

About the raid against Prosfygika in the 22nd of November, 2022

The Community of Squatted Prosfygika* was violently raided twice by armed police forces in the 22nd of November, 2022. The first raid took place in the early morning hours and the goal was to capture fellow comrade and member of the community Kostas Dimalexis, whom the state accused of committing arson attacks on state and capital targets. The case could not stand in court, where, after a year and a half of imprisonment he was deemed non-guilty, since most if not all the evidence was either fabricated or just lacking.

Afterwards, in the evening of the 22nd, the second raid occurred, where a counter-terrorist unit backed up by other militarised police squads broke into one of the buildings of the community, a building that houses a social kitchen, an open political space and families, and arrested 79 people. Among them were comrades who came to express their solidarity to the community after the first raid and families with children. This group stood united and fought valiantly against the police forces in order to protect one another and the liberated grounds of the community. Self-organisation and collective self-defense against any power and system that saps us of our lives and turns us into slaves is not the duty of a few, select people; Rather, it is a duty that is collectively shared and a duty that can only be fulfilled when we stand in unison.

The police continued their terror-monging the next day at court, where comrades that gathered in solidarity to the 79 captives were violently attacked and beaten by Anti-riot units.

This police operation is one of many battles in the war that the state is waging against the community of Prosfygika and the world that it's trying to build. A world based on solidarity, equality, collective struggle and resistance, a world that stands against the capitalist way of life and its rotten values, against the commercialisation and exploitation of human lives. The existence of this community is living proof that a better world is indeed possible, if we fight for it.

The aforementioned War on Prosfygika is in turn part of a broader plan spearheaded by the current government and their allies from the economic elite that seeks to sterilise and gentrify the city in order to increase the profits of big corporations and shareholders, whilst eliminating any dissent and resistance against the status quo. Anything that deviates from the way of life that is being imposed by capitalism is seen as an enemy that must be eliminated by any means.

The charges that the 79 comrades are facing in court are as follows:

- 1. Assault on police officers through the use of various objects
that can be used to cause physical harm as a group*
- 2. Repeated cause of serious bodily harm against police officers as a group*
- 3. Property (public and private) damage as a group*
- 4. Disturbing the common peace as a group*
- 5. Illegal possession and use of fireworks*
- 6. Illegal possession of nautical flares*
- 7. Illegal possession of weapons*

8. Refusal to give fingerprints

Short recap of the first trial and political commentary

In October 24th, 2024, after the bench agreed for the trial to be moved into a bigger auditorium so that the collective group of the arrested comrades could fit, the trial started. The prosecutor called up the prosecution witnesses to the stand. They were 10 cops in total, but two of them did not show up because they “Called in sick”. Their testimonies were, at the very least, highly inconsistent with one another, constantly getting facts wrong, saying things that would cancel out the testimony of the previous cop, and they were even inconsistent with their reports about the raid.

Once the cops were done testifying, the prosecutor started calling the defense witnesses to the stand. During the defense testimonies the judge and the bench constantly tried to block the witnesses from saying anything remotely political, and demanded that they strictly stick to the questions asked about the 2nd raid. This is another common tactic that is used by the judicial representatives in order to remove politics from any trial, so that they can silence anybody that speaks up about the violent nature of the state, and to downgrade our beliefs and the resistance against any oppressor. The state uses every available tactic to depoliticize the struggles of the oppressed and to crush them, in times where basic necessities such as food, education, healthcare, justice, even freedom itself are becoming luxuries for the few. By removing any political meaning to these struggles, the state keeps the people complacent.

As a whole, the witnesses expressed the terror that the police forces instilled on the entire neighborhood, which is made up of families, people with health issues etc. They described a militant force that utilised guns with non-lethal ammunition (rubber bullets), tear-gas and flashbangs, drones and a helicopter terrorizing the neighborhood of Prosfygika, arresting even children and their mothers. This attack shows, as we mentioned before, that the state wants to eradicate anything that does not conform with its principles and anything that poses a threat to the capitalist way of life.

The defence testimonies began with the mother and a resident of Prosfygika, who first of all referred to the terror that overwhelmed the people of the community, as among them were people on bed with many health problems and young children, who suddenly found themselves surrounded by all kinds of police force without any provocation. The witness also pointed out the repeated teargas and flashbang use INSIDE of the building, making the place look like a warzone. She also mentioned a similar attack that the police performed back in 2016, where, with the excuse of the Golden Dawn (fascist party) trial, sent anti-riot units to assault the homes of the community with similar tactics, yet again showcasing the attempts carried out by the state to uproot the residents from their community.

The next defense witness was the comrade who was kidnapped by the Counter-Terrorism unit in the first raid, Kostas Dimalaxis. He faced a constant attempt to suppress his political positions, with the well-known tactic of interruption aimed at the general silencing of political speech. It is noteworthy that when the comrade highlighted the fact that the case against him could not stand in court and he was deemed non-guilty, the bench made sure to note that he was found guilty of two minor misdemeanors.

While the above was unfolding, comrades from the audience verbally intervened, in order to highlight the importance of the political content the comrade was testifying to. On the order of

the court, they were quickly removed from the courtroom even though they were among the defendants. This role was assumed by the newly formed Judicial Police Unit, who have the role of enforcing the authoritarian practices of the court.

Subsequently, the president of the Employees' Association of St. Savas Hospital, which is located right next to Prosfygika and has a close relationship with the community, was the third in line as a defence witness. In her testimony, she mentioned the understaffing of the hospital, which reveals the state's intentions to dismantle public hospital structures, the deterioration of social health care and the ever-increasing repression. It was also reported by the same witness that on the day of the repressive operation there was a delay in appointments, endangering the health of patients. The police advised hospital officials to close the windows, because chemicals would be used. 2022 was covid season and this hospital was identified as vulnerable to outbreaks of the virus, so it followed a specific protocol, and as a result the windows were left open. However, hospital staff were eventually forced to close them after the police used chemicals and flashbangs. This shows how little the state cares about the people in need, and how many people it's willing to endanger in order to fulfill its goals.

The photojournalist Nikos Pilos, who was initially arrested in the second raid, but because of his journalist status, the case was eventually filed. He testified that earlier that day and while he had been in the neighborhood from the morning, the community did not show any intention of wanting to attack the police, as all the people were calm and the purpose was to hold the urgent assembly called for 4:00 pm. It is also important to note that after the second raid he repeatedly showed his journalist identity to the cops but was still arrested, even though at the end the case was filed.

The penultimate defence witness is a solidarian with the Solidarity Crew for the homeless housed in Prosfygika, and specifically the building that was raided that day. The key points of his testimony were the testimony of the invasion during which the police units were extremely violent, the calm atmosphere of the neighbourhood even 10 minutes before the invasion and the situation the neighbourhood was in after the operation: the atmosphere was suffocating, full of chemicals and flashbangs, while the Social Center looked like a "Warzone", as he said. Finally, reference was made to the wider area of Ampelokipoi - Gyzi (The area where Prosfygika are located), and the good relationship that the community has with the neighborhood.

The last defense witness, Katerina Matsa, psychiatrist and scientific director of the 18 ANO Addiction Unit until her retirement, will testify at the next trial.

The community of the Squatted Prosfygika in Alexandras Avenue is living proof that a better world is possible, with an infrastructure that is at the service of all people, always based on equality and self-organization.

NOONE ALONE IN THE HANDS OF THE STATE

The arrested comrades from the battle of the Squatted Prosfygika

**Prosfygika* in Greek is the name given to the neighborhoods that were built for the migrants coming to Greece in the 1900s.