

MANNING FACES LIFE IN JAIL

US army whistleblower Bradley Manning could be sentenced to up to 136 years in prison

Despite being acquitted of 'aiding the enemy', the most serious charge against him, US army private Bradley Manning still faces a lifetime in military jail for leaking thousands of classified US army documents. He has been found guilty of 17 out of a possible 22 charges, and a further four amended charges. These include seven of the eight charges made against him under the Espionage Act, which together contribute 60 years of his maximum possible sentence of 136 years. The month-long sentencing phase of his trial begins on Wednesday 31st of July.

Manning was found guilty of leaking Afghan and Iraq war logs, embassy cables and over 700 detainee files from Guantánamo Bay, "wrongfully and wantonly" submitting them to the Wikileaks site "with reason to believe such information could be used to the injury of the US or the advantage of any foreign nation".

Manning was found not guilty of leaking an encrypted version of a video which showed US soldiers shooting civilians in Afghanistan, although he admitted sending **page 3** ▶▶

LENS CAP FRACK RIGHT OFF!



Part of the 'desolate' North which Lord Howell, George Osborne's father-in-law, wants to see destroyed by greedy energy companies.

ROYAL BABY BORN

Prince George Alexander Louis, third in line to the throne, was born on Monday 22nd July. Speculation about possible names and due date and intense scrutiny of Kate's maternity wardrobe and swelling figure have distracted a large proportion of the population from real news stories for months now. In the days and hours leading up to the birth, enormous crowds gathered outside the hospital and the media predictably exploded. There's absolutely nothing creepy about the whole world obsessing over the reproductive system of a woman they've never met, is there?

Post-birth, the focus has moved to criticising Kate for not immediately losing her baby bulge, reporting on her breast feeding efforts, wittering endlessly about the fact that the baby is called George Alexander

Louis (did they really expect it to be called Dwayne Keanu Jayden?) and various slightly unnerving artists' impressions of what he will look like as an adult. A risky business, that last one – as I'm sure William's little bro will attest to.

Dodgy souvenirs? Does the Pope shit in the woods? First up, a 20-inch ceramic figurine which comes with equally misshapen (mis?) representations of his adoring parents. A hand-knitted family is also available. If you've still got any pennies to count, a royal baby money box is on the market. And dodgiest of all, a Mills and Boon collection of stories 'inspired' by the birth. Eh?

Or... how about a limited edition Prince George 'barf bag' to mop up your disgust?
Charlotte Dingle

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NEWS

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LENS CAP LEWISHAM



Campaigners are waiting with bated breath for a verdict on the fate of Lewisham hospital A&E in south east London. The decision on whether or not to downgrade will be made on 31st July.

Manning faces life in jail

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an unencrypted version of the video at a later date. Some 122 days will be taken off Manning's sentence as compensation for his ordeal at the Quantico marine base between July 2010 and April 2011. During this time he was kept in what essentially amounted to solitary confinement (he was allowed out of his cell for less than an hour a day) and for 20 days of his sentence he was forced to strip naked at night. The UN denounced this as a form of torture.

As its name would suggest, the Espionage Act of 1917 has traditionally been used to convict spies rather than leakers. Richard Nixon tried and failed to use it in 1971 to prosecute military analyst Daniel Ellsberg, leaker of the infamous Pentagon Papers. Ellsberg passed the papers – a history of US political-military involvement in Vietnam from 1945 to 1967 – to the New York Times, believing it would help to end what he saw as a futile war which America had

no chance of winning. Despite Nixon being determined to punish him as severely as possible, Ellsberg was released without charge after government officials were revealed to have broken into the office of the psychiatrist Ellsberg was seeing at the time in order to steal Ellsberg's records. Unfortunately, the current US government's use of torture on Manning hasn't inspired the same kind of 'lenience'.

There are concerns that Wikileaks founder and editor-in-chief Julian Assange may face similarly severe sentencing if he leaves the Ecuadorian embassy in London where he is currently being harboured. Equally, the verdict could be a sign of things to come for whistleblower Edward Snowden, who exposed a massive US government surveillance scandal. Snowden is currently stranded in Moscow airport and in the process of appealing to various countries for asylum.

Charlotte Dingle



State racism on the rise

The government crackdown on illegal immigrants gathers pace

First the 'racist vans', a pilot project from the Home Office which saw various multi-cultural London communities subjected to posters urging illegal immigrants to 'Go home'. Then a stop-and-search frenzy which appears to be the beginnings of an attempt to challenge the immigration status of every non-white person in the country. You don't need Cameron to rehash the Rivers of Blood speech to know what's going on here.

The 'racist vans', as they have unsurprisingly been nicknamed, were driven across the London boroughs of Hounslow, Barking & Dagenham, Ealing, Barnet, Brent and Redbridge. They were emblazoned with the stark message: "In the UK illegally? Go home or face arrest. Text HOME to 78070 for free advice, and help with travel documents. We can help you return home voluntarily without fear of arrest or detention."



from the spray cans of the National Front. Following a widespread outcry, the vans were taken out of circulation. But that wasn't the end of it...

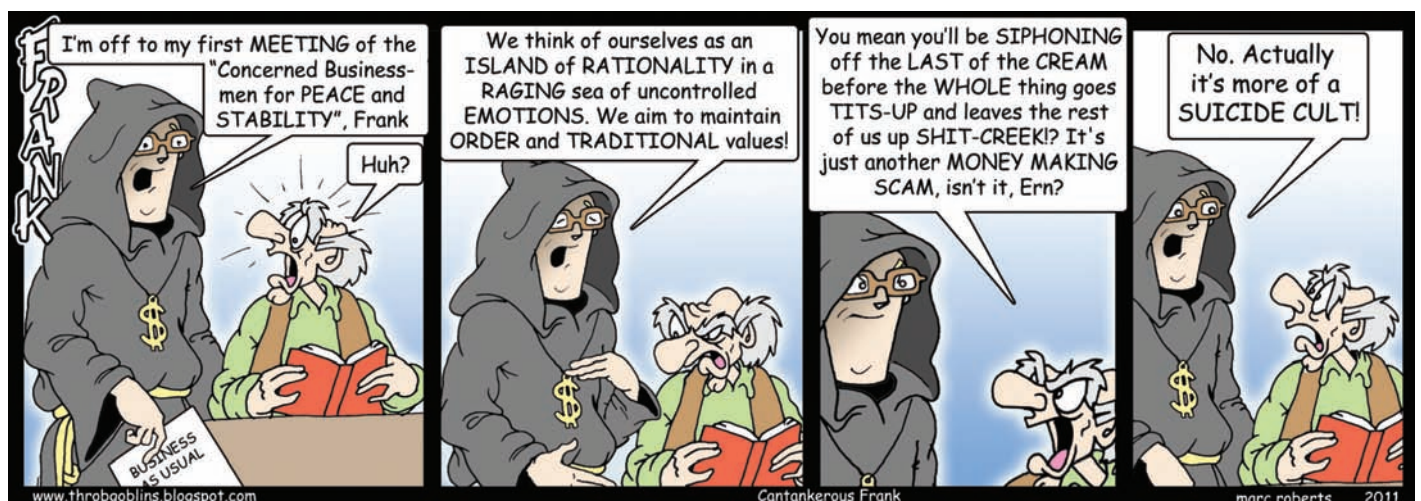
Clearly no lessons were learned, as the Home Office's next stunt has been to launch a ludicrously overenthusiastic campaign of random stop-and-searches. Nothing says 'racist' like standing outside tube stations grabbing anyone who isn't white and demanding they prove their right to be here. Because of course all immigrants are non-white. And the cherry on the cake? UKBA officers don't actually have the power to make you stop and talk to them, unless in possession of compelling evidence that you are in Britain illegally. If they approach you for no reason other than the colour of your skin, you are perfectly within your legal rights to refuse to comply with their requests. These officials frighten people into cooperating with them under false pretences, beguiling them with a uniform and

a threatening manner. If you're unfortunate enough to be stopped, just ask them if they've read Chapter 31 of UKBA's Operational Enforcement Activity manual recently. If you witness a stop-and-search, record the whole thing on your mobile if at all possible.

When questioned about all this deeply dodgy behaviour, the Home Office said in a (naturally highly evasive) statement: "We make no apology for enforcing our immigration laws and our officers carry out hundreds of operations every year around London. Where we find people who are in the UK illegally we will seek to remove them. We take any allegations of inappropriate behaviour from our officers very seriously and operate a comprehensive complaints and investigation process for where detainees or members of the public believe they have been mistreated."

Something tells me that last bit might be utter porkies.

Charlotte Dingle



THE BIG PICTURE



An anarchist encampment in Cairo's Tahrir Square, erected as part of protests calling for the dissolution of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood dictatorship.

No offence

The alarming implications for our right to protest if the proposed Antisocial Behaviour, Crime and Policing Bill is passed

The new Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Bill being debated by parliament is proving controversial. If passed, the Bill would change laws covering everything from dog fouling to littering to forced marriage to evictions. It has united seemingly disparate groups in opposition, from guide dog owners to naturists to civil liberties campaigners. Here, the clauses most likely to affect street protests are examined.

In the government's own words, the Bill "widens the application and effects of the instruments available in four ways: a broader definition; a lower standard of proof; increased sanctions; and increased durations" for 'anti-social behaviour'. A number of specific clauses could give police the power to prevent or end demonstrations on the spot, and potentially inflict a jail sentence on resisters.

The Bill would scrap the infamous Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO) and replace it with an Injunction to Prevent Nuisance and Annoyance (INPA). This widens the definition of antisocial behaviour from "conduct likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress" to "engagement or the threat of engaging in conduct capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to any person". We all know how easy it is to annoy others despite acting perfectly legally, and what is a protest meant to be, if not at least a nuisance? The peaceful picketing of a Marks & Spencer's over Workfare could be considered a 'nuisance' to a number of different groups – store managers, security guards, shoppers. Anyone breaching an INPA could face up to



two years in prison, or an unlimited fine, and the INPA can be imposed indefinitely for anyone over 18. Imposing the injunction requires only the civil standard of proof, a balance of probabilities (rather than the criminal standard of 'beyond reasonable doubt'), despite a potential prison sentence for a breach. INPAs can also come with a 'positive requirement' – meaning you'd have to actively do something to avoid breaching it, (as yet undefined, but perhaps for example attending a course) rather than simply not doing something, as things currently stand with ASBOs.

A new dispersal power in the Bill allows police to impose a ban on persons in an area for up to 48 hours. There needs to be reasonable grounds for suspicion that someone's 'presence or behaviour' in the 'locality' (an area as yet undefined) "has contributed to or is likely to contribute to harassment, alarm or distress or the occurrence of crime or disorder". Note the addition of 'is likely to', meaning no actual 'anti-social behaviour' needs to have taken place. Again, this is all a



matter of yours and the police's opinion, and it's clear whose opinion matters in situations like this. Refusing to leave the area is punishable by up to three months in prison and a fine of £2,500. Imposing the dispersal order requires a police inspector's authorisation, but can be carried out by constables and even police community support officers (PCSOs), and they can even dictate your route home and confiscate objects they consider 'anti-social'. The only exemption guaranteeing your freedom to exist in a public place unaffected by these new powers is given to trade union picket lines. This suggests the authors of the Bill are aware of the restrictions it could impose on other kinds of peaceful assembly, which have similar policing requirements, and are disregarding this nonetheless.

