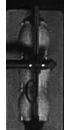


# 215 Rioters: Heroes Forever

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# Philadelphia in Revolt

When the 2020 George Floyd uprising hit Philadelphia on May 30th, hundreds of corporate businesses were looted and destroyed in Center City, the downtown citadel of the local retail-service economy. Dozens of officers were injured and hospitalized, mostly because of people throwing projectiles like rocks, bottles, and bricks. By the second day of the rebellion in Philly, the mass looting had spread to the commercial corridors in the working-class sections of the city, places like West Philly, North Philly, Kensington, Port Richmond, South Philly, and Upper Darby. Over the course of four days banks, police cars, and big corporations like Apple, Walmart, Target, T-Mobile, 5 Below, Wawa, etc. were attacked, looted, and some set on fire. Protesters devised ingenious methods for looting the capitalists, including the use of a fork-lift at the Lowes in West Philly to move and load large items like dishwashers, dryers, and washing machines. Like many other cities during the George Floyd uprising, it took the National Guard occupying key parts of the city to get people to stop rioting and looting.

Then in October the Walter Wallace rebellion exploded on the scene. Again, there was mass looting, looting by car, property destruction, and fighting the police. Again, the National Guard had to be called in to restore the law by threat of assault rifles and armored vehicles. Some of the strategic lessons to be learned from this rebellion are reflected in the texts *The Walter Wallace Jr. Rebellion in Philadelphia*, and *Cars, Riots and Black Liberation*, each providing distinct but overlapping interpretations.

Black proletarians and their allies have been fighting the police and looting from the rich since at least the 1960s. It's not a new phenomenon. But what is new about the 2020 riots is the amount of people who aren't Black who participated. The insurgent elements of the Black proletariat led the insurgent elements of the white, Latino, Indigenous, and Asian proletariat in the name of George Floyd, to take a stand against all the forces of racism and

injustice. In the heat of battle, it didn't matter who you were, all that mattered was that you were there fighting the police or helping others do so.

The rioters are heroes. They are not criminals, thugs, or outside agitators. The rioters are the forces of life resisting the forces of death—the police and the entire capitalist system. And as long as the police exist, no matter what color they are, they will continue to harass and murder working class Black people. This is the basic function of the police and it is connected to capitalism. Only revolt and revolution can put an end to it. The world is in crisis and no one can escape it. And things will only get worse with climate change. If the government and the rich fucked up this bad with COVID, imagine how fucked up things will be with the climate crisis in the coming decades.

A long time ago slaves dreamt of a world without slavery and fought to create that world. Today all of us must dream of a world without money, hunger, prisons, borders, or police, and fight for it. If we do not dream and fight for the impossible, we will be killed by the possible. To get to this world will mean nothing less than a revolution.

The 2020 riots proved that the police can be outmaneuvered and defeated in the streets. But when the National Guard came and occupied the city, the rebellions reached their limit and came to an end. To outmaneuver and defeat the National Guard, many more people will have to join the riots. For this to happen, the question becomes: how can the riots converge with labor strikes, blockades, housing and land occupations? We do not know the exact answer yet, but this is the dilemma confronting us. What we do know is that without masses of working-class people joining the revolt, it can only become isolated, and easier for the police to crush.

2020 showed us that when we fight together, we are powerful. The politicians, liberals and conservatives of all colors, have tried

to divide the rioters based on race, but the strength of the riots was that people from all racial groups joined together to attack the police and loot the capitalists. Of course, this doesn't mean that racism is over, far from it. The 2020 rebellions also resulted in a racist backlash across the country. In Philadelphia, there was the incident in Fishtown when a large group of mostly working-class white men roamed the area beating up BLM protesters. Because of the deep history of racism in this country, the contradiction between multi-racial revolt and white racist reaction makes it so that a revolution will likely also provoke a civil war. In this country, there is nothing more dangerous to the rich and the racists than a Black led multi-racial movement against racism and capitalism. That is what the 2020 riots were, and that is what the establishment and their lackeys are so afraid of happening again.

