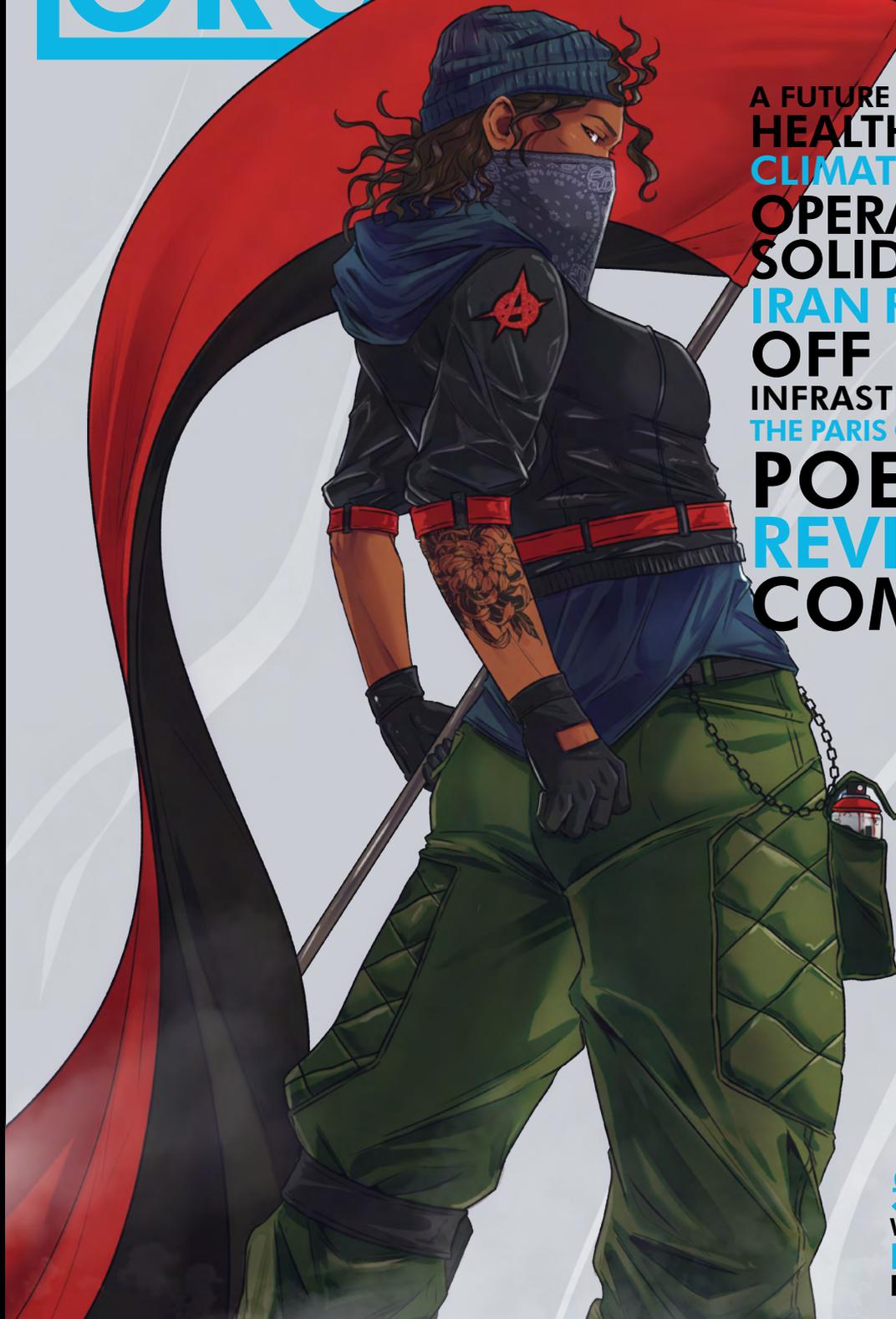


# ORGANISE 97

A FUTURE OF URBAN  
HEALTH-CARE  
CLIMATE CAMP  
OPERATION  
SOLIDARITY  
IRAN RISING  
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**“Strike not for a few cents more an hour, because the price of living will be raised faster still, but strike for all you earn, be content with nothing less.”**

**- Lucy Parsons**

**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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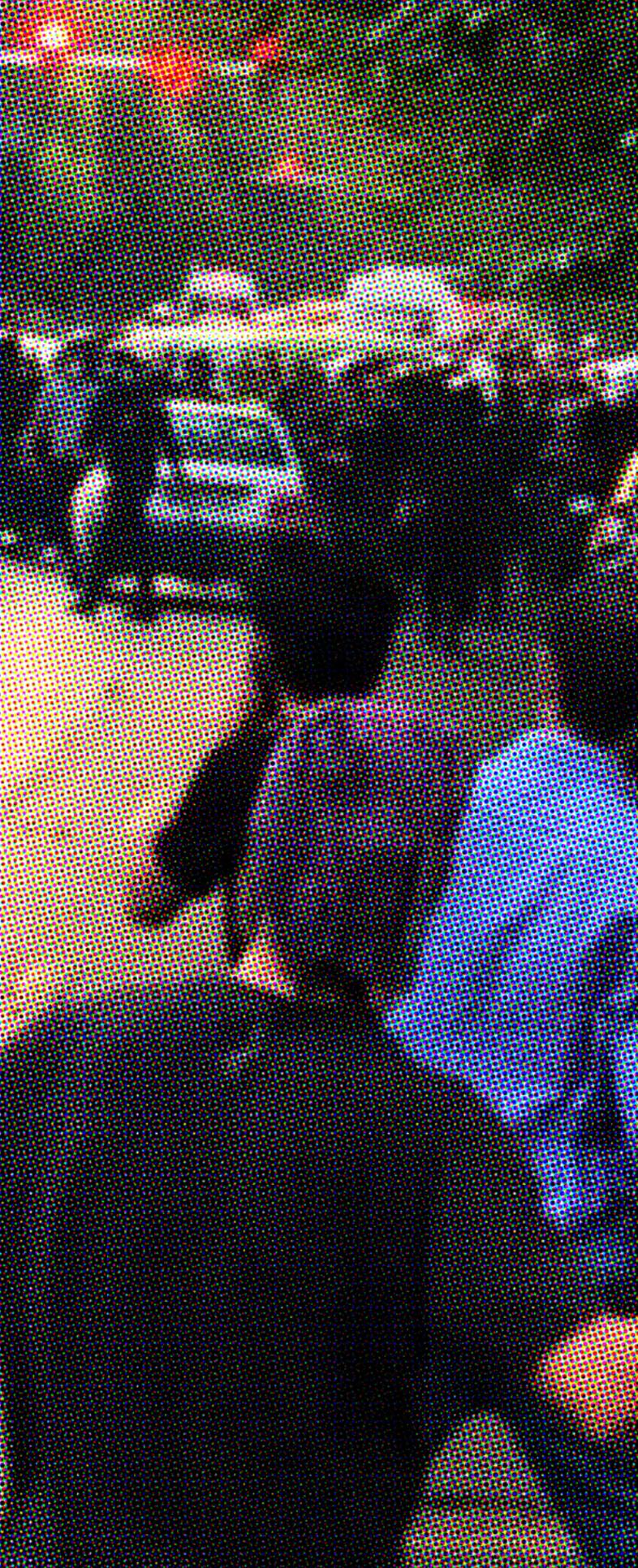
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**Editorial:** The struggle against the vast might of capital/state can seem like a cruel joke put on the conscious working class. The moment of radicalisation like turning a blinding light on something that had always been half a shadow only to be faced with the monolithic might of our adversaries. Add to this the mundane realities of a movement treading water - The social beurocracy and internicine bunfighting - and these germinal moment can seem, almost hopeless. The ebb and flow of this evolutionary period a wasted effort; a dream of freedom we can never attain, chasing it a fool's errand.

Sometimes, we stow such doubts with hopeful, idle fantasies of thrilling heroics to come, gawking at comrades global from the sidelines as we sit in relative security in our gilded cage, waiting for our moment in the crucible. The truth of it is that our revolution here in Britain isn't an open on, while we have no lack of catalysts for the revolutionary moment, we lack the fuel: we lack the will. We have to dispel our doubts not with lofty promises but with the cold realities we face right here and now. Prefiguration is the watchword of the Anarchist.

We must fight the quiet battles: building communities, support infrastructure, the culture of resistance. This is the revolution now. Don't wait to be emancipated, you must do this yourself, look around you and find what needs doing. Then do it!

You might feel isolated, your closest compas across a digital maw but know this - you are not alone, you do not have to do this on your own. You my fellow anarchist are part of a vast and wonderful future. Find each other, be brave, and fight for your future! These pages are but seeds.

To the revolution now!

**Peter Ó Máille**



## A FUTURE OF URBAN HEALTH-CARE

Anarchists have a long-standing tradition of providing medicine to all, so naturally the cities of the future will include autonomous healthcare. Even if libertarian socialist ethics spread regionally or globally, the availability of resources and the environment itself will be significant factors in how this care is provided. Climate change will make some regions less hospitable to human life either through unsurvivable heat or a lack of arable land. Technosolutionism may allow us to continue to manufacture high tech tools, or we may find that conserving the environment limits the extraction necessary for such tech. These factors will change how cities and healthcare look, as will regional variations, so accurate predictions of the future would need to be tremendously complex as well as laden with caveats. Predicting which paths humanity will most likely take can at times be an exercise in pragmatic fatalism, so instead of looking at ways humanity will scrape by during widespread desertification and deadly heat waves, let's instead look at how humanity will thrive despite climate change. Sometimes we need a little optimism, and this is an example of how some regions might organize.

### Current Conditions

Three key constraints that shape modern healthcare are the initial capital required to become a healthcare practitioner, the restriction of intellectual property, and the artificial scarcity of materials needed for medicine. These constraints exist in their most obscene forms in neo-liberal "free" markets like the United States where healthcare is privatized and even those with insurance often cannot afford routine checkups or the costs of minor accidents. Some may point to States like the United Kingdom with the NHS as examples the sort of

welfare provided by social-democracy. At its best, it still is rife with hierarchy and discrimination, and at present it has been actively hamstrung by right-wing austerity. Even the most allegedly socialist States have elements of privatization or back-channel prioritization based on class or party standing.

The ability to train to become the lowest grade paramedic still excludes the economically disadvantaged either through the cost of certification or the time that must be allocated away from paid work for the courses. Becoming a doctor is even more stacked in favor of the privileged as the decade-long process is generally dependent on the class-correlated quality of secondary education and the ability to pay for an undergraduate degree and medical school. This, along with discrimination during education in the workplace, leads to some demographics being significantly underrepresented among medical practitioners.

Medicine is an ivory tower where it is exceedingly difficult for people to research their own conditions or the conditions present within their community. Textbooks and papers are restricted, and much of the "free" information found on the internet funnels people towards profitable solutions or is downright medically inaccurate. Individuals become reliant on the authority of institutional medicine to dispense knowledge and care, and when they seek it out on their own, there are high odds they end up reading pseudo-science.

Even the most well-intentioned doctors with the most connection to their communities are restricted by the time per patient and the materials that are accessible. »

## 8

Private or nationalized insurance may not pay for treatments that they have not authorized, and medicine and equipment can be exorbitantly expensive. Resources for research and development are directed toward profitable solutions, so medication for rare diseases may never be developed. Life-saving medications, such as antivenoms, may even be discontinued because they are not profitable to produce.

Budgets also restrict the availability of staff in medical centers. Large, centralized facilities have a regular stream of incoming patients and thus can justify staffing of entire departments for emergency care. Smaller medical facilities in rural and frontier environments may lack interested practitioners, and when practitioners are interested, there are insufficient patients being billed to pay for multiple physicians and surgeons to be on standby for care.

Lack of community trust in medicine is not a direct constraint, but it is a product of discrimination or the willingness to exploit vulnerable populations, and it negatively impacts how certain populations relate to and receive medical care. This mistrust may exist within a demographic due to repeated negative experiences with the healthcare system. Other times it may exist because of historical medical abuses such as forced sterilizations or non-consensual experimentation against one's demographic. Sometimes it's simply because medical professionals are outsiders to a community and are viewed with some skepticism.

### **Restructuring and Emergence**

Systems do not change at the drop of a pin; radical restructuring takes time. If healthcare institutions and universities take a decade to adapt to a world without capitalism, the boon of new doctors would not be working on their own in a new system for some 15-20 years past some epochal inflection point. While many benefits of truly socialized healthcare would be seen before that, total change and societal adaptation would take significant time. Instead of looking at the moments of radical transformation, let us instead consider the shape of these systems as they settle into new configurations.

### **De-Urbanization**

Following the collapse of capital, there would be a lifting of the economic impetus that drives people to and holds

people in urban centers. Some might immigrate to cities, but many more would leave. In the present world, there is a proportional oversaturation of medical practitioners in urban environments compared to suburban, rural, and frontier environments. Among the expatriates from the cities would be many doctors returning to their former communities to bring higher quality medicine, having originally left because of better education and (in some regions) better pay. This would start the process of decentralization of medicine, both in terms of knowledge and facilities, away from urban centers.

Decentralization can, however, be at odds with environmental conservation, and in the case of medicine, some specialized equipment relies on the extraction of rare earth metals. Additionally, specialists are needed to operate said equipment and interpret their results. Maximum care trauma centers, even equipment aside, require many disciplines to care for the different injuries of a polytrauma patient. One patient alone can require multiple surgeons in different fields and multiple emergency care physicians, such as a patient who was in a building collapse who has an intracranial hemorrhage, bone fractures, and significant burns to their skin. Full decentralization, in the sense that every community can provide all health services its residents require, may not be possible because of these constraints, so the adaptation would be stronger federation between urban and non-urban locations. It may be infeasible to get specialists and equipment to more remote locations, and while telemedicine can provide some services, one of the main obstacles to care would be patient logistics. Networks would develop for moving patients in need of long-term care and complex emergency care toward centralized nodes with appropriate staff and facilities. Centers for treating rare and complex injuries and illnesses would remain somewhat centralized, though not necessarily in urban centers.

For emergencies, expedient care is necessary to save lives and body functionality. As a simple example, the survival rate increases and disability rate decreases as the time from the onset of a stroke to treatment decreases, often abbreviated by the phrase "time is brain." Moving patients to centralized nodes is not simply a matter of getting them there, but how fast. Increased centralization means increased transit times. Additionally, individuals also tend to select for convenience, and medicine is

no different. Basic emergency services and general practitioners will decentralize at greater rates than specialist medicine to accommodate these wants.

This flow of medical potential is not specifically urban to rural but rather core to periphery. Rural areas within the States of the imperial core have relative privilege to other regions globally, but within the States themselves they are still at the periphery. There is currently inequality in who has access to healthcare with the best care being provided to the elite in urban centers in the States of the imperial core. To address the injustices in access to healthcare distribution more globally, cities may see a decrease in the availability of the highest level of care as equipment and practitioners move to regions that have traditionally suffered from exploitation, imperialism, and embargoes.

The average level of care received within a city would still increase in accessibility and quality along with the average level of care globally. Medical practitioners working in an urban environment have the advantage of a steady stream of patients with varied conditions. This, along with other knowledgeable colleagues, lets them learn and continuously practice their skills. If medical staff decentralize away from urban centers, those working in rural and frontier environments may see a lower number of conditions and use skills they've learned less frequently. Skills that are not used are lost, and practitioners will still somehow need to maintain their knowledge and skills through use.

Systems will emerge to help prevent skill loss in rural environments with a lower volume of patients in certain disciplines. Practitioners currently self-limit to treatments and procedures they feel they are qualified to give even if they are certified or legally allowed to perform others. To help practitioners who live in remote environments retain their skills, networks among colleagues would allow them to temporarily come to urban centers for continued education and practical skill training. Much of modern society promotes individuals permanently settling in one location with one (or multiple) fixed places of work, but with this constraint removed, practitioners may be able to periodically travel to cities to work until they feel competent with a skill again.

## Community Medicine

Decentralization is not just the splitting of a small number large nodes into a large number of small nodes that retain isolation or hierarchical structures between them. It means creating a web of many interconnected individuals and organizations that work together both independently and symbiotically.

One of the ways that medicine is currently structurally held apart from the community is a lack of gradation and interconnectedness of care. When one needs regular or non-emergency care, they see their primary care provider (PCP), typically a physician or nurse practitioner. If the PCP cannot handle the issue, they give verbal instructions how to find specialist care, often "Go to the emergency department" or "find a podiatrist and ask them about it." There is no handoff, and there is a significant step, both psychologically and in terms of level of care, in moving from a PCP to a hospital. And when a patient is discharged from a hospital or sent home from a specialist with instructions, they are often on their own to continue their care.

The decentralization efforts will also happen intra-city, and care will move away from large hospitals to community medicine with smaller practices and family doctors. Where there were jumps between levels of care, and where these departments and specializations were kept separate, there will instead be a continuum of care that allows easy transitions from lower level care to the highest level of care and back down again. This ingress into the medical process might start with those who are outside of the traditional domain of medicine such as community healers, those who take care of others or are sought out for advice. Care might end here where a bandage and antimicrobial ointment is applied, or it may be escalated to community nurses. The individual with a funny-looking mole might then be ushered to a dermatologist for further consultation. When a patient starts working their way down the gradient from more intense and specialized care to basic care, there would be still be continued care instead of abrupt termination of care. Discharged patients could have access to ambulatory nursing or even short-term, non-stigmatized assisted living facilities to help them easily recover or simply have frequent and easy access to physicians. »

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When bureaucracy does not impose top-down order on medical care, practitioners can self-organize and build their own networks to handle patient care. At each step along the way, from community healer to neurosurgeon, the practitioners would develop networks of trust and connection. Where previous the interfaces were purely between Facility Alpha and Department Beta, or even the abstract idea of “some oncologist somewhere else,” individuals would become more familiar with those around them giving them time to help spread their knowledge. When a healer sends a local to a dermatologist for that funny-looking mole, and it turns out to have been cancerous, communicating this from the physician or the patient back to the healer encourages this cooperation.

The removal of barriers to training would mean more practitioners, which means a lower patient to practitioner ratio. Even within the current system, this would mean practitioners who are more alert and less burned out leading to better patient outcomes. An improved ratio gives practitioners more time per patient, and this can foster the development of connections with patients that previously was much more difficult. This connection and the closer proximity to the community members being cared for can make medicine more holistic. More capacity and less restrictions to medicine would mean that those without access to medicine in a capitalist world would be able to receive regular treatment.

There would be a bond between healthcare workers and the community in which they operate.

Because the ability to practice medicine would not be gated by class, medical practitioners would have a similar demographic distribution as the general population, age aside. The groups that would see the highest improvement of care and positive outcomes from ailments would be those that are currently most marginalized. Trans doctors would be better able to provide tailored care for trans patients, and likewise with other demographics such as non-dominant ethnicities or those with disabilities. A long-term effect of this demographic shift within medicine would be medical research moving away from treating middle-aged white men as the “normal” on which all medicine is based. When a practitioner doesn’t share the demographic of their patients, they would still be able to provide better care due to better education and clinical research.

Racism, misogyny, transmisia, fatmisia, and other prejudices don’t disappear because of the introduction of socialist programs, so shitbag healthcare workers would still exist. However, what would also exist is actual patient choice in their healthcare provider instead of being stuck with whoever had an appointment available or was assigned by a bureaucratic insurance company. Prejudiced and abusive people could be more easily avoided.



PAKISTAN WORKERS' SOLIDARITY FEDERATION  
PUTTING TOGETHER AID PACKAGES FOR THE FLOODS

The positive effects of better representation in the medical field and real patient choice would be further magnified by the democratization of medical knowledge when the walled gardens of medical papers and textbooks are made open to the public. Individuals would be able to research their symptoms and take notes to their healthcare providers. Instead of the information flow being unidirectional from practitioner to patient, it would be bidirectional and collaborative. Practitioners who beat down patients with the cudgel of authority will lose out on patients, but because their ability to survive is not dependent on an income, they wouldn't be driven out of business by competition in the classical sense. They would still continue to practice medicine, but they might only have a few patients who aren't impacted by their prejudices.

Medical practitioners who are more available to their patients who themselves are more educated on health makes for more trust in medicine as a practice. Visiting a doctor would be less like scheduling a time-boxed procedure and more akin to dropping by your local market to talk about what's in season and new recipes. The barrier to contacting healthcare workers would be reduced, and this would make it easy to incorporate regular healthcare into one's life.

Just as not everyone is a foodie who wants to eat only the freshest and most nutritious meals, and not everyone wants to discuss culinary trends or the provenance of their produce, not every patient will want to have long conversations with healthcare providers or undergo involved and time-consuming treatments. To continue the metaphor, some people eat quick meals just to get calories into their body, and likewise some will still want to only get a bare minimum of medical care to patch up their body when things go awry. Because of the cost and effort required to book even a simple checkup, many forego basic medical care as it's "not worth it." Lowering the barriers to entry for medicine by increasing the availability of practitioners and creating more graduated steps will help those who might have been historically excluded from medicine receive both regular basic care and specialist care for their ailments.

Depending on one's region, healthcare work can be seen as a task assigned to professionals, a task that only occurs at known time periods in one's life. Infants, the pregnant, the recuperating, and the elderly are often pushed off to be cared for by someone else as these conditions are seen as aberrations to some "normal" state of affairs. Part of this

is due to the nuclear family structure of the so-called west, but more generally it is a result of the restrictions on time and resources in an atomized culture. Some of this can be attributed to conscious "rugged individualism," and some is the result of individuals prioritizing themselves while struggling to survive in an actively hostile world, even if they wished to be able to care for others. Most importantly, perfect health is the expectation, and ailments are moralized and seen as personal failures. This care work is offloaded on to others, and it tends to fall on people who are read as women and low-paid individuals.

With total liberation, the norm would not be to split work across gender, racial, or class lines, and there would be external pressure for all to contribute to care via a default expectation that work is spread evenly. Mutual aid as an ethos would be cultivated, and this would lead to an internal drive to help others whereby one would see a need that is unmet, and they would then take the initiative to meet it. If members of a society do not assume that both themselves and others must be perpetually self-reliant, the significant work of tending to others, such as later in life or due to illness, would not be viewed as some burden to bear but rather as that which one must do for society to remain functional and healthy.

When medicine is not rigidly tiered and set apart from the communities it serves, healthcare would become a community effort again. Individuals with more time to themselves would still feel that they can pursue their passions and leisures instead of spending the scant few free hours they have per week taking care of others. The work required by individuals to care for their loved ones, neighbors, and yes even the disliked misers would be reduced by freely available doctors and nurses. Care-takers would exist to check in on others and might assist with their daily activities, but such roles might only exist for those who need a high level of care. Assisted living facilities would be able to be more embedded within communities, and even when labor-intensive, long-term care is required, it would not be separated by significant physical distance or the mental distance of relegating the infirm to some void where they can languish and perish without disturbing the hale and hearty. To borrow the community defense slogan of the present, in they future they might say "we keep us healthy." »

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Much the way start-of-life and end-of-life care is relegated to the margins of our thought, mental health is often cleaved from physical health as if the two can be reasonably separated, and this is typically directly enforced by current healthcare bureaucracies. Simply by the abolition of capitalism, many of the direct causes of poor mental health would be removed, but still mental healthcare will always be desired. Carceral psychiatric hospitals, like prisons, would be destroyed, and with the abolition of the police, the response to a mental health crisis would not be one of violence but one of patience, understanding, and accommodation. Because there can be physiological causes of mental health ailments, physical examinations prior to care would still be the norm, but the accessibility of physical healthcare would not make this a hurdle. More generally, spaces (figuratively and otherwise) would be set aside where people could find comfort, free of the burden of becoming “productive” again. Even just by the very nature of reduced work, individuals would have more time to check in on the well-being of their friends before moments of crisis arise. The aid we provide each other wouldn't be reactive; it wouldn't just be the response to depression or mania. It would be proactive, and individuals would actively engage with one another to, where possible, root out the causes of poor mental health. Individuals would not be only looking out for themselves and those in their immediate networks, but rather work would be done so that all can find great elation, including creating space and accommodation for neurodivergences.

### **Societal Effects**

Due to the time and resource restrictions of capitalism, many people do not address problems in their lives until they become critical. Presently, many people treat their health as a sort of object that breaks, and they only seek medical care when it needs to be repaired. When medicine is free for all, when it is accessible, when the choices that lead to good health are made possible, many people will change their relation to their own health from a tool that breaks into a resource that can be cultivated. What we call “self-care” within radical spaces now is often a bare minimum to keep us functioning as workers so we can pay rent or as activists so we can continue fighting. Holistic care that comes from the community in its entirety will become normalized, and individuals will be able to set out time to true personal joy and care, both on their own and with others.

When family doctors and other medical professionals don't exist aside from the community, but rather as a part of it, how we relate to health will change, and in particular with respect to the creation of new life and death. These two parts of human existence are heavily medicalized where non-practitioners rely on practitioners to guide them through the medical parts of these human experiences, away from the communities and in culturally-sterile ways. Our ability to experience the joys of new life and to cope with death are stunted and degraded because we cannot experience them with others socially.

Birth could be a moment celebrated with cherished ones in one's own home. Family and friends could be part of this process and be present to help with the initial responsibilities of child rearing. The requirement to work would not exist, and the formative years of a child's life could be spent with far more attentive care.

Humans would learn to cope with death and loss by it being more present in their communities. Instead of the elderly dying in their apartments alone or equally alone in assisted living facilities, they would reach the end of their lives more gracefully and surrounded by others. The experience of the death of others would not be such an alien experience, and consequently the unexpected loss of other loved ones would be less traumatic. The entire way we would relate to death would change. This isn't to say transhumanist efforts to defeat death wouldn't continue through therapies or cybernetics, but earnest discussion about death wouldn't be so taboo, and we would more healthily learn to deal with it.

As communities learn to care for themselves and set aside space, and as they are not restricted by capital, cities will change their physical form to promote health. More parks would exist, but with less reliance on cars, more streets would be park-like and have trees and gardens. Strict zoning would put more amenities within walking distance. When work isn't coerced, people will find more ways to be joyful and active. Spaces to exercise, even if just by walking, will spring up to meet demands, as will places for individuals to relax and socialize with each other. Living made joyful and nourishing will, even with no other changes to medicine, decrease disease and increase life expectancy.

## New Tensions

Presently, for many disciplines there is one governing body per State that issues certificates saying that the bearer has met some criteria or possesses some capabilities or knowledge, and such a certificate enables them to perform their profession. These governing bodies originated as a means of protecting their members' statuses by gatekeeping entrance into the field, but in part they claim to protect the public from malpractice. Following the abolition of the State and capital, these bodies will cease to exist, but it's often said that "safety rules are written in blood," so some new structures will emerge to protect the public and ensure high quality of services.

Physical spaces are loci of many activities and forms of organizing, and hospitals by their centralized nature will have some inherent ability to self-regulate. A seasoned expert can spot a fraud very quickly, and the mutual oversight between colleagues would provide checks to ensure that all are acting in ways that do not endanger patients either through outdated or esoteric practices. One of the ways anarchist organizations keep themselves in check—particularly from accumulating power—is by splintering, merging, and reforming. This fluidity is not possible when such large physical spaces and organizational structures exist, and internal conflicts about what constitutes legitimate medical practices or even the power struggles of micro-tyrants could lead to hospitals fracturing along department or theoretical/ideological lines.

Other medical practices that do not require such large, connected, specialized spaces—such as general practitioners, dentists, or gynecologists—will not have the same builtin capacity for oversight. Many general practices have only one or two physicians plus a few nurses, and there is the possibility that several untrained, apathetic, or otherwise unscrupulous individuals could come together and practice improper or outdated medicine.

To offer some proof of competency, medical guilds might arise to provide the same sort of assurances covered by current medical licensing boards. They might provide guidelines for what is expected from medical training or what practices fall outside of accepted medical science. As science is not some singular truth that everyone inevitably converges upon, there would be many guilds with many—yet overlapping—criteria for education and

praxis. These guilds might be local to a region, but they would likely federate with others or have presence in multiple regions.

When practitioners move between regions, hospitals and practices could trust the practitioner's previous hospital or guild and therefore have a starting point of elevated trust in the practitioner themselves. Or, there may be no such guilds and trust would have to be built up at the individual level wherein practitioners who transfer go through a brief period where they are shadowed by a known trusted colleague.

Hospitals and guilds would allow patients to check the ways in which their provider is qualified. Because of the historic nature of organizations protecting themselves from criticism and sheltering those who cause harm, independent watchdog groups might also arise to inform the public about medical safety. These might be staffed by doctors or simply people who collect reviews and complaints and investigate them.

The medical field currently allows for medical malpractice insofar as chiropractors are allowed to call themselves "doctor," and homeopathy is still widely practiced by people who have completed medical school. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we've seen huge amounts of medical professionals be allowed to continue practicing medicine while being anti-vax. Anarchism alone is not the cure for misinformation, and in particular medical misinformation. Pseudo- and anti-scientific beliefs are widespread in current anarchist spaces, and while in the future there would be better access to information and fewer financial incentives for peddling snake oil, these trends would certainly continue.

What new tensions would exist is the possibility of factions directly countering each other: Guilds could denounce each other, hospitals could refuse doctors from certain guilds, and smaller practices could speak out against each other without running afoul of libel and slander laws. When a group practices or pedals something that causes community harm—like anti-vax "science," the overuse of antibiotics, or dangerous procedures—they could be directly countered and disrupted. Practitioners who impair public health through poor practices, or even by spreading ideas that cause people to make choices not based in scientific medicine could face intra-org »



HEALTH WORKER IN NORTH EAST SYRIA TAKING SOMEONE'S TEMPERATURE

or community sanctions. Watchdog groups could take direct action to shutdown anti-vax practices to preempt disease outbreak, and just as much esoteric doctors and patients could fight back to defend their rights to practice anti-science. A theoretical ground for these guilds to disrupt those engaging in anti-science is that medical practice is predicated on the informed consent of patients, and if one is informed by—what the guild believes to be—lies, then they are not able to give genuine consent.

Just as within modern anarchist thought, there are competing ideas and centuries of debate have not narrowed us down to one set of practices, medicine of the future would see similar struggles but with more possibility of dynamic shifts and confrontations when a singular controlling body is removed. The democratization of information does not stop misinformation, and free association would allow those who practice woo to come together and reject science, possibly leading to divergent medical currents like we see today.

### Closing Remark

Much of the way we think of the future of healthcare is in terms of the current system, only “socialist-er.” In our imaginations, the same structures tend to exist, only better funded, with happier staff, and more positive outcomes. We are limited by how deeply we are embedded in capitalism, and even this essay may seem laughably

unimaginative by anarchists who read it in the future. It also carries all the biases of its author (a white, uni-educated, abled, read-as-man person in Europe), and while it attempts to account for how others experience medicine currently and how they might in the future, there are of course (to its author) unknown unknowns, so naturally there are gaps with respect to medical traumas and healthcare and its norms in other regions. Other cultures, now and in the future, have different ideas about medicine and different ways they fit medicine into their societies. This is no blueprint, just some imaginings of how some cities and regions may look.

Another world is possible. We can start to build the cities of the future in the cities of the present, and we can apply non-hierarchical organizing principles and mutual aid to our current communities. Doctors and nurses can be recruited into street medicine collectives, and autonomous spaces can incorporate community medicine into their programs. Healthcare from below can be built starting today. We do not have to wait until after The Rev™. The future is now. Go out and make it. ■

**Håkan Geijer**

# **ULTIMATUM #1 TO WORLD LEADERS**



**You are guilty of gross negligence for your mishandling of the climate crisis.**

**We can no longer trust you to lead us towards a livable future.**

**So We the People are taking matters into our own hands. We will be sending you a series of simply worded demands — ULTIMATUMS — that tell you exactly, step by step, what we want you to do.**

**Our first demand:**

**Immediately call an extraordinary leaders summit of the G20 to declare a Global Climate Emergency.**

**If you have not called this summit by mid-November, then We the People of the world will ramp up our disobedience to fever pitch and bring this doomsday machine of yours to a sudden, shuddering halt.**

**The Third Force**



**“SINCE 2012 763 YOUTH CENTRES HAVE BEEN PERMANENTLY CLOSED! THIS IS ALSO NOT INCLUDING YOUTH CLUBS, AN UNMEASURABLE NUMBER DUE TO THE NATURE OF THEM BEING INDEPENDENTLY COMMUNITY RUN BUT AN ASSUMABLY ASSIMILABLE STATISTIC.”**

## THE LOST GENERATION

“Kids out causing trouble”, “roaming the streets”, “yobs”, “chavs”, “trouble-makers”, “students” – this kind of age old rhetoric has for years created a conception of the youth that they are trouble making dangerous vandals inappropriately socialised during their non-confirmative years to the bullshit-subscribed notions of the status quo. This scapegoating is not only damaging the already demonised youth but it greatly effects our ability to proactively deal with the problems for youth in society. As with any other marginalised minority group the youth need fair and effective support, political representation and rights. The young push boundaries, as all animals do, it’s how we learn what’s appropriate, what’s not, and what kind of characteristics and behaviour are the right ones to choose to build moral character. The issue is this: the bullshit long-standing idea of demonising the young is nothing new but has been accelerated since Thatcher’s authoritarian approach to crime control, or rather the new understanding of what is criminal behaviour and who are the criminals. Society is encouraged to be increasingly paranoid about one’s own community. Media created bias around which people look “dodgy” or potentially criminal, echoing this continuing authoritarian approach to crime control which only divides our society. The UK has a VERY authoritarian approach to youth offending. This is important to understand as this helps propagate stricter crime control measures that attack the symptoms of crime and does not address the causes. The UK imprisons 4 times as many under 18’s than Portugal, 25 times more than Belgium and 100 times more than Finland (*Full Fact 2012*). It is no great hidden factor that with increasing social deprivation crime rises, meaning young adults from poorer backgrounds are also disproportionately effected by the issues of a failing

and exploitative capitalist system. In 2009 a study of nearly 1000 teenage males found that 85% of them believed the media portray them in a bad light. Stories are continually perpetuated of youths standing on street corners, vandalising parks, looting and shoplifting – but with the attacks on youth services where does the media and skewed middle class attitudes which so often scapegoat the youth want our young to socialise and interact with one another?

Since 2012 763 youth centres have been permanently closed! This is also not including youth clubs, an unmeasurable number due to the nature of them being independently community run but an assumably assimilable statistic. In real terms financial funding for youth services has fallen by £1billion, this has had devastating effects on the sector across the board and equates to a drop of 70% funding nationally (YMCA, 2020). Additionally, the lockdown period saw a rapid decline and closure of youth services, many of which have failed to resume pre-lockdown levels of operation. One report on behalf of the London Assembly into lockdown youth services found them to be at a crisis, with 33 years’ worth of days of closure during the pandemic. The lockdown was a strenuous time and how society operated was greatly changed, however the cost of 33 years’ worth of youth work in what is being known as “the lost years for youth work” will have catastrophic impacts for the country’s capital (London Assembly, 2022). In 2018, UNISON conducted a survey of 21,000 local government workers regarding the extent of the cuts to youth services (*UNISON, 2019*). 90% responded stating that the cuts have had a direct impact on their work and 84% of total people surveyed stated that they have a lack

of confidence in the future and effectiveness of youth services as a whole. With this increasing number of closed youth services, critical under-funding of remaining ones and with young adults from poorer economic backgrounds more greatly affected by the socio-economic struggle this leads to severe marginalisation of the youth in society. This marginalisation leads to increased levels of social unrest, crime and an overall decline in community standards.

