

STATE SPONSORED MURDER

Security forces role in murder of solicitor revealed

The findings of an inquiry into the 1989 murder of Belfast human rights solicitor, Pat Finucane have been made public. The findings, whilst not exactly a surprise, are nevertheless shocking, and lay naked the lengths the British state will go to in order to silence people who get in its way.

Finucane was executed by loyalist gunmen in-front of his wife and children. The report concludes that the RUC 'proposed' that Finucane be murdered, and passed information onto his killers, failed to prevent the attack from taking place, and then deliberately sabotaged the subsequent murder investigation. The report also found that the army intelligence unit, the FRU "bears a degree of responsibility", as their agents were involved in 'selecting targets'.

As would have been expected, the current chief constable of the Northern Ireland police force has issued an "unconditional and absolute" apology. His faux concern has been mirrored by that of David Cameron, who in a statement to parliament, apologised to the family on behalf of the country.

The key areas of state collusion highlighted in the report are as follows:

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LENS CAP FRANCE



Forty thousand activists face-off against state forces in France as they oppose the construction a huge new international airport on the outskirts of Nantes.

TORY TOFF CHASED OFF CAMPUS

Conservative MP, mastermind, and driving force behind the new anti-squatting legislation Mike Weatherly, was chased off a University campus by angry students and squatters.

He had been invited to give a talk at the University of Sussex, about his role in changing the law to criminalise squatting. Unfortunately for Mr Weatherly, just prior to the scheduled start of his lecture, he was surrounded by a large group of angry protesters and pelted with tomatoes and eggs (although 'tomatoes' has now been changed to 'rocks' by the capitalist press. Weatherly was later escorted from the premises by the police and security guards.

Despite little evidence, Mr Weatherly is telling anyone who'll listen that someone tried to punch him, and that two of his associates received injuries from protesters. One person has subsequently been arrested for 'affray'.

Weatherly issued a statement following the incident that said: "The squatters have regularly attempted to stop free speech from taking place for the precise reason that they cannot justify their criminal behaviour."

The University claim to be appalled that Mr Weatherly was prevented from speaking. Sadly they are not appalled that thousands of people are homeless up and down the country.

The Squatters Network of Brighton said: "Weatherly repeatedly shunned debate with any squatters before he criminalised us. This is the only time he has spoken in public about squatting, people tried to let their voices be heard through the government consultation, which came out as 90% opposed to banning squatting, this is why a broad range of people chased him off campus today."

Matthew Black

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ISSN 0016-0504



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NEWS

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LENS CAP LONDON



Thousands of students marched through London on 14th November to protest against the financial burdens faced by students.

Milestone for Radical Routes

UK radical co-ops network demonstrates its financial muscle

With its loan last week of £60,000 to Rose Howey Housing Co-op in Liverpool, the Radical Routes federation reached the milestone of half a million pounds on loan to member co-operatives. This has enabled housing 31 adults and 14 children and the leveraging of over £920,000 worth of investment in common ownership this year alone.

Keith Wilson, Treasurer of Radical Routes, said, "This is a really exciting time for co-operatives. We are getting more enquiries than ever and, even better, we are seeing real results in new housing co-operatives purchasing property. Rose Howey is the latest in a recent string of successes. Small, independent housing co-ops are a strong model that is growing."

Beth Ash of Rootstock, the finance-raising arm of Radical Routes said, "This shows that ethical investment remains alive and well and, even more importantly, viable in the current climate. Our investors come from a wide range of backgrounds, but are united in seeking a socially conscious purpose for their money. We are proud of how our small



organisation has continued to grow and thrive; for us the half-million mark is an important symbol of that."

Radical Routes is a UK network of co-operatives which strongly encourages the principles of mutual aid and solidarity among its members. In existence for nearly 25 years, it has helped establish many co-operative projects and developed them into a strong support network. Indeed some older co-ops also provide direct finance to fledgling co-operatives, and mature communities have fostered the growth of workers co-ops and social centres around them.

Radical Routes is a UK-wide secondary co-op, whose 40 members include housing co-ops, workers' co-ops and co-operative social centres. The common bond of Radical Routes members is their use of co-operatives as bases from which to challenge dominant social structures and social and ecological injustice and encourage others to do so too. Their activities include:

- Publishing guides to setting up housing co-ops, workers' co-ops and co-operative social centres.
- Developing model rules for small, independent housing co-ops and workers' co-ops.
- Running training and skill-sharing at every quarterly gathering on consensus decision-making, setting up co-ops and financial literacy, plus whatever other skills members wish to share.
- Raising investment from the general public through 'Rootstock Ltd' investors co-op, to make loans to member co-operatives.
- Advising and supporting member co-ops to develop sound business plans.
- Offering legal advice and mediation for member co-ops in need.

For more information contact Bek Dale of Catalyst Collective, via bek@brokenplastic.org.uk or 07901 822694.



Pret workers organise

Pret a Manger Staff Union (PAMSU)

Although the Pret a Manger Staff Union (PAMSU) is registered with the government certification office, Pret refuse to recognise the union.

The Pret a Manger staff union believe that all Pret workers deserve enough pay and guaranteed hours to live on. The union is demanding that Pret pay all of their employees the London living wage of £8.55, and £7.45 across the rest of the UK.

We know that Pret will not listen just because we ask nicely. We need you to get involved, join the union, talk to your work-mates about the campaign, and attend upcoming public actions – which will put pressure of Pret to give us the wages and hours that we demand.

What else do PAMSU do?

- Mentoring of workplace activists.
- Training on the skills we need to get organised.
- Legal support.

State sponsored murder

◀ page 1

- There were extensive 'leaks of police information to loyalist paramilitary organisations.
 - MI5 new of the threats against Finucane's life but failed to protect him.
 - Employees of state organisations played a key role in the murder of Pat Finucane.
 - There was a failure to properly investigate the murder, and a failure to arrest and interview key loyalist paramilitaries.
 - Senior army Officers deliberately lied during investigations.
 - The Royal Ulster Constabulary seriously obstructed the investigation.
 - 85% of loyalist paramilitaries 'intelligence' originated from the British security forces.
- Despite such damning findings, Sir Desmond De Silva, who led the review, has said that he believed that there was "no overarching

- Supporting each other when raising grievances or fighting disciplinaries.

What makes PAMSU different?

PAMSU is an independent union. This means no managers, no politicians, and no bureaucrats. We do not rely on the law or the goodwill of the company when it comes to fighting for the interests of the Pret workers. Instead, PAMSU believe that all Pret workers – whether you are a barista, team leader, kitchen staff, or any other position – should come together to support each other. Only by standing together will we ensure that we get the respect we deserve. It is only through solidarity that we will make Pret a better place to work.

According to Pret a Manger's own figures, 91% of all Pret's employees are immigrants, and only 3% of the entire workforce identified themselves as 'white British'. Yet that 3% controls the positions such as general managers, area managers and operational managers. Not to mention human resources, which employ

exclusively 'white British' workers.

It is clear that Pret a Manger prefers to hire a foreign workforce. PAMSU believe that the reason for this selective recruitment approach is so that Pret can easily exploit immigrant workers, Immigrants are more vulnerable than British workers. English is generally not their native language, and they are unfamiliar with the British legal system. These factors make them perfect employees for Pret.

Sick of the bullying by Pret, five immigrant workers at the St Pancras branch formed the PAMSU in September of this year – to fight to be treated with respect, dignity, and to have access to the payslips. Pret responded as you would expect, and three of the five workers are no longer employed by Pret.

