



NO BORDERS! NO STATES! NO WARS!

Resistance Special Edition

Free/Donation

Over 20 simultaneous protests throughout the UK and around the world to end immigration detention centres

by Shut Down Detention Centres

Thousands of activists took part in a coordinated transnational day of solidarity with detainees.

190 detainees went on hunger strike in Harmondsworth detention centre.

A coalition of groups from the UK and around the world joined a mass simultaneous protest in 15 detention centres on 7th May, calling to end immigration detention centres. An international coalition joined forces with groups from all around the UK as well as groups from the US, Spain, Greece, The Netherlands, Germany, Sweden, Iceland, N. Ireland, Belgium, France and Italy. In the UK, thousands took part in the protest in solidarity with the 30,000 adults and children in detention. Protesters held demonstrations at St Pancras train station, held noise demonstration in various detention centres, flew kites so detainees can see them beyond the high walls, danced, sang songs and called for the immediate release of those held against their will without judicial oversight, a time limit, or adequate access to legal support, translation, and healthcare.

In Harmondsworth detention centre, 190 people announced a hunger strike and refused to eat lunch, and 50 people occupied the yard in protest. In Morton Hall, demonstrators came to support Fredrick Igbiniedion, who had been on hunger strike for 13 days by the 7th of May. Igbiniedion has been living in the UK since 2004 and has a 5 year old son here. According to reports from Morton Hall, he has already collapsed several times since starting his hunger strike.

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A mother of a past detainee in Morton Hall spoke at the demonstration and said: "My son was detained four times. He was abused quite a lot. We are here today because we think that the way our asylum seekers are treated is inhumane, is wrong and is degrading". People inside various detention centres reported that this show of solidarity meant a lot to them, and in many demonstrations detainees were answering the protest with their own chanting in call for freedom.

Away from the public eye: self-harm, abuse and trauma

Every year, over 30,000 people - including children - are detained in high-security prisons without adequate access to legal advice, and with poor to non-existent health care provision. Detention centres rarely garner media attention: journalists are not permitted to visit people in detention, and people detained have limited internet access, and no access to cameras, making primary source materials nearly impossible to obtain. However, research reveals the tough conditions:

- 2,230 attempted suicides in UK detention centres since 2007
- 26 deaths across UK detention since 1989
- Physical and sexual abuse by staff
- Bullying of LGBT detainees
- Increase risk for PTSD and mental health disability, particularly for people who suffered persecution in the past.
- Pregnant women, children, and survivors of torture are detained against the Home Office guidelines

In the UK, a growing number of detention centres are run by private companies such as G4S, Serco, and GEO, who profit from the imprisonment of people considered to be "illegal" by governments. Some detainees perform key maintenance jobs in the detention centres for merely for £1 per hour, making the running of the places more profitable for companies. Today a large coalition of organisations demands to stop this exploitative practice.

May 7th was part of a wider transnational campaign to shut down detention centres and end the system of immigration detention that criminalises and imprisons people simply because they have chosen

or been forced to migrate. Actions also take place in solidarity with wider struggles against borders and migration controls and with people who are living in detention without walls, from Calais to Idomeni.

This day of action took place directly in organisation and solidarity with the very people who are currently detained, or who have lived experiences of detention and the actions they take daily to protest their imprisonment and deportation, such as yard occupations, hunger strikes, riots, and resistance to forced removals. We want to let people held inside detention centres know that their struggles are not unheard, that people on the outside are listening and want to come together in fighting against detention and deportation.

