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INDIGNADOS: THE ANGRY ONES

From Arab Spring to Spanish Summer

The 'Spanish revolution' that began in the famous Puerta del Sol square in Madrid on 15th May quickly spread across Europe as squares and public spaces were taken over and occupied in Greece, Italy and the UK in support of the Spanish peoples' uprising against the corrupt political system and mass unemployment. What started as a simple protest camp in Madrid's main public square following a demonstration ahead of the local elections soon escalated into a full scale movement after police violently evicted the protestors. In response hundreds and thousands came out to reoccupy the square and force the police to back down, and have remained in the square ever since.

Similar assemblies sprang up in towns and cities across the country including Barcelona and Valencia and were soon followed by mass gatherings in other European countries. In the UK hundreds of people joined in solidarity assemblies in Nottingham, Brighton, Bristol, Manchester and Edinburgh.

Calling itself Democracia Real Ya! (Real Democracy Now), the Spanish movement, which was originally organised via social media for a one-off demonstration on 15th page 3 ►►

LENS CAP BEAR NECESSITY



Environmental group Greenpeace brought out their activist bear Paula to kick off the first day of what they say will be a "summer of protest" against Edinburgh based oil firm Cairn Energy. Activists, including the arctic polar bear, gathered outside Cairn's headquarters, blocking the entrance to their offices in the financial district of the city in protest at the firms deep sea drilling work.

Courtesy of Greenpeace

TOMLINSON KILLER TO FACE TRIAL

PC Simon Harwood, who was found guilty of unlawful killing by a jury at the inquest into the death of Ian Tomlinson, will face criminal proceedings for his actions. Keir Starmer, Director of Public Prosecutions has fined that the riot officer will face charges over the death of the newspaper vendor during the G20 protests at the Bank of England in London in 2009.

In a statement issued by Starmer, who had previously refused to bring charges against the officer claiming discrepancies in medical evidence, said "there is now sufficient evidence to provide a realistic prospect of successfully prosecuting PC Simon Harwood for the manslaughter of Mr Tomlinson. That being the case, it is clearly in the public interest that criminal proceedings be brought." The reality is the

evidence presented to the inquest was exactly the same evidence Starmer had on his desk.

At Tomlinson's inquest the jury were unanimous in their findings that he was killed unlawfully at the hands of Harwood, who was caught on camera striking Tomlinson with his baton before charging into him, sending him crashing to the ground. Tomlinson later died from his injuries received from the fall. The jury went on to conclude that the force used by Harwood was not justified.

The family responded to the news by saying "We welcome today's decision to bring a charge of manslaughter against the officer. We believe this is the right decision. What we have always wanted is to achieve justice for Ian and to show that police officers are not above the law"

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NEWS

NEWS IN BRIEF

FOOTBALL: Swindon Town football team have appointed a fascist sympathiser as their new manager. Paolo Di Canio was part of the notoriously far right 'Irriducibili' Lazio hooligan firm and would often give them the fascist salute on the field when he became a player at the club. He explained the gesture as: "I am a fascist not a racist." He has also expressed his admiration for Mussolini.

The Italian player has spent time at several UK clubs during his career. Already GMB union has dropped its sponsorship deal with the club over the appointment.

MINING: A Welsh family was offered just 22p in compensation after the death of a miner from years of breathing in deadly coal dust. What made this pay out all the more insulting was the £1,885 paid to solicitors handling the claim.

Some 750,000 miners have been compensated over the agonising effects of coal dust inhalation, but according to official figures 69% of those paid compensation got less than the average cost of administering the claims. The government was forced to introduce the scheme by the High Court, but not until more than 3,200 Welsh pitmen died before receiving anything.

NEW LABOUR: The figures aren't quite adding up for the party in opposition. New Labour is now nearly £10m in debt and it appears they have only received two registered donations from individuals since Miliband took charge, and one of those was the party's former spin doctor Alistair Campbell.

POLITICS: The first state visit by US President Barack Obama at the end of May passed peacefully enough with only token demonstrations and protests. Unfortunately there was no 'street theatre' planned so the tabloid headline hunters were free of lurid 'anarchists target president' stories courtesy of the ego of eccentric Marxist academics. Obama did have dinner with the Queen, special relationships were reaffirmed and military strategies were agreed upon under the guise of the war on terror.

TRANSPORT: Dundee bus drivers staged two wildcat strikes, the first over a change to working conditions, the second when two drivers' union representatives were suspended for what National Express claimed was "unauthorised" industrial action.

Originally 40 drivers were called in from their routes after National Express imposed an increase in working hours with no increase in pay.

Having agreed to go back to work, management then immediately suspended the two union reps, instigating even more drivers to return to the depot in support of their colleagues. The action brought a halt to most of the bus service to the city.

LENS CAP SHEFFIELD SUCCESS



The second Sheffield anarchist bookfair was another major success as more people flocked to the event eagerly engaging with the myriad of anarchist literature on offer. Such events as these continue to highlight the range and diversity of anarchist ideas and offer an essential avenue for people to get involved in radical politics. *Freedom* salutes the efforts of the organisers who pulled off an incredible job.

Mumping the HMIC

We were shocked when Freedom Press got an invite to an HMIC event at the swanky Kingsway Hall hotel in Covent Garden as part of their review of NDEU and in particular the undercover activities of NPOIU.

This review is headed by Bernard Hogan-Howe (pictured below) from HMIC but also has input from ACPO, SOCA and an external reference panel of various ex-cops and judges, plus chief sell-out Shami Chakrabarti – who didn't show her face at this presumably because of the stick she'd get for Liberty's phoney legal observers on 26th March. The Chief Inspector of OSC was also along for the ride as an 'interested observer'. You'll be glad to know that he's not an ex-cop. He was in military intelligence.

Around 25 'delegates', as we were called, attended the event. Most were from various radical organisations including Fitwatch, Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty and the Network for Police Monitoring, plus a smattering of civil liberties lawyers.

There was a slight nervousness at the start with everyone secretly thinking it was like one of the American style stings were all the



crooks in town are told they've won a free holiday and when they turn up to collect find it's a one way trip to the slammer.

After getting an hour and a half PowerPoint presentation on how the HMIC carries out its whitewashing, we got to ask questions. Anyone reading this hoping for information on how many undercover cops there are can look away now. The best bit was Bernie saying "I'm not giving you any straight answers."

So to the reason we went – free grub. Great for meat eaters with skewers of salmon and beef stroganoff. Vegans got rice or potatoes. Fortunately our kids come tough and, after vociferous lobbying, stuffed peppers were produced. Small victories, comrades, small victories.

Glossary

HMIC: Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary.
 ACPO: Association of Chief Police Officers, a private firm run by the top 230 cops in England and Wales.
 NDEU: National Domestic Extremism Unit, the umbrella body for NDET, NPOIU and NETCU.
 NDET: National Domestic Extremist Team.
 NPOIU: National Public Order Intelligence Unit, who ran Mark Stone/Kennedy.
 NETCU: National Extremism Tactical Co-ordination Unit.
 SOCA: Serious Organised Crime Agency.
 OSC: Office for Surveillance Commissioners, which monitors the use of covert surveillance by public bodies including covert human intelligence sources (hairies and grasses).
 National VIPER Bureau: Video Identification Parades Electronic Recording – nothing to do with this but too good an acronym to leave out.



Southampton refuse collectors on the picket line on 23rd May, the first day of their five-day strike action.

Council workers take on bosses

Southampton gets militant in the fight against the cuts

Council workers in Southampton have instigated a strategy of indefinite strike action in opposition to the introduction of a policy of sacking staff and re-employing them on lower rates with poorer terms and conditions. If the council succeeds in its objective it could be replicated by local authorities throughout the UK. Workers have also been threatened with dismissal if they don't sign up for the new contract. As such many radicals are seeing the Southampton council workers dispute as an important test in the battle against the imposition of the coalition's 'austerity measures', especially for local government public sector workers.

First to strike were the refuse collectors and street cleaners who stopped work for five days between 23rd and 27th May. To coincide with the first day of action as many

as 4,300 Southampton council workers, including care workers, social workers and building trades, adopted a policy of work to rule, refusing overtime until the Tory led council retract the threat to impose the new conditions set to be implemented in July. The following week a different group of workers including parking attendants, traffic wardens and maintenance engineers began their strike action. A joint strike committee has been set up to ensure the action continues uninterrupted. It is thought to be the biggest single industrial dispute in the city's recent history.

The list of councils using section 188 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations Act – relating to mass redundancy procedure – to enforce such changes on council workers' conditions, as well as the number of jobs under threat, has risen rapidly. According to the GMB union 171,709 posts are under threat or have already gone at local authorities in England, Wales and Scotland.

Southampton council is known for the militancy of its work force. In November 2010 when Tory leaders first stated they wanted to cut pay by as much as 5.5%, staff walked out angry at the proposal, determined to fight the measures. Then when the council was setting its budget in February 2011, refuse workers stormed the building in an attempt to disrupt councillors voting through massive spending cuts to public services.

