

CHARGES DROPPED

The unravelling of political policing

After several months the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), headed by Director of Public Prosecutions Kier Starmer, has decided to drop criminal proceedings against of 109 protesters involved in the occupation of Fortnum & Mason department store during the mass TUC demonstration on 26th March in central London. The activists, who were all part of a UK Uncut action to peacefully occupy the famous department store, were arrested en masse as they left the building and charged with aggravated trespass. In an unusual step the CPS issued a full statement explaining the seemingly contradictory decision to drop the charges against the majority of protesters.

In the carefully worded statement chief prosecutor Alison Saunders said: "I have concluded that there is sufficient evidence to provide a realistic prospect of conviction for the offence of aggravated trespass against all the defendants. However, in discontinuing these cases I have considered whether a prosecution is necessary in the public interest. I have decided that it is not."

Although this marks an impressive victory for the mainly young activists who were **page 3** ▶▶

LENS CAP ANARCHIST SQUIRREL



Scientists in California have discovered that certain animal species in the wild have a tendency to mimic the behavioural patterns and social groupings commonly found in human beings. It's thought the western gray squirrel with its anti-authoritarian approach to both its actions and lifestyle is the closest to the social make up of an 'anarchist'.

WORKERS BLACKLIST BREAKTHROUGH

Bricklayer Brian Higgins, a campaigner against the construction industry's unofficial blacklist, took his case to the European Union in an attempt to gain formal recognition of the unlawful practice.

Higgins, secretary of the Northampton branch of UCATT (the building workers union), led a delegation from the Blacklist Support Group, which included Steve Acheson and Dave Smith, to Brussels to hold talks with László Andor, Commissioner for Employment and Social Affairs, to discuss potential EU wide legislation to outlaw blacklisting.

Mr Andor was given documentary evidence from victimised union reps, including secret blacklist files kept about their activities as union safety reps in the British construction industry.

The files were compiled by the Consulting Association, suppliers of information to construction companies on specific people and union activity, and provide damning evidence that major multi-

national building firms systematically dismissed and victimised workers who raised concerns about health and safety issues or unpaid wages.

Steve Acheson, a blacklisted electrician and secretary of the Manchester contracting branch of UNITE, said: "We have been victimised by these firms just because we have stood up for safety issues".

Regulations banning blacklisting came into force in the UK last year but have been criticised by unions, employment law experts and campaigners as too lax and with too few rights of redress for affected individuals. There is no specific EU-wide legislation against blacklisting of individuals for safety reasons.

Consulting Association were found guilty of running an unlawful blacklisting service on building workers selling intelligence on trade unionists and political activists for more than 30 years.

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NEWS

NEWS IN BRIEF

FOOTBALL: The first corporate sponsors of FC United of Manchester, everyone's favourite punk football team, may have given much needed cash to the club but they won't be getting the company's name on the player's shirts.

"What we are against is putting commercial interests before those of the club" said Andy Walsh, the club's general manager. FC United, seen as a flagship club for many in grass roots football, have also launched their 'punk finance' concept – funding the club without input of big banks.

POLICE: Not content with beating schoolkids and people in wheelchairs during demonstrations, the police are now demanding to be rotated every 45 minutes when on riot duty, so that they can go to the toilet.

The police federation's health and safety officer Bryan Higgins claims that police need a toilet break every 45 minutes to stop them feeling grumpy during periods of prolonged public order duty – like kettling schoolkids for hours on end perhaps.

He also claims, astonishingly, that it's because they need to go that makes them act with "incivility, impoliteness and intolerance".

ANARCHIST: The gentleman who put a shaving foam pie in Rupert Murdoch's face during his questioning by the government's culture select committee on the phone hacking scandal at the *News of the World* has outed himself as an anarchist.

Jonathan May-Bowles (the name is a dead giveaway) may have adopted the posture of 'anarchist as court jester' (notable allies Chris Knight and Charlie Vietch), but when it is we are going to stop relying on the antics of weird individuals to make us look bad? Or should that be good?

RAIL: It seems one of the most militant transport unions, the RMT, is going on the offensive with talks of a merger with Transport Salaried Staffs' Association to create a rail super union. Whether this gives them any greater purchase we'll have to wait and see, one thing is clear it's certainly put the wind up Bullingdon boy Boris Johnson who has spent the majority of his tenure as London Mayor trying to make the Underground union free.

TECHNOLOGY: One tax avoider yet to be targeted by UK Uncut is the internet search giants Google. Their UK operation paid only £1.2 million in corporation tax last year despite generating a massive £2.15 billion in revenue.

The reason Google UK avoided paying proper tax is that it legally diverts as much as 90% of its UK revenue through Ireland. According to 2009 figures they paid just £3 million in tax in what should have been £190 million levy.

LENS CAP EVERYTHING'S GONE GREEN



Earth First! The ecological direct action movement have been keeping themselves busy. Not only have they put a new action update newsletter out and redesigned and upgraded their website, they have also finalised the date for this year's summer gathering – 10th to 15th August, somewhere in East Anglia. Check the website for all relevant info at <https://earthfirst.org.uk/>

Liverpool's people power

Residents of Cairns Street in Toxteth, Liverpool 8, defied private contractors by blockading the street on the morning of 11th July as they came to demolish a set of impressive Victorian houses as part of the areas 'regeneration' scheme. Locals insist the properties should be refurbished and that their views were ignored on the matter and as a result they sprang into action, quickly making homemade banners and preventing workmen from accessing the site. Property developers Lovell, accompanied by police, were met with peaceful yet determined resistance and had to abandon their plans for the day.

Residents, many of whom are from the riots of 1981 generation, have been holding regular all-day community markets to highlight the issue with stalls selling artwork by local artists, homemade bread and cakes, Caribbean cuisine and a bike repair session. They have also been holding vigils outside the houses on Kingsley Road at the end of Cairns Street.

The current actions stem from the Labour controlled council giving contracts to developers to knock the houses around Cairns Street, as part of a 'regeneration' process, which is Council-speak for demolishing the existing strong, sturdy housing stock to make cheaper, smaller higher rent houses that take up less space –

space that can then be sold off to the highest bidder. As one councillor put it: "The homes which are to be demolished will be replaced with three modern homes fit for the 21st century, as part of our aims to drive up the quality of housing in the area." Liverpool 8 has been blighted over the years with the constant boarding up and demolition of houses making parts of the area a permanent building site.

But this nothing new, the residents of Cairns Street and the surrounding few streets have been fighting the supposed 'regeneration' of the area for more than eighteen years. The Granby area of Toxteth would be row upon row of sub-standard new housing if it had not been for the fortitude of its remaining residents. Liverpool council continue using underhand tactics in their bid to move every single resident from the area, and constantly undermine the efforts of these people.

Stella Shackel from Cairns Street said, "These once beautiful large buildings have been left to rot, along with a lot of taxpayer-owned property, and are no worse than other buildings. The council have rushed it through without proper consultation of all neighbours affected." There is now Granby Four Streets Trust which was set up to offer an community-led alternative to the current council policy with the practical aim of making all the empty houses in the surrounding streets into homes again.

See page 12 for more successful people power protests.





Wobblies standing firm

IWW workers win big concessions after wildcat strike

Poorly paid cleaners working at the prestigious Guildhall, home of the City of London Corporation, have won a major victory against their bosses, the sub-contractor Ocean Contract Cleaning Ltd, in an ongoing dispute over pay and working conditions.

The cleaners, who are all members of the radical union Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), took direct action on 15th July refusing to go into work, instead holding an early morning demonstration outside the building. As a result not only did the company agree to pay all withheld back pay but opened up collective bargain negotiations with the IWW.

Previously the workers raised a collective grievance with Ocean Contract Cleaning to review the salaries for the past six months. The company duly ignored the request and

refused to participate in any collective bargaining process. As a result, in June 34 cleaners employed by Ocean took two days of industrial action as many workers had failed to receive wages over the last three months. The company promised to pay the overdue wages by the 20th June and so the dispute was suspended. However when the cleaners received their last pay packets, the company failed to keep their promises which resulted in the cleaners calling a new strike day for 15th July with a picket outside London Guildhall.

On the day itself, 21 out of the 35 cleaning workforce were on strike, arriving at 5.30am to picket outside their workplace. They were joined by cleaners from other sites, Colombian solidarity campaign, students and workers from University College London and SOAS, members of other unions including Unison and RMT as well as London IWW members. It was a lively event with workers shouting slogans, in Spanish and English, including 'No pay, no work', and even the local priest turning up with offers of coffee and use of the

church toilet for the strikers and their supporters.

After 8am two workers and two IWW union representatives were invited by the Guildhall management to negotiate inside, with Ocean representatives eventually coming to a settlement after several hours giving assurances about the unpaid wages.

According to the IWW the best thing about this protest was the determination and unity of the workers – despite intimidation from managers they remained solid throughout.