Demonstrations were held at:

March through central London (UK)

Dungavel detention centre (Scotland, UK)

Morton Hall detention centre (Lincoln, UK)

Yarl's Wood detention centre (Bedfordshire, UK)

Cedars detention centre (West Sussex, UK)

Campsfield detention centre (Oxfordshire, UK)

Brook House detention centre (Gatwick, UK)

Tinsley House detention centre (Gatwick, UK)

Harmondsworth detention centre (Middlesex, UK)

Colnbrook detention centre (Middlesex, UK)

The Verne detention centre (Dorset, UK)

Larne House (Northern Ireland, UK)

Detention centre near Schiphol Airport (The Netherlands)

Reykjavik (Iceland)

127 bis detention centre (Steenokkerzeel, Belgium)

Coquelles detention centre (near Calais, France)

Märsta detention centre (Sweden)

Larne House (Belfast, N. Ireland)

Brennero (Italy)

Parenesti (Greece)

Exhibition at ex-detention centre (Frankfurt, Germany)

Tacoma and Lynden detention centres (US)

This day of protest has been called for and supported by groups across borders:

Movement for Justice, Leeds No Borders, We Will Rise, The Unity Centre, No Borders Iceland, SOAS Detainee Support, Black Women's Rape Action Project, Brighton Migrant Solidarity, Campaign to Close Campsfield, Manchester Migrant Solidarity, Anarchist Group of Amsterdam, No Borders Sussex, Migrant Solidarity Group of Hungary, Getting The Voice Out, Faites Votre Jeu!, No Borders Frankfurt, No One Is Illegal Stockholm, Borderline-Europe, Calais Migrant Solidarity, Anti Raids Network, No Borders Women and Non-binary folk, Shake! – Young Voices in Arts, Media, Race & Power,

Detained Voices, Close the Verne, Shut Down Morton Hall, South Yorkshire Migration and Asylum Action Group, Barbed Wire Britain, Migrant Rights Network, Right to Remain, Lesbians and Gays Support the Migrants, No Deportations-Residence Papers for All, Welcome to Hungary, SOS Racismo Madrid, Aktion Mot Deportation, All African Women's Group, Payday, Women Against Rape, Women of Colour in Global Women's Strike Fight Racism Fight Imperialism Edinburgh Migrants Solidarity Network Abbatere Le Frontiere

For stories, experiences, and demands by people held in UK detention centres:

<http://detainedvoices.com>

Editorial

The 'migrant crisis', the referendum about withdrawing from the EU, and many conflicts past and present are all about artificial lines that divide groups of people. These borders are both physical - you are not allowed to cross from one piece of land to another - and mental and imaginary - the idea that people on one side of the line are fundamentally different from those on the other side. In this issue of Resistance we focus on the borders between nation states. Governments have control over a particular patch of land that is perceived to have some kind of common social and cultural identity. The fact that humans have been migrants around the globe for thousands of years seems to be forgotten as the nation creates this illusion of sameness in a group of people that live within its borders.

The state certainly doesn't treat all those people with equal respect!

As anarchists we reject all borders except the border between the vast majority of the world's population and the ruling class - the bosses, the bankers, the property developers and all those with the wealth and power to exploit and oppress us. The ruling class doesn't respect the boundaries that they impose on us: money goes all over the world for speculation and tax evasion, corporations move production from one country to another in search of the lowest wages, and shops are filled with products made on the other side of the world. Inside the nation, they have erected borders on our land, excluding us from more and more places. Land has long been largely privately owned in the countryside, vast Highland estates, for example, and agriculture. But increasingly in the cities, land is being privatised and effectively excluding anyone who isn't working or spending money.

In this issue of Resistance, we look at the fightback against borders and the ways in which people are creating a spirit of internationalism and unity between the working class against the ruling class.

Fighting Fascism and Racism from Dulwich to Dunkirk



On 30th January Kent Anti-Racism Network organised opposition to a neo-Nazi anti-immigration rally in Dover, the third such protest in the town in recent months. A number of far-right, fascist and neo-Nazi groups including National Action, National Front, the EDL and assorted Odin-worshipping white supremacists came together to drink lager on the streets and act out their Danny Dyer, Football Factory fantasies.

Although discerning a coherent ideology from these groups is difficult, what is clear is that there is a growing current of co-operation between fascist groups and this is manifesting itself in an increased street presence as well as attacks against 'immigrants'. On the same day as the Dover protest a far-right group in Stockholm attacked anyone not white whilst giving out anti-immigration leaflets and there has since been a similar case in Manchester as well as continued attacks against immigration centres in Germany.