Pret a Manger, stop union busting, and treat your staff with respect and dignity!

Pret a Manger Staff Union (PAMSU)

Get involved today, email pret.staff.union@gmail.com or see website <http://www.pamsu.org/>

state conspiracy", but would be discussing the report with the police ombudsman in the coming weeks. Despite Pat Finucane's family demanding a full public enquiry, David Cameron has ruled it out.

Pat Finucane's widow, 'Geraldine', declined to take part in the review, dismissing it as a "whitewash" and a "sham". She believes that the government have "engineered a suppression of the truth" that covered up her husband's brutal execution.

She went on to say that: "At every turn, it is clear that this report has done exactly what was required. To give the benefit of the doubt to the state, its cabinet and ministers, to the army, the intelligence services, to itself. At every turn, dead witnesses have been blamed, and defunct agencies found wanting. Serving personnel and active state

departments appear to have been excused. The dirt has been swept under the carpet without any serious attempt to lift the lid on what really happened to Pat and so many others".

Following his apology, David Cameron stressed that despite the clear evidence of 'state collusion' in Mr Finucane's murder, no government minister had any knowledge or involvement.

Few will believe Cameron's claims – this is just the latest example of Thatcherite era state corruption, which can be added to the list that includes the Hillsborough cover-up, the Orgreave fit-up, MI5 and Stella Rimmington's dirty tricks campaign against Arthur Scargill, and the brutality and lies of the police force during the 1980s.

Matthew Black

THE BIG PICTURE

Members of Swiss trade union Unia hold red umbrellas while forming the shape of a large fish swimming after a smaller financial shark at a bank protest in Zurich.

Dirty oil in the UK?

Tar sands 'dirty oil' could soon be coming to the UK

A new report published by the UK Tar Sands Network, Corporate Watch and Pembrokeshire Friends of the Earth reveals that US energy company Valero is expecting to bring increasing quantities¹ of oil derived from the controversial tar sands² to locations around the UK, including Pembrokeshire, Wales.

According to the report, *Tar sands coming to town*, Valero purchased the Pembroke refinery in August 2011³ as part of its plans to increase diesel exports to Europe, particularly the UK and Ireland. The company plans for a rapidly growing portion of this diesel to originate from the tar sands in Alberta, Canada.

The tar sands industry has been criticised for its widespread deforestation, high levels of greenhouse gas emissions, use of huge amounts of water and natural gas, and resulting local toxic pollution that has disproportionate impacts on local indigenous communities. It has been met with wave of resistance in the Canada and US with hundreds arrested in acts of civil disobedience.⁴

Valero is a prominent supporter of the proposed Keystone XL pipeline that would take tar sands oil from Alberta to the Texas Gulf Coast, a hub for oil exports.⁵ The company is also a supporter of the reversal of another pipeline in Canada that would take tar sands east from Alberta to Montreal. Valero operates another refinery in Quebec and has illustrated that it would use this as another export opportunity to the UK and Europe [5].

The European Fuel Quality Directive,⁶ a policy initiative that could discourage the import of fuels from environmentally destructive sources such as the tar sands, is still being debated, having met strong resistance from the oil industry.

The report was launched at a public meeting in Pembrokeshire last night (30th October), where Jill Evans MEP and Emily Coats from the UK Tar Sands Network spoke to concerned residents about the dangers of tar sands expansion. A spokesperson from Valero was invited to the meeting but declined to attend.

In response to the report, Valero has emphasized that the company is not involved in the extraction of tar sands, but admits that the petroleum products they import to the UK are likely to include oil derived from the Canadian tar sands.

Emily Coats from UK Tar Sands Network said: "Tar sands extraction is devastating the environment, destroying indigenous people's lives and livelihoods, and locking us into a future of catastrophic climate change. We need to block off new markets for tar sands oil in order to slow the dangerous expansion of this industry and encourage investment in renewable energy. The EU Fuel Quality Directive is meant to slow the flow of tar



sands oil into Europe, so we'd be keen to see how this fits Valero's plans. We in the UK must say no to tar sands coming to our towns."

Gordon James from Pembrokeshire Friends of the Earth said: "We are strongly opposed to a fuel derived from such an environmentally damaging source being used in Britain, and we certainly don't want it imported through local ports. It would be a travesty for it to enter Britain through Wales



when the Welsh Government is aiming to make sustainable development its central organising principle. In the 1990s we successfully fought a long and hard campaign to prevent 'Orimulsion' fuel, which has similar properties to tar sands oil, being imported and burnt at Pembroke power station. Once again, we believe that Pembrokeshire should have nothing to do with such a damaging fuel and we shall campaign vigorously to prevent it happening."

Corporate Watch

References

- 1 A very small quantity of tar sands oil has already been discovered to be entering Europe, see here but this latest report, *Tar sands coming to town*, uncovers evidence that this could soon be growing significantly.
- 2 For more information on tar sands see no-tar-sands.org
- 3 In August 2011, Valero purchased the Pembroke refinery in Wales, its first outside North America. The £450 million deal also included ownership interests in four major pipelines and 11 fuel terminals, a 14,000 barrel per day aviation fuels business, and more than 1,000 Texaco-branded service stations in the UK and Ireland.
- 4 In the two weeks up to 3rd September, 1,253 people were arrested in daily sit-ins outside the White House as part of an ongoing grassroots campaign against tar sands and the Keystone XL pipeline in North America.
- 5 Valero has committed to taking on at least 100,000 barrels a day (20% of initial capacity) from the proposed Keystone XL tar sands pipeline until 2030. Valero has also recently upgraded its Port Arthur refinery in Texas, increasing its ability to process heavy sour crude (such as tar sands oil) to 80% of its 310,000 barrels per day capacity. Valero's Port Arthur refinery is located right next to where the pipeline is planned to finish.
- 6 Tar sands imports would be strongly discouraged by the proposed EU Fuel Quality Directive (FQD) legislation which aims to cut emissions from transport by 6% by 2020. The EU Commission has recommended the FQD labels tar sands-derived fuel as 23% more carbon intensive than fuel from conventional oil, to discourage individual companies from including tar sands-derived oil in their fuel mix. Yet the FQD has been repeatedly delayed, in part due to lobbying from the Canadian government and the oil industry.



ANALYSIS

Anti-fascism on trial

Regular readers of *Freedom* will be familiar with the fondness of both British Transport Police and the Crown Prosecution Service to indulge in conspiracy theories. Unless you welcome the opportunity to become better acquainted with the legal system, this is development that should worry political activists.

In 2011, myself and 19 co-defendants were put on trial on charges of ‘conspiracy to commit violent disorder’ for taking part in an anti-fascist mobilisation against a Blood & Honour concert in March 2009 in Welling, South London. The result: seven people convicted, six people jailed with one person being subsequently deported.

This was a case with serious implications for political activists. First, this represented a conscious effort by the state to clamp down on militant antifascism, when prior to this point participants had been reasonably successful in not attracting undue attention from the forces of law and order. Second, there is a danger that conspiracy laws will be deployed in future to effectively criminalise political activism.

Conspiracy is a complex charge and a prosecutor’s wet dream. It’s roughly when two or more people agree to commit an offence, in our case violent disorder. A prosecutor doesn’t need to produce evidence of a pre-agreed plan, or say when it was agreed to and how it was agreed to. The existence of a plan and the fact that people consented to it can be inferred from their subsequent behaviour.

