

Letter from the Prisons of Fresnes and Villepinte in France

Bruno and Ivan

April 2008

Greetings to all friends, to all those who are not resigned to the situation in which we live: police occupation of the streets, of the cities, raids, deportations, arrests, daily difficulties, the dispossession of our lives; the situation that pushes us to cede a major part of our lives to the bosses of every genre, to those who preside over our destinies, to power. If we've taken the road of revolt, it's for all these reasons, to retake the power over our lives, for the freedom to live.

We were arrested on January 19. Two of us are in prison, the third is under judicial control (he passed by and had the bad luck of knowing us). We had in our possession a smoke-bomb that we made with a mixture of sodium chlorate, sugar and flour. When burned, this mixture produces a lot of smoke. We were going to use it at the end of the demonstration which took place that day in front of the detention centre of Vincennes. Our idea: to be visible near the imprisoned undocumented immigrants, knowing that the police would surely try to prevent us from getting near the centre. We also had firecrackers for making noise and tire-poppers (bent nails) which can be put on the road to block cars from passing.

For the police and justice, the pretext is always found; we had the elements for a nail bomb. Here is what we're accused of:

Transport and possession, in an organized gang, of incendiary or explosive substances or products composing an incendiary or explosive device for the preparing of an act of destruction, degradation or assault on persons.

Association of criminals intending to commit a crime of voluntary destruction by the effect of a fire, an explosive substance or any other means to create a danger for persons, committed by an organized gang.

Refusal to give digital prints or photographs to verify identity. Refusal by persons suspected of a crime or offense to submit to biological sampling for the identification of a genetic imprint.

It causes a chill on the back. These are the facts, now we'll try to contribute a reflection.

It's obvious to see that we didn't end up this way because of what we had or because of what we planned to do with what we had. The State criminalizes revolt and tries to smother all "unauthorized" dissidence. What's targeted is our ideas and our method of struggle, outside of parties, unions or other organizations. Faced with this anger that the State can neither reach, nor manage, nor recuperate, it isolates and designates the internal enemy. The police use their files and general information to construct "profile types". The figure used in our case is an "anarcho-autonomist" cell. Power assimilates this figure as terrorist. Constructing a danger for creating a consensus for its population, reinforcing its control and justifying repression.

This is why we are in prison today. This is the solution chosen by the State for the management of illegalities, of "risk populations". Today it imprisons for longer and longer terms. The controls [random identity checks by police], each time more effective, and the sanctions that create fear also ensures to those who have or profit from power a society where each individual has its place and knows the lines laid out that encircle and repress, that can't be crossed without paying the price.

If we struggle on the side of the undocumented immigrants, it's because we know that it's the same police who control, the same boss who exploits, the same walls that imprison. In going to the demonstration, we wanted to yell "Freedom" in echo with the prisoners, to show that there are many who understand the revolt that they led for many months. Lighting a smokebomb, trying to get as close as possible to the gates of the prison, yelling "close the detention centers", with the determination of wanting to live free. This struggle, within which one can recognize oneself, is a terrain for building complicities, a place for the possible expression of our own revolt.

We don't consider ourselves "victims of repression". There is no just repression, no just imprisonment. There is repression and its function of management, its role of maintaining the order of things: the power of those who possess facing the dispossessed.

When the whole world marches in line, it is much easier to hit those who leave the ranks. We hope that there are many of us who want to fully control our lives, who have this rage in our hearts, who want to build and weave solidarities that build revolts.

Bruno and Ivan, April 2008.

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France under the anti-terrorist legislation, here: www.non-fides.fr

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