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Organising ourselves is the first and main step towards our aim

Zaher Baher

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In June 2017 I wrote an article “Our struggle must go beyond what our lifestyle demands”¹. In that article I stressed some major factors that may be obstacles in the way of our struggles. Since I wrote that article our life in the UK has gotten worse in every way. But, for anarchist people, nothing has changed, with no improvement and no development in our struggle against the system. In fact there has been more sectarianism, with groups keeping more distance between each other, far away from cooperation and solidarity and more divided over the Gender Recognition Act (GRA).

The state, through its organs, tries hard to increase its influence and pressure, overpowering people through the market, financial institutions and education system, undermining and demoralising them. It tries to divert their intentions away from real problems

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¹ <http://zaherbaher.com/2017/07/01/our-struggle-must-goes-beyond-what-our-lifestyle-demands/>

that they are facing now. The Labour Party too with its most radical manifesto, probably since the Second World War, anaesthetised many people from the working class, students, pensioners, the disabled and people with special needs. Both parties, one in power and the other in opposition, with all kinds of leftists are, in different ways, in agreement with maintaining the system by trying to reform it, to prolonging its age.

The only difference between them is that the party in power is rushing to make the situation worse for the working class and other ordinary people. The opposition wants to reform the system to prolong it. In other words, each of them wants to suppress us through their reforms.

The system, the state and organisations from left to right may have a little distance or enmity between themselves, but they are all consciously or unconsciously fighting directly or indirectly against ordinary people, their movement and their aims.

In short the state and its system is very alive, very strong and well organised. It is far from being in a crisis and, in my opinion, has never been in crisis. It is, unfortunately, going to be more dominant, more powerful in controlling us, containing and dominating not only our daily life but our minds and our bodies too.

It is not the system or the capitalism in crisis, it is us and the crisis is us². We must admit that we are in a very deep crisis financially, economically, educationally, morally and culturally.

How can we get out?

There is no doubt that there are groups in the UK who try hard to educate themselves and maintain activities. They hold public meetings, participate in demonstrations and protests and support workers when they are on strike. But that is not enough. All these actions may not take us forward while we are a tiny minority and not just among the public but even among ourselves, the anarchists.

² <http://zaherbaher.com/2015/12/14/is-capitalism-in-crisis-or-are-we/>

I am aware that in this country the struggle against the system probably is the hardest one after the United States. We are traditionally not revolutionary as we really had no uprising or revolution here. What we had was one general strike almost a century ago, from 3rd to 12th May of 1926. We also had many more strikes but the main ones were the London Dock strike of 1949 and 1957, the seamen's strike of 1960, the Thames Dock strike of 1972, the miners' strike of 1984-1985, the Wapping dispute and strike of 1986, and the watchmakers' strike in Dandy in 1992. However, almost all have been defeated due to the lack of solidarity, betrayal by the Labour Party and union leaders and the brutality of the state. We can also note that, if not all, surely the majority of them fought back against their employers and the state in a position of defence and not from a position of attack.

Having said that it does not mean the movement stays forever weak and divided as it is now. But that is the reality of the workers' movement currently as it is very weak and capitalism is extremely strong.

It is time for anarchists to get together and put away their small, nonessential differences in order to organise themselves in independent, non-hierarchical local groups wherever they are and whenever they can. We cannot just wait for the situation to ripen or the movement to grow and develop because we will become a part of it. The movement does not wait for us. There is no doubt if the movement occurs, we can be a part of it but it will be late and, also, we will not be starting or involved from a strong position.

Organising ourselves is essential and through it we can participate in the uprising and revolution in a strong position and effectively. That does not mean we cannot organise ourselves, building the necessary groups during the uprising. However, the history of Iranian's so-called revolution of 1978-79 and the recent "Arab Spring", especially in Syria excluding the Kurdish part (Rojava) and Egypt, showed that the building of groups and organisations during the uprising were effective but, once the uprising and revolu-

tion were defeated they lost their dynamism and became ineffective. Obviously there are many reasons for that, but the main one is that anything that emerges during or for a particular event, once the event is over the groups and organisations are usually over too. The only groups currently existing and maintaining their position are those they were there before the uprising although they are not active as they used to be.

We are now between a couple of choices either; we leave changing society to our 'representatives' through the parliamentary system, or we strongly take part, with ordinary people, in changing it. If we choose the second we need to be serious about it, as we will need to give some of our time whether we are workers, unemployed, students, retirees or whatever our situation is. It is an ignorant and unconcerned attitude to believe in something but we do not do much for it. It is also a selfish attitude to wait for others to do it for you. There is no excuse.