The new Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) can be imposed by local authorities against anyone acting 'unreasonably' and causing a 'persistent detrimental effect' on the quality of life in an area – a highly subjective definition which could conceivably



include regular pickets or protests. The PSPO cuts down the amount of public consultation previously needed to impose a ban on activities in an area, and only requires a civil burden of proof (balance of probabilities) to be applied. It can be imposed on a group, or demographic such as young people, or individuals, and enforced by local authority employees, including private contractors. It can last for up to three years before requiring a review.

Existing powers have already been used to interfere with individuals not breaking a law. Recent attempts by local authorities to ban rough sleeping in Westminster, spitting in Enfield, begging in Aberdeen and smoking in parks in Blackpool, indicate how these new powers are likely to be used and abused.

Mark Dziecielewski of campaign group NO2ID, has called the Bill "deliberately imprecise". Anti-regulation group Manifesto warn of the Bill's "weak democratic checks" and restrictions based on "potential activities", where no harm has actually taken place. Civil liberties group Big Brother Watch noted that the Bill covers acts which are already crimes, but usually require a higher standard of proof. Even the Association of Chief Police Officers has decried the INPA's potential for "stigmatising and possibly criminalising young people unnecessarily". In contrast to this, the Labour Party have accused the Coalition of trying to "water down" the anti-social behaviour powers they introduced when in government, when in fact the Bill does the opposite, reducing 11 relatively well-defined powers to six that are much more vague, more encompassing and therefore more easily applied.

How this Bill progresses will depend on the strength of opposition against it. So far, dozens of groups have heaped official criticism on it as it stands, and amendments are likely. But for now, the future legality of street protest is uncertain.

Louise Reynolds

To keep up-to-date with the progress of the Bill visit <http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2013-14/antisocialbehaviourcrimeandpolicingbill.html>

ANALYSIS

Use my broken heart



What the shooting of Trayvon Martin tells us about American society

In mid-July George Zimmerman was acquitted of murdering Florida teenager Trayvon Martin in February 2012. The case implicitly cements the hierarchy of classes, races, genders and those strata of society which are sometimes assumed not to exist in the United States. At the same time as Zimmerman was acquitted, Florida mother Marissa Alexander (black) was sentenced to 20 years for firing a warning shot in the presence of, but nowhere near, her abusive husband. Also at the same time as the Zimmerman trial, a study by the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement (MXGM) found that in 2012 one black person was killed in an extrajudicial shooting every 28 hours by police, security guards and self-appointed vigilantes.

Yet the jury in Florida, some of whom did seem to believe that Zimmerman's action was a crime, was directed that the 'Stand Your Ground' law gave Zimmerman the right to attack and ultimately to kill Martin. 'Stand Your Ground' was conceived and aggressively promoted by the commercially-motivated American Legislative Exchange Council, ALEC. Martin's life became inherently less valuable than that of his survivor: less valuable even than the principle of 'self-defence'. What's more, 'Stand Your Ground', now strengthened by the Florida verdict, conceivably also threatens the lives of protesters, activists and anyone not conforming. It's now a law in force in dozens of states.

The Martin-Zimmerman case also demonstrates the polarisation in American society. Almost daily throughout the trial, the Murdoch-owned Fox 'News' channel featured pundit after pundit mocking, criticising, declaiming, sniping and generally attempting to undermine the case for the prosecution. The jury was even officially shown a hugely sympathetic interview which far-right Fox personality Sean Hannity recorded with Zimmerman in lieu of testimony!

In the weeks following the verdict, CNN newswatches were crafted to portray Zimmerman as a hero: he rescued someone from a traffic accident, for instance. After the verdict, too, several relatively low-key and restrained street demonstrations were organised in various cities across the country. The local propaganda outlets were quick to see these only as 'trouble'. For instance, Los Angeles TV station KTLA, suspended regular programming to bring helicopter coverage of the 'unruly and threatening' (mostly black) youngsters sauntering through the Crenshaw district of the city in entirely sober manner. A small fire in an outside dustbin, which was quickly extinguished, was the most violent act of protest. Yet the Los Angeles Police Department wasted little time in making dozens of arrests.

A subtler phenomenon is what Martin-Zimmerman reveals about surface symptoms and deeper causes. Pervert even the ragbag of legal measures in place and people will – sooner or later – object. Invade Afghanistan, Iraq; remove a head of state in Haiti; destabilise countries in the interests of profit; actively participate in trends that destroy the

only planet we have. Then wonder why there is resistance and fight back. And see resistance as wrong and irrational.

For example, a correspondent on Fox News was discussing America's long-time obsession with 'Islamic fundamentalism' recently. He opined, "We should bring a load of 3x4's with us – it's all these people understand". And he was serious. Subtler still, is the implicit assumption that there is one right way to do things. And that anything else is unpatriotic, deviant and dangerous. Holding a view that's even a slight variation on the consensus – which is an entirely fabricated consensus, of course – breaches the principle of a fictional neutrality in the wider circles of society and opinion. It's the US version of 'Keep politics out of sport', etc., in the UK. Except that the stakes are higher – as we've seen with the massive surveillance which the likes of Snowden and Manning have revealed. Their actions, not what they told us, are under scrutiny from Congress to CBS, etc.

Even subtler, but probably inescapable, is the blend of total materialism with infantilisation through popular culture which is leaving more and more generations incapable of analysis, discrimination and adult thought. The marginalisation and disparaging of knowledge, inquiry and original thought in favour of the quick 'canned' summary of events, motives, options and abstractions. The American equivalent of authentic culture is adulterated, formulaic entertainment, so reduced in depth and originality that it's little wonder that those who would pronounce on the issues of such a case as Martin-Zimmerman are effectively deprived of the very language to do so. Add to this the obsession with self, with one's appearance, lifestyle choices and the superficial impression one makes on others, and any chance of a dispassionate or de-centred assessment of the relative merits of an event or course of action such as the trial of a confessed killer is obviously asking far too much.

Steeped in hubris and short-sightedness, this monolithic dogma insists on conformity. It's based on intolerance, and admits of no dissent whatsoever. For those unable to see what was so wrong about Zimmerman's acquittal (assuming acceptance of a punitive legal system, which is – it has to be said – problematic for anarchists), persons represent class, race, gender first. And are individuals only secondly. Thus it is that Martin was a 'threat', a misfit (a black youth in a white area), and then an entity to be silenced because of that. For the bigots and rednecks any criticism of this conception of the world is unworthy even of consideration.

And into this perpetuation is firmly built.
Louis Further

References

Malcolm X Grassroots Movement (MXGM): <http://mxgm.org>

NEWS FROM A FOOD BANK

Developments made in emergencies, intended for short term, can become permanent for the State's benefit. The Defence of The Real Act, known as 'Dora', is an example. Fearing Napoleon, it was used to compile lists of able bodied men aged 17 to 55. Simon Schama records that "a home guard could then be made in the event of an invasion".* It became more efficient than the press gangs which kidnapped men for the navy and the army.

Other States, in time, found such 'lists' useful in getting cannon fodder for their wars. During the First World War many working people found themselves with extra beer money due to regular employment. But this was bad for 'the war effort', many taking mornings off after a night in the pub. Organising shifts was also a problem. So in came strict licensing laws which remained long after 1918. Also during WW1 Dora made restrictions on trade union activity, giving lessons to the bosses on how to keep the whip-hand.

In our food banks, where the desperate only get a few days basic supplies, we can strongly suspect a repeat of how a temporary expediter is nudged towards permanence.

One such group of 'banks' in the North West heard a worrying but well-founded rumour – that they were to be offered a well-paid permanent employee, paid for by the county council. If one such authority is making such a suggestion, then how widespread is it around Britain now?

The relevance of that offer needs some explanation. Such 'banks' are run entirely by volunteers who collectively have all sorts of skills. The food is given voluntarily from various sources. Accepting a paid employee would greatly damage that voluntary ethos.

All charities are competing with each other for diminishing resources. Donors to food banks would be much less sympathetic if such indirect financial help was accepted from the authorities.

While such aid is meant to be short term help for people in crisis, that 'offer' suggests that for millions, the State sees their plight as permanent. Such volunteers, like this writer, can be accused of reformism that sustains the causes of oppression. But while a few might become politicised by poverty the majority only feel harassed and impotent. In trying to 'help' we can still keep our anarchist values and visions, looking for allies and chances to air our opinions.

martin s. gilbert

* Simon Schama, *A History of Britain*, Vol. 3, page 109, BBC World Wide, 2002.

Veganism vs. capitalism

Kevin Watkinson urges us to consider a diet free from animal products

I recently had the pleasure of reading an article by Peter Gelderloos in which he outlines veganism as a consumer activity.* Throughout this piece I was struck by the way he downplayed the experience of the suffering victim within a capitalist system. If you look within society it is broadly apparent that the exploitation of animals (human and otherwise) does not relate exclusively to capitalism.

Following from this, it is possible to find the exploitation of animals perpetrated amongst anarchists and communists, and in a similar format, behaviour relating to sexism and racism can also be found to exist amongst people identifying themselves with these forms of political theory and practise.

Historically, Western capitalist vegetarianism has had its basis in working class solidarity. The elite enjoyed the prime cuts of flesh, and the majority of people weren't even at the table. As a sign of social status the consumption of flesh/number of animals a person owns, has been used to reinforce a position within society. More recently the horsemeat scandal has exposed industry practices that allow cheap meat to be sold to people who have reduced purchasing power, showing once again that people with little money are also considered to have little value.

The question of whether the capitalist plant-based industry is better than a capitalist

flesh-based industry is a good one and worthy of some consideration. The generally accepted definition of veganism is to avoid animal products due to inherent exploitative and harmful practices. This includes 'food' and non-food items, so it encompasses the boycott of the whole animal industry.

Here are a few points that might be worth thinking about:

- Going vegan does not create any particular difficulties once you have learned how to adjust.
- Going vegan isn't going to destroy capitalism in itself, but it will reduce suffering for other animals that share the planet with us, whilst also disrupting the *status quo*.
- Going vegan isn't a particularly significant personal activity in itself, you can do lots of other things too.
- Ending the enslavement and commodification of animals is consistent with anarchism.
- There is a significant difference between consuming meat to survive, and eating animal products for pleasure or out of habit.
- Animal Liberation is the liberation of oneself from the use of other animals.
- Creating vegan spaces is a basis for respect to all living beings.
- You don't need to care about other animals to go vegan.
- You don't have to commit to going vegan forever. It is always good to regularly examine your reasons for doing anything.