It might not be popular to say this, but most people will never become like Jay-Z or Beyonce—rich and powerful. A small minority of Black people like Kevin Hart or Meek Mill might become rich, but that is all that can happen. The elites dangle images of these people in front of us to make us think that one lucky day in Amerikkka we can also become millionaires. But this is a lie. Anyways, the Black elite, like the white elite, continually fuck over lots of Black people and other working-class people to get to where they are. If you want to be like them, then we have different goals. A small group of rich Black faces at the top only shows that skin ain't kin. The only kin are other proletarians who are willing to join us in a common revolt.

While some may want to become rich so they can give back to the community, like Lebron James, this is not a solution either. Even with all of Lebron's charity, he has only been able to make a small dent in the poverty of Black people in Cleveland. Wealthy Black people cannot save Black proletarians.

In the riots and protests, a specific group of Black people came out who are the enemy of revolt. Like the white liberals, these Black

people call for peace, legality, blame riots on outside agitators, and try to divide people in the riots based on race. This group of people is called the Black counterinsurgency. It can be confusing, because the riots were led by Black proletarians, but at the same time, one of the greatest enemies of the riots were Black counter-insurgents.

With all these contradictions, the 2020 rioters did something which is very hard to do in Amerikkka. In the riots, people of all races came together to fight the cops and loot the capitalist. This kind of multi-racial revolt is the way forward because it is the only way that racism can be defeated in this country. When poor and working-class people come together to fight against a common class enemy and momentarily defeat this enemy, the possibility of revolution appears on the horizon.

We know it might sound crazy to say that there are white people who are against the police and willing to fight racism, but that is what happened during the 2020 riots. The riots showed that whites are divided into three camps right now: the racists, the confused, and the anti-racists. We call the militant anti-racist whites “race-traitors” and “antifa.” We need to try to convince the confused whites to become race-traitors and antifa. And we have to fight the racist whites to the end.

For revolution to happen, millions of people will have to embark on a journey to take over all of society, including the transit system, sanitation system, hospitals, schools, grocery stores, farms, and kick the bosses and managers out of these places. The masses of people will have to organize a new way of life based on use, rather than profit. Only then will we be able to start living in dignity and peace.

Right now, we all have masters whether we want to admit it or not. Our masters are our bosses, the cops, the politicians, the rich. No matter how proud you are as a Black person, the truth is that the master has you in chains. And to make things confusing, today

the master can also be a Black or Brown person. We are against all masters, no matter the color of their skin.

When we say revolution, this means burning down every police station, destroying every prison, looting all the capitalists, taking over essential workplaces and infrastructure, and building a new way of life. What this means is that everyone will have free food, clothes, healthcare, education, and housing, no matter what. There will be no need for police because everyone will have what they need to live, and stealing will make no sense when everything is free. Everything can be free because money will not exist, and we will not have to work just to scrape by. Rather than wasting our lives working, we will have the freedom to dedicate our time to the free development of each and all. This revolution will change everything and everyone. It is hard to imagine this, but this is what we must do. If we do not, we will continue to bury Black bodies in the ground.

R.I.P. Walter Wallace Jr.

# **The Walter Wallace Jr. Rebellion in Philadelphia**

*by Gilets Jawns*

Walter Wallace Jr., a father and aspiring rapper with a history of mental illness, was having a crisis and acting erratically. Someone from Wallace's family called 911, hoping to have him temporarily hospitalized. Rather than the ambulance his family expected, the officers from the Philadelphia Police Department (PPD) arrived. Officers on the scene were told by his family that Wallace was having a mental health crisis. Nonetheless, within minutes Wallace was shot over a dozen times, and was pronounced dead soon after arriving at the hospital. Shaky cellphone footage capturing the incident ends with Wallace's family and neighbors confronting and screaming at the police officers on the scene. Everybody knew it was about to explode.