Young people value each other, many have strong social connections that older adults do not. It is through these social connections in a multicultural society that the young often lead the old in their acceptance of diversity in society. It's a culture that isn't dominated by ideology but is entrenched in an appreciation for one another;. Some would argue that this is what makes their naturally liberal social attitudes dangerous. I would like to address that in certain areas the rise in gang culture and county lines is undeniable and is a growing problem. However, this is not a choice that young people aspire to go into but more symptomatic of a exploitative economic system - one which is failing millions within the poorest communities and is an example of society breaking down and further highlights how ideas of social mobility are simply lies.

Big business's and wealthy donor's best friends, the Conservative party, however unadvertised in the media, is now in real terms an operating right-wing government. Political commentators, academics and the latest YouGov polls show 61 % of the electorate agree with this statement. The governments foreign policy pertaining to refugees was shown to be in breach of human rights and international law, the governments U turn on LGBTQIA+ rights, the government removing several abortion protection rights from its international pledge and the persistent adaptation of Neoliberalist ideology truly show their core ideology is one centred in right-wing political beliefs. Additionally this shit shows no sign of stopping it's only getting worse. With both remaining candidates for the Conservative leadership election Rishi Sunak and Lizz Truss being Thatcherite politicians, offering their mates a return to tax policies of the Thatcher era, it can truly be said that this time in UK political history is set to be further right politically than the times of Margret Thatcher! This was a time when it was widely considered the most pro-market, anti-public sector and right-wing moment in global history. This political approach dominates society and culture

and even though it seems a broad thing to consider it is one of the main driving points of a divided and economically socially stratified society. The historical analysis of how the economic model, authoritarianism and neoliberalism became so integrated can be hard to identify for many in society. The objective history and implications of these topics are neither taught in schools nor widely discussed in society. The attacks on progressive and inclusive values listed above are a direct ideological attack on millions within our society, and this is important as people are beginning to think that this political stand point is somewhat normal. This is where Blacker (2013) argues that ideology "runs smoothest, when it's not noticed as such".

This attack on progressive values becoming known in the press as "the war on woke" can not be allowed to become normalised. The diversity in our schools and the social lives of young people is something to cherish and promote - we're really in deeper than we thought if that isn't deemed normal! To deem "anti-woke" attitudes as normal is some straight-up right-wing justification bullshit, no surprise I suppose its one being pedalled by our media giants. 83% of our media is owned by three main companies News UK, DMG and Reach, it's not surprising that when they move together the attitudes in society move with them (*Media Reform Coalition, 2019*). This attack on ideals of diversity, equality and minority representation must change. Liz Truss openly stated the other day that she wanted to scrap diversity and equality officers, a REAL attack on decency, acceptive values and what little ideas of a community remain in our multicultural society. The youth are becoming less equipped to deal with issues in their personal lives as this economic and cultural attack outlined above is denying their autonomy and, worse, rejecting and failing to nurture it. In our school systems education is failing, teachers just aren't taking the jobs and because of this teacher's with growing class sizes are rapidly becoming figures of social control and not pathways to enlightenment as a holistic teacher should be. This is ultimately creating students that instantaneously have warranted issues with authority. However, this one-sided approach to portraying society and its inhabitants as one-dimensional does not champion the difference of ideas and may be creating a lost generation: one that may be incapable of thinking critically about their own oppression. »

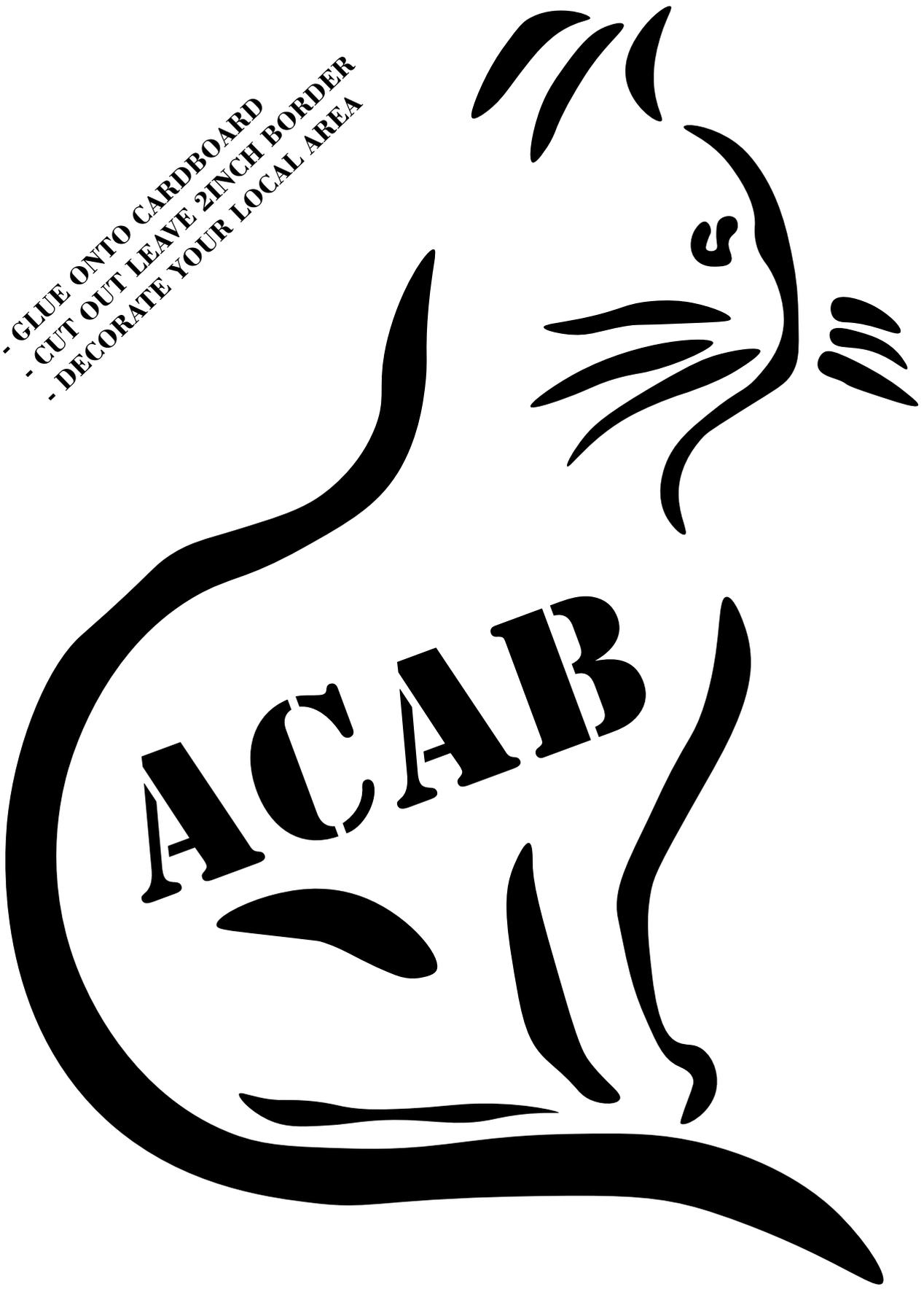
Society must uproot its current education system both in academia and humanitarian skills to allow for a more holistic approach to human co-operation rooted in mutualism and universal love to flourish for all. Young people need to be respected and nurtured in a system of organisation that doesn't promote the bettering of one's self on the degradation of another. This is where Anarchism steps in. Anarchism, if not undertaken as a personal philosophy, needs at the very least to be seriously respected as a critique of the putrid exploitations of capitalism. A rich historical philosophy to be learned from and studied to gain an understanding of the complexity of a diverse approach to life and community. Even without a statist mechanism forcing people to work, if new systems allow capitalist entities and corporations to still operate then people will ultimately be forced to trade liberty for labour, to be exploited for the bastardisation of one person's greed over one person's right to life. This is currently what is happening to our society: we are moving backwards and the new political ideology being peddled by likely winner Liz Truss is one of division and destruction. The lockdown has disproportionately effected our youth in regards to education. We as anarchists are the first to speak to the school systems and the draconian attitudes that are employed within them but also we understand the benefit and liberation of proper education. We must promote understanding and community-driven values, and this has to come from a desire to inspire our youth

and work with their beliefs and passions. We must deny and proclaim the immorality of the "anti-woke" attitudes that are saturating the political mainstream and see it and call it out for what it is: an adoption of right-wing sympathetic attitudes. The resurgence in anarchism seen throughout the west over the past few decades is now starting to gain traction. This needs to be taught to the youth so they can develop their own autonomy. Examples of solidarity between "first" and "third" world countries coming together in the global struggle and global environmentalist efforts show political alliances are forming, deepening and strengthening all with Anarchism at their heart. Movements rooted in the questions of legitimacy, justice, accountability and decision-making are all areas with which our lost youth's generation is readily voiced to challenge. Emma Goldman once said "since every effort in our educational life seems to be directed toward making the child a being foreign to itself, it must of necessity produce individuals foreign to one another in an everlasting antagonism". This highlights our need to promote the youth and their integration into each other's lives as a process of community and social development not as some neoliberal notion of an individual venturing into the divided world of work with no peers or effective autonomy and little respect to these liberating values. ■

**Josh Bannister**



- GLUE ONTO CARDBOARD
- CUT OUT LEAVE 2INCH BORDER
- DECORATE YOUR LOCAL AREA



## THOUGHTS FROM CLIMATE CAMP

This week ExxonMobil sold its last four oil fields in the Niger Delta. Shell is planning to sell theirs too, though the sale is currently on hold as they appeal damages over an oil spill in 2019. But the impacts on the local landscape and the people that live there won't be so quick to disappear. Life expectancy in Nigeria is just 55, in Ogoniland it is only 41. Wherever fossil fuels are extracted, processed or transported the local people pay a price.

In the community of Torry, on the South Eastern edge of Aberdeen, we see the same environmental injustice. Life expectancy in Torry is 14 years lower than the more affluent parts of the city. On the map of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation Torry shows a deep red, compared to the blue of Mannofield across the river. Torry doesn't have oil fields, but they've had to put up with a lot over the last 50 years. In the 1970s 100 houses in Old Torry were demolished to make way for Shell. Since then there have been two landfill sites (now capped, but inaccessible and covered in chimneys to release the gas from decomposing rubbish), a waste water treatment plant, industrial estates, and now a new harbour, an (enormous!) incinerator, and plans for an "energy transition zone" which threatens to cover their last remaining public greenspace, Saint Fittick's park.

It was only ten years ago that the East Tullos Burn was restored and reed beds were planted to filter the heavy metals that had polluted the stream. Since then biodiversity in the park has flourished. The local community raised thousands of pounds for a community woodland. And now all that work is threatened, in order to keep the profits flowing at the very companies

who have caused our climate crisis, and much of the deprivation of Torry. A community campaign to save the park is now underway, and Climate Camp Scotland held their 2022 gathering in the park to offer support to the community and campaign for a just transition.

The new harbour in Nigg Bay, by Torry, currently under construction, is estimated to cost £400m. Concerned that this investment will not be realised, demand has fallen since initial plans were drawn up, while costs have increased, the city council and Opportunity North East (a vehicle for oil billionaire "sir" Ian Wood to continue his control over the city) are proposing an energy transition zone to support the harbour.

An energy transition zone sounds like it might not be a bad thing, we do need an energy transition after all. And part of the project does involve plans to support offshore wind, using the zone as a loading and assembly area for turbines before they are transferred into the harbour. But the ETZ is also marketed as a leader in the hydrogen economy and carbon capture and storage (CCS). These technologies probably have a place, but it's a niche one for especially hard to decarbonise sectors like steel production or cement. The ETZ in Aberdeen, spearheaded by Ian Wood and feasibility studied by Barton Willmore, an oil and gas industry consultancy, looks more like an attempt to keep the gas flowing from the North Sea and prevent a real transition.

A real energy transition, a just transition, needs to put workers and communities at the heart of decision making. Even if we thought hydrogen made from natural gas and CCS were useful technologies, we can't build

that transition by concreting over the last greenspace of one of the poorest areas of the city. People at the top of investment firms and oil companies can see what's coming, and whilst the far right, and much of the Tory party, still preach denial, much of the capitalist class is preparing for a transition. But one led by them will place the burden on the poorest, it will pass costs on to consumers without any consideration for their ability to pay and destroy our land in the process, while maintaining their profits. We need to take control of the transition. Demanding the economy is decarbonised isn't enough.

At climate camp the activist collective Enough! presented a workshop on degrowth. The idea has been around for a while, but seems to be gaining traction in left and environmentalist spaces. As they described it, degrowth means decommodifying our basic needs, defunding the military and police state, democratising the land and economy, working less, consuming less, and ending our reliance on (neo)colonial extraction. As a list of policies it's pretty close to what we call anarchist communism!

A just transition is one that really transforms our society, but it has to also be internationalist. We can't have degrowth in one country any more than socialism in

one country, and we can't build a just future by sealing ourselves off from the effects of climate change that are already happening and baked in for the future. Climate justice is migrant justice.

On the final day of this year's climate camp, there was a rally with MORE (Migrants Organising for Rights and Empowerment) to demand an end to hotel detention - where people waiting the processing of asylum applications are placed in hotels, without access to employment or education, or any ability to create a new life. Just in Aberdeen there are over 100 men stuck in these hotels.

Just days after climate camp there was an immigration raid in Ballater, a small village 40 minutes outside Aberdeen. Despite recent successes opposing raids in Glasgow and Edinburgh we weren't able to stop this one, but the network of anti-raids groups is growing, the reach of these groups, where we can get information and sight on what's happening is spreading. Building this sort of mutual aid, infrastructure, and connections everywhere is how we will build a just transition. ■

**Anna Keyes**  
*AF Irregulars*

PHOTOGRAPHY: RIC LANDER



## DQSH REPORT

Aida H Dee is an author, drag queen, and children's entertainer whose recent tour of 69 UK libraries over the course of two months exposed her to queerphobic<sup>1</sup> abuse and threats of violence. The Drag Queen Story Hour events, where Aida read storybooks to young children, were targeted by anti-LGBT+ protestors who label Aida as a groomer, indoctrinating young children according to a "trans agenda". They attempt to crowd the library entrances to harass her and the families attending the events, with the stated aim to place her under citizen's arrest and remove her from the libraries by force.

At the first location of the DQSH tour in Reading, Aida and the attendees were ambushed by protestors with a banner reading "WELCOME GROOMERS" in rainbow lettering. Once they were inside and the event was underway, a woman who had been pretending to be an attendee began hurling abuse. She accused Aida of being a paedophile and chanted "who knows what autogynephilia is?" to the room full of children. They then waited outside the library until Aida was escorted to her car by police, where they continued to abuse her until she managed to drive away.

News coverage of the hateful scenes in Reading meant that word of the DQSH protests spread, and anti-fascists were able to mobilise at short notice to oppose them in Bristol, the next city on the tour. Conflict between the protestors and counter-protestors further escalated media attention, resulting in each of the remaining libraries seeing a turn out in solidarity with Aida. Some cities had an anarchist presence, while others were "officially" organised by groups such as the Socialist Workers Party in Portsmouth and Extinction Rebellion

Youth in Oxford. The largest turnouts in solidarity were in Brighton, Oxford, Norfolk and Leeds.

At many protests, the most notable face was that of Michael "Mad Mix" Chaves, a prominent live-streamer from the Covid denialist group Alpha Team Assemble, who took a break from harassing vaccine centre staff to harass librarians, families and queer anti-fascists. Chaves may seem like a clownish grifter, but among his entourage are members of the recently-formed Independent Nationalist Network, who are white nationalists. Another fascist influencer who attended the DQSH protest in Leeds was Mark Collett, proud Nazi and founder of Britain's largest white nationalist group Patriotic Alternative. In Brighton, Piers Corbyn reared his head. This is on top of the huddle of mid-rank TERFS each event attracted.

Anti-fascists who have been paying attention to this dangerous coalition of fascists, anti-vaxxers and TERFS may be nervous that they have found a common enemy to unite against. However, this is not a functional relationship. Monitoring of Twitter and Telegram channels reveals that each group view the others as potentially tarnishing their reputation. PA don't want to be seen as 5G microchip paranoiacs, so they didn't show up to events with Chaves and ATA. At the same time, PA does such a poor job of veiling their Nazism that INN won't touch them with a flagpole. As a result, PA dominated the protests in Leeds and some London libraries, and were totally absent anywhere else.

Associating with either group threatens the establishment approval that TERFS currently enjoy, as well as being

unhealthy for their own self-perception as feminists. This has proven to be an especially weak point for the “gender critical” movement, after Michael Chaves and the white nationalist group Hearts of Oak were spotted supporting a Standing For Women rally in Brighton. Many TERFS who think of themselves as a liberal or leftist movement were unable to reconcile the welcoming of far-right activists into their movement, and have distanced themselves from Standing For Women.

Several media outlets have repeated the fascist lie that some DQSH events were cancelled due to the “antifa mob”, however Aida has confirmed that on each of these occasions the events were either postponed, rescheduled in secret to confuse the protestors, or axed last-minute by councillors against the wishes of the library staff. Many parents and Aida herself have thanked the counter-protesters for attending the events and making them feel safer. Although none of the DQSH counter-protests succeeded in driving the fascists away from any of the libraries, there were no incidents of protesters disrupting the story-telling from the inside after Reading.

The huge variation in our numbers from city to city highlighted a need for greater flexibility and a willingness to travel in antifascist groups. For example, there was a mere 40-minute train journey between two DQSH events in Oxford and Wokingham, but while the counter-protest in Oxford was hundreds strong, the Wokingham Library saw a dramatically lower turn-out.

During these same time popular transphobe JK Rowling has went onto lend support to self-titled “theocratic fascist” Matt Walsh (*ed. who has recently highly questiona*

*thoughts on the “breeding” of teenage girls brought to bear as we edit this*), Posie Parker’s denouncement of feminism has once again come to the fore and Allison Bailey has called for solidarity with racists and homophobes against the trans community, and Helen Joyce went on a rant calling for the sterilisation and eradication of trans people. All of which has seen the “Gender Critical” auto-consume itself as the willfully ignorant majority has had to wake up to the reality of the trans community has been telling them for years, that their movement is a right wing one laden with the most horrific bigots.

The trans community is nearly the latest victim of the right wings attempts to use populist drivel to bolster their ranks, they’ve been having a good year. The battle field has -no doubt temporarily- move from overt white supremacy to cultural front sand anti-fascists need to remain vigilant to the every changing face of hate. ■

### Jane Doe

*1. In this article I use the term queerphobia to describe a form of prejudice which affects the whole LGBT+, but especially targets trans and gender non-conforming people. The DQSH protesters (and many other fascists) blur the line between homophobia and transphobia: although the accusation of child grooming using “gender ideology” is transphobic, Aida is actually a cisgender man when out of drag, and a lot of the abuse she has received is classic homophobia.*

## Officialism and Opposition: United by Hatred

On Tuesday 4 October, at 7am, the repressive eviction of the Lof Lafken Winkul Mapu in Río Negro began, by order of Federal Judge Maria Silvina Dominguez.

Police forces entered the Lof and destroyed the rewe, a ceremonial space for the Mapuche people. They attacked with lead bullets and tear gas, destroying the ceremonial grounds. They abused, assaulted and arrested Machi Betiana Colhuan, the spiritual authority, as well as two patients that required medical treatment, other lamngen (sisters), one of whom is 40 weeks pregnant, mothers with months-old babies, pu wentrú (men) and 13 minors.

Some of the children, in shock and facing repression, fled to hide in the forest. They stayed there for more than 12 hours, cold and hungry. Meanwhile their grandmothers demanded to re-enter the territory, in order to find their grandchildren and take them to a safe place, but they were not permitted access.

At midday, personnel entered the site on motorbikes, with large weapons to fire against the children and young people of the Lof.

The mothers of those children remain in the custody of the airport security police. Among the injured were a 12-year-old child and a missing young person.

The police have not lifted the road blocks at the moment, however, they have allowed the gauchos (the gang of Bruno Pogliano, mayor of El Bolsón) to pass through and intimidate the pu lamngen that gathered to search for their children.



We demand the immediate release of our sisters and brothers, the return of all the pu lamngen – siblings of the Lof Lafken Winkul Mapu – to the territory, and the commitment to the physical safety of the pu pichikeche (children) and the pu lamngen (sisters).

Immediate freedom for Machi Betiana Colhuan, the maximum spiritual authority!

The Movement of Women and Diverse Indigenous Peoples for Good Life calls for a protest, and for the participation of all women, of organised diverse people from the entire country and of society as a whole.

We call for protests at all delegations of the Ministry of Women and Diversity, as well as at the offices of the Council of Women in every municipality in the country, and at the tribunal administrations of the entire country. An injury to one is an injury to ALL.

Xipatupe kom pu lamngen, freedom for our sisters!

This will not go unpunished.

*Marici Weu! Marici Weu!*

**#LofLafkenWinkulMapuResiste**

## The Normalization of Bullying on behalf of Religious Values

“Astaghfirullah”<sup>1</sup>

“After she becomes a widow, her outfit seems to be weird”

“Beautiful? Are you all blind? Beautiful, but reveal her body to everyone. I feel sorry for her late husband.”

“She thinks she is great. Remember, the world is only a temporary visit for us before the end of it. She doesn’t know how it feels to be tormented by God.”

All of the quotes come from some netizens who commented on the appearance of Bunga Citra Lestari, a popular Indonesian artist/singer wearing gowns in each of her live performances. Sadly, they commented not on her voice, but on her attire considered “too revealing”. All of them condemned her openly and related that condition to God’s punishment. Shockingly, most of those harsh comments came from women.

They did that intensely while at the same time arguing that what they said is a part of reminders because all of them are Muslims with Islamic values. They did that to show her that as a Muslim, she needed to know how to behave and wear her attire everywhere she is. Despite their harsh or undermining statements for her, they count on their Islamic values as a justification, again as a reminder for her.

Approximately 231,069,932 Muslims, who live in 33 provinces, dominate the Indonesian population currently. In addition, in the current period, Islamisation has seemed to infiltrate the population’s life, as proven by their female daily attire covered by headscarves

mostly and long dresses. Research in the report titled “Aku Ingin Lari Jauh (I Want to Run Away)” by Human Right Watch (HRW) indicates that the regulation to wear headscarves for women affects them as the State Apparatuses in Indonesia. One research finding highlights the story of an anonymous female lecturer in a public university in Jakarta. She underlined that she was under the pressure to wear a headscarf despite no confirmed written regulations on her campus. She pointed to the large board on the campus imposing all the visitors to wear “Muslim Attire”. She faced up to that pressure, causing discomfort while she remembered that the university only mentioned “Appropriate Attire” in the regulation. At the same time, the research depicts the impact of the regulation of school attires in 2014 that explains students are allowed to wear the uniforms by following their suggested religious values. Particularly for Muslim female students, it is elaborated on the Regulation of Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia No. 45 the Year 2014 about School Uniforms for Students of Primary and Middle Level of Education. Article 4 of this regulation underlines that every school regulates their students’ uniforms by concerning every citizen’s right to conduct their religions and beliefs. Unfortunately, it brings a general interpretation by many schools, predominantly public ones that Muslim female students must wear headscarves as well as appropriate uniforms to comply with their religious standards.

In addition, the research reveals a story of a mother in Jogjakarta with her daughter who studied in a public high school in 2017. She encountered some discomfort when the school and its teachers constantly »

gave unwanted comments or underestimated her daughter's choice not to wear it despite the school and teachers' inexplicit remarks for wearing it.

Reminding anyone of what they should wear appropriately is good, however, in this context; most of the undermining statements above strongly suggest the bullying that is conducted on behalf of enforcing religious values (Islam) due to the emerging consequences, such as discomfort, under pressure feeling and inferiority. In addition, it suggests a forcible imposition of regulations for public conducts based on

religious values. It seems overtly inappropriate because of ignoring the public's rights as citizens that should be protected without seeing their religious background.

### **The Bullying being Normalized here**

What is never recognized well here is that the abovementioned bullying tends to be normalized due to its justification on behalf of religious values. It comes with a devastating impact, for example, the one teaching in a public university should quit her work and make her move to a private university where she was not mandated to wear a headscarf or any identical



Islamic value attires. The research of HRW suggests that in general many female students and teachers encounter bullying widely due to their refusal to wear headscarves and adjust their attires based on forced religious values in their institutions in several cities. In most Indonesian public schools, Elaine Pearson from HRW suggests that disobedient students who refuse to wear headscarves would be recommended to be expelled from their schools or resign under pressure. In addition, she highlights that the State's female apparatuses are prone to losing their job or resigning due to their aversion to the demand for wearing headscarves.

Some of my Muslim female friends encountered this bullying as they decided to take off their headscarves after years. When deciding to do so, my psychologist friend, teaching in one of the public universities in Bandung, Indonesia, said that most of her friends were very cynical as well as advising and 'threatening' her as a part of their love and caring for her. Some even advised her by informing her of relevant verses of the Al Quran. Even, they accused her of being affected by western culture and following their trends. Despite those prejudices, some of her other friends supported her decision, emphasizing that it would be tough to take and make her know what she wanted.

One of my other friends is now living in Bali with most of the Hindunese population. She highlights when she was still living in Bandung where most Muslim population lives, and decided to take off her headscarf, her friends commented on her look very harshly, mocking her look similar to a prostitute or accusing her of money orientation merely. Most of her friends that she thinks are good turned out to be very sarcastic and let her down with their remarks after seeing her current look at that time.

Recently, in Bantul, Jogjakarta, Indonesia, a female Muslim student of SMA Negeri 1 Banguntapan, Bantul (Public High School 1) encountered a forcible headscarf-wearing by her school-counseling teacher. They made her stay in the toilet for one hour before going out and transferred to the school-health unit. She was indicated to be depressed after being called two times by the teacher. Shockingly, she encountered some bullying from other teachers before the call and

it was because of her appearance without a headscarf at the school. They even commented to her that it was the right time to wear the headscarf as a Muslim. The worst was when her school- counseling teacher tended to lower her down by saying that her parents were not praying properly and her father was just a Muslim convert. This incident ended with her decision to relocate to another public school, while the Governor of Jogjakarta, Sri Sultan Hamengkubuwono X announced that 4 bullying teachers at that school were deactivated from their teaching work until further notice. He added that they had violated the Regulation of the Ministry of Education and Culture about school uniforms. After the finding of the bullying case, many students and parents have the courage to report a similar case to their schools or authorities, for example in one Public Primary School in Tambora and one Junior High School in Kebon Jeruk, Jakarta. Their parents reported the allegation of the forcible headscarf wearing to Ima Mahdiah, one of the Jakarta regional legislative members.

### **The Freedom with No Bullying**

The State's Constitution assures the citizens' religious rights, including their implementation in their daily routines with their interpretations. The option of wearing headscarves for females as a religious obligation, in this case, Islam, is personal conduct and shows their close relationship with their God. The interpretation of wearing headscarves for Muslim females suggests many differentiations in the Quran verses. However, the obligation to wear headscarves in public schools or public spaces is supposed to be questioned since actually, they should be acting as safe spaces for everyone without any forced religious-based regulations and bullying for those who do not wish to do so. Those spaces are managed by the Government as the ones providing services for anyone without seeing any social background, including religions. Consequently, the obligation to wear specific religious-based uniforms/attire in public spaces or education institutions is irrelevant, and the decision to wear those returns to their personals with their consciousness. ■

### **Fanny Syariful Alam**

1. *"I seek forgiveness from Allah", a short prayer seeking for redemption*

“... IT’S REALLY IMPORTANT THAT THE VIOLENT LEGACY OF THIS LAND BE BROKEN. BUILDING A POLICE TRAINING FACILITY THERE CONTINUES THIS LEGACY. THE EXISTING PRISONS AND JUVENILE DETENTION CENTER THAT ARE STILL OPERATING ON THE EDGE OF THE HISTORIC PRISON FARM SITE CONTINUES THIS LEGACY. ”

## I believe we will win

### TWO PERSPECTIVES ON DEFEND THE ATLANTA FOREST

They say Atlanta is a city in a forest. What happens when cops, developers, and Hollywood team up to decimate some of the very woods the city claims to treasure? In the last year, a widespread and diverse movement has sprung up to Defend the Atlanta Forest from a secretive proposal to build a police training facility, flanked by a movie soundstage, in a wooded parcel in southeast Atlanta. In this interview from January 30, just days after a major action ending in a handful of arrests, we speak with two participants in the movement about its origins, tactics, and insurgent vision. Their story is of getting ahead of the media, outsmarting the cops, and coming to know the woods through the struggle.

#### Tell us what happened on Friday, January 28.

**P1:** On Friday, there was a march to defend the forest. About sixty people gathered at Intrenchment Creek Park, which is the public part of the forest that’s under threat. People marched through that forest onto Constitution Road, which goes through the forest, and then into the Old Prison Farm, which is the parcel of land that the city is trying to turn into a police training compound. Protesters were looking for the active construction crew that was out there. There hasn’t really been so much active construction on that site until about a week and a half ago. Eventually, protesters confronted a few workers with a boring machine collecting soil samples. Police from DeKalb County were there guarding them. After a brief confrontation, police started snatching people, and more or less the march dispersed. Four people were arrested and the rest of the crowd navigated their way out of the forest.

#### How did the struggle begin? Who exactly are you defending the forest from? Who’s running these boring machines?

**P1:** The struggle to defend the forest started before Defend Atlanta Forest was coined and emerged as a movement. There were three separate campaigns happening for years in the same region, which is along the South River in southeast Atlanta. One is this effort to preserve Constitution Lakes, which is a public park adjacent to the parcels of land that we were just talking about, Intrenchment Creek Park, and the Old Atlanta Prison Farm. In Constitution Lakes, there was an effort to develop trails and preserve the wetlands there that was spearheaded by a local artist. There’s also the effort to save the Old Atlanta Prison Farm from development, and that was its own campaign. Save the Old Atlanta Prison Farm, the formal campaign, was sort of spearheaded by just a couple people as well. After it was revealed that Blackhall Studios was going to try to purchase Intrenchment Creek Park and swap it for other land parcels in DeKalb County, there was also an effort spearheaded by a few other people to, in their words, “Stop the Swap.” To clarify, the city wants to give the park to the developers from the movie studio in exchange for the parcel of land they already own, and have already destroyed, because that land is no longer useful for them. So it’s a disgrace.

Those campaigns to stop it did work together, but they didn’t have a coherent sort of fight. They separated out each of their struggles. So when we learned that the Atlanta Police Foundation was intending to turn the Old Atlanta Prison Farm—adjacent to »



both Intrenchment Creek Park and Constitution Lakes—into a police training compound we decided we needed to do something. We saw that this was something they were announcing internally, but they hadn't made a big media push about it. They were actually trying to call it the "Institute for Social Justice" or something absurd like that in their early video promotion. We also recognized that there was a systematic but sort of patchwork destruction of the forests in southeast Atlanta through condos and other sorts of development emerging in the area. That all put this zone of the city, which is one of its most ecologically diverse and crucial zones, at risk. Defend the Atlanta Forest emerged in order to respond to all of these incursions into the forest and onto South Atlanta. It started out by trying to articulate that all of these things are tied together. Essentially, they're not separate struggles—there's something that affects them all. That the police, that Hollywood, and that development and rising rents and gentrification in the city are a part and parcel of the same general process of securing profits for the big corporations, the government, the businessmen, etc.

The first week of action that happened in June 2021 was sort of the big emergence of the movement. After that there was a massive push against the City Council to refuse to lease the land to the police foundation to build the training center. There have been encampments, innumerable direct actions against the city and contractors involved, a second week of action, and now tree-sits. We preempted the announcement of the police training facility by naming it "Cop City," and that sort of got ahead of the rest of the struggle. One of the things that we've tried to do the entire time is get ahead of what we anticipate from past experiences, from our knowledge of how this type of development works and what it relies on. In 2021, we really emphasized people being present in the forest, pushing people to go be there and become familiar with it. In the last few weeks, as there's been this initial surveying work—it's not construction, but it destroys huge swaths of the forest—we know that many dozens of people are more familiar with the territory and how to move through it than there had been a year ago.

**To reiterate something I heard you say: there were already these different ways that this space was coded, and then folks**

**were encouraged to go and actually live there. It reminds me of the ZAD strategy where folks squatted condemned farm houses and began cultivating the land. How have you managed to re-territorialize the space? You mentioned some of the things you built. Are people actually living there? What does the forest look like to you now?**

**P2:** One thing that we always understood, and maybe this just speaks to how the movement has grown, was that because the forest is in our neighborhoods and part of our lives—to an extent it was already, but we've consciously made it more a part of our lives — there was going to be some kind of exchange with the forest that didn't look necessarily like a fixed occupation. That is still true now, and for many of us who live here, we circulate through the forest and have tried to make the pattern of struggle look like this as well: circulating through the forest and having an exchange with it and making it part of a pattern of our lives, rather than necessarily staying there in a fixed and permanent way. That's part of how we understand it. The forest is the city but the forest is also within the city, so there's a sort of rhythm with it.

**P1:** It's winter, so there's not as much activity in the forest right now. But because of gentrification in the city, the DIY scenes, like the music scenes, have lost a lot of the spaces that they depended on. As a result, because of overlapping networks, the forest became kind of a regular site for shows and parties. So when people in the DIY scenes need a venue, they just do them there. That didn't exist before the movement.

That's part of why we've encouraged a lot of different types of participation. We don't direct people to participate in any particular way, so we often meet people we've never seen before in our lives organizing ecological walks or organizing massive parties in the forest. People have a lot of freedom to interact with the forest in ways that make sense to them.

As far as mapping and coding, we've named landmarks within the movement, within the forest, that we use as internal reference. If you're a person who's in the movement who comes to the forest, you come to know

these landmarks. This is the type of thing where it feels really clear that it's "ours" in ways that can't be understood by enemy forces trying to get in there. There have been trails marked throughout, different types of maps made that people use to navigate the land. We've developed understandings of and ways to refer to things within it. For example we all know the landmark that's been named "Big Mama," a massive cherrybark oak tree near Intrenchment Creek. She's actually been recently declared a "champion tree," because trees of her species and size are rare in Georgia. Near to Big Mama is also "The Living Room," a pine clearing in the public park side of the forest, named so because it's free of undergrowth, pleasant to sit and gather in, so it's become the frequent site of dinners, bonfires, gatherings, movie screenings, performances, art installations, and skillshares.

