

ORGANISE '94



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Organise is the magazine of the Anarchist Federation (AF). As anarchist communists we fight for a world without leaders, where power is shared equally amongst communities, and people are free to reach their full potential. We do this by supporting working class resistance to exploitation and oppression, organise alongside our neighbours and workmates, host informative events, and produce publications that help make sense of the world around us.

We publish twice a year with the aim to provide a clear anarchist viewpoint on contemporary issues and to initiate debate on ideas not normally covered in agitational papers. To meet this target, we positively solicit contributions from our readers and play host to any article that furthers the objectives of anarchist communism. If you'd like to write something for us, feel free to contact us through any of the details below. The articles in this issue do not represent the collective viewpoint of the AF unless stated as such. Revolutionary ideas develop from debate, they do not merely drop out of the air! We hope that this publication will help that debate to take place.

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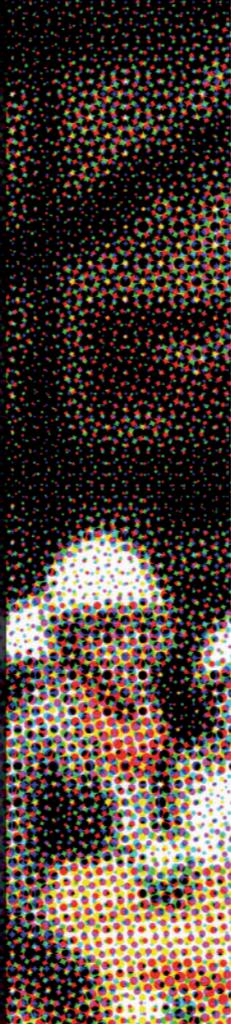
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127,517. That's how many people have died due to the consciously inadequate pandemic response. It's little more than Gross Negligence Manslaughter on a horrific scale. If, like me you've lost someone, since the dip prior to November, you can blame Bojo and his little cadre of petty despots. Their own research committee told them the NHS was critically understocked when it came to PPE and materials needed to handle a pandemic. This was in 2016. They told to committee to revisit their findings. When a pandemic came about, they sat idle until it was too late. In the rush to cover their negligence they encouraged people not use PPE, they said there is no data (a lie) to cover the horrific state of the NHS after years of successive cuts.

They left the borders open, not for migrants ofcourse, but for buisnessmen and holiday makers. No don't worry about a test sir, straight onto the tube with you, No worries. Promoting self-determined shielding? "Oh the economy! No!" they cried, then after being forced into what's now branded "lockdown" they broke the imposed abstinence by offering vouchers for cheap meals and sent the kids back to school, gotta free the workers up. They knew what the results of this would be, they just did not care. Subsequently as the bodies piled up they switched tack and imposed ridiuclously draconian lockdown enforcement. The police, now no longer even pretending to catch muggers, now spent their time harassing people sat in the park.

Meanwhile the right wing and their fuck buddies in the tinfoil hat centre/left, switched from "5G death rays in the vaccine" to "Making me wear a mask is the

real fascism". Their recruitment policy of preying on normal people's morale attrition with seemingly "common sense" positions proving to be ridiculously successful for them. They use Covid-19 like they use the victims of terror and children who've suffered abuse. They don't care about any of them, just the unquestionable cause they can hide behind to spreading their odious bile.

Elsewhere a nurse is handed a £10,000 fine for organising a small protest over pay, police brutally attack women holding a vigil for a woman murdered by a cop, their mate. Elsewhere they batter teenagers sat peacefully on the ground and the nation explodes into outrage that the kids didn't disperse. They get called "terrorists" for days before the cops admit they started it and lied about their injuries. No one cares by then, it's the next news story and there's riot porn from the states as the cops execute another young black man on he streets. Before you start to wonder about the white faces in heavy armour packing rifles and batons moving in on the crowd of black locals, wait they're protesting not looting? Here's the weather, close your eyes now, you didn't see shit, shut up.

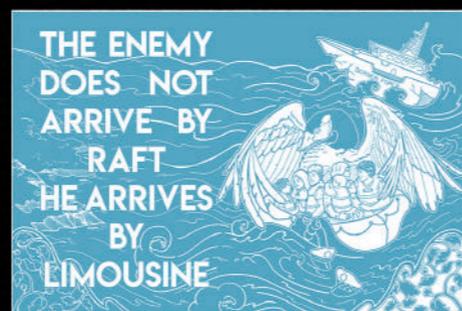
Shit isn't ok.
I hope these pages inspire you to do something about it. I hope they make you angry, so angry that you hit the streets and fight this fucking bill, the G7 and the bullshit Cop26.

#KillTheBill #Mayday2021

Love and Rage
Peter Ó Máille
Editor of Organise

Outside cover artwork supplied by
N.O. Bonzo

Anarchist illustrator, printmaker, and muralist based out of Portland, OR. They are the illustrator of Mutual Aid: An Illuminated Factor of Evolution (PM Press, Spring 2021). More of their work can be found at www.nobonzo.com



Inside cover artwork supplied by
Antimateria

Who made these pieces for the 8 March Women's Strike on behalf of the IWW/AIT

Find them at @antimateriart



THIS MAY DAY, A CALL FOR ANARCHISTS TO BUILD TRANSNATIONAL BRIDGES OF SOLIDARITY WITH REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

As an anarchist, grassroots migrant organizer in Mexico, I want to mark this May Day by highlighting several compelling reasons why migrants and anarchists are natural allies, accomplices, partners, and companeros. There are more migrants and refugees now than ever before in modern human history. The UN predicts there will be up to 1 Billion refugees displaced by 2050 from climate change alone.

Given the overlapping crises of climate chaos, the daily economic misery caused by disaster capitalism, the rise of narco-states unleashed on the most vulnerable, and the systematic raping and pillaging of precious natural resources by multinational corporations, the numbers of migrants and refugees will continue to grow exponentially for the foreseeable future.

Anarchists of all stripes are needed to reach out to migrant and refugee communities and work in solidarity to achieve our common objectives. We have everything to gain by pursuing alliances based on our widely shared values and beliefs, such as the freedom to live without prisons, police, or deportations. It's important for us to invest our energy in building bridges of solidarity with the forcibly displaced, at a time when many governments

are fully invested in building more physical and virtual border walls to keep us divided.

Broadly speaking, migrants and anarchists share these values:

1. Freedom of movement. Freedom to travel at will by train hopping, bike riding, hitch-hiking, walking, and carpooling for hundreds, or even thousands, of miles often without money or resources. Freedom to travel with a caravan of people or alone. We demand absolute freedom to travel with or without the permission of the government or "legitimate" papers.
2. National borders are unnecessary, imaginary lines that serve a white-settler-colonial strategy to divide and conquer people. Viruses and hurricanes don't recognize borders. Money is given absolute freedom to cross borders because economies closed off to trade are less strong. Why are currencies, natural resources, or commercial commodities afforded more freedom to cross international borders than human beings?
3. Border walls violate our human rights. Walls don't work to keep people or contraband out. Walls are symbols



of repression and fear. Walls are expensive tools of tyranny and fascism. Border walls are not just physical barriers anymore but virtual. We oppose virtual walls built on CCTV cameras, surveillance drones, and heat motion sensors utilized to monitor our every move.

4. Freedom from all forms of social control and surveillance. We oppose the collection of biometric data, and other personal data, mass surveillance systems and technologically sophisticated means of repression, from ankle monitoring bracelets to social media data mining, to immigrant court check-ins. Our most personal information is not for sale, nor is it to be used to track our every movement by any government or private corporation.

5. Major distrust of the government and all its agents; police, military, border patrol, immigration judges, politicians, ICE agents, prison guards etc. Our lived experiences have led us to understand that governments are thinly disguised monopolies on violence and wealth.

6. The law is never on our side. Laws don't favor us even when they are intended to do so because those laws are never actually enforced in our defense. Government agents put in charge of upholding the laws are usually the most lawless in our experiences of dealing with them.

7. Distrust of all political parties and all politicians. We don't subscribe to either Democrats or Republicans. All major parties have failed to take up our interests and we're readily used as scapegoats to scare voters on both sides of the isle.

8. Freedom from all forms of forced incarceration for adults, youth and children who have committed no violent crimes. We want to see the abolition of for-profit, private contractor and government run facilities. That includes jails, prisons, immigrant detention centers, black sites, etc. Our contemporary criminal justice systems are based on racism and eugenics, not intended to pursue justice for victims or maintaining law and order.

9. Freedom from all forms of torture, that's physical and mental abuse. Torture is systematically used against the historically marginalized and most vulnerable in our societies as a form punishment by state and non-state (gangs, cartels) actors. Torture can be withholding resources like food, water, sunlight or sleep, keeping us incommunicado from family and friends, mental anguish like mock executions, bodily harm of all types.

10. Freedom to work without exploitation, physical repression, abusive or unsafe labor conditions. We demand to be treated humanely and paid a great wage that allows us to live with dignity. During the COVID-19 pandemic, our jobs are deemed "essential work" but are not compensated sufficiently as we take on additional risks to our health, leading to death in some cases.

11. Good healthcare is a human right, not a privilege reserved only for those people who can pay for it. Quality healthcare, especially during a world-wide pandemic, should be guaranteed to all for free.

12. Direct action works to gain political leverage and power. We use direct action as a form of political participation without hesitation. We embrace a diversity of tactics.

13. We believe in the right to self-organize into groups, caravans, assemblies, committees, unions, and collectives. We believe these forms of autonomous organizing are a necessity for our survival, not a luxury.

14. Mutual aid as a way of life. We chose cooperation over competition to sustain our most basic human needs, exchanging everything from art, to labor, to money, to resources.

Looking to take the first step? Please support the work of Contra Viento Y Marea Comedor Tijuana and donate to them via their GoFundMe. El Comedor is a refugee-run space in Tijuana. It provides vital resources for refugees and others in need. Centered around a kitchen, El Comedor is one of the only places, in Tijuana, that serves free hot meals daily to these targeted populations. Their roof also hosts a donation center and a food garden. These meals, resources, and this space are crucial for thousands making the dangerous journey northward to escape violence. Support them via their Patreon support page. ■

Anonymous via It's Going Down

www.gofundme.com/f/migrant-organizers-of-tijuana-need-covid-support
www.patreon.com/elcomedor

Ed. 599 - That's the number of people who died trying to cross the Mediterranean since the start of the year. This is more than twice the figure compared to last year despite there being 19% less attempted crossings. End this horror.
www.alarmphone.org
www.sea-watch.org

SLEEPWALKING INTO A POLICE STATE

On the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill, #KillTheBill and “thugs”.

March 21st 2021, 11PM—Deliveroo drivers are queuing outside Taka Taka, a Greek takeaway near Bridewell Police Station in the centre of Bristol. They negotiate orders through plastic visors, pick up bundles of oregano-laden chips and tzatziki pots, lamb kebabs that have piouretted all day, swathed in flatbreads and topped with an ugly bell pepper. Grease-thick steam rises, condenses and is wiped clean from the brows of dough-hatted chefs; their mouths shout order numbers at the gig-economy crowd. About ten metres away, a police car is on fire. A protester does a kickflip.

There are swarms of people all over Bridewell. Lines of police hammer protestors with the blades of their shields. Protestors hammer back with fists and tossed debris, set off fireworks and fall back. The police, surprised, go harder still. The hospitals are filled with injured protestors. Medics are harassed, arrested, journalists bullied and truncheoned. The night echoes those we have seen play out across the USA for over a year, after the encoded racism of American Empire reified itself on the body of George Floyd as the sheer impossibility of breathing under the state’s unflagging tonnage.

In Bristol, the protests’ foundational scene is similar: the murder of Sarah Everard by Wayne Couzens, a Metropolitan Police Officer. Both instances concretise the advance of political power against its subjects—a campaign of unmitigated exhaustion and depletion, the sweeping aside of black bodies, the predation of women’s, the abhorrence of the unexploitable and the negation of the exploited: an endless war on an outside which remains impossible to the logic of capital, yet integral to the economic expansion and social repression that that logic necessitates—‘how can you be so violent, when one of your mates murdered someone like me the other week?’ screams a woman in the crowd, before she is swatted away by the police as if she was nothing.

The structural target of the protests is the recent Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill which—at the time of writing—has stalled at the committee stage in the Commons, but still threatens to be pushed through in time. At over 300 pages long, its provisions are far-reaching and aim at overwhelming any opposition—though the Labour Party seem to be doing a good job overwhelming themselves; initially planning to abstain,

they only opposed the bill after the public outcry.

One of the main sources of contention is what the bill could mean for protests. Currently, police must substantiate that a protest will cause “serious public disorder, serious damage to property or serious disruption to the life of the community” before they impose restrictions on it. In the past, this vagueness has afforded police enough room to, for example, kettle 4000-5000 G20 protestors in April 2009, not because they themselves were deemed to be breaching the peace, but because a group nearby was. The crowds were held for four hours, before the use of “reasonable force” was sanctioned in order to disperse them. In the ensuing throng, Ian Tomlinson, a newspaper seller not attached to the protest, was batonned from behind by an officer who was wearing a balaclava and had his police number concealed. Tomlinson collapsed fifteen minutes later and was pronounced dead on arrival at hospital.

If the bill passes into law, police chiefs will no longer need to demonstrate that a protest is likely to cause serious disorder before imposing restrictions and will be given even more interpretive room to justify repressive measures. Start and finish times will be mandated in advance on protests with as little as one person present, the “controlled area” around Westminster, which prohibits protest activities, will be expanded, police will be able to set noise limits in order to prevent what the bill calls “serious unease” of passersby and fines of up to £2,500 will be issued to protestors who refuse to follow the conditions laid out by the police. It will also be considered a crime if the protestors “ought to know that the condition has been imposed,” leaving the possibility of punitive actions disturbingly open-ended. Officers like the one who struck Ian Tomlinson will be entrusted with dictating the terms of their own backlash and what constitutes apposite freedom of expression will be decided by those in whose interests it is to limit that expression.

This is nothing new—the goalposts of peaceful protest have always been defined arbitrarily. Contemporary coverage of civil rights actions which are now considered exemplary of non-violent praxis, such as Martin Luther King’s marches in the South, show that any action which is potentially threatening to the status quo will be deemed violent—whether or not there is violence and whether or



not that violence starts with the protestors or the police—until it can be recuperated into a Liberal imaginary of peaceful progress which doesn’t threaten capital. As Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari point out, “state overcoding is precisely this structural violence that defines the law, “police” violence and not the violence of war. There is lawful violence wherever violence contributes to the creation of that which it is used against.” Violence becomes “simply a natural phenomenon the responsibility for which does not lie with the state, which uses violence only against the violent.” In effect: the very constitution of violence proceeds from the a priori assumption that the state’s use of force is natural and justified, an assumption that consequently cannot allow for the idea that the social conditions which it perpetuates precipitate the exact types of violence it abhors.

This bill however would go closer than ever before to criminalising protest, something which is supposedly sacrosanct to liberal democracy. It is hard to picture what protest could mean to its authors, since it’s obvious they have never had anything to protest about. Protests must draw attention to themselves and insert a break in the homogeneity of day-to-day life in order to be protests.

The outcome of the bill then, will be an absolute defanging of the legal means for reproach and a consolidation of the state’s monopoly on definitions of violence. It would, as the human rights barrister Adam Wagner points out, essentially make permanent the de facto ban on protests that is already in place due to COVID regulations.

As well as a result of the proposal of the bill then, the Bristol protests could well be a premonition of its effects, as the police used COVID regulations as a pretext for violent dispersal tactics (the police’s apology to protestors arrested outside the trial of the ‘Colston Four’ in January calls the legal legitimacy of this pretext into question though). Before the first Kill the Bill action was due to start, Avon and Somerset Police advised that protests should be carried out online. The bathos of a 10,000-strong Zoom call, disembodied faces expressing their anger to crunchy laptop microphones, perhaps this is what the bill’s authors are aiming for: mass politics denuded of the masses, all the spontaneity and potentialities of collective mobilisation stoppered and stuffed into however long your bandwidth is, occupations that only occupy Hertzian space.

In fact, the bill is preoccupied with space, its enclosure and the conditioning of the way bodies are allowed to move in it. Guy Shrubsole’s book *Who Owns England?* draws on FOI and map data to conclude that 48% of land in England is owned by less than 1% of its population. Of that 48%, 18% is owned by corporations and 30%, the largest amount owned by any one group, is owned by a very-much-still-extant aristocracy. A further 17% belongs to city bankers and new money, the typical bourgeoisie. To trespass on this land is currently a civil offence, but, if the Conservatives follow through on their 2019 manifesto, it will soon become a criminal one, giving police the power to curtail ancient freedoms and place further restrictions on the Right to Roam, which in England pertains to only 10% of the land.

The provisions of the current bill focus on those “residing on land without consent in or with a vehicle.” Just as similar legislation under the Cameron government transferred squatting from a civil to a criminal offence and consequently criminalised a way of life that many unhoused folk rely on then, this bill will redound most heavily on those without fixed abodes, namely Gypsy, Romany and Traveller communities. Vans—which, to be clear, are homes—will be confiscated indefinitely, the legal threshold for police to harass and intervene in settlements will be lowered and the extremely violent scenes that played out on Dale Farm in 2011 could become more and more frequent. »

This is red meat for Middle England's more sadistic postcodes, where, according to YouGov polling, over 40% of people would be unhappy with a close relative forming a relationship with a traveller, over 10% think "gypsies/travellers should be refused entry into bars and restaurants, because they are gypsies/travellers" and GRT children have by far the lowest school attainment of any cohort. The local election literature of Labour MP Charlotte Nichols explicitly boasted of "dealing" with "incursions" by traveller communities, which speaks to both the willingness of the Labour Party to sell out these communities and the embeddedness of anti-GRT rhetoric to the extent that it is seen as a vote-winner by both major parties.

Again, this is nothing new, nor is it unique to the UK. Since the emergence of GRT groups in Western Europe in the Early Modern period, their status as subjects on the periphery of a nascent capitalism led to demonisation by the equally nascent, modern nation state. As capital drew peasants into the urban proletariat, traveller communities eluded incorporation into the sedentary labour pool and undermined the gradual subordination of the commons under a regime of private property relations by their nomadism.

The bill, which presents itself as a protection of private property, can be seen as proceeding directly from capitalism's insolvency with this type of nomadic lifestyle. While it takes the cosmopolitan businessman to be its modern imago, the nomad is an absolute outside whose rootlessness is in tension with the basic injunctions of capitalist social production and threatens the accumulative property of capital investment—in particular, house prices, the inflation of which has been the Conservative's skeleton key for clinging onto power for decades.

This rhetoric often centres on a double-bind. Just as an anti-Semite might accuse Jews of being communists in one breath and the conniving financiers of international capital in the other, politicians engaging in anti-GRT prejudice will demonise GRT encampments for producing "excessive noise, smells, litter or deposits of waste," as per the bill, but offer no solutions to the lack of authorised sites, even as families are left without access to running water, toilets or refuse spots in the middle of a pandemic. Again, the state asserts its prejudice on the outcomes it helps perpetuate and opts to criminalise a way of life rather than sustain it.

Pogroms, enslavement and expulsion are all commonplace to the history of GRT communities. They may have reached

a peak with the "Porjamos" (literally "the devouring"), which saw close to half-a-million Romani people killed at the hands of the Nazis, but this was neither the first, nor the last genocide and evidence for coercive sterilisations of Romani women in the Czech Republic date as recently as 2001. Meanwhile, violent attacks against encampments, which are often sites of extreme privation, are on the rise across Europe in keeping with the reactionary turn of the past decade. Under these conditions, to further legitimise anti-GRT hatred and foreclose on their freedoms for electoral gains is deplorable.

On the 24th March, a protest is held in Bristol specifically focused on the anti-GRT elements of the bill. One sign reads, 'first they came for the gypsies.'

A week after the first Bristol protest, Home Secretary Priti Patel, the architect of the bill, will denounce those involved as 'thugs'—a word that was bastardised from Hindi by British colonisers in the 1800s and used to designate the othered subjects of the Indian interior that escaped assimilation into the Imperial machine, haunting the colonial imagination with the possibility of an outside. What followed this designation was of course a brutal and legal eradication of whoever was labelled 'thug' or 'thuggee' under the terms of the Thuggee and Dacoity Suppression Acts, 1836–48. Since then, the word 'thug' has come to cipher the neuroses of the state, flung at any deemed outside, from striking miners to Irish immigrants and travellers.

The fascist Carl Schmitt wrote that 'the core of the political is not enmity per se, but the distinction between friend and enemy, and presupposes both friend and enemy.' The inconsistencies and fragility of political power cannot be seen as immanent to it, but rather as coming from a non-reconcilable other—a 'thug,' an 'outside agitator' or a non-incorporable community. Any regime which imposes a socio-economic orthodoxy as stridently as a state must have an outside to deflect the internal precarity of its normative social mores on to so that the inside, the 'friends' can be seen as whole and not lacking. In relation to the state then, the outside is caught in the curious position of having both its existence and its destruction as necessary components for the continuation of a state of affairs which designates it as such.

In Deleuze's Postscript on the Societies of Control, he writes 'there is no need to fear or hope, but only to look for new weapons.' As the Tory stranglehold on state power slides ever closer to all-out fascism, what will be left to do other than be 'thugs'? ■

#KillTheBill Coalition Statement

We, the undersigned groups and organisations, stand in solidarity with all those fighting to #KillTheBill.

The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill is a dangerous and unnecessary piece of legislation that endangers the rights and safety of every single one of us. It is therefore no surprise that those who are working to #KillTheBill have come together from every section of society. We stand united and reject attempts to divide our movement into "good" and "bad" protestors.

We must be clear: there is no version of this Bill that is tolerable. Whilst we support the many efforts to stop this Bill passing through Parliament, we also call on all groups and organisations to stand unified in demanding nothing less than a complete rejection of the Bill. If we stand together then we can #KillTheBill.

In recent weeks, we have seen the police repeatedly abuse the powers they already have. Giving them more powers will not make us safer.

THE BILL intensifies police brutality against Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, and criminalises their way of life. This must go.

THE BILL gives the police the power to criminalise protests for being "noisy", disruptive or "annoying". This must go.

THE BILL uses 'protecting' women as a cover to expand police powers and increase custodial sentences. These measures are not sufficient to prevent violence, and are troubling considering

police officers' implication in cases of violence against women. This must go.

THE BILL expands stop and search powers, which are already regularly used to harass and terrorise young black people. This must go.

THE BILL will silence the calls for justice by families of those whose loved ones have died at the hands of the police. This must go.

THE BILL makes those at the sharpest edge of state violence even more unsafe - including migrants, sex workers, Disabled people, and racialised communities.

WE MUST KILL THIS BILL.

The Government's current majority means that the Bill may pass through the halls of Parliament. That does not mean it will pass through the streets.

Just as many before us - in history as recent as the anti Poll Tax movement - we know that victories are won in the streets, in our communities and workplaces. People power has already got this Bill delayed. It can also stop it being enforced.

We, the undersigned, stand together to Kill The Bill in its entirety and with all the tools at our disposal.

Sisters Uncut

To sign your organisation to the statement :- www.bit.ly/killthebillstatement

COPS CRIMES AGAINST WOMEN AND KIDS - PT 1

Since 2010 At Least 1300 Women and Children Have Been Sexually or Physically Attacked by Police Officers in the UK.

Content warning: Sexual violence against women and children. Domestic abuse. Police violence. Violence. Suicide.

PART 1: THE WOMEN THEY KNOW

Like many people, I am a man. And like many people, I spent much of March 2021 reading stories shared by women covering the spectrum of shitty behaviour they've experienced at the hands of men. I am trying to keep the reason why that outpouring happened out of this series. But it should be clear what has inspired it. The memories of her should belong to her family and friends. Her name shouldn't be used as bait to discuss the horrors below.

The more I think about it, I realise that this terrible piece of society that somehow, we've all just let exist forever, isn't a women's issue. It affects women, of course. Definitely of course. But in these attacks, the women's role is simply to exist to satisfy the man. This is a men's issue.

It is we men who make these choices. It is we who keep leering at you. It is we who keep groping you. It is we who keep assaulting you. It is we who keep raping you. It is we who keep killing you. This is a men's issue. We make this shit happen.

As of March 2020, 68.8% of UK cops were men.

Policing is a deeply misogynistic institution that refuses to change. This has been pointed out numerous times over the past decade by various inspectors and victims' groups. Yet all The Police do is pay lip service to the changes recommended. This lack of action has led to corruption, sexual assault, rape, and murder.

In the seventies, women were first permitted to become full blown cops. The numbers have risen since then. But an increase in female officers doesn't mean The Police don't hate women.

The Source For the Number in The Title

On my internet travels, I found a list of links to media reports about cops committing crimes. It's from a source I'd usually dismiss as being dodgy as fuuuck. The author is a Freeman. A special kind of probably-harmless-conspiratorial-looney. "You can't arrest me 'cos I know magic words" kinda guy.

The list goes back twelve years. I combed through the

nearly one thousand articles, verifying them all, and removed all the cool stuff like cops taking drugs, and stealing stuff from work (pssst if you're a cop reading this, you should start stealing from work, take loads of drugs, and then quit).

And with the remaining information, I was able to create a spreadsheet with all the charges I could find that were brought against cops for physical or sexual violence against women and children.

Here's a summary of what I've found. Not all the crimes are included on this chart. (Next Page)

What's immediately clear from looking through this data, is that a recent murder of a woman, allegedly by a cop, is not an exception. What happened to her is particularly brutal. But police officers attack women and children all the time for gratification.

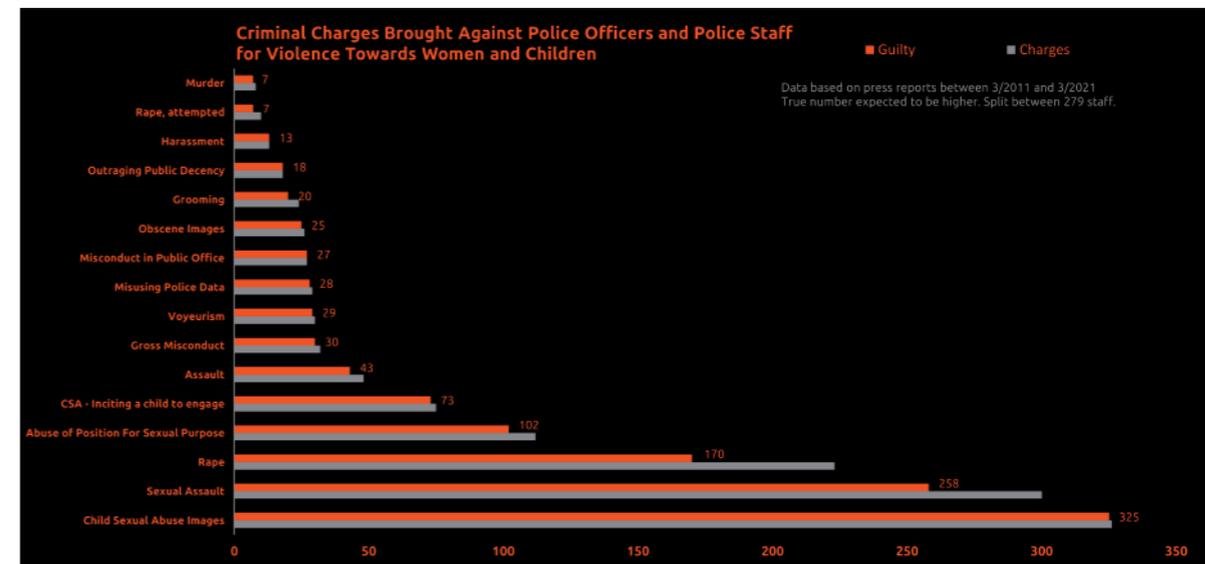
I'm not a data scientist, I'm just a blogger with time on his hands and a limited knowledge of Excel. The biggest insight I can offer is: Why the fuck is no one counting this?

That's not hyperbole. No one is! Police forces count complaints against their officers, The College of Policing has annual statistics for officers who are fired and the category their offence fits into. But they don't count which of those ends up in the justice system.

My data just shows the cases that have been charged and then reported on. I will not have found every case which is charged. It will absolutely be incomplete. Male violence against women is widely underreported already and many of the stories I've read feature quotes from survivors about fearing reporting a police officer. Or in some cases being threatened with that information by the piece of shit doing the violence.

They're More Than Just Numbers

Each entry on the spreadsheet represents the courage of a woman or girl who decided to try and do something to stop the man that hurt her. It feels a bit trite to write that, but after reading so much of this bleak, bleak shit I had to find something positive to try and hold on to. For me, it has been their courage.



So, as I show you numbers, please try to remember that each piece of a total is something terrible that happened to somebody. It was real. It was something that affected them enough to brave going to the place where their attacker worked, to the literal source of his power, and telling one of his colleagues. That must have been shit scary. I hate that I can do none of their stories justice. In fact, my focus is very purposefully on the perpetrators and their enablers. I want them to own the terrible things they've done. They did it.

From the senior officer who raped two junior officers, to the PC who sent suggestive texts to a fourteen year old girl. It's all male entitlement and misogyny, inflated by the state, and used in ways to abuse someone else just because she's a she.

These men made choices to do these horrendous things. Remember that. This was all chosen. And keep in mind that people aren't charged with every crime they've committed, just the ones the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) thinks it'll successfully prosecute. Most of these cops will be worse than they appear.

On Charges

Most importantly for understanding the data, I've combined crimes into more recognisable labels. There are so many different charges that are basically the same, or have significant overlap. I just think it's simpler to categorise 'Indecent Assault', or 'Unwanted Sexual Touching' as Sexual Assault.

I refuse to accept that 'Buggery' isn't Rape. Or indeed 'Assault by Penetration'. The law may judge differently, but

if you assault-by-penetration someone, you're a fucking rapist in my eyes.

You can find further notes and detail of how I've grouped crimes together for easier data wrangling in the Information section of the spreadsheet I used to assemble this data. A copy is downloadable from the Organise! website.

I haven't collected data on whether victims or perpetrators belonged to any minority groups. This goes for ethnicity, and for things like sexuality, or if the victim was a cis or trans woman. I would have absolutely collected it, for sure, but details about victims are quite rightly kept out of the press, and generally the only way to tell the officer's race is if a mugshot is included in the articles I've got the data from.

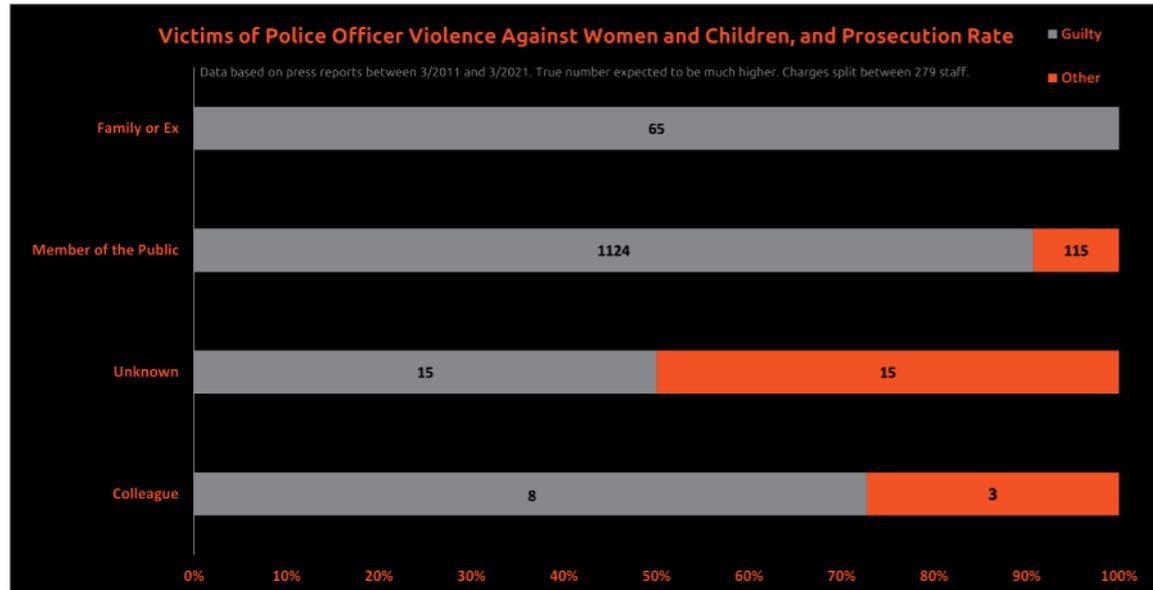
Last on the list of caveats is that a small number of the cops charged over this ten-year period committed their offences decades ago. It's taken this long to bring them to justice. So, some are historic cases. I do not believe this makes them any less worthy of being counted here. Not least because there's a high chance that in thirty years cops will be being prosecuted for crimes they're committing today.

Cops At Home

I've heard several times over the years that domestic abuse is much more prevalent in police families. Maybe you have too. Academic literature from the US confirms this isn't one of those bullshit facts that floats around, with three studies concluding that somewhere between 20% and 40% of families with a police officer experience »

domestic abuse. The level for a non-cop family is 10%. You might be thinking “ohh but the Americans are all gun-toting maniacs” which is obviously completely entirely totally true. But also, y’don’t need a gun to hurt somebody else. And cops get training on how to be violent whatever country they’re from. I’ll find a source later. Ahem.

With that bleak statement of fact out of the way, here’s something relatively positive until you think about it for more than a second; I was surprised by how few of the total reported cases were domestic abuse-y in nature.



The category ‘Family or Ex’ is exactly that. And all sixty-five of the charges brought were prosecuted and the perpetrators were found guilty. So that’s good. Or is it? Well, yes.

But also, probably definitely not.

In 2020 The Centre for Women’s Justice (CWJ) brought a super-complaint (‘super-complaint’ is what they’re actually called, very cool) against The Police titled ‘Failure to address police perpetrated domestic abuse’. It discusses at great length the fear and difficulties faced by women who are being, or have been abused by partners in a police force. While it doesn’t contain much in the way of statistical data, the super-complaint identified common themes amongst all the women they interviewed, more than half of whom also worked for the police. The most common being that the affected women feel doubly powerless. The powerlessness a victim of domestic abuse often feels, but also the man abusing them works for the police, the institution ostensibly there to protect them.

From the CWJ report; *“What stands out as a common feature is the potential for improper manipulation and abuse of systems in the suspect’s favour. ... Underlying this may be a belief that an officers’ career should not suffer as a result of these kinds of reports.”*

I imagine these experiences matched that of a civilian police worker who was for a time the wife of PC Steven Riding. In fact, she became the second ex-wife of PC Steven Riding, who assaulted her repeatedly. Over twenty-two years PC Steven Riding abused three women.

A wife, a wife, and a girlfriend.

It seems his girlfriend reported him. PC Steven Riding was found guilty of grabbing her by the neck, slapping her, and kicking her. PC Steven Riding’s second wife said he did similar violence to her. She spoke of having to wear a scarf to work to cover up the bruising around her throat left by PC Steven Riding.

The story doesn’t say whether she tried to report him. But eight years with a man like PC Steven Riding, who was content to regularly strangle her, and punch her, can’t have been easy or empowering. She said at his trial:

“I was nervous giving evidence and discussing parts of my private life. But it’s a necessary evil to ensure his proven violent behaviour stops. It was important for me to attend to try to in some way form a closure on a difficult and stressful chapter.”

I hate this. They separated in 2010 and he was tried in 2016. PC Steven Riding, trying to cling to power, denied

the charges and so forced her to give evidence and relive her trauma.

Of the thirty-nine physical assault charges against women I’ve found, fifteen were committed by PC Steven Riding. The rest? One was against a colleague. Four were against a partner. And six were against an ex.

PC Stuart Doran got dumped. That must’ve sucked. But we all get dumped at some point. It hurts. It leaves us confused. We write rambling mushy nonsense, drink ice-cream and beer in equal measure, send secretly hopeful texts and blah blah blah etc etc you know how breakups go. Most importantly, we get over them. It just takes a little time.

She was at a party. He wasn’t invited. PC Stuart Doran spent the night drinking. PC Stuart Doran turned up at the party he wasn’t invited to. PC Stuart Doran pushed her onto a bed. PC Stuart Doran straddled her. PC Stuart Doran grabbed her by the neck. PC Stuart Doran punched her in the face.

PC Stuart Doran punched her in the face again. PC Stuart Doran punched her in the face again. And again. And again. And again. And again.