The city itself has a radical history. As far back as 1890, when dockers were agitating for better rates of pay known as the 'dockers tanner', it was Southampton where mass rioting took place during the strike with blacklegs being attacked as they arrived by train and large crowds gathering daily in the streets. It was also one of the first ports to go on unofficial strike during the mass unrest of 1911. Then, following the First World War, Southampton soldiers mutinied and took over the docks, refusing orders to return to wartorn Europe.

Indignados: the angry ones

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May, is typified by the mass assembly similar to Tahir Square in Egypt that provoked demands for greater democracy and which was replicated throughout the Arabic countries. These assemblies are entirely self-organised with communal kitchens, makeshift tents and furniture brought in. It has the infrastructure of a permanent camp with committees set up to handle communications, food, cleaning, protest actions and legal matters.

The biggest assembly in the UK was outside the Spanish embassy in London where, at its height, 700 people took over a traffic island opposite the Embassy, from where people gathered to make banners and placards, hold

rallies with chants and slogans against politicians, bankers, political parties and demanding a system change. *Freedom* went down to the embassy and met up with one of the people from Real Democracy Now who we interviewed the following day (see our feature on pages 8 and 9). The atmosphere there was both energetic and utterly determined as people gathered to discuss how to develop the movement in the UK. It was clear that they took inspiration from their comrades in the occupied squares in Madrid and Barcelona.

The two interesting dynamics that define the Democracia Real Ya! assemblies are that there is no formal involvement from political

organisations and the youthful nature of the participants. As with the UK, a new generation of young people in Spain are being politicised and becoming active, without instruction or leadership from the radical left. Another universal feature is the way in which these camps are organised. They take great care in not having leaders with working groups set up to carry out the decisions agreed at the mass assemblies via consensus. Even with a newly politicised youth, the bulk of the participants are ordinary Spaniards from all social and political backgrounds angry at a political system they have no real say in. It is this anger that is being channelled and focused through the mass assemblies.

ANALYSIS

The curious case of Libya

Examining the fall-out of the uprising in Libya

If the period we are living in now is going to be marked by anything at all in history, it will be the so-called Arab Spring. The Spring rose in Tunisia, escalated in Egypt, although it is Libya that will define it – at least for us outsiders. But western involvement in Libya has once again poisoned the chalice. This article is meant to put the whole thing in a larger perspective, to the extent that I understand it.

Current updates

The haphazardly cobbled together rebel army, made up of ordinary people, managed to free Misurata on 11th May 2011. Tripoli is still the stronghold of Qaddafi and is holding out, although NATO forces have now stepped up the bombing campaign. In two days of heavy shelling of the capital 19 people (identities as yet unknown) have reportedly been killed. The war has turned out to be a stalemate.

Meanwhile, Benghazi (where it all began) has become a thriving hub of revolutionary activities – and the seat of the Transitional National Council (TNC). The TNC is an unelected, ad hoc body of ‘leaders’ who came together when it all kicked off. Some of them are defectors from the regime, including the head of the Council, Mustafa Abdul Jalil, ex Justice Minister. Others are Libyan academics who taught abroad until the uprising, such as Ali Tarhouni, TNC’s Finance Minister, who had been a lecturer of Economics at the University of Washington at Seattle.

A genuine people’s revolution

Whatever the trajectory of the political development (which I shall get to in the next section), there can be no doubt about the popular character of this revolution, and how ordinary people have taken charge at the grassroots level. According to Portia Walker of Foreign Policy, “[Volunteers] sweep the streets, search for mines and make food for rebel fighters. They have set up newspapers, radio stations, and television channels to fill the void left by decades of stultifying state-run media.”

A documentary film produced by the Benghazi rebel media centre (brought here by comrades who travelled to Libya, see *Freedom* 7208, 23rd April, page 7) shows how the rebel army is made up mostly of students, doctors, professors, artists, etc., and women of all ages shouting that they themselves are willing to fight and die on the frontline.

And what about money? How are the rebels funding this war? If there are spurious sponsors, we don’t know about them yet. Initially, Libyans under the ‘direction’ of Tarhouni robbed (appropriated) the 505 million dollars stashed at the Benghazi branch



of the Central Bank of Libya (as reported by *The Washington Post* on 24th May 2011). Apparently, the bank managers themselves helped carry out the heist.

The TNC’s head, Jalil, is currently on a world tour to gather funds, which are mostly Libyan assets held in various countries. According to TWP, “Tarhouni estimates that the assets could be worth as much as 165 billion dollars.”

Oops, enter the West

Continuing the theme of money, 32 billion of those frozen assets are in the US alone, and the TNC has already requested three billion, which the US seems to be reluctant to release as of now. However, the US has already given 53.5 million in aid and 25 million in ‘non-lethal military supply’. The TNC’s idea is to ‘borrow’ this money (Libyans’ own to begin with) against a loan (which will tie the country’s economy to their western benefactors, and which will have to be paid off through noxious ‘free trade’ means).

Also, the TNC, however necessary it is deemed to be, is not an elected body, but has already been officially recognised by a few countries such as France, Italy and Qatar. Those that haven’t done so officially, such as the US, UK, Turkey, etc., have established *de facto* diplomatic relations with the TNC. It is entirely plausible that even if elections are held soon after the conflict is over, most of its ‘leaders’ (who are already entangled with the western powers) will end up in power with strings attached to them.

The war itself might be getting murkier. According to the Guardian website, NATO lists 16 targets seven of which are categorised suspiciously as ‘Other’, as distinct from clearly military targets which have been listed. Asia Times Online quotes Robert Haddick of Foreign Policy: “NATO’s bombardment strategy is now likely more focused on applying political and psychological coercion against the regime rather than inflicting battlefield damage against military forces”, implying infrastructure, in turn implying that anyone could be fair game – if they got in the way.

This is not mere scare-mongering since the war is entering its fourth month, and Qaddafi is still holding out. Impatience can lead NATO to go Wild West on Tripoli, or consider putting troops on the ground. Fears are rife that if the war drags on, and if NATO is unable to remove Qaddafi through air strikes alone, “A *de facto* partition of Libya looks possible. So does a collapse into Somalia-like factional chaos” (*The Independent*, 25th May 2011).

Apparently, ordinary Libyans on the ground are rejecting these speculations. For those feeling concerned and involved in the issue, it is a waiting game. A western-style ‘democracy’ might not be the most ideal arrangement, but hopefully, if they get through this one, they can live to fight another day.

An extended version of this article with updated information will be available on the Freedom website in the near future.

NEWS IN BRIEF

BARKING: Over 25 EDL attempted to storm a UAF meeting on defending multiculturalism in the area. The mob, chanting EDL slogans, charged the door, smashing the glass front and throwing bricks and debris into the building. It's understood there were at least two identifiable members of the BNP within their ranks. A small group of stewards managed to hold the door despite concerted efforts of the mob to gain access. At least one person was injured in the attack.

BARNSELEY: Over 400 Barnsley College lecturers and students took to the streets and demonstrated through the south Yorkshire town to protest over the threat of mass redundancies to the education staff. Already 60 teachers are faced with compulsory redundancies at the college, with one in ten of the staff facing the sack by the end of summer. It was the second student demonstration there in a week. The college specialises in music technology, sports and physical education and public services.

CAMBRIDGE (1): For the second time in a month the offices of Jobcentre Plus offices that house Atos Healthcare, a division of IT giants Atos Origin, were occupied by activists who were protesting at the company's poor record. Atos has been given the contract to conduct disability assessments on behalf of the DWP for people claiming benefits. It is responsible for carrying out the notorious Work Capability Assessment which is used to harass the sick and disabled back into work by threatening to withhold their benefit entitlement.

CAMBRIDGE (2): Several dozen protestors descended upon the Cambridge University Debating Union building in response to the society booking Eric Pickles, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, who has presided over some of the most brutal cuts to our public services that we've witnessed for a generation. A very noisy drumming ensemble played continuously throughout the evening. Meanwhile activists managed to find a way into the building and proceeded to making loads of noise right in front of the hall (including lots more drumming). Apparently Pickles could not be heard above the noise for the whole meeting.

NEWCASTLE: Workers held a protest over plans to axe and export 180 customer call centre jobs by government owned East Coast railways. Members from rail unions RMT and TSSA gathered outside the firm's offices in Newcastle. The RMT had discovered that three companies had bid for the work not only on the basis of keeping it in the UK but also keeping it on Tyneside. The rejection of those bids favour of Atos Origin, suggests a healthy profit for the Tories favourite private contractors.

I wish we could've been there

It was during the AF's meeting at the Bristol bookfair on the role of anarchists in the anti-cuts movement, as they listed the features of recent anarchist activity, that a comrade leant over and whispered 'there isn't a better time to be an anarchist'. A throwaway remark that may come to have some significance.

If we look at the past ten years in radical politics from the anti-globalisation movement that manifested itself in summit mobilisations to the ecological anti-roads campaign that morphed into the climate change radical agenda, and crucially the anti-war movement that defined and defiled a generation of political activists, we see anarchism as a battle against its own involvement.

