

RAGE AGAINST VIDEO SURVEILLANCE

(2020-2021)





Bogotá, May 5th, 2021

Translated from French by an anarchist comrade
for *Act For Freedom Now!*

Zanzara athée, July 2021

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Anticopyright.

Rage against video surveillance (2020-2021)

«The first cameras were installed in Marseille, not so long ago, maybe ten years now, a bit more, fifteen. Well, back then, people would climb, tear them down , break them (...). I can imagine it must have been the same in Nice, with the first cameras... There were anti-camera groups, but there are so many cameras nowadays that they gave up.»

Someone from Human Rights League of Nice, in Olivier Lamour's documentary *Fliquez-vous les uns les autres*, 2020.

For some time now, actions against mobile antennas have been multiplying, in France and elsewhere¹. Beautiful acts of sabotage that mark a diffuse, diverse and determined refusal of communication and control technologies, notably against the deployment of 5G that accompanies the techno-capitalist

[1] For example, read the brochure «Burning the Centers of the technological virus», published in 2020, available in English at actforfree.noblogs.org.

steamroller that never ceases to crush all that is still wild and free in this world... So everywhere, people organize themselves in an attempt to live differently and to attack this world of generalized submission, sabotaging by many means, from the most basics to the most imaginative.

Video surveillance, like all control technologies, by becoming widespread and invading the streets of large cities as well as those of villages, is becoming increasingly commonplace and is forcing the social acceptance which is actively sought by the proponents of social control marketing. However, it continues to inspire acts of resistance² and sabotage. As long as there are forms of police control over our lives, whether widespread or not, there will be people trying to prevent them from doing harm. There are many reasons for getting rid of state control and capitalist domination, the aim here is not to elaborate and argue them, but to show that there are acts of sabotage and self defense that deserve to be known, and to receive solidarity and complicity. Because there are still people who prefer a free world to a world of security by a hundred fold .

[2] Several websites try to list the technological advances in terms of video surveillance, sometimes mapping the presence of cameras across the city. A text called «We're being watched: poke their eyes out» was published on iaa-ta.info in March 2020, and is available in English at act-forfree.noblogs.org. The website affiches.blackblogs.org provides PDFs of several posters against CCTV (in French).

Below are some examples of direct actions against CCTV cameras, mostly in France but not exclusively³, over a period of about a year⁴, to give some inspiration, and also to make clear the fact that not everyone has given up – far from it⁵.

Zanzara athée, June 2021

[3] All this is of course far from exhaustive, most of the actions remain totally unknown to the general public, the media and to us. To find these concrete examples of actions against CCTV, several sources were used: the websites sansnom.noblogs.org, attaque.noblogs.org, sansattendre.noblogs.org, depassement.tumblr.com, la-rueourien.tumblr.com, dijoncter.info, mars-infos.org, paris-luttes.info, Twitter (#CamOver) and various sites of the French-speaking mainstream press.

[4] From April 2020 to the end of May 2021, a period like any other, was simply the time when the editing of this little publication ended.

[5] People interested in (mostly self-filmed) videos of CCTV sabotage actions, sometimes known as «camover», can contact zanzara@squat.net to receive them via internet or usb key.



Hong Kong, June 2019



Ermont, May 11th, 2020

Chronologie (April 2020 – May 2021)

15-16 APRIL 2020, LES MUREAUX (PARIS SUBURB, FRANCE)

At around 11pm on April 15th, a police van intervened in the Vignes-Blanches neighbourhood, where individuals had thrown fireworks at CCTV cameras. The vehicle was surrounded by several people who kicked the vehicle. The police threw six stun grenades and left the scene. Later, at around 12:45 am, while questioning a man on rue Louis-Blériot for a repeat offence of failing to comply with a containment order, the police were hit with potatoes and onions thrown from the floors of a building.

21 APRIL 2020, GENNEVILLIERS (PARIS SUBURB, FRANCE)

In the Luth neighbourhood, while clashes with the police are taking place, an individual climbs to the top of a CCTV mast and smashes the cameras attached to it.