The dangers of this being applied more widely are obvious. For instance, say you’re photographed on a demo talking to someone who is later nicked throwing a brick through the window of a bank. Well, you were obviously planning something, ladies and gentleman of the jury, he was clearly giving

his co-defendant directions to the bank.

The decision to prosecute us was transparently politically motivated. The case largely rested on CCTV footage taken from cameras at Welling station and what it showed was clear: an altercation between two neo-nazis who got off a train and, at most, three or four anti-fascists. One neo-nazi was briefly knocked unconscious but was so badly injured that he discharged himself from hospital. The violence was spontaneous and did not involve the majority of anti-fascists at the station or in the vicinity. The Battle of Cable Street this was not.

This level of violence was no worse than you would see on a Saturday night in a town centre anywhere in Britain, and that includes Welling. This particular fight though, caught the attention of the police.

As anyone who has been politically active in recent years is aware, regular police harassment and monitoring comes with the territory. Most of us who travelled down to Welling were familiar with this and prepared accordingly.

What we were not prepared for was being the targets of one of the largest policing operations of 2009, or the more or less unlimited resources available to the police to pursue political activists.

Operation Cavalry (I swear, psychiatrists would have a field day with some coppers) involved hundreds of police officers simultaneously raiding properties all across the country. Dozens of people were arrested and 23 eventually charged. Some early casualties of the police operation found themselves with bail conditions placing them under curfew, banning them from appearing in public in groups larger than three people and ordering them to sign in at a police station every single day.

British Transport Police, the force used to carry out of these raids, was used as a *de-facto* national police force. This is something to watch out for the future.

It’s unlikely that a punch-up between a few blokes outside a pub on a Saturday night would provoke this reaction.

Reports filtering in from police raids quickly made it clear what and who they were looking for. Search warrants specified material relating to antifascism in general and the group ‘Antifa’ in particular. This was an attempt to intimidate activists and disrupt and criminalise militant antifascism.

This was made obvious during our trial by the repeated efforts of the prosecution to equate fascists and anti-fascists. The far left and the far right are as bad as each other, both extremists and both dangerous. In case there was any confusion about who we were and what we were on trial for, in his summing up speech the chief prosecutor reminded the jury that we were also guilty of sending people to gulags in Stalin’s Russia, starving people to death in China’s Great Leap Forward and murdering Bambi.

That anarchists were not in charge of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union was a historical detail lost on him.

The wider lesson here is the importance of being sensitive to shifts in national policing priorities. A change in focus means that activities which were acceptable in the recent past can suddenly land you in hot water without any change in the law. It’s clear we were promoted rapidly up someone’s priority list in early 2009 and this drastically altered our range of options for political activity.

Contrast what happened in Welling in 2009 with the events outside the BNP’s Red, White and Blue festival the year before. Although 33 antifascists were arrested, the police didn’t pursue these cases with any enthusiasm and only one person was eventually charged. Had the lot of us been up on conspiracy charges I imagine it would have been very difficult to explain in court what we were all doing in a field in the middle of nowhere if there was no sort of prior plan involved.

The level of resources the police were willing to deploy against us should also prompt those who might consider adopting an Antifa-style approach to anti-fascism to think very hard indeed.

More widely, if conspiracy charges do come into fashion, it could become a serious headache. For us, the prosecution argued that because most of us were in the vicinity of an offence, and some of us knew the people involved in the violence, we were also guilty of planning it. This was a case of guilt by association. In some cases this was personal association and in most cases it was political association.

The implication of this is clear. If you’re political or your mates are political, then you’re probably up to something.

Welling trial defendant



Blacklister Dead

Ian Kerr, chief executive of the Consulting Association and full-time blacklister of trade unionists and environmental activists since 1969 when he started work for the infamous Economic League, died on Tuesday.

His £50,000 a year salary, bonuses, BUPA plan and Mercedes company car lifestyle funded by the major UK construction firms, including Sir Robert McApline, Balfour Beatty, Skanska, Carillion, Kier, BAM, AMEC and AMEY came to a halt when the illegal conspiracy was closed down in 2009.

At a recent appearance at the Scottish Affairs Select Committee investigation into blacklisting, he remained totally unrepentant about decades of victimising safety reps in the building industry. Kerr was supposed to have supplied an additional witness statement to the inquiry naming names of senior company directors who were the ringleaders of the human rights abuse.

The Blacklist Support Group will not be donating to his collection

Solidarity Federation

Blacklist Support Group statement on Crossrail

It is a disgrace that public funds are being spent on blacklisting trade unionists on the Crossrail project.

Workers have been dismissed from the largest construction project in Europe for raising safety concerns about high voltage cables and for joining the UNITE union. For nearly three months there have been daily protests about blacklisting on Crossrail and the firms involved have constantly denied that it is taking place.

On Tuesday Ian Kerr, chief officer of the Consulting Association blacklisting organisation told MPs that his members had talked at length about Crossrail during meetings to discuss the list: "An awful lot of discussion took place at Consulting Association meetings about the Crossrail project."

In addition Ron Barron, the most senior industrial relations officer on the entire Crossrail project, lost his job last week after investigative journalists discovered that he was a proven blacklister having cross-checked job applicants against the secret blacklist of workers to be barred from the industry, a list that he helped to compile. An employment tribunal found that he introduced the use of the blacklist at his former employer, the construction firm CB&I, and referred to it more than 900 times in 2007 alone.

The evidence of blacklisting on Crossrail is damning and overwhelming – none of the blacklisting firms are now even attempting to deny that these discussions took place.

This is a major systematic breach of human rights by big business subsidised by taxpayers money – when are they going to come clean?

Crossrail and the construction firms on Crossrail should make a public apology, pay compensation and reinstate all the UNITE members who have lost their jobs on the project.

Blacklist Support Group

Return of the workhouse

In August *Inside Housing* interviewed Tory rat-bag and chief executive of Liverpool Mutual Homes (LMH) Steve Coffey about "innovative proposals to reduce the impact of benefit reforms on its residents".

The proposal offers tenants hit by the bedroom tax a deal to make up the shortfall in their rent by working for LMH doing odd jobs such as 'litter picking' on LMH estates. Tenants would also be shunted into training (work) programmes with local charities to secure a roof over their heads.

Coffey coats the proposed workhouse scheme with a voluntary varnish, but how voluntary is voluntary when it is conditional? Well, it's not voluntary at all, when the threat of eviction forces tenants into the scheme.

Coffey has been in the news lately over false accusations made against staff to get them arrested. Three shop stewards – callously sacked along with ten others in 2011 – accused of assault by Coffey were finally acquitted in November, when the judge threw out the case brought against them by Coffey and LMH. So it's no surprise that the slimy scumbag would have no qualms transporting tenants back to the days of the workhouse, under the pretence of a 'something for something' deal.

With 56% of people on the work programme in social housing, housing associations have been sniffing 'round the government's failing work programme since its introduction in 2011, trying to find a way to tap into the lucrative contracts the DWP has been throwing at its toff pals. Bromford Housing Group is one of the landlords who have secured contracts to swell the profits of work programme providers.

When the Tories called for a return to Victorian values, they meant it. Landlords, whether they're branded social or not, outing tenants to work for rent taken away by attacks on welfare; or adding conditionally



to tenancies based on attending training or work programmes mimics the workhouse ideology.

