The End of Peaceful Protest

Anonymous

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Peaceful and “legal” protest in Russia has been suppressed. Moreover, it is now impossible in principle: in a matter of days, the state has adopted a package of laws which make even shouting “No to War!” illegal. And liberal human rights activists are already handing out instructions: don’t shout and write “No to War!”, while pro-government journalists are making Orwell spin in his coffin by seriously producing stories that the slogan “No to War” came from Nazi leaflets.

It is obvious to anyone who follows politics and has studied the history of protest movements that protests in fascist (or aspiring to become such) dictatorships, without taking radical and offensive forms, will be suppressed. After all, how can people who run from the riot police win?

We know that anarchists and anti-fascists took part in these protests in many cities in the early days of the war. And they participated quite successfully.

But now it makes no sense for ANARCHISTS to take part in centralized “protests”, ritual stands in the main squares, which the Navalny Team and other liberal projects will be announcing for some time, because you will be thrown into a police van faster than you can have time to do anything. At the very least, it won’t make sense until the street has entered a new phase – when people are ready for an active confrontation, when the shouts of shame will be replaced by flurries of bottles at the trash. And then it will be time to get involved and unite with people who are ready to act. But trying to raise people who respond by branding you a provocateur and shouting “we are for peace” for forceful action is both suicidal and a waste of human resources, which, alas, are already scarce.

Direct Action

Under these conditions there are not many tactics left that can in principle be used. For example, if we return to the subject of rallies and similar agitation, anarchists can, in association with other initiatives, hold instead of one rally – which is easy to cover – many, in different parts of the city, flowing like water from the punishers, and distributing agitation materials in the process.

However, we want to talk about another tactic – direct action.

Setting fire to the military recruitment office is good. But not enough. More precisely, setting fire to the military enlistment office in the abstract (in the spirit of throwing a Molotov cocktail against the concrete wall) is not enough to risk the freedom of the revolutionary.

There aren’t enough of us. So every action we take must be as effective as possible. If you are prepared to set fire to the military recruitment office, do it with maximum efficiency (coefficient of performance). Spend a month to prepare, but do it well.

The effectiveness of an action can be considered on three scales: material damage to the state, the information effect, and the maintenance of guerrilla combat efficiency after it.

And it is necessary to strive to maximise effectiveness on all three scales, and to sacrifice some (particularly the last) only in favour of a huge preponderance on the others.

Let’s start with the last one. It’s not the one-off damage from the action that matters to us. Imperial aggression will not stop at one, even if it is burned to the ground. What matters is

the cumulative damage that the guerrilla (or their followers, if their action “ignites” people’s souls) will have managed to do before being arrested. This leads to the importance of the conspiracy measures which have already been mentioned a number of times (we will not go into details here, as we are not writing a manual, but are discussing a general concept). It also requires finding a balance between the size of the group in action (which increases the damage caused and also provides better security for the event) and the risks of information leakage, which requires that as few people as possible know about the action.

In terms of material damage to the state and informational effect, the action of the Lukhovitsk arsonist [1] can be considered as an example. His goal was to archive the files of conscripts, which is clearly a significant damage to the state (and achievable even for a loner). For publicity purposes, he videotaped the action and made an appeal.

If you want to do material damage to the system, think carefully about how you can do it, what means should be used, what is the best point to hit. We know of several cases where Molotov cocktails thrown by insurgents have never caught fire, and where no material damage has actually occurred. Also, consider not only the effect and spin of the action (like throwing Molotov cocktails), but its effectiveness – it’s often more effective to use fuel through a broken window, for example, rather than throwing projectiles.

Therefore, before planning an action, be sure to study the materials about the different means of warfare and choose the ones available to you. For example, we can recommend articles about incendiary mixtures and explosives on the BA [Anarchist Fighter] website ;-)(instructions on how to access .onion sites are on the mirror).

In the information age, you can’t do anything without good coverage of the action. Make a short (!!! this is important, as verbose manifestos are difficult to understand and read, and the scale of the text needs to relate to the scale of the action, otherwise it can get ridiculous) but understandable message, why you are attacking this particular site and what effect you expect. Consider where you can safely send this action message.

At the moment, insurrectionism is mainly a topic for anarchist underground groups – the rest of us shrug it off as a provocation. So the first thing to do is to find the biggest anarchist channels that support such an action, and work out how best to send them material to distribute it.

But you can also try to send it not only to anarchist resources, but also to independent media – the situation is changing, which means that perhaps some of them will also mention your action. Especially if it is backed up by a supporting video. Many publications now have a presence on TOR, which makes it easier to submit stories to them. Pay attention to those media outlets now operating from abroad – they have less internal self-censorship. It would be good if a comrade could translate the address into English to cover the action abroad.

A simplified scheme seems to us to be this. A Molotov cocktail into a police station that no one found out about and caused no tangible damage is zero or negative, in the case of you going to jail, KPIs. On the other hand, destroying expensive equipment, important documents or an action that destabilizes the work of the authorities is a positive efficiency factor that increases many times over in the case of skilful media coverage.

Let us remember once again the arsonist in Lukhovitsy. The destruction of the archives is good, but the fact that thousands of people became aware of the act increases the KPI

many times over. (Why it is important to publicize the actions should probably be written about separately.)

That said, of course, besides direct action, even at times like this the revolutionaries need to do other things. First of all, they need to agitate and get the masses involved. For in addition to weakening the state (for which the targeted attacks are intended), there must also be an initiative in society that takes over the agenda and restructures the world on the basis of freedom and self-rule.

However, it is worth bearing in mind that agitation can now be punished quite harshly. It is worth remembering the threats made by the notorious bastard from the [Centre for Combating Extemism], Okopny, to intimidate a man who was distributing anti-war stickers. So it's time to put aside the idea that "I'm not doing anything illegal, I'm not in danger". And whatever you do, pay attention to your own safety and be prepared for meetings with state agents.

find each other.

anti-copyright
creative commons zero (cc-0)
do whatever you want

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