

# THE PAPER

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[www.wearethepaper.org](http://www.wearethepaper.org)

*comfort, support, encouragement*  
RIOT AGAIN  
RIOT BETTER

# EDITORIAL

General Strike | #Occupy Oakland



*The reality is that the offenders were deriving support and encouragement from being together with other offenders and offering comfort, support and encouragement to the other offenders around them. Perhaps too the sheer numbers involved may have led some of them to believe that they were untouchable* - Lord Chief Justice Lord Judge, commenting on a sentencing appeal following the summer riots in Britain

What is clear is that Lord Judge is scared. He is scared of solidarity and care. The system of institutional politics and law works by separating us. It fears the processes by which we come together as collectivities in struggle, solidarity and care. Where we touch each other, and become 'untouchable'. Beneath the riot, the looting, the struggle (and also beneath the occupation) are the bonds that bind our bodies together. Friendships, bonds of intimacy, a solidarity born from being together - not just in the moments of rebellion but also in the day to day.

They fear us acting together because at the basis of their power lies our separation. In occupation, on strike, on the streets, claiming property - the gang, the camp, the union, the commune.

Clearly the riot continues among those who briefly took over the streets, in the mounting pile of court cases, in friendships that were forged or fortified and the acts of solidarity and care that were there, and came after. We might wonder how many face the prosecution of their trials alone? How many carry the riot in their body with no one to talk to? Where does the riot still exist, what traces has it left behind? And what can we do to make those intimacies live again? We mustn't assume ready answers when we don't know the questions. We have to ask, what do they/we need, what do they/we desire? It is here, at this juncture of them/us, that we need to return to the question of questions... not of 'what do they want' but of 'what do we need to do to continue the riot together?'

To ask 'what can we do now?' requires understanding the riot as continuing and shaping desires in the present. We need to ask in what ways do the possibilities and the limitations of the riot create a desire to invent, learn, or develop new capacities, ideas, modes of organising, etc.? The question is not only 'what was in the riot for people?', but 'what was in the riot that was more than the riot?'

While the first question is only for the rioters, the second is broader. We are all

living a crisis, but living it differently. Some suffer a less tangible destruction where their future possibilities disappear while daily life seemingly goes on as before, only greyer, duller, deader. For others, those whose future died a long time ago, the crisis lives as a moment of pure violence: not only job losses, or pay-day loans, or debt piled upon debt, eviction and homelessness, but ever-intensified policing and repression.

The crisis has drawn these two moments closer together - the loss of a future and of never having one. The daily effects of job losses, welfare cuts, rising food costs, heating becoming a decision, of gentrification, and the racist policing of these crises are as clear in Pembury and Broadwater Farm Estate in London as they are in so many places across this country, not to mention beyond it. No wonder the riots were 'contagious'.

But gaps nevertheless remain among us. To remain attached to the old future and 'aspirations' leads to a politics of nostalgia and fear. Fear of the 'underclass' deepens, fear of those who don't aspire, those who have nothing much to lose. Against this, our task is to build connections of solidarity between those whose future is closing, and those who feel they have none. Do we occupy to reclaim a lost future, or do we occupy to open space and time for the creation of a different kind of future altogether, one that works for another kind of us? The future has for too long been a means to enslave many of us in debt and overwork, of trapping us on property ladders and career paths. Our task is to realise that we'll never own a house in our fucking lives.

So let's not ask 'what were the politics of the riot', or what was it 'trying to do' but how does the riot continue and how can we, together, make it continue, better, more productive of 'comfort, support and encouragement'? A year ago we rioted together at Millbank. Somewhere, sometime soon, we will riot again. Now let's ask: how do we riot again, how do we riot better?

## Contact us

Email: [emailthepaper@gmail.com](mailto:emailthepaper@gmail.com)

Send your letters, event listings, drawings, reports, articles, photos and other bits and pieces to the editorial collective for the next edition by Dec 18th. The Paper has a free subscribers postal service; to receive the next edition email us your contact details. We have regular editorial collective meetings and are always looking for writers, designers, proofreaders, editors, artists, distributors and energetic folk to get involved.

## Talk/Write with us

The Paper is a collaborative production: changing editorial teams, diffused and collective authorship, fake names and having fun are all ways in which we seek to learn to be and do otherwise. The pedagogy of The Paper is in its production. The dissemination process also has as its goal the alteration of traditional hierarchies of privilege of those working both within and outside of the education frame. Could those networks who produce, but also pass the paper around, develop their own processes for collective discussion around its contents? We invite and welcome any suggestions for collaborative discussion, writing or publishing across different movements. Send any thoughts, questions or suggestions to [emailthepaper@gmail.com](mailto:emailthepaper@gmail.com)

## Contributors

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# Correspondence



After a short break, The Paper's mailbox was full with letters from comrades and fellow travellers both near and far about what they got up to over the summer.

Dear Isabelle,

You have asked us to tell you what's been happening in Spain since 15 May. Well, we'll try, but it's impossible to give you an exhaustive account. Events have followed one another at unprecedented speed.

Everything started by taking the squares: repeating this Egyptian gesture of Tahrir, of which we knew very little. There was an awakening, felt and materially inscribed in the space of the Plaza del Sol. It was the awakening of us as a collective force, all of a sudden, almost overnight. Before the squares, we already knew that the government was swindling us and that the interests of finance were valued above us.

But we felt alone, impotent. Nothing could be done. In the social networks, we could sense, we could share, we started to conspire. But it was all so ethereal. In the squares we have discovered how our bodies are many, how tangible they are. Made of flesh and bones. Together we just can! We can build a democratic city in the belly of the corrupted one. What was happening was so magic, so full of possibilities that almost immediately we sensed that we had to give everything in order to keep it.

First of all, we broke with dichotomies. The square is taken, but it is not closed. It is open to everybody, transformed from a privatised space into one that is really public. The square itself is woven through the entering and exiting of bodies, people, each of them bringing their knowledge, their time, their energies. It became the most intense space of social cooperation in the city. Inclusiveness became a key word. It was about making a space where everybody could find her own place. The politics of the taken square were not about beating your enemy, or winning arguments about ideas, but opening oneself up to thinking together with the other. Learning to hear what each singular contribution can offer and also learning to renounce yourself a little.

In the first few weeks a sort of zen patience emerged in decision making. Collective decisions were not the result of a battle for majorities led by the groups with predefined ideas, but a delicate and rolling process of consent, able to bring together the collective wills and also to include each singular voice. This process was led by the certainty that this was the only way for us to continue being both so many and so different. It is only by being so many and so different that we can keep on holding this

event, to keep opening and exploring the possibilities that we are inventing.

