



Des Moines Mutual Aid Monthly

MARCH 2025 — ISSUE #25



HOMELESSNESS IN THE UNITED STATES SURGED BY 18.1% THIS YEAR ACCORDING TO AN ANNUAL U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Housing Justice is Not in the Budget

How our city budget proves that housing justice is not a priority

BY COMRADE JEN

On February 10, Des Moines began enforcing new ordinances criminalizing homelessness and sleeping outdoors, despite the fact that the city has not yet implemented most of the initiatives they promised to support our growing houseless community. When pressed on what this enforcement looks like, answers from police and city representatives remain vague and full of empty promises. More concerning however, Des Moines Police have stated that they “don’t have enough resources” to fully enforce the ordinances. The agenda behind this statement is both nefarious and obvious - a plea for more funding.

The City has proposed an increase of over \$2.5 million dollars from the general fund for DMPD in the upcoming budget. This combined with the external funds from fines, citations, and grants, would total nearly \$88.5 million dollars for DMPD and take 35% of the entire budget. This is far more than any department, with the next most funded being DMFD at 23%. Meanwhile, the department of Civil and Human Rights receives less than 1% of the allocated taxpayer funds.

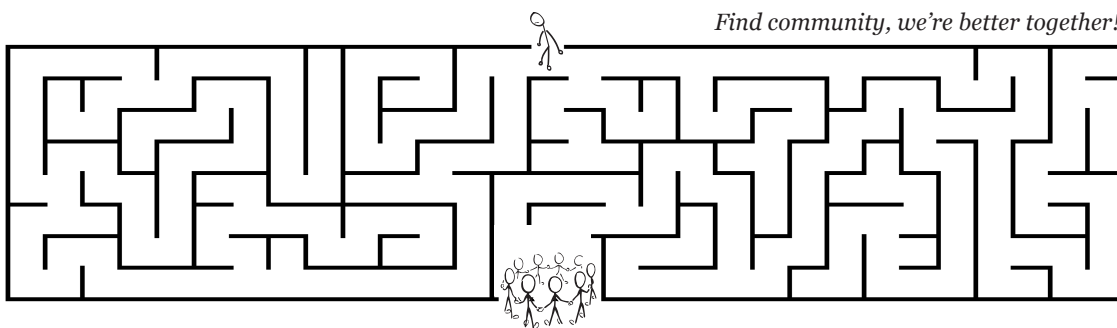
It’s no mistake that the city is increasing police funding while slacking on basic initiatives designed to reduce the suffering of our most vulnerable neighbors. If our city truly wanted to

help the houseless population, they would allocate funds accordingly and stand up to DMPD. Instead, the city council chose to pass cruel and violent ordinances allowing the police to not only torment our neighbors but to additionally use the excuse of having a “lack of resources” for enforcement to justify the blatant theft of our tax dollars.

Last September, there were 750 individuals on the waiting list for emergency housing. Using the model of tiny cottage homes proposed by local advocates, all of those people could be housed for an entire year with just over \$4 million or 4.5% of the proposed police budget. With this cut, DMPD would still be taking most of our budget though their services would be less warranted as affordable housing has been proven to reduce most crime, especially violent crime.

If we were to simply prioritize funding for human rights, we could free our tax dollars from the pig pen and put them back in the pockets of the people. ■

It’s no mistake for Des Moines to increase police funding while slacking on basic initiatives designed to reduce the suffering of our most vulnerable neighbors.



Recommended Reading

from an indie book store person in these trying times:

- ***The Message*** by Ta-Nehisi Coates
- ***An Indigenous Peoples’ History of the United States*** by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz
- ***Let This Radicalize You*** by Mariame Kaba and Kelly Hayes
- ***The Viral Underground*** by Steven Thrasher
- ***It Was Vulgar and It Was Beautiful*** by Jack Lowery
- ***The Faggots and Their Friends Between Revolutions*** by Larry Mitchell
- ***The Parable of the Sower*** by Octavia Butler (*really anything by Butler*)
- ***1984*** by George Orwell
- ***Brave New World*** by Aldous Huxley
- ***Braiding Sweetgrass*** by Robin Wall Kimmerer
- ***The Last White Man*** by Mohsin Hamid (*also Exit West*)
- ***The Fire Next Time*** by James Baldwin (*really anything by Baldwin*)

Get these books for free from your local library or from a local independent bookstore (NOT Amazon) (bookshop.org is a network of indies that ship everywhere). Alibris.com and powells.com are great used book providers that aren’t part of an evil empire. Once you’ve read a book, give it to someone else to read. Physical books are one of the last ad-free spaces to put our brains and attention — our time and attention is our most valuable currency. ■

“You think your pain and your heartbreak are unprecedented in the history of the world, but then you read. It was books that taught me that the things that tormented me most were the very things that connected me with all the people who were alive, who had ever been alive.”