That afternoon, the video began to circulate on social media, along with a flier calling for a demonstration that evening at Malcolm X Park in West Philadelphia, not far from the site of the shooting. Several hundred joined a rowdy march to the nearby 18th Precinct, through the neighborhood, and eventually back towards the precinct again. A breakaway march left for University City, where a campus police station and substation had their windows broken, along with a police cruiser.

Clashes between demonstrators and riot police broke out near the 18th Precinct and the crowd spilled over onto 52nd street, the nearest commercial strip, where more police were assaulted, a police car was set on fire and another one had its windows broken. Dumpsters were dragged into the street and set on fire as well.

With the police retreating, a festive mood set in. The crowd set off fireworks and set about looting. Along that stretch of 52nd Street, most of the storefronts belong to small, black-owned busi



nesses: bookstores, beauty salons, restaurants. This constrained how much the looting spread, for now. When riot police eventually charged the crowd, most people took off running down side streets, jumped into cars, and disappeared.

Looting soon broke out all over the city, as groups drove around breaking into pharmacies, liquor stores, and chain stores.

A crowd regrouped in West Philadelphia, where things began to take on the form of a classic community riot. Dozens of police were hit with bricks and bottles and forced to retreat. On the stretch of blocks now vacated by the police, much of the neighborhood was out in the street or on their porches. Young people broke up bricks on the sidewalk, in anticipation of another battle. Others drank, debated, enthusiastically greeted their neighbors, shared looted goods, and cheered on the youth as they fought with or ran from the police. Everyone present shared in the revelry of the moment, even if they didn't partake in, or even openly criticized, the potlatch of destruction.

People calmly walked in and out of bodegas and pharmacies, taking what they needed. "Is there any kid's cereal left? If you don't have kids, you might not know this. But that shit is expensive." A whole range of different kinds of people from the neighborhood walked the streets carrying trash bags, weighed down with looted products, slung over their shoulders. Drunk men took on the role of town crier, walking from block to block enthusiastically shouting the news: where looting was taking place, where groups were headed now.

When riot police inevitably tried to retake the streets, just like earlier in the evening, most of the crowd either took off running to their cars, or just went back inside their homes. Someone yelled out an intersection in the neighborhood. People dispersed, regrouped there, and began looting until enough police arrived that it was time to disperse and regroup elsewhere. This pattern was carried on for much of the night.

## **Tuesday, October 27th**

The next morning it was announced that the National Guard had been mobilized and would arrive within the next forty-eight hours. The riot thus had a limited window of time.

A flier circulated for another demonstration at Malcolm X Park that evening. In an almost comically exaggerated act of what the movement has come to call swooping, the Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL) put out a separate call for a march at the exact same location, only an hour earlier. This confusion led to the crowd splitting, with some following the PSL towards Center City and others marching towards the 18th Precinct. Over the course of the evening, the group that gathered at the precinct, a noticeably larger and more diverse crowd than the previous night, grew to approximately 400 people.

Meanwhile, a caravan of cars descended on the Wal-Mart in Port Richmond, on the northern end of the city. Helicopter news footage showed a parking lot densely packed with idling cars while dozens of people ran out of the store with full shopping carts or flat-screen TVs and home appliances. One man even managed to get away with a washing machine. Police speculated that up to two hundred people were in the store at once.

The caravan marauded through Aramingo Avenue for the next several hours, storming a Footlocker, a furniture store, a kid's clothing store, and other box stores along the way. PPD estimated that up to one thousand people participated in the caravan. Wal-Mart announced later that week that, due to the threat of continued social unrest, they would be taking guns and ammunition off of their shop floors.

