Against Surveillance State UK Against Facial Recognition CCTV

Britain is an authoritarian surveillance State, which has pioneered how many modern societies look; entirely covered by security cameras at almost every urban point, place, square, road, corner, shop, bus, train, etc. Partially perpetually in a state of decay and disrepair, here they have built a life almost as in a vast prison, and it is what their world looks like. Prison society; endless drab shopping centres, housing estates, tower blocks, industrial and recreational areas capable of being on lock-down at short notice. Regularly practised large-scale multi-agency counter-terror response drills to terrorist attacks, inner-city riots. Mind-control media beams out lies, half-truths, distractions, impossible consumer desires, morning, noon and night. Every potentially disruptive mass event, social and environmental crisis, is hyped by the media as threatening such an abrupt end to normality that at least all the police's resources will be stretched so thin that the military will have to be involved to restore order under martial law. Austerity, flooding, Brexit, immigration, Islamism. Reactionary, racist, nationalist discourses and ideologies are everywhere; religious and far-right neo-nazi groups are regrouping. Anarchist and eco-action is called "extremism" or "terrorism", in the double-speak of the police-state. There will never be any chance of individual, social and environmental change without the recreation of daily life into an existence that reflects our desires, passions and joys, rather than a cog in their system of fear. Likewise there is zero possibility of any social change without an insurrection, a social war.

So already there is not much sense of real freedom in the cities or towns beyond what we steal and reclaim as our own and largely the passive citizens have adopted to decades of surveillance without doing anything about it at all. In fact, many people would even argue for the necessity of these devices not only to protect their own property but vital to the running of the country itself. The only opposition to these devices and their future is that it doesn't yet work well enough. Consumerism is swamped by mobile phone devices, drones, computer games, household security systems, all utilising facial recognition software, and the new technology companies are successfully promoting their vision where privacy disappears into a life lived online where there is nowhere to hide from either capitalism, authority or the commodity.

'Smart' CCTV systems in different forms have been operational for years, such as the 'Ring of Steel' security system around the City of London financial district, but British police are currently testing newer more sophisticated mass facial biometric pattern recognition software in public trials at anti-arms and anti-war protests, music and sporting events in towns and cities across the country, on crowds of up to 90,000 people and above. Despite reports that the technology is not yet as effective as the authorities demand, this technology, and other technologies of social control similar to it, will continue to be tested and forced on the population by the State in the name of public safety, crime prevention or some other illusion.

The 'intelligent' CCTV system is connected to a laptop or server, the video is recorded digitally and pattern recognition software compares facial biometrics from the live feed to those on a database or watch list. The regime wants to input databases from other sources into the system eventually. The Police National Database (which has more than 19 million images), the Automatic Number Plate Recognition database (for tracking vehicles), passport photos and/or driving licences could be added to its system in the future.

At present the facial recognition devices are reported to work well in controlled spaces like border check-points, but perform much more inaccurately in less controlled spaces where there is a lot of movement. That is why, in the roll out of these facial recognition devices, our communities, environments and spaces will become testing places and in the end necessarily become more prison-like in their design, planning and architecture in the future. This is a process which has been taking place for decades already, and is part of the standardising, globalising nature of technology, capitalism and hierarchy.

The new technologies more correctly concern population management and control, not 'individual crime'. This is about mass surveillance, the prevention of predicted large-scale uprisings, and development of a modern totalitarianism. A dream of control unheard of since the fantasies of 20th Century dictators available with a few laptops and a server. The aim of facial recognition CCTV is to have general artificial intelligences tracking multi-millions of people in real-time, with no privacy, no freedom and no ability for the conditions of social-class structures to ever change: the same mechanisms which currently run society magnified a thousand-fold by technology's advance in the service of Capital. Technology was always pushed that it would free people and liberate them from a mechanistic life of meaningless work, but the opposite seems true, that technology has only enabled people to be more enslaved to production with no real autonomy.

If anything can be learned from the lessons of States that have integrated widespread surveillance systems in the territories they dominate, is that these systems have proven difficult to remove by the population subject to it, who gradually become less resistant to their use. In those areas where the cameras and networks have not yet spread and established themselves deeply, they must be sabotaged and those individuals and companies who are involved the in new technologies of social control must become targets of a sustained assault.

Profit interests, technical interests, extractive interests, class interests; The only answer to these interests is direct action: individual and collective action against the State, police, politicians, companies, scientists of the new and old power structures. Nobody will do it other than yourself, begin now! Alone or with a small group of 2-3, find yourselves and begin.

Every refusal, confrontation, wreckage and riot is a spark against the tinder-box of relations of this corrupt and unbalanced prison-world. Every gesture of mutual aid, kindness, love and solidarity can light an inferno.

Forward subversion, conspiracy and sabotage!

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