PC Stuart Doran put his hands over her mouth and nose, cutting off her breathing. PC Stuart Doran leant forwards bringing his face closer to hers. PC Stuart Doran clenched her cheek between his teeth. PC Stuart Doran bit down hard and tore.

His victim? A fellow police officer. I hope she got a warmer reception on her return to work than this officer mentioned in the CWJ super complaint did:

“After her initial report of abuse ... she returned from sick leave, bullying began: a wooden cross marked “in remembrance” was left in her tray, comments were made implying she was mad, three male officers drove with her to a forest in the early hours, suggested a cigarette break then drove away leaving her alone for 30-45 minutes. She was sexually harassed by another officer but when she told him to stop, her senior reprimanded her for upsetting him.”

It’s Just Banter

With those kind of responses to a colleague who had been a victim of domestic abuse, no wonder it took three years for the victim of Detective Constable Nick Gravenor to report him for a sexual assault.

For several months while at work, DC Nick Gravenor told his junior female colleague that she had a “nice bum”. DC Nick Gravenor told his female colleague what he liked sexually.

On the day that DC Nick Gravenor attacked her, his victim had just ended a relationship with another man, and had recently been bereaved. In her own words, she was vulnerable.

DC Nick Gravenor forced his mouth against hers. DC Nick Gravenor pulled off her top. DC Nick Gravenor pulled off her bra. DC Nick Gravenor touched her inappropriately. DC Nick Gravenor made her afraid that she was about to be raped.

I wonder if DC Nick Gravenor and his male colleagues ever described the woman he assaulted as “job fit”. Apparently in The Police that’s what male officers call female officers who look good both in and out of their uniform.

I wonder if DC Nick Gravenor discussed with his male colleagues if the woman he attacked was “getting any cock?” Just like a team of five officers were caught doing, in their office, along with a whole bunch more sexist and racist comments.

Having read the CWJ super-complaint, I wouldn’t be surprised if he’d done both;

“The concerns raised in this super-complaint should be seen in the context of a broader culture of ‘institutionalised sexism’ within the police service that condones and trivialises violence against women.”

The Murderers

Of the nine charged killings of women and girls by police officers I found, one is awaiting trial. The remaining eight resulted in the man being found guilty or were part of a murder suicide. Six wives. One ex-wife. One ex-lover. And one daughter.

All these cases are horrible. And they all stick out in some way. How could they not?

Inspector Darren McKie’s wife was a police officer. Inspector Darran McKie strangled her.

Detective Constable Peter Foster’s wife was a police officer. DC Peter Foster beat her over the head with a baseball bat and stabbed her in the throat. »

I could only guess at whether these were the miserable finales of domestic abuse.

Inspector Toby Day had just been fired for *“misusing police systems and matters concerning honesty and integrity”*. A few days later Toby Day strangled his six-year-old daughter. Toby Day stabbed her three times in the chest. Then Toby Day strangled his wife. Toby Day stabbed her four times. Toby Day stabbed his sixteen-year-old daughter in the neck. She survived. Toby Day stabbed his fourteen-year-old son in the chest. He survived.

DC Ivan Esack

In 2010 Detective Constable Ivan Esack, resigned from the police because he was bored. No, really. That’s not a joke.

In February 2012, after years of abuse, Ivan Esack and his wife separated. In April 2012 Ivan Esack walked into his ex-wife’s hair salon and stabbed her eleven times in the neck and chest. As Ivan Esack walked out, he said *“She deserved it, the bitch”*.

Before Ivan Esack murdered his ex-wife, he harassed and stalked her. She reported him to the police several times, but decided not to press charges because she didn’t want to damage his reputation. Ivan Esack sent her text messages featuring lines like *“Death, death, death”*.

She got a new boyfriend. Seven weeks before Ivan Esack murdered her, Ivan Esack walked into her hair salon and strangled her until she passed out. At Ivan Esack’s trial, her boyfriend described her state of mind in the weeks between the attacks; *“She was a nervous wreck and absolutely petrified.”*

Her boyfriend testified that she said, *“[Ivan Esack] would do her family”*.

One of the BBC articles about the trial of Ivan Esack begins with this line: *“[Her] determination not to get her violent former husband Ivan into trouble ultimately cost her her life.”*

Did it?

Ivan Esack wasn’t a cop when he killed his ex-wife, but he had been for seven years. During the investigation, police learned Ivan Esack was verbally and physically assaulting her while he was a police officer. When Ivan Esack killed her, he was barely two years out of the police. Did he still have contacts in the police? Did Ivan

Esack use his position as a police officer to scare her into silence? According to the Centre for Women’s Justice, this is typical behaviour of a police officer who is also a perpetrator of domestic abuse.

After Ivan Esack’s trial for murder, Detective Chief Inspector Paul Fotheringham told the BBC; *“We take every incident very seriously and we won’t just look for the evidence provided from the person suffering. We look for evidence around it to see if we can support them.”*

In 2014 a review of the case reported back. It stated The Police did nothing in the face of mounting evidence in the months before Ivan Esack stabbed her to death. That The Police did nothing when they could have arrested Ivan Esack for the charge of ‘Sending Malicious Communications’. The Police did nothing when she told them that Ivan Esack had threatened to harm himself. The Police did nothing after investigating and finding that friends and family had information about the ongoing abuse Ivan Esack inflicted on her. The Police did nothing when she reported Ivan Esack had turned up at her new home with a knife. The Police did nothing when Ivan Esack strangled her in public.

The Police did fucking nothing.

It’s unclear if The Police knew of Ivan Esack’s behaviour while he was employed by them. But the events leading up to and the eventual murder of his ex-wife make me wonder if they’d have even cared. Here’s a quote from the CWJ’s super-complaint:

“We are particularly concerned about the conclusion that because conduct took place in an officer’s private life there is no potential for misconduct. In one of the cases cited the Professional Standards Department stated that the officer had discredited himself but not discredited the police service.”

Domestic Abuse is NBD, Actually

I combined the latest sets of domestic abuse figures for England and Wales (excluding Greater Manchester, who were having computer problems - seriously), Scotland, and Northern Ireland. They totalled 1,380,507 reports to The Police, and of that first number 802,804 were recorded as crimes.

These of course are only the abuses that were reported. From what we have seen so far, it is likely the numbers don’t include those of women partnered with police officers.

Since putting together the spreadsheet the bulk of this essay is based on, seeing large numbers related to violence printed like that has really started to affect me. I entered more than 1300 violent crimes by hand. I read about each one. Imagined the horror each time. It’s a small number compared to the total above. But I feel I can at least begin to comprehend the sheer amount of fear and suffering numbers like that represent. In the reports the numbers are from, when I read lines like *“Domestic abuse has remained relatively stable in...”* it starts to overwhelm me. The detachment of statisticians, innocent though it may be, is infuriating. Enough about me.

“I want to fuck you”.

David Temkin, the lawyer defending Detective Constable Michael McMillan said that *“[McMillan] was never threatening or violent towards the complainants.”*

“I want to fuck you”

Is what the message said, sent by DC Michael McMillan to the victim of a domestic violence case he was investigating. DC Michael McMillan then demanded *“indecent pictures”*. She refused.

DC Michael McMillan recommended no further action be taken against the first, nameless man who had attacked her. DC Michael McMillan said that she was unwilling to help the police with their enquiries and had retracted her statement.

DC Michael McMillan was a police officer trained specially to handle complaints and victims of domestic violence.

DC Michael McMillan convinced a rape victim that she should retract her complaint against the nameless man who raped her. Even though she didn’t want to. DC Michael McMillan lied to her and told her he was arranging protection for her from the first nameless man who attacked her.

DC Michael McMillan abused his position of power, and convinced two domestic abuse victims to have sex with him. DC Michael McMillan sent sexts and lewd pictures to victims of domestic abuse. DC Michael McMillan regularly demanded naked pictures from domestic abuse victims.

David Temkin, the lawyer defending DC Michael McMillan said that *“[McMillan] was never threatening or violent towards the complainants.”*

David Temkin can suck my whole entire ass. Explain to me how there aren’t threats or violence in the actions of DC Michael McMillan, the man charged with protecting women from other men who had already done violence to them.

The threats implicit in not complying with DC Michael McMillan’s demands are clear. The disparity in power between police officer and abuse victim are clear. The threat implicit in the demands made by a man such as DC Michael McMillan are clear. Do what I want, or I will not stop more of the violence you have already suffered. It’s my abuse, or another man’s abuse. Choose.

One of the first concerns in the CWJ super-complaint are reports from domestic abuse professionals afraid that officers believed to be perpetrators of domestic abuse are working in public protection roles dealing with victims of domestic and sexual abuse. While there is no indication that DC Michael McMillan abused his wife or daughters, what might a man who does perpetrate domestic abuse to his family do to a vulnerable woman who has asked him for help? What might he be doing now?

As you’ve seen, misogyny runs deep through British policing. There’s fear within its own ranks to report men who sexually assault their colleagues. There’s indifference when a cop is suspected of abusing his wife. There’s outright hostility towards some victims. There’s failure after failure after failure.

It’s sadly predictable that there’s a lot more to this story. A lot more women have been hurt. A lot more women have been let down.

A lot more women have been scared into sexual exploitation by a man wielding state power for his own violent means.

Unless The Police get their act together and/or abolish themselves, we’ll never know how many. I have some numbers on the cops that have been caught. But like with domestic abuse, they are very bad at catching their officers when they abuse their position for a sexual purpose.

In most cases, they’re not even looking. That’s Part 2. You’ll find it on the Organise website. ■

Lovely Alexander

Writes and reads about horrible things, and turns them into video soup. find him at www.LovelyAlexander.com and follow him at @LovelyAlexanduh

348 DAYS LATER

What We Can Expect After the Pandemic

As I begin to type this article, it has been 348 days since Boris Johnson announced the first national lockdown in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Since then, over 120,000 people have died as a result of the disease, creating massive disruption, grief and anxiety for countless other people, and demonstrating the total inadequacy of the government and the Capitalist system that provides it with its power.

We've seen the government bungle its response to the pandemic, communities band together in admirable acts of mutual aid, right-wing conspiracies, and inspirational mass movements rise up against oppression. Now, with the development and mass distribution of a number of vaccines, many people envision an end to the pandemic in the U.K within a year. As the pandemic is gradually brought under control, and businesses and the government try to push people towards a return to 'normality', what threats and opportunities might face us, and what can we, as anarchists, do to prepare and respond to these challenges?

First, let's assess the actual likelihood of the pandemic being brought under control here within a reasonable timeframe. The government promises that all adults will have received the first dose of a vaccine by the end of July. However, most research indicates that two doses are necessary for effective protection against the virus, and, in order to achieve this lofty promise, the gap between first and second doses has been stretched from a recommended 2 weeks to a maximum of 12 weeks; this lengthened gap has caused concern as it may potentially reduce the effectiveness of the vaccination and may even provide an opportunity for the virus to mutate and adapt against the vaccine.

The concerns about the potential reduction in the effectiveness of the vaccination have been further exacerbated by the fact that the second dose may consist of a different vaccine than that of the first. Although the threat of mutation may be somewhat inhibited by the fact that the virus cannot mutate in an overly extensive manner without compromising its ability to infect people, and that vaccinations could likely be developed against any new strains, the fact remains that new strains of the virus do have the potential to severely disrupt the vaccination process; for example, the AstraZeneca vaccine has

been found to be significantly less effective against the South African strain. It must also be kept in mind that many people, such as those who have an autoimmune disorder, etc., will be unable to receive a vaccination; as it has not been confirmed for certain that vaccinations prevent transmission of COVID-19, there remains the potential that precautions will still have to be maintained for the benefit of these people, even after the bulk of the population has been vaccinated. In light of these factors, whilst it may not be entirely improbable that the pandemic will be brought under control by some point after October this year, it is also not entirely improbable that the pandemic will continue in the U.K for a noticeably longer period of time.

On a more hopeful note, the research and production of new vaccinations against COVID-19 has led to a number of exciting developments: mRNA vaccines, such as the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines, have now been proven to be effective and are cheaper and easier to produce than traditional vaccines; a trio of 'biohackers', Dariia Dantseva, David Ishee and Josiah Zayner, developed a DIY DNA vaccine that produced neutralising antibodies in all three of the trio when they tested it on themselves; a group of people, who met through their association with Harvard Medical School, formed the Rapid Deployment Vaccine Collaborative (RaDVaC) and developed a vaccine with the express intent that it could be produced with minimal equipment and distributed safely with a minimum of training (RaDVaC's vaccination is delivered via a nasal spray, as opposed to via an injection).

The relatively low cost of production for each of these vaccinations (especially the RaDVaC vaccination, which is significantly cheaper and easier to produce than the mRNA and DNA vaccines) means that, through the pooling of funds and/or fundraisers, decentralised collectives could produce and distribute vaccinations against COVID-19 (and, with some modifications, against other diseases) throughout their local communities; this could potentially allow for the mitigation of any disturbances to the state vaccination programme, the shortening of the gap between first and second doses, and, in a more expansive view, it could lessen communities' reliance on the state for healthcare). mRNA vaccines have another exciting potential for treatment as research indicates that the same technology could be adapted to treat most forms of

cancer (in somewhat of an oversimplification, injections of mRNA could be used to cause cancer cells to produce antigens that would then cause the body's immune system to target and destroy them); if this is the case, this has enormous implications for anarchistic models of healthcare as it could potentially allow decentralised collectives to effectively treat the leading cause of death worldwide.

Of course, we must refrain from being overly optimistic and avoid falling into the trap of techno-utopianism; this decentralised production and distribution of vaccinations, as well as the use of mRNA technology against cancer, has not been tested or proven to be effective in a statistically significant manner, there are a number of safety concerns that will need to be addressed, and it is likely that anyone attempting to produce vaccines will face harsh opposition from the State, who will act to protect the patents of corporations and to destroy any attempt to undermine its influence.

Vaccinations in all forms will continue to be opposed by a vocal minority of conspiracy theorists that have emerged throughout the pandemic. These conspiracy theorists consist of a diverse coalition of, amongst others, anti-vaxxers, QAnon followers, and vehement opponents of 5G technology. Whilst they, by themselves, are likely to remain a minority, and will probably never amount to a serious threat on a systemic level, they provide an excellent body of potential recruits and supporters for fascists, who have already begun to openly participate in their marches and demonstrations.

The conspiracy theorists are ideal targets for fascist recruitment as they, whether they are aware of it or not, hold a number of anti-Semitic beliefs and have an authoritarian mindset that views any deviance from their line of thought as the behaviour of mere 'sheeple' at best or a serious threat from allies/servants of their imagined shadowy cabal at worst.

Fascism in the UK, after the collapse of the majority of the EDL, has mostly been a disorganised, infighting mess, but it may be able to regain an organised presence on the streets if it continues to gain influence over the conspiracy theorists and takes charge of their movements. Even if they never become sufficiently organised to be a systemic threat, there is a serious risk that the conspiracy theorists and fascists may begin to commit isolated acts of violence and stochastic terrorism, which will largely be targeted against Jewish and Muslim communities.

Unfortunately, this movement is likely to be sustained even after it long becomes clear that vaccinations pose no major risk; due to its cult-like mentality, many of the movement's adherents will double-down on their ideas in response to information that challenges them. As a result, there needs to be an active anti-fascist presence to protect our communities from violence and to prevent fascist organisation. Where possible, anarchists should do what they can to dispel conspiracy theories and ensure that people's, often legitimate, opposition to the government is not misdirected in hateful, bigoted directions.

Anarchists should also act to help people whose opposition to the government and state is directed in more positive directions. During the Summer of 2020, there was a significant resurgence of the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement in response to the murder of George Floyd in Amerika. This movement successfully popularised the positions of defunding the police and, more hopefully, police abolition. The disproportionate manner in which BLM protests and activists have been policed provides evidence of both the racism of the police as an institution, and the serious threat that the movement poses to the police. Unfortunately, the centuries of ongoing racism and police brutality are unlikely to end any time soon, so anarchists must be prepared to help the continued struggle against the police and support BLM in a variety of ways, whether that be through prison support or fundraising for BLM activists who face state repression, or opposing the fascist presence that often emerges to harass BLM protests.

Finally, what can we expect from the British state? The government is under pressure from its capitalist backers to reopen businesses and kickstart the economy, and it will likely do this, as it has done previously, before it is actually safe to do so. At least for the immediate future, the government has indicated that it will attempt to offer support to mitigate the severity of the economic damage inflicted by the pandemic, but many people will struggle, and are struggling, as the result of job-loss and Brexit-related price increases; a reinvigoration of the many mutual aid groups that sprung up during the early stages of the pandemic would be incredibly useful in helping people to overcome this challenge, but we should be careful to avoid previous mistakes and take a stronger effort to push forward a radical message and reject the attempts of local political parties to co-opt the groups for their own agendas.

The growing influence of the state will not be limited to the economy as the government has announced »

its intentions to restrict and repress protests; as mentioned earlier, the state has felt threatened by movements such as BLM, and is therefore pushing forward a bill, the 'Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill', that will allow the police to place more limitations on protests, and inflict harsher punishments on those who violate such limitations. The Labour Opposition, led by Keir Starmer, former head of the Crown Prosecution Service, has so far voiced no objection to this bill and it is more likely than not that it will pass successfully. When it does, we can expect more harassment from the police at demos, and will potentially have to deal with more self-policing at demos from nervous liberal/NGO types; more attention will likely have to be given to the vital work of prisoner support, as, unfortunately, people will be facing more years behind bars due to harsher sentencing.

Further state repression is planned through the criminalisation of trespass; although the category of 'people who trespass' encompasses just about everybody, the criminalisation of trespass will disproportionately be used against gypsy, traveller and Roma communities in a violent attack against their way of life for the benefit of wealthy landowners.

An equally severe concern is the potential for an intensified legal persecution of trans people; although the government has made recent progressive steps, such as the inclusion of alternative gender identities in the 2021 census, the Minister for Women and Equalities, Elizabeth Truss has made a number of comments that parallel those commonly employed by TERF activists, and has announced plans to make it more difficult for trans youth to access support, to roll back long delayed reforms to the Gender Recognition Act, and to endanger trans feminine people by forcing them out of women's spaces. With a hostile media that actively discriminates against trans people and platforms transphobes, and a Labour Opposition that itself harbours many transphobic members, we cannot expect any 'official' opposition to such legal persecution and we should therefore prepare ourselves to provide our own opposition through a diversity of tactics.

The sheer volume of oppressive policies and positions that the government has planned is indicative of a 'Shock Doctrine'. A 'Shock Doctrine', as defined by Naomi Klein in her 2007 book of the same name, is a political strategy involving the exploitation of large-scale crises, whether natural or artificial, to distract, preoccupy and overwhelm any potential popular resistance to oppressive/otherwise unpopular policies and developments. The COVID-19 pandemic has provided a perfect opportunity

for this shock doctrine, as many anarchists and a significant portion of the political left's membership base have been stuck combatting the pandemic's effects, critiquing the government's decisions, and dealing with the grief and anxiety surrounding the pandemic, with little time, resources, or capacity to organise effectively against the government's planned repression. Not to mention the fact that COVID-19 itself significantly increases the risk of organising physically, and that many people have grown a heightened sense of 'learned helplessness' as they have felt unable to effectively act against the pandemic themselves, becoming reliant on following the orders and instructions of government 'experts'.

These problems, as demonstrated by the BLM protests, can be overcome and effective resistance against the state can manifest itself, even in the face of crisis. In addition, it is possible that we can utilise our experiences gained during the pandemic in mutual aid collectives and other support groups to effectively organise alternative structures to, at least in part, circumvent or mitigate the harms inflicted by the government's Shock Doctrine; for example, if the State won't support trans youth, then decentralised collectives should step in to fulfil that role, and if the government starts doling out harsher fines against protesters, then community solidarity groups can raise funds to cover the costs. The pandemic may even provide us with some advantages of our own as it has successfully exposed the inadequacy of both state and capital, and has left countless people distrustful of authority and eager for radical change.

In conclusion, the pandemic has disrupted society, allowing, and perhaps compelling, the government to increase its authoritarianism to preserve its own power. This disruption has also, however, allowed us to gain vital experiences and has opened up new opportunities.

Many people, now disillusioned with the status quo, have been misled to follow conspiracy theories and fascist influence, but many more have allowed their disillusionment to be a more enlightening experience, pushing them to take their first steps to build a better world. In face of the challenges created by this pandemic, and the overwhelming likelihood of future crises, it is perfectly reasonable to feel disheartened, but, in our darkest moments, we can take inspiration from the acts of resistance, compassion and solidarity that have arisen across communities globally.

"The bourgeoisie might blast and ruin its own world before it leaves the stage of history. We carry a new world, here, in our hearts. That world is growing this minute."

~ **Buenaventura Durruti** ■



BEYOND THE TERF WAR...

A brief QnA with the Trans Safety Network

Trans Safety Network (TSN), launched publicly in October 2020, is a group of trans people who research and publish data on transphobic campaigns. Organise spoke to them about the group, and the wider climate of transphobia in the UK.

Why did you form TSN?

A lot of us have been either following or otherwise engaged by the rapid increase in anti-trans hate campaigning going on. A great deal of this is well known and written about, in terms of the “TERF War”, but increasingly we noticed other mobilisations. These were hidden from most peoples awareness. Less active on social media, but very active in other ways; lobbying government, establishing networks of conversion practitioners, producing books full of “alternative facts” about the history of trans people, harassing trans academics, and leafleting door-to-door.

What made us finally come together and start TSN was hearing reports from friends, who knew school teachers, about strange DVDs about the Transgender Agenda. We wanted to investigate and expose where they were coming from more comprehensively. When we investigated further, the DVDs turned out to be coming from the Christian creationist group Truth In Science¹.

What are the biggest threats to Trans safety in the UK at present?

The biggest threat to trans safety and well-being in the UK right now is institutional - the British government have made no secret of the fact they are willing to drag out trans rights issues with inquiry after inquiry. All for the sake of a (even by Tory standards) pointless culture war, that infringes on the supposed small government civil liberties they'd normally love. The NHS is both failing to defend care for trans people in court, and failing to provide it in the clinic. Healthcare training teaching doctors how to interact with trans patients sensitively was pulled on the basis of a moral panic, local councils have withdrawn equality guidance under legal threats from anti-trans activists while waiting for a far right Tory party to show leadership. In the public narrative, there's a lot of focus on TERFs as mobilisers of all of this but they simply would not be as influential and powerful as they are without significant backing from the right wing press and sympathetic MPs and Lords (in both the Tory and Labour parties). In the end it comes down to power and

resources. Anti-trans campaigns have powerfully stifled trans voices from media, driven trans women out of public roles, and are having a chilling effect on trans health and sociology research, while Oxford University funds conspiracy theories about Jewish Financiers and Big Pharma being “behind Transgender Ideology”². None of this could happen without the support of institutionalised power in the state, higher education and nationalised healthcare.

How do you feel trans safety relates to other struggles?

The trans community is really small. We know there aren't many of us, and unlike a lot of other communities we're often isolated and spread out among communities who are culturally hostile. Right-wing governments have a habit of using us as a scapegoat they can whip to keep their electoral base happy. Left-wing governments offer us platitudes to make themselves look good without really changing anything.

Either way the fundamental issue is a lack of trans power/trans liberation. A lot of our historic and pre-existing representative bodies have mainly served to try and incorporate transness into an establishment that has no reason not to treat us cynically. Often in the process they disregard the needs of racialised trans people, trans migrants, trans sex workers, incarcerated trans people, disabled trans people, trans people with care responsibilities etc. Some of the most damaging transphobia comes from bosses, landlords, border agents, cops, psychiatric professionals trying to pathologise us just getting through life. We often can't rely on services, such as domestic violence, who can exercise power to hurt the most marginalised. Those facing the most serious issues with transphobia urgently need a trans liberation movement built on coalitional and intersectional lines. It's not enough to just have the government registering approved transgender people on a list. We need liberation!

Regarding intersections with struggles against sexism, much of the debate seems to be about whether feminists are happy to allow trans people to be part of the struggle. People arguing against trans inclusion claim it's inappropriate for trans people to be included in feminist struggles. Those arguing for inclusion tout its validation. Few debates talk about the necessity of trans inclusion, whether it is necessary for liberation from patriarchal

systems. The discussion should not be “do we want trans people to be included” but “in what ways are trans inclusivity and liberation needed for the larger struggle against gendered oppression”.

Transphobia seems one of the most pervasive forms of bigotry amongst the UK's left and anarchist movements. What do you feel has driven this, and how can it be opposed?

Not sure it is necessarily true that transphobia is more pervasive on the left than other bigotries. Transphobia is certainly highly visible on the left, but other bigotries are sadly still alive and well. There are a lot of ways that the wider left pays lip service to anti-racism but fails black and brown siblings in practice, and there have been major issues with anti-Semitism.

Bigotry isn't really the most useful way to think about transphobia (or any form of oppression). If we see the left as something that's being built, who is it being built for, and how does it achieve that? Transphobia is structural: lots of people on the left make platitudes against hate or about the trans women dying in South America, but it often has an exploitative character to it. You show you're a good leftie by denouncing TERFs or hand-wringing about dead black and brown trans women far away, and in the process you get moral/social value without really doing anything for trans liberation. We need trans liberation built into the roots of radical projects.

Those hostile to trans people have grown increasingly prominent in the past few years. Why do you think that is?

There's a mixture of factors, particularly in the UK. Transphobia isn't new at all, nor are TERFs. Many of us have been opposing them for years. We know people who've been putting up with them for decades. In the UK, there are probably three things which have come together to make transphobia particularly loud.

Firstly, the UK-based religious right have been movement-building for years, and not just around trans stuff. They've organised harassment campaigns, targeting reproductive health clinics (to deter people from abortions), and mobilised large numbers around schools and sex education. Secondly, the trans-national alt-right crowd have been growing, and they are really effective in media operations. Finally, we have the most far-right Tory government in many years, and a profoundly complacent parliamentary left-wing.

What other trans groups are active in the UK at the moment?

There are loads of trans mutual aid groups in the UK, and more popping up pretty regularly. We've had a blip as a community, after the implosion of Action for Trans Health, but it's probably good that these are very much local groups focused on addressing the needs of local communities. If you're trans and don't have one locally maybe find some friends and see what you could do about organising one. Talk together and find out what problems trans people are facing in your area and find ways to solve them! Direct action gets the goods.

Do you have any reading or listening recommendations?

Blood and TERF is a really great podcast, well worth listening to.

What sort of things should cis people be doing more of to support trans people?

Make your community spaces actively safe by confronting transphobes. Resist respectability politics. Don't help spread the smear stories about individual trans people, regardless of if they've done something wrong. Don't treat transphobia like it's an individual bigotry; it's social and systemic, and needs to be addressed by dealing with the institutions and systems that make it possible.

How can people support you?

We rely a lot on tips from people who've seen transphobic leaflets. We're hoping to be able to build links with other orgs in the future, with a view to addressing some of the undiscussed intersections between trans liberation and other issues.

For instance, black and brown transfeminine public figures are especially singled out for demonisation. We would like to address trans safety in a way that draws attention to the operation of racism, misogyny and transphobia together, rather than treating transphobia as a single issue.

This is just one example, we're looking for collaborators who would be interested in putting trans safety in a broader context.

Thank you very much TSN for the time, please head over to their website and social media and check out the fantastic work they are doing. ■

Web: www.transafety.network

Twitter: @trans_safety

Facebook: @transafetynetwork

ON STANDING TOGETHER AGAINST THE G7

Statement from the Anarchist Federation upon Joining the Resist G7 Coalition

Between 11-13th June 2021 the coastal town of Carbis Bay in Cornwall will play host to the 46th G7 summit. The world's industrialised powerhouses will be coming together again to discuss how to maintain the nightmare of global capitalism and how a small but powerful fraternity can profiteer from the labour and deaths of the working class.

At our recent Federal Delegate Meeting we discussed this summit (as well as November's COP26) and decided that during the current state of pandemic and the UK's Lockdown, and given the potent outbursts of revolutionary action that we've seen previous these past years such as Toronto 2010 and Hamburg 2017, we would invest our support, solidarity and capacities behind local organisers who already begun to step up to the plate to tackle this most insidious leviathan of global capitalism.

A few days after our federation meeting in February 2021, the AF reached internal consensus on joining the Resist G7 Coalition, a network of organisations from diverse political backgrounds who have come together to stand against the summit. Our shared aim is to work in a unified manner, both tactically and politically, in the pursuit of protecting this planet from those who would destroy it for the profit of a few.

We have engaged previously in global networks, including organisation and action at Gleneagles G8 in 2005 at the time when the Labour government was applauding itself for winning the 2012 Olympics but was dramatically cut short by the London bombings; an early legacy of its militaristic Middle East adventure with the US. Back then, the Dissent Network that realised the Gleneagles protest camp against the G8 paved the way for the series of Camps for Climate Action, No Borders, and the Defy-ID network against state authoritarianism.

We step into the coalition as anarchist communists, revolutionary and militant. It is our hope that we may act as a bridge between the various comrades involved to help deliver a politically and tactically unified response. We will be forming a working group internally to co-ordinate with the rest of the coalition and any other parties who may wish to be involved. We also hope to draw on experience from our international links including those who witnessed the intense repression at Genoa's G8

two decades ago. (we remember Carlo Giuliani who was shot dead and run over by the police.)

The thousands of delegates and representatives of UK, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the USA and the EU as well their "guests" from Australia, India and South Korea, alongside a retinue of sycophantic liberal organisations and various NGOs, will travel from across the world (despite the international pandemic) to discuss and co-ordinate the continued exploitation of the working class around the world. They are framing their discussions behind the themes of "Covid and Climate" which given the spectacular failure of most of the invited states on both of these accounts, through economic self-interest that results in vast inequalities between and poverty within nation states, is nothing more than a sick farce.



As anarchists, we stand not only against the G7 states' policies that result in war & terror, environmental destruction and exploitation of people, but the very existence of these structures and platforms. Behind the vast blockade of police, cyber specialists, and secret service agents, the 'leaders' of the world will be discussing how to ensure their global monopolies and ensure their throttling grasp on the Less Economically Developed Countries of the global south doesn't weaken even for a moment. We are currently facing increased repression as the so-called democratic states use the pandemic as an excuse to stifle popular dissent. The strife in the Middle East shows no sign of abating and continues to be an arena of war for many of the G7 states against their economic, strategic and historical enemies.

The disparity of power and privilege is held in place by vast borders and the illegalising of people they see as nothing more than surplus humanity. These nation states stand as some of the most dominant industrialists around the world, alongside Russia, China and Brazil. They are the enemies of all who desire liberty and justice in this world, nothing more than architects of death and destruction on a scale it is near impossible to comprehend.

The working class have no country. We stand together with comrades across the world when we say that the tyranny of global capitalism and the platform of nationalistic jingoism which support it must come crashing down and an egalitarian and libertarian approach to sharing this globe with the rest of nature be its replacement. We invite you to join us and say, no more, I will not stand idle as they destroy this planet and murder us in the name of their economic growth. ■

Anarchist Federation

www.resistg7.org

www.twitter.com/resistg7

www.afed.org.uk

www.twitter.com/AnarchistFed



WHY RESIST G7?

THE G7 EXISTS IN A SETTING OF GLOBAL CAPITALISM. KEEPING THE RICH RICH AND THE POOR POOR. THESE MEETINGS SERVE TO MAINTAIN THE SYSTEM.

THE G7 LEADERS ARE MEETING IN CORNWALL, THE SECOND POOREST REGION IN EUROPE. WHILE THEY ARE ENJOYING THE LUXURY OF CARBIS BAY HOTEL, FAMILIES ARE LIVING IN POVERTY WITH LITTLE SUPPORT

EMPTY PROMISES FROM LEADERS WILL NOT SUFFICE, THE CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCY NEEDS ACTION NOW.

THE G7 AND CO MEETING IN CORNWALL SPEND AT LEAST \$1,117,400,000,000 EACH YEAR ON MILITARY FORCES AND EQUIPMENT.

THIS IS MORE THAN ENOUGH TO PREVENT CLIMATE CATASTROPHE AND END GLOBAL POVERTY.

IFA COMMUNIQUÉ - MAYDAY 2021

Greetings of the Secretariat of the International of Anarchist Federations (IAF/IFA) on the 1st of May 2021.

The Secretariat of the International of Anarchist Federations sends its greetings to this international meeting for May Day 2021. Founded in 1968 at the International Anarchist Congress in Carrara, the International of Anarchist Federations continues carrying out the values of social justice, antiauthoritarianism and internationalism that inspired the struggle of the Paris Commune 150 years ago and of the five Martyrs of Chicago 135 years ago. Still inspired by these values, our member federations are committed to build an anarchist alternative for a world that is increasingly devastated by the crimes of capitalism, the logics of states and armies, the ever-growing environmental deprecation.

In the last year, this situation has been tragically worsened by the current world pandemic, whose consequences are burdening the working class. Exploited and oppressed people are those most affected by the pandemic, and at the same time most committed to protect everyone's health. Yet, in various regions of the world we are witnessing the deterioration of the living and working conditions of hundreds of millions of people. In many countries the military budget has been increased and war tensions between states are exacerbating alongside a growing concert of racist, fascist and nationalist propaganda. Governments all around the world are strengthening security measures, tightening control and repression on their populations and are widening the power of police forces. Meanwhile, all over the world, an increasingly segregated population is living in total deprivation in places such as poor neighbourhoods, detention camps for migrants and prisons.

Nevertheless, in every corner of the world there are forms of resistance. In some cases movements of struggle are not only resisting the harshening of authoritarian policies but they are trying to create an alternative. We stand with people revolting in the USA against racism and police, in Nigeria against special security forces, in France against a new police state, in Chile against the

militaristic neoliberal State and the genocidal violence used to repress the Mapuche people, in Great Britain against patriarchy and gender violence. We are with those who are struggling for equality and liberty against dictatorships in Turkey and Belarus, and against authoritarian regimes in Thailand, Myanmar and Indonesia. Where it is present,

the anarchist movement is an active part of these struggles, trying to develop their revolutionary potentialities and to counter any authoritarian degeneration. In various regions of the world anarchists are engaged daily, defending spaces of freedom, supporting striking workers, building solidarity and mutual aid networks to tackle poverty, gender violence, inaccessibility to protective equipment and medical treatment.

While it would be impossible to summarize all the activities which are being supported by our comrades and federations in different countries and realities, these include experiences of mutual aid which include, among other possible examples: Creating groups of mutual aid that help one's community/house/neighbourhood to cope with the virus, for instance with distribution of food, protection equipment and medicine; Opening up new spaces for living and for making cultural activities, including occupations of spaces by homeless peoples; Circulation of books, journals and other supports and explanations to deal with the crisis; Promoting and practically implementing anticapitalistic alternatives to the existing economic system such as solidarity shared funds; Promoting activism to support abused and vulnerable groups such as indigenous people.

Now, more than ever, it is necessary to strengthen the internationalist dimension of anarchism, to oppose the ongoing authoritarian processes and to relaunch a revolutionary perspective in a world that capitalism and state have brought to the point of collapse. In this May Day, a date which is crucial for both our history and future, we confirm and continue our worldwide fight for fostering internationalist solidarity in the workers' movements worldwide, to go ahead building day by day the new world that we bring in our hearts. ■

In solidarity
The IFA Secretariat

Website: <http://i-f-a.org/>
Secretariat: secretariat@i-f-a.org
Social Media: www.twitter.com/IntFedAnarchist

AUDIO READING:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=VLl6VXhT-A4

AN ETHIOPIAN ANARCHIST PERSPECTIVE ON THE WAR IN TIGRAY

On the 14th of March, The Final Straw Podcast spoke with Anner, an Ethiopian member of Horn Anarchists, an anarchist group based in east Africa, particularly in Ethiopia and the Ethiopian diaspora. The group has been around for about a year and hopes to organize and spread anarchist ideas and organizing in the horn of Africa. Horn anarchists is a newer group planning to do work with refugees and introduce anarchist ideas to east Africa. Anner talks about the group, the history of post-Junta Ethiopia, the context of the ongoing armed conflict in Tigray, the fighting factions and the displacement and violence suffered by residents of the region as well as the ethnic hatred against Tigrayans by the government of Abi Ahmed and his Prosperity Party.



TFSR: Would you please introduce yourself, if you'd like, and tell us a bit about Horn Anarchists as a collective project? What are your shared values? What do you do? Where are you based, and how long have you been around?