After the generation that made the poll tax their own, fuelling a new dynamic around the anti-roads and criminal justice bill campaign, came the anti-capitalists of the 2000s, which could have been a point of realignment for the anarchist movement as a political entity. (When I say anarchist movement here I mean just that, not groups nor individuals, but the physical manifestation of a political idea realised in all those things that embody it.) Yet it wasn't to be. The rise of internet anarchism and the dull force of the left (perhaps best exemplified by the Socialist Workers Party) created a paralysis of involvement, a crisis of identity and something oddly lacking in a recognisable force for change. The past ten years saw anarchism in search of its own sense of being.

How that impacted on those who were involved was to veer often wildly between vexed outsider critique (where so much energy

was dissipated defining what kind of politics they were not) and whirlwind activity based on identifiable, yet abstract concerns.

Targeting the IMF necessarily meant buying into the dynamics of the dominant political discourse. Concepts and key words became our lexicon. Academics led the way and we nodded sagely as we tore at summit fences and avoided the plumes of drifting tear gas. The thrill was liberating, explaining it to someone in the post office queue the following week less so.

But what we are seeing today is yet another realignment, one not reliant on traditional internal anarchist tribalism. So we get members of Solfed cracking open squats and opening social centres, we get ex-Wombles hosting a meeting of over a hundred people about supporting the general strike action on 30th June, the mood has shifted away from an entrenched defence of identity and retreat into ideology, to an open realisation of actually affecting change. It is not so much all that is solid melting into air, but all the hot air of the last ten years solidifying into some sort of meaning.

A new decade and a new generation of people are being politicised – the mass student protests and university occupations, the snowballing of UK Uncut, all blithely accept anarchist methodology as natural forms of organisation. Our work is how we engage and develop with these movements. In years to come we can look back and we can say we were there, we were involved, the anarchist movement was, perhaps for once, in the right place at the right time.



Clockwise from top left: the poll tax riot in 1990; the Carnival Against Capitalism/J18 on 18th June 1999; the Oxford Circus kettle, Mayday 2001; Fortnum & Mason occupied during this year's protests on 26th March.

INTERNATIONAL

NEWS IN BRIEF

BRAZIL: An Anti-logging activist has been shot and killed in what police believe was an assassination to silence the outspoken defender of the Amazonian rainforests. José Claudio Ribeiro da Silva, was shot and killed along with his wife, Maria do Espírito Santo, in Nova Ipixuna, a rural town in the northeast Brazil. Ribeiro had received many death threats previously from, it is claimed, businessmen who work with loggers, who don't want the forest standing.

CANADA: Hundreds of construction workers at the Come by Chance oil refinery in Newfoundland walked off of the job after discovering they had only been given a day's work before being laid off. Over 300 workers were fired in what was expected to be a two month contract, and then were joined by 400 other workers who down tools and staged a protest outside of the gates of the facility in support of the sacked workers

ITALY: On 25th May, police forced their way into the homes of six Padua University students. All have been active in recent student protests that have shaken several Italian cities, culminating in the 14th December mass protest in Rome. Following arrest and release the six students are now forced to reside in their homes, which are not in Padova where they study, and must register at the local police station three times a week.

GEORGIA: A brutal police crackdown on peaceful protesters in Tbilisi left at least two dead. Nearly 40 people were also injured as riot police cleared protesters from the streets ahead of independence day celebrations. Police opened fire on the crowd who had been peacefully protesting all week, where as many as 10,000 people gathered in central Tbilisi. The movement, dubbed the 'silver revolution', is demanding the president's resignation after he failed to tackle the countries crippling poverty.

TURKEY: The Turkish government has filed criminal charges against 111 union leaders, members and supporters which carry prison terms of up to five years in connection with a 2010 demonstration in Ankara. The Ankara action was in support of 12,000 workers made redundant overnight following the privatisation of the state tobacco monopoly TEKEL.

MOROCCO: Police in the capital, Rabat, and Casablanca have violently dispersed protesters who defied a ban on demonstrations, beating them up with batons and taking several into custody. A protest leaflet declared "We are against despotism, against corruption. We are for dignity, freedom, democracy and social justice." In recent months, protesters seeking more democratic rights and economic benefits have held several nationwide protests in the country of 32 million, resulting in at least six deaths.

LENS CAP SYRIA'S CRACKDOWN



At least three people have been killed in the capital Damascus, after Syrian security forces used live fire to disperse hundreds of anti-government demonstrators. There were reports of five protesters being shot dead in Dael, and one other in Zabadani. The killings came amid renewed demonstrations by pro-democracy advocates in an effort to reach out to the army to join their 10-week uprising against president Assad's one-party rule.

The Second Revolution

Thousands of protesters have returned to Cairo's Tahrir Square for what they called a 'second revolution', demanding the country's new military leaders respond to their continued calls for reform. Protesters flocked into Tahrir Square – the symbolic heart of protests that toppled Mubarak in February – carrying banners reading 'Egyptian revolution is not over'.

Youth groups that had helped to launch the uprising against Mubarak dubbed Friday 27th May as 'the second day of anger'. They included The Coalition of the Revolution Youth, which consists of several movements behind the Egyptian uprising, and April 6 youth movement.

Despite some political groups actively discouraging participation, most noticeably Muslim Brotherhood, some hundreds of thousands defied the boycott and packed Tahrir Square.

Their demands were for the most part uncontroversial: reforms to state media, the replacement of corrupt university heads and governors, an independent judiciary, and an end to trying civilians in military tribunals. The military council issued a statement the day before the mass protest announcing that it would not be present near the square which led to protesters to fear this would give reactionary forces an open invitation to attack the demonstration. 'Popular committees' were formed to organise the security and safeguarding of all the entrances to the square. Reports state that the popular committees were able to repel an attack by armed thugs who attempted to enter the square by car early Friday morning.

The Egyptian revolution, if it does come, will come from the energy of its youth movement unafraid of government threats and inspired by its own irrepressibility.

Notes from the US

Contradiction

Sometimes an event or revelation so explicitly and stunningly exemplifies a principle that it's hard to imagine it wasn't invented. Take the city of Benton Harbor, Michigan: the city's elected mayor and city commissioners were stripped last month of all their power by an unelected 'emergency' financial manager who was forcefully appointed by Michigan governor Rick Snyder. Benton Harbor happens to be the corporate headquarters of the world's largest appliance manufacturer, Whirlpool. It

was reported in mid-May that the company had not only successfully managed to avoid paying federal income taxes over the past three years – despite reporting US\$18 (£11) billion in worldwide sales in 2010 – but that it also received a tax benefit of US\$64 (£40) million from the federal government.

Equally hard to credit is the Obama administration's approval in May of a plan by Shell for new deep water oil and gas exploration in the Gulf of Mexico – exactly the region

Ireland's response to visiting monarch

WSM comrade gives us their view of the recent Royal visit

The recent visit of the British Queen to Ireland was treated by media commentators here as a groundbreaking moment in relations between the two islands. Liz's itinerary included the Garden of Remembrance in Dublin, the official memorial park to those who died fighting for 'Irish Freedom' (against British rule). In Ireland as in Britain the monarchy has a strong association with imperialism and empire and for that reason the visit was seen as putting a considerable challenge to the militant wing of Irish nationalism.

The media hype about the possible protests that were going to take place resembled the sort of scare stories you read in advance of G8 summit protests. And like such stories the function of the hype was to create the justification for a huge 'security' operation that was designed to make any significant protest impossible. Some 10,000 security force personnel were deployed, water cannon borrowed from the PSNI, miles of crowd control barriers deployed and the entire city centre shut down for much of the four day visit.

Alongside this the police visited the home of everyone who lived on any of the routes that Liz was to be driven along, thousands of homes in all. Anyone that the initial sweep identified as having a radical past or present was prone to then be visited by the Special Branch secret police, some people reported as many as four subsequent visits. Uniformed police were deployed in clusters throughout Dublin from a week before the visit started



and part of their role was to remove political posters and stickers throughout the city, even where such posters had been erected with the permission of the city council! This was unfortunate for the Dublin Anarchist Bookfair, which coincidentally was held a couple of days before the visit, as the majority of the posters erected advertising it were removed.

In the event the protests that took place were small and subject to massive levels of policing. The much-hyped violence failed to materialise except for a minor riot in the north inner city on the first day of the visit, much of it police driven. The Irish anarchist group the Workers Solidarity Movement took part

on protests in Dublin and Cork, in Dublin selecting the protest that focused on the elitism and privilege of the royals rather than other more nationalist themed ones.

Although the police had claimed to be facilitating protest, we soon discovered the reality when the person bringing the banner that had been made to the event had the banner and four anarchist flags confiscated. The banner read 'Old Ruler, New Rulers: Class War Continues...' to underline that the new 'republican' government in the south continued to rule on behalf of capital just as the old imperial government had done from London.

Notes from the US

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where last year's disastrous spill happened; exactly under circumstances which have hardly changed. Shell's plan includes five exploratory wells, more than 7,000 feet underwater and three previously approved wells about 72 miles from Louisiana.

Just as disturbing is a ruling by the Federal Supreme Court in May which increases police power. Officers now have power to enter the homes of citizens without a warrant. An eight-to-one ruling upheld the warrantless search of a Kentucky man's flat after police smelled marijuana. Writing for the majority, Justice Samuel Alito wrote that citizens are not required to grant police officers permission to enter their homes after hearing a knock, but if there is no response and the officers hear noise that suggests evidence is being destroyed, they are justified in breaking in.

