

FREEDOM

80P ANARCHIST NEWS AND VIEWS

www.freedompress.org.uk

26 AUGUST 2006

INSIDE ►►

Looking at NHS finances page 3

Anarchism and Lebanon page 4

The life of Murray Bookchin page 5

The SWP have missed again page 7

TERROR WEAK POINTS SNUBBED

An exclusive investigation by *Freedom* has found that thousands of potential terror targets have not been attacked despite being totally ignored by the security forces and government legislation.

Nuclear sites and their supply trains, water supplies, power supplies, fuel supplies and industries using massive levels of heavy poisons all appear to be totally safe, as neither terrorists nor the secret services have paid them any attention at all.

In fact no attacks have occurred on or near any facility which could conceivably kill a large mass number of people despite big weaknesses in the system.

In a report by Greenpeace, for example, it was found that a single high-explosive shot fired at a nuclear train running through London could immediately kill 50,000 people by rupturing tanks carrying highly radioactive fuel. Security on these trains is almost non-existent, and Greenpeace was able to build up a reliable dossier of train movements without once being asked for ID.

The facilities themselves, while guarded, have not seen a major upsurge in security measures even as many are readied for decommissioning.

Water facilities, which are easily located on maps and have minimal private security, have also remained free of poisons, biological agents or indeed any other form of contaminant. Supermarket supplies, again easily contaminated, have also been left alone.

Over the last three winters, no plots seem to have been foiled to sabotage fuel supplies, or electricity supplies, which have the potential to kill countless vulnerable people if blocked.

Refineries too, have been blessed with a terror-free last few years, as has the entirety of our heavy chemicals industry.

Economically, the stock exchange has not been hit, nor have any of the UK's banking headquarters, despite popularisation of the idea of an economic collapse brought about by such measures in the film *Fight Club*.

In fact transport has been the only area where terrorists have consistently been found to have been plotting murder. This consistent aiming at the same target baffles Simon, an anti-nuclear campaigner, who doesn't see why terrorists have restricted themselves to such an inefficient (albeit spectacular) arena. He said: "No-one wants terrorism to happen, but I don't understand why we have only seen trains and planes coming under any kind of threat."

"It just seems so samey, you'd think they'd have a bit more imagination – after all, they can convince themselves of the whole virgins in heaven thing, and planes are a really difficult target too, what with all the security these days."

But the Home Office, despite such a huge list of potential danger zones, have remained focussed on the airline problem, announcing a new plan of



OUTRAGE A march in the rebellious town of Oaxaca, Mexico, follows the death of Eleuterio José Jiménez Colmenares, who was shot while making a peaceful protest. Inset, Jiménez died the same day. See page 4.

heightened security, see-through hand luggage and research into liquid explosives detection.

An additional plan involves invading

the internet to sniff out and ban terrorist websites, adding to existing tactics of identifying and profiling as large a percentage of the population as possible,

in the hope that constantly monitoring everyone will eventually make terrorism impossible.

► page 6, column 5

WORKPLACE SAFETY CUTS

Following a highly critical report showing the number of workplace deaths involving young workers is rising, the watchdog for industrial accidents has announced a major staff cut.

A new investigation by *Hazards* magazine has found that fatal and minor injuries for employees aged 16-24 have risen 20% from a 2001 low of 3,656 to last year's figures of 4,424.

The figure equates to a serious injury taking place at work every 40 minutes, and more than one death every month.

The report has come out alongside the controversial decision by governmental body the Health and Safety Executive to cut between 250

and 350 posts across the department.

HSE programmes also identified as casualties of the cutbacks include measures introduced as part of the executive's strategic shift away from inspection and enforcement in favour of education and preventative advice.

The *Hazards* report shows that the time spent by HSE staff in direct contact with employers has already fallen in all of HSE's divisions bar one despite a growth in the number of workplaces.

In 2001-02 the average frequency of workplace inspections was once every seven years. Figures for 2006 suggest this has risen to every 13 years.

The *Hazards* report rejected claims that young people are more likely to have accidents because of age. They said: "Contrary to popular perception, young workers are not killed or injured because they goof around or because they are immature. The accident statistics are most commonly explained by inexperience, not youth. The newer you are to the job, the more likely you

are to be injured. This holds whatever the worker's age.

"Young workers are much more likely to be workplace novices than the rest of the working population, so are more at risk. Government figures show almost 50% of 16-24 year olds have been in their job for less than a year. This compares to 20% of 25-34 year olds and 15% in the 35-44 age bracket."

Hazards' report found low levels of occupational ill-health, however the report pointed out that in most cases, particularly with the taking in of cancer-causing particles or other harmful substances, ill-health is cumulative.

The most recent research by the TUC, a 'Play safe at work' survey, has led *Hazards* to suggest that poor health and safety training at work for young people – who disproportionately work in heavy industrial environments – may be a major contributing factor to the rising totals. The survey found that

► page 6, column 5

MANX JUSTICE

Until his trial Pieter Van Rooyen, a South African tax exile, was a local Barclays bank manager on the Isle of Man, and also founder and head of the Life Church, a small evangelical cult. Rooyen had helped smuggle five black South African labourers and their white boss over to the island to improve his property.

The court heard they were paid £1.36 an hour for 72-hour weeks and only allowed out in public accompanied by their boss or the pastor, who told the judge he had been "looking out for their spiritual welfare". They lived, in the prosecutor's words, "like slaves" until a neighbour tipped off the police.

While the black workers were deported from the British Isles within hours of the tip-off, their white manager was granted leave to remain "in order to help with enquiries" and Van Rooyen was not even questioned for days.

The Manx media, unable to report details of the real goings on because of

imminent court action, then fed rumours about the arrest of anonymous 'asylum seekers' instead.

These led to a spate of racist assaults on low-paid foreign health and hotel workers, and even a BNP recruitment drive in a country with an independent government and no Westminster representation.

As the trial eventually proceeded, months later, Van Rooyen presented a work permit application for self-employed Christian community work. A call for him to be deported went unheard and he was sentenced to three months in the island's low security prison instead.

The Department of Home Affairs (the Manx equivalent of the Home Office) has been claiming the eventual successful prosecution as evidence that the island's immigration strategies work.

How an operation which results in five workers being thrown off the island unpaid while the con-artist who smuggled them there is a 'success' they did not explain.

ISSN 0016-0504



Vol 67 No 16

9 770016 050009

Home and away

BBC pensions deal split

After a close ballot, the two major BBC unions have split over the issue of industrial action on BBC attacks on pensions (*Freedom*, 29th July).

BECTU's BBC members have voted to accept a 2.8% pay increase and watered-down changes to pension benefits.

In a postal ballot 61.4% of members in the BBC voted in favour of the package, which was tabled by management last month in the face of a strike threat.

Results in a parallel ballot of the NUJ's journalist members produced the opposite result with 59.4% voting to reject the pay and pensions offer.

Mersey ambulance dispute

Striking ambulance workers in Liverpool have been threatened with the sack over the ongoing dispute. Local NHS chief John Burnside said his trust board would "as a last resort" consider dismissing staff who continued striking beyond eight weeks.

"We will take whatever steps are necessary to resolve this dispute," said Mr Burnside. "If there's no resolution then, as a last resort, the trust board would have to consider dismissal of any employees taking strike action, to protect patient care."

The dispute began when the employers double-crossed workers over a pay review they said would be 'binding on all parties'.

New social centre opens

A community and youth centre in Sparkbrook, closed by Birmingham City Council last year, has been occupied with the aim of putting the building back into community use. The Cottage of Content had been boarded up in May 2005 and scheduled for auction, allegedly for the old occupiers' failure to pay the rent and bills, 22 years after the Council stopped its funding.

Whilst building up a campaign to compel the Council to reinstate the community's youth and community centre, the space is being used, as a social centre, for a wide range of activities, from DIY and educational workshops, screenings and socials, to a meeting place for various grassroots groups. Regular, open meetings are held every Monday at 7.30pm.

Binmen are back

The Transport and General Workers' Union has confirmed that its members at Haringey Accord have now returned to work, following the resolution of a dispute involving refuse collections.

As a result of the agreement, one residential refuse collection crew, which was removed under the efficiency savings package, will be reinstated. The other, however, will be lost. Some members of the bin crews believe they could have won more if they had stayed out.

Ballot on sacking

Tube drivers on London Underground's Jubilee Line are to be balloted for industrial action over the "blatantly unfair" sacking of a fellow driver.

RMT member Raj Nathvani, a driver with eight-and-a-half years' experience who had never previously passed a signal at danger or been involved in any safety-related incident, was dismissed after reporting that he had overrun a signal.

"When Raj over-ran a signal he reported it to his controller and proceeded at caution. Ahead of him were green signals and no points, but he was sacked without mercy because he didn't follow procedure exactly," said RMT general secretary Bob Crow.

Around the world

ICELAND: A campaign against the construction of the giant Karahnjúkar hydro-electric dam in the Icelandic Highlands – one of Europe's last surviving wildernesses – has stepped up a gear as activists relocated their protest camp from Snaefell, some hours walk to the construction site, to a much nearer, more disputed area at Lindur, an area threatened with flooding by the dam.

An eyewitness reports that the move took place in the face of massive police efforts to frustrate it, using exclusion zones and roadblocks, which required breaching by the activists. The new camp has subsequently been surrounded by cops, who are refusing to let vehicles in with food and water.

On 3rd August, seven activists broke into the construction site and police were liberal with their batons, mistreating and arresting four. The next day, there was another invasion by more than 30 people who locked on to vehicles and stopped work for four hours. The police were back on brutal form, attacking video activists and damaging equipment, and cutting through people's D-locks with scant regard for safety. Seventeen people were arrested and many people had serious bruise injuries from the handcuffs used.

