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SHOULD WE BE IN OR OUT?

Ten new countries have joined the EU, and Tony Blair has agreed to call a referendum on a proposed EU constitution.

Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia joined on the 1st May, possibly to be followed by Croatia, Romania, Bulgaria and Turkey in 2007.

EU documents also mention a desire to expand further, taking in every eastern European state (including Russia), parts of North Africa and the Middle East. These plans are tentatively envisaged to happen within the next twenty to thirty years.

It is thought that the influx for this year will make the 'old' EU states £6 billion, with £15 billion being made by the newcomers.

The new constitution meanwhile is being pushed hard by Blair as a good thing (he has ordered his party to vote for it), despite an approval rating of just 42% in recent polls, the second lowest in the EU.

Both of these issues have been hyped as history-making because they affect the EU 'bloc', that half-mythical beast that hangs over all our lives. But what is the European Union all about? Is it a positive or a negative thing?

What it does

The remit of the EU is massive. First envisaged by Hermann Goering as the European Economic Community and ratified in the 1951 Treaty of Paris, its laws and agreements cover trade, environment, employment, foreign policy, immigration, border control, drugs and terrorism to name but a few.

Upon its founding the EU accepted the Human Rights Act, which nominally guarantees various rights for all EU citizens (such as the right to privacy).

In much the same way as the American constitution, the HRA was written with altruistic notions, which has allowed some victories for groups such as prisoners, who can take human rights cases to the EU court with some hope of success even if the UK system lets them down.

However, this altruism did not spill over into the EU's economic laws and policies in quite the same way. Although measures such as the Maximum Working Week have had a positive impact on many people's lives, others clearly favour big business over people.

Recent measures include:

- A ruling by the European court of Justice in March that corporations can change their official addresses within the EU for free. This is likely to mean that big companies paying 30% corporate tax in Britain can move for free to Estonia which hasn't got a tax at all. It will also mean that corporations will much more easily be able to shut up shop in Britain and relocate to countries where workers receive lower wages.
- Setting up 'Europol', an armed body of police who are 'immune' from the law. Files on undesirables are kept and can contain up to 56 different types of information on each suspect.
- A series of measures allowing police to read confidential emails without permission.

How it's run

The EU is split into several sections. One is the European Parliament, where MEPs voted in by the public check and vote on new treaties and measures. Second is the European Commission, a group of MEP-appointed bureaucrats who draft the laws which are to be discussed. Third is the Council of Ministers, the main decision-making body, headed by a



Thousands march on the EU Summit in Dublin – see centre pages for details

president who is rotated every six months and run by a selection of unelected ministers from each state. Fourth is the Central European Bank, an institution holding most of the member state's gold reserves, who handle and apportion the vast quantities of money. They are also unelected.

Trust

In effect three of the most powerful bodies in the EU are unelected, but according to many the parliament is just as bad. The population of Europe currently stands at 450 million people across 25 states. European elections are the most under-attended in Britain, meriting a mere 18% turnout.

These are the bodies we are currently

reliant on for much of our law and economic policy making. They are not based in the UK, they aren't elected by the UK. Even for non-anarchists it must seem a bit far-fetched that it is designed to help us.

The only non parliamentary groups able to wield power in Brussels and exert pressure are big businesses and accepted institutions, and they are talking to a series of political bodies with even less reason than most to care about local issues.

It is partly as a result of this that economic policies such as the notorious Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) continues to go from strength to strength, despite the estimated cost to consumers of an extra £1,000 per

person every year.

The various bodies are so badly policed that fraud now takes between \$4-6 billion a year from the EU's coffers, money taken originally from our taxes (we pay on average £450 per person to the EU). Rather than deal with the problem, a vote last week absolved European Commissioners of all responsibility for departmental failures by a vote of 515 to 88 in the European Parliament.

The referendum, when it happens, looks likely to be fought on the issue of trust – whether we, the public, feel we can trust the EU leadership to run our lives from offices across the channel. Given the evidence, Freedom would argue no.

JUST A FEW BAD APPLES ...

Last year, when Bush prematurely declared mission accomplished, he stated that "Saddam's torture chambers are closed." Yet just as the occupiers took over Saddam's palaces, they also took his prisons. The torture chambers have been reopened, under new management.

Anyone in the US government who says that they are 'shocked' by the treatment of prisoners are either ignorant or lying. That includes Bush, who admitted he first learned of the torture claims in early January. Yet

nothing was mentioned nor done until the evidence could not be ignored. We only know about Abu Ghraib because the soldiers were stupid enough to take photographs as mementos.

The former US officer responsible for the jail stated that the cell blocks where the abuses took place were under the control of military intelligence when the prisoners were subjected to beating, rape, sexually humiliation and torture. She said that the MPs were given separate instructions by US intelligence officers "on what they needed to do"

and stated the Military Intelligence Brigade commander told her "the MPs are doing a great job in there. They're getting more information."

Even the 'Taguba Report', the official Army investigation of torture at Abu Ghraib prison indicates this. While the report is a whitewash, intending to show that a few bad apples, all on their own, decided to torture Iraqi prisoners, the links are there to be seen. It finds that "contrary to the provision of AR 190-8, and the findings found in MG Ryder's Report, Military Intelligence

and Other US Government Agency's interrogators actively requested that MP guards set physical and mental conditions for favourable interrogation of witnesses." It quotes Specialist Sabrina Harman of the 372nd MP Company stating "Military Intelligence wanted to get them to talk. It is [their] job to do things for MI and [CIA] and to get these people to talk." Sergeant Javal Davis notes that "in Wing 1A we were told that they had different rules and different SOP for treatment." Why things were different in Wing 1A? "The rest of the

wings are regular prisoners and 1A/B are Military Intelligence holds ... The wing belongs to MI and it appeared MI personnel approved of the abuse."

So was the abuse really was just an isolated case of a few bad eggs, or whether it is indicative of a systematic use of psychological and physical torture by US and British forces to extract "intelligence" to further the military, and therefore economic domination of Iraq? We'll leave you to make up your own minds.

How can people torture? See editorial, page 8

Home and away

FREEDOM

Volume 65 Number 09

Anarchism

Anarchists work towards a society of mutual aid and voluntary co-operation. We reject all government and economic repression.

Freedom Press is an independent anarchist publisher. Besides this newspaper, which comes out every two weeks, we produce books on all aspects of anarchist theory and practice.

In our building in Whitechapel we run Britain's biggest anarchist bookshop and host a social centre and meeting space, the Autonomy Club. We're currently developing open-access IT provision for activists to use.

Our aim is to explain anarchism more widely and to show that human freedom can only thrive when the institutions of state and capital have been abolished. Freedom's editors wish to present a broad range of anarchist thought, and as such the views expressed in the paper are those of the individual contributors and not necessarily those of the editorial collective.