Another crucial cry is "They do not represent us!" This movement was born from the radical crisis of representation. Parties, unions, associations, NGOs, are considered "chiringuitos", representing nothing else but their own interests. One or another "friend" (what better word for this participation produced by contagious relationships?) of the movement can be close to a union or a group. The participation of groups is recognized as part of the movement, but only if they are contributing and not patronizing. And their presence is always the subject of scrutiny. /Cuji and Fatimatta

[full text available at [wearethepaper.org](http://wearethepaper.org)]

Just finished my induction lectures on a) a school in Tower Hamlets b) the Olympics, and was pleasantly surprised at the interruption of politics. Basically, during the question and answers, criticisms (from both the students and lecturers) were made of a) cutting EMA b) tuition fees c) Teach First d) academies e) Olympic legacy f) gentrification of East London, etc. Most importantly, criticism and dissatisfaction of the Tories (what they are doing with education) kept rearing their heads despite the IOE Director of Studies (or something) looking uncomfortable. To be honest, it has been the most political formal lectures I have been to (even if accidentally). Obviously the bar is quite low though! I mean, it wasn't the Communist Manifesto or anything, but I was very surprised because when I looked at the timetable I thought it was going to be a complete load of bollocks. In the cracks there was some interesting shit and this bunch of student teachers hate the Tories. /Student teacher /London, Sept. 2011.

I am pleading NOT GUILTY.

It is paramount that we view the mass charging of protesters with violent disorder in its political context. I personally was terrified, going between depression, anxiety and guilt, fearing for my future and my freedom. But learning about the law and seeing the heart-warming hard work and offers of solidarity by fellow protesters and support groups like Green & Black Cross and Legal Defence Monitoring Group has made all the difference.

We are part of a movement that poses a serious threat to the status quo and we are

therefore feeling the full force of the state, like countless social movements before us. In that sense it is nothing to be ashamed of, but neither something to be fetishised or proud of. We don't need martyrs. Getting arrested is no joke guys, especially for violent disorder.

But it could have been any of us. It is incredibly important that as a movement we show unconditional solidarity with all those arrested on the recent demos, build and maintain the networks that can nurture and support student and anti-cuts prisoners. We cannot and should not be afraid. Especially when defending yourself or your ideals. /Defendant /charged on 26 March, 2011.

**Letter from Cairo to Occupy Wall Street (Extract)**

To all those in the United States currently occupying parks, squares and other spaces, your comrades in Cairo are watching you in solidarity. Having received so much advice from you about transitioning to democracy, we thought it's our turn to pass on some advice....It is not our desire to participate in violence, but it is even less our desire to lose. If we do not resist, actively, when they come to take what we have won back, then we will surely lose. Do not confuse the tactics that we used when we shouted "peaceful" with fetishising nonviolence; if the state had given up immediately we would have been overjoyed, but as they sought to abuse us, beat us, kill us, we knew that there was no other option than to fight back. Had we laid down and allowed ourselves to be arrested, tortured, and martyred to "make a point", we would be no less bloodied, beaten and dead. Be prepared to defend these things you have occupied, that you are building, because, after everything else has been taken from us, these reclaimed spaces are so very precious.

...By way of concluding, then, our only real advice to you is to continue, keep going and do not stop. Occupy more, find each other, build larger and larger networks and keep discovering new ways to experiment with social life, consensus, and democracy. Discover new ways to use these spaces, discover new ways to hold on to them and never give them up again. Resist fiercely when you are under attack, but otherwise take pleasure in what you are doing, let it be easy, fun even. We are all watching one another now, and from Cairo we want to say that we are in solidarity with you, and we love you all for what you are doing. /Comrades from Cairo/ 24th of October, 2011.

[full text available at [wearethepaper.org](http://wearethepaper.org)]

## Prison Support

General Strike | #Occupy Oakland



In the age of Twitter and Facebook, writing a letter - on paper with a pen - seems pretty outdated, but for those in prison, letters are a serious and needed lifeline. Don't forget all mail is 'monitored' - so don't write anything that might get you, your friends or others into trouble, but on the other hand try not to become so paranoid that you end up never saying anything important.

**Michael Newton** - Serving a 12 month sentence for J30 action and multiple other minor charges. Hopefully out on early release on 30th December. Michael welcomes letters, posters and pictures. A6611CE. HMP Preston. Wing C4 17, 2 Ribbleton Lane. Preston. Lancs. PR1 5AB

**Joseph Binney:** Found guilty of violent disorder at Kingston Crown Court on Monday 31st October and is now on remand (on request) until his sentencing on 25th November You can write to him: Joseph Binney - A5569CH, HMP Wandsworth, PO Box 757, Heathfield Road, London, SW18 3HS

**Harry Webb:** Pleaded guilty to violent disorder on March 26th, Trafalgar square - police began unprovoked attack. Sentenced 12 mths custodial sentence. Write to him c/o London ABC Freedom Bookshop, Angel Alley, 84B Whitechapel High Street, London, E1 7QX

**Edward Woollard:** Pleaded guilty to violent disorder at Millbank 10/11/10 - dropping object from roof. Sentenced to 2 years and 8 months custodial. You can write to him via c/o address here: <http://support4edwoollard.wordpress.com/contact-ed/>

**James Heslip:** Sentenced 5/10/11, 12 mths custodial for alleged violent disorder during the Millbank protests. Write to him c/o London ABC Freedom Bookshop, Angel Alley, 84B Whitechapel High Street, London, E1 7QX

**Charlie Gilmour:** Pleaded guilty to 2 counts of violent disorder on student protests 2010. Sentenced 15/7/11 - 16 month custodial. Write to him c/o London ABC Freedom Bookshop, Angel Alley, 84B Whitechapel High Street, London, E1 7QX

**Omar Ibrahim:** Found guilty of violent disorder on 26 March by a jury. You can write to him at: Omar Ibrahim, AO253CH, Wandsworth Prison, Heathfield Road, Wandsworth, London, SW18 3HS

**Richard Bacon.** Pleaded guilty to affray from March 26th. Sentenced at Southwark crown court on Oct 28th to 10 months. Write to him c/o London ABC Freedom Bookshop, Angel Alley, 84B Whitechapel High Street, London, E1 7QX

## Tottenham Defence Campaign

Once again our community has to pick up the pieces of major social unrest. The reasons for this outburst are many and more complex than the responses that have dominated the media in the immediacy of the event, particularly those from our political leadership. The Tottenham Defence Campaign has been formed in defence of the principle of equal treatment and due process, a defence against the dehumanising of an already demonised group of people, and a defence against the implosion of an impoverished area and its people.