Meanwhile, the state of Arizona continues to amaze as well. Arizona lawmakers have a

plan to build a wall so long and so high that no immigrants (whose presence has actually been shown to keep the economy afloat in such states) can ever get in. If the Federal government won't agree to it, the Arizona élite is going to build it themselves. Well, not literally – the lawmakers intend to seek public donations (a website is already being readied) and... prison labour. "We're going to build this site as fast as we can, and promote it, and market the heck out of it," said a first-term Republican senator from Maricopa. "I think it's going to be a really, really neat thing."

Meanwhile Republican Arizona governor, Jan Brewer, has asked the US Supreme Court to lift an injunction on SB 1070, Arizona's anti-immigrant law which empowers state and local law enforcement to stop, question and arrest whoever they suspect may be an undocumented immigrant.

Louis Further

France G8 summit

Perhaps in the age of austerity and climate campaigners concerns over air travel, international summits are no longer the place for UK activists.

The G8 leaders met in Deauville on 26th to 28th May to cost out their future roles in an age of financial meltdowns and global uprisings.

Counter protests against the meeting had little impact given Deauville is a fortress resort that had 12,000 police on standby.

A week prior to the gathering of the heads of the eight wealthiest nations, however, there was a mass demonstration in La Havre, the nearest city to the conference, where thousands of union activists gathered to protest.

There were also several decentralised actions in European cities throughout the period, including Berlin, Strasbourg, Amsterdam, Paris Hamburg and Cologne.

FEATURE

“We are angry, we are upset, we

Freedom talks to a representative from Spain's Real Democracy Now movement

We meet outside Angel tube station on the rarest of sunny bank holiday Mondays. After grabbing a coffee, we find somewhere quiet to talk about the incredible events that are happening in Spain and how they made their way across the Channel to the heart of London. Having met Hugo briefly the previous day at the assembly outside the Spanish Embassy, I ask him for formal introductions and a little background.

“Hi, I'm Hugo from Tenerife, Spain, and have been living in London for three years, I'm a member of Democracia Real Ya!, here in London. I am not a speaker for the movement, but I'm a member of the press committee. We don't have any kind of leadership, we don't have leaders, it's a very flat [horizontal] assembly movement, I'm not talking as a speaker, but as a citizen of one of the committees of the assembly, we don't exercise any kind of leadership, we would prefer to build an assembly movement where every person participates to build the leadership of all the organisations all together.

“The movement started around 2010-11 on the internet. Basically the origin of the movement were people connected to hackers, people against a law to limit the use of internet by the socialist government – it's called Ley Sinde [Sinde's Law]. Sinde is the name of the Minister of Culture in the current government of José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero. These became more and more political movements since 2010 when the government of Zapatero introduced brutal cuts in the budget, to the welfare state in proportions that we've never seen before. They angered and upset a lot of people, a lot of supporters of the socialist party who voted for them because they represented the centre left, but moved towards a more neo-liberal vision of the economic situation. So a lot of



Outside the Spanish embassy in London, the sign reads ‘21% unemployment, 40% youth unemployment’.

people started to feel completely defrauded by the government of Zapatero.

“And it's at this moment there are a lot of small movements that are connecting, linking with each other. It wasn't spontaneous in the way that it was yes, one day the people decide to go to the streets, meet on the square and they say ‘okay let's go to Puerta del Sol together’. It was a *campamento*, it was a movement working before that, but now they give the name to all these protests – Democracia Real Ya! ‘15M’ because that was the first day everything started it was the first *campamento* [camp].”

I ask how he himself got involved in the movement.

“I started to receive emails and messages around January or February and to be honest I didn't expect any big political issue about that, I was expecting a normal protest. I was in Madrid days before and I started to feel ‘everything is going on’, there's a lot of people talking, I receive more and more messages by Facebook about this thing. A lot of people talking okay let's go to do something.

“It was around the elections that we reached the figure of five million unemployed and this was the council and local elections on 22nd May, it started to fuel the motives and the reasons for people to go to the streets. At the beginning it to go on the protest on the 15th May, but there wasn't any expectation, or any plan, at least that I know, to go to do a camp. It was in the Puerta del Sol square in the centre of Madrid on the night of the 15th of May a group of more or less 200 people decided after the protest to camp there. And they were removed by the police. After that people used Twitter and Facebook, again, using the same way of communicating as all the revolutions in North Africa, and this is probably the most similar thing to the North Africa rebellions, it was – people are connected and said ‘okay let's go to camp again and let's go to support all the comrades arrested by the police’. Because these were absolutely normal people. Not are not members of any political organisations, they are not members of any trade unions, they're normal people; unemployed, students, normal workers, that went there to protest against the general situation.

“One of mistakes the media made is it thinks that all these protests happening in Spain is just a protest against the socialist government. It's not just that, obviously that is one part, but the other part is it's a problem with the political system in general. Since Spain got the democratic system in 1977 after Franco's death, we settled with a system that is a proportional corrective system that has the two main parties swapping the power constantly. The feeling of a lot of people is the system is more or less a closed system where we cannot chose our candidates; we have a



closed list that the party gives to us. So one of the big questions we are asking of society is let's go to reform the electoral law.

“But two or three main issues that are very new in all of this. First of all, since the democratic system came into being in the seventies for the first time the political class have been removed from the centre of the political space, and all the media attention put there a normal citizen, a part of the society, an important part of the society that says: we are angry, we are upset, we are the indignants. We need to try to do something with that, because we cannot be more passive people saying ‘okay we don't have any options, we can vote conservatives, we can vote socialist’. So we need to give options. We need to give the option to people to say I don't like the system.

“The original idea was to make a movement inclusive, so any person can participate and can join the movement. It's not a left movement, it's not a conservative movement, it is a movement where a normal citizen can come to the assembly and say ‘I like this kind of thing; I don't like this kind of thing’. It is an assembly movement and we organise it by committees and by commissions that just do the work that the assembly decides. The assembly decides it's going to do this

e are the indignants”



action, so there is a lot of committees and commissions working for that, but in the end the assembly is the supreme body of all these movements. It is quite exciting and fantastic and it's the first time we are doing these kind of things in our lives but at the same time it's quite chaotic. And we are learning.

“The other big thing is we were doing this for two and three weeks in Spain so we were learning about democracy. Because democracy is not just about talk, democracy is to listen carefully to what all the people are talking about. And even if you don't agree with what this person is saying, listen to the options, listen to the ideas that the other person gives to you. Because democracy is about building something, counting everyone in society. And this is not easy.”

We go on to talk about how the movement was transported over to the UK.

“What is this movement in the political Spanish situation? It doesn't have any kind of background of a strong political organisation or trade unions or anything like that. It came about through the internet in the beginning and after a lot of people came to join the movement. And after the first successful day on 15th May and the reaction of the police upset a lot of people so on Monday 16th a lot

of people took to the streets in many places around the country, not just Madrid.

“This time here in London there were about 30 people at the embassy on Sunday 15th, but I didn't know anything about that because I didn't know any of these people. And the next day, on Monday, it was double and by Thursday there were 200 and we held an assembly. And it was amazing because, this is the other big new thing about the movement that in a normal protest in Spain we sing songs, we chant many kinds of slogans, but we never sit on the floor and in an organised way we start to talk and make an assembly. And it was new, and it was exciting, it was something that – what happens now? We can decide things, we can do things, and we can raise it between each other and we don't know each other – I didn't know any of the people. And suddenly we were discussing and talking.

“The thing is the last 35 years just these two parties – socialist and conservative swapping the power, and we had a system that felt miserable to give any kind of normal life to Spanish society. At the same time we have this banking crisis, which is the origin of the crisis, we are putting a lot of money since 2008–09 into the banking system to avoid its collapse but now we

have to cut all social services because we need to support a big public debt. Now we're going to have to cut health services and education.

“But it's the whole political body and we need to change that. So people go to the street and say we need to change that. But what's the change that we need? What's the change that we would like? It's going to be quite different. And this is one of the difficulties. But now everyone, everybody, greens, reds, communists whatever, all together let's go to reform the system to give the voice to normal people, the normal citizen. The four points of consensus that we are reaching now in all the assemblies in Spain are basically:

1. Reform of the electoral law, that gives a more plural democratic system, and to represent other options;
2. More transparency in the political system. So we can check what the politicians do. For example we can check what political parties spend and where they receive their money;
3. Allow people to enter into the political system to check what their politicians do. We don't know who the politicians are we're voting for on the list, these guys never answer to the citizen;
4. Separation between power of the state, between the executive, judiciary and parliament.

“Now we are reaching after two or three weeks of the movement, because it's quite new, the possibility to get a consensus on these four points, reform of electoral law and to get a much better democratic system using direct democracy much more than now. For example local councils and the budget can be discussed in open assemblies in every borough and people can make decisions about libraries and hospitals, and can have that opportunity to vote.

“Finally something happened. Thousands of people go to the streets and say 'no stop with that, we are absolutely indignant with that', and we need to react and we need to change that. It's not going to be easy, but it's going to be absolutely exciting. It's very new, and as it's happening in North Arabic countries, it's something that when people are in the streets you never know which direction it going to take.