* <http://news.infoshop.org/article.php?story=20080604153638368>



INTERNATIONAL

NEWS IN BRIEF

ITALY: A demonstration in Rome demanding the right to affordable housing has ended in violence, after the police charged a peaceful picket because they did not have permission to gather. The attack resulted in many unarmed protesters nursing injuries from batons. The attack is a blatant attempt to put down the movement for affordable housing, which has defended many attempted evictions and organised countless occupations, rallies, and sit-ins.

PHILIPPINES: Antonio Petalcorin is the fourth trade union leader in as many months to be assassinated in the Philippines. He was gunned down on his way to a union rally in early July. All four trade unionists have been murdered in broad daylight by gangs of masked men on motorcycles.

In the last decade there are at least twenty documented cases of trade union leaders being killed, as well as thirty journalists, and over a thousand political activists have 'disappeared'. All of which has happened since Benigno Aquino III became President.

RUSSIA: Irina Lipskaya has now spent more than 12 months in jail without a single court appearance or a schedule for a trial.

She was arrested in July 2012, suspected of planning assault on a nazi concert in a Moscow club. She has been charged with 'hooliganism', 'preliminary intent' and a 'hate crime'.

She requires on-going treatment following being stabbed by nazis, but has been refused any medical attention by prison authorities. Irina is being kept in jail due to delaying tactics by the police and by local nazis who she was planning to target.

On top of imprisonment without trial she has been betrayed by several of her comrades.

Please write to Irina: Irina Lipskaya, K308, Sizo6, Petchatniki, Shosseynaya 92, 109383, Moscow, Russia.

SOUTH AFRICA: Security forces have clashed with protesters who are angry that Barack Obama is to receive an honorary doctorate from the University of Johannesburg.

Demonstrators – from the university, trade unions, communist party and the groups 'NoBama' and 'No You Can't' – cited Obama's on-going support for Israeli attacks on Palestinians, drone attacks and plans to exploit Africa's resources as the rationale for their protest.

A student spokesperson said: "I feel that my rights are being infringed. We cannot protest any more, personally I feel like we are becoming an extension of the US. We should not be honouring this man who makes oppression possible. Hands off our gold, oil, diamonds, and land."

Heavily armed riot police fired rubber bullets, teargas and stun grenades, into thousands of protesters, who fought running battles with police – in and around the Soweto campus.

LENS CAP CHILE



Over 100,000 students have clashed with police in the Chilean capital, Santiago. They are demanding. They are demanding wide ranging reforms to the education system. Teachers, dock workers, and copper miners have joined in solidarity with the students, blockading several key highways, and bringing central Santiago to a standstill.

Spanish banks occupied

Hundreds of activists from the Platform for Mortgage Victims (PAH) have occupied a branch of the Banco Popular Bank, and the BBVA bank, both in Barcelona.

Activists have taken up the case of José Antonio Gómez. José signed for a loan of €390,000 and, despite repaying over €100,000, interest rates mean the debt has now risen to €590,000 in less than five years.

José's circumstances are typical for many ordinary Spaniards who have been crippled by interest rates.

As you would expect, within minutes of the occupation scores of heavily armed riot police arrived and began the process of violently dragging people out of the bank.

This latest action comes only days after fifty members of the (PAH) occupied a branch of the BBVA bank in Barcelona, protesting

against the bank evicting people who have been unable to keep up with their loan repayments

A local blogger described events as follows: "The latest bank was taken in the La Floresta suburb. After a leafleting and graffiti march around local banks the local 'indignats' cooked an enormous veggie paella for up to 2,000 people. Finally, they enacted a drama in the street which ended in the occupation of an adjoining abandoned bank. There is plenty of local action – a small consumer's co-op, and an occupied community garden."

The (PAH) are demanding that action be taken to prevent a growing social crisis, and have vowed to continue with bank occupations until banks start offering solutions.

Matt Black

Notes from the US

Economy

Last month the US Senate passed a farm bill. It will cut the system that handles food stamps for the less well off by about US\$400 (£260) million each year. Another version of the same bill which was approved by a House committee in May would cut food stamps by about five times as much. Big business does better, though:

an amendment by Republican Senator David Vitter prevents anyone ever convicted of a violent crime from ever receiving aid.

Labour

Obama has attempted to silence more whistle-blowers than all previous presidents combined.

Suzuki union busting in India

Workers exploited and stripped of rights and wages in Delhi automobile factory

Despite generating huge profits for huge automotive corporations, India's auto workers are treated appallingly and are amongst the lowest paid in the world. Suzuki make on average \$65,000 profit per worker in India, which is rising dramatically year on year, yet the workers have seen their wages slashed by 25% over the last decade.

In Manesar, around 25 miles away from New Delhi, workers are on an indefinite strike, demanding the release of 147 of their colleagues from prison.

The workers were jailed just over a year ago following a dispute at the local Suzuki car plant. Following the unfair suspension of a worker who had been bullied by a supervisor, the factory bosses hired several hundred goons from a private security firm, who then descended on the factory and attacked those who were attempting to organise a protest about the suspension. The bosses gravely misjudged the feeling amongst the workers, who retaliated by hospitalising over 40 factory supervisors, one of whom died in a fire.

It appeared that the local police in collusion with the factory bosses brushed the attack by hire thugs under the carpet and arrested over 1,000 workers on a variety of trumped up charges. A further 2,000 workers were fired after they tried to set up a trade union, the Maruti Suzuki Workers Union (MSWU). The workers decided to create their own union following attempts by Suzuki to force a trade union set up and run by management on to them.



The government have instigated legislation in Manesar that prevents any public assembly from taking place. This is enforced by a new military garrison that has been set up close to the factory. They have also set up a perimeter around the town, which means that anyone entering or leaving Manesar must pass through a military checkpoint.

On the first anniversary of the dispute several thousand locals gathered at the factory gates but they were quickly surrounded and dispersed by hundreds of heavily armed soldiers.

Those workers on strike – currently sitting outside the gates of the Suzuki plant – are demanding the immediate release of all prisoners associated with the dispute and the reinstatement of all those workers who had been dismissed for trying to organise a union.

They say that until their demands are met, they will not be returning to work.

The Suzuki workers have built widespread local and national support for their struggle, with many solidarity actions taking place across India.

Through its use of the armed forces, the police, and its manipulation of the courts, the Indian government is hell bent on ensuring that no trade union organising can take place, that militants are jailed, and that production gets back to normal as soon as possible.

Many US, European, and Japanese car manufacturers only invest in India on the condition that independent trade unions are eradicated. Hence wages have been slashed and the majority of workers are now on temporary contracts.

Matt Black

Notes from the US

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McClatchy News reported in late June that the vast majority of government agencies and departments – including those with no connection whatsoever to intelligence or national security – operate a plan, 'Insider Threat', which obliges government employees effectively to spy and 'snitch' on colleagues. Suspicious activity that must be reported includes expressing anti-employer sentiment, visiting such websites as The Onion and Salon.com, appearing disgruntled and talking about (personal) money worries. These, according to the directive, could all be signs of disaffection by an employee serious enough to betoken imminent 'leaking'!

Repression

At the end of June lawmakers in Texas threw out some of the strictest anti-abortion

restrictions in the US. Hundreds of pro-choice supporters actively lobbied the Texas capitol building in opposition to Senate Bill 5, which would close 37 of 42 abortion clinics in the state and ban abortion after twenty weeks. The Governor of Texas almost immediately re-introduced the measure and at press time it looked likely to pass.

Another federal judge issued a ruling early this month suggesting force-feeding hunger-striking prisoners at Guantánamo Bay is illegal. She also warned that only President Obama can stop it.

Then thousands of prisoners throughout California launched their own widespread hunger strike – the third in the past couple of years. Their aim is to draw attention to long term solitary confinement; the prisoners

call this 'indefinite state-sanctioned torture'. The most recent such strike eighteen months ago won promises to improve conditions for those in solitary confinement. Some 30,000 prisoners refused meals on the current strike's first day. If kept up, this would constitute the largest prison hunger strike in California's history.

At exactly the same time, the prison service in California asked the Supreme Court to release it from an order to reduce its prison population by about 10,000 prisoners in 2013 because of inhumane conditions. Court documents show that at least one prisoner in the State "...needlessly dies every six or seven days due to constitutional deficiencies". The suicide rate for prisoners there is 80% higher than the national average.

Louis Further

ANALYSIS

SWP saga continues

Internal ructions rage on and membership numbers remain in decline

The crisis wracking the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) (see the March 2013 issue of *Freedom*) shows no sign of abating. Defections, expulsions and the formation of breakaway factions have shaken the organisation from top to bottom, as party leaders and dis-obedient dissidents have continued to battle for control of the future direction of the organisation. After months of bruising conflict, neither the oppositionists nor the party loyalists have won a decisive victory, while all around is evidence of the enfeeblement of all parties to the conflict.

The scale of losses suffered by the SWP is difficult to verify, but it is clear that several hundred members have decamped to alternative factions, while many hundreds more, repulsed by the split, have simply walked away. The party's student grouping, always a left group's most brittle and vulnerable formation, appears to have suffered the most catastrophic losses.

After months of low-level skirmishes, it was the party centre's handling of allegations of serious sexual assault against Comrade Delta (longstanding, senior member Martin Smith) which pitched matters over the edge. The disputes committee appointed to judge the case (composed of Smith's friends and colleagues) found him not guilty of any offence. Exonerated through a process shaped by nepotism and hidden behind a complete

lack of transparency, Delta retained his role as a trusted party agent. Outraged party dissidents were appalled at the leadership's duplicity, and refusal to treat charges of violence against women members by party seniors seriously.

However, party dissidents within the SWP do not share a united perspective on many key issues. For many oppositionists, the Delta case was more significant as a metaphor for a wider party malaise: one in which the party's bosses were revealed as a self-perpetuating elite, insulated from the party membership and determined to crush any criticism. Despite the lack of unity, dissidents were successful in their attempts to call a special recall conference in March to challenge the findings of the Delta commission. The move was initially opposed by the party leadership, concerned that it would give too much credence to the opposition. But after party bosses relented, bitter struggles over the selection of delegates saw loyalists and oppositionists clash at branch meetings across the country, usually with each side accusing the other of trying to manipulate the vote in their favour.

If the party leadership miscalculated that the special conference might snuff out the opposition, party rebels also badly misplayed their hand and walked into an ambush. After comfortably winning the conference vote, the 'vindicated' central committee declared the conflict at an end; and went straight after their enemy within. "We are not prepared", the Central Committee declared a few weeks later, "to see the SWP wrecked by those who put their faction before the party and the working class". For

all its absurd hyperbole, the statement was an acknowledgement of the seriousness and scale of the internal unrest, and of the determination of SWP managers to stamp it out.

After the conference defeat, many opposition members jumped ship before the party's internal affairs enforcers could get to them. In March, a group of Sheffield SWP members resigned *en masse*, telling party bosses it was impossible to "defend the catastrophe you have created". Across the country, hundreds more followed suit. The largest breakaway group immediately formed the rival International Socialist Network, which declared itself (as so many previous splits from the SWP have done) determined to 'reclaim' the 'essence' of the party's origins, unsullied by the machinations of the party's current owners.

