

RESISTANCE

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Olympic Fortress Looms Over London



Residents on in Tower Hamlets were horrified when they learnt that surface to air missiles were to be positioned on a tower on their site, the old Bryant and May match factory buildings. As a result a campaign has been set up to oppose the missile installations, formed by local residents and supporters (for more information visit <http://stoptheolympicmissiles.wordpress.com/>). But the positioning of missiles here and elsewhere is

only part of the story. As many as 48,000 security forces will be deployed in London, in addition to 13,500 troops – more soldiers than the British Army have stationed in Afghanistan. A sonic weapon designed to disperse crowds by administering “head splitting pain” is in readiness. Unmanned drones will be patrolling the skies over London. An aircraft carrier will be anchored nearby on the Thames in addition to other warships. A “safe

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zone” will be put in place surrounded by eleven miles of electrified fence, and patrolled by 55 security teams with attack dogs. This is not North Korea or the Soviet Union but London today - during the Olympics in Peking, not even the Chinese government put up such a fence or drone planes.

The 2006 Olympic Games Act means that not only the police and armed forces, but also private security forces, can use physical force to “protect the Olympics”. This covers anything from demonstrations and strikes, to the sale of bootleg Olympic products on the street that are not officially approved. “Brand protection teams” will patrol inside the Games to make sure that only clothes or accessories with officially approved commercial messages can be worn.

In addition people congregating on the street, a normal occurrence particularly in summer months, will be harassed, in particular local working class youth. This is already happening, with increased surveillance and harassment in the boroughs bordering the Olympics. Rough sleepers are to be removed; in fact the police can remove anyone “deemed in any way to be causing a nuisance”.

What’s more, there is no sign that this will disappear with the end of the Olympics. The police will end up more tooled-up and arrogant than before, whole neighbourhoods will be socially cleansed and gentrified, taxes will be jacked up to pay for it all, and all the security devices and cameras installed will stay in place.

The Games are not about sport. They are about commercialised patriotism,

brand placement, and profiteering for estate agents and landlords. They are there to boost the push towards neo-liberalism, to destroy our working class



neighbourhoods, to boost the power of a state that is increasingly a police state. Who is the enemy in this New Britain? It’s us, the majority of the population!

Fighting Back Against Austerity: Around the World, We Say No!

In this month’s Resistance we report on the movements that are developing around the world in reply to the delightful austerity measures that our masters and bosses are pushing through.

Chile pioneered the world that we are now facing, with its deregulation of work laws, its privatisation of health and education and transport. It coupled this with a murderous regime that murdered thousands. It was no coincidence that Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher was a great fan and defender of the bloody dictator Augusto Pinochet. Now her heirs, in both the Labour Party and in the Conservative-Liberal Democrat alliance are pushing through the same measures in the UK.

Yet there is widespread rejection of and resistance to these austerity measures, not just here but around the world. In Quebec a massive movement has emerged rejecting the privatisation of

education and in the process starting to question the whole system. The recent elections in Greece and France show the distaste for austerity in those countries as does the widespread protests there and in Portugal and Spain. Let’s be clear: the elections were just a thermometer that measured the temperature of social anger in those countries. We cannot rely on the likes of French President-Elect Francois Hollande, a millionaire himself with ideas similar to those of former British PM Tony Blair; nor on the leftist SYRIZA alliance in Greece. We have to rely on ourselves to fight our own struggles. That means self-organisation in our neighbourhoods, in our workplaces, and on the streets.

We must also be aware of the recent gains made by the Front National in France and Golden Dawn in Greece; the first a fascist party hiding behind the cloak of respectability, the second an openly neo-Nazi organisation. If a

strong workers movement develops on an international scale, the boss class may well use these fascist groups to attack such a movement, and we have to be prepared to fight the rise of the far right.

Whilst new mass movements are emerging in places like the United States, Quebec and the laboratory of neo-liberalism, Chile, some people might wonder why such movements and events of such importance receive little or no coverage in the British media, whether it be the newspapers or the BBC. But it’s not surprising. They want to keep the truth from us because they know that resistance is contagious. That’s why we hope you continue to read and support papers like Resistance, which are dedicated to bringing you the latest news of the struggles that are now emerging in the UK and across the world.

