

GATHERING AGAINST THE PRISON SOCIETY 31st Oct/ 1st Nov 2009

at the Cowley Club social centre,
12 London Road, Brighton, UK
<http://anti-state09.blogspot.com/>
anti-state09@hushmail.com

Two days of discussions and presentations about the struggle for liberation, inside and outside of the prison walls. Organised by random anarchists and the ABC.

Topics/Themes:

The State of Things to Come - Presentation by Tony Bunyan of StateWatch, about new European security architecture, biometrics & surveillance technologies and the open prison society.

Prison Struggle across Europe - Presentations on some of the different situations.

Campaign Against Prison Slavery - Fighting the corporations involved in the prison industry.

Fortress Europe - Borders are the prison walls of the nation-state.

Combating the open prison - Our modern consumer capitalist societies are becoming increasingly like open prisons, watched and spied on, monitored and databased, the average UK citizen is in a prison of monstrous proportions.

Mental Health - The repression of everyday life is making us sick, and the only solution is to over-throw the conditions that make us ill.

As the economic crisis hits deeper and people get organised and angry, the state needs media diversions like the War on Terror,

and escalating political repression to maintain the class divisions that ensure continued economic exploitation. The UK State, leading others, is about to proceed on a major prison building project, whilst more and more our societies already resemble open prisons. It all has to go. This is a call for debate and exchange, to reflect and agitate...

Meetings at this year's ANARCHIST BOOKFAIR, 24th October in London

www.anarchistbookfair.org

Too Many Prisons, Not Enough Justice

In the first of our two workshops, we will explore the factors that increasingly contribute to the criminalisation and victimisation of communities, including political activists.

Anarchists for Prison Abolition

In the second of our two workshops, we will discuss ways of preventing the criminalisation and over-policing of our communities and ways of opposing the growing "prison society".

Greece – after the December 2008 insurrection

After the highs of last December, struggles in Greece continue at a level unheard of in the UK, in the face of a massive counter-offensive by the allied forces of the Greek state, capital and the fascists. Hear a speaker from Greece on the up to date situation on the streets, and how the movement is responding.



www.brightonabc.org.uk

ABC, PO Box 74,
Brighton BN1 4ZQ

ACTIVE

Irregular bulletin of Brighton
Anarchist Black Cross
prisoner support group

SOLIDARITY

www.brightonabc.org.uk

ABC, PO Box 74, Brighton BN1 4ZQ

THODORIS ILIOPOULOS WINS HIS FREEDOM

After 49 days of hungerstrike, Greek anarchist Thodoris Iliopoulos is now free! On the 10 July 2009 Thodoris Iliopoulos, the last anarchist prisoner remaining in custody in Greece following the December Uprising of last year, started a hunger strike in protest against his continuing detention. Thodoris was detained on 3 trumped up charges, the only witness being a police officer, and he has been in prison under pre-trial detention ever since. On the 8th July bail judges denied Thodoris' petition for release from the Court Prisons of Koridalos, Athens, on the grounds that Iliopoulos is an anarchist and therefore a "danger for democracy." He went on hunger strike on 10 July and for more than a month the authorities refused to provide him with proper medical support at a public hospital and instead kept him in the under-funded and under-equipped prison's medical room.

Anarchist comrades in Greece and abroad quickly mobilised in solidarity, and later leftist and communist political

parties also declared their support. As the voices demanding his release were becoming more and more, and as his case was being picked up by progressive media (due to massive protests and other solidarity actions that couldn't be left unreported) the government couldn't ignore the protests any more and set him free at last.

Free, but with a few conditions: he isn't allowed to leave the country and every fortnight he has to report to the local police station. He was set free without the need for bail payment.

It should be made clear that Theodoros Iliopoulos won thanks to his determination and to the Greek and international solidarity movement in his support.

Meanwhile, in Naxos, a small island in Greece, immigrants went on hunger strike today to protest about the denial of their human rights. The social war continues...

Sept-09
Free!

IMPRISONED RUSSIAN ANTI-FASCIST'S APPEAL REJECTED

The court has ruled to uphold the conviction of Alexei Bychin on Tuesday, in an appeal hearing that only lasted ten minutes, according to the imprisoned antifascist's lawyer, "They didn't listen to any of our arguments." The defense had asked for the conviction to be changed from "conscious bodily injury, dangerous to a person's life" to "excess of self-defense". Bychin was sentenced to five years in a maximum-security prison on May 8 for stabbing two men in the city centre last year, while he insisted that he acted in self-defense as they attacked him. One of the men, who had allegedly been marching, shouting "Sieg Heil" and making Nazi salutes, turned out to be a police trainee.