Once in a while, usually after massive disorder, some of us are sought out by perplexed officials who repeat the questions they asked after the previous riot; but generally we are ignored. We cannot engage with the political process whilst suspending our critical faculties, there are far too many serious issues we want addressed - policing and real security for our communities, employment and urban renewal to name a few - and all within the framework of supporting and building our communities, not towards what others have prescribed for us, but as determined step by

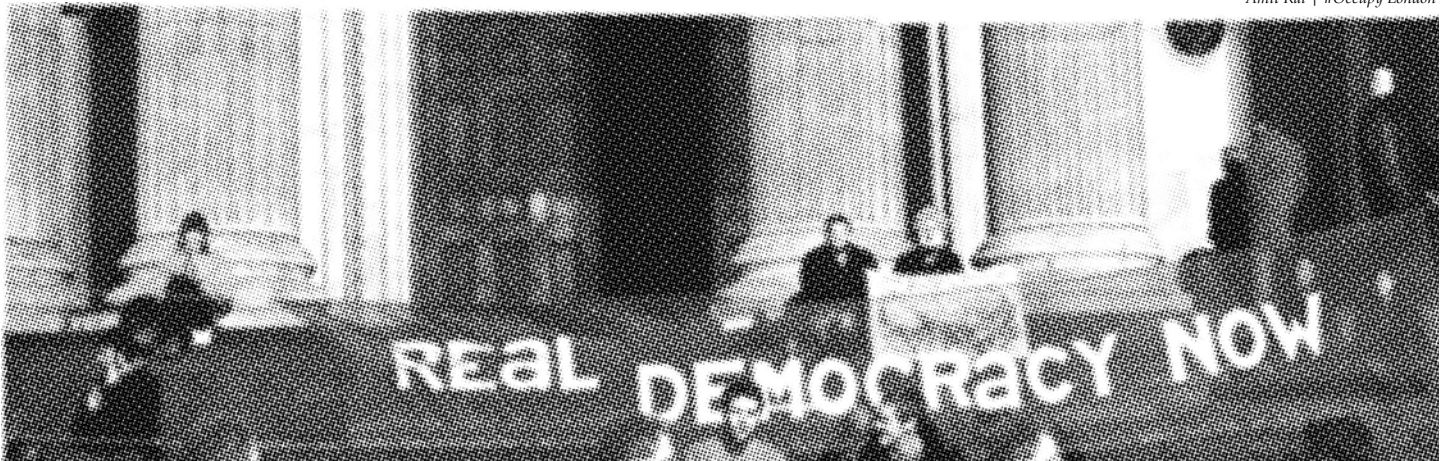
step by ourselves. We need more than to be 'consulted' on these matters; we need to have meaningful decision-making abilities on matters that directly affect us. This lack of a meaningful way to shape our future is also part of the cause of the disorder we have witnessed.

These are some of the motivations behind forming the Tottenham Defence Campaign.

Further info and contact:  
<http://www.tottenhamdefencecampaign.co.uk>

## The application of farce as filter

Amit Rai | #Occupy London



TIFFANY PAGE  
AND NICHOLAS BEURET

It would be easy enough to see the farcical nature of the new Tier 4 visa restrictions (those aimed at 'adult' students, a.k.a. international university students) as some kind of error or self-defeating bureaucratic fuck up. But, not unlike the management of call centres or emergency housing applications (or the dole in general), farce and error are integral to border control in the UK. Farce and error do what outright racism and hostility cannot - diffuse the experience and encounter, rendering collectivity in the face of such abject stupidity difficult, if not impossible.

The new visa restrictions, in place from July 4th 2011, aim to reduce international student numbers by one quarter. The new visa process requires potential students to provide proof that they have a minimum

amount of savings (in pounds), reduces the ability for students to stay in the UK after graduation to earn money to pay back student loans, and to prove their English language capability before entry. These tight, culturally-biased restrictions have come into effect alongside the development of a visa-system controlled by staff who have no training or experience in being able to recognise and respond appropriately to differences between cultures, let alone be sensitive or responsive to the needs of potential students.

Obviously such a system, coupled with the massive withdrawal of funding in the arts, humanities and social sciences and with caps in student places, will have a devastating effect on some disciplines in the university (those not immediately amenable to 'market conditions'). As Matthew Fuller, a lecturer at Goldsmiths, University of London, makes clear: "It's a self-mutilating, self-wounding policy with disastrous long-

term consequences. Universities need to operate at an international level and current government policy makes this impossible." Beyond the actual UKBA, the university itself is now completely drawn into both the process of selection as well as the process of surveillance of international students.

*Students Under Watch*, a recently published report, demonstrates how tightened controls have led to a massive extension of surveillance on campus - and a humiliating and hostile experience for international academics and students. The report's author, Valerie Hartwich, states: "Students from financially unstable countries and that those that do not conform with EU practices are most at risk of being refused visas. The visa process is for international students and yet it is impossible for many nationalities to meet the requirements."

*Students Under Watch* can be accessed at [www.manifestoclub.com/reports](http://www.manifestoclub.com/reports).

## Lecturers Defend Your Students

NINA POWER

Collective expressions of political opposition are the most terrifying thing in the world - if you're the government, police and courts, that is. The past few months have seen an incredible crack-down on protest and heavy sentences handed down to anyone involved in a public order situation. Just as "rioters" have received lengthy and explicitly exceptional sentences, so too have those who've been accused of serious public order offences relating to the student protests of last November and December.

Defend the Right to Protest, a campaign set up to help defend students and other protesters, and to help get the message out about police brutality, is setting up a Lecturer campaign, as a way of not only helping those students already facing trial, or already imprisoned, but also to provide a pre-emptive support network for those who may be hassled or arrested by the police at future demonstrations and occupations.

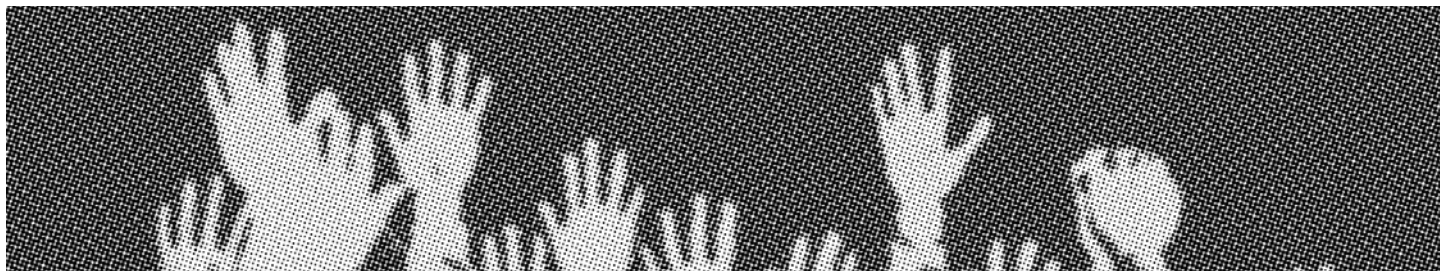
It is imperative that lecturers defend their students: not only is it politically consistent (many thousands of lecturers attended the 11 November demonstration last year, many marched with their students on the 26 March and 30 June this year, many supported the campus occupations and were grateful when students came out to bolster picket lines in our on-going fight for pensions), it is also a way of making very clear where the dividing lines are: not between staff and students, but between the government and all those that are fighting against austerity and privatisation.