Apologies

The Freedom newspaper group would like to apologise to all our subscribers for the tardiness of the last issue. This was due to problems in communication which should now be rectified. Thanks for bearing with us.

Helping Out

Sincere thanks to all those who have sent donations recently, they couldn't have come at a better time and every little helps! Of course donations, payable to Freedom Press at the address below are still much appreciated, as this paper is made at a loss and so has to be subsidised by book sales and your gifts.

New submissions are also always welcome for inclusion in Freedom. In particular we would like news pieces of under 500 words – stories about ordinary people using direct action to improve their lives in particular. Also feature articles with an in-depth look at a particular subject, event or person of around 1,700 words are needed. We try to put anything not used in the paper on www.enrager.net/newswire

Please send submissions to us at our Copy email or to our postal address below.

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Next issue

Contributions are wanted for future Freedoms. The next issue will be dated 15th May 2004 and the last day for getting copy to us will be Thursday 6th May. See contact details above for where to send your letters/articles.

If you are interested in writing regularly for Freedom we want to hear from you!

News from the inside

Anti-fascist jailed

'Slick' is an anti-fascist who took part in the October 1993 demonstration against the British National Party offices in Welling. The police aggressively defended the BNP, and fighting broke out between anti-fascists and cops. As a result of his involvement in the 'riot' Slick was sentenced to five years imprisonment, but he disappeared before he could be jailed. Eleven years later and Slick was arrested during a noisy argument. Once arrested the cops worked out who he was and he has now started his five year sentence. Letters of support should be addressed to C. Varkki, JR9335, HMP Elmlea, Church Rd, Eastchurch, Shearness, Kent, ME12 4AY.

End of the Marini trial

In Italy last month, the third and final degree of the Marini trial ended by confirming the sentences of the accused anarchists. Besides those already in prison, Angela Maria (Marina) Lo Vecchio, Alfredo Bonanno, Orlando Campo, and Carlo Tesseri have now been arrested and are in various jails across Italy.

The trial has gone on for years, and was part of an attempted frame-up by prosecutor Marini. The anarchists were

accused of belonging to a fictional armed anarchist organisation, but almost all were acquitted of 'subversive association', and thirteen were sentenced for 'common crimes'.

The sentences are as follows: Angela Maria (Marina) Lo Vecchio, 15 years; Alfredo Bonanno, 6 years; Orlando Campo, 10 years; Carlo Tesseri, 3 years and 9 months.

Alfredo Bonanno is imprisoned in Trieste. Angela Maria Lo Vecchio and Orlando Campo are in the Rebibbia prison in Rome. Carlo Tesseri is in the Dozza jail in Bologna.

Rose Ann Scrocco and Gregorian Garagin were both condemned to 30 years in prison, and Francesco Porcu was given a life sentence and eighteen months of daily isolation. Fortunately, Rose is still a fugitive.

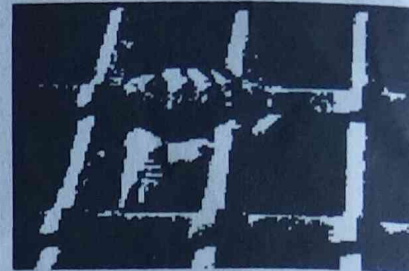
Write to Angela at Angela Maria (Marina) Lo Vecchio, Via Bartolo Longo, 92, 00156 Rome, Italy

West Papua Solidarity

Please take some time over this week to send cards or letters to some of the many West Papuans imprisoned for struggling for their freedom against Indonesia and the multinational corporations invading their forests. Also you can phone the

prisons directly and tell the guards not to mistreat the prisoners.

Unfortunately a number of events have caused quite a lot of the people to be sentenced over the last six months. Firstly, seven people have been accused of involvement in the arms raid on the Wamena armoury in April 2003. Two have received life sentences and the other five are serving twenty years each! They are all being held in Wamena prison. On 5th October 2003 the Indonesian army attacked some OPM members in Yalengga village shooting nine dead, five others from this village have now ended up in Wamena prison. Also in October 16 members of the Presidium Council were arrested accused of inciting violence in the 'bloody Wamena' incident in 2000. They had all previously been arrested on this charge, served part of a sentence and had been released but the new administration have rounded them up again stating they have to complete their sentences. All sixteen have now been moved to Abepura prison. Around the 1st December 2003 yet more people were arrested in connection with flag raising ceremonies. And finally in the run up to the 5th April elections which saw a wide spread boycott across Papua



a few people were shot and others beaten being accused of campaigning for the boycott. Three of the attacked are being held under conditions of arrest in the Wamena hospital.

Sadly we cannot list all the prisoners we've been informed of because of space limitations. Detailed and more recent prisoner lists can be found at www.westpapua.net/cases/hr/prisoner

Mexican bandits

A short-staffed prison in Mexico has hired 42 of its most fearsome inmates to act as guards. The convicts-turned-wardens will each be paid between £20 and £100 a month. They will help the real guards keep control in the overcrowded prison at Tepic.

According to Mexican newspaper Reforma, the prisoners chosen were those who instilled the most fear in their fellow inmates.

LISTINGS

Brighton

18th May Public meeting against water fluoridation, with invited medical and Human Rights speakers, at Hanover Centre, Southover Street, from 1.30pm to 4.30pm.

East Anglia

12th June Norwich's first annual anarchist bookfair – call 07941 657485 norwichanarchists@hotmail.com <http://twotins.tripod.com/>

Faslane

7th to 13th June Faslane Peace Camp Birthday Week. Faslane has been resisting the UK's nuclear WMD for 22 years! During the week there will be workshops and actions, and on Saturday we're having a birthday party with sound systems and punk bands. Faslane Peace Camp, Shandon, Helensburgh, Scotland. 01436 820 901 faslanepeacecamp@hotmail.com www.faslanepeacecamp.org.uk

Glasgow

27th May Glasgow Freedom Readers Group meeting – more details from glasgowfr@hotmail.com

London

15th May Memorial/benefit gig for Chris Groner – who sadly passed away in March. With PAIN and other 'ChrisG' bands @ Chats Palace, 42-44 Brooksbys Walk, London E9. For info <http://www.chris-groner.com/>

15th May The wall must fall – Palestine Solidarity Campaign, speeches at Trafalgar Square 1.30 pm www.palestinesolidaritycampaign.org/

17th May Resist the eviction! Bailiffs are due at the Ex-Grand Banks occupied social centre, 156-158 Fortress Road, NW5 (Tufnel Park

tube). Café and other fun from 10am.

Call 07956 975490 for more info

18th May Give George Bush Sr the reception he deserves! from 4.30 to 6.30pm, Landmark Hotel, 222 Marylebone Road, NW1, see www.stopwar.org.uk/

19th May The 2004 Royal Institute of Philosophy Annual Lecture will be given by Professor Noam Chomsky and is called, 'Simple Truths, Hard Choices: Some Thoughts on Terror, Justice and Self-defence'. At 5.30 pm in Logan Hall, The Institute of Education, 20 Bedford Way, WC1. Free.