“In Spain we are facing a very similar problem to Italy or Greece, especially to Italy with corrupt politicians, and we are talking here with Spanish and Italian people to do things together, because we are sharing the same situation, we need to establish links. Real Democracy Now, London needs to get connections with other groups in Europe facing the same situation because this problem about democracy is not just in Spain, it's not just in North Africa, it's a global problem, people are asking for real democracy in many, many countries.”

COMMENT

ABOUT FREEDOM

ANGEL ALLEY

Thanks to all who came to Iain McKay's talk on the new Proudhon anthology he's edited. We still have copies of *Property is Theft* at the special reduced rate of £20, so hurry up and buy it before we run out.

Meantime Freedom Press have just published a new book by Harold Barclay called *Religious Movements: Today and Yesterday*. This short book gives an outstanding critique of various factions of God botherers and is available post free (like everything else) from our website.

Our drive to make Freedom more inclusive of the movement as a whole continues with the All London Anarchist Revolutionary Movement meeting having a unanimously approving a proposal to adopt *Freedom* as a newspaper and *Black Flag* as a magazine for all groups without their own publication. We await the deluge of articles and new paper sellers that this will bring.

Lastly we wish happiness to long time shop volunteers Lois and Max who are getting married on 11th June. Customers visiting the shop on the 12th are asked to speak quietly and tread softly as we will all have nasty hangovers.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

This is issue is vol 72 no 11, so if the number above your name on the address label is 7211 or less, then your subscription is now due for renewal. There's a renewal form on page 16 of this issue or you can subscribe online at freedompress.org.uk/news/subscribe or, if you don't want to worry in the future about remembering to renew, ask us to send you a standing order form by emailing subs@freedompress.org.uk or write to us at 'Subscriptions', Freedom, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX. Unfortunately our subscription rates have to increase, so any subscribers paying by Standing Order are asked to contact their bank to update the amount payable.

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NEXT ISSUE

The next issue will be dated 18th June 2011 and the last day to get copy to us for that issue will be Thursday 9th June. You can send your articles to us by email to copy@freedompress.org.uk or by post addressed to 'The Editors', Freedom, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX.

A sideways look

by SVARTFROSK

It is a feature of capitalism that it is always looking for new opportunities to expand the range of things that can be bought and sold. It plays out in new 'needs' being created for instance by technology, the most obvious recent examples being personal computers and mobile phones. These new needs might supplant old ones – I imagine far fewer exercise books, typewriters or fax machines are sold now.

The pace of change creates conflict between capitalists themselves as well as increasing their exploitation of us. A large old Victorian pub not far from me was closed and the new owners wanted to convert it into flats. In a rare move, the council insisted that the development include a bar. The developers came back and were distraught when their plans were once again rejected because they had not included a cellar. They protested that a cellar wasn't necessary for a bar; which is of course true if you only intend to sell bottled beers or lager from a keg.

I will term the way in which we are all paying more for less the Ryanair model. You take a price, split and itemise and charge separately for each part of it, with the whole thing costing a lot more. It also means that Ryanair and their competitors only compete on the basic price of the flight, there is little evidence that their additional charges reflect the cost of something, they are just an opportunity to milk their customers. Indeed, Ryanair use special charges to express political points, usually in favour of their brand of unregulated free market anti-worker capitalism, such as their two euro levy on all passengers to pay for the cost of compensating passengers for flight delays.

This model has been adopted by the government when it comes to charging

council and housing association rents. In this case they call it 'disaggregation', and it's also a scam. It used to be that if you lived in a council house, you paid your rent, your rates and your water rates. Rates were abolished and their replacements began to be collected separately. Then, under Labour's plans to bring council rents into line with the private sector, the government began setting rent levels. Council rents have gone up by more than inflation for over a decade, and that just counts the basic rent. Other services, like caretaking, grounds maintenance or customer services, have been separated out and are charged for separately. The overall effect has been what the Labour government wanted, council rents are now more or less the same as housing association rents and there are fewer obstacles to transferring stock. And of course more money is raised.

Councils are involved in charging for things that were previously free off their own bat, too. A classic example is street parking. Twenty years ago virtually nobody paid to park outside their house. Now, some urban councils are completely covered in Controlled Parking Zones. There is even a phenomenon called CPZ-creep, whereby the charging zones spread over an area. Further new charges are brought in for rubbish clearance, and Tory Barnet council, already notorious for having CPZs where none are needed, is planning an 'easyCouncil', drawing straight from the budget airline model of a crap basic service and paying for extras.

None of this is really our problem as anarchists, except that it all adds to the inflationary pressure of our cost of living. It seems that the authorities can put charges up willy-nilly – if only the same could be said of wage increases.



Ryanair and their competitors only compete on the basic price of the flight – their additional charges are just an opportunity to milk their customers.

Anarchist Federation

Anarchist Federation's decision to increase the pages of its newsletter is paying off as May's edition of *Resistance* again allows the group to explore in more depth the social issues of the day. Crystallising their position on the current government's cuts, the feature article takes us through a brief history of Tory attacks on the working class and gives some concrete proposals how we can create a mass movement. These include mass assemblies, social strikes and islands of autonomy.

Along with the freesheet comes their new summer edition of *Organise*, themed around violence. Content includes an analysis on the anti-cuts movement, along with a history of anarchism in Greece, alienation, sabotage, Tunisian revolt, and the Impact of the Paris Commune. The centre piece is a theoretical examination of the recent black bloc activity on the TUC demo. Below is an extract from that piece.

On the Black Bloc

But if the bloc was born of rage and frustration and contempt for New Labour hypocrisy, Saturday 26th's 'Black Bloc' was far bigger than any seen in the UK previously. Let's just set our clearly why it is what it is, because it has been badly mis-represented.

Firstly, as has helpfully been noted even in the mainstream media by people who actually understand what is going on, it is not a group or even a movement but a tactic used in pursuance of a strategy. The strategy is to hit wealth and privilege where it hurts using direct action. This is essentially symbolic – how much does replacing a window or cleaning off paint actually harm a bank's profits? – but there is nonetheless a message behind it that is the message that demos have lost; if we can do this – get to you like this – then think what a mass uprising could do.

The tactic then, is to do all this in such a way as to get away with it. The identification and criminalisation of (unmasked) students and others after Millbank and the Parliament Square kettle shows that this is no easy feat in the age of ubiquitous CCTV, and that this is the case whether or not you have actually 'done anything'. Just by showing your photograph on TV, they turn you into public enemy no. 1.

Anarchist Communism and the Black Bloc

The student movement has transformed the established anarchist movement within the space of a year because of the breath-taking lack of compromise in its vision of equality of opportunity, and the speed with which it took this to its logical conclusion – we must bring down inequality. Students now joining the movement might be shocked to learn how 'anti-student' the anarchist movement was until relatively recently. There was a perception that students – university students that is – were privileged and apathetic. *Class War* took the piss and talked of beating them up; a magazine was launched called *Anti-Student*. In the Anarchist Federation, if a student joined, by and large we expected

them to disappear off home in the first holiday and that we'd never see them again. What a different material circumstances make!

But how good is the bloc at representing anarchism more generally? The rest of the movement is small and does not have anything like the impact that the bloc now has. So the bloc is our ambassador. What people think of the bloc, is what they think of anarchists. So again we return to the issue of Black Bloc strategy.

Organise magazine issue 76 Summer 2011, 'Violence in context' is £3.50 available from Freedom bookshop, as is *Resistance* #132 which is absolutely free.