Coffey and LMH's 'embryonic' plans could be (or may already have been) picked up by landlords out to make an easy pound of the backs of the unemployed, as landlords try to embed themselves in the work programme supply chain. Uptake by housing associations has been slow, but with the impending bedroom tax and cut in council tax support it could provide an opportunity for landlords to escalate the exploitation of their tenants. Conversely, the introduction of the bedroom tax is an opportunity for us to organise, and fight back.

We have until 1st April 2013 to organise against the bedroom tax, so we must act quickly, and in the process we can stop landlords' exploitation of tenants.

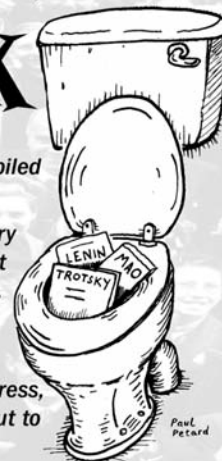
Liverpool Claimants Network

The Anarchist Quiz Book

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

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

Get your copy now for £5 (post free) by mail order from Freedom Press, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX (cheque/PO made out to Freedom Press) or from www.freedompress.org.uk



INTERNATIONAL

NEWS IN BRIEF

ARGENTINA: Two people have been killed, dozens injured and 137 arrests made in eight poverty-stricken cities across Argentina during an outbreak of mass looting at supermarkets. In just one city, it was reported that all 25 of its supermarkets had been emptied. True to form, the state is denying that the looting is anything to do with poverty and social circumstances. They claim that it is nothing more than common criminality being encouraged by political opponents and trade unions. The government have deployed the armed forces across the country to try and regain control.

GREECE: In Aspropyrgos, a suburb of Athens, the fascist Golden Dawn's shop and office building has been partially destroyed by a makeshift bomb containing dynamite. Several walls and part of the roof have collapsed, with no reported injuries. The 'Anti-Fascist Front', a group associated with the FAI Informal Anarchist Federation, has claimed responsibility for the attack. In a statement they said, "We decided to hit Golden Dawn's offices because we believe that you have to hit out at fascists first, before they hit you."

HOLLAND: The government have announced plans to deal with 'nuisance neighbours' in Amsterdam. They are to be exiled from the city and re-housed in newly created villages that are made up of caravans and containers, which will then be under constant supervision by the police. Local government officials have already been identifying likely targets for this. The project is being referred to as the 'scum villages', as it closely mirrors a policy suggestion made by fascist, Geert Wilders, who wanted a village building in which all the 'scum' could be housed. Tenants who refuse to modify their behaviour, or move to the new villages, will lose all rights to social housing and will be made homeless.

ITALY: Workers at the Careggi hospital in Florence went on strike against the proposal that would radically change terms and conditions, and that had been signed by the mainstream unions, the CGIL and the CISL. Around 300 workers attended a protest called by the USI-AIT. Subsequently 60 workers occupied the entrance to the management buildings, demanding that the bosses come out and negotiate. Following the occupation it was announced that the CISL had withdrawn their signature from the agreement, and that negotiations would resume.

RUSSIA: A series of dawn raids took place in the homes of several members of the anarchist group 'Autonomous Actions' across the Russian city of Kirov. Officers from an anti-extremist police team, seized computer hardware, software, and political books. The raids are part of an investigation started in 2011 following the distribution of leaflets calling for violence against fascists at a march.

LENS CAP USA



On 'Black Friday', striking Walmart workers took part in over a thousand actions across 46 states in protest against working conditions.

Solidarity with Natais workers

On Thursday 13th December 2012, former workers from the Natais popcorn factory in Bézéril, France, will go to trial for supposed defamation of their ex-employer, for talking about their working conditions on a blog.

Among the problems the workers faced was exposure to Diacetyl. This chemical can cause bronchitis obliterans, also known as 'popcorn workers lung', or other serious respiratory illnesses. Diacetyl is a component of the artificial butter flavour used in microwave popcorn. Bronchitis obliterans is irreversible and can lead to death.

The workers at Natais popcorn factory are not even given masks to protect themselves from the vapours. They also must work in extreme heat. Around 80% of the people at the factory are temporary workers. The work is hard, people are sometimes forced to work on Sundays, and the pay is bad.

There was even a strike at the factory. A

year-end bonus was won, but then the union called off the strike. Some workers however tried to keep fighting. For trying to speak out against these conditions, a case was brought against two of the strikers – now former workers of the company.

The ZSP-IWA are "outraged by the fact that workers who are exposed to extremely dangerous substances such as Diacetyl, without any special protection, and who have no employment stability are also being subjected to this legal repression".

Comrades around the world are being encouraged to support this case by sending an email to the company (their address is info@popcorn.fr), sample text: We demand an end to the repression of Natais workers and support their struggle for safer working conditions and job security. (Add whatever you like to text.)

ZSP-IWA

Notes from the US

In November the US reached two connected milestones: data from the government showed that the period from January to October 2012 was officially the warmest ever recorded for the contiguous United States. According to the National Climatic Data Centre, the national temperature was 3.4° Fahrenheit higher than the average throughout the twentieth century – and even more tellingly, over one degree higher than any previous record for the first 10 months of the year.

Then the Paris-based International Energy Agency reported that the United States will surpass Saudi Arabia's oil production by around 2020 and thus become the world's biggest producer of oil.

Again, more worryingly, this is in no small part the result of the controversial extraction technique of 'fracking' (hydraulic fracturing for shale oil and gas) which causes untold damage to the fabric of the earth's surface, the health of those who live nearby (drinking

European strike

Several European countries join recent day of action

The strike was the expression of rage and protest against austerity by millions of working class people. It was pushed by mainstream unions whose intention was to soften austerity and push themselves forward as managers of discontent, and as forces the boss class can safely do business with. After the Spanish, Greek and Portuguese unions initiated strike action on 14th November, the ETUC, the European mainstream trade union federation, came with its call for a European day of action, and the ball started rolling.

The day itself was impressive. There were 24-hour strikes across Spain, Portugal, Greece and Italy. Other countries such as Germany, the Netherlands, Poland and the UK saw smaller actions. In those countries it was generally the more radical groups who pushed the actions. It was the FAU in Germany, ZSP in Poland and 'Occupy' and anarchists in the Netherlands. In the UK, several solidarity pickets and rallies took place across many of the main cities.

The strongest actions took place in Italy, Portugal and Spain. In Italy there were several large rallies and demonstrations, which complimented the strike action called by the CGIL. In several cities more militant actions



took place – organised by various student groups, COBAS and anarchist groups. Clashes and confrontation with state forces were commonplace, and many railway stations were occupied by protesters.

Portugal saw a large general strike which included all port workers and all airport workers, resulting in 160 cancelled flights, along with all rail and underground workers, which resulted in 90% of public transport being cancelled. Tens of thousands of people demonstrated outside the parliament buildings, clashing violently with the police over several hours. The Portuguese police in particular took a very hard line against protesters, reminding many of the days of the dictatorship.

Spain saw an explosion of protest and

resistance. Hundreds of thousands followed the calls of the mainstream unions CCOO and UGT, and marched through Madrid, Barcelona, Seville and Valencia. More radical organisations attracted huge crowds as well. Where mainstream unions had a total of three million at their rallies, groups such as the anarcho-sindicalist CNT and other radical forces, saw an estimated quarter of a million at their actions.