**Tell us a bit more about Atlanta itself. What's the city's culture like? How is the forest related to the city itself?**

**P1:** Historically Atlanta is a Black cultural Mecca, but over the past ten years or so there's been pretty aggressive gentrification in the city. Movie and TV production and the general relocation of that industry and its tens of thousands of high-paid workers into the metropolitan area, the speculative real estate connected to that, university expansion and the role this plays in so-called "urban renewal," investments tied to the airport and Delta, tech industry expansion including by Microsoft and companies like that—these are all huge factors that have played the leading role in gentrifying the city, building on a process of restructuring and austerity that began in the leadup to the 1996 Olympic Games. The city is changing rapidly, and that includes a huge influx of high-paid workers, investors, white consumers and business owners, and a completely new layer of landlords and international property management companies. In many ways, it mirrors patterns occurring all over the world, but there are not even social democratic checks or controls on, for instance, »



the displacement of historical—largely Black—residents, rent controls, tenants rights, or anything of that nature.

**P2:** It's considered to be the new Hollywood in a lot of ways, and with the reorganization of the economy since the pandemic and the uprising, Atlanta is one of the cities in the South that has had an influx of people moving to it from all across the country. People are fleeing other cities and moving to the South. That's one of the dynamics here. People are leaving LA, California in general, and also the Northwest—because of work, but also because of wildfires and environmental pressures in general. Atlanta is a city of trees and has a political culture around trees and respect for trees in a way that I still don't fully understand as a newcomer here. But I know it extends back about fifty years, to a time when there was a conscious effort to plant trees in the city in the seventies. It's a part of the culture here where natural life is acknowledged in a political way I haven't seen in other cities I'm familiar with.

**P1:** The catchphrase is that Atlanta is a city in a forest. So obviously this is a big talking point for the movement, as the Atlanta Police Foundation, with the help of Reeves Young, their construction contractor, are trying to destroy the largest “green space” in the city.

### **How have the police and press responded to you? What has the opposition been like?**

**P1:** The police generally have been pretty hands-off. The first arrests that happened in the movement happened on Friday, just two days ago. More recently, if people are caught on the Old Prison Farm partition of the forest, they've been cited for trespassing, or they've been detained and questioned, but no one's been arrested until now. Generally, the police presence in the forest has been almost null.

**P2:** They are on the back foot. The movement emerged prior to any official announcement of the intention to build the police training compound. You would have had to search to find out that this was what they were planning to do with the space.

The movement preempted the announcement, and since then both the police and the politicians in the media have been trying to play catch-up, trying to correct the

narrative we established. Right now, there's a bit of a reckoning moment because the Police Foundation has the lease to the land and they feel more entitlement to the space, and so the construction is actively moving forward. It definitely seems they have been reacting to what the movement puts forward. The police here are generally pretty hands-off in regards to political events or movements. The summer of 2020 was novel insofar as the police had to take their gloves off because it was so out of control. But generally if there's a protest or something, a lot of times you won't even see the police there. They're always there—there's ten cruisers two blocks away—but it's not like the NYPD where they're marching with the crowd.

Even when they evicted the camp in early December, the police escorted DeKalb Parks and Rec. So it was the county Parks and Recreation Department that was doing the actual eviction, lightly enforced by police presence. But there's been minimal surveillance—as far as we know—or police interference with daily activity. And it's been about ten months of regular, consistent activity in the woods, in both parcels.

**P1:** As for the media, the coverage has been a bit mixed. I would say there's been a ton of favorable coverage from local or DIY news outlets. So much so that now almost always when the movement's mentioned, it's with the preface that the police training facility has widespread community opposition. But there's been some clearly unfavorable articles that have come out as well.

**P2:** The main news outlet in Atlanta, the Atlanta Journal Constitution, has shared interests with the Atlanta Police Foundation. There are some people in the movement who put a lot of attention to the relationship between the mainstream media and the Atlanta Police Foundation and how they bolster each other. Like the rest of the country, there's a ton of attention to the alleged “crimewave” that seems to suggest that even more resources should go to the police. There's a lot of attention to those narratives that indirectly support the police training facility, because Cop City has become so controversial.

**Tell us the story of the forest before the struggle broke out. The ecosystem in Atlanta is really rich, and the idea that**

**there's already an interpenetration of the urban and the rural in this particular place is really interesting.**

**P1:** It was a dairy farm at some point, and then it was turned into a Prison Farm in the early 1900s. There are also some really old trees, but a lot of it is new growth from within the last twenty-five to seventy-five years or so. This forest is really crucial for the climate resiliency of Atlanta. This is what is remaining of the growth that has emerged since it was farmed by prison labor. We have to grow the forest and not just save or defend or protect this part of the forest. But it's also a place of deep historical traumas connected to deliberately racialized legacies of brutality and expropriation. This forest, and the rest of the city, was Muscogee (Creek) territory before the forced relocation of the tribes in the 1830s.

**P2:** Moving forward, it's really important that the violent legacy of this land be broken. Building a police training facility there continues this legacy. The existing prisons and juvenile detention center that are still operating on the edge of the historic prison farm site continues this legacy. Everything sacrificed to social control, everything that needs to be hidden away from society is put into this zone—but this is one of the zones that is most beautiful and abundant, full of natural life. It's also a place that attracts the uncontrollable aspects of urban life. You can go to the woods, and the police are afraid to go in there; it's sort of haunted. You can be there and it's quiet, you can't see what's happening forty yards from you. The South River forests are the most ecologically important zones in Atlanta according to the city's own analysis and they had a big proposal to turn it into protected parks in an "eco-corridor." But they've given that all up to carve it up and turn the forest into Amazon distribution centers, movie soundstages, and literally locking children up on the periphery of the proposed Cop City ballistics field. It seems important that you're specifically targeting a police training facility, which links this struggle to the George Floyd Rebellion too.

**P1:** Obviously from the city's perspective, this project is linked to the George Floyd movement. It's obvious from our perspective as well, but from the opposite point of view. City officials explicitly talk about police morale declining when they talk about this project, they talk about the rise in crime, so on and so forth.

On the other hand, we think that trying to build a state of the art police training compound in the wake of one of the biggest anti-police movements in US history is unconscionable. But that's their answer to the economic crisis most people are faced with right now, and so there's a crisis of livable existence. To me, this is a response to the George Floyd Uprising, but it's also an anticipation of what continued climate change will look like. Their only answer is more police, and so the only answer that they can give to all the problems of the city is more police. For middle class and wealthy people, the only answer is more bad entertainment, more Netflix, more isolation at home to watch the things that Blackhall Studios produces to distract you from what's happening outside. And so, in response, our message has been: "go outside, go be in the forest, let's stop this thing."

**P2:** The trajectory of the struggle is also entirely different from the George Floyd Uprising. It's just on a totally different scale. There is a dynamic between the direct activity in the forest and the petitioning of the city, and there's a rhythm between the two in the struggle that helps people involved in the direct activity get some rest. Some people prioritize the physical defense of the forest, the physical presence of people in the forest, and then other people have focused on petitioning city officials to try to stop the project. There's also been a lot of pressure on contractors involved in the project. There was a demonstration at the Reeves Young office—one of the main construction companies—and there's kind of a continuous effort to put pressure on those contractors. Until the past week and a half, none of that direct pressure on contractors happened in the forest. It was all in the suburbs, with folks showing up at offices, peoples' houses, and so forth.

**P1:** In response to the backlash, they've tried to make Cop City into a public park. They want people to come interact with the police and they think that people will want to walk their dogs next to SWAT training, which is actually already happening there. There's a police firing range within the forest where they have a school bus that they shoot up. You find teargas canisters all over the forest. They present it like they're going to have massive amounts of green space preserved, like it's going to be eco-friendly. Those are the external presentations. It's a big spectacle. It's funny, because it was obvious when they first announced it »



into question and all of that. We're approaching year two now of the struggle and I think that it has become something of a staple for a lot of people. Right now the movement is kind of small, but the size fluctuates. There are a lot of people who've been a part of it at some point in time. Many people have circulated through the movement and they may return one day. Prominent members of Atlanta Bike Life have made propaganda videos for the movement. The DSA has been involved. Anarchists have been involved. City elections were decided partly based on the forest issue—there were changes and politicians lost their seats. So even city politicians have been involved.

There's no central coalition or something like that, but the amount of different people who have participated in the movement is notable. And it's because it was established as a movement without definition, at least without a certain definition. It allowed as many people as possible to act however they saw fit and it gave an avenue and a platform for them to do that, for example through the calls for weeks of action or the calls to be in the forest. That said, I think there is a general desire to also produce something new, something more than just the sum of its parts.

**So there are different groups, entities, people, and institutions that are all getting activated, recombined, and now being coordinated in a new way through the struggle. Does that seem like a generative thing, like the composition now will make other things possible in the future? It's a little bit speculative, but we think about the Zapatistas for example. The Zapatistas are a really advanced kind of landback struggle, so to speak, or an eco-defensive struggle that is territorially situated. And now they literally just infuse other movements with their energy. I'm sure it's a little early to say that that's what's happening here, but what you've described sounds super exciting and so I'm imagining that it feels good to people to be a part of it. There might be new ways for people to relate to this moment as a memory they carry forward with them in some kind of way.**

**P1:** Absolutely, that was a big piece for us. We wanted people to have meaningful experiences, especially coming out of many people's initial introduction to direct action, like the George Floyd Uprising. That's a bar that's just so extremely high, but having new types of experiences in the forest is healing and really potent. It's really important for feeling connected to the city and to the land that you're defending. When you choose to go sit in a tree you know what that feeling is, so lots of people circulating through the forest and struggling together is a big thing. We didn't want the movement to be singularly contingent on the success of defeating either of these projects, rather we wanted it to be about defending the city in the long-term. The livability of the city—not just in the face of climate change, but in the face of development and in the face of the police. That's a long-term struggle.

**Thanks so much for talking to us. Is there anything you want to add, anything we missed?**

The movement has grown organically—because it asks that you come be in the woods, and when you're there, you see and know how important it is to fight for the forest. There are deep roots across the city among people who have been fighting beside one another for decades. Their project has no legitimacy. We don't need more policing training and we do need more forests. For now, more people will continue to inhabit the forest in new ways and to expand and experiment with different ways of defending the space. Many different efforts are being pursued, from direct action to media and legal avenues. There's momentum in all these directions and there's respect among the movement for different approaches. We're excited about the potential in the movement and what the future holds. This is a new type of struggle and I believe that we will win. ■

## Defend The Atlanta Forest

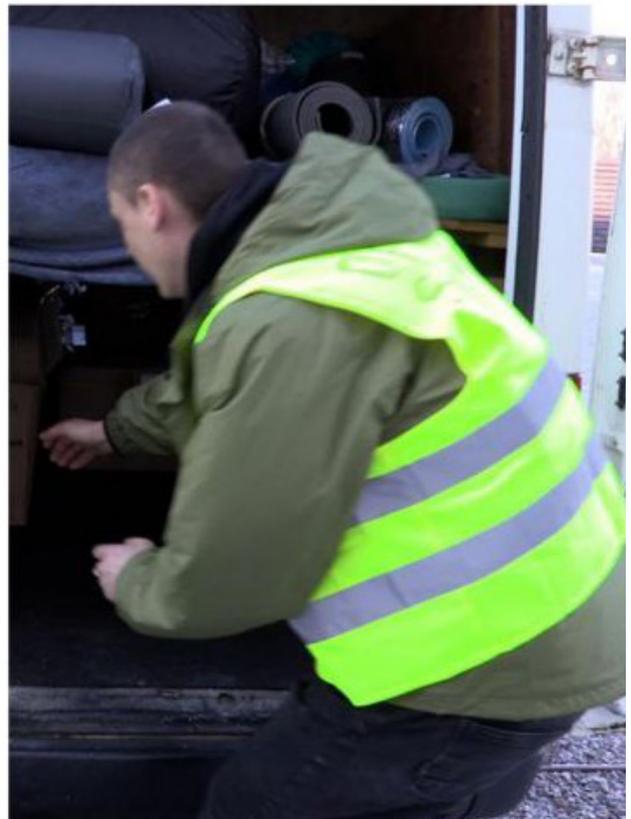
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## OPERATION SOLIDARITY

*At the start of this year as Russian tanks rolled into Ukraine, Anarchists and anti-authoritarians across the region pivoted to defend their communities against the imperial aggressor, many picked up rifles while others established support infrastructure, helping those who remain, the refugees, and the anarchist war fighters. One such outfit is Operation Solidarity which for months of war have acted as a spear head for much of the mutual aid which came flooding in. They kindly agreed to answer a few questions about how they went about doing this.*

We began preliminary preparations in the second half of January when the news became threatening and it became clear that this wasn't a simple drill. Some comrades put forward a proposal for action in case of the invasion. They planned to create two structures: military and volunteer one. Guided by their suggestion, on January 28, we made a closed volunteer chat and proceeded to create Operation Solidarity. At the same time, there were organizational meetings of activists who were interested in armed resistance. At these meetings we discussed news, individual impressions, proposals for action and coordination between structures.

By February 24, we had basic documentation describing our internal and external objectives, global goals, functions, and a strategy for achieving them. In fact, we created a full-fledged organization.

From the very beginning we understood that there

would be a lot of work and that some autonomous space would work best. We needed a place where people could live and work together, leaving only in case of great need or because of tasks. We looked for a suitable headquarters in advance, and considered options for squatting commercial space. But thanks to our comrades, on February 24 we were given the key to a friendly bar in the center of Kyiv. The space turned out to be practically perfect: the only thing missing was a shower and a washing machine. Living together in a space protected from uninvited guests and rocket attacks consolidated us and calmed the panic of the first days. Once again we convinced that crises are better handled in organized groups.

Our first plan was to have four departments:

- PR - maintaining social media, soliciting help, publishing bulletins and news.
- “Communications” - coordinating our TDU (Territorial Defense Units) squads, organizing calls and meetings, supply logistics.
- “Warehouse” - accounting for items in the warehouse, forming parcels and shipments.
- “Technical” - loading parcels and delivering them, contacting Squads.

But we didn't take into account some important roles and the need for other departments and subdivisions, so in reality there were about »

9 of them. On the other hand, we understood from the beginning that each department would need coordinators. People who understand more than the others and are able to train new people, because of their competence and involvement in the processes. This is how it turned out, and we believe that this is an absolutely natural situation. We weren't a horizontal organization, but we were striving for it. Full horizontality in organizations is possible only by the system of training and integration of new people, which we simply can't build because of the lack of human resources and time.

#### *Decision Making*

Decisions were made by consensus, at a General Meeting. At first we met every day for 2-3 hours. Then we limited it to 1-1.5, with an additional meeting at noon, for 15-20 minutes. Then we had meetings once every 4 days, for 1-1.5 hours. We conclude this is a good scheme that worked quite well in our circumstances. Later, due to the conflict, general meetings were sabotaged and people tried to introduce a system of decision-making in working groups, or rather in departments. The problem is that such a system can't work for a unified organization, because the departments can make decisions that are unacceptable for

other departments or individual participants. And there is no mechanism for coordinating them and finding consensus.

#### *People Acceptance*

OpSol was a membership organization based on the principle of concentric circles. We divided people into helpers (the Environment) and members. There were all kinds of people in the Environment who could just help us without wanting to become a part of the organization. One could become a member only with the consent of all current members of the organization, and if the candidate met 3 criteria: 1) libertarian views, 2) a guarantee that the person was safe for others, and 3) effectiveness. The guarantors were required to raise a question on the meetings and to provide brief information about the candidate. A person was considered accepted if no one voiced an objection to his/her candidacy within 24 hours.

#### *Withdrawal, Expulsion, and Punishment*

Unfortunately, we didn't have time to discuss and decide on these issues.

#### *Regulation of conflicts*

We never made an organizational decision, but we understood the importance of conflicts



and developed a multi-step scheme. According to it, every week we were supposed to have reflection sessions (a sort of Kurdish takmil). Any dissatisfaction was suggested to be expressed through an effective feedback scheme, written or verbally, with the help of a facilitator who could suggest better wording. Interpersonal conflicts were suggested to be solved between people. If they failed, then the conflict was resolved in a conflict session. If that fails as well, then the arbitration is called.

### *Fundraising*

Fundraising campaigns and support from comrades all over the world. The Target Audience (TA) was originally Ukrainian society and western comrades, but at some point the faction that favored a focus on western comrades prevailed and we found ourselves in informational isolation from Ukrainian society. By the time this became clear and the second faction began to change its approach, Ukrainian society had already run out of funds and the crisis became apparent, the moment was lost.

### *Logistics and supplies*

We had the next scheme: fighters submitted individual or collective requests to the squad coordinators (OpSol members). Often these were uniforms, military gear, equipment and household items. We experimented with creating a chatbot to simplify our work, but at some point the idea was abandoned. After receiving a request, the coordinators searched for things by themselves or reassigned the search to other people, including those abroad. After that, the items needed were bought and delivered to the comrades. This may sound simple, but in a military conflict it was a grueling undertaking.

### *Current Situation*

Some comrades are fighting in different areas individually or even in groups, but they are all citizens of Ukraine. Foreign volunteers can go to the special battalions (organized by nationality, such as Belarusian or Russian), but the problem is that they are often controlled by the special services and right-wingers. In addition, the

attention of the special services and bureaucratic obstacles prevent the creation of our own unit and the acceptance of internationalists. But comrades keep training and seek solutions to these problems.

### *How to help us?*

We recommend to contact fighting comrades directly to find out the current needs and accounts for financial support.

Regarding support networks: military support for anti-authoritarians and anti-fascists is provided by Kharkiv Hardcore Help, GNIP and Eco Platform (can be found on Instagram & Fb also) — we recommend to work with these initiatives.

Among the initiatives that provide solely humanitarian help, including help for comrades, we recommend Help War Victims & Lviv Vegan Kitchen. The last do a wonderful job cooking vegan food for refugees and supplying the vegan fighters.

Political & organizational process in libertarian Milieu is almost completely stopped. Most of comrades are volunturing and have foggy political perspective. In their words: «We must help people, not to think about politics».

We also recommend to get acquainted with activity & direct action of MOAC (Militant Organization of Anarchists-Communists). Recently they created a Foundation for Revolutionaries which supports activists who practice sabotage of Russian & Belarus army, police & state inside Russia and Belarus.

Today our group is focused on development of theoretical & practical basis in new conditions. We call for cooperation with other groups and activists who deeply understand the need of egalitarian and effective theoretical & organizational approaches. We want to exchange the experience and build global, sustainable and powerful Movement. So if it's sounds important to you, we would be happy to see your mail and discuss the ways for cooperation. ■

## **Operation Solidarity**

## SUPPORT OF THE KURDISH-SPEAKING ANARCHIST FORUM FOR THE MASS UPRISINGS IN IRAN

Anarchists have always supported and will support spontaneous mass movement and uprisings. Spontaneous mass uprisings are a sign of rising level of discontent, resistance and self-consciousness of the oppressed against the dominant system and the authorities. Although the protests, riots and uprisings may take different names and colours, in the content they are resistance to oppression, resistance to the brutality of the authorities and rejection of the oppressive system.

It is true that the reason for the uprising of the oppressed in Iranian cities was the murder of Mahsa Amini (a 22-year-old Kurdish girl) who had traveled to Tehran with her family and was arrested by the authorities who allegedly accused her of improper behavior in regards to the compulsory hijab law and later died as the result of the beating. This tragic death has shown again the brutality of the authorities and it shook the world. However, the message of this uprising was both a protest against Mahsa's killing and a very radical border breaking message to Iran and the world that the oppressed, regardless of their language, ethnicity, race, colour and personal characteristics, are oppressed by one class enemy and one system.

This uprising has broken the boundaries of previous uprisings in terms of consciousness, activities and goal, rejecting the myth of nationalism, a strong response to the political parties that each paints the oppression by their respective ideologies and each directs the protests according to their particular interests. This uprising was

not only a message to the oppressors in Iran, but also to all the oppressors in the world. It was mainly a message to all the oppressed that the oppression has not got a nation, a race, a gender or a nationality They have one enemy: their own class existence, the class society and the class domination; They have one basic and common goal: it's to liberate life and existence from oppression and threats of destruction, to liberate the world from the oppression of capitalists and the tyranny of politicians.

We, as the Kurdish-Speaking anarchist forum, consider ourselves part of the protests of all the oppressed people of the world everywhere and we support and participate as much as possible in all protests, resistance, self-organization and uprising against this class society and its system at all levels.

The present general protests and uprisings have been a sudden and effective step towards a global unity of the oppressed, while rejecting the attempts of politicians and parties to divide and fragment the protests and turn them into canon fodders through competitions for authority building.

We extend our condolences to the family and friends of Mahsa Amini and the victims of the demonstrations.

Long live the struggle and the uprisings of the oppressed in Iranian cities

Long live the unity of the exploited class struggles

Defeat to the efforts of the ruling party and to those in the opposition

Death to Class sovereignty in all its names and its colors

**The Kurdish-Speaking Anarchist Forum**  
23 September 2022

# یۆكەس ی ت ش پ و اه ۆب ناتسی کرانەئ ناکەیی رەوامەج ەناشۆرخ ناریئەل

شیرەئەک، ەییە ناینمژود کەیی و ەیی ناینامتشی و زەگەر  
ییرەورەس و یتەیانچی لئەمۆک و نایۆخی یتەیانچی نووب  
، ەییە نایۆکۆئ و یتەپەنب یجنامائ کەیی؛ ەییەتەیانچی  
، نووچۆئەل یناکەشەپە و مەتسەل نووب و نایژ یندرکدازائ  
و نارادەئامرەس یرەگ لئاپەچ ەل ەنیمەز یۆگ یندرکراگزر  
نارایماپ یرەگ ناواپ ەل

ب نامۆخ نامز-ی یدروک یناتسی کرانەئ یۆکەس کەو مەئئ  
وومە ەل ناەیی یناواسوچ وومە یتەیانزەپان ەل کئشەب  
یراگنەرەب و یتەیانزەپان وومە ەل و ینازەد کئنیئوش  
یمەتسیس و لئەمۆک یژد یتەیانزەپان و نتسخ کئپۆخ و  
نیەکەد یناویت شپ، تئبە کئتسائ رە ەل یتەیانچی  
نیەکەد یرادشەب راوب و یناوت یدەرپە و

ەناژۆپ مەئ یرەساترەس ینیرەپەپار و ناشۆرخ و یتەیانزەپان  
ناکەب زح و نارایماپ یلۆهە یەودەندرکتەر یناکواە یناوت  
و ناکەیی تەیانزەپان یندرکچراپەچراپ و ندرکشەباد ۆب  
یکئناناواگنە، یناواختالەسەد ینابەدرەب ەب ینیرپۆگ  
یرەساترەس یکەیی تئکەیی ۆب تئب اراک و پپوتک  
یناواسوچ

یناتسۆد و نازئخ کەتەل نامۆخ یتەیانزەپان و ینیمخواە مەئئ  
ناکەنادناش ینۆخ وئ نیناشخەب نایگ و ینیمەئ اسەم  
رەن و زرەب مەئئ یال ەنازیئائ وەئ یدای، ینیرپەدرەد  
تئنیئەم

یناکەرەش ەل ناواسوچ یناشۆرخ و تابەخ تئب ووتوەکرەس  
ناریئ

ناواسوچ یتەیانچی یتئکەیی تئب ووتوەکرەس

رادتالەسەد ینارایماپ یناکەیی یرەگ ناواپ و لۆهە ۆب تسکش  
نۆیسزۆپۆئ و

و وان وومە ەب یتەیانچی یرەورەس تئخووپ  
هوەیی ناکەگنەپ

## نامز-ی یدروک یناتسی کرانەئ یۆکەس

۲۰۲۲ یرەب مەتبتس ۲۳

مە ۲ ۱۴۰۰

یۆخۆخ یناشۆرخ یناویت شپ مەدرە ناکەتسی کرانەئ  
ینیرەپەپار و ناشۆرخ و تابەخ. نە و نووب یرەوامەج  
یتسائ یناشک لئە یناشین یرەوامەج یۆخۆخ  
یژد ەناواسوچ یرایشووچ و یراگنەرەب و یتەیانزەپان  
ناکەیی یتەیانزەپان ەندەچرە. نارادتالەسەد و لآز یمەتسیس  
ەل رۆچوارۆچ یگنەر و وان ناکەنییرەپەپار و ناکەناشۆرخ  
، نەتس ەوونووب یراگنەرەب ادکۆرەوئەل مائەب، نرگبۆخ  
یەووندرکتەر، نارادتالەسەد یرەوئەل ەوونووب یراگنەرەب  
ینارادۆز یمەتسیس

وئەل ناواسوچ ەوونیرەپەپار یرەدناە و راکۆهەتسار  
یکئئیی (ینیمەئ اسەم ینت شوک ناریئ یناکەرەش  
کەتەل کئت شەگ ەب ەک، ووب (نامز-ی یدروک یلئاس ۲۲  
یندرکەنوپەیی یوونایەب و ووبوچ نارات ۆب ەکەنازئخ  
ەنادئل وەئ و ەواردیئل و ەوارکریگتسەد یمالسئیی بچایح  
یواچرەب و ارکشائ یکەیی پەرەلم و یندرم یراکۆهە ەب ووب  
یکۆپک و مایەپ مائەب. دناژە یناوت و ووب نارادتالەسەد  
و وەئ ینت شوک ەب ووب یتەیانزەپان مە ەراچ مەئ ینیرەپەپار  
یۆخۆخ ۆب، ووب نئزەب روونس و لآکیدار رۆز یتئمایەپ مە  
و زەگەر و ینتئئ و نامز رە ناواسوچ ەک، ناەیی و ناریئ  
یتسەد یناواسوچ، تئبە یناوسەک یکەیی ینەم تەب ینات  
و وان رە یدیی، نەتسسیس کەیی و یتەیانچی ینمژود کەیی  
تئبە یکئگنەر

یندەب روونس یندناکش و نندارەپت ەراچ مەئ ینیرەپەپار  
و نتوووب و رزە یراب ەل ووب ووشپ یناکەنییرەپەپار  
، ووب یتەیی ەووتەن یناسفەئ ەووندرکتەر، چنامائ  
گنەر ەب و ەکەیی رە ەک ناکەب زح ۆب ووب دنوت یتئمالەو  
ۆب کئرۆچ ەب نایەکەیی رە و تابەدوان ەووناسوچ کئوان و  
ینیرەپەپار. تادەد لۆهە ناواسوچ یتەیانزەپان یندرکەتسارائ  
، ووبەن ناریئ وئ یناوپەرەلم ۆب کئمایەپ سەب ەراچ مەئ  
ووب کئمایەپ ەوئ شپ اوائ رە، ووب ناپەرەلم وومە وک لئەب  
زەگەر و داژەن و ەووتەن ەووناسوچ ەک، ناواسوچ وومە ۆب  
و داژەن و ەووتەن ناواسوچ ەک اوائ رە، ەیی ینامتشی و

## REVOLT IN IRAN

### THE FEMINIST RESURRECTION AND THE BEGINNING OF THE END FOR THE REGIME

On September 16, 2022, Guidance Patrol police in Tehran murdered a 22-year-old woman; allegedly, she was not wearing the hijab in accordance with Iranian state policy. In response, people across Iran have taken to the streets for almost two weeks, confronting police and opening up spaces of ungovernable freedom. For many in Iran, it appears that a revolutionary process is underway.

Collaborating with Collective 98, an anti-capitalist and anti-authoritarian group focused on struggles in Iran, we were able to interview Iranian and Kurdish feminists about the situation. Collective 98 derives its name from “Aban” 98, the uprising that spread across Iran in November 2019—year 1398 according to the Iranian calendar. In the following text, they explore the historical significance of this wave of revolt and the forces that set it in motion.

The woman whose death sparked this movement is known most widely as Mahsa Amini, thanks to news reporting and social media hashtags. In fact, her Kurdish name is Jina; this is the name by which she is known to her family, friends, and the whole of Kurdistan in Iran. Kurdish people in Iran—being an ethnic minority—often choose a Persian “second name” to conceal their Kurdish identity. In Kurdish, Jina means life, a political concept that appears in the slogan that Kurdish women have popularized in Kurdish parts of Turkey and Rojava since 2013, and which has become the central refrain of this cycle of struggles: Jin, Jian, Azadî [“**women, life, freedom**”].

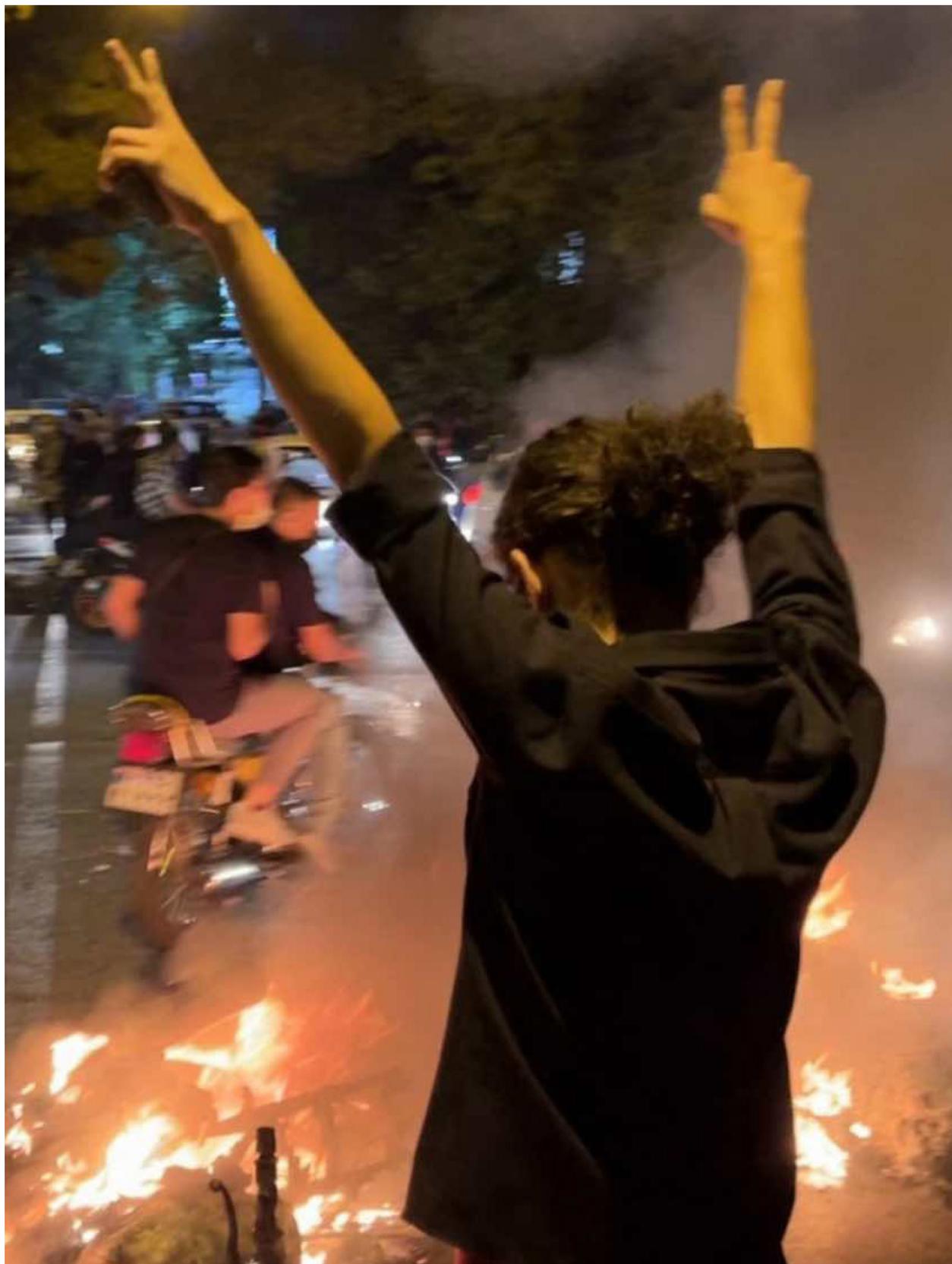
From the revolt in Iran to the anti-war protests in

Russia, from the defense of Exarchia to the student walkouts protesting anti-trans policies in the United States, resisting patriarchy is fundamental to confronting capitalism and the state. A victory in Iran would galvanize a host of similar struggles elsewhere around the world.

To keep up with developments in Iran, we recommend SarKhatism/ and Blackfishvoice on Telegram (*both in Farsi*) and the websites of the Slingers Collective and the Kurdistan Human Rights Network (*both in English*). »



JINA/MAHSA AMINI



“The beginning of the end” is the expression used in a statement issued on September 25, 2022 by “The Teachers Who Seek Justice” on the current cycle of struggles in Iran, one week after the killing of Jina/Mahsa Amini. This phrase captures the stakes of this historic moment. It implies that the proletarians on the streets, especially women and ethnic minorities, see the end of the 44 years of Islamic dictatorship as very close. They have entered into an explicitly revolutionary phase in which there is no solution but revolution.

The uprising of December 2017-January 2018 represented a watershed moment in the history of the Islamic Republic, when millions of proletarians across the country in more than 100 cities rebelled against the ruling oligarchy, saying “enough is enough” to a life governed by misery, precarity, dictatorship, Islamism autocracy, and authoritarian repression. It was the first time that society, especially the leftist students in Tehran, expressed the negation of the system as a whole: “Reformists, hardliners, the game is over!”

Over the past five years, the whole country has been on fire. You could say it is burning from both ends: between chronic nationwide riots and organized struggles involving teachers, students, nurses, pensioners, workers, and other sectors of society.<sup>1</sup> Teachers, to give a single example, have mobilized six massive demonstrations and strikes over the past six months, each one taking place in more than 100 cities. The leaders and well-known activists of this movement have been arrested and are now in prison, but the teachers’ movement continues to mobilize.

These two levels of struggle—the spontaneous mass uprising and the more organized forms of resistance—are interrelated. Each cycle of struggle is becoming more intense and “militant” than the previous one, and the temporal gaps between the cycles are becoming increasingly shorter.

Nonetheless, Jina/Mahsa’s death has unleashed something qualitatively different, which must be considered a break with the historical period that started with the December 2017-January 2018 uprising.