The cleaners of Guildhall are on incredibly low pay rates, £5.95 per hour, whilst working in one of the most expensive cities in Europe and receiving no sick pay or pension. According to the London Living Wage Unit this is officially poverty pay as the London Living Wage has been set at £8.30.

Alberto Durango, spokesperson for the cleaners said: "This is just the beginning of this struggle. The workers, currently paid the minimum wage, are determined to go on to fight for the living wage. Thanks to all who supported us, both at the protest and with solidarity messages."

Charges dropped

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involved in the action it raises a number of questions on the real purpose of the arrests and what bearing it has on the 30 other activists who continue to be part of a prosecution.

The Fortnum & Mason occupation was a major mass action instigated by UK Uncut, a direct action network with an anti-cuts agenda, who target high street stores to highlight their tax avoidance. Fortnum & Mason is owned by Whittington Investment Ltd who avoids paying some £10 million a year in tax.

It was clear that the state had two objectives in arresting 145 people on the day. Firstly as an intelligence gathering exercise, admitted as much by Lynne Owens, Assistant

Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police when giving evidence to Parliament. "It is why the fact that we arrested as many people as we did is so important to us because that obviously gives us some really important intelligence opportunities," and to deter people from participating in future UK Uncut activities. It was political policing at its most obtuse, and one that could not stand up to close legal scrutiny.

This in part is why the CPS was forced to drop the charges. The 30 people who remain charged with criminal offences are the ones the police and CPS consider 'ringleaders' directly involved in organising UK Uncut activities. It is this aspect and this aspect alone that the

CPS continue to pursue their prosecution.

This is the third high profile case where the CPS and Keir Starmer in particular, have come under serious criticism for decisions supposedly made 'independently'. Already the Court of Appeal have determined the convictions of the 20 environmentalists involved in the Ratcliffe-on-Soar power station protest was a miscarriage of justice, especially given the very active role the undercover police officer Mark Stone played. It was also Starmer who personally refused to charge Simon Harwood for the killing of Ian Tomlinson at the G8 protest, only to have to reverse his decision after the inquest concluded Tomlinson was unlawfully killed.

ANALYSIS

Norway massacre: a perspective

I'm sure many of you watched the scenes taking place in Norway with horror, and rightly so.

Particularly disturbing was the knee jerk reaction, reminiscent of the news coverage following the immediate aftermath of the Oklahoma bombings, the continual repetition that the incident had all the characteristics of an Islamist plot. The 'gates of Vienna' mindset tirades posted in the comments sections of online coverage (before they apprehended the white blonde suspect) made for particularly infuriating reading; page upon page of ranting amounting to nothing less than an incitement towards a Muslim/Asian Pogrom.

This prejudged notion of Muslim involvement lasted right up until the shocked exclamations that the gunman was blonde and of Norwegian appearance. The *Daily Express* still couldn't resist putting in a section about Jihadists and cartoons of the prophet Muhammed the next day, despite contrary evidence, and *The Sun* went with the even crasser 'Al-Qaeda Massacre, Norway's 9/11'. This coverage is merely a manifestation of a wider arching problem created by an amalgamation of factors created by politicians, the media and the far right all pursuing their own particular agendas which happen to have a convergence of mutual interest.

There is clearly a double standard involved in the reporting of terrorism in the mainstream media largely dependent upon motives and perceived aims. A clear example of this is the coverage of the Tea Party inspired would-be assassin of US congresswomen Gabrielle Gifford, Jared Loughner. Despite having clear political affiliations and using means that would be classed as terrorism by even the loosest of definitions applied to Islamic Extremists, he was barely ever described as such. The subsequent coverage followed the paradigm and similar characterisation of Timothy McVeigh, David Copeland (the Soho bomber) and undoubtedly Anders Behring Breivik; that of the insane lone gunman.

There appears to be reluctance in the immediate coverage following the Norway bombing and shooting to call him for what he



Above, rescue teams carry the body of a victim from Utoeya island; below, the aftermath of the Oslo bomb.

is, namely a right wing, Christian, conservative terrorist inspired by the resurgence of the far right in Europe and America. Despite clear right wing allegiances the media have persisted in portraying him as an insane individual and shown little will to analyse the underlying causes and factors which drove Breivik to commit these atrocities; such as their own innately Islamophobic and disproportionate news coverage of terrorism plots. Twitter and Facebook posts by Breivik have shown his admiration for the Tea Party movement and advocated a cultural European movement founded upon a similar basis. In his posts he also talks of starting a "cultural defence" street movement largely inspired by our very own EDL with whom he had contact.

As anarchists we should be above the exploitation of human suffering in order to gain political brownie points, however there is a clear link between the concessions made to the new forms of 'acceptable racism' since 2001 and its tacit acceptance by mainstream culture that has led to a legitimisation of such views which must be pointed out. With so much deference to authority people still often look to mainstream culture and figures to gauge which views are socially acceptable and which ones are not. The platform given to groups such as the EDL and BNP has allowed their lies to become acceptable norms, of which the aforementioned media coverage and continual emphasis on the ethnicity of the perpetrator are just one manifestation.

This acceptance has been endorsed by politicians who seek to politically posture as tough by using immigration as a vote winner (see *Black Flag* issue 232 'Victims of the political game'), keep people occupied with banalities and garner support for unpopular foreign policy by dehumanising the 'enemy'. With David Cameron even making dangerous

speeches such as his infamous 'multiculturalism has failed', speech on the day of a major EDL mobilisation in Luton. Cameron and the Tories (not renowned for their tolerance) have literally handed the far right PR material; parts of the speech were even quoted on National Front literature in the Scottish Elections last May. The media pander to this type of sentiment and even, debatably, cause it in part with their sensationalist stories and even outright lies to sell papers. They then feign ignorance at what could have possibly driven this cultural nationalist to fear for the future of his culture and country so much so that he would resort to such abhorrent acts in an effort to help his country?

Together politicians and the media have created an atmosphere where prejudice sells, which is becoming evident with the far right making gains throughout Europe and creating a popular 'European Caliphate' and 'demographic time bomb' myth, which is now permeating itself into society as a legitimate view. This Norwegian incident and the attack on Gabrielle Gifford should draw attention to the difference between free speech and incitement to attacks on minority populations and politicians who, meaning well, may be defending multiculturalism.

I also hope this will clearly indicate the pitfalls of tolerating bigotry in the name of freedom of speech and act as a catalyst towards the rejection of the edifices of 'respectable racism' such as the BNP and EDL. I can already see their counter argument to the idea that Breivik's actions are a manifestation of the vicious myths and lies they spread: this was one unrepresentative isolated incident, not all nationalists are extremists, the irony of which appears to be lost on nationalists and the far right.

Stefan Knust



IN BRIEF

Bob Miller

Three hundred people attended the funeral of Bob Miller in Manchester on 1st July, including a contingent of 50 members of the Anarchist Federation (see the obituary in the last issue of *Freedom*, 16th July). This was testimony to the wide respect Bob had earned gained both within the movement, through his work as a teacher, and in other spheres of life. His partner Sally, his son and his daughter, and his oldest friend and comrade Mike from the early days of Bob's political activity onwards, gave moving testimonies to Bob's life and activities.

NH

No Class (My Arse)

They say that class don't matter,
But that just cannot be,
The jury said they're innocent,
They each had a degree.
No previous bad character,
And references galore,
A soldier and a nurse for friends,
Well who could ask for more?
They say we are all equal,
It's simply just not true,
The way the law applies to me,
Does not apply to you.
We all sat in the courtroom,
Accused of the same crime,
You're getting on with your life,
I'm in here doing time.
I'm angry at the system,
The judges and the law,
That sit in ivory towers,
The rich above the poor.
This is our 'big society',
It isn't worth a cus,
There'll always be one law for them,
Another one for us.

Sean Cregan

A poem written in HMP Wormwood Scrubs by antifascist prisoner Sean Cregan who is currently serving 21 months, along with several others (see list below), for his political activities.

Freedom continues to support those imprisoned for their political activities and we are happy for those inside to write for *Freedom* and will gladly publish any articles, opinion pieces, or just simple rants from those currently residing at Her Majesty's pleasure. We also encourage people to write to those inside as all communication is welcome and part of the process of political solidarity. Plus it lets those inside know that they are not forgotten and are supported throughout their time inside.

The prisoners are:

- Andy Baker A5768CE
- Thomas Blak A5728CE
- Sean Cregan A5769CE
- Phil De Sousa A5766CE
- Ravinder Gill A5770CE
- Austen Jackson A5729CE

They are all currently being held at: HMP Wormwood Scrubs, PO Box 757, Du Cane Road, London, W12 0AE.

A critic replies to Chris Knight

Give up making yourself look an idiot

When I saw Chris Knight had written an article responding to his critics, it seemed like something worth reading and replying to. Predictably enough, almost everything about it pissed me off...

He claims that his project is "to help break through the wall of censorship erected by the mainstream media. Our project is to break out of the middle class bubble altogether and reach the working class."