James Baldwin

BY COMRADE CLAIRE

Collapse: A Sketch of the Enemy



BY COMRADE CRIXUS

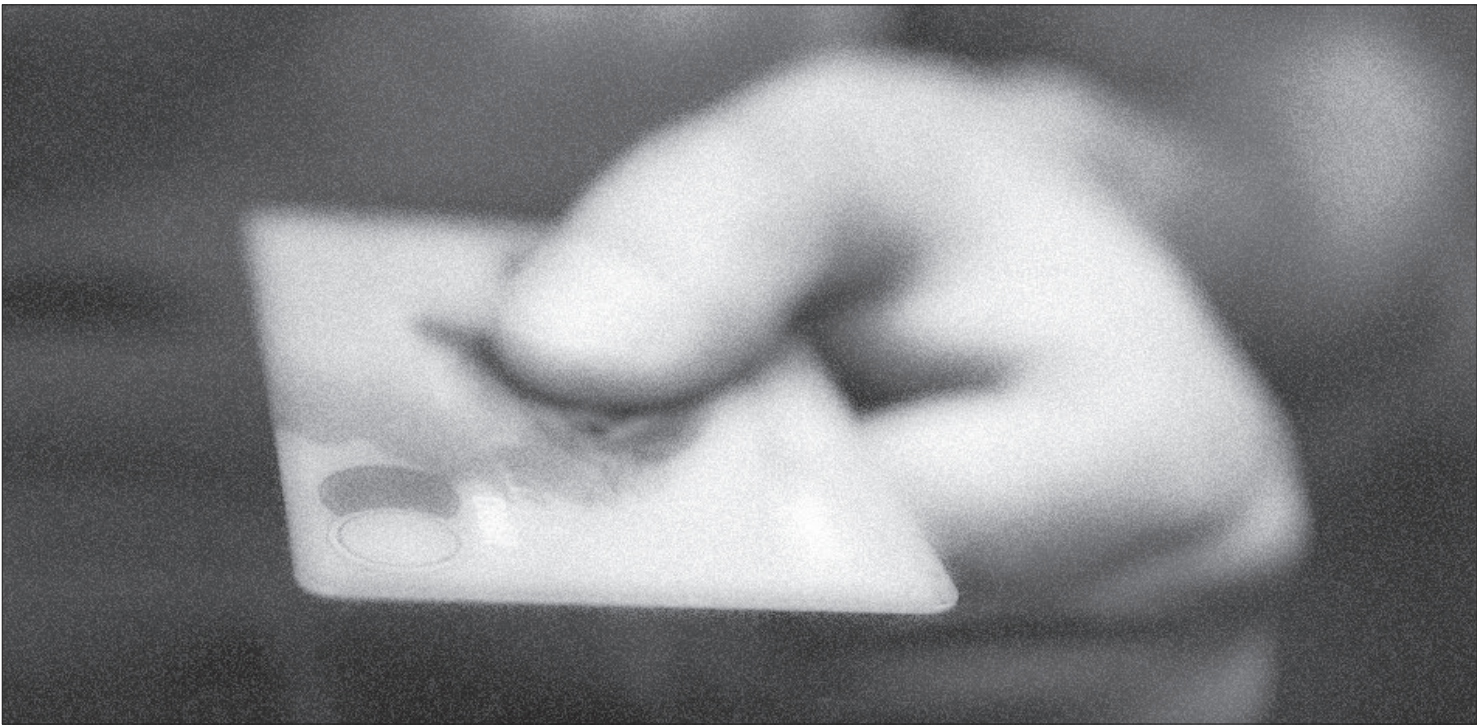
A defining feature of early stage fascism is the spread of non-state forces which spread terror on behalf of reactionary elements of the ruling class, prior to that segment of the ruling class taking power. This development takes place during periods of crisis in capitalism. No carbon copies of 20th century fascism will take place, but acknowledging the historic character of ruling class tactics can inform our analysis of new forces which are forming at this moment, when the American system has taken the initial steps of crisis. While our well-armed populace loses outlets within the current political structure, we will see the rise of these new forces, some of which resemble fascism.