Back in West Philly, the crowd at the Precinct marched to 52nd Street, where some people began building barricades in the street. A line of riot police was forced to retreat under a volley of bottles and bricks and were chased nearly back to their Precinct. Most

of the crowd did its best to avoid the street-fighting. The march carried on along 52nd Street but was soon cut off by a line of riot police, with much of the crowd either being surrounded (kettled) or dispersed. Several smaller marches crisscrossed the neighborhood for the rest of the evening. One such march, avoiding the now heavily policed area around 52nd Street, left a trail of burning barricades and a looted liquor store in its wake.

Around midnight, with the streets largely evacuated of activists, youth from the neighborhood gathered. They dragged dumpsters into the street, setting them on fire, and threw bricks at the line of riot police on 52nd Street, until the police eventually charged at them. They led the police on a chase for much of the night, stopping occasionally to break up bricks and wait for their enemy to get within striking range, or to drag improvised barricades into the street and set them on fire. Several vehicles were set on fire as well, including a Xfinity van. “That’s for cutting off my wi-fi, bitch!” The whole proceeding had a festive air to it.

In New York City, a solidarity demonstration that night in downtown Brooklyn threw bricks at the police, broke the windows of a police car, a court building, and numerous businesses.

### **Wednesday, October 28th**

On the third day of the rebellion, a curfew was declared for 9PM. No protest was called for that evening. A small crowd gathered outside of the 18th Precinct but was composed of more journalists than protesters. After being warned by community affairs officers that the gathering was illegal, most of the crowd went home. For the rest of the night, youth from West Philadelphia sporadically clashed with the police and set off fireworks. Along City Avenue in Merion Park, a caravan of looters ransacked strip malls and box stores. Groups of cars swarmed the area, storming businesses and then stopping at gas stations to regroup and discuss their next move. At times, the swarm of looters was so dense that there were traffic jams along the highway.

Dispersed looting continued for the next several days, as did the occasional daytime protest, but neither found a way to relate to each other or pick up momentum on their own. Several days of bad weather didn't help. The national guard finally arrived on Friday, too late to prevent any of the rioting. By the time the unrest had died down, there had been an estimated 225 arrests, 60 injured police officers, 617 incidents of looting, 18 damaged vehicles, and over 50 ATM explosions, according to the city.

Philadelphia's unique tactical innovation has been the introduction of ATM bombings: groups detonate small explosive devices on an ATM and, ostensibly, walk away with the cash. During the heady days of May and early June, the sound of explosions became a part of the background ambiance of the city where American democracy was born. This tactic reemerged during late October's unrest. There were likely a dozen ATM bombings each of the three major nights of unrest. This tactic has yet to spread elsewhere, likely due to the amount of technical knowledge required and danger involved.

### **Who is in the Streets**

Throughout the country, the crowds that flooded the streets in May and June closely corresponded to the demographics of the city they were in. White people, in fact, were often over-represented compared to their share of the total population of the given city. It was only during some of the most intense moments of looting that the participants were mostly black, but never exclusively so.

During the October riots in Philadelphia, black proletarians stood largely alone. When multiracial crowds did come together, they were largely unable to overcome the separations that had been so easily dissolved earlier in the summer. If non-Black activists had hoped to express their support for the rioting, they perhaps had the inverse effect of stifling it, as people from the neighborhood were skeptical of how these newcomers might act. For moments on Monday and Tuesday night, a multiracial crowd worked to

gether to build barricades and attack the police. But more often than not, even when different elements of the crowd took part in the rioting, they did so separately. Each night by midnight, almost no one was left on the streets who wasn't black.

A certain hesitation around whether or how to act in the streets likely results from anxiety around these "rigid lines of separation." Debates abounded in the streets, on Telegram channels, and within activists' circles about the proper way to relate to the black struggle. It is worth remembering though that this anxiety is often only one-sided. People from outside of the neighborhood who showed up for the riots were at times treated with suspicion, until they made it clear that they were there for the same reasons as everyone else: to fight the police. Then they were widely embraced. Those taking the initiative in the streets were glad that others had joined them, especially if they had something to contribute.