I have a limited amount of sympathy for this – I've argued that anarchists should engage with the mainstream media more in the past, although I also think it's worth being aware of the potentially life-ruining effects the media can have. But, at the end of the day, I think there's only one way that's really effective for reaching working-class people: actually *talking* to them. And by that, I mean talking to people about their lives and things that are relevant to them, not hunter-gatherers in the neolithic era or top-hatted zombie clowns.

He claims that getting the *Evening Standard* to run an article titled 'Anarchist extremists plan to hi-jack TUC march' should be seen as a triumph, since there's no way they'd ever print anything more straightforwardly positive. I might have some sympathy for this idea, if it wasn't for the fact that it's demonstrably untrue, since the same paper also ran an article with the headline 'Anarchists are students, NHS staff and union members'. Equally, while they're not an anarchist group as such, it's worth noting that UK Uncut have managed to get papers as far to the right as the *Daily Mail* to write fairly sympathetic reports of (sort of) direct action

against the cuts. So, the idea that Chris Knight's style of interaction with the media is the only one that can get positive results is nonsense, since others are managing to do it without coming across as maniacs.

Knight claims that "anything which fosters the impression that the ruling class is invincible is reactionary".

I think he has a point here, but the effect of his attempted Royal Wedding protest was not to make the ruling class look weak: instead, it was given at easy chance to demonstrate how good it is at repression, and its victims appeared powerless to fight back. Unfortunately for him, those moments when the ruling class really do look weak, and we start to win, usually come out of campaigns that engage directly with everyday life, the sort of activity that Knight seems to regard as "worthy and boring" – for instance, the campaigns which have saved care homes in Nottingham and Sheffield, and saved free travel for the disabled in Reading. If we're going to have any relevance at all, anarchists need to be a part of these campaigns – we need to be funny, and interesting and creative, but we also need a deadly serious desire to win. Anything which fosters the impression that anti-capitalists are incoherent nutcases with a shaky grasp on reality is reactionary; and this, as far as I can tell, seems to be Knight's main role.

CP

Cautiously Pessimistic blog sent us this article which we have mercilessly cut to give a flavour of the critique. Their fuller and more frank criticism of Knight can be accessed on their blog at <http://nothingiseverlost.wordpress.com/> We shall put the full unedited article up on the *Freedom* website. We will also give our considered response to Knight in a future issue.



INTERNATIONAL

NEWS IN BRIEF

CHILE: There has been a week of violent protests in Dichato against the government's lack of response to the devastation caused by last year's tsunami. Victims of the disaster are still waiting for assistance in rebuilding their communities. The residents' demands include housing for all regardless of financial status, reconstruction of the local school and fire station along with food vouchers. "We no longer fear going out into the streets," Ximena Toledo, speaker for the residents said "If there are not solutions by today, the future protests will be more radical."

SPAIN: Taking inspiration from the Indignados protest movement residents of the multicultural neighbourhood of Lavapiés in Madrid have started fighting back against the constant harassment of the police. Around 200 locals and activists surrounded the police station to demand they stop harassing immigrants in the poor neighbourhood. It was the second such anti-police protest in Lavapiés in a week, with locals chanting at police 'Get out of the neighbourhood' as they rallied around to prevent an arrest.

USA: Hundreds of dock workers crowded onto railroad tracks to block a mile-long train from delivering grain to the EGT-owned terminal to the Port of Longview, Washington State. It was the third major protest in a week in what has become an increasingly volatile dispute between EGT and the International Longshore and Warehouse Union over the use of non-unionised labour. Executives say they can save \$1 million by employing non-union labour, at lower rates and without hard won concessions.

VIETNAM: A welder who was sacked along with 400 co-workers responded by squatting a crane at the Hanjin shipyard in the southern city of Busan. Kim Jin-suk protest began in January after a strike by 700 workers following the announcement of mass layoffs at the shipyard. She has remained on top of the 115ft high crane now for over 190 days and is refusing to come down until the company reinstates the sacked workers. A mass demonstration in the city saw over 9,000 people come out in support.

YEMEN: As part of the wider anti-government protests taking place across the country, 100 journalists took to the streets against harassment and censorship by authorities and demanded a freer, more open press. 'Freedom of the press' in the UK means the right to illegal phone hacking and cocaine binges with senior politicians – in Yemen however journalists working for independent newspapers are routinely attacked by security forces, intimidated and assaulted. Some daily paper distribution has to be smuggled out of the city to avoid confiscation, which could lead to arrest and detention.

LENS CAP CARLO GIULIANI PARK



On the tenth anniversary of the killing of an anti-capitalist protester by Italian police at the anti G8 summit protest in Genoa, a memorial park was opened in Kreuzberg, Berlin, to commemorate his death, and as permanent reminder of the power of resistance and the fragility of human life (see page 13 for what happened to the young protester).

No Borders comrades go free

On the 12th July three people from Calais No Borders walked away free from the court in Boulogne after the judge found no evidence against them on charges of 'rebellion' (violence against the police) and 'illegal occupation' following a violent raid by police on the famous Africa House squat.

The massive squatted building complex near the centre of Calais was home many hundreds of immigrants, those with 'sans papiers', as well as No Borders activists who worked alongside them. It was eventually evicted in June after a sustained campaign of intimidation by the local authorities and police.

The three were arrested on the morning of 21st April after vanloads of border police accompanied by the notorious CRS riot police attacked the squat and arresting all those without documentation. The two people acting as observers filming the raid

were targeted by police, had their camera smashed, were physically assaulted then arrested as was a third observer who went to their aid.

The judge eventually dismissed the charges against the three as there was no evidence against them although they were found guilty of 'resisting fingerprints', but received no penalty.

According to No Borders the court case brought attention to the French state's abuse of its legal obligations to refugees under 'human rights' legislation – many of the migrant squatters in Calais have claimed asylum in France and are legally entitled to accommodation, which the state fails to provide. Africa House is now in the process of demolition, but No Borders Calais is determined to continue to fight for the abolition of all state borders.

Notes from the US

Environment

In Montana in early July, an oil pipeline operated by Exxon Mobil ruptured beneath the famous Yellowstone River, leaking as much as 42,000 gallons of crude oil. Although the company originally claimed that the spill affected only 10 miles of the river, a distance of 150 miles was soon revealed as accurate. In May officials had expressed concern that the integrity of the line could be at risk as the Yellowstone River started to rise; as a result it was temporarily shut down in May. A year ago the Department of Transportation also notified Exxon Mobil of seven potential safety violations and other faults.

In mid July over a hundred environmental

activists held a lively protest (five people were arrested) in the office of Montana governor Brian Schweitzer against several polluting projects across the state. In particular Schweitzer was pressed to stop the building of TransCanada's Keystone XL pipeline and of Exxon Mobil's megaload shipments to the Alberta Tar Sands.

Labour

Public trade unions in Wisconsin filed a new lawsuit in early July against Republican governor, Scott Walker's, anti-collective bargaining law. Two chapters of the AFL-CIO in Madison allege that the law is

Bash Back! No more hell-raising

The state's final clamp down on the queer anarchist action group

The Lansing chapter of the queer anarchists Bash Back! Network have been served a court injunction that permanently prevents them from disrupting religious services anywhere in the United States. The fourteen named individuals are also permanently prohibited from conducting protests on the private property of any place of worship in the United States, or destroying property at any place of worship in the United States. These far reaching measures were handed down to the group by the US District Court of Michigan after they staged an audacious protest that the notoriously homophobic Mount Hope Church.

The protest took place in November 2008, when 30 members of Bash Back! Lansing disrupted the Sunday service at Mount Hope Church. According to the group, people dressed in pink and black, equipped with a megaphone, black flags, picket signs and an upside-down pink cross began demonstrating outside the church. A team that had been hiding under the pews in the closed-off balcony dropped a banner and pulled back the curtains to reveal 'IT'S OKAY TO BE GAY! BASH BACK!' Another group threw over a thousand fliers to the entirety of the congregation. Queers began making out in front of the pastor. And within a matter of minutes, everyone had evaded the guards and made their escape. According to one media report the protestors also threw condoms, glitter, confetti, and pink fabric. There were no arrests.



The group, who were known for masking up in pink bandanas, declared afterwards "Let it be known: So long as bigots kill us in the streets, this pack of wolves will continue TO BASH BACK!"

Past Bash Back! actions have included demonstrations in memory of Duanna Johnson, a transwoman who was brutally beaten by Memphis police officers and murdered while in the process of suing the police department, confronting neo-Nazis who were counter-protesting a Pride march in Milwaukee, plus when Nike became the co-sponsors of the Memphis Pride, Bash Back! flyposted along the route of the march condemning Nike's sweatshop practices and mainstream gay culture before unfurling a banner on the day declaring 'Queer Liberation, not Queer Consumerism'.