Student Strike Continues in Quebec

After 10 weeks of strikes, more than 170,000 students are still out in the Canadian province of Quebec.

Large demonstrations have been mounted in response to the Quebecois Government's austerity programme, including Premier Jean Charest's plan to add \$1,625 to the annual cost of higher and further education by 2016. On 22nd March more than 250,000 demonstrated in the streets of Quebec City in one of the biggest such events in the history of the province. There were blockades and occupations of the port of Montreal, of the bridges linking the south bank to the Island of Montreal, of

banks, government buildings, and the administrative buildings of universities and colleges.

The police and university administrations have responded with lawsuits and repression. There have been more than 600 arrests since February 13th. Injunctions have been served in different colleges and universities banning strike pickets, and even meetings.

In response the student movement has tried to spread the struggle by supporting various strikes happening at the same time (AVEos, Rio Tinto). The unions' leadership, whilst giving formal

support to the struggle, have actually worked to prevent the spreading of the strike movement.

On 17th April the government invited the most moderate of the student organisations, the Federation des Etudiants Universitaires (FEUQ) to hold talks over fees. They blocked the presence of the Coalition Large de l'Association Syndicale pour une Solidarite Syndical (Broad Coalition of Union Association for Union Solidarity (Classe), which organises 50% of the students, because it refused to condemn students taking direct action – blockades and occupations have been carried out since the beginning of the strike.

The struggle is spreading and intensifying. In response the greatest police repression in the history of Quebec has been unleashed with attacks on demonstrations and meetings by police armed with batons and rubber bullets. One student lost an eye as a result of being hit in the face with a rubber bullet whilst another was hit in the head at close range.

Students are realising that the strike is not just about tuition fees, but about the state of society in general, not least massive government corruption at regional and federal level. The unrest is now being referred to in some quarters as the Maple Spring, in reference to both the Arab Spring of 2011 and the maple tree of Canada.



Prisoners Resist

Open resistance broke out in three UK prisons at the end of April. On the evening of Thursday 19th of April there was a revolt at Guys Marsh young offenders institute near Shaftesbury, Dorset.

Thirty prisoners mutinied and were able to smash cells during the seven-hour uprising. The Category C prisoners succeeded in putting 83 cells out of use. They lit fires, smashed windows and wrecked cell fittings. At least one screw was injured. On Tuesday 24th at Lindholme in South Yorkshire, 25 prisoners barricaded themselves into their cells lighting fires and smashing windows. During their eight-hour rebellion they succeeded in wrecking 26 cells.

At 4.30am on Friday 27th 48 prisoners surrendered after six hours of resistance at Ranby jail in Nottinghamshire. Police and the fire brigade turned up at the prison as three squads of screws in riot gear had to be used to suppress the prisoners after 51 cells were wrecked. Prisoners caused flood damage by opening up water taps.

The Home Office said: 'There are likely to be different reasons for all three of these disturbances, but they are also probably tied in to the overcrowding problem.'

For news, analysis, history and links to Anarchist Black Cross groups check The Campaign Against Prison Slavery (CAPS) <http://www.againstprisonslavery.org/>

May Day in Manchester

This year's May Day demonstration was more enjoyable than usual, with a relatively large turn out of around 200 people and pleasant weather for a majority of the day. A 'carnival bloc' had been arranged by local autonomists, and included a sound system playing traditional workers anthems such as Bella Ciao as well as more modern tunes. A large samba band and a couple of demonstrators on stilts kept our spirits high as we marched from the site of the large unemployed workers' demonstration of 1931 that was ambushed by police, towards the modern Urbis development.