In Dover Kent ARN managed to organise a strong opposition on the streets with backing from Brighton and London antifascists, as well as many other groups from across the country. Opposition on the day was hampered after around 200 antifascists were detained by police in a service station near Dover after coaches from opposing groups accidentally ran into each other. In order to facilitate the fascist's march, Kent police detained antifascists for five hours whilst refusing to specify which powers of detention they were using for most of this time. Once again the police showed favouritism towards the far-right as

their side of the service station encounter were processed quickly and sent on their way.

Sadly, this meant the fascists were simply outnumbered rather than vastly outnumbered in Dover. Although some fascists have since declared the day a victory the main outcome has been a public unmasking of these groups- videos of them performing Nazi salutes and shouting 'Seig Heil' did the rounds of the evening news and certainly did not play well with Dover locals on the day. With growing anti-immigration rhetoric in the press it is worrying that these groups feel confident to both espouse a Nazi ideology and to do this openly in public.

Anti-fascist groups were again in action on 2nd April as 60 neo-nazis made the return trip to Dover to shout misguided views about 'them immigrants' to their only audience, a triple line of police, which was also the only thing stopping them from being pulled apart by 600 antifascists. Dover has now become a war of attrition between the South East Alliance's unity project of neo-nazis against various anti-fascist groups. As each new protest has been called, the fascist numbers have decreased as they realise they have little local support and can only march when police intervene.

The day was heavily policed from the beginning, meaning any confrontations were likely to be minimal despite the many online threats made by the fascists. Instead, KARN marched through the centre of town to the docks where three cars were sent full of aid for the refugee camps in Calais and Dunkirk. Once the cars had been seen off, anti-fascists blocked the road

for a number of hours to stop the fascist march. The police were determined to let the Nazis through and so began making arrests at random from the crowd and brought in horses to push protesters to one side. A number of police were also witnessed punching anti-fascists to try and provoke arrests and justify their numbers. Eventually, the fascists and their police escort managed to dribble past. To call it a sorry sight would be an understatement. How the police can defend the amount of money spent and inconvenience to traffic to allow this small band of idiots to march is unclear.

What should be remembered, however, is the threat that these people can pose. Although their numbers have been dwindling at recent Dover protests, there is currently a resurgence of far-right activity and accompanying street violence and threats. Direct opposition is needed and both KARN and the Anti-Fascist Network provided amazing organisation both on the day and in helping arrestees once they'd been released. International solidarity was also well received as Nord Pas de Calais anti-fascists made the

trip over the channel.

Opposing the far-right does not just occur on the streets and members of the Anarchist Federation have been involved in fundraisers, prisoners support, organisation and arguing against their racist ideology in print and at public meetings. Ultimately, however, whilst they continue to have a violent street presence we will need to counter this.

Meanwhile, away from the dreamland the neo-nazis live in, the refugee crisis continues. The Anarchist Federation has been organising aid collections and delivering them to the distribution centre in Calais and will continue this support as long as necessary. The people living in the camps have short-term needs for tents, sleeping bags and waterproofs but also in the long-term, recognition that they are not illegal or 'sans-papiers' but people in desperate need.

To get involved or find out more, visit:
www.dulwich2dunkirk.wordpress.com

Twitter: **@dulwich2dunkirk**

The Unity Centre

Anyone watching the news over the last few months will have heard about the 'migrant crisis' that's apparently plaguing Europe. It's spoken about in much the same terms as swine flu was a few years ago. Right wing and fascist responses are predictable: but these groups' responses are murderous, dangerous, and unfortunately often held by those in power. The critical danger of this right wing, racist response should not be underestimated.

But it's important not to ignore the issues with the left-wing, liberal response. The 'migrant crisis' is a crisis of people that need our help, they cry. We need to help people in this 'migrant crisis' out of our own kindness and generosity with what is ours, by providing charitable support to the areas most affected by the 'migrant crisis'.

It can seem strange to have a problem with this - charity and kindness sound good, and this might be a useful response to the migrant crisis.

Except, of course, that there is no migrant crisis.

Capitalism is the crisis. Capitalism is either having a crisis, or is in fact constructed on a series of crises that just lumber from economic sector to economic sector, destroying those unlucky enough to get in the way, and totally inevitable in order to maintain the system.

