

Disappearing From State Control



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Original text in Czech

Zmizení z dohledu státní moci

Lukáš Borl

2015-2016

antifenix.noblogs.org

English translation

theanarchistlibrary.org/library/disappearing-from-state-control

New edition

No Trace Project

Layout

No Trace Project

notrace.how/resources/#lukas-borl

Note from the No Trace Project:

In 2015, the Czech Republic initiated a repressive operation called “Fenix” that targeted several anarchists, including Lukáš Borl. To avoid arrest, Lukáš Borl decided to enter clandestinity.

The following three texts were written by him:

- “Disappearing From State Control” dates from September 2015, shortly after he entered clandestinity.
- “Confirmed: Lukáš Borl Under Police Investigation” dates from February 2016, while he was in clandestinity.
- “Statement on My Arrest” dates from September 2016, shortly after his arrest.

After his arrest, Lukáš Borl was detained for several months before being acquitted in 2017. You can find more information about the Fenix operation in our Threat Library¹.

¹<https://notrace.how/threat-library/repressive-operations/fenix.html>

Contents

Disappearing From State Control	4
Time for a life change	4
Breaking point	5
Disturbing attention	6
Surveillance and wiretapping	7
Damn hard decision	8
Confirmed: Lukáš Borl Under Police Investigation	10
Statement on My Arrest	12
Before the arrest	12
Circumstances of the arrest	13
Police motion	14
Defense	14
Still armed and dangerous	15
The terrain of struggle	15
Solidarity actions	15

Disappearing From State Control

Time for a life change

I am an anarchist, a rebel. It means a lot to me. Among other things, I am threatened by those I rebel against. But compared to other rebels, we anarchists have it even more complicated. Threats hang over our heads, no matter what time and place we live in. As fighters against all States, anarchists are always threatened by repression and violence. During monarchy and theocracy, under fascist or Bolshevik dictatorships, as well as under liberal democracies. All anarchists must live knowing that at any time our existence can be hit by a hard blow from State repression.

Although I am very aware of this constant threat, over the long years of anarchist activity I have dulled my senses quite a bit. I simply didn't care too much emotionally when some of the often repeated forms of repression came. They became a routine. Every now and then cops violently attack anarchist demonstrations or evict a squat. Every now and then somebody gets arrested and released some time later with a fine or probation. This is nothing unusual in an anarchist environment. We don't need to drown in despair because of this, we just need to cope with these conditions. I started to perceive these recurrent troubles as the inevitable consequence of anarchist activities. We just need to take into account that if somebody fights against the State, the same State will fight back.

We can live quite ordinary lives despite these small “routine” repression events. The police will have more and more information about your activities, but still, you can do your stuff and you can do it publicly. I've been doing this for around seventeen years. Police surveillance, interrogations, prison cells, courts. Fines and probation. So much of this during those seventeen years, but nothing that would prevent me from organizing or participating in anarchist activities in public.

The phase of my public activities reached the top, now it's time for the phase of hiding. After long reasoning and considering the present context I decided to disappear from the eyes of State control. At present I think

it's the only possible way I know of to protect myself against the crushing hits of repression. Now I will try to outline the context and reasons that led me to this decision.

Breaking point

My current stance is the result of the last few months, but there is no doubt that I made all of the most underlying decisions just a few days before my disappearance. April 28, 2015 was the beginning of all of this. The day the police started the operation Fenix—this repressive campaign against the anarchist movement became some sort of breaking point. A transition from long-term mild repression to strong repression. Three anarchists ended in pre-trial detention after the first raids and another one a few weeks later. The official version is that it was an effort to eliminate the Síť Revolučních Buněk (SRB, Network of Revolutionary Cells) and leftist terrorism. But there is no doubt that the SRB still functions. It's also obvious that repression hit the wider anarchist movement and also the families and friends of anarchists. Besides the imprisoned comrades there are also other people accused of crimes and prosecuted. Dozens of people have been interrogated and bullied. Some people are surveilled by whole police teams that track all their steps and communications. This situation has created a very oppressive atmosphere.