None of the rival groups to emerge from the crisis advocate abandoning the state-seizing Trotskyist model or rejecting the alienated nature of the left's supposedly 'revolutionary' ambitions. In their different ways, each group appears to be seeking a 'less authoritarian' and 'more tolerant' version of the very organisation they've left behind. The new factions have high expectations but few members, and poor prospects of long-term viability in an already overcrowded micro-party market.

As party membership has continued to plummet, some higher echelon figures sympathetic to the rebels' case urged restraint. Party historian Ian Birchall suggested that an organisation locked in decline "should recognise that it cannot afford to squander cadre", and called on the central committee to curtail its pursuit of the dissidents. It was advice that party heads have been reluctant to follow, and expulsions are continuing.

The SWP has endured the crisis thus far, but its membership has been torn asunder; its brand is badly tarnished; and far fewer of its fellow travellers are willing to take its phone calls (external speakers at the party's Marxism summer school were few in number this year). The party's remaining cadre can look forward to a new era of enforced discipline and obedience. But it remains clear that not all the leadership's critics have been expunged. Future rebellions threaten. It seems that Comrade Delta has become a liability in the view of the party's inner circle – not because of his alleged crimes against other party members, but because he has become irreparably damaged goods. In late July, as fresh allegations against him were made public, his 'resignation' was announced.

If its leaders can stabilise things and ride out the continuing upheavals, a smaller and more circumspect SWP will persist. But this crisis, on a scale without precedent in the history of the party, could still signal the beginning of the end of the SWP.

Trotwatch



Los camaradas Ingleses

John MacDonald on the role of the British Battalion in the Spanish Civil War

Some 125,000 foreign nationals came to fight for Spain's Second Republic during those desperate years of civil war. At least this was the hugely inflated figure published by Franco's Foreign Ministry in 1952. Andreu Catells estimated the number at 60,000 in his book *Brigadas Internacionales de la Guerra de España* written in 1974. Some served with the militias but the vast majority with the International Brigades. Catells's figure of 60,000 probably includes the Spanish serving with the brigades of which there were many drafted in to make up numbers after initial heavy losses. In September 1937 a decree by the Republican Government ensured a Spanish presence in the Brigades. The decree ruled there must be a Spanish battalion in every International Brigade, a Spanish company in every battalion and a Spanish section in every company. The Spanish Brigaders were paid almost a third more than their foreign counterparts. An accepted figure today for the number of foreigners in the Brigades between 1936 to 1938 is just over 35,000 from 53 nations. This figure is insignificant compared to those who intervened on the behalf of the Nationalists.

The outwardly simple task of counting the volunteers is not easy. Some used assumed names, some epithets and a surprising number appeared to have changed their identities several times. This was to try and keep on the right side of the Non-intervention Agreement which the British Government had extended to include the situation in Spain. Under the Act it became illegal for ex-prisoners of war to return to Spain. Despite changing his name, James Rutherford was re-captured by the Nationalists and duly shot on the strength of the act. The British Government also re-implemented the Foreign Enlistment Act which further legalised the execution of more British volunteers by Franco's men.

Of the 35,000 Brigaders some 2,300 were British. The earliest arrivals, after an inactive couple of months with the Tom Mann Centuria fought with the German Thaelmann Centuria or the French Commune de Paris Battalion. The British Battalion of the 15th International Brigade wasn't formed until the December of 1936. Of the original 19 Britons serving with the Commune de Paris Battalion only nine survived the war. James Albrighton and 14 other British nationals served with the sinister Muerte es Maestro Centuria which took part in the furious defence of Madrid in the November. This action alone reduced the Centuria to 40 men from an initial strength of 128.



As the casualties mounted so recruitment slowed, falling off sharply in February and even further in the March of 1937. The largest age group of volunteers was 21 to 30, with almost a third from South East England (mainly London). The four most common occupations listed by the Brigaders were labourer, miner, motor driver and seaman. These men came despite the hostility of the British establishment. It wasn't just the stream of pro-Franco lobbyists being warmly greeted by government departments, it was an active involvement with the events unfolding in Spain.

The aircraft that collected Franco from his internal exile on the Canary Islands was paid for with British cash. It delivered him to Spanish Morocco where he could oversee the embarkation of his Ejército de África onto Hitler's JU-52s bound for the mainland. The journey was organised by the British Secret Service and accompanied by a British Major and his daughter. Recent de-classified papers at the Public Records Office in London show the extent of MI6 involvement. The Rapide aircraft piloted by Captain Cecil Bebb and on hire from Olley Air Services at Croydon aerodrome was authorised at the highest level of the British establishment. Major Hugh Pollard, his daughter Diana, and another young woman Dorothy Watson were also on the flight which collected Franco. Nor were the British press sympathetic to the volunteers, only four of the hundreds of daily newspapers in the country showed anything like sympathy. This attitude only began to change when the refugee Basque children arrived in Britain during 1937.

The British Brigaders fought on all fronts from Lopera to Belchite including Jarama. Here the British rifle companies totalling

400 took 275 casualties in the desperate attempt to hold 'Suicide Hill'. The machine gun company had been supplied the wrong ammunition and had to hold off the advancing Nationalists with small arms. When the correct cartridges did arrive they were boxed and had to be belted by hand before the heavy machine guns could be deployed. The British Battalion was also actively involved in the last major action of the War. At the Ebro, they took considerable casualties trying repeatedly to capture Hill 481, 'The Pimple' as it was known to the Brigaders. Their attempts were unsuccessful. Without the reserves and infrastructure possessed by the Nationalists this battle ended like most others during the conflict with a Republican rout.

In October 1938 the British Brigaders left Spain, leaving some 500 dead. Returning to, at worst, a hostile reception and, at best, ambivalence. The world war which followed vindicated them in the eyes of many and the Law of Historical Memory honoured them with Spanish Citizenship. They were on the losing side in a pivotal war in world history. They were fighting for a democratically elected government and for freedom and this is how they should be remembered.

Who do we celebrate? The labourers and bus drivers who gave up everything, who went to fight against fascism, or the peers and politicians who actively supported and helped Franco. Conveniently forgetting, of course, their involvement with the start of the Second World War.

NB: For the total number of Brigaders I have accepted Richard Baxell's figure, but I accept it is still under debate.

FEATURE

HOW TO BE FREE

Joe Herbert on right-wing libertarianism versus anarchism, the difference between 'freedom to' and 'freedom from'... and the powers of learning and imagination

Thomas Jefferson, who penned the stirring words of the American Declaration of Independence, was a slave-owner. The irony is a hard one for modern sensibilities. Jefferson freed his slaves by his death and by his will. The gesture seems too little and too late. The issue festered in the USA. In England, where families had grown rich, great houses built, on the proceeds of the slave trade, there was some movement. First of all the ban on the slave trade itself, eventually of the institution of slavery itself, at least in the British Empire. In the USA the issue came to divide the previously united states, and hundreds of thousands died in a bloody civil war. Slavery was abolished, but the second-class status of black citizens in the USA continued, enforced by the KKK and the lynch-mob.

In both world wars, black men fought and died alongside white men, even if they were not allowed to socialise together. Back home, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) worked hard to secure the rights of black people to education (including higher education) and access to professional jobs.

In the 1960s, the great decade of change in both Europe and North America, the pace began to quicken. Charismatic leaders such as Martin Luther King urged black people to struggle (non-violently) to assert their rights under the constitution – that the 'all' men who had been 'created equal' (Jefferson again) included black and white, women as well as men. White liberals and socialists joined them.



And the Black Power movement suggested what the consequences might be if equal rights were not achieved.

Freedom from discrimination on the grounds of race and colour became one of the great causes of the second half of the twentieth century. In South Africa, the struggle against the apartheid regime became an international cause. That is, when people could raise their heads from making money and getting rich. And against all the odds, one man, Nelson Mandela, ensured that majority rule came without the violence and bloodshed so long predicted and expected.

In our own country, we have laws which prohibit discrimination against women, black people, those with disabilities. Indeed, the majority of people are covered by such laws, with only a minority of white able-bodied men excluded. Which fact is much exploited by the popular press... But do such laws make a difference? Just as in South Africa, many black people continue to live in slum dwellings and endure high rates of unemployment and violent crime, so in England black people and other ethnic minorities tend to live in less desirable neighbourhoods, their young people harassed by the police and made to feel that they do not belong.

Islamic terrorism, whether in New York, Pakistan or London, has been used as the reason to restrict civil liberties. This has ranged from long-term detention of suspected militants to routine stop-and-search of young Muslims. Tourists who carry a camera around London are now at risk of being accused of taking photos of potential 'terrorist targets' (Buckingham Palace? Houses of Parliament? McDonald's?). So how much freedom we should be expected to give up in order to protect freedom in the wide sense – the right to live in a democratic, free society? What matters here is not so much finding the perfect answer as ensuring that the debate takes place. And part of that debate is about inequalities and iniquities on a world-world scale.

So far, the assumption has been that freedom is only an issue for the political left. That is not the case. Those who assert a libertarian viewpoint from a different spot on the political spectrum point out how readily socialism itself – the utopia of freedom-loving leftists – has been perverted to justify authoritarian rule, especially in Soviet Russia, and those countries in central and eastern Europe that endured Soviet-style rule. Stalin eliminated most of those communists who had fought in the Spanish Civil War, for example, on the basis that they might have become tainted with any one of a number of ideological deviations – the revolutionary doctrines of his fellow revolutionary Trotsky, or the libertarian ideals of the Spanish anarchists. Right-wing supporters of 'freedom' claim that almost anything imposed by government – taxation, commercial rules



and regulations, employment laws, equal opportunities, social workers – is somehow infringing their liberties. If it has the European Union tag attached, then that makes it twice as authoritarian, twice as freedom-threatening. It is a curious mirror-image of the freedom claimed by the Left.

Due consideration of the views of right-wing libertarians might lead us to a number of conclusions. Firstly that 'freedom from' must be distinguished from 'freedom to'. 'Freedom from' is a form of protection against arbitrary action of others. It makes clear that our lives should be lived unhampered, whether by tyrannical government or deprivation of the basic means of subsistence – clean air, water, food, or the possibility of making something of our lives through education and cultural activities. 'Freedom to' is the more dangerous, the more exhilarating. Because 'freedom to' always brings into play other people, and therefore community and society. So the second conclusion is that freedom is only worth considering within a social context.

We need restrictions on freedom to make life tolerable. The freedom of some to party until dawn at a night-club will be intolerable to many if some licensing authority does not insist on maximum permitted sound levels, and minimum levels of sound-proofing. At a global level, unless we balance our freedom to indulge in economic growth (sometimes referred to as greed) against our responsibilities



to restrict pollution, we (or our children, our grandchildren) will probably end up with a planet that will scarcely support life in any form. Freedom to do certain things then, not freedom to do anything that an individual fancies, however harmful to others. Free speech is the freedom to put forward views and ideas however misguided or mad or just plain wrong they may seem to the rest of the world. We pride ourselves, rightly, on the protection we give to lost causes. Yet over the years, we have built up, as a society, a considerable number of constraints on our own free speech.

