A MODERN HISTORY OF SQUATTING ON THE LOWER EAST SIDE

The 1960s were a tumultuous time. Freedom rides in the South and freedom riots in the North were rocking the nation. Hundreds of cities were aflame, fanned by the winds of revolution, threatening the very stability of the US government. The idea of reducing the population of the poor in the cities by destroying the available housing, as a way to prevent further insurrections, was an idea that appealed to many in the ruling elite.

By the early 70s, these notions became studied, and then documents, and finally plans to "spatially deconcentrate" the urban centers of the troublesome poor. Black and Latino people especially. These motives, military/control motives, fueled the mechanisms of depopulation and "planned shrinkage" which decimated city after city throughout the decade. From an economic point of view, how can we explain the abandonment of buildings and the rapid deterioration of poor neighborhoods that occurred across the country? Well, as long as the booms required cheap labor, they built housing for the workers. When the worker was no longer necessary, and in fact became uppity, no new housing was to be built. The housing that poor people were living in became a target for the apparatus of displacement: Red-lining by banks and insurance companies, arson for profit, and phony relocation scams. It became impossible for even the most well-meaning landlords to maintain their buildings. Generations of working class ownership came to naught against the more powerful and bigger capitalists who forced both residential tenants and small landlords out of the neighborhoods.

By the mid-70s, the war against the poor was no longer a subject for speculation, for what had taken place in secret in the halls of HUD, in banks and police stations, now showed its ravaged product: war-torn neighborhoods, buildings abandoned, burned out shells, vacant stretches of land where poor, working people once lived. But the state meant to go even further. It wasn't enough to displace the poor. Simply dispersing the poor was not control enough. The state meant to re-concentrate them in shelters.

Enter the 'Coalition for the Homeless', founded in Washington, DC in 1979-80. Through their championing of 'right to shelter' legislation around the country, the legal framework for the growth of the shelter industry was put in place. The more insidious result of the 'right to shelter' strategy was to turn people, including homeless people, away from the obvious solution to the problem, namely taking over the abandoned buildings etc., and get them to settle for the 'alternative' of living in a gym or an armory. Some chose it.

By the 80s, federal monies and "emergency management" expertise were fixed upon the homeless. They were seen as something other than the poor who had been displaced earlier. The "shelter system" or low-intensity detention of the poor, became the dominant strategy. Those who saw the obvious solution began taking direct action to solve homelessness, at least on a local level. After all, with all of the thousands of abandoned and warehoused apartments and empty land, it seemed crazy to suggest that thousands of homeless victims of governmental assault live in barracks. Squatting became the realistic alternative for people forced to choose between the streets and the life threatening shelter system.

As the 1990s begin, squatting has become a political statement as well as a solution to homelessness. In spite of countless attempts by the city and its police force to remove them from their buildings, the squatters of the Lower East Side have stood fast in the face of evictions, arrests, and even wholesale demolitions. Through mass demonstrations and battles in the streets and courts, squatters here kept their homes, in some cases for as long as 10 years.

In the years to come, as more people become aware of the benefits of squatting, more buildings will be taken. We can expect the state to intensify its efforts to prevent and destroy the squatters' movement. Through mass public support, this genuine people's movement will survive and grow.

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SON OF A BITCH! ABOUT A HUNDRED MOTHERFUCKERS IN UNIFORM ARE MARCHING DOWN THE STREET HEADED STRAIGHT TOWARDS US!

FUCK YOU!
WE'RE NOT TAKING ANY OF THIS SHIT!
FUCK OFF!

THE SHOUTS OF ANGER TURN TO VIOLENCE...

BEFORE THE COPS CAN GET INTO THE SQUAT THEY ARE SHOWERED WITH DEBRIS FROM INSIDE THE BUILDING.

FUCK YOU MAN! WE AIN'T LEAVING! THIS SQUAT IS OUR HOME!

THIS IS CAUSING TOO MUCH PUBLICITY!

RETREAT! EVERYBOY RETREAT!
The only way we have of communicating with anybody outside of the squat is with walkie talkies.

We have to be careful so the cops don't listen in on the conversation.

The last person we want hanging around our squat is a cop.

Squatters will get hassled by cops just because they're living in a squat!

The corrupt enemy of all squatters is... developer of housing preservation and development - H.P.D.

Because of certain real estate interests, this area of the city must be secured - so it can be fully developed by the city!
IN THE LOWER EAST SIDE OF NEW YORK CITY THERE IS A COMMUNITY OF SQUATTERS OPPOSING THE TYRANNY OF THE STATE.

SQUAT N.Y.C.
BY LAWRENCE VAN ABBEMA 90

THERE HAS BEEN A LOT OF PROGRESS IN THE SQUATTER'S REVOLUTION!
BUT AT THE SAME TIME THERE HAS BEEN A MILITARISTIC WAR ON THE DOOR IN NEW YORK!
SLEIGHED PLUMER SUE
SEZ: TRY NOT TO
TRIP OVER YO\NS WAY TO THUH RITO!!

BESIDES, WHEN YUR HAID GHTZ TOO BIG, YER HANDT TENDS YUR FALL OFF....

FILM ME ZAPPIN' THUH INSPEKTUR'S CAR!!!
WAIT'LL MUK FRENZ SEE THIS!!