The previous cycle of uprisings was provoked by explicitly economic intrigues (three-fold increase

of fuel prices in November 2019, for example<sup>2</sup>) and directed against the widespread misery structurally engendered by authoritarian neoliberalism over the past 30 years. The economic crisis and extremely harsh class differentiation in Iran is not simply the result of the US sanctions—as the pseudo-anti-imperialist wants to make us believe—nor is it simply the result of the structural adjustments imposed by the International Monetary Fund after the Iran-Iraq war in the 1990s. While these are absolutely important factors, we see the social problems not simply in abstract and “external” terms but rather as the result of a deeper and more longstanding historical process in which the ruling oligarchy has dispossessed many populations, rendered labor precarious, commodified various domains of social reproduction, and brutally repressed syndicates, labor unions, and any other organized form of doing politics.<sup>3</sup>

We should not underestimate the catastrophic and destructive effects of the US and EU sanctions on the daily lives of people in the current conjecture, nor do we want to downplay the relevance of the past histories of “semi-colonialism” in Iran up to the present. We cannot forget the participation of the Labour Party in the UK in the 1953 coup, engineered by the Central Intelligence Agency, to overthrow the democratically elected prime minister, Mohammad Mossadegh, who championed the nationalization of the oil industry in Iran. It was precisely imperialist interventions like this that provided the social conditions for the rise of Islamists like Khomeini who hijacked the progressive revolution of 1979 and established an autocratic dictatorship.<sup>4</sup> Rather, our position is a political negation that operates with the logic of neither/nor, criticizing the Islamic Republic and the US and its allies at the same time. This double negation is fundamental to forming genuinely international solidarities and to the cause of internationalism itself.<sup>5</sup>

Now, despite all the cycles of struggles and forms of political organizing of the past five years, this time round is different, because the riots are ignited by the killing of Jina Amini, a woman of Kurdish ethnicity, due to compulsory Hijab—the structural pillar of patriarchal domination in the Islamic Republic since the 1979 Revolution. The ethnic and gender dimension of this state killing has changed the political dynamics in Iran, giving rise to unprecedented developments.

First, the fact that protests began in Kurdistan—in Saghez, Jina’s home city, where she was born and buried—played a crucial role in what happened afterwards. Kurdistan has a peculiar position in the history of political movements and social struggles against the Islamic Republic. In the aftermath of the 1979 Revolution, when the majority of Persians in Iran said “yes” to a referendum on creating an Islamic Republic, Kurdistan said a strong “no” (see this historic photo). Khomeini declared war—more precisely, “Jihad”—on Kurdistan. What followed was an armed struggle between the Kurdish people (and Kurdish left-leaning parties) and the Revolutionary Guard (i.e., Islamist forces who took power and hijacked the revolution). Many non-Kurdish leftists also joined with Kurdistan at the time, because they saw Kurdistan as the “last bastion” to defend—the social geography in which there remained a possibility of realizing the progressive and leftists’ ideals of the Revolution. Although Kurdistan was defeated after almost a decade of armed struggle and numerous other forms of political organization, nonetheless, Kurdistan never bent the knee to the Islamic Republic.

Hence, one of the slogans that emerged after the murder of Jina was “Kurdistan, Kurdistan, the graveyard of fascists.” In the immediate aftermath of Jina’s murdering, it was Kurdish women who began chanting “Jin, Jian, Azadî” (Women, Life, Freedom), the famous slogan originally chanted by Kurdish women in Turkey and more recently in Rojava (the Northern and North-eastern parts of Syria). In Iran, this slogan has now spread beyond Kurdistan across the country to the point that the current movement, which is indeed a feminist revolution, is known by this name, “Jin, Jian, Azadî.”<sup>6</sup>

Among the three terms of the slogan, the second one, Jian [Life], has some striking features. While Jin [women] refers to gender liberation and Azadî to autonomy and self-governance, Jian, is first and foremost reminiscent of the name of the symbolic martyr of the movement, Jina Amini (as in Kurdish, Jina also means life). On Jina’s grave, her family inscribed the following sentence: “Dear Jina, you are not dead, your name become the Code.” She became the universal symbol of all previous martyrs, signifying all the other Jinas whose lives are ruined by the Islamic Republic, both directly and indirectly, because of their gender, class, sexuality, or the destruction of their ecological environment.



There is an existential component to this movement, which is also expressed on Twitter (*with #Mahsa\_Amini or #Jina\_Amini*) among the Iranian users who recount how their lives and the lives of their friends and families have been wasted over the past 44 years—tortured, imprisoned in both extra-judicial ways and show trials, their lives wasted outside of prison in everyday life without any chance to be fully actualized. Lives that did not live, as the German philosopher Theodor Adorno put it [Das Leben lebt nicht]<sup>7</sup>. Yet this melancholic recalling of the past is oriented towards the future, with an aspiration to finally put an end to the zombie Islamic Republic that drains our vital energies and life processes. There is a future to be reclaimed, a future in which no one will be killed on account of her gender or her hair, in which no one will be tortured and no one will suffer from poverty—a classless society governed by a genuine and not just formal freedom (though not everyone shares that last goal).

For what does class struggle mean, if not reclaiming life in its entirety by liberating it from the ways it has been colonized by capitalist accumulation and all the other forms of domination that sustain and secure that? »

The fear of standing up to a monstrous authoritarian regime that displays no principles whatsoever has turned into its opposite: rage, power, and solidarity. The oppressed classes have never been this united since the 1979 Revolution. The videos showing sisterhood among women, united against misogynist repressive forces, have given everyone goose bumps.<sup>8</sup> The solidarities established between the so-called “center” and the “periphery” across the country as well as among traditionally opposed ethnic minorities (between the Kurds and the Turks in the province of Western Azarbaijan) are unprecedented. The courage and determination of the youth to build barricades and fight with their bare hands or cobblestones against the police are astonishing and admirable.

As the social class who are oppressed, dominated, and exploited above everyone else, women are at the forefront of transforming fear into rage, subordination into collective subjectivity, death into life. Women protestors courageously take off their scarves, wave them in the air, and burn them in the flaming barricades set up to hinder police violence.<sup>9</sup> There is nothing more empowering than burning scarves in Iran: it is like burning a swastika under Hitler’s regime in the 1930s. Contrary to Western corporate media reports, the protests in Iran are not simply about the “morality police”—they represent a rejection of the structural social, political, and juridical relations that systematically reproduce capitalist patriarchy combined with Islamist codes.

As a social relation, Hijab signifies a set of constitutive elements of the Islamic Republic. First, viewed symbolically, compulsory Hijab represents the regime of patriarchy as a whole. The compulsory practice of veiling the body reminds women on a daily basis that they have an inferior position within society, that they are the second sex, that their bodies are structurally owned by the family, their brothers, fathers, male partners, and of course by the bosses and the state. Second, Hijab also represents the religious, autocratic authority that is capable—or at least, was capable—of imposing Islamic dress codes on the bodies of the ruled classes, especially women. No to Hijab means radically challenging the authority and legitimacy of the Islamic Republic as a whole. Third, and from an international standpoint, Hijab as an “Islamic virtue” is also understood by the ruling classes as the most important representative of

“anti-imperialism.” Just as Adolf Hitler systematically employed the swastika to ideologically express the “prosperity” and “well-being” of a society ruled by National Socialism, the Islamic Republic has imposed Hijab on women to convey the impression that Iranian society is constituted by the realization of Islamic virtues and ideals and therefore fundamentally opposed to the Western empire and its moral values and social norms. Hijab thus allegedly represents an ideological and practical alternative to the empire.

In the immediate aftermath of the Revolution, on March 8, 1979, tens of thousands of women marched in the streets of Tehran against the imposition of compulsory Hijab, chanting “Either a headscarf or a head injury” and “We did not make a revolution to go back”—referring to the reactionary aspect of compulsory Hijab that aims to “turn back” the wheels of history. At the time, the Islamist media and Khomeini labeled the feminists and other women on the streets as supporters of imperialism who subscribed to “Western culture.” Tragically, no one heard the women’s voices or heeded their warnings, not even the leftists who—catastrophically—accorded an ontological priority to the struggle against imperialism, relativizing and downplaying all other forms of domination as “secondary.” Today, when women burn scarves on the streets and the whole society emphatically rejects compulsory Hijab, this shakes the entire patriarchal and autocratic authority to the core, along with the pseudo-anti-imperialist legitimacy of the Islamic Republic. These are the pillars of class rule in Iran and the whole population is rejecting them. The Islamic republic is already dead in the minds of its people; now the people must kill it in reality.

Let’s be clear: burning scarves is not a right-wing gesture oriented towards a fascist Islamophobia. No one is challenging anyone’s religion. Rather, it is a gesture proclaiming emancipation from compulsory Hijab, which controls women’s bodies. Hijab has nothing to do with “women’s culture” in the Middle East, as some postcolonial thinkers imply. In the context of the Islamic Republic, Hijab is a method of class domination, an integral part of capitalist patriarchy, and must be criticized without compromise.

As a historically specific social relationship, capitalism has the capacity to employ “non-capitalist” social

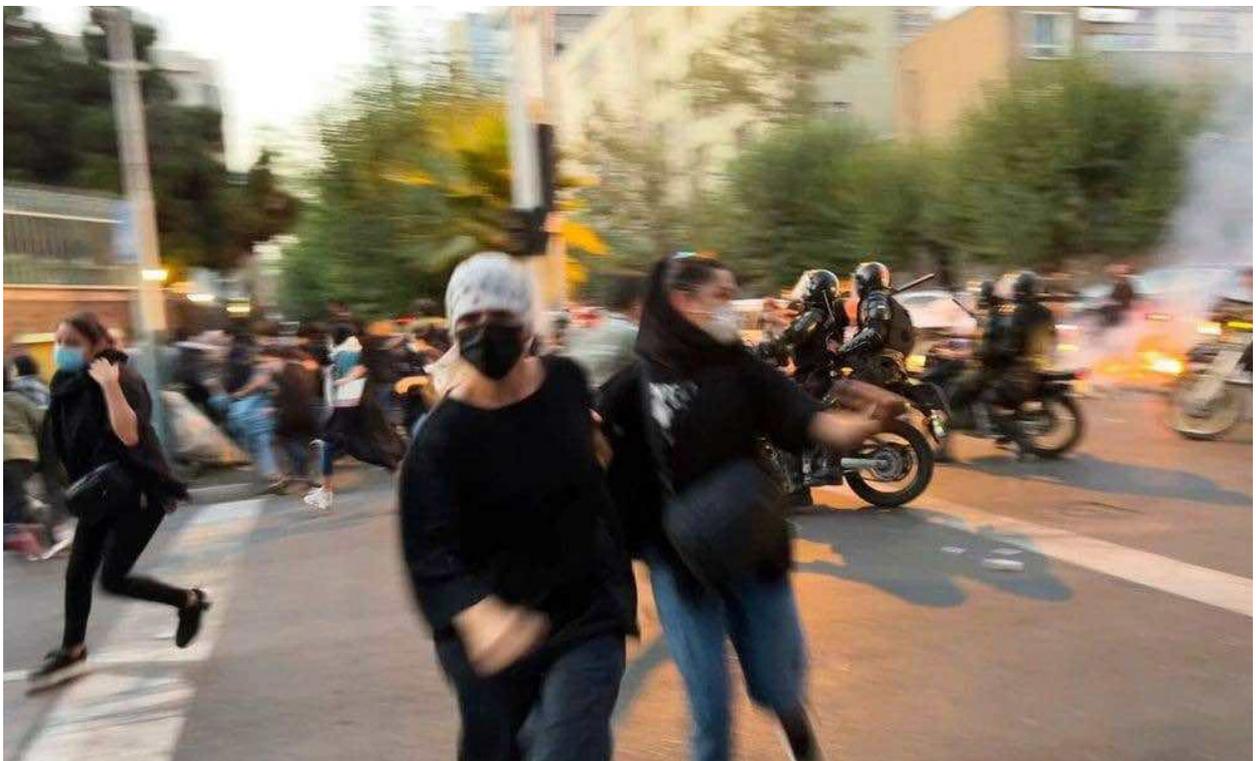
relations at the service of its own accumulation and reproduction. Religion, like patriarchy, is not a thing of the past; it is not an anachronistic residue that lies beneath the surface of modern society without social effectivity. In a capitalist society like Iran, class domination as a whole is mediated by and recoded via Islamic codes. Compulsory Hijab has been a crucial element in the Islamic Republic patriarchy that has marginalized women and systematically controlled their bodies. This has also led to a division within the working class in the broad sense of the term through gendered hierarchies and interpersonal domination.

The pseudo-anti-imperialists who think that the people on the street are simply the puppets of Israel, Saudi Arabia, and the United States not only deprive the people of their agency and subjectivity in a typically orientalist manner by presupposing an “abstract essence” for a society like Iran—they also reproduce the reactionary discourse and practice of the Islamic Republic itself. Understanding this is crucial for international solidarity with women in Iran and the oppressed classes more generally. Strikingly, even the religious Muslim women who wear Islamic dresses like the chador have emphatically rejected compulsory Hijab and supported this movement on the streets and social media.

With women at the forefront of the struggles fighting courageously against the repressive apparatus of the state, the Islamic Republic has never appeared so weak. The question is not “what is to be done,” but how to finish it off?

Kurdistan initiated the protests and introduced feminist and anti-authoritarian slogans. This catalyzed the students—the social sector that is always at the forefront of political events—in universities, especially in Tehran, to organize protests and expand the uprising via their assemblies and sit-down strikes. Like COVID-19, in the timespan of the two days following Jina’s death, the uprising spread across the whole country; so far, the oppressed classes have fought with tooth and nail against the regime’s repressive forces in more than 80 cities across the country.

Because we have entered an explicitly revolutionary stage, the street conflicts between the protestors on the one hand and the police and Basij (the militia organization of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps) on the other have become less “one-sided” than before. People have realized that, with social cooperation, solidarity, and practice, they too can exhaust the repressive forces and finally shut them down. »



Young people especially are learning various methods of self-defense, such as making a “handmade nail screw” that punctures the tire of police motorcycles and prevents them from moving freely to carry out attacks. Independent doctors are announcing their mobile numbers on the internet to help those who are injured in the protests, as going to the hospital is often dangerous. There are also calls for “neighborhood organization,” a local structure to connect those who live in the same area.

Given that the ideological apparatus of the government has become dysfunctional for most of the society, the chief medium through which the Islamic Republic continues to reproduce itself is the repressive apparatus that, during this uprising alone, has already killed 80 people and arrested thousands of protesters.<sup>10</sup> Let us not forget that this occurred during an internet blackout, a brutal method that the Islamic Republic has repeatedly employed in the past, especially during the 2019 November uprising—Abaan-e-Khoonin [“Bloody November”]—when “the authorities completely shut down the internet for four successive days, transforming the country into a big black box, slaughtering the people with impunity.”<sup>11</sup> Jina Amini also represents and calls to memory the hundreds of martyrs who were murdered at that time.<sup>12</sup> Those who support the Islamic Republic on the grounds that it is an anti-imperialist force in global geopolitics conveniently ignore that it murders its own people on the streets, imprisons them illegally, and tortures them to extract false confessions.

Now, after ten days, the prospects of this cycle of spontaneous mass uprising depend on the more organized forms of resistance, especially the strike of workers, teachers, and students. In Iran, unlike the most advanced capitalist societies, unions and syndicates are not integrated into the capitalist system. Unions do not simply aim to realize their own particular demands, thus hindering the formation of a more radical movement. Rather, they seek fundamental transformations that the ruling classes see as an existential threat. This is the reason why hundreds of union members and syndicates (teachers, students, workers, pensioner activists) are currently in prison, some of them tortured.

Over the past four days, there have been many calls for a “general strike” from progressive students and teachers and also some anonymous militants who

produced agitational videos using revolutionary songs produced in the aftermath of the 1979 Revolution. Oil workers have also threatened to go on strike if the Islamic Republic continues to repress the protests on the streets.<sup>13</sup> If this happens, then the whole dynamic will change.

What is certain is that the uprising needs new energy, an event that enables it to keep going, as it is very difficult to sustain such an uprising on a daily basis over a long period of time. More generally, beyond the immediate exigencies of the present, overthrowing the Islamic Republic hinges very much on crucial organizational questions that require not only a “collective intellect” but also time to put it into practice via trial and error. The missing link is an organic relationship between the spontaneous mass uprising and other organized forms of struggle. This implies that each side of this relation becomes more organized internally, through the formation of local-countrywide organizations and more coordinated actions among the unions and syndicates.

Most importantly—and this is crucial for international solidarity—the radical trends within the movement need to be promoted, while the reactionary elements should be criticized. The revolution that society seeks is not simply a political one in which the autocratic Islamic Republic is displaced by another—say, a more democratic-liberal—political form. It is also a social revolution in which not only the individual subjectivities of the people but also the most important social structures are transformed. Corporate media in the West (for example, the BBC Persian and Iran International) as well as celebrity activists like Masih Alinejad (who work with the most conservative forces in the United States, those in favor of prohibiting abortion and “regime change” via military intervention) are doing their best to promote the reactionary trends within the movement, reducing the whole problem to the question of “human rights.” They misrepresent the social relations that emerge from the structures of capitalist societies as merely juridical ones. Their manipulative propaganda portrays a reactionary alternative, injecting doses of “loyalism” into the popular imagination: a politics that aims to revive the social-political order overthrown by the 1979 Revolution.

The people on the streets are not stupid; they do not put much stock in this narrative. It is important for our internationalist comrades across the world to support the radical trends and slogans of the movement, opposing the loyalist diaspora who are spreading nationalism by bringing the flag of Persia before the revolution of 1979 to demonstrations.

The problem is not just how to overthrow the Islamic Republic, but how to defend the revolution and its progressive forces after its toppling. The more support radical forces and progressive elements receive, the easier it will be to defend the revolution against reactionary forces. The Islamic Republic plays a crucial role in the global accumulation of capital (via the supply of raw materials such as oil and gas) and also in geopolitical power relations in the Middle East. Clearly, regional and global powers will do everything they can to shape the revolutionary process and its outcome to align with their own economic and geopolitical interests. Only with strong international solidarities supporting the most radical tendencies within the movement could the yet-to-be revolution maintain itself against the reactionary forces of loyalism, against geopolitical interventions, and against the violent integration into global circuits of accumulation.

The future is marked by uncertainties. Yet, class struggle from below and against all forms of domination will remain an important material force in the course of capitalism's history. Of that much, we are certain. ■

## CrimethInc.

1. For background on the 2019 November uprising, see the *Collective 98* statement in *Roar Magazine*, signed by more than 100 hundred militants, activists, and academics. For an analysis of neoliberalism in Iran, read [this](#).

2. For more information on the 2019 November uprising, see the text *Collective 98* wrote on its first anniversary.

3. For more on the question of pseudo-anti-imperialism, read [this](#).

4. John Newsinger, *The Blood Never Dried: A People's History of the British Empire* (London: Bookmarks Publication, 2006), 'Iranian Oil', pp. 174-77. Asef Bayat, *Revolution Without Revolutionaries: Making Sense of Arab Spring* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2017), pp. 2-7.

5. See the open letter from *Collective 98* to ACTA, one of the

most important leftist platforms in France, which published a catastrophically ideological piece from the standpoint of pseudo-anti-imperialism on the praise of Ghassem Suleimani, the military general of the Revolutionary Guard—who not only repressed dissidents in Iran but also destabilized Iraq, Syria, and indeed the whole region.

6. For more perspective on this slogan, consult the interview *RadioZamaneh* conducted with the leftist activists inside Iran who called for a general strike.

7. Theodor Adorno, *Minima Moralia: Reflections on a Damaged Life*

8. See the famous photo taken in Tehran, a few minutes after midnight, in which three women, joining hands, wave their scarves in the air behind burning barricades.

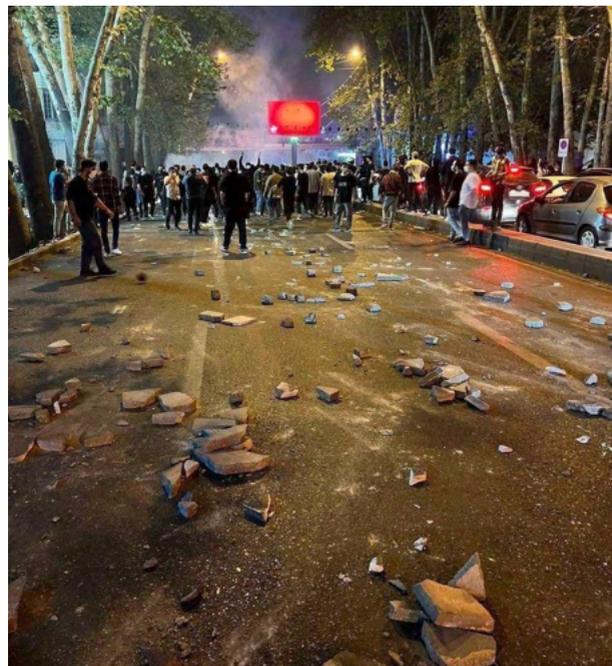
9. See, for example, this viral video in which women burn their scarves and dance around a fire. For some Iranian feminists, this was reminiscent of the witches before the rise of capitalism.

10. For statistics detailing the killings and arrests in Kurdistan, consult [this report](#).

11. As discussed in the statement that appeared via *ROAR Magazine*.

12. *304 to 1500* The real number of victims is not clear. Amnesty International confirms that at least 304 people were killed, while Reuters reports 1500 people.

13. For an analysis of the recent strike by oil workers, see Iman Ganji and Jose Rosales, "The Bitter Experience of Workers in Iran—A Letter from Comrades."



## Kurdish Left Feminists on the Feminist Uprising in Iran

**A statement written and signed by leftist feminists from Kurdistan on the current feminist insurrection in Iran.**

You are hearing our voice from Kurdistan. This is a collective voice of leftists and marginalized feminists from a geography whose history is marked by discrimination, imprisonment, torture, execution, and exile. This has been the case since the early days of the 1979 Revolution. We are Kurdish women and queer people who inherited a history that is not only full of violence but also of struggle and resistance. We have always had to fight on multiple fronts: in one battleground, against the patriarchy of Kurdish and non-Kurdish men, and in the other one, against the regime's Islamist fundamentalism and the imposition of its gendered hierarchy. Against the chauvinist feminists, we have been fighting very hard to articulate gender oppression in its intersectionality with various forms of domination imposed upon us as ethnic-national minority.

Today, we are all witnessing a feminist revolution in Iran in terms of form and content. The Kurdish slogan of “Jin—Jiyan—Azadî” (“Women—Life—Freedom”) has become the central refrain of this cycle of struggles, giving it a new and fresh life. We express our uncompromising support for the struggles of the people in Iran, especially for the women's courageous and unstoppable fights on the streets. Since the current uprising is born out of Jina Amini's killing by state femicide, we would like to name this uprising after Jina: “the movement of Jina” [“the movement for life”]. The name Jina in Kurdish means both life and life-giving, reminding us of Jiyan, the middle term of the slogan now chanted everywhere. For us, Jina is an appropriate name because we believe “Berxwedan jiyan e” [a reference to the Kurdish slogan, “life is resistance”].

This uprising has not only elevated the question of gendered and sexual oppression to a public concern but

also shown in practice how gendered, ethnic, and class forms of oppression can be articulated in a radical manner, namely as mutually interrelated. This political articulation has enabled the protestors to form a strong and united front against dictatorship, political Islam, chauvinism, patriarchy, and the domination of capital. Those women and queer people who have brought social struggles from the so-called “private” sphere to the “public” sphere, from the domestic domain to the streets, are genuinely inspiring to us, for they have shown that the liberation from patriarchy, the state, and capital are deeply intertwined.

Let us not forget that we are at a critical conjuncture, a crucial turning point in history. Jina has become our common code, uniting us in these multi-faceted and difficult circumstances. We see ourselves as part of the social movements that seek justice for the killing of all Jinas, especially the feminist and leftist movement that opposes femicide and queer killing, whilst also taking a stand against “exclusive nationalisms” (be it on the side of the left or the right).

“Jin—Jiyan—Azadî” originally appeared in the struggles of Kurdish women in Turkey and recently became one of the main slogans in Rojava; in Iran, it spread in the blink of an eye to every corner of the whole country. What is inspiring about the slogan is that it can overcome the borders historically established by colonial and imperialist forces in the Middle East—just as the Kurdish, a nation without the state, have done in the region, especially Kurdish women. We take this transnational and transborder unity as indicative of the strength of the Kurdish women's movement, indeed as a bright omen. Just as we see ourselves as an integral part of the women's protests and queer communities in Iran, so too, we utilize the buildup of women's and queer

people's historical experiences in other parts of Kurdistan in Iraq, Turkey, and Syria. "Jin—Jiyan—Azadi," traditionally used in the funeral of Kurdish martyrs, is now chanted in the funeral of our martyr, Jina Amini. This enables us to speak of women's power, subjectivity, and courage in their fight against the patriarchal forces driven by death and enslavement.

Sparked by the state femicide of Jina, the current uprising quickly turned into a movement against mandatory Hijab in particular and in favor of overthrowing of the regime more generally. The movement has been able to challenge, indeed to deconstruct, the prevailing narratives and images depicting Kurdish women as well as the women of other ethnicities in Iran, in two specific respects. First, the nationalist's racist misrepresentation of ethnic minority women as simply puppets in the hands of political parties with no agency of their own. Second, the Western orientalist view of Middle East women.

The regime's repressions and atrocities are not news to anyone. Since its violent establishment in the aftermath of the 1979 Revolution, the Islamic republic's response to all social conflicts has always been repression—namely, the imprisonment and the killing of protesters. Like many other people in Iran, hundreds of women and feminist activists have been arrested during the past two weeks and are in

prison now. Women and queer people, however, have shown that fear can no longer prevent them from participating in the various movements growing in society. They can and already have become the pioneers of overthrowing masculine dictators and oligarchs in the region as a whole.

What is happening now in Iran promises the beginning of a new historical era of fighting against violence, fundamentalism, and deprivation of the right to life. We consider ourselves part of this movement, inviting the leftist and feminist/queer groups throughout the region and the Global South to join us in this war. We are calling for Kurdish, Turkish, Arab, and Baloch feminists to join us in order to redefine the intersectionality of the various forms of domination imposed upon all of us in a progressive manner, namely: beyond the patriarchal formulations of ethnic oppression. We also call for the anti-capitalist and anti-racist feminists in the "West" and other part of the world to support our cause and stand beside us. The ideals of freedom and emancipation cannot be realized without reclaiming the right to our lives; this is what precisely echoes in Jin—Jiyan—Azadi. Our feminist revolution is following this slogan very carefully, thereby demanding a genuinely global solidarity for its realization in practice.

*The original statement can be found here: [www.tribunezamaneh.com/archives/149800](http://www.tribunezamaneh.com/archives/149800)*



## THE IRANIAN WOMEN ARE BETTER OFF ON THEIR OWN, WITHOUT THE MAINSTREAM “SOLIDARITY” FROM THE WEST

It’s been two weeks that I haven’t been able to take my eyes from my laptop and mobile screens -- the only means connecting me to Iran right now. I’ve spent countless hours watching videos of protests happening in my hometown and cities I have lived in, recognizing some of the streets, shops and places – familiar scenes, vivid reminders of big or small riots in the past.

I find it increasingly harder to get any work done or sleep without waking up with fast heartbeat. It’s nerve-wrecking to watch your sisters getting beaten up by the police and plain cloths thugs, from the safety of your home here in Europe. You don’t get to be a part of their struggle; guilt and solitude is all you get.

However, joining the rallies organized by the exiled groups in Europe would make me feel even more guilty, guilty of standing in line with those who have constantly worked to strengthen oppression on Iranians and intensify their pain. The very same groups are now organizing rallies pretending to support the protests, but in fact are highjacking an original struggle to use it to receive more funding from their masters.

Among the prominent opposition group organizing rallies in exile is the MEK or (*People’s Mojahedeen*), a cult like organization, funded by both Saudis, Israel and US Neo-Cons and trained by Mossad.<sup>1</sup> Over the past years they have constantly lobbied with EU and US politicians for imposing more sanctions on Iran. Along with their bosses they

have tried to hammer down the claim that sanctions only target the ruling elites, but in fact, the sanctions have wrecked millions of Iranian lives. In contrast to their claim, the country hasn’t been able to buy vital medicine such as chemotherapy drugs for cancer and blood clotting agents for haemophiliacs.<sup>2</sup> COVID-19 vaccine deliveries were delayed for months due to embargoes, costing tens of thousands of lives.

In a speech at a MEK convention, Trump’s ex-lawyer Rudi Giuliani, who also has represented this sect for years, described the effect of sanctions as such:<sup>3</sup>

“The sanctions are working...we see signs of young men and women saying, give me some food, we see signs of men trying to sell their internal organs for 500 American dollars... these are the kind of conditions that lead to revolution, god willing, a nonviolent one!”

And indeed, the sanctions have made the riots more frequent, but less likely to succeed. Workers are no longer able to join the strikes, for fear of starving to death. Millions of people are simply too poor to organize themselves. Most Iranians cannot afford to mobilize for weeks or months. Those who impose sanctions on Iran don’t want progressive revolutions to succeed, they’re seeking civil war and periodic clashes of attrition.

In the rallies all over Europe and the US, monarchists who aim to bring back the son of

Shah, are visibly active. Together with MEK, they have called for more sanctions and even military intervention in Iran, with their leaders frequently appearing in right-wing Israeli media. These pan-Iranist fascists call themselves Aryans and praise the ousted king, Mohammadreza Pahlavi for cracking down on Kurds and other peoples in Iran.

And there is also the much-celebrated “feminist” icon, Masih Alinejad. She is seen these days on almost every Western TV channel calling for the world’s right-wing and left-wing feminists to support Iranian women. She laments about how people who protested George Floyd death, are now neglecting Iranians’ struggle and then she claims that Iranians are happy about the sanction and are asking for more.

The reporters who interview this self-proclaimed leader, do not bother to google her name to see her photo shaking hands with Mike Pompeo and find about that she publicly received about \$500,000<sup>4</sup> in funds to legitimize sanctions, that’s in addition to prizes she receives, and the money she makes by sticking her online “campaign’s” logo to the videos of protests and selling them to news agencies and media.

Each one of these groups have an army of trolls who are quick to harass anyone who calls on their lies or has a slightly different opinion with the most sexist slurs and death threats. For them, whoever dares to disagree is a regime apologist, a traitor and deserves to be hanged. Leftists are their favourite pray. But they target pretty much everyone, from artists and film makers who dare to work under Islamic republic and the Hijabi girls who recently kicked off a campaign against the compulsory Hijab. Iranian women do not need solidarity from these gangs. They have autonomously been fighting against the humiliating morality police for years. They have been thrown in jail, risked their lives and gave up their safety. They have even created their own symbols and actions. Their entire life is resistance, they have managed to push the religious hardliners back one step at a time.

On a busy street in Tehran, Vida Movahedi,<sup>5</sup> became a symbol of defying compulsory Hijab for quietly standing on a metal utilities box and quietly waving her white scarf from a stick. She refused to align herself, or even speak to fake activist like Massih Alinejad. Fhrad Meysami, a teacher imprisoned for protesting against Hijab law went on a long, life-threatening hunger strike in prison in 2019, demanding for the dissolution of morality police. But after foreign politicians and the so-called human rights organizations began to use his struggle to legitimize themselves, he sent out an open letter, denouncing all of them, including the US president.<sup>6</sup>

These scenes of activism never get any attention from the mainstream western media, which in end, doesn’t do any good rather than giving the regime more excuses to clamp down on the truthful struggles. The exiled “freedom fighters” know that very well, this why every time a bottom-up movement unfolds in Iran this is the scenario they try to implement: They rush to claim the movement for their own: MEK says they have sent their clandestine members to organize the protests, the son of Pahlavi issues an statement in support of them, and people like Massih Alinejad film themselves crying while urging the protesters to keep fighting. In return, the regime violently stifles the movement, linking it to foreign agents who seek to destabilize the country. As a result, people get hurt, killed and imprisoned. Islamic Republic and the exiled opposition are both happy, their points are proven. »



MASIH ALINEJAD WITH SEC. OF STATE MIKE POMPEO, FEB, 2019 (PHOTO: U.S. STATE DEPT.)

I refuse to join people who represent a spitting image of the Islamic republic in fascism, corruption and totalitarianism. They work hand in hand with the government in Iran to polarize the country along religious lines and create another Syria there. They, and the Islamic Republic regime are trying to destroy any chance of a progressive, collective action to take momentum.

I rather feel guilty for having abandoned my sisters, than to stand in line with those who want to starve Iranians to death or bomb them.

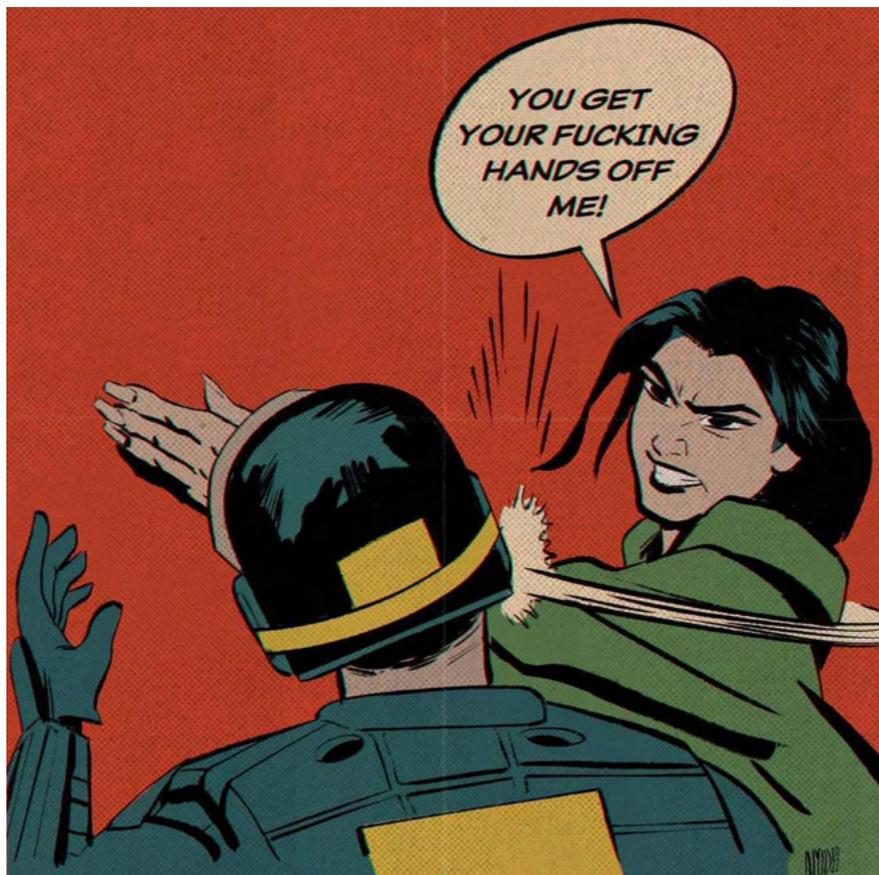
Frankly, none of these forms of exiled solidarity has any significant impact on Iranians on the ground anyway.

Social Media celebrities can try to build a concerned, woke, activist face of themselves by posting tweets and videos in support of Iran's protests and claim "the world stands by you," but the inspiration comes from sources elsewhere than mainstream media and celebrities.

