In any gathering of this nature where the discussion has to be translated into several languages and gets into many hours, any notes taken are bound to contain mistakes and errors. We have tried to keep the essentially strategic comments and opened dialog intact for easy reading, whilst removing repetition. Due to the length of the text, we could not print all the notes from the individual presentations, but this is material widespread on the internet. We invite you to correct any inaccuracy or omissions, contributions are welcome to be received. A lot of the information here is specific to the situation in Germany, we hope it can inform and inspire. Everyone finds and takes away a different experience and the debate is still open - break the prisons down!!!

Some of the participants who came with projects:


Day 1
Warning to expect controls by cops & nazis in the area. Introduction “Why antiprison” + Discussion about establishing common ground + Critique of the publicity material
Film - Russian prisons

Day 2
Presentations – Autonomous Prison Project Köln. Sound Demo outside the Köln prison with spontaneous street-protest. Presentations – Austria Animal Liberation raids and Limits of the solidarity work & presentation about UK, one movie about Mumia’s situation and prisons in USA as well about Transgender persons in USA prisons were shown.

Day 3
Ending Discussion – closing remarks – summary – feedback

Day 1 : Friday 26/9

Over the last two or three years people in the movement have become more interested in this topic, not from any organised groups, but they got more connected and organised so now they think it will continue and they will be more structure. In weekend is intended to exchange basic thoughts from our combined understanding and present different situations of countries.

Our personal communications outside the discussions are just as important. The idea behind the weekend is that the anti-prison movement is weak at the moment, and we want to start the project again, specifically against the state and the capitalist system, not just prisons. Everyday life is connected to the prison, because it is what enforces the system of private property, the prison is the microcosm of the state. For growing numbers of people, life is more dangerous and criminalised, looking at the society which leads the imprisonment and making a wider denouncement from a perspective of being at war with the present rule of the financial market, it will take time, energy.

The gathering was also open to non-anarchists, as people to suggest or give presentations.

The modern anti-prison movement started in the 1960’s in Europe from the Southern European areas, from the prisoners themselves. The social struggle was very high, and the social movements were strong, but they were repressed. In the last few years the movement started to grow again, in the last 2-3 years in Germany there was certainly a larger interest in this topic, and there has been a widespread hunger-strike by German prisoners, there is a Greek hunger-strike ongoing as this is being written, and an Italian hunger protest is planned for December... The question is how we can be on the ‘outside’ and smash the walls in, the state borders that keep us prisoner in the ‘homeland nation-state’, and those walls which separate the contradictions of the capitalist way of life from the broader population.

The internet is the dominant way to communicate and it is important to meet face-to-face, we shouldn’t be surprised if our relationships and affinities naturally withdraw or wither if we spend too much time in cyberspace, the instantaneous exchange of information there is useful, but let’s not forget the information horizon never ends, we can put all this effort into overground international info-tech structures but it means absolutely nothing without it manifesting in the streets. Real, valid connections come from the networks of resistance and friendship which define our struggle and our methods of organisation: mutual aid and solidarity. The underground cells, the individuals who make the decentralised direct-actions of solidarity and attack, unknown to each other, are together as unknown collaborators in the compulsion of the excluded to resist oppression.

The previous European anti-prison structure came mainly out of anarchists from France, Italy, Spain and Swiss back in the mid of 2003 and the last meeting of parts of this structure met in Barcelona in 2004 (See “Notes taken at the international gathering against prison society”, in 325 #1, or 325 online). This structure came under a lot of repression and surveillance from the authorities, and eventually fragmented as people felt it had come to an end of it’s usefulness. Certain realities which are not to the taste of the system had regrouped and it was viewed as a threat. People were tracked,
watched, harassed, threatened, beaten up, at the same time there was the beginning of a wave of repression, arrests, imprisonment as the EU and Europol attempted to deal with the "Mediterranean Triangle" of "anarchist terrorism". Now Barcelona, which was identified as a centre of anarchist and anti-system activity by the Europol has been under repression for the last 3 years, it is a specific outcome from the investigations into infrastructure, communication and friendship networks. It was seen as a place where the autonomous squats, social centres, anarchist activity was getting too much, it had to be attacked and repressed, and this is what the Catalan state police, the Mossos D’Esquadra have done for the past 3 years, they have had a Carte Blanche to evict, arrest and terrorise.