21st May Can Anarchism and Marxism be reconciled? Free and open debate led by Terry Liddle and Steve Ash, London Anarchist Forum, Conway Hall, Holborn, at 8pm. antines@yahoo.co.uk

28th May London Critical Mass bike ride starts 6pm from Southbank at Waterloo in front of the NFT under Waterloo Bridge cmlondon.enrager.net/

29th May Benefit gig for North and East London sabs and Haringey Solidarity Group, at Chats Palace, 49 Brooksbys Walk, Homerton, E9, tickets £5, www.londonpunks.co.uk/

29th May Haringey Critical Mass Bike Ride 2004 for clean air and safe streets. From 11am at the Manor House Tube, finishing at Chestnuts Park Festival at 12.30. Supported by Haringey Solidarity Group 0208 374 5027. www.criticalmasslondon.org.uk/

4th June Break/Beat the Wall, fundraising party against the Apartheid Wall in Palestine, with DJ and MC sets from GM Baby, Underground Alliance, Double Negative, The Unpeople and more. from 8pm till 3am at Sahara Nights, Kings Cross, Pentonville Road, N1, £5 (solidarity entrance fee £8) 0207 700 6192 www.stophthewall.org

5th June Re-arranged Cannabis March

and Festival, carnival style march from Kennington Park (assemble 12 noon) with floats, banners, costumes and samba beats leading to an all day free festival in Brockwell Park, Brixton www.thecannabisfestival.co.uk/ Every Wednesday the LARC Library from 1pm at 62 Fieldgate Street, E1.

Manchester

15th May Northern Anarchist Network spring meeting at Bridge 5 Mill, Beswick Street, Manchester from 10am to 5pm For more info call 01422 842558

5th June Manchester Radical Bookfair 11am until 5pm at Bridge 5 Mill, 22A Beswick Street, Ancoats, Manchester. The bookfair covers anarchism, peace, direct action and social change. There will be books, stalls, ideas, discussions and workshops. Note that the fair aims to promote and celebrate grassroots, non hierarchical, DIY activism and is not a platform for party politics! info@radicalbookfair.org.uk www.radicalbookfair.org.uk/

Nationwide groups

Anarchist Federation
Box 2, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX
www.afed.org.uk

Antifa
Box 36, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX
www.antifa.org.uk

Class War Federation
PO Box 467, London E8 3QX
www.classwaruk.org

Earth First!
www.earthfirst.org.uk

Industrial Workers of the World
PO Box 74, Brighton, BN1 4ZQ
www.iww.org.uk

Solidarity Federation
PO Box 469, Preston PR1 8FX

www.solfed.org.uk

For details of smaller and local groups see www.enrager.net/britain

Social Centres

Autonomous Centre of Edinburgh (ACE)
17 West Montgomery Place, Edinburgh
www.autonomous.org.uk

The Cowley Club
12 London Road, Brighton BN1 4JA
www.cowleyclub.org.uk

Freedom
84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1

Kebele
14 Robertson Road, Easton, Bristol BS5 6JY
www.kebele.org

Lancaster Resource Centre (LaRC)
The Basement, 78a Penny Street, Lancaster
www.eco-action.org/lancaster

London Action Resource Centre (LARC)
62 Fieldgate Street, London E1
www.londonlarc.org

Occupied Social Centre
159 Fortress Road, London NW5
www.wombles.org.uk

Printworks Social Centre
58 Albion Street, Glasgow
www.glasgow-autonomy.org

SUMAC Centre
245 Gladstone Street, Nottingham NG7 6HX
www.veggies.org.uk/rainbow/

Use Your Loaf
227 Deptford High Street, London SE8
www.squat.freerise.co.uk/

useyourloaf.html

1in12 Club
21-23 Albion Street, Bradford, West Yorkshire, BD1 2LY
www.1in12.com

56a Infoshop
56 Crampton Street, London SE17
www.safetycat.org/56a

Beeching rural railways ... again

Last week GNER recommended scrapping vast swathes of Britain's remaining rural train network, Rob Ray discovers

Speaking at a rail industry forum James Sherwood, president of the group which owns GNER, said regional railways could be cut because they weren't as cost efficient as urban rail links.

Sherwood, whose rail company made \$84.1 million dollars last year (up 22% on 2002 thanks largely to increased passenger volumes), believes that regional lines are ruining the industry. He said that "the railways could probably be profitable if you could get rid of a lot of the services. We have to get commuters and long-distance travellers to their destinations on time. But to hell with freight and regional railways which are running around virtually empty."

The outburst, greeted with scorn by unions and rail monitoring groups, follows several less high-profile attempts to marginalise rural rail. Last year the Strategic Rail Authority put forward proposals to slash the maintenance budget for rural networks by up to 50% - leading to delays and missed services - so they could redirect the funds to intercity rail. According to SRA chairman and CEO Richard Bowker this gives "The best bang for the buck".

The SRA is currently trying to privatise South Eastern Trains - the

only nationalised lines in Britain and successor to the notorious Connex - despite a nine per cent improvement in punctuality since renationalisation. This is in direct conflict with the verdict of the government's own rail review, which found in favour of renationalising services.

According to *The Times*, 400 stations across Britain would be candidates for Sherwood's 'to hell with them' policy as they carry fewer than 25 passengers a day. However, these statistics fail to reflect the disproportionate benefits to communities that stations bring, according to a report by the Association of Community Rail Partnerships (ACORP): "Many people use these rural lines because they have simply no alternative - the car-less, socially excluded inhabitants of small communities which may not have any other public transport. In this sense, the service is similar to that of a bus, providing fairly short journeys to the market town."

Subsidies on the most rural lines can reach £1.60 per passenger, as opposed to costing nothing on major trunk routes. This extra cost per head to the government is cited as a main reason for scrapping less used stations. A spokesman for transport union RMT, interviewed for *Freedom*, disagreed however that this extra cost is unnecessary: "We believe that the railway system should be expanded not chopped to pieces. It is a service and it serves rural communities in such a way that it requires higher subsidies."

One argument against closing the minor railways is their 'tributary' function for other more major routes. The spokesman explained that "it has a knock on effect. You're cutting off your own nose to spite your face. If you cut down your rural routes you're cutting down on the number of people who have access to other rural routes. If the private sector thinks that the best way to solve this is to shut them down, obviously companies working for profit are not the best people to do this job."



A vision of the future - an abandoned railway line

The problem is not just confined to railways. Gemma Sayers takes a train from Southwold to Ipswich every day, yet the closure of the bus route which takes her to the station could leave her with no choice but to drive - or not travel at all.