Anner: I go by the name Anner and I use she/her pronouns. Horn Anarchists as a collective project started about a year ago with the aim of disseminating anarchist ideas and values and the politics of the Horn. Individually, we were engaged in different anti-fascist, feminist, labor, and refugee solidarity organizing, and we later came together to bring the values of anarchism and some of our

works into a shared, collective organizing. Most of what we've been doing in the past year has been online, since some of our members are in the diaspora, some of us are based in the Horn of Africa. And we haven't actually been able to come together and work into a grassroots project as of yet, but we have hopes of doing that. Recently with what is happening in Tigray and the crisis, we plan to meet in Sudan to do some refugee solidarity work in Sudan for those that have been forced to flee their homes because of the genocidal war.

TFSR: For clarification, is there a set vision of anarchism that unites folks, or is it just a set of common values, and if you could describe what those are?

A: As a collective, the values we really uphold are those of equality, kindness, mutual aid, solidarity and voluntarism, especially some of us were radicalized through the different volunteer activities we've been doing. Some of us were radicalized through reading "too much of anarchist literature", while others were radicalized by joining different organizing circles. Those are basically some of the values we all share and uphold.

TFSR: So, modern anarchist organizing in Africa that I've heard of has been mostly projects in South Africa, affiliates of the ZACF, or people like Sam Mbah and the Awakening Movement, a syndicalist movement in Nigeria or in Egypt during and after the uprisings against Hosni Mubarak. Can you talk a bit about the milieu or the movement of anarchism in the Horn of Africa. And maybe, if it relates to economic more so or religious or irreligious ideas, musical or sub-cultural genres, like metal and punk, (which) are a big thing in a lot of parts of the world around anarchist communities, or if it relates to regional or ethnic autonomy movements. I'd like to hear your thoughts.

A: Yeah, you're definitely right about that. Well, when we came together to form Horn Anarchists, one of the things we wanted to do was to study anarchism in the "third world". Most of the anarchist literature we've been studying has been very Euro-centric, so we wanted to understand how the history of anarchism worked in our part of the world, and we haven't had much luck in that regard. The anarchist movements or any anarchist presence we could find were in very few places: »

there were some in Nigeria, South Africa, Algeria, a little in Sudan and Egypt, but not a lot, especially not in the Horn. And one of the things we attribute to that is that the settlers in this part of Africa, and especially the highlands of the Horn, are very hierarchical societies that are very religious as well. The two most dominant religions are orthodox Christianity and Islam. And both are very devout to their religion, and that has maintained a very strong hierarchical community that has been passing down to generations and their religion has also been highly tied with the state and people that loved their religion, their god, also had to love the state. So anarchism has not really been welcome in our part of the world.

The way anarchism came in the Horn, especially in Ethiopia and Eritrea has a very interesting aspect to it, as it did not come as a movement of its own, recognized and clearly differentiated between other movements. And actually the way it comes up in history, it is when Marxist-Leninists and other communist movements, communist organizations use it to label each other to indicate that the other was less desirable than they were. They wanted to build a strong state, though a communist state, and calling the other anarchists was a way to make sure that the public loses trust and looks at them with animosity, hostility. It was a way to smear each other's name, basically, and that's how anarchism has been used, not anarchism per se, but the word "anarchist", as a label.

TFSR: Right now we're speaking in the aftermath of a "police action" against the northern province of Tigray? And please correct me if I mistake any of this, but (it has been) conducted by the central Ethiopian military that has left widespread displacement. It's been engaged from at least two other countries plus regional and ethnic militia, widespread reports of theft and sexual assault against people in Tigray. I appreciate you coming on to share what you know, especially since the Ethiopian state has done a lot to stop word from getting out about what's been going on there. For those unfamiliar with the politics and the history of the Horn, of Ethiopia in particular, the history of the conflicts and various state and non-state actors, and their motivations can be a bit confusing. If it's not too much, would you mind giving us a rundown or a thumbnail sketch of the civil war and its aftermath and lay the playing field for what's going on right now?

A: Just to give you a rundown of the history to understand how we got here, Ethiopia boasts of having had an empire-building history that dates back to 3000 years ago. What has been central in the empire-building and state-building process has been a claimed ancestry from the

biblical king Solomon in which different kings and queens claim they were descendants of King Solomon and hence had a divine right to rule. So this Solomonic tendency has been one of the strongest forces operating in the region until the 1974 Revolution in which the last monarch was overthrown in a coup d'état and a communist state was established by a military junta that took power from the last king. And this communist military junta created a very oppressive, dictatorial and violent state and started a red terror campaign against other leftist groups that were functioning in the country at the time. By this time, there were quite a number of rebel groups, guerrilla fighters and the TPLF was one of the guerrilla fighters, along with the Eritrean People's Liberation Front, Oromo Liberation Front and many others. The military junta was later defeated by a coalition of these guerrilla fighters under the name EPRDF (the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front) which was going to lead the country for the next 30 years. The TPLF was one of the central and dominant members of this coalition.

TFSR: Would you talk a little bit about the TPLF? I think in a past article on the blog for the Indigenous Anarchist Federation, your collective described them as a Marxist-Leninist group. Can you talk a bit about them? What their relationship is to the people in Tigray? What part they've played in this recent upsurge of conflict with the central Ethiopian regime of Abiy Ahmed?

A: TPLF has a very interesting history. As an organization, it started with tough people and it later became the largest armed struggle in the country. The relationship it has with the state has also been very dynamic. As it first started as a rebel group against the regime, and it would later be in power. But before that, it would craft its manifesto and its program as a political party and as an armed rebel group with the aim of self-administration or self-determination or even independence, if unity does not seem to be feasible within the country. This is what later led to Ethnic Federalism and then Art. 39, which is the most contested article in the Constitution. That is the article that gives nations the right to secession when unity is not possible. With the people Tigray, the TPLF had a very changing relationship. At first, it was very loved and adored by the community, it was hosted by the communities when it was a rebel, a guerrilla fighter, and then it took power, and then it became an instrument of the state, and the violence that is inherent to the state continued within the TPLF/EPRDF. The EPRDF, to remind you, is the coalition that was led by the TPLF. The violence of the state and the violence of the party could not be told apart, and then this started to rough

things up with the people that used to adore the TPLF and admire their commitments, dedication and discipline. The TPLF was used as an example of courage, discipline, and dedication, but after it got power, after they got into office and then continued the violence of the state, the relationship was somehow changing with the rest of the Ethiopian state as well as the people of Tigray.

When Abiy Ahmed came to power three years back, that is when the TPLF had a chance to revisit its relationship with the people of Tigray. They resigned from their posts at the federal government and went back.... Members of the TPLF went back to the region of Tigray and started looking back at what they've been doing in the past years and apologized to the people for not having represented them enough, for not having done much good in the past 27 years. At this point, the people of Tigray did not really have an option. I personally think it was a siege, as roads to Tigray were blocked by the Fano vigilante group from the Amhara region, and there was very concerning hate-preaching that was done. State sponsored hate preaching that was done against Tigrinya-speaking people. Tigrinya is the official language that people in Tigray speak. They were not labeled as ethnic Tigrayans, but a state propaganda machine used the phrase "Tigninya-speaking" to tell of atrocities that have been done by the state apparatus in the past 30 years.

Abiy was applauded to be a reformer, a democrat and a neoliberal force in the region. In his attempt to prove this, he was making sure to document different documentaries that were run on state-owned media, which were basically exposing the violence of the state and especially how prisoners were treated, how there were prisons that were not even official, underground prisons, garage prisons and all that sort of thing. Very atrocious stuff that was happening. The accountability was given to the TPLF. The TPLF was expected to be accountable for all these atrocities that happened all over the country. Although the TPLF was only one part of the coalition that was running the country. The EPRDF, it was just one member of the EPRDF, the other members of the EPRDF were still in power, they still held office. But later they changed their name from EPRDF and made it Prosperity Party, which is the party that is now in power, the PP. The PP is a very sharp contrast that has been seen from the EPRDF, as it is almost a one-man party where Abiy is the chairman and the leader. And the party basically reflects what Abiy as a person is – very narcissistic, authoritarian, aiming to control everything that goes around. That is one of the threats that many people felt it was a threat to the ethnic federalism and the self-determination of different

ethnic regions in the country.

The war against Tigray right now... One aspect of it is this ideological difference between a unitary state that is Abiy, the one that is led by Abiy, that wants to control everything, that wants to assign regional presidents from the center. And then the resistance from a party like TPLF, it was a very strong party. It has been in power for 30 years and it has a well-built structure, it's very dominant in the region, controls the region and has almost all of the seats in the regional council. It was a force that could contend the central government, perhaps the only regional force that could contend Abiy and the federal government, as all of the others were under Abiy's wing and he could assign any person to be the president of any region, and the people would not have a chance to either elect them or even have a say in who was elected to administer their regional state. That's one of the aspects of the ideological side of the war: self-administration, autonomy versus unitarism and unitary dictatorship.

TFSR: What sparked the attack on the ENDF by the TPLF forces?

A: Depending on who you ask, the war in Tigray had different causes. One is the one I'd already mentioned. The strength of TPLF was a threat to Abiy, that Abiy as a person that wants silence and criminalizes dissent, would naturally be against a region that is powerful enough to contend what he is saying and have consequences. One of the ways this has been seen is with the election that the Tigray region held despite the central government, the federal government, deciding to postpone the election using COVID-19 as a pretext. Tigray region has established their own electoral board and managed to have elections, local elections in a way that took the pandemic seriously. They made sure people kept their social distance and they took the necessary measures but made sure the elections happened. That is perhaps one of the strongest measures taken by the TPLF that made Abiy very unhappy.

The other one, especially the one that the state mentions is the attack on the ENDF by the TPLF forces. We don't know how true this is, regardless there are claims that, after a posed threat, TPLF allied forces attacked the northern command of the Ethiopian National Defense Force, which resulted in a full-blown war.

TFSR: Is the communication blockade limited or has it been limited to Tigray, is still ongoing? I have some reasons why I think that the military would do this, »

but could you explain why you think it's important for the military for the ENDF to impose this?

A: The ENDF and Prosperity Party reacted very violently, it made sure to cut all sorts of communication in Tigray, including telecom, internet, phone line, services, electricity and even water services were cut down. The entire region was in a complete blackout. We could not get what was happening. We had family there. We could not hear from our families for months, and there was a complete media blackout as well. And the ENDF was going wild in the dark without needing to think about consequences, believing that maybe the word would not get out.

TFSR: Thank you for that. You mentioned that Abiy Ahmed has gotten a lot of credit internationally. I think he got a Noble Peace Prize for whatever that's worth for signing this treaty with Eritrea and since the conflict has escalated, there have been reports of incursions by military troops from Somalia and Eritrea, and also a conflict between the Ethiopian government, and I think the government in Sudan, where a lot of people were fleeing violence in Tigray, fleeing displacement. Can you talk a little bit about the way that the borders play into this crisis and the way that other international actors are taking part?

A: Neighboring nations like Sudan have responded interestingly. Sudan has been hosting refugees that were displaced, because of the war, it has hosted more than 60,000 refugees. The numbers would have increased if the borders were not blocked by the Ethiopian National Defense Force. On the contrary, Eritrea has been involved in this war in a very violent manner. The TPLF and the Eritrean People's Liberation Front used to be allies during the Derg regime when they were both guerrilla fighters and then Eritrea seceded and the Ethio-Eritrean war what happened, and there was animosity that lasted for almost three decades. And bringing peace between Ethiopia and Eritrea was one of the main reasons Abiy was nominated and later got the Nobel Peace Prize. But this peace process with Eritrea has never included the major warring parties, which was the TPLF, and it was a peace deal between Abiy and the dictator Isaias Afwerki. Members of the media were not told what the peace deal meant and what it constitutes and in retrospect, it seemed more like a war deal, a genocidal war deal than a peace process. As a genuine peace process, this would have first and foremost involved the major, belligerent parties which this peace deal did not. And maybe the whole point of trying to make peace with Eritrea was to eliminate TPLF.

TFSR: There have been reports of massacres in, among other places, Mai Kadra. 600 civilians, mostly ethnic Amharans and Wolkaitis. It's been accused of the atrocity that was conducted by TPLF-sympathetic militia and police. This is one example where it's considered to have been conducted by people from one side, and yet there have been also attacks and massacres that have been reported by Amharans against Tigrayans, as well as all of these reports that are coming out from the Human Rights Watch and other organizations about assaults by the uniformed military. It's a hard subject, but can you talk about, I guess, some of the things that you want the international audience to know about, what you've heard about what's going on, and could you read it as a sign of a wider breakdown of the multi-ethnic communities of the country?

A: The media blackout had really influenced the international response to the war. In the first few months of the war only the Tigray regional state media was accessible, and that was also state propaganda, and then there was the federal state propaganda from here, but there was no way to actually know what regular people were going through. They were both just spreading propaganda and not reporting what was happening on the ground. The first atrocities we started hearing were from refugees that managed to make it to Sudan. They would tell what they've seen, what they've passed through and the horrors of the war. Although Abiy even went to parliament to discredit these reports by saying that these refugees were murderers and that they were youth organized by the TPLF, he basically labeled them a killing squad and tried to make them and their accounts lose credit. But international media was talking to refugees that made it to Sudan from Tigray and those were the earliest news we heard about what is happening. Survivors' accounts, those were the first survivor accounts we could hear from the war. Later people came to Addis, especially people that had other citizenship, maybe dual citizenship. There were some: Ethio-Americans, German Ethiopians, and their embassies found a way to bring them back to Addis and fly them back to their countries. And they had more stories of what they had gone through. But the first reports we heard were from refugees in Sudan and then later the phone lines were accessible in a few areas in Mekelle City and a few other cities. The connection was really bad, but we could still get a picture of what was happening, and later videos and pictures and other evidence footage started coming up.

The massacre of Mai Kadra has been used to justify the war. It was the second biggest event that the federal state

used to justify the war against Tigray. The first was the attack on the northern command of the ENDF and the second one was the massacre at Mai Kadra. We still don't know who the perpetrator was, there are different claims. Some claim it was TPLF allied forces. Others claim it was the ENDF. Others claim it was the Amhara militia or the Fano vigilante group. Regardless, there hasn't been an investigation that every group agreed on, but what we know is that there have been retaliations. Whether it was the Amharans that were killed or whether that was the Tigrayans. We know for sure that there has been retaliation and any other aspect of the war, including the retaliation, the different massacres we've heard about, the massacres in Aksum... we've heard of massacres in quite a few number of places, the biggest so far being in Aksum where 800 people were killed inside a church, and none of these were reported by the state, as was Mai Kadra. It has been almost four months, but the Mai Kadra still occupies air time and not the others. So the way it was used as a tool for propaganda makes one doubt the genuinity behind the reports.

So I don't know, I wouldn't see it as a breakdown of the multi-ethnic federalism. I mean there are signs of the breakdown, but not this war. I just see it as years-long hate-preaching and fascism, to be honest. One of the reasons the Amhara militia and the Fano vigilante group went to war was because they had claims over some of the lands that were occupied by Tigrayans and that is mostly in the western part of Tigray, which we still expect were the worst hit. They were the worst affected. There was an ethnic cleansing almost. Nowadays, one barely finds any Tigrayan living in that region that was occupied by Tigrayans and Amharans have taken over, and this was one of their causes to get into the war. So I would attribute it to fascism than I would to the breakdown of the multi-ethnic federalism.

Without clear evidence of what actually was happening on the ground, despite what the two warring parties were saying on their state-owned medias, I believe the international community was hopeful and optimistic and wanted to take Abiy for his word and that this would be a surgical operation to remove the TPLF without no further damage, but it has clearly been anything but that. If anything, this is a collective punishment on any and every ethnic Tigrayan that not only lives in Tigray but also lives outside Tigray. They have been ethnically profiled – I'm talking about people that were not in Tigray. They've been arrested, detained, they had their house searched without a warrants, and then they were harassed, tortured, abused on the streets by people as well as by security forces. And

this collective punishment actually dates back, I would say, to 2016, when ethnic Tigrayans were forced to flee their homes. The place they've been living in for years, for decades, because they were ethnic Tigrayans, they were forced to flee and go back to Tigray. And since then roads were blocked, inflation was really high, the road to Eritrea was also opened, so inflation was pretty high in the city and as I mentioned before, the hate-preaching, the hate-speeches against ethnic Tigrayans, the labeling... They were called "daytime hyenas" by the prime minister, and this was something that has been building up for quite a few years.

The international community, I believe, was just being hopeful and wanted to take Abiy for his word. But later it became clear that this was not a surgical operation and that civilians were the receiving end of this wrath from Abiy. And now the international community is very alarmed and is trying to influence and pressure Abiy to make sure that he at least provides access to distribute humanitarian aid and takes necessary steps to protect civilians, not even protect, but just stop killing civilians. Now there are also threats of economic sanctions, cutting of aids, and now the international community really seems alarmed about what is happening and keeps mentioning it to Abiy. Although not much has changed about what he's doing. Ethnic Tigrayans were facing repression. Not only were they illegally detained, illegally searched, even arrested, they're also harassed and tortured on the streets if they had a Tigrinia-sounding name or if their ID said that they were of the Tigrayan ethnic origin, they were also unable to board international flights, as Ethiopian Airlines was asking people to provide their local IDs to make sure what ethnic group they were from to bar them from flying.

There were also a few indications that there was something like a concentration camp. We have not been able to verify if this was true or not, but you've definitely heard about a concentration camp as well.

Many ethnic Tigrayans were getting laid off. They were being suspended from work, especially those that had government jobs. Every member of the military that is an ethnic Tigrayan has been suspended. Also, members of the federal government and organizations functioning under the federal government that were working in different parts of the country were also suspended from work because they were ethnic Tigrayans. Many landlords were also evicting people and telling them to leave their house because, and only because, they were ethnic Tigrayans. »

This had gotten so bad that Tigrayans could not even speak their language on the street and in coffee shops or in hotels, as they were very alarmed and scared of what that would result in, hearing their language would make the state and security forces, even fascists, do.

CONTENT WARNING THAT THERE IS A GRAPHIC DESCRIPTION OF SEXUAL ASSAULT COMING UP. IF YOU'RE CONCERNED, PLEASE SKIP THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPH

We've recently been seeing that there was footage that was circulating on social media of civilians being killed by the Ethiopian National Defense Force, being massacred in a very gruesome manner. One of the biggest concerns is also rape. There is widespread rape in the cities that are controlled by the ENDF. Both the ENDF and the Eritrean soldiers are engaged in gang rapes of very young girls. At first, it was teenagers and then the reports coming now are of children less than the age of thirteen. And the reason behind, what is being said, is that the Eritrean soldiers were warned against HIV. So the assumption was that young girls would be free from HIV and they were safe options, so they're engaged in gang rapes of very young girls. And what is happening, what they're doing to these people... We recently read a report and also saw a video of this young woman that was gang-raped by 23 soldiers for five days, and then they stuffed some dirt and plastic bags and even nails into her vagina. And there was a video circulating of the doctors removing all the stuff that was stuffed in her. The cruelty is unthinkable, it's inhumane.

*** END CONTENT WARNING***

TFSR: How is the response from the international community in your eyes been to the conflicts in Tigray and the repression of the Tigrayan people?

A: When talking about aid distribution in the region, we need to understand what is at play here. There are international aid organizations that had food, medicines, medical supplies, food supplies, ready and packed, and they had truckloads of these items, waiting to distribute but could not get access to the region. The government and the ENDF would not allow access, and that was the main difficulty in helping the people that were starving and that were dying from hunger, thirst and lack of medicines.

TFSR: I definitely saw a number of critiques in the social media for Horn Anarchists around the distribution of aid and what was actually happening to it. I imagine that

some of it is a response to western social media users may be saying, "Look, someone's already doing something, I don't have to think about what's going on over there" or saying, "I can send a few dollars, I just make a few clicks and then I have no responsibility or relationship to this anymore. I have done my part". Is there any way to... while the wheels are turning in the UN, to try to get some intervention of peacekeeping troops, is there anything that you can think of that people from abroad can do to actually aid the people in Tigray and to send material, to get people fed?

A: Our critic was mainly because of the different GoFundMe accounts that were being started by warmongers that were supporting the war. We feel like it was dishonest to collect money and aid in the name of the Tigrayan people saying that you distributed to the people in Tigray when you have no means of reaching Tigray. The problem was not that there was a shortage of food or medical supplies. There were aid organizations that were ready to distribute, they had truckloads of them. They just could not get access, and regardless of how much money one was collecting in the name of Tigrayans and the people of Tigray, it wouldn't matter how much money they collected as they would not have any means to distribute it. So our critique was mainly on these dishonest attempts to try and be sympathetic towards Tigrayans by collecting aid and by organizing GoFundMe's.

TFSR: Maybe people in the audience who are concerned about this similarly could look up and find, for instance, businesses like Ethiopian Airlines, if they live in a city where there is a large international airport – and maybe there is an Ethiopian Airlines stall – that could be a place to apply pressure or any diplomatic, governmental buildings?

A: There are different ways in which the international community can show solidarity with the people of Tigray. The most basic one is tweeting, using the hashtags, making sure that word gets out, making sure there communication and media blackout does not mean the world does not know what is happening. We need to be as loud as possible to make sure that people are aware of what is happening. I personally believe that Tigray should be the center of the world at this moment. Every eye should be looking towards Tigray because there's another genocide happening in the 21st century. And we can almost be sure that our leaders are going to come out tomorrow to say that never again, to say that they will not let this happen ever again, but this is happening right now and we're living through it, and we can't let it happen.

And especially, we can't let it happen in silence. The least we can do is raise awareness, make sure everyone knows about it, make sure our local representatives know about it, respond to it and report to the people that have elected them what they're doing to try and stop it.

There are also options in helping refugees that have been displaced, most of which are in Sudan right now. Our collective was organizing mutual aid support with refugees that are in Sudan. There are also other initiatives trying to support refugees in Sudan, as well as those in Tigray. Access is relatively better now. We cannot say it's unfettered and free, but it's relatively better and there are also initiatives to try and distribute aid in Tigray, though it remains limited. There's also the option of helping Tigrayan organizers, there are different Tigrayan organizers all over the world, trying to organize protests, rallies and appealing to the United Nations and the governments of the countries in which they reside to pressure Abiy to stop the genocide, to make sure that the Eritrean army leaves Tigray, that the Amhara militias and the Fano vigilante leave Tigray, because the atrocities they're committing are very unthinkable and horrendous. It's also important that people that want to stand in solidarity with Tigrayans hold their representatives accountable for the measures that their representatives and their governments are taking to pressure the Ethiopian government to stop this genocidal war and to pressure their countries and the United Nations to intervene and act – its responsibility to protect civilians. With how bad this is right now, we have heard of confirmed deaths of more than 50,000, but many places are still not accessible and reports have not been completed even in parts that are accessible, but we expect so many casualties, and this is continuing.

TFSR: Back to the theoretical-world for a second, if you were to see after an end to the armed conflict, I'm sure that your collective has talked a lot about what it would be like to transition into a decentralized, grassroots, anti-fascist, anti-nationalist region and...

A: Yeah, we've discussed it a lot and what we've been hoping was some ... okay, there are different fascists in Ethiopia, it's very interesting. There are fascists that believe in Ethiopian and there are ethno-nationalist fascisms, but they are all right-wing, they all are fascists. And people were trying to fight a certain type of fascism, they go into another type of fascism, they go to their own group. There is quite a number of fascist groups in the country right now that are supported, that get applauded by the government as well.

What we were hoping that we could have... Let me speak on my own behalf. Personally, I want to start a workers movement. I believe it would be crosscutting among different ethnic groups, different beliefs. And then the poor people of Ethiopia know their problem best and whoever is claiming to represent them and to fight on their behalf at the occupied of their behalf, basically are using them as a human shield. There are quite a few people dying in Ethiopia every day in different parts of the country from these fascist groups and orgs, and they are very loud on their platforms. They control the media, they control the resources, and people are scared that if they will not align themselves with either this one or that one, there is no fertile ground for people belonging to different groups to come together and fight their own oppressors.

One of the reasons TPLF is known for oppression of the country. TPLF is a minority as I've told you. They haven't been going around and repressing every ethnic group, it's the structure that has been repressing and oppressing. The people of Oromia were not necessarily oppressed by people of TPLF, it was people that came from that group that were in power. People still feel like "I have been oppressed because they are a part of a specific ethnic group. And the only way I can fight this oppression is if I ally myself with my own ethnic group and fight against the others," which creates animosity almost with every other group except your own. And then it becomes hard to even talk about class struggle in that regard.

But ideally, I would love a class movement. Class is a very important element in Ethiopian politics now that the politics is based almost solely on identity, and specifically ethnic identity. So you either a certain ethnic group or you are a fascist that believes that people should not mention their identity, should believe in one country, one god, one people. The struggle is very hard.

TFSR: I spoke a few years back with someone who was organizing in Bosnia, and some of the parts of this conversation remind me of parts of that conversation, where he talked about the institutionalization of ethnic differentiation and even if not in application, the institutionalization of "self-rule" and formalization of ethnic difference as being the basis on which people lived in community together. While, ostensibly, it would protect someone from getting repressed by another group and allowing someone to practice their religions, speak their language, these things, it also institutionalizing it into the government and being the basis for the representation of administering public monies or social programs, »

or whatever, also solidified differentiation between people, that, after the fall of Yugoslavia, where everyone had been sort of united under this idea of class in a lot of ways, as imperfect as Tito's state was. This person that I was talking to was very excited about the possibility that people had broken out of those ethnic parties that were meant to divide them against each other. And it seems like a very important and critical thing. It makes a lot of sense to me.

A: Yeah, there are some groups that are mobilizing to criminalize organizing around ethnic identities. What we've had throughout the history of Ethiopia is.. Ethiopia is an Imperialist country. We have not struggled against these fascists of Italy, but we have not struggled against our own fascism. It's an expansionist state, it's an empire, and it has been assimilating into the dominant culture. I can't criticize when people are fighting for their group rights based on their ethnic identities, they were not allowed to speak their own language, to practice their own religion, as the state religion for so many years has orthodox Christianity. And people were forced to denounce their own identity and get in line with what was considered the state identity, which is the identity of highlanders and Christianity. But this Ethnic Federalism that most people of Ethiopia are against around nations and nationalities, complete self-determination to the point of secession. It has been the battleground for different political parties that trying to do this, to sort of force and places the arms of the federal government, or actually the regional government, activists from different ethnic groups claim that they will secede if this or that demand is not fulfilled. Honestly. I'm not against people struggling to protect their rights, especially minorities, but how long would that go? Othering is a major problem, especially nowadays when Abiy's regime is trying to construct the old state of one Ethiopia where all identities are melted into one. Ethiopia is actually called the melting pot of identities into a certain dominant identity.

TFSR: Awesome. Thank you so much for taking the time and working with me to have this conversation. I really appreciate it. ■

Many thanks to Anner for giving us permission to share this transcription. To hear this and many other fantastic podcasts head over to The Final Straw Radio's website: www.thefinalstrawradio.noblogs.org

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A GENOCIDE WITH THE LIGHTS TURNED OFF

An Anarchist perspective on the horrors going ignored by the world

In 2019, the Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Abiy Ahmed Ali, received the Nobel Peace Prize for ending a 20-year border dispute with Eritrea, Ethiopia's long-term, regional rival. By the 19th November 2020, Ethiopian and Eritrean state forces had joined together to occupy the city of Aksum in Tigray, Northern Ethiopia. They carried out a series of atrocities including door-to-door extrajudicial killings, looting of food stores and pharmacies, sexual violence and indiscriminate shelling, culminating in the massacre of hundreds of unarmed civilians on the 28th-29th. Aside from the horrifying testimonies of survivors, the only imagery able to puncture the state-enforced communications blackout are satellite shots of disturbed earth—evidence of recent graves—around the churches and up the roadsides. It is a genocide with the lights turned off.

Since then, the massacres have continued unabated, with humanitarian aid blocked off and MSF hospitals routinely destroyed. As in the Yemen, ongoing environmental degradation and the intentional destruction of food and water supplies have exacerbated already existing scarcities and deprivation. A full-scale famine looms—a UN estimate puts the number of Tigrayans requiring urgent, life-saving assistance at 4.5 million, with 2.5 million children malnourished. 2 million Tigrayans have been internally displaced and over 60,000 have fled to refugee camps in Sudan. For many, this has meant returning to the same camps they found refuge in during the civil war which ended 30 years ago.

Nations, Nationalities and Peoples

The seeds of the central government's war on the region of Tigray may be found in the first lines of the 1995 Constitution of Ethiopia, the founding document of the modern Ethiopian state. The document begins 'we, the Nations, Nationalities and Peoples of Ethiopia.' This emphasis on the horizontality of Ethiopia's diverse ethnic makeup is irreconcilable to the modern nation state's desire for top-down vertical power and capitalism's conceptual need for individual financial actors.

The result, as student activist Walleigne Mekonnen wrote in the 1960s, is a 'fake Ethiopian Nationalism advanced by the ruling class.' For Mekonnen, this nationalism was fake because it privileged the Amhara and Amhara-Tigray people above Ethiopia's many other ethnic groups.

Now, this fake nationalism smuggles in the supremacy of the state under the guise of preserving the universality of its own self-conception.

Abiy Ahmed Ali became Prime Minister in 2018. While initially from the Oromo Democratic Party, a party in favour of Oromo nationalism, in 2019 he formed and became leader of the new Prosperity Party, a merger of every existing political party except one—the TPLF, a formerly Marxist-Leninist party which is the regional authority in Tigray and was the dominant party in Ethiopian politics from 1989 to 2018. They support the current federalist arrangement, while Abiy's Prosperity Party aim to bring Ethiopia beyond that ethno-federalism and closer to a citizen-based model of the state. In short, they wish to scrub out the "nations and nationalities" part of the constitution.

Because of this, the Prosperity Party has won the respect of some liberals in the Global North, despite the potential misgivings they may have about the slogan which is becoming associated with Abiy "Make Ethiopia Great Again." Their platform posits itself (in opposition to the TPLF) as unideological and rational, folding every ethnic-oriented political tendency into their neo-liberal, individualist conception of a pan-Ethiopian politics.

This model is more friendly to capital. The dissolution of old hierarchies onto a purportedly horizontal plane of individuals makes the country more amenable to investment and wealth extraction by Imperial hegemony such as the US and China. What's more, the state-owned railway, maritime, air transport, logistics, electricity, and telecommunications sectors are all slated for privatisation and foreign capital will be hoping ethnic divisions don't get in the way of the coming energy windfall from the controversial Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam which sees Ethiopia gain access to the hydro-electric goldmine of the river Nile.

In response to the flattening of the political landscape into the single Prosperity Party, the TPLF cried illegality and, in a second affront to Abiy, continued to hold elections in the Tigray region last summer, ignoring Abiy's postponement of them until an undisclosed date, an act which echoed Viktor Orbán's fascist government in Hungary by citing the COVID-19 pandemic »

as a justification. The government declared the TPLF's elections illegal at the same time as the TPLF were declaring Abiy's leadership illegitimate.

On the 4th of November, the TPLF put several military bases under siege, claiming to be acting in self-defense. In the days that followed, a mere month after the disputed elections, tanks arrived in Tigray and set about, in the words of an internal report by the US government, "deliberately and efficiently rendering Western Tigray ethnically homogeneous through the organized use of force and intimidation."

It is obvious how the state-enforced imposition of a politic based on individualism is not only internally paradoxical, but also in tension with the diverse ethnic makeup of the country. Trying to scrub out the "Nations and Nationalities" inevitably has precisely the opposite effect—ethnic divides become further entrenched. Accounts from Tigrayans in wider Ethiopia talk of landlords using their ethnicity as a pretext for evictions, of illegal detentions by the state, of being fired from jobs and of not being able to speak their own language in public for fear of recriminations from fascists or state actors. The war on Tigray has inevitably become a war on Tigrayans.

A Secular, Holy War

As his political project comes more and more to resemble the bloodthirsty, hyper-partisan regime that it purports to be against, Abiy is at pains to show the world that this is a mere law enforcement operation.

Domestically, the TPLF are designated as a threat to the nominal horizontality of the Ethiopian state, when in reality the inciting threat is to Abiy's position at the top of the vertical hierarchy of that state. Scenes from the Mai Kadra massacre, the perpetrators of which are, like many others, highly disputed, play on the news, while massacres by Eritrean and Ethiopian state forces, like the one in Aksum, are ignored.

Internationally, Abiy will hope that deceived Western eyes will view the peace deal with Eritrea as the object-cause of the conflict—if the TPLF are seen as a threat to that peace, the international community will be more amenable to state repression of the region. As it is though, the deal already looks rancid, a cynical way to leverage condescending and performative Western prize-politics to squeeze out political rivals and engage in extreme oppression (here, Abiy's fellow traveler is the now-coup-d'état-ed leader of Myanmar, the Nobel Peace Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi, and her genocide of the Rohingya

people). On signing the deal, Eritrean president Isaias Afewerki made this cynicism explicit by calling it 'game over' for the TPLF.

What we are left with trying to analyse Abiy's politics is an abstraction of political maneuvering and ethnic cleansing onto the plane of universal values—war for the sake of peace.

On the 30th of November 2020, as survivors of the Aksum massacre were digging the mass graves which were soon to be picked up by satellite, Abiy's address to parliament amplified this paradox. 'After all,' said Abiy, 'we would like to tell them [the TPLF]—please, understand us, we need peace and it is necessary to know that we don't compromise anything which comes against our honour.' In effect: we need peace and we won't compromise on our need for peace even if that means going to war and compromising on our need for peace.

In *Strategy of Deception*, Paul Virilio uses the term 'secular, holy wars' to describe conflicts which are persecuted with the crusader's fervour and the human rights lawyer's moral framework. We might think of how China's insistence on the "harmonious society" apparently necessitates the repression of the Uighurs or how Western nation state's offer humanitarian justifications for genocidal interventions in the Middle East.

The war in Ethiopia is a secular, holy war. Unlike territorial wars (though secular, holy wars may initially be territorial in nature), these wars leave no recourse to diplomacy, nor even victory, as the values they are fought under are always already undermined by the sheer brutality of the engagement, the meaning of the conflict immediately lost in a mire of senseless violence.

It is easy to label such wars as ordinarily bloody conflicts decorated with ordinarily misleading state propaganda, but it is not a case of whether any given war is actually being persecuted in the name of peace or not. The point more specifically is that such wars in their contradiction lay bare the continuity between state-determined peace and state-sponsored violence. The two are inextricable—what the state deems "peace," "harmony," or a "humanitarian intervention" is a managed violence of which an uncontrolled escalation must always be left possible in order to substantiate the qualifier "managed."

It is not simply that the state has a monopoly on violence, then. It has a monopoly on violence which posits its very non-monopolisation as the premise of its monopoly.

Any violent act, such as Abiy's continued embargo on international aid and humanitarian groups in Tigray or the Ethiopian army's destruction of MSF hospitals or any of the numerous crimes against humanity his regime has committed, may be justified in the name of preserving the monopoly on that violence, which trickles from the state, through the ruling class—the landlords who evict Tigrayan tenants, the bosses who suspend Tigrayan workers.



Ethiopian Anarchisms and International Solidarity
In many ways, the situation in Tigray is not only devastatingly sad, but completely disheartening. Aid still can't get through. The communications blackout is a conscious attempt to foreclose on solidarity, a war without photos. Reports emerge of massacres a month after they have taken place, compounding the sense of uncertainty for those who have loved ones at risk.

Meanwhile, disinformation is rife on both sides. Almost every claim in this article is disputed by the group opposite the one making the claim. In a further paradox and a further Trumpism, Abiy has called for sympathetic Ethiopians in the country and in the diaspora to combat "TPLF fake news" with social media support—you will see photos of Abiy in camouflage as if on the front line, but zoom in and the uniform will turn out to be a Ukrainian soldier's, an Abiy-esque goatee shopped onto his face; you will find many single-issue accounts parroting various pro-government or pro-TPLF lines of attack, as the distinction between sock-puppetry and genuine political action becomes blurry.

Virilio, writing at the dawn of the internet, quotes the Whig historian Alexander Kinglake's assessment of 19th Century warfare: "insofar as the battlefield presented itself to the bare eyesight of men, it had no entirety, no length, no breadth, no size, no shape and was made up of nothing." Although magpied from an entirely different era, this remains an accurate and depressing summation of the experience of post-modern information warfare, where the excluded voices of those human beings at

the heart of the conflict are replaced by the cold work of bots filling their absence with long copy-and-paste comment chains, interrupted occasionally by video footage of extreme, casual violence, rotting corpses and weaponised rape (though you wouldn't find these in any state-sanctioned media).