The network itself has ceased to function in an organised form, although individual chapters continue to exist autonomously. It does however leave behind an interesting legacy. At the time of Bash Back!'s formation in 2007, there were no national organisations or networks specifically for queer anarchists. Points of unity were adopted that emphasised the rejection of capitalism and imperialism and all forms of state power and perhaps most significantly their refusal to condemn actions on the grounds that the state deems it to be illegal, i.e. violent. It was this uncompromising stance, along with provocative images of people masked up holding baseball bats and sledgehammers that earned Bash Back! their fearless reputation for confrontation. The recent court injunction is perhaps the state finally acting on that reputation.

Notes from the US

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unconstitutional because it leaves public employees such as police and firefighters out. In so doing it violates their rights to equal protection. At the same time opponents of the law point out that public workers could lose their jobs to prisoners from the state because of the threatened changes to collective bargaining practices. Prisoners have previously been used for certain projects; now there is greater flexibility in assigning them to jobs which were previously reserved for unionised employees.

Media

The rabid, poorly-informed, destructive, racist, darling of the right, Glenn Beck, is off the air. Beck hosted his final TV show on Rupert Murdoch's Fox 'News' in early July. He now plans to launch his own 'internet broadcast'. An advertising boycott was launched after one typical Beck pronounce-

ment: "The President, I think, has exposed himself as a guy, over and over and over again, who has a deep-seated hatred for white people or the white culture."

In a positive step to combat prejudice the governor of California, Jerry Brown, signed into law in mid July a measure mandating the inclusion of materials highlighting the achievements of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in the state's social science education.

Others fighting racism include 15,000 people who gathered recently in Georgia to protest a new immigration law there. In common with other such laws throughout the country, it aims to crack down on undocumented immigrants by legalising 15-year prison sentences and US\$250,000 (£157,000) fines for individuals who use false identification to secure a job.

Louis Further

Six Anarchists jailed

A Greek court has found six members of an insurrectionary anarchist group guilty of terrorism charges and handed down stiff jail terms for their alleged involvement in a series of bombings targeting two Greek politicians and a ministry building.

The five young men and a woman were found guilty of belonging to the Conspiracy Nuclei of Fire group, and received sentences ranging from 11 to 25 years in prison. No one was injured in the 2009 bombings.

The group has also claimed responsibility for sending mail bombs to foreign embassies and European officials, with one parcel reaching the office of German Chancellor Angela Merkel before being destroyed.

Judges acquitted another two defendants of all charges. The sentences followed a six-month trial at a special courthouse in a maximum security Athens jail.

FEATURE

Peter Kropotkin and Radical Ecology

From past to present, Kropotkin's impact on the modern ecological movement

PART TWO

In the previous edition, I outlined briefly the various components of Kropotkin's political ideology. In this final instalment I will detail the four main philosophies guiding radical environmental groups in existence today along with their views on revolutionary change and sabotage tactics, and finally conclude with some of Kropotkin's own views on the use of sabotage and 'propaganda by deed' as a means of achieving social revolution. But let us first look at the four main philosophies of radical ecology: deep ecology, social ecology, eco-feminism, and bioregionalism.

In 1973, Norwegian philosopher, Arne Naess, developed the philosophy of deep ecology which is characterised by a more holistic approach to nature, exemplified by the preservation ethic as well as the writings of Aldo Leopold and Rachel Carson. Douglas Long writes in his book, *Ecoterrorism*, of Naess stating: "Naess called for a fundamental change in human consciousness that acknowledged the intrinsic value of all natural things, the biocentric equality of all species, and the 'submergence of the human self in a larger natural self'."¹

Deep ecology rejects an anthropocentric view of the world and states that humans are not the center of life on earth, but instead, only make up a small part of it, and that all living things have an equal right to live and blossom. Naess believed that anyone who subscribed to this biocentric view was obliged to try and implement necessary changes to basic economic, technological, and ideological structures.

Now, to move on to the second philosophy of the four: eco-feminism. Eco-feminism was

developed in the 1970s from a synthesis of feminist and environmental philosophies and tactical ideas. The term was coined in 1974 to represent women's potential for bringing about an ecological revolution to ensure human survival on the planet. The view of eco-feminism, as stated by Long, is "based on the analysis of environmental problems from the perspective of the feminist critique of patriarchal systems, as well as on attempts to offer alternative systems intended to liberate both women and nature from oppression."²

Now let us move on to the third philosophy: social ecology. Primarily, social ecology was the invention of American anarchist philosopher, Murray Bookchin, who was inspired by Kropotkin and other various anarchists. "Bookchin concluded that environmental problems could not be solved in a free-market, capitalist society, because such hierarchical and authoritarian social, economic, and political structures allow humans to dominate others and nature."³ Bookchin argues that, instead of dominating nature, humans should emulate it, which, characterised by a form of cooperation, or mutual aid, among organisms that furthers evolutionary goals.

Finally, we move to bioregionalism. Long writes that bioregionalism "is a synthesis of countercultural philosophies such as: back-to-the-land communalism, social anarchism, appropriate technology, and feminism."⁴ It is considered by its proponents to be a means through which Bookchin's theory of social ecology can be implemented.

Now that we have covered the four main philosophies guiding radical environmental thought, it is important to point out that all four of these views all advocate some sort of revolution. They all go further than simply advocating for more governmental regulation. All of them advocate dramatic changes in lifestyle, as well as socio-economic and political structures.

Now we must move on to describe various eco-terrorist groups and their methods of realising their goals. Before going into detail on various eco-terrorist groups, it would be wise to give a definition of just exactly what eco-terrorism is. The FBI defines it thusly: "The use or the threatened use of violence of a criminal nature against innocent victims or property by an environmentally oriented, sub national group for environmental-political reasons, or aimed at an audience beyond the target, often of a symbolic nature."⁵

The first group we'll cover is the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society, hereafter referred to as SSCS. The former Greenpeace member, Paul Watson founded SSCS along with other activists because they believed activists such as themselves needed more tools and tactics than simply the civil disobedience that Greenpeace had been practicing. Watson and the other members



of SSCS believe activists need to utilise tactics such as sabotage to achieve their goals.

Quoting from the SSCS website, it reads: "Sea Shepherd uses innovative direct-action tactics to investigate, document, and take action when necessary to expose and confront illegal activities on the high seas."⁶

Earth First! was formed in 1979, and their website reads: "We believe in using all the tools in the tool box, ranging from grassroots organising and involvement in the legal process to civil disobedience and monkey wrenching."⁷ From Earth First! came the next and final group we shall examine, the Earth Liberation Front.

The Earth Liberation Front/Animal Liberation Front, hereafter referred to as ELF/ALF, was founded in Brighton, England, in 1992 by several Earth First! activists who refused to abandon sabotage as a tactic when others wished to mainstream the movement. Long writes: "Extremists who act in the name of the ELF/ALF operate in secrecy and in small independent cells with no identifiable leader or hierarchy. There are no membership lists, no annual fees, and no magazines or journals."⁸ Through the 1990s and early into the first decade of the twenty-first



Environmentalism



century the FBI had declared the ELF/ALF to be the most dangerous domestic terrorist threat to the United States.

Now we must move on to detail Kropotkin's views on terrorism.

Kropotkin proclaims his views on terrorism quite clearly and succinctly in his autobiography, *Memoirs of a Revolutionist*. He writes: "Terrorism was called into existence by certain special conditions of the political struggle at a given historical moment. It has lived, and has died. It may revive and die out again."⁹ Terrorism itself is seen as a natural occurrence, and in fact may be necessary for change. So, anarchists then should not fear utilising terroristic means to achieve their desired ends. As far as Kropotkin was concerned, if the state utilised violence to maintain its authority, then the people had a right to use violence to take away that authority.

Caroline Cahm, in her book, *Kropotkin and the Rise of Revolutionary Anarchism: 1872–1886* quotes Kropotkin saying: "...an act of revolt should be a serious act of war – not a dramatic gesture,"¹⁰ and "preliminary acts of revolt were necessary before a full-scale revolution could take place."¹¹ Cahm

goes on to say "anarchists ... sought to awaken the popular spirit of revolt for the violent expropriation of property and the disorganisation of the state, by theoretical propaganda and above all by insurrectional acts."¹² Cahm quotes Kropotkin further, stating: "The act accomplished in one locality becomes itself the most powerful means of propaganda."¹³ And finally, Cahm quotes Kropotkin saying: "This would be a living act of propaganda: The idea will not be written down, put in a newspaper or picture, any more than it will be sculptured in marble, carved in stone or cast in bronze: it will walk in flesh and blood, living before the people."¹⁴

One can see from this then that Kropotkin's ideas for spreading anarchist propaganda by deed, as well as by theoretical means, should always ultimately be directed towards a future revolution, and that those who participate in these acts of revolt will be the ones who shape the direction that the revolution will take. Of course, the very name, 'propaganda by deed,' that Kropotkin developed and advocated lies very much within the definition of eco-terrorism that the FBI provides as stated above. In Kropotkin's eyes, the terroristic act is propaganda. By carrying out a terroristic act, you illuminate problems within the existing system by shining a spotlight on the specific issue, and the act also demonstrates to the people what and how they can act themselves.

