

The Paramount Uprising

An Anarchist Account Of The Paramount Uprising

Afro-Indigenous Revolutionary

8/17/2025

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“Rebellion is life, submission is death.”

—Ricardo Flores Magón

“**Every single project for freedom is fundamentally illegal.** The fight for our survival will entail the greatest crime ever committed: the act of liberation.”

—We Are All Illegal, Re-Existir Media.

“It’s no surprise ICE was on the run. They could not quell the revolt.”

—Revolt and Representation: A View From The Battle For Los Angeles, Mapaches Clandestinxs, Cuauhtli.

June 7th, 2025

A man with a Palestinian flag and a man with a blue lightsaber stand in the middle of Alondra Boulevard, a street in Paramount, Los Angeles. They face a line of heavily armed LA Sheriffs. One waves his flag, the other his lightsaber. A massive crowd surrounds them and cheers them on. This is an uprising.

Why did we go to Paramount?

We went to Paramount because we weren’t boutta stand idly by and watch ICE do some Nazi shit. We weren’t gonna let them take anymore of our friends or family. The raids of the previous day deeply traumatized us. Some of us lost friends to the abductions. ICE kidnapped mothers, sons, daughters, fathers, grandmas, romantic partners, neighbors, and on and on. They robbed children of the only family they had. They terrorized the entire community. LA fought back. That same day, protestors stormed the federal building in attempt to rescue the disappeared. When we saw what was happening in Paramount and that our people there were fighting back, we joined the revolt.

The Paramount Uprising

We’re on our way to Paramount. Some of our homies are already there. They tell us how the riot began. ICE raided a Home Depot by Alondra Boulevard. La migra brutally attacked and abducted the migrant workers there (and any other Brown person in their,) but faced immediate resistance as bystanders attempted to stop them. Meanwhile, there was gridlocked traffic in front of the Home Depot and dozens of local residents with no-where to go looked on in horror. At this point ICE mercilessly fired tear gas at the people in the cars. Of course, the community didn’t take this fascist attack lying down. Protestors surrounded and got into physical altercations with the enemy, forcing them to leave. They blocked some of the streets off with Home Depot Shopping Carts. As the ICE agents drove away, people pelted their cars with rocks and concrete, breaking windows and cracking windshields. After ICE pulled out, their close allies, the LA Sheriffs entered into the fray firing munitions. More people came to fight back. This was a spontaneous revolt, a reaction to the provocations of the state. By the time we reach Paramount the crowd begins throwing fireworks to drive the sheriffs out.

We meet up with our friends and some other kids in shiesties at the Mobil gas station. They've tipped the police surveillance machine on its side. It squeals out helpless warnings, its voice that of a robotic white woman. Standing at the gas station, we observe the scene unfolding before us. People and pigs are getting ready to fight. The two sides face off. On one side the people, on the other the LA Sheriffs with their guns trained on us. A Brown woman stands in front of everyone else, she curses them out and dares them to shoot her. The sheriffs have tanks-armored trucks-guns to shoot "less lethal rounds," tear gas, and flash grenades. They line up opposite of us-on both sides of a place that sells donuts.

In between us and our enemies is a burned out car. Someone allegedly stole it, parked it in the middle of Alondra and set it ablaze. At the gas station along Alondra and blocking both side streets are cars with many Mexican, Guatemalan, Salvadoran, Palestinian, and other flags, bikes and of course, people. These include young and old, even parents and their little children. Everyone has a right to fight for their freedom. The sheriffs unload their rubber bullets and flash grenades, rebels on our side throw fireworks.

Every time someone launches a firework, they not only pop off rounds in his direction, but also release salvos of grenades and bullets on the entire crowd. Collective punishment. At one point the sheriffs fire directly on the mobil. Volley after volley. A flash bang goes off next to me under the awning. The vibrations rattle my bones and explode in my ears. You ever hear something so loud it makes you not just deaf but blind too? My ears ring and I see white, but I get out of there. In a truly sadistic fashion they target random bystanders and onlookers, especially women. They shoot a young girl standing behind the gas station sign in the leg. She cries from the shock and pain.