It is not simply that separations reasserted themselves within and between the crowds. The riot did not spread from neighborhood to neighborhood, and only a minority of the immediate neighborhood ever participated in a significant way. No wider layers of the class ever came into the streets, and the activist crowd that mobilized never exceeded a few hundred people. Solidarity demonstrations, apart from the one in Brooklyn, were small and attended only by committed activists.

The black avant-garde may continue to blaze ahead on its own, struggling with an intensity that many are not willing to participate in. If we cannot find a way to meaningfully contribute to this dynamic, we might face a difficult choice of taking increasing risks without a clear horizon. This riddle may solve itself as struggles once again generalize and new tactics proliferate, but that is not something we can take for granted.

# **Cars, Riots, and Black Liberation: Lessons from Philadelphia's Walter Wallace Rebellion**

*By Shemon and Arturo*

While stuck in a traffic jam, waiting for the red light to turn green, a car breaks whatever is left of the law and speeds away. Dozens of gas guzzling monsters roaring down the street, tires screeching, tinted windows, speeding through red lights. Time and speed do not obey red, yellow, or green here. This is no ordinary caravan. It is the caravan of Black liberation, where looting by car is the art form developed in response to the murder of Walter Wallace Jr. by the Philadelphia Police.

Suddenly, a group of teenagers pop out of a car and walk down the street to an unknown destination. Cop-cars zoom past them in a panic of sirens, red and blue lights flashing through the night, probably rushing to another 911 call about looters at a pharmacy, Footlocker, grocery store, or liquor store somewhere else. Across the street, a gas station is filled with cars of young Black people hopping in and out, discussions taking place, music blaring. It is part music festival, part pitstop, and part modern day proletarian council where young people discuss what to do next.

What happened in Ferguson in 2014 as an impromptu practice has now become an art in Philadelphia: the art of looting by car. The official record will simply list this activity as crime that has nothing to do with politics. But there could be nothing further from the truth. Black rioters are the creators of new tactics of struggle, new visions of liberation, and new types of revolutionary organization. The accomplishments of the rebellion in Philadelphia were powerful, liberating, and simply beautiful. While pundits will dismiss the riots as apolitical or criminal, it is the radical

activities of the Black proletariat that create the very political conditions that put revolutionary change on the horizon.

## **The Strategic Implications of the Uprising**

In order to oppose it and crush it, the state and far-right are forced to take the uprising very seriously. But for the liberals and moderates that wish to make the uprising respectable in the eyes of bourgeois society, 93 percent of the George Floyd protests have been baptized as peaceful and lawful. Using this statistical sleight of hand, liberalism and reformism equates the Black Lives Matter movement with non-violent, legal protest, while writing off the illegal and violent actions of the masses of proletarians who took part in the uprising. Meanwhile Black proletarians are taking immense risks in a battle of life and death.

Whether it's distributing food to insurgents, providing medical support, gathering and distributing riot materials, listening to the police scanner and relaying information, providing transportation, safehouses, and legal support, or just doing the actual rioting, everyone has a role to play. At this point in the development of class tensions and the deepening crisis of capitalism, we can expect to see more rebellions in the near future. The question is, are we willing to prepare ourselves accordingly?

Revolutionary organizations are not built in the abstract but are expressions of the tactical and strategic challenges raised by the proletariat in the process of class struggle. The fundamental organizational question that revolutionaries now face is how to contribute and relate to the coming riots and uprisings. To engage in such an endeavor, we will have to move beyond the stale organizational forms of the past and begin to account for the diverse, illegal, and creative forms that the Black proletariat has developed, the use of cars being one of the most innovative tools in this emerging tactical practice.