INFUKINCREDIBLE AMAZIN!!!
NO HOUSING, NO PEACE
SUE!!!

OKEE... I THINK MUH WALLET'S SOMEWHERE NEAR MY SLEEVE!

FIVE BUCKS IF YUR WANNA SEE EM....

SUE IS ABOUT TO READ THE BENEFITZ OF STARDUMB!!!

THE CITY WAS NURISHING AN INFLAMMATORY BLOOM.

WE FIND EACH OTHER IN HIBERNATION.

THE TWO COPS WENT TO GET ENHANCED MEALS.

THEY SEARCHED THE HOUSE.

NOW WE HAD TO WORRY ABOUT THE COPS SUN US.

WE ENDUP HESSING THEM BESIDE INSTEAD OF BRICKING...

THEY COULDN'T GET THE SHIT SHOWN THE GAME OF ALL DAY. WE OGU A QUEEN HITS SLEEP AND THE NEXT MORNING...

THEY CAN'T GET THE SHIT SHOWN THE GAME OF ALL DAY. WE OGU A QUEEN HITS SLEEP AND THE NEXT MORNING...

WE MADE OUR POINT.

AS A RESULT THEY DISPERSED THE CLAW.

AND IT'S A HUH JUNO AND COW.

THIS MADE THE CROWD NEARLY.

NO WORK.

WERE ALL LAZY, SO MUCH AS A PENSION AND THERE TERRITORIES PARTNERShip HOMELESS.

I'M SHOWIN' MY FILM AT A RAVE ADDAN.

FIVE BUCKS IF YUR WANNA SEE EM....

BESIDES, WHEN YUR HAID GHTZ TOO BIG, YER HANDT TENDS YUR FALL OFF....

THEY WOZ GREAT SUE!!!

SHE'S TRY NOT TO TRIP OVER YUH EGOMANIA WAY TO THUH RITO!!!
SLEDGEHAMMER SUE!!!

GIT YER ASS IN GEAR!!! HPD AND RIOT COPZ ARE TEARING DOWN MUSHROOM SQUAT!!!

LEMMIE ATTEM!!!

HARD HAT

WORK GLOVES

HARDCORE

LEATHER

LEATHER

DENIM

"NO HOUSING NO PEACE!!"

GET IN, GIVE EM HELL, WATCH OUT FOR THUH DIGS!!

OKEE!

REGULATION SHITKICKERS WONT BE FOR TESTICLE MASHING

YO! SUE!!! BRING MUCHEMMA HUH?!

RAGEOUS SOS I KIN!

NO HOUSING NO PEACE!!

RAGE RAGE RAGE
I REPEAT, COME OUT... YOU ARE IN VIOLATION OF OUR LAW!

UH, OH, THEY'RE PULLIN' A SNEAK ATTACK!!

AND I DECIDED TO DEMOLISH FOR THAT... A BARREL OF FERMENTED SQUATTER PISSES VINTAGE 1985!!

SPLOP!

GURGLE!

RETREAT!

WHAT A STINKY SCUM!! TAKE EM 3 WEEKS TO CLEAN OFF THAT SHIT!!

THAT SHOULD HOLD US OFF FOR A WHILE... LONG ENOUGH FOR US TO CALL...

THE FLYIN' BOTTLES!!

LATER THAT NITE...

JUDDIN AT THE SOUTH...

WOW, THERE'S AN OFFICE BUILDING. PERHAPS SOME DEPOSIT HERE TO FEED THE SQUAT FOR A WHILE...

DEFINITELY NOT A GREAT NITE...

LET'S PARTY!!

ANYMORE PISSES?

YEY!!!

THANKS TO... THEM FLYIN' BOTTLES!!

WE'RE ONLY A BOTTLE'S THROW AWAY!!

DEDICATED TO THE FLYIN' BOTTLE ENQUIRER OF TOMORROW'S ENQUIRER
ATTENTION!!
THIS IS THE POLICE!!
ALL OCCUPANTS
OF THE BUILDING... YOU
HAVE FIVE MINUTES
TO COME OUT...
WITH YOUR HANDS
UP!!!
AS SOON AS THE COPS LEAVE, THE SQUATTERS AND ACTIVISTS ARE ABLE TO RE-ENTER THE SQUAT...

THE REST OF THE DAY IS SPENT CELEBRATING AS THE SQUATTERS HAVE FINALLY ACHIEVED A VICTORY IN THE SQUATTERS REVOLUTION...

Welcome to our humble police state.

EAST VILLAGE NYC

Squatter's rights are human rights!

YUPPIE GO HOME
NATIVES ARE HOSTILE

YUPPIE DEATH SQUAD

DONT TREAD ON ME!

COMING SOON

The SHADOW is the underground newspaper of the Lower East Side of New York City, rising up after the infamous Tompkins Square Pig Riot of August 1988 to fill the void left by the East Village Other and the RAT. Issues covered include government and police corruption and violence, people fighting the state, squatters' rights, homelessness, gentrification, marijuana rights, Anarchy, and more! Current and past issues are available by mail for $1.00 plus $1.00 postage. Please send to SHADOW PRESS, P.O. Box 22599, New York, N.Y. 10009.