21-22 APRIL 2020, SENS (FRANCE)

During the night, in the Champs Plaisants district, several dozen people destroyed or damaged more than ten CCTV cameras (set on fire or covered in paint) and burnt rubbish bins. The police were targeted when they intervened to restore «order».

21-22 APRIL 2020, ERMONT (PARIS SUBURB, FRANCE)

During the night of 21-22 April, the cameras of the CSU (urban supervision centre of the Val Parisis district) were targeted. Individuals armed with a grinder, hooded in black and with gloved hands, attacked a pylon bearing a camera, in René-Utrillo Street, just opposite the Les Chênes shopping centre. The camera is, of course, put out of action.

23 APRIL 2020, TOURCOING (FRANCE)

In the Pont-Rompu district, a video surveillance mast was broken by a burning vehicle.

23 APRIL 2020, PORTLAND (USA)

Early in the morning, surveillance cameras, luxury cars and ATMs were attacked and sabotaged.

29-30 APRIL 2020, ROMANS-SUR-ISÈRE (FRANCE)

At around 1.30 am, a Fiat Punto, stolen earlier in the evening, hit and broke the mast of a CCTV camera at a roundabout on Avenue du Maquis. When the police arrive, the car is set on fire and the policemen are pelted with stones.

APRIL-MAY 2020, PARIS SUBURBS (FRANCE)

At the beginning of April, in Wissous, internet cables were sabotaged. The same happened on the night of 9 to 10 April in Massy. In Argenteuil, in the Champioux district, at the beginning of May, all the cables were cut. On 5 May, it was in Ivry-sur-Seine and Vitry-sur-Seine that the cables were cut with a grinder. An article published in *Le Parisien* on 3 May 2020 states that *«among the reasons that would push individuals to commit such acts, there would be the desire to put the city's cameras out of service»*.

10-11 MAY 2020, ERMONT (PARIS SUBURB, FRANCE)

Three CSU camera masts were sawn down with a hacksaw on the night of 10 to 11 May, in the Chênes district. *«That's six in a fortnight, that's starting to be a lot»*, said a city official in an article in *Le Parisien*.

LATE MAY 2020, MINNEAPOLIS (USA)

During the riotous demonstrations following the murder of George Floyd by US police officers, several CCTV cameras are sabotaged. A CCTV mast was even attacked with a chainsaw (not sure if it was really effective, but it looks good at demonstrations...).

MAY-JUNE 2020, CHOLET (FRANCE)

Cameras installed in the halls of buildings on rue Lieutenant-Colonel-de-Malleray, in the Favreau-Les Mauges neighbourhood, were destroyed on 29 May and again on 4 June. On 18 June, a 16-year-old boy was arrested by the police and reportedly confessed to the acts, without however revealing the identity of those who had accompanied him.

2-3 JUNE 2020, MONTBÉLIARD (FRANCE)

During the night, in the Petite Hollande district, individuals dressed in black and wearing balaclavas managed to climb poles and rip off the globes of the surveillance cameras, which were well protected.

7 JUNE 2020, MONTBÉLIARD (FRANCE)

Around forty young people destroyed three surveillance cameras in the Rue Debussy, installed on poles and placed in several locations. A vehicle is set on fire in the car park of the rent company Néolia and a bus shelter is broken. The confrontations turned into a riot. The Montbéliard police had to call in reinforcements from Besançon (and the gendarmes of the PSIG). The next day, tags «for Adama and for George Floyd» are visible on the walls of the Petite Hollande neighbourhood.

8 JUNE 2020, MEXICO DF (MEXICO)

During an anti-police demonstration, CCTV cameras were destroyed or obstructed.

11 JUNE 2020, PHILADELPHIA (USA)

From a press release: «On June 11, International Day of Solidarity with Anarchist Prisoners, as a small gesture against control and imprisonment, the cables of nine CCTV cameras were cut.»