It is an intentionally hard war to access from the outside, made harder by the indifference of a Western media hamstrung by their need to locate a bogeyman, such as they do with China. Abiy, with his Nobel Peace Prize, unremarkable dress sense, his individualist governmentality and supplantation of the Marxist-Leninist TPLF, makes for a poor Third World despot to journalists that traffic in spectacle and Orientalism.

In this fog, Abiy will try to get away with everything he can. It is incredibly important therefore that our eyes remain firmly on the region. The MapEthiopia project has been tracking the conflict since the 4th of November and is a good way to stay up to date with the changing situation. »



Calls should also be made and actions taken to ensure that the UN investigates the situation independently. This can be done through protests and admonitions to whatever member state you reside in. The Ethiopian Human Rights Commission, a state body that will almost certainly sterilise its findings to be more sympathetic to the government, cannot be allowed to handle the investigation.

Anarchism has historically been succoured by the puncture wounds of state-on-state violence. This was the case with the CNT in Spain and the Makhnovists in Huliaipole. Both those places already had an underlying anarchist presence which Ethiopia lacks, but it's not unreasonable to imagine necessity creating the need for collective interventions which organise into an anarchism under

a different name, such as has happened in Rojava and Chiapas. In the last year, for example, Horn Anarchists have emerged as an anarchist project in the region and are aiming to medical aid and supplies to refugees stranded in Sudan (their Mutual Aid fund can be found here).

Finally, I have been at pains throughout this article to make the situation comparable to other contemporary instances of state violence. Although the violence in Tigray is extreme, it is unexceptional—China, Saudi Arabia and Myanmar are all executing similar genocides and this violence is in potentiate everywhere that state control exists. What I have tried to do is show how a 21st Century genocide looks like—it doesn't come in jackboots, but is cossetted in the applauding hands of the Nobel Peace Prize committee. It lies in potentiate everywhere. It talks of citizenship and rationality (soon, it may also talk of preserving the environment). It won't involve a takeover of state power, but will already be continuous with the normative aims of the state that executes it.

CONTENT WARNING: SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Additional:

Since Organise's first published the above Ethiopia, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali has announced that Eritrean troops will leave the region of Tigray in Northern Ethiopia. This comes as a surprise, since Abiy has spent the last few months denying the presence of any Eritrean troops in Ethiopia at all. Yet, even as he was denying the existence of the Eritrean troops fighting a war against a group he declared victory over in November, reports from the UN and Amnesty International were confirming that, not only were they there, they were colluding with Abiy's government to carry out numerous atrocities. When they leave on their as-yet-unspecified date, a slew of corpses—which could very well number upwards of 100,000—will be in their wake. This prompts the question: who is Abiy's audience for these lies? Who is a sincere believer, any more?

The flagrancy of Abiy's lies are echoed in the obscenity of the violence. As accessibility to the region has grown over the past few weeks, Ethiopian and Eritrean soldiers have made little effort to curb their violence under this heightened scrutiny. On the 23rd of March, soldiers beat and threatened an MSF driver and killed at least four men extrajudicially while MSF staff were present. MSF also reported that "most" of their 100+ hospitals in the region had been looted or destroyed.

As is often the case, much of the genocidal violence

redounds heavily on women, as Amharic soldiers talk of cleansing them of their Tigrayan blood. A recent article in The Daily Telegraph quotes doctors and nurses from the region: "Soldiers enter hospitals as they like. They cross wards and threaten patients, nurses and doctors. There were recently seven raped women from Zalambessa who disappeared from their beds after seeing soldiers in the hospital," says a doctor in Adigrat. A nurse says her rehabilitation centre for survivors of sexual assault was threatened with closure in order to stop these stories coming out, but still the attacks continue and still the stories get out.

The story of Selam, a 26-year-old coffee seller from Tigray who was abducted by Eritrean soldiers with 17 other women in January, deserves to be heard in full [TW: extreme sexual violence, HIV]: "They [Eritrean soldiers] took us into the forest. When we arrived there, there were around 100 soldiers who were waiting for us. They tied the hands and feet of each one of us. And then they raped us without mercy. We stayed that way for three days. After three days the soldiers killed five girls who had been tied with us. They poured [alcohol] over our wounds. They danced standing over us."

The story continues: "After the first attack, [Selam's] abusers were waiting for her as she returned to her house from the hospital with contraceptives and post-exposure HIV drugs. "Why the hell did you want this? We want you to be sick. That is what we are here for. We are here to make you HIV-positive," Selam recalled one of the men as saying."

To try to suppress the stories even though everyone knows what is going on speaks to a regime unburdened by any need to justify its own actions. Without oversight, the cover-up becomes a mere formality which will allow for the execution of more and more extreme violence. As mentioned in the last article, the importance of an independent inquiry by the UN cannot be overstated. A joint inquiry between the UN and the Ethiopian Human rights Commission will not deliver justice, since the EHRC are state-funded and lack the trust of the Tigrayan people whose voices should be at the centre of the report. Pressure should be put on UN member states to help achieve this.

What next?

Abiy's multi-ethnic electoral coalition—the Prosperity Party—and his dream of a more centralised Ethiopia looks more and more futile and more and more bloody by the day. With or without Eritrea, the atrocities are likely

to continue for some time and there is a real possibility that the entire country will fracture or even balkanise, as the regional animosities which saw thousands dead and arrested in a wave of 2014 protests come to a head again. What's more, tensions with Egypt and Sudan over the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD), which would give Ethiopia unprecedented control of the Nile's water flow into those countries, are building. On April the 11th, talks between the three countries over data sharing came to nothing. Leaving the Kinshasa summit, the Sudanese Irrigation Minister said Ethiopia's offer 'implies suspicious selectivity in dealing with what has been agreed upon.' Again, we see how the lack of trust in Abiy's government could have serious ramifications for the region.

In light of all this, the upcoming 2021 elections (if they go ahead) may seem trivial, but given how much of the violence has been fueled by Abiy's desire to cling on to electoral power, they have the potential to change the dynamics of the conflict. Abiy used the elections held by the TPLF last year as a pretext to kill thousands of civilians. The TPLF has since been excluded from competing and it remains to be seen what the ostracisation of the Tigrayan people from the political landscape will mean for the Abiy's longevity.

Citing COVID struggles, the Ethiopian government has recently turned to the IMF and World Bank to raise funds, offering the state-owned internet provider Ethio Telecom up for partial privatisation and asking for a restructuring of its loans to put off repayment until a later date. The military has already seen its budget steadily increase under Abiy: per the human rights non-profit Omna Tigray, military spending currently averages 4% a year, while health spending sits at 3.3%. It is highly likely that this extra financial flexibility will be used to exacerbate the conflict further.

While we should be loath to put our faith in the world's financial elite, this does provide the institutions of capital with the opportunity to put pressure on Abiy's government and we in turn should pressure them to do so, by lending our support to Omna Tigray's campaign on the issue.

Meanwhile, Abiy's counterpart in Eritrea, Isaias Afwerki, who, like Abiy, previously garnered praise from the West (Bill Clinton called him a 'renaissance African leader') while committing numerous human rights abuses, is in a similarly precarious position. He faces being scapegoated by Abiy in order to deceive the international community, with EU sanctions already being levied at Eritrea, »

while domestic dissent over the country's involvement in the unpopular war grows. The further destabilisation of Ethiopia though, could give Afwerki room to maneuver in the ever-tightening political knot that he has found himself in, as the hot potato would pass back into Abiy's hands.

If Ethiopia does fracture then, the competing interests of Eritrea, Egypt and Sudan would complexify the conflict and snowball the violence. As ever, it will be ordinary people, like Selam, whose bodies will be pawned for the personal-political gain of autocrats like Abiy and Afwerki or sucked deeper into the scramble for ever scarcer resources.

On the 15th of April, two weeks after Abiy's announcement that Eritrean troops would leave the region, the under-secretary general of humanitarian affairs told a UN security council that "neither the UN nor any of the humanitarian agencies we work with have seen proof of Eritrean withdrawal." There have been reports of Eritrean troops indiscriminately killing civilians as recently as the 12th. Some have even begun to disguise themselves in Ethiopian uniforms. It would seem then that the withdrawal is yet another lie. Despite Abiy's words, the genocide simply goes on.

The fact is that no one is a sincere believer. Not Abiy (despite his Pentecostalism), not his defenders and certainly not the oppressed and displaced Tigrayans. This is because the lies of politicians like Abiy, as with Trump or Bolsonaro, no longer aspire to sincere belief, so easily are they refuted. Their lies are mere instruments. Their ideological utility is not located in their capacity to dupe people into believing them, but in the continued violence they make space for by discarding the aim of duping altogether. If no one believes what they are saying, everything becomes negotiable. It is not then a case of ideology being "a set of lies experienced as true," but "a set of lies experienced as lies, but acted on anyway"—or as the Marxist academic Theodor Adorno wrote, "the lie has lost its honest function of misrepresenting reality."

It no longer posits another reality, just debases the original, no longer demonstrates an awareness of one's actions as morally condemnable, only a will to continue the morally bankrupt act. In short, there is no longer anything left to unmask, for the mask is already, obviously, painted plastic. ■

To support the refugees of Tigray please consider donating towards the mutual aid fund.

www.gofundme.com/f/tigray-refugee-mutual-aid



'A Rats' Revolution' by Diều Hâu. Inspired by the traditional Vietnamese painting "Rat's Wedding," where the rats had to bribe the cat - their natural enemy and ruler, for a smooth ceremony.

THE BROKEN PROMISES OF VIETNAM

Vietnamese anarchist collective Mèo Mun discuss the country's "socialism"

Vietnam 2021, the mood in the air seems to be that of optimism. The government's relentless pursuit of a Zero-COVID strategy has won them widespread approval both domestically and internationally. The economy managed to squeeze out positive growth whereas many of its neighbours suffered a decline from the pandemic. Yet underneath all this bravado, one could sense that something is amiss. There's this nagging feeling that no one seems to be able to put a finger on. Almost as if, there is a spectre haunting Vietnam, the spectre of communism — the true kind without any bells and whistles.

As Emma Goldman astutely observed, there was no communism in the USSR. The same can be said of present-day Vietnam. The party in power — the Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV) — has long strayed from the path to communism.

Before the current party leader assumes his third term (2020–2025), he formulated an ambitious road map, in which by 2045 Vietnam would become a "developed" country, on par with Japan, South Korea, and Singapore. To us radicals, this is a betrayal to the working class, indigenous people, and marginalised groups who sacrificed so much for Vietnam's revolution. But as Marxist-Leninists with bright eyes and adamant conviction would tell you, that's all part of the plan™ and 2045 will be the long-awaited year when Vietnam finally advances to a classless, moneyless, and stateless, country.

However, a closer look at Vietnam's society today would show that the plan is but an illusion, and the promises are mere justification for the ruling class and capitalist class to continue sucking the life out of Vietnam for a while longer. The difference between what the party elites preach and what they allow to happen in reality is that between day and night.

As Vietnam's economy grows by leaps and bounds, so does the chasm between the rich and the poor. And no amount of welfare and regulation can stop the accumulation of capital or reverse the flow of wealth from the hands of the many into those of a few. Nowhere does this accumulation manifest itself more pervasively than in the system of land ownership. This system allows control of the land to be wrested from the peasants and the common people for little compensation and given to capitalists who often

make many times more profit. All across the country, luxurious residential buildings sprung up but few of those displaced by them can afford to move in. The billionaire Phạm Nhật Vượng, whose family own as much wealth as 800,000 Vietnamese, couldn't have built his empire without public properties being handed into his pocket in this manner.



The people's billionaire Phạm Nhật Vượng (left) on a talking panel with Nguyễn Mạnh Hùng (right) — the former CEO of Viettel (now Vietnam's Minister of Information and Communications). Besides them, a statue of Hồ Chí Minh and the hammer and sickle symbol can be seen.

Vietnam's already precarious ecosystem and indigenous communities also pay a heavy price for this rapid economic development. The plan for the electricity sector until 2045 gave some concession to renewable energies whilst supporting the construction of many new coal power plants, ignoring their huge CO2 footprint and many warnings about the link between coal power and the PM2.5 fog that covers major cities, threatening the well-being of millions. In the mid-2010s, hundreds of small hydroelectric power plants sprung up in the mountainous area around the country to sate the power-hungry cities and factories. These plants not only disrupted the river network and deprived the downstream agricultural land of essential sediment, they also caused untold damages to indigenous communities during construction and operation. Solar energy plants in Ninh Thuận robbed the indigenous Chăm of their ranching land. The Mekong Delta, Vietnam's primary rice cultivating area, is facing an existential threat from the many dams being constructed upstream in Thailand and China. And at the same time as a national project to plant one billion trees is ratified, numerous approvals went to capitalists so they »

can transform thousands of hectares of farm and forest land into resorts and golf courses.

Behind all this is a strong sense of nationalism — an effective tool to silence any meaningful criticism against the state, a value which can be utilised to undermine other people's struggle in the name of an abstract greater good. Nationalism has become the value that determines a Vietnamese citizen's worth.

It was nationalism that catapulted the Việt Minh into power during the 1940s. It was nationalism that motivated millions of young Vietnamese to put the nation's interest above their own as they throw themselves against foreign imperialism. Since the early days of the Party, there has been a consistent effort to cultivate a strong sense of nationalism everywhere. Nationalism is in the Vietnamese children's curriculum, in our songs, poems, art, and all over the media. One of the greatest successes of the Party has been the conflation of national identity and party loyalty. Modern Vietnamese capitalists like VinGroup or BKAV can be seen taking a cue from the state propaganda machine and incorporated nationalistic elements into the marketing of their products..

Ironically, it is the nationalists that claim to inherit Vietnam's "communist" revolution, yet they are the most vocal group against any and all radical ideals such as animal liberation, gender and sexuality liberation, indigenous autonomy, decriminalisation of sex work, and solidarity with international struggles, such as those in Hong Kong or Myanmar. The nationalist persuasion predictably morphed into a counter-revolutionary, reactionary force draping themselves in red.

Vulnerable victims of Vietnamese nationalism include, but are not limited to:

Queer people, who continue to face a high degree of discrimination in Vietnam. Recent progress in gender and sexuality liberation has largely come from liberal elements, such as the Pride movement, which is nothing more than a marketing ploy for foreign and local companies. Substantial changes, such as the recognition of same-sex families and transgender individuals' medical needs as rights have been delayed time and time again to prioritise "more pressing matters."

Sex workers, who are stigmatised and targeted by the police. In the eyes of Vietnam's patriarchal society, sex work isn't recognised as labour, but a mere immoral ailment to be eliminated. Consequently, sex work is blamed for the

spread of STIs like HIV, and sex workers, especially queer sex workers, are cast to the fringe of society.

Indigenous communities, who have been at the brunt of Kinh's (or Việt's) expansionist policies since the time of feudalism, find no assurance under the "anti-imperialist" rule of the current state. Worse off, the oppression they face has escalated, as the state obtains novel and more effective tools to neutralise any resistance, as well as to proactively patrol the indigenous population.

Abroad, many defenders of Vietnam's "socialism" have witnessed and ignored these obvious red flags, for all are justified in the name of their favourite "socialist" state's development. This demonstrates an apathy and ignorance toward Vietnamese people's continuous struggle for a just society, not to mention the embracing of capitalism, as long as it is draped in a red flag and claims to be against the imperialistic ambitions of "the West," especially the US, even when all signs show that communism is and was never on the agenda.

In the end, to exist is in itself a victory, thus a role manifests itself, a role to represent the voices of Vietnamese radicals. We aim at the future working class, the youth, who are both perpetuating and oppressed by capitalism and the state so that they can break through its oppressive chains. ■

Mèo Mun is a Vietnamese anarchist collective currently working to make anarchist writing and theory more accessible to Vietnamese speakers. Our handy work can be seen on the online Southeast Asian Anarchist Library, on our twitter @AdventuresOfMun and our blog "Mèo Mun" on <http://libcom.org>. Email: meo_mun@inventati.org



Two street propaganda posters in Hà Nội. The one on the left reads: "Celebrate the glorious Party, celebrate the 2021 Spring." The one on the right depicts a supposed ethnic minority woman with her child, celebrating the Party.



Announcing the formation of the 아나키스트 연합 [ANARCHIST FEDERATION in SOUTH KOREA]

Currently South Korea is going through extreme social inequalities due to problems such as low birth rate, aging society, gender and income inequality. Reasons behind such lasting social problems can be found on the ruling class who parasitize on the centralised form of state governance.

To tackle these problems and be one day free of state rule we have decided to establish a federation of Anarchists in South Korea. Korea has a long history of Anarchism. Even though its forces dwindled due to oppression that began from colonial period, its legacy shall continue through our AFSK.

현재 한국은 저출산과 고령화, 성 불평등과 빈부격차로 인해 극심한 사회적 불평등을 겪고 있다. 이러한 고질적인 사회 문제는 중앙 집권화된 국가 체제에 기생하는 기득권층에게서 원인을 찾을 수 있다. 이러한 문제의식에 근거해 우리는 국가 체제를 벗어나 한국의 AF 지부를 세우기로 하였다. 한국의 아나키즘은 사실 상당히 오랜 역사를 가지고 있다. 일제강점기부터 강한 탄압을 받아 점점 그 세력이 사라졌으나 우리 AFSK를 통하여 그 전통이 이어지는 것이다.

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SHINMIN PREFECTURE - SUMMARIZED

What it was and why it failed.

Inception

Many Koreans gathered in Manchuria to avoid oppression from the Japanese empire and formed their own society. Kim Jong-jin, having been inspired by anarchism under Yi Hoe-yeong, aspired to create a society in which all were equal without privilege and discrimination and free to develop and improve as they please. He believed in order to achieve a revolutionary movement, they needed to maintain a long struggle by a detailed plan and a complete organization and Manchuria was an adequate spot to have as a base. So he divided and surveyed the region and reported the results to Kim Jwa-jin.

He suggested to reform the Shinmin prefecture to prevent the invasion of Marxist-Leninists, defeat those who claim

“scientific socialism” and hold a long struggle against Japanese imperialism.

Meanwhile in Manchuria, Korean anarchists had created an organization called 자유청년회 (“Ja yu cheong nyeon hoe”) and its members were working all across Manchuria. Kim Jong-jin, along with Yi Dal and Kim Ya-bong gathered all members and formed 흑우연맹 (“Heug u yeon maeng”) focusing on propagating anarchism. More youth organizations converged under the activities of 흑우연맹 and formed 북만한인청년연맹 (“Bung man han in cheong nyeon yeon maeng”) which also studied anarchism and focused on enlightenment of the population. Kim Jong-jin and Yi Eul-gyu established the Korean Anarchist Federation in Manchuria (재만조선무정부주의자연맹) using 북만한인청년연맹 as a base.



On the other hand, nationalists in Manchuria had failed to unify their factions of 3 prefectures in Manchuria and their innovative congress had disbanded without making much progress. Also, since they have expropriated resources from the populace while reigning over them, they were losing support and the populace were leaning towards Marxist-Leninists. Feeling threatened by this development, the nationalists and anarchists joined forces to create the Korean People's Association in Manchuria (한족총연합회).

Management

북만한인청년연맹, through their announcement, exposed the Japanese ambitions of Manchurian invasion and opposed political movements. They also opposed capitalism and foreign rule, and sought to respect the will of the individual and established the rule of free association, thus rejecting centralised governance.

The Korean Anarchist Federation in Manchuria, included a society of no rulers, free development via mutual aid and free association, work according to one's ability and consumption based on one's need into their programme. They sought to revolutionize the mind and lives of peasants and build an ideal society and progressing the liberation efforts based on it.

Their immediate program:

1. We strive to reform the lives of Korean-Chinese people and to cultivate their anti-Japanese, anti Marxist-Leninist ideology.
2. We strive to foster the organization of our fellow compatriots through the self-governing cooperative structures to promote the economic/cultural improvement of Korean-Chinese people
3. We strive with all our might to the education of the youth in order to strengthen the anti-Japanese force and the cultural development of the youth.
4. We as farmers run our own lives with our own strength through collective labor with the farmer population and at the same time focus on the improvement of the lives of farmers and farming methods as well as cultivation of ideologies.
5. We carry a responsibility to research our own affairs and to regularly report self-criticism

6. We have the obligation of friendly cooperation and common operatives with ethnic nationalists on the anti-Japanese liberation front.

According to the rules of the KPAM, its members were comprised of revolutionary Koreans, those who have lived in the region for longer than 3 months had rights and obligations such as donating funds, enlisting in the military, voting and passive suffrage. On its central institution, they installed the representative, executive, conference agencies and military, farming, education and economy committees. The representative agency was the top resolution agency which was held every January by those gathered by the executive agency and the head was picked by the executive agency to represent the meeting. Executive agency composed of over 15 to under 21 members which handled the affairs decided at the meeting and their term was a year. The conference agency composed of members from each committee and handled the connections between each committees and handled the PR decided by the executives.

Each regional division of the KPAM was the agriculture association and it served as a regional administration handling matters ranging from executive, judicial, finance, to education, security and picked over 5 to under 9 members to carry them out. Also they installed the associations of education and security to handle those matters respectively.

The KPAM sought for maintenance of the region in order to acquire a structural base in it. They also focused on building elementary (소학교) and middle schools(중등학교).

They also built rice mills in order to protect the Korean peasants from being duped by Chinese merchants.

The Fall

The prefecture started to fall with the assassination of Kim Jwa-jin by Gong Do-jin, a 화요파 (“Hwa yo pa”) communist party member during the attempt by the Marxist-Leninists to dismantle the nationalist organization as the conflict between both factions escalated. KPAM then blamed and executed 2 figures which brought further condemnation and more assassination attempts from Marxist-Leninists »

The association moved its HQ to Jilin and sought to unite the ethnic organizations against the communist party once more and attempted to subjugate the Marxist-Leninists. They also tried to calm down the population and fix its structural problems but ran out of funds so they had to request some money from a meeting in Beijing (무정부주의자동양대회). They got the money and planned to use it to rebuild the commune but 10 members got arrested by the Chinese police who were collaborating with the Japanese embassy. The police confiscated the funds. China based Korean anarchists quickly gathered around Manchuria to resume and rebuild Shinmin efforts.

After gathering, anarchists tried to restructure and enlighten the population once more but their efforts remained in vain for 2 reasons. The first being the internal division in the association and the second being the conflict between nationalists and anarchists. The Anarchists soon found themselves rejected from the main positions of the association as the conflict grew worse. The nationalists assassinated Yi Jun-geun, Kim Ya-un, and Kim Jong-jin, thus finally closing the chapter of the Shinmin prefecture as the anarchists fled from Manchuria.

Why it failed

The KPAM did indeed operate in an anarchistic manner. It was structured in accordance with anarchist principles of bottom-up organization based on free association. Each region would send their share of delegates which would manage the main issues of the association, and the general association would take care of all paperwork and decide on foreign affairs and public relations. Each region would hold a meeting to choose delegates and write proposals to the main branch. However, due to the situation in Manchuria and the lacking state of the Shinmin prefecture forced the association to adopt a top-down approach where they would select a couple candidates for each structure and hold elections respectively.

However, the KPAM had a fundamental flaw. While it was operated and structured by anarchist principles, it was not unified by anarchism nor did every member agree with anarchism.

For example, one phrase of their programme says, “We

strive for the complete independence of the nation and thorough liberation of the people”. This meant they did not deny the state rather they acknowledged it. Despite the state being one of the top authorities that oppresses people according to anarchists, anarchists in Shinmin have deviated from anarchist principles by recognizing its existence in order to collaborate with the nationalists as they needed the regional base from them.

This “non-anarchistic” element eventually led to the internal division within the association and between anarchists and nationalists. Despite nationalist ideology having fundamental difference with anarchism, anarchists cooperated with nationalists which was a self-contradiction.

They had not established a regional base by themselves and borrowed it from the nationalists, this carried a certain dangerous factor that ultimately led to their failure from the beginning.

Aftermath

Afterwards the anarchists fled from Manchuria to mainland China, where they resumed their focus on terrorist activities. Unlike Korea and Japan, there was no Korean populace to rally the movements with and because the efforts to build a base for a liberation movement was shattered as foretold, the only option left for Korean anarchists at the time (early to mid 1930s) was direct terrorism. They were also heavily discouraged from the failures of Shinmin and having to live far abroad, which led them to nihilist terrorism. The remaining anarchists began collaborating with nationalists like Kim Koo as both groups had a common objective that is to achieve liberation through terrorism.

Kim Koo and nationalists had the funds and anarchists had people to carry out assassinations. Another reason is that they had experience cooperating with nationalists in Shinmin. The anarchists also loathed the Marxist-Leninists after they killed Kim Jwa-jin which was a key factor of the fall of Shinmin, which led them to anti-ML activities. ■

MIN

*Article composed with reference to Dr. Yi Horyong's **Anarchism in Korea** and proofread by a couple others including @wrkclasshistory.*

KRONSTADT DIARY

The Dispatches of Alexander Berkman from Petrograd 1921

February 28 — Strikers' proclamations have appeared on the streets today. They cite cases of workers found frozen to death in their homes. The main demand is for winter clothing and more regular issue of rations. Some of the circulars protest against the suppression of factory meetings. “The people want to take counsel together and find means of relief,” they state. Zinoviev asserts the whole trouble is due to Menshevik and Social Revolutionist plotting.

For the first time a political turn is being given to the strikes. Late in the afternoon a proclamation was posted containing larger demands. “A complete change is necessary in the policies of the Government,” it reads. “First of all, the workers and peasants need freedom. They don't want to live by the decrees of the Bolsheviks; they want to control their own destinies. We demand the liberation of all arrested socialists and non-partisan workingmen; abolition of martial law; freedom of speech, press, and assembly for all who labour; free election of shop and factory committees, of labour union and Soviet representatives.” ■

Alexander Berkman

March 1 — Many arrests are taking place. Groups of strikers surrounded by Chekists, on their way to prison, are a common sight. Much indignation in the city. I hear that several unions have been liquidated and their active members turned over to the Cheka. But proclamations continue to appear. The arbitrary stand of the authorities is having the effect of rousing reactionary tendencies. The situation is growing tense. Calls for the Uchredilka (Constituent Assembly) are being heard. A manifesto is circulating, signed by the “Socialist Workers of the Nevsky District”, openly attacking the Communist regime. “We know who is afraid of the Constituent Assembly,” it declares. “It is they who will no longer be able to rob us. Instead they will have to answer before the representatives of the people for their deceit, their thefts, and all their crimes.”

Zinoviev is alarmed; he has wired Moscow for troops. The local garrison is said to be in sympathy with the strikers. Military from the provinces has been ordered to the city: special Communist regiments have already arrived. Extraordinary martial law has been declared today. ■

Alexander Berkman

March 2 — Most disquieting reports. Large strikes have broken out in Moscow. In the Astoria I heard today that armed conflicts have taken place near the Kremlin and blood has been shed. The Bolsheviks claim the coincidence of events in the two capitals as proof of a counterrevolutionary conspiracy.

It is said that Kronstadt sailors have come to the city to look into the cause of trouble. Impossible to tell fact from fiction. The absence of a public press encourages the wildest rumours. The official papers are discredited. ■

Alexander Berkman

March 3 — Kronstadt is disturbed. It disapproves of the Government's drastic methods against the dissatisfied workers. The men of the warship Petropavlovsk have passed a resolution of sympathy with the strikers.

It has become known today that on February 28 a committee of sailors was sent to this city to investigate the strike situation. Its report was unfavourable to the authorities. On March 1 the crews of the First and Second Squadrons of the Baltic Fleet called a public meeting at Yakorny Square. The gathering was attended by 16,000 sailors, Red Army men, and workers. The Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Kronstadt Soviet, the communist Vassiliev, presided. The audience was addressed by Kalinin, President of the Republic, and by Kuzmin, Commissar of the Baltic Fleet. The attitude of the sailors was entirely friendly to the Soviet Government, and Kalinin was met on his arrival in Kronstadt with military honours, music, and banners.

At the meeting the Petrograd situation and the report of the sailors' investigating committee were discussed. The audience was outspoken in its indignation at the means employed by Zinoviev against the workers. President Kalinin and Commissar Kuzmin berated the strikers and denounced the Petropavlovsk Resolution as counter-revolutionary. The sailors emphasized their loyalty to the Soviet system, but condemned the Bolshevik bureaucracy. The resolution was passed. ■

Alexander Berkman »

March 4 — Great nervous tension in the city. The strikes continue labour disorders have again taken place in Moscow. A wave of discontent is sweeping the country. Peasant uprisings are reported from Tambov, Siberia, the Ukraine, and Caucasus. The country is on the verge of desperation. It was confidently hoped that with the end of civil war the Communists would mitigate the severe military regime. The Government had announced its intention of economic reconstruction, and the people were eager to co-operate. They looked forward to the lightening of the heavy burdens, the abolition of wartime restrictions, and the introduction of elemental liberties.

The fronts are liquidated, but the old policies continue, and labour militarization is paralyzing industrial revival. It is openly charged that the Communist Party is more interested in entrenching its political power than in saving the Revolution.

An official manifesto appeared today. It is signed by Lenin and Trotsky and declares Kronstadt guilty of mutiny (myatezh). The demand of the sailors for free Soviets is denounced as “a counterrevolutionary conspiracy against the proletarian Republic”. Members of the Communist Party are ordered into the mills and factories to “rally the workers to the support of the Government against the traitors”. Kronstadt is to be suppressed.

The Moscow radio station sent out a message addressed “to all, all, all”:

Petrograd is orderly and quiet, and even the few factories where accusations against the Soviet Government were recently voiced now understand that it is the work of provocators. . . . Just at this moment, when in America a new Republican regime is assuming the reins of government and showing inclination to take up business relations with Soviet Russia, the spreading of lying rumours and the organization of disturbances in Kronstadt have the sole purpose of influencing the American President and changing his policy toward Russia. At the same time the London Conference is holding its sessions, and the spreading of similar rumours must influence also the Turkish delegation and make it more submissive to the demands of the Entente. The rebellion of the Petropavlovsk crew is undoubtedly part of a great conspiracy to create trouble within Soviet Russia and to injure our international position. . . . This plan is being carried out within Russia by a Czarist general and former officers, and their activities are supported by the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionists.

The whole Northern District is under martial law and all gatherings are interdicted. Elaborate precautions have been taken to protect the Government institutions. Machine guns are placed in the Astoria, the living quarters of Zinoviev and other prominent Bolsheviks. These preparations are increasing general nervousness. Official proclamations command the immediate return of the strikers to the factories, prohibit suspension of work, and warn the populace against congregating in the streets.

The Committee of Defence has initiated a “cleaning” of the city. Many workers suspected of sympathizing with Kronstadt have been placed under arrest. All Petrograd sailors and part of the garrison thought to be “untrustworthy” have been ordered to distant points, while the families of Kronstadt sailors living in Petrograd are held as hostages. The Committee of Defence notified Kronstadt that “the prisoners are kept as ‘pledges’ for the safety of the Commissar of the Baltic Fleet, N. N. Kuzmin, the Chairman of the Kronstadt Soviet, T. Vassiliev, and other Communists. If the least harm be suffered by our comrades, the hostages will pay with their lives”.

“We want no bloodshed,” Kronstadt wired in reply. “Not a single Communist has been harmed by us.”

The Petrograd workers are anxiously awaiting developments. They hope that the intercession of the sailors may turn the situation in their favour. The term of office of the Kronstadt Soviet is about to expire, and arrangements are being made for the coming elections.

On March 2 a conference of delegates took place, at which 300 representatives of the ships, the garrison, the labour unions and factories were present, among them also a number of Communists. The Conference approved the Resolution passed by the mass meeting the previous day. Lenin and Trotsky have declared it counter-revolutionary and proof of a White conspiracy.

RESOLUTION OF THE GENERAL MEETING OF THE CREWS OF THE FIRST AND SECOND SQUADRONS OF THE BALTIC FLEET

Held March 1, 1921

Having heard the report of the representatives sent by the General Meeting of Ship Crews to Petrograd to investigate the situation there, Resolved:

1. In view of the fact that the present Soviets do not express the will of the workers and peasants, immediately

to hold new elections by secret ballot, the pre-election campaign to have full freedom of agitation among the workers and peasants;

2. To establish freedom of speech and press for workers and peasants, for anarchists and Left socialist parties;

3. To secure freedom of assembly for labour unions and peasant organizations;

4. To call a non-partisan conference of the workers, Red Army soldiers and sailors of Petrograd, Kronstadt, and of Petrograd Province, no later than March 19, 1921;

5. To liberate all political prisoners of socialist parties, as well as all workers, peasants, soldiers, and sailors imprisoned in connection with the labour and peasant movements;

6. To elect a commission to review the cases of those held in prison and concentration camps;

7. To abolish all politodeli (political bureaus) because no party should be given special privileges in the propagation of its ideas or receive the financial support of the Government for such purposes. Instead there should be established educational and 353 cultural commissions, locally elected and financed by the Government.

8. To abolish immediately all zagraditelniye otryadi (Armed units organized by the Bolsheviks for the purpose of suppressing traffic and confiscating foodstuffs and other products. The irresponsibility and arbitrariness of their methods were proverbial throughout the country).

9. To equalize the rations of all who work, with the exception of those employed in trades detrimental to health;

10. To abolish the Communist fighting detachments in all branches of the Army, as well as the Communist guards kept on duty in mills and factories. Should such guards or military detachments be found necessary, they are to be appointed in the Army from the ranks, and in the factories according to the judgment of the workers;

11. To give the peasants full freedom of action in regard to their land, and also the right to keep cattle, on condition that the peasants manage with their own means; that is, without employing hired labour;

12. To request all branches of the Army, as well as

our comrades, the military kursanti, to concur in our resolutions;

13. To demand for the latter publicity in the press;

14. To appoint a Travelling Commission of Control;

15. To permit free kustarnoye (individual small-scale) production by one's own efforts.

Resolution passed unanimously by Brigade Meeting, two persons refraining from voting.

PETRICHENKO, Chairman Brigade Meeting.
PEREPELKIN, Secretary.

Resolution passed by an overwhelming majority of the Kronstadt garrison.

VASSILIEV, Chairman.

Kalinin and Vassiliev voted against the Resolution. ■

Alexander Berkman

March 4 - Late at night. — The extraordinary session of the Petro-Soviet in the Tauride Palace was packed with Communists, mostly youngsters, fanatical and intolerant. Admission by special ticket; a propusk (permit) also had to be secured to return home after interdicted hours. Representatives of shops and labour committees were in the galleries, the seats in the main body having been occupied by Communists. Some factory delegates were given the floor, but the moment they attempted to state their case, they were shouted down. Zinoviev repeatedly urged the meeting to give the opposition an opportunity to be heard, but his appeal lacked energy and conviction.

Not a voice was raised in favour of the Constituent Assembly. A millworker pleaded with the Government to consider the complaints of the workers who are cold and hungry. Zinoviev replied that the strikers are enemies of the Soviet regime. Kalinin declared Kronstadt the headquarters of General Kozlovsky's plot. A sailor reminded Zinoviev of the time when he and Lenin were hunted as counter-revolutionists by Kerensky and were saved by the very sailors whom they now denounce as traitors. Kronstadt demands only honest elections, he declared. He was not allowed to proceed. The stentorian voice and impassioned appeal of Yevdakimov, Zinoviev's lieutenant, wrought the Communists up to a high pitch of excitement. »

His resolution was passed amid a tumult of protest from the non-partisan delegates and labour men. The resolution declared Kronstadt guilty of a counterrevolutionary attempt against the Soviet regime and demands its immediate surrender. It is a declaration of war. ■

Alexander Berkman

March 5 — Many Bolsheviks refuse to believe that the Soviet resolution will be carried out. It were too monstrous a thing to attack by force of arms the “pride and glory of the Russian Revolution”, as Trotsky christened the Kronstadt sailors. In the circle of their friends many Communists threaten to resign from the Party should such a bloody deed come to pass.