Speeches were made by trade unionists but as the rain began to pour members

of the Anarchist Federation took to the stage. Frank Ellis, secretary of Manchester TUC, tried to physically prevent



them but was unable to. The AF speaker spoke of the history of the Haymarket Massacre and of the need to organise beyond trade unions and one-day token

actions. As Ellis told the AF member that they had 'no right' to speak, a member of the audience shouted that they had more right than Salford's new Labour Party Mayor Ian Stewart, an ex-MP who had voted for war

For a full report including photos and videos, go to: <http://tinyurl.com/6ok9ubz>.

News from the Czech Republic Demonstration of discontent

At least 100 000 people came on Saturday 21st of April to Prague to join the demonstration called "Stop the Government", convened a coalition of labour unions and several civic initiatives. The demonstration was undoubtedly the largest public display of discontent in the last 20 years.

The event started at ten o'clock in the morning with gathering of participants around the House of Unions in Zizkov (an area of Prague). Before noon, the head of the parade was formed by individual unions. The march itself seemed endless. Protesters filled more than half of Wenceslas Square. The event was clear demonstration of popular discontent with the current government, its work and reforms.

The protest was also joined by the Czechoslovak Anarchist Federation, which issued a call to anarchists to participate: "We join this the protest but we also want to add our own protest... We want to talk about the principles of the capitalist system... We want to show that our vision does not end by changing the government, but goes further, towards human emancipation and the emancipation of society, to realising common power."

Before the event itself, anarchists participated in information campaigns in their respective regions. During these days of protest they were promoting the "Stop the government" demonstration but also the forthcoming May Day action days.

On the march the anarchists either joined the informal anarchist bloc or marched within block of unions together with their colleagues. A thousand issues of the anarchist magazine ZDOLA (From Below), hundreds of A-Kontra journals as well as new and old issues of the anarchist revue Existence, were distributed even before the march. There were also a large number of promoting the May Day action days or leaflets of anarchist group Anarchocommunist alternative and Collectively against capital.

Ideas of anarchism are not generally known or widespread, as it showed during the demonstration at times when some unionists or discontented citizens found themselves near the anti-authoritarian bloc. These participants seemed to be surprised by some of the anarchist slogans. Apparently they believe that representative democracy is the only fair social system. However, they showed interest in the anti-author-

itarian printed materials and even expressed their sympathy to the anarchist bloc on a few occasions. Our participation in the demonstration contributed among other things to the spreading of anarchist ideas among people who understand the need of change of the current system, but have not been actively seeking any alternatives yet.

The reaction of government officials was predictable. Finance Minister Kalousek, in response to the anger of a hundred thousand ordinary people in the streets of Prague, smugly said that if it was up to him, reforms and cuts would be much harder. It is clear that union demonstration once in a while, no matter how big, will not hit the government and so there is no reason for them to fear such a thing, because the government is in fact in no danger.

This is a fact which anarchists have pointed out for a long time. Hopefully, it will be understood by many people, who will cross the boundary of their passivity and begin to think about more effective forms of protest and resistance. Resistance, which will be noticeable and which the elites can no longer ignore. Resistance, which also opens the door for finding and realising alternatives from below.

The Student Movement in Chile

From April 2011 and for several months afterwards, Chilean students turned out in the strike to mobilise against the privatisation of education. This system was put into place by the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet, a man admired by former UK Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. In addition to demanding an education system accessible to everyone, they want the end of the neoliberal system and the institutions created by Pinochet.

Pinochet oversaw the privatisation of the health service and education, and the deregulation of employment law. Up until the coup of 1973 the public education system in Chile was noted for its high quality of education, and was free to students. Now tuition fees are among the highest in the world. The same pattern has been repeated in health, pensions, transport, the media, etc.

From May 2011 students have organised demonstrations, cultural activities, cacerolazos (where people turned out in the street banging saucepans) and hunger strikes. In response there was the usual violent repression, with thousands of arrests. The rebellion of university students and high school students revealed the nature of the government led by the “new right” party of Sebastian Pinera. As well as the arrests, hundreds were injured, and one 14 year old was shot dead by the police.