There were fines and probation before, but now the anarchists were imprisoned under very frightening conditions. Some comrades are accused of preparing for acts of terrorism. Concretely, of planning an attack on a freight train carrying military equipment. Two undercover cops who infiltrated one anarchist group played an important role in this case. Another comrade is accused of an attack against the house of the Czech minister of defense. The attack with molotov cocktails was—according to the police version—militant advocacy of Russia and the regime of Vladimir Putin. The truth is that the persecuted anarchist is a Russian citizen, who was persecuted in Russia and has repeatedly stood against Putin, the Russian state and its regime in lectures in the Czech Republic. The defendant simply doesn't have this motive. Moreover he has a provable alibi, he was at another place during the time of the attack.

Simply, the anarchists in Czech Republic are going to prison because of some absurd police fictions and provocations. This is the big reason for me, as an active anarchist, to start to worry that I could also be imprisoned soon. Undoubtedly everybody from the anarchist movement can be imprisoned, so the question is: why do I think that they want to imprison me? Of course I can't say with certainty, but there are some signs that suggest the probability is very high. I don't want to disregard this.

Disturbing attention

Dozens of anarchists throughout the Czech Republic were interrogated during operation Fenix, some of them repeatedly. I talked with most of them about their experience. Almost everyone independently agreed on one thing—that I'm the person that police mostly focused on during the interrogations. According to trusted sources it was the same during the interrogations of imprisoned anarchists. It isn't meaningless coincidence and it surely has its reasons linked to an effort to imprison me. These interrogations can be the way for them to obtain information for an arrest warrant. It doesn't matter if the information has some real basis or if it's the result of police manipulating statements. It will be trouble either way.

There can be many reasons why they focus their attention on me so strongly. Perhaps because I'm publicly involved in projects that lead the anarchist movement to join with people outside of it. Or maybe it's the activities around the Ateneo community center or the activities to support workers bullied by their bosses. Police can see me as a person who significantly contributes to popularize anarchist tactics and goals. This kind of person is a threat for the status quo everywhere around the globe and police try to eliminate their influence.

It's also true that in lectures, public discussions and in publications I repeatedly and openly advocate for illegal direct action as an integral part of anti-capitalist resistance. Police can see high risk in this, because I can maybe inspire or support some people to do these illegal direct actions. It's also known that I'm a member of Asociace Alerta, that republishes on the Internet statements by the SRB and other militant groups. It's no secret that I'm also distributing publications and some of them include

texts from groups and individuals beyond the borders of legality like Revolutionary Struggle, Angry Brigade, Třídni Válka (Class War), the Animal Liberation Front, Alfredo Bonnano or Antonio Tellez. I don't agree with some of their activities and stances, but mainly I do and that's the reason why I spread their texts and verbally express sympathy with them.

So, I'm just loudly saying things that many anarchists only dare to say secretly, so nobody can hear them. I'm helping to spread information about illegal direct actions and encouraging others to support them. I also repeatedly declared that as an anarchist, I don't want to bound myself with norms and I will cross borders everywhere I think it's legitimate. I have no doubt that police want to stop all of this, perhaps with the help of imprisonment.

I don't want to overestimate my abilities and influence, but I have no doubt that the police hate everything I do. They have enough reasons to try to stop me. Just what they presented as a reason for the raid on the Ateneo community center is a big warning. Some sort of message: "Don't doubt we're coming after you." They submitted warrants for house searches of four places where I spent much time and they justified it by suspecting me as a person who founded, supported and promoted the SRB. If police use these suspicions to justify raids, it's reasonable to worry that they want to turn these suspicions into charges and severe punishment. I don't want to stand by and wait for it to happen.

Surveillance and wiretapping

I already mentioned the attention to my person during police interrogations. I would like to remind everyone that this is just one of many cases where I experienced this attention. During the last months it was very present during my everyday life. As I wrote, there was a team of undercover cops that tracked all my steps and communications (in Czech: here²,

²<https://asociacealerta.noblogs.org/post/2015/08/07/otevreny-denik-monitorovaneho-anarchisty-prvni-cast>

here³, and here⁴). There were days that I couldn't move without their presence. This intense surveillance fits the theory that they want to arrest me. And it seems like they don't want just me. I think that there are two goals that police want to achieve with this surveillance.

Goal one: uncovering links and relations. They want to know with who I'm in touch, what we're doing together and what we cooperate on. They expect that I will lead them to people who can then easily be convicted of illegal activities. They assume that if I openly advocate for and spread information about illegal activities I must also know people who are involved in such activities.

Goal two: they want to accuse me of illegal activities. They are watching me expecting me to do something illegal sooner or later that they can observe. Or to do something that would show a link between me and something illegal from the past. I'm afraid that even if this leads to nothing and the police can't connect me with anything illegal, they will create some evidence themselves. It will be the same thing that happened to the anarchists who ended up in custody with allegations of serious crimes because of some doubtful claims of the police.