There is much more to do: we need to get the message out about what to do when arrested. Too many young people are pressured into 'confessing', to accepting a caution, to pleading guilty to offences they haven't committed. We need to ensure that institutions do not try to expel students when they come out of jail. We need to get the message out about legal rights and about the political nature of current public

order policing; and we need to fight against having police on campus, and against being told to spy or inform on our students. The student-client is, in the minds of the government and management, only ever one step away from being the 'dangerous' student, the 'student-radical'. We must resist this expansion of the category of student domestic extremist, which has been applied to Muslim students for many years already, and cut off this suspicious, policing role at its root.

Lecturers should be prepared to support the families of arrested students and to stand by those people we teach, whenever, wherever - without them, we'd be nothing. If teachers/lecturers would like to get involved in the campaign, by being a point of contact at their institution, or anything else, or if you have ideas/experiences of your own, please contact Nina Power ([ninapower@gmail.com](mailto:ninapower@gmail.com)) for further information.

## Prisons are reproductive units Notes From Court Monitoring



With many in our movements currently facing criminal trials and long custodial sentences, the role that the courts, legal system and prisons play is made clearer by the day, as is the need for solidarity with those inside.

MANUELA ZECHNER

If you've been wondering what happened to the student movement of last Spring, the answer is that the State is processing it. Some 180 protesters, most of them under 25, have been moving in and out of courtrooms for the last 6 to 12 months. Some of them are already jailed, tagged, serving community sentences, on cautions and bind-overs, or released. At the time of writing, we know of 7 people in prison. Expect this number to rise sharply in the coming months. The movement hasn't disappeared, it's just been made more invisible. Large scale prosecution of legitimate protesters is not just a clever strategy for keeping movements busy with legalities or for producing fear - it's also part and parcel of the production of an underclass ('feral') forced to do the shitty work. Inmates, ex-inmates, those with criminal records: processed to serve at the lowest and dodgiest echelons of capitalism.

### Political prisoners made in the UK

It is well known that prisons don't 'correct' people, that most inmates come out more rather than less likely to commit crime. Prisons seem outdated, costly and stupid, but like most things, they don't exist by mistake. Prisons are places for the reproduction of power. Power relations are effective and sustainable only when they imply some sort of productivity: when they make bodies productive. Prisons are not just about punishing, removing or prohibiting. Although invisibly, they're productive. Just as the supposedly non-productive 'home' (versus the productive world of 'work') and the shadowy economies of informal labour are key areas of capitalist production, so is the judiciary-backstage. The prison is just another back room of capitalism: domesticating some to do the most underpaid and informal work.

It is vital for those in power to have access to a criminalised class of people whose lives are so devalued that they can be used as traffickers, bodyguards and bouncers,

army fighters, dealers, prostitutes, etc. The prison is economically efficient, and not just a little: like unpaid care and illegalised work, it quietly sustains the whole economy. It is yet another reproductive mechanism of capital: the production of a fear of criminality is key for legitimising a system of security and control. It is vital for capitalist 'democracy' that there be special kinds of statuses (criminal records as much as citizenship and visas) and incubators (prisons, uncared-for neighbourhoods, etc.) to make and mark the people who will be the most exploitable.

And it is preferable that this status be assigned to those who are political enemies of a regime: thus the student movement goes to prison, or at least to court. As do those who riot. Because they proceed around axes of class and race, we can say that most imprisonments are political - and economic/al. These days, we see young people in particular going to prison. Youth are dangerous when they ask for rights: they'll want pensions, homes, stable jobs. All those things which the neoliberals are working so hard to get rid of. Better to produce an extra-class of delinquent slave labourers for the formal and informal capitalist economies.

### Solidarity and care: court support

I've been doing court monitoring for the Legal Defence Monitoring Group (LDMG) recently. Sitting in Kingston Crown Court and witnessing rituals of accusation and conviction, framed by incomprehensible legal jargon. Giving advice, showing support and solidarity. LDMG and Green and Black Cross are organisations that assist people stuck in the judicial and prison systems. They help with legal advice, support and documentation in the courts, keeping records of cases and linking defendants up with each other and with solicitors who know why it is important to fight the prison factory. If you want to learn about state violence and the way the law is arbitrarily used to enforce norms these days, do go along and volunteer as a monitor, you are needed. It is curious

labour, following up on the cases of all those people, making sure they get the right information and attention.

UK jails are stretched to their limits[1]. Since the 1950s, there has been a fivefold increase in the country's prison population, and it is projected to keep rising. Across 'democratic' countries, there have never been as many people in prisons as there are today (with the US leading the way in incarceration rates[2]). There is nothing better than a well-produced underclass in times of a crisis of capitalist and democratic reproduction. With all the money sucked up by the one percent, and with neoliberal governments trashing all mechanisms of redistribution, who will do all the informal, illegalised and hyperprecarious work which sustains our collapsing economies? Women and subaltern people can't do it all. More and more jobs require a special education, a special brutalisation and precarisation: welcome to court, to prison! Police are trained to spot and hand-pick those who don't fit the norm. The lucky ones are then manufactured into criminals, forced to take on the growing amounts of underpaid and unpaid labour in our economies (whether as 'volunteers', serving community sentences or just doing shitty work).

All these back rooms are vitally important sites of struggle. The reproductive sphere is often hidden in our movements, just as it is in capitalist labour. As much as a sustainable economic-productive model needs to take into account and valorise those spheres, so does our militancy. Movements need to be held together as they proceed and transform. It is in the invisibilised spaces that our worlds get reproduced - that is, carefully sustained, but also systematically and violently domesticated. Perhaps the camp-occupation at St Paul's is one space where such attention may be practised in the open. Because there will never be anything better, more efficient or productive than caring, passionate struggle.

*If you would like to do court monitoring please email: [courtsupport@riseup.net](mailto:courtsupport@riseup.net)*

[1] <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/hub/crime-justice/offenders/prison>

[2] Un Report on 'GLOBAL INCARCERATION AND PRISON TRENDS' by Roy Walmsley, [www.unodc.org/pdf/crime/.../forum3\\_Art3.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/pdf/crime/.../forum3_Art3.pdf)

## Her Majesties Prison - A Survival Guide

CARL CATTERMOLE

In calling this a 'survival guide' I guess I've already wrong footed you: people's vicarious view of prison is that you'll arrive, get robbed, get banged up with a psychopath and then get raped in the shower. In reality it's nothing like this... I ended up on the high-risk wing of one of England's most notorious jails and I had no problems whatsoever.

With a few bits of information, your own bed sheets and a radio it becomes even easier, so please share this with anyone you know who's on bail or inside, repost it, plagiarise it, whatever. Just a note... this isn't all encompassing... I've never sat a parole hearing or had to serve a life sentence. This guide will help anyone facing prison but is probably better suited to those serving a 'shit and a shave' (that's a shorter sentence, a couple years or less, by the way).