IRELAND: A jury of 12 Dubliners has found five anti-war activists not guilty of charges of criminal damage to a US warplane in a surprise victory.

The jury, agreed that the five anti-war activists had acted with 'lawful excuse' in an effort to save lives in Iraq and in Shannon itself.

Deirdre Clancy, a member of the group, said: "Many thanks to those who supported us during the three and a half years, standing with us faithfully through two collapsed trials and numerous mainstream media falsehoods. It's been a long battle but worth it."

Anti-War Ireland applauded the jury's decision, which largely vindicates the actions of Pitstop Ploughshares in breaking onto a US facility and wielding the axe.

They said in a statement: "Anti-War Ireland has consistently argued that the actions of those involved in the disabling of the warplane were commendable and inspirational.

"The verdict amounts to a blow to the US war machine in Ireland, and a rejection of the collaboration of the Irish government."

NEPAL: Up to 25,000 tea workers have gone on strike after failed talks between employers and three large unions broke down at the beginning of the month.

Work in estates across the country stopped on 5th August after employers rejected a 21-point demand despite a warning shot of state-wide protests which had taken place two days before.

Among the demands of the workers is a monthly salary of Rs 5,000 (£35.39) to workers and distribution of salary for the days when the estates remained closed due to a major weather disturbance.

Chatra Bahadur Giri, president of the Tea Producers' Federation, said the talks failed because it was impossible to meet the demands of the workers. The workers currently get a monthly salary

of Rs 3,300 (£23.25).

The strike, to start from Sunday will affect 32 tea estates and 37 processing centers. According to factory owners, the strike will mean that in Jhapa district 500,000 kilograms of tea leaves will go waste each day.

PHILLIPINES: The conclusion of Lafayette's 30-day mock test run signals the dawn of an impending oceans catastrophe. The gold mine has already leaked cyanide and other toxics into the oceans, causing fish kills, and the local people now fear what will happen to their marine environment which, for many of them, is their only means of survival. Locals are protesting and calling for international solidarity.

Despite strong opposition from local and national groups, the Philippine government allowed the Australian firm Lafayette to start the extraction of gold, silver, copper and zinc in April 2005 on the picturesque island of Rapu Rapu.

Lafayette was ordered to halt its operations late last year after two mine spills released cyanide and other contaminants from the mine and into the sea around the island, causing massive fish kills

The DENR, however, allowed Lafayette to continue operations despite these lapses by granting the company a 30-day test run on 11th July 2006.

USA: The Starbucks 'investigation' of IWW member Daniel Gross has concluded with his termination after more than three years of organising at the company.

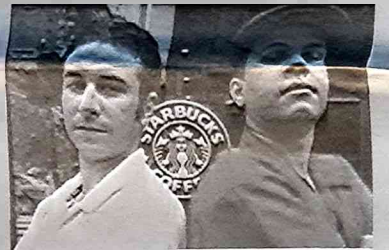
Daniel's expression of solidarity at a union picket line with co-worker and fellow union member, Evan Winterscheidt, was deemed threatening by Starbucks despite multiple eyewitnesses who confirm that Daniel merely asserted to District Manager Allison Marx that Evan should not be fired.

To provide additional cover for the termination, Starbucks issued Daniel a blatantly discriminatory performance review today with negative ratings for things like, "not communicating partner morale issues to the Store Manager."

The IWW said: "The right to free association at work is fundamental and not subject to compromise. But to vindicate our right to union membership, we need support from you, the working class; the class that built this society with our sweat and indeed with our blood."

The IWW requests that you do not spend your hard earned money at Starbucks until the company respects the right of workers to organise and reinstates Daniel Gross and the rest of the IWW baristas.

See starbucksunion.org/node/1015 for more info, email group pledges to starbucksunion@yahoo.com



Prison news

Women in prison

There has not been an explosion in women bank-robbers or girl muggers over the past nine years, yet since New Labour came to power in 1997, the female prison population in England and Wales has increased by 2,067.

Five thousand women are now behind bars, many are single mothers or primary carers for their children, and almost all of them are in for non-violent offences. Conditions for women prisoners continue to be even worse than the abysmal conditions in which male prisoners are held, with levels of self-harm, and attempted or realised suicide at staggering levels. Statistics released last month by the Howard League for Penal Reform show the following:

- 4,494 women are in jail in England and Wales.
- 62% are aged between 18 and 30.
- 202 girls under the age of 18 are in custody.
- Three-quarters suffer mental health problems.
- Two-thirds are drug and/or alcohol dependent.
- Half have suffered domestic violence.
- One-third admit to having been sexually abused.
- One in ten have attempted suicide before being imprisoned
- 42 have killed themselves in the past four years.

- 24% are from ethnic minorities.
- There are spaces for 79 babies in prisons.

Anarchists arrested in Greece

Greek police have announced the arrest of three suspected members of the urban guerrilla group Anti-Fascist Action, believed to be responsible for a series of politically-motivated arson attacks, which date back to 1994.

According to mainstream media reports, the three suspects were arrested in a suburb of Athens after a branch of the National Bank of Greece was set on fire.

'Bent screws' shock!

A recent report by the Metropolitan Police and the Prison Service's own anti-corruption unit estimates that at least a thousand prison guards are making money from illegal activities such as smuggling in drugs.

A further 500 are estimated to be having 'inappropriate relationships' with prisoners. While many experienced cons would regard these estimates as low to the point of being laughable, the Prison Service is still in denial about bent jail staff, criticising the report for 'overstating' the level of corruption in prisons in England and Wales.

Alan Lord

Sixteen years after the 1991 prisoners' uprising at Strangeways prison in

Manchester, Alan Lord, who was present for 23 of the 25 days of the protest, is still in jail. Alan was only 20 years old when he received a life sentence for the murder of a Manchester jeweller in 1981, with a recommendation that he serve 16 years.

After Strangeways he received an additional ten-year sentence to run concurrent to his life sentence. Not only that, but for many years following, he was shunted around from segregation unit to segregation unit, facing the retribution of the prison system and the hostility of those who administer it.

Today, Alan is still held in high security conditions, continually discriminated against, and with no end to his ordeal in sight.

Alan Lord, K80382, HMP Kingston, 122 Milton Road, Portsmouth, Hants., PO3 6AS.

Rod Coronado jailed for six months

American Earth First! activist, Rod Coronado, has been sentenced to eight months imprisonment for his role in an EF! mountain lion hunt sabotage. His co-defendant, Matthew Crozier, was given a non-custodial sentence.

Rod is likely to be moved within the next few weeks, so if you do write to him please be warned your letter may be returned. However don't let that put you off. Rod's supporter asked "could you please remind people that while Rod

has begun his sentence for one of his cases, he is still awaiting trial on three others, including for giving a speech, so people should of course remember to be careful what they write to him."

Rod is a dedicated environmental, animal rights and native rights activist. He has always shown great dedication and compassion and it is now our turn to support him.

Rodney Coronado, # 03895-000, CCA, PO Box 6300, Florence, AZ 85232, USA

Another pamphlet from Leeds ABC Following swiftly on the heels of *Down With The Prison Walls!*, the story of anarchist ex-prisoner Laudelino Iglesias Martinez, Leeds ABC have launched another new pamphlet *Women & Prison*.

The pamphlet reports on the situation of women prisoners in the Basque Country, and is available for 50p (plus 50p postage) from Leeds ABC, PO Box 53, Leeds, LS8 4WP (blank postal orders or well-disguised cash only please).

Both pamphlets were launched at a successful event at The Common Place in Leeds, on 6th August. Laudelino himself spoke at the event, and there was a quiz and a raffle to raise money for prisoner support, as well as a vegan barbecue. Two films were also shown, *Imprisonment In Great Britain*, and the more commercial *V For Vendetta*.

compiled by Mark Bamsley

Money up but services down

Labour have announced a PFI spending spree as new financial figures show continued deficits despite 12,000 NHS job cuts

The NHS has reported in its quarterly economic report that it has reduced the annual deficit in spending from £1,227m to £883m on the back of a round of mass layoffs.

Funding for the reduction of the deficit has come from a variety of sources, including the redistribution of some reserve money held by the Strategic Health Authorities, and more controversially, 12,000 frontline job losses, closure of services, and a gradual privatisation process.

More cuts are being announced as *Freedom* goes to press, with mental health remaining the most under-fire section of the service as the guinea pig for 'care in the community'.

The latest available figures from the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) places the likely figure at 18,000 workers sacked or at high risk.

The cuts will hit NHS Direct, the phone-in diagnosis service, with a possibly a thousand jobs set to go in the service as twelve centres across the country close down.

NHS Direct was one of New Labour's first flagship reforms. Founded in 1997 it handles around 6.5 million calls a year.

The cuts would see professionals reduced to just 50% of the workforce, and leave some regions, including London, with gaps in locally based services – potentially wasting £5.6m of public money according to the RCN.

They said: "This is a nurse-led success story, admired across the world, yet, we could see it dismantled with little thought or planning. NHS Direct staff morale is at rock bottom and they understandably

feel angry and let down by their employer."

The largest cut is likely to come in Nottingham, where a merger could see as many as 1,200 people out of the door. The merger is one of several that have been taking place over the last year as part of a preliminary reorganising of the structure of the NHS.

The NHS central body has announced, alongside the continuing cuts, a full implementing of a scheme to centralise some of the largest regions to begin the process of building several 'superhospitals'.