The strike itself was effective. Pickets blockaded bus depots, closed down bars and fought running battles with the police. This was more than just an ordinary one-day strike, it seemed much more like a dress rehearsal for bigger events yet to happen.

Peter Storm

Notes from the US

◀ page 8

water from taps can be ignitable) as well as the larger environment.

In a new study by federal agencies it was revealed in December that fracking can also trigger earthquakes. The US Geological Survey found that oil and gas operations caused the majority – perhaps all – earthquakes in certain areas of New Mexico and Colorado in the ten years from 2001.

At the end of last month, fast 'food' workers across New York City went on strike against an industry that's worth US\$200 (£125) billion, yet which barely pays its workers enough to live on. Their aim is to get the minimum wages up to US\$15 (£9.35) an hour and have their

independent union, the Fast Food Workers Committee, recognised.

Michigan has become the latest state to attempt to pass anti-union legislation. It's inspired, promoted and funded by right wing doctrinaire movements such as Dick DeVos of Amway (whose wife is the sister of Erik Prince, the founder of notorious mercenary company, Blackwater) and the Koch brothers. It's the 24th so-called 'right to work' (union membership becomes optional; but the benefits apply to everyone) state in the country.

Yet massive protests took place in the middle of December in opposition to what's seen as a divisive plan, and one designed to

depress workers' rights and standard of living.

Google has reported that surveillance online by the US government is increasing – far surpassing that of governments elsewhere, in fact.

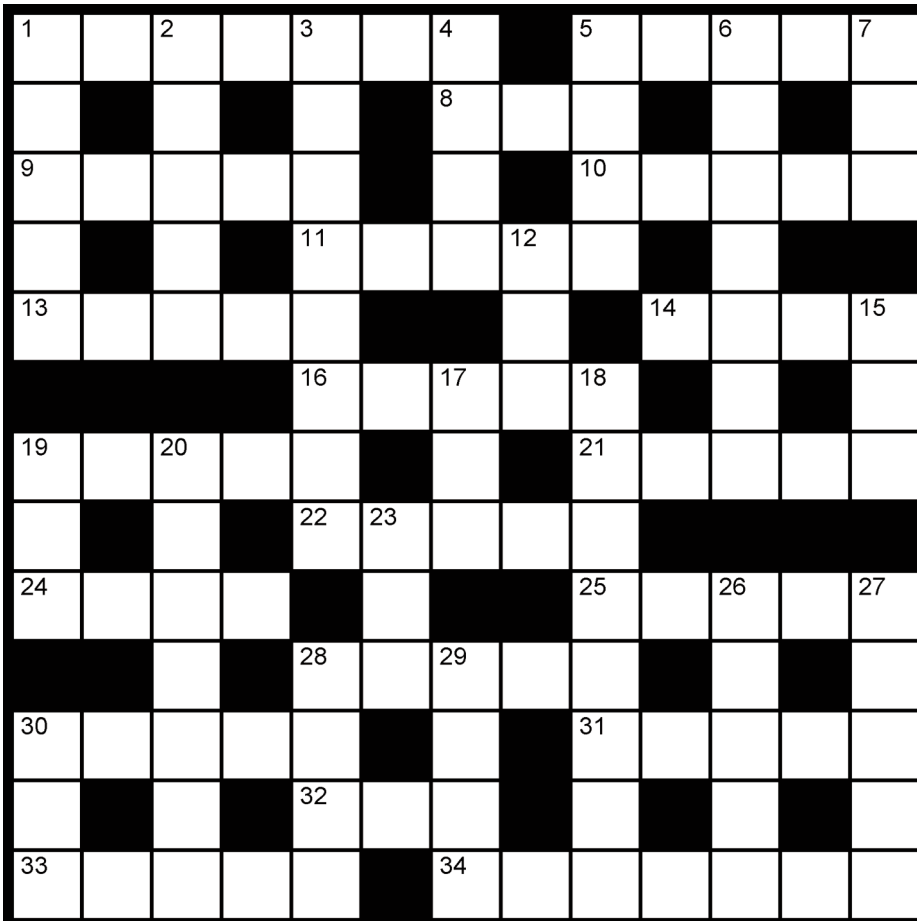
In the first six months of 2012 Google received well over 20,000 requests (almost one every ten minutes around the clock) from the government for information on users. Over a third of these came from the US – Google complied with 90% of them.

In a blog a member of Google staff wrote, "This is the sixth time we've released this data, and one trend has become clear: Government surveillance is on the rise."

Louis Further

CROSSWORD

Prize Crossword compiled by Bjarni Halfnelson



Across

- 1 Archer wants to hit them, sailor understands (6)
 5 Jam? U-turn and an alternative for Tory PM! (5)
 8 Time gone by is drag on inside (3)
 9 Fanatical about a bird (5)
 11 Existed for return of Old Nick (5)
 12 Spaniard's response to bravado of 5 down – losing head (3)
 13 Habitual practice, exercise to hold on to silver (5)
 15 Cambrian country below a lesser part (5)
 16 Father Christmas coming down this took flight, reportedly (4)

- 18 Poems about Derby race venue (5)
 21 Pet – or, awkwardly, one who enjoys a few seasonal drinks! (5)
 23 A nun, running around, leave invalid (5)
 25 Hamster-eater returned rats, right? (5)
 27 Amateur Olympian holding metal disc that's hardly a medal-winner! (4)
 28 Useful value of former Olympics Minister's backing (5)
 31 Runner up, we hear – command to raise the sail (5)
 33 Un-green vehicle at centre of scare (3)
 34 Defendant's evidence of absence when I follow strange bail conditions (5)
 35 Get her so excited – something to give

one a good ride! (5)

- 36 Shiny thing boycotted after Hillsborough disaster? (3)
 37 Running sores desired with bread during strike (5)
 38 Well-muscled, adapted endwise (7)

Down

- 1 / 21 / 6 Get Olympics train off course to take part in field event? (5,3,7)
 2 Beer gets drunk – a litre – for freedom fighter (5)
 3 Terrible rudeness of final employers (3,5)
 4 Oldies' holiday company surprisingly a gas (4)
 5 Taking part in demo, leading counter-spy (4)
 6 See 1
 7 Communist depiction of Rudolph's nose? (3)
 10 The Spanish rising over Mao's revolution – great victory for the Mexican army! (5)
 14 F*ck*ng police take part in central scene of Easter Rising (1,1,1)
 17 Give him an inch and he'll take this old length of cloth! (3)
 19 All at it when lost in unwise affairs (3)
 20 No harm at all to take a spin around 26 miles of posh London streets set aside for it (8)
 21 See 1
 22 One kilo turning up in tangled ropes – often heard from politicians! (7)
 24 They help us to see suave alterations (5)
 26 Pair central to best workmanship (3)
 29 Santa's crewmen kept together using this common token of wage-slavery (5)
 30 Part of first reading: "put your foot down!" (5)
 31 This sometimes contains a greeting for the pantomime villain! (4)
 32 Not out with two Poles visiting these drinking establishments (4)
 34 Tune with a lot of atmosphere (3)
- You can send your answers to 'Crossword', Freedom Press, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX or email them to crossword@freedompress.org.uk by Monday 14th February 2013 and the first correct answer out of the hat will win a prize.