And also I'd just like to say that subreptives I've included in here are already well known to the authorities: they know how you make hooch, they know that people charge their phones with a Playstation and they know you can build secret compartments in cupboards. I haven't included anything that is unknown. There are an ever dwindling number of things they don't know and I have obviously left them out.

Prison is jam-packed with stupid, aggressive and pugnacious people. And then there are the inmates: most of them are harmless. Still, I'd recommend you to keep yourself to yourself until you've assessed who you can be yourself with. Considering the media hype and most peoples vicarious view of prison, violence is relatively rare. But in general, adhere to the following simple rules and prison is probably safer than your average provincial high street on a Friday night. Don't be wet, but at the same time don't walk around like you've got a nuclear warhead up your rectum. Never ever grass anyone up. Don't steal from people.

Over the first week or two you'll do 'induction'. They'll explain to you how to go about 'kit change', library, meal slips and all the rest. At some point you'll be further assessed and they'll ask you all the usual: are you suicidal, do you have violent antecedents, do you take drugs, etc etc. Whatever you do don't even admit to having smoked weed in the past, they'll treat you as a 'user' and put you on weekly 'mandatory drug testing' for the rest of your sentence.

The system will come as a shock to your own... you'll be astounded at how inefficient prisons are, how much stuff gets thrown over the fence and how preventable it is, how little support is given to illiterate

people and drug users when this would quite obviously reduce the likelihood of them reoffending, how many people are serving such small sentences for crimes against people and how others are serving huge ones for crimes against capital, how many reformed offenders are rotting away on indeterminate sentences five years past their release date, and how bitties smoke teabags wrapped in bible pages when they've run out of cigarettes.

That leads me nicely on to cigarettes: as there is no money behind bars, prison is basically run on an economy of tobacco, and sometimes tins of tuna. A haircut will set you back two tins of tuna, getting a kitchen guy to get you some black pepper or having your cell repainted by the wing painter or a spliff of hash will set you back a half ounce of burn, one of those horrible match stick jewellery box things might set you back two ounces, and so on. Even if you don't smoke it's worth having some tobacco stashed away so you can buy something if you need it.

[the full guide can be downloaded from [wearthepaper.org](http://wearthepaper.org)]

## The Partners' Guide to Prison

KS, KA

This guide is a collaborative effort by the partners of some of those convicted in June 2011 at Blackfriars Crown Court, London. It can't tell you everything, but our lives would have been a lot easier if we'd had a guide like this. Luckily there was a group of us and by sticking together and exchanging knowledge we managed to get through the tough initial stages. The thing about prisons, and the criminal justice system in general, is that they don't tell you ANYTHING and if they do it often turns out to be wrong. You will need to take the initiative and do some research if you want to get information.

Every prisoner is legally entitled to a 'reception visit' in the first 72 hours (three days), so once you have found out where they are you will probably want to take advantage of this. Like most things where the prison system is concerned, it is not as easy as it sounds! You may want to phone the prison's visitors' centre beforehand and ask them for advice, but the important thing is to get there. If you don't get in within the 72 hours, kick up a stink! The reception visit is a legal right!

The prisoner will be allocated a prison number which will be used on all correspondence from, to and about them while they are inside. You need to know this number as soon as possible so that you can communicate with them. For all visits after the reception visit, you have to wait

for your partner to send you a VO (Visiting Order). A new prisoner will normally get two VOs a month plus a PVO which is an extra one they can apply for. Up to three people can go on each visit; in order to invite them the prisoner will need their full names, addresses and dates of birth.

You can't be a very effective support for your partner if you're in a complete mess (though you may be in a bit of one to begin with!). You are entitled to feel upset, worried and angry, especially in the immediate aftermath of the conviction. These sorts of feelings may continue for some time. But it's possible to feel this way and still get on with things. Make sure that you've got some support (both practical and emotional). Don't feel that you have to cope on your own.

*This is written from a girlfriend's perspective and is aimed more at the people visiting inmates on a regular basis, which is invariably women.*

The screws are all turdy caricatures of themselves, and fully enjoy telling you that every single item you brought to try and hand in is not allowed. You actually just have to make a joke of it to survive it - so it's always going to be easier if you go with a friend. In a lot of visits you actually get quite a long time, like two hours sometimes, and I quite liked the thing of choosing to leave before the screws start yelling and prodding at you to move. The whole thing is about power and control, right down to how you are allowed to sit together or

put your jacket on the chair, so wherever you can take it back makes it feel a little bit more normal. When their sentence is nearly over it can get pretty daunting, especially if you are in a relationship with them, suddenly it can feel like you have to deal with all the expectations. What if it isn't the honey dipped reunion we're all waiting for?! You've all just been through a pretty inhumane and damaging experience and it's difficult to know how it's going to work out. The prison system doesn't offer any real support for any of the people concerned so it is really important you get it your-self. Talk to your friends and family about it, and try and make plans for their release that doesn't put too much pressure on you. A relationship is maybe even worth breaking off and starting again at this point, in order to return to normality. However this is not a straightforward choice because you are an important part of their (true) rehabilitation process, bringing them back and helping them through. Some people may think this is some sort of exaggeration, but it's not worth underestimating how damaging a system the prison system is, especially when the effects of it so often remain hidden behind the constant front of machismo.

[the full guide can be downloaded at [weartheapper.org](http://weartheapper.org)]

# The Accomplice

General Strike | #Occupy Oakland

*The accomplice is the one you hear things about by hearing things*



STEFANO HARNEY

The accomplice is someone who is not there. Someone you can see only if you see things. To feel the love of the accomplice is to feel safe to be unsafe. The love of the accomplice is known by what he makes vulnerable, by the bodies she teaches to open in conspiracy. To the police the accomplice must exist, to explain the contagion. But to us, the contagion comes before the accomplice, makes the accomplice possible. Against the logistical logic, the imperative in contemporary capital to connect everything to everything, a logic too often mimicked in the movement, the accomplice is disconnected, recalcitrant, does not fit, attach, translate, change. The accomplice is the one you hear things about by hearing things. The one who could not be here, would not be here, the one we long for by belonging to the conspiracy. The friend is the one who is always there, but the accomplice is the friend who can never be there.

And, make no mistake, this most intimate absence, this most missing love is a political one, too.

Here is how Walter Rodney writes about what we call the accomplice:

'And above all, I would like to indicate my own gratification for that experience which I shared with them. Because I learnt. I got knowledge from them, real knowledge. You have to speak to Jamaican Rasta, and you have to listen to him, listen very carefully and then you will hear him tell you about the Word... You have to listen to them and you hear them talk about Cosmic Power

and it rings a bell. I say, but (wait) I have read this somewhere, this is Africa. You have to listen to their drums to get the Message of the Cosmic Power.'