The progressive slogan "women, life, freedom," which is now echoing in Iranian cities streets, comes from Rojava, none of the so-called activists, opposition groups, and celebrities "supporting" the protests mention that. Only progressive movements can give real solidarity to one another, and that's a fact these fake warriors hate to acknowledge. ■

### Mona Omid

1. [www.timesofisrael.com/us-officials-mossad-and-iranian-terror-group-offing-nuclear-scientists](http://www.timesofisrael.com/us-officials-mossad-and-iranian-terror-group-offing-nuclear-scientists)
2. [www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jan/13/iran-lifesaving-drugs-international-sanctions](http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jan/13/iran-lifesaving-drugs-international-sanctions)
3. [www.twitter.com/KeiPritsker/status/1575463312632025090](https://www.twitter.com/KeiPritsker/status/1575463312632025090)
4. [www.twitter.com/eliclifton/status/1214342478071042049](https://www.twitter.com/eliclifton/status/1214342478071042049)
5. [www.niacouncil.org/human\\_rights\\_tracker/vidamovahed-sentenced-year-prison](http://www.niacouncil.org/human_rights_tracker/vidamovahed-sentenced-year-prison)
6. [www.al-monitor.com/originals/2019/01/iran-letter-evin-prison-farhad-meysami-pompeo-sanctions.html](http://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2019/01/iran-letter-evin-prison-farhad-meysami-pompeo-sanctions.html)



## INTERNATIONAL ROUND UP

### China

As the Chinese Communist Party convenes to vest Xi Jinping with even more dictatorial power, tensions are simmering beneath the surface of the police state. Following a wave of arrests against known dissidents, Beijing activists carried out a banner drop demanding food, freedom and dignity, and for a transition from autocracy to democracy. To meet their demands, they called for a “strike against classes, against work and against the dictator.” Meanwhile, the party grandees have attempted to divert attention away from these problems with sabre-rattling nationalism, once again making threats of military force against the people of Taiwan.



### Indonesia

In Malang, police fired tear gas into the crowd at a football stadium, causing a stampede in which over 135 people were killed. Indonesians reacted to this gross brutality with a familiar call: Defund the Police. This is yet another case of abuse in a long and disgusting track record of injustice, coming from a police force that was not long ago a tool of repression by the fascist regime of Suharto, and that still has not shaken off its totalitarian tendencies. As Indonesian law enforcement has – by far – the most bloated budget and largest force in South East Asia, they ought to consider defunding a milder, nicer option to the more radical and necessary alternative: their abolition.



## Japan

It's not often that such high-profile politicians as Shinzo Abe are assassinated. It's less often that the assassins are successful in achieving their goals. Yet it seems as though when a disgruntled victim of the Unification Church turned his home-made blunderbuss on the old man, that gunpowder ignited a mass inquiry into the cult's influence in the Japanese state. One of many ties that the ruling party has with its fascist roots is being severed. Here's hoping the pulling of this thread leads the entire damn thing to unravel.



## Cuba

In the wake of some extensive constitutional reforms that have reigned in many of the government's more authoritarian practices, the Cuban people voted overwhelmingly to legalise same-sex marriage and adoption. One of the greatest injustices that has plagued the Republic of Cuba since the 1959 Revolution has now been brought to an end, thanks to the tireless work of the island's LGBT+ community and human rights activists. Let this be the first of many wins in the long road to liberty and equality for all.



## Mexico

A massive leak of Mexican state documents has revealed an extensive surveillance regime, using the infamous Pegasus spyware, targeted against the country's feminist and indigenous activists. A long time enemy of the Mexican government and its capitalist mega projects on Mayan lands, the Zapatistas were found to be among the most heavily surveilled – with even their delegates to Europe having fallen under the surveillance state's web. These revelations, alongside those that the state had been collaborating closely with the country's cartels for years, aren't of much surprise to those familiar with its history of repression – which has continued under the "socialist" AMLO government. The people of Mexico must have Land and they must have Freedom.



## Tunisia

Countless people from vast and diverse political movements have come together in protest against the power grab by the would-be dictator Kais Saied. Following a largely-boycotted sham referendum to roll back the gains of the 2011 revolution and return Tunisia to autocracy, the opposition to the new regime is quickly gaining momentum, as calls for another revolution begin to spread throughout the country. Backed by the IMF and with the state's repressive organs in his hands, Saied isn't taking this lying down. But facing shortages of basic necessities and the revocation of their hard-earned rights, neither are the people.



## Pakistan

For months, a devastating flood has torn through the Indus valley, leaving many of the people of Pakistan without homes or basic necessities. Without waiting for the slow movements of the government, the Pakistani Workers' Solidarity Federation sprung into action and provided mutual aid disaster relief throughout the country. From Khyber Pakhtunkwa to Sindh, the WSF has distributed food and medicine to those in need, and established flood relief camps for shelter, all underneath a banner that reads: "Government cannot solve any problem, because government itself is a problem." Indeed, these floods were caused by the climate crisis enforced by governments. While we can help each other, we must make these governments pay.



## Armenia

The so-called Republic of Azerbaijan has begun to test the waters for a full-scale invasion of Armenia. Aliyev and his fascist government have made their genocidal intentions very clear, having declared they will stop at nothing less than the complete elimination of Armenians. With Putin's Russia bogged down in Ukraine and the European Union caring more for cheap gas than human rights, Armenians are diplomatically isolated and once again facing the unthinkable – something which the world promised would never happen again. The Aliyev regime must be destroyed. This genocide must never be allowed to take place.



## Italy

100 years after fascists first seized power, the neo-fascist Brothers of Italy have won election and will soon form a far-right government, in coalition with the decrepit old fossil Berlusconi and the violently anti-immigration Salvini. The girl boss of new nationalism Georgia Meloni, alongside a cavalcade of scum nostalgic for the days of dictatorship, have emerged from a chaotic period of political crisis that has brought the defeat of both the institutional left and the impotent populists. Time will tell what results from this. We can only hope Italian anti-fascists will turn this broken system upside-down.



## DISPATCH FROM KHARTOUM #9

Regular demonstrations involving thousands of people continue. A demonstration on Thursday (October 13th) in the capital, Khartoum, so thousands head towards the palace. The focus of the day was to prevent the militarization of judges after the release of military criminals who killed the revolutionaries in the previous demonstrations. The revolutionaries chanted, “The people want to overthrow the judiciary.”

These cries have no end or deterrent, neither the militarization of the judiciary, nor political maliciousness, nor the UN Security Council, nor the bullets of proof, nor the malice of the Islamic movement.

Our slogan will be raised in large demonstrations such as next October 25, all walls will be decorated with the liberation slogan, and it will be raised above the police armoured vehicles and above the palace on Victory Day. As for the small demonstrations, we



One such revolutionary event in Al-Kalakla area of Khartoum. Saw hundreds gather. The police tried to intervene but were forced to flee.

The capitalist system is collapsing. Our revolution is a cumulative action since the coup of the Islamic movement in 1989 in the month of June. The revolutionaries were a minority. With the broadcast of revolutionary action, the September revolution erupted in 2013. Then came the December revolution of year 2018 and until the moment it continues, and the revolution has become a daily practice. It has become an addiction to us until the rule of the individual is overthrown and the people rule themselves. We will not accept any political settlement and we will fight until the last breath. And the revolution here has become of all generations. Children go out in demonstrations. It will be from generation to generation until victory. ■

**Sudanese Anarchists' Gathering**  
(Mild editing from Organise)



## THE CONFLICT IN UKRAINE CONTINUES

When the Russian Armed Forces invaded Ukraine in February 2022, many considered it to be a foregone conclusion. The larger imperialist power was surely going to steam-roll its smaller, weaker neighbour, in a blitzkrieg that Europe had not seen in decades. Pushing in from all sides, emblazoned with the letter “Z”, the Russian forces looked set to capture Kyiv within weeks. But that’s not what happened.

Instead the northern front quickly collapsed, unable to break the Ukrainian defences and quickly exhausting their own supply lines. The war shifted to the eastern and southern fronts, where the Russian federation had captured large amounts of territory, primed for annexation into the empire. This too was assumed to be a foregone conclusion. Yet a massive counteroffensive managed to recapture all of Kharkiv oblast and push into Donbas, the “hero city” of Huliaipole (Nestor Makhno’s hometown) held out against constant Russian assaults into Zaporizhzhia oblast, and the front at Kherson is beginning to give way. Our own anarchist comrades have themselves moved to these fronts, where they aim to put their anti-authoritarianism and anti-imperialism into practice against those that brought war to their land.

Everywhere that the Russian forces have been pushed back from, mass graves and scenes of massacres have been discovered, leading many to consider the campaign a genocidal one. Towns and cities all over the country have been under constant bombardment for months, driving millions of people to seek refuge abroad, while thousands more have been killed by missiles and bombs. This is what Ukrainians are facing. This is what they are fighting.



Meanwhile, Putin and his cronies have been getting desperate. They have begun a campaign of mass conscription of their own citizens, many of whom are ethnic minorities, to throw them into the meat grinder for the purpose of changing a line on a map. They have amped up their rhetoric of a “holy war” against a decadent west, which they wish to destroy for allowing the existence of trans and non-binary people. They have even started to threaten the use of nuclear weapons, which has put the entire world into a state of alert not felt in decades.

The nightmare of war being dragged out by the new Russian empire is making many anxious for peace. But what form that peace will take is still unsettled. Some fools, from tinpot tankies to babbling billionaires, have begun to call for appeasement, intent on believing that if we give a fascist dictator everything he wants, then he will stop. But appeasement is a false peace, one that rewards the initiator of war and incentivises them to continue their warmongering practices.

A true path to peace is not a mere armistice, but one that sabotages the ability of warring states to prosecute conflicts. While Ukrainians hold the line against the imperial assault, it is Russians that are standing in the way of further offensive operations. In aid of their Ukrainian counterparts across the front lines, Russian partisans have sabotaged military infrastructure, resisted conscription and even carried out violent assaults on the centres of Russian militarism. While states make war, it is we the people that make peace. ■

## PHONE BOX LARDERS. A PRACTICAL GUIDE.

Members of North East Anarchist Group, Northumbria IWW, and other comrades have been setting up mutual aid larders around the north-east of England. Here's how you can do the same!

### YOU WILL NEED:

- A phone box, ideally one with a door still attached, ideally close to shops.
- Some food to start off with.
- Some shelves.
- Some signs explaining what all this is.
- Blu tack/tape.

### YOU MIGHT NEED:

- A bike lock.
- Hand sanitiser.
- A whiteboard and marker pens for mutual aid requests.



### What is this?

A community larder inside a phonebox, that works along the basic principle of 'take what you need, leave what you can'.

### Setting up:

Try and look like you're supposed to be there. Wear hi-vis if necessary, pick a time when there are fewer passers-by (early morning works). Same principle as ad hacking.

Phone boxes are owned by BT so there's no need to deal with local authorities. BT were willing to grant permission in early lockdown but are currently much less open to this kind of thing. In unrelated news, it's often easier to ask for forgiveness than permission also to not ask for forgiveness from corporations.



## Signs and advertising:

Best to keep signs short and simple, emphasising that the food's for everyone and that there's no limit on what people can take.

We contacted the local press as soon as we were set up. This was to make it far harder for the council to shut us down, because then they'd look like the bad guys. We also have a Facebook page and use Twitter sometimes.

## Shelves:

It's often better to keep non-food items on the lower shelves because of rodent risk, keep an eye on any uncovered/open boxes of food and try not to leave overnight. Good idea to label shelves. It can also be good to secure the shelves to the kiosk itself with a bike lock - this can be a major challenge. IKEA have great sized metal shelves that fit in the classic red phone boxes.

## Maintenance:

Set up a cleaning rota to make sure it stays tidy (provide hand sanitiser, masks, etc.). Wipe down handle/surfaces. Check use-by dates, chuck out anything unsuitable. It's good to be seen doing maintenance too, it adds to your legitimacy.

If you see cops hanging round the phonebox as you approach to do maintenance...wait till they've gone! They're not going to do anything to help and can only limit you.

## Funding and keeping the larder stocked:

We use Open Collective, which lets you upload the receipt and you get reimbursed within a week or two. Everyone (donor or not) can see what you've spent the money on and how much money you currently have, although Open Collective do take a small cut.

We also use TooGoodToGo – this is an app for gentrified dumpster diving where you pay a small amount to get supermarket/restaurant surplus.

## Questions/comments/feedback?

Contact @NorthumbriaIWW on Twitter or on northumbria@iww.org.uk!

## Where can these beautiful phone boxes be found so far?

Community larders in phone boxes can be found in many places, including Newcastle, Durham and Alnwick! And one day soon - near you! ■



## OFF GRID INFRASTRUCTURE, DUAL POWER & AUTONOMY

How do we actually attain autonomy, freedom from unjust hierarchy & oppression, and universal equality between all people and living things? How do we decouple ourselves from capitalism, and move into building a world based on solidarity, mutual aid, and true equality? Not in a theoretical sense, but in the material reality. What concrete steps can we take to build the world we want to see and to prefigure the social relations, technological relations, and ecological relations? We start by building the world we want to see, right now, at this moment.

We start by taking ideas from prefigurative politics and dual power. We can build autonomous networks that work outside of capitalist systems, to make the foundations of a post-capitalist world right now. We can actually build an alternative, we just have to know how to get there.

There are specific areas or domains that hierarchical power structures use to cement their control over us and the ecology of our planet. These domains have been used to alienate us from what we need in life, to alienate us from each other, and to alienate us from the planet and ecosystem. Building collective and horizontal autonomy in these domains will bring us closer to moving away from hierarchy and capitalism, and closer to the worlds that we want to live in.

- Food
- Water
- Shelter
- Energy
- Communications

We have to break the chains of control in these domains, if we are able to build our own autonomous systems, we can create a real alternative in the now. Some of these things are pretty basic, but I want to include energy and communications because of the conditions of our modern times. With climate change ravaging the environment there is a greater need to heat and cool the places where people live. With the internet and the widespread ability to instantly communicate wirelessly with people across the globe, we now have the tools to spread information and communicate internationally with each other. We can use communication networks in positive ways, to enable free access to a good education for all people, to build international solidarity, and to reach out to each other in ways that historically, used to be impossible. Some people have a jaded view of technology, especially the internet. And for good reason, the current uses tend to amplify the worst parts of surveillance capitalism. However, as with any tool, we have to see the liberatory potential in creating autonomous and anticapitalist communication networks.

### **Everything is like...Connected Dude \*takes another hit\***

Here I'm going to focus on communication, and building an emergency or backup community network that runs off solar power. In a way that works like a localized intranet, but when expanded, becomes much closer to the internet as we think about it today. But this connects back to almost every single other domain, by making an autonomous communication network that runs off solar, we are investigating collective autonomy in both the communications and energy domain. Sharing information about growing food and food sovereignty, sharing information on making homes from the earth and recycled materials so we can make our own ecological community housing. Sharing information on water collection, filtration, and sanitation so we can bring clean water to everyone. These things are all connected. If you take anything away from this, let it be that all of these things are interconnected and that you can build real skills that will make an impact. Starting small leads to doing big things.

## What is the internet? / Building a foundation

Technology can seem like a black box, or like witchcraft, because it tends to look on the outside like a magical thing that suddenly allows us to communicate across the world. I won't argue about the psychedelic/occult-like nature of technology but I will argue that the technology is much simpler than people imagine. At the core of the internet (or really computer networking) are three basic components.

1. A client
2. A server
3. A router

Those three things are what make an intranet, a local network of computers and servers that can share information either over ethernet, or wirelessly on Wifi. The internet is basically this exact model but at a massive scale, literally every service you use today basically runs like this. There are way more things in the middle and people spend their entire professional careers working with this, like network engineers. But at the very foundation, this is how the internet runs, you have clients making requests to servers, and there are routers and other networking equipment to connect and route those requests.



Currently the backbone of this system, the wiring and fiber optics, the massive data centers that house servers and networking equipment are owned and operated by corporations. Short of expropriating those services in a revolutionary move, we can at this moment build our own networks, owned and operated by the people. We can have collective ownership of the means to both digital and physical production by instead, creating our own networks that can use existing infrastructure to work, but also be independent of it all. In building communication infrastructure, we can be sure that our methods of communication foster autonomy.

## Towards a people's network: Circular economies and Professional Infrastructure

First, we should start with one component, the server. And also start by questioning our assumptions of what can and can't be a server. Every computer can be made into a server. Your old laptop from 2008, a single board computer like a raspberry pi, hell you could turn a smart fridge into a server. A server is just a computer that allows other computers to connect to a service that is running on it. With that information let your imagination run free. Most of these services need very little computing power to run, and so we can take e-waste, or tech that was deemed "obsolete" and use it to build autonomous communication networks. We should work at closing the cycle of e-waste by understanding that every functional computer can serve an important purpose. The global south has been pillaged for the rare earth minerals to make this technology and yet capitalists want us to throw our electronics away when they release a new model. We can't waste the earth's resources like this, we can't keep incentivizing the extraction of minerals, labor, and lives in the global south to make more tech that we already have sitting in piles of e-waste. So we can turn every computer into a server, we can also turn every computer into a client.

With that, we can mine the trash, instead of the earth. We can reuse resources and technology to stop the cycle of waste. The same thing goes for routers, there are millions of routers that are deemed "obsolete" that can run open source software and be made new again, or even with their default configs, act as nodes in a network. When you think of these components, think of the things that have been previously ignored.

You also don't have to make the network with recycled and upcycled parts and machines, you can use the newer computer that you already have. You can make extremely professional networks that can get crazy range and support a shit load of people. The folks at NYCMesh (nycmesh.net) have been giving internet access to people who are in areas that service providers ignore. »

They are using new hardware to bridge the gap, and basically what we are doing here is a smaller and more DIY version of what they do. The point is to know that this doesn't have to be super expensive, it can be as DIY and trashy as you want, there is room to move and be creative and play with things that are both new and old.

I feature a full technical guide on how to use a raspberry pi and travel routers to create a network like this on my substack ([anarchosolarpunk.substack.com/p/offgridinternet](http://anarchosolarpunk.substack.com/p/offgridinternet)). Here I want to talk more about the essentials behind the idea, more uses, and talk about how these networks interconnect with anarchist and leftist struggles more broadly.

### **OK, but what can these servers actually do?**

You can make these servers do whatever you want. Which is crazy to take in, and kinda hard to imagine but right now there is free and open source software that can replace almost every paid and corporate gatekept thing out there. The original concept for this network was to have a chat server, a media server, a digital library and host educational content on it for anyone to access. More importantly all of it can work entirely offline, Rocket chat is the chat server I used as an example in my technical article that allows for local offline registration. Calibre runs the digital library that anyone can visit and download e-books. You can host your own social media platforms that federate like an element server (a discord like server) that also can do full encryption and when connected to the internet, can work just like discord can. A media server can allow people to stream pre-downloaded youtube videos, movies, music, whatever is added to the server, all for free and for anyone to access. What we are doing here is taking common services, finding open source and free software, and creating our own networks that can connect and spread out. This is modular and able to grow into whatever you or your community needs.

### **Powering the network / Simple Solar Power Stations**

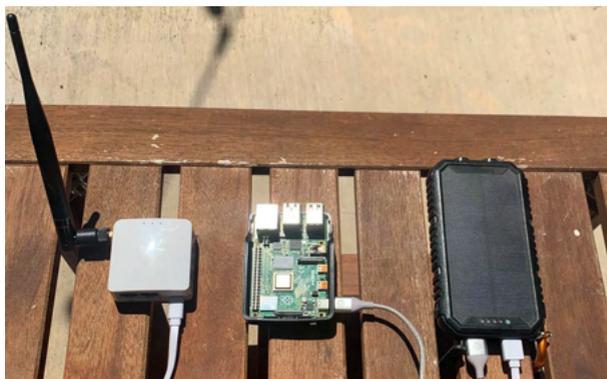
Operating anything "off grid" just means not using municipal, city, or corporate services such as electricity. This gives us much more control over what we do because we aren't beholden to governments or corporations for power generation. Originally this network was imagined

as an emergency network, but it can be so much more. Adding in off grid power generation really opens things up to making autonomous and resilient infrastructure because we aren't relying on forces out of our control and we can maintain collective and democratic ownership of the hardware and the network.

The easiest place to start is to pick a server and router that run off direct current or DC power. Alternating power or AC power is what comes out of your walls, and typically you need extra equipment for that.

The best place to start is a server and router that can run off USB power, and then you can run your server and network off a battery bank. For example, raspberry pi microcomputers run off USB power and can do everything a regular computer can. For the router, a travel router can be used that runs off USB.

Even better, you can get a solar-powered battery bank that recharges in the sun.



There is an example of a raspberry pi server that is running a chat server, a ebook library, a media server for movies and videos along with a travel router to give other people access to the wireless network, and a solar power battery bank. All of this can run without outside electricity, and can stay on as long as the battery bank can get recharged. This is a great mobile setup, one that can even be added into a bag and carried around, with the battery bank hanging out and being recharged by the sun.

But let's say you want to use your laptop, and a more powerful router with external antennas and stronger broadcast strength, well you will need a way to generate AC power. We can do that with a generator but gas-

powered generators are terrible for the environment, and you can't always rely on access to gasoline. So why don't we use a system that can run just off the power of the sun?

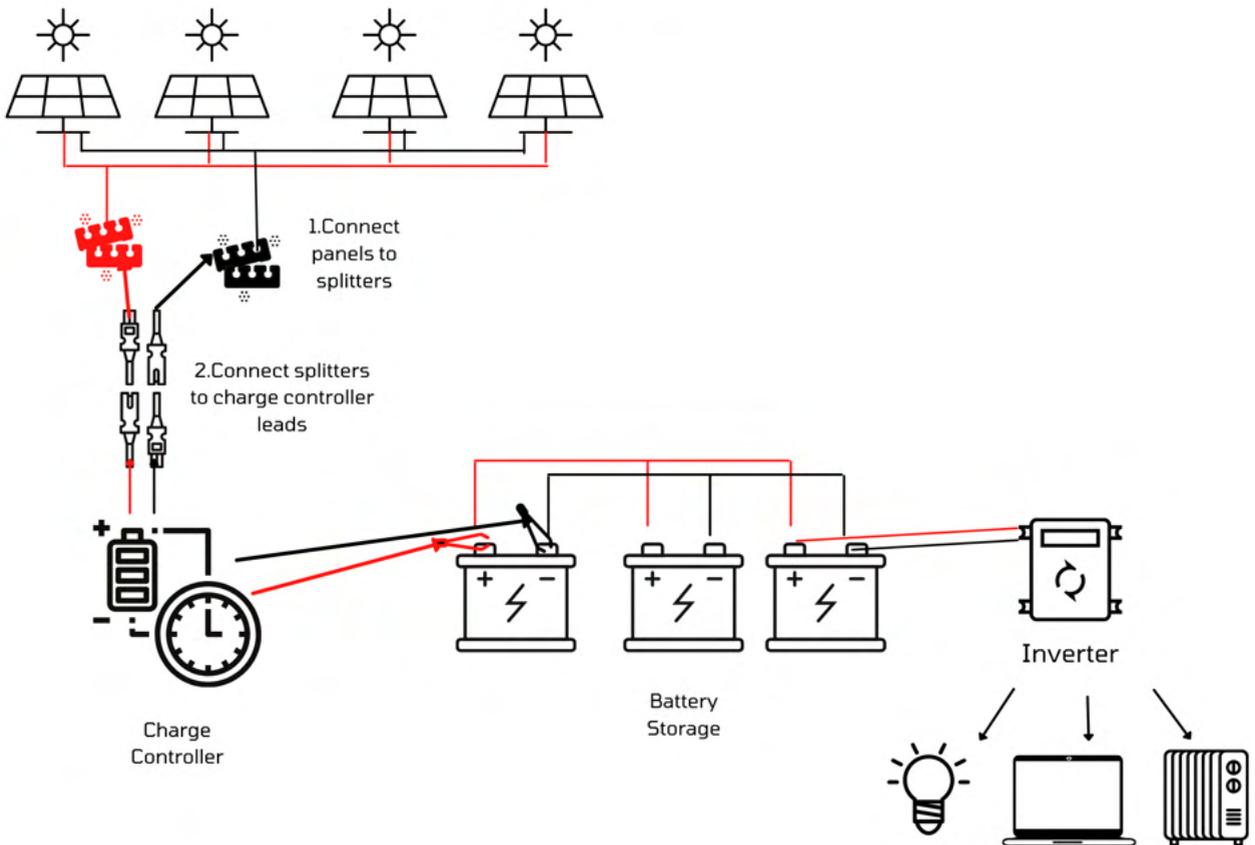
In general, off grid solar setups consist of a couple of parts:

- Solar panels
- A solar charge controller
- Deep cycle, AGM, or Lithium Ion batteries
- An inverter

You can buy off-the-shelf prebuilt units, but for a comparable price and a little DIY ingenuity, you can make a system with almost double the power capabilities that is modular and can easily be repaired without the need for proprietary parts. You can make this small scale, to power a few devices with some extra storage for when the sun isn't out. Or make a medium size setup that can supply power all night and enough for multiple

people/lots of devices. Or a large, community-sized grid that is owned and operated by the people that is fully disconnected from power companies and fully autonomous. So this all scales from something small, to something huge. I have a full guide to making off-grid solar systems that goes into details of all the parts ([anarchosolarpunk.substack.com/p/offgridsolar](http://anarchosolarpunk.substack.com/p/offgridsolar)), but the important thing is to learn the core parts, how they work together, and seeing how you can scale it up or down to meet people's needs.

This is the basic layout of an off grid solar setup. An inverter allows you to turn the DC power of deep cycle batteries into AC power - so you can use anything that plugs into the wall and have power like normal. The batteries are charged by the charge controller, which regulates the voltage and balances how the batteries are charged. The solar panels are attached last, and when exposed to the sun, provide power to recharge the battery bank. »



## Expanding the network

We now have a server that can do different things, that can be run off a small, medium, or community-sized solar microgrid. Now it's time to expand our network by using other routers as nodes to extend the range, and give more people access to the autonomous network. WDS is a protocol that allows routers to basically form mesh networks by connecting wirelessly and propagating a network between each other. Think of this as mycelium and mushrooms. Our server can spread information like mycelium spreads information between itself and plants, by making nodes (mushrooms) that spread spores (more wireless connections) out, which can allow more nodes to come up and spread the network out. Most new routers are capable of doing WDS, some say it in the admin portal. Every router is different and it may call WDS something like wireless repeating, or mesh networking, it depends. But the key thing to understand is that a ton of routers can use WDS and spread the network. Think of your neighbors who already have routers for their internet, when needed they can also become nodes in the network by using their routers to connect using WDS and making more nodes that spread the signal.

Because you are powering your system via off grid solar, you can make smaller power stations with just one solar panel, a charge controller, maybe one or two deep cycle batteries, and a cheap inverter, and position them throughout your community to act as emergency charge stations and to run the routers that become nodes.

### Summarizing the steps

1. Get a computer that can act as a server.
2. Install your services on there (chat, media servers, educational content, etc.)
3. Set up the main router and connect your server to that network.
4. Find a node router and figure out a way to power it.
5. Connect your node to the network via WDS.
6. Repeat until your network covers the area you want.

### What does this look like in practice?

Let's say you decide to make this, you get a computer and turn it into a server by installing Ubuntu, a free operating system on it. You spin up rocket chat as a chat server, use calibre to make a giant ebook library for anyone to access, use emby to host movies and pre-downloaded youtube videos. You install an offline version of khan

academy to give access to educational materials, maybe some offline maps and other geographical information. You connect this to a medium sized off grid solar setup so you can run all of this for basically no operating cost. You have been talking to your neighbors recently about forming a small mutual aid group, this starts growing more into a tenant union as well. For security reasons, you opt to install an element server on your autonomous server with full encryption so no one can eavesdrop on your local tenant union forming. You and your mutual aid group pool some funding together to start making smaller solar electrical stations that can be positioned around your community. More neighbors join in and start hosting network nodes with routers from thrift stores, now spreading the area the network can reach. The power and internet are on, so the network is connected to the wider internet if needed, which gives internet access to other people who internet service provider corporations won't service. So now you are spreading internet access to people who need it, using community nodes to spread the network.

An emergency happens, another natural disaster that cuts off power to your community. Your off grid solar power station is unaffected and the autonomous network stays working. All of the communities servers and services are still accessible. Neighbors set up the small power stations to help power devices and keep medical devices and mobility aids charged. People can chat on the autonomous chat servers and keep in contact, helping to move resources to those who need them easily.

### The revolutionary potential of autonomous infrastructure

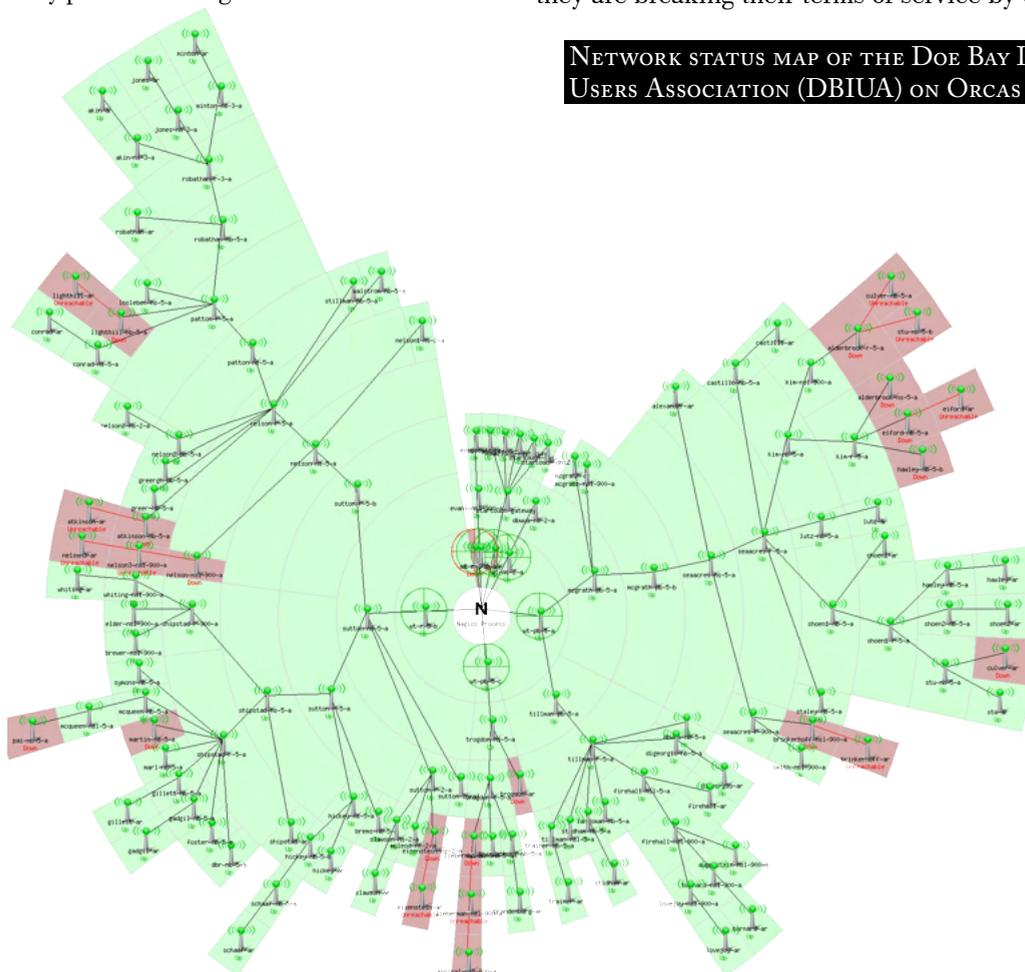
Capitalists and states hold their power over the people by maintaining their control over the necessities of life. Food, water, shelter, communication, and even life itself becomes a commodity to buy and sell. The control that's exerted is basically the statement "you work or you die". Without engaging in capitalism you will lose access to food, water, and shelter, you will lose access to live a decent life. So what if we took that power away from them? We can provide food, clean drinking water, good housing, and access to a decent life without capitalism, without bosses, and without state control. Collectively we can build the foundations of autonomy right now, by creating the democratic and egalitarian structures we want to see right now. If we can take back

control of the foundational infrastructure of our lives, we can decouple from the capitalist system and meet the needs of all people. Let's dare to have hope about the future, to speculate, to imagine, and then take that goal and act on things to make it happen. A revolution is a snowball effect of small and big actions over time adding together, gathering momentum and eventually changing the course of history. It will be over years, with the work of millions of people, but we can and will succeed in our goals to make the world a better place for all people. Including the ecology and natural world that allows us all to live. Even small actions turn into real collective power. So let's look into the revolutionary potentials and the snowball effects that collective, horizontal, and intersectional movements and change can have.

We might start with creating autonomous emergency networks to help connect us as more natural disasters happen as climate change gets worse. These emergency networks start to get better, more people add more servers, the community pools funds together to share an internet

plan and connects the community network to the wider internet. More nodes are added that give internet access to those who can't get it or can't afford it, while also maintaining an emergency network that can work even without the internet or grid power. The community starts making its own autonomous solar-powered micro grids, that during normal times help supplement electrical bills, run the autonomous networks, but also give extra power to the unhoused or anyone who would need access to power. The digital community library hosts all kinds of information but the local food collective uses it to share information on food sovereignty and how to grow food even in an apartment building. This information spreads on the community network and in encrypted community chats where members of a local apartment building talk about making a community garden. While working in the community garden they start planing a tenant union, along with learning how to grow indoors and away from some of the harsh weather that keeps getting worse. The tenant union's social media accounts get taken down by the social media corporation who says they are breaking their terms of service by »

NETWORK STATUS MAP OF THE DOE BAY INTERNET USERS ASSOCIATION (DBIUA) ON ORCAS ISLAND



advocating for a tenant strike. The community has already been hosting federated social media platforms on their own, and these platforms are only accessible to the local community, but also can be connected to the internet at large if needed. People start seeing the abandoned lots nearby and band together to make a community land trust and collectively buy and own these empty lots. Using the information on the community network and sharing info with other groups on the federated social media platforms, people start making adobe and rammed earth structures to act as emergency and transitional housing, while the city and the state at large do nothing. Every space in the area that can grow food and plants is used, more and more people are growing the food they need at home and in community gardens. Clean drinking water is provided to all people, in an area that struggled to have access to clean water due to years of neglect from the city. The community harvests rainwater and uses that to irrigate the community gardens, and to do every day tasks like washing dishes and flushing toilets. Passive solar water distillers take rainwater, boil it and condense it into filtered drinking water, all of it just running on the power of the sun. More protests start happening in the city, as people look around them and see that the government, the corporations, and those in power are doing nothing for the people.