Mexico DF, June 8th, 2020

12 JUNE 2020, WUPPERTAL (GERMANY)

The four tyres of a Bosch vehicle are punctured and its white bodywork is splattered with black paint. A press release states: «We did not choose Bosch at random. The company had a stand at this year's European Police Congress [in Berlin] and also acts as a security company around the world. In London, for example, the company operates facial recognition cameras to monitor people at the London Bridge station. But also in Vietnam, where Bosch offers

its 24-hour protection services at the consulate general, "the German House", with a video analysis system. China's largest airport, the streets of Ohio, the parks of Mantua in Italy or the Praski harbour in Warsaw... Bosch is everywhere with its cameras and proud of it (boschsecurity.com). We don't want to be monitored anywhere in the world. In any case, they only serve to satisfy and protect the powerful. Here too, the increase in surveillance to smart cities is not only a disgusting intrusion into our private lives but also an important part of the expanding gentrification. Those who get in the way or do not fit in with the norms can be sorted out more easily. For the powers that be, it is enough to send in the uniformed lackeys who blindly comply.»

21 JULY 2020, VÉNISSIEUX (LYON SUBURB, FRANCE)

At around 11:50pm, on Boulevard Lénine, a city surveillance camera was damaged by a group of young people. On 18 August, a 14-year-old boy was arrested by the police for these acts. He declared in police custody that he had acted «for fun».

1 AUGUST 2020, BRON (LYON SUBURB, FRANCE)

During the night of 31 July to 1 August, a dozen individuals sawed down two CCTV camera masts in Place Jean-Moulin.

20 AUGUST 2020, PORTLAND (USA)

During one of the many anti-racist and anti-police demonstrations, the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) building was tagged, its windows smashed and two cameras blinded by construction cones attached to them. Clashes with police ensued.

5 SEPTEMBER 2020, CHOLET (FRANCE)

In the Jean-Monnet car park, avenue de l'Europe, a car is set on fire at the foot of a mast overhung by a video surveillance camera, to put it out of action. When the police arrived on the scene,



Portland, August 20th, 2020

around twenty young people greeted them with projectiles.

21 SEPTEMBER 2020, ROUBAIX (FRANCE)

On the Quai du Sartel, the mast of a CCTV camera was set on fire and then sawed off.

21-22 SEPTEMBER 2020, MINSK (BELARUS)

In the night, anarchists from the «*Neighbourhoods without Cops*» initiative tore down three surveillance cameras that were above the entrance doors of apartment buildings (at 6 and 86 Soltysa Street).

13 NOVEMBER 2020, PONTIANAK (INDONESIA)

Anarchists claim to have sabotaged several CCTV cameras: «*We refuse to be passive in the midst of the control and takeover of our living space by the state, the government and the police. (...) Let's fight the technology of control! Fight the prisons and for the release of all prisoners! Long live anarchy, long live insurrection!*»

18 NOVEMBER 2020, QUIMPER (FRANCE)

Two individuals aged 15 and 18 sawed down two

CCTV camera masts in the Kermoysan area. The cameras are destroyed as they should be, but the two individuals are arrested by the police as they leave the scene.

22 NOVEMBER 2020, MONTBÉLIARD (FRANCE)

In the Petite Hollande district, five masts of recently installed surveillance cameras are destroyed with a «Dumper», a construction machine «borrowed» from nearby. This was set on fire shortly afterwards. According to *L'Est Républicain*, the district «has once again fallen into total anarchy». What joy!

28 NOVEMBER 2020, PARIS (FRANCE)

During the demonstration against the «Global Security» law, video surveillance cameras are set on fire, from their connections inside the poles where they are fixed.

1-2 DECEMBER 2020, CHAMBÉRY (FRANCE)

During the night, supermarket trolleys filled with fabric were set on fire underneath CCTV cameras: one near the front of the Biollay social and entertainment centre, on which a camera is fixed, the other underneath a CCTV mast.

8 DECEMBER 2020, COMPIÈGNE (FRANCE)

At around 9pm, an individual fired a rifle at the video surveillance cameras installed in Place Baudelaire, in the Clos-des-Roses neighbourhood. At least one of them was destroyed, located on a building just above the food market. The camera was connected to the inter-municipal urban supervision centre and had only been installed a month ago, when the neighbourhood went from two to five cameras... In April 2019, two cameras in the same neighbourhood were destroyed with a thermal grinder.