Since the police in the Czech Republic have already arrested people because of some obviously fictional constructs, it's very easy to believe that they want to do the same to me. I described the motives that can lead the police to arrest me and also the things that can be counted as a preparation for such a move. All of this led me to my decision that the only way to prevent this is to simply disappear from the sight of the police and the government. If they don't know where I am and what I am doing, they don't have the conditions needed for my imprisonment.

Damn hard decision

Now, I want to emphasize one important thing. I'm aware that my theories about my imprisonment are based on assumptions. There is no way

³<https://asociacealerta.noblogs.org/post/2015/08/21/8695>

⁴<https://asociacealerta.noblogs.org/post/2015/09/18/otevreny-denik-monitorovaneho-anarchisty-treti-cast>

that I can prove them now of course. If the theory of my imprisonment would prove invalid, my decision to disappear would remain anyway. The reason is my will to keep my dignity and health.

To live under constant police surveillance is unsustainable in the long term. In situations like this, not only will you lose your privacy and dignity, but you are also exposed to huge psychological pressure that can undermine your health very easily. Paranoia and other psychological and emotional problems are common results in such situations. I know cases of people that needed to seek psychiatric treatment because of intensive police surveillance, their health was undermined and maybe can't be fully restored. I want to prevent this, so I will hide rather than live in the conditions of permanent control.

I want to hide rather than sit in the prison or hospital. Now I see only these three options, so my decision is clear. Disappear while I can. When I say that my decision is clear, I don't mean that it's easy. It's damn hard to decide to disappear without farewell and to lose contact with people I have known for years. But such a decision is the result of a logical assessment of the situation. It's also a self-preservation instinct.

Of course I would rather live normally, close to all the people I know, but this is impossible now. The decision to leave friends and family is the consequence of a situation into which my enemies pushed me. I have no intention to forgive them. I'm also hiding from their sight because I want to plan my next moves in the struggle undisturbed, so I can subvert their beliefs. Simply put, if I'm disappearing from the sight of the police and government it doesn't mean that I'm no longer part of an anarchist resistance.

Last words I'm sending to those I love. If I'm disappearing from the sight of all of you, friends and family, it doesn't mean that I'm leaving you! We don't see each other and we don't talk together now, but you are always an important part of my life. I don't doubt that I'm also still an important part of yours.

I love you, I'm thinking of you and I miss you.

Confirmed: Lukáš Borl Under Police Investigation

On October 24, 2015 my article was published on Asociace Alerta's website. In it, I've expressed the suspicion that the police want to arrest me and imprison me. This suspicion has become the reason of my disappearance from State control. Less than a month after the publication, my suspicions were confirmed. On November 12, 2015, according to the police website, it's been confirmed that they're searching for me.

From the realm of conjecture, therefore, we move into the realm of facts. It's now confirmed that I am under investigation. I don't exactly know what that means for me and what's gonna happen. I don't know what I'm accused of. But I'm sure that while I am enjoying my freedom, the police would rather see me locked in a cage that they call "prison".

Despite the fact that my enemies think I'm hiding in some hole, I certainly am not. I'm moving freely in various countries and cities. I'm aware of the risks that are associated with this. But I can't be sure whether everyone else is aware of those risks. So everyone, please, respect the following prompt:

If you've seen me. Doesn't matter who, where and when. Act like you haven't seen me and don't even talk about it. Ever! If you speak with someone who claims that they saw me, try to convince them not to talk about it. But don't do this over the phone or the Internet.

The exception, of course, is people I voluntarily have contact with. With them, rules have been set. They know who they can talk to about me, and under what circumstances. I ask everyone else not to talk about anything, anywhere, that could reveal my movements or my connections with other people. The countries or cities I move in. The people I am in contact with. Everything must remain secret if I and those who help me are to remain safe.

Not respecting this call would be very irresponsible of you and it might have some tragic consequences. In the worse-case scenario it would be considered identical to the unacceptable act of giving information to police.

Dangerous and armed: On the police website, right next to my picture there are lines “Dangerous” and “Armed” stating “YES”. I need to confirm this again. Yes, I'm dangerous and armed!