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The Jewish anarchist movement

Notions of nation and ethnicity are often dismissed in the anarchist movement as being backwards or chauvinistic; yet we often find that those victimised under the boot-heel of national and racial oppression are the most receptive to our ideas. The Jewish contribution to the anarchist movement is a case in point. At a certain point in history, before Zionism became a more dominant ideology, Jewish anarchism flourished. Not only was it a movement that bequeathed great individuals – Goldman, Berkman etc. – it also promoted a brand of Yiddish culture which, due to the tragedies that befell European Jewry and the rise of the Hebrew language, has now been consigned to the dustbin of history.

Jewish Anarchism found its most fertile breeding ground amongst the immigrants who flocked to America's shores during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It was here, in a strange land, that these young men and women, who had dreamed of escaping to freedom, found themselves working long hours in sweatshops on New York's lower East Side. This, coupled with a refusal to leave behind the culture they had grown up in, gave the Jewish anarchists their impetus. Forming unions was the first task, as workers sought to organise and fight for better wages and less hours. Jewish anarchists played a role in the cigar-makers strike of 1877 and also helped highlight many of the inequities within New York's tenement housing system. In 1890 the *Frei Arbeiter Stimme* was established. The paper's stated aim was not only to promote the anarchist ideal, but also to be an advocate for Jewish culture. Yiddish poems were published within its pages, social meetings were advertised, as were fundraisers and theatre events. The *Frei Arbeiter Stimme* became the longest running Yiddish periodical in history, only ceasing publication in 1977. It's board was a who's who of the Jewish anarchist movement and at one point included the brilliant Franz Feigler, a Wobbly and sailor who helped break the British blockade of Palestine by ferrying concentration camp survivors into the country.

London's East End was also party to an exciting Jewish anarchist movement, partly organised by the German gentile Rudolf Rocker. Rocker helped found an anarchist club on Bremer Street as well as *Die Arbeiter Frant*, a Yiddish anarchist paper aimed at



London's Jewish community. Jewish anarchists participated in the industrial unrest of 1889 and 1912 and also helped defeat Mosley at Cable Street (pictured above), by this point however the movement had split, with many some comrades joining the Communist Party after witnessing the "success" of the Russian Revolution.

Perhaps the most neglected contribution of Jewish anarchism is its relationship to Israel. This is understandable; many run screaming at the displacement of the Palestinians and no anarchist wants to be associated with a militarised state that imprisons a whole people in misery. Yet it is here that we find some very interesting developments. Anarchists in Israel nowadays tend to disassociate completely from Zionism preferring instead to concentrate on Palestinian solidarity actions such as Anarchists Against The Wall. Yet they often forget that, despite its faults, much of the Kibbutz movement was heavily influenced by the Anarchist ideas of Tolstoy and Gustav Landauer. By some reports Israeli national hero Yosef Trumeldor described himself as an anarchist-communist and

many ideas he held were close to anarcho-syndicalism. Aharon Shidlovsky, an anarchist from Eastern Europe and a giant of the second Aaliyah, was one of the founders of kibbutz Kvutzat Kinneret. A number of Zionist settlers went to fight with the anarchists in Spain during the civil war. Left Zionists Yitzhak Tabenkin and Berl Katznilson were both profoundly influenced by Anarchism and French literary critic Bernard Lazare was both a Zionist and Anarchist, as indeed was famous philosopher Martin Buber.

The irony here is that, despite influencing many Zionists, the rise of Zionism after the Second World War effectively killed off Jewish anarchism. The idea that in order for the Jews to thrive and survive they needed a state and land that could protect their interests made perfect sense after the horrors of the Holocaust. With Zionism also came the dominance of Hebrew, and the death of the Yiddish language. This was a tough blow for the Jewish anarchists as the cultural milieu in which they existed had always been heavily Yiddish. Zionism however, dismissed the language as "gibberish". Thus Jewish anarchism not only suffered a political death, but also a cultural one as well. Perhaps this is inevitable when an idea is tied up with the vague notion of a "people" or a changing vision of culture. However, despite its pitfalls Jewish anarchism provides a history and contribution to the anarchist movement which continues to influence and shape our thoughts to this day.



FEATURE

NO STATE SOLUTION

As tensions and violence in Gaza have boiled over in the last few weeks, it is worthwhile revisiting the following two documents

The first is a statement on the troubles that was originally distributed by the Manchester and Sheffield Anarchist Federation groups, and recently posted on Libcom.org. It looks at the impossibilities of a two state solution, and advocates a 'no state solution'.

The second is a powerful text written by a group of refugees known as 'Gaza Youth Breaks Out' (GYBO). They express their anger and disgust at both sides in the conflict, and at the wider international community.

NO STATE SOLUTION IN GAZA

One thing is absolutely clear about the current situation in Gaza: the Israeli state is committing atrocities which must end immediately. With hundreds dead and thousands wounded, it has become increasingly clear that the aim of the military operation, which has been in the planning stages since the signing of the original ceasefire in June, is to break Hamas completely. The attack follows the crippling blockade throughout the supposed 'ceasefire', which has destroyed the livelihoods of Gazan's, ruined the civilian infrastructure and created a humanitarian disaster which anyone with an ounce of humanity would seek an end to.

But that's not all there is to say about the situation. On both sides of the conflict, the idea that opposing Israel has to mean supporting Hamas and its 'resistance' movement is worryingly common. We totally reject this argument. Just like any other set of rulers, Hamas, like all the other major Palestinian factions, are happy and willing to sacrifice ordinary Palestinians to increase their power. This isn't some vague theoretical point – for a period recently most deaths in Gaza were a result of fighting between Hamas and Fatah. The 'choices' offered to ordinary Palestinian people are between Islamist gangsters (Hamas, Islamic Jihad) or nationalist gangsters (Fatah, Al-Aqsa Martyrs brigades). These groups have shown their willingness to attack working-class attempts to improve their living conditions, seizing union offices, kidnapping prominent trade unionists, and breaking strikes. One spectacular example is the attack on Palestine Workers Radio by Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, for "stoking internal conflicts". Clearly, a "free Palestine" under the control of any of these groups would be nothing of the sort.

As anarchists, we are internationalists, opposing the idea that the rulers and ruled within a nation have any interests in common. Therefore, anarchists reject Palestinian nationalism just as we reject Israeli nationalism (Zionism). Ethnicity does not grant "rights" to lands, which require the state to enforce them. People, on the other hand, have a right to having their human needs met, and should be able to live where they choose, freely.

Therefore, against the divisions and false choices set up by nationalism, we fully support the ordinary inhabitants of Gaza and Israel against state warfare – not because of their nationality, ethnicity, or religion, but



simply because they're real living, feeling, thinking, suffering, struggling human beings. And this support has to mean total hostility to all those who would oppress and exploit them – the Israeli state and the Western governments and corporations that supply it with weapons, but also any other capitalist factions who seek to use ordinary working-class Palestinians as pawns in their power struggles. The only real solution is one which is collective, based on the fact that as a class, globally, we ultimately have nothing but our ability to work for others, and everything to gain in ending this system – capitalism – and the states and wars it needs

That this seems like a "difficult" solution does not stop it from being the right one. Any "solution" that means endless cycles of conflict, which is what nationalism represents, is no solution at all. And if that is the case, the fact that it is "easier" is irrelevant. There are sectors of Palestinian society which are not dominated by the would-be rulers – protests organised by village committees in the West Bank for instance. These deserve our support. As do those in Israel who refuse to fight, and who resist the war. But not the groups who call on Palestinians to be slaughtered on their behalf by one of the most advanced armies in the world, and



ON



who wilfully attack civilians on the other side of the border. Neither one state nor two states, but no states. Whoever dies, Hamas and the Israeli state win.