Comrades in Italy and Spain took the brunt of this wave of repression, across Italy from 2003 anarchists were arrested and centres shut down and this wave did not yet stop... The specific police unit to target anarchists set up by Europol was mainly organised by the Italian Carabinieri, the paramilitary police, notorious torturers, manipulators and killers, largely responsible for the brutal terrorismisation of the demonstrators in Genoa, 98 2001.

The opening evening was very informal, approx 80 people, and around 200 people participated in the entire 3 days of events including the demo, which was attended by around 100 people. At the demo, which was outside of the prison and courthouse of Kiel, there was a Sound demo with statements read about against the jail, there were slogans and banners, including an improvised street-protest invading the roads around the prison, also it was noticed that some windows of the courthouse had been smashed earlier before the demo arrived. In the evening there was a banner drop from a motorway bridge near the autonomous project which housed the gathering, earlier in the day the people had held the banners there for the people travelling in the cars to see, with a few people sounding their horns to support us.

To begin the discussion, the program was stated and people were asked if they also wanted to respond, and it was responded to any points or raise questions if they had any, to share ideas about "Why anti-prison?".

One early point raised was that the only people there at the meeting were those from "our-small corner" and that despite the invitation not many autonomous groups showed up who were not linked in some small way with the organisers. It was not usual that a 2-3 day anti-prison meeting happens organised by anarchists, but it was totally open to autonomous left radicals and this was made very clear from the beginning.

Since we start from small situations, it’s not so important, as the process is about development. The organisers are anarchists and autonomous people.

There was a second hand criticism that the promotional material and the text of the underground press-release was arrogant and confrontational, in that we just want to stage an event for "our people", just among us and no-one else, and very critical towards the efforts of other people in the left movement.

It was reported that some people felt "scared" by the promo flyer/text/image, probably being "too an anti-prison and anarchist", that if we wanted more people to show up we should make it more open to others, less threatening. There is a clear anarchist connection to this meeting, but there is also not many people for example from the more communist direction, they were not enthusiastic to participate for these reasons. For this process it is really important that as many people participate, and it was responded to if that people feel so attacked by such material they should just show up here and discuss their points. The gathering was open to those who were willing to collaborate but that the purpose was to concentrate on some specific realities and meet together for the first time around these topics. The title of the gathering is really important for it is not simply about anti-repression activities but about a wider anti-prison and anti-state critique, because the society we live in is an open prison, and it does not end with the prison, it is about the dismantling of society itself, and the eradication of the capitalist system.

Really it is quite clear that if those groups are not saying they are for prison abolition, that is their position, and it is clear, they might want to be involved and that is okay, but what is more interesting is how to broaden this discussion into the prisons themselves amongst the prisoners, and how we exchange this information with them. In a text within the booklet for the weekend Christian Sommermann (Anti-Fascist prisoner in Germany) raises this point and it is his really main concern with what is happening in Germany, because it is not happening, and it involves a lack of information getting into prisons and amongst prisoners. Those are the people we would like to see more involved in these discussions, than other groups who have already said what their position is, what their purpose is, and what they are going to do.

The discussion on the outside of the walls of the prisons is low within Northern Europe. Anti-prison is a minor topic and few too people are aware, or feel they can do anything against the totality of the repressive apparatus of the state.

Despite this a big hunger strike just happened within the jails of Germany, there is organisation amongst the prisoners to varying degrees, there are revolutionary prisoners, there are direct actions happening in solidarity... The last big prison disturbances happened in the 1990’s, and this is the first time such things are occurring again, there are certainly many prisoners who are close to rebelling and a movement outside is important in sustaining the ideas and heart of those inside. It is an important point to recognise the centrality of the decisions of the prisoners themselves in the direction of the struggle. The recent hunger strike was a positive start and connecting point for many people inside and outside, and links were made that are growing, but we need more direct contacts with people locked inside.

There is a magazine for prisoners without political censorship, called “Lichtblick” and based in Tegel prison, Berlin, where even Nazis sometimes contribute, but this stresses the importance of making reading material that challenges this and spreads libertarian concepts. It was felt that we should really know what we are talking about before we talk about destroying the prison because when we make the demonstration in the street, when we organise and agitate we need to be
able to explain to the people who ask "what about the Nazi, the child molester, the rapist etc." How to know to react and talk with people about the emotions raised, the question of the social.