The people are doing everything for the people. In these protests, people with their own servers and nodes maintain secure communication networks that no one can interfere with, their data being wiped by smashing the SD cards after protests. Even when cops come in and attempt to arrest people, they can't do shit. It's all encrypted. The tenant unions join forces with the food cooperatives and the housing cooperatives who have been building small farming plots along with sustainably made free housing on the plots of land that were once abandoned. These plots are now thriving urban farms, now given back to the Indigenous people who called this land home, to make an agreement to be stewards of the land, and help return more areas back to Indigenous people. What was once a car-centric city center is now being transformed into an area made for people, with free transportation being done by local people to cut down on the amount of cars needed, but also to make room for people to walk, bike, get around, and simply live. With more housing, a community food web, autonomous power generation, access to clean water, and the ability

to communicate things really kick off. Tenant unions take over apartment buildings from landlords and investment banks, making squats to house people who were living on the street and supplying them with a place to live, fresh organic food, and access to a decent life. Police strike back as they always do. But at this point more communities have joined in and created a federation of blocks, everyone voting together and consenting to the changes that affect them. Police are kept away from the center of the city by community defense groups. The police cut electricity and internet access off to attempt to stop people from communicating and operating. But it's useless, because the power and communications are controlled by the people. Labor unions stage strikes and eventually take over factories and warehouses where the capitalists produced so much profit. This happens across multiple major cities, all coordinated by federated and secure communications and good security culture. Police try to infiltrate the networks, but they are separated from the internet at large and to get access to the community network, you need to be part of the community. The police, the state, the capitalist overlords have no clue how to stop cities from collectively organizing. They will try killing people, try starving people, isolating people, and they won't succeed. Because all of the true power will be in the hands of the people.

All of this is possible if we are able to look toward building the foundations of autonomy, through a diversity of tactics and methods. All of the things that governments, states, corporations hold over our heads, we can take back. We can make the decisions about our lives for ourselves, as a collective that organizes horizontally, intersectionally, and most importantly equitably. This all seems daunting because it is. But we can start, sometimes starting small, other places starting big, but we can just start to build the foundations. Let's take back what's ours. And put all the power in the hands of the people. ■

## HydroponicTrash

*Andre (AKA HydroponicTrash) is a hacker, writer, and gardener making vertical farms from trash and other recycled objects. His long-form political writing along with DIY build guides and solarpunk fiction can be found at [anarchosolarpunk.substack.com](http://anarchosolarpunk.substack.com), he can also be found on TikTok and Twitter @HydroponicTrash.*

# SEE A RAID?

**Don't walk by! We can resist the raids together!**

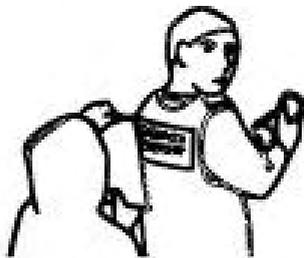
**MAKE SURE PEOPLE  
KNOW THEY DON'T  
HAVE TO ANSWER  
ANY QUESTIONS  
AND CAN LEAVE.**



**IF THEY WANT TO  
LEAVE, WALK AWAY  
WITH THEM.**



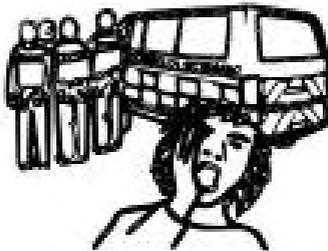
**FILM IMMIGRATION OFFICERS AND POLICE. IF  
SOMEONE IS BEING DETAINED, CHECK WITH  
THEM FIRST OR ONLY FILM OFFICERS.**



**CHALLENGE THE OFFICERS — WHY ARE  
THEY QUESTIONING SPECIFIC PEOPLE?**

**TELL PEOPLE AROUND  
YOU WHAT'S  
HAPPENING.**

**CALL YOUR FRIENDS.  
TWEET @ANTIRAIDS  
TO GET WORD OUT.**



✂ ——— IF SOMEONE IS DETAINED GIVE THEM THESE NUMBERS ——— ✂

**BAIL FOR IMMIGRATION DETAINEES  
02074569750**

**SOAS DETAINEE SUPPORT  
07438407570**

## THE PARIS COMMUNE AND THE IDEA OF THE STATE

MICHAEL BAKUNIN (1871)

This work, like all my published work, of which there has not been a great deal, is an outgrowth of events. It is the natural continuation of my Letters to a Frenchman (September 1870), wherein I had the easy but painful distinction of foreseeing and foretelling the dire calamities which now beset France and the whole civilized world, the only cure for which is the Social Revolution.

My purpose now is to prove the need for such a revolution. I shall review the historical development of society and what is now taking place in Europe, right before our eyes. Thus all those who sincerely thirst for truth can accept it and proclaim openly and unequivocally the philosophical principles and practical aims which are at the very core of what we call the Social Revolution.

I know my self-imposed task is not a simple one. I might be called presumptuous had I any personal motives in undertaking it. Let me assure my reader, I have none. I am not a scholar or a philosopher, not even a professional writer. I have not done much writing in my life and have never written except, so to speak, in self-defense, and only when a passionate conviction forced me to overcome my instinctive dislike for any public exhibition of myself.

Well, then, who am I, and what is it that prompts me to publish this work at this time? I am an impassioned seeker of the truth, and as bitter an enemy of the vicious fictions used by the established order — an order which has profited from all the religious, metaphysical, political, juridical, economic, and social infamies of all times — to brutalize and enslave the world. I am a fanatical lover

of liberty. I consider it the only environment in which human intelligence, dignity, and happiness can thrive and develop. I do not mean that formal liberty which is dispensed, measured out, and regulated by the State; for this is a perennial lie and represents nothing but the privilege of a few, based upon the servitude of the remainder. Nor do I mean that individualist, egoist, base, and fraudulent liberty extolled by the school of Jean Jacques Rousseau and every other school of bourgeois liberalism, which considers the rights of all, represented by the State, as a limit for the rights of each; it always, necessarily, ends up by reducing the rights of individuals to zero. No, I mean the only liberty worthy of the name, the liberty which implies the full development of all the material, intellectual, and moral capacities latent in every one of us; the liberty which knows no other restrictions but those set by the laws of our own nature. Consequently there are, properly speaking, no restrictions, since these laws are not imposed upon us by any legislator from outside, alongside, or above ourselves. These laws are subjective, inherent in ourselves; they constitute the very basis of our being. Instead of seeking to curtail them, we should see in them the real condition and the effective cause of our liberty — that liberty of each man which does not find another man's freedom a boundary but a confirmation and vast extension of his own; liberty through solidarity, in equality. I mean liberty triumphant over brute force and, what has always been the real expression of such force, the principle of authority. I mean liberty which will shatter all the idols in heaven and on earth and will then build a new world of mankind in solidarity, upon the ruins of all the churches and all the states.



I am a convinced advocate of economic and social equality because I know that, without it, liberty, justice, human dignity, morality, and the well-being of individuals, as well as the prosperity of nations, will never amount to more than a pack of lies. But since I stand for liberty as the primary condition of mankind, I believe that equality must be established in the world by the spontaneous organization of labor and the collective ownership of property by freely organized producers' associations, and by the equally spontaneous federation of communes, to replace the domineering paternalistic State.

It is at this point that a fundamental division arises between the socialists and revolutionary collectivists on the one hand and the authoritarian communists who support the absolute power of the State on the other. Their ultimate aim is identical. Both equally desire to create a new social order based first on the organization of collective labor, inevitably imposed upon each and all by the natural force of events, under conditions equal for all, and second, upon the collective ownership of the tools of production.

The difference is only that the communists imagine they can attain their goal by the development and organization of the political power of the working classes, and chiefly of the proletariat of the cities, aided by bourgeois radicalism. The revolutionary socialists, on the other hand, believe they can succeed only through the development and organization of the non-political or anti-political social power of the working classes in city and country, including all men of goodwill from the upper classes who break with their past and wish openly to join, them and accept their revolutionary program in full.

This divergence leads to a difference in tactics. The communists believe it necessary to organize the workers' forces in order to seize the political power of the State. The revolutionary socialists organize for the purpose of destroying — or, to put it more politely — liquidating the State. The communists advocate the principle and the practices of authority; the revolutionary socialists put all their faith in liberty. Both equally favor science, which is to eliminate superstition and take the place of religious faith. The former would like to impose science by force; the latter would try to propagate it so that human groups, once convinced, would organize and federalize spontaneously, freely, from the bottom up, of their own accord and true to their own interests, never following a prearranged plan imposed upon “ignorant” masses by a few “superior” minds.

The revolutionary socialists hold that there is a great deal more practical good sense and wisdom in the instinctive aspirations and real needs of the masses than in the profound intelligence of all the doctors and guides of humanity who, after so many failures, still keep on trying to make men happy. The revolutionary socialists, furthermore, believe that mankind has for too long submitted to being governed; that the cause of its troubles does not lie in any particular form of government but in the fundamental principles and the very existence of government, whatever form it may take.

Finally, there is the well-known contradiction between communism as developed scientifically by the German school and accepted in part by the Americans and the English, and Proudhonism, greatly developed and taken to its ultimate conclusion by the proletariat of the Latin countries. »

Revolutionary socialism has just attempted its first striking and practical demonstration in the Paris Commune.

I am a supporter of the Paris Commune, which, for all the bloodletting it suffered at the hands of monarchical and clerical reaction, has nonetheless grown more enduring and more powerful in the hearts and minds of Europe's proletariat. I am its supporter, above all, because it was a bold, clearly formulated negation of the State.

It is immensely significant that this rebellion against the State has taken place in France, which had been hitherto the land of political centralization par excellence, and that it was precisely Paris, the leader and the fountainhead of the great French civilization, which took the initiative in the Commune. Paris, casting aside her crown and enthusiastically proclaiming her own defeat in order to give life and liberty to France, to Europe, to the entire world; Paris reaffirming her historic power of leadership, showing to all the enslaved peoples (and are there any masses that are not slaves?) the only road to emancipation and health; Paris inflicting a mortal blow upon the political traditions of bourgeois radicalism and giving a real basis to revolutionary socialism against the reactionaries of France and Europe! Paris shrouded in her own ruins, to give the solemn lie to triumphant reaction; saving, by her own disaster, the honor and the future of France, and proving to mankind that if life, intelligence, and moral strength have departed from the upper classes, they have been preserved in their power and promises in the proletariat! Paris inaugurating the new era of the definitive and complete emancipation of the masses and their real solidarity across state frontiers; Paris destroying nationalism and erecting the religion of humanity upon its ruins; Paris proclaiming herself humanitarian and atheist, and replacing divine fictions with the great realities of social life and faith in science, replacing the lies and inequities of the old morality with the principles of liberty, justice, equality, and fraternity, those eternal bases of all human morality! Paris heroic, rational and confident, confirming her strong faith in the destinies of mankind by her own glorious downfall, her death; passing down her faith, in all its power, to the generations to come! Paris, drenched in the blood of her noblest children — this is humanity itself, crucified by the united international reaction of Europe, tinder the direct inspiration of all the Christian churches and

that high priest of iniquity, the Pope. But the coming international revolution, expressing the solidarity of the peoples, shall be the resurrection of Paris.

This is the true meaning, and these are the immense, beneficent results of two months which encompassed the life and death of the ever memorable Paris Commune.

The Paris Commune lasted too short a time, and its internal development was too hampered by the mortal struggle it had to engage in against the Versailles reaction to allow it at least to formulate, if not apply, its socialist program theoretically. We must realize, too, that the majority of the members of the Commune were not socialists, properly speaking. If they appeared to be, it was because they were drawn in this direction by the irresistible course of events, the nature of the situation, the necessities of their position, rather than through personal conviction. The socialists were a tiny minority — there were, at most, fourteen or fifteen of them; the rest were Jacobins. But, let us make it clear, there are Jacobins and Jacobins. There are Jacobin lawyers and doctrinaires, like Mr. Gambetta; their positivist presumptuous, despotic, and legalistic republicanism had repudiated the old revolutionary faith, leaving nothing of Jacobinism but its cult of unity and authority, and delivered the people of France over to the Prussians, and later still to native-born reactionaries. And there are Jacobins who are frankly revolutionaries, the heroes, the last sincere representatives of the democratic faith of 1793; able to sacrifice both their well-armed unity and authority rather than submit their conscience to the insolence of the reaction. These magnanimous Jacobins led naturally by Delescluze, a great soul and a great character, desire the triumph of the Revolution above everything else; and since there is no revolution without the masses, and since the masses nowadays reveal an instinct for socialism and can only make an economic and social revolution, the Jacobins of good faith, letting themselves be impelled increasingly by the logic of the revolutionary movement, will end up becoming socialists in spite of themselves.

This precisely was the situation in which the Jacobins who participated in the Paris Commune found themselves. Delescluze, and many others with him, signed programs and proclamations whose general import and promise were of a positively socialist nature. However, in spite of

their good faith and all their goodwill, they were merely socialists impelled by outward circumstances rather than by an inward conviction; they lacked the time and even the capacity to overcome and subdue many of their own bourgeois prejudices which were contrary to their newly acquired socialism. One can understand that, trapped in this internal struggle, they could never go beyond generalities or take any of those decisive measures that would end their solidarity and all their contacts with the bourgeois world forever.

This was a great misfortune for the Commune and for these men. They were paralyzed, and they paralyzed the Commune. Yet we cannot blame them. Men are not transformed overnight; they do not change their natures or their habits at will. They proved their sincerity by letting themselves be killed for the Commune. Who would dare ask more of them?

They are no more to be blamed than the people of Paris, under whose influence they thought and acted. The people were socialists more by instinct than by reflection. All their aspirations are in the highest degree socialist but their ideas, or rather their traditional expressions, are not. The proletariat of the great cities of France, and even of Paris, still cling to many Jacobin prejudices, and to many dictatorial and governmental concepts. The cult of authority — the fatal result of religious education, that historic source of all evils, deprivations, and servitude — has not yet been completely eradicated in them. This is so true that even the most intelligent children of the people, the most convinced socialists, have not freed themselves completely of these ideas. If you rummage around a bit in their minds, you will find the Jacobin, the advocate of government, cowering in a dark corner, humble but not quite dead.

And, too, the small group of convinced socialists who participated in the Commune were in a very difficult position. While they felt the lack of support from the great masses of the people of Paris, and while the organization of the International Association, itself imperfect, compromised hardly a few thousand persons, they had to keep up a daily struggle against the Jacobin majority. In the midst of the conflict, they had to feed and provide work for several thousand workers, organize and arm them, and keep a sharp lookout for the doings of the reactionaries. All this in an immense city like Paris,

besieged, facing the threat of starvation, and a prey to all the shady intrigues of the reaction, which managed to establish itself in Versailles with the permission and by the grace of the Prussians. They had to set up a revolutionary government and army against the government and army of Versailles; in order to fight the monarchist and clerical reaction they were compelled to organize themselves in a Jacobin manner, forgetting or sacrificing the first conditions of revolutionary socialism.

In this confusing situation, it was natural that the Jacobins, the strongest section, constituting the majority of the Commune, who also possessed a highly developed political instinct, the tradition and practice of governmental organization, should have had the upper hand over the socialists. It is a matter of surprise that they did not press their advantage more than they did; that they did not give a fully Jacobin character to the Paris insurrection; that, on the contrary, they let themselves be carried along into a social revolution.

I know that many socialists, very logical in their theory, blame our Paris friends for not having acted sufficiently as socialists in their revolutionary practice. The yelping pack of the bourgeois press, on the other hand, accuse them of having followed their program too faithfully. Let us forget, for a moment, the ignoble denunciations of that press. I want to call the attention of the strictest theoreticians of proletarian emancipation to the fact that they are unjust to our Paris brothers, for between the most correct theories and their practical application lies an enormous distance which cannot be bridged in a few days. Whoever had the pleasure of knowing Varlin, for instance (to name just one man whose death is certain), knows that he and his friends were guided by profound, passionate, and well-considered socialist convictions. These were men whose ardent zeal, devotion, and good faith had never been questioned by those who had known them. Yet, precisely because they were men of good faith, they were filled with self-distrust in the face of the immense task to which they had devoted their minds and their lives; they thought too little of themselves! And they were convinced that in the Social Revolution, diametrically opposite to a political revolution in this as in other ways, individual action was to be almost nil, while the spontaneous action of the masses had to be everything. »

All that individuals can do is formulate, clarify, and propagate ideas expressing the instinctive desires of the people, and contribute their constant efforts to the revolutionary organization of the natural powers of the masses. This and nothing more; all the rest can be accomplished only by the people themselves. Otherwise we would end up with a political dictatorship — the reconstitution of the State, with all its privileges, inequalities, and oppressions; by taking a devious but inevitable path we would come to reestablish the political, social, and economic slavery of the masses.

Varlin and all his friends, like all sincere socialists, and generally like all workers born and bred among the people, shared this perfectly legitimate feeling of caution toward the continuous activity of one and the same group of individuals and against the domination exerted by superior personalities. And since they were just and fair-minded men above all else, they turned this foresight, this mistrust, against themselves as much as against other persons.

Contrary to the belief of authoritarian communists — which I deem completely wrong — that a social revolution must be decreed and organized either by a dictatorship or by a constituent assembly emerging from a political revolution, our friends, the Paris socialists, believed that revolution could neither be made nor brought to its full development except by the spontaneous and continued action of the masses, the groups and the associations of the people.

Our Paris friends were right a thousand times over. In fact, where is the mind, brilliant as it may be, or — if we speak of a collective dictatorship, even if it were formed of several hundred individuals endowed with superior mentalities — where are the intellects powerful enough to embrace the infinite multiplicity and diversity of real interests, aspirations, wishes, and needs which sum up the collective will of the people? And to invent a social organization that will not be a Procrustean bed upon which the violence of the State will more or less overtly force unhappy society to stretch out? It has always been thus, and it is exactly this old system of organization by force that the Social Revolution should end by granting full liberty to the masses, the groups, the communes, the associations and to the individuals as well; by destroying once and for all the historic

cause of all violence, which is the power and indeed the mere existence of the State. Its fall will bring down with it all the inequities of the law and all the lies of the various religions, since both law and religion have never been anything but the compulsory consecration, ideal and real, of all violence represented, guaranteed, and protected by the State.

It is obvious that liberty will never be given to humanity, and that the real interests of society, of all groups, local associations, and individuals who make up society will never be satisfied until there are no longer any states. It is obvious that all the so-called general interests of society, which the State is supposed to represent and which are in reality just a general and constant negation of the true interests of regions, communes, associations, and individuals subject to the State, are a mere abstraction, a fiction, a lie. The State is like a vast slaughterhouse or an enormous cemetery, where all the real aspirations, all the living forces of a country enter generously and happily, in the shadow of that abstraction, to let themselves be slain and buried. And just as no abstraction exists for and by itself, having no legs to stand on, no arms to create with, no stomach to digest the mass of victims delivered to it, it is likewise clear that the celestial or religious abstraction, God, actually represents the very real interests of a privileged class, the clergy, while its terrestrial complement, that political abstraction, the State, represents the no less real interests of the exploiting class which tends to absorb all the others — the bourgeoisie. As the clergy has always been divisive, and nowadays tends to separate men even further into a very powerful and wealthy minority and a subjected and rather wretched majority, so likewise the bourgeoisie, with its various social and political organizations in industry, agriculture, banking, and commerce, as well as in all administrative, financial, judiciary, education, police, and military functions of the State tend increasingly to weld all of these into a really dominant oligarchy on the one hand, and on the other hand into an enormous mass of more or less hopeless creatures, defrauded creatures who live in a perpetual illusion, steadily and inevitably pushed down into the proletariat by the irresistible force of the present economic development, and reduced to serving as blind tools of this all-powerful oligarchy.

The abolition of the Church and the State should

be the first and indispensable condition for the real enfranchisement of society which can and should reorganize itself, not from the top down according to an ideal plan dressed up by wise men or scholars nor by decrees promulgated by some dictatorial power or even by a national assembly elected through universal suffrage. Such a system, as I have already said, would inevitably lead to the creation of a new state and, consequently, to the formation of a ruling aristocracy, that is, an entire class of persons who have nothing in common with the masses. And, of course, this class would exploit and subject the masses, under the pretext of serving the common welfare or saving the State.

The future social organization should be carried out from the bottom up, by the free association or federation of workers, starting with the associations, then going on to the communes, the regions, the nations, and, finally, culminating in a great international and universal federation. It is only then that the true, life-giving social order of liberty and general welfare will come into being, a social order which, far from restricting, will affirm and reconcile the interests of individuals and of society.

It is said that the harmony and universal solidarity of individuals with society can never be attained in practice because their interests, being antagonistic, can never be reconciled. To this objection I reply that if these interests have never as yet come to mutual accord, it was because the State has sacrificed the interests of the majority for the benefit of a privileged minority. That is why this famous incompatibility, this conflict of personal interests with those of society, is nothing but a fraud, a political lie, born of the theological lie which invented the doctrine of original sin in order to dishonor man and destroy his self-respect. The same false idea concerning irreconcilable interests was also fostered by the dreams of metaphysics which, as we know, is close kin to theology. Metaphysics, failing to recognize the social character of human nature, looked upon society as a mechanical and purely artificial aggregate of individuals, suddenly brought together in the name of some formal or secret compact concluded freely or under the influence of a superior power. Before uniting in society, these individuals, endowed with some sort of immortal soul, enjoyed complete liberty, according to the metaphysicians. We are convinced that all the wealth of man's intellectual, moral, and material development, as

well as his apparent independence, is the product of his life in society. Outside society, not only would he not be a free man, he would not even become genuinely human, a being conscious of himself, the only being who thinks and speaks. Only the combination of intelligence and collective labor was able to force man out of that savage and brutish state which constituted his original nature, or rather the starting point for his further development. We are profoundly convinced that the entire life of men — their interests, tendencies, needs, illusions, even stupidities, as well as every bit of violence, injustice, and seemingly voluntary activity — merely represent the result of inevitable societal forces. People cannot reject the idea of mutual independence, nor can they deny the reciprocal influence and uniformity exhibiting the manifestations of external nature.

In nature herself, this marvelous correlation and interdependence of phenomena certainly is not produced without struggle. On the contrary, the harmony of the forces of nature appears only as the result of a continual struggle, which is the real condition of life and of movement. In nature, as in society, order without struggle is death.

If order is natural and possible in the universe, it is only because the universe is not governed according to some pre-imagined system imposed by a supreme will. The theological hypothesis of divine legislation leads to an obvious absurdity, to the negation not only of all order but of nature herself. Natural laws are real only in that they are inherent in nature; that is, they are not established by any authority. These laws are but simple manifestations, or rather continuous variations, of the uniformities constituting what we call "nature." Human intelligence and its science have observed them, have checked them experimentally, assembled them into a system and called them laws. But nature as such knows no laws. She acts unconsciously; she represents in herself the infinite variety of phenomena which appear and repeat themselves inevitably. This inevitability of action is the reason the universal order can and does exist.

Such an order is also apparent in human society, which seems to have evolved in an allegedly anti-natural way but actually is determined by the natural animal's needs and his capacity for thinking that have contributed a special element »

to his development — a completely natural element, by the way, in the sense that men, like everything that exists, represent the material product of the union and action of natural forces. This special element is reason, the capacity for generalization and abstraction, thanks to which man is able to project himself in his thought, examining and observing himself like a strange, external object. By lifting himself in thought above himself, and above the world around him, he reaches the representation of perfect abstraction, the absolute void. And this absolute is nothing less than his capacity for abstraction, which disdains all that exists and finds its repose in attaining complete negation. This is the ultimate limit of the highest abstraction of the mind; this absolute nothingness is God.

This is the meaning and the historical foundation of every theological doctrine. As they did not understand the nature and the material causes of their own thinking, and did not even grasp the conditions or natural laws underlying such thinking, these early men and early societies had not the slightest suspicion that their absolute notions were simply the result of their own capacity for formulating abstract ideas. Hence they viewed these ideas, drawn from nature, as real objects, next to which nature herself ceased to amount to anything. »

They began to worship their fictions, their improbable notions of the absolute, and to honor them. But since they felt the need of giving some concrete form to the abstract idea of nothingness or of God, they created the concept of divinity and, furthermore, endowed it with all the qualities and powers, good and evil, which they found only in nature and in society. Such was the origin and historical development of all religions, from fetishism on down to Christianity.

We do not intend to undertake a study of the history of religious, theological, and metaphysical absurdities or to discuss the procession of all the divine incarnations and visions created by centuries of barbarism. We all know that superstition brought disaster and caused rivers of blood and tears to flow. All these revolting aberrations of poor mankind were historical, inevitable stages in the normal growth and evolution of social organizations. Such aberrations engendered the fatal idea, which dominated men's imagination, that the universe was governed by a supernatural power and will. Centuries came and went,

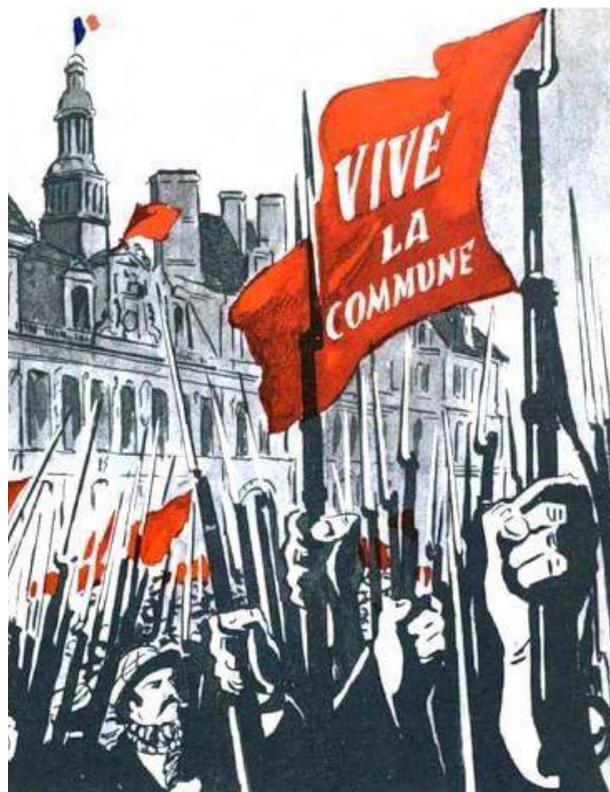
and societies grew accustomed to this idea to such an extent that they finally destroyed any urge toward or capacity to achieve further progress which arose in their midst.

The lust for power of a few individuals originally, and of several social classes later, established slavery and conquest as the dominant principle, and implanted this terrible idea of divinity in the heart of society. Thereafter no society was viewed as feasible without these two institutions, the Church and the State, at its base. These two social scourges are defended by all their doctrinaire apologists.

No sooner did these institutions appear in the world than two ruling classes — the priests and the aristocrats — promptly organized themselves and lost no time in indoctrinating the enslaved people with the idea of the utility, indispensability, and sacredness of the Church and of the State. ■

### Michail Bakunin (1871)

*Extracted from "Bakunin on Anarchy", translated and edited by Sam Dolgoff, 1971*



# A Brief History of the “The Kid’s Are Ruder These Days”

2022

**SIRI STATE OF AFFAIRS** Voice assistants Siri and Alexa are making kids rude and antisocial, scientists fear

2001

Going to church these days is like going to a park or a picnic. Where has all the respect gone? It's church! First it was women in shorts and backless sundresses and now it's men in shorts and tank tops. Is it any wonder that kids today are disrespectful and mannerless?

1978

Beattie notes. “Kids are disrespectful. It's a sign of the times. We can, and should, expect the same until society changes,” he said.

1964

Mrs. West said she thought things had “really changed since we came up.” Both she and Mrs. Alexander said that children did not mind their parents like they did “when we were young.” Mrs. Alexander said, “children are worse today than they were. They're disrespectful.”

423 BCE

- The children now love luxury; they have bad manners, contempt for authority; they show disrespect for elders and love chatter in place of exercise. Children are now tyrants, not the servants of their households. They no longer rise when elders enter the room. They contradict their parents, chatter before company, gobble up dainties at the table, cross their legs, and tyrannize their teachers. -- misattributed to [Socrates](#)
- a paraphrase of a [quote](#) from [Aristophanes'](#) *Clouds*, (see [w:The Clouds](#)), a comedic play known for its caricature of

1954

It is true that kids are less respectful than they used to be? Back in the Coolidge administration kids used to call their parents' friends “Mr. and Mrs.” Now they're likely as not to call the old man's golf partner “Charlie,” and to speak of the lady across the street as “Lucy.”

1911

## Sequence of Bad Mannered Children Ill-Mannered Youths

(From the Brockville Times.)

A few weeks ago, Earl Grey, the governor-general, expressed regret at the lack of manners in some parts of Ontario of the children. The utterance of the governor-general attracted general attention and many newspaper comments were made upon it. The press was practically unanimous in agreeing that Earl Grey was only too correct in his expression of regret.

1868

Alas! what do we see with a frequency painfully significant in these days—children insolent and disobedient—even young men of whom we might justly expect better things—impudent, contemptuous of age and experience, self-willed and swaggering—frequenters of the tempting saloon and easy dupes of vice and crime! Is prosperity to be expected for them?

## 6 FREE RANGE HUMANS AND SOME GUILT MILK

BY ROBERT OF TERROR

If there's one thing, I'm sick of hearing,  
It's that we all at some point have to struggle,  
How long do we sell ourselves lies?  
'Til we're sheltering amongst ruin and rubble?

There are people in worse situations over there,  
Whilst that's true, wealth is actually relative,  
And where I grew up, we had fuck all,  
So survival, was still the imperative.

You do what you can, to make ends meet,  
Your children deserve more than just shoes on their feet,  
A roof above their head, a proper education,  
But the narrative we're served makes that same implication.

You're better off than billions of other folks,  
I accept that, feel guilty, yet I am still broke,  
So on top of the condition, my finances are in,  
My feeling pissed off, now feels like a sin.

Who does this serve and where are the gains,  
It seems obvious to me that there should,  
Be some sort of benefit, to living like this,  
Or is it merely a global falsehood?

Charities perpetuate poverty worldwide,  
Poor feed the poor, under the guise of fun and games,  
The elite serve up lashings of TV lights,  
Averting all shadows of blame.

The struggle is real, so goes the saying,  
Yet the elite's wealth is never decaying,  
In fact quite the opposite, happened just now,  
When the pandemic hit, they got richer somehow.

**Robert of Terror** is a middle aged, slightly weathered poet and writer from the sunny seaside town of Blackpool, in Northwest, England. His poetic stylings are mainly influenced by a disdain for the government, the injustices and imbalances he sees in society, a blow softened with a sprinkle of humour. Propped up by the old adage, ‘if you don’t laugh, you cry’ he seeks to awaken and unite society, through his poetic verse, highlighting the failures of governments, the hypocrisy and vitriol spread by the media and the blind faith people around him seem to have in the afore mentioned charlatans. He runs a successful poetry night in Blackpool named By the Metre, which runs every 4 months at the town’s favourite live music venue and supporter of the cause, Bootleg Social. *You can find additional poems by Robert on [organise.org.uk](http://organise.org.uk).* ■

So, tell me more, about my need to struggle,  
How I should work harder, rather than hustle,  
The fact of the matter is the hustle keeps float,  
My entire life as the riches scapegoat.

It’s perfect that way, it’s capitalism’s goal,  
Without the poor and needy it falls apart,  
And I’m not saying we need to become communist,  
Just be aware of the systems head start.

Your dreams are nothing more than a gamble,  
You can have the drive and determination of a bull,  
There’s only one winner in the bullring,  
The ring master, and his fat pockets full.

He charged you entry to see the fight,  
Between one of your own, and the bovine highlight,  
The bull is released and smashes the peasant,  
The crowd break out laughing, even though its unpleasant.

The distraction is set, the ringmaster unhurt,  
The poor bullfighter bleeds in the dirt,  
At least you’re not him, with broken bones,  
Go back to your job, plug in your earphones.  
Pretend you don’t hear, his cries and his woes,  
As you reach for your unobtainable goals.  
Remember these words, as the purse strings are tightened,  
See how the systems designed, and join the enlightened,  
Revolting against their revolting ways,  
If we rise up together, we’ll see the end of these days.  
Creating a society with opportunities,  
For all, instead of elitist communities.  
It doesn’t even really need to be much,  
Just something to help bring us all back in touch,  
Then once we’re OK, and no one’s going hungry,  
We can once again, use the prefix of great for our country.



## MY FRIENDS ARE BLACKBIRDS

BY KATERINA GOGOU

TRANSLATION BY ANGELOS SAKKIS

My own friends are blackbirds  
 who play see-saw on roofs of crumbling houses  
 Exarchia, Patisia, Metaxurgio, Metz.  
 They do whatever comes along.  
 Peddlers of cookbooks and encyclopedias  
 they build roads and connect deserts  
 barkers for Zinonos Str. dives  
 professional rebels  
 cornered in the old days and forced to drop their pants  
 now they swallow pills and alcohol to sleep  
 but they have dreams so they don't sleep.  
 My own women-friends are taut wires  
 on roof terraces of old houses  
 Exarchia, Victoria, Koukaki, Ghizi.  
 You've pinned on them a million steel clothes' pins  
 your guilt, party-meeting decisions, borrowed dresses  
 cigarette burn-marks, strange headaches  
 threatening silences, vaginitis  
 they fall in love with gays  
 trichomonas, late-periods  
 the telephone the telephone the telephone  
 broken glasses and no one for an ambulance.  
 They do whatever comes along.  
 My friends are always on the move  
 because you haven't given them an inch.  
 All my friends paint with black  
 because you've debased the red for them  
 they write in a symbolic tongue  
 because your own's only for ass-licking.  
 My friends are blackbirds and wires  
 in your hands. At your throat.  
 My friends.

# I DEFEND ANARCHY

BY KATERINA GOGOU  
TRANSLATION BY ANGELOS SAKKIS

Don't you stop me. I am dreaming.  
We lived centuries of injustice bent over.  
Centuries of loneliness.  
Now don't. Don't you stop me.  
Now and here, for ever and everywhere.  
I am dreaming freedom.  
Though everyone's  
All-beautiful uniqueness  
To reinstitute  
The harmony of the universe.  
Lets play. Knowledge is joy.  
Its not school conscription.  
I dream because I love.  
Great dreams in the sky.  
Workers with their own factories  
Contributing to world chocolate making.  
I dream because I KNOW and I CAN.  
Banks give birth to "robbers".  
Prisons to "terrorists".  
Loneliness to "misfits".  
Products to "need"  
Borders to armies.  
All caused by property.  
Violence gives birth to violence.  
Don't now. Don't you stop me.  
The time has come to reinstitute  
the morally just as the ultimate praxis.  
To make life into a poem.  
And life into praxis.  
It is a dream that I can I can I can  
I love you  
And you do not stop me nor am I dreaming. I live.  
I reach my hands  
To love to solidarity  
To Freedom.  
As many times as it takes all over again.  
I defend ANARCHY.