Either way, people displaced by this crisis are not the problem.

And whilst the solution isn't segregation, death and bigger walls, it isn't charity either. All the tents and blankets in the world won't change the situation, and it's important to remember the wealth of richer countries is not there by rights, but by theft and oppression. You can't charitably give what you stole in the first place. Where people are driven to desperate living conditions, it's invaluable to make things bearable and it can save lives. No one is suggesting we leave people to suffer. But no one would be in that situation if we all had the same freedom of movement - people need papers and the right to live and work.

We - The Unity Centre - are a No Borders and non-hierarchical collective run completely by unpaid volunteers in Glasgow. The collective is a mix of people with papers and people struggling for their own. Unity began 9 years ago, born out of the community resistance to dawn raids that were taking place. We organise out of a small office round the corner from the local Home Office, 5 days a week, with a 24hr phone-line, and little resources or money. We work to provide unconditional practical and

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emotional support to people seeking asylum, refugees, and all migrants affected by the racist and brutally oppressive border and immigration controls that operate in the UK and across the world. We believe in and try to enact solidarity, not charity. This is not necessarily easy or simple, but we believe we should be fighting to change fundamental injustice, not just bandage wounds. We aim to enable people to navigate the system how they want, and to be empowered to make their own choices.

We support people inside and outside of detention. Recently the continual privatisation and funding cuts of 3rd sector charities working in asylum and migration mean that we are increasingly supporting people with housing and destitution issues, unable to give the most time and energy to supporting people in detention centres who are due to be removed from the UK.

There are also a few campaigns we're working on at the moment: challenging the legitimacy of charter flights which forcibly remove high numbers of rejected refugees and migrants to specific countries en masse. We're campaigning to bring attention to criminal deportations: the racist double punishment which targets certain groups with deportation, regardless of the number of years they've lived in the

UK and the life they've built up. A "foreign criminal" first serves their full prison sentence, and is then - unlike British nationals - detained in immigration detention and subsequently deported to their "country of origin". We're also looking to challenge the 'deport now, appeal later' policy of the Home Office, which dictates that those seeking to appeal a decision made by the Home Office must make the appeal from the country they are first deported to. Currently this is only applicable to criminal deportations, but the Tories have pledged to subject all immigration appeals to this unjust logic.

Unity also runs peer support groups for asylum seekers and refugees: one for women, and the other for LGBTQ folk, to empower and support each other through the process. We have links with lots of other organisations in Glasgow (including several charities who are actually very nice people!), and are sistered with the Govan Community Bike Workshop that provides free or cheap work on bikes for the local community.

If you or anyone you know would be interested in getting involved, get in touch. Find us on facebook or www.unitycentreglasgow.org. If you can support us financially - thank you! We run on shoestrings, luck, and donations. We need all the help we can get.

Edinburgh Coalition Against Poverty

Solidarity demonstrators from round Scotland won an important victory at Edinburgh's High Riggs jobcentre on 14th March. The welfare rights worker from ECAP-affiliated Edinburgh Claimants successfully accompanied the jobseeker to his appointment, as the DWP and G4S security backed down from their previous attempt to deny this right.

Edinburgh Coalition Against Poverty called the demo after G4S security guards attacked the same welfare rights rep as he accompanied the same JSA claimant at High Riggs on 29th February. Totally flouting the DWP's own rules, the G4S guards denied the claimant his basic human right to be accompanied by whoever he wishes.

Around 50 demonstrators answered the call and crowded round the jobcentre entrance on the 14th. Alerted through the Action Against Austerity and other networks, groups and individuals from Dundee, Forfar, Glasgow, Greenock and Stirling joined ECAP and other locals from Edinburgh and Lothians. Castlemilk Against Austerity, Dundee Against Austerity, Glasgow Anarchist Collective, Scottish Unemployed Workers Network, and Stirling Anarchists were among those present. The Rhythms of

Resistance samba band gave a musical accompaniment to the angry chants.... ADVOCACY IS NOT A CRIME.... G4S NAZI SWINE.... IDS - ROT IN HELL....