The spirit of the Pinochet regime has resurfaced with the mayor of Santiago called for the intervention of the armed forces to stop demonstrations to commemorate the coup on 11th September 1973. Meanwhile, the mayor of Providencia (an ex-member of the DINA, the Pinochet regime’s dreaded secret police) announced that he would close down the occupied high schools; whilst at the same time paying tribute to General Krasnoff, who was imprisoned for 100 years for attacks on civil liberties, kidnappings and murders carried out under the dictatorship. One of the closest advisers of Pinera has spoken out in support of the mayor, causing a scandal.

The two biggest student organisations in the country launched a movement that lasted 7 months but failed to gain any concessions from the government. However, opinion polls of 29th December 2011 show that 80% of the population support the student movement.

The Libertarian Students Front (FEL), which coordinates anarchist students, has returned to the student organisation the Federation of Chilean Students (FECH) 80 years after leaving the organisation due to a takeover by the Communist Party. The new general secretary of FECH is an anarchist, and he and others represent a current that wants to develop the student movement and meet up with other social movements in

Land Occupations in Honduras

Thousands of rural workers in Honduras have occupied land as part of a dispute with large landowners and the government.

The coordinated invasions took place at several locations across the country. Farmers’ groups say the areas taken over are public lands where poor farmers have the right to grow food under Honduran law. The government said the seizures were illegal and that the occupations were politically motivated and aimed at destabilising the government of President Porfirio Lobo.

Dozens of rural workers have been killed in recent years over these land disputes. Organisations representing rural workers say successive governments have failed to fulfil promises to distribute farmland using agrarian reform legislation, instead acting in the interests of large landowners

workers unions.

New struggles seem to be on the horizon in Chile, and these may well be intense and bitter.

Turkish Police Arrest 60 in Night Raids

On the night of the 13th of May, the Turkish state organized a raid on a number of houses and anarchist social centres in the wake of this year’s May Day protests. At least 60 people have been arrested, though it is not yet certain whether all of those arrested were anarchists, or just their friends or relatives. Those arrested included members of the social anarchist organisation Toprak Ve Ozgurluk (“Land and Freedom”), and Devrimci Anarsist Faaliyet (“Revolutionary

Anarchist Action”).

Till now nothing has been heard from the imprisoned anarchists. They have not been allowed access to lawyers. The

Turkish state have long used the tactic of mass raids against leftist, radical and anarchist currents. Thousands of Kurdish Party members and hundreds of leftists have been imprisoned for years without trial or clear criminal charges. However, this is the first such massive operation against anarchists



Women to pro-life groups: SPUC off!

On Saturday 28th April, the pro-life group Society for the Protection of Unborn Children held a series of kerbside “vigils” throughout the country, in order to wave placards showing out of context pictures of fetuses and false claims about abortion. Happily, they faced strong opposition from feminist groups and allies in Bath, Brighton, Bristol, Cardiff, Chester, Edinburgh, Lincoln, Newcastle, Sheffield, Stevenage and Liverpool.

SPUC’s stance is not only anti-abortion but anti-morning after pill and, though they’re not too clear on what it has to do with protecting “unborn children”, anti-gay marriage. Still, if they were bothered about making sense, or reducing abortions, they’d be campaigning for universal free childcare, financial and community support for families, free contraception for all and better sex education, rather than trying to remove reproductive choices and use guilt and false information to coerce women into going through with unwanted pregnancies.

SPUC’s public statements had proposed a silent vigil, but they broke their silence on many occasions, some to tell counter-protesters they would pray for them, others to call them “child-killers” and,

more entertainingly, “scarlet women”. SPUC’s claim that their calls for restrictions on women’s bodies and lives are to do with protecting women and children ring a little false when they throw sexual insults at mothers. It couldn’t be clearer that SPUC’s agenda is about

or EDL. Lobbies much like these are responsible for the total ban on abortion and inaccessibility of the morning after pill in Ireland, as well as increasingly draconian abortion laws in the US: laws that cause untold suffering to millions of women, as well as their families and



control, not welfare.

Despite their respectable image, it is as important to oppose SPUC as the BNP

their existing children. If these people gain the influence they’re seeking, they pose a very real threat to women’s lives, health and freedom.