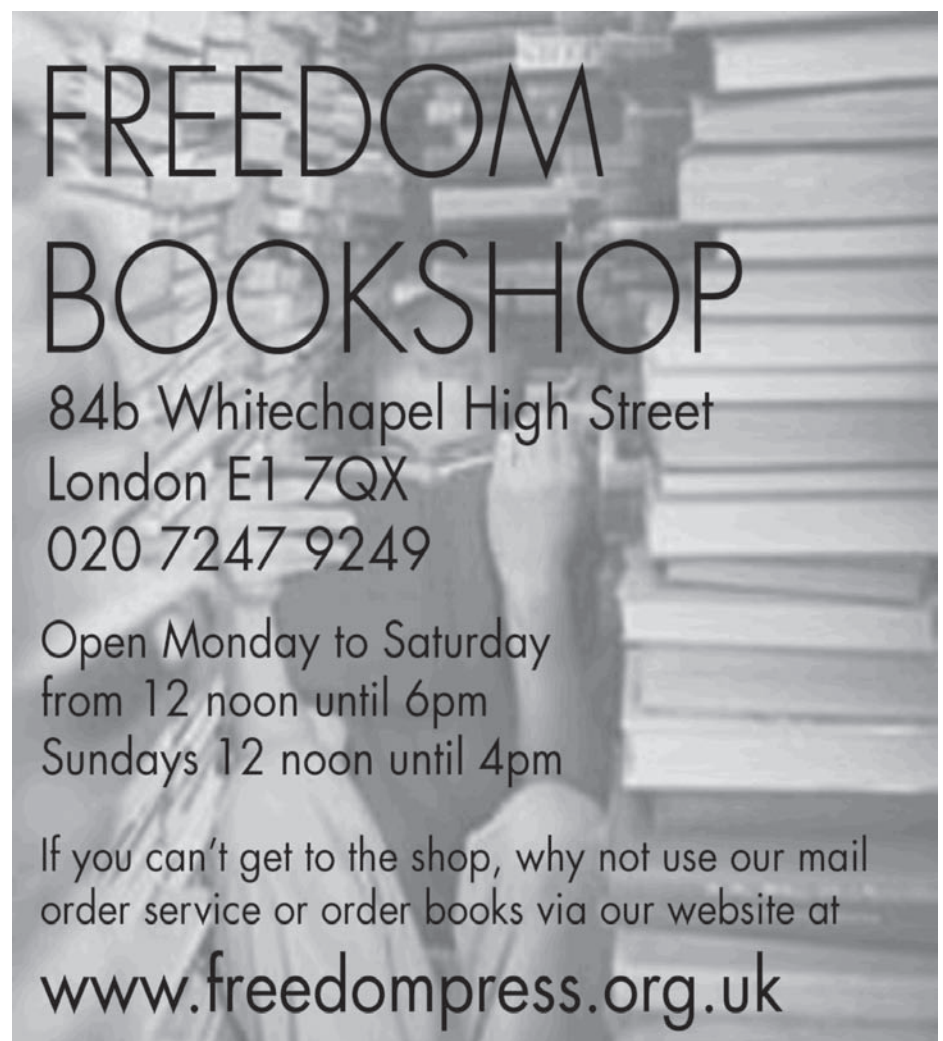
Solidarity Federation

Rightly, Solfed are still celebrating their emphatic success over Office Angels who withheld wages to an agency worker. Perhaps more impressive is the conclusions they draw from the action. Below they give us an honest assessment on the subject:

To begin, there *has* been an uptick in class struggle since the recession began. That means that – for better or worse – we're living in an environment that is easier to organise in. However, we think there's something larger (though very much related) going on, namely

an appetite for practical activity within the 'activist'/political community (not to mention within the wider population). This is post-Millbank austerity Britain. People are pissed off and, for the first time in a generation, they know who they're angry at. With the decline of basic industry and the marketisation of the public sector, working for an employment agency – with none of the hard-won legal rights of permanent staff – is an experience far too many of us have had to suffer through. The Office Angels dispute gave class struggle anarchists an opportunity for tangible, practical activity. For too long, many of us have had to make do with public or, even worse, online debate about anarchism, producing literature, or going to picket lines in the increasingly rare incidents of strikes. Now, these are all important tasks. However, we want to reach a point where anarcho-syndicalists unions are facilitating, organising, and leading struggles in the workplace and the community. For many of us, Office Angels was our first experience seeing an anarchist organisation take an active role in a workplace dispute. We liked it. And we want more.

Solidarity Federation are in the process of expanding their work place organiser training programme designed to give workers the tools and confidence to organise in their workplace. If you want to know more get in touch with your nearest Solfed branch.



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GETTING ACTIVE

PRISON NEWS

With so much feigned indignation and right wing vitriol hitting the airwaves whenever the subject of the Coalition's so-called 'Rehabilitation Revolution' is raised, it seems to be less than a coincidence that prison has become a major trope of the current TV season. First we had the programme on *The Clink*, the gourmet restaurant (three course meal circa £20*) within the grounds of HMP High Down run under head chef and self-confessed dictator Alberto Crisci's 'one strike and you're out' regime. Then came *Strangeways*, the latest in ITV's attempts at a 'warts and all' prison documentary (c.f. last year's *Inside Wormwood Scrubs*), episodes of which sandwiched the first *Question Time* to be held inside a prison (the *Scrubs* again) and Louis Theroux's incredibly grim *Miami Mega Jail* two-parter.

Interestingly, far from being the sort of glowing advert for Ken Clarke's vision of a return to the Victorian values (that never in fact existed) of hard prison work, *The Prison Restaurant* turned out to be an indictment of just how pathetic current prison work and training actually is. The *Clink* jobs are the most sought after in the prison amongst the 1,050 population, but there are only 18 workplaces available, and it trained a grand total of just 38 prisoners in 2010. Admittedly, the pay is 50p more (£14.70 – a good enhanced rate prison wage) than in the prison kitchens (30 workplaces), but it's hardly the sort of model solution to be rolled out across the whole prison estate, not least because most prisons are not located in areas where gourmet restaurants are likely to be a roaring success (sited in Sutton, High Down can attract the sort of London glitterati willing to pay for the frisson of slumming it amongst the cons).

Kitchens also featured in the third episode of *Strangeways* as a route to post-release employment (though the star chef goes on the run from his job whilst in parole). Ostensibly a series about how the prison had changed since the major rebellion in 1990, probably the single most important event in prison history since The Prison Act 1898, instead it turned out to be a horror show focusing mostly on a small number of prisoners on the hospital wing with a little light relief in the guise of that most everyday of prison events, a wedding. Admittedly HMP Manchester, as the prison is now known, is the largest high security prison in the country and it is a particularly grim and violent place (though not as grim and violent as the remand centre that features in Theroux's programme). However, the average prisoner's experience is largely one of a mixture of boredom (time banded up) and drudgery (tedious, mind-numbing prison jobs), which does not make for ratings-attracting TV.

* £2.10 is spent providing a prisoner's three square meals a day.



The protest and camp outside London's Spanish embassy, Belgrave Square, in support of Democracia Real Ya (Real Democracy Now) holds a plenary assembly where people can express their views and aims.

Solidarity action for 30th June

Following on from the call for an open assembly to discuss, propose and organise for the first round of co-ordinated strike actions on 30th June, over 100 people turned up and squeezed into the Marchmont Community Centre in central London on Monday 23rd May. Public sector workers, parents, carers, workers, unemployed, teachers, precarious workers were joined by Spanish students who had been, since 15th May, holding self-organised assemblies as part of a new international movement that has seen hundreds of thousands take to the streets occupying main squares across Spain and beyond against crippling austerity and raising unemployment.

The purpose of the meeting was to focus on the 30th June public sectors strikes and how those of us "officially" on strike can connect with the rest of the population, to generalise the strike as a day of action for all those fighting against the cuts and the wider austerity measures. There was an implicit understanding that we should be calling for people not to go to work in solidarity (taking day off work, calling in sick etc) to enable a bigger participation on the various pickets, actions and demonstrations.

This first assembly reached consensus on the following:

- To mobilise and support early morning pickets of striking workers
- To organise local initiatives to link up pickets with marches between different sites.
- To promote diverse forms of actions to publicise and circulate the struggles

Several suggestions to organise various feeder marches and possibly a mass action later on in the day against a specific target were also discussed. There were also proposals to hold on public assemblies, in similar fashion to the recent events in Spain, that could further open up inclusivity and participation than perhaps less engaging forms of actions. These ideas could be included as suggestions for local initiatives. Economic blockades/disruption were also discussed and there was a general support for the idea throughout the meeting as a possible form of action, no doubt this too will be revisited at the next assemblies.

There were a wide ranging participation from radical left, anarchist, autonomist and socialist tendencies as well as people from no "political position" at the meeting but the meeting itself was one of the most respectful, dynamic and inspirational meetings for a long time. We hope to continue with this spirit in the lead up to 30th June with the sole intention to generalise the strikes in London and across the UK, radicalising many more people into taking action for their future.

The next assembly will be held at 7pm Monday 6th June in a bigger venue. We encourage everyone interested, engaged and up for it to come down and get involved. We especially like more workers who will potentially be on strike to attend and help us organise towards 30th June.

General contact email: june30action@gmail.com

International Anarchist Manifesto on the war

An important archived document outlining anarchist opposition to the First World War

Europe in a blaze, twelve million men engaged in the most frightful butchery that history has ever recorded; millions of women and children in tears; the economic, intellectual, and moral life of seven great peoples brutally suspended, and the menace becoming every day more pregnant with new military complications – such is, for seven months, the painful, agonising and hateful spectacle presented by the civilised world.

But a spectacle not unexpected – at least, by the anarchists, since for them there never has been nor is there any doubt – the terrible events of today strengthen this conviction – that war is permanently fostered by the present social system. Armed conflict, restricted or widespread, colonial or European, is the natural consequence and the inevitable and fatal outcome of a society that is founded on the exploitation of the workers, rests on the savage struggle of the classes, and compels Labour to submit to the domination of a minority of parasites who hold both political and economic power...

Civilisation? Who, then, represents it just now? Is it the German state, with its formidable militarism, and so powerful that it has stifled every disposition to revolt? Is it the Russian state, to whom the knout, the gibbet and Siberia are the sole means of persuasion? Is it the French state, with its *Biribi*, its bloody conquests in Tonkin, Madagascar, Morocco, and its compulsory enlistment of black troops? France, that detains in its prisons, for years, comrades guilty only of having written and spoken against war? Is it the English state, which exploits, divides, and oppresses the population of its immense colonial empire?

No, none of the belligerents is entitled to invoke the name of civilisation, or declare itself in a state of legitimate defence.

The truth is that the cause of wars, of that which at present stains with blood the plains of Europe, as of all wars that have preceded it, rests solely in the existence of the state, which is the political form of privilege.