Trotsky was to address the Petro-Soviet last evening. His failure to appear was interpreted as indicating that the seriousness of the situation has been exaggerated. But during the night he arrived, and today he issued an ultimatum to Kronstadt:

The Workers’ and Peasants’ Government has decreed that Kronstadt and the rebellious ships must immediately submit to the authority of the Soviet Republic. Therefore, I command all who have raised their hand against the socialist fatherland to lay down their arms at once. The obdurate are to be disarmed and turned over to the Soviet authorities. The arrested commissars and other representatives of the Government are to be liberated at once. Only those surrendering unconditionally may count on the mercy of the Soviet Republic. Simultaneously I am issuing orders to prepare to quell the mutiny and subdue the mutineers by force of arms. Responsibility for the harm that may be suffered by the peaceful population will fall entirely upon the heads of the counter-revolutionary mutineers. This warning is final.

TROTSKY,

Chairman Revolutionary Military
Soviet of the Republic.

KAMENEV,

Commander-in-C/lief.

The city is on the verge of panic. The factories are closed, and there are rumours of demonstrations and riots. Threats against Jews are becoming audible. Military forces continue to flow into Petrograd and environs. Trotsky has sent another demand to Kronstadt to

surrender, the order containing the threat: “I’ll shoot you like pheasants.” Even some Communists are indignant at the tone assumed by the Government. It is a fatal error, they say, to interpret the workers’ plea for bread as opposition. Kronstadt’s sympathy with the strikers and their demand for honest elections have been turned by Zinoviev into a counter-revolutionary plot. I have talked the situation over with several friends, among them a number of Communists. We feel there is yet time to save the situation. A commission in which the sailors and workers would have confidence, could allay the roused passions and find a satisfactory solution of the pressing problems. It is incredible that a comparatively unimportant incident, as the original strike in the Trubotchny mill, should be deliberately provoked into civil war with all the bloodshed it entails.

The Communists with whom I have discussed the suggestion all favour it, but dare not take the initiative. No one believes in the Kozlovsky story. All agree that the sailors are the staunchest supporters of the Soviets; their object is to compel the authorities to grant needed reforms. To a certain degree they have already succeeded. The zagruditelnye otryadi, notoriously brutal and arbitrary, have been abolished in the Petrograd province, and certain labour organizations have been given permission to send representatives to the villages for the purchase of food. During the last two days special rations and clothing have also been issued to several factories. The Government fears a general uprising. Petrograd is now in an “extraordinary state of siege”; being out of doors is permitted only till nine in the evening. But the city is quiet. I expect no serious upheaval if the authorities can be prevailed upon to take a more reasonable and just course. In the hope of opening the road to a peaceful solution, I have submitted to Zinoviev a plan of arbitration signed by persons friendly to the Bolsheviks:

To the Petrograd Soviet of Labour and Defence,

CHAIRMAN ZINOVIEV:

To remain silent now is impossible, even criminal. Recent events impel us anarchists to speak out and to declare our attitude in the present situation.

The spirit of ferment manifest among the workers and sailors is the result of causes that demand our serious attention. Cold and hunger had produced discontent, and the absence of any opportunity for discussion and criticism is forcing the workers and sailors to air their grievances in the open.

White-Guardist bands wish and may try to exploit this dissatisfaction in their own class interests. Hiding behind the workers and sailors they throw out slogans of the Constituent Assembly, of free trade, and similar demands.

We anarchists have long exposed the fiction of these slogans, and we declare to the whole world that we will fight with arms against any counter-revolutionary attempt, in co-operation with all friends of the Social Revolution and hand in hand with the Bolsheviks.

Concerning the conflict between the Soviet Government and the workers and sailors, we hold that it must be settled not by force of arms, but by means of comradely agreement. Resorting to bloodshed, on the part of the Soviet Government, will not— in the given situation—intimidate or quieten the workers. On the contrary, it will serve only to aggravate matters and will strengthen the hands of the Entente and of internal counter revolution.

More important still, the use of force by the Workers’ and Peasants’ Government against workers and sailors will have a demoralizing effect upon the international revolutionary movement and will result in incalculable harm to the Social Revolution.

Comrades Bolsheviks, bethink yourselves before it is too late! Do not play with fire: you are about to take a most serious and decisive step.

We hereby submit to you the following proposition: Let a commission be selected to consist of five persons, inclusive of two anarchists. The commission is to go to Kronstadt to settle the dispute by peaceful means. In the given situation this is the most radical method. It will be of international revolutionary significance.

ALEXANDER BERKMAN

EMMA GOLDMAN

PERKUS

PETROVSKY

Petrograd, March 5, 1921. ■

Alexander Berkman

March 6 — Today Kronstadt sent out by radio a statement of its position. It reads:

Our cause is just, we stand for the power of Soviets, not parties. We stand for freely elected representatives of the labouring masses. The substitute Soviets manipulated by the Communist Party have always been deaf to our needs and demands; the only reply we have ever received was shooting. . . . Comrades! They deliberately pervert the truth and resort to most despicable defamation. . . . In Kronstadt the whole power is exclusively in the hands of the revolutionary sailors, soldiers, and workers—not with counterrevolutionists led by some Kozlovsky, as the lying Moscow radio tries to make you believe. . . . Do not delay, Comrades! Join us, get in touch with us: demand admission to Kronstadt for your delegates. Only they will tell you the whole truth and will expose the fiendish calumny about Finnish bread and Entente offers.

Long live the revolutionary proletariat and the peasantry!

Long live the power of freely elected Soviets. ■

Alexander Berkman

March 7 — Distant rumbling reaches my ears as I cross the Nevsky. It sounds again, stronger and nearer, as if rolling toward me. All at once I realize that artillery is being fired. It is 6 P.M. Kronstadt has been attacked!

Days of anguish and cannonading. My heart is numb with despair; something has died within me. The people on the streets look bowed with grief, bewildered. No one trusts himself to speak. The thunder of heavy guns rends the air. ■

Alexander Berkman

March 17 — Kronstadt has fallen today. Thousands of sailors and workers lie dead in its streets. Summary execution of prisoners and hostages continues. ■

Alexander Berkman

March 18 — The victors are celebrating the anniversary of the Commune of 1871. Trotsky and Zinoviev denounce Thiers and Gallifet for the slaughter of the Paris rebels. . . . ■

Alexander Berkman

THE PARIS COMMUNE

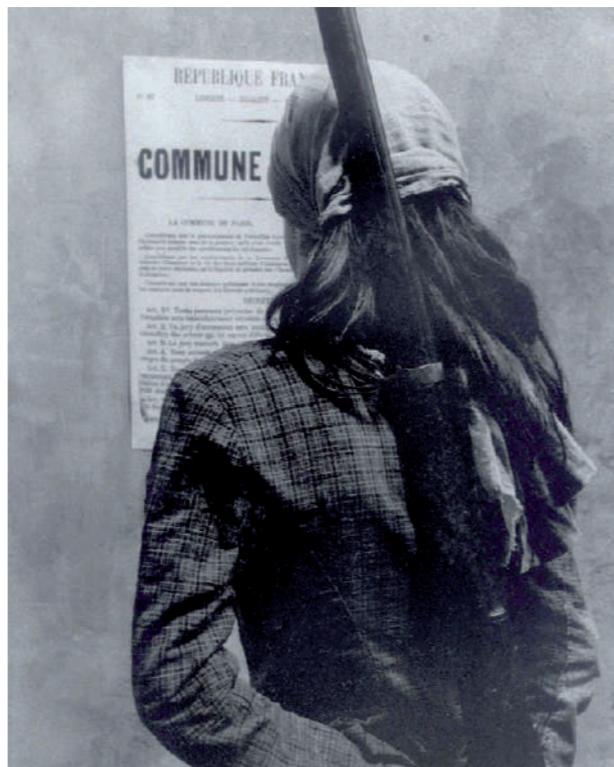
A contested legacy from Organise 77

Here Organise presents two different Anarchist approaches to the Paris Commune, which flowered briefly one hundred and forty years ago, in the Spring of 1871. The first, whilst acknowledging that the Commune was an important lesson in early socialism, warns us not to fall into the trap of fetishising historical events and evaluates what was achieved in the light of subsequent anarchist thinking. The second takes the Commune on its own terms and on those of anarchists who were its contemporaries, celebrating what was achieved by libertarians in this, ultimately flawed, early attempt at social revolution.

LESSONS OF THE COMMUNE

The Paris Commune of 1871 was an exciting time for the workers' movement and provided valuable lessons for the class struggle after its fall. However, whilst the event was spectacular and many social reforms occurred and were adopted by the Third Republic that followed it, a lot of it has been exaggerated for lazy historical propaganda purposes to supposedly prove that socialism is possible through these means. As social anarchists we should analyse it without fantastical generalisations so that we may draw upon the experience of the workers during the Commune and gain understanding for our own future struggles. It does us no good to overstate the importance of any revolutionary event.

The backdrop to the insurrection was the Franco-Prussian war and the German siege of Paris, 1870-1, during which period France underwent a Republican coup deposing Emperor Napoleon III in September 1870, ending the Second Empire which had lasted since 1852. A hushed up election in February 1871 brought to power unpopular monarchists and conservatives who signed for peace with Prussia. From this period the National Guard, the organised militia formerly under the command of the French Republic, gained in strength and influence and held onto the arms provided to it for the defence of Paris during its siege. By the 3rd March, the proletarian battalions of the Guard, angered by the attempted triumphal entry into their city by the Prussians defected from the government of Adolphe Thiers to form its own Central Committee with elected commanders.



This dual military power would not do for the government. Thiers sent in battalions of regular troops to disarm the Guard on 18th March. Parisian workers famously resisted at Montmartre in the north of the city, where an attempt to seize the cannon of the Guard was halted after the regular army, fraternising with the Guard and local residents, arrested their generals, Clement-Thomas and Lecomte, and had them shot. Upon hearing of the insurrection, the order was given for the evacuation of the city, although some regular battalions chose to remain.

The Guard was not united in its support for the insurrection, however. As a commander from one of the thirty bourgeois battalions had put it to the old commanding officer on the eve of the insurrection, 'The National Guard will not fight against the National Guard'. Thus, the Central Committee took provisional control of the city and made plans to organise elections to the Commune, which were held on 26th March.

In the few weeks before the Commune was put down,

in what came to be known as the 'Bloody Week' (21 - 28 May), progressive transformations took place in social, economic and political relationships. But the insurrection was fragile, not least in military terms. After an agreement was made with the Prussians to release French prisoners of war to aid in the re-capture of Paris, the French army entered from the west of the city taking each district one by one. Workers erected barricades to defend themselves and the Commune executed a few of its hostages in desperation including Georges Darbois, the archbishop of Paris.

As the soldiers retook Paris, known and suspected communards were arrested, whilst others swept through the city setting fire to important buildings to hinder the re-occupation of the city by the state. Those that survived Bloody Week were put on trial. Many were executed whilst others were imprisoned or exiled to New Caledonia. It is unclear how many communards were murdered and executed; the figures range from 5,000 to 50,000. Many ex-communards escaped and sought asylum in countries like the USA, Britain and Belgium and continued their political struggle there. Amnesty was not granted until 1880.

The influence of existing political forms

The 18th March is hailed as the date of the insurrection and has many similarities to the beginnings of subsequent revolutions such as that of Russia 1917, Spain 1936 and Hungary 1956, in that they were spontaneous proletarian events reacting to the conditions capitalists in power had imposed upon them. They were neither planned, nor sparked by the propagandising of political organisations. Mass membership of political organisations was merely representative of the already-existing desire for social, economic and political transformation of society. In the case of Paris 1871, a report to the International Workingmen's Association (IWA) by the Corresponding Secretary for France on the General Council, Auguste Serrailier, stated that the International was in disarray, its organisation weak and unwilling to act as an association in some cases. It should be noted that the IWA in France was largely of the Proudhonist tradition, being mutualists who believed they could make capitalism irrelevant through supposedly ignoring, undermining and finally supplanting the state and business. The French section was not in a position to exert much political influence anyway. The International constituted less than one-third of the political Commune; »



Jacobin bourgeois republicans, conservative and oppositionist held the rest of the seats. Anarchist communists hold that you cannot escape capitalism: it must be abolished. But the Commune overlooked the necessity for the seizure of political power from the bourgeoisie.

Achievements and limitations of the Commune

This is not to say that the social revolution occurring in 1871 would have inevitably failed simply because the IWA were a minority faction in the political Commune. A strong desire for socio-economic change was held by the population as a whole. It must be kept in mind that the Commune was a living, and therefore continually developing, example of class struggle and important social questions were being raised in the proletarian quarters of the city as well as by their 'representatives' in the political Commune. It was because of the grassroots desire for change that the political Commune enacted its decrees around social reform.

But the political Commune was ultimately built on the legality of the old regime and on the old republican traditions which had dominated French revolutionary thought. It was itself a bourgeois republic, albeit more decentralised. For instance, the Central Committee of the National Guard, originally intending to hold elections to the Commune on 22nd March, had to delay until the 26th after negotiations with the old mayors of Paris who ran the voting lists and had the authority to call elections.

Workers' cooperatives and economic life

One of the major reforms that leftists and revolutionaries point towards was the April 16th decree requiring that abandoned factories were to be handed to the 'cooperative association of the workers who were employed in them.' But in reality, this was compatible with capitalist economics. Worker/producers' cooperatives exist to this day and are not exempt from being exploiters themselves.

L'Ouvrier de l'Avenir, a newspaper of the time, reported fifty workers' cooperatives, mainly within the skilled trades, existing in Paris in the weeks before the March insurrection. Indeed, the Government of National Defence, which took over authority from Napoleon III when he was deposed, encouraged the setting up of workers' cooperatives during the Siege of Paris, through the handing out of large contracts to textile workers to make uniforms for the French army. During the Commune, attempts were made to seek out the private owners in order to compensate them for the loss of their factory after its expropriation, and in some

cases, the private owners worked hand-in-hand with the cooperatives, receiving rent, lending equipment and offering business advice to the management of these cooperatives.

Although the formation of forty three worker cooperatives is sometimes quoted, there were only two of significant size: the Société Cooperative des Fondateurs en Fer (Cooperative Society of Iron Founders) and the Association des Ouvriers de la Métallurgie (Association of Metalworkers). The latter had its munitions factory in the Louvre. The former had already been set up the day before the 16th April decree at a public meeting of iron founders, and so was not the result of the political Commune itself. The society was in fact set up with the support of the War Delegation for the purpose of producing armaments for the National Guard, as were many of the other cooperatives founded during this time. Even though the iron founders received a requisition order for a factory, they chose not to expropriate it from its former master but to rent it from him. The chief organiser, Pierre Marc, was a business owner of eight years standing and was selected to the role because he knew how to run a business. The average wage in the factory was half of what it was before the Commune and half that of the workers in the association at the Louvre. Even there, the metalworkers' demand for a wage increase for dangerous work in the front line was rejected; the cooperatives could not compete with private firms for contracts unless they became exploitative themselves.

The fact that cooperatives were still employing the wage system as a means of distribution shows their limitation in socialising the means of production, distribution and exchange. When on the 19th May the Labour and Exchange Delegation called for a meeting of representatives of the cooperatives, only twenty-seven cooperatives were represented out of ninety-three eligible. For the Commune to have been a success, the workers would have had to remove their own political 'representatives' and business owners and managers. In a revolution, capitalists and their supporters must not be allowed to re-take any ground. Workers must control and direct the movement of production and distribution within the economy of the new society as a priority and destroy wage slavery and private ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange.

Kropotkin also criticised the Commune for failing to expropriate private property, especially factories and the gold that was stored in banks within the Paris city walls, due to 'prejudices about property and authority'. Many

communards seem to have seen economic changes as secondary to political revolution. However we must learn from the lessons of struggles in the past and see the two as inseparable. The Parisian workers failed to seize their workplaces, control the economy themselves and make irrelevant the power of capital.

Political organisation

While those elected to the Commune were, in theory, recallable, they still had the power to make decisions and were relatively centralized and cut off from the people. They were representatives rather than mandated delegates. The former is familiar to us now; we elect people on the basis of what they say or their declared political allegiance and they then make decisions for us. Throughout history this form of organisation has led to abuse, corruption and inequality. The later system, of mandated, recallable delegates is a libertarian form of political organisation. Rather than giving power to make and enforce decisions to a minority, we retain power at a local or workplace level and mandate delegates with the decisions we have made. The delegates are recallable if they go beyond their mandate.

Kropotkin criticised the political organisation of the commune for maintaining a governmental system of representatives, which then became separated from the day-to-day realities of the wider Commune, becoming conservative and paralysed by endless discussion, confirmation of the Anarchist critique of representative systems. However, if representation is the only form of political organisation experienced or witnessed by the wider class, there is a danger that this is what will be defaulted to during insurrectionary times. It is therefore vital that we are arguing for, and practicing libertarian forms of organising during these pre-revolutionary periods when we are active in community groups, workplaces, student struggles and tenants' and residents' associations, both because they are the best way to organise democratically, and also because this gives confidence and competence in libertarian practices necessary to maintain revolution.

In the end, perhaps the biggest problem with the Commune's political system of representation was its inefficiency. Only a small number of people were trying to cope with the huge volume of issues, resulting in the representatives being inundated and not able to cope. On the one hand they showed how well ordinary working people can take over the running

of things, without needing specialized bureaucrats, but they needed to go further and have autonomous sections of the city run things. Federalism would have been more efficient!

Women and the Commune

Women were involved within the struggle, famously initially confronting the soldiers who had been sent to take back the cannon on the first day. However they faced discrimination both within the Commune and from the victorious Government.

Some progressive policies were adopted by the Commune, notably establishing day nurseries, raising the salary of women teachers to be equal to that of male teachers and improving availability and accessibility of education for girls and women. However the commune was too short lived for these initiatives to be brought to fruition and women's inequality was only partially addressed. While men gained their suffrage, this wasn't the case for women. Some women had an active part in the defence of the commune, for example in Place Blanch where one hundred and twenty women erected and defended a barricade. However, the role of women was largely one of domesticity and care, many working as nurses, such as within the Women's Union for the Defence of Paris and Care of the Injured. Most women were kept away from the barricades and front lines, but others acted as cantinières, whose official role was to cook, feed and nurse the male troops, although some also fought alongside the men.

After the fall of the commune, misogynistic attitudes within Paris and France were exploited in order to discredit the communards with descriptions of 'petroleuses' - women setting fire to buildings, to argue why order needed to be restored and to justify the horror of the slaughter that followed. Such imagery of 'unfeminine' women, which is rooted in sexist attitudes to what female behaviour should be like, has been used at other times to demonise radical movements often with some success even amongst those who are progressive on other issues. This is just one reason why Anarchists must tackle sexism within our wider class. Radical movements often remain macho and male dominated.

Conclusions and lessons

Although much was spontaneous and unplanned, the influence of Proudhon on the communards gave it some libertarian flavour. However events moved so fast, and decisions and structures developed by necessity so quickly, that there was little time for »

theoretical arguments. Without the previous discussions, and the libertarian and socialist organising that had been taking place within the working class of Paris, which meant that much radical thought was already understood, the Commune may have looked even less progressive. However there were still many mistakes made, notably allowing a representative political system to emerge and to fail to carry out an economic revolution within the city walls. Both of these errors are easy to spot if you understand Anarchism, but during an insurrection it is too late! It is vital that libertarian thought and ways of organising are understood and familiar to the wider working class in pre-revolutionary times, so that these same mistakes are not repeated.

Memories of assemblies from previous revolutions gave the Parisians inspiration and models that they could draw upon, just as in Russia the experiences of 1905 meant that the concept of forming soviets within workplaces was familiar to the Russian working class in 1917 and forced the Bolsheviks to adopt the Anarchist slogan of 'All Power to the Soviets' (although obviously this was soon betrayed by authoritarian centralism).

Finally, it is significant that a festive atmosphere apparently flourished within the city during the period of the Commune. This joy, energy, creativity and high-spirits can be felt in many liberated spaces. Emma Goldman argues that culture, festivity, music and of course dancing are an essential part of revolution. When we are in a space that feels freed from the shackles of capitalism and authority – even just temporarily such as during an occupation – this flowering of creativity contrasts with everyday life and nourishes the feelings of solidarity, affection and comradeship that is both the natural product of struggling together, and it is that which keeps us going during the dark times. ■

VIVE LA COMMUNE!

This article is dedicated to all those who will turn their guns on their officers.

'We revolutionaries aren't just chasing a scarlet flag. What we pursue is an awakening of liberty, old or new. It is the ancient Communes of France, it is 1703; it is June 1848; it is 1871. Most especially it is the next revolution which is advancing under this dawn.'

Louise Michel

'The Commune was the biggest festival of the nineteenth century. Underlying the events of that spring of 1871 one can see the insurgents' feeling that they had become the masters of their own history, not so much on the level of "governmental" politics as on the level of their everyday life.'

Situationist International

This year marks the 140th (Now 150th) anniversary of the Paris Commune. This momentous event marked the spectacular and agonising beginning of the period in which the working class has made consistent attempts, through revolutions around the world, to break with the system of exploitation and inequality and to usher in a new society and a new civilisation based on equality and freedom. The forms of organisation developed by the Parisian masses, be they artisans, workers, unemployed, artists and writers, youth and children, women and men, are demonstrated again and again in the revolutions that were to break out throughout the twentieth century and into this one. They are the heralds of a new way of organising socially and of behaving honourably and nobly towards each other. They are an inspiration to all those who wish to clearly break with this society of corruption, brutality, and of the most despicable and venal apologies for human beings running the show. As Louise Michel one of the finest and most magnificent revolutionaries who ever drew breath was to remember of those communards she had survived: 'To those who in falling, have opened so wide the gates of the future, through which the revolution will pass!'

After the disastrous Franco-Prussian War and the adventures of Napoleon III, France was defeated by Prussia. The Prussians advanced to the outskirts of Paris. The National Guard, a sort of home army/militia supported by public subscription refused to countenance the surrender of artillery to the Prussians, as connived at by the new republican government that had replaced the old imperial regime. This government sent in troops to regain the artillery. They were confronted by a crowd that refused to relinquish the guns situated on the heights of Montmartre. The officers barked out orders to fire on the crowd but the soldiers refused and turned their guns on their officers on March 18th 1871. This was the birth of the Paris Commune.

Free elections called by the National Guard followed. They elected a council made up of a majority of old style Jacobin revolutionaries (harking back to the 1789 Revolution) and a minority of working class socialists, mostly left-wing Jacobins, influenced by Auguste Blanqui and those under the sway of Proudhon, who

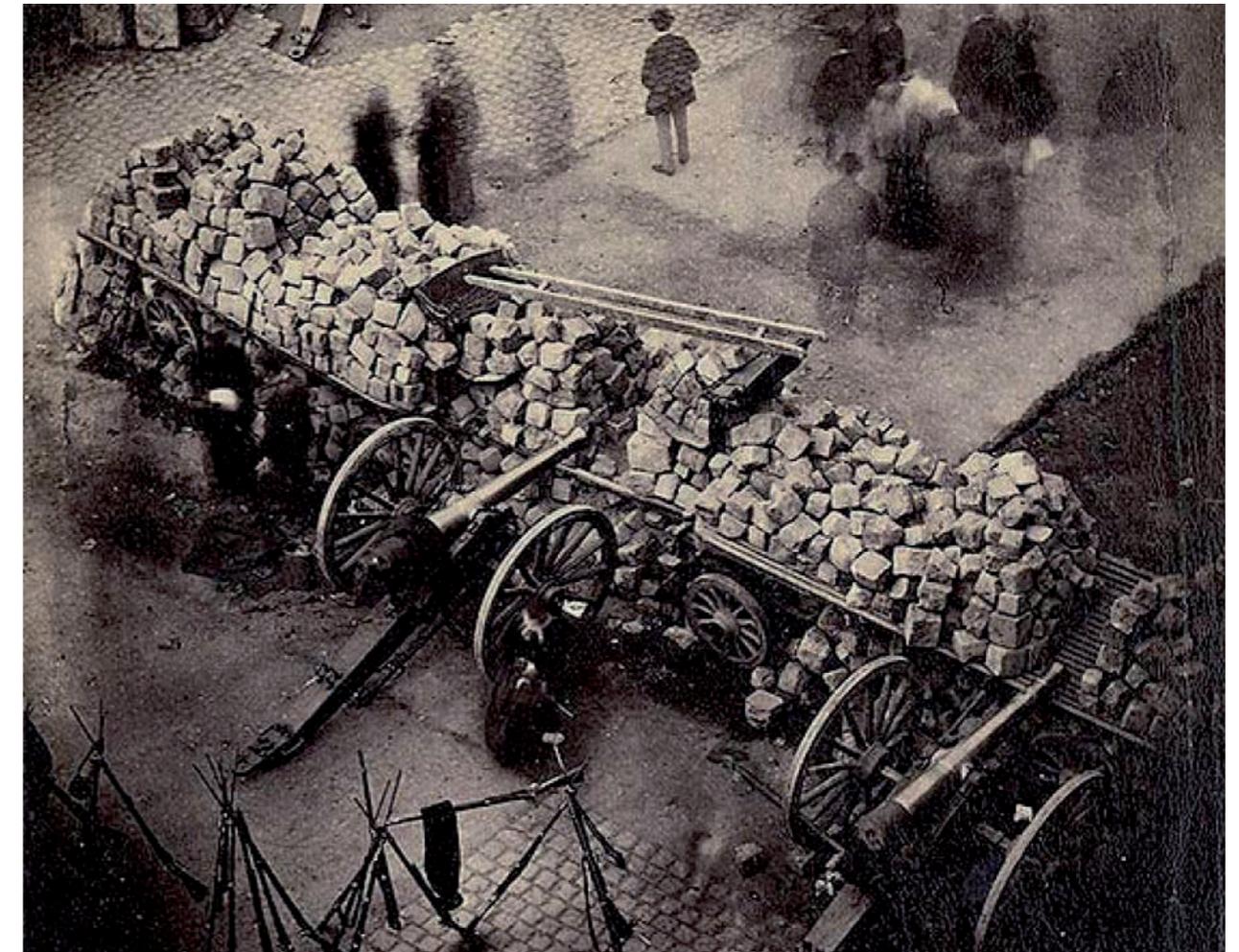
had envisaged a more libertarian and federalist form of organisation. The Commune of Paris proclaimed Paris to be autonomous and called for the creation of a confederation of communes throughout France. The Commune itself was, in theory, recallable, and paid an average workers' wage. It had a mandate to report back to those who had elected it. At the same time, a whole host of clubs and associations in the Paris neighbourhoods began to develop, concerned both with the administration of the local areas and with visions of how a new society should operate.

The anarchist movement, which was developing at this point in history, was enthused by this, as its thinkers had predicted just such a development. The Russian anarchist Bakunin commented at the time, 'Revolutionary socialism has just attempted its first striking and practical demonstration in the Paris Commune'.

The Commune called for the re-opening of workplaces run in a cooperative fashion and by May 1871, forty-three

workplaces were operating in this way. The Engineers Union voted at a meeting on 23rd of April that since the aim of the Commune should be 'economic emancipation' it should 'organise labour through associations in which there would be joint responsibility' in order 'to suppress the exploitation of man by man.'

Similarly Marx and his followers hailed the coming of the Paris Commune. Marx was to write that the Council of the Commune 'was formed of the municipal councillors, chosen by universal suffrage in the various wards of the town.' This majority in the final days of the Commune voted to establish a Committee of Public Safety which would act to defend Paris against the advancing counter-revolution. Those of a more libertarian bent within the Commune opposed this arguing against the dictatorship of this 'majority'. As the anarchist Kropotkin noted, the Paris Commune did not 'break with the tradition of the State, of representative government, and it did not attempt to achieve within the Commune that organisation from the simple »



to the complex it inaugurated by proclaiming the independence and free federation of the Communes ...if no central government was needed to rule the independent Communes, if the national Government is thrown overboard and national unity is obtained by free federation, then a central municipal Government becomes equally useless and noxious. The same federative principle would do within the Commune'.

The Paris Commune faced two ways: backwards towards the old ways of functioning of the 1789 Revolution, with its centralisation, authoritarianism and terror; and forwards to a libertarian, decentralist and humane way of functioning. The old ways as represented by the central administration of the Commune hindered and crippled the new ways as represented in the clubs



and associations that had developed at the grassroots level. The State was not abolished and representative government remained in place. As Kropotkin was to note, 'instead of acting for themselves . . . the people, confiding in their governors, entrusted them the charge of taking the initiative. This was the first consequence of the inevitable result of elections' with the central council acting as 'the greatest obstacle to the revolution'. He went on to note that, 'immobilised there by fetters of red tape, forced to discuss when action was needed, and losing the sensitivity that comes from continual contact with the masses, they saw themselves reduced to impotence. Paralysed by their distancing from the revolutionary centre – the people – they themselves paralysed the popular initiative'.

In addition, again according to Kropotkin, the central

council, 'treated the economic question as a secondary one, which would be attended to later on, after the triumph of the Commune . . . But the crushing defeat which soon followed, and the blood-thirsty revenge taken by the middle class, proved once more that the triumph of a popular Commune was materially impossible without a parallel triumph of the people in the economic field'. The council of the Commune became more and more isolated from the people who elected it, and thus more and more irrelevant. And as its irrelevance grew, so did its authoritarian tendencies, with the Jacobin majority creating a 'Committee of Public Safety' to 'defend' the 'revolution'. The Committee proved to be inept and ineffectual and in practice was ignored by the Parisian masses as they fought to defend their gains against the armed forces of the French government which had

advanced on Paris. On May 21st, government troops entered the city, and seven days of fierce street fighting followed. The army and armed units of the upper classes roamed the streets, shooting down batches of Communards, women, men and children. At least 30,000 people were killed in the street fighting, many executed after they had surrendered. Their bodies were thrown into mass graves, some of them still alive. Many fled into exile, whilst many others were imprisoned for long periods of time. The appalling massacre of the aftermath of the Paris Commune left deep scars in French society which still exist today.

The Paris Commune was the preface to whole chapters of revolution. Let the final words soon be written and let the gates swing wide for the birth of a new, free and fair society! ■

KROPOTKIN AND THE GHOST OF WAR

The deadly betrayal of a generation of slaughtered youth in Kropotkin's stand

The kind of apologetics that some anarchists have adopted for Peter Kropotkin's declared support for imperialism's Great War is truly disturbing: '

'It is commonly accepted that the Anarchist theoretician Peter Kropotkin did support the Allied cause in World War I. But is it true? Much is made of it by hostile Marxist critics (and was at the time) exaggerating the extent of whatever he said...' ⁽¹⁾

This was Albert Meltzer's take on Kropotkin's unambiguous support for the Allied cause in World War I. Of course, "support for the war" does not equate to "support for war" per se; even the "pour-encourager-les-autres" Douglas Haig would disown that sentiment. Meltzer offers the further apology that at no time did Kropotkin recruit for the war. He had no need to be out physically active in that compromising role, since his published support for a British military response to stop 'the menace of Prussian militarism' was in itself persuasion or recruitment, and if not, what was it?

Equally spurious is the anarchist George Woodcock's plea that *'All that can be said in defence of Kropotkin in this unfortunate matter is that at the time he was already an old and very sick man, almost worn out by a life of suffering and singularly vigorous activity.'* -The Anarchist Prince: A Biographical Study of Peter Kropotkin

The Great War was indeed a litmus test for exposing the true proclivities of anarchists, socialists, syndicalists, progressives and suffragettes as well as a platform for the reactionary jingoists and patriots of the time. Given the level of frenetic jingoism in the preparations for war in Britain and across Europe in 1914, one wonders how this wouldn't have impressed any humanitarian, progressive individual, let alone an anarchist, with anything other than growing alarm and horror. Moreover, what level of naïveté for an anarchist theoretician would be required not to foresee the inevitability of conscription, with its fundamental violation of human freedom or, worse still, the executions of "deserters" and "cowards" demanded by military discipline. Even in 1914 "shell shock" was well understood. Incidentally, Kropotkin's 'vile, warlike' Prussian militarists executed 25 of their soldiers, compared to the 306 executed by Kropotkin's British defenders of freedom.

And it is not with the luxury of hindsight that one notes these considerations; plenty of socialists, syndicalists and communists were outspoken in their hostility to this the greatest of capitalist wars, and Britain's enthusiasm for it, from Jim Larkin and James Connolly in Ireland to John Maclean and Charlotte Despard in Britain.

The ambivalent nature of the anarchist response at the time to the war has already been frankly admitted elsewhere in the anarchist press, for example Italian anarchist Errico Malatesta's shocked response⁽²⁾ to Kropotkin's support for the war is comparable to that of the vehemently anti-war socialist and suffragette Sylvia Pankhurst toward her suffragette mother Emmeline's and sibling Christabel's patriotic campaigning for war recruitment.

A reactionary strident patriotism was reflected in the suffragette movement's new slogan: "For King, For Country, for Freedom". The newspaper was renamed Britannia and attacked politicians and military leaders for not being warlike enough, Christabel calling the less than enthusiastic warrior politicians "the traitors, Grey, Asquith and Cecil". Anti-war activists such as Ramsay MacDonald were attacked in the paper as being "more German than the Germans". Christabel also demanded the "internment of all people of enemy race, men and women, young and old, found on these shores, and for a more complete and ruthless enforcement of the blockade of enemy and neutral." ⁽³⁾

Whereas the socialist Sylvia's Dreadnought paper (later re-named the Workers' Dreadnought) was consistently anti-war. She opposed the Defence of the Realm Act in 1914 that undermined civil liberties, and advocated militant strike action against the evils of conscription. Other anti-war trade union activists, such as Mary Macarthur and Margaret Bondfield were attacked as "Bolshevik women trade union leaders" in the suffragette paper. The Pankhursts

As for Marxist exaggerations of Kropotkin's stance according to Albert Meltzer, there is little need. In October 1914, Kropotkin unequivocally declared his support for the Allies, insisting that 'the German invasion must be repulsed – no matter how difficult this may be lest Europe fall to 'Prussian militarism'. »

The militarism of the British Empire, with its bloody excesses stretching back into the century before, and with its recent scorched-earth war in South Africa, causing the deliberate deaths by starvation and disease, of at least 30, 000 Boer women, children and elderly in concentration camps, together with uncounted numbers of black Africans (107,000 were interned), didn't feature in his anti-militarism.

As Meltzer reveals, *'he did not come out in open opposition to the Boer War, and told Emma Goldman at the time (as she records in 'Living My Life') that he did not think Russians who were 'guests' of Britain should do so.'* (3)

Both Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman were among the authors of the 'International Anarchist Manifesto on the War', published in February 1915 and signed by 37 anarchists from several countries, including from the belligerent states. Signatories numbered leading anarchist theorist Errico Malatesta and Freedom's own

Lilian Wolfe (Lilian G Woolf) and Tom Keell. The manifesto was published in Freedom in March 1915. It reminded readers that neither side 'is entitled to invoke the name of civilisation'. Anarchists should continue to 'summon the slaves to revolt against their masters'.

Naturally, one would have thought that anarchists would have been without question on the side of the mutineers at Les Fontinettes and Étapes. Le Camp Britannique at Étapes was notorious for its brutal "Bull Run", where soldiers were daily terrorised and bullied back into the war by the hated NCOs and officers.

Like the socialist Sylvia Pankhurst, Freedom newspaper's editor Tom Keell and his partner and fellow-contributor Lilian Wolfe were actively and openly anti-War. The 1916 introduction of conscription by the Military Service Act drew condemnation from the British anarchist periodical The Voice of Labour, of which Lilian was a founding contributor. Wolfe and Keell



were arrested and imprisoned as a consequence of an article they wrote, also published as a leaflet, advocating dodging the draft and practical measures that could be adopted to achieve it. They were charged and found guilty under the Defence of the Realm Act.

Conversely, in contradiction to all the apologetics for Kropotkin, the words he wrote in a letter to Swedish professor Gustav Steffen, and published in Freedom in October 1914, clearly show his support for the war. According to Kropotkin: 'And the moment they began to feel themselves strong as a sea power, the Germans took it into their heads to destroy the maritime power of Britain, to take a strong footing on the southern shores of the Channel, and to menace England with an invasion.

'...all freedom-loving Europe is ready at this moment to combat that vile warlike spirit which has taken possession of Germany since it abandoned the traditions of its former civilization and adopted the tenets of the Bismarckian Imperialism.'

And worse still:

'It is certain that the present war will be a great lesson to all nations. It will have taught them that war cannot be combatted by pacifist dreams and all sorts of nonsense about war being so murderous now that it will be impossible in the future. Nor can it be combatted by that sort of antimilitarist propaganda which has been carried on till now. Something much deeper than that is required.'

The anarchist supporters for the Allied war, including Jean Grave and Peter Kropotkin, followed this up in February 1916 with 'Le Manifeste des Seize', with 15 leading anarchist signatories and appearing in the French newspaper Bataille, insisting that the fight must continue.