Now the people Rodney is writing about were labeled by their own government as criminals. They were regarded by that government as disposable, literally removed to the garbage dump where Rodney sat with them. Nor were they, like Rodney, historical materialists in any strict sense, and indeed they seem at moments to move Rodney away from his materialism toward what might say some other cosmic materialism. They were, in other words, invisible both to the government and to the revolution, and yet as Rodney recognises, the revolutionary learns from them, is opened by them.

To grasp the importance of this apprehension of accomplices in Rodney, think of it in contrast to this passage from Frantz Fanon:

'For example, the gangster who holds up the police set on to track him down for days on end, or who dies in single combat after having killed four or five policemen, or who commits suicide in order not to give away his accomplices - these types light the way for the people, form blueprints for action and become heroes. Obviously, it's a waste of breath to say that such-and-such a hero is a thief, a scoundrel, or a reprobate.'

And yet Fanon does waste his breath here because for him such people labeled by the police as criminal were also unready for revolution. They had not become new men, new revolutionary subjects, had not changed. But the accomplice does not need to change, the accomplice is the one who tells you by her absence from the revolution,

that she is already revolutionary, already untimely. She is already, in Kwame Toure's words, ready for a revolution.

Here is Rodney again: 'But you learn humility after you get in contact with these brothers... you learn humility because they are teaching you. And you get a confidence that comes from an awareness that our people are beautiful. Beauty is in the very existence of black people... these brothers who, up to now, are every day performing a miracle... They live and they are physically fit, they have a vitality of mind, they have a tremendous sense of humour, they have depth. How do they do that in the midst of existing conditions? And they create, they are always saying things...'

And seeing things and hearing things. The accomplice is already elsewhere opening us, teaching us, loving us, here.



## Interview with Haneen Maikey



Haneen Maikey

*I don't think homophobia is my struggle, my struggle is more heteronormativity, patriarchy, gender roles, and linking gender and sexuality and exploring them together all the time.*

The Paper spoke with Haneen Maikey, Director of Al-Qaws for Sexual & Gender Diversity in Palestinian Society, a Palestinian grassroots queer political organisation working throughout Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories.

*"If we behave like those on the other side, then we are the other side."*

- Jean Genet

At a time when Israeli, U.S., and E.U. mainstream media groups publish stories about the presence of homosexuals in order to indicate economic growth, the process of strategizing how to mobilise queer politics outside the "homonationalism" sphere poses a daunting challenge. How do queer Palestinians, themselves under the perpetual threat of colonial oppression and violence, organise themselves and navigate a route by which they can engage with tactics of grouping and visibility, but in way that is necessarily distinct from traditional "gay-rights" approaches? Maikey, a Palestinian citizen of Jerusalem, discussed some of the ways these challenges are played out in the daily operations of Al-Qaws.

**The Paper:** Tell us about Al-Qaws.

**Haneen Maikey:** Well, it's a ten-year story, so I will keep it short. Al-Qaws (which in Arabic means "rainbow": very lame and not creative) started in late 2001 as part of Jerusalem Open House, an Israeli LGBT Jerusalem-based community centre. It was an apolitical organisation, an apolitical space, and actually an apolitical start for Al-Qaws.

In 2007, after seven years of experiencing being in a Jewish-Israeli space we came to understand that we needed a separate space to express all our complex identities and registered Al-Qaws as an independent entity. We didn't want to create a "pink bubble", though of course it feels convenient sometimes to exist under these bubbles in order to grow and to build teamwork, solidarity, friendship or love.

Al-Qaws is the largest queer group in Palestine today. We provide peer support to individuals, we have a hotline operated by 20 volunteers who answer the phones, and a

large community-building effort in four areas: the West Bank, East Jerusalem, Haifa and Jaffa. We see Al-Qaws as a national organisation that crosses borders. We understand the differences between these spaces and have a sort of "politics of location approach".

There is currently a sexual movement happening in Palestinian society and around the Arab world. Our discourse is shifting away from narrow LGBT 'gay rights' and identity politics approaches, to more of a sexual rights approach. We are critical of the "rights" approach, but use it as a framework so people such as women, allies and bisexuals can be included and involved in challenging the different taboos in sexuality. We cannot discuss homosexuality and queer politics without challenging sexuality. This is why we think queer politics rather than queer identity could be the right framework.

**TP:** Can you talk a little about how you feel queerness connects to protest?

**HM:** It comes down to visibility. We have a space in the mainstream media on Qadita.net, one of the most popular cultural and political web-spaces. Last year we published around 100 articles about our activism, our ideology, how we perceive sexuality. We aim to stretch the Arabic language to include behaviours and expressions that are supposedly not in the mainstream.

We are also, more importantly, very visible from our political platform. I co-founded Al-Qaws to promote BDS [campaign for Boycotts, Divestment and Sanctions against Israel] to more Palestinian queers and to be visible in every campaign related to Palestinian struggle, both nationally and internationally, physically and virtually. We are everywhere. We are challenging the current image of what "Palestinian gay" means - images of "victimhood" or "the exotic" - challenging this binary and bringing in more of the activist spirit.

**TP:** Tell me a little bit more about when you said that the Western notions of LGBT doesn't provide a good narrative for Palestinian groups.

**HM:** It's a big topic and I'm still exploring what that means. I don't want to assume that West means a universal, and I know there are so many different experiences, especially in the U.S. I'm talking in terms of hegemonic Western concepts that are biased towards privilege. I'm not looking for privileges; I'm resisting privileges all the time. Take the term "homophobia". Of course my Mum is homophobic, and I myself was homophobic once. The majority of my community is homophobic, and if not then they're transphobic. [But] we're using the same binaries, reinforcing the same thing, defining who's progressive and who's backward, and not breaking the cycle or addressing the root of the problem. So I don't think homophobia is my struggle, my struggle is more challenging heteronormativity, patriarchy, gender roles, and linking gender and sexuality and exploring them together all the time.

There are complexities of openness and privacy within communities that need to be worked with without forcing people to come out. 10% of the people I know live alone. People live with their families. It's not that people are locked in this family prison, they really love that culture and mentality and really feel a part of their family. Now there are more young people who are living alone, people will be more ready to consider their sexuality - and it's not just about homosexuals, but also women who have sex before marriage, or people having a more open lifestyle and sexuality. Let's challenge sexuality and not just homosexuality. But I do think that the queer voice is really important. Because you cannot discuss sexuality without discussing us. So, I am happy that we are leading this. There's something strong about us leading it.

[The full version of this abridged interview can be read online at [www.werepaper.org](http://www.werepaper.org)]

## Regeneration, repression and dispossession: eviction from the entrepreneurial city



RACHEL DRUMMOND

In August of 2009 the Islington Tribune reported on a story that revealed with unusual clarity the logic at the core of recent 'regeneration' projects in the UK.

Having already reneged on promises to expand transport services, provide green spaces and social housing to about the newly built Arsenal Emirates stadium, Arsenal FC apartments announced that children from what little social housing remained at the complex would be barred from entering the 3,000 sqm on-site playground. This main playground would be reserved only for children of parents who were private flat owners, while children from social housing would instead be provided with small green spaces.