Carving-up Carpenters Estate: Social Cleansing in the East End

The Carpenters Estate is a sustainable and friendly community of over 500 dwellings made up of houses, flats and maisonettes, some in the three tower blocks right next door to the Olympics site in Stratford, East London. The estate is home to some 201 tenants, 67 leaseholders and 93 freeholders. Newham Council, aim to raze the estate to the ground and replace it with new housing, most of which will be owner-occupied. The Mayor of London, Boris Johnson is an enthusiastic supporter of the plan, as is the Mayor of Newham, Sir Robin Wales, with his idea for a “third city” in Newham.

The Carpenters Tenant Management Organisation (TMO), a tool of the Council, barred freeholders from its Annual General Meeting on 25th November

2011, “lost” five out of six leaseholder nominations, and posted security guards on the door who refused entry to many residents. Local community action group Carpenters Estate Against Regeneration Plan (CARP) demanded an independent scrutineer for the votes, which was denied.

Following the AGM, Carpenters TMO and Newham Council then reformed the Residents’ Steering Group, re-engineering the current Terms of Reference meaning that effectively the consultation is now in the hands of council officials. The TMO have refused to act on leaseholders’ concerns about the independent valuation service commissioned by the TMO as they push ahead with Compulsory Purchase to clear the estate for redevelopment. One adviser

was sacked for backing residents’ interests.

Meanwhile the Council are moving tenants out of the tower blocks into flats owned by the housing association Genesis. Their secure tenancy rights will be lost and replaced by inferior Assured Tenancies. CARP are fighting back. They have had several public meetings, are challenging the unconstitutional decisions and are looking for a truly independent adviser to make this happen. If you are a resident in Carpenters or would like to know more, contact Carpenters Against Regeneration Plan (details below):

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/carpvoice>
Tel: 07838383141

Sheffield Anarchist Bookfair 2012

Bank Street Arts, Bank Street,
Sheffield S1 2DS

10:00 – 18:00

In April of this year it was announced that the UK had entered a “double-dip” recession. This cannot be disconnected from a much wider global crisis for capitalism, but in an immediate sense this means more cuts in pay, more unemployment, more repossessions, ever higher living costs – even greater austerity. This austerity, however, has a double-standard. While the government tells us that we must sacrifice our public services, financial security and access to education – putting the most vulnerable at ever greater risk – they are pursuing tax cuts for big business and handing over institutions like the NHS to private companies at huge expense. As always it is the needs of elites that come before those of working people.

It is no accident that this has happened. The government is reacting to the demands of a global marketplace that operates by one simple rule – the pursuit of profit. Profit that comes at the expense of jobs, well-being, the environment, and, all too often, peoples’ lives.

It has been the position of both politicians and political commentators that



SHEFFIELD ANARCHIST BOOK FAIR // 23rd JUNE 2012
STALLS, TALKS, FILMS, MEETINGS AND MORE...

there is no alternative to austerity; that the best we can do is try and all “pull together”, tighten our belts and struggle through. Yet while life for the majority is made even harder, many at the top are clearly benefitting from austerity programmes. Britain’s rich are getting richer – now worth more than £400billion – benefitting from low taxation, declining wages, easy access to tax havens and a country fuelled by debt.

Anarchists argue that there is an alternative to a world ruled by profit. We argue that it is possible to organise society based on systems of mutual solidarity, from the bottom-up and controlled directly and democratically. This is not a utopian dream but builds on the concrete experiments of people

in struggle – from the Diggers of 1649 on St. George’s Hill, to the Peasant and Workers’ Councils of the Ukrainian revolution of 1917, self-managed and collectivised industries in Spain in 1936, right up to contemporary experiments in self-management such as the “recovered” co-operative factories of Argentina in the early 00s.

Anarchist book fairs have run for years in cities from San Francisco to Zagreb. They’re a great starting point into the ideas, activism, ethics, creativity and history of the contemporary anarchist movement, with publishers, comics, zines, film, art, food and fun stuff. If you are a seasoned activist or just a little anarcho-curious come and find out what it’s all about!