A century, even half a century ago, such freedom was constrained largely by sexual and religious considerations – the blasphemy and obscenity laws. Serious discussion of, for example, birth control or homosexuality was banned in works of both fiction and non-fiction. Radclyffe Hall's *The Well of Loneliness*, which described the pleasures and difficulties of lesbian love, was published in 1928, and subsequently banned as obscene. It was not published again until after the Second World War. Heterosexual love was acceptable on the stage and in film but only if the actors kept their clothes on and refrained from using good old Anglo-Saxon terms for the relevant parts of the human body. Deep into the twentieth century, the Lord Chamberlain's Office continued to exercise fierce control over what could be shown and said in plays and films. D.H. Lawrence's

Lady Chatterley's Lover, as explicit about heterosexual love as Hall's novel was inexplicit about homosexual relations, was published abroad in 1928 but banned in England until 1960.

Nowadays, pretty much anything goes sexually, as long as it doesn't involve children or animals. Now freedom of expression is most obviously limited by equality legislation. Serious discussion of migration issues, for example, is permitted but speeches or articles designed to whip up hatred against a particular

ethnic group is against the law. The border between the two is now always obvious. Some people thought Enoch Powell's 'Rivers of Blood' speech was a serious reflection on deteriorating race relations in England, while other saw it a designed to stir up violent conflict. Another source of tension comes over when it is legitimate to advocate the violent overthrow of a political regime. The willingness of certain Muslim groups to launch suicide missions against targets in Western countries has added extra urgency to this debate. As has the probably illegal activity of Prime Minister Blair and President Bush in launching the invasion of Iraq. Many people accept that at the end of the day, violence may be necessary to counter oppression sustained by state violence. But in a connected, globalised world, this makes almost anything or anybody linked to a repressive regime a legitimate target.

In the long run, the ultimate freedom may be that of the imagination, the ability to imagine the world different from the way it is. The stories of those who have spent long periods in prison, or otherwise confined, bear witness to the power and perseverance of the human mind. The world is arranged in a particular way, people relate to one another in a certain way, or to objects, indeed the whole created world. But through history the pattern forms and re-forms, largely as a result of our human imagination. Most obviously through education, the training of minds, the world can appear other than what it is today. Yet so much that passes for education seems to stifle the creativity of young people, seems to say "The world is like it is, and not otherwise; take it or..." Or what? It may be a dilemma for some. Yet through the generations from Socrates to the twenty-first century there have nevertheless been many people teaching both children and adults that there is another world in our hearts.



WILDCAT SPECIAL

Fifty years ago the *Peace News* cartoonist Donald Room was accidentally involved in the Challenor case (look it up). Since 1980, he has also drawn the Wildcat cartoon in *Freedom* (see page 24). This is a reduced reproduction of a *Peace News* strip from June 2013, in which he recalls his fifteen minutes of fame.

Autumn 1962. Harold Challenor, Detective Sergeant in charge of CID aides (young PCs hoping to join CID), has a store of weapons for planting on people, helping to secure convictions.

At least one case known to the National Council for Civil Liberties

Planted iron bar on Riccardo. A-seven a-years for a-notting!!

Occupational risk for us villains. But seven years for "organising a gang," on a kid who can't organise eff-all!! He's a real bastard.

10 July 1963. Queen of Britain meets Queen of Greece on State Visit.

Home Secretary Henry Brooke calls midnight press conference.

The Queen of Britain wosh boed tonight and Iam fumfum furious!!

11 July 1963, Challenor assembles aides.

We can't allow queen-boosers not to be violent. They're not the sort that carries knives, so we'll issue them with bits of bricks.

11 July. Eight males (four demonstrators and four local residents) arrested and charged with carrying offensive weapons at a demo.

Challenor in person nicks the *Peace News* cartoonist ...

'Ave that with me.

SMACK!!

who listens at doors.

I took the brick from his pocket.

but it was never in my pocket.

Why not use the public Forensic Science service?

"We work for the defence as well as the prosecution. Defence solicitors should make more use of the service".

"Access is routine. Just hand whatever you want examined to the prosecuting officer, with a note of what you need".

8 August 1963. The cartoonist has a well paid job (not as a cartoonist), and comes to court with a solicitor, a barrister, and a forensic scientist.

Are you familiar with Locard's principle??

Certainly. Every contact leaves its trace.

A piece of brick in a pocket would leave brick dust and scratches. I searched all the pockets and found no trace of a brick.

Case dismissed I see no alternative.

DUST FALLS OFF BRICK AS MAGISTRATE LOOKS AT IT

Dozens convicted or remanded on D/S Challenor's evidence are released.

17 August 1963. Boastful cartoon is published in *Peace News*.

"I've dislodged a bit of brick."

Mr Challenor is assailed by demons

You know about Locard's principle but didn't act on it!! Call yourself a detective??

You had ample opportunities to put the brick in the bloke's pocket. but stuck to verbals!!

You think you're a smart operator, but you're just a stupid berk!!

D/S Challenor has gone mad, Minister, and Parliament is calling for a Public Inquiry.

Our advice is (1) have an Inquiry to discover the facts; (2) set the public mind at rest by finding whole affair due to mental illness, police force not to blame; and (3) properly investigate what really happened.

We know what happened. The Queen was boed and I was furious.

August 1965. Cmnd 2735 James Report published. Public mind set at rest.

Report (HO\287\1463) of the proper investigation was completed in 1971 and will be released in 2022.

Don't miss it !!

PRISONERS ON HUNGER AND WORK STRIKE

At the time of writing this, prisoners across California are a week into the largest hunger and work strike in state history and their third major hunger strike in the past few years. The strike has been called by the Pelican Bay Secure Housing Unit (SHU) Short Corridor Collective. On the first day (8th July) 30,000 prisoners in two-thirds of the state's 33 prisons, and at all four out-of-state private prisons, refused meals and 2,300 refused to participate in their work assignments or attend classes. According to the protest's supporters, this had reduced to 29,000 and 2,000 participants respectively by day two. This compares to the peak numbers for the two previous hunger strike protests of 7,000 inmates refusing food in July 2011 and 12,000 in October of that year, with more than 6,000 of the core SHU prisoners maintaining their hunger strike for several weeks in the second protest.

Needless to say, the official strike figures are somewhat different. Not least because the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) only count someone as being on hunger strike if they miss nine consecutive meals. This means they did not start counting participants until the 11th, when their figures were 12,421 inmates in 24 state prisons and four out-of-state contract facilities and 1,336 on work/education strikes. These numbers have been swollen by solidarity protests at a number of prisons outside California.

At the end of the first week, the 'official' July 15th figures were 2,572 hunger strikers in 17 state prisons and 258 work and education refuseniks. Of course, these figures were played up as showing a fall-off in support. However, it was never going to be the case that all those who had refused food over the first few days in solidarity with the core SHU protestors would continue throughout the hunger strike. Still, given that roughly 12,000 of California's inmates, nearly 10% of the total State prison population are held in one form or another of isolation, and roughly 4,500 of those are in SHU cells, it is pretty solid protest.

This 'depletion' in numbers has not stopped a 'target list' of prisoners, fasters and alleged leaders being moved to 'Potty Watch' cells (a particularly medieval form of torture used to find swallowed contraband), confiscating any food bought at prison canteens from protestors' cells and threatening them with action for "participating in a mass disturbance and refusing to participate in a work assignment [which are] violations of state law". There is talk of seeking court permission to force-feed inmates. More information can be found at <http://prisonerhungerstrikesolidarity.wordpress.com>

Prison under the coalition

We all know why representative democracy is a total con. One set of party-political drones is replaced by another set, whose only real difference appears to be the colour of the rosette pinned on their chest to mark the occasion. And every time one set of bureaucrats is ousted, the new set spend the majority of their time blaming the previous useless bunch for any problems they encounter.

Having been elected on yet another useless piece of paper – the party election manifesto – it is *de rigueur* for it to be cast aside as rapidly as possible post-election and replaced with a whole new set of policies that appear to have been made up on the spot or spewed out by the latest focus group. And, irony of ironies, some of these brand spanking new policies are exactly the ones that the previous useless bunch of party functionaries had been advocating and which the current (and then would be) incumbents had so vehemently dismissed as not practical /ideologically acceptable/affordable.

So why this rant? Well, all of the above has been amply illustrated by the Coalition's laughable attempts to run the prison system. We've had (and this is nowhere near an exhaustive list):

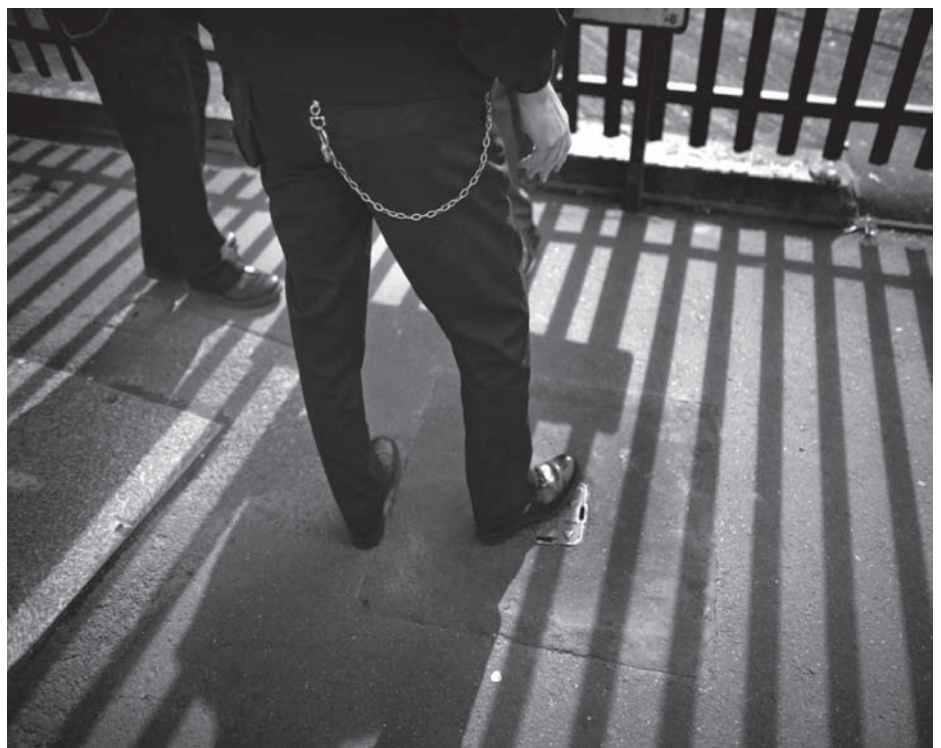
- The Tories' abandonment of their plans to sell off 30 expensive inner city Victorian prisons to finance 5,000 new prison places as being too expensive.
- The junking of IPP sentences because they too cost too much, despite being just the sort of hard-line policy that the Tory faithful wet themselves over.
- The introduction of competitive tendering for legal aid provision despite the current

Attorney General, Dominic Grieve, having declared the Conservative's opposition to just that back in 2004 when he was Shadow Attorney General.