The official understanding of this moment is that the rioters are







unorganized, lack direction, and need leadership. The reality that forms of coordination and organization are already happening within the maelstrom of the riot. This should be obvious when large caravans of looters swarm specific locations at the same time. It cannot be completely spontaneous that Black proletarians converged on Wal-Mart, looted it, and when the cops arrived, evaded them and went on to form convoys of up to forty cars that targeted multiple shopping districts throughout the city. The question of revolutionary organization, then, is not a matter of bringing organization to those who have none, but of connecting and engaging with the organic forms of organization that emerge through the autonomous actions of the proletariat.

## **New Dynamics, New Divisions**

Revolutionary organizations prove themselves in the battle of class conflict. In the case of Philadelphia, any revolutionary organization had to deal with the dynamics of feet and tires. Of course, most people rioted and looted on foot. But as the 2020 riots wore on, and the state became more prepared for prolonged street confrontations, it became harder to continue on foot. In response, some rioters used cars to outmaneuver the police and spread the rebellion to other areas. We had already seen this in early August following the murder of Latrell Allen in Chicago, where rioters formed car caravans that looted the Magnificent Mile. This trend continued in Louisville with the Breonna Taylor protests in late September, where state preparation made an uprising in the city practically impossible. In response, people took to cars and spread the riots geographically by looting businesses on the periphery of the city. These were brilliant tactical innovations when facing the raw power of the state.

Looting by car has clear advantages to looting on foot. There's less peace policing because there is not as much of an association with a specific geography, and what is often the same thing, a specific race. The most important aspect of looting by car, however, is that it disperses and exhausts the police. This strategy can create

a dynamic where those left on foot find themselves in de facto police free zones, able to revel in freedom for extended periods of time, because the police are too busy trying to counter the looting caravans elsewhere. This is what happened in Philadelphia. The synergy of those on foot and those in cars created a different geography and dynamic of struggle where police cars were racing from store to store trying to stop the roving bands of car-looters, while those on foot found themselves pulling police resources in a different direction. There were simply too many rioters in different places and not enough police.

We also can't ignore the use of cars as weapons. While we've seen cops and right-wingers use cars to run over BLM protesters, there were also several incidents during the uprising in which cars were used as weapons against the police. This happened in Philadelphia, among other cities. Police were hit and run over during the Walter Wallace Rebellion, as also occurred during the George Floyd riots in Philadelphia over the summer.

The use of cars in riots generates several strategic advantages, but the car is certainly not a perfect tool. The license plate is a huge security risk. With a few keystrokes police can use your license plate to look up your address and knock on your door. While this presents many dangers, what's important to note is that proletarians are finding ways to loot by car and not get caught regardless. Besides the risks that come with having a license plate, evading the police by car is oftentimes more dangerous than on foot, and getting caught after a high-speed chase is going to result in longer jail time.

Another concern is that the car can atomize the struggle, where each car is a separate unit. While in a way, this dynamic socializes the specific rioters within each car, it does so in a very different manner than looting on foot, where there is much more of a social and collective atmosphere. When looting by car, each car functions as a ship unto itself, making it difficult to engage with drivers and passengers in other cars.

If the initial division of the uprising was between legal and illegal protests, non-violent and violent protests, good and bad protesters, another division has emerged: shoes versus tires. However, unlike the division between lawful and criminal protesters, this division is not an obstacle to the deepening of the struggle. Unlike previous divisions, this one emerges directly out of the tactical back and forth between the police and the Black proletariat. This organic division arises in response to the maneuvers of the police, reflecting innovation and creativity, instead of containment and counterinsurgency.

## **New Geographies of Struggle**

If the initial phase of the uprising this summer was concentrated on the wealthiest portions of cities, in the fall the proletariat abandoned Jefferson Square Park in Louisville, and abandoned Center City in Philadelphia, and instead used cars to spread the rebellion geographically. Instead of fixating on a specific territory, those who looted by car used the vastness of urban space to create new territories of struggle. This development reflects changes in the class struggle that still needs to be accounted for.