It opens with a summation of the position of those opposed to the war, which it goes on to disavow in no uncertain terms in its insistence that war must continue:

'From various sides, voices are raised to demand immediate peace. There has been enough bloodshed, they say, enough destruction, and it is time to finish things, one way or another...'

And the response:

'To speak of peace at this moment, is precisely to play the game of the German ministerial party...We would prefer

to look the danger in its face and seek what we can do to ward it off. To ignore this danger would be to increase it.'

But they were not, were they, looking "danger in its face"? No more than any armchair-warrior patriot back in Britain, castigated in Wilfred Owen's famous anti-war poem 'Dulce et Decorum est Pro Patria Mori'.

One who did look danger in the face, and unwillingly, was Somerset man Harry Patch, whose statement on the Great War in which he was forced to take part is starkly genuine in its simplicity: "I felt then as I feel now, that the politicians who took us to war should have been given the guns and told to settle their differences themselves, instead of organising nothing better than legalised mass murder."

It couldn't be more relevant today, when the annual poppy-fest is growing yearly into ever more spectacular celebrations of Britain's warring traditions than a ceremony of remembrance for the lives wasted by war. As Iain Cobain wrote: "For more than a hundred years, not a single year has passed when Britain's armed forces have not been engaged in military operations somewhere in the world. The British are unique in this respect: the same could not be said of the Americans, the Russians, the French or any other nation. Only the British are perpetually at war".

On my nearby Folkestone war memorial is the name of Frederick C Butcher. The 23 year old was executed for "desertion" on 27/8/1918. He was found wandering in a dazed condition and going in the opposite direction from the front line. The implacable Haig turned down an appeal for mercy, as he did in so many cases. Frederick's family understandably objected to his name being carved on the memorial by those that killed him, but their feelings of loss and outrage were ignored. He didn't die for his country he was murdered by his country.

We owe it to Frederick Butcher and all the other millions of young working class victims of the Great War, which was inspired by nationalism, patriotism and imperialism, to be very clear about the deadly betrayal of a generation of slaughtered youth in Kropotkin's stand. ■

Patrick Carey

(1) - <https://www.katesharpleylibrary.net/sf7n16>

(2) - <https://www.katesharpleylibrary.net/mpg5xs>

(3) - Sylvia Pankhurst, 'The History of the Woman's Suffrage Movement', p 594, (1931 edition)

(4) - <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/emma-goldman-living-my-life>

35 YEARS OF THE ANARCHIST FEDERATION

Reflections on 1986 and now

It's 35 years since the AF was first formed as the Anarchist Communist Federation in 1986. We've published retrospectives on several occasions before in the 10, 20, 25 and 30 year specials of Organise! This time we look back at what was happening in and around 1986 and its relationship to the emergence of the new anarchist organisations.

1986 had seen in some big anarchist anniversaries of its own. As well as the year being the centenary of the Haymarket Affair of 4th May 1886 in Chicago and a half century since the start of the Spanish Revolution in 1936, anarcho-pacifist influenced paper Peace News celebrated 50, and 'Freedom / A Hundred Years', a special centenary journal, was published. However, the views of those attached to Freedom at the time were not widely embraced by the emerging class struggle anarchist current. Although there was reference to history of the movement, including names associated with the origins of anarchist communism, much of the contemporary opinion read

as of out-of-touch reminiscence and philosophical pondering, especially after the Miners' strike battles and 'inner city riots' of the early decade. One article from a member of the newly launched Class War Federation did put the case for class politics and meaningful direct action (and appealed for anarchists to break from punk and veganism.) The article also called for more anarchist organisation and applauded the formation of the ACF.

Cold War politics

American militarism was a major 1980s political theme. The Ronald Reagan presidency was engaged in a not-so-Cold War in many corners of the globe. The US government was supporting several right-wing governments and insurgencies in Central America, including what became the Iran-Contra Affair, where the National Security Council was found to be covertly selling arms to Iran and using proceeds from this to fund right-wing rebel militias in Nicaragua. The Central Intelligence Agency was supporting Islamic fighters 'Mujahideen' in Afghanistan against the Soviet Union and UNITA in Angola who were a major ally of the South African state. Whilst Chomsky and Herman's book 'Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media' (1988) was around the corner, anarchists were stressing the need for Do-It-Yourself publishing by revolutionaries.

In the last few years before the Berlin Wall was brought down, when the dual influences of Soviet Union and USA still divided up the globe, understanding of geopolitics was prevalent amongst the Left in Britain. The UK establishment's role in supporting the Chilean junta had been a major Trade Union issue and so earlier in the 1980s it was especially galling to see the government cosy up to Pinochet and resume arms sales. The Falklands War was judged by the Left to be British jingoism and a key part of the election campaign tool for the Thatcher second term. The Anti-Apartheid Movement was strong and the Conservative Right's support for the regime was well known. Around 1986, the Federation of Conservative Students was making a nuisance of itself with a universities speaking tour of Monday Club members and other politicians well known for their support for white power in South Africa and Rhodesia (pre-Zimbabwe) and anti-immigration policies and views. This led to a great deal of direct action that was supported by anarchists, to oppose and 'no-platform' specifically racist individuals.

In the UK, a major focus of direct action in addition to big demonstrations was against US military power more broadly. Reagan was engaged in brinkmanship with the waning Soviet power and had bought Cruise Missiles to air bases in England with the support of the Conservatives. Anarchists were active on CND demonstrations and set up peace camps. Involvement in direct action, including a great deal of fence cutting at Greenham Common, Molesworth and other USAF bases, led to important discussions in the peace movement about 'violence to property' that was eventually resolved in anarchist circles even amongst pacifists (where the consensus became that destruction of property was not considered to be violence.) Class struggle anarchism was, however, beginning to critique the peace movement as lifestyle, something that was also directed at Green Anarchist, its paper being quite visible on Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament demos. Also, anarchists, unlike some on the Left, were accepting of separatism in the movement (a defining feature of the Greenham women's camps) and the ACF reflected this in its aims and principles, whilst in practice the mainly mixed anarchist groups assumed men within them were feminist anyway.

Thatcher, Thatcher ...

1986 was past mid-way of Thatcher's second term as Prime Minister and the neoliberal project was in full swing. Utilities and the buses were being privatised, and a law was passed to de-mutualise Building Societies. The year also saw the 'Big Bang' deregulation of the City allowing vast sums to be made from the easy credit available resulting in massive debt for many of the working class. The year also continued the cheap sell-off of council housing under 'Right to Buy' with discounts of up to 70% available for aspiring home-owners. Land and property prices were about to boom leading to gentrification becoming a major feature of Southern big cities whilst the Tories seemed content to let the North suffer the rot of industrial decay. Unemployment was stuck at over 3 million. Bradford's '1 in 12 Club' launch was one early anarchist recognition of the need for more autonomous spaces in the anarchist movement, whose name comes directly out of the unemployment statistics of the time. In general, anarchists were heavily involved with mutual aid in the face of Thatcherite attacks on welfare. Other important activist spaces such as the Autonomous Centre of Edinburgh had begun as advice centres.

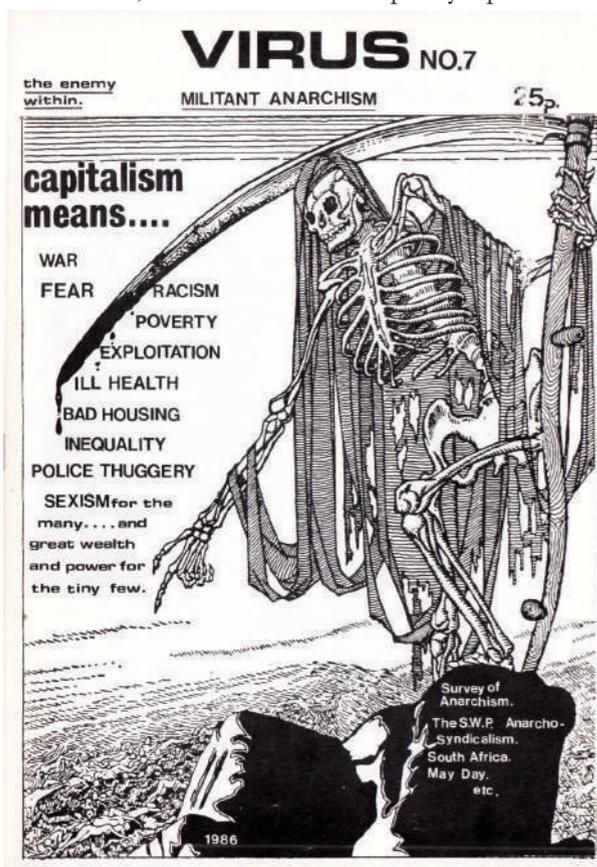
The Marxist-Leninist/Trotskyist left was reeling since the second Thatcher election victory. Neil Kinnock, Labour leader, was spending much time in power marginalising them. Derek Hatton, deputy leader of Liverpool City

Council was thrown out of the Party for his membership of the Militant Tendency. Along with various other city councils Liverpool he played a major part in the Militant inspired rate-capping rebellion against Thatcher's plans to squeeze local government finances. Also in 1986, the GLC, led by Ken Livingstone and John McDonnell (known more recently as Corbyn's Shadow Chancellor of the Exchequer) was abolished, weakening the Left's control of London. These events of the mid-80s represented the death-throws of Old Labour. The Local Government Act that was associated with rate-setting mentioned above was passed in 1986. This was notoriously amended in 1988 to add the Clause/Section 28 "prohibit the promotion of homosexuality by local authorities" which had not made it into the Act two years earlier. Anarchists took part in the many Clause 28 protests; it was eventually repealed in 2003.

In January 1986, the major labour movement struggle since the end of the Miners' Strike was about to begin; the year-long Wapping Dispute. Rupert Murdoch's News International empire was in the process of moving the Sun, Times and associated Sunday newspapers away from their long-time home on Fleet Street. A major part of the modernisation plan was to destroy the print unions' power by sacking most of the no-longer needed typesetters and ensuring non-closed shop contracts at the new plant at Wapping. There was strong critique amongst class struggle anarchists and anarcho-syndicalists of the Trade Unions inability to foster solidarity. The campaign to support the printers from anarchists included supporting weekly demonstrations outside the Wapping plant and direct action to prevent distribution of papers by private haulage company TNT. The demos were heavily and violently policed with running battles most weeks. This dispute further consolidated the anarchist organisations attitude to the police as front-line enemies and towards class violence. The government upped the ante with the passing of the Public Order Act (1986) which gave police powers to control "public processions and assemblies" and provided long maximum sentences for riot, violent disorder and affray (10, 5 and 3 years) that were used to great effect by the state in the anti-Poll Tax campaign a few years later (anarchists responded to the "Battle of Trafalgar" of March 1990 by initiating unconditional legal support for the hundreds arrested).

Our movement in 2021

So where are we in 2021? In 1986 the anarchist papers like Virus (forerunner of Organise!), Class War and Direct Action fed on the anger of the middle Thatcher years and looked to working class revolt for inspiration. »

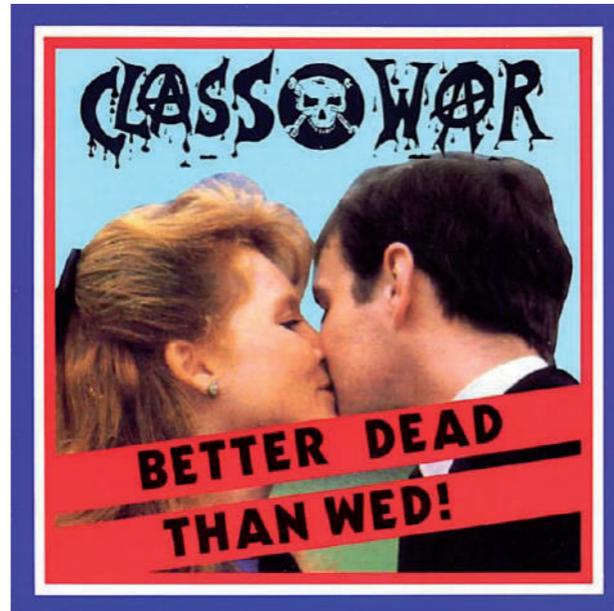


The pages of these papers would also go on to cover in some detail developments in Northern Ireland that followed the signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement with some anarchists verging on support for the nationalist cause as a reflection of the anti-imperialism that was still very prevalent on the Left. There is now a more critical eye on colonialism that could perhaps help steer a better path between ultraleft and anti-imperialist positions such as in the analysis of Rojava where there is much disagreement amongst anarchists. As well as coming from the trigger of Brexit, the April 2021 rioting in Northern Ireland has its origins in the history of the Union and struggle for a United Ireland that anarchists were aiming to make sense of in their papers in the 1980s, but are less vocal about since the ending of the Troubles.

The family occasions of the Royals were a source of derision amongst many anarchists in the 1980s, especially for Class War, who produced the single 'Better Dead than Wed!' in response to the marriage of Andrew and Fergie. But with both *The Windsors* and *The Crown* as entertainment on Netflix and their real lives even stranger than fiction it hardly seems necessary for anarchists to make much effort ridiculing them anymore.

The mainstream media news has been very much about Party politics, and, until the pandemic hit, Brexit dominated the political agenda and to a lesser extent Scottish Independence. But anarchists were neither pro nor anti-Brexit, treating Fortress Europe and English nationalism as two sides of a statist and capitalist coin. We were also mostly disinterested in the tussles within and between parties on either side of the border. The rise and fall of Corbyn and the installation of a 'safe pair of hands' like Keir Starmer sometimes feels a bit like the Kinnock years as the Labour Party tries once again to regain electoral credibility; this holds little appeal to anarchists apart from to say "told you so" to those leftists who spent time canvassing for Corbyn.

The last few years have not been kind to grassroots politics either, though. Our DIY press is no longer special, being just one drop in a vast ocean of internet media that is directed to individuals' computer and phones by algorithms, whilst each populist state leader has been amongst the mainstream media's biggest critics as a technique to position them alone as the "voice of the people". Anarchists are also now having to explicitly distance ourselves from conspiracy theorists and be more nuanced about saying all politicians are liars. A lot of the community work nowadays is defensive, running first food banks and then soup kitchens as more people have

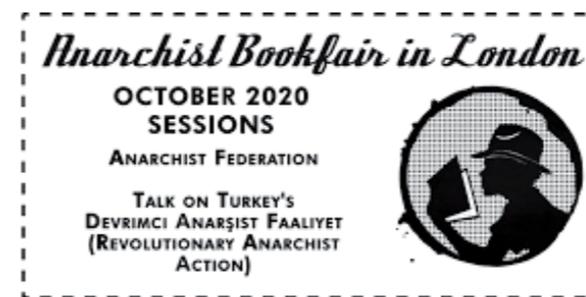


struggled to feed themselves after incomes from low paid and precarious work evaporated during the pandemic. Anarchists have played a small part in this widespread need for mutual aid with good examples in London (GAF free shops) and Bristol (BASE & Roses).

One element of déjà vu from 1986 comes from the announcement of a new 'Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill.' Judging by the use of police powers granted during the pandemic, this is more likely to be directed at stifling Reclaim These Streets protests against violence to women, Black Lives Matter demos and Extinction Rebellion actions, or as yet another attack on travellers, rather than being used to control workers disputes or demos about global politics. This said, economic strife may be around the corner as the state claws back the billions spent during the pandemic. A class analysis is essential as the outcome of the pandemic will amplify inequalities as much as the pandemic itself has revealed them. Anarchists also have much to offer tactically and have been instrumental in providing legal support on recent demos, which is an important legacy of the knowledge sharing and organisation of defence groups following the Public Order Act of 1986. The debate about violence to property has come back though in the context of statue toppling; anarchists could usefully look to the 1980s to see how this was justified in Peace News.

Globalisation

Internationally, things are very different in the organised anarchist movement since 1986. The Cold War framing of Latin American politics shifted after the fall of the Berlin



Wall in the 1990s to a critique of capitalist globalisation. In Mexico, the Zapatistas emerged as a force in direct response to the North American Free Trade Agreement of 1994, which brought anarchism into direct solidarity relationships with indigenous struggles with support of many anarchists in Britain and Ireland for the Encuentros in Chiapas and other solidarity activity with comrades from Oaxaca and members of the FAM (Federación Anarquista de México) that AF was involved with. Anti-capitalism became a central feature of anarchist involvement in struggles of the 2000s, its forerunners existing in the Stop the City actions of the 1980s against the military-industrial complex, but now even more explicitly transnationalist with a No Borders ethos.

For the AF, our international links have continued to grow since our joining the International of Anarchist Federations in 2000. Organisations in IFA include the Czech and Slovak Anarchist Federation and Federation of Anarchist Organising in Slovenia & Croatia, and we have good contact with comrades from Belarus who face intense and continued repression. Links with anarchists in the East, and most of the organisations themselves, simply did not exist or were still in exile in the West in the early-to-mid 1980s due to the Iron Curtain. The Latin American federations in IFA are highlighting the ongoing need for support for indigenous struggles, including the Mapuche people facing modern day land-grabs by corporations in Chile, and the massively unequal effect of Coronavirus amidst the contempt of Brazilian leader Bolsonaro for indigenous communities. This is in addition to the stark differences in access to vaccination between the richer and poorer countries in our international.

The rifts in British anarchist, feminist and left movements caused by a reactionary rise in transphobia, had meant the postponement of larger anarchist events that have not yet returned due to the pandemic, although an online 'Anarchist Bookfair in London' was successfully held last year, organised by in part by AF members. The consultation on amendment of the Gender Recognition Act in UK and the activism of trans people, including those

in AF, to increase visibility and acceptance, had put a small powerful group of ex-feminist academics and journalists in an uneasy alliance with religious fundamentalists, social conservatives and the far right. The antagonism is a departure from the 1980s when left and right politics were more clearly defined and anarchists aligned with the feminist movement for the most part, where the negatives focussed mainly on critiques of reformism or cross-class alliances. This has all caused headaches for some anarchists. Echoes of 'no-platform' were heard before the pandemic but the more confrontational face-to-face meetings have stopped due to social distancing, whilst the government decision not to amend the GRA to allow self-determination has fulfilled some of the reactionaries' aims. The fight for transgender equality is ongoing and strongly reflects that against homophobia in the 1980s. The AF itself moved some years ago to the recognition of internal oppressions with the formalising of causes that meet and organise separately whilst 2020s anarcha-feminism is confident in defining its own parameters.

Hopefully, the message of the class struggle anarchists of 1986 still stands regarding the need for organisations. A libertarian perspective will be needed to critique Coronavirus Passports which may otherwise realise the introduction 'ID cards' (proposed by successive government both Tory and Labour since the 1980s for other reasons) and to keep up the pressure that will hopefully Kill the Bill. Good organisation is needed, especially during the pandemic when we are more physically isolated, to make the case for an anarchist communist perspective. ■



FIGHTING BACK

A brief guide to protests, police & the law, for attending protests

A lot has happened since the 1st (2010) and 2nd (2012) edition of this pamphlet. We have seen mass protest movements around the world grow, from Black Lives Matter in the US, to the Kurdish revolution in Northern Syria. We have seen the biggest strikes in recorded history in India, huge movements around women's rights in south America and anarchist groups appearing and organising in places like Myanmar, the middle east and Indonesia. In the UK we have seen the rise of environmental movements such as Youth strike for climate and Extinction rebellion. We have seen more people fighting White Supremacy through groups like Black Lives Matter and groups coming together under the Kill the Bill protests.

The growth of mutual aid networks, of supporting one another through the covid pandemic with food distros and offering each other help has increased our ability to function as a community. With these networks building and anarchist ideas spreading we are starting to increase our threat to the capitalist state.

At the same time we are seeing the far right organising aswell, managing to get huge numbers on the street, and in the US even feeling confident enough to try and stop the new Democratic president being sworn in. We have seen many countries come under fascist leadership to Erdogan in Turkey and Bolsanaro in Brazil. Even in the UK we have now had an increasingly blazen right wing Tory government in power for over a decade.

We need to act now.

We need to step up the pressure and organise in a non-hierarchical way, and we need to do so in as safe a way as possible for ourselves so we can keep on fighting.

Here we initially cover what you and your group should consider before attending an action or demonstration and ways to be effective during it. We then provide a brief oversight on how the police operate including their units tactics and behaviour, as well as what rights you have. Finally we provide a step by step guide of what to do if you or one of your mates gets busted by the cops.

This pamphlet works on the premise that you are just going on a nice fluffy march from A to B but considers that during this time anything could happen including illegal activity.

The authors of this pamphlet in no way encourage illegal or violent behaviour but instead concede that individuals and groups will do what they believe is necessary to fight the state and other oppressive hierarchies, we know they have bee violent to us and there is no way that those with power will give it up without a fight.

In Solidarity,
Bristol Anarchist Federation



SECTION A - The Protest

People choose to take action to further their cause in many different ways and propose many different tactics ranging from marches, occupations, sit down protests and signing petitions through to more energetic activity including property destruction and other forms of sabotage. This pamphlet does not encourage any particular kind of protest, the choice is yours but we would say three things:

- 1) For your own safety if anyone encourages you to be passive and sit down in front of a line of police horses tell that person to fuck right off, unless you want to get trampled.
- 2) If you do anything illegal you must be ready to live with the consequences.
- 3) If you do anything that injures or potentially could have injured a fellow protester (think throwing bottles from the back of a crowd) expect people there to be pissed at you!

Module One - Preparing for an action or demo

First things first, find some friends. Make sure they're friends you trust, preferably some you know reasonably well, but most importantly have the same goals and desires regarding the reasoning behind your demonstration and the tactics you are willing to use.

Create an affinity group from this, smaller affinity groups work much better for quick movement and decision making, but it can be bigger if you choose. We recommend a group of 4-8, always even numbers because within these groups you need to 'buddy-up'. This may be starting to sound a bit like a year 8 school trip, but it can be very important and holding hands isn't essential (but sometimes useful)!

Basically, choose one person within your group and you will be sticking together through the whole thing, making sure each other are OK, working together, and keeping track of if one of you gets nicked. Now, you've got your affinity group and buddies, you go on the demo and get split up (it happens), do you really want to shout names across a crowd of 1000 + people, where the police can hear and there's probably several other people with the same name?

Nah, didn't think so. Choose a code word, possibly an irregular name like Gertrude, something professional sounding like 'Foxtrot' or something silly like "Knickers". In our experience two syllable words works best because

its short but not so short you may miss the call. Words not to use include: bomb, gun, medic or Allah etc. A hand signal in the air helps a lot as well, because this shows your location above the crowd. This can be anything, but we suggest it's not a middle finger or two fingers because if the cops are feeling like it they could probably attempt an arrest for section 5. We recently taught these tactics to a group of students from U.W.E, some of them put them to use at the demo the next day with great success.

People might be using fake names (recommended) in case of arrest or hospitalisation, so it's worth finding out what names people are using. Not knowing could mean they're in hospital but you can't get to them or check up on them, or find out which police station they are at. Then not only could they find themselves coming out of another police station miles away with no one waiting for them, but the dedicated solidarity democrew could be sat outside a police station cradling a bottle of whiskey and pack of hobnobs for days!

It's worth talking over your arrestee procedure, choosing a solicitor (see bust card on back cover), de-arrests, solidarity demos, and anything else you might think of even if you "aren't going to do anything illegal". The more time your group spends together going over things and practising the better you will work as a team. If you're intending on making a point against certain companies - tax dodgers for example - we suggest you choose your targets before hand and scout them out earlier on in the day to see how protected they are. Possibly create a back up list of targets in case the police/security ruin your attempts on one, but a written list on your person may amount to a conspiracy charge (note to self ed.).

Let people know if you have first aid training, it can be beneficial to have a first aid kit with you either way; you never know when the police are going to decide they're bored and smash you round the head with a big heavy stick! The basic message is prepare for everything, have plans and back up plans and back up plans for your back up plans. Make sure you all know what you're doing and ensure you're never caught off guard. Organise, resist!

Module Two - On the day

Wake up well ahead of time and deal with your hangover, even better don't have one! You need to be thinking straight and be on the ball. If you still feel the effects of any drugs (alcohol included) it might be worth staying home because it could effect your judgement and you don't want to be getting yourself or your mates into bad situations.»

Eat a good high carb breakfast. Your mum always told you breakfast is the most important meal of the day, she was right, so don't go moaning to her when you get stuck in a police kettle and start feeling peckish. Get dressed, wear warm clothes in dark colours with no identifying features like logos or bright colours. It doesn't matter if your aren't planning on doing anything illegal, nobody plans these things, right? It's a sign of unity and protects the anonymity of all.

Check your pockets, bag and wallet, empty them of **ABSOLUTELY EVERYTHING!** All you need is about one litre of water, enough food to sustain you (remember you may be running around so burning calories), your house key and enough money to get the bus/train home (if you get kettled/carried away/nicked/start the revolution, you may miss your planned lift home). Optional extras we recommend are a baseball cap, a dark scarf or other face covering (an old t-shirt sleeve is ideal), pain killers in their original packaging and prescription drugs where relevant in their original packaging.

Mobile phones are useful for communication yes, but remember if they get taken by the cops they will have a list of your friends, access to your text message and call log, let alone any apps like Signal or Telegram. If you are taking part in radical action and you have your proper phone on you then you are a liability and a threat to the security of those you organise with. Leave it at home. Remember if they are really after you for something like "conspiracy" and start a line of investigation your phone basically tells them everything. Take a burner. Use it a few times then give it to someone else, somewhere else. If you get pinched with it, give it to your nephew or something, it's no longer usable.

A change of clothes is good too, you could get wet and need to change, or you could get cold in a kettle and need the extra layers. As a word of advise, make sure the change of clothes are good for blending into a crowd (blue jeans, t-shirt with a logo, grey hoody, something like that!).

Write the number of a decent, experienced solicitor on your arm. "Oh but I'm not going to..." **JUST FUCKING DO IT!!!!** Too many peoples famous last words have been, "Oh but I'm not going to do anything that will get me arrested." So just do it ok!? Often there are bust cards given out for large demos so use the number on that if appropriate. Bust cards are easy to lose, so writing it on your arm means you can't lose it, and the police can't deny you access to your arm! (N.B. If you already don't have any arms free then any body part will do).

Meet your group somewhere public away from the main demo make sure everyone is ok and no one needs to toilet or whatever, then head over. Stick together for the rest of the day. **NEVER** walk off alone. Tell your group if you need to leave/go somewhere and go together; from personal experience we know the cops like to pick off stragglers.

Masking up – You may choose to "mask up" from the beginning of the demo, this is your choice but from experience this tends to attract undue attention from the Police and scuppers any plans you had before you start. So unless there are hundreds of you all masked up then don't bother. If however things get a bit "Exciting" put your mask on, even if you don't get stuck in yourself it protects you and your fellow protesters when the cameras start flashing. Try your best to avoid having your photo taken and whatever you do for Christ's sake don't tag yourself in Facebook or upload videos of you to TikTok and YouTube. Operational Security is more important than clout.

Wearing a baseball cap quite low will help to make you less identifiable to cameras (and unidentifiable to CCTV cameras because of their angle) so they're incredibly useful, and don't make you look too suspect.

Remember, especially in urban environments and in the age of the live streaming panopticon, your mask is not a guarantee of anonymity. Many cities have a wide net of cameras and unless you are very on it can simply following you back through the day to a moment where you don't have a mask on, say three hours before the demo even started. It does provide a level of security, but this is mostly in the tactical moment.

Who did that? – We understand, you went to #KillTheBill with your mates, the police have been pushing you around and your are pretty pissed off. Then some bloody Tory or corporate fat cat or tool of the state puts a plate glass window right next to you!

We are not going to tell you what to do but what we will say is if something were to happen to that window don't just stand there posing for the media, unless your plan is to go through the window then grab your buddy and disappear into the gathered crowd pronto. Consider changing your appearance A.S.A.P too.

Module Three - Afterwards "the debrief"

After the demo get together in a quiet yet public space if you can – parks are good – and have a chat about how

you are feeling. Demos can be very stressful and even upsetting experiences so take the time to cool down and get your feelings out in the open. It may be worth having a similar gathering a day or two later, from experience the adrenaline can keep you going for hours afterwards, but later that night or the next day you could suddenly feel incredibly overwhelmed by everything that happened. There's no shame in this, everyone gets these feelings and it's best to share them. Even the most seasoned protesters feel their legs shake when confronted with their first or fifteenth police line!

At the risk of sounding cheesy and clichéd, group hug everyone!... No, seriously, there's nothing that means more in life than good friends who are able to support you and this is definitely a time you'll need them.

Now if you are like us head straight down the pub but **NEVER** talk about anything that you did or that anyone else did from now on. Use the mantra of "What happened on the demo stays on the demo" it could be the difference between pub and prison.

If people are arrested, get to the police station for a solidarity demo. This has been proven to pressure police into faster processing, but more importantly it's a lot nicer to have a warm welcome of comrades with food and drink waiting for you than a cold car park and a long walk home.

The most important part however, is a debrief. Get together somewhere secure and discuss what happened, what went well, what went badly and what you can change



for next time. Remember never talk about illegal activities that may have occurred on the demo, even if you think you're safe, you may end up regretting the announcement of "yeah, I set a cop on fire with a petrol bomb".

SECTION B - THE COPS

Let's set a few things straight. There is a good chance you have been brought up to believe that the police are good people, they are here to uphold the law and stop all the bad guys like burglars and gangsters and drug dealers and rapists. Though it is true they do these things (well, kinda), if your are planning to protest then you are now potentially one of these bad people. When people protest at a basic level they are complaining about how the state does things. The police are a tool of the state and they will attempt to stifle your decent. As a result it is sometimes necessary to up the ante in order to get our message heard. Alternatively it is the police who often escalate a situation. Either way it is important to realise that we do not have to obey the police although they will attempt to make out you do.

If you want to make your voice heard through protest or direct action, it is just a matter of time until you are confronted by the police. This can be a very stressful and intimidating experience particularly when threats of arrest, riot gear, dogs, horses and batons are involved.

Knowing your rights and police tactics, having confidence in yourself and those around you and how you behave in these situations can be the difference between a successful action and a night in the cells.

Module Four - Units & ranks

Most cops you meet are plain old constables, they have **black** epaulette, and they are just your standard coppa. You can generally presume they lack much public order training beyond the odd weekend of training and will be prone to erratic behaviour.

This is especially so of the younger men, who unable to manage their fear in the situation and riding an adrenaline spike are likely to strike out randomly and wildly. Learn to read behaviours, spot the twitchy ones and make sure able bodies are in their way.

If police officers have **green** tags on their shoulder, this means they're a police medic. This means very little, they're just as likely to batter you with their magic healing baton. I wouldn't trust them to treat me any more than a rabid squirrel with a box of Tesco's own brand plasters! »

Orange tags on their shoulder means they're "evidence" gatherers (EGT). Their job is to film everyone on demos to try and create intelligence files of when you've been on demos, how vocal/active you were on those demos. They'll use information like what the demo was about and where it was to predict future demos you may go on. They work in pairs, one with a video camera and another who's job it is to look tough and protect the cop with the camera. It's best to avoid being identifiable when the cameras are pointed at you, but masking up when no one else around is could lead to you and the camera building up a special relationship.

These guys with the **blue tops** to their jakets are FIT, no really, it stands for Forward Intelligence Team. These are cops who's job it is to build up a profile of what the Daily Mail would call "professional protesters", and what we would call "people". They take your picture, and stick it in a database, printing out your head shots as a spotter guide for snatch squads and the like. They also gather live tactical info and relay that back to command.

Both FIT and EGT should be blocked at every opportunity. A flag or banner usually does the trick. They are specifically passive units so tend to step away or stand around hoping you'll get bored. This is one of those roles you can take up if you find your group milling about.

Police Liaison Officers in **Blue bibs** are everywhere these days, constantly hanging around 'engaging' with

protesters. They are being hailed as a new invention, but the role they carry out is not new at all. They work along side or in replacement of FIT teams and are the "friendly face" of monitoring demos.

DO NOT TRUST THEM! They will approach members of the protest in a friendly manner and ask unintrusive questions, the only reply is "Am I being detained?" "No?" "Bye", if you see them talking to others, Intercede "Are they being detained?" "No?" "Walk on mate", almost always being are thankful to you, having found themselves either unaware they could way away or simply being entralled by their own natural tendency to be polite.

White epaulettes/tabards (three stripes) are sergeants. These ones are attached to a group of PCs (known as a serial) and tell the PCs to do basic functions like walk, arrest, and swing their batons. Listen out for them telling their serial to "turn left" or "step forward" it's pretty funny, fucking robots. If you find yourself in an advantageous positon, watching this persons movements, watching who they stand behind etc can help you recognise when they are telegraphic a push or a grab.

In public order situations you will see cops with red epaulettes (two diamonds), these are inspectors and on the whole will be the highest rank you are going to see on the street unless all hell has broken loose. (If you see a Super Intendant you know you are doing something right!)



These are the ones giving the orders and the only ones who will know when you may be getting out of that kettle, not that they will tell you. They receive their their orders from chief inspectors and superintendents. Generally these two high ranks will be hidden in a van or station somewhere moving their units around command and conquer stylee.

You know things are certainly about to get spicy and you're all going to turn into "a minority of violent protestors with an agenda" when the police uniforms change into the armoured gear, generally dark blue overalls, with various levels of kit depend on the situation. This is a Police Support Unit or PSU. They will go by different names depending on where you are "Matrix Disruption Team" in Merseyside, "Tactical Aid Unit" in Greater Manchester, "Territorial Support Group" in London. Regardless they all operate much the same. Congratulations, you are now about to be designated a riotter and face police brutality.

These are the heavies who they like to film smashing in the doors of drug farms who suddenly will find less cameras about as they begin smashing in your face. They are no joke, they are almost certainly harder than you, stronger than you and better at violence. Full time PSU (Level 1) can run a kilometer in full gear with a longshield in less than six minutes. They are drilled constantly and regularly much lik the horses to make them bomb proof, strip out any humanity they have and make them all about getting the job done.

A PSU is generally composed of 1 Inspector (**Red**) 3 Sergeants (**White**) 18 Constables (**Black**) tho they may be issued with EGT, Medics and Tactical Advisors (**Blue**) in the case of major (and generally planned) demonstrations.

The critical thing here is to remember to act in a unified manner, lock arms, hold the line, support each other, watch for sudden bursts forward and attempts to snatch protesters.

Lastly, don't talk to fucking cops. Don't stand on the front, talking to them about how bad they are or complaining about how this issue affects them too etc etc. They do not care and you are probably feeding them info and giving them information that'll later be read out in court if you happen to be feeling aggy at the time. Worst of all, leaving you to spend you energies as individuals shouting at cops or even talking to them is a tactic, it reduces your focus, your agency and your energies. At the very worst it entirely disarms the movement leasting you static and slowly atrophying with in action as a few at the front try to get PC. Plod to do something that'll get her the sack.

Don't talk to cops, talk to comrades, make a new friend, start a chant, touch base and make sure those around you are doing well, play eye spy, sing Beyonce, do whatever, just don't talk to cops.

Module Five – On kettles

The tactic you're mostly likely to encounter is the "kettle", or "cordon" as the police call it when they're pretending it hasn't been repeatedly condemned for it denying people their human rights. This is when police form lines all around a group of people stopping them from leaving an area. The purpose of this is to demoralize protesters by denying them access to food, water, toilets, and warmth. The easiest way to avoid these is to recognize them forming early. Keep an eye out round the edge of gatherings for police forming tight lines. They can form far away if they think they're likely to get spotted or close in if they think they can get away with it. The obvious aspect of avoiding this is to keep moving, it's very hard to trap a group of people who are constantly moving. Everyone ends up caught in a kettle at some point, unfortunately. I'm not going to lie, they're shit. They're boring and demoralizing. But if we let them demoralize us the police win, so lets not! Also if kettling is an inevitability then try to use it to your tactical advantage by blocking up a road or something.»

CUT ME OUT - KEEP ME

LEGAL QUESTIONS about PROTEST?

STOP AND SEARCH: You're not legally required to give your name and address under any stop and search power, see below website for more details. Legally you must be told the reason and the power that you are being searched under.