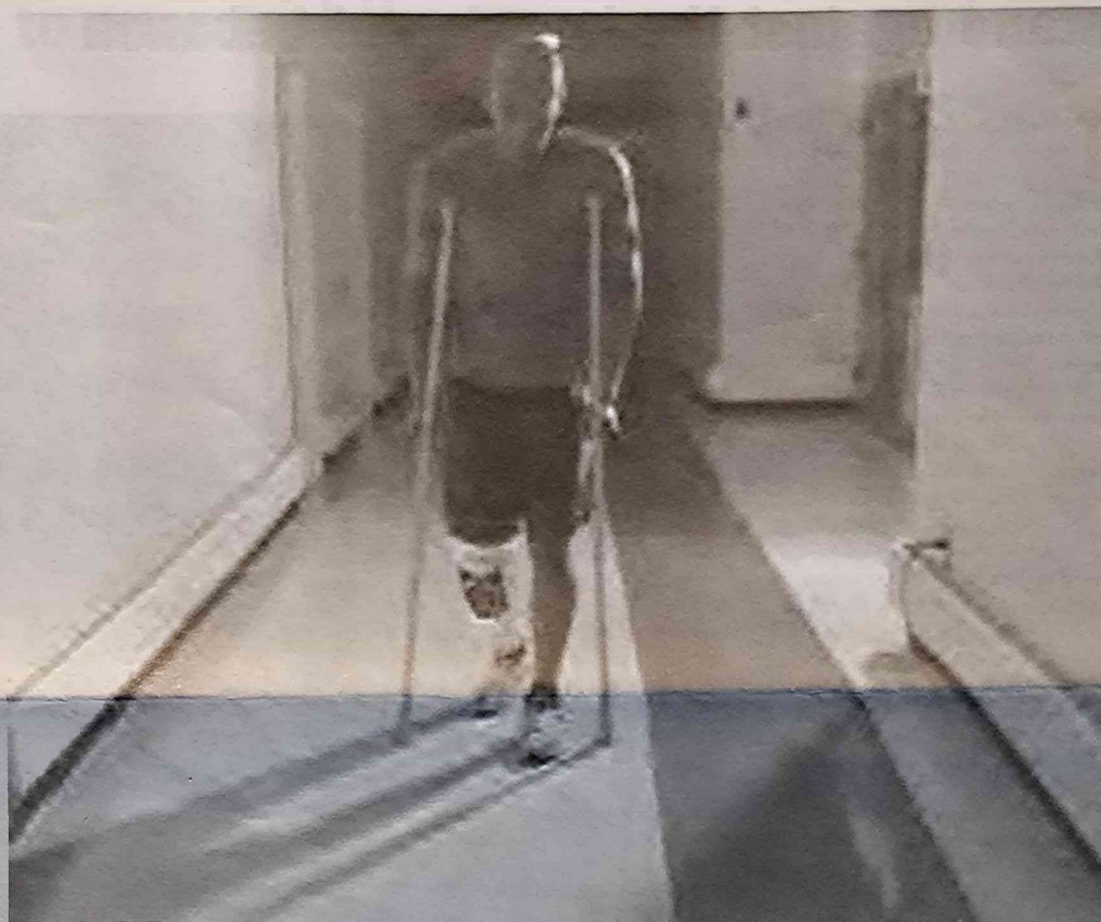
These superhospitals are intended to work alongside a decentralised community hospital network which would cover ailments which don't require specialist treatments.

In theory, according to the government, major savings could be made by centralising specialist groups in the same hospital, as well as improvements to waiting times.

However, the building of six new PFI schemes, in on of the biggest construction projects ever seen in the NHS, would draw a minimum of £1.5bn out of the sector to create the new hospitals over the next few years, adding to projects already completed, such as the notorious Norfolk and Norwich hospital.

The schemes, widely regarded as the first wave of a far larger building programme to be rolled out across the country, will affect London, Surrey, Sussex, Greater Manchester, Lancashire and Cornwall.

The design of the PFI projects, replacing large, space efficient wards with individual roomed facilities, has already drawn heavy criticism from health groups



and unions around the country, after failures in previous projects have left health workers having to work in poorly designed conditions.

Partial implementation of the scheme already seems to have begun, with the revelation that ten hospitals in England

are due to be downgraded or closed. However no confirmation has been given as yet how these are to be replaced.

The government has reiterated its stance of not bailing out (and indeed fining) failing hospitals in the report, and have told PCTs with a funding

surplus to pay their money into a central 'contingency fund' controlled by the SHAs.

The bailout block will hit the bottom 13% of struggling health groups, which between them hold 90% of the deficit, particularly hard.

Lots of hot air

A report has found that the Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG) market is uncompetitive and could be ripping off vulnerable rural people, but has refused to suggest the breakup of controlling monopolies.

LPG is used to supply heating for housing not covered by the national gas grid, with people living in rural areas having gas periodically delivered and stored at their homes.

The Competition Commission has completed its findings on the LPG market and voiced concerns that people living in rural areas are being systematically misled by four major players – who control 90% of the market between them.

The Commission's conclusion for reform to the market suggests the banning of certain anti-competitive practices, such as the common technique of charging high prices to switch suppliers with a three-to-five year block on switching again.

Switching supplier can cost up to £700, compared to an average annual

bill for domestic bulk LPG of about £800, making even extremely good deals potentially unattainable in competitive situations.

Switchover prices are kept high by the system of tank transfers currently operated by the companies. When an LPG user signs up for a supply, a tank is installed at the home, but remains in the hands of the company.

In order for the supply to be switched, companies remove their tanks, while the new supplier has to install their own. This would be stopped with companies simply taking over responsibility for existing tanks, the Commission said.

Other suggested measures include the stopping of three-month waiting periods for switchovers, and the distribution of increased information on alternative suppliers.

However the 87-page report has concluded that while smaller groups have been systematically pushed out in favour of a tiny number of 'major suppliers', and prices are far above production costs, it

does not qualify as a cartel industry.

The four suppliers (referred to as the 'major suppliers') are familiar household names: BP, Calor Gas Limited, Shell and specialist firm Flogas.

The conclusion by the Competition Commission, that while some practice is breaching monopoly guidelines there is no reasonable risk of major monopolistic price gouging seems to conflict with their own research.

The report notes, for example: "We consider that, if a hypothetical monopolist of domestic bulk LPG raised prices to 5% above the competitive level, customers would not switch to heating oil at a sufficient rate to make such a price rise unprofitable."

Around 150,000 households are covered by LPG but barely 750 (0.5%) switch in any given year. This compares to 15% of mains gas customers – a market which in itself has come under sustained criticism for its monopoly habits of cutting maintenance while hiking prices for their captive audience.

Rob Ray

No free lunches

Following a concerted campaign by charities and volunteers, the Department of Work and Pensions have backed down on an attempt to remove the right of volunteers to be paid for their lunchtime meals.

Voluntary organisations up and down the country were livid at the attempt to make life harder for unemployed volunteers.

The Department for Work and Pensions issued a leaflet last month for claimants wishing to volunteer to do charity work, stating that they can't have their food expenses reimbursed, as their benefit money already covers their food costs.

It's generally accepted good practice for organisations to reimburse volunteer expenses, to ensure that those on a low income aren't excluded. For years food expenses have been seen as a legitimate expense, referred to in government publications.

A common reaction seems to have been, in effect, civil disobedience – many organisations simply continued to pay

lunch expenses in collusion with their volunteers.

"I have a choice between giving up volunteering and risking my benefits," said one volunteer. "I want to carry on, so I'm just not telling the jobcentre that I'm getting lunch expenses."

In their retraction of the move, the DWP attempted to paint it as a proactive improvement for the volunteer workforce. DWP minister John Hutton even pretended that free meals was a new government initiative, saying: "This simplification of the rules is to ensure that volunteers are not penalised for doing the right thing. We do not want a situation where individuals are put off from volunteering because they cannot afford to buy something to eat."

More battles look likely to come, as the mutual aid roots of voluntarism are under threat from a government looking to deliver public services on the cheap – such contracts with local government being one of the few sources of funding for cash strapped groups.

Israeli voices against the war

Ellen Kemp looks at the Israelis who have taken an unheralded stand against the invasion of Lebanon

Throughout July and August, peace activists in Israel took to the streets to condemn the war in Lebanon. Many of these activists are part of the movement that has continuously demonstrated against the occupation of the West Bank and the incursion into Gaza and has supported Palestinian resistance against The Wall dividing the region.

Women Against War increased their activities and held daily vigils in Haifa and Jerusalem. Other vigils were led by Women in Black who have been demonstrating for peace since 1988.

On 22nd July a demonstration of 5,000 people took place in Tel Aviv, and a further demonstration took place on 5th August with nearly 10,000 taking part. A wide coalition of groups including feminists, refuseniks, anarchists and communists, came together to organise these demonstrations. The demonstrations were also supported by Israeli Arabs.

Slogans against the war included 'Defence minister Peretz, how many kids have you killed today!' and 'Out of Lebanon Out of Gaza' and 'Support us not the US'. Some soldiers have refused to serve in Lebanon and were imprisoned as a consequence. Anarchists blockaded the Ramat David Air Force base on 8th August and were dispersed by police, who made 12 arrests.

All those involved in these protests supported the demand for an immediate ceasefire in both Lebanon and Gaza, the withdrawal of Israeli forces and negotia-

tion for the release of the captured Israeli soldiers.

For most Israelis this peace movement is traitorous and the demonstrators receive a lot of abuse. On one occasion some Israeli soldiers fired rubber bullets and a demonstrator was seriously injured when hit in the face. Whereas this peace movement has taken on the Israeli militaristic state, 'Peace Now', the movement that opposed the first Lebanon War that began in 1982 and did not cease until 2000, initially justified Israel's response to Hizbollah's provocation.

