



“SAFETY”

Try not to roll
your eyes.

“Safety for staff. Safety for incarcerated. Dignity for all.”

In less than 100 days, Johnson County will ask the public to authorize nearly \$100 million of debt to build a bigger, brand-new jail. The proposal is murky — what the public will be voting on isn’t even set yet — but the back-the-blue establishment forces are out ginning up literal copaganda.

The slogan itself suggests it has had as much input from a wide array of stakeholders as the proposed new jail has. That is to say almost none.

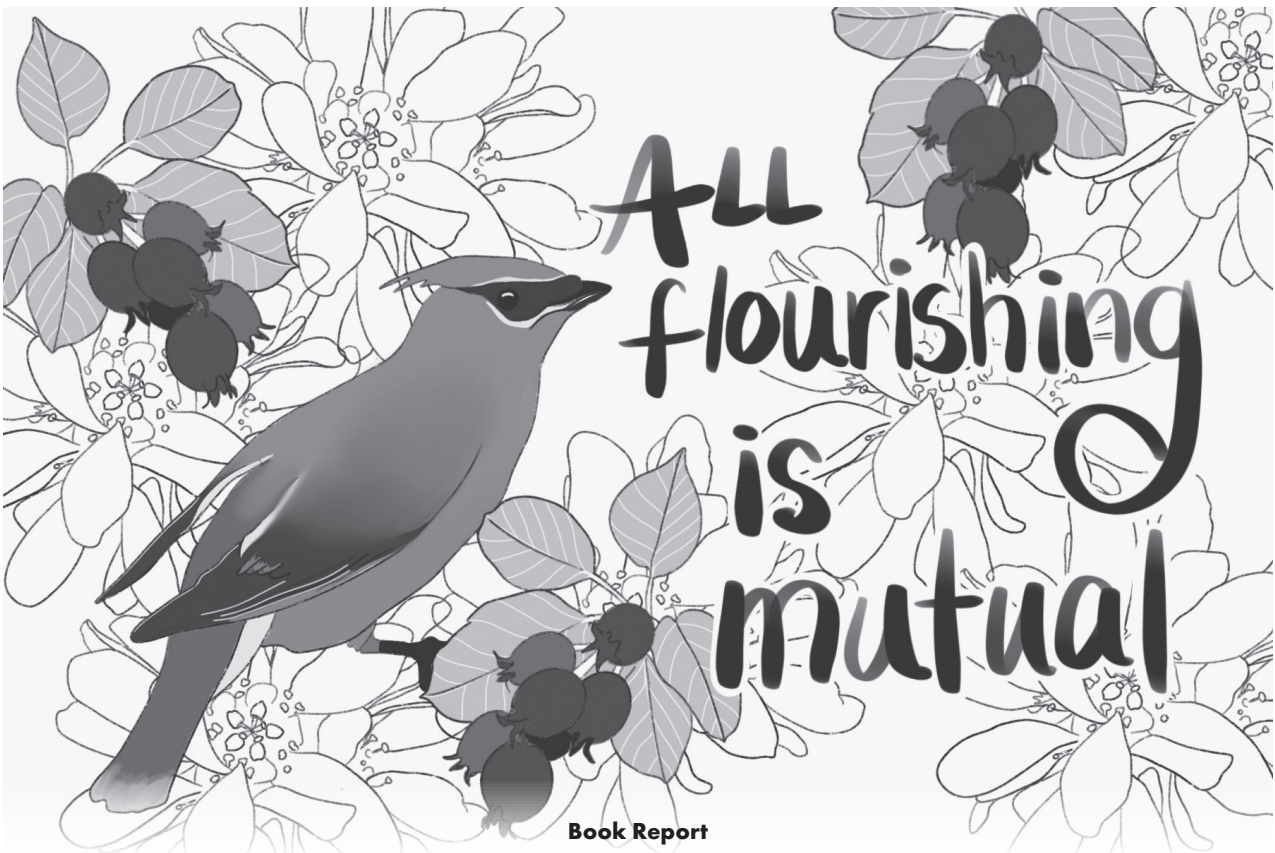
The second bullet point of Johnson County’s pro-jail political action committee’s argument, “safety for incarcerated,” is perhaps the most telling: the people incarcerated under the care of Sheriff Brad Kunkel aren’t even worthy of a noun. You can almost hear them try to make it a complete sentence with a rising-intonation “people... question mark?”

One imagines it’s difficult for a bunch of cops (Sheriff Kunkel has provided the PAC about half of its initial financial support according to public filings) to refer to anyone in the jail as anything other than “criminals” or “bad guys.” Perhaps better, from a marketing perspective, to avoid any noun at that point.