**Katerina Gogou** was born on the 1st of June 1940 and grew up in the crucible that was the Nazi occupation of Greece, the civil war and the ryears of brutal authoritarian governments and political instability which lead to the fascist coup in 1967. A poet, actress, anarchist and deeply passionate defender of trans and gay rights, she lived a vital life, which was cut short by her own hand on the 3rd of October 1993. Despite publishing five anthologies, her works remain little known not just in Greece, but around the world. ■

## Review: PRESS (B) TO MEOW

The opening scene of *Stray* is nothing short of a masterpiece. You're a cat out in the rain, in a long forgotten and overgrown industrial environment. You spend the time playing with the rest of the clowder, bonding with each other and getting yourself all attached, before all cwtching up for a nap. It's an absolutely lush establishing scene, with gentle stormy audio and rich graphics. What really makes is special is the soft gradient in which it encourages you to started projecting your own behaviour as a cat.

You can't talk to each other.

You're cats. So you meow, nuzzle, and attack tails playfully. When you wake up together, the sun is out and everything is just serene and lovely. After a stretch and go for a stroll along an artificial valley called *Inside the Wall*. Playing with each other along the way, jumping around: learning the controls as you go.

Now, silent protagonists are nothing new, however, they are rarely introduced in such an emotive and captivating manner, not only helping you to transition into another character but into another species. The meowing, scratching trees and bounding along pipes are all obvious however it's really hammered down by the more subtle interactions and movement, particularly how the cats walk together and navigate objects. I've asked a few people now and every one of them reported that they had started "role-playing with a cat mentality" pretty instantly. The pacing here is managed beautifully and over the course of a couple of minutes you'll soon be path-finding with natural feline instincts. Suddenly you're hit with a cut scene and you're about to have all that security ripped from you... You fail a jump, slide down the wall and, with your fellow strays sat watching helpless, fall into the abyss below.

These first few minutes entirely justified the two years of excitement from watching the trailer back in 2020. The publisher, Annapurna Interactive, had at the start of the year published the last chapter of the absolutely spellbinding *Kentucky Root Zero* by developer Cardboard Computer (a game which returned my love of story driven games) and the visuals for this new project looked like a futuristic Kowloon city with robots. In my head, I got the idea that this was going to be an open-world cat detective game, like if Haruki Murakami and William Gibson had found the time to pen a novel together.

Let's be honest here, we all wanted to play a game as a cat and for it to actually feel like you were a cat. Whether that was because you're high on memes, have a general love of those weird little guys, or like me, you're still trying to pass it off as a genuine interest in gaming from alternative perspectives, the most important and vital aspect of this game was that you "felt like a cat" and they smashed that out of the park in the intro alone.

Graphically the game is pretty damn lush, the lighting especially is master stroke after master stroke, with everything from it's grand set pieces to the incidental lighting. It's fantastic. Stop and look around at anytime and, nine out of ten times, you'll instantly find an angle which looks like a promo shot for the game. In fact this was probably one of the easiest games to market visually because it is simply unbelievably beautifully dressed. The direction is stunning, particularly the cinematography which has a similar feel to Michael Slovis' *Breaking Bad*. time after time I found myself pausing to just look around.

Gameplay wise it's a platformer - a basic one - which has you bouncing up ginnels full of street furniture, ducts and balconies, finding your way through environments that go between linear escapades and more pseudo open-world hub towns. This is done through button prompts, letting you know where you can jump. Initially I wasn't particularly keen on this system. I found myself making a jump, then looking around for the next button prompt point, rather than at an object. However along the way I realised that A: You can simply turn off the visual prompts; and B: Without this system you'd be guestimating jumps and half the time you'd be falling or scrambling for a firmer foothold. Ultimately, they could have removed it for a better gameplay experience that didn't break the fantasy of playing as a ninja cat. But before long it feels natural and I found myself tracking the obvious spots for these points and movement began to flow much more smoothly.

The gameplay has two major issues: it's ridiculously simple and it's entirely on rails. These two issues make it feel substantially less like an adventure game and more like an interactive novel with gameplay elements. The challenge is pretty much absent with the story line carried along by simple fetch quests, basic detective work, and some very simple puzzling. This isn't one for people looking to have their skills put to task..

The game is broken up into essentially six sections: The **Dead City** is first. Empty streets populated by bugs (we later find out are called Zurks) it's alien and lonely, the emotive counter-punch to the intro. You're guided along a path by a mysterious helper who communicates through old TV's and light fixtures towards a flat where we resurrect them in the form of a little bot called B-12. Along the way, there are buckets to knock off shelves and mess to make. A nice touch here is how if you "meow" it signals that you're stuck and will be responded too by a light flash or audio cue.

The **Slums** and its surroundings provide a solid third of the game itself. It's here where we first encounter functioning robots and get to explore the world proper. B-12 acts as translator as you introduce ourselves to the various bots who are going about their day, as we gather up the information we need to start finding a path out of the city. This ultimately comes in the form of *The Outsiders*, a small group who are obsessed with traversing through the dangerous city and escaping to the outside world. This area includes an extended section traversing the Slums and up a tower full of Zurks to deposit a receiver, which does an excellent job of making The Slums feel like the last pocket of life in the lower level of the city, a last safe bastion in a dying world, albeit one which is the receiving end of the waste system in the upper sections. »



The **Sewer** is the route out of the Slums and puts you on the track of the missing Outsiders. You're now armed with a weapon, the *Defluxor*, which makes the Zurks explode, however it has a limited burst so must be used tactically. This section really scales up the threat of the Zurks as we go deeper into their territory. Pretty soon you're past the giant eyes and nests full of baddies and find yourself on the other side.

The **Antvillage** is a serene pause in the game. A small community built up an internal tower, which you'll use to get to the next section. There is a bit of lore here and a single mission, but ultimately it's a rest stop on your way to the next area, something which I did accidentally as I carried on adventuring up. It's actually pretty pointless.

The **Midtown**, like The Slums, makes up about a third of the game. While still run down through time, it's clear that this area is in better stead. The robots have manufactured outfits, go to nightclubs, practice dance moves on the street and, oh yeah, face the brutal might of a dystopian authority in the form of the **Neco Corporation** and it's army of security drones and robot police. Here you'll also find the **Factory**, where the city's waste is processed before being dropped into The Slums. Along your way you shut down this factory, in order to get a Maguffin in the form of a battery which will power your final escape via a subway system. Unfortunately, you are caught along the way and sent to...

The **Jail**, the big house, the collapsing remnants of a brutal order. It's a fairly sizeable complex where you'll have to rescue your friends and break out. There isn't much to this area, other than the final culmination of the stealth skills you'll have learnt along the way.

You'll also be able to find some collectables such as music sheets (which one of your new friends will play), badges, scratching posts, and most importantly B-12 memories, which provide a modicum of exposition and lore via reflections from your little pal as you trigger a memory. You can also just play with a random ball, take a nap on a cushion, systematically wreck everyone's shelves or just scratch up all the furnishings.

These locations and the characters within them are all well put together however, the game is a repeat offender of one of the worst game sins in my books: it introduces elements of gameplay and uses them once. Early on you drop a bucket into a fan to stop it so you can make your

way through. Like, cool, that's an interesting dynamic that I'll remember so I can fi.... no we never use it again.

There is a really nice animation of opening the flat window as we enter it, do we do that again? That's a nice pendulum motion at the start of the Jail, imagine if we had some puzzling to do where timing might have been important? The Jail also has breaking windows and climbing on peoples backs and a vehicle. Another one shot. It's a waste.

There are also several instances in game when it feels like there was supposed to be something more here. For example, there is some graffiti in Midtown that leads you to a robot who likes poetry. This feels a lot like the arc that had us collecting music, but it's just a dead end. There are no poems to collect and this feels like something, they just didn't have the budget/time to make a complete game. I suspect quite a few elements they wanted to add were removed due to constraints. The game suffers from this in a major way.

While I don't believe you should judge a game on how long it takes to play in a cost/hours ratio, this is the gaming equivalent of back-packers marking their life in a succession of events without substance, drive by tourism fully of pretty distractions to fill the void. How much the game gives you in return? Well, the game is short, real short, clocking in at around a leisurely five hours. It's absolutely gorgeous but there are richer narratives in the Metro's comic section and everything feels about as deep as a paddle pool. The hub areas are woefully limited, Antvillage might as well not exist and it's absolutely wasted due to how little there is to actually do there. Then we have Midtown, which is essentially three locations patched together. The "dungeon" sections, as fun and evocative as they might be, are tiny. The Factory, for example, is obscenely short, even removing what could have been an action packed escape with a simple bucket to freedom. It has taken all of two seconds for modders to implement multiplayer, customised cats (*amongst other things like farting, play as a dog and first person*) and yet, the core game lacks these obviously desired elements.

The final chapter of the game, the **Control Room**, introduces us to a spotless clean environment, where the robots were still working and never developed consciousness. It looks down upon the rest of the city and could have contained a huge array of exploration and lore building. But it's just two rooms, a little bit of property damage and bosh it's the end.

The obvious excuse is that the game stripped the fat and doesn't have filler, however I don't feel this is supported by the actual gameplay, where things are set up larger than they turn out to be. What we get is a story-driven platformer that sits between *Oddworld* and *Limbo* for content, unsure whether it wants to give us an expanded narrative or something more spartan. I think this is why there is an otherworldly feel to The Slum, Antvillage and Midtown sections. I reckon the lack of a budget to expand the world and give the supporting cast more life, makes it all feel like we caught all the robots, not in the middle of their everyday lives - part of some organic world - but simply in the same action they've been trapped in for hundreds of years. The semblance of consciousness only existing as their programmes respond to the new presence, ultimately feeling like some dystopian micro colony from *Lexx* rather than something richer and this is just disappointing. I shouldn't have to head canon this stuff to make it work.

It seems their priorities were elsewhere as they found time to add a bunch of references to games like *Skyrim*, *Half-Life*, and *Neir Automata* alongside shows such as *Gravity Fall's* *Mr. Robot*, and *Back to the Future*./ They is also a nice easter egg in the form of QR codes which lead you to a bit of binary which translates into messages from the devs. Cute.

One aspect they didn't short change tho was the absolutely stunning score. It keeps the emotional roller-coaster on

schedule and makes sure the beats are hit just right. It adds to the cinematic feel of the game, which is complimented though-out by the environmental and incidental sounds and music, truly making the world feel more alive than it has any right too.

Ultimately the game is very enjoyable, though limited. The story has aspirations of having depth while being about as deep as a puddle, albeit a puddle made of something sweet and tooth decaying like Pepsi. At the time I started writing this, it had 60k concurrent players and was selling on Steam for £23.99. B12 and Annapurna Interactive are richer than Captain Kirk right now, so I've got no ethical issue with telling you if you haven't played it already just go borrow the game for a weekend and get it out of your system.

The setting and story conclude themselves with some strong finality but I'd be very keen to see the universe expanded, perhaps *Stray* comes out of the **Walled City** to find a living breathing city around it, one in which it must explore to find the rest of it's clowder... maybe they'll make a more Murakami-esque Cat Detective game in a genuinely open-world city and make the game of my dreams.

Sad to say, I think this is a one-off and a broader cat detective game will have to wait until folk are not longer worried about *Stray* comparisons. ■

**Peter Ó Máille**



## Review: Trainwreck: Woodstock 99

I watched Trainwreck: Woodstock 99, and as much as it is one of the most annoying documentaries I've ever seen, I highly recommend you watch it as it is the best visualisation of that meme (in sociological meaning) where Boomers and Millennials are no friends at all. Also, it made me really angry.

### SOME FILM SPOILERS AHEAD.

So basically, in the 90s, the guys who put up the original Woodstock 69 festival decided to do it again. In 1994, they organised a pretty legendary, music performances concerned, reincarnation of the original festival. However, it was also a commercial failure due to too many people managing to get in for free. So in 1999, they decided to put up another festival, but this time with more enforcement and barriers to make it a commercial success.

While it is pretty obvious through the whole documentary that it is a commercial endeavour, the organisers keep insisting that the main aim of the festival was to bring "peace and love" and make a stand against apparently increasing gun violence in the USA. (They are, btw, incorrect that gun violence in the USA was increasing back then. It was steadily falling for a good few years but ok, Columbine happened in April 99, so yes, it was a problem discussed far and wide. Not like it stopped me from checking the actual numbers tho.)

To ensure commercial viability, the organisers, after charging something like \$150 a ticket, search approx 300 thousand kids and take all their food, water, alcohol etc. off them. They also put up a massive fence around

the festival grounds to ensure nobody gets in for free, and presumably so nobody smuggles in the supplies. God forbid this happens; I mean peace and love would suffer innit. The fence is decorated with some hippie art, to make it even worse.

There is a vendor area where the kids can get themselves water for \$4 a bottle (normal price back then should be something like 65 cents), or massively overpriced food and tat. In theory, there are free water filling points, but there aren't enough, and soon enough they would be unusable anyway.

The whole festival grounds seem like the worst possible place for such an event. It is a decommissioned military airport featuring an abandoned jet and shit like that, plus it is an almost entirely concrete-covered surface with no shaded spaces. Which is a brilliant idea for the hot weather conditions that summer combined with hundreds of thousands of kids who just had their water taken off them but still fully intend to spend the weekend getting utterly trashed.

There are other infrastructure problems, such as not enough showers, water points and toilets. Within the first festival day, everything turns into some apocalyptic hellhole where the available water has such great human faeces content that people get bacterial mouth diseases. Also, the toilets look the worst I've ever seen, and let me tell you that I'm old enough to remember why the squatted East London punk venue, the Poison Club, was called the Poison Club. There also weren't enough stewards and other staff, nobody was picking the litter, and generally, greed forced the organisers to cut corners



wherever they could, at the expense of people's safety and wellbeing. It all looks like they did zero actual organising beyond coming up with a Grand Idea.

The organisers just ignore all these issues, behaving like all this wasn't entirely preventable and predictable. Throughout the whole documentary, they present themselves as victims of some objective reality they do not influence and victims of these nasty kids of the 90s who don't know about peace and love.

And now, the best part.

To help the kids achieve peace and love, they invite the biggest names of 90s rock music. The problem is that they have precisely zero idea about 90s music, damn, tbh if I am told they missed the birth of punk, I would not be surprised.

They organised this massive festival and claim they know what they are doing, there is this aura of legends of Woodstock 69 surrounding them, but they have not bothered to check out who is going to play in 99, beyond checking how well it will sell, of course. They have no idea of nu-metal's existence. The main organiser is really open about the fact that he has never listened to the invited

bands and generally has no idea about the developments in rock music. His friend and fellow organiser is saying at some point that the only show he watched during the whole festival was Willie fuckin Nelson.

So this bunch of 1960s hippie rock fans invite such grand names in the peace and love department as Korn, Limp Bizkit and Red Hot Chilli Peppers. The organisers had one person on payroll young enough to know exactly what this selection of bands will likely bring, and he is, bless him, trying to enlighten them. But hey ho, who would listen to some kid? And ofc, what the kid was trying to warn them about happened soon enough, because, frankly, any 15yo back then was more qualified to make such judgement than Woodstock 99 organisers.

Korn gig is tense, the stage gets filled with unpicked trash thrown by the audience, but the act ends, miraculously, in peace. Mainly because it is only day 1, the toilets aren't shat all over beyond recognition, and people do not get trench mouth disease from unknowingly drinking a human shit cocktail yet, and they still have cash for overpriced junk food provided. But the next day, Limp Bizkit, a band known for their achievements in the peace and love department, perform. »

While one of the organisers says at some point that it is impossible to control 300 thousand people, he's proven wrong by Limp Bizkit's frontman Fred Durst, who very much knows how to control such a crowd. He decides to do so by performing one of the band's greatest hits, a well-known 90s peace and love anthem called Break Stuff ("And if my day keeps going this way, I just might/Break something tonight/I pack a chainsaw/I'll skin your ass raw") A song none of the organisers knew of until then. And ofc stuff gets broken, journalists get pelted with bottles and other random crap, and MTV reporters feel like they should flee while being heckled for their station insisting to promote boy bands by a drunken crowd. It is a glorious disaster, but it is also not the end of it because the organisers somewhat decided to ignore what's going on, despite serious scrutiny from journalists. next day, they prematurely declare the whole festival a success: before it even ends.

And next day, RHChP is the main star. During the RHChP gig, the organisers decide to give away tens of thousands of candles to the crowd, aiming at getting everyone to light them, wave them in the air and take a stand against gun violence and therefore increase the peace and love vibes. It is the first time since the beginning of the festival when the exhausted, hangover, dirty kids who just got robbed by water and food sellers put their hands on something flammable. And oh oh, they do not miss this opportunity, lighting a large fire within the sight of RHChP, who pause their show until the fire is put down. This does not happen, and so the organisers, in their wisdom, have another brilliant idea. They ask Anthony Kiedis, the lead singer of RHChP and back then a world-renowned voice of reason and responsibility, to do something about it. The band comes back to perform, you guessed it, a cover of Jimmy Hendrix's song called Fire, which turns out to be a brilliant choice of soundtrack for what happens throughout the night and is read by the crowd as an invitation to burn more shit. And this is precisely what they do throughout the night, destroying the vendor village, burning cars and everything else they can to the chants of that Rage Against the Machine song the 90s kids were known for singing to signal politely they won't do what they are told to. Meanwhile, the festival staff and accredited journos hide, fearing for their lives. The riot is ended by the organisers getting state troopers involved.

And now another best part. In their closing statements in the doc, the organisers claim that this entirely predictable disaster was not their fault at all. They further say that the reported sexual attacks that happened during the festival were, basically, a fact of life, something that happens because them pesky women insist on going topless and stuff. And that this whole thing happened because, you would not believe it, the 90s kids are "entitled". En-fucking-titled. To things like clean water, affordable food and all this other shit the Millennials, then in their teens and early 20s, unreasonably demand, instead of just sucking it up and letting some already rich, out-of-touch guys make even more money off them.

I think Woodstock 1999 was the first ever recorded public mass clash between the Boomers and the Millennials. The festival took place in July 1999. I remember watching it and being like: damn, I would love to be there and break some stuff, while my Boomer parents were like: OMG, they are destroying the legend of Woodstock, where is the peace, where is the love, how dare them kids! Seattle WTO protests happened in November 1999. After this, I was lost to a straight life forever. ■

### Zosia Brom



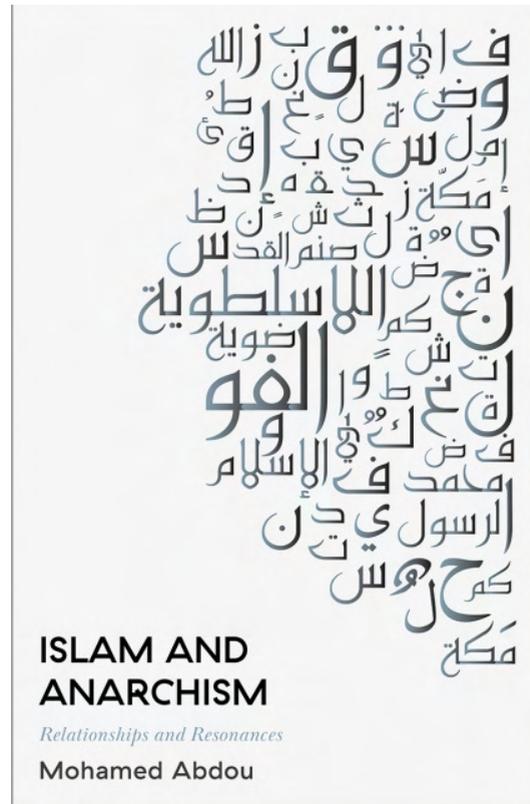
## Review:

# Islam and Anarchism

## Relationships and Resonances

Before engaging with any text – particularly a text with such a declarative title, indicating particular associations – it is vital for a reader to clarify with themselves their expectations and the criteria by which they intend to judge. Of course, these criteria shift as the book indicates the true direction of its contents and certain aspects are unpicked, but beginning the text with some degree of critical engagement is vital to ensure that there are no biases being allowed to filter through.

Therefore, to clarify: before engaging with Mohamed Abdou's *Islam and Anarchism*, I had decided very firmly not to critique from a theological perspective. The reasons for this are threefold. Firstly, I am not an Islamic scholar and am therefore entirely unqualified to make nuanced judgement on any specific claims of theological detail that might spring up throughout the course of a book with this title. Secondly, the aim of the book – as stated on the back cover – is not to provide a justification for Islam more generally but rather to attempt to synthesise elements of it with anarchism and explore apparent connections between the two, and therefore it makes sense that this book can be read in either direction; in this case, from anarchism to Islam, rather than the reverse. Thirdly, and perhaps most crucially, it is clear that writing on anarchism from an explicitly religious position is a somewhat controversial action, and I believe in a spirit of academic generosity with such issues. Sharpening a blade over whether or not the axioms seem inherently convincing to me as an individual helps nobody. My approach, in conclusion, to this text was as follows: assuming that I take the claims of Islamic faith on their face, how convincing do I find the arguments insofar as they address various anarchist positions?



Quite apart from this, it is also worth noting that this is the rare book for whom a target audience is named explicitly by the audience – and it is a target audience of which I am not a part. A white person from within the colonial core falls outside the spectrum of the ‘BIPOC’ audience that Abdou names as priority in discussions surrounding the book. While this has inevitably impacted my reading and is therefore worth noting, the book is by no means inaccessible to, or vehemently against, readings by white or non-Muslim individuals.

With all of these preliminary concerns well addressed, it is the book itself that falls under discussion. The results of my approach, my particular engagement with the text, were mixed. Beginning, however, with the strengths of the text seems an appropriate start, as *Islam and Anarchism* itself begins exhibiting these strengths within the first few pages of the introduction. Abdou, rather rapidly, establishes a strong sense of tone that carries throughout the book and there is an air of learned experience to the arguments being made, as though they had been well honed over time. For the most part, this is to the advantage of the arguments, which are presented with a finesse and a careful selection of quotations »

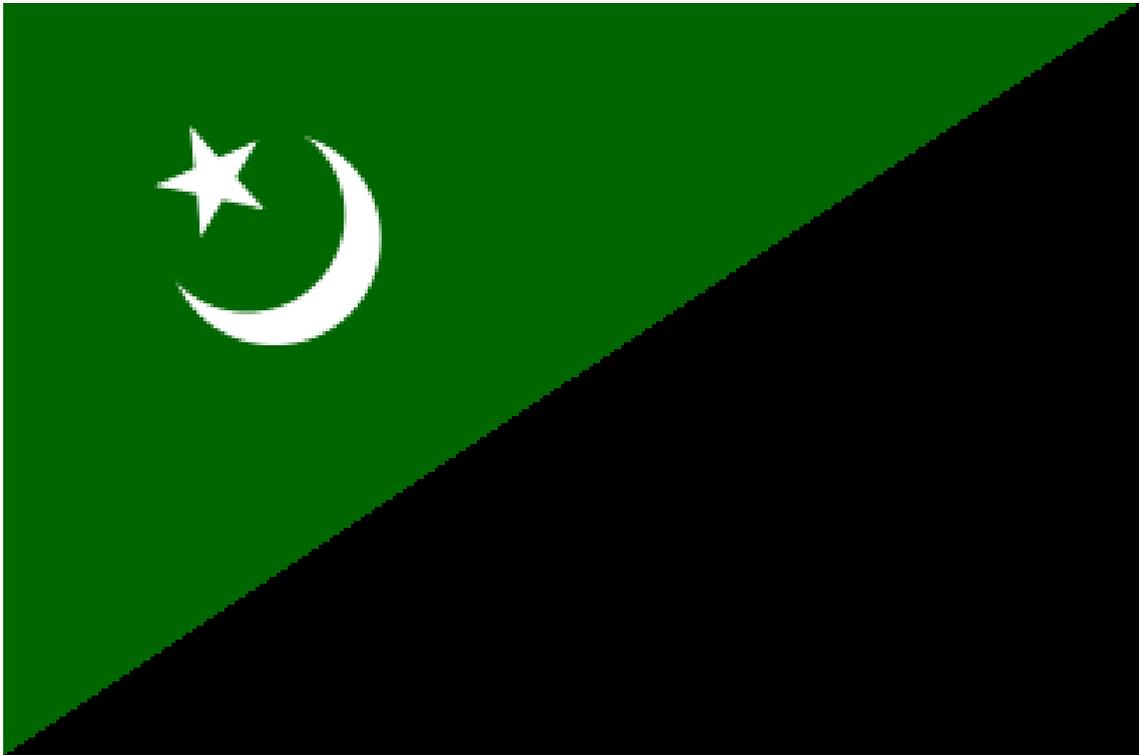
from across the gamut of scholarship, both anarchist and Islamic, as well as occasionally dipping into sociological, anthropological, and philosophical territory.

A second strength of the text lies in the simplicity of the central claim; that is, that Islam and anarchism are, far from irreconcilable, capable of some degree of cross-over. As with any religious or spiritual tradition with a number of sects and diverse branches, this is undoubtedly true; one potential oversight in the text reveals itself here when the affinity of the Sufi tradition, which has a long history of being included in anarchist discussions by figures as 'canonical' as Peter Marshall, receives no mention whatsoever; perhaps this is an oversight, but given the rigorous citation present elsewhere in the book this seems somewhat unlikely and therefore strikes me as an odd choice on the part of the author.

Further, the depth of this scholarship, and a dependence on a breadth of Islamic sources lends the book a sense of credibility which almost certainly would provoke thought in the mind of any Muslim reader; it is hard to deny, for example, the exegesis given of particular Qur'anic,

especially as Abdou reinforces the 'essential' nature of the text and rejects the subjective, interpretation-based readings of the texts promoted by figures such as Olivier Roy, who 'ignore' the primacy of Allah's word given via scripture. For any Muslim reader, this vehement defence of the core texts almost certainly provides a sense of safety; reading Abdou, you are in the hands of a true believer who is not attempting to lead you astray. This is a scholar who is serious about the faith.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the text exemplifies a handful of core anarchist principles in the body of its own argument; Abdou extols the virtue of a continued self criticism, even mentioning a need for an ongoing 'interrogation' of the ideas, beliefs, practices, et cetera, of all Muslims. That this is fitting with anarchism, a philosophy and praxis built upon taking literally Marx's demand for a ruthless critique of all that exists, goes without saying, and the insistence of such a claim in a text which nevertheless attempts to draw broad lines between anarchism and a theological tradition many take to be authoritarian is to be applauded.



These positive traits, fantastic as they may be, however, are not the sole qualities of Islam and Anarchism. Despite the strength of the argument, particular to the Muslim readers who comprise the intended audience, there are nevertheless some central issues which concern a reader approaching from outside perspectives and potentially those from differing Islamic traditions who might have instinct to distrust the interpretations offered by Abdou. The first of these issues, and one which must be confronted immediately for a reader such as myself who is limited to only English and French as a reader, is the concern of language; firstly, Abdou – as most Muslims – assumes that the Qur’an is the literal dictated word of Allah. This is to be expected, of course, and while this will be a bone of factual contention for certain individuals, is something that I am willing to grant on its face for the sake of the review, as noted earlier. The concern, however, is that when faced with criticisms – in this case, the idea of Islam as an inherently authoritarian belief system – Abdou retreats into linguistic defense. Most anarchists, the author accurately states, ‘have never read the Sunnah [...] in the language in which they were dictated and written – Arabic’, and are ‘ill versed in interpretative traditions within Islam’. This is followed by a basic explanation of the concept of ambiguity and interpretation. Both of these facts may well be true; certainly, they are true in the case of this reader, as I am illiterate in Arabic other than basic transliteration and am not an Islamic scholar. Convincing, however, is a different issue; if someone has a criticism that is inaccurate, it should be possible to simply explain this inaccuracy to them (though whether they will listen or not is another issue). For Abdou here, this is impossible; Islam’s authoritarian nature simply isn’t real, and you would know that if you read Arabic. The actual claims being made by the authors cited are not refuted in any more direct fashion than this.

In other parts of the text, Abdou seems to be interested in engaging in some kind of pseudo-apologia for various negative aspects of historically Muslim cultures – this is despite emphasising the difference between Islam qua Islam and Islam as cultural presence early in the text. In particular, with regards to the idea of an Islamic history of imperialism, Abdou writes that while nobody can deny ‘injustices committed in the name of Islam’, these empires were nevertheless ‘effective rulers, builders rather than destroyers’ whose rulership often ‘brought peace’ to embattled communities and often brought

lower taxes and similar boons. That these caveats are useless to the point of insulting is not worth mentioning; as an English reader, it rings heavily of British patriots informing us that the British Empire brought trains and civilisation to India as absolution for genocide. What makes this particularly odious section of the book worse is the fact that it is unnecessary; if we are providing a truly anarchist reading of history, and we are separating Islam from Islamic cultures, there is no need to run any interference for these historical empires. They can be dismissed as horrific and left to rot. That Abdou feels the need to speak in such terms about them belies an equivocation error of his own, eliding the history of Islam and the behaviour of Muslim conquerors into one by mistake – a mistake possible impossible to avoid as, despite Abdou’s refusal to accept the commands for conquest in the history of Islamic literature, they are indeed present. Similar downplaying of Islamic manifestations of slavery occur throughout the book despite acknowledgements of the horror of slavery and the presence of anti-African racism in many culturally Muslim countries today. Abdou, it seems, finds it as difficult as the Europeans he decries to separate the faith from the historical practice, in this way.

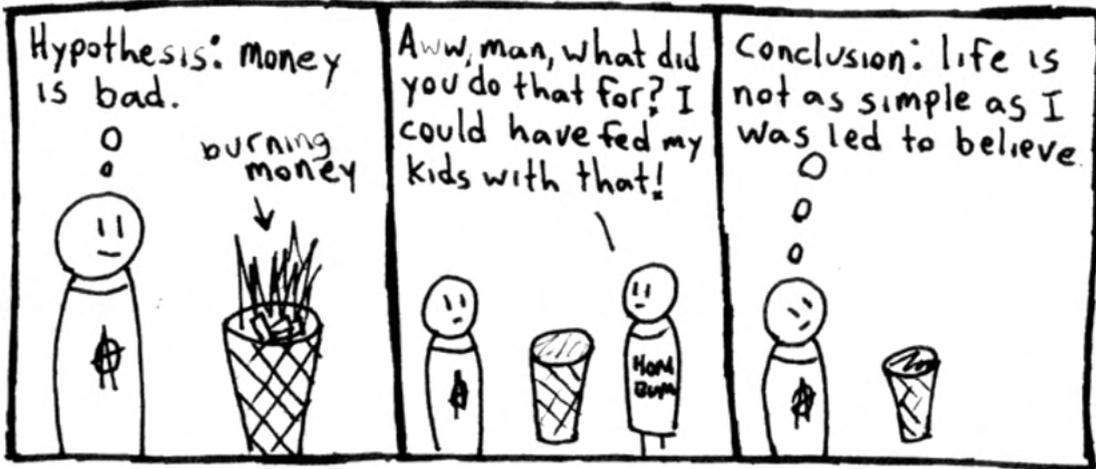
Ultimately, the conclusion therefore has two primary layers. Firstly, that while this text is well written and well researched, citing most of the names I would expect to see and then a few more for good measure, it is not a book whose connections I find particularly persuasive; that is to say, I do not come out of the book believing more firmly than I did going in that there is any inherent affinity of Islam with anarchism. However – and far more significantly when considering Abdou’s intended audience of BIPOC and Muslims – the book does appear far more persuasive when making the point that there can be strains of anarchism that do not run contradictory to Islam. By this measure (and for the author, this is the measure of primary import), Islam and Anarchism has far more success and weight. That the more problematic aspects of the text weigh heavily on it, however, is impossible to dismiss. ■

## Jay Fraser

*Islam and Anarchism - Relationships and Resonances* by Mohamed Abdou is available to buy now from Pluto Press.