Emerging from the jobcentre, welfare rights worker Bob spoke to the crowd. He revealed that unlike the 29th February there had been no attempt by the security guards to stop him - though the DWP still made spurious demands he show ID, which he successfully declined to do. Significantly, the DWP interviewer's attitude was positively transformed from the usual bullying and harassment to which the claimant has been regularly subjected. "This is totally down to the solidarity shown by all of you," Bob declared.



Return of Dawn Raids in Glasgow



Monday 21st March 2016, at around 20:30, Police Scotland violently broke up a peaceful blockade in solidarity with Beverley Vaanda Kanjii and her 14 year old son. Beverley and her son were awoken on Monday by a dawn raid, carried out by 4 immigration officers, 2 social workers and 2 cops from police Scotland.

Police Scotland had previously maintained in response to a FOI request that they did not routinely assist the Home Office in dawn raids. MSP's also maintain that "refugees are welcome here". Yet the events of the day were harrowing.

Public bodies, including the Home Office and Police Scotland, are legally obliged to safeguard children, but when it comes to immigrant children of colour, they are doing the contrary. Beverley's 14 year old son awoke to watch his mother being taken by force, struggling and desperate. They were taken directly to the airport, with a view to being detained and forcibly removed, but Beverley's son refused to get on the plane. They were then taken to the Home Office's Brand Street premises, where the blockade began around 14:00.

Cops waded in with over 30 officers and dogs to clear the blockade. They pushed a woman almost 9 months pregnant, as well as a person using a wheelchair. Friends were superglued together, but cops simply ripped their hands apart. Skin was broken and people terrified. Friends chanted "Beverley, we're here for you", despite the police violence.

Police told protesters that Beverley had broken her ankle - this injury can only have been sustained in their care, and suggests extreme force was used. Friends let an ambulance pass, to enter the Home Office compound, but the last words heard from Beverley were that she would rather die than be

forced back to Namibia - she gave strict instructions that the blockade continue. Both police and paramedics said that people should move, so the ambulance could leave and Beverley could have the medical attention she needed. Friends agreed, but only if someone could hear from Beverley directly that this was the case. Beverley's own partner was denied access to her. Once the blockade had been brutalised by Police Scotland, an ambulance drove out, followed by a black coach with tinted windows. Beverley has since told us that she was in the ambulance but that she was separated from her son. He was on the bus, bound for forced removal.

Beverley and her son were held at Cedars - a detention centre for families run by G4S and Barnardos. There has not been an end to child detention, it just has a different name. Cedars goes by 'Pre-departure Accommodation'. She was able to engage a lawyer on a pro-bono basis, lodging a Judicial Review, to avoid another attempt to remove them in a short period of time, and returned to Glasgow on the 24th.

The Home Office accept that Beverley is a lesbian; this is notable, given the culture of disbelief surrounding sexuality claimants. Even so, the Home Office maintain she can go and hide elsewhere in Namibia. They say this though Beverley and her teen son faced assault, sexual violence and death threats. Furthermore, there are precedents set maintaining LGBT people should not have to live discreetly and in fear. Beverley and her son's lives are at risk if returned.

These events have caused immeasurable trauma both to Beverley and her young son. The ordeal lasted over 24 hours. The Home Office and Police Scotland's actions are unforgivable. We must stand up, for Beverley, for her son, and against this merciless system.

Fortunately, Beverley and her son are now back in Glasgow. This is testament to the strength and power of Bev, her son, her hardworking lawyers in London, and all of us her friends and supporters across the many networks in Glasgow, London, Brighton and other cities that fought this together. Individuals from Sisters Uncut and SOAS Detainee Visitors have offered incredible support and solidarity throughout the week Beverley and her son were detained and LGBT Unity is so grateful and inspired by all their help!

The fight is not yet over; there is still much to do.

Tearing down borders in the city



There are many borders within the city, erected to maintain the interests of business and the rich. These include privatised shopping malls, limits on access to so-called public spaces and gated communities. If you are not contributing to someone's profits, then you are not welcome. This growing movement for taking back public space is one of the most positive developments of recent years in our fight for the city, showing the power of direct collective action.