Amos Oz, Israeli novelist and 'Peace Now' founder stated in the *Los Angeles Times*: "The Israeli Peace Movement should support Israel's attempt at self defence pure and simple." The continual targeting of civilians – with enormous loss of life – by the Israeli air force eventually led to these opportunists to call for a ceasefire.

Israel is a militaristic state, where the Israeli Defence Force (IDF) is held in high esteem by the majority of the population. The leadership of most political parties is dominated by former senior commanders from the IDF. Service in the IDF ensures a smooth career path in the private sector and/or public sector.

Such is the standing of the IDF that it recruits directly from the Jewish diaspora those wishing to emigrate to Israel. Television commentaries on political events are invariably given by ex-generals. This culture of militarism is



tied in with notions that unless they defend themselves there will be another Holocaust. As one Israeli put it, "we are brainwashed since we were kids to see ourselves as victims of anti-Semitism."

Israel spends 22% of GDP on defence and receives about \$5 billion per annum from the USA for defence. With a

population of only 7 million, Israel can mobilise armed forces of nearly 480,000. This is without doubt one of the major reasons why Israel always seeks to solve all its political, economic and diplomatic problems by military means.

Against this militarism the activities of the Israeli peace movement – those

calling for an end to the oppression of the Palestinians and the negotiation with Israel's neighbours – must be seen as revolutionary acts.

Many thanks to the Israeli comrade who provided a great deal of information for this article.

Freed at last

A leading trade unionist imprisoned by Iran in December last year has been released after an international solidarity campaign and a fundraising campaign by his fellow unionists.

Mansoor Osanloo was released from Evin prison, the most notorious jail in the country, on 9th August after his \$165,000 bail was sent in by colleagues, friends and relatives, some of whom put their own properties on the line.

The average pay of an experienced driver is around \$375.

The achievement is all the more remarkable as following Mansoor's detention, other industrial actions have seen further crackdowns.

A unionist writing in April said: "Since then many workers of Vahed Bus Company have been jailed, fired and beaten up. Authorities even jailed wives and husbands of some workers and cut their wages during industrial action on February and March 2006."

Last month, international union bodies the ICFTU and ITF had jointly lodged a formal complaint against

Tehran with the UN's International Labour Organisation, after the Iranian government's Labour Ministry had for months claimed that Osanloo was to be released 'any day'.

Mansoor is still to be prosecuted however for helping form the Tehran Public Bus Transportation Company Trade Union last year, and participating in a strike which paralysed the Iranian capital for several days.

The strike was asking for payment of wages owed, improvements to poor working conditions and against the company's refusal to recognise the union, which had had a majority membership since mid-2005.

The forming of an independent union is illegal in Iranian law, which only recognises 'labour councils' linked to the state by ideology and religious affiliation. Participating in the strike, it is being argued, also amounts to a breach of public order.

Iran is a member of the International Labour Organisation, a UN agency, and had signed up to ILO labour standards

including the right to free association, however the government has repeatedly resorted to "harassment, arrests and physical attacks" to crush the union, according to ICFTU sources.

The attacks, which notoriously took place in the dead of night and saw the children of trade unionists harassed, were against a background of majority support for the newly constituted union within the Tehran bus company's 16,000-strong workforce.

Mansoor was arrested on the orders of Sa'id Mortazavi, who was at the time the Prosecutor for Tehran and Islamic Revolution Tribunals.

The order saw leading unionists beaten up by plainclothes members of the Ansar Hezbollah at a strike meeting before being arrested in dawn raids on 22nd December.

Mortazavi, notorious as the destroyer of Iran's media and alleged to have participated in the rape and murder of a Canadian/Iranian journalist, has since been promoted and placed as a delegate to the UN.

Ortiz vs Oaxaca

Following the activation of a far-right police presence in the town by Oaxaca governor Ulisez Ruiz Ortiz to quell demonstrators, huge marches have surged through the town and teachers have refused to go back to work until the forces, and Ortiz, stand down.

On 6th August governor Ortiz and the president of Mexico, Vicente Fox, made a new ultra-right alliance which activated the Federal Preventive Police (PPP), known for its cruelty, for use against protestors.

On 10th August, four people were killed and four more injured as a wave of terror was unleashed in the town in reaction to hostage-taking (where no injuries to the hostages were reported) by some protestors.

One of the dead was a 12-year-old boy, Octavio Martínez Martínez. Another of the dead was Eleuterio José Jiménez Colmenares (see page 1), who had been taking part in a peaceful protest march. Each of the other two dead were activists in the town.

When Jiménez fell, men on the march entered the house where the shot had come from, searched it, and allege that it belonged to a PRI activist. One of the cars parked at the house was said to contain a licence plate of the Judicial Federal Police, along with documentation and other evidence. It is thought the police had rented the property.

In response, teachers have withdrawn their agreement to begin classes on 14th August, two weeks earlier than the usual school term, to make up for the weeks lost last May.

Co-ordinating group The Popular Assembly of the People of Oaxaca (APPO), have said that the teachers will remain until Ortiz leaves. The teachers, from their side, maintain that those who walk for hours to their schools in the mountains would be extremely vulnerable to assassinations.

A march also took place on the 13th August to mourn the killing of Jiménez and the other victims. This march went without incident.

Feature

Mourning Bookchin

Robert Allen reflects on the life of a great thinker on modern society and his contribution to anarchist theory

As Murray Bookchin left a legacy to the anarchist movement? Avid readers of his writings over the past six decades would claim he has been an influential presence in their lives. His acolytes would argue vehemently that the Bronx-born radical of Wobbly parents was one of the most significant thinkers of the twentieth century.

Bookchin himself would not be unhappy if his redemptive dialectic has contributed to the formation, as he put it in *Post-Scarcity Anarchism*, “of an anarchic society where people will attain full control over their daily lives”.

Brian Toker, in his obituary of Bookchin in *Z* magazine, has no doubt that this “visionary social theorist and activist” was an influence on “prominent political and social activists throughout the US, Europe, South America, Turkey, Japan, and beyond”.

“From the 1960s to the present,” Toker writes, “the utopian dimension of Bookchin’s social ecology inspired several generations of social and ecological activists, from the pioneering urban ecology movements of the sixties, to the 1970s’ back-to-the-land, anti-nuclear, and sustainable technology movements, the beginnings of Green politics and organic agriculture in the early 1980s, and the anti-authoritarian global justice movement that came of age in 1999 in the streets of Seattle.”

This paragraph alone would have pleased Bookchin because, throughout his later years, he felt his writings had not been given credence, especially by those who preferred to cling to the outdated political and social isms he insisted were no longer relevant in post-scarcity societies, by those neo-liberals disguised as anarchists and communists who sat at Noam Chomsky’s feet and by a left-libertarian movement that is dominated by one class.

The introductions to three editions of *Post-Scarcity Anarchism* in 1970, 1985 and 2004 read like a testament from a man still unsure of his audience. Bookchin, despite his vision, will never attain the iconic status of those men we are told we should follow, and that would be a greater testimony to his life’s work.

In the last of those introductions, Bookchin left a riddle for the anarchist movement. “There can,” he wrote, “be no society as such without institutions, systems of governance and laws. The only issue in question is whether these structures and guidelines are authoritarian or libertarian, for they constitute the very forms of social existence.”

The state is an ensemble, not of institutions as such, but of authoritarian institutions (usually controlled by classes), which is where anarchism gets lost in a tangle of highly confused individualistic concepts.”

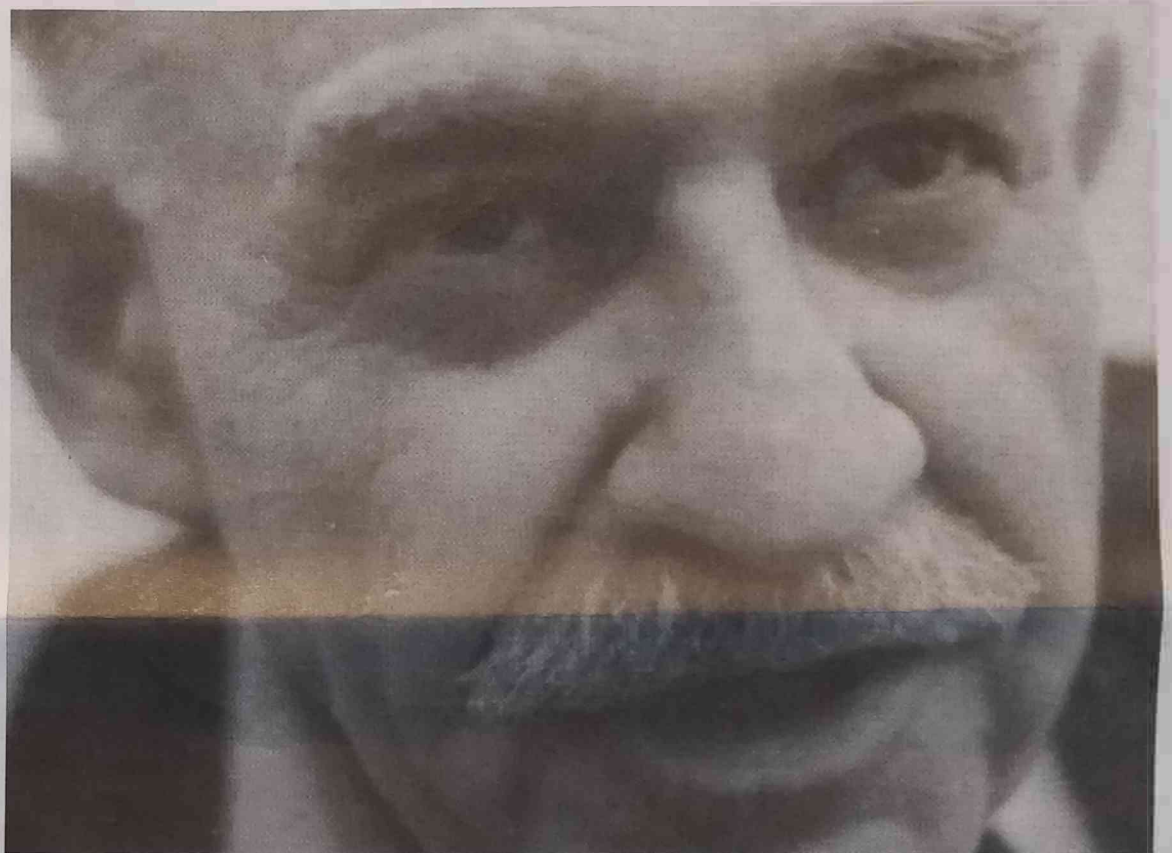
The same essay provides a clue to the riddle. In it Bookchin reveals that in the early 1960s he had become “disillusioned” with Marxist politics and was hostile to any form of directive radicalism. “I suffered,” he wrote, “from a measure of confusion over the enormous differences between syndicalism and anarchism.” At that point he turned to the Spanish Civil War “and only then did I nuance my own views and realise how distant were the anarchists and anarcho-syndicalists from each other”.

