

Anarchists on Alexei Navalny

Section of I.W.A. in the region of Russia about the last protests for Navalny

The Polar Blast & CRAS-IWA

February 17, 2024

We, anarchists and anarcho-syndicalists, consider it completely unacceptable for ourselves to take any part in political shows organized by supporters of the right-wing populist Navalny, who is sadly “famous” for his openly nationalist, anti-immigrant, anti-Caucasian and anti-Semitic statements. To march in the ranks of the demonstrations they convened would mean – regardless of any excuses or “explanations” – to turn into the back of one of the political gangs waging a dirty and unprincipled struggle for power.

We, as anarchists, believe that both the current authoritarian regime in the Kremlin, which became the successor of Yeltsin’s neoliberal clique, and the opposing group headed by Navalny, which is now seeking to seize the leadership of the entire mass of disaffected, are just the spokesmen for the interests of the country’s true rulers – the dominant Oligarchy and its “Iron Heel”. Supporting any of these camps completely contradicts our anarchist convictions and our social revolutionary goal. Participation in the struggle for power between various parties, coalitions and cliques, and the transfer of more than justified social discontent of people into the rotten channel of politicking only distract the working class from the struggle for its true social interests, from the awakening of the labour class consciousness and, ultimately, from the social and personal liberation.

We, anarchists, stand for the immediate and unconditional release of all anarchist, left-wing radical and social prisoners who are languishing today in the dungeons of the Oligarchy. But we are convinced that such a result must be achieved on our own, without turning into actual voluntary or involuntary servants of certain alien contenders for political power for the sake of continuing the same anti-social and neoliberal policy in the interests of Capital. We cannot fight side by side with those who did not interfere with the total privatization and destruction of affordable health care and education, who did not oppose the anti-human pension reform, who last year supported the introduction of a universal terrorist system of surveillance and house arrest under the pretext of “fighting the epidemic”. There is no “lesser evil” for us, and we do not enter into an alliance with the enemy – even when he is the enemy of our enemy.

No to political struggle – for social resistance!

We should have no illusions about Navalny though. He has built a movement based on populism and Russian nationalism. In 2006 he campaigned for a far-right event, the Russian March, to be allowed to go ahead, and took part in it. The movement he founded the following year, The People, went into alliance with the nationalist groups the Movement Against Illegal Immigration and Great Russia. He supported Russia during the war against Georgia in 2008, and called for all Georgians to be expelled from Russia. On several occasions he has called for the expulsion of illegal immigrants and demanded visa restrictions for the Central Asian states of Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. He supported a nationalist campaign, Stop Feeding the Caucasus that has called for ending federal subsidies to the governments of Chechnya and other North Caucasus republics, part of the Russian Federation.

Navalny is against “corrupt businessmen”, not “honest” ones, and he advocates complete freedom for business interests in Russia. He is a supporter of economic liberalism, which in no way will benefit the Russian masses. He has managed to become the lightning rod for the raging discontent felt over inequality and corruption and repression. The emerging movement needs to break with him and his ilk and establish its own independence. This means a critical engagement with the movement by revolutionaries in order to attempt to wrest it from the influence of the Navalny group. This must have the aim of working towards a revolution to overthrow the Putin kleptocracy, and to establish genuine communism in Russia – libertarian communism.

Neither Putin nor Navalny!

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