She said, "people like me who use the thing every day and have no alternative need public transport. Surely we should work on the principle of providing transport to the entire community? I hate public transport, we can't rely on the trains as it is so is it any wonder so many people avoid using them?"

ACORP agrees with this sentiment in its report, saying "Britain's rural railways have long been run as an

afterthought by both BR and many of today's train operators. Most rural lines have timetables which are hopelessly unattractive, with three or four-hour intervals between trains often inconveniently timed, (with) dismal unstaffed stations, and uncomfortable, cramped trains."

There is ample evidence that rural railways could work if properly run. In Germany for example railways are run on a local basis, in areas covering around 50km each. Often they are owned and operated by local councils. While standards are nominally set on a national basis, these are flexible and local councils have a great deal of autonomy.

The level of local knowledge, coupled with the need for innovative methods to find funding, has created a high quality rural network, according to Mick Stone of Swanage railway. In a report to ACORP he said, "what most struck me was how very rural some parts of Germany are, and how remarkable therefore that such good train services are still provided, and are still being invested in."

Local management of lines, and preferably of buses, could help make them both more enticing to travellers and more cost efficient. German and French rural lines are thought to be up to 40% cheaper to run than similar British ones.

- ▶ Cars pump out four times as much Carbon Dioxide per passenger than trains.
- ▶ Trains unlike cars do not pollute at all in carbon monoxide, lead or volatile organics.
- ▶ Over 400 miles or less, using a European train is faster than flying.
- ▶ Trains use seventeen times less fuel than planes.
- ▶ Road users killed in 2002: 3,431
- ▶ Rail users killed in 2002: 7

In brief

No IDea
As we predicted (*Freedom*, 1st May) the trial of the government's identity card scheme has been delayed for several months due to basic technical problems. Equipment used to carry out fingerprint and iris scans was found to be unreliable and the data it generated inaccurate.

Glasgow Social Centre
The Glasgow Autonomous Project have finally managed to open a social centre. The building will be temporarily available,

until a more permanent location is found. Why not pop in, see what's going on or if you can, offer to help out.

Northern Radical Library
The famous 1in12 anarchist-run social centre in Bradford, Yorkshire, this month re-opened its new and improved library. It now includes two main book collections: The Albert Meltzer and The Reuben Goldberg Collections. Contact library@1in12.com
For details of these and other social centres in Britain, see our Listings, page 2

Victory in HE dispute

Academic and related members of staff in the AUT have voted to accept the university employers' improved pay offer in an postal ballot by 84.5% to 15.5% (52% voted).

Earlier this year AUT members had voted overwhelmingly to take action. After two days of strike action as well as action short of a strike (a boycott of assessments), the employers were forced back to the negotiating table after dismissing the AUT. The direct action and solidarity of AUT members (and, unofficially, of members of other unions

who refused to cross picket lines) ensured the union got significant gains. A Memorandum of Understanding was agreed which removes threatened losses of career earnings, safeguards the present pay and grading link between academic and related staff and provides a national agreement. It should produce significant additional pay increases for those at the lower end of the pay scales - but only if implemented properly. This is the next struggle.

While not perfect, this is a victory. It shows that industrial action works and

can get significant gains. The precise details will be worked out by each institution separately. Which means that this is not the end of it. Local negotiations to be started and, importantly, these will involve all the unions in the sector (only the AUT opposed the new pay framework). This should increase our power, assuming the unions work together. This is a good time for anarchists to stress the importance of organising by industry (one boss, one union) and for rank and file action and control.

Richard Griffin

North America



Canada

The biggest ever Mayday in Quebec saw some 100,000 take to the streets of Montreal. Around five hundred anarchists formed a bloc and led a 'wildcat' march of a thousand people on a shortcut to the park which was the final destination of the demonstration after waiting for nearly three hours being unable to move. Revolutionary graffiti was sprayed up along the route and on police vehicles.

After the anarchist bloc arrived in the park and the trade unionists were arriving en masse, riot police charged in. It is unclear exactly why they did this, but they ended up getting themselves surrounded, and angering the tens of thousands of demonstrators who were still trying to enter the park to join their friends and comrades. They started being attacked on all sides by anarchists and socialists until union stewards positioned

themselves between the two factions and the police withdrew, leaving everyone to continue having a nice day.

United States

Over 2,000 immigrant workers demanding their rights took to the streets of LA, while elsewhere in the country people reclaimed streets and held marches, rallies and pickets. The Mayday tradition in the US largely died out when the anti-communist Labor Day was brought in as a replacement, but anarchists have been doing their best to revive International Workers Day.

Some of the other cities which saw demonstrations were New York City, Tallahassee, Atlanta, San Francisco (see picture, above), Milwaukee, Tucson, Louisville, Ozark Mountains, Columbia, Denver, Boston, Portland, Brattleboro, Olympia, Seattle and Minneapolis.

Britain and Ireland

Ireland

As EU ministers and bureaucrats dined in luxury in Farmleigh House, Dublin to celebrate the entry of ten new countries into the Union, thousands of people were laying siege to the place (see picture, right). Any dissent was met by a city-wide clampdown, which saw buildings and houses raided, activists arrested and harassed, and the 'Bring the Noise' demonstration on the banquet banned from its original gathering point. The mainstream media had been spreading ridiculous scare stories for months, including headlines about "15,000 hate-filled Wombles" going to smash up the town, and anarchists planning Sarin gas attacks.

With just 24 hours' notice, the Dublin Grassroots Network (DGN - a non-hierarchical umbrella group) arranged a new meeting point at the GPO on O'Connell Street, at which almost 5,000 people assembled. A contrast to the smaller 'another Europe is possible' march earlier in the day, minus the trade unions who decided to cancel their annual mayday march and move it to Belfast!

The march set-off on a several kilometre trek across the city towards Ashton Road to within one mile of Farmleigh House. The DGN organised march stopped 100m from police lines due their assurances that their march was a peaceful march and would not involve any confrontation with the Garda. An anarchist confrontational bloc which had made its intentions clear before the demo was then allowed to move to the front and form a bloc of around 150 anarchists. People linked up behind a banner which read 'Resist the Europe of Capital' and slowly moved towards the three deep line of Garda shouting "solidarity!". After an initial push, the lines of police started to split and an order was overhead from high ranking cops to fall back. At this point upwards of 200 riot police with tower shields confronted the and was followed up by a water-cannon loaned from the ex-RUC.

What followed was not a rout but an ordered retreat, despite many people receiving serious injuries including broken arms and legs, and skull injuries. There were also 28 arrests - mainly of people who trusted the police enough to sit down in front of them. During the previous days there



was also a Critical Mass bike ride attracting some 700 cyclists (Ireland's biggest critical mass), No Borders street theatre and a Reclaim the Streets party of 1,000 on the Monday.

www.struggle.ws/eufortress

Northern Ireland

In Belfast, in spite of the fine weather, attendance at the annual May Day march was down on previous years. The new anarchist organisation Organise! Was present under a banner dedicated to the memory of the Haymarket martyrs, members of the Communities Against the Water Tax also attended.

