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Defending our struggles ? preparing our power

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Every serious working class struggle, every struggle by the exploited and oppressed, needs self-defence. Strikers on the picket lines know that only a determined mass picket will stop the police ferrying in strike breakers and enabling the boss to carry on his business. In many countries, the bosses resort to assassination of trade unionists. Landless rural workers in Latin America face the gunmen of the big landowners or the imperialist agribusinesses.

Self-defence is no offence. We must organise self-defence in every struggle, wherever the right to assemble, to picket or to march is challenged by the state, the bosses, or wherever minorities or communities are attacked.

In every strike, we fight for picket defence squads; on every anti-capitalist protest we fight for co-ordination of the stewards; in every confrontation with fascists we fight for a popular anti-fascist militia. These are the first steps towards the formation of a workers? and popular militia ? an organisation essential for the defence of our class today, and for its victorious revolutionary offensive tomorrow.

Mass forces are needed. Therefore, we fight for the mass organisations of the workers, the unions and the workers? parties to create organised forces. Wherever democratic freedoms allow it, we must organise the militia publicly, drawing in the youth, the unemployed, and women ? all the most courageous and determined elements of the working people. Systematic training of forces is essential. Conspiratorial methods should embrace only the essential technical aspects of the matter.

Every step towards the workers? and popular militia helps the fighting layers of the working class to steel themselves in struggle. Its victories embolden the sections of workers not yet involved in the struggle, spread confusion and doubt in the hearts of the supporters of the enemy, help fracture the unity and cohesion of the police and military forces as well as the fascist gangs, and point the way forwards to the overthrow of the state.

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