I'm dangerous! I present a security risk for the stability of capitalism. A system that provides extreme wealth, privilege and power to a minority, while condemning the majority to poverty and social insecurity. To an existence conditioned by the willingness to be exploited by bosses and oppressed by the bureaucratic and political managers of misery. I'm dangerous to capitalism and the States that ensure its continuation. I'm dangerous because I'm united in a common struggle with those who want to put an end to capitalism and States. From the perspective of the police I'm dangerous because I refuse to adapt to the conditions of exploitation and because I encourage others to rebel against them. I'm dangerous because instead of living on my knees I prefer to live upright. Beyond the law, but with pride. With the dignity of a creature that prefers the joyful logic of struggle and rejects the mentality of submission.

I'm armed! Armed with solidarity, the desire for freedom, courage and other weapons. I don't hesitate to use those weapons to defend my interests as well as the interests of others, who just like me are underprivileged, people who are kept in misery by capitalism, exploited, tortured and murdered. The police would rather see me unarmed. In other words: without solidarity, compliant, resigned and paralyzed by fear. Too bad for them. The advantage is on my side. I'm armed, with solidarity, optimistic and unfettered by fear.

I'm still strong and unbreakable. I draw energy from the solidarity of other anarchists in various parts of the world. With the same enthusiasm, I am trying to support them. Providing some resources to them and helping them. Energy, motivation and strength. I'm not alone and they're not alone. That's what keeps us alive. That's what allows us to go forward.

Statement on My Arrest

On Sunday, September 4, 2016, I was arrested by the police in Most and taken to the remand prison in Litoměřice. This is what I did not want to happen, but knew all along could happen at any time. Fortunately I have mentally prepared myself for such a situation, which allows me to deal calmly with this unpleasant reality, which I, and apparently people close to me, are exposed to now.

I was captured by those who defend the rule of capital over our lives. Nevertheless, this doesn't change my will to continue along the path that I have chosen. I will continue to destroy and create. To fight and love. I remain an anarchist with everything that goes with it. I decided for now to write a few paragraphs about my imprisonment. Surely I will soon express my opinion about other issues that I consider important.

Before the arrest

It's no secret that at some point I decided to “disappear” out of fear that the police were planning my arrest. I have expressed my reasons in the text “Disappearing From State Control”, which was published by various sites of the anarchist movement. The choice I made allowed me to live hidden and quite happily for months. I freely moved and ate good food. The whole world was my home and in it I was able to find havens for cultural and social existence. The emotional and material support I had gave me enough energy to keep fighting for emancipation. I knew the risks involved, but I never considered quitting. I don't think about it now either. To break free from State dictatorship and capitalism is such an attractive goal that it is impossible to turn away my attention from it. Even the fact that the power is threatening me with finger, baton or prison... Being an anarchist means to me to understand such threats as an inevitable consequence of my expressed desire for freedom. It is connected with the everyday life of a rebel. It's a fact that I cannot avoid, but can resist. It's what I do and will keep doing.

Circumstances of the arrest

Police arrested me in Most, a small city where I was born and lived for a long time. I have part of my family and many friends there. In Most with some people we run the Ateneo community center and organize many events associated with the anarchist movement. In short, in this city I'm a quite known person, both to the population and the police and bureaucrats.

Some people will consider it a sign of “stupidity” that I decided to come to this city while I was the subject of a European arrest warrant. Even if my closest people think so, I would not blame them. Because they look at the matter from a different perspective than I do. So I do understand that some people don't understand the thoughts and actions of a person who has been underground for a long time. The life of a person on the run is marked by the separation from their loved ones, who they were previously in close and frequent contact with. It's one of the hardest things that a person in such a situation has to deal with. Fundraising, food, shelter or staying secure are in contrast relatively easy tasks. There are two ways to deal with such a separation. Either accept it passively, which also means exposing yourself to suffering and an unending frustration. Or try to overcome it with occasional contacts, which of course greatly increases the risk of getting caught by the police. I “instinctively” chose the second option. I knew what I was risking and what I could lose. But I also knew that in isolation I can lose something that is very important to me—contacts with people I care about and who care about me. That's why I decided to come to Most, knowing the risks.

Everything could have gone smoothly and soon I would have moved to a safer place, it was not a difficult task, and I had carefully prepared for it. But as everyone surely knows, in our lives, sometimes unexpected events take place which cannot be predicted nor reversed. We are dragged by events without being able to prevent them or change them. That's exactly what happened in my case. As a result, I not only failed to make contact, but I was also arrested. I will not explain now, why and how it happened. Perhaps I will do so later.