England

Besides being a day of recognising the continuing struggle between capitalism and the working class, Mayday has always been about having fun and sticking two fingers up at authority. This year in that spirit Lancashire Solidarity Federation and Lancaster Anarchist Group decided to reclaim it and put on the Lancashire Reclaim Mayday Roadshow.

The first event of the weekend kicked off with a Friday night gig in Preston. Next day being the 1st May, various events took place. A wreath was laid in Preston at the memorial of the strikers of 1842 who were shot by the militia. This has been done for the past three years by Lancashire SolFed to mark the continuation of the struggle for freedom and justice. The usual Mayday stalls that used to be organised by the Radical Preston Alliance were nowhere to be seen, since RESPECT managed to put everybody off by doubling the cost of a stall, and failing to

invite lots of groups.

In Lancaster the annual Trades Council Mayday march took place. A fascist BNP member turned up demanding to take part and take photos. However an anarchist soon turned up and he was rapidly ejected. There was then a picnic and evening event with music, films and anarchist bellydancing! The Roadshow ended on Sunday in Burnley with another gig. It was a relaxing Mayday in London this year, as 1,000 people - mostly Turkish Stalinists and Maoists - marched on the TUC demonstration, and around 150 anarchists attended the anti-capitalist picnic, cricket and football matches in St James' Park.

There was a Mad Picnic for a Mad World, with a samba band, in Piccadilly Gardens, Manchester, where free popcorn was distributed wrapped in leaflets about the proposed sell-off of the gardens.

Freedom also received news of a march in Nottingham of two hundred people, a slightly drizzly event Bristol, which was attended by activists of the newly-formed Bristol Anarchist Network, among others and other actions around the country.

Scotland

The annual Mayday march and rally in Edinburgh was attended by about five hundred people, including Stop the War activists, anarchists, striking Nursery Nurses and others. Various people spoke at the rally, which ended with a quotation from the Edinburgh born socialist James Connolly: "Our demands most moderate be, we only want the Earth!"

South America

Colombia

Demonstrations in Cali, Medellin, Barranquilla, Cartagena, Barrancabermeja and Bogota. Bogota saw 50 city blocks taken up by demonstrators converge on the city centre. Police attacked the demonstrators with water cannons and riot police later in the afternoon. A general strike has been called for May 18th by all trade unions in support of oil workers on strike.

Uruguay

Demonstrations occurred at the Plaza Primero de Mayo (First of May Plaza). The mainstream trade union PIT-CNT had speeches disrupted by the audience impatient with their collaboration with government and representatives of the United States.

Ecuador

Ten thousand marched on Quito, including anarchists, trade unions and indigenous groups.

Mexico

Demonstrations occurred all over the country. Mayday celebrations in Monterrey were disrupted by police brutality.

Argentina

Demonstrations called in La Plata, Salta, and Buenos Aires. Anarchists held separate demonstrations in support of campaigns for 'dignified labour' and self-management.

Chile

Marches were organised all over Chile, including this large anarchist demonstration (see picture below).

Europe

Germany

In Berlin (see picture, right) the annual ritual, thousands of anarchists and others fought running battles with fascists, who also march on 1st May, and their police guards. The autonomists succeeded in blocking the demonstration of the Nazi NPD with burning barricades, and tried to get through to them throwing rocks and bottles. Fifty eight cops were injured, and there were 166 arrests, of whom over twenty are still imprisoned as we go to press. More sedate demonstrations

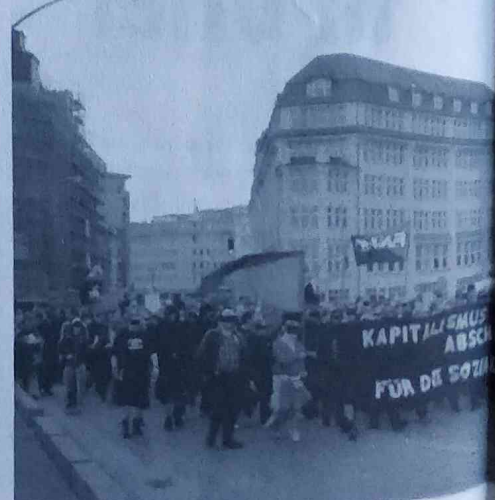
occurred in other major cities around the country.

Spain

Mayday celebrations occurred nationwide, with the participation of the anarcho-syndicalist unions the CNT and CGT. 15,000 people marched in Barcelona.

Italy

Hundreds of thousands demonstrated across the country, with up to 100,000 reclaiming the streets with soundsystems in Milan alone.



MAYDAY 04

Eastern Europe

Russia

Mayday in Russia has been successfully hijacked by the huge Stalinist parties of the old USSR. But this year anarchist-organised events – mostly by the federation Autonomous Action – though still small were attended by record numbers (see picture, right). In Yaroslavl a small demonstration was completely surrounded by police. The anarchists linked arms together but were eventually all separated and arrested. After solidarity demonstrations they were all released. All the demonstrators in Kaliningrad were also violently arrested and had their papers confiscated by police. St Petersburg saw the largest anarchist bloc of 150 people, which received a lot of mainstream press coverage and in Moscow around 80 anarchists took part in an illegal demonstration, which was small but given the difficult political climate was still a success for the Muscovites.

The anarchist bloc in Murmansk carried a sound-system with red and black flags, and attempted to remove the neo-fascist National Bolshevik Party from the demonstration.

In Kazan several nazis were hanging around the march, but after a short educational debate they retreated.

Anarchists also marched in Novosibirsk, Omsk, Rostov-na-Donu, Perm, Tomsk and Nizhni

Novgorod, where a police vehicle collided with the crowd injuring several - one very seriously. www.avtonom.org www.iaf-ifa.org

Czech Republic

Two hundred anarchists gathered under the slogan 'For an anarchist world, against capitalist Europe!' on a demonstration organised by the Czechoslovak Anarchist Federation in Prague. Anarchists marched under black and red flags through the city centre with a noisy samba band and shouting slogans.

They were surrounded by almost 3,500 police with watercannon, horses and armoured vehicles. The

day was relatively quiet except for an ant-fascist attack on a roaming band of neonazis and an incident where a police van collided with a line of riot cops!

Latvia

In Riga while the rich and government bureaucrats were drinking champagne forty anarchists joined a Critical Mass bike ride, which left the meeting point rapidly to avoid a repeat of last year's Mayday – which saw all the participants nicked within fifteen minutes. They cycled around the city with a green and black flag distributing leaflets about the history of International Workers' Day.