According to Garrett, a geography professor known for his participation in 'place-hacking': "If you ask people to have access to these spaces, you won't get it or if you do get it you are going to have to pay. And so we've got ourselves into this situation where we don't have any choice but to trespass if we want to participate in our cities."

www.channel4.com/news/public-space-occupy-private-land-place-hacker

Skateboarders and the takeover of space

Youth subcultures are finding the need to reclaim space in order to engage in their activities. Last summer, in Greenwich, London, a group of skaters took over an old car wash and turned it into a skate park. They lasted for several months, hosting workshops, art activities and performances as well as skateboarding. It was described as a "skate summer camp in the middle of London". Unfortunately, the developers were able to get them evicted in order for them to proceed with yet another unaffordable housing development. A spokesperson for the collective commented:

"We've had a fantastic summer here, it really goes to show what an alternative community plan can

achieve. We can't understand how planning permission can be given for such high-density developments that squeeze out the children. This is happening all over the borough".

A more long-lived example is the evening/night time occupation of the shopping centre opposite Westfield in Stratford, East London. While Westfield and the Olympic Park are symbols of the worst that is happening to London with high rise luxury flats and the corporate takeover of all available space, walking through the original mall is refreshing. It has become a place for young people to 'hang out', with a lively scene of skateboarders, roller bladers and street dancers. The space is used by a variety of people, from teenagers to thirty-somethings, both male and female. There is a welcoming atmosphere. One female user commented: *"What I like about the place is that we're one big community, just having fun. We all end up knowing each other. And it's a great place to learn. People don't judge so harshly as they might in a proper skate park"*. The police don't hassle them. Perhaps there are too many of them committed to using this space, and the space has been used like this for at least 5 years.

Jumping over barriers: the Glasgow Parkour Girls

Parkour, though physically demanding, has become increasingly popular. It is a kind of physical training that uses parts of the built environment; it involves jumping, climbing, running and swinging. For a group of women in Glasgow, it is explicitly about reclaiming urban areas as women. According to one participant:

"The reclamation of public space as a woman is very central to my understanding of parkour, and my love

for it. Practicing parkour has opened up access to new areas of Glasgow that I would have never gone to before. Several of these areas may even be classed as 'dodgy' or 'unsafe', but parkour gave me a reason to enter them, and allowed me to form positive bonds to those areas. Practising parkour in the evening and night time also serves as a way to fight back against fear that, as a woman, I have been trained to feel.

Parkour lets us create new emotional bonds to space. We begin to see the city in a new light as our parkour vision develops, allowing us to view our surroundings

in a new way. For all practitioners, this allows us to reclaim our city space, using it as our playground, rather than being boxed in or herded by the architecture. I have strong emotional attachments and many happy memories in my training spots. Parkour allows a female practitioner, through new positive experiences in city spaces, the chance to create new emotions towards these spaces, which can replace the old ones of fear."

(www.glasgowparkourgirls.wordpress.com)

Dispatches from Greece: Thoughts on hierarchies, anarchists and NGOs from an older Anarchist

When I first arrived in Ritsona, much of the discussion and decision making was done by consensus meetings and was facilitated by the presence of a strong woman from amongst the pool of international volunteers.

It is rather hard to look back now, only a few days later in ordinary time and see the way things worked. There were daily meetings run by Leona which were interpreted into Arabic and Farsi. Questions were asked and answers given where possible. If it wasn't not possible then it was made clear that this was the case. In general, people were respectful of the meetings although sometimes the amount of background noise made it difficult to hear.

People, in general, did not steal from supplies and if they did they were given a very swift and fair exit. Fair distribution was very important. Women and children were given space in the meetings. "Now we are going to have a question from a child". It wasn't perfect. There was a tyranny of structurelessness but it was a pretty okay sort of tyranny given the difficulties of the circumstances. It was benign, benevolent and well intentioned. But short term international volunteers cannot provide long term funding and resources. Big money is needed to provide medical cover, better food, buildings and the like.