Marxism bore the brunt from Bookchin’s researches. “When the hell are we finally going to create a movement that looks to the future instead of to the past?” he asked in *Listen, Marxist!* – one of the pivotal essays in *Post-Scarcity Anarchism*. “When will we begin to learn more from what is being born instead of what is dying?”

Bookchin decided that traditional Marxism’s ‘breakdown theory’ of capitalism was completely wrong. Capitalism, Bookchin wrote, “would not ‘decompose’ because it had to limit economic growth; rather it was faced with a permanent breakdown because it was expanding (indeed, coming into its own as a dominant economy) by ravaging the planet and simplifying complex ecosystems, reducing the earth’s capacity to sustain advanced forms of life”.

After several decades (the 1950s, ’60s, ’70s and ’80s) and a series of works in progress (notably contained in *The Ecology of Freedom* in 1982/91 and in *The Modern Crisis* in 1987), Bookchin believed he needed to write *The Philosophy of Social Ecology*, which summarised his dialectic progression. Yet, for all the thousands of words in these books, when it came to summing up what he had been repeating for many years it took him a few sentences in 2004: “Social ecology, it should be emphasised, is not anarchism any more than it is individualism. It is decidedly a new form of libertarian socialism: libertarian in its concept of an organic and ‘from-the-ground-up’ mode of praxis; socialist in its belief that power must be conceived as federal communities.”

Despite its age, *Post-Scarcity Anarchism* is as good as any one of Bookchin’s books to get a grasp of social ecology from because the next step is *The Ecology of Freedom: The Emergence and Dissolution of Hierarchy*, a wide intellectual journey that defines the author and thinker as much as the philosophy and the practice. And it was when Bookchin’s theories started to emerge, more so in Europe than in America – despite the belief held by many American-centric social ecologists, that the problems that he had foreseen became apparent, which he addressed in *The Modern Crisis*.



When Bookchin first presented his ideas about societies based on a process of non-hierarchical, non-authoritarian, collective autonomy, he did not imagine that it would be so difficult for people to grasp. Yet he knew that communities usually only respond to single-issue campaigns, when their livelihoods, their health and safety, their environment, and their way of life is threatened – and once the campaign is over they go back to their ordered lives. He also knew that political activists would be motivated by selfish desire, by political dogma, by a need to build some kind of career rather than by an altruistic impulse to change society.

So it is sad that some of his last words were: “Such is the way of the world, as my seventy years of active radicalism have taught me.” It is sad because if he had been able to see beyond his north American perspective he would have realised that the continuity of radical thought he had tapped into had not been arrested in Europe, as it has been in his native USA, and that the way of the world is not the American way.

When the movements against globalisation began, all he could see was the problem from an American perspective, he could not see that his arguments about lifestyle anarchism, in particular, and these radicals’ antipathy towards anarcho-syndicalism and autonomous assembly and libertarian organising were symptoms of the American disease.

Elsewhere in the world, lifestyle

activism and lifestyle anarchism would be ironic flowers with short seasons. The world had begun to change, leaving the US and everything that annoyed the hell out of Bookchin behind; the active change that he desired and the practical philosophy that he had worked so hard to articulate had been happening for several years – elsewhere. American radicals did not notice because they pay little or no attention to the rest of world.

It is also sad because deep down he knew that the world does not begin and end with the American empire. Interviewed in the mid-1990s Bookchin acknowledged an old tradition, rooted in Europe not in north America, that made him think the way he did. “I can’t say there was any single event which caused me to arrive at the conclusions I have. I merely elaborated, embroidered and hopefully enriched notions that seemed to come with my mother’s milk because my family had a very rich and very colourful revolutionary tradition in Russia, which they brought with them to the United States and which they in turn brought to me.”

If Bookchin has left a legacy, he has left it to the world. If few and fewer American radicals do not understand social ecology it is their loss. If those who have been building autonomous assemblies and organising libertarian communities do not know about or have never read Murray Bookchin, it is not their loss. These peoples’ assemblies have never been in need of movement intellectuals in the first place.

Whether communalism becomes a progression from marxism, anarchism, anarcho-syndicalism or social ecology depends not so much on how we get there from here as on how we organise. Organisation is not anti-anarchist except in the minds of the overly individualist-libertarians and the naive.

Right now, Bookchin’s philosophy cuts deep into traditional anarchist exegeses. If his critique of anarchism is to mean anything it will have to be separated from the alienating mode of discourse he adopted during his later years.

So, Bookchin will be remembered by those who knew him as a man without malice, with hardly a hint of ego! Those who have read him over the years will acknowledge his influence. Whether they call themselves anarchists, left-libertarians, social ecologists or communalists is a different debate.

But those who managed to read into his work a utopian vision more tangible than mere eco-social politics will understand these thoughts. “My utopian visions,” he said, “came from an ongoing reading as well as ongoing discussions about what a rational society would look like. Let me stress that I am a strong believer in imagination. When imagination is not informed by reason it can be as dangerous as it can be creative, as destructive as it can be creative.”

His bottom line, however, was, “unity in diversity” and this he learned from his days as a ‘live school’ activist, where common agreement is something that had to be borne.

Commentary

FREEDOM

Volume 67 Number 16

Anarchism

Anarchists work towards a society of mutual aid and voluntary co-operation. We reject government, and all forms of exploitation and domination.

Freedom Press is an independent anarchist publisher, founded in 1886. Besides this newspaper, which comes out every two weeks, we produce books on all aspects of anarchist theory and practice – see our website for a full list.

In our building in East London we run Britain's biggest anarchist bookshop and host the Autonomy Club meeting room and the Freedom Hacklab open-access IT space.

Our aim is to explain anarchism more widely and to show that people can work together and use direct action to practically improve our lives and build a better world.

Freedom's editors wish to present a broad range of anarchist thought, and as such the views expressed in the paper are those of the individual contributors and not necessarily those of the editorial collective.

Angel Alley

Having had a good long break from the paper over the holidays, we are now back and writing again until the end of the year.

The lack of writing has been reflected by a slow few weeks at the press itself, apart from feverish planning to try and beat the changeover from big envelopes to small as the Royal Mail now take sizing into the equation when charging for postage.

Due to this, we will have to put all our papers in a smaller envelope from now on, and a little bit will have to come off the sides to make room. Hopefully this will mean that the price can stay pretty much the same.

Aesthetically, this is not the ideal solution, as we're going to have damn great creases down the 'e' in Freedom and no easily-noticeable headlines. However, it's still better than a 13 pence price hike.

Our sincere apologies for the lateness of the last paper, which is the worst it has been this year. We think we have worked out where it all went wrong (weekends, basically), but are still in need of more help to get the paper out in any form, let alone timely.

Contact details

Freedom Press, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX
Tel/fax: 020 7247 9249

www.freedompress.org.uk

Enquiries: info@freedompress.org.uk

Copy/Letters: copy@freedompress.org.uk

Subscriptions: subs@freedompress.org.uk

Bookshop: shop@freedompress.org.uk

Freedom Press Distribution:

distro@freedompress.org.uk

Next issue

The next issue will be dated 8th September 2006 and the last day to get copy to us for that issue will be Thursday 31st August. You can send articles to us at copy@freedompress.org.uk or by post to Editors, Freedom, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX.

Response to Shute

I would like to make a very quick response to John Shute's feature in *Freedom* (15th July).

His analysis of the politics and tactics of the BNP seem insightful and broadly correct, as do his comments regarding the failure of 'anyone' to put forward revolutionary ideas in working class communities as an alternative.

However, I would like to challenge some of his very sweeping criticisms of Antifa and the anarchist response to the far right. As a founding member of the 635 Group, I can assure John that there is constant debate and analysis regarding the far right and our response to them, at least within some sections of Antifa (it is a federation after all).

There are some hugely dedicated anti-fascists risking their liberty, personal safety and their sanity trying to find effective ways to confront the fascist threat. The problem that they encounter again and again is an absolute lack of material and human resources. There is nothing we would love more than to be able to close down every meeting we gained intelligence on, but the resources to do this effectively and safely are just not there. The same goes for us to seriously counter their propaganda.