Asia



Sri Lanka

Three separate marches began in Valaichenai, Batticaloa town and Kaluwanchikudy and converged on the Kaluthavalai grounds for the May Day rally.

Philippines

Workers and activists celebrated with a march and rally of several thousand in Manila.

South Korea

Around 20,000 workers, mostly members of the militant Korean Confederation of Trade Unions, gathered at a downtown Seoul park, demanding the government retract its promise to send more than 3,000 soldiers to Iraq.

India

Over ten trade unions marched in the capital New Delhi against privatisation and rising unemployment.

Indonesia

Demonstrations across the country took place, mostly organised by trade unions which have only become legal since the collapse of US-backed dictator General Suharto in 1998. Thousands marched and motor-cycled in Jakarta, demanding workers' rights, free education and an end to privatisation and militarism (see picture above).

China

20,000 workers and labour activists marched in Bangkok;

Japan

Over 50,000 people participated in Mayday events. In Osaka anarchists helped organise events with the city's homeless, and set up soup kitchens and an overnight camp in a public park. Anarchists in Kyoto held a graffiti competition.

Middle East

Israel and Palestine

Anarchists from Anarchists Against the Wall, the Maavak Ehad collective and others attended the annual Mayday demonstration in Tel Aviv with red and black flags. Upon arrival stewards and members of the Labour Party's Zionist youth wing – Hanoar Haoved Vehalomed – and other Communist parties attacked them and requested police to keep them away. Only the intervention of an ex-MP and a lawyer eventually secured their entry to the march. Hanoar Haoved Vehalomed members also again tried to beat anarchists and destroy cameras when they responded to the singing of Zionist songs with choruses of the Internationale and

'Zionism is racism!'

Workers also marched in Nazareth, Nablus and Abu-Dis

Iran

Workers demonstrated in Tehran on 30th April to demand better conditions.

Turkey

Mayday was celebrated all over Turkey, with anarchist blocs in Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir, Antalya, Malatya and Diyarbakir. Most of the attendees seemed to be young people and students rather than the established trade unions. Some demonstrations were banned, and there were small clashes with police and some arrests.

Australia

Melbourne

Anarchists organised a picnic at the 8-hour-day Memorial, and attended two marches with a thousand others. There was also a Critical Mass bike and Reclaim the Streets party.

Sydney

A May 1st Reclaim the Streets party in Erskineville was attacked by police, and the following day the

traditional Sunday Mayday rally attracted 1,000 people.

Brisbane

15,000 trade unionists attended the Labour day Public Holiday rally and festival on Monday.

Wollongong, Adelaide, Christchurch, Dunedin, Wellington and Perth also had Sunday marches.

Feature

Crime and punishment

An experiment in putting 'more Bobbies on the beat' in a Yorkshire village was abandoned early because of unexpected results. The intention of the research project was to increase villagers' sense of security through a visible police presence.

The Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust financed the three-year project, and working in partnership with North Yorkshire police, paid £25,000 a year for an extra 24 hours a week policing at New Earswick, near York.

However, although recorded crime fell by 5% in the first year of the project, it almost doubled in the second year. And the researchers concluded that the additional policing and security measures may have actually heightened levels of anxiety and hardened lines of difference among local people.

Professor Adam Crawford, co-author of the report, said that "one of the key lessons to be learned from this well-intentioned attempt to make residents feel more secure is that trying to tackle local order problems through policing and security alone can have the opposite effect." It isn't just ineffective according to Professor Crawford; it can actually have the opposite effect of making people feel less secure.

And, in a strange echo of writers like Goldman and Kropotkin, the researchers found that providing policing or security solutions to local order problems might be to overlook more fundamental social issues underlying these difficulties.

Emma Goldman wrote, in *Prisons: a Social Crime and Failure*, "there is hardly an advanced criminologist who will not concede that the social and economic influences are the most relentless, the most poisonous germs of crime. Granted even that there are innate criminal tendencies, it is none the less true that these tendencies find rich nutrition in our social environment."

An increased police presence, the New Earswick researchers seem to agree, in addition to being counterproductive, does nothing to address those real issues.

And neither does prison. According to former prison governor Professor

David Wilson, now a criminologist, the UK has the highest prison population in Europe as well as the highest mandatory minimum sentences, but still has one of the worst crime rates. If prison and severity of sentencing are deterrents, why are they not working? To address that, we have to look at who is sent to prison, and why.

According to the Prison Reform Trust, over two in three prisoners are unemployed at the time of imprisonment, which is around thirteen times the national unemployment rate. Furthermore, one-third of prisoners was not in permanent accommodation before being imprisoned, and around one in twenty prisoners was sleeping rough before being sent to prison.

Black people are two-and-a-half times more likely to go to jail than are white people on similar charges. Analysis found that the Crown Prosecution Service was more likely to oppose bail for male African Caribbeans (CPS objected to bail in 13.2% of cases), compared with white men (CPS objected to bail in 9% of cases). Furthermore, black youths are five or six times more likely to be stopped and searched. They get longer prison sentences, and make up 12% of the male and 18% of the female prison population, far in excess of their share of the population as a whole.

Research done by the Scottish Forum for Community Justice has found similar results for women in Scotland. Remand rates, already high in Scotland, show that women are more likely to be remanded than men are. And the rate of increase shows a marked change in remand patterns: remand for young women, 16 to 20 years of age, increased by 2% last year but by 38% over the last five and ten years. Remand of young men increased also by 2% last year but reduced by 10% in five years and 4% over ten years. So, although there is a small continuing increase in remand overall, women are being remanded more and more often. Direct sentencing of women in Scotland – i.e. not fine default – was up 16% from last year, 21% from five years ago and 16% from ten years ago. This follows the same pattern as remand, being double the rate of increase for males.

But most interesting was the relationship between direct sentence and remand in custody. The proportion of remands not resulting in prison sentences is 20% for males in Scotland, but for females was 47%. In other words, women are more likely to be remanded for offences that do not merit custody on sentence. Are 'out of control' women seen as more threatening than men charged with these minor offences?

All this shows what we probably suspected; the justice system discriminates against certain groups. It does so not because it is imperfect, not because it needs to be reformed, and not because of the (undoubted) presence of racists and misogynists within its institutions. It does so because that is its intention.

There is no mistake; the disproportionate custody rates are no



Overcrowded, brutal and ineffective – Britain's prison system

meaningless accident. It makes no sense to say that the fact that these groups are consistently imprisoned at a higher rate is statistically insignificant. These people are imprisoned because the purpose of the criminal justice system is to sweep them up.

Prison is there to protect the wealthy from the working class, the unemployed, and the homeless, black people, 'out of control' women, and people experiencing mental ill health. In short, from the groups most disadvantaged and dispossessed by contemporary capitalism. The facts are there; tinkering liberals must no longer sweep this under the carpet. The system isn't broken; it's working only too well.