- The dash to roll out 'payment by results' for post-released short-term prisoner mentoring schemes despite both pilot schemes not having been completed and one actually showing an increase in reoffending rates.

Which brings us to the latest of Chris Grayling's harebrained 'back of a fag packet' schemes: the introduction of 70 regional 'resettlement prisons' across the country, which are prisons closer to an individual prisoner's home and where they will be transferred prior to their release. So, whilst this will obviously aid the running of the post-released mentoring schemes, it throws a massive spanner into the works for the potential introduction of 'payment by results' within the prison estate – a particularly stupid and unworkable idea in the first place. Who's going to get the (financial) credit for cutting a particular prisoner's likelihood of reoffending if they are being moved to yet another prison prior to release?

And even more bizarrely, the vast majority of the 30 prisons the Tories wanted to flog off are on the list of 'resettlement prisons'. Add to that the announcement of a new 2,000-place mini-Titan prison for North Wales and Policy Exchange flagging up of a future Tory government building 3,000-bed Titan prisons (something that they had previously opposed when Labour had proposed it) and one is forced to concede that it is no way to run a Banana Republic.



COMMENT

ABOUT FREEDOM

ANGEL ALLEY

July blooms over Angel Alley but as it is the slow season for news, once again we will prognosticate far into the future and fast-forward to the events of August. Our new beach will become a seaside resort when a sudden downpour causes the drain to overflow (doubtless blocked by all the bits of gravel from relaying the surface of the alley) and form a big lake outside the front door. Work will continue slowly on new, nicer shelving and the lights will be fixed around mid August. Later in the month a shiny new window will be fitted to replace the one smashed in the firebomb attack in February and then a box will be fitted around the electricity meter – at which point the shop will be nearly back to normal.

On a more serious note, the English Defence League are once again threatening to march in Whitechapel. The date set is the 7th September and of course we and other anarchists are organising with the local community to oppose this and the inevitable invasive policing that goes with it. Incidentally, the Met now has 5,260 riot trained officers a 40% rise since the riots of August 2011, which means a lot of overeager plod.

P.S. Peter Capaldi will be the new Doctor Who.

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CONTACT DETAILS

Freedom Press, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX
 Tell/fax: 020 7247 9249
www.freedompress.org.uk
 Enquiries: info@freedompress.org.uk
 Copy/Letters: copy@freedompress.org.uk
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A sideways look

by SVARTFROSK

There can be no doubt that Wonga and other payday lenders do a lot of social harm, so it is refreshing in one way that there is increased scrutiny on their activities, even if it is just from the Archbishop of Canterbury or Papiss Cisse, Newcastle United's Muslim striker.

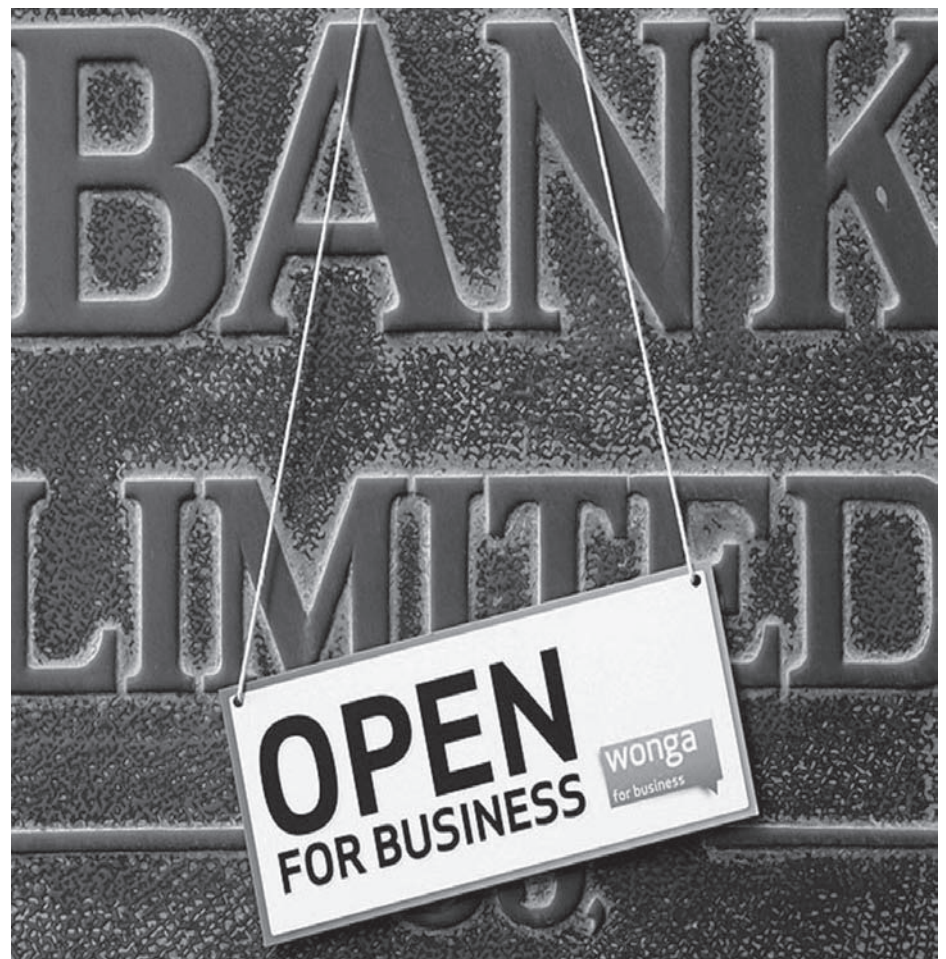
Wonga and other payday lenders loan money at very high rates for short periods. They defend their business model by saying that most of their customers pay back and don't end up paying the eye-watering amounts quoted in the press. This may well be true, but it is not a lot of help for those who do, and you can understand why there might be concern, even if there's precious little of it from mainstream politicians.

However, I think a lot of the criticism of Wonga misses the point. Yes, it's a rip off, but why do people feel they need it? Welcome to low-pay Britain, where millions struggle between pay packets or benefit payments because the cost of living outstrips the rise in pay and millions of workers have not had a pay rise in years. The lid has been kept on inflation by counting mortgage payments in with inflation – these have not generally been rising. If, on the other hand, you're paying rent you'll have seen the amount you pay go up plenty over the last five years. Likewise, gas and electricity prices, food, travel have all gone up by far more than the official rate

of inflation. Things that are used to pretend inflation is low include consumer electronics, which have fallen in price. I don't know about you but they don't make up a lot of my purchases.

And if everything is going up apart from your income, there will be times when even the bust budgeted household will run out of money when there is a bill to pay. And in the Ryanair-style economy we live in, everything has a price. Banks charge up to £35 for going overdrawn and will charge for missed direct debits or bounced cheques. Utilities charge for reconnection.

Wonga fills the gap for people who don't have a cushion for their finances and have worked out that the Wonga fees are a better deal than the rip off charges. The popular imagination of these loans is that they are used like credit cards for impulse buys like holidays or a new television. I think this is only a small part of the picture – after all, who would pay that sort of interest if they had an alternative? The underlying reason pay day loan companies exist are the crap banks and the general cost of living, together with the rip-off charges that now seem to accompany almost every area of life. I'd like to hear the Archbishop talk about that, but then it might mean this former oil executive looking at the workings of capitalism.



Pride and prejudice

As a lifelong boycotter of the grotesque capitalist display that is mainstream LGBT Pride, it was refreshing to read about the House of Brag/London Queer Social Centre running an alternative to London Pride (*Freedom*, June 2013). In contrast to that shameless exercise in sucking up the Pink Pound, it sounds as if it was an event which centred on genuine political discussion and good old-fashioned fun that didn't involve £6 bottles of beer.

I shall definitely be there next year!

Julian Norwich

All the world's a stage

The Living Theatre is in the midst of reorganising after losing its performance space in New York City. The Living Theatre was/is one of the main architects of the counterculture and of experimental theatre in the United States.

Living Theatre artist Judith Malina says: "I'm in the theatre because I'm a revolutionary. I want to make the beautiful anarchist non-violent revolution and I think this is where, if anywhere, it's going to happen. We'll keep going. If we have no place, we'll do street theatre. We can always work on the street and pass the hat."

Please make a contribution to support the reorganisation of the work of The Living Theatre.

The best way to contribute is to send cheques or cash to: The Living Theatre, 151 First Avenue, Suite # 136, New York, NY 10003, USA. See also www.livingtheatre.org.

Syndicalist Action

Going postal

Staff at Bridgwater Delivery Office have been striking over cuts to full-time jobs and overtime; failure to negotiate with the union; failure to pay money for previous savings; and too many bullying managers. Royal Mail are refusing to consider reasonable compromises. Having already taken five days of strike action, the strikers are now embarking on another four days of strikes with the possibility of a whole week of striking at the beginning of September.

Our Friarn Street picket lines run from 5am to 9am: 'solidarity hour' is between 8am and 9am. Our next four strikes are Saturday 10th August, Monday 12th August, Saturday 17th August and Monday 19th August. See you there!

Dave Chapple

A job well done

Demonstrators besieged Leith Job Centre in Edinburgh on 11th July to oppose the 30% sanctions target set by a new manager there. Part of the Boycott Workfare Week of Action Against Workfare, the demo denounced all work-for-your-benefits schemes, and

proclaimed opposition to the whole austerity programme.

Organised by Edinburgh Coalition Against Poverty and supported by Greater Leith Against the Cuts, the demo saw around thirty to forty people participating including several disability rights activists and several people who signed on at Leith Job Centre. One demonstrator told how she herself had been sanctioned and was surviving on meagre hardship payments. Others recounted how the new Hit Squad at Leith Job Centre were trying to bully and threaten them into signing up to the Universal Jobmatch government job search account and give permission for their job search to be electronically monitored. It is clear the local manager's declaration that 30% of claimants were not meeting the conditions for receiving Job Seekers Allowance – and therefore should be sanctioned – is being translated into oppressive bullying treatment on a daily basis.

The police were guarding the Job Centre for hours before the demo and with reinforcements arriving police numbers grew to double figures. Some demonstrators entered the Job Centre but were grabbed by police in the foyer and frogmarched out. The policeman in charge declared the Public Order Act was in force and under its provisions ordered people to leave the approach ramp to the Job Centre. Despite this demonstrators crowded round the door, now guarded by a

row of police. A cacophony of whistles, spoons beating on pots and chants of "We will not be sanctioned!" and "We won't be your 30%" let the management know claimants would not be passive victims.

Placards and banners declared 'DWP = Department of Workfare and Punishment' and 'No To A4Enslavement'. Before and during the demo hundreds of leaflets were distributed to claimants, advising: "If you have a tricky interview at the Jobcentre, take a friend or adviser with you, this is your right. You have the right to challenge sanctions. Ask for the decision to be reviewed and appeal against it. If need be, we can alert our Edinburgh Coalition Against Poverty solidarity network to have a peaceful demo *inside* the Jobcentre." Special leaflets on the Universal Jobmatch explained that the DWP have no right to insist on access your job search and urged claimants to resist being signed up for the scheme.