Militant anti-fascists are often charged by many in the anarchist 'movement' with thuggery, a lack of creativity, chauvinism and inefficiency but rarely is it the case that anybody approaches us with useful ideas or a willingness to get involved on any level.

We are not just interested in throwing bricks and punches but more often than not that is the only thing we can afford to do.

The fight against fascism should be one of our most important priorities as anarchists. It appears, however, that as the threat looms larger the willingness of the majority to seriously confront and destroy it decreases.

The campaign against the BPP was not a case of kicking around a straw man, but one of the most effective and well-executed direct action campaigns against a fascist organisation that has been seen in a long time.

It is quite obvious to me that the BPP posed a threat on the streets of West Yorkshire (Leeds especially), as well as being a sponge for the ever increasing numbers of disaffected BNP members in the North.

The BPP is now collapsed, thanks more or less exclusively to the actions of the 635 Group. We will now continue with our agreed strategy of weakening the BNP's electoral machine in West Yorkshire, no doubt in complete

isolation from the rest of the anarchist 'movement'.

I would very much appreciate it if you could publish our founding statement in your paper and would urge everyone to start fighting back against any and all fascist activities in your area. Finally, thank you to all those people who have supported the 635 Group, if you wish to contact us please visit the contacts section of antifa.org.uk.

From the editors – unfortunately due to a lack of space we are unable to publish the full founding statement of the 635 Group. In short however, it is a militant, anarchist antifascist organisation affiliated to the international group antifa. It will not advocate electoralism to defeat any fascist group and will not work with any Searchlight or authoritarian antifascist groups such as the SWP, ANL or Unite. The founding statement stresses a need to organise in communities for local defence, and the need for both ideological and physical opposition as appropriate. It is specifically inclusive to women on all levels, and to those unable to use physical force confrontation (who can assume other roles in the organisation). Although for security reasons it is not an open mass-recruitment group, it welcomes potential new members.

HezBollocks and IsRabies

Class War is appalled at the carnage that is occurring in the Middle East. We are also disappointed but not surprised at what is being said about it, especially by some 'progressive' organisations.

Lebanon is being turned into a grotesque war-games board as the real protagonists, the USA and Iran, use their proxies to slug it out.

Neither the Israeli army nor Hezbollah give a flying fuck about 'their' civilians, except as bloody totems to hang in front of the cameras of the world's press in order to justify their own next atrocity.

The left have adopted two approaches. Firstly, wholesale adoption of the Islamist agenda, cheerleading Hamas or Hezbollah without qualification or criticism. This 'idiot anti-imperialism', the trademark of today's SWP, says my enemy's enemy is my friend and any criticism of them, no matter how mild, is 'racism', 'Islamophobia' and 'Zionist pro-American warmongering'.

The second approach is slightly more subtle. Hezbollah is fighting back, therefore we must support Hezbollah and the slogan 'We are all Hezbollah' is an act of basic solidarity. This argument is crap. Hezbollah isn't a nationality or a racial epithet, it is a political party/militia.

Lebanon has a radical history, albeit one distorted by the chains of Leninist communism, but this has been written out of the Brit left's history books in their rush to embrace Islamotrottery.

A real working class alternative is desperately needed – one that recognises that there can be no peace whilst borders are drawn by reference to the Torah, and International policy is determined in Washington by consulting the book of revelations.

The Israeli state oppresses the Palestinians, driving them into the hands of the fanatics of Hamas out of despair at the failure of the secular

Palestinian left. In turn the suicide bombers provide for the Israeli state 'proof' of the murderous nature of the Palestinians and drives the Israeli public to support harsher and harsher measures against the 'terrorists'.

This is a self destructive spiral and must be broken.

The Israeli state is not shaken by katyushas or by suicide bombers – it is strengthened by them.

The last real challenge to the Israeli state was the Intifada, mass popular resistance on the streets of the west bank and Gaza, and amongst the 'Israeli Arab' population. This rose up from below from the streets and spread all across the Middle East and North Africa as the Arab working class drew inspiration from the bravery of the Palestinian youth, and employed the same tactics to confront their own ruling classes. Inside Israel proper the intifada created real tensions within the army, as soldiers refused to be used to gun down children and sparked a massive peace movement amongst the general population.

The Oslo peace process was designed to derail the intifada and create from the PLO a police force to keep the unruly Palestinians in line.

All the arguments of the left revolve around one state/two state. All happily accept the artificial divisions created in the twentieth century by the very imperialists that they claim to oppose, and all ignore the actual people who live there. Re-jigging the lines on a map will create new oppressions, and we as revolutionaries should have no part in assisting that.

We should stand shoulder to shoulder with those struggling against the oppressors of the Israeli state and the Palestinian bantustan.

Any state solution is a continuation of the same bullshit.

FREEDOM
ANARCHIST BOOKSHOP
84b Whitechapel High Street
London E1 7QX
tel/fax 020 7247 9249
OPENING HOURS
Monday to Saturday
from 12 noon to 6pm

The shop is staffed by volunteers and the opening hours are subject to change so it's a good idea to call first to check we're open.
You can also use our mail order service or order books online via our website www.freedompress.org.uk

Quiz answers

1. Allegedly an enclave in Timor, it was a hoax state set up by New Zealand anarchists to satirise what real states did.
2. It was co-edited by Federico Arcos and Abel Paz among others, and took a critical line of the CNT's involvement in the government. While the government censor cut pieces out, the editors printed and circulated uncensored copies.
3. Valencia
4. As part of a deal with the occupying Romanians, the Bolsheviks went to Soviet Russia in a sealed train. They excluded the anarchists and left communists, who attempted to continue resistance or escape. Many were killed in the subsequent fascist coup, or died in the prison camps.

Terror weakness

page 1

The Home Office has come under fire for its proposed policy of profiling airline users by a senior muslim police official, who has said it will be tantamount to racial discrimination.

No plans have been announced as yet to begin the systematic profiling of workforces in environments such as water facilities, or of general populations living near possible terrorist strike points.

The Home Office plan says: "The Home Office are working with the emergency services to develop improvements in equipment to detect, monitor and identify chemical, biological and radioactive materials.

"This work is based on developing a statement of requirements – that is, what the emergency services need a piece of equipment to do – and deciding what is possible now and in the future."

A method of protecting what is already there, however, is not mentioned.

Workplace safety

page 1

37% of the age group had received no health and safety training at work, despite a clear legal duty for employers to do so.

This is likely to affect the workforce in future as well, because workers are not being protected from long-term exposures.

Music review

page 7

grounds of any worthwhile future movement.

Preceding his music career, Riley spent four years on the central committee of a Leninist group before realising the arrogant sectarian irrelevance of such forms of organisation.

Since then he's emphasised the potential of the lower classes to overcome their situation – which art has the capacity to engage with, share in, crystallise and facilitate rather than summon up or dictate. Avoiding the superior preaching disappointingly prevalent among many prominent 'raptivists', he twists ghetto-centric narratives to signal what becomes possible when individuals interpret their lives in terms of collective understanding and action.

So the street hustler's soul-searching in *We Are The Ones*, the drudge work subversion of *Ass-Breath Killers*, the celebration of shoplifting in *I Love Boosters* and the social/sexual yearning of *Ijuswannalayarounalldayinbedwithyou* and *BabyLet'sHaveABabyBeforeBush-DoSomethingCrazy* all acknowledge the painful intransigence of daily struggles.

Meanwhile the rebellious class pride and explicitly political themes of other tracks on *Pick A Bigger Weapon* focus precisely on the centrality in any genuinely liberatory impulses of such acknowledgement from experience – a poetic balance encapsulated in the opening metaphor of the Intro: "I'm a walking contradiction / Like bullets and love mixin'."

www.tomjennings.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk

libcom.org



The 56a Infoshop, now open:
Wednesday 3-7pm,
Thur 2-8pm, Fri 3-7pm
& Sat from 2-6pm

Books,
CP's, Shirts,
Archive & Action at:
56a Crampton St
London SE 17
www.56a.org.uk

Independent Radical London Social Centre since 1991

REVIEW

Iain Mackay looks at the latest SWP offering on anarchism and asks: is it ignorance, or just lies?

I had the distinct displeasure of looking at Mike Gonzalez's new book, *A Rebel's Guide to Marx*, recently. Gonzalez, for those who do not know, is a long time leading member of the SWP hierarchy.

Given how the SWP seem incapable of writing anything truth or accurate about anarchism, I was prepared for the worse when it came to his account of Marx's conflict with Bakunin. I was not disappointed.

According to Gonzalez, Bakunin was no friend of the working class because he was opposed to working class people organising! This was because it would result in 'authoritarianism'. He was addicted to conspiracy, arguing for secret cells which would attack the state on behalf of the working class and was opposed to Marx's dictum that the emancipation of the workers was the task of the workers themselves.

What a travesty of the truth! Anyone even faintly familiar with Bakunin's ideas would know that he was utterly in favour of working class organisation. He continually stressed the need for "the social (and therefore anti-political) organisation and power of the working masses of the cities and villages" (*The Political Philosophy of Bakunin*, page 300). Hell, you do not need to read Bakunin to know this, you can read Marx and Engels. According to Marx, Bakunin's theory consisted of urging the working class to "only organise themselves by trades-unions" and "not occupy itself with politics." Engels asserted that in the "Bakuninist programme a general strike is the lever employed by which the social revolution is started" and that they admitted "this required a well-formed organisation of the working class" – i.e. a trade union federation (Marx, Engels and Lenin, *Anarchism and Anarcho-Syndicalism*, pages 48, 132 and 133).