It is at this point that the state wheels in the inevitable response in such a situation. I have to say that up until this point my only experience of the NGOs was a few days of Red Cross-ness but that will deserve a report of its very own!

But the 3 NGOs which came are so young, so different and so hierarchical by comparison to the previous situation. I think my reaction to them as an exhausted anarchist was not as constructive as it should have

been but it is hard when a MAN is told by his seniors that he is charge of the women's tent. Actually, now that I have some time to reflect on this, as I write, the sheer nonsense of this situation is magnified. Beneath the man in the structure is a very young female student of emergency studies. And under her are a group of independent volunteers and NGO volunteers as well. There are many discussions in twos and threes but no whole group meetings. This is unhealthy for all of us and creates a slightly paranoid environment. Two NGOs argued for control of the women's space. The organisation with least experience won the toss but didn't have the skill set to do it right. There were major problems in infant feeding as a result but babies and vulnerable women make easy fundraising material.

But to return to the function of the NGOs.

Last week as I was sitting in a tent with a woman, supporting her in breastfeeding her baby, some Greek people came and asked what people needed. It transpired that these people were local leftists and also anarchists. It was very exciting to meet them. A couple of days later I attended their meeting in the nearby town where the ameliorating function of the NGOs was discussed. The young people at the camp work bloody hard every day for a few euros doing their utmost to make the best of a truly horrible situation. Further back, in offices, are the managers, fundraising and distributing scarce resources, trying to make the situation on the ground marginally less horrible. The try to put in WiFi, they increase the diet about starvation level as provided by the Greeks. They provide a few more showers and tea and biscuits. But all this, of which the refugees are TOTALLY aware, does not solve the problem of people being stranded in Greece.

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The first day they introduced themselves there was a great anger. Refugees shouted that they did not want conditions improved per se they wanted to be away from this dusty, dirty snake-ridden camp! They wanted the borders to be opened. There was considerable disquiet from the individuals in the NGOs which was inevitable. Shouting in a foreign language can be frightening. You can't be sure what is being said, if it is aimed at you, if it is provoking violence. It can be very scary.

Following this there was one more open meeting where it was said that there would be meetings only when necessary. Since then there have been none. There have instead been hunger strikes. Yazidi people

have been persecuted and have left the camp. The level of anger has increased, due to the lack of a forum.

There is an absolute fear of upsetting the comparative calm at the camp. And also a fear of people coming into the nearby town where there may be trouble. I believe this is why there is no bus laid on. Not a matter of much else.

So to conclude the ramblings, the "on the ground" NGOs do their young enthusiastic best but the NGOs internationally pour oil on the terribly troubled seas of Turkey and Greece. The governments of the world need the NGOs to keep a lid on things and manage the situation.

Landlords/Border Guards?

On 1 February this year, the State recruited 1.5 million new immigration enforcement officers. You may know them better as "private landlords." This measure is part of the 2015 Immigration Act, which Home Secretary Theresa May said was meant to "create a really hostile environment for illegal migrants". These changes show that she wasn't joking. Even in an "age of austerity," the Government has managed to find an extra £3 million to help local councils police the measures.

New "right to rent" rules make it landlords' responsibility to check the immigration status of all new tenants, including ones not named on the tenancy agreement - and even if there's no tenancy agreement at all. Most news coverage has focused on how landlords don't really understand their new duties - funny, that, when more than 90% of them manage to understand the complex HMRC rules that give them tax relief on rental income. Landlords are also apparently worried that people might think they're racist. As if.

The "right to rent" checks are being introduced nationwide despite the experiences of people of colour in the West Midlands pilot area for the scheme last year. One would-be tenant was told, "The landlord said that if I was under that scheme he was not going to bother because he had a local person who wanted the property and it was much easier to rent to them," with landlords more willing to rent to people with "local accents." Even the Government's own evaluation report found that potential tenants who were black or from other minority ethnic groups were asked to provide more information - such as references and how long they had lived in the area - than potential white tenants.

The Government is trying to dress these measures up as a crackdown on "rogue landlords" who "knowingly target illegal migrants who are not in a position to complain about sub-standard accommodation." In reality, the checks are intended to enlist private landlords as unofficial border guards, and give the State new powers that they can use in so-called "multi-agency raids" against migrants.