The state has arisen out of military force, it has developed through the use of military force, and it is still on military force that it must logically rest in order to maintain its omnipotence. Whatever the form it may assume, the state is nothing but organised oppression for the advantage of a privileged minority. The present conflict illustrates this in the most striking manner. All forms of the state are engaged in the present war: absolutism with Russia, absolutism softened by parliamentary institutions with Germany, the state ruling over peoples of quite different races



Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman were two of the signatories of the International Anarchist Manifesto on the War in 1915.

with Austria, a democratic Constitutional regime with England, and a democratic Republican regime with France.

The misfortune of the peoples, who were deeply attached to peace, is that, in order to avoid war, they placed their confidence in the State with its intriguing diplomatists, in democracy, and in political parties (not excluding those in opposition, like Parliamentary Socialism). This confidence has been deliberately betrayed, and continues to be so, when governments, with the aid of the whole of their press, persuade their respective peoples that this war is a way of liberation.

A resolutely against all wars between peoples, and in neutral countries, like Italy, where the governments seek to throw fresh peoples into the fiery furnace of war, or comrades have been, are, and ever will energetically opposed to war.

The role of the anarchists is the present tragedy, whatever may be the place of the situation in which they find themselves, is to continue to proclaim that there is but one war of liberation: that which in all countries is waged by the oppressed against the oppressors, by the exploited against the exploiters. Our part is to summon the slaves to revolt against their masters.

Anarchist action and propaganda should assiduously and perseveringly aim at weakening and dissolving the various states, at cultivating the spit of revolt, arousing discontent in peoples and armies.

To all soldiers of all countries, who believe they are fighting for justice and liberty, we have to declare that their heroism and their valour will but serve to perpetuate hatred, tyranny and misery.

To the workers on the farm and field it is necessary to show that after the war they will be obliged once more to bend beneath the yoke and to continue to cultivate the lands of their lords and to feed the rich.

To all the outcasts, that they should not part with their arms until they have settled accounts with their oppressors until they have taken land and factory and workshop for themselves

To mothers, wives and daughters, the victims of increased misery and privation, let us show who are the ones really responsible for their sorrows and for the massacre of their fathers, sons and husbands.

We must take advantage of all the movements of revolt, of all the discontent, in order to foment insurrection, and to organise the revolution to which we look to put an end to all social wrongs.

No despondency, even before a calamity like the present war. It is in periods thus troubled, in which many thousands of men heroically give their lives for an idea, that we must show these men the generosity, greatness, and beauty of the anarchist ideal; Social justice realised through the free organisations of producers; war and militarism done away with forever; and complete freedom won, by the abolition of the state and its organs of destruction.

International Anarchist Manifesto on the War was published 12th February 1915 (*Freedom*, March 1915), signed by some thirty anarchists from the United States, Italy, France, Spain, the Netherlands and Russia, including Emma Goldman, Alexander Berkman and Errico Malatesta, as a universal declaration against war.

REVIEWS

WHAT'S ON

JUNE

■ **4th Strawberry Fair**, Cambridge, after police stopped 2010 happening, we're back this year for a one-day free festival at Midsummer Common, Cambridge, see www.strawberry-fair.org.uk for more.

■ **4th and 5th Anarchist Bookfair** at the Farelstaal, Oberer Quai 12, 2502 Biel-Bienne, Switzerland, with many publishers and anti-authoritarian organisations from Switzerland, France, Germany, Italy, etc., along with public readings and presentations, see <http://buechermesse.ch/2011> for details.

■ **4th and 5th Newcastle Community Green Festival**, now in its 16th year, at Leazes Park, Richardson Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 4LR, for further details see www.newcastlegreenfestival.org.uk.

■ **4th to 6th Party Against The Pipe Festival** in Aghoose, Co. Mayo, Ireland, to celebrate a decade of resistance to Shell's Corrib gas project, festival will feature bands, circus, dance, comedy, crafts – all performers/workshoppers or if you can lend equipment get in touch at 0851141170, email partyagainstthepipe@gmail.com, for more details see <http://partyagainstthepipe.wordpress.com/>

■ **8th Atheism UK** presents 'Dancing on the graves of gods: how science kills faith', a talk at 7pm, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1R 4RL, for info and tickets see <http://www.atheismuk.com/tickets-2/>

■ **11th 'Keeping the Flame: radical clubs and societies in late nineteenth century London'**, speaker Roger Huddle, a News From Nowhere Club event at The Epicentre, West Street, Leytonstone, London E11 4LJ, 7.30pm buffet, 8pm talk and discussion, for details call 020 8555 5248 or see newsfromnowhereclub.org.

■ **18th Anarchist and Working Class Bookfair** from 11am until 5pm at Museum Vaults, 33 Silkworth Row, Sunderland, Tyne-and-Wear SR1 3QJ, for further information or to book a stall, call 07931301901.

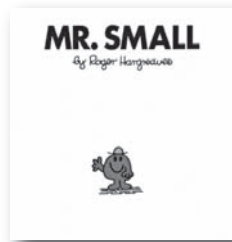
■ **18th Green and Black Cross Network Gathering**, the first ever, at The School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) Thornhaugh Street, Russell Square, London WC1H 0XG from 11am until 6pm, for more email GBCLegal@riseup.net or see <http://greenandblackcross.org>.

JULY

■ **2nd Bradford Zine Fayre** from 12 noon until 4pm at Impressions Gallery, Centenary Square, Bradford, BD1 1SD, stalls/tables are free, to apply email BZF2011@lists.aktivix.org, for updates keep an eye on <http://northernindymedia.org/events/2030> and there will also be an after party at the 1in12 Club in Bradford.

■ **9th 'Will the internet encourage the public to engage in the planning process in Waltham Forest'**, speaker Adrian Stannard, a News From Nowhere Club event at The Epicentre, West Street, Leytonstone, London E11 4LJ, 7.30pm buffet, 8pm talk and discussion, call 020 8555 5248 or see newsfromnowhereclub.org for details.

BOOK



Mr Small
Roger
Hargreaves

Mr Small is Hargreaves' *Boys From The Blackstuff*. Here he adopts a more naturalistic style, putting aside explicit exposition of academic schools of thought along with his usual moral and philosophical preoccupations. In a manner that is almost kitchen sink, we follow the working class everyman – quite literally the small man – as he searches for a job in 70s Britain. Thematically Hargreaves shows his vision, as he presages the mass unemployment that was to come in the 1980s.

Mr Small tries a succession of jobs for which he is woefully mismatched – they are all manifestly too big for him. He lacks the basic knowledge and skills to hold down any of the occupations he attempts. Does Hargreaves here break from his usual social conservatism with a damning indictment of an education system that is not adequately preparing the workforce for increasingly skilled and mechanised labour? And in this does he further express his frustration at how his own fictional potentialities have

been manacled and constrained by this state of affairs?

For indeed, Hargreaves himself seems to give up on Mr Small – in a wry narrative flourish, of course. Beneath the surface positivity of the ending, we at best encounter stoicism, with a definite undercurrent of fatalistic dread at what the very near future holds. The shadow of the impending Thatcher years is already falling across the world of the Mr Men. If Hargreaves has deprived him of revolutionary socialism in Mr Uppity – or even the more modest protection of the centre-left – there is nothing Mr Small can do but passively accept his situation. Mr Robertson, a literary personification of statutory intervention, is ultimately powerless to help him. The collective sentiment of the workers – embodied by a friendly postman – offers nothing practical, just sympathy. The only job that Mr Small proves fit to do is recount his story to the author. (Contrast this with the earlier Mr Bump, who successfully finds a job compatible with his idiosyncrasies as a character.)

Hargreaves, with characteristic genius, holds up his hands and laments his own impotence. But if Mr Small cannot be saved, at least he has been given a voice.

Hamilton Richardson

<http://www.hamiltonrichardson.net/>

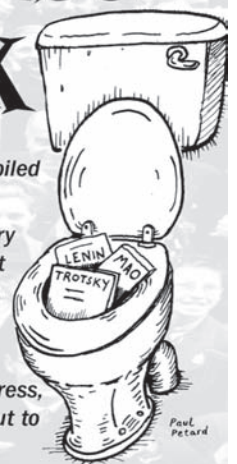
Mr Small (Mr Men Classic Library) by Roger Hargreaves, paperback, published by Egmont Books Ltd, £2.50.

The Anarchist Quiz Book

Who said "I shit on all the revolutionary vanguards of this planet"? Find out in the new Anarchist Quiz Book from Freedom Press, compiled by Martin Howard and illustrated by Paul Petard.

Some say that it should not be the highest priority of a revolutionary movement to ask itself obscure questions, but it's good fun and if it encourages an enquiring mind to find out more, than all the better. So agitate, educate and organise, all in this very handy question and answer format!

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QUIZ ANSWERS

1. He had used a toilet designated for President Robert Mugabe.
2. They call it being 'sent to Mordor', after the home of evil lord Sauron in Lord of the Rings. Foxconn make computers and computer parts and drive many of their workers to suicide.
3. Because a former councillor and the local paper made a fuss about his Facebook

- links, which included hatred of the police; anarchy; sniffing petrol; killing religion... and a local zoo. And David Cameron(!). After the scandal, Sam Harmer decided that being a councillor wasn't worth it.
4. At least £680,000, with £30,000 on the kitchen alone. Remember, we're all in this together.