After all, there’s a back-drop to this nearly \$100 million ask: Sheriff Kunkel, several deputies, Johnson County, and other officials are currently being sued for letting Nate Davis Jr. die of alcohol withdrawal while under their care at the jail in 2024. Alcohol withdrawal is common and expected in jails and prisons, especially people serving time for operating while intoxicated as Davis was. Alcohol withdrawal is also easy to treat if attended to with Valium, the same common medication used to treat anxiety, and a bare minimum of human care and decency.

No amount of compassion, chumminess, or kindness can offset the literally fatal flaw of letting a man under the care of Johnson County and its sheriff die. No new building would have provided Davis with medical treatment that was more than the four-minutes

“SAFETY,” cont’d on back



THE SERVICEBERRY: ABUNDANCE AND RECIPROCITY IN THE NATURAL WORLD

By Robin Wall Kimmerer

All flourishing is mutual. When people discuss and think about economics they often aren’t thinking of the natural world. Robin invites us to think differently about our relationship with economics. How can our economic systems mirror the abundant and giving nature of the natural world?

Our current economic system, colonial capitalism, perpetuates and operates through scarcity. Resources are scarce and demand is so high that we must continue to increase prices and extract more from the earth to meet our needs. Inevitably, some people will go without.

What is a gift economy? “In a gift economy wealth is understood as having enough to share, and the practice of dealing with abundance is to give it away.

In fact, status is determined not by how much one accumulates, but by how much one gives away. The currency in a gift economy is relationship, which is expressed as gratitude, as interdependence, and the ongoing cycles of reciprocity.”

We can have an economy that does not rely on ongoing extraction from the earth and a scarcity mindset. People practice gift economies on a smaller scale often. When you grow too many tomatoes and give some to a friend. When you make extra food and offer it to your neighbor. When you give lesser used clothing to a family member. These are all examples of giving a resource that we have an abundance of to others in our community. Robin reminds us that there is an even larger scale

gift economy that exists in almost every city, the library. Collectively, we create the infrastructure to have books, digital media, wi-fi, meeting space, etc. that is shared with the entire community through a set of guidelines that we all agree to. This is a large-scale gift economy.

“A gift economy nurtures the community bonds that enhance mutual well being; the economic unit is ‘we’ rather than ‘I.’”

Colonial capitalism is responsible for land theft, over extraction, and subsequently climate collapse and deep disconnection from the land.

“When the natural world is understood as a gift instead of private property, there are ethical constraints on the accumulation of abundance that is not yours to own. Gifts are not meant to be hoarded, and thus

made scarce for others, but given away, which generates sufficiency for all.”

As humans we come from the earth as well. We are part of nature. Therefore, it would make sense to observe the natural world and use those observations to shape systems. Large scale degrowth is necessary for our survival. We will not survive inevitable climate collapse without a halt to extraction and restructuring our communities. Robin asks us to think about reorienting our relationship with resources as a necessary step towards a cultural shift of our communities. Viewing resources not as an extractable item to be hoarded and sold for a profit, but as a gift from the earth. Not to be taken, but received, and received with gratitude.

—CLIF

Reprint

OPEN LETTER TO THE WHITE LEFT IN THE U.S.

The White Left in the U.S. is bankrupt. This comes as news only to those in the White Left who absurdly believe otherwise, or who somehow confuse their sincerity with revolutionary politics. The White Left (New and Old) has become a necessary adjunct to the entire process of White bourgeois socialization in the U.S. It can be honestly said that the Leftist parties and associations of the U.S. are as necessary to the perpetuation of racism and White class domination as the middle class institutions of the status quo.

In the U.S., the White Left in general and the large communist and socialist parties in particular have long since relinquished any revolutionary claim hysterically directed at them by the reactionary, major political parties of the status quo. No longer does the White Left support the ultimate cause of the working class and its historical revolutionary role. Instead, the White Left subsumes its hunger for White bourgeois legitimacy behind marxist rhetoric and intellectual lip masturbation. The White Left and its major organizations support only “safe,” tame, reformist struggles, labelling all who would go further in developing revolutionary contradictions as “adventurists.”