To reference this to popular culture, the film, *V for Vendetta* depicts a masked hero living in London in the not too distant future, in which England has dissolved into a fascist state. The main character, V – who is labelled a terrorist by the fascist authorities – has the goal of blowing up the parliament building because it is a symbol of political power. In one scene, V goes into a speech to Natalie Portman's character, Evi Hammond, about how the building is a symbol, as is the act of destroying it. V professes that by blowing up parliament, this in turn can inspire hope among the masses, showing them the deficiencies of the existing system, and a possible path forward to change. This is propaganda by deed.

So, in summation, what modern environmental groups do to further their goals is no different than what Kropotkin and V were advocating by suggesting acts of revolt as a means to propagate their ideas. So, I hope I have succeeded in adequately detailing the correlations between Kropotkin's theories and the theories and practices of the various radical environmental eco-terrorist groups of today. Kropotkin's influence goes well beyond the philosophical contributions that Bookchin and other ecologists have proved, and perhaps his most chilling contributions to the radical environmental movement are his ideas for revolution, and insurrectional acts, which I have attempted

to detail in the preceding pages.

In writing this paper, I have not tried to make any ethical judgments about any of the people or ideas presented here, and I have tried to limit my own biases as much as possible, though, given the historical climate we find ourselves in, with respect to climate change and the continued despoliation of nature, I find it difficult to believe that eco-terrorist acts and groups will disappear anytime in the near future, or, if anything, only intensify. And I believe it is there which lays the importance of any future study in this area. In order to understand the aspirations of a certain group with political and ideological goals, it is necessary to understand where these aspirations have their roots, and that is perhaps how one can better understand how to address the issues raised by eco-terrorists who really are a product of the evolutionary chain of anarchist thought. So, simply to neglect having an adequate understanding of how something develops is unproductive for finding solutions, and because, to quote another radical work, "in reality, everything involves everything else."¹⁵

Trent Trepanier

1 Douglas Long, *Ecoterrorism*, page 20.

2 Long, *Ecoterrorism*, page 21.

3 *Ibid.*, page 22.

4 Long, *Ecoterrorism*, page 22.

5 *Ibid.* pages 3–4.

6 Information attained at SSCS website: www.seashepherd.org

7 Information attained from Earth First! website: www.earthfirst.org

8 Long, *Ecoterrorism*, pages 45–46.

9 Kropotkin, *Memoirs*, page 297.

10 Cahm, *Revolutionary Anarchism*, page 103.

11 *Ibid.*, pages 106–07.

12 *Ibid.*, page 111.

13 *Ibid.*, page 126.

14 *Ibid.*, page 84.

15 The Invisible Committee, *The Coming Insurrection*, page 97.



COMMENT

ABOUT FREEDOM

ANGEL ALLEY

Workmen are continuing their scaffolding work on the property above at the entrance to Angel Alley, but don't worry, there is still full access to the shop and despite the inconvenience and looking like a discarded Whitechapel art gallery 'installation art' piece, albeit one with men in hard hats and hi-vis jackets traipsing up and down upon it, we are still very much open for business.

Talking of workmen, it also looks like we will be getting a new kitchen space in the Autonomy Club. For those who have dared venture into our recently refurbished art space/meeting room on the second floor (Freedom's very own white cube) will not have failed to notice the rather sorry sight of the ageing and battered white cast iron sink in the corner near the damp patch. The sink has seen one too many years venerable service in the name of anarchist cleanliness and design aesthetics – definitely a contender for the Road to Wigan Pier retro chic look. Hopefully by the end of August work will be done and washing up will once again become a pleasure for our legion of volunteers and building users.

In shop terms we are turning over a new leaf with promises to make sure the place in swept and dusted on a daily basis. The shop's able proprietor is committed to ensuring the place will be giving Waterstone's a run for its money in terms of efficiency, friendliness, and that all important anarchist shopping experience.

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NEXT ISSUE

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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

In Bexleyheath, in the suburbs of London, there is a large headquarters building, visible from the A2 as it sweeps towards London from Dartford. It's been empty for a few years now, but it used to be the headquarters of the Woolwich Building Society. The Woolwich was closed a few years ago after it was bought by Barclays Bank, and now survives solely as Barclays' mortgage brand.

The few years it has been empty have not been kind to it. Already, there are teasels and poppies well established between cracks in the pavement. A dilapidated sign outside warns that the site is used for police dog training, but there is little sign of life. Tesco's have applied to build a superstore there, perhaps inevitably, to compete with the three other supermarkets within a mile, including the country's largest Sainsburys. Local people are in opposition, citing concerns about traffic on the narrow roads nearby, and so far seem to be winning.

If it doesn't end up as a retail development, the site is likely to be a white elephant unless used for housing. It's too far from any train stations to actually work as a headquarters and the roads wouldn't take the traffic.

But why is there this big empty space in Bexleyheath? Building societies were a product of the nineteenth century workers movement, where better-off workers banded together to save and buy houses. The areas they were strongest in are often those associated with the co-operative movement and other forms of working class self-organisation, often with links to non-conformism – hence a strength in areas like West Yorkshire, the Midlands and East Anglia, and South London.

A brief trawl of a history of building societies found them named for Greenwich, Bermondsey, Blackheath, Lee & Lewisham, Sydenham, Lambeth, Peckham, Camberwell (which became South London), Southwark, Effra, Rotherhithe and Bromley. Gradually,

they closed or merged, I can remember the Greenwich and Lambeth being absorbed by the Portman, itself swallowed by Nationwide. The process of concentration accelerated in the 1990s after they were allowed to demutualise and become banks. This was aided by carpetbaggers, people who opened accounts simply to get a pay off when it was sold. All of the building societies that demutualised no longer exist, surviving as brands of banks, where they survive at all.

Make no mistake, these have always been capitalist institutions, and not always helpful to their customers or members. But what was thrown away in a rush for speculative fortune was a different way of doing things. When I was in my teens, my parents got me to open an account with the Woolwich. It was the local building society, and they thought that being able to show that I had saved properly would stand me in good stead if the time ever came for me to borrow. This is not the society we live in any more. No one in your bank or building society knows you, you are only an entry in a database, with a corresponding entry in a credit ratings agency's files determining whether you will ever be able to borrow. The jobs at the local building societies have gone, replaced by call centres.

These changes are part and parcel of how capitalism works, how different are building societies now? The biggest, Nationwide, has just pulled out of Lewisham and Catford, despite the Council asking them not to. Unless they've got a particular beef with the council, this decision is solely motivated by commercial concerns. It seems that this particular institution, with its roots in mutual aid and self-help, has turned its back on the poorest in the search for more profit, even though their adverts boast of not having shareholders. Perhaps the problem is with capitalism itself, rather than the shareholders?



FEEDBACK

Lucian Freud

Reports of the death of Lucian Freud remind me of a talk given by Tony Gibson to the London Anarchist Group in 1955, about methods of evading conscription, such as going on the run, demonstrating or feigning ill-health, and convincing Conscientious Objection Tribunals (“Of course there is genuine conscientious objection, but a Tribunal is not the place to express it”).

Lucian Freud’s method, Tony alleged, was to show exaggerated enthusiasm for being conscripted, such that he was diagnosed as mentally ill, and rejected.

“Please let me join the army, Sir! Please send me to the front, Sir! Oh, please, Sir! I long to die for Britain, Sir!”

“Steady on, lad. What’s your name?”

“Freud.”

Donald Roomm

New social centre

A site for the grassroots social centre in Birmingham. The Whit Marley Building has been left empty for a number of years. Much has been stripped out and the building is slowly deteriorating. Buildings like this are part of Birmingham’s heritage, we want to take care of it while it is unused and put it to use as a community centre.

We are currently doing up the building and creating meeting spaces which we want to let groups use for free. Some of us are university students, some of us are teachers and we aim to provide free A level and GCSE tuition in most subjects once the building has been done up. We are aiming to run a ‘Free Shop’ in which people will be able to drop off unused items for others to take for free.

We want to make a point about waste; Birmingham has the most abandoned buildings in the country and sadly the highest rates of homelessness. We live in a society that is intensely wasteful we are doing this because we want something that is visibly the opposite.

We all have strong political convictions; we live in times and a country where the whims of media barons are given more attention by governments than ordinary people. Viable and profitable pensions are being raided to give money to the rich, education is again being made a preserve of the few... we want change and if you think like us come join us.
Birmingham Social Centre, 10 Ivy Road, Birmingham, B30 2NX
<http://birminghamsocialcentre.wordpress.com/>

Feminist Library

The ‘Writers Space’ at the Feminist Library is for feminist writers, poets, students and all others who would like to come and write in company of like-minded people and be inspired by the feminist books surrounding us. It will run the first Saturday of each month from 1.30pm to 5pm. The feminist fiction and poetry reading group will also be running from 4pm to 5pm on the same day. If you have a favourite book or poem that you would like to share something about, and/or an idea for a novel or poetry for a group read, please bring it with you. For more info email: feminsitwritersspace@yahoo.co.uk.