A century ago, it was factories which dotted the terrain of class struggle. Today it is the shopping district, the cell phone store, the CVS, and the Apple store that mark the new geography of struggle. Riots and looting, therefore, are not the result of delusions on the part of the proletariat but are instead reflections of what capital looks like now: wealth in the form of commodities concentrated in key neighborhoods, often spread geographically throughout cities. While these commodities are not the means of production, they represent a vast collection of value just waiting to be expropriated. The looting of Wal-Mart is an excellent example of this. Here capital has brought together a vast assemblage of commodities which proletarians usually have to pay for. The mass looting of Wal-Mart in Port Richmond on October 27th and 28th was precisely the reaction of people who are forced to live

and work alongside this hyper-concentration of commodities. Instead of dismissing riots as unorganized or “unstrategic”, then, it makes more sense to ask why is it that proletarians in the United States are rioting more than they’re striking.

Precise data are not available of what kind of jobs rioters hold, but an educated guess is that if they hold jobs, they are most likely in low-wage service sector jobs with little structural power. Unlike factory strikes, strikes in restaurants or retail stores might shut down those particular businesses, but this has little impact on the overall economy. While it is safe to assume that these proletarians are taking their radical experiences in the uprising back into their workplaces, these workplaces are not the giant factories which incubated the revolutionary forces of the past. Instead of identifying as workers and deriving their power from their workplaces, these proletarians find street riots, even those that result in the destruction of their workplaces, to be more powerful than struggles over the workplace. This is not by accident or because of “false consciousness” but is instead an expression of the changing nature of work and the current composition of the proletariat. It is also an expression of where proletarians feel their power lies. Within the context of nearly sixty years of de-industrialization, the rise of the retail-service economy, and growing surplus populations, the phenomenon of looting by car is a major tactical innovation that corresponds with the changing geography and structure of class conflict.

### **The Car as a Weapon of Black Liberation**

While cars are climate-destroying machines which will ultimately kill Black proletarians, there is an alternative history of the car that we must pay attention to. The Montgomery Bus Boycott in 1955-56 is perhaps the most famous example. Civil rights activists, particularly Black women who were domestic workers, organized an alternative public transportation system based on cars in order to boycott the segregation of the buses in Montgomery, Alabama. This history provides valuable lessons for our current

moment, especially when it comes to the question of social reproduction.

If we begin with the 2014 Ferguson uprising, we see cars being used as getaway vehicles, as barriers to create police free zones, and as shields to fire at cops. But cars in Ferguson were not used for the purposes of spreading the uprising geographically. Instead, spaces were defended around several sites in Ferguson, most importantly the QT as well as Canfield and West Florissant. Compared to the 2010s, the riots happening today have escalated in intensity and expanded in geography, the looting convoy being the best example of this.

What we see from Ferguson to Philadelphia is the growing use of the car as a weapon of mass struggle. In Ferguson in 2014, cars were used for defensive purposes, while in Chicago, Louisville, Philadelphia, and elsewhere in 2020, cars were used for offensive purposes: for looting, for attacking police, and for spreading the geography of the uprising. We should expect cars to continue to play an important role as riots continue to unfold and potentially mutate into other forms of mass struggle: blockades, strikes, and occupations. Undoubtedly, the state will respond with new forms of surveillance and repression, but how it will do that is still unclear. In the meantime, Black proletarians will probably take advantage of the state's lack of capacity to deal with widespread looting by car. As revolutionaries, it is our duty to participate in this emerging form of struggle, to defend it, to help it grow and spread, and to articulate its potentials and limits.



*The following two anonymously written reports emerged from the Walter Wallace rebellion. They are shared here further spread these relatively unknown texts and also to point out some possibilities and impacts that small groups can have during moments of revolt.*



# Report from a march into University City

Here's a report back on one march that took place Monday, October 26. This march didn't get much attention so I want to share my experience of it because it pushed the envelope in terms of what a medium sized group of people can accomplish. This report back is a snapshot of one moment that night, so much more happened that night and the next one, and there are so many things worth discussing that I don't touch on. Hopefully this is only one of many reports and conversations on the Walter Wallace Jr uprising.