A Black man with his two young sons comes up to me as I crouch behind the Mobil sign. He drops a small rock into my hands. He looks me dead in the eyes. "You know what you need to do" he seems to say. I think I try to respond, tell him this rock's too small, but it's so loud I can't even hear my own voice.

The sheriffs retreat to a secondary position and the crowd surges forward. A Black woman in a bathrobe, maybe with a mug and cigar(?), drives up in her car and joins the uprising. "Burn it all down!" She tells everyone, "get your guns!" A man stands on the wall behind the donut shop, he waves the flag of Burkina Faso. The Paramount rebels advance. As we move forward, an empty lot of dry grass catches on fire, but people put it out. People-mostly young women, teenage girls and children-walk behind the advancing crowd: they hand out granola bars, juice and water. People stand on the burned out car holding Mexican and Palestinian flags, signs, and banners. They take pictures of each other. The mood is cheerfully rebellious as people pose on the car, drivers in their vehicles speed around it, and others shoot colorful fireworks into the sky. Artists and graffers put on a beautiful display, tagging the donut shop and the wall behind it with messages like "chinga la migra." The crowd rebels not only against the terror and atrocities of ICE, but also-whether explicitly or implicitly-against the perpetual indignities and oppressions of existing everyday under the yoke of the American Empire. By fighting the police, and by liberating and sharing resources, the participants of spontaneous revolts like those in Paramount strike out against the subjugation of the state and exploitation of capital.

In the uprising there are Mexicans, Black folks, Salvians, Guatemalans, Palestinians, Migrants, Urban Natives, even some white people, Punks, Skaters, Anarchists, Leftists, members of rival gangs, kids from around the hood, Bikers, Low Riders, Compton Cowboys, Niggas just thuggin, and on and on. Two Palestinians find each other on the sidelines. It's a happy discovery and each

tells the other what town he or his family is from. The main participants, the “drivers” of the revolt are the residents of Compton and Paramount themselves, especially those who live near or along Alondra. They’re pissed-and rightfully so.

On the right side of Alondra, along a strip of petit bourgeois shops: The pigs shoot another girl in the leg. She was just watching everything go down, not throwing rocks or fireworks. Her friends help her limp away. They shoot at the storefronts. A fist sized rubber projectile pops a man in the face. His cheek busts open. My friend pours water over the cut. He doesn’t cry. He nurses the bleeding wound. I pick up the bullet. Blue rubber covers hard metal. It’s the size of a softball. Later in that same area, they knock someone out.

The sheriffs appear to have an endless arsenal at their disposal, but so do we. We realize that we need more cover. People dash forward but the sheriffs knock them down with “less lethal rounds” and flash bangs. I run into an old comrade and with our friends, we unlatch a dumpster behind the donut shop. It’s stuck, but my friends manage to free it, we push it down the middle of the street and flash bangs and tear gas explode above us. I hear and feel the clink clink of the bullets as they hit the dumpster. I’m locked in. I trust these people with my life. We reach a truck that marks the furthest point to no man’s land, the area directly in front of the sheriffs. Some others come and push it too far, or so we think. The frontline advances and the dumpster remains useful, now joined by a burning shopping cart.

A young guy around my age spikes rocks at the cops from behind the dumpster. He’s using his t-shirt as a mask. Sweat glistens on his muscled torso. His biceps, abs, and chest tighten and contort as he spikes projectiles and dodges bullets. From behind the dumpster, I hand him a stone but his arm’s too tired. I lob it myself. It lands a pitiful five feet in front of the dumpster. My friend hears the sound. We laugh about this later.