An exciting new online resource has recently been launched: the Women’s Liberation Movement Music Archive. The project documents the bands, musicians and musical projects that were part of, or influenced by, the great burgeoning of cultural creativity generated by the Women’s Liberation Movement of the 1970s and 80s. This work-in-progress collection comprises testimonies and interviews, discographies, gigographies and memorabilia including photographs, videos, recordings, flyers, press clippings and posters, plus links to ongoing women’s music-making and feminist activism. The project is an independent, voluntary and (as yet) unfunded venture. Archive co-coordinators Dr Deborah Withers and Frankie Green believe the achievements of these music-makers should be mapped and celebrated.

All women who were involved in women’s music – as solo artists, in bands, as DJs, MCs, in distribution networks, recording studios, photographers, journalists, events organisers, etc. – are invited to contact and contribute to the project.

Contact: wmmusicarchive@gmail.com
Feminist Library, 5a Westminster Bridge Road, London SE1 7XW
www.feministlibrary.co.uk

Francisco Maroto

Not such a well known name these days even in Granada, his birthplace, yet he was one of the most celebrated anarchists in his day, not locally or in Andalusia but in the whole of Spain. His name cropped up in the Granada newspapers virtually every day: he represented the Woodworkers Unions of Granada and Alicante at CNT conferences; and during the civil war he ended up leading a column called after himself. And his arrest by Stalinists during the civil war was one of the root causes of the clashes in Barcelona in May 1937, as minuted in a report from CNT National Committee.

Maroto was in Alicante when the *coup d’état* in July 1936 occurred. Together with other local social and political forces, the CNT decided to raise columns of militias to liberate the towns that had fallen to fascists. On 7th August 1936, 270 militants (of both sexes) set off from Alicante, with trucks and other vehicles, under Maroto’s leadership. En route they were quickly joined by lots of refugees and fighters itching for action until soon their numbers had swollen to 600. They entered the province of Granada where the main city and plains had fallen to the fascists, even though the province had not, having been held by the populace, militians from the mines in Alquife and other anarchist and socialist activists and militants.
From the July issue of the *Kate Sharpley Library bulletin* #67 (50p or \$1) available from Freedom bookshop, or directly from Kate Sharpley Library, BM Hurricane, London WC1N 3XX.

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GETTING ACTIVE

PRISON NEWS

It comes as no great surprise to hear that the Coalition are to sell off eight state-sector prisons to the highest bidder in the latest round of 'market-testing' of so-called 'failing prisons', thereby continuing and expanding on the programme of progressive privatisation of the prison system that New Labour toe-dipped and tested the water for with the HMP Birmingham 'marketisation' project. Even the choice of prisons to be privatised is fairly predictable, but it is the timing of the announcement and the size of the 'market-testing' that are significant.

The previous 2009 round of 'market-testing' of four prisons had seen two remain with their current operators and new-build HMP Featherstone 2 going to G4S, but, most controversially, the Prison Officers' Association-stronghold of HMP Birmingham handed over to the private sector (G4S again, see *Freedom Prison News*, 7th May). Much was expected of potential union action following the privatisation announcement in May, with talk of a national work-to-rule and wildcat strikes (prison officers being banned from striking) over the immediate loss of 130 jobs and the apparently direct challenge to the POA's power, but threats of judicial review and a national ballot came, very quietly one has to say, to absolutely nothing.

So, with that 'bastion of working class trades union militancy' (every socialist newspaper you have ever read) rendered impotent and not having needed to call in any of the military personnel who had been specially trained up in advance of the announcement, Ken Clarke and his ConDem chums have obviously decided to move in for the kill. And, despite the public pronouncement that the selection was "based on a wide range of criteria including the potential for efficiency improvements, service reform and innovation, not on the basis of poor performance," it is clear that most of the 6,000-plus prison places are being hived off because of just that.

For example, HMP/YOI Moorland and Hatfield were the scene of last year's three days of rioting sparked by bad staff-inmate relations and heavy use of force in a rundown, shabby and poorly organised prison. They, together with nearby HMP Lindholme, are ripe for a Yorkshire-based prison cluster; as are HMP Acklington and HMYOI Castington (along with their feeder prison at Durham) in Northumberland's case. Castington interestingly is itself notorious as the prison where 10 children and young adults (15-21 years) were, over a two-year period, hospitalised with broken bones after being restrained by officers. Four of the jails also happen to be Category C training prisons, the very institutions at the forefront of plans to introduce a new Victorian working ethic into prisons. No doubt the plan here is to use the private sector to build much-needed new workshops and introduce the sort of changes to prison regimes impossible to achieve in the public sector, where the POA still hold sway.



Protest at NHS Sheffield against the closure of Birch Avenue and Woodland View care homes.

In the looming age of austerity a few local grassroots success stories show what can be done with a little energy, anger and persistence.

● Campaigners against the closure of the day care centre **Hayward House**, a specialist cancer care unit, are celebrating a massive victory after management did a u-turn and decided to keep the facility open after a vigorous fight by the local community. The centre, funded by the Primary Care Trust and situated in the grounds of Nottingham University Hospital NHS Trust provides facilities and essential support for cancer patients and their families, as well as for inpatients.

When residents heard about the proposed closure in April they mounted a massive public campaign forcing the trust to reconsider its position. Despite the victory patients and their families are still angry at the way they were treated over the issue. In desperate backpedalling the NHS Board claimed that it was all a mistake and they can't understand how letters announcing the closure got sent out. Patients were later given letters of apology from the NHS.

The group have vowed to continue to hold the trust to account over the centre. As they say on their website: "This campaign has been self-organised by patients, carers and volunteers. It is amazing what people can achieve when they band together and say NO!"

<http://www.savehaywarddaycare.org.uk/>

● Two other care facilities remain open because of people power, this time in Sheffield. The **Save My Home 2011** group was formed by residents, carers and their families fighting to keep the Birch Avenue and Woodland



View care homes open. The homes provide specialist care for over 100 people suffering from Alzheimers, Dementia, and related conditions. In January of this year families and guardians of residents were informed that Sheffield NHS Primary Care Trust were planning to withdraw funding from the homes, and following a 'consultation' meeting it became clear that the decision to evict the residents had already been made. As the group stated: "Why fight? We believe that together we can keep these homes open, and defend our loved ones who live in them".

After a six-month battle between the trust and campaigners over the future of the two homes, the Sheffield NHS PCT Board decided to endorse a recommendation on 5th July to keep Woodland View and Birch Avenue open. All current residents will be able to stay in the homes.

<http://savemyhome2011.wordpress.com/>

● Reading **Save Our Services (SOS)** sprang into action when the council introduced measures to restrict the use concessionary bus passes for disabled people as part of its 'austerity measures'. In an attempt to save money disabled people were prevented from using their passes on public transport before 9.30 am and after 11pm.

In a matter of weeks the group had collected hundreds of signatures in opposition to the move forcing the newly elected council to commit to reinstating the bus pass concessions for people with disabilities and their carers/escorts so that they can travel before 9.30am. SOS spokeswoman said the strength of feeling had been overwhelming adding: "Many saw it as unnecessary, hitting the vulnerable hardest."

<http://www.sos-reading.org.uk/>



Genoa ten years on

The death of the anti-globalisation movement

For the anti-globalisation movement it became a tragic, defining moment. The death of Carlo Giuliani, a young Italian activist shot and killed by police on the streets of Genoa one hot July day in 2001 as thousands upon thousands from across Europe converged on the old port town to confront the world leaders at the G8 Summit, has come to symbolise both of the strength and the weakness of a truly international movement.

Genoa was part of a new political trajectory of summit mobilisations where the global institutions of power – World Bank, IMF, World Trade Organisation, G8, would be confronted and opposed wherever they met. These mobilisations became essential dates in the political activist's diary. They were massive, celebratory, inspired affairs, a unity of presence and purpose, if not politics. They also became increasing points of focus for confrontation between activists and the state. Something had to give.

Below is an eye witness account from a member of the Wombles who was at the scene when Carlo was shot and killed.

Friday, 20th July

We woke at 8am – an Italian theme song from a programme about a siege played over the loudspeakers: it was a joyous, militant march, a call to stand up for our beliefs and prepare for battle. We did. Three hours of preparation: mock battles with individual and group shields; Tute Bianche sans overalls dressed in armour and helmets and goggles and gas masks, life jackets, buoyancy aids, protection, yellow, orange, white, black, blue, red. We were 'il Disobediente Civili', or something like that.

Left Carlini about midday. Marched down the main street (Corso Gastaldi) making slow progress as the huge shields, borne on little shopping trolley wheels, were not the easiest to manoeuvre and it was essential to try and keep the weight of numbers close behind. Large groups move slowly!

A helicopter now came to look over us – a huge, menacing looking thing. Chants of 'Bastardi' rose from the crowd, along with a one-finger salute. We were in a jubilant mood, intent on liberating Genoa – 'Genova, Libera! Genova, Libera!!'