The racist character of the White Left is concealed behind a progressive pretense only one step- removed from White bourgeois liberalism. Seldom, if ever, does the White Left support the right of Black people to national self-determination, and their right to organize an armed capacity to resist the aggression of the European Amerikan Capitalist State. Instead, the White Left supports individual cases of perceived “racism,” “injustice,” or “sexism,” therein paying their obligatory dues. We are counselled that Black peoples’ struggle must await conscious development of the White working class, and even further: that Black Nationalist divides the U.S. working class movement. The implication of this line is clear: “Niggers need White folks’ approval “ in order to proceed along their own historical road, begun with the introduction of the first

OPEN LETTER, cont’d on back

MUTUAL AID RIDES

TUESDAY JUNE 30

6:30P TO 8P JULY 28

AUG 25

SEPT 29

OCT 27



OPEN LETTER, cont'd

African slaves into colonial america. The historical continuum of Blacks and Whites in the U.S. in conveniently butchered to conform with contemporary White left cowardice and racism, effectively absolving them of revolutionary responsibility during the present epoch.

The socialist and communist intellectual Black bourgeoisie are no better than their White counterparts, especially when these blacks are members of the bourgeois white leftist parties. These slick punks of the left view with contempt and fear all political Black activists that do not conveniently fit into the mass line of their respective organizations, organizations dominated by political gradualism, opportunism, and “time is not rightism.” These Blacks wax very intellectual in their contempt for the extremism of the Black Nationalist left. How dare a lower class Black show more dedication to an ideal than they — by putting their lives on the line for their beliefs? The urgency felt by revolutionary BlacksNationalists under the jackboot of the repressive capitalist state, while a catalyst for revolutionary action for some, is a reason for cowardice in others who do not share the same sense of urgency. The White Left does not share our sense of urgency because they do not share our reality and perceive the historical destiny of Blacks as identical to their own, instead of as related. Such false notions would be quickly dispelled with a materialist analysis of american history.

Yet the bankruptcy of the White Left in the U.S. is not unique to these shores. Nor does it only apply to Black/White relationships of the Left. It (White Left bankruptcy) is a symptom of the socio-economic development in the capitalist West, where the power and control of capital have looted the western communist parties of their revolutionary vitality by effectively arresting the selfidentity of the industrial working classes.

“SAFETY,” cont'd

of a physician’s assistant at his cell’s food delivery port he actually received. The sheriff cared about the people in his care, he could show us now before being rewarded with his \$100 million dream jail.

Team Jail, which is being led by a former banker and a local plumbing supply mogul, cannot even see the inappropriateness of all this.

Let’s move to the slogan’s first point, which isn’t first by accident: “safety for staff.” Law enforcement officers are already some of

Consequently, the bankruptcy fo the White Left has internal implications and affects the White Left’s relationship to itself and to the very working classes they would lead. This contradiction is manifested in the position of most western communist parties to the younger, more militant european “New Left” groupings. The concept of euro-communism is its most putrid feature. Almost a hundred years ago, Marx asserted: a working class “at rest” has no identity. He did not mean objectively it was not a working class, but that subjectively, revolutionary consciousness of itself as a revolutionary class for itself was precluded without active struggle against its class enemy. Because the communist parties of Western Europe and in most Latin American countries view bourgeois legitimacy as primary instead of secondary, these parties actively collaborate with the forces of reaction and capital.. They do so in order to secure a legitimacy that only the entrenched bourgeoisie and capitalist can bestow, for even the most revisionist communist must agree that capitalism is a dictatorship of the capitalist class, regardless of the political organization such a dictatorship may assume. Accordingly, a communist party unwilling to push the contradictions of working class struggle beyond the legality of bourgeois reformism and unionism will itself be determined by that reformism, Hence, the working class such a party would pretend to lead will be led down the path of its natural class enemy. Chile is a case in point of such folly.

When it comes to colonialism, international and domestic, the bankruptcy of the left is just as evident. In each ex-colonial european western capitalist nation, the traditional White left has acted as a moderating voice against the colonial policies of their bourgeoisie. This, while good in itself, masks the class collaborationist nature of the White European Left. Never did the European left

the most protected — both physically in the work they do and shielded by the law itself — public employees we have. It is riskier to be a garbage collector, animal control officer, public works labor, or a groundskeeper than a law enforcement officer, and many of these public servants are paid less and play a more vital role in our communities.

If law enforcement is truly “putting their lives on the line every day,” as a person at a recent forum said echoing the common back-the-blue refrain, why do we not say that same thing about roof-

ascend to the principled level of unconditional revolutionary support for the national liberation movements themselves. Why? Was it because in each ex-colonial, capitalist nation the White left still identified with the narrow, racial and national interests of their own country, and hence, with the interests of their own national bourgeoisie? Or was it because identification with, and full support of, Third World liberation movements would erode white left “legitimacy” at home? Apparently the answer is both classnational collaboration and political expediency. So much for theories of unity between international working classes, especially when they apply to under-developed peoples of color with little or no modern working class to speak of.