(FUCK HAMAS! FUCK ISRAEL!) MANIFESTO FROM GAZAN YOUTH

Fuck Hamas. Fuck Israel. Fuck Fatah. Fuck UN. Fuck UNWRA. Fuck USA! We, the youth in Gaza, are so fed up with Israel, Hamas, the occupation, the violations of human rights and the indifference of the international community.

We want to scream and break this wall of silence, injustice and indifference like the Israeli F16's breaking the wall of sound; scream with all the power in our souls in order to release this immense frustration that consumes us because of this fucking situation we live in.

We are sick of being caught in this political struggle; sick of coal-dark nights with airplanes circling above our homes; sick of innocent farmers getting shot in the buffer zone because they are taking care of their lands; sick of bearded guys walking around with their guns abusing their power, beating up or incarcerating young people

demonstrating for what they believe in; sick of the wall of shame that separates us from the rest of our country and keeps us imprisoned in a stamp-sized piece of land;

sick of being portrayed as terrorists, home-made fanatics with explosives in our pockets and evil in our eyes; sick of the indifference we meet from the international community, the so-called experts in expressing concerns and drafting resolutions but cowards in enforcing anything they agree on; we are sick and tired of living a shitty life, being kept in jail by Israel, beaten up by Hamas and completely ignored by the rest of the world.

There is a revolution growing inside of us, an immense dissatisfaction and frustration that will destroy us unless we find a way of canalising this energy into something that can challenge the *status quo* and give us some kind of hope.

We barely survived the Operation Cast Lead, where Israel very effectively bombed the shit out of us, destroying thousands of homes and even more lives and dreams. During the war we got the unmistakable feeling that Israel wanted to erase us from the face of the Earth. During the last years, Hamas has been doing all they can to control our thoughts, behaviour and aspirations. Here in Gaza we are scared of being incarcerated, interrogated, hit, tortured, bombed, and killed. We cannot move as we want, say what we want, do what we want.

“ENOUGH! Enough pain, enough tears, enough suffering, enough control, limitations, unjust justifications, terror, torture, excuses, bombings, sleepless nights, dead civilians, black memories, bleak future, heart-aching present, disturbed politics, fanatic politicians, religious bullshit, enough incarceration! WE SAY STOP! This is not the future we want! We want to be free. We want to be able to live a normal life. We want peace. Is that too much to ask?”



NEWS

Liverpool left join forces

Starbucks and Poundland targeted on a successful day of action

A large group of activists wreaked a little bit of havoc with pre-Christmas capitalist business as usual on Saturday afternoon, as they joined in with a nationwide UK Uncut action, and also targeted workfare exploiters Poundland.

The five hours of fun began at noon, with a static rally organised by Liverpool Against The Cuts, who also played a co-ordinating and publicising role in the run-up to Saturday. It took place next to the Co-operative Bank on the corner of Bold Street and, like other recent demos, it seemed quite isolated from the general public milling by. A handful of speakers decried the government's austerity agenda through a megaphone, but it appeared to make little impact on busy shoppers.

After a few minutes, a group led by the Socialist Singers and the Angry Women of Liverpool made their move on the local branch of Starbucks – the multi-billion pound company which has recently been making the headlines for its ability to avoid paying tax.

Police were monitoring the front Bold Street entrance, and the back door had been locked, but a small number of us managed to get inside by simply posing as customers and strolling past the cops. Once inside, the AWOL banner was unfurled. This inevitably provoked the anger of the manager and a plainclothes cop/security guard, who claimed he “didn't want to hurt” one demonstrator, but twisted her hand and wrist in opposite directions as she and comrades were bundled out of the building.

But by this time, the Socialist Singers had massed outside the front entrance, effectively blocking it, and scores more had moved from the static demo to hear them/join in, creating a ‘wall of sound’. The front door was also locked, and only opened when the customers already inside wanted to leave.

The shop was closed for at least a couple of hours over the busy lunchtime period, and many caffeine seekers were turned away. Most left with no complaint once they were informed we'd closed the branch due to Starbucks' refusal to pay taxes, and the link with the austerity bearing down on us all was constantly reinforced by the many placards and banners. But one American appeared to be in denial, claiming it was “an objective fact I can get coffee in this shop”, while another man announced he supported the cuts to “bad nurses and bad teachers”, for which he was roundly booed and denounced as “Tory scum”.

Eventually, a breakaway group moved away in knots of twos and threes, in order to hit the Liverpool One Starbucks branch



half a mile down the road. There we encountered more hostility from the manager and one cop in particular, but this time the element of surprise meant that we'd got more bodies into the shop itself, therefore making it more difficult to evict us all without arrests. After much shouting, a lengthy standoff ensued, while passers-by took photos through the windows – many of which were uploaded on social networking websites.

Finally, the police ran out of patience, and ‘good cop’ was sent over to couch a threat of arrest under aggressive trespass legislation in “respect for your right to demonstrate” and acknowledgement that “you’ve had a really successful protest”. At this point we decided to walk out together, with large numbers maintaining a picket outside, whilst others of us swapped UK Uncut for Boycott Workfare, and descended on the Williamson Square Poundland.

We have held many pickets there over the past few months, and normally the security guard merely asks us to make sure we are not blocking access as we hand out leaflets and talk to people about the workfare scheme. This time however – perhaps because his patience had run out or perhaps due to Christmas pressure – he threatened to call the police, before actually calling three other ‘security’ men, one of whom was a massive track-suited guy. This individual proceeded to push one protester, throw balled-up pieces of paper at me, and make gang signs. Another threatened to meet demonstrators “down a dark alley”.

The law did arrive about twenty minutes later, and as is usual they marched straight inside to consult with the store security. When they emerged, they were deaf to our complaints about the criminal acts committed by ‘security’, but the senior cop clearly didn't want to make any arrests either, so he merely repeated the normal security mantra of “make sure you don't block the door”, having warned his junior colleague to back off and calm down. Many potential customers took our literature, and stopped for a chat.

As the clock ticked round to five, we decided to call it a day, satisfied that we had put in hours of excellent work. The afternoon had been a massive success – costing Starbucks significant amounts of money, and generating great publicity for our causes. These victories were only possible due to the coming together of many different groups and unaligned people on the radical left, which gave us the numbers necessary to make a big physical impact, and made for a fantastic atmosphere. However, we need to make more effort to communicate with the workers in the shops. In the case of Poundland and other workfare profiteers, real jobs and wages are being undermined by the scheme. And Starbucks declared war on its staff this week, as it refused to accept any cut in profits if and when it decides to pay some corporation tax.

Saturday's events provided a brief, tantalising hint of working class power, but real change will have to be based on workplace organisation.

Adam Ford

Prison: a looking glass world

In the weird and wacky world of prisons nothing is ever quiet what it seems, whether it be the bizarre spectacle of death row prisoners in California campaigning for the retention of the death penalty; David Cameron pledging the Coalition to pursue a “tough but intelligent” line on “law and order” when the one thing singularly absent from the criminal justice system has always been scientific evidence-based policies; or Chris Grayling, the supposed new saviour of the Coalition’s prisons policy, ranting on about prisoners lying in bed watching satellite TV sports channels all day. In fact, the reality is often even stranger than we allow for once we have fought through the lies, damned lies and the occasionally lazily deployed statistics.