If you witness an arrest, want support or have legal questions about protest:

courtsupport@protonmail.com
07946 541 511

Legal Observers are independent volunteers who gather evidence on behalf of protesters and act to counter police intimidation and misbehaviour. Read more about your rights and protest legislation:

www.greenandblackcross.org

After arrest &/or if you have a court date & want advice email courtsupport@protonmail.com

Lets say you weren't moving much or paying much attention and the police have formed tight lines all around (bollocks!) so you need to escape. This isn't easy, but here are some hints.

Go for the ends of lines or corners, these are weaker and so you're more likely to break them. This is the classic strategy of the Black bloc. Try to make it directional where you push, rather than pushing the whole line. If you can put a lot of pressure on a small area it's more likely to break, and once it's broken the hole can be forced wider a lot easier. If the groups it working well together you can sometimes take quick changes in direction, keeping the cops of guard and allowing you to break free. If you fail to break the kettle, it's not going to be fun. Tho they sometimes just let you join into the larger protest, or keep you surrounded until the official end time of the demo and then leave. It's very inconsistent. There have been cases of them arresting everyone in the kettle for Section 14 (protesting outside a designated protest area) but the most common end would be them letting people out one by one, searching them and filming them whilst they give their details (usually under section 60). Expect to be trapped for several hours, a good book helps.

Unless they accuse you of breaching section 50 of the anti-social behaviour laws, you (generally) do not have to

ADVICE ON ARREST

Say "NO COMMENT" to all police questions during casual chats, 'booking in' & interviews. At the police station you may wish to give your name, address and date of birth to speed your release. For your protection and that of other people **don't answer further questions.**

Do not accept a **CAUTION** without advice from a recommended solicitor. This is an admission of responsibility and goes on the police national computer.

You have the right to **FREE LEGAL ADVICE** at the police station. Duty solicitors don't always have experience with protest law, instead ask the police to contact one of the following:

WRITE NAME AND NUMBER OF A GOOD SOLICITOR

You have the right to have someone informed of your arrest (make that the **Protest Support Line** unless otherwise arranged: **07946 541 511**). You have the right to an interpreter if English is not your first language. If you are or appear under 18 an appropriate adult should be called.

CUT ME OUT - KEEP ME

give your details. When they're filming you, you can put your hands over your face (they may forcefully remove your hands in this situation – which is illegal – but they are the police) or lower your head to hide your face.

When in a kettle be careful what you say, it may seem the police aren't paying attention, that you may be getting off lightly and such but there's a good chance they're listening to everything you're saying and you're only going to make things worse for yourself. Never co-operate with them but don't give them fuel against you! It's easy to let your guard down, but a seemingly casual conversation with a cop could end with them knowing your name, how far you travelled to get there, the fact there's the makings of a paint bomb in your bag. **BOLLOCKS, YOU JUST GOT YOURSELF NICKED.**

Snatch squads are less common, but you've got to keep an eye out! They usually work in groups of 6/8 (see, our affinity group recommendations are so good they're used by the police!) and will come into a kettle or demo to try and remove people they intend to arrest. Often someone they see as a trouble maker or someone they recognise from intelligence gathering and consider them as a potential trouble maker. They've been known to use snatch squads on the most vocal in crowds as well. We wouldn't want you to obstruct a police officer, that would be illegal after all, but we have heard that it's possible to use the advantage of numbers to hold people and prevent them from getting dragged away.

Module Six - Know your rights

If police are performing a stop and search they are required to give the reasons for the stop first. This can be something concrete such as suspicion of committing a specific crime, or as vague as behaving suspiciously, so it isn't worth trying to argue your way out of. They can't however, ask you to remove a mask/facial covering unless a section 60a has been put in place by an officer of inspector rank or above.

After the search you should always ask for a receipt of search. On large protests where they're searching a lot of people they may say it is inconvenient but they should be filming it themselves and make this film available to you if you apply through the police station they specify. The receipt is not only a pain for them (remember, they've caused a lot of inconvenience to you, so it's only fair to repay the favour) but also it is evidence of the search, so it helps in case of complaints about their conduct.

When they ask for your details you are not required to

give them, unless you're suspected of a section 50 offence, also known as an anti-social behaviour offence. If you are suspected of a section 50 offence, you are only required to give your name and address. Any questions beyond that should be answered with "no comment".

Refusal to give your details under section 50 is a non-arrestable offence, but if you refuse they will ask for your details for the non-arrestable offence. Refusal to give your details the second time around is an arrestable offence under P.A.C.E. Get it? No? It's a legal loophole, and not a good one. (If they only ask your details once and then arrest you, it is false arrest and worth perusing legal action.)

Before the search, the searching police officer is required to give you their surname, I.D number & station they are attached to. They probably won't do this unless you ask first. It is worth taking note of their I.D number in case you want to lodge a complaint about their conduct afterwards. on a database then use software to match your face to other protests. Keep clear!

If there are Legal Observers around, get their attention, if you don't have a bustcard/ number, get one off them!

Module Seven - If you get arrested;a step by step guide

1) Shout for your affinity group.

2) Remember everything the cops say to you word for word and repeat them to your solicitor, technicalities are wonderful things!

3) Try and get badge numbers, although it can be hard and a lot to remember so your buddy should do that for you.

4) As they are carrying you away you have a few options:

- Go willingly - This requires little effort, but these bastards are silencing your voice, so you don't want to make their job easy!

- Struggle - This is fairly futile unless you have others helping by pulling you/pushing the cops, but it can be a reaction a lot of the time. And it can count as resisting arrest or even assault PC.

- Go limp - This is recommended, it makes it very hard for police to carry you because you become a dead weight. It can often take four or more cops to carry you this way. They may count it as resisting arrest but it's not that likely.

5) Remain silent. Beyond shouting for your affinity group and alerting people to your arrest you don't want to kick off. These situations trigger a lot of anger and you don't want a section 5 for calling a copper a 'spunk guzzling horse fucker'.

6) Interview: Answer "No Comment" to all questions. Your solicitor may advise you otherwise, this regularly backfires so we still recommend saying no comment. In fact instruct your solicitor to advise you to say no comment. I know it doesn't make sence but the legal world doesn't. They are attempting to get evidence form you to charge you or others, if they had enough evidence to charge you they would just do it. They will try everything to get you to talk, lying about other people grassing you up, pretending to be your friend, convincing you it's in your best interests to talk. It's all bollocks! No comment, no comment, no comment! If you talk you're just putting yourself and your comrades at risk. You have no legal obligation to speak.

Module Eight - If your mate gets arrested

1) Attempt a de-arrest if you choose too (see module one) but remember there are risks involved, namely you also getting arrested. De-arresting involved physically removing someone from an arrest or otherwise preventing someone from being arrested.

2) If there is a legal support line for the demo you are on (check your bust card) call them.

3) Ask the cops where they are taking them (don't expect an answer) & record the numbers of the arresting officers.

4) Sorry, but your demo is over, your comrade's welfare takes precedent over the protest. Get together with the rest of your group and head down the police station to show your solidarity, having someone meet you when you come out of the cop shop is very important for morale and the more people outside the better. Call up others to get down there.

5) In truth even the quickest turn over time is two hours but realistically it could be much longer. Use this time to buy some extra food and drink ready for the wait and for the arrestee when they come out. A whip round works well if there is a good sized crowd. Also use this time to go relax somewhere. In our experience taking a load of hyped up angry activists and putting them outside a police station straight after a demo doesn't always go well for us. »

6) Hunker down for a long wait – you can do shifts, some wait while some go home for a rest or go somewhere else warm. In the past we have had sing-alongs, played board games brought from home and played tag. It keeps spirits up so we highly recommend you do whatever you can to have fun, ideally really noisy fun.

7) When your comrade gets out give them a hug and the food you brought and get somewhere calm and comfy. If they want to talk about it find out what happened to them inside and what questions they were asked as this can be valuable information for the future but to not press the point if they don't want to talk just yet.

IN CONCLUSION

- 1) Work with people you know and trust.
- 2) Decide in advance what your goal is.
- 3) Prepare for any eventuality.
- 4) Don't lose site of your real target by tussling with the cops unnecessarily.
- 5) Stay together.
- 6) Be anonymous.
- 7) Keep moving.
- 8) Know your rights and the law.
- 9) Don't talk to the police.
- 10) Show solidarity with your comrades.

USEFUL CONTACTS

Protest support line
07946 541 511 *!PUT ON ARM!*

NetPol resource page
www.netpol.org/resources

Green and Black Cross
www.greenandblackcross.org

Black Protest Legal Support
BlackProtestLegal@protonmail.com

Activist Court Aid Brigade
courtsupport@protonmail.com

Contact GBC Resources collective
gbcresources@protonmail.com

Contact GBC Trainings collective
gbctrainings@protonmail.com

Legal Observer callouts and coordination
legal-observer-network@protonmail.com

Y-Stop for non-protest Stop and Searches
www.y-stop.org

London Campaign Against Police and State Violence
www.londonagainstopoliceviolence.wordpress.com

Libcom's Guide to arrest
www.libcom.org/organise/no-comment-the-defendants-guide-to-arrest

SCALP
www.scottishactivistlegalproject.co.uk ■

Bristol Anarchist Federation



**STAND
AGAINST
TIGRAY
GENOCIDE**

ፀረ የትግራይ
ዘር ማጥፋት
ወንጀል ቋጭ!

Set up your own

COMMUNITY PANTRY/
BODEGANG BAYAN



Send out the bat signal!

tip!

Ask family or neighbors if they want to help or know anyone who wants to! Set up a group chat (GC) and make sure these are people who want to help out actively, too. You might also think of posting a call on your Facebook or other social media!



List down what you need.

tip!

Start an inventory either via Excel or paper. Aside from the food you want to share, write down the materials you need and the people who have expressed the desire to share or help out.



Find a spot that has a lot of foot traffic.

tip!

Pick a location that's accessible to you or your group. If you live in a high-traffic area, outside your own home might be good! You will also need an address to share for anyone interested in sharing.



Set up!

tip!

Use whatever you and your friends have. An old shelf, shoe rack, or boxes as makeshift tables are good to start with. Put up a sign that explains the community pantry. Be creative! Invite people to take what they need and give what they can. Tell people about it! And don't forget to translate!

Mutual aid: Solidarity, not charity

The goal is to help each other out, not treat others like they are charity cases. We are just offering a hand to members of our community who might need help in these difficult times. We are here to remind each other that we can rely on one another, not that they are helpless without us. After all, we can't really rely on anyone else.

What if people take everything?

Then that's good! That's the point of the community pantry anyway: to be used by the people. Even if the pantry runs empty many times, what is important is that we are prepared to help each other and offer help to our community as long as we're able.

Let's trust in one another!

Many thanks to Bandilang Itim for sharing this with Organise.

Bandilang Itim publishes a libertarian perspective on politics and social issues in the archipelago known as the Philippines.

You can access the files for these images as well as the original in Tagalog as well as text versions of both on their blog over on Libcom.

www.libcom.org/blog/paano-magsimula-ng-bodegong-bayanhow-start-community-pantry-17042021



BURN AFTER READING

REVIEWING THE BOOKS AND TUNES THEY WOULD RATHER YOU FORGOT ABOUT

WORKER'S INQUIRY AND THE GLOBAL CLASS STRUGGLE

edited by Robert Ovetz

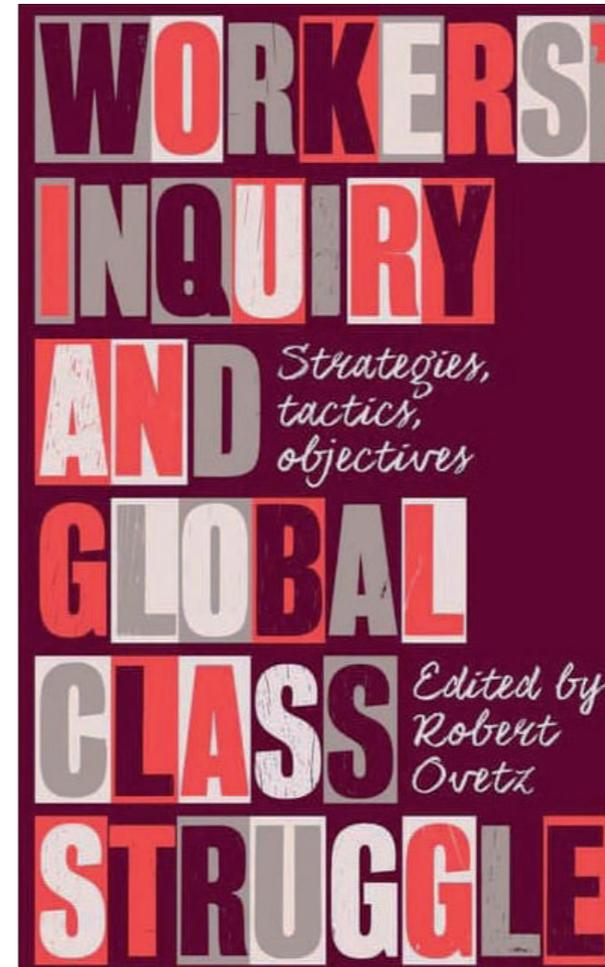
'We also rely upon socialists of all schools who, being wishful for social reform, must wish for an exact and positive knowledge of the conditions in which the working class – the class to whom the future belongs – works and moves.'

Karl Marx (A Worker's Inquiry, 1880)

Rising out of the late career work of that most renowned thinker and formulator of socialist philosophy, Karl Marx, the idea of the worker's inquiry is one which has enjoyed far less popular success than many other ideas to which his name is often attached. The initial premise, formulated in the text mentioned in the quotation given above, took the form of a questionnaire which Marx created in order to gather information on the conditions of the working classes in France. Even during his lifetime, the success of this idea was far less than might have been expected – there is little evidence to suggest any workers responded to this survey, and it wasn't until the idea was resurrected almost a century later by the Italian Marxists that it regained some semblance of life.

In essence, the function of the worker's inquiry is to elucidate the precise conditions of working class labour, such that it can be more accurately understood and methods of resistance – whether individual or union based – can be planned with reasonable consideration as to the material nature of the work at the time, rather than purely ideological means. This necessitates the inquiry as a temporally limited methodology, as conditions will change over time and render each inquiry less accurate as time goes on. There is, therefore, an assumption of continually updated knowledge; a number of reports which succeed each other – Worker's Inquiry and Global Class Struggle, edited by Robert Ovetz and published by Pluto Press, attempts to provide a new and updated report on the conditions of the working class across a spectrum of labour.

Divided into three sections, Worker's Inquiry attempts an impressively broad description and analysis within a relatively short page count – fewer than three hundred pages are needed for essays which span transport and logistics, education, call centres, custodial work, manufacturing, and mining. While there are certainly elements of the labour market which avoid detail here, most notably the incredibly large and important world of service work, it is clear that the collection of essays



gathered in this new work are an ambitious undertaking which seeks to demonstrate a clear picture of much of the labour market within a relatively compact space.

This level of accessibility continues within the essays themselves. While it is entirely true that Ovetz's lengthy introduction contains a hefty dose of theoretical references and discussions of power, many of which are extremely interesting in their own right and give far greater context to the project of the collection than would make sense for me to give here, the majority of the book takes an altogether more overtly conversational tone that allows some intensely heavy material to be understood easily and without much in the way of barriers.

Beginning with the first essay in the book – Dario Bursztyn's brief history and contextualisation of the Argentine trucker's union *Camioneros* – we are treated to a splendidly well written and engaging history of the Argentine Republic's tendency to 'dodge' the regulations of the Spanish, as well as the smuggler-trade relationship with the British Empire; the segue between this short

history and the connection to Argentina's ongoing semi-colonial economic relationship with Britain, culminating in the occupation of the Malvinas Islands (known in the UK to many as the Falklands) as a result, is executed smoothly and with an almost deceptive ease by the author. Despite the density of both time and material, the delivery is engaging and there is an undercurrent of enthusiasm in the writing which removes many of the potential barriers that such material might hold to those unfamiliar with the specifics beforehand. Further, the transition between the historical British involvement in the region towards the American engagement that waned in conflict with local labour laws and the opening of easier pathways towards capital extraction in Mexico and other places, is written with a well-balanced attitude towards the multitude of forces that conspired over time to encourage this change. This focus on historical context may seem slightly odd in a book of such size. Indeed, while approaching the text for the first time I had a degree of concern for the dwindling of pages without having addressed the primary focus of the work itself – the worker's inquiry. However, Bursztyn's historical groundwork does not go to waste. Upon engaging with the modern day struggle of the worker's, the contextual elements built into the historicisation allow for a robust and engaging analysis of the role of the trucker's union as well as the common attitudes that make up the social power of the trade unions in Argentina without sacrifice nuance for ease of comprehension. The pivotal power of the trucker's union, which holds a role of indispensable importance within the Argentine economy (Bursztyn informs us that 'there is no sector' which is not reliant on their work, and that a strike proposal from the *Camioneros* would leave everything 'paralyzed'), is in direct conflict with the desires of capital to create easier modes of profit regarding trade – particularly as modern economic exchange shifts from the established relationship with the United States towards China – and the uncomfortable tension between the union and government which seeks to loosen their hold is outlined neatly by Bursztyn.

While it may seem odd to spend so much time on only a single essay, the reason for this is simple: the trends which emerge through the reading of this first essay return throughout the collection and often to the same effect. There are positives to this methodology – not only does it create a sense of linear progression which interesting and engaging to the reader, but the use of a firm chronology and the granting of key information allows insight into sectors that may not have been familiar to the reader in advance, but it also creates a series of limitations in the scope of the project as well. »

*"No one commits suicide in a police station
I would have an abortion, in case he becomes a policeman
Nobody commits suicide in a police station (Fuck the police)"*

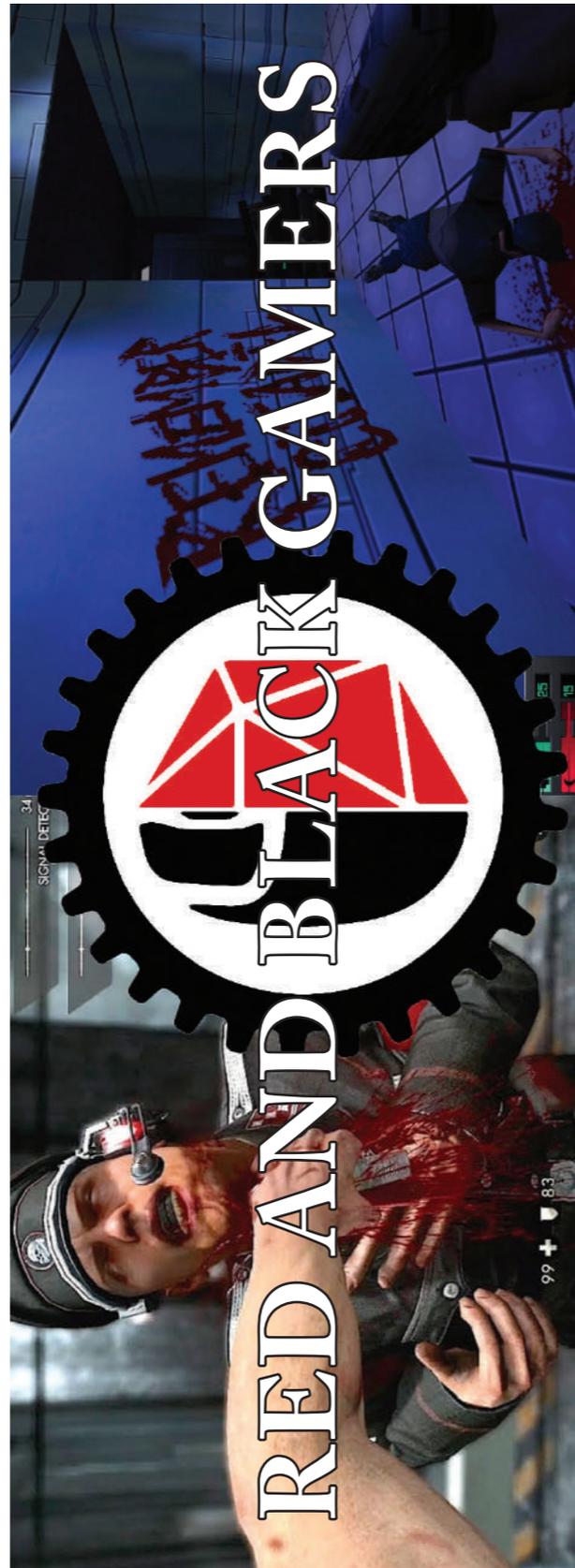
Well shit. The entire albums like this.

*"Move without problem, the whole world is for me
And the world belongs to everyone, how ridiculous it looks
The wall of your eyes, asking me for papers
I occupy the whole map, I fly over divisions"*

Sara, a self defined feminist, put out her first album "La Hija Del Loco" back in 2009 and despite having toured Argentina and much of South America extensively, has next to no reputation in the anglophone world. Once again the trappings of language keep us seperated and so many hip hop fans without this absolutely fucking belter of an album and performer.

Her music is a vivid fusion of elements, from synthwave and funk to punk rock and what I now know is called Cumbria, that is folk music of cultural elements of indogenous peoples across south America... the almost mantra like "cumbria antifascista" in one track having all the more meaning now, she's speaking to the dancehall youth, the anti fascists who are so often out there on the streets fighting for the future.

The album is Politicalpari and trust me, you want it want to hear it. I'm absolutely tampin' with myself for leaving the album to the side for so long. This shit right here is the sound track to my summer, that's for sure. ■



DISARM THE BASE

Dissent Games (Tabletop)

One of the most amazing things to come out of this renaissance of boards we are going through is that our shelves are evolving. There was a time not so long ago that I could have accurately said that (despite a few homebrews) the games I had could all be summed up as either combat or market orientated. This is often reduced down to Ameri-Trash and Eurogames, and for the longest time, these were your options, however with each year that goes by we see games take on different mechanics, different purpose.

The games that have best explored this renouncement of "fight or farm" have been the co-operative ones of which Pandemic is probably most notable, how it is far from alone in pitting the table against some sinister menace which it must work to over come and as we get more and more indie games get the professionally produced games, we are getting truly spoilt, not just with the abstract and artistic games, or the narrative builders but also with games willing to take on a political cause.

One such game is "Disarm The Base", a 1-4 player co-operative game that tasks the players with making their way into an airbase and disapplying fighter jets, hopefully to then egress safely and claim victory with a banner drop none the less.

Tho the manual insists the narrative is hypothetical, it's hard not to draw comparisons with the Ploughshare Four who back in 1996 made their way into an airbase and caused £1.6m worth of damage to a Hawk fighter jet which was on it's way to Indonesia where it would likely be used to commit unspeakable horrors. The jury agreed and found the four women not guilty, noting the Genocide Act and that it was indeed legal and lawful to take actions which would stop the mass murder of innocent people.

Unlike games like Riot or Bloc by Bloc, this is not a game of molotovs, guns, and violence. This is a non-violent, stealthy affair where the aim isn't to overcome the security guards but avoid them and weave your way through the defences, tracking down fighter planes and disarming them. Players can chose where to move and how best to utilise the cards they are dealt to acheive their objectives. These cards also provide the autonoma for the guards, turning on spotlights, closing gates, and moving the guards between the hangers. If they see you, you are caught and removed from play, if two players are caught, the mission fails.



It's not too difficult to pick up, tho in our first run through we neglected to be as mobile as we should focusing on cards rather than the guard patrol around the outside of the base haha our bad, on our return we were much more prepared! Tension was high but the atmosphere light, you're going to have mini debates over what to do next, is the risk worth it? Do you wait until you get a code to enter the hanger or just break in?

Play takes about an hour if you're going at a casual pace but if everyones up to spend you could easily play through in thirty minutes. One of the issues with the game (like most co-op) games is that it's prone to a bit of "quarterbacking" with one player instructing everyone on the best action to take, so we put in place an informal rule not to slip into being a boss but to work as a team. The game however comes with a couple of different rulesets mitigating this and infact making the game significantly harder or easier if you so wish. This makes it much more accessible to new players but also challenging to the more experianced. There is also a solo mode which is really cool to have, more games should!

The build quality is significantly better than many self published games and it's obvious that a lot of thought and love went into it. On writing the review I also see that it's non-profit with the cash going towards the Campaign Against Arms Trade. Sure the game isn't one you'll be spending all night on, if you're anything like us it'll find it's way into your "warm up" collection before you hit the big games. Quite simply it'd make a great edition to any collection and given that there has only been a limited print run I'd highly advise you support Dissent Games and go Disarm The Base. ■

*Find out more at www.disarmthebase.com
You can follow Dissent Games on Twitter @dissentgames*

ANARCHY AND VIOLENCE

Errico Malatesta

The following work first appeared Liberty (London), Part 1 in no. 9 (Sept. 1894) and Part 2 in no. 10 (Oct. 1894)



From their first manifestations Anarchists have [been] nearly unanimous as to the necessity of recourse to physical force in order to transform existing society; and while the other self-styled revolutionary parties have gone floundering into the parliamentary slough, the anarchist idea has in some sort identified itself with that of armed insurrection and violent revolution.

But, perhaps, there has been no sufficient explanation as to the kind and the degree of violence to be employed; and here as in many other questions very dissimilar ideas and sentiments lurk under our common name.

As a fact, the numerous outrages which have lately been perpetrated by Anarchists and in the name of Anarchy, have brought to the light of day profound differences which had formerly been ignored, or scarcely foreseen.

Some comrades, disgusted at the atrocity and uselessness of certain of these acts, have declared themselves opposed to all violence whatever, except in cases of personal defence against direct and immediate attack. Which, in my opinion, would mean the renunciation of all revolutionary initiative, and the reserving of our blows for the petty, and often involuntary agents of the government, while leaving in peace the organizers of, and those chiefly benefited by, government and capitalist exploitation.

Other comrades, on the contrary, carried away by the excitement of the struggle, embittered by the infamies of the ruling class, and assuredly influenced by what has remained of the old Jacobin ideas permeating the political education of the present generation, have hastily accepted any and every kind of violence, provided only that it be committed in the name of Anarchy; and they have claimed hardly less than the right of life and death over those who are not Anarchists, or who are not Anarchists

exactly according to their pattern.

And the mass of the public, ignoring these polemics, and deceived by the capitalist press, see in Anarchy nothing but bombs and daggers, and habitually regard Anarchists as wild beasts thirsting for blood and ruin.

It is therefore needful that we explain ourselves very clearly as regards this question of violence, and that each one of us should take a position accordingly: needful both in the interests of the relations of practical co-operation which may exist among all those who profess Anarchism, as well as in the interests of the general propaganda, and of our relations with the public.

In my opinion, there can be no doubt that the Anarchist Idea, denying government, is by its very nature opposed to violence, which is the essence of every authoritarian system - the mode of action of every government.

Anarchy is freedom in solidarity. It is only through the harmonizing of interests, through voluntary co-operation, through love, respect, and reciprocal tolerance, by persuasion, by example, and by the contagion of benevolence, that it can and ought to triumph.

We are Anarchists, because we believe that we can never achieve the combined well-being of all - which is the aim of all our efforts - except through a free understanding among men, and without forcibly imposing the will of any upon any others.

In other parties there are certainly men who are as sincere and as devoted to the interests of the people as the best of us may be. But that which characterizes us Anarchists and distinguishes us from all others is that we do not believe ourselves in possession of absolute truth; we do

not believe ourselves either infallible, or omniscient, - which is the implicit pretension of all legislators and political candidates whatever; and consequently we do not believe ourselves called for the direction and tutelage of the people.

We are, par excellence, the party of freedom, the party of free development, the party of social experimentation. But against this very freedom which we claim for all, against the possibility of this experimental search after better forms of society, there are erected barriers of iron. Legions of soldiers and police are ready to massacre and imprison anyone who will not meekly submit to the laws which a handful of privileged persons have made in their own interests. And even if soldiers and police did not exist, yet so long as the economic constitution of society remains what it is, freedom would still be impossible; because, since all the means of life are under the control of a minority, the great mass of mankind is obliged to labour for the others, and themselves wallow in poverty and degradation.

The first thing to do, therefore, is to get rid of the armed force which defends existing institutions, and by



means of the expropriation of the present holders, to place the land and the other means of production at the disposal of everybody. And this cannot possibly be done - in our opinion - without the employment of physical force. Moreover, the natural development of economic antagonisms, the waking consciousness of an important fraction of the proletariat, the constantly increasing number of unemployed, the blind resistance of the ruling classes, in short contemporary evolution as a whole, is conducting us inevitably towards the outbreak of a great revolution, which will overthrow everything by its violence, and the fore-running signs of which are already visible. This revolution will happen, with us or without us; and the existence of a revolutionary party, conscious of the end to be attained, will serve to give a useful direction to the violence, and to moderate its excesses by the influence of a lofty ideal.

Thus it is that we are revolutionists. In this sense, and within these limits, violence is not a contradiction with Anarchist principles, since it is not the result of our free choice, but is imposed upon us by necessity in the defence of unrecognized human rights which are thwarted by brute force.

I repeat here: as Anarchists, we cannot and we do not desire to employ violence, except in the defence of ourselves and others against oppression. But we claim this right of defence - entire, real, and efficacious. That is, we wish to be able to go behind the material instrument which wounds us, and to attack the hand which wields the instrument, and the head which directs it. And we wish to choose our own hour and field of battle, so as to attack the enemy under conditions as favourable as possible: whether it be when he is actually attacking and provoking us, or at times when he slumbers, and relaxes his hand, counting on popular submission. For as a fact, the bourgeoisie is in a permanent state of war against the proletariat, since it never for one moment ceases to exploit the latter, and grind it down.

Unfortunately, among the acts which have been committed in the name of Anarchy, there have been some, which, though wholly lacking in Anarchist characteristics, have been wrongly confounded with other acts of obviously Anarchist inspiration.

For my part, I protest against this confusion between acts wholly different in moral value, as well as in practical effects. »

Despite the excommunication and insults of certain people, I consider it an essential point to discriminate between the heroic act of a man who consciously sacrifices his life for that which he believes will do good, and the almost involuntary act of some unhappy man whom society has reduced to despair, or the savage act of a man who has been driven astray by suffering, and has caught the contagion of this civilised savagery which surrounds us all; between the intelligent act of a man who, before acting, weighs the probable good or evil that may result for his cause, and the thoughtless act of the man who strikes at random; between the generous act of one who exposes himself to danger in order to spare suffering to his fellows, and the bourgeois act of one who brings suffering upon others for his own advantage; between the anarchist act of one who desires to destroy the obstacles that stand in the way of the reconstitution of society on a basis of free agreement of all, and the authoritarian act of the man who intends to punish the crowd for its stupidity, to terrorise it (which makes it still more stupid) and to impose his own ideas upon it.

Most assuredly the bourgeoisie has no right to complain of the violence of its foes, since its whole history, as a class, is a history of bloodshed, and since the system of exploitation, which is the law of its life, daily produces hecatombs of innocents. Assuredly, too, it is not political parties who should complain of violence, for these are, on and all, red-handed with blood spilt unnecessarily, and wholly in their own interest; these, who have brought up the young, generation after generation, in the cult of force triumphant; these, who when they are not actual apologists of the Inquisition, are yet enthusiastic admirers of that Red Terror, which checked the splendid revolutionary impulse at the end of the last century, and prepared the way for the Empire, for the Restoration, and the White Terror.

The fit of mildness which has come over certain of the bourgeois, now that their lives and their purses are menaced, is, in our opinion, extremely untrustworthy. But it is not for us to regulate our conduct by the amount of pleasure or vexation which it may occasion the bourgeoisie. We have to conduct ourselves according to our principles; and the interest of our cause, which in our view is the cause of all humanity.

Since historical antecedents have driven us to the necessity of violence, let us employ violence; but let us never forget that it is a case of hard necessity, and in its essence contrary to our aspirations. Let us not forget that all history witnesses to the distressing fact - whenever

resistance to oppression has been victorious it has always engendered new oppression, and it warns us that it must ever be so until the bloody tradition of the past be forever broken with, and violence be limited to the strictest necessity.

Violence begets violence; and authoritarianism begets oppression and slavery. The good intentions of individuals can in no way affect this sequence. The fanatic who tells himself that he will save people by force, and in his own manner, is always a sincere man, but a terrible agent of oppression and reaction. Robespierre, with horrible good faith and his conscience pure and cruel, was just as fatal for the Revolution as the personal ambition of Bonaparte. The ardent zeal of Torquemada for the salvation of souls did much more harm to freedom of thought and to the progress of the human mind than the scepticism and corruption of Leo X and his court.

Theories, declarations of principle, or magnanimous words can do nothing against the natural filiation of facts. Many martyrs have died for freedom, many battles have been fought and won in the name of the welfare of all mankind, and yet the freedom has turned out after all to mean nothing but the unlimited oppression and exploitation of the poor by the rich.

The Anarchist idea is no more secured from corruption than the Liberal idea has proved to be, yet the beginnings of corruption may be already observed if we note the contempt for the masses which is exhibited by certain Anarchists, their intolerance, and their desire to spread terror around them.

Anarchists! let us save Anarchy! Our doctrine is a doctrine of love. We cannot, and we ought not to be either avengers, nor dispensers of justice. Our task, our ambition, our ideal is to be deliverers. ■



I AM AN ANARCHIST

Lucy Parsons

This is the text from one of her speeches as it appeared in the Kansas City Journal, December 21, 1886



Lucy E. Parsons was a leading figure in American anarchism and the radical labor movement. Born a slave near Waco, Texas, she married Albert R. Parsons who had become a white radical Republican after serving first as a Confederate soldier. In 1873 Albert and Lucy moved to Chicago in 1873 where they became involved in radical labor organizing. Thirteen years later she rose to national fame when she embarked on a speaking tour to raise money for her husband who was one of nine men tried and sentenced to be executed for "speaking in such a way as to inspire the bomber to violence" following the Haymarket Square Bombing which killed a Chicago policeman.

Lucy Parsons remained an activist after the execution of Albert and in 1892 founded the newspaper Freedom which addressed such issues as labor organizing, lynching and black peonage in the South. In 1905 Parsons became the only woman to address the founding convention of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). In the early 1930s Parsons joined in the defense of the Scottsboro Boys and Angelo Herndon. Parsons died accidentally in a house fire in 1942.

I am an anarchist. I suppose you came here, the most of you, to see what a real, live anarchist looked like. I suppose some of you expected to see me with a bomb in one hand and a flaming torch in the other, but are disappointed in seeing neither. If such has been your ideas regarding an anarchist, you deserved to be disappointed. Anarchists are peaceable, law-abiding people. What do anarchists mean when they speak of anarchy? Webster gives the term two definitions: chaos and the state of being without political rule. We cling to the latter definition. Our enemies hold that we believe only in the former.

Do you wonder why there are anarchists in this country, in this great land of liberty, as you love to call it? Go to

New York. Go through the byways and alleys of that great city. Count the myriads starving; count the multiplied thousands who are homeless; number those who work harder than slaves and live on less and have fewer comforts than the meanest slaves. You will be dumbfounded by your discoveries, you who have paid no attention to these poor, save as objects of charity and commiseration. They are not objects of charity, they are the victims of the rank injustice that permeates the system of government, and of political economy that holds sway from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Its oppression, the misery it causes, the wretchedness it gives birth to, are found to a greater extent in New York than elsewhere. In New York, where not many days ago two governments united in unveiling a statue of liberty, where a hundred bands played that hymn of liberty, 'The Marseillaise.' But almost its equal is found among the miners of the West, who dwell in squalor and wear rags, that the capitalists, who control the earth that should be free to all, may add still further to their millions! Oh, there are plenty of reasons for the existence of anarchists.

But in Chicago they do not think anarchists have any right to exist at all. They want to hang them there, lawfully or unlawfully. You have heard of a certain Haymarket meeting. You have heard of a bomb. You have heard of arrests and of succeeding arrests effected by detectives. Those detectives! There is a set of men nay, beasts for you! Pinkerton detectives! They would do anything. I feel sure capitalists wanted a man to throw that bomb at the Haymarket meeting and have the anarchists blamed for it. Pinkerton could have accomplished it for him. You have heard a great deal about bombs. You have heard that the anarchists said lots about dynamite. You have been told that Lingg made bombs. He violated no law. Dynamite bombs can kill, can murder, so can Gatling guns. Suppose that bomb had been thrown by an anarchist.»