There was a proposal from an autonomous commander from Spain 30 years ago- first the Nazis and these people come out of the prison, then we kill them. This was not a concrete proposal we made an agreement on. Short of shooting people, which undoubtedly would happen to the class enemy in a revolutionary situation, we have to find ways to resolve the problems of violence and hatred, this is the challenge.

The prisons themselves appear not to be able to fall tomorrow and if the time comes when we are in a position as a social movement to destroy them, we would have also a wider social movement which deals with problems and conflicts in a completely different way rather than just brutalise people. A movement that has the power to overturn the ruling class through self-organisation will be strong enough to carry the release of the prisons. This would go a long way to removing the background factors of anti-social crime and it can be hard to explain to people, as it is the concept of an anarchist or libertarian communist society, and this has been deliberately obscured and discredited by the authoritarian forces.

It is not the case that the people in the prison are serial killers only, everyone knows on the street you should not be in the prison for selling marijuana, stealing from the supermarket and defrauding the government tax and so on. For us, there is no difference between social and political prisoners, this is the difference between anti-prison organising and solidarity work that only involves only supporting specific political prisoners.

It was thought that many people in society knew why more prisons were not a good thing, and that an increasing number of them when in contact with the judicial and penal system had a negative reaction towards it.

So it was thought that it wasn't so important to stress the activity of convincing the "person-on-the-street", as pretty soon you can be sure that they are knowing about it, as the prison population is growing and that is because people are jailed for smaller crimes. There is a growing prison labour industry in Europe which adds to the trend and a particularly repressive atmosphere which is growing, you are criminal if you do not accept every last law to regulate everything, the anti-social behaviour laws of UK, the "citizenism" of Spain, no drinking in the squares, no smoking, do not gather, do not congregate. This is what the state has always done - prevent the people from meeting together, clear the streets and roads, suppress, jail and murder those who rebel. Everyone knows the truth but follows the lie in their own way.

We need to ask ourselves what this society would look like without the prisons, to imagine what would constitute the basis of our means to deal with conflicts. The society needs to change, our problem is we cannot visibly propose a reality, we are in a grey-zone, what should it look like? That which we wish to create and take part in and think about, together, that is what it will look like.

We shouldn't make such a big difference between ourselves and prisoners anyway, we are all being watched and recorded all the time and subject to the police, it is not like we are in this complete freedom and the prisoners come out and, "wow, they are free", there is no 'free'. How we should talk about prisons should take that into account.

For some people at the gathering, the situation after the prisons come down is not as important as the fact they exist right now. Forced medication was seen as a particularly bad problem in the USA and UK, but looking at situations on-the-ground was a focus of concern.

Other did not agree that it should be a main point to focus on these topics, the conditions inside the prisons, the fact they are being drugged, or if they are being beaten up everyday, or how the conditions are. It was very important that the prison be destroyed right now. The question that everyone asks, what do we do with the rapists, murderers, fascists- It does not just stand on itself, it is not just tear down the walls and things are over, it is the whole prison society, it is part of a bigger world that keeps humiliating, locking up and punishing people, that is the thing you have to get rid of.

It is not just physically knocking down these buildings but it is also destroying this whole system which creates it. Once this system which creates its own prisoners, this system which humilates people, is gone, there would not be tons of people filling these places!

The justice system prevents victim and offender from having contact with each other, and denies the community from getting involved, the justice is bourgeoise. Nothing is resolved.

In Rwanda there are community mediation initiatives to deal with the effects of genocide based on community mediation and discussion. It is true that sometimes the community kills and perpetrator of serious crimes, but the aim is to find new ways of dealing with violence. Certainly bourgeoise justice is about punishment, not rehabilitation.

It is not just about punishment, it is about discipline, societies of control and so on. For certain the surveillance cameras which we can find everywhere are not so important as the fear of being watched is manufacturing by the authorities. You do not steal, you do not make actions, you are scared and isolated. Both need to be fought against, the punishment, the blow, and also the terror, the control.

All this needs to sink in, to be brought into the society. The main anarchist ideas are solidarity and mutual aid, that is what happens when the walls come down and we abolish prison society. It isn't thought of that we can abolish all conflict, and it's not desirable to end all conflict, because it is creative, how you deal with that conflict. Our position as anarchists is -mutual aid and solidarity, we can't look for these guarantees and promise to people that we are going to be able to deal with all conflict, sex offenders, Nazis; the only thing we can say is that we have this idea of solidarity between us, that if society came down, then this is how we deal with the problems that arise.

