



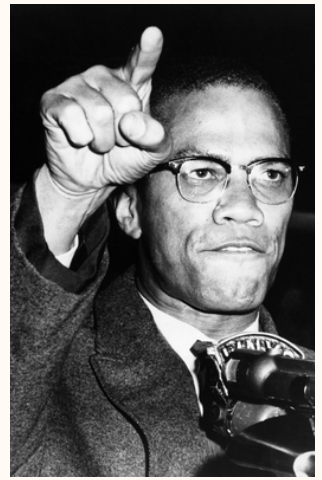
The Quill

The Porcupines

EDITION I

December 2024

We Care About Palestinians Because We Care About Americans



In a famous speech, Malcolm X once wrote: “You can't understand what is going on in Mississippi if you don't understand what is going on in the Congo. And you can't really be interested in what's going on in Mississippi if you're not also interested in what's going on in the Congo. They're both the same.” As members of The Porcupines, a revolutionary community building group, we stand behind, with, and on this statement. We believe that American foreign policy is domestic policy and that as long as there is destabilization outside we will remain destabilized on the inside. We believe in the inherent rights of all people to have access to food, water, peace, and the pursuit of liberty, even if all of the current politicians do not, and we work to build the community bonds that will make these rights untouchable regardless of who is in office. We believe that to free those in captivity outside we must first begin by freeing ourselves. We believe that we must develop skills as individuals to feed, clothe, serve, and protect our communities who are far more deserving of the tax dollars that are being used to fund foreign wars. We believe that Americans are deserving of the independence that so many of our forefathers fought for, including the independence of existing without the weight of corrupted politicians and powerful business conglomerates. We ask that, if you agree with any of our ideals that you join us in building a community and becoming stronger together. From Mississippi to Congo and from Albany to Palestine. Together, united.

— Words by Comrade A.D.





*“They tried to bury us, they did not know we were
seeds.”*

— Mexican Proverb

— Artwork by Comrade A.M.

Sligo Street Garden: Growing a Revolution



The Nature and Work of Community Gardening

The ground is compacted, and sometimes I find marbles and plastic, or bits of glass. Once, memorably, an old license plate. Two years ago, I became the steward of Sligo Street, what I call the vacant plot — and now, our community garden — in downtown Albany. It used to be an illegal dumping ground; now it is a site of war with highly-invasive Japanese Knotweed. But more than that, Sligo Street has been an immediate lesson in our agency, legacy, the histories and realities we create — the trash we leave behind, the seeds we plant, and the forces we fight. Though I am not well equipped, I think to Sligo Street and know that if I never took care for it, the Knotweed may very well have choked out every other root and flower. I also know that the volunteer plants, which some may call weeds, invite bees and birds and their deep roots work to undo the compaction previous owners introduced. With intention, I have smothered some plants and encouraged others to flourish.



While we have legal & explicit permission to plant and transform Sligo Street, the nature of our work can be done anywhere and by other means. Our plot is 30x40 feet in size, but before I was able to store tools in our prefab shed, I brought them in a trolley. Before we installed a rain barrel, I brought water in 2L bottles in my backpack. I grew successful tomatoes and snap peas this way – as well as less successful peppers. In the first stages of my fight with the Knotweed, when I had no idea what I was doing, neighbors gave me gloves and guidance. Seeing my care for the plot inspired their interest, too, and lovely conversations. In the interest of conversations - connecting with your neighbors, building food sovereignty, and taking back control of our communities and land - I invite you to exert your own agency and look at the “vacant” plots around you. In Albany, there are a number of plots I see mowed twice a year and left to grow grass and not much else. For you, it may be a median, an empty planter neglected by your municipality, or a road verge you walk by everyday.



These are opportunities for conversation and congregation, and ideal sites for Guerrilla Gardening. Your involvement could be as little as scattering seeds and watching in satisfaction as something new grows in a previously mono-cultured space. It could be as involved as daily visits to enjoy, to prune, to harvest. Though before you plant, I recommend you visit nativeplantfinder.nwf.org to see what plants might be most beloved by moths and butterflies in your area. For Capital Region folks, <https://plantbuyingcollective.com> is a source for research and purchase, too. I advise that you pay attention to your plot and see the regular behavior around it before getting too invested. I'll also say that it's impressive how easily bystanders will accept someone in a high-vis vest and gardening gloves – even more so if a friend or two joins. At Sligo St., we have big dreams. In our space, we hope to have a multi-season garden starting with garlic in the spring all the way through parsnips into the fall. With this food, we might plug into the Free Food Fridges all across the Capital Region to directly provide food to our neighbors; we might bring our harvest to Food Not Bombs and help create hot meals; we might table at the farmer's market down the street to sell our produce cheaply, and with our funds, support other mutual aid campaigns or purchase equipment to learn other skills. If we are successful in our efforts, we might even have enough to throw a canning party and teach ourselves how to preserve our yield into the winter. These small steps we take now may blossom into something more than we can even imagine now.

My Last Will and Testament

“My final will is that you always remember that resistance is not in vain, nor is it just a bullet fired, but a life lived with honor and dignity. Prison and siege have taught me that the battle is long, and the road is hard, but I also learned that people who refuse to surrender create miracles with their own hands.

Do not expect the world to be fair to you, for I have lived and witnessed how the world remained silent in the face of our pain. Do not wait for fairness, but be the fairness. Carry the dream of Palestine in your heart and make every wound a weapon and every tear a source of hope.

This is my will: do not lay down your weapons; do not throw away stones; do not forget your martyrs; and do not compromise on a dream that is rightfully yours.

We are here to stay in our land, in our hearts and in the future of our children.

I entrust you with Palestine, the land I loved until death and the dream I carried on my shoulders like a mountain that never bends. If I fall, do not fall with me, but carry the banner that never falls, and make my blood a bridge for a generation that rises from our ashes stronger. Do not forget that the homeland is not just a story to be told but a reality to be lived, and with every martyr born from this land a thousand more resistance fighters are born.

If the flood returns and I am not among you, know that I was the first drop in the waves of freedom, and I lived to see you continue the journey. Be a thorn in their throat, a flood that knows no retreat, and do not rest until the world acknowledges that we are the rightful owners and that we are not just numbers in the news.”