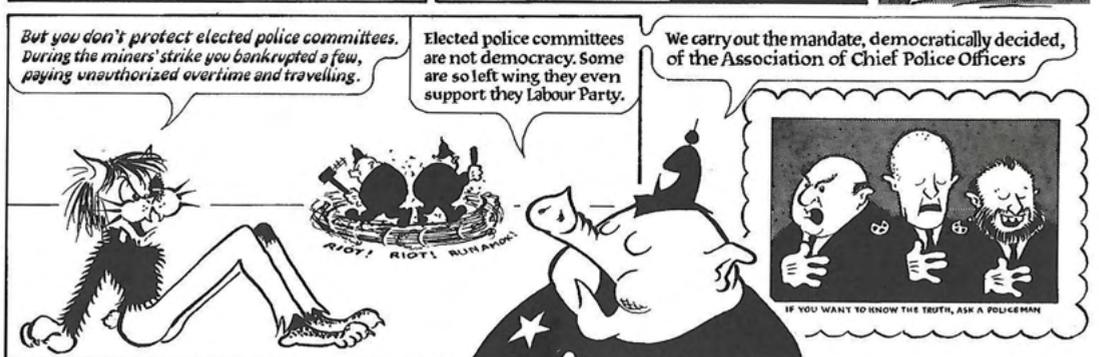
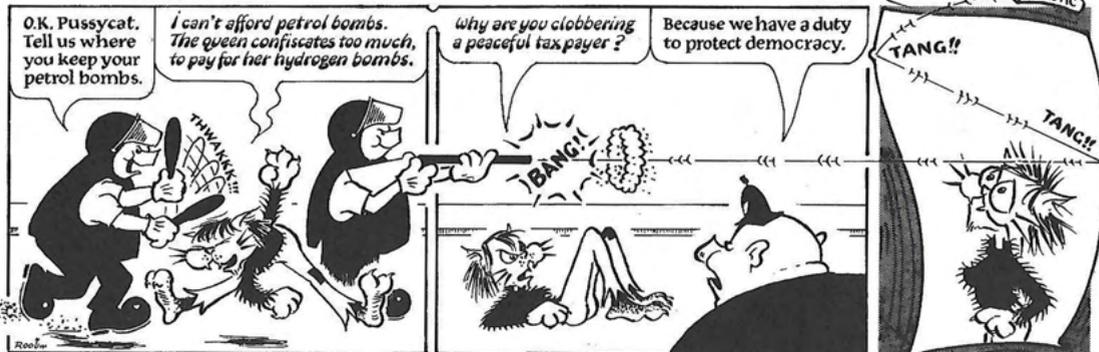
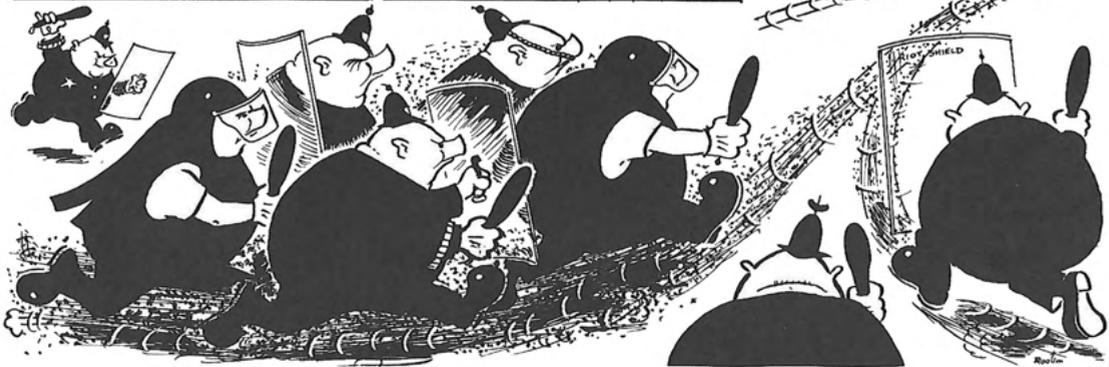
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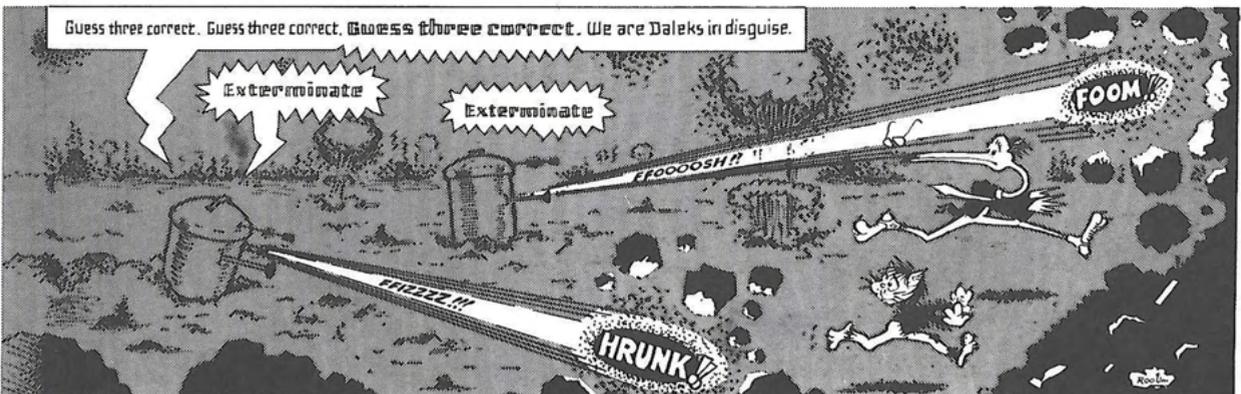
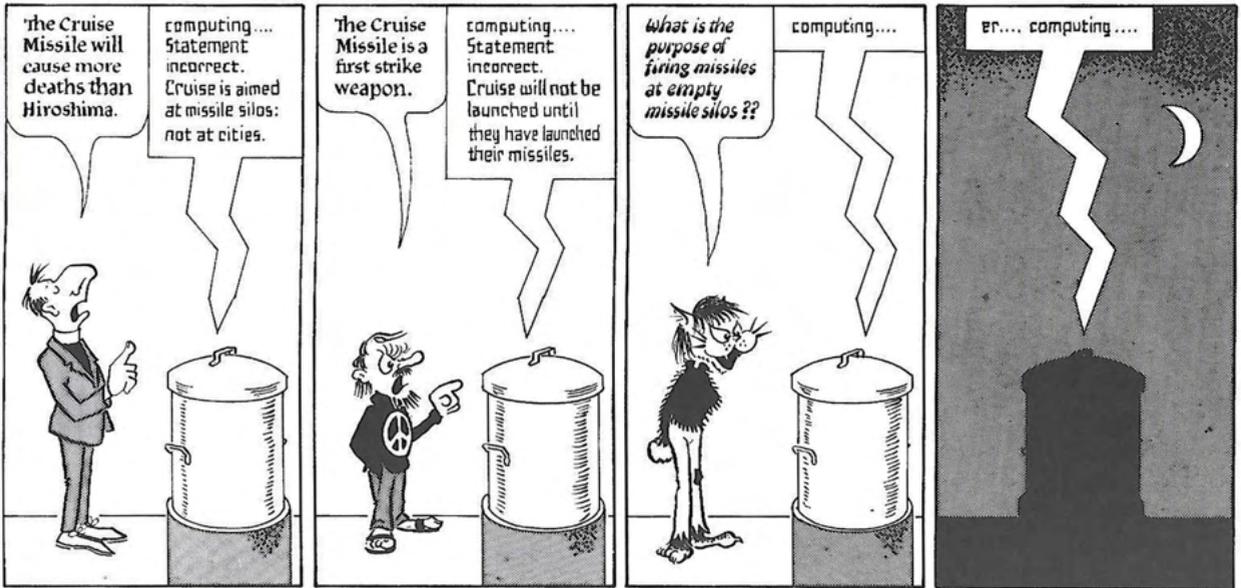




# WILDCAT

Cartoons by Donald Room  
Collected editions available  
from Freedom Bookshop





# 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. A 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](http://i-f-a.org)

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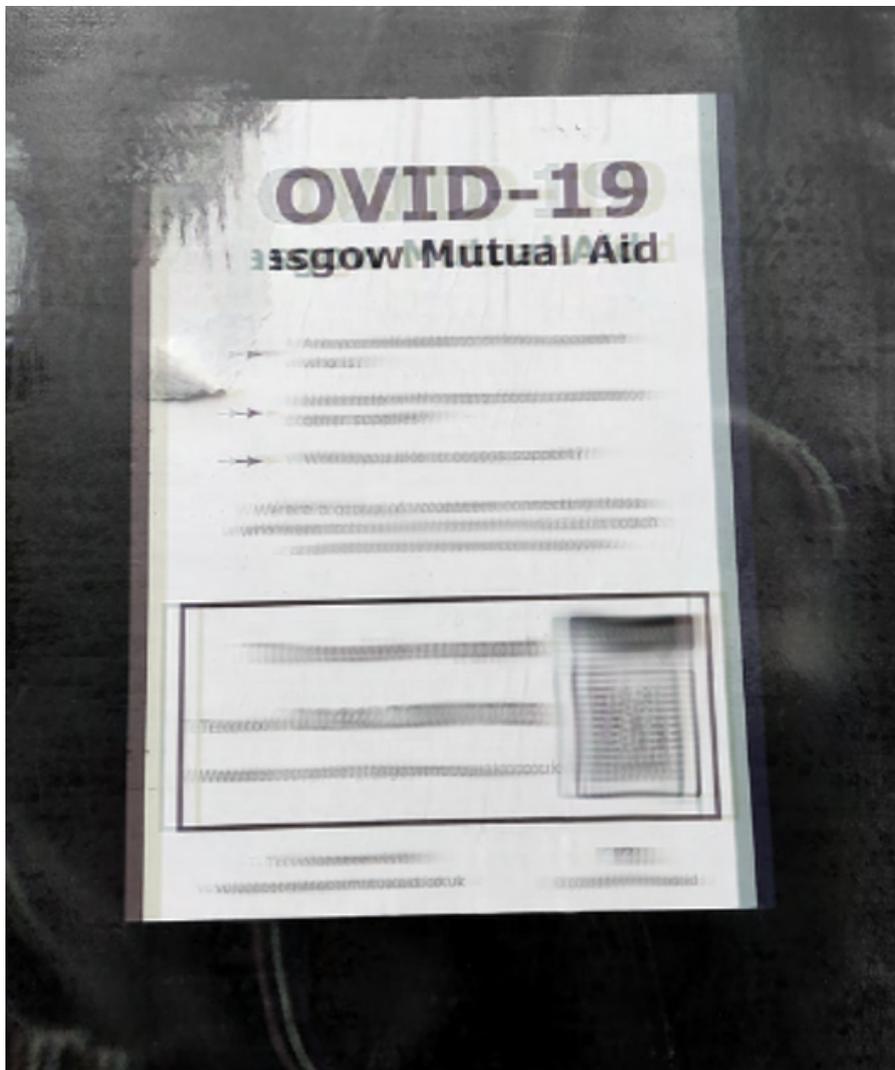
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**WOMEN.LIFE.LIBERTY.**

# THE COMMONER



**ON VACCINES, MASKS, AND EQUAL FREEDOM  
A JAYWALKING MANIFESTO**

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The Commoner seeks to tap into deep rooted, communalistic traditions that have defined various human societies for centuries so that we might end the atomisation of society and reclaim the world that belongs to all of us. We wish to fight the mainstream acceptance of capitalist competition, exploitation, and misery, and end oppression of all forms. We desire to shelter those who believe in the communal spirit of humanity. Quite simply, we want to explore what it means to be a commoner.

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Front cover: "Sign for Glasgow Mutual Aid Glasgow Volunteer Group" by felibrilu. Back cover: "Street Walking" by Joshua Rappenecker.

# On Vaccines, Masks, and Equal Freedom

Søren Hough

The anarchist position on getting vaccinated is simple: reducing the spread of illness protects you and your community. Getting vaccinated reduces the pressure on hospital resources, and it helps slow the spread of the disease. This, in turn, stymies the mutation of the virus into potentially deadly new variants and helps keep those around you safe. The same logic applies to wearing masks. If, as anarchists, we strive to maximise the well-being and freedom of everyone, masks and vaccines are the only viable option in the midst of a global pandemic.

Those who argue that wearing a mask or getting vaccinated is an infringement on freedom should be reminded that our freedoms are inherently limited by the safety and well-being of others; any infringement on others' safety thus becomes its own form of coercion. This is the concept of 'equal freedom' or 'equal liberty' which is embraced across much of the political spectrum, anarchists included. In her 1932 essay 'Anarchism and American Traditions,' Voltairine de Cleyre cites the desire of the American revolutionaries to 'set the limits of the common concern at the line of where one man's liberty would encroach upon another's' and reiterates that 'equal liberty is the political ideal.'

You should not, for instance, run through a crowded room waving a baseball bat around higgledy-piggledy, because although you may have the freedom to do so in a vacuum, in practice those around you are likely to get hurt. Understanding our responsibility to others' equal freedom, we cannot condone individuals willingly becoming vectors for harm to the community. Therefore, we cannot allow those who are medically eligible but decline the vaccine to hijack the language of libertarianism for reactionary, anti-science purposes.

They perniciously confuse the real coercion of having to live among infectious coworkers and neighbours with the 'coercion' of having to wear a mask or get a job. Consideration for equal freedom by preventing harm is, as Errico Malatesta says repeatedly, a matter of course for all humans: 'The concept of freedom for all, which inevitably involves the precept that one's freedom is limited by the equal freedom of others, is a human concept.'

Getting vaccinated also has nothing to do with adhering to government rules or supporting pharmaceutical companies. The interests of state and capital run orthogonal to the need for a vaccinated population. As we have seen over the course of the pandemic, the whims of the government have had little connection to science and much more to do with the further enrichment of the upper classes. As for the companies producing the vaccines and protective equipment, they have done everything in their power to restrict access to the vaccine to vast swathes of the world and procure dodgy contracts from those in power. They should not be any sort of fulcrum of decision making for anarchists.

Make no mistake: anarchists must reject any state forcing vaccinations under penalty of law (whether through fines or imprisonment). Let us return to de Cleyre for a moment, who follows up her call for equal liberty by rejecting the liberal solution to ensuring it: government. She argues that early American revolutionaries believed 'the closest approximation to equal liberty might be best secured by the rule of the majority' which would inevitably end up 'manipulated by a very small minority.' Instead, she proposes anarchists should look toward 'voluntary association of those interested in the management of matters of common concern, without coercion of the uninterested or the opposed.' In other words, de Cleyre advocates for the community to address common concerns in cooperation, and for those uninterested to leave the community so as not to put others at risk. In the context of

COVID-19, this means either masking and vaccinating, or isolating to ensure the safety of others — but it does not allow some to put others in jeopardy, nor does it involve the carceral dictates of the State.

State-enforced coercion is already a significant issue in Greece and Italy, with Austria poised to follow. We must conceptualise this as we do any state-mandated behaviour — that is, incidental to what we do as anarchists. Consider that virtually all states have made it illegal for individuals to murder one another. However, one would hope the reason the vast majority of people do not murder is not because it is unlawful, but rather because it is immoral and destructive to society. Similarly, anarchists should not get vaccinated because of directives from the government (enforced or otherwise), but because it is the mutually supportive, empathetic, and liberating thing to do. Nor should we automatically defy directives as though we were mere contrarians rather than principled actors; that is only the State exercising its control over us once again. In sum: when the government says wear masks, wear masks. And when it says do not wear masks, wear masks anyway.

The perils of state mandates are apparent. As any anarchist or abolitionist knows, adding to the legal remit of the racist prison industrial complex only reentrenches its power to suppress poor and working people and must be opposed on those grounds alone. Consider one Black community in Panola, Alabama, which had to fight to bring vaccines to their area; the nearest vaccine centre to Panola was more than thirty miles away. For them, a mandatory vaccine law would have been difficult if not impossible to fulfil, leaving them at the mercy of the police and courts.

Think also about how many people are afraid to get vaccinated — not because they are worried about the safety of the vaccines themselves, but because their immigration status is in question, or

because they know the history of racism in medicine. For the uninsured in countries with privatised healthcare, fear of potentially ruinous debt may similarly keep them away from vaccination clinics. Does threatening these individuals with fees or even prison really help resolve the issue? Or could it, as some fear, engender 'a substantial negative impact on voluntary compliance' in some populations, fomenting rather than reducing anti-vaccination sentiment?

Yet as strong as our government aversion may be, it does not change the science behind how extraordinarily effective (and safe) vaccines are at reducing the worst outcomes associated with catching SARS-CoV-2, including hospitalisation, mortality, and 'long COVID.' It does not alter the evidence which makes it clear that vaccination provides a stronger, longer lasting, and less risky path to protection than natural immunity. It does not change the fact that surgical (and especially N95) masks are excellent barriers against transmission.

If we accept this robust empirical data to be true, and we should, then we should understand the harm associated with not masking or vaccinating. We should encourage our friends, peers, coworkers, and neighbours to get vaccinated and use masks rather than push them away from these options. Resisting basic steps toward protecting yourself and others during the pandemic on grounds of alleged 'anti-authoritarianism' is nothing but an exertion of authority over those who cannot access masks or vaccines themselves. Mask and vaccine refusal is an expression of total disregard for the poor, the immunocompromised, the elderly, and the disabled. It is anti-science, and it is fundamentally anti-anarchist.

### **Intellectual Property is a Scourge**

When University of Oxford scientists developed their DNA-based

vaccine against COVID-19, the university said they wanted the medicine to be released under 'non-exclusive, royalty-free licences to support free of charge, at-cost' distribution during the pandemic. It was a revelation in 2020 when Kaiser Health News reported that the Gates Foundation had been operating behind the scenes to encourage Oxford to give exclusive rights to AstraZeneca. This tracked well with Bill Gates' general affinity for IP protection; his public opposition to the United States IP waiver placed Gates in a small camp arguing for the Global North to withhold access to inoculations from much of the developing world. With the AstraZeneca partnership, yet another promising vaccine remained safely within the constricting hands of private enterprise. With Pfizer, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson, the question of an IP-free vaccine doesn't appear to have been considered at all. Those two vaccines are sold for profit. The AstraZeneca vaccine was sold at cost, but is already shifting to a for-profit model.

It is important to look at the raw consequences of these decisions. In December 2021, the People's Vaccine Alliance reported that 'more doses of COVID-19 vaccines have been delivered to the EU, the UK and the US in the six-week run up to Christmas than African countries have received all year.' Researchers in South Africa, the World Health Organization's regional base of mRNA vaccine research, were delayed dramatically in creating their own vaccines because Moderna refused to share their protocols with local scientists. The punchline is obvious: more unvaccinated people, and more death. As of March 2022, less than 12% of Africa's population has been fully vaccinated; the figure in Europe is over 60%. Pharmaceutical companies, selling the world on their alleged value as uniquely capable of distributing vaccines, have dammed up the supply flow and sentenced entire regions to suffer from a preventable disease. As punishment, these corporations have received billions in profits.

We are living through a global pandemic. SARS-CoV-2 does not respect state boundaries. It spreads like wildfire, and as it spreads, it incubates in the population, leading to novel variants with varying degrees of transmissibility and virulence. The chances of this increase dramatically when vaccines and preventative measures, like mask wearing, are not observed. And in the meantime, those living in a disproportionately unvaccinated Global South die as a result of direct and indirect effects of the pandemic, including due to sanctions imposed by the United States. We saw a similar scenario play out a decade ago, as it happens, when western institutions like the World Trade Organization (WTO) refuse to provide patent exemptions for African states struggling with the AIDS pandemic. It is impossible to remove imperialism as a determinant factor in the Global South's suffering when disease breaks out.

As anarchists, we can decry the industry from top to bottom: profiteering off of lifesaving drugs, restricting access to medicine based on wealth and geography, and maintaining secret knowledge about recipes that could enable mass production of key medications. The anarchist Vyvian Raoul lays it out succinctly: 'If you own the patent to the cure, you're automatically invested against prevention.' Profit-based amorality is typical of capitalism more broadly. In the harsh light of healthcare, its grotesque, unfeeling mode becomes even uglier, and deadlier.

This critique of intellectual property is not unique to anarchists. Historian David Noble, in his 1977 book *American By Design*, astutely observes that the 'inventor, the original focus of the patent system, tended increasingly to "abandon" his patent in exchange for corporate security; he either sold or licensed his patent rights to industrial corporations or assigned them to the company of which he became an employee, bartering his genius for a salary.' We can see in the case of AstraZeneca that Noble prefigured our exact situa-

-tion. Noble also quotes lawyer Edwin J. Prindle, who observed in 1906 that 'patents are the only legal form of absolute monopoly.' Indeed: and this monopolistic stranglehold on medicine has had dire consequences in this pandemic, and will continue to do so as long as it is permitted and encouraged.

Do not forget that nation states have also failed utterly to alleviate any of these problems. The US refused to engage with the problem of intellectual property on essential medication for many crucial months. Once it relented, Germany got in the way. These are not companies holding up supply; these are countries, although you would be forgiven for confusing the two. And yet for all their bluster about public health crises and human rights, they did not see fit to permit the development and distribution of vaccines in countries that desperately need it.

Anarchists are often asked how they will coordinate mass production over vast global distances, but how well have our illustrious nation states and corporations fared? Look no further than their COVAX program for an indicative metric of the intense ineptitude, or perhaps callous disinterest, in truly vaccinating the global populace. Hundreds of millions of vaccines remain undelivered despite the promises of wealthy nations. Domestically, COVID program funding is rapidly disappearing even as the military enjoys another boost to its massive budget. We know that publicly funded researchers have the capacity to scale up to meet international need, as Vanessa A. Bee demonstrates in her article about manufacturing the Ebola vaccine. So what is the hold up?

The real culprits are greed and an intense feeling of national self-preservation: pre-purchase agreements enrich the companies producing the vaccines while ensuring domestic distribution takes priority over the rest of the world. Shallow, jingoistic geopolitical scheming also plays a role, as does racist condescension, as Adam



Johnson points out. Meanwhile, as discussed, the Global South is forced to wait on the good will and coordination of these countries to donate their vaccines because the North will not allow the South to produce the vaccines themselves. This only reinforces the authority powerful countries have over those with fewer resources – all the while weakening them economically and increasing their dependence.

### **Bright Lights**

But it isn't all bleak.

The Free The Vaccine and People's Vaccine movements have challenged the status quo since the pandemic began. These organisations have taken pains to call out major universities and companies for their commitment to entrench intellectual property rather than share it with the world. They have helped to build a vocal resistance in the spirit of Jonas Salk, who, when asked about patenting his polio vaccine, famously declared, "There is no patent."

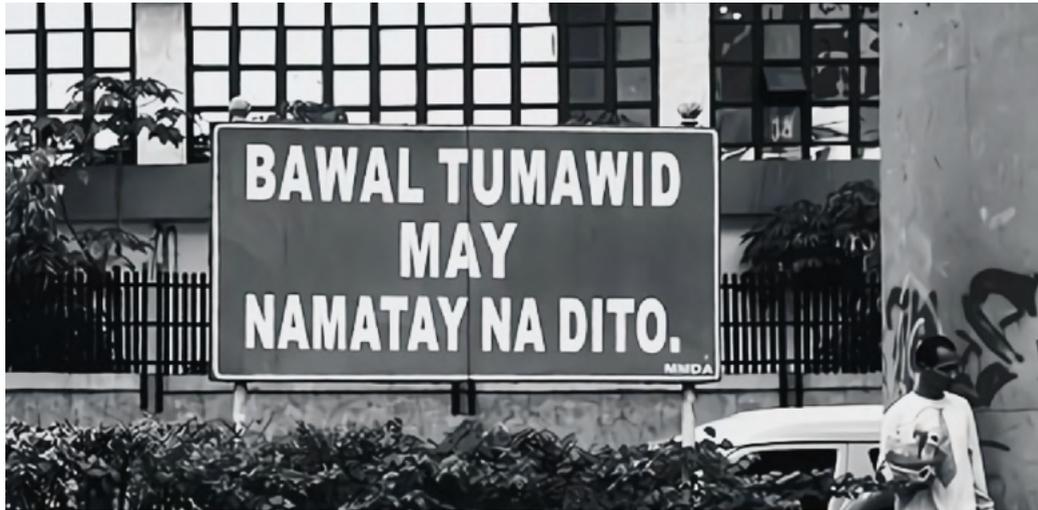
Could you patent the sun?’

We already have examples of researchers living out these ideals. South African scientists were tasked with reverse engineering the Moderna vaccine, and it appears they may have already done it. This breakthrough could unlock massive potential for African vaccination efforts. This is a direct repudiation of the North demanding it maintain a monopoly on life-saving medicine. Meanwhile, an attempt to follow through on the goals of the Oxford scientists seems to be bearing fruit in Texas. Baylor College of Medicine scientists have developed a new vaccine called Corbevax they are committed to releasing patent-free.

As anarchists, we must challenge all power structures as they exist. This means breaking through corporate and national hegemony to fight against IP law for universal access to medicine. It means, as some doctors have nobly attempted, refusing to adhere to nonsensical, self-defeating rules about throwing out usable vaccines. It means following the scientific data to logical conclusions, including that vaccines and masks are safe, effective, and two of our best tools in slowing the virus and protecting our fellow human beings. And it means engaging in mutual aid to help our local and broader communities to make and distribute masks and food to those who need it.

We can’t turn to capital or the state for answers because their only goal, proven time and again, is self-enrichment and expanded power. The truth is that we protect ourselves — so let’s get those jabs.





## **A Jaywalking Manifesto**

**Simoun Magsalin**

The sign on the image states: 'Forbidden to cross [the road], people have died here.'

(1) The streets are the life-blood of the city—common areas used by all citizens.

(2) The history of industrial capitalism is also the history of the enclosure and privatization of the commons. Starting in 17th and peaking in 19th century Britain, common lands used by peasants and farmers for livestock to graze were enclosed for the benefit of a growing bourgeoisie, while those who lost access to the commons were forced to flock to the city to find employment in factories—the process of proletarianization. Similarly, streets that were once common spaces for use by the citizens of the city have become enclosed spaces reserved for a specific type of commodity: the automobile.

(3) Citizens of the city have been relegated to the well-defined spati-

-al and temporal peripheries of the streets: the sidewalk, crosswalk, pedestrian overpass, the occasional street festival. In the Philippines, our sidewalks are even further subdivided by the abortive policy of pink or orange lines on some sidewalks—such as those on Epifanio de los Santos Avenue in Metro Manila—which denote where street vendors are allowed to set up.

(4) The vast majority of the street is reserved for the automobile commodity and its resulting car traffic. Thus, the life-blood of the city becomes its near exclusive domain.. To step outside these peripheries is to be subjected to the violence of the state through being punished for jaywalking, or the violence of the automobile commodity that kills millions across the globe. After all, automobiles kill 1.3 million people a year.

### **Jaywalking as Invented**

(5) To deviate from our defined spaces on the street is to become a “jaywalker.” “Jaywalking” was an invention by automobile capitalists to shift blame on accidents from cars and drivers to pedestrians. After all, the jaywalker shouldn’t have been on the road if they didn’t want to be run over!

(6) The creation of “jaywalking” then becomes part-and-parcel of the enclosure of the street reserved for automobile use.

(7) That is to say: to create a jaywalker, one must create jaywalking. Ursula Le Guin says it best: “To make a thief, make an owner; to create crime, create laws.”—from *The Dispossessed*. (Le Guin, 1974).

(8) Thus, the enclosure of the streets needs no physical barriers (though these may still be used). The enclosure is ideological—its manifestation is the invention of jaywalking. This criminalization of

jaywalkers is in turn enshrined through ordinances and enforced by the police.

(9) Yet the police are not actually necessary to enforce this enclosure. Michel Foucault's reading of the panopticon reminds us that we do not have to be watched at all times to ensure that we police our own behavior. The very regime of enclosure, its ordinances, and its police has accustomed us to obey its delimitations, even if we are not actively policed. That, and of course, the very threat of death by automobile.

(10) Yet the invention of jaywalking itself is part of a larger logic of organizing our cities according to the logic of automobiles—an automobile urbanism (if it may be called that).

### **Automobile Urbanism**

(11) Automobile urbanism subordinates humans to the rule of capital and to the rule of a specific commodity—the automobile.

(12) Automobile urbanism is not just the enclosure of streets; automobile urbanism has ordered our cities around and for the automobile: parking lots, gas stations, widened roads and highways, bridges, underpasses, overpasses, and bypasses. An entire ecology is made for the automobile commodity wherein humanity are mere pedestrians. In a joke from the Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy, an alien wrongly assumes the dominant species of Earth is the automobile.

(13) Urban citizens are subordinated to this automobile urbanism and the neoliberalization of urban spaces. The urban citizen—particularly the working class—is out of sight and out of mind to the automobile urbanite.

(14) Automobile urbanism has gentrified and sequestered spaces that divide the city between those with automobiles and those without. In English, to gentrify is to reserve for the gentry class, but its French translation is perhaps more accurate for the scenario at hand: *embourgeoisement*, or to make bourgeois. After all, bourgeois referred originally to walled-off towns, set apart from the rest.

(15) Thus, the entire world is ordered under the bourgeois logic of the automobile commodity. To the automobile: the wide lanes. To the urban citizen: the spatial and temporal peripheries of the street: the sidewalk, crosswalk, pedestrian overpass, occasional street festivals, closed to cars on weekends. The urban citizen is thus demoted to a pedestrian.

(16) The enclosure of the streets from foot traffic is also an act of class warfare—dispossessing urban citizens of public spaces and the paving of homes for wider boulevards.

(17) This is literally true for Baron Georges-Eugène Haussmann's Paris (1850s), Robert Moses' New York (1960s), (Harvey, 2008) and Metro Manila today. As David Harvey explains, Haussmann decimated the neighborhoods of Paris to build wide boulevards to make it easier to crush proletarian rebellions in the wake of the 1848 Revolutions. Similarly, Moses decimated the neighborhoods of New York for a new grand plan for the endless growth of capitalism. In Metro Manila, urban poor associations such as Kadamay or Save San Roque fight tooth and nail in resisting relocations against large developers that want to build more and more malls and high-rises. As an added bonus, the destruction of urban poor and racialized communities is a proven method of repression, as Harvey and Henri Lefebvre noted.

(18) Are streets made wider to accommodate more people or to acc-

-ommodate more automobiles? It is well-noted that wider streets incentivize drivers to speed and drive faster, making our streets more dangerous and more hostile to citizens.

(19) Our streets have become dangerous for citizens. Commuting citizens risk life and limb to get to work and back. The road is a hostile place wherein the commodity of the car is king.

(20) Consider the cinematic trope of a car driving into a ball bouncing into the street, followed by a child dying from automobile impact: We have canonized the hostility of our streets in our imagination. This hostility is only a small part of the larger hostile world of capital that make up our environs. The hostility of the automobile is largely passive as well—who is it that has agency in the killing? The driver or the automobile?

(21) However, automobile urbanism was not inevitable. In the United States in particular, it was a product of a Keynesian growth-for-the-sake-of-growth economic ideology and cynical Fordist wage hikes to generate demand for automobiles. Automobile companies had to systematically destroy tram systems and force the phasing out of other transportation for urban citizens to adopt automobiles. After all, Henry Ford supposedly said “cars don’t buy cars.”

(22) In this sense, automobiles are spectacular needs, or needs that are illusionary. For if we are not forced by the world of capital to work, and to live in homes far from that work and amenities, we do not actually need automobiles and their false mobility. Without the world of capital that marks us as proletarian, automobiles in their commodified forms have no real use. Automobile commodities are false needs imposed by the world of work.

(23) The Philippines has uncritically adopted automobile urbanism. This is partly as a result of neo-colonialism where peripheral count-

-ries become destinations for finished commodities such as the automobile. Just as in the United States, cars were privileged over trams and jobs and amenities were made more and more distant from homes.

### **The Automobile and Mobility**

(24) Neoliberalism and its logic of marketization has exacerbated automobile urbanism in literally promoting automobility—mobility as an individual responsibility to be resolved by individual means. The solution, of course, is the market—buy a car!

(25) Yet the automobile is not just a commodity—it is capital in and of itself. Specifically, an automobile is a mode of transportation that enables the automobile owner to transport themselves, others, capital, and commodities.

(26) Automobility becomes a means of livelihood: transporting car-owners from work to home and back. Thus automobile urbanism has ordered cities beneath the ever-marching vroom of automobiles, rather than being ordered for the everyday needs of citizens.

(27) Mobility becomes a class issue. Those with cars can expect to cover more ground and thus more opportunities. Those without cars then have less options for finding work due to limitations of the commute and can access less amenities than they might otherwise.

(28) We have become second-class citizens in our own cities, with the first-class being the automobile owner. Automobile urbanism reserves the streets for them; the proletariat and commuters are after-thoughts.

## Returning to Jaywalking

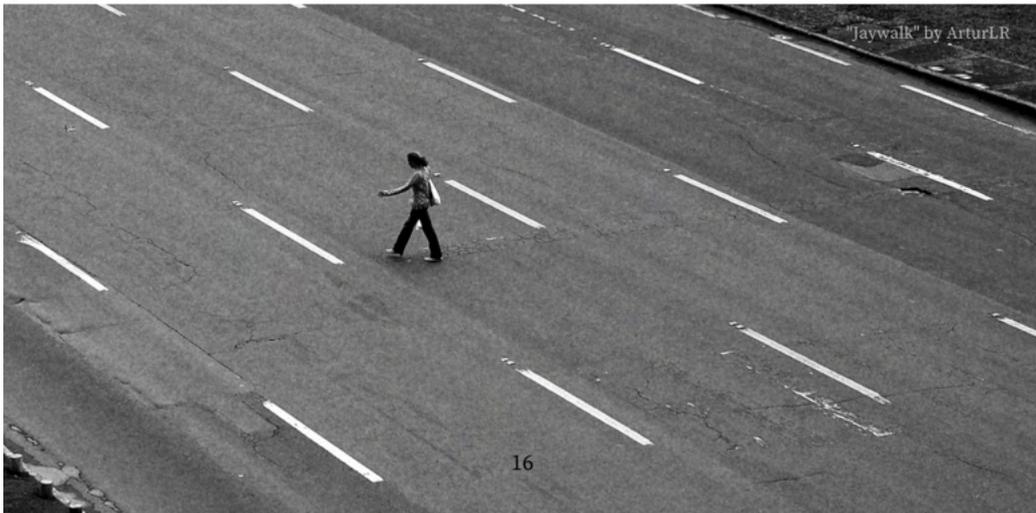
(29) In the context of automobile urbanism, jaywalking is the act of entering spaces that have become reserved for automobiles.

(30) Jaywalking is framed as an issue of safety and discipline. Yet safety and discipline for whom? Safety for citizens walking on the street, or safety for the automobile to go about its way?

(31) The very concept of jaywalking puts the burden of safety on the pedestrian—an admittance that the streets are hostile for foot traffic.

(32) For whom is the disciplining of the pedestrian? Discipline for the preservation of order—to assure the streamlining of streets for the service of capital!

(33) Jaywalking is an offence to the capitalist order, pitting the mobility of the citizen against the mobility of the automobile, capital, and commodity. Jaywalking threatens to delay the otherwise smooth transportation of capital and commodities throughout the city.



(34) To restrict working-class mobility is class warfare—for mobility is how the worker can get from their rented home to their workplace to rent away their time through wage-labor.

(35) Thus increasing penalties for jaywalking is nothing less than a concentrated class war offensive. It is an attack on the mobility of the urban citizen, especially working-class citizens who do not usually own automobiles.

(36) Those who do own automobiles quickly learn that the automobile is a colonizer of everyday life, to borrow a term from Henri Lefebvre. The automobile colonizes everyday life by forcing its owners into its zone of sheer consumption. This is manifested not just in the monetary cost of gasoline and of constant repairs, but also through deep costs to health and ecology.

(37) Automobiles—and of course, capitalism—are literally starving us of oxygen by increasing the parts per million of carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, and nitrous oxide in congested and polluted cities.

(38) And who are even the so-called jaywalkers? Is this not yet another criminalization of homelessness, ambulant vending, and more—the criminalization of working class mobility itself. Is this not yet another case of creeping authoritarianism? Martial law is redundant—it is already here!

(39) And how is this working-class mobility punished? Another fine that cannot be paid? Unpaid community service—thereby foregoing wages for those hours? And for what? Is this not redistribution in favor of the state? State coffers that are then plundered by corrupt public servants?

(40) Thus, the streets must be reclaimed. Every step that is “jay” is

defiance in the face of the automobile machine. Honk away mga punyeta—I am walking here.

### **Right to the City**

(41) Yet it is not enough to jaywalk. It is not enough to reclaim streets as our streets for people. We must reclaim the whole city, to create a humanistic—nay, revolutionary—urbanism for the citizens of the city. A right to our streets—a right to the city!

(42) “The right to the city is far more than the individual liberty to access urban resources: it is a right to change ourselves by changing the city.”—David Harvey

(43) The Right to the City asks of us: whose city, and for whom?—for automobiles or for citizens? Jaywalking in this sense is to reclaim the streets as the life-blood of a humanist urbanism—a city for humans rather than automobile commodities.

(44) As Lefebvre, Harvey, and Murray Bookchin notes, urban spaces are where class conflict is most obvious. As minor as it seems, the invention of jaywalking is a means of control that capital has over the development of the city and its citizens.

(45) An assertion to our urban mobility will necessarily be connected to struggles in ecology, and for housing and work. For what is the point of mobility if we are denied housing, or if we go to work for meager pay? Or if our mobility is policed at every turn by the state?

(46) The struggle for our mobility as citizens of the city is thus a microcosm of the larger anti-capitalist struggle that revolts against the colonization of everyday life by capital and commodities. Indeed, it is a microcosm of a larger struggle against authority for

an anarchy of movement.

(47) Jaywalking, then, is class war, as it defies the penalization of mobility as ordered by the automobile urbanism that divides our cities. Against the penalization of mobility is the anarchy of the streets that revolts against the authority of the automobile and for the possibility of the right to the city.

(48) Reclaim our streets, reclaim our cities! The struggle for a revolutionary urbanism for all is already underway!





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