Ignoring the misrepresentations of Marx and Engels about the theories of their enemies, they did get the basic point of Bakunin's ideas – the centrality of trade union organisation and struggle as well as the use of strikes and the general strike – right.

As for the claim that Bakunin was opposed to the idea of working class self-emancipation, that is equally false (ironically, Gonzalez flows Lenin who explicitly held the position he falsely ascribes to Bakunin). Bakunin continually

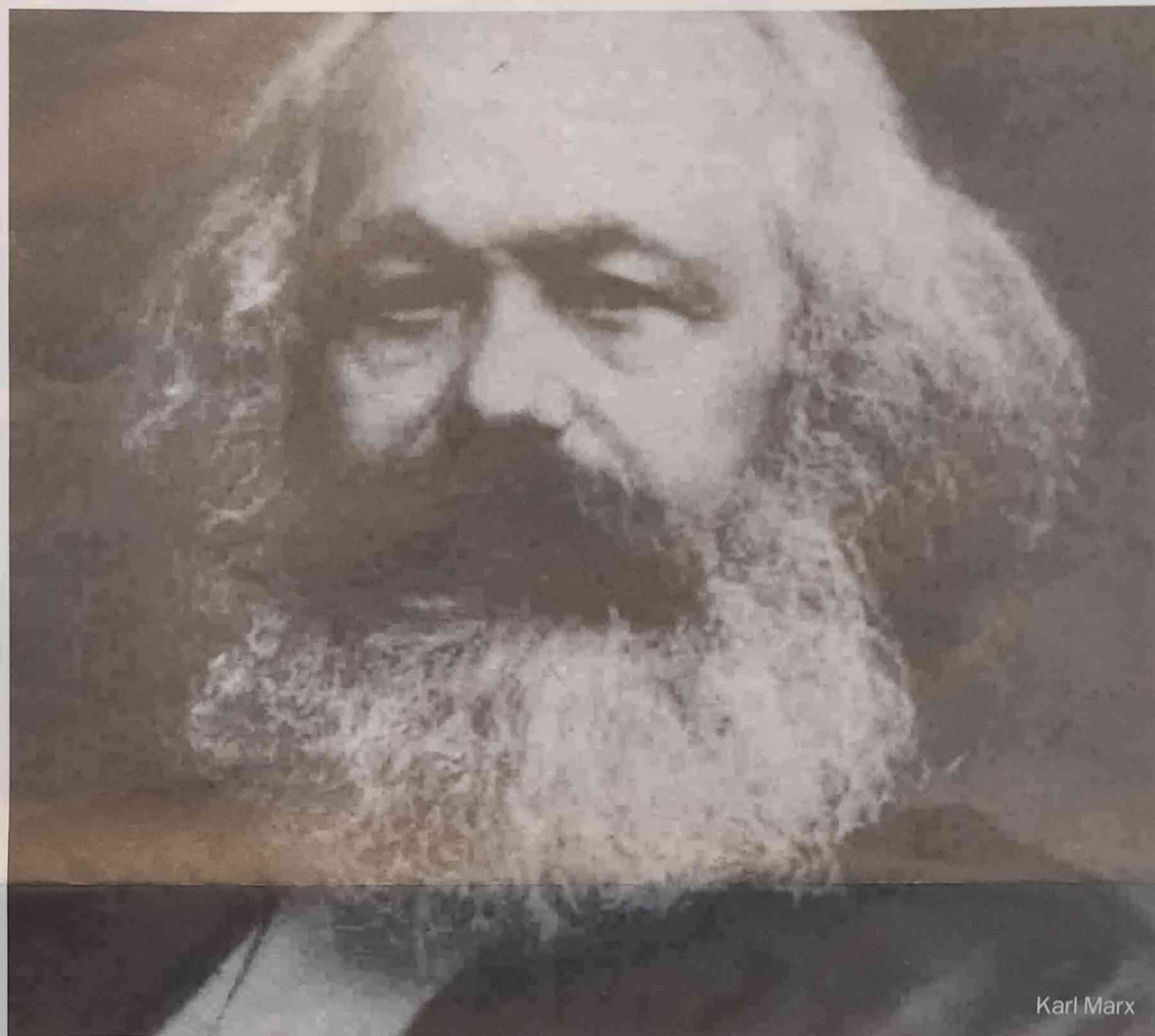
quoted Marx's (originally Flora Tristan's) words from the Preamble to the General Rules of the First International: "That the emancipation of the workers must be accomplished by the workers themselves." Far more than Marx, Bakunin argued that workers' can only free themselves by a "single path, that of emancipation through practical action" namely "workers' solidarity in their struggle against the bosses" by trades unions and solidarity. The "collective experience" workers gain in the International combined with the "collective struggle of the workers against the bosses" will ensure workers "will necessarily come to realise that there is an irreconcilable antagonism between the henchmen of reaction and [their] own dearest human concerns. Having reached this point, [they] will recognise [themselves] to be ... revolutionary socialist[s]" (*The Basic Bakunin*, pages 92 and 103).

In contrast Marx placed his hopes for working class self-emancipation on a political party which would conquer "political power." As history soon proved, Marx was mistaken – "political power" can only be seized by a minority (i.e. the party, not the class it claims to represent) and if the few have the power, the rest are no longer free (i.e. they no longer govern themselves).

That the many elect the few who issue them orders does not signify emancipation! It is because of this that anarchists stress self-management of working class struggle and organisation from below. Anarchists are (to use Bakunin's words) "convinced that revolution is only sincere, honest and real in the hands of the masses, and that when it is concentrated in those of a few ruling individuals it inevitably and immediately becomes reaction" (*Michael Bakunin: Selected Writings*, page 237)

This did not mean Bakunin rejected the need for revolutionaries to organise within the class struggle. Like Marx, he saw the need for a political grouping, to help convince others of the validity of anarchist ideas. However, for Bakunin the political group did not aim to seize political power (unlike Marxists) and so it "rule[d] out any idea of dictatorship and custodial control."

Rather the "revolution would be created by the people, and supreme control must always belong to the people organised into a free federation



Karl Marx

of agricultural and industrial associations ... organised from below upwards by means of revolutionary delegation." All the political group could do was to "help the people towards self-determination on the lines of the most complete equality and the fullest freedom in every direction, without the least interference from any sort of domination" (*Michael Bakunin: Selected Writings*, pages 172 and 191).

Needless to say, Gonzalez fails to discuss these key aspects of the Marx-Bakunin conflict – and whom history subsequently proved right! Nor, while praising the Paris Commune, does he note that many of its key aspects (such as federalism, revocable mandates, co-operatives, etc.) were prefigured in the works of Proudhon in 1840s and Bakunin in 1860s.

Like the Russian Soviets of 1917, this popular revolt a marked similarity with Bakunin's discussions of revolutionary

change. As he put it, the "future organisation must be made solely from the bottom upwards, by free association or free federation of workers, firstly in their unions, then in the communes, regions, nations and finally in a great federation, international and universal" (*Michael Bakunin: Selected Writings*, page 206).

Similarly, Gonzalez's notion that Bakunin saw revolution in terms of conspiracies launching insurrections on behalf of the people is equally a distortion of the anarchist's ideas. As becomes clear from reading Bakunin, he saw revolution as coming from below and rooted in social struggle and popular organisation.

I welcome people criticising or critiquing anarchism or individual anarchists as it allows us to strengthen our ideas. I do have a problem with people attacking anarchism/anarchists

for positions we/they do not actually hold. To assert, for example, that Bakunin opposed working class organisation is either a lie or shows the utter ignorance of the author. It suggests either that the SWP does not care about the facts or it means that you can become a leading member of its hierarchy and know absolutely nothing about a subject but feel able to expose that ignorance in print.

Neither option puts Gonzalez in a good light – but at least he can console himself that his failing is shared by most, if not all, of his comrades.

Visit my webpage for more critiques of other Marxist attacks on Bakunin as well as the real differences between anarchism and Marxism: <http://anarchism.ws/writers/anarcho.html>

A Rebel's Guide to Marx by Mike Gonzalez, Bookmarks Publications, £2

MUSIC

The Coup Pick a Bigger Weapon Epitaph Records

The fifth album from political hip-hop act The Coup continues their evolution from underground West Coast US rabble-rousers into international recognition and acclaim.

This process was helped no end when their early-2001 cover design for *Party Music* – a metaphor for the revolutionary destruction of capitalism featuring DJ

Pam the Funktress and MC Boots Riley brandishing drumsticks and guitar tuner with the World Trade Centre exploding in the background – was hastily withdrawn by their record label after 9/11.

The resulting publicity gave Boots an unanticipated mainstream media platform to air the insurrectionary class-struggle views familiar from the lyrics of *Kill My Landlord* (1993), *Genocide and Juice* (1994) and *Steal This Album* (1998) – conveyed, as in the new

release, via pithy, witty, tales of woe, frustration, anger, humour and hope in everyday life on the mean streets of Oakland.

The group's progression is further audible in the album's synthesis of 1970s soulful funkadelia and the whole sophisticated gamut of hip-hop referentiality – so that Pam's stellar turntablism and Boots' accomplished delivery reach another level in the instrumental company of sundry Parliament, Gap Band and Frankie



Beverly and Maze-era veterans along with Silk-E's beautifully-pitched R&B vocals.