The Arsenal case is emblematic of a broad and diffuse logic of enclosure (privatizing and limiting access to space) that permeates the ongoing project of 'regeneration' in London and the UK. It is this that lies in the background of seemingly discrete issues such as long prison sentences for student protesters, evictions of 'rioters' and Traveller communities and the development of the London Olympic site. Just as the state seeks out new ways to criminalise and repress public protest, a new series of strategies and justifications to dispossess the people of any property and housing owned publicly or held in common continues apace. Yet what may be particularly novel in recent years is the specific ways these two strategies of enclosure have intersected with one another: repression and dispossession are increasingly employed together to produce a cleansed entrepreneurial city.

This connection is most brutally apparent in recent evictions of the families of individuals convicted of crimes associated with the August 2011 riots from their social housing. Wandsworth Council proudly led the way in beginning eviction proceedings against the mother of a man charged with 'riot-related' crime. At least 9 other councils have already announced they'll follow suit. It is unclear whether these evictions

will be upheld given how clearly they contravene the right to housing. However, they nevertheless point to an increasingly clear association - by both the state and in popular media - between social housing and criminality. Collective punishment (via eviction) opens the door to a new strategy of 'dispossession by criminalisation'. The Thatcherite policy of the 'right to buy' council homes becomes amplified by a right to evict people from them. This becomes clearer still in the government's new Localism Bill that seeks to shorten tenancies and remove lifetime tenancies altogether, removing all security for families in social housing.

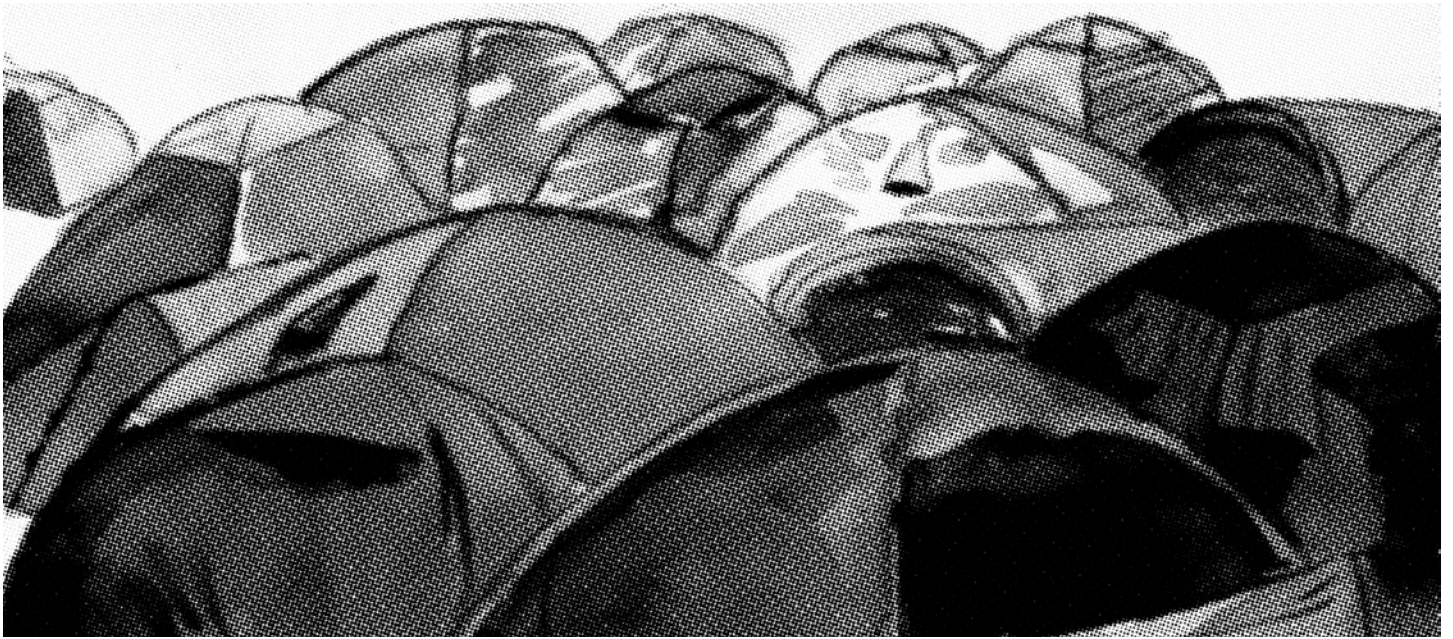
Sometimes outright dispossession is not immediately possible. In this case, other forms of enclosure come into use. ASBO tactics which restrict and criminalise 'minor incidents' such as spitting or 'intimidation' are familiar. Yet the increasing use of 'dispersal zones' on council estates and elsewhere is even more draconian. These give police powers for 6 months at a time (renewable) to disperse individuals if their presence 'has resulted, or is likely to result, in any members of the public being intimidated, harassed, alarmed or distressed'. Failure to observe an order to disperse is a criminal offence. Despite a paucity of statistics, it is assumed that over 1,000 dispersal zones are in existence in England. Beyond their use in areas or amongst people labeled 'problematic' (read: working class), similar anticipatory and collective punitive tactics are also increasingly employed in the policing of public protest: pre-emptive arrests such as those in the run-up to the royal wedding and the pervasiveness of 'kettling', amongst others. Collective punishment has also become widespread in the form of outrageously long sentences for those convicted of even the most minor crimes during forms of collective protest, such as the 'riots' or the student protests.

This relationship between repression and dispossession emerges again in the government's recent white paper on

squatting rights. Criminalising trespass would provide the police with a further tool in curbing protests and in particular, occupations. It is also likely to be employed to evict Traveller communities. At the time of writing, the Traveller community of 86 families at Dale Farm in Basildon, Essex has been forcibly removed from land they own (transformed from a former scrapyard), but which the council has refused to zone as residential. The increase in families at this site since the 1960s is itself the result of evictions from other sites in the South East of England. Besides the obvious racism faced by Travellers and the highly repressive nature of the eviction (police employed tasers as a tool of crowd control for the first time in the UK), it is important to recognize that this eviction also sits within a broader project.

Basildon lies within the corridor that Thames Gateway Development Corp (LTGDC) has earmarked for 'regeneration', following on from the 1980s London Docklands redevelopment. This consisted of tawdry, overpriced, 'loft style' apartments and skyscrapers in a massive 'enterprise zone' which offered tax breaks and state-backed powers of compulsory purchase of private and public land to developers that has swelled to new proportions with the arrival of the Olympics in London in 2012. The area in which Basildon falls has been earmarked to create a leafy suburban idyll for commuting workers - hence the emphasis on the Green Belt in justifications for the Dale Farm eviction. The background to the eviction of Dale Farm is therefore a much broader project of extending the entrepreneurial city and removing and dispossessing those who do not belong there. The existence of Traveller camps clashes absolutely with these consumerist and capitalist objectives.