The reasons for this are of course many and varied: ranging from the fundamental Orwellian insanity of prison itself, as typified by the very basis for its late eighteenth century invention as a more ‘modern’ and ‘enlightened’

You may call it ‘nonsense’ but I’ve heard nonsense, compared with which that would be as sensible as a dictionary! (The Red Queen in *Alice Through The Looking Glass* by Lewis Carroll)

mechanism (when compared to execution or transportation) to correct the absence of moral, i.e. religious, rectitude amongst society’s more wayward members (a ‘criminality’ attributed to a whole host of ‘causes’ including the breakdown of the family and parental authority, the rejection of some god or other, ‘original sin’, etc., that the quiet contemplation afforded by a prison cell would allow the offender time to overcome); via the apologists who buy into the inanity of the propaganda and doublethink that helps perpetuate the ‘criminal justice’ status quo (newspaper editors, the general public, etc.) because, as we all know, ‘prison works’; all the way to the self-serving toadies (prison officers, politicians, etc.) whose very jobs rely on its continued existence, and who are only too willing to stretch ‘the truth’ until it confirms to their needs.

Take the case of the Californian death row prisoners for example. Whilst America was girding its loins in preparation for the big vote on who would be the next ‘leader of the free world’, and whilst New York’s Mayor Bloomberg was happily abandoning 12,000 of the Californian’s fellow prisoners who happened to be slap bang in the path of ‘Frankenstorm’ Hurricane Sandy on Riker’s Island (and who had conveniently been left out of the NYC evacuation plan) to their fates, states across the USA were holding referenda on a whole host of new laws, including Proposition 34 in California: the abolition of the death penalty in the ‘Golden

State’, something slated to save the cash-strapped state billions of dollars. Except that the proposal was to replace it with a sentence of life without the possibility of parole, and to apply it to all existing death sentences, something that all those prisoners maintaining their innocence and undergoing the labyrinthine US appeals processes were definitely going to be against (appeals that would also have been severely restricted under the same legislation). Add to that the fact that California leads the rest of the States in wrongful convictions overturned on appeal and you can see why prisoners were vigorously (and successfully) campaigning to retain the statute.

As for Cameron, Grayling and the brave new world of the Rehabilitation Revolution Mk II, the dissembling over the ‘two-strikes’ sentencing policy was covered in the November column but Grayling’s announcement of the rolling out across the prison system of the payment by results (PBR) system despite the fact that the three prison system pilot schemes (two years, one year and one month old respectively) not yet having provided any concrete results is another new low in the practice of ‘intelligence’ and truth in prisons policy. Rather, he is going ahead based on a personal visit to the HMP Peterborough pilot, which he found “encouraging”, and on his supposedly positive experience of the Welfare-to-Work PBR farce in the Works and Pensions department. Nothing particularly scientific there then.

Which brings us to Grayling’s all too fatuous recent comments about prison “not [being] meant to be a place that people enjoy being in. I don’t [want to] see prisoners in this country sitting in cells watching the Sunday afternoon match on Sky Sports.”

This clearly illustrates how little he really understands about the way the prison system operates. Only about 3,000 prisoners in private prisons across the county have access to Sky and they are the most compliant Enhanced (IEPS) Category prisoners. They

have the best-paid jobs in UK prisons and no doubt work the hardest too, exactly what the Incentives and Earned Privileges Scheme was brought in to achieve. So it clearly profits G4S, Serco or Sodexo to pay that little bit extra above and beyond what is available in public sector prisons to ensure their good behaviour. Good capitalist economics really, so what’s Grayling complaining about? Well, it pays politically to give prisoners the occasional shoeing, especially when you are new to the manor, even if you are factually inaccurate.

In other news, the private security firm G4S has suffered further fallout from the Olympics security fiasco, losing the contract to manage HMP Wolds (which they have run since it opened 20 years ago, and which will revert to the public sector). They have also had their bids to run some of the other eight ‘failing’ prisons currently up for tendering (see *Freedom*, April 2012), this despite the company having been awarded the contract to run HMP Birmingham last year (see *Freedom*, 7th May 2011). Clearly the last Prisons Inspectorate report that noted further recent deterioration in the running of the prison, highlighting “the availability of drugs, a lack of staff confidence in confronting poor behaviour, weaknesses in the promotion of diversity and limited work and training provision” didn’t help of course. But then again, they are common problems across the whole of an overcrowded and under-funded prison estate, irrespective of whether prisons are in the public or private sector.

Of the remaining eight prisons, it came as no surprise that the five potentially most profitable nicks (the two-prison HMP Northumberland cluster and the three in the South Yorkshire cluster) still remain in line to be cherry-picked by either Sodexo, Serco or the MTC/Amey consortium, with Serco remaining the favourite to win the South Yorkshire bid. The other three prisons no one else wanted and remain in the hands of Joe Public.

BRA



COMMENT

ABOUT FREEDOM

ANGEL ALLEY

Another year ends without the establishment of an environmentally sustainable global community based on freedom and co-operation. Poor show folks, we must all try harder in 2013.

However the paper soldiers on into its 127th year and the building increases in vibrancy with the Anarchist Federation joining those with offices upstairs.

Shop-wise the new bestseller is *Fighting for Ourselves* by another tenant, the Solidarity Federation. This has proved to be a remarkable online seller so it's good to see people taking advantage of our post-free webshop.

No one active in the anarchist movement on this island can have failed to notice that it's been a hard year all round. Not only has the promise of student and social uprisings faded but the movement has faced serious internal problems as well. Here we have not been exempt from these and, on top of our financial problems, it has not made it an easy year for Freedom Press. Thanks to everyone who has supported us through this difficult time.

So for those comrades who have had an unpleasant time this year battling the forces of reaction inside and outside the movement, we offer Epicurus' dictum that it is by "storms and tempest that good pilots gain their reputation".

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A sideways look

by SVARTFROSK

In 1915, Wobbly songwriter Ralph Chaplin put the final touches to what to me is one of the finest labour songs of all time, 'Solidarity Forever'. It's been in my mind a lot recently, after lustily singing it at Terry Little's funeral, particularly this verse:

*"Is there aught we hold in common
with the greedy parasite,*

*Who would lash us into serfdom and
would crush us with his might?*

*Is there anything left to us but to
organise and fight?*

For the union makes us strong."

The song argues that there is nothing in common between workers and the greedy parasites. So far so good. It's the next couplet that I think is worth reflecting on. We are faced with attacks on all aspects of our lives, as part of a massive offensive against working class living standards. Chaplin wrote 'Solidarity Forever' in 1915, while covering strikes for the IWW publication *Solidarity*. Then as much as now there were all sorts of distractions from organising to improve our lot. The IWW faced battles with the Salvation Army and other evangelist groups, who preached that all would be well in the next life and the trials of this life had to be borne, or with patriotic or racist groups who held that the divisions in society were between Americans and foreigners or blacks and whites, fooling the poor American or poor white into identifying with his bosses and exploiters rather than seeing them for what they were.

There's no denying the government and their allies in the media don't know what they are up to, they've read every page from *The Idiot's Guide to Divide and Rule*. So, we get 'compassionate' conservatives telling us that everyone on benefits, except for pensioners, is a scrounger. The disabled are slammed as faking illness, giving the green light to morons who now attack anyone who looks disabled. Foreigners and the EU and immigrants – it's all been done before.

