

P6, AND THE STATUS FOR ALL MARCH:

The rights and risks of marching

Thinking of marching to end deportations in the May 18th Status for All march? Images of police repression in the media have been making some people hesitate.

Here is some information about the march to encourage you to participate!

WHAT IS THE STATUS FOR ALL MARCH?

The Status for All march is a festive, 'family-friendly' march open to all, whatever your status, age, and mobility. We want to make this march as accessible as possible for everyone, especially for people directly affected by repressive border policies. Please get in touch if you have suggestions or requests relating to accessibility.

Since its first annual march in 2004, there has never been a police intervention during a 'Status for All' demonstration! Even in 2012, at the height of the largest student strike Quebec has ever seen, with intensified police repression directed at student marches, Status for All organizers refused to give the police our route in advance, walking in defiance of 'Special Law' Bill78/ Law 12. Nevertheless, the police did not interfere with our march.

THE ANTI-PROTEST BYLAW P6

Although Quebec's anti-protest laws were withdrawn by the new government in 2012, the city of Montreal amended a municipal bylaw, Regulation P6, which implements many of the same provisions; namely, the requirement that march organizers provide a route for approval to the Montreal police. P6 also bans the use of masks in protests.

Montreal police have been using the P6 bylaw to stop some marches - militant, confrontational, student

marches - while they allow others to proceed without interfering. They target certain people with masks, and allow others to wear masks with no problem. Effectively, P6 gives police the power to decide who can and who can't march - which political questions are allowed and which are silenced - on the streets of Montreal.

RESISTANCE TO P6

People are defying this repressive bylaw, continuing to march without police approval and to wear masks. Increasingly, organizations are supporting people in the streets and speaking out against P6, with over 80 expressing publicly that they will defy the bylaw because it violates fundamental principles of freedom.

In solidarity with others in Montreal facing police repression, and out of our strong commitment to principles of freedom and justice, the Status for All Coalition will not be providing our march route to police. In addition, we are encouraging people to wear masks, as part of our long-standing tradition and symbolic gesture in solidarity with members of our communities who are non-status and often cannot publicly show their faces.

CONSEQUENCES OF P6

We do not believe our principled position on P6 will result in police interference with our march. Member organizations of the Status for All coalition have organized family-friendly marches in the past months

without notifying police and there has been no police interference.

P6 is a municipal bylaw and NOT part of the criminal code. An infraction of P6 is not a criminal offense. It results in a ticket, not a criminal charge. It is equivalent to a parking ticket.

P6 tickets are between \$500 and \$1000 for first timers. Militant and student groups defying P6 are contesting their P6 tickets and refusing to pay. In fact, the courts will be asked to decide on the constitutionality (legality) of this bylaw. If the courts find P6 to be unconstitutional, as we believe, the law will be struck down and no one will have to pay. The question will probably take years to make it through the courts, during which time the ticket is suspended.

WHEN P6 IS APPLIED: WHAT A POLICE INTERVENTION COULD LOOK LIKE

When they decide that a march is in violation of P-6, the police must make an announcement and tell people to leave before making an intervention.

In marches where police have used P6 and people have refused to leave, the police have either ticketed people on the spot or brought them to a police station to ticket them. In both cases, police ask people for their name and address. If police suspect that the name and address is false, they can ask for proof. If the person being ticketed refuses to give police his or her name and address or refuses to give proof of name and address if police asks for these,

the police can detain the person until he or she gives his or her name and address and/or provides proof.

CRIMINAL CHARGES

There are, however, certain acts that could lead to criminal charges and have a more serious impact on immigration status (removal of permanent residence, difficulties for applying for permanent residence or citizenship, etc.): trying to resist an arrest or escape from a cop who is trying to arrest them, assaulting an officer (throwing objects, empty plastic bottles at them), or giving false identification to the police.

PARTICIPATING IN THE MARCH

Although we believe this will be a perfectly safe march, we don't want to take any risks. We have therefore prepared a number of safety precautions, including protocols for decision-making teams and police liaisons in each contingent. If we believe that the march is becoming unsafe we will make that clear to participants so that anyone who wants to can leave.

People marching should remain vigilant and attentive to announcements from organizers and police presence. As explained above, the police are supposed to announce that a march is in violation of P6 before doing anything. Participants can thus leave before police make an intervention.

We also suggest that people who still feel nervous come to the march with a buddy, someone they trust. You can watch out for each other and help ensure each of you is safe.

in solidarity
Accessibility, Security and Solidarity Committee of the
Status for All Coalition