As one demonstrator said: "We can learn from the resistance in Brazil, Turkey, Spain, Greece and elsewhere – it's no good relying on politicians or leaders, we need grassroots direct action. It's time to say enough is enough!"

Edinburgh Coalition Against Poverty
ecap@lists.riseup.net
www.edinburghagainstpoverity.org.uk
 Greater Leith Against the Cuts
www.edinburghagaincuts.org.uk

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GETTING ACTIVE

WHAT'S ON

JULY

■ **4th, 11th, 18th and 25th** London group of The Anarchist Federation meets at Freedom Bookshop 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX. If you would like to attend please email london@afed.org.uk.

■ **19th** The Red & Black Club at LARC, 62 Fieldgate Street, London E1 1ES from 8pm, live broadcast from Dissident Island Radio as the local anarchists host a traditional east end knees-up.

AUGUST

■ **1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd and 29th** London group of The Anarchist Federation meets at Freedom Bookshop 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX. If you would like to attend email london@afed.org.uk.

■ **6th and 20th** Practical Squatting Evening at LARC, 62 Fieldgate Street, London E1 1ES from 7pm to 8pm, for more see <http://www.squatter.org.uk/>

■ **7th to 11th** Earth First! Summer Gathering near Bexhill, for further details see <http://efgathering.weebly.com/>

■ **10th** News from Nowhere Club presents *Political Biography* with speaker Rania Khan at The Epicentre, West Street, Leytonstone E11 4LJ, buffet 7.30pm, talk starts 8pm, see <http://www.newsfromnowhereclub.org/> or call 0208 555 5248 for details.

■ **13th and 27th** Practical Squatting Evening at 56a Infoshop, 56a Crampton Street, London SE17 3AE from 7pm to 8pm, see <http://www.56a.org.uk/> for details.

■ **16th** The Red & Black Club at LARC, 62 Fieldgate Street, London E1 1ES from 8pm, Dissident Island Radio will be broadcasting live as the local anarchists host a traditional east end knees-up.

■ **22nd** Reel News film night at The Grosvenor, 17 Sidney Road, Stockwell, London SW9 0TP, from 7.30pm until 11.30pm, see <http://reelnews.co.uk> for more.

SEPTEMBER

■ **3rd and 17th** Practical Squatting Evening at LARC, 62 Fieldgate Street, London E1 1ES from 7pm to 8pm, for more see <http://www.squatter.org.uk/>

■ **5th, 12th, 19th and 26th** London group of The Anarchist Federation meets weekly on Thursday evenings at Freedom Bookshop, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX. If you would like to attend please email london@afed.org.uk beforehand.

■ **7th to 14th** Week of action against DSEi, see www.stopthearmsfair.org.uk for more.

■ **10th and 24th** Practical Squatting Evening at 56a Infoshop, 56a Crampton Street, London SE17 3AE from 7pm to 8pm, see <http://www.56a.org.uk/> for details.

■ **14th** News from Nowhere Club presents *Conflict and Competition: The Rise and Fall of London's Docks in the nineteenth century* with speaker Dr Tom Wareham at The Epicentre, West Street, Leytonstone E11 4LJ, buffet 7.30pm, talk starts 8pm, see <http://www.newsfromnowhereclub.org/> or call 0208 555 5248 for details.



● In the second week of August, a group mainly composed of volunteers from the Sumac Centre in Nottingham is travelling down to Calais to cook for migrants trapped on the border between France and the UK. The group also spent two weeks beginning the 7th July on the border. The trip is part of an ongoing call-out for radical kitchen and catering collectives to head to Calais every summer when the charities decide they can take a month off from feeding migrants there – despite it being their main purpose to do so.

Calais Migrant Solidarity Network was set up in 2009. Kitchens have come to the border from across Western Europe, including the Netherlands, Germany and Sweden and many parts of the UK for the last three years.

Leeds No Borders have also visited Calais with a mobile kitchen this summer, and a crew from Cardiff are due to be there in the second week of August for the same reason.

If other groups feel they can fill any gaps this summer please get in touch. It would be great if more social centres got involved in this – this year and in the years ahead.

The Sumac Centre is a volunteer-run social and community centre based in Forest Fields in Nottingham. We have a cafe which is open every Saturday evening for a big communal meal called People's Kitchen, and also host the Forest Fields Social Club, a bar which opens Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 7.30pm until 11pm.

We provide resources and also a meeting space for groups and individuals working to promote social justice, environmental awareness, peace, and animal rights.

The Sumac Centre, 245 Gladstone Street, Forest Fields, Nottingham, NG7 6HX, tel: 0845 458 9595, www.sumac.org.uk

● DSEi (Defence & Security Equipment International), is one of the biggest events on the international arms fair circuit, taking place at the ExCeL centre in London's Docklands. It exists so that arms buyers and sellers can come together, network and make deals. The last event featured over 1,300 arms companies from around the world, displaying arms ranging from rifles to tanks to fighter jets to battleships. They were joined by arms dealers, 'trade visitors' and military delegations, including countries involved in conflict and human rights abuses, as well as those with desperately underfunded development needs.

All this took place in secret, behind heavily protected security fences and police lines designed to allow arms dealers to trade their wares unhindered by transparency or public protest. The event was subsidised by the UK taxpayer.

Stop The Arms Fair is a coalition of groups and individuals who have joined forces to put an end to DSEi and all UK arms fairs.

A massive week of action is planned from 7th to 14th September to expose the arms fair and make its business as difficult as possible. If you only do one thing, join in Occupy DSEi on Sunday 8th September for a huge protest as arms dealers arrive and try to set up at the fair.

- Stop the Arms Fair <http://www.stopthearmsfair.org.uk/> <https://www.facebook.com/stopthearmsfair> Twitter @StopTheArmsFair (#occupydsei)
- Disarm DSEi <http://www.dsei.org/> Twitter @DisarmDsei
- Campaign Against the Arms Trade <http://www.caat.org.uk/> Twitter @wwwcaatorguk

More racism at AC Milan

AC Milan footballer, Kevin Constant, has walked off the pitch during the middle of the game in response to racist abuse from fans. He is the second AC Milan player this year to abandon a game, joining Kevin Prince Boateng who refused to complete a game in January.

Unlike the first incident – when both sets of players followed Boateng off the pitch – Constant was immediately substituted and the game continued. The lack of support



being offered Kevin Constant by his club is much less than Boateng received just six months ago. Whilst they supported Boateng's right to refuse to play, they have taken a much harder line with the latest incident. The club released a quite ridiculous statement saying: "Despite his more than understandable reasons and the anger he must have felt, AC Milan would like to remind everyone that the only people responsible for intervening against any manifestations that offend the human dignity, which includes racial discrimination, are the referee in charge of the match and the head of public safety." So it would appear that nobody has the right to take issue with or to intervene in racist incidents unless it is the referee. The statement went on to claim that there should be a 'zero tolerance' to racism. Presumably it is the AC Milan club board that get to define 'racism' or 'zero tolerance'?

The club have announced that an internal investigation is to take place and that

disciplinary measures may follow. The club President has said: "Although it was terrible behaviour by the crowd, the rules are that the player to go to the referee. He then goes to the fourth official, who alerts the police officers. The game is then suspended."

Milan milked that publicity that January's incident generated. They enjoyed being seen as the club that does not tolerate racist abuse – just as long as a player refusing to play is just a one off incident. Anything more would be an embarrassment, and would undermine the latest round of FIFA ant-racism initiatives.

Sepp Blatter's latest sanctions against clubs that have problem with racism are just further derisory fines and toothless threats of having to play matches behind closed doors. As FIFA/UEFA would not exist without the clubs that they govern – we do not need to call in Perry Mason to work out that clubs of significance will never be sanctioned in any meaningful way.

Matt Black

Football's blind eye to slavery

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conditions and pay of those involved is a disgrace on a colossal scale.

The workers are paid poverty wages, which are often withheld by supervisors for trivial reasons. Health and safety considerations do not exist on building sites, which as you would expect has led to a high rate of accidents. Workers are all housed in huge sprawling camps that often lack running water, or adequate drainage. Illnesses associated with living in such squalor are high.

Should workers decide they no longer wish to work in Qatar, they have to ask the site supervisor for permission to leave. One of the conditions of employment is that workers hand over their passports to the bosses. This

makes leaving difficult as permission is often refused, as are wages if they ask to leave. Workers are also contractually barred from leaving one contractor for another, barred from forming or joining trade unions and the Qatari court system refuses to hear any cases relating to workplace issues.

The situation in Qatar is no secret, yet what has the international community has had absolutely nothing to say about it. Human rights watch and a couple of trade unions have issued tokenistic statements condemning Qatar, yet FIFA, organisers of the World Cup, and those who awarded Qatar the tournament in 2022, have said very little about goings on in Qatar, effectively

turning a blind eye. When asked about human rights abuses, they said that the "World Cup in the Middle East offers a great opportunity for the region to discover football's power as a platform for positive social change. FIFA upholds the respect for human rights and the application of international norms of behaviour as a principle and part of all our activities."

Sepp Blatter and the brown envelope brigade in FIFA towers have a different view of what 'positive social change' entails, than I do. However slavery is defined in the twenty-first century the situation in Qatar must match that definition, yet FIFA and the wider sporting community don't appear to care.

Matt Black

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REVIEWS

BOOK

The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness

by Michelle Alexander, The New Press, £14.99

The New Jim Crow addresses the mass incarceration and criminalisation of blacks in the US. In a 20 year period up to the year 2000, prison numbers went from 300k to two million. In 2007, one in 31 Americans was under some aspect of the criminal justice system. Historically, this is an unprecedented rate of imprisonment and growth in prison numbers.

No other regime is known to incarcerate as many of its ethnic minorities as the US and we have some pretty appalling regimes to compare them to. Detailed studies examine that while African-Americans are not proportionately more likely to be users or dealers in drugs than other races, they account for 80-90% of arrests around drug related offences. In some communities, one in three black males is either in prison, parole or probation.

Much of the current spike in numbers leads Alexander to target 'the war on drugs' as being wholly about targeting blacks for imprisonment. She argues that an overhaul in criminal changes emanating from the Reagan period created a permanent 'racial caste' in the US that continued in an unchallenged form under Clinton and currently under Obama. The main dichotomy she tries to address is how this could happen not under segregation, or a state guided by explicitly racist ideas, but under institutions which are 'colorblind' but still have an implicitly racist end result.

There is a certain view in the book that (legal) racial control of blacks, from the abolition of slavery, right up to the Civil Rights Movement takes new forms when concessions are made, but she doesn't seem to qualify what the cultural underpinnings of this white supremacist sentiment (for lack of a better term) is/are, and how it can be combatted. Instead she's taking apart institutions and after some profound analysis she's beckoning the Civil Rights Movement to change direction. So we can see in linear form Nixon play the law and order card against the '60s Civil Rights Movement and from there we can see a historical trajectory right up to today.