If it is not by chance that these are the people society sees as criminals, neither is it an accident that the crime society punishes is mostly property based. This society often values property more highly than human life. Listen to reports of accidents involving loss of life; it is not unusual for the value of any damaged or destroyed property to feature at least as prominently as the death toll. Society takes the dimmest view of transgressions against its most sacred cows, so it should be no surprise that more than 90% of punished crime is property based.

Since Thatcher told us that there is no such thing as society, only individuals, and set about so fracturing society that this came to be true, reported crime has risen dramatically. This ought not to be a surprise. If we are to function as individuals interacting only through business transactions – seeking only to buy at the lowest prices we can use our influence to achieve and sell at the highest prices we can use our influence to achieve – then it is hardly surprising that the outcome is an increase in anti-social behaviour. Remember the slogan 'greed is good'? What was the expected outcome of such a philosophy?

The first casualty of such a philosophy is solidarity; the basic empathy and

appreciation we have of the needs of others; respect for others' freedom. It might be objected that not all of those disadvantaged by this selfish society turn to crime. True, but then that does not mean it isn't the cause when people do. Not all of those who smoke get lung cancer, but smoking is the cause when people do.

Of course not all crime is property based. There are acts of violence: rape, murder, and assault. These, too, come about when the freedom of others is not respected. A fractured society devoid of solidarity is one in which a lack of respect for individual autonomy will flourish. If there is a power differential, then both those who wield that power and those upon whom it is wielded are damaged.

If there is sexism, then women will be abused, both by society and by individuals. Where the wishes of women are deemed less important, then acts of coercion are seen as natural. At the extremes, pathological abuse is merely a logical extension of society's hierarchies. Rape has long been seen as more about power than about sex. And this is not the only example. A society that rears people to see the use of power over others as natural will breed anti social behaviour. Where there is inequality, solidarity will be damaged or destroyed.

That is not to remove individual responsibility. Just because the conditions are there for anti-social behaviour to flourish does not excuse the individual's actions. However, were the conditions not there in the first place, the issue need not arise.

The question is, however, how we repair human solidarity. Putting more 'Bobbies on the beat' only increases fear and social division, tougher sentencing hasn't cut crime, and neither has putting more people in prison, so we need to look to the roots of the problem.

There are aspects of restorative

justice that ought to interest anarchists. Restorative justice is a body of ideas opposed to retributive justice; instead of revenge, it seeks healing. Both these ideas exist within the current system, but the idea of restorative justice is only partially developed, and in that undeveloped state is applied mostly to white collar crime, which sees less severity of sentencing, whereas blue collar crime gets the full weight of retributive justice.

However, were restorative justice to be more fully developed, the power to respond to crime would be returned to the community. The community then helps those involved reach a response. And all those affected by the crime take part in the process.

The idea is that crime is a matter for the community; that the individual responsible is given the opportunity to reform (unlike prisons, which are, in Kropotkin's famous phrase, 'universities of crime'); and that healing for the victim, for community relationships, and for human solidarity is what is sought.

We don't live in an anarchist society, but we can either bemoan that fact or we can start to show how anarchist values might be put into practice. Communities can start to repair human solidarity. Parents can bring up children in a libertarian way. Of course, without huge economic and social change, this will only have limited effect. But anything that gives power and hope back to communities has to be worth exploring.

It is true that within the restorative justice dialogue there is much to be wary of. There is the possibility that the middle classes will appropriate it as a way of getting the working class to 'repay' them once more. But this is why the ideas must be explored more fully by anarchism, and the work to repair human solidarity returned to the hands of the community.

Steve McKee

Quiz answers

1. Trotskyism. The Balham Group, led by Father Stewart Purkis, were active in the CP in the thirties. Trotsky was worried how this would look so instructed spare South African Trotskyists to come to London. They founded the RCP, from whom all the later 57 Varieties spring.
2. Fidel Castro.
3. He dispersed the Constituent Assembly in January 1918. He also was a sailor in the Kronstadt fleet and was outlawed by the Bolsheviks for protesting about the return of Tsarist officers. He was killed fighting Denikin in 1919.
4. Skinheads Against Racial Prejudice – it was formed by skins pissed off at nazi bands and who wanted to reassert the roots of their movement in ska and reggae.

While witnesses affirmed that the instructions to torture came from Military Intelligence and the CIA, the US Army Taguba Report places the blame firmly on the lowest levels. Of course following orders is no defence, yet the report makes no attempt to follow the responsibility up the chain of command. Yet the horrors in Iraq are not due to 'a few bad apples' or even 'human nature'. They are the product of hierarchy. The occupying forces are ruling the Iraqis and trying to crush resistance to that rule. They are in a position of power over them. How the state treats people flows from that social relationship. In the military, the hierarchy is extreme. The chain of command is clear and soldiers are expected to follow orders. They are trained to follow orders and kill and, by necessity, dehumanised to achieve it. The enemy is demonised to appear less than human. Why expect soldiers to not follow their training and the rigors of dictatorial authority?

Nor is it human nature. It is the social relations people are placed within which shape their actions and thoughts. As proven by the classic psychological experiments of the '50s, people put in a position of total power over others will abuse their charges. Prison guards mistreat inmates for one simple reason: they can. Wherever one controls another, abuse is inevitable. However, there is more to it than that. The guards were told to abuse their prisoners and the chain of command absolved them of responsibility (as Milgram's famous experiments prove).

Thus we have the product of imperial interests, racism, reasons of state and hierarchy being exposed for the world to see. Unsurprisingly, the institutional pressures which produced the tortures are being downplayed yet we cannot understand what happened without these institutions and how they shape the individuals subject to them. Nor can we understand why it happened unless we know the long grim history of torture by the US state and its training of its client states to do likewise. If we so that then we would question the way we organise society and draw libertarian conclusions.

In the short term, we can only demand the end of the occupation. Bush said that whatever had happened, US forces would remain in Iraq: "We want to help Iraq. We made a commitment," he said. "The United States will keep that commitment, because we believe in freedom and we believe the people of Iraq want to be free." Yes the Iraqi people do want to be free. They wanted to be free when the US was supporting Saddam. They now want to be free of imperialist occupation. They want real sovereignty not the bogus 'transfer' of June 30th. If the US really wanted to help Iraqis, it would leave them to build their own society as they wished.

Going Mad

Donald's rejoinder on GM in the 1st May issue, doesn't actually move things along at all.

Whereas it is perfectly true to say that it is incompatible with anarchism (as strictly defined) for anarchists to demand that governments ban GM products, it is equally true that it is incompatible with anarchism for anarchists to demand that governments allow GM products.

The same goes for his comments on GM generally. There is nothing in anarchism (strictly defined) that is either for or against GM in principle.