18 DECEMBER 2020, MARSEILLE (FRANCE)

On the initiative of the «Marseille Révoltée» collective, several dozen cameras in the city centre are sabotaged, destroyed or covered with paint.

MID-DECEMBER 2020, PORTLAND (USA)

Dozens of «Amazon Ring» and «Google Nest» surveillance cameras are removed and destroyed during nightly walks in residential areas of the city. A statement explains: *«The increasing presence of these doorbell cameras are a dangerous expansion of corporate spying and the panoptic surveillance state.*

The two reinforce each other, with Ring partnering with over 1,000 police departments to provide footage in bulk to law enforcement without warrants or oversight (...). Removing these cameras is an easy and direct way to attack the reach of corporate and state surveillance, helping to keep folks safe from steadily rising techno-authoritarianism. Their destruction is simultaneously an attack on the corporate monsters of Google and Amazon, some of the companies most active in profiting off of the modern dystopian hell that they created and continue to create. Such an action is quick, easy, immediately effective and rewarding (...). Doorbell cameras are easily removed with a small crowbar or pry-bar, or with a claw hammer, as long as the claw end is thin/tapered enough to fit between the camera and the wall it's attached too (...). Fuck Google, fuck Amazon, fuck the panopticon, and fuck the police! Good luck and have fun!»

20 DECEMBER 2020, TOULOUSE (FRANCE)

At around 7pm, two men, aged 17 and 19, armed with a thermal circular grinder, sawed down the mast of a video-protection camera, on chemin de Lestang, in the Reynerie district. The arrival of the Mirail BST police officers unfortunately put an end to their good work. Two days before, in the Empalot district, the same scenario had occurred.

16 JANUARY 2021, NANTES (FRANCE)

During a demonstration against the Global Security Law, a masked individual climbed a mast supporting a camera from the Urban Supervision Centre (CSU) in Pont-Morand Square in the city centre. The camera was damaged with a punch. On the way down, he was stopped by the BAC, who tried to handcuff him. The individual managed to flee, helped in particular by around twenty demonstrators who attacked the police and threw projectiles at them. A 26-year-old man was then arrested on 16 February 2021 and is due to go on trial on 17 November 2021.

21-22 JANUARY 2021, REIMS (FRANCE)

In the Wilson district, two CCTV cameras are destroyed overnight, targeted by pellet gunfire. In 2017, two cameras were vandalised in the Orgeval district. That time, people climbed the masts four metres high to break the cameras.

23-24 JANUARY 2021, SOISSONS (FRANCE)

The mast on top of which a CCTV camera was perched was knocked down in the Presles district. The police officers who went to the site were

greeted by around thirty people who threw projectiles at them.

25 JANUARY 2021, PLAISIR (PARIS SUBURB, FRANCE)

In the afternoon, employees of a company installing 'video protection' cameras were attacked in the Valibout neighbourhood. They received projectiles and mortar fireworks from a group of around ten individuals. The arrival of the police put the anti-camera rebels to flight.

25 JANUARY 2021, ROTTERDAM (NETHERLANDS)

During an evening of protest against the health curfew, at least one CCTV mast was knocked down by a crowd of people.

24 FEBRUARY 2021, SAINT-GRATIEN (PARIS SUBURB, FRANCE)

At around 5.15pm, in Rue des Raguenets, people set up a ladder to reach the camera on top of a pole and beat on it to try to break it. But the police arrived, putting a stop to the beautiful project. In the night that followed, at around 1:15am, the pole was attacked with a disc saw and completely sawn down.

25 FEBRUARY 2021, VÉNISSIEUX (LYON SUBURB, FRANCE)

In the Minguettes district, at 12 avenue Maurice-Thorez, a camera located on the 12th floor of a building was set on fire. According to an article in *Le Progrès*, «the inhabitants are still wondering how the arsonists managed to reach this urban equipment.»