A buzz of the phone let me know that the police had shot a man in West Philly. Then word spread that the man who had been shot had died at the hospital, and that unsurprisingly he was black. A call was circulating for a demonstration at Malcolm X Park.

A group of a couple hundred of us marched out of the park toward the 18th Precinct where the cops who killed the man were from. Multiple approaches to the building were foiled by barricades and cops with helmets and riot shields lined up behind them. After a few attempts at getting to the building we turned around and went east instead, back toward the park. Photographers' and journalists' cameras were blocked as we went toward 52nd St. Once we were on 52nd St a few people tried to throw rocks at an unmarked police car ahead of the march, were told off, and after a strikingly short conversation had convinced their critics, some of whom joined them and also proved to have better aim.

We stopped at the corner of the park and some people began to tell a camera person to stop filming. As they left a news van parked at the corner was vandalized, sides tagged, tires pierced, and the windshield smashed. The marching was buzzing and joyful as people chanted "what did you see? I didn't see shit!" People discussed and quickly decided to head towards the police

stations in University City where they would likely be less guarded. On the way people learned the man who had been killed was named Walter Wallace and we shouted it, and it was written upon available walls alongside anti-police graffiti.

With only a couple blocks between us and the police stations the march stopped and a heated argument ensued. The argument was between some people who felt the march should be going toward the unguarded University City precincts and some people who wanted the march to return to the 18th Precinct to support the family of Walter Wallace Jr. The argument was unnecessarily heated, the two approaches — support and attack — are both important, it's a strength that we can find more than one way to confront the situation. The argument split the march; some headed back West towards the 18th Precinct while others continued to the University City ones. I was with the latter march.

University City is policed by the Philly Police Department, Drexel Police, the University of Pennsylvania Police, and University City District Safety Ambassadors. As we approached the back of the UPenn police station a line of maybe four cops blocked the street with bicycles. We took the sidewalk, went around them, and people smashed and tagged the back of the building. At the end of the block we turned north onto 40th where a UPenn police car sat idling, as we passed it someone smashed some of its windows before it drove away. Turning another corner east onto Chestnut St we found ourselves with almost no cops around in front of a PPD substation and the UCD office, both of which lost most of their windows. Having visited the police stations like we'd wanted, we decided to head back toward the 18th Precinct to see what was happening there. The march back was unusually calm considering what had just happened. We had police cars and a police bus following us that we kept at bay by repeatedly barricading the street with dumpsters and other materials. We made it to the 18th Precinct with no arrests and joined the larger crowd there.

It's still unbelievable to me that a group of people that wasn't that big was able to attack two police stations and the UCD office, while the police were there, and walk away! It sets a new precedent for what is possible.

RIP Walter Wallace Jr

Much love to everyone who took their rage and sorrow into the street

Freedom for everyone arrested during the uprising

Forever fuck the police

## **The Irvine Vandalized**

Last night while the cops were busy protecting their precincts, we took advantage of the moment to go after a different target. We ended up taking out several windows of The Irvine (on 52nd St near Baltimore Ave) around the back of the building, while some of its yuppie residents panicked on the patio. This was a small first step for us towards moving beyond just attending mass protests when they kick off – we're also trying to think about how we can aim our actions in ways that help spread or sustain mass resistance and our side in this war against police and property.

We have seen firsthand how gentrification projects like The Irvine have increased the cops' presence and racist violence in this neighborhood. We don't want developers to feel safe here. We hope this action is just one of many future attacks against The Irvine!

Gentrification is death. Revolt is life! <3





Philly 2021  
IG: fragments.215



**"The rioters are heroes. The rioters are the forces of life resisting the forces of death—the police and the entire capitalist system. And as long as the police exist, no matter what color they are, they will continue to harass and murder Black people. Only revolt and revolution can put an end to it."**