The governance structure of the organisations tasked with Thames Gateway regeneration is complex. Acronyms proliferate and change, corporations are restructured to take advantage of new, more favourable legislation, public-private



partnerships emerge without any clearly defined relationship. Properties such as those on the current site of Stratford City (which also owns part of the Olympic site) have seemingly been shuffled between the state and developers incessantly over at least the past 15 years. The state provides capital with infrastructure such as transportation, cheap land - seized from individual groups or the public itself and sold at discount prices - and also buys back sites which prove to be unprofitable in particular market conditions. Similarly, the Mayor recently promised interest free loans to developers of the Olympic site after 2012. The state acts as an agent for developers, creating favourable conditions for investment, while also absorbing risks and costs.

In its ghastly pink and tasteless font, the 2012 Olympics website proudly displays one of its victims - not unlike an angler with his catch - the Clay's Lane Estate. Once Europe's second largest purpose-built housing co-operative, all 425 residents were evicted under a compulsory purchase order provided for the whole of the Olympic site. Another 35 Traveller families and 64 allotment holders were also dispossessed of their land, while a number of historical commons including Lammas land were appropriated within the bounds of a 306 hectare site earmarked for the Olympic park and Village.

The number of 'affordable homes' promised to be built on the Olympic site has also consistently decreased. The very meaning of 'affordable' housing itself is such a flexible term that it can encompass anything from social housing to part purchase of homes for households earning as much as £74,000 per year. Moreover, since the project is not funded past 2013, studies have suggested that following the Olympics, the lack of a budget could be used as a justification for taking all of this land and infrastructure away from the public and given to large developers at highly discounted rates, as was done following the Sydney Olympics.

Yet more mega-developments are afoot. In 2010, the LTGDC gave planning permission for what will be one of 5 of the first Tesco 'villages' in the UK in Bromley-by-Bow. A hyper-store, itself too big for the ubiquitous term of mega-store, will neighbour a Tesco-built school, hotel, and 454 homes all owned by the retailer. Residents concerned about the continued closure of local libraries will be satisfied to know that Tesco has promised to build an "idea store." Any queries on what the latter will look like should be directed to the bookshelves in one's local Tesco.

There's more. One could also point to the green spaces to be called 'Adi-zones' sponsored by the sporting giant Adidas, though maintained by local councils; the housing projects to be developed by Stratford City; the 18,000 plus home repossessions that occurred in the UK in the first half of this year; plans for increased police powers because the Olympics; and so on.

It is perhaps within these twin fronts of dispossession on the one hand and repressive policing on the other, that we might view the recent explosion of occupations, despite all of their contradictions, as one appropriate form of resistance. For here we arrive at a tactic which seeks to transform the privately enclosed and the repressively policed space into something public and open to all.

## Going to jail

"By the time you read this, I'll be in jail. I have hurt no one, offended no one, threatened nobody, and yet I am in prison for 18 months...I am being sent to jail on the most spurious of charges, just as many others are too. I am not asking you to feel sorry for me. I am asking you to think seriously about the kind of government and legal system that believes the only way to deal with dissent is to put it behind bars."

*Omar Ibrahim - one of many sentenced on Friday at Kingston crown court*

Winter is almost here. Sadly, the days of coin-operated electric meters that allowed for knife and string tricks and replacing coins with foreign shrapnel are long gone. So, while 20,000 plus people freeze to death in the UK each year, we can either spend all our money on heating and starve to death, or kill ourselves by cooking the power meter. Here are a few alternative methods to beat the policies of people freezing.

### 1 Don't freeze alone

Do some research on the 1970s Italian movements for self-reduction. Summarised here for inspiration: 1. Organise a meeting with your neighbours, the more the better. 2. Pay your bills together. 3. Then delay the payment by one week. 4. Next make a payment strike for one month. 5. Agree to break the strike if the company agrees to a 25% discount on all bills.

### 2 100 Meter Skint

A household energy meter doesn't belong to the tenant/occupier, but rather is the private property of a greedy, parasitic corporation that has the police on its payroll. If they notice you have tampered with your meter, you will probably get disconnected, fined, arrested, or all of the above. Never let the meter reader come into your place if the meter is showing negative usage or has an obvious bypass still in place! Having £0 bills is also likely to trigger an algorithm that will beep at some miserable sod in a headset who is paid minimum wage to begin the process of catching you out. If you do decide to auto-reduce your bills, make sure you still have current going through the meter from time to time.

Examine the type of meter you have at your house. Some of the new digital ones have tamper alarms and can register a bypass. Prepay meters work pretty much like normal meters apart from the top-up

key. These were invented to make poor people even poorer, by forcing them to pay even more for power: no money/no credit history/no bank account/crap landlord equals no access to direct debit only/quarterly/significantly cheaper electric rates. With prepay meters, the key registers the difference between the amount of electricity paid for and the amount actually used, and transmits this data every time you top up. So use multiple keys and make sure you put money on them occasionally. Smart meters, supposedly designed to save the planet, are used for surveillance and punishment of those who cannot afford to pay. They can detect fiddling and communicate detailed records of power usage back to their masters.

**WARNING: electricity is quite dangerous!**

Becoming a steaming pile of shit and burnt hair next to your hall cupboard is arguably worse than watching your Gran die from hypothermia. Track down a mate who knows what they're doing, or pay someone sympathetic/dodgy who does it for a living.

### 3 Magnets, how the fuck do they work?

This will depend on how old your meter is. If it is one of those with a spinning disc, it might be worth giving fiddling it a shot - this type is least likely to result in a fry up. Placing strongish magnets on either side of the meter box, roughly in line with the disc,

will interrupt the magnetic field and should make the disc spin faster or slower. Play around with the positioning and polarity until you get it to slow down or stop, then tape them in place.

**WARNING: The following methods require more care!**

If the above doesn't work you can drill a tiny, needle-sized hole in the plastic on the side of the meter in line with the spinning disc. Put a needle through and look through the panel at the front to make sure it comes out just under the disk. Apply some downward pressure to stop the disc spinning.

### 4 Shoot the Pump!

You (or better still someone who has technical experience) will need to tamper with potentially live wires. Which means TURNING OFF THE MAINS SWITCH on the fuse box. Then, find the main fuse - this will be BEFORE the fuse box - and pull it out. Use a multimeter or a voltage meter (available from hardware stores) to make sure there is no power in the meter before continuing. Insulated pliers, rubber boots and gloves are also a mighty fine idea. And don't forget: everyone in the house MUST know that the meter reader is not to be allowed to enter the house. For more details on the nitty gritty of which wires to connect to which other wires - check out the good old internet.

Now, nothing left to do except enjoy an auto-reduced electrocution.

**Power to the People!**

**Vive la Résistance!**