25 FEBRUARY 2021, MELUN (PARIS SUBURB, FRANCE)

As riots broke out in the city in the early evening, at around 9:50pm individuals attacked a pole on which a surveillance camera was fixed. According



Bagnolet, March 16th, 2021

to an article in Le Parisien: *«It was damaged, which cut off the connection with other cameras. The police intervened again, in particular those of the anti-crime brigade. On the spot, they saw individuals setting up barricades on rue Joachim-du-Bellay using household waste containers. At the sight of the officials, the people ran away.»*

28 FEBRUARY 2021, FRÉJUS (FRANCE)

During a third day of confrontations that week between the police and residents of the Gabelle district, several video surveillance camera masts are set on fire.

FEBRUARY-MARCH 2021, ALÈS (FRANCE)

In three weeks, three «*video-protection*» cameras of the city of Alès are destroyed with a gun, in the Cévennes and Près-Saint-Jean districts.

MARCH 2021, BAGNOLET & MONTREUIL (PARIS SUBURBS, FRANCE)

Dozens of posters against video surveillance are stuck on the walls and under the cameras.



Marseille, March 21st, 2021

21 MARCH 2021, MARSEILLE (FRANCE)

During the carnival, the internal connections of at least one CCTV mast were set on fire, putting the cameras attached to it out of action.

22-23 MARCH 2021, PONTOISE (PARIS SUBURB, FRANCE)

At around 3:15am, individuals cut the pole supporting a camera at the corner of rue Fontaine and rue Rodin in the Cordeliers district.

24 MARCH 2021, HERBLAY-SUR-SEINE (PARIS SUBURB, FRANCE)

In the evening, a burning car was pushed at a CCTV mast, causing it to fall, with the camera being destroyed in the fire. Two days before, two individuals ran from the police after trying to saw down another CCTV mast.

28 MARCH 2021, RILLIEUX-LA-PAPE (LYON SUBURB, FRANCE)

While riots were taking place in the Allagniers neighbourhood, the mast of a video surveillance camera was damaged with a disc cutter.

27 MARCH-7 APRIL 2021, LIMOGES (FRANCE)

Nine cameras were destroyed in the Beaubreuil district, and several others in the Fabre d'Églantine alley, notably by gunfire. In September 2020, bullet holes had already been found in a camera located on a six-metre high lamppost. In an article

published on the *France Bleu* website, Cyril Sarlin, the director of security, prevention and health at the city of Limoges, said: «*Last year, we had nine cameras destroyed in this district*».

11-12 APRIL 2021, TOULOUSE (FRANCE)

In the Empalot district, at around 1:45 a.m., the mast of a video surveillance camera is sawn down with a thermal cutter. The police were pelted with stones when they arrived on the scene.

15-16 APRIL 2021, CANTELEU (FRANCE)

At 3:20am, three young men, perched on a construction platform, destroyed a CCTV camera located high up on a building on Avenue de Versailles. Unfortunately, they were arrested by the BAC in the process.

17-18 APRIL 2021, SAINT-ÉTIENNE (FRANCE)

During the night of 17 to 18 April, around thirty people occupied the central square: rubbish bins were set on fire at the foot of a CCTV mast and an electrical cabinet was damaged. The neighbourhood was plunged into darkness.

20-21 APRIL 2021, PLAISIR (PARIS SUBURB, FRANCE)

During the night of 20-21 April, after blocking the surrounding roads with rubbish bins, about twenty individuals with concealed faces cut down the masts of four cameras surrounding the Valibout neighbourhood with a circular saw. When they arrived on the scene, the police were greeted by fireworks. Three weeks earlier, still in the Valibout neighbourhood, individuals had destroyed two other cameras using the same procedure.

28 APRIL 2021, CALI (COLOMBIA)

During the general strike at the end of April/beginning of May, rioters attacked the poles on which the cameras were fixed. Six to eight people, using ropes, grabbed the cameras and smashed them to the ground before kicking and stoning them. Another person climbed up a pole to smash the cameras with a stick.

28 APRIL 2021, MEDELLÍN (COLOMBIA)

During the general strike, demonstrators knocked down several CCTV masts, and set some of them on fire.



Medellín, April 28th, 2021

APRIL-MAY 2021, FRÉJUS (FRANCE)

According to an article published on the *France Info* website, a magistrate has stated that the video surveillance cameras in the Gabelle district have been systematically destroyed for several weeks.