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**Day 2 – Saturday 27/9**

Starting from the 70's one group present had contact with the prisoners of the Red Army Faction (RAF), they squatted a house for a living project, many other people were involved, some of them went to prison, from this a prison project evolved, making contacts, visiting etc. Making newspaper for prisoners etc. In the 70's & 80's there was not just the Revolutionary Cells, there was many other underground autonomous groups, there was also a lot of overground public work for the people of the RAF. The Rote Hilfe, (Red Help) in Germany at one point was connected so closely to the situation of the RAF (Red Army Faction) prisons. From '72 there was a book of articles about militant resistance, communism etc. The fact that political prisoners receive isolation and torture as an answer to their political militant intervention is the reality. Now there is a movie about the RAF coming out, it is interesting because the RAF are still sitting there in prison, in isolation conditions which didn't disappear, there is a trial ongoing for 5 people accused of terrorist association, because of burning a Turkish commerce centre, in Berlin there is the trial against the supposed Militant Group (MG) people. Modern isolation conditions were born in the United States but have been perfected here in Germany, at the end of the 70's the practice came to Hamburg and have been developed. The anti-terrorist laws and criminalization of the movement, backed up with imprisonment, isolation, torture and murder have always been tools for the state to use against the social movement. Certain tortures are 'white tortures', psychological tortures, constant lights etc to affect the concentration, destroy the mind.

In the prison if you kept your political identity you would be subject to this, and not only the political prisoners but it was widening. There was a group called 'Black Help' for prisoners, an anti-prisons group, they made a paper which was important for the struggle, it included the writings of some June 2nd Movement prisoners
(an underground autonomous/anarchist direct action group), and also other social prisoners, it was an important project for the prisoners and the people outside, it was not just for itself, but for people to take action.

At one point there was a big discussion about the question "destroy prisons" or simply "support our political prisoners". The RAF always defined themselves as political prisoners, different to social prisoners. The Black Help defined all social prisoners as political prisoners, there is no distinction between social and political prisoners, that was the statement.

The prison of course is widening outside the walls, so even in the bar you are in a kind of prison, prison is a situation in society.

In '82 an autonomous anti-prison project started, in a squatted factory, involving ex-prisoners, it was involved in the left-radical movement. Also a book was published which had a lot of impact on the movement and the direction taken between those inside and outside, there was much activity.

We need to understand the basic conditions and possibilities for resistance in the prisons and outside, what constitutes the reality.

At the beginning there was not so much collective action, but a lot of contact with prisoners, making written material for the public, having a concentrated approach, at the time there was a lack of medical care, so there were a few actions. The attempt to make a prisoners newspaper ran into problems with censorship, disruption by the authorities.

One German anarchist from the Autonomous Prison group from Köln had been in prison in total for 10 years from the 70’s, 4 years for 5 gram hashish, 6 years for bank robbery, assorted ‘crimes’ associated with the movement. He’d been involved with the underground groups and now was organising with the autonomous-left prisoner support organisations, he also always thought things should be taken in a stronger direction against the government and capitalists.

He had suffered isolation and torture, he made the situation public, alongside with the other political and social prisoners through the publications of the movement.

It was very hard conditions, there were many restrictions and a situation of social repression. He went on hunger strike, like many people, but during the hunger-strike the prisoners called it off and decided it would be better to make a collective action and occupy the roof, it was hard to organise, 40 people.

During the decision making process questions like, “how to defend against the guards? how to defend this room?”. About one or two hours before the action started, the riot vans appeared to the prisons, the state had prepared, he was deported to another prison, in isolation, in a section of the wing alone.

In this prison there was a comrade who was not a revolutionary but a reformist, he would try to deal with the situation in a different way, but for everyone it was hard, your ideas are challenged, there is little potential because the conditions are not in your favour at all.

In his opinion, it is important not to start from zero, but learn from how the radical generation before the one you are in has conducted itself, for the continuity of the struggle.

Written material is important in this regard, making an exchange with prisoners, how to get prisoners involved in this discussion, phone-ins to group meetings if possible and personal contact, the visibility is needed when in prison, as communication breaks the isolation and creates bonds and solidarity.

