

The Bosses Grand Idea

– The Olympic Spectacle of Money and Power

Torch the Olympics

2012

[ed. - This piece was featured online and in the anarchist publication Dark Nights, just before the London Games. Anti-2012 resistance was sparse in the years between London winning the mega-project bid and the summer event, although there was sporadic action in the run-up.]

“When the emperors must get their subjects to swallow something disastrous, they organise majestic games.”

– leaflet against the 2006 Winter Olympics

Ever since they were founded in 1896, the modern Olympic Games have been more about money, power, and politics than they are about athletics and sport or celebrating some mythical ‘common humanity’. The financiers of this palaver and the economic system that underpins it have no ‘common humanity’ to share with us the excluded, despite the jingoistic London 2012 advertising forced down our throats for months and months now.

The ‘Greenest Games so far’?! What a bad joke, as the Olympic sprawl of huge developments further scar the face of the land colonised by the megacity. More contaminated topsoil, destroyed marsh habitat, concrete and fences. All funded by the same global corporations who are devastating the living planet, poisoning and exploiting the people (BP who are responsible for the Gulf of Mexico oil spill and the extraction of highly-polluting tar sands such as in Canada, Dow Chemical who produced one-third of the Agent Orange defoliants sprayed over Vietnam and producing birth defects even four generations later and who were implicated in the 1984 Bhopal disaster in India which killed up to 20,000 people and injured tens of thousands more, Rio Tinto the number one emitter of toxins near the Utah mine making Olympic medals, EDF who are building 8 new nuclear plants around the UK... [ed. - plans are on now hold while they demand higher energy prices]).

Across the world the Olympic infrastructures have been raised on the bodies of workers who died in the race to complete these modern-day pyramids of Industrial Progress. Yes, make no mistake, it’s these businessmen and contractors along with government bureaucrats and their security services (quick to use a lucrative opportunity to advance social control) who really benefit from this.

Already globally synonymous with the surveillance society, London will host a showcase of the latest control technologies from the booming security and defence sector which feeds off post-9/11 and austerity-era insecurity. This is the bosses grand idea: to catalyse and secure

projects of urban development, tourism and infrastructure under the favourable conditions of a world-renowned market scheme. Much beyond a single event, the modern Olympics is an emblem of the system that brought it back to life.

“Myths about the Olympic industry are promoted almost entirely through the corporate media, who create a common consensus that everyone will benefit from the Olympics, and therefore everyone supports them. Those who don’t are either ignored, marginalized as misguided misfits, or criminalized.”

- leaflet against the 2010 Winter Olympics

We know that their ‘trickle-down’ economics is bullshit, the super-rich coming to the UK who can afford to go to the Games swan around posh hotels and shopping districts. The privileged class ‘Olympic family’ of officials, national bureaucrats and sponsors – and apparently other businessmen secretly offered access for £20,000 each – enjoy 170 miles of their own ‘VIP lanes’ to travel around during the period in 4,000 chauffeur-driven BMWs alongside the athlete’s coaches. They have cleared the way for them and their mates only, with mass evictions and social cleansing of the more unsightly aspects of the class society that they run.

And what are the rest of us to be left after the show is over? Increased rents, more surveillance technology, exclusive commercial areas we are socially, economically and racially frozen out of. **Fascist regulation and austerity for most, Disneyland in London for the few.** Everything controlled and calculated by the powerful ruining our lives. And the privilege of a few weeks’ circus to make us forget the emptiness and desolation of our times.

“The Olympics are a shop-window of capitalism and domination itself. An advertisement for the world of class slavery and the means to impose it.”

- leaflet against the 2004 Olympics

We have already seen the venomous vilification of the “unpatriotic” who during the summer might demonstrate, strike or otherwise disturb the waters. We have already seen the rolling numbers of Group 4 Security private guards, army and police forces from across the country who will occupy London for the event. The focus in all the security is explicitly on the ‘internal enemy’, the black sheep among us... the perfect excuse to roll the troops out onto the streets in a country where it is stigmatised to do so.

In the past the Olympics has been used as a military experiment as part of the giant show-piece and bidding nations must show willing to implement a martial police state.

The biggest mobilisation since the second world war; 18,000 soldiers (possibly more, such is the secrecy – including details of troops deployed from other countries), with unmanned drones, fighter jets, Royal Marines, attack helicopters and the Navy’s biggest aircraft carrier will be in London – with a more familiar military parade to make it all more palatable in the patriotic fervour that barely masks the citizens’ fear. **Fear of the elusive terrorist, rowdy youth or illegal immigrant, but not of cops who can kill people like Ian Thomlinson with impunity? Not of Group 4 Security mercenaries who got away with murdering Jimmy Mubenga on his deportation flight? Not of the soldiers who brutalise, rape and occupy across the world?**

The police officers for the Games are militarised even more too, with sonic weapons, water cannons and chemical weapons for the first time on mainland Britain ready to disperse any unruly mob. Any dissent against the ‘Olympic spirit’ will not go unnoticed by the Met, long granted powers to remove any signs of anti-Olympic sentiment within a certain radius. The display, production or possession of posters/leaflets critical of the Games, government or sponsors has been criminalised, police powers granted to enter private homes to seize materials. The Olympics Dis-

persal Zone outside the miles of electric fence allows cops to banish groups of two people or more from the area for 74 hours, and if they're under 16 even escort them home.

The State uses the legitimacy of the Olympics to push ahead the kind of modern totalitarianism that has been its direction in the UK for so long already. When the athletes and tourists have packed up the smoke will clear to reveal the fortress standing taller and stronger than ever. *But the struggle against the powerful and their world doesn't come and go with such events, and cops, industrialists and politicians will have to keep looking over their shoulder for the rest of their despicable lives.* What terrifies them is the prospect of an uncontrollable fringe who don't buy the friendly image, who aren't cowed into total submission by the show of force, who see how far from a meaningful life these bastards are keeping us and who can find the cracks in the wall which separates the haves from the have-nots. **In August 2011, an explosion of anger rocked the centres of poverty and exploitation, and the riots have left a burning legacy which unveils how thin that wall can be.**

Let's go at it once again, harder than ever, until the whole rotten charade falls apart!

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