A recent right-wing controversy has been the H1-B visa issue. Visas issued to foreign professionals “take” jobs away from Americans, who would demand higher wages. Many on the right hoped a Trump presidency would end the program, but he has indicated that he will continue it.

Those opposed to fascist violence would do well to follow the political trends which trail in the wake of American disintegration.

This has revealed a larger fracture on the right. The Musk faction representing Silicon Valley, and the Bannon faction, representing open fascists who see their long-held historical elevation dissipating. Having taken the side of Silicon Valley, Trump sends a signal to his vulgar fascist backers that he is not their man. Their rage will fuel fascist militias and violence. This backlash can be weaponized by people on the fringes of power now, used to ride a new wave of mass support to fill the void Trump leaves.

Those opposed to fascist violence would do well to follow the political trends which trail in the wake of American disintegration. Monumental changes are upon us. While they are to be celebrated given the potential opportunity they open for revolution, this will also accelerate the anti-human tendencies present in massive portions of the population. ■



“FOR THE MASTER’S TOOLS WILL NEVER DISMANTLE THE MASTER’S HOUSE.” — AUDRE LORDE

Shopping Local

Liberal Petty Bourgeois Back Patting is no Means for Revolution

BY COMRADE JACK

We hear “shop local” and “support local businesses” echoed throughout our lives. We read it in shops, we see it on TV, and we may even hear it at a protest. These words are something that should infuriate every revolutionary and should be criticized and struck down as soon as they come up. The notion that the working class can exercise its will by funneling money into the hands of the local business owners (*petty bourgeois*) is asinine. If the aim is not to eliminate capital, then the action simply amounts to who the working class will accept as their next oppressors. We should not accept the rule of the local exploiter any more than we allow the rule of the big exploiter, e.g. the real bourgeois.

One cannot be so oblivious as to think that the money they pay to the petty bourgeois will cycle back into the “community”, because it should be apparently obvious that it does not do so in the larger sense of the entire capitalist economy. We should only infer that capital in the local sense

will only be accumulated by the local capitalist, while the local working class continues to spiral into destitution at the hand of their local business people. Often, the local businesses have nothing to offer the working class but overpriced commodities only obtainable by affluent middle class workers or the petty bourgeois themselves. They have nothing to offer us that the bourgeois cannot already.

If the point of shopping locally is to “build community”, we should not wish to share community with someone who only sees our presence and our being as an opportunity for a transaction. The working class must see through this absurdity. We cannot find community with those whose occupation is to extract what little we have for merely existing in the space they “own.” We do not want owners, we want the liberation of those who are owned. We should build our community with them and struggle with them to destroy that which owns us: capital. We must carry out this liberation by our own determination. We must recognize this as the

If the point of shopping locally is to “build community”, we should not wish to share community with someone who only sees our presence and our being as an opportunity for a transaction.

truth for ourselves, and insist that the local business owners do so as well. Those who can are welcome in our struggle for revolution. If our revolution is contingent on the purchasing of a woefully condescending t-shirt from Raygun, we are doomed. ■

Fund Fuck the Police

We’re out of time, Bobby

BY SUBCOMADANTE RONNIE

Thirty-four years ago, on March 3rd, 1991, unarmed Rodney King was brutally beaten by the LAPD. This horrific event was captured on film and became one of the first viral videos of police brutality. All officers were acquitted of wrongdoing the next year — and the city of LA went up in flames.

Here in Des Moines, the pigs have killed at least three people in the first quarter of 2025, and have committed countless brutal beatings and other uses of force.

Currently the city is fighting in court to keep DMPD ‘Use of Force’ reports confidential, having previously been ordered to turn them over by a lower court. An oral argument before the Iowa Supreme Court was held February 18th, the decision will follow later this year.

What links LA to Ferguson, Minneapolis to Des Moines, is not that these locations made some bad hiring decisions, that result in *families being destroyed by death and prison*, it is that the pigs are an armed occupation of our neighborhoods, the local military for the wealthy. It is that the pigs are an armed occupation of our neighborhoods, the local military for the wealthy. Their job is to make the territory they prowl a safe place for those that hoard and withhold resources from the rest of us - the capitalist class.

The only solution to police murders is a complete abolition of the police and the state. We encourage you to reflect on what we have lost as a society by delegating so many of our responsibilities to snarling pigs who are armed to the teeth and programmed to kill. ‘Defunding’ or ‘reforming’ the pigs is tantamount to bowing to their authority - and surrendering over power that we possess.

Fuck the Police, Power to the People. ■