It seems a little clearer that the anti-prison movement now has less of a divide between social and political prisoners. Contact with relatives and family is very important, there has to be responsibility, try to raise awareness, so on the inside the prisoners feel that it is worth the struggle, that they do not act alone. In this way it is really crucial to be able to carry the struggle forward in harsh conditions, despite the low-level at present.

Another anarchist present talked about some of the projects he was involved in such as writing letters to prisoners, he began writing under a fake name then after used his real name as he became overground, making publications and circulating letters, it has evolved into an 80 prisoner project. He thought that there was a lack of structure in the anti-prison movement, just a handful of groups, existing in the 80’s & 90’s until now. The newspaper they produce gets read by many prisoners and is called “Mauerfall” and also people like anarchist prisoner Thomas Meyer-Falk are involved.

Prison work must continue over the months and years, if it disappears prisoners cannot have hope in it, it has to be consistent. Very important to collect this experience between us and the prisoners, we are the same, and widen the discussion, make networks of affinity. Letters are of course only part of the story, there are many ways to support the prisoners. In publications prisoners can get a voice ordinarily denied them, so comrades abroad or nearby can hear their thoughts.

Contacts must be established to make firm these relationships, so prisoners can ask of what they want from the support organisations in coordination with the relatives.

If you know the visiting hours of the local prison, go to the area and talk with the friends and relatives of the prison, start a discussion there. By going to prison every week, always in the visiting room, approach and explain your point of view. Many people wish to talk about their experiences and those of their loved ones and know what the situation is clearly inside the prison, many times there are people who want to tell what is going on, but don’t know how or who to say it to. It is an effective way of keeping contact and knowing the community affected by the incarceration.

There has also been many changes since the 70’s & 80’s, there are now more fascists in prison with more organised structures than before. It can be difficult to build support for our prisoners, the fascists have built contacts with many social prisoners so the access to our publications is under threat, like the prisoners themselves who come into contact with the extreme-right inside. It is important to understand this. Many social prisoners, drug users, thieves, fraudsters, minor criminals, their first point of reference was the counter-culture, the left and alternative. Now many Nazi & fascist perspectives are making a return, and they are not so previously disorganised as the last two decades.

Recently there was a fight outside a court between Nazis and Hells Angels bike gang, they both had prisoners in conflict in the jail and outside, at the court where the trial was taking place. It is important that prisoners can see something different than fascist material and ideas, to know that there is an expression of rebellion unlike reactionary and racist ideology. Everybody is potentially at risk of prison, where the Nazis will attack you and kill you, and the outside resembles an open prison more and more.

This discussion which is part of our European anti-prison activity is intended to strengthen the networks of resistance so we are better able to counter the extreme-right and their clumsy handlers, the state.

It is simple to understand that if you want to act, you can make your own decisions, you start to resist and take your life for yourself. Importantly, it is also about getting used to the idea that if you are in the movement, prison is a threat, by making contact with prisoners and creating solidarity with prisons we step towards overcoming this threat.

“What can I do to prepare for prison?”, “How is it in prison?” many people want this information badly, and more will end up there as mass imprisonment unfolds. Again, public information, newspaper projects and continuity are the key towards a sustained process of agitation. Not just to talk about prisons, but to bring in much more to broaden the perspective, it touches on many themes.

It is important for some to define themselves as political prisoners, those who had taken arms and so, it is for them to decide, but putting aside differences in the face of adversity is also needed, for example there is few connections
between the migrant struggle against detention centres and the anarchist & autonomous prisoner struggle, even the social prisoners struggle which is building and has already had some serious moments in Germany, Greece, Belgium, Italy and Spain recently.

Except there is contradictions in the solidarity work, and conflicts over approach, specialisations, etc. If militants are expected to go to jail, it is a situation worth thinking about to prepare the solidarity group, to know the appropriate direction and level of activity before-hand to prevent time delay in responding to political repression.

If solidarity groups are created they shouldn't be focused simply on fighting one persons case, or one wave of repression, they should target the entire system that maintains domination and exploitation.

In Austria with the raids against animal liberationists the whole topic is very 'hot'; the solidarity groups of course for the liberation and continuation of the animalists demands. The movement is defensive and paranoid from the paramilitary raids which occurred in such an extensive manner.

It is needed to work in small concentrated groups on the topic and the communications between the groups need to be improved. There is a lot of information but not enough discussion, or even activity, happening in many places in Europe. A mass of little groups networked together, but now there needs to be more activity in the face of the crackdown.