The constitution says there are certain inalienable rights, among which are a free press, free speech and free assemblage. The citizens of this great land are given by the constitution the right to repel the unlawful invasion of those rights. The meeting at Haymarket square was a peaceable meeting. Suppose, when an anarchist saw the police arrive on the scene, with murder in their eyes, determined to break up that meeting, suppose he had thrown that bomb; he would have violated no law. That will be the verdict of your children. Had I been there, had I seen those murderous police approach, had I heard that insolent command to disperse, had I heard Fielden say, 'Captain, this is a peaceable meeting,' had I seen the liberties of my countrymen trodden under foot, I would have flung the bomb myself. I would have violated no law, but would have upheld the constitution.

If the anarchists had planned to destroy the city of Chicago and to massacre the police, why was it they had only two or three bombs in hand? Such was not their intention. It was a peaceable meeting. Carter Harrison, the mayor of Chicago, was there. He said it was a quiet meeting. He told Bonfield [Captain John Bonfield, Commander of Desplaines Police Station] to send the police to their different beats. I do not stand here to gloat



over the murder of those policemen. I despise murder. But when a ball from the revolver of a policeman kills it is as much murder as when death results from a bomb.

The police rushed upon that meeting as it was about to disperse. Mr. Simonson talked to Bonfield about the meeting.' Bonfield said he wanted to do the anarchists up. Parsons went to the meeting. He took his wife, two ladies and his two children along. Toward the close of the meeting, he said, 'I believe it is going to rain. Let us adjourn to Zeph's hall.' Fielden said he was about through with his speech and would close it at once. The people were beginning to scatter about, a thousand of the more enthusiastic still lingered in spite of the rain. Parsons, and those who accompanied him started for home. They had gone as far as the Desplaine's street police station when they saw the police start at a double quick. Parsons stopped to see what was the trouble. Those 200 policemen rushed on to do the anarchists up. Then we went on. I was in Zeph's hall when I heard that terrible detonation. It was heard around the world. Tyrants trembled and felt there was something wrong.

The discovery of dynamite and its use by anarchists is a repetition of history. When gun powder was discovered, the feudal system was at the height of its power. Its discovery and use made the middle classes. Its first discharge sounded the death knell of the feudal system. The bomb at Chi-cago sounded the downfall of the wage system of the nineteenth century. Why? Because I know no intelligent people will submit to despotism. The first means the diffusion of power. I tell no man to use it. But it was the achievement of science, not of anarchy, and would do for the masses. I suppose the press will say I belched forth treason. If I have violated any law, arrest me, give me a trial, and the proper punishment, but let the next an-archist that comes along ventilate his views without hindrance.

Well, the bomb exploded, the arrests were made and then came that great judicial farce, beginning on June 21. The jury was impaneled. Is there a Knight of Labor here? Then know that a Knight of Labor was not considered competent enough to serve on that jury. 'Are you a Knight of Labor?' 'Have you any sympathy with labor organizations?' were the questions asked each talisman. If an affirmative answer was given, the talisman was bounced. It was not are you a Mason, a Knight Templar? O, no! [Great applause.] I see you read the signs of the times by that expression. Hangman Gary, miscalled judge, ruled that if a man was prejudiced against the defendants, it did not incapacitate him for serving on the jury. For such a

man, said Hangman Gary, would pay closer attention to the law and evidence and would be more apt to render a verdict for the defense. Is there a lawyer here? If there is he knows such a ruling is without precedent and contrary to all law, reason or common sense.

In the heat of patriotism the American citizen sometimes drops a tear for the nihilist of Russia. They say the nihilist can't get justice, that he is condemned without trial. How much more should he weep for his next door neighbor, the anarchist, who is given the form of trial under such a ruling.

There were 'squealers' introduced as witnesses for the prosecution. There were three of them. Each and every one was compelled to admit they had been purchased and intimidated by the prosecution. Yet Hangman Gary held their evidence as competent. It came out in the trial that the Haymarket meeting was the result of no plot, but was caused in this wise. The day before the wage slaves in McCormick's factory had struck for eight hours labor, McCormick, from his luxurious office, with one stroke of the pen by his idle, be ringed fingers, turned 4,000 men out of employment. Some gathered and stoned the factory. Therefore they were anarchists, said the press. But anarchists are not fools; only fools stone buildings. The police were sent out and they killed six wage slaves. You didn't know that. The capitalistic press kept it quiet, but it made a great fuss over the killing of some policemen. Then these crazy anarchists, as they are called, thought a meeting ought to be held to consider the killing of six brethren and to discuss the eight hour movement. The meeting was held. It was peaceable. When Bonfield ordered the police to charge those peaceable anarchists, he hauled down the American flag and should have been shot on the spot.

While the judicial farce was going on the red and black flags were brought into court, to prove that the anarchists threw the bomb. They were placed on the walls and hung there, awful specters before the jury. What does the black flag mean? When a cable gram says it was carried through the streets of a European city it means that the people are suffering—that the men are out of work, the women starving, the children barefooted. But, you say, that is in Europe. How about America? The Chicago Tribune said there were 30,000 men in that city with nothing to do. Another authority said there were 10,000 barefooted children in mid winter. The police said hun-dreds had no place to sleep or warm. Then President Cleveland issued his Thanksgiving proclamation and the anarchists formed in procession and car-ried the black flag to show that these

thousands had nothing for which to return thanks. When the Board of Trade, that gambling den, was dedicated by means of a banquet, \$30 a plate, again the black flag was carried, to sig-nify that there were thousands who couldn't enjoy a 2 cent meal.

But the red flag, the horrible red flag, what does that mean? Not that the streets should run with gore, but that the same red blood courses through the veins of the whole human race. * It meant the brotherhood of man. When the red flag floats over the world the idle shall be called to work. There will be an end of prostitution for women, of slavery for man, of hunger for children.

Liberty has been named anarchy. If this verdict is carried out it will be the death knell of America's liberty. You and your children will be slaves. You will have liberty if you can pay for it. If this verdict is carried out, place the flag of our country at half mast and write on every fold 'shame.' Let our flag be trailed in the dust. Let the children of workingmen place laurels to the brow of these modern heroes, for they committed no crime. Break the two fold yoke. Bread is freedom and freedom is bread. ■



THE RAPIST IN YOUR PATH

English lyrics + actions and Chilean/Spanish original lyrics

[Keep arms loose at your side, march in place to the beat for the first eight verses]

Patri-archy is our judge
That imprisons us at birth
And our punishment
Is the violence you DON'T see.
Patri-archy is our judge
That imprisons us at birth
And our punishment
Is the violence you CAN see.
It's femicide.

[Place hands behind the head, squat up and down]

Impu-nity for my killer.

[Repeat movement above]

It's our disappearances.

[Repeat movement above]

It's rape!

[Repeat movement above]

[March in place, but without lifting feet from the ground; move forearms up and down in sync with]

And it's not my fault, not where I was, not how I dressed.
And it's not my fault, not where I was, not how I dressed.
And it's not my fault, not where I was, not how I dressed.
And it's not my fault, not where I was, not how I dressed.

And the rapist WAS you

[Extend LEFT arm straight out in front of you, pointing]

And the rapist IS you

[Extend LEFT arm straight out in front of you, pointing]

It's the cops,

[Use LEFT arm to point behind you]

It's The judges,

[Use LEFT arm to point in front of you]

It's The system,

[Raise arms, pointing in circle around the head]

It's The president. (prime minister)

[Cross forearms above the head forming an X]

This oppressive state is a macho rapist.

[Use LEFT arm and pump a closed fist]

This oppressive state is a macho rapist.

[Use LEFT arm and pump a closed fist]

[Extend LEFT arm straight out in front of you, pointing]

The rapist is you.
The rapist is you.
The rapist is you.
The rapist is you.

Original Spanish Lyrics.

El patriarcado es un juez
que nos juzga por nacer,
y nuestro castigo
es la violencia que no ves.
El patriarcado es un juez
que nos juzga por nacer,
y nuestro castigo
es la violencia que ya ves.
Es femicidio.
Impunidad para mi asesino.
Es la desaparición.
Es la violación.

Y la culpa no era mía, ni dónde estaba ni cómo vestía.
Y la culpa no era mía, ni dónde estaba ni cómo vestía.
Y la culpa no era mía, ni dónde estaba ni cómo vestía.
Y la culpa no era mía, ni dónde estaba ni cómo vestía.

El violador eras tú.
El violador eres tú.
Son los pacos,
los jueces,
el Estado,
el Presidente.

El Estado opresor es un macho violador.
El Estado opresor es un macho violador.
El violador eras tú.
El violador eres tú.

Duerme tranquila, niña inocente,
sin preocuparte del bandolero,
que por tu sueño dulce y sonriente
vela tu amante carabnero.

El violador eres tú.
El violador eres tú.
El violador eres tú.
El violador eres tú.

Note:

There is a slight difference between the Chilean version as it makes a direct reference to a police anthem, "Orden y Patria" which has lyrics about police protecting young women as they sleep. This is generally omitted from versions elsewhere around the world.

What is a lesbian?

It may seem obvious. Surely everyone knows the answer.

Infact many candidates in this election claim that the answer is "anyone who says they are".

It doesn't matter if a person was born male takes no hormones and has no surgery: someone who identifies as a women – and as a lesbian – should be accepted as one. Other lesbians who aren't bigots respect other women's preferred pronouns and are more than fine with admitting all women - whether cis or trans - into single-gendered spaces.

Lesbians, gays, bisexuals and trans people have fought long and hard for equality as people who are attracted to the same sex or gender. It would be absolutely absurd to believe that embracing sisters and encouraging men to embrace their brothers and welcome them into their spaces would undermine anyone's rights. Segregation is the policy of the hate-filled after all, however they sell it.

For example, lesbians who say they would never date people who identify as a women but retain male anatomy are constantly affirmed and no one cares. The idea that trans people think they have a right to demand a person find them personally attractive is entirely manufactured by bigots. It's one which the hate group LGB Alliance share near word for word with the right wing, MRA movement's "Super Straight". Only bigots buy this absolute bullshit.

Believe it or not, capitalists, in attempts to capitalise on progressive politics often recognise bigotry behind a seemingly unobjectionable facade, however being capitalists they lack any nuance of understanding and make corporate decisions that re-inforce the self victimisation of bigots. What's next? Banning white people who say they only like white people?

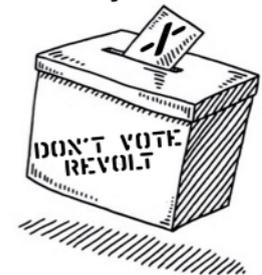
We're grateful that many trans people who want, and deserve, a life lived in peace and dignity with full equality, are also horrified by the similarities and relationships between the right wing and the transphobic left.

The implications of this change for gay people are entirely manufactured. The erasure of sex as a "binary" characteristic is backed by scientific developments in recent decades and has many wonderful implications for all of society, particularly trans and gender non conforming individuals who no longer need to live lives of abject fear, abuse, and violence. Their existence now valid and recognised.

We believe a lesbian is a woman, whether she is cis or trans, who is attracted to other women. We believe that prisons should be abolished and that women's refuges and changing rooms are necessary.

Visit <https://tinyurl.com/helpImabigot> for more common sense responses to important questions.

ORGANISE



www.organisemagazine.org.uk www.afed.org.uk @AnarchistFed

A response to the LGB Alliance who are a transphobic hate group.

THE SUPER-HAPPY ANARCHO-FUN PAGES!

THE HISTORY OF PATRIARCHY! First Page!

Once, a long time ago, in a past that I'm making up, men & women, boys & girls weren't judged by what happened where their legs met... we're stick people anyway.

for a brief period of time, people experimented with a hierarchy based on what happened where their arm & torso met... behold the power of my hairy armpits!

but patriarchy never really caught on.

but one day some guy named Pat had the not-so-bright idea of a hierarchy based on what was between people's legs.

this is dumb.

I rule.

he called it patriarchy.

at first, patriarchy seemed just as dumb as patriarchy, but then half the people realized they could be better than the other half.

hey Pat, you just named this after yourself, didn't you?

Umm... no?

I have a penis.

Some women wanted radical change. They wanted equality.

Still not a doormat... feminazi.

When in fact, most radical feminists don't hate men... they just hate almost everything men do.

You act like your opinion is more valid than mine. Also, you keep alternating between referring to me as a child and a sexual object. Maybe you should seek counseling.

but in this movement, patriarchy was still present.

Actually, I got rid of my patriarchy. My views on Emma Goldman are more evolved than yours, and I can talk about them louder. Also, I have a patch about equality.

So the mass media spin "equality" to mean "anti-man," and these women are going to leave their husbands and become lesbians and practice witchcraft. Well, they finally got something right.

Around the same time period, another movement was evolving. Anarchism, which claimed to be against all hierarchy.

It's also about spray paint.

So the anarchist movement is full of hypocrisy, and not just that good criminals are "doing the best we can" kind.

I thought that dishes just washed themselves.

and soon patriarchy ravaged the countryside... ah! rrrrr it's the forces of domination culture!

Since only men got to write books and teach higher education, people thought it was a good thing. Feelings make me weak. I'm too ruled by emotion to understand complex thought.

fortunately, a group of women realized that, contrary to popular vernacular, they didn't need any balls to be brave and started a movement called feminism.

Almost 200 years have passed, and although much good has been done, patriarchy remains.

gives us liberty or we'll give you death, jerk-o's.

chain length

unfortunately, most men didn't want to give any power back to women.

I'm not a feminazi.

activists often think of women's rights issues as purely reformist...

look, we can just wait until after the Rev to have an abortion. Uhm, no we can't, jerk.

and then wonder why a lot of women burn out after being treated like crap by anarchist men.

I would feel a lot better about myself if there were more women (or people of color) at this meeting.

So anyway, think about these things.

Jerk.

The End

it has come to my attention. that many found the Super-Happy-Anarcho-Fun Pages offensively violent since they depict the death of both people and CEOs.

Traditionally, cartoons depict cute animals dying senselessly, and violence is treated as impermanent.

We at SHAPP, on the other hand, never depict animals dying, people are killed for reasons and we treat death with weight and permanence.

But to me... please our critics, we are pleased to announce our new comic strip, the Moderately Okay Liberal Guilt Pages.

So here's a taste.

Wow, I really should start buying the fair trade coffee.

The Moderately Okay Liberal Guilt Pages!

- Peace!
- Pleasant money!
- Starving kids!

Dr. Science-o!

hi everybody, I'm Dr. Science-o and I'm here to teach you anarcho-kids some science!

I know that school sucks, and that most of what they teach you is a bunch of bunk. But some of what they told you was true.

for example, drugs are often really dumb. Not all drugs, but certainly really dumb ones. So today I'm going to show you how to safely determine if a drug is okay.

So, I have in my hand some hair-o-coke, a drug that sounds fun. But is it?

I have with me two boued and gagged yuppies and I am going to force them to ingest the hair-o-coke.

and it looks like they died. Now wait you glad we tested the hair-o-coke on the peons of global capitalism instead of ourselves or cute little animals?

So now you know a safe and humane way to experiment with drugs before you try them yourself.

and remember kids, coke is for stupid hipsters and heroin is for stupid street kids. Although they're both probably a lot of fun.

also, it's hard to smash the state when you're dead. So don't drink and drive.

So, Armed & Curious, it is up to each of us to decide for ourselves if and when yuppies deserve to die.

I hope I have been of some help. Please submit any further questions to Strangers@riseup.net

the moderately okay liberal guilt pages (MOLGP)

hey, mr. Police officer, could you consider not pointing that gun at my head?

No.

Okay. I hear what you're saying, and I understand that you're just a worker like me.

So... want to stop pointing that gun at my head now?

Nope.

MOLGP

Hi honey, how was your day at global-deathtron Inc.

Frustrating.

It's hard, you know, I'm the only woman on the child-exploitation board, and I make less than the men. I suppose feminists work is never done.

As a man, I fully support the right to equal pay for both sexes... So, what's for dinner?

That's so true...

MOLGP

You know, although I have nothing to gain from helping the poor, I give homeless people quarters sometimes.

well, only once.

But that's what welfare is for. So I don't have to get near those smelly, dirty, lazy homeless people. But anyway, the point I'm getting at is that I'm a good person.

any other car is a hybrid.

fair trade Starbucks

Dr. Science-o!

I have in my hand a letter from a reader:

"Dr. Science-o, do yuppies really deserve to die? -sincerely, armed & curious"

Well, this is an interesting question. At first glance it seems obvious the answer would be yes, but what is that based on?

According to the state, those who are considered unreconcilable murderers and rapists deserve to die?

So by the state's terms, yuppies deserve to die. But as anarchists, we are not compelled to use the state's standards.

therefore it's probably preferable to view each yuppie on an individual basis.

anarchy ≠ the state

Cartoon: yuppies

help!

www.tangledwilderness.org for the web and printable 'zines or check out your favourite disreputable bookstores for the book

WILDCAT

Cartoons by Donald Room
Collected editions available
from Freedom Bookshop

Arson Rape and
Bloody Murder
are on the increase.



I must have more lolly to counteract
Arson Rape and
Bloody Murder!!



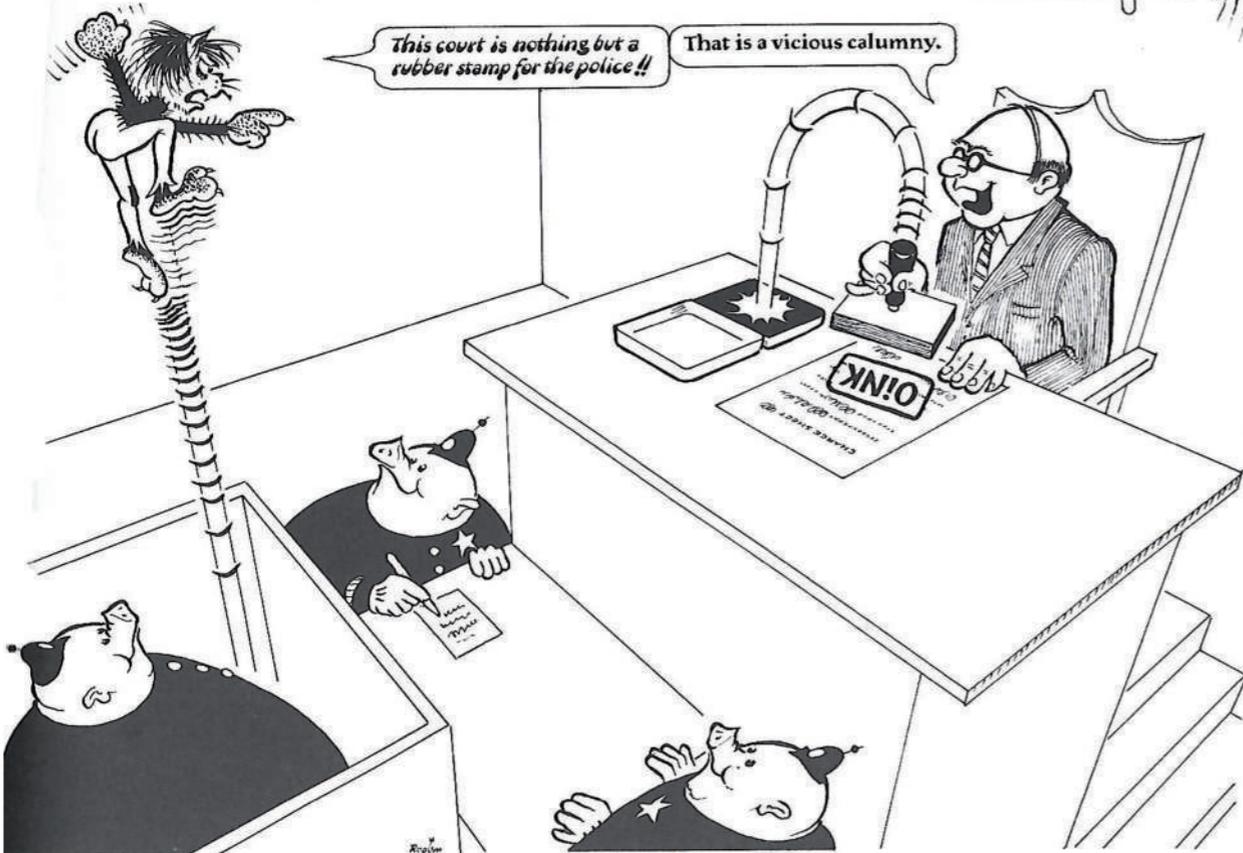
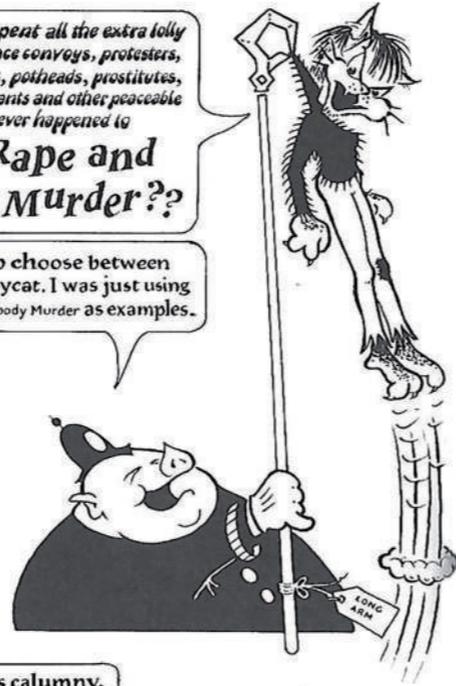
Good grief !!!
Here, take the
child welfare fund.

LATER

You spent all the extra lolly
persevering peace conveys, protesters,
pornographers, potheads, prostitutes,
illegal immigrants and other peaceable
persons. Whatever happened to

Arson Rape and
Bloody Murder??

Not my job to choose between
crimes, Pussycat. I was just using
Arson Rape and Bloody Murder as examples.



This court is nothing but a
rubber stamp for the police!!

That is a vicious calumny.

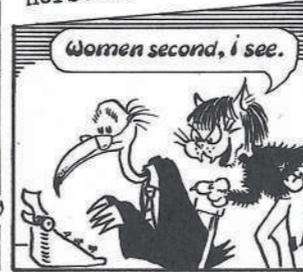
LONG ARM

Anarchy will be when
every individual has
absolute sovereignty
over himself.



'himself'?
Women don't count?

Anarchy will be when
every individual has
absolute sovereignty
over himself, or
herself.



Women second, I see.

Anarchy will be when
every individual has
absolute sovereignty
over himself, or
herself, or himself.



Sexism in reverse.

Anarchy will be when
every individual has
absolute sovereignty
over ~~himself, or~~
^{full stop}
herself, or himself.

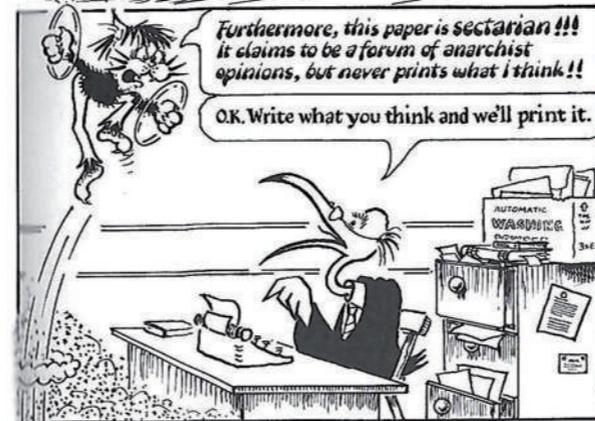


Not clear.
Sovereignty over whom?

And these grotesque animal
cartoons are speciesist !!



Well, I have to draw grotesque animals
because I can't draw people.



Furthermore, this paper is sectarian !!!
It claims to be a forum of anarchist
opinions, but never prints what I think !!

OK. Write what you think and we'll print it.



Er...
Er...

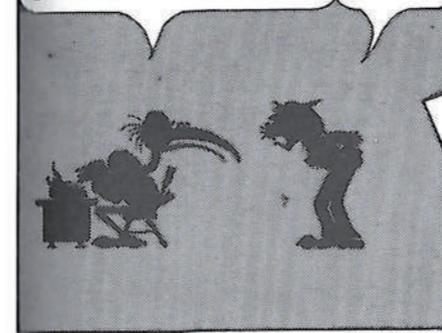


No, you do the writing.
Only say what I want to say, instead of
what you want to say.

Instead of just criticizing,
why don't you do something
positive towards the paper?

Such as
for
instance?

Such as for instance,
draft an editorial
comment on this letter.



Thrrrrrr spp!!



Thankyou. You have a lovely
way with words, when you
take the trouble.



Thrrrrrr spp.

WHO ARE THE ANARCHIST FEDERATION?

We are class struggle Anarchists.

We fight with revolutionary theory and praxis for a world without leaders, where power is shared equally amongst all and people are free to reach their full potential within a classless society. We do not seek power or control for our organisation but to work as part of a united international revolutionary movement which is diverse in character and founded in the principles of mutual aid, compassion and solidarity.

Capitalism and the state are systems of oppression that exploit the working class and destroy the environment for the benefit of the ruling class. The dynamic between master and worker, the oppressor and oppressed, infects every aspect of our society. Genuine liberation will not come with a process of concessions or reforms it will come with the complete dissolution of the master, and the complete building of a fair and just society for the working class.

We fight systems of oppression that divide the working class and feel that this is essential to class struggle. The revolutionary call has no place for bigotry of any form and solidarity needs to be complete and overt, not granted on its convenience. Where the working class oppresses each other the ruling class benefit as they do from cross-class movements which appeal to factors of our identity to obfuscate real class differences and achieve little results for the downtrodden.

It is not possible to abolish Capitalism without first building a culture of resistance. An self empowered working class will achieve this better world through political unity and the development of a wide network of autonomous organisations working together in a federative manner, freely associating as individuals unified by our collective aims and principles.

We forward this social revolution as an organisation and as individuals, in the workplace, on the street, in the home and on-line through the creation of media, the organisation of book fairs, facilitating the creation of autonomous collectives as equals and providing vital

resources, skill sets and support to an array of groups and individuals both domestically and world-wide as part of the International Federation of Anarchists.

AFed has a number of vital roles to perform in order to reach these goals:

- Support resistance against capitalism, state, and other oppression where it exists, and attempt to spark it where it does not.
- Produce information and analysis against capitalist society and argue the case for anarchist communism.
- Be the memory of the working class by making the lessons of past gains and defeats widely known.
- Be a forum for debate and discussion between all elements of the revolutionary working class.
- Work to understand the developments in our society and deliver a coherent communist response to them.
- Seek to win the leadership of ideas within the working class.
- Intervene and co-ordinate our actions in the workplace and the community.
- Work to build a global anarchist movement as part of the International of Anarchist Federations.

We do not shirk the responsibilities of building a better world, we endeavour to take on the difficult conversations that face us and develop our ideas alongside the rich and diverse community of activists, organisers and revolutionaries always learning from the struggles of others to build together and ignite the flames of change.

**JOIN THE REVOLUTION
ANARCHIST FEDERATION
AFED.ORG.UK**

AIMS AND PRINCIPLES

1. The Anarchist Federation is an organisation of revolutionary class struggle anarchists. We aim for the abolition of all hierarchy, and work for the creation of a world-wide classless society: anarchist communism.

2. Capitalism is based on the exploitation of the working class by the ruling class. But inequality and exploitation are also expressed in terms of race, gender, sexuality, health, ability and age, and in these ways one section of the working class oppresses another. This divides us, causing a lack of class unity in struggle that benefits the ruling class. Oppressed groups are strengthened by autonomous action which challenges social and economic power relationships. To achieve our goal we must relinquish power over each other on a personal as well as a political level.

3. We believe that fighting systems of oppression that divide the working class, such as racism and sexism, is essential to class struggle. Anarchist communism cannot be achieved while these inequalities still exist. In order to be effective in our various struggles against oppression, both within society and within the working class, we at times need to organise independently as people who are oppressed according to gender, sexuality, ethnicity or ability. We do this as working class people, as cross-class movements hide real class differences and achieve little for us. Full emancipation cannot be achieved without the abolition of capitalism.

4. We are opposed to the ideology of national liberation movements which claims that there is some common interest between native bosses and the working class in face of foreign domination. We do support working class struggles against racism, genocide, ethnocide and political and economic colonialism. We oppose the creation of any new ruling class. We reject all forms of nationalism, as this only serves to redefine divisions in the international working class. The working class has no country and national boundaries must be eliminated. We seek to build an anarchist international to work with other libertarian revolutionaries throughout the world.

5. As well as exploiting and oppressing the majority of people, Capitalism threatens the world through war and the destruction of the environment.

6. It is not possible to abolish Capitalism without a revolution, which will arise out of class conflict. The ruling class must be completely overthrown to achieve anarchist communism. Because the ruling class will not relinquish power without their use of armed force, this revolution will be a time of violence as well as liberation.

7. Unions by their very nature cannot become vehicles for the revolutionary transformation of society. They have to be accepted by capitalism in order to function and so cannot play a part in its overthrow. Trades unions divide the working class (between employed and unemployed, trade and craft, skilled and unskilled, etc). Even syndicalist unions are constrained by the fundamental nature of unionism. The union has to be able to control its membership in order to make deals with management. Their aim, through negotiation, is to achieve a fairer form of exploitation of the workforce. The interests of leaders and representatives will always be different from ours. The boss class is our enemy, and while we must fight for better conditions from it, we have to realise that reforms we may achieve today may be taken away tomorrow. Our ultimate aim must be the complete abolition of wage slavery. Working within the unions can never achieve this. However, we do not argue for people to leave unions until they are made irrelevant by the revolutionary event. The union is a common point of departure for many workers. Rank and file initiatives may strengthen us in the battle for anarchist communism. What's important is that we organise ourselves collectively, arguing for workers to control struggles themselves.

8. Genuine liberation can only come about through the revolutionary self activity of the working class on a mass scale. An anarchist communist society means not only co-operation between equals, but active involvement in the shaping and creating of that society during and after the revolution. In times of upheaval and struggle, people will need to create their own revolutionary organisations controlled by everyone in them. These autonomous organisations will be outside the control of political parties, and within them we will learn many important lessons of self-activity.

9. As anarchists we organise in all areas of life to try to advance the revolutionary process. We believe a strong anarchist organisation is necessary to help us to this end. Unlike other so-called socialists or communists we do not want power or control for our organisation. We recognise that the revolution can only be carried out directly by the working class. However, the revolution must be preceded by organisations able to convince people of the anarchist communist alternative and method. We participate in struggle as anarchist communists, and organise on a federative basis. We reject sectarianism and work for a united revolutionary anarchist movement.

10. We have a materialist analysis of capitalist society. The working class can only change society through our own efforts. We reject arguments for either a unity between classes or for liberation that is based upon religious or spiritual beliefs or a supernatural or divine force. We work towards a world where religion holds no attraction.



The International of Anarchist Federations (IAF or IFA) was founded during an international anarchist conference in Carrara in 1968 by the three existing european federations of France, Italy and Spain as well as the Bulgarian federation in french exile. To counter the internationalisation of state and capitalist powers that are developing their influences ever rapidly on a global scale, the IFA has since aimed to build and improve strong and active international anarchist structures.

The federations associated with IFA believe that such an organisation is necessary to co-ordinate their international work and efficiently co-operate towards their mutual aims.

To further improve the quality of exchange and co-operation, IFA also keeps close contact with other anarchist organisations, such as the IWA.

The principles of work within IFA are that of federalism, free arrangement and mutual aid. To improve co-ordination and communication within IFA, as well as to provide an open contact address for the public and other anarchist groups and organisations, an International Secretariat was set up. The Secretariat irregularly rotates among the IFA federations. Most of the federations produce regular publications.

For further information contact us:-

Website / i-f-a.org

Twitter / [IntFedAnarchist](https://twitter.com/IntFedAnarchist)

FB / [InternationalOfAnarchistFederations](https://www.facebook.com/InternationalOfAnarchistFederations)

Federación Libertaria Argentina (FLA)
federacionlibertaria.org

Iniciativa Federalista Anarquista (IFABrasil)
anarkio.net

Anarchist Federation (AF)
afed.org.uk

Федерация на анархистите в България (ФАБ)
anarchy.bg

Anarchistická federace (AF)
afed.cz

Fédération Anarchiste (FA)
federation-anarchiste.org

Föderation deutschsprachiger Anarchistinnen (FdA)
fda-ifa.org

Federazione Anarchica Italiana (FAI)
federazioneanarchica.org

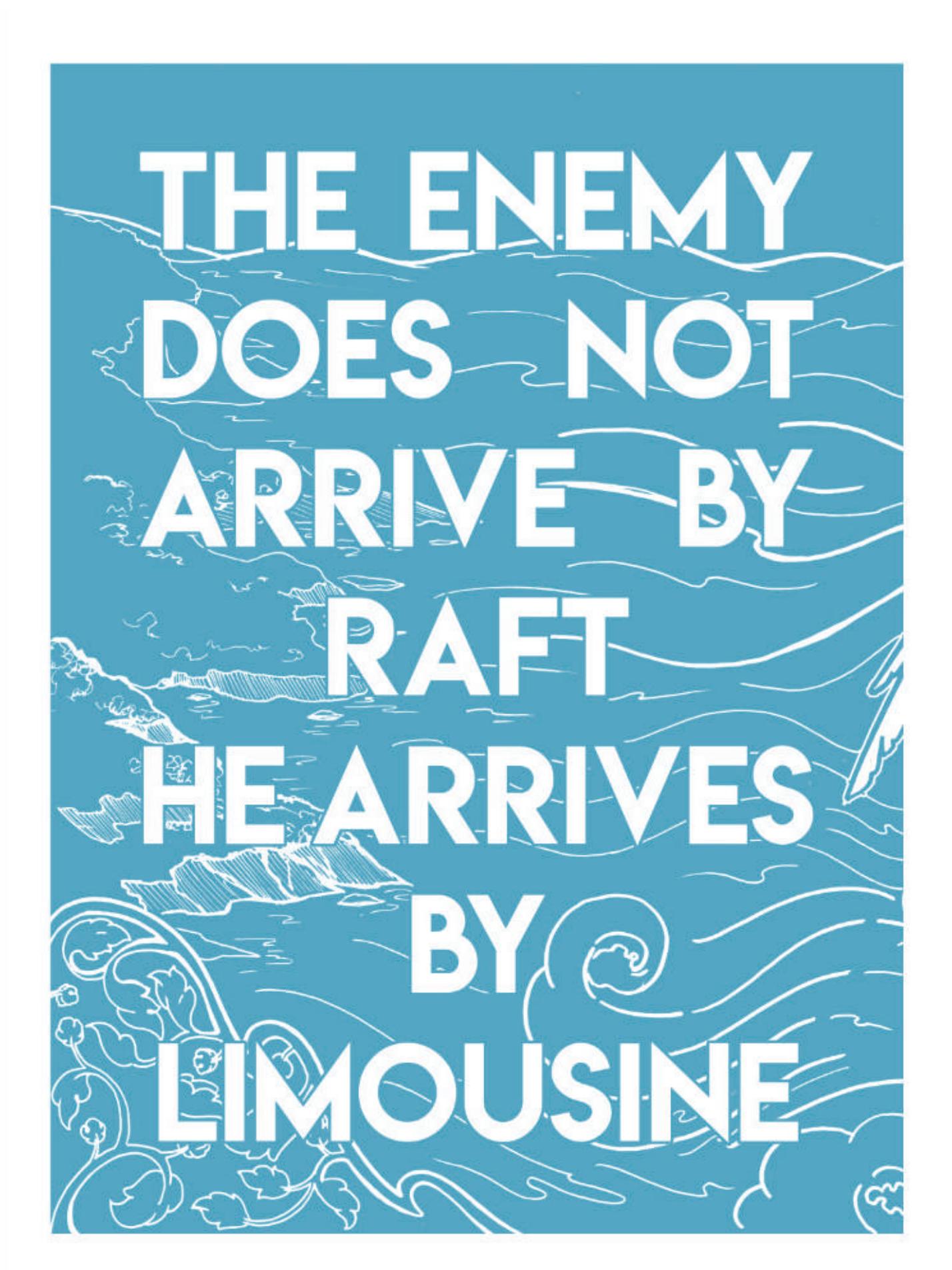
Federación Anarquista de México (FAM)
federacionanarquistademexico.org

Federación Anarquista Ibérica (FAI)
federacionanarquistaiberica.wordpress.com

Federacija za anarhistično organiziranje (FAO)
a-federacija.org

Federazione Anarchica Siciliana (FAS)
fasiciliana.noblogs.org (membership pending)





**THE ENEMY
DOES NOT
ARRIVE BY
RAFT
HE ARRIVES
BY
LIMOUSINE**