcing oppression and exploitation is their job - *to serve and protect capitalism itself*, not the people. When it comes to vigilantes and “ordinary people” who chose to strike with their fists rather than offer a helping hand to someone in need, we see how a social system speaks and acts through people, causing them to *lose their humanity* in the process.

In opposition to all this, we need to unite people to STOP these instances of violence against homeless people, by mass collective action. This means putting aside petty differences and even real disputes among the people and finding common ground and solidarity among different poor and oppressed people - from those in the shelters and on the streets, to those in the apartments and housing projects who are also the victims of police brutality and harassment, and ICE raids.

Why does the government only deliver vicious police brutality instead of help? *Why do they keep fucking with the homeless?*

The people in power have *no* regard for the lives and the humanity of those who sleep on the streets and in the shelters. We need to look no further than the 2011 killing of Kelly Thomas in Fullerton, CA, where two police officers brutally beat a homeless man until he was unrecognizable, refusing to stop even as he cried for help. Despite outcry and protests, the officers never faced justice. Or in May 2023, when Marine Daniel Penny choked the Black homeless man Jordan Neely to death on a NYC subway car, even as onlookers pleaded with him to stop.



Jordan Neely, killed by white vigilante in NYC - May 1, 2023



Kelly Thomas, killed by Fullerton PD in July 2011

Homelessness is a THREAT to everyone else - "you will work for us, do what we say, and put up with whatever conditions, no matter how fucked up, or else you will end up like them..." Millions of people are just one missed paycheck, or one emergency away from becoming homeless.

No rational or sane society would allow this to happen. On top of this, homeless people are set against each other, and against other oppressed people, such as immigrants from countries ruined by the policies of the U.S. government. Reactionary mobilizations (sometimes involving other oppressed sections of the masses) pop up any time a new shelter is proposed or constructed. Conservative media outlets and the wealthy classes seize on drug use and violent crime to scare still more people into being more cruel to the homeless. While it's true that drug use and crime follow where there are desperate people pushed to the edge by the workings of the system - it is not the people themselves who are the enemy - it is the system and its enforcers who keep people in these conditions.

The Emergency Shelter System: Not a Solution, but a Part of the Problem

What about the shelters that do exist? They are not just partial “solutions” but part of the problem. Often run by nonprofits and private entities which pimp off the suffering of the people, these sites crowd people together, surveil and stifle them, even in the least abysmal of conditions. Restrictions on visitors, when you can exit and enter, whether you can bring pets or even your belongings inside present people with bitter choices. Shelters work with police and government authorities to conduct invasive searches and even arrests and violence within their walls. Arbitrary evictions and abuse from the staff await even the “lucky ones” who get in. In many shelters, bedbugs and other pests leech upon and carry diseases among the residents. In some cases, people choose to sleep on the streets rather than be subjected to atrocious conditions. This is not just a problem in one or two places. This is endemic - - it is happening across the country.



Photos: Evidence of the bedbug infestation at the PATH shelter in Placentia, provided by residents



Photo: The PATH shelter in Placentia, CA

All of these abuses and more are on display in one shelter that *Dare To Struggle* members in Southern California have been investigating through talking to dozens of current and former residents at the shelter. PATH, or as they should be called, *Parasites Against the Homeless*, operates a handful of emergency shelters across SoCal. Their shelter in Placentia, opened in 2019, has been ridden with bedbugs and other pests almost since opening, with no end in sight to the infestation. Lack of working showers and moldy conditions in the bathrooms, constant surveillance, and staff ranging from indifferent and aloof to downright corrupt and abusive greet anyone “lucky” enough to be dragged there by the police or referred by social services. Multiply this one experience by thousands, and we can begin to get a sense of what our homeless brothers and sisters are going through on a mass scale.