These measures show that we can't trust the State to protect us from rogue landlords, when "protection" in this case is just another form of racist policing. There's always another agenda - not surprising when a quarter of MPs are private landlords themselves. Rather than relying on the State, renters are coming together to take on their landlords, with self-organised groups like Hackney Renters forming across the UK. And the victory of the UCL students who have recently won their rent strike (and £100 thousand compensation from their landlord) shows that when we organise together, we can win.

Neither Westminster nor Brussels



The European Union has meant another layer of power over populations. Its main purpose is to serve the needs of corporations and financial institutions and is an obstacle to the emancipation of the working class. The EU imposes their own vision for Europe based on the needs of capital. The vast majority of regulations have been to enhance the power of capital over the people. Very few policies have been directed at improving social conditions. We have seen the way in which the EU has presided over the attack on the Greek people and the raid of western capital on the assets of Eastern Europe. The EU has created fortress Europe, closing its borders to the rest of the world, at the same time as it tries to be one of the many self-appointed world policemen.

You might think the answer is to withdraw from this Union. However, the idea that the working class would be better off outside the EU, ruled by their own State, is a dangerous illusion because of the fact that this is the position of the far right parties who are not remotely interested in resisting state power. Instead, their aim would be to install an even more authoritarian regime with even more repression.

Capitalism is global. The power of international corporations and banks will not

disappear if a country withdraws from the EU. The movement of production and money across borders, motivated by the search for profits will continue. International institutions such as the IMF and World Bank will still have the power to impose austerity and policies that are against the interests of local populations. Human needs will take second place whether the country is within or outside the EU.

The retreat behind national borders will have serious consequences for the spirit of co-operation and solidarity between the working class of Europe. Ordinary people have a history of supporting each other regardless of national origin. This tradition will be undermined as people put what appears to be their self-interest over mutual aid. A divided working class will benefit those who have caused the problems we are facing in the first place, such as austerity and repressive measures.

Many who support withdrawal from the EU seem to think that we can return to some kind of Golden Age of prosperity. This Golden Age never existed. They forget that their own state has never been their friend. All states operate by taking power from the people. It doesn't matter if the State is a few miles or thousands

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of miles away; it will still be out of our control, operating in its own interests.

The Anarchist Alternative

Anarchists reject both the options presented to us: supporting the EU by voting in the European Elections or campaigning for withdrawal.

The internationalism that the EU represents is the unity of political and financial elites against the European working class. We propose both an alternative method of organising society as well as an alternative internationalism that extends to the whole planet.

Anarchists oppose the top-down approach adopted by the State and leftist parties. We promote non-hierarchical forms of organisation and methods of organising. The future organisation of society that we envision will be one of that is bottom-up based on groups which federate with each other and co-ordinate on an international level, independent of any current statist structure whether national or at a European level. This will include all areas of economic and social life such as the production, distribution and consumption of goods and the provision of services such as health and education. We need to take control of our own education such that it helps to promote our emancipation from authoritarian ideologies

such as religion, nationalism, and cult of the leader.

In order to achieve this aim of complete political, economic, social and cultural transformation we need to build on and strengthen the international networks and co-ordinations that we already have. We have to fight back against borders working as human filter but let capital move across. Our proposal is to abolish all borders within countries and between countries which are limiting free movement of people.

- United fight against the banks by a universal refusal to pay debts.
- Civil disobedience against all repressive laws which take away our human rights.
- Strengthen and extend the current struggles against the increasing precariousness of living and working conditions.
- Resist all attempts to divide us according to race, sex or age.
- Co-ordinate struggles that are against common employers across borders.
- Resist privatisation of public services
- Promote alternative networks of production and distribution
- Extend international solidarity for those being criminalised as a result of social struggles.

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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.

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Are you interested in finding out more about anarchism?

The Anarchist Federation of Britain aims to link together campaigns that empower working class people or that challenge capitalism and irrational systems of power. We have groups throughout Britain so contact us to find out about activities near you.

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