Police motion

Shortly after the arrest, I was handed a motion to initiate criminal prosecution against me. During the whole process, I decided to exercise the right to remain silent. The case is investigated by the *Útvar pro odhalování organizovaného zločinu* (ÚOOZ, Police department for combating organized crime). They accuse me of founding, supporting and promoting a movement aimed at suppressing human rights and freedoms. According to the ÚOOZ I founded the SRB, participated in some SRB events and wrote some SRB communiqués and published them on Asociace Alerta's website. They further claim that I have committed the offense of damaging other people's property, four times. Twice during an arson attack on a police car. Once during an arson attack on a shop door. And once by spraying on the wall of the prison in Ruzyně, Prague. Finally I am also accused by the ÚOOZ of blackmailing the owner of the steak restaurant Řízkárna.

I carefully studied all accusations to find out on what basis the ÚOOZ believes I committed those acts. Honestly, it really calmed me down, because the “evidence” is a mixture of speculation and assessment of “clues” that don't actually prove my participation in those acts.

Defense

As is known, I have no sympathy for the judicial system. I consider it part of the repressive tools of capitalism, which I oppose. Nevertheless, I have decided to try to defend myself in court, given the fragility of the “evidence” that the ÚOOZ presents against me. I realize that this choice means fighting on enemy territory with limited resources. Therefore, I don't have exaggerated expectations or illusions that the court is an independent institution that can serve the emancipatory struggle.

I will defend myself in court, but I continue to stand by the idea that the anarchist struggle must be based primarily on the subversive logic of direct action, not on reliance on the institutional instruments of the State and indirect (mediated by representatives) forms of action. From what I have been saying and doing for many years, it is clearly visible what types of

struggle I prefer. I will continue to act accordingly and I ask other people who stand in solidarity with me to do the same.

Still armed and dangerous

While in hiding, the police and the media labeled me as dangerous and armed. I confirmed this in a text, “Confirmed: Lukáš Borl Under Police Investigation.” After my arrest, the police confiscated my defensive pepper spray, brass knuckles, and a gas pistol with two magazines and 23 rounds (note: these weapons are legally available in the Czech Republic even without a weapons license). Now they keep me in jail. I stand by the fact that I'm still armed and dangerous. Dangerous (to capitalism), because, even behind the bars I refuse to adapt to the conditions of exploitation and encourages others to rebel against them. I'm still armed because of my willingness to be in solidarity. Up to now they weren't able to take this solidarity away from me and recorded it as a matter of importance for criminal proceedings. Solidarity and rebellion are weapons that I still have on me and I'm ready to use them. I have done that already, do that now and will keep doing it.

The terrain of struggle

As an anarchist, I was always aware of the possibility of arrest. After all, every regime suppresses its opposition in this way. Now I am in pre-trial detention, but do not consider it as the end of the anarchist path. Jail is just one of many phases that a revolutionary may (but need not) go through. It's not the end. Only a change in the circumstances of the terrain where I will now struggle against the perpetrators of oppression. I am pleased that I can keep fighting together with other anarchists. With those who understand that collective struggle is the only way out of the capitalist mud.

Solidarity actions

Anyone who feels the need to support me can choose their own way and timing according to their own considerations. I will not tell anyone what

to do and how. But I explicitly don't want to see anyone, without my consent, distance themselves from direct actions done in my support. If I don't agree with an action, I will express that by myself, if I consider it important.

An advice for those who doubt about what actions would be welcome: get information about my past to understand what ideological positions I stand for. If you understand my positions, then you will lose any doubts regarding what actions I would welcome or not. No time to lose.

No social peace with those who oppress and exploit us. The struggle continues!

With anarchist greetings from prison, your brother, friend, comrade, Lukáš Borl.

The phase of my public activities reached the top, now it's time for the phase of hiding. After long reasoning and considering the present context I decided to disappear from the eyes of State control. At present I think it's the only possible way I know of to protect myself against the crushing hits of repression. Now I will try to outline the context and reasons that led me to this decision.



No Trace Project / No trace, no case. A collection of tools to help anarchists and other rebels **understand** the capabilities of their enemies, **undermine** surveillance efforts, and ultimately **act** without getting caught.

Depending on your context, possession of certain documents may be criminalized or attract unwanted attention—be careful about what zines you print and where you store them.