Day 3 – Sunday 28/9

For this gathering, some of the participants felt that there could have been another day, the schedule was tight and two presentations did not happen, the soil-party took place on the Saturday night, leading to sore heads and a delayed discussion on Sunday, this is to be reflected upon. The days were very full, and this was the first gathering of its type for some time, so it's to be expected that it is just the start. There were comments that it was disappointing that more people from the left-radical movement in Kiel did not come, and that there a few internationals who had travelled specifically for it, but it is another encounter and networking point from where we can push things forward.

We have to think about how we communicate better, when we are in our everyday fight sometimes you are isolated from the communications of the internationals and what is happening around the world. It is only from personal contact we establish these relationships, so it is more difficult than relying on the internet, but it has to be done. Perhaps we can use this meeting for trying to have better communications, making more translations, building on these relationships of solidarity.

There was a little disappointment voiced about the lack of concrete initiatives that came from the weekend, there doesn't seem to be a material anti-prison struggle now, but a lot of dispersed activity. We have had a lot of discussions, but we have not talked about what it would look like. The quality of information, relationships and exchange very good, but sometimes it was more anti-repression, rather than anti-prison. If what we are here for is anti-prison then what we are here to talk about is how we concretely improve the communication between ourselves and the prisoners, then possibly a structure for communication between internationals.

We have to understand what these new prisons and technologically developed prison states are going to look like, it is key to fighting against them.

Talks about attacking the structures of the prison state, what this would look like was missing from our discussions, talks about other autonomous groups like 'Os Cangaceiros', who would concentrate on the anti-prison then what we are here to talk about is the avenue of activity that is open to you once you comprehend their role, so this is the kind of information we should be talking about, not the hypothetical discussion over what we would do with the Nazis, or these other hypothetical situations.

By building a dossier on the prison projects we can see how they work and what they need to function. There was a brief campaign in UK called CAGE, at the turn of the century, which occupied a prison being built and made some trashing, sabotage, before leaving. In terms of attacking a specific industry, of course from the UK there is the situation of the Animal Liberation Front, they have systematically taken on companies and brought them down, how they have done this but the architects many smaller companies that they need to survive, it is a case of a single issue being pushed to it's limits, for this as anarchists we don't want to separate it from the revolutionary struggle against all domination, but it is an example to learn from in terms of a campaign.

In Germany, the Anti-Fascist movement, the amount of research they put into what they are doing, they have good skills, there should be more cross-over into this area. In Berlin they want to make a new jail, half privately owned, the architect is from Austria, in 2012 it will be built, in Großbeeren, which is in Brandenburg, Berlin's region.

It is good to act against the prisons, but also in an information way, against the idea of their "perfect world", where prisons serve their purpose for the "good of society", this is part of the counter-information struggle. It would have been good to have more discussions about these themes, but it is a problem that you cannot lose from the eyes that in different countries you have a different kind of repression, like to discuss these arguments, there is another certain sense of repression in other countries, and we have to find a balance.

In a bigger meeting we have to understand about this things, but we talking about a history, of tactics, of methodology, it is for everyone to decide.
Despite the recognition that mass imprisonment is a reality, it is not our wish to find a new ‘revolutionary subject’ in the prisoner, the proletarian is not this, we don’t have to make this mistake, that these people have a ‘special role’, they are people like us, who happen to be in a different situation, but are not ‘better’ or more ‘revolutionary’. It is very difficult as it is outside, with all the social problems to work with people, so ‘inside’ it is not really easy at all. It is not any different than the work with migrant communities, there are points of misunderstanding, points of clarity and so on. None of the people are perfect, the difference is that the people inside got caught. Which are the ways to raise awareness and take actions, to make a debate, it can go good, it can go very wrong.

It is a lot of questions, a discontinuity. More and more, the real thing is that everyday life becomes more like the prison, from the time you wake up to go to sleep, outside is a prison, Europe is a prison, so many people here in Kiel are left-wing, anti-fascist,but they are not here, they are fighting Nazis on the street, 800 people at the demonstration against a neonazi club 30km away from Kiel (taking place the Saturday of the meeting – St.Pauli vs Rostock, 150 people were arrested, some in hospital).