1 MAY 2021, PARIS (FRANCE)

During the main May Day demonstration (inter-union etc.), several CCTV cameras were sabotaged with paint from the “cortège de tête” (combative front of the demonstration).

2 MAY 2021, REIMS (FRANCE)

At the corner of Boulevard Wilson and Place Mozart, a hooded individual is seen sawing down the video surveillance mast, probably with a thermal disc cutter. *«This happens from time to time when these people have an urgent need to remove a camera»*, said Xavier Albertini, deputy mayor in charge of security, in the newspaper *L'Union*.

5 MAY 2021, BOGOTÁ (COLOMBIA)

During the general strike, fearless demonstrators climb up traffic poles and rip out CCTV cameras.

6 MAY 2021, CANNES (FRANCE)

Several rubbish bins were set on fire on the Avenue des Buissons-ardents, police vehicles were pelted with stones and a CCTV camera was damaged.

EARLY MAY 2021, JERUSALEM (PALESTINE-ISRAEL)

In the Silwan neighbourhood, two individuals used a disc cutter to knock down a pole on which several CCTV cameras were mounted.

9 MAY 2021, SANTIAGO (CHILE)

During a day of action against state surveillance, two panoptic cameras were brought down in the working-class neighbourhoods of Villa Francia and Simón Bolívar.

23 MAY 2021, SAINT-DENIS (PARIS SUBURB, FRANCE)

Nathalie Voralek, deputy mayor of Saint-Denis in charge of security and public safety, found her car with a smashed windscreen. This is not the first act of vandalism, as the deputy has already found her car with flat tyres. A stubbornness which, according to her, owes nothing to chance. Quoted in an article in *Actu-Ile-de-France*, she said: *«It's clearly my capacity as an elected official in charge of security that is being targeted. The implementation of extended working hours, the dog squad, the armament, the fact that the municipal police are starting to intervene in the housing estates had already resulted in damage to my vehicle»*. This new damage comes just two days after the inauguration of the city's new Urban Supervision Centre (CSU) and its 93 cameras. The new CSU is part of the development of video surveillance in Saint-Denis, with the aim of having 400 cameras by the 2024 Olympic Games...

29-30 MAY 2021, CHARLEVILLE-MÉZIÈRES (FRANCE)

During the weekend, in the Manchester and Ronde Couture neighbourhoods, rubbish containers and vehicles were set on fire. Four of the seven cameras in the Manchester neighbourhood were destroyed. In La Ronde Couture, the score was two out of nine. For these six destroyed cameras, the financial damage for the municipality would amount to nearly 150,000 euros. The LR mayor of Charleville-Mézières, Boris Ravignon, told France 3: *«There is nothing classic about this, it is a scandal. Hooded teams cut out four devices in broad daylight with grinders, successively, from the main cameras in the area. This is a challenge to republican law. The message is: we don't want you to know what's going on any more.»*



Charleville-Mézières, May 31st, 2021

Other pamphlets availables in English at zanzara@squat.net:

- *There is no communism in Russia*, by Emma Goldman (USA, 1934, 20 pages)
- *The Transformation of silence into language and action*, by Audre Lorde (Chicago, USA, 1977, 12 pages)
- *The changing face of «race»*, by Colette Guillaumin (France, 1981, 16 pages)
- *To Squat is... to struggle*, by Molotov & Confetti (Paris, France, 1984, 8 pages)
- *The Spectacle-commodity football*, by A Rebellious Footballer (Grenoble, France, 2004, 8 pages)
- *The CPE, a drop in a lake of rage. Comments on violence, illegality and the direction of social struggles*, by Les enragé-e-s ouvrent le bal (Grenoble, France, 2006, 12 pages)
- *A Jobless stroll*, by anonymous (Marseille, France, 2017, 12 pages)
- *Black vests, Yellow raincoats. Interviews with anarchists concerning the Yellow vests movement*, by anonymous, Enkapuzado and Zanzara athée (France, 2019, 28 pages)

(If you can help with translations, in any language,
please send a message to zanzara@squat.net!)

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ZANZARA ATHEE