It should come as no surprise then, that the White left in modern western nations is inhibited by their own urge for bourgeois legitimacy, by their own cultural racism, and by the very process of western, working class cooptation. The sum of these parts add up to the revolutionary bankruptcy of the traditional White left in the modern capitalist nations.

Rather than grasp this concept and the revolutionary obligations that flow from it, the White left and white communists fall into the pits of over-intellectualism and endless debate over who has the locks on the ultimate truth — who retains the undistilled pure ideology of marxism. Subjectively, most White leftists do not want to deal with the funky, unvarnished, stomped down in the gutter truth. So they devise all types of subjective reasoning for such avoidance of reality. This manifests itself in the attitudes of some White leftists. When a Black man, hard pressed by the very realities that “would-be” leftists conveniently avoid, is less than humble, reasonable, and convenient, he is immediately branded arrogant and prideful, and hence worthy of being politically ignored. Other defensive attitudes then follow: A Black man

who espouses the truth as the conditions of combat and struggle dictate is considered “bitter” or hateful towards all Whites, or in the very least, resentful. This is not only comic, it’s pathetic, because many Whites mistake intelligence for stupidity and cannot distinguish one from the other. This equals out to covert racism masquerading as quasi-ego analysis, which more often than not is an analysis of the White psychic instead of a Black man’s ego. For this and other reasons, not a few White leftists find it easier to work with or support Black women who are not as “threatening” to their delicate White consciences.* A Black person however, that has a full-blown (or over-blown) appreciation of his/her self-worth is the antithesis of a slave, for former Black slaves do not presume to be more qualified then their former slave masters; when they do, they are indeed arrogant! White leftists consistently fail to understand that respect and understanding pursue a different cultural and social pattern, one that cannot be erased by political discussion. And the requirements of survival are the ultimate political issues.

The human factor is the most dynamic factor in struggle and revolution. It is a conscious, living thing. We cannot engage in revolution and combat of a protracted nature and remain forgiving of the vacillation of others not so inclined. Revolution makes one intolerant because every day we are reminded that we must do what is of value, not for others, but because of our own self value. The failure of the White left to support the Black Liberation Movement is a failure of the White Left to support itself. It is not a question of helping us, but of manifesting what one is about — and the White Left is obviously about bullshit...

—R. DHORUBA MOORE
FRANK KHALI ABNEY
B.L.A.

**Note from ICMA: A loud, angry, radical Black woman is a threat to the delicate White conscience, too.*

ers, delivery drivers, trash collectors, and agricultural workers? All four are identified by OSHA as in the top ten most lethal jobs (unsurprisingly, law enforcement isn’t on the list). Where is the outcry for public investments for their safety?

The third and final point, “dignity for all,” sells a dream.

Dignity does not come from buildings, and it does not come from cages.

New walls, fresh paint, and indirect sunlight filtered down through a chase doesn’t provide dignity. People who are caged by violence workers aren’t pro-

vided dignity. Dignity comes from treating human beings like people and providing them with the things they need, not writing them off as criminals and bad guys, or seeing them as nounless, dehumanized “incarcerated.”

“Safety for staff. Safety for incarcerated. Dignity for all.” Yes, everyone deserves safety. Everyone deserves dignity.

But this proposed \$100 million jail doesn’t provide them. Instead it invests in and further entrenches a broken, racist system that provides neither consistently or well.

—NEEDOH

DECLASSIFIEDS



TRANS SELF-DEFENSE PROGRAM

Traditional martial arts classes aren’t always welcoming, and many empowerment programs target cis women only. Trans and gender nonconforming folks are often excluded from sports and martial arts spaces designed around other identities. We are building something different. This is practical self-defense training tailored to the trans community’s needs in an affirming space.

This free program runs on volunteers including a martial arts coach, a social worker, and an advisory committee who believe safety training belongs to everyone. Our goal is to build confidence, resilience, and real-world safety strategies together through weekly classes. We want to grow community networks of mutual protection alongside practical skills. This is mutual aid at work with community members and allies contributing skills toward shared goals. We take care of each other. Kids are welcome and must be accompanied by a participating guardian at all times. If you need accomodations in order to participate, reach out and we’ll do our best to support you.

LEARN SELF-DEFENSE SKILLS
IN A SUPPORTIVE SPACE

Sundays at 4:00 PM
Arroyo Grappling Academy
1604 Sycamore St.



Questions? Contact will@wjdenny.com



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