Everyday in Europe it is like this. Dog-fights when we should be going after the owner, we should be aware that the prison riots are in a place of weakness, that it suits the guards to murder the prisoners and so on, watching them fight with each other, it is endless like that way. They use the conflicts and gang-fights for themselves, setting them up and taking bets on the winners. They deliver the left-wing people to the fascists in jail to prevent organising or even just doing their time.

A German anarchist of the older generation who had spent time in jail gave his respect for any rebels trying to climb the roof in prison and bring some collective actions, this was possible in the ‘80s and ‘90s, - that is not really the situation right now in Germany. He commented that for him it was problematic to organise a demo in front of Kiel prison which is an old building arranged as a 5-pointed star, where all the cell wings are not-visible to each other and face only into the inner courtyard. The prisoners couldn’t see the demonstration, but they could have heard it. We must engage with open hearts and ask the meaningful questions, explore and begin the healing process, rejecting the endless violence. It makes no sense to turn the young people on to something ‘romantic’, with ‘excitement’ about prison and spread illusions, it is a serious situation when we have to fight. No answers, more questions.

All the people out of prison is threatening for the ‘normal people’ it is a question of changing the reality, that they understand that the prison is the threat, that it doesn’t make their communities secure.

For the last German hunger-strike recently, the government did everything it could to keep it out of the newspapers, and of course the media complied. They knew that one spark or incident could get out of control, because there is this image of the nice German jail, the “human rights” which is nothing but lies. We see how the media and state function, they say nothing about the hunger protest. The authorities have a strategy of concentrating on these people. There is much or not enough. It is not the case that these things were not happening, and the theoretical.

We can however speak about what is done, what is in the past, what everyone knows is happening, and the theoretical.

The concrete solidarity, it exists, but when we look at the different countries, there is a different level of action, in Germany, for the prisoner who has a soli-group, etc there is something happening, but the groups, the individuals they sometimes feel very alone. When the prisoners who are spending a long time in jail, it is hard, for everyone, and you have to be strong, and we must have more consciousness about what happens when you go to the demonstrations and you go to jail.

Every time people make the slogan “Smash Capitalism”, “Smash the Nazi” we have to think about ourselves as potential prisoners, because this is the future they want for us, so we had better be prepared to refuse this role, and that comes from being prepared. The solidarity group, it must be active not just for one month, one year, but all the time, and conscious. For example the 1st of May in Germany, there should be more time and effort for the prisoners.

It has to be more serious, when you write a poster, make an action, make the demo, you have to be prepared for arrests already. You must continue the solidarity work in an organised way, it is not right to forget about the prisoners from the demonstrations, it is about our political cohesion.

It is also not just about after the demonstration, it is about how to develop the idea that prison is a brutalising totality, if a few people from the movement enter the jail, it is a good point to begin, but it is not all. Our goal is to widen the perspective, not just support the prisoners from our circles. A consciousness and wider knowledge on the whole topic, a possibility to meet and discuss on a level of understanding not yet totally present.

This gathering has been good for the people to meet each other and exchange views, contacts, ideas, make a visible space for these topics and open this debate. Hopefully it will go further on, there is more people than expected really, a lot to improve, less presentations, more discussions, this will be the second process.
forced to pay cell 'rent' in Germany). A good point underpinning the next hunger-strike, a concrete point for attacking the prison labour, which is simply a system of forced production and repression.

As more of the already fragile economy begins to be dependent on large warehouse style prison labour facilities, it becomes more essential to organise against them, as it is also an attack on workers ‘outside’. Prisoners unions, prisoners leagues, strikes, sabotage, it is important.

This struggle however should not be separate from the broader revolutionary struggle, and there should be a recognition of the limits of the bodies, to concentrate on the prisons yes, but we should be for total liberation.

It is the risk of specialisation, always when there is only a few groups working on this topic, there is a risk that things become compartmentalised, other threads within the topic need to be widened, and connected to the different parts of the struggle- no borders, anti-psychiatry + ‘cognitive liberty’, youth jails, and anti-terror laws. To work on different levels and not get stuck in a very particular activity. Prison of course is this productive process so we agree that this is also an area worthy of inquiry as it is essentially a concrete expression of the class struggle, it is the government of poverty.

In closing. “Silence is also an answer”.

At New Years Eve there is, like many cities in Europe, a demo which goes to the prison, in this case - Moabit, the prison of Berlin. This time it is the 15th year that it will happen.

Invitations for you to come.