A compa and I look for more dumpsters to use for cover but anywhere nearby is slim pickings. We start to move towards some trash cans, but they belong to someone. We leave them alone and instead opt for various pieces of wood and debris. Someone sets a small fire in a shopping cart next to the dumpster to give us more cover. The sheriffs fire directly on us but I keep running back and forth with more trash to burn. Just as I throw some wood into the shopping cart, the pigs start blasting and I duck down. Suddenly I’m knocked on my ass, my vision white with pain and fear. A rubber bullet, probably fire from an angle, bounced off the ground and hit me square in the knee. For a bit I am stunned, and my friend tells me to stay down or I’ll be hit again. I make it to the sidewalk behind the truck and a street medic pours water over my knee.

A truck or a mini-van pulls up, they open up the trunk and give out hot, homemade tamales, water and gatorade. They pull up right in the middle of two rival gangs, mostly on mopeds. For a moment it seems like there’s gonna be a stand off, but the gangs have a common enemy, and they put aside their beefs for the sake of the revolt. The sheriffs unload dozens of canisters of teargas but the wind blows it all back on them. Taste of their own medicine. We laugh and jeer. Later, a viral video will show workers in a Pupuseria or Mexican Restaurant pouring water in the eyes of the sheriffs. Even when they help ICE terrorize our communities, we still treat them like human beings. We have our humanity. For them I can’t say the same.

We aren’t so lucky later on and my friend nearly suffocates. I use my gas mask and inhaler on them as we run. The night has its injuries. I see at least one person, possibly a journalist or onlooker, knocked off their feet by a rubber bullet or shell. He doesn’t get back up. Some other people pick him up and carry him to safety. We speak to someone on a low rider bike, he’s carrying a bottle of corona or modelo. At first we’re not sure what he’s saying, but eventually

understand. He lives right over here and he's not happy about the ICE raids or the teargas. He supports the uprising.

The most daring among us are in cars and on motor bikes. They charge towards the enemy and lob fireworks while taking the blunt of bullets and flash bangs. In a similar manner, they completely clog the side roads leading to Alondra. The area around the burned out car turns into a street takeover. Rather than retreating or advancing or holding a fixed position, the crowd ebbs and flows like water. At one point a bunch of people run back-not because the pigs got the upper hand-but simply because they want to see and join the takeover. The police eventually take back Alondra, but they fail to capture most of us. The brave people of Paramount and Compton, with their accomplices, fought the cowardly, sadistic, incompetent ICE, LAPD and LASD. They drained time, energy and resources from the enemy, and possibly saved many people from abduction. While we didn't win, neither did our enemies. The struggle continues.

Escaping Hell

To whoever reads this, I leave one last message. One of the rebel artists at Paramount wrote, in sophisticated LA letters, something along the lines of "living in hell." He's right. We are living in hell, the hell of government, capitalism, colonialism, racism, patriarchy, bullshit borders, genocides, all the forms of domination intensified through fascism and generating a climate catastrophe. We need to go through the fire, the flames of revolution, to escape this hell. In the rubbles of the US Empire and all empires, we can build a world without slaves and masters, rulers and ruled.

Articles and Authors Quoted

1. "Rebellion is life, submission is death." While I could not find an exact source for this quote by Ricardo Flores Magón. Magón was an Anarchist revolutionary from the Mazatec Pueblo in Oaxaca who helped start the Mexican Revolution. He most likely wrote this famous quote in *Regeneración*, his insurrectionary Anarchist periodical. Here are some sources on Ricardo Flores Magón and his legacy.

Collected Works, Ricardo Flores Magón.

<https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/ricardo-flores-magon-collected-works>

WE MARCH TOWARDS LIFE: Magónismo and the Mexican Revolution, Re-Existir Media

<https://reexist.noblogs.org/zines/magonismo/>

2. **"Every single project for freedom is fundamentally illegal.** The fight for our survival will entail the greatest crime ever committed: the act of liberation."

— *We Are All Illegal*, Re-Existir Media.

<https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/brown-anarchy>

<https://reexist.noblogs.org/zines/illegal/>

3. "It's no surprise ICE was on the run. They could not quell the revolt."

-Revolt and Representation: A View From The Battle For Los Angeles, Mapaches Clandestinx, Cuauhtli.

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