And then the gas canisters fell from the sky. No warning, no police in sight, just out of the blue... onto an unsuspecting crowd, many of whom did *not* actually have masks or protection – and of those that did, most were not wearing them. It was mayhem. Crowds streaming backwards (literally! – carried by the water from their eyes), reinforcements continually trying to get to the front. Vinegar was quickly used up in dousing



Riot police storm past the body of Carlo Giuliani, who had been shot and killed in central Genoa during the G8 Summit protests, 20th July 2001.

people's masks in order to provide some kind of respiratory protection; a tap was found and water was ferried to the front to assist those too overcome to withdraw. Hundreds if not thousands were affected, some acquiring head injuries or bruising from being hit by the canisters and bottles (yes!! Bottles) thrown from the police lines.

For now there were police lines. They had crept up the train lines, hidden behind a wall. They had formed lines at the bottom of Via Tolemaide and also at the bottom of Via Montevideo. In had now turned into a full scale war: charges and victories by both sides. The police rushed forwards but the 'civil disobedients' responded. We captured a Carabinieri riot van, and it was set on fire. Demonstrators were arrested in small numbers, but mostly the police seemed bent on causing harm only. People caught fire, blood was pouring from head wounds and some collapsed under the stress of the heat and teargas. Two vans carrying water cannon made forays up the streets, tear gas canisters continually exploding around them. Medics got trapped whilst helping people, narrow escapes were the order of the day... for most of us. But not for Carlo Giuliani.

Sometime later in the afternoon, around about 5.00 or 5.30pm, a group of three police vehicles whose advance had been stopped by the presence of barricades across the road were attacked by protestors. Two of them withdrew the fifty metres or so back to police lines, the third was surrounded by a group of (maximum) ten protestors. A Womble saw the Carabinieri draw his pistol: lying back across the seat, shield in his left arm, legs up, he took steady aim. The Womble ran, then heard the shot. Turning, he saw the police vehicle reverse over the body on the floor, then drive forward over the body on the floor.

The Wombles ran to assist: between them,

a huge amount of life experience, but never anything like this. They check Carlo's pulse – weak and fading – then turned the head and realised that blood was pumping out of an enormous hole in his head. Meanwhile, the police were firing constant tear gas canisters *at* the two demonstrators and the body on the floor... the police were advancing and there was nothing the Wombles could do but run...

Back in Carlini Stadium the mood was subdued. No one had anything positive to say: just shock at the tactics and violence of the police. A television had somehow been connected in the corner of the marquee; round about 8pm a sudden cry went up and people rushed outside. An announcement came over the loudspeakers: 'The G8 summit has been suspended!' Maybe Carlo didn't die in vain....maybe we *were* finally starting to change this god-awful world of ours, maybe his brothers and sisters the world over would one day be able to share in Peaceful Heaven right here on earth without any more bloodshed...

An evening of political speeches was about to commence. First, thought, there was a minute's silence – a silence so profound and so silent that not even the crickets whispered. We cried with all our hearts that we could live in a world such as this... yet we knew that this just made our fight even more important. An open microphone was presented, and delegates stepped up from many countries, many groups, to speak in solidarity.

Meanwhile, outside the stadium, stragglers were being arrested by the police. We were warned of this over the loudspeaker, then advised that the Genoa Social Forum/Tute Bianche running the stadium would try to provide food for the six thousand. And provide they did!! Pasta (what else, in Italy!) for the masses...

REVIEWS

WHAT'S ON

JULY

■ **28th to 1st August** Peace News Summer Gathering, this hothouse of creativity will be at Crabapple Community, Berrington Hall, Berrington, Shropshire, SY5 6HA, for details see <http://peacenewscamp.info>.

AUGUST

■ **5th to 8th** UK Animal Rights Gathering 2011 with talks, discussions and workshops on a wide range of issues and activities related to animal rights campaigning, as well as a chance to socialise with like-minded people, near Northampton, see www.veggies.org.uk/event.php?ref=1863 or www.argathering.org.uk for details.

■ **6th and 7th** Adhocracy, a weekend of creative thought and activity about DIY cultures, collective action and can-do mindsets at Rich Mix, 35-47 Bethnal Green Road, London, E1 6LA, see www.adhocracy.info for details.

■ **10 to 15th** Earth First! Summer Gathering, workshops, skill sharing and planning action, plus low-impact living without leaders, meet people, learn skills, take action. Anarchist Teapot will provide vegan food for £5 a day, location in East Anglia (to be announced, see website), price £20-30 to cover costs, for further details email efsummergathering@riseup.net or see www.earthfirstgathering.org.uk.

■ **20th** Little London Fields free green festival from 12 noon until 9pm at London Fields, Hackney E8 3RH, for further details see www.littlelondonfields.co.uk.

■ **21st** London Vegan Festival, with many stallholders, nutrition information and an array of interesting talks and workshops, Kensington Town Hall, London, W8 7NX from 11am until 8pm, adm £2, email robandal55@googlemail.com or see www.vegancampaigns.org.uk/festival for more info.

■ **26th** The Outdoor Skillshare 2011, join us in beautiful rural South Lanarkshire for a weekend of skillsharing and workshops about outdoor life and resistance techniques – learn new skills, meet new people and share your experiences with others in South Lanarkshire, Scotland, for details email outdoorskillshare@riseup.net or see <http://outdoorskillshare.noflag.org.uk/>

SEPTEMBER

■ **13th** Disarm DSEi Day of Action, the world's largest arms fair, taking place at the ExCeL exhibition centre in London's Docklands from 13th to 16th, exists so that arms buyers and sellers can come together, network and make deals, see www.dsei.org for details of action.

■ **21st** Reclaim The Fields in solidarity with the people of Rosia Montana, a village in the Apuseni Mountains in Romania, under threat of being destroyed by a gold mining project in the name of profit, for details email camp2011@reclaimthefields.org or see www.reclaimthefields.org.

FILM

Route Irish

directed by Ken Loach

Belatedly joining the 'Iraq-movie' genre, the veteran leftie social-realist embellishes screenwriter Paul Laverty's grimly downbeat tragedy with conspiracy and action thriller elements. Cannily singling out for attention a specific real horror of this episode of Western imperialism – the bonanza for corporate 'security consultants' granted legal immunity for crimes perpetrated – *Route Irish* traces the consequences of 'collateral damage' for soldiers of fortune. Two childhood friends from Liverpool first enlisted immediately from school, and after leaving the regular forces Fergus persuaded Frankie to join him guarding bigwigs for big bucks in occupied Baghdad. When Frankie is killed – supposedly being 'in the wrong place at the wrong time' along the titular 'most dangerous road in the world' – Fergus refuses to swallow the company line. Deploying his elite SAS training, an increasingly loose-cannon investigation uncovers atrocity, dishonesty and corruption at the heart of private security business practice.

Privatised on Parade

Without pursuing the implications, the film does suggest that outsourcing military adventurism for profit not only obscures responsibility for the usual planned and incidental brutalities of war, but also renders redundant grand narratives of patriotism, duty and the greater good which otherwise preoccupy those accounting for inevitable suffering. Given the especially transparent iniquity of sacrificing humanity merely for shareholder value, Fergus' rage and hurt conceivably parallel the experiences of others whose lives are ruined for reasons equally outside their ken. However, he cannot widen horizons or envision joint projects, since his entire being is consumed by the violence which now defines him. Personal bonds and passions are themselves privatised in guilt, regret and despair, with traditional discourses no longer providing succour – surely a potent metaphor for existence in general under advanced capitalism. Yet, in itself, murderous revenge against the bosses for their treachery makes no more political sense than assassinating figureheads or 'fragging' commanding officers. Sure, those particular individuals won't cause any further evil, even if others



will always take their place. But is there wider resonance?

As with any spanners thrown impulsively into the workings of military-industrial complexes, the collective action or dynamics which might be prefigured, affected by or accompany such events would be paramount in judging their significance – as when American GIs in Vietnam behaved with equally extreme prejudice. Here there is no inkling of what these social dimensions might entail, and in interviews Loach seems aware that obsession with this protagonist's overwhelming internal damage overdetermines dead-ends for villains and anti-hero alike. Moreover, it is precisely not those who do comfortably well out of combat – whether honoured servicemen or mercenaries making a mint – who tend to unravel in isolated post-traumatic psychosis. Thankfully, shoe-horning in simple-minded bleeding-heart liberalism – as per last year's naff BBC drama *Occupation* – was shunned, but *Route Irish* remains just as crippled in tunnel-vision as Fergus. Whereas 'bringing the war back home' more ambitiously, while still respecting the deeper Iraqi tragedy, could have elaborated other characters – Frankie's girlfriend; the Kurdish musician – and possibilities beyond being props in one man's ultimately uninvolved self-destructive redemption.

www.tomjennings.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk
<http://libcom.org/blog/4271>

Route Irish is available now on DVD.