If The Coup's compelling beats ever more satisfyingly integrate the strengths of their musical antecedents with present demands, the same cannot be said of political prospects from their, and our, perspective. The injunction to *Pick a Bigger Weapon* refers to the failure of our tactics thus far, and the contents reiterate the grass-roots

A Sideways Look

In July, the *Panorama* programme made allegations that corruption was at the heart of the police's failure to investigate the murder of Stephen Lawrence. Allegations were made by Neil Putnam, who had been busted for corruption and turned evidence against other bent cops. They included Detective Sergeant John Davidson, a senior figure in the investigation, who he claimed was in the pay of local gangster Clifford Norris, father of one of the suspects in the murder enquiry. These allegations aren't new, they first surfaced in *The Guardian* in 2001.

Davidson has denied this, as has Clifford Norris. The substance of Putnam's allegations is interesting. He refers to Davidson talking about Norris in the context of the investigation and that Davidson was linked to Norris. Most telling of all is that the police didn't follow up the corruption charges because it would "be too much of an embarrassment" and could "destroy the Metropolitan Police". Sadly, Stephen Lawrence wasn't unique at the time - there were other racial murders such as Rolan Adams in nearby Thamesmead in 1991 and Rohit Duggal in Eltham in 1992. The police were reluctant to treat these murders as being racially motivated, though they did manage to arrest people and both their murderers were jailed. Neither of these cases appears to have had a well-connected suspect, though.

Norris may have swayed Davidson to impede the investigation. Davidson was a member of the local serious crime squad, who often seem to have a symbiotic relationship with local criminals. Detective Sergeant David Coles, the officer assigned to protect Duwayne Brooks, (the main witness in the case), visited Norris in a Chislehurst pub three times and packages were seen changing hands. Coles claims he was merely cultivating Norris as an informer, which seems unlikely given how powerful Norris was at the time. But such regular contacts do make sense if we see such serious crime squads as being the mirror image of the criminals they police.

One thing that can't be assumed from the alleged corruption in the Lawrence investigation is that it lets the police off the hook for being racist. The MacPherson report's conclusion that the police were institutionally racist remains important - individual coppers might not be, but as a whole the attitudes and behaviour of the police stacks up. In January this year in Plumstead, just down the road from where Stephen Lawrence was killed, a young Somali, Nuur Saeed, died after armed police stormed his flat. The Independent Police Complaints Authority investigated the incident, but decided that he fell from the balcony. The Justice for Nuur Campaign says that police have been targeting the Somali community in the area after the murder of PC Sharon Beshenivsky in Bradford, whose alleged attackers are Somalis from the same area. It certainly looks

like the 'same old, same old' to me. Policing, in the sense of maintaining rules within a civil organisation, takes on a life of its own once it is left up to a specialist corps. All societies have mechanisms to cope with breaking their rules, all are potentially problematic. But assigning one group to do it on your behalf is a recipe for trouble. For the police to be institutionally racist or institutionally corrupt requires that they are an institution. Perhaps that's why anarchists distinguish between the police function, which should be shared by all members of society, and 'the police' as a separate body.

Svartfrosk

Blast from the Past

Taken from *Freedom* August 22 1981, entitled Trigger-Happy Yankee Doodle:

Before we are accused of racism, or nationalism or any such non-anarchist attitude, may we ask readers to read the following paragraph from last Sunday's *Observer*: "However, even the *New York Times* thought there might be something to be said for 'giving a black eye to Colonel Qadhafi', and President Reagan evidently had no doubt about the overwhelming support for it among his country's electors."

Reagan pressed the message home on Thursday when he donned his commander-in-chief's cap to board the aircraft carrier Constellation 50 miles off the coast of California to watch a "demonstration of firepower" by F-14 jets. He later told a cheering crew it had been "a Yankee Doodle day ... Let friend and foe alike know that America has the muscle to back up its words." He was comparing the F-14 display with what he called the 'message' sent to Libya and 'the enemies of freedom'.

The 'message' sent to Libya by the US Airforce was the shooting down of two Libyan planes in the Mediterranean Gulf of Sirte, under circumstances which look very like provocation - by the Americans, carrying out naval manoeuvres in the Gulf.

For eight years now, Libya's nationalist, pan-Islamic leader, Colonel Qadhafi, has been trying to establish Libyan sovereignty over territorial waters extending right across the Gulf of Sirte and exceeding by far the normal boundaries of agreed 'territorial sea' and 'exclusive economic zone'.

Qadhafi, incidentally, is expansionist on land as well as sea, seeking to establish a pan-Islamic block, if not empire, in the extensive but impoverished lands to the south of Libya - an ambition viewed with some concern by central African states whose boundaries he would then reach (although he was very friendly with President Amin of Uganda). Nor is he popular among his fellow Arab leaders, among whom Sadat has referred to him as a 'madman'.

One reason for this could be that he is given to policies like defending the Gulf, "even if it meant war with the



United States or a Third World War"!

So much for the little madman. What about the big one? While President Reagan wants to show off his muscles bashing little Libya (for there seems to be evidence that the Gulf incident was planned at the highest level), could it be that he really wants to stir up conflict around the periphery of Europe in order to bring more pressure on those European leaders reluctant to take up the US offer of neutron bombs?

Imagine if...

King Abdullah bounded out onto the airfield to look over his new 'Eurofighter' aircraft.

Beside it stood a representative of the British government who had managed to persuade the king that, despite rumours of technical problems with the craft, it was the best around. He was world-renowned for his salesmanship.

"Good afternoon King Abdullah. I understand you wish to buy our hardware?"

He then launched into his spiel. "This is the most high-tech multi-role aircraft ever designed, it outperforms even the fastest jets and can perform any bombing function you want..."

Abdullah leered at him. "Can it bomb people?"

The man coughed again. "It has advanced line-of-sight and target recognition..."

"Does it recognise people?"

"Look," the man sighed. "You're not going to bomb people are you? We're not supposed to sell to terror states."

Abdullah looked shocked. "Of course not. These will bomb insurgents. Sure I define who insurgents are, but that's just quibbling."

The man beamed. "Ah well that's all right then. The capabilities of this craft..."

Listings

Until 4th September Camp for Climate Action in north of England, see climatecamp.org.uk

1st to 3rd September Permaculture Convergence 2006, near Dorchester. For more info and booking details see permaculture.org.uk

2nd September Stop Trident replacement, one-day strategy conference organised by CND from 10.30am to 5pm at TUC Congress House, Great Russell Street, London, see cnduk.org

13th September South London SolFed film night at Café Crema, 306 New Cross Road, London SE14, showing Ken Loach's *Bread and Roses* about janitors organising in LA, opens at 7.30pm, film at 8pm, entry £4 includes a veggie meal.

19th to 21st September IMF/World Bank Monetary meeting in Singapore over this weekend, for details see hazardscampaign.org.uk/docs/riga.htm

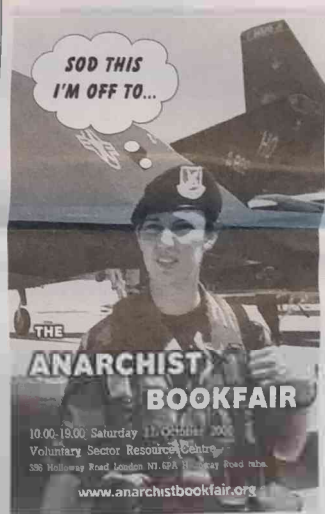
8th October Lakenheath Airbase demo at main gate, for details call 01508 550446 or see lakenheathaction.org

9th and 10th October Blockade Faslane nuclear submarine base as part of 'Faslane 365', a year of continual peaceful protest at the gates of this nuclear submarine base in western Scotland, see faslane365.org for info

21st October The 25th Anarchist Bookfair, from 10am to 7pm at the

Voluntary Sector Resource Centre, 356 Holloway Road, London N7, see anarchistbookfair.org for more details.

4th November National Climate March as part of a day of international climate protest on the day before the Nairobi climate talks, demanding urgent action on climate all round the world, for more see globalclimatecampaign.org



The quiz

1. Where was the state of Occussi-Ambeno?
2. What was the origin of the short-lived libertarian youth paper *El Quixote* in 1937 in Barcelona?
3. In which city was the Iron Column founded during the Spanish revolution?
4. After the collapse of the Hungarian Soviet in 1919, what happened to the Bolsheviks, anarchists and left communists involved?

Answers on page 6

SUBSCRIPTION FORM

Send to Freedom Press, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX

- Please start a NEW subscription to Freedom for issues
- Please RENEW my subscription to Freedom for issues
- I enclose a donation
- I'd like to pay by Standing Order and have completed the form (see right)
- I enclose £ payment (cheques payable to Freedom Press please)

Name

Address

Postcode

STANDING ORDER FORM

Please return to Freedom, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX

To the manager (your bank)

Bank name

Bank address

Postcode

£ each month/quarter/year (delete as appropriate) starting on (date)

Name(s) of account holder(s)

Account number Sort code

Signature

For bank use only

Please pay this sum to Freedom Press, account number 82946905 sort code 72-00-05. Alliance & Leicester Commercial Bank plc, Bridle Road, Bootle, Merseyside GIR 0AA

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

	inland	Europe	outside Europe (surface)	outside Europe (airmail)
--	--------	--------	--------------------------	--------------------------

	Freedom (24 issues) half price for 12 issues			
Claimants	15.00			
Regular	20.00	29.00	29.00	41.00
Institutions	28.00	36.00	36.00	46.00
Supporter	48.00	60.00	60.00	72.00

Get in touch with us for details of bundle rates.

Note that we have a new 'supporter' sub rate.

You can also use the Standing Order form to ensure that your subscription always gets paid on time, or if you want to make a regular donation to Freedom.

All prices are in £ sterling.

You can now subscribe online at www.freedompress.org.uk

FREEDOM fortnightly ISSN 0016 0504