Origin of the specious

Miracle to relate, a creationist edition of Darwin has less than intelligent designs on the understanding of evolution, says Donald Room

More than 100,000 copies of Darwin's *Origin of Species: 150th Anniversary Edition*, published by the Bridge-Logos Foundation, were given away at schools in the USA on its release in 2009, and a lot more were distributed free in British universities in the second half of 2010. The subtitle "Special Introduction by Ray Comfort" was printed on the cover of the first 30,000 copies of this book, but dropped from the cover of subsequent print runs. In copies given out in Britain, the name of Ray Comfort, prolific author of more than sixty creationist books, is only mentioned once, at the end of the 50-page Special Introduction.

Creationists have often attempted to prohibit the teaching of evolution in American schools, but this is ruled unconstitutional. So now creationists campaign for "both sides of the argument" to be taught in biology classes. This is the first book presenting creationist arguments alongside the *Origin* to be given away free in large quantities, but not the first ever published. The blurb quotes from an earlier (1971) such work: "Belief in the theory of evolution is thus exactly parallel to belief in special creation – both are concepts which believers know to be true, but neither up to the present has been capable of proof." Not everyone would agree that knowledge derived from a study of natural objects is "exactly parallel" to knowledge derived from the conviction that ancient myth is literally true.

Why have such quantities of money and energy been spent on this and other creationist



Handing out the creationist version of Darwin's classic to US schoolchildren.

campaigns? The question is answered in a quotation from the atheist writer Penn Jillette (of the Penn and Teller magic act): "If I believed without a shadow of doubt that a truck was coming at you, and you didn't believe it ... there is a certain point where I tackle you. Similarly, if I sincerely believed that you would go to Hell, or whatever, if you did not embrace creationism, I would shout a warning. My belief that a truck is about to hit you, or that you are due for eternal torture, may be mistaken, nevertheless my motive is the wholly humanitarian motive of saving you from imminent danger."

In pursuit of this commendable intention, Ray Comfort seeks to convince his audience by using arguments which he must know are dishonest. For instance, he quotes passages from Hitler's *Mein Kampf* which assert that

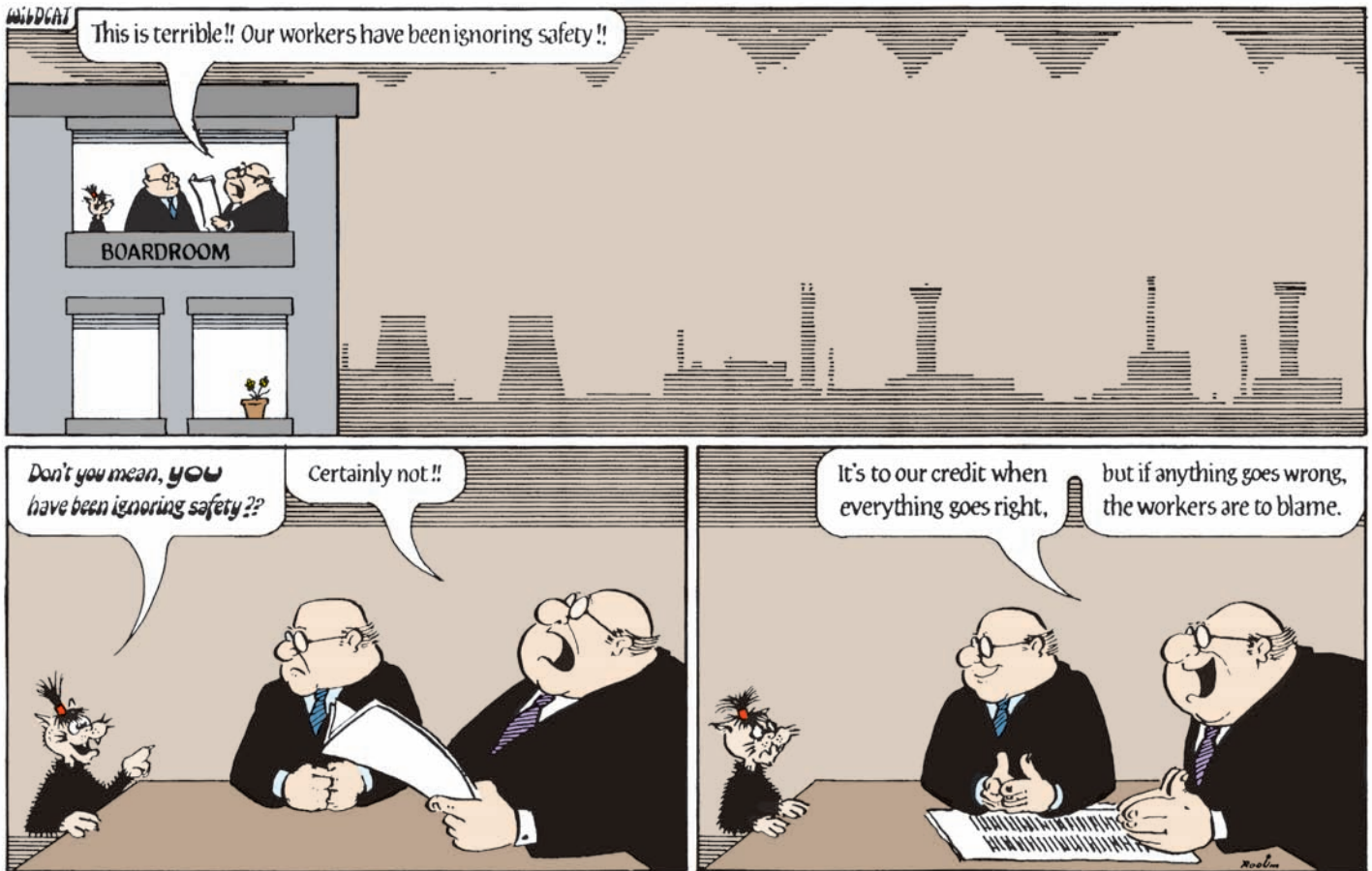
elimination of the less fit, the driving force of evolution, is "the will of Nature", implying that all who accept natural selection as a scientific theory agree with Hitler that it is also an ethical imperative. Comfort goes on to cite Hitler's list of extant human races in terms of right to survive, with Nordics at the top and Jews at the bottom, as if this is part of Darwin's own theory.

He quotes from Richard Dawkins: "Biology is the study of complicated things that give the appearance of having been designed for a purpose", and asserts that this means Dawkins "understands that something must have created everything." It means nothing of the sort, but the assertion might create a little confusion in those who are not thinking too carefully.

He uses a favourite device of creationist proselytes, which is to quote the first sentence only of two contiguous sentences by Darwin: "To suppose that the eye, with all its inimitable contrivances ... could have formed by natural selection, seems, I freely confess, absurd in the highest degree. Yet reason tells me, that if ... [summary of evidence] ... then the difficulty ... though insuperable by our imagination, can hardly be considered real." Darwin was writing in the 1850s, to intelligent readers for whom his theory might come as a shock. By quoting the first sentence but omitting the second, Comfort, and those he follows, contrive to give the false impression that Darwin doubted the validity of his own theory. Of course readers have the chance to check the quotation without moving from their chairs, as the text of the *Origin* is bound in the same volume;

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Review

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but this is not encouraged. There is a footnote reference to a 1971 edition of the *Origin* which ends with “p.”, as if a page number has accidentally been omitted, but no reference to the page number (174) in the current volume.

Comfort goes on to remark that Darwin “was right on one point. If a Designer is left out of the equation, such a thought is absurd in the highest degree.” But bringing a designer into the thought cannot possibly make it less absurd. Darwin accounts for the complexity of the living world by saying it developed within “the external conditions of life ... whilst this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity.” Comfort

purports to account for the complexity of an eye by saying it is produced by something infinitely more complex, which is no solution whatever to the problem of complexity.

A cynic might say, with Bakunin, that a ruler in Heaven is the best justification for a ruler on Earth, and that this is why some people want everybody to believe in God. It would be quite unfair to allege that this is Ray Comfort’s motive, but on the evidence of this book, it seems fair to say that he uses deliberate falsehoods in his campaign to get people to agree with him. The sincerity of his cause, and his readiness to devote his life to it, do not excuse him.

Charles Darwin’s *Origin of Species*, 150th Anniversary Edition, published by Bridge-Logos Foundation (Alachua, Florida), \$4.99 (but mostly distributed free).

THE QUIZ

1. Zimbabwean police sergeant Alois Mabhunu was arrested on 7th May and has been in custody since. What heinous crime had he committed?
2. What do Apple engineers call it when they are sent to work in the Foxconn factory that makes ipods in Shenzhen, China?
3. Nineteen year old Sam Harmer was elected to Frodsham Town Council in Cheshire after campaigning around a BMX park. Why didn’t he take up his seat?
4. We live in an age of austerity, so how much money has David Cameron spent on fitting out Downing Street to his posh tastes?

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