

Proposal for Action on the Question of Violence and Nonviolence

The movement has become distracted by a historical debate about what is violent and what is nonviolent. This debate ultimately ends in an effort to impose definitions onto tactics.

The State loves this debate and is no doubt fostering it. It is a wedge issue they can use to divide us and marginalize us, and they control the tools to do so...the media.

We must not allow ourselves to become distracted or consumed in this debate. The definitions of violence and nonviolence are subjective. What is violent to me may not be violent to you. What is nonviolent to me may be violent to you. How one community experiences oppression and violence and responds may be different than another community.

The practices and policies of the State are inherently violent...physically, emotionally, psychologically and spiritually. It is here that we must focus our energy to expose the violence perpetrated everyday against communities of color, the working class and people living in poverty throughout the world.

For the purposes of our collective actions I would like to propose the following action guidelines.

Action Guidelines

All participants in these actions are asked to agree to the following action guidelines and principles. Having this basic agreement will allow people from many backgrounds, movements and beliefs to work together for these actions. They are not philosophical or political requirements placed upon you or judgements about the validity of some tactics over others. These guidelines are basic agreements that create a basis for trust, so we can work together for this action and know what to expect from each other.

- We will use no violence, physical or verbal, toward any living thing. By violence we include comments or behavior that are racist, sexist, ageist, homophobic, classist or otherwise oppressive
- We will carry no weapons
- We will not bring or use any alcohol or illegal drugs.
- We will respect each others voices and tactics and work to insure that all of our issues are heard
- We will not intentionally harm or put at risk those who have not agreed to participate in our nonviolent actions