QUIZ ANSWERS

1. They'd be fired by now. It was in the context of Great Ormond Street Hospital's covering up incompetence and medical errors, including the Baby P case, and persecuting whistle-blowers.
2. In the UK most of it is out of copyright. Unfortunately in Germany, alleged anarchist Heiner Becker claims exclusive rights to it and he has used legal means to stop others

- publishing it, including threatening websites. Becker has shown no inkling of publishing it himself.
3. In the language of a rival tribe, it means cannibal. The people known as Mohawks called themselves Kanien'gehaga, meaning people from the place of flint.
4. Tardigrades, also called water bears, tiny animals less than 1mm long.

A Dutch treat

Iain McKay on a new publication of the important Amsterdam congress of 1907

In an impressive addition to anarchist history, the reports, debates and motions of the International Anarchist Congress held between August 24th and 31st 1907 are available for the first time in English. This meeting, held in Amsterdam, attracted the leading lights of the international libertarian movement – Errico Malatesta, Emma Goldman, Pierre Ramus, Christiaan Cornelissen and a host of others. A long list of subjects was to be discussed: syndicalism, anti-militarism, the 1905 Russian Revolution, organisation, co-operatives and much more. Most of this is still relevant and so this book is not just for those interested in anarchist history; it is of interest to modern activists.

There is a useful, if at times cryptic, introduction by the editor which puts the congress into context. This is followed by the reports to, discussions in and motions to the Congress in chronological order. This is followed by an account of two syndicalist meetings and an appendix on the recent Russian Revolution. All are of interest. The reports to the congress on the state of the anarchist movement in various countries makes interesting reading. Some of these will appear familiar to militants today, for better or worse! It is a shame, however, that Luigi Fabbri's report on the Italian anarchist movement is not included. Its exclusion detracts from claims this book is the full report of the congress.

Then the discussions get going. The one on organisation seems somewhat redundant, as everyone agreed it was necessary. However, while much was discussed, this congress is best remembered for the debate between leading French union militant Pierre Monatte (pages 108–16) and veteran Italian anarchist militant Errico Malatesta (pages 121–6) on libertarian attitudes to revolutionary syndicalism.

Monatte used the experience of the French *Confédération Générale du Travail* (CGT) to expound the virtues of revolutionary unionism. Malatesta took a much more critical perspective. Although he stressed that “anarchists must enter the workers’ syndicates,” he did not think unions, by themselves, were inherently revolutionary. Thus the need for anarchists to organise both as workers *and* as anarchists in order “to incite the syndicates to the ideal, guiding them little by little towards the social revolution” (page 124).

A hundred years later it is fair to say that Malatesta was correct in his critique of syndicalism. Few syndicalists today would disagree with Malatesta on the need to turn a general strike into an insurrection, and the



The 1905 Russian revolution was one of the topics discussed at the 1907 International Anarchist Conference. Here a train has been overturned by strikers at a railway depot during the general strike by Russian workers in 1905.

descent of the CGT and other revolutionary unions into reformism confirmed his fears that unionism “is and always will be a legalitarian, conservative movement with no other goal – at best – than the improvement of working conditions” (page 122).

It must also be noted that Malatesta's talk has been used by both liberal libertarians and Leninists to draw a distinction between syndicalism and anarchism. As becomes clear, however, seeing the whole debate and Malatesta's resolution at the congress, he was *not* denying the need for unions, class struggle and anarchist participation within the labour movement. Far from it! He was simply critical of the “overly simplistic” conceptions (page 123) expounded by certain syndicalists, and was combating those libertarians who were letting themselves “be absorbed by” the labour movement, so replacing the end (anarchism) by the “means” (class struggle) (page 126). As his joint resolution with Cornelissen and Vohryzek to the Congress put it:

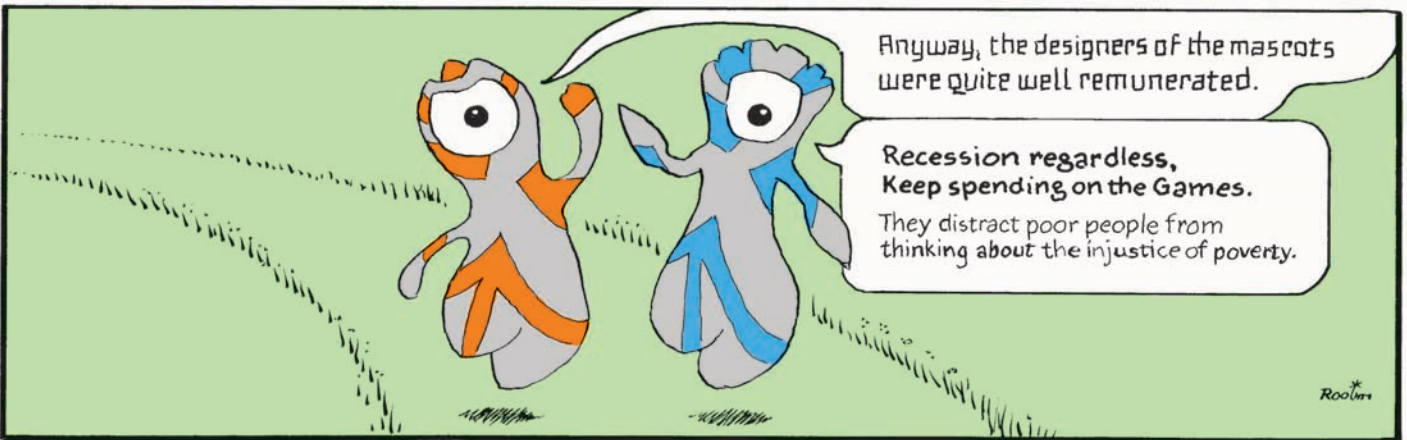
“the Syndicates [are] organisation fighting in the class war for amelioration of the conditions of labour, and as unions of productive workers which can help in the transformation of capitalist society into Anarchist Communist society ... But [it] is the duty of Anarchists to constitute the revolutionary element in those organisations ... the Syndicalist movement [is] a powerful means of revolution, but not ... a substitute for revolution ... [that is] armed insurrection and expropriation by force” (pages 132–2).

In short, Malatesta's position was not anti-syndicalism but rather syndicalism-plus. His opposition to certain elements of syndicalism

cannot be used to suggest a difference between the two. Indeed, Monatte states that syndicalism had “reminded anarchism of its worker origins” while anarchists have “contributed in no small way to dragging” the unions “along the revolutionary path” (page 108). He also linked syndicalism with the “idea of the proletariat, organised into ‘resistance societies’, being the agent of the social revolution that lay at the heart of the great International Working Men's Association” (IWMA) along with the “ideas of autonomy and federation” expounded by those who “took sides with Bakunin” and “rose up against the abuse of power by the general council” (page 110). Malatesta, for his part, stated he had “never stopped ... pushing comrades to the path that syndicalists, forgetting a glorious past, call *new*, but the first anarchists had already established and followed within the international” (page 122). In this – this vision of anarchist organisations working within the labour movement – he followed his old mentor Bakunin's lead when argued that the Alliance of Socialist Democracy should be active within the IWMA.

After the discussions at the Congress, the book summarises two private meetings of syndicalist attendees on international relations between revolutionary unionists. It ends with an appendix on the Russian Revolution that gives important accounts of the Russian anarchist movement and the events of 1905, both of which are of interest.

Indeed, some of the accounts of the Russian anarchist movement have to be read to be believed. Clearly, a very brutal regime provoked extreme resistance and the account



Review

◀ page 15

is full of comrades assassinating particularly abusive bosses/officials or committing expropriations from the bourgeoisie (for workers on strikes, propaganda, etc.) then getting into gun-battles with the police. More often than not, these are ended by the anarchists shooting themselves to escape capture.

While all very heroic, it does seem a counter-productive approach to producing a revolutionary libertarian workers movement. The reader is bound to ask whether the 1917 revolution would not have benefited if those comrades had still been around and had spent the intervening years building a movement. Simply put, Peter Arshinov and

Nestor Makhno were imprisoned but after being released from prison both helped deepen the Ukrainian revolution. I cannot help feeling there may be lessons there for those who prefer the glamour of the Black Bloc to the more boring activities of getting our ideas across and organising.

All in all, all those involved in getting this account 1907 Congress available in English should be congratulated. It is an extremely valuable addition to both our understanding of early twentieth century anarchism and its debates but it also gives valuable lessons which can enrich our activity now.

The International Anarchist Congress Amsterdam (1907) edited by Maurizio Antonioli, translation and English edition by Nestor McNab, published by Black Cat Press, £15.

THE QUIZ

1. According to medical journal *The Lancet*, what would have happened to the management at Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital if they had been at Wigan?
2. Who owns the work of Rudolf Rocker?
3. What does Mohawk mean?
4. What can survive boiling, freezing and 10 days in space?

Answers on page 14

The Anarchist Quiz Book compiled by Martin Howard, with illustrations by Paul Petard, is available for £5 (post free) from freedompress.org.uk or from our bookshop at 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX.

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