From which we can conclude that as anarchists our arguments on GM must therefore take place using other criteria.

Richard Alexander

Donald Rooum states that we have ignored two key things. Firstly, that asking the state to ban a non-harmful product is anti-anarchist and, secondly, that not all anarchists are anti-GM. As far as the latter goes, I'm not sure who said that was the case?

As for the former claim, he conveniently ignores my argument that we simply do not know whether it is the case or will remain so if unleashed into the environment. Looking at the one crop which the government said was safe, Donald ignores the fact that the tests cannot be used as evidence of GM's safety simply because they used a pesticide which is soon to be banned. He also failed to note that the company who produced the GMO said it would only plant it if it could ignore the rules used in the testing process.

In summary, Donald says that one GM crop is safe to plant based on a flawed test; the constraints of which that produced the results would not be applied in practice. This does not sound like good science to me.

At least Donald kept to the issue at hand. That cannot be said of Peter Gibson. Indeed, the more I read his letters the more I think he is having an argument with himself and no one else. While happy to insult others and attribute to them opinions they obviously do not have, he seems incapable of addressing their actual arguments. Hopefully he will forsake the insults and inventions and the address the issues at hand.

Finally, there is Tony's diatribe against Stuart Christie and "fucking middle class" people who can afford to buy books at £35 a pop. Firstly, why the venom? A short, simple letter wondering why the book was so expensive would have sufficed. Secondly, I'm not middle class and many working class people can afford £35 for a book. Thirdly, has Tony not heard of public libraries? Fourthly, and most importantly, I did explain why the book was so expensive; perhaps Tony was too busy getting angry to notice?

Iain McKay



Where to now?

Clearly the anarchist movement is growing as we speak, if not for the consistent mentions anarchists get in anti-capitalist writings, and for the need for anarchism to be disproved rather limp-wristedly by the likes of Monbiot in their writing.

What this discussion might entail was discussion of propaganda, presentation, direct action, functioning of groups, etc. Promoting anarchism is a tricky subject compared to other politics - we aren't simply after a vote. I think it's also worth giving some thought to things like: anarchist canvassing (how would that work?!), social centres, bookfairs, anarchist community work - addressing concerns over vandalism, gangs etc. with libertarian strategies, share the experiences of those producing local anarchist freesheets and newspapers, sharing successful and useful ideas that groups and individuals have used. Also instances where an activity done by a group had an effect, i.e. doing a fairly regular swap shop on the uni campus got people interested in what we're doing and what we believe.

Other questions include tactical national campaigns - where anarchist views are very much more akin to the mainstream, like possibly Defy-ID, as opposed to something like the CAPS, which, worthy as it is, is not going to 'win over hearts and minds', for the large proportion of the population that believe that people locked up get what they deserve (from my own experience of CAPS demos, even though the fact that Tony Wilkinson is a fat cat is very popular). While these issues are still important, and this is not a call to stop doing things, it's a matter of trying to direct our limited time and resources to the things that we think will help build the anarchist movement most effectively.

Richard Alison

A sideways look

One of the big benefits from having days off around major Christian holidays is that I get to catch up on the pile of books, magazines and papers that have occupied the area by the side of my bed. One of the things I got to read was the brilliant exposé of the Private Finance Initiative done by Private Eye. While I may have some reservations about its source (mainly SWP hack Paul Foot) collecting this much information together in an easy-to-digest format is essential. The government and their big business mates want PFI to seem over-complicated, for once people understand that the short-term decisions made mean higher bills and taxes in the future, the whole rotten shambles becomes harder to sell.

Among the many other things I read was an article from Do Or Die #10, called 'Down with Empire: Up with Spring', which was basically a potted history of radical ecological resistance in Britain. Not coming from this milieu, I found it informative and inspiring. Particularly useful was the fact that mistakes were analysed and not glossed over and that issues were addressed strategically. And how what may have been a defeat on a single cause (Manchester Airport, Newbury) led to victories for many others (cancellation of the road building programme).

One explicit point was made in relation to this process, where animal liberationists had initiated a domino effect against facilities breeding animals for vivisection. They started with Consort, who bred dogs, moving on to Hillgrove, who bred cats and Shamrock Farm who did vile things to monkeys. By the time the cycle reached Regal (rabbit breeders) the owners capitulated at the mere announcement of a campaign. The cycle was stopped at Huntingdon Life Sciences because the state saw the dangers to a key part of the British bio-tech industry and stepped in to back it. I'm not an animal liberationist, but I'm prepared to learn from anybody.

For those of us who care about such things, PFI is a golden excuse to privatise the NHS, sell off school playing fields to build obesity clinics, demolish existing homes to build fewer and smaller at higher rent, that sort of thing. It's been aptly described as paying off your mortgage using a credit card with the added bonus that the building society keeps your home.

While there are a lot more companies involved in it than vivisection (or road building - though it is possible to be involved in both), it's still a relative few. Many have Labour appointees on the board, or have seconded key staff into Whitehall. But they are vulnerable in

the same way that those other companies were. Their offices can be occupied, their machinery defied, their reputations tarnished. Although some PFI companies don't need any help to do all this, step forward Jarvis (whose chair, Steve Norris, is Tory candidate for Mayor of London. If elected he would be in charge of the disastrous Public Private Partnership, whereby consortia of firms, including Jarvis, get to sabotage the Tube).

Some might suggest that this is reformist, tackling the symptoms not the cause. Well, it is, but two other things apply. First, we need the victories against a system that seeks to bring the market into every area of life. And second, despite the popular myths peddled by, er ... capitalists, they are risk averse. Once the costs associated with the honest profits these upstanding citizens are making are made clear - they'll go elsewhere.

Svartfrosk

Words we use

PROPERTY

When my teachers taught me about communism, my imagination wandered deep off into the woods. I thought, "how the hell are all those Russian people going to fit in our house? It's hard enough just me and my Mum in this little flat. Yeah, equality is good an' all but I don't want to be sleeping with some grizzly borsch-smelling old man."

But of course anarchism is not opposed to small-scale individual property. When anarchists say 'property is theft', we do not mean that you will have to collectivise your flat, your car or your underpants. We mean no person or group should own our means of life. The land which feeds us and the factories and offices we work in should be owned and controlled by all of us, who work there and use the products. No one should be able to decide whether others live or die, or scratch about in poverty, simply by virtue of their wealth.

Ron Jay

The quiz

1. What British political movement started from a South London group led by an anglo-catholic priest?
2. Who said: "We would never come to believe that a homosexual could embody the conditions and requirements of conduct that could enable us to consider him a true revolutionary, a true Communist militant"?
3. What important role did the anarchist Anatoli Zhelezniakov play in the Russian revolution?
4. What is S.H.A.R.P.?

Answers on page 6

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