The book does well to challenge the massive gaps in the current logic of the Civil Rights Movement and examine the scope of mistreatment of convicted felons. It provides some decent tactical and strategic observations for a social movement capable of bringing about potential changes. However, for all the book's political acumen, I was surprised Alexander didn't try to locate the major mistreatment of blacks into a critique of neo-liberalism.

Joe Maguire

The Fiction column will return in our next issue.

FILM

The Spirit of '45

directed by Ken Loach

Loach's return to documentary has attracted wide coverage, with cinema and DVD releases and Film4 television screening on 25th June. So, riding waves of Olympics and other jingoisms, the veteran director panders to resurgent nationalism with an old-leftie twist, celebrating Labour's landslide 1945 victory after World War Two and its social-democratic programme of universal welfare and state control of the economy. The structure and aesthetics of the film are also unashamedly backward-looking, based on extensive black-and-white archive footage and contemporary interviews adopting the same monochrome palette. The shift to colour in closing clips of Stop the War, Occupy, UK Uncut and Save the NHS banners and demonstrations finally reinforces the message that present-day ragtag resistance requires unification through an updated 'spirit of '45'.

The first half-hour gives timely reminders of working-class poverty in 1920s/30s Britain. Unemployment, appalling working conditions, disgusting housing and unaffordable medical care while the rich maintained power through their 'free market' after the slaughter of the 1914-18 war and with the labour movement's fitful growth thereafter. Nevertheless, the film's second act recounts experiences of collective strength during WW2 in military and civilian spheres feeding beliefs that the masses

could also 'win the peace' and never return to the prior *status quo*. Thus a bemused Winston Churchill is heckled at 1945 election hustings, Clement Attlee proclaims 'socialism', and subsequent nationalisations of housing, health and industry receive rapturous welcomes. We then jump-cut to Thatcher's 1980s and ongoing privatisations, attacks on organised labour and the decimation of welfare heralding a vicious circle to the bad old days of our starting point – unless, allegedly, the corpse of socialism can be resuscitated.

As an exceedingly blunt instrument for rousing the rabble from the slumber of 'there is no alternative', *The Spirit of '45* may serve some purpose for those with little knowledge of history. But although its broad-brush approach inevitably entails oversimplification, some of the glaring omissions* are so clumsily or egregiously concealed as to suggest bad faith as well as bad politics. Thus many of the self-inflicted failings and defeats of, and betrayals by, the Labour Party, trade unions and state socialism in general – not to mention their regular exasperated repudiation by disillusioned working-class people – are either conveniently ignored or blithely glossed over.

www.libcom.org/blog/tom-jennings

* See, for notable examples: 'Left Unity... No Thanks', reposted at www.ianbone.wordpress.com/2013/04/30/ and Anna Chen, 'Ethnically Cleansing History', at www.madammiawow.blogspot.co.uk/2013/06/.



QUIZ ANSWERS

1. Lesotho, Swaziland, Papua New Guinea and the USA.
2. According to an anonymous mother quoted in the *New York Post*, by hiring a disabled guide, at \$130 an hour, allowing them to join a disabled queue in the Florida theme park. Disney have said they are reviewing the situation and will take steps to prevent this in future.
3. The Bank transferred the money, despite a request from their French counterpart not

- to as it was stolen from the Czech government.
4. Those who were Jewish were sent, via a French camp, to Auschwitz, where approximately 2,000 were killed. Others were sent to a local French camp, only to be released a few days later. The Germans, working to a Vichy plan of social cleansing, then dynamited most of the Old Port, saving only buildings like the Hotel Splendide that the French fascists thought saving.

Power napping

Anna Aslanyan reviews this exploration of the changing role of sleep in a capitalist world

“Sleep is the most moronic fraternity in the world, with the heaviest dues and the crudest rituals. [...] I simply cannot get used to the nightly betrayal of reason, humanity, genius.” This is from Vladimir Nabokov’s autobiography *Speak, Memory*, written over half a century ago, long before the advent of “the 24/7 non-time of compulsory accumulation”, facilitated by technology.

Given the omnipresence of this phenomenon today, Jonathan Crary’s analysis of it is timely. His *24/7: Late Capitalism and the Ends of Sleep* starts with several examples related to the meaning of sleep today, the most illuminating of them concerning the use of sleep deprivation as part of the Pentagon’s First Special Interrogation Plan. Evoking the technique aimed at “the calculated shattering of an individual”, Crary sets the tone for the book, which demonstrates how one of the most private human activities is being transformed in the age of “terminal capitalism” (some online versions of the book’s subtitle use this term) and high-tech advances.

The first chapter contains a foray into history, outlining different patterns of human life. There are further historical facts in the book as the author refers to the industrial revolution and the changes it brought upon humankind. A 1782 painting by John Wright of Derby, *Arkwright’s Cotton Mills by Night*, is studied to illustrate capitalism’s impact on “the relation between work and time”. The set-up when factories operate round the clock to generate profit, while humans work in 12-hour shifts was not, of course, possible in rural societies; we would not be living at the frenetic pace that is often required of us today if it were not for Arkwright’s mills.

“An illuminated 24/7 world without shadows is the final capitalist mirage of post-history,” writes Crary. Is “mass synchronisation” good or bad then? The author cites Bernard Stiegler on this, countering the philosopher’s “idea of the industrial homogenisation of consciousness and its flows”. Indeed, it is easy to blame industrial revolution for everything, but before street lighting was introduced people’s diurnal rhythms were determined by one – definitive – factor: they could not very well be changed by the light of an oil lamp. The BBC report on segmented sleep published last year emphasised the fact that, up until the late seventeenth century, people slept not in a single eight-hour stretch, but with intervals. It was urban development and industrialisation that led to the pattern we are now used to; those of us who wake up in the middle of the night to check their



emails or stay glued to their smartphones at all hours are, in fact, getting closer to the mediaeval model, the one destroyed by the emergence of capitalism. Trying to decide what’s good and what’s evil about this phenomenon is a lost argument: trying to analyse its impact on society and culture is useful, especially now that it can no longer be ignored as rare.

This is what Crary does in his book talking about “the borders between private and professional time, between work and consumption.” He cites a number of seminal works on the subject, most pertinently *The New Spirit of Capitalism* by Luc Boltanski and Eve Chiapello. Another link in the 24/7 chain pointed out by these authors is the recent demise of “slow” activities: “social phenomena that are characterised by the appearance of stasis or slow rates of change are marginalised and drained of value or desirability”.

Although Crary does not quote Nabokov’s diatribe against sleep, he mentions such philosophers as Descartes, Hume and Locke “who disparaged sleep for its irrelevance to the operation of the mind or the pursuit of knowledge”. By the mid nineteenth century, such theories identified sleep with a primitive

mode of existence; from this point of view, the decrease in the average number of hours we sleep, registered over the last hundred years (from 10 hours down to a mere six and a half, according to North American statistics) should look encouraging. References to twentieth century thinkers, including Hannah Arendt, Michel Foucault and Guy Debord, exemplify and highlight some of the points the author makes about the human condition in what many still perceive as a “brave new world”.

An important theme touched upon in the book is surveillance: having reached unprecedented levels, it keeps encroaching on us, be it through social networks, marketing exercises or government spying. Amazingly, it has penetrated not just business but also the arts – no creative project today is envisaged without having it in mind. *24/7* focuses on the other side of the same coin as it talks about business strategists employing “screens... that track eye movements, as well as durations and fixations of visual interest in sequences or streams of graphic information”. The so-called optical ergonomics is a lucrative area of research in which we all take part as guinea pigs, often

THE ARTS

KING MOB: MAX

During the Gordon Riots of June 1780, a 23 year old William Blake found himself at the forefront of the mob as it reached the hated Newgate Prison, now the site of the Old Bailey. After releasing everyone (most of the prisoners freed were being held for non-payment of debts) the prison was gutted and the walls damaged, and some graffiti left offered the proclamation that the inmates had been freed by the authority of “His Majesty, King Mob”. An anarcho-situationalist group took up the name in the 1970s in London’s Notting Hill Area and pioneered

psychogeography via graffiti and their publication *King Mob Echo*.

In the June issue of *Freedom* we featured an exciting new group exhibition of radical art in The New Art Gallery Walsall, curated by Cedar Lewisohn. The show also features photographs by Freedom Collective member Max Reeves, “a self-taught photographer and active humanitarian. He documents his daily life, focusing on themes of freedom, control and individuality in society. Images of family and friends are intertwined with images of public marches, protests, crowds

and riots”. This work is part of a wider project called ‘London is a World Class City’ looking at the psychological terrain of the capital. Here are a selection of the images on show.

Max’s acclaimed photographic ‘zine *Papakura Post Office* is available from the Freedom bookshop.

The Hecklers show is at The New Art Gallery Walsall, Gallery Square, Walsall WS2 8LG, tel: 01922 654 400, until 22nd September 2013. For details see www.thenewartgallerywalsall.org.uk.



Photograph © Max Reeves

Book review

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quite willingly. Crary remembers that back in the late 1990s, the future CEO of Google already talked about “attention economy” that would mark the 21st century, stressing the need for global corporations to “succeed in maximizing the number of ‘eyeballs’ they could consistently engage and control”. This example strengthens the author’s argument when he attempts to expose “the expedient misconception that economic justice, mitigation of climate change, and egalitarian

social relations can somehow occur alongside the continued existence of corporations like Google, Apple, and General Electric”.

Writing about the two-way nature of the processes he observes, Crary notes that psychotropic drugs and communication devices are similar in their “production of forms of social compliance”. Lamenting – but at the same time constantly examining – the fact that we are turning into accomplices of terminal capitalism, the author recalls

“the many bestselling guides that tell us, with a grim fatality, the 1,000 movies to see before we die, the 100 tourist destinations to visit before we die, the 500 books to read before we die”. *24/7* is unlikely to be on any such list: anyone interested in contemporary thought should read it without the risk of submitting to the rules of that stupid game.

24/7: Late Capitalism and the Ends of Sleep by Jonathan Crary, published by Verso, £9.99.

REEVES



Photographs © Max Reeves

SPORT

Football's blind eye to slavery



The appalling conditions that migrant workers are enduring whilst building stadiums for Qatar's world cup in 2022, was first covered in *Freedom* last year. A clearer picture of working practices and exploitation across Qatar has now emerged.

To enable Qatar to have suitable stadia and infrastructure to host the second largest

sporting event in the world, they are embarking on one of the biggest construction projects the world has ever seen. They are spending hundreds of billions on purpose built stadiums, a new road system, a new international airport, a new seaport and hundreds of hotels. The project will take the best part of a decade to complete and will

require the labour of close to 1.2 million people.

Some 94% of all those employed on the project will be immigrants – predominantly from South Asia. Despite being one of the wealthiest countries in the world, and the World Cup (and everything around it) being very much in the public eye, the working

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THE QUIZ

1. Which four countries in the world don't have mandatory paid maternity leave?
2. How does the 1% "do Disney"?
3. According to archives released in July, how did the Bank of England respond when asked by Nazi Germany to sell gold looted from Czechoslovakia?
4. In 1943, residents of the Old Port in Marseille were rounded up by French police, working with the SS, and removed from the city. What happened next?

Answers on page 20

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