Updates From Portugal

Portuguese political parties are pushing forward their austerity plan, despite mass opposition. In response to this, twenty organisations have created The Platform of October 15th to organise a demonstration on the same date.

Whilst the rank and file are looking to organise strikes at a European level, the unions’ leadership looks to divide the movement: the principal union body The CGTP has 800,000 members, and its leadership has attempted to block any serious fight back against austerity, hindering any mass mobilisation. As a result support for the recent

general strike was not as solid as it could have been. However, several thousand workers mobilised at Lisbon and Porto, including groups of workers on short term and temporary contracts and groups of the unemployed. Police attacked several demonstrations with batons, injuring several people.

The organisations of “precarious” workers (on temporary and short-term contracts) seem to be the most dynamic groups in the struggle against austerity. Their capacity for self-organisation allows them to have a presence on demonstrations but also to mobilise

very quickly for local actions.

These movements are now looking towards self-organisation in communities where they have set up social centres, either rented or occupied. The disused school La Escola in Porto, which had become a self-managed collective space, became a symbol of the struggle when it was evicted on April 19th. There was strong support from the population of the Fontinha neighbourhood at a demonstration outside the town hall in response to the eviction.

Noise Demo. HMP Brixton. 5th June. 3pm

At Her Majesty's Pleasure? Stuff that!

London Anarchist Black Cross have organised a demo in solidarity with prisoners at HMP Brixton, because frankly we don't feel like celebrating 60 years of having a queen, especially a queen who takes pleasure from imprisoning our mates, comrades, and other fellow human beings. What kind of a sick mind takes pleasure from locking people up in prison? Prisons destroy people. They destroy families, friendships, and communities. Putting somebody in prison is an act of violence which only brutalises those who are already struggling.

We don't believe that prison is the answer to any question we have ever asked.

Show the people inside HMP Brixton that they are not alone or forgotten.

Organise for a noisy demo at HMP Brixton. Meet at Brixton Tube, 3pm to

walk up to the prison together. Bring whistles, horns and drums.

London ABC.

C/o Freedom Bookshop, Angel Alley, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX

<http://network23.org/londonabc>
n the evening.

Black Rose Centre website:

<http://sheffieldsocialcentre.org.uk/>

Liked Resistance? Try Organise

Organise! is the Anarchist Federation's theoretical and historical magazine. It is published in order to develop anarchist communist ideas. It aims to give a clear anarchist viewpoint on contemporary issues, and initiate debates on areas not normally covered in agitational journals. You can order or subscribe online at www.afed.org.uk, or get in touch with your local AF group for a copy.

Subscriptions

Organise single issue (including postage and packing):

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Annual subscription to Organise! (two issues, saving a pound a year or 50p an issue):

£6 UK/£7 EU /£8 rest of world

Resistance subscription (10 issues per year, to cover postage and packing) is:

For UK addresses only: £8.00

Anywhere in Europe: £15.00

Rest of World: £20.00

ANARCHIST FEDERATION

The Anarchist Federation is an organisation of class struggle anarchists (based in Britain and Ireland, but with many contacts overseas) which aims to abolish Capitalism and all oppression to create a free and equal society. This is Anarchist Communism.

We see today's society as being divided into two main opposing classes: the ruling class which controls all the power and wealth, and the working class which the rulers exploit to maintain this. By racism, sexism and other forms of oppression, as well as war and environmental destruction the rulers weaken and divide us. Only the direct action of working class people can defeat these attacks and

ultimately overthrow capitalism.

As the capitalist system rules the whole world it's destruction must be complete and world wide. We reject attempts to reform it such as working through parliament and national liberation movements (like the IRA) as they fail to challenge capitalism itself. Unions also work as a part of the capitalist system, so although workers struggle within them, they will be unable to bring about capitalism's destruction unless they go beyond these limits.

Organisation is vital if we're to beat the bosses, so we work for a united anarchist movement and are affiliated to the International of Anarchist Federations.

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