An expert analysis presented by the defense showed that Bychin had a cut on his arm from a broken bottle that one of the alleged attackers had been holding. "After they pushed Bychin against the wall, one of them hit him on the head with a broken bottle and Bychin covered his head with his arms" she said. "It was disregarded by the court as irrelevant." The defense also presented a witness who said he saw Bychin being assaulted by two men, but the appeal court dismissed his testimony, because he saw the fight from a distance and could not clearly see the faces of the people involved.

Over the past three years, numerous incidents of the police arresting and beating antifascists and anarchists during rallies have been reported. Bychin carried a knife for self-defense, as many antifascists have done since 20-year-old anti-fascist punk musician Timur Kacharava was stabbed to death by a dozen Nazi skinheads in St Petersburg's city centre on Nov. 13, 2005. A fellow

activist Maxim Zgibai sustained multiple knife wounds and severe brain damage but survived this attack.

E-mail: antifa_spb@riseup.net for more information and details of how to send donations.

NEW ATTEMPT BY THE PRISON SYSTEM TO SABOTAGE JOHN BOWDEN'S PAROLE HEARING

"The contents of a prison intelligence report is the latest attempt to prevent my release. Essentially the strategy is the same as in 2007 - to try and persuade the parole board that I am linked to an illegal group on the outside (in 2007 it was a terrorist or paramilitary group, now it's a criminal or "gang-land" fraternity) and therefore represent a risk to public safety. The source of the allegations is senior prison staff who used the identity of people who have visited me in prison to claim an association with illegal groups. In 2007 "evidence" of my involvement with a "terrorist organisation" was a visit I'd received from two members of the Anarchist Black Cross, in 2008 "evidence" of my involvement in the Glasgow underworld was a visit I'd received from an ex-prisoner who I'd served time with.

When considering the release of a life sentence prisoner the parole board must consider public safety and whether the prisoner continues to represent a risk to the community. After almost 3 decades in jail and five years of regular access to the community in work placements and frequent home leaves, there was no serious suggestion that I presented any sort of risk to the community. Yet in 2007 a report submitted to the parole board by Matt Stillman contained the allegation that I was linked to a "terrorist" and "paramilitary" group.

As a consequence my parole hearing that year was postponed and I was returned to a maximum-security jail. Following an investigation the allegation was completely discredited, and I was returned to an open jail. In July 2009 prior to another parole hearing the report to the parole board claimed I had connections to well-known gangland figures from the Glasgow area. As in 2007, there exists absolutely no evidence to support such an allegation. (...) What chiefly characterises their "intelligence" on me is a focus on my political attitude and opposition towards the prison system. Even my writings about the prison system are considered a "risk factor". In August 2008 I contributed an article on the history of the struggle for prisoners' rights in the newspaper *Insidetime*. The purpose behind treating such writings as a "risk factor" is twofold: to manufacture yet another sham argument against my release, and to deter other prisoners from publicly voicing criticisms of the prison system."

Please write letters of complaint to the parole board and ask that this latest set of lies about John not be considered at his parole hearing:

Ms Patricia O'Brian, Team leader, Team H, Public Protection Unit, 4th Floor, Fry Building, 2 Marsham Street, London. SW1P 4DR.

Also write to demand that the contents of this report be withdrawn:

Scottish Prison Service
Headquarters, Communications
Branch, Room 338, Calton House,
5 Redheughs Rigg, Edinburgh
EH12 9HW.

GOVERNMENT DRUGS POLICY UNLAWFUL

Casey Hardison, 38, a US citizen serving 20 years for the manufacture of LSD and other psychedelic-type drugs, has today submitted an appeal against his conviction based on evidence that the Misuse of Drugs Act is being mal-administered by the Home Secretary. The government themselves have admitted that: "*The distinction between legal and illegal substances is not unequivocally based on pharmacology, economic or risk benefit analysis. It is...based in large part on historical and cultural precedents.*" Hardison's appeal questions why the tolerance of substances such as alcohol is not extended to the equally or less-harmful psychedelic-type drugs of his indictment.

Should his appeal succeed, the government will be forced to prohibit alcohol and tobacco equally, or regulate the possession, production and commerce of dangerous or otherwise harmful drugs in a rational and objective manner.

Hardison states that the under-regulation of alcohol and tobacco activities has contributed to over a million deaths in the United Kingdom alone and the over-regulation of the equally or less-harmful 'controlled' drug activities has criminalised millions of otherwise law-abiding persons, clogged our courts and prison system, and fuelled an unregulated black market governed only by the law of unintended consequences. Hardison believes his appeal is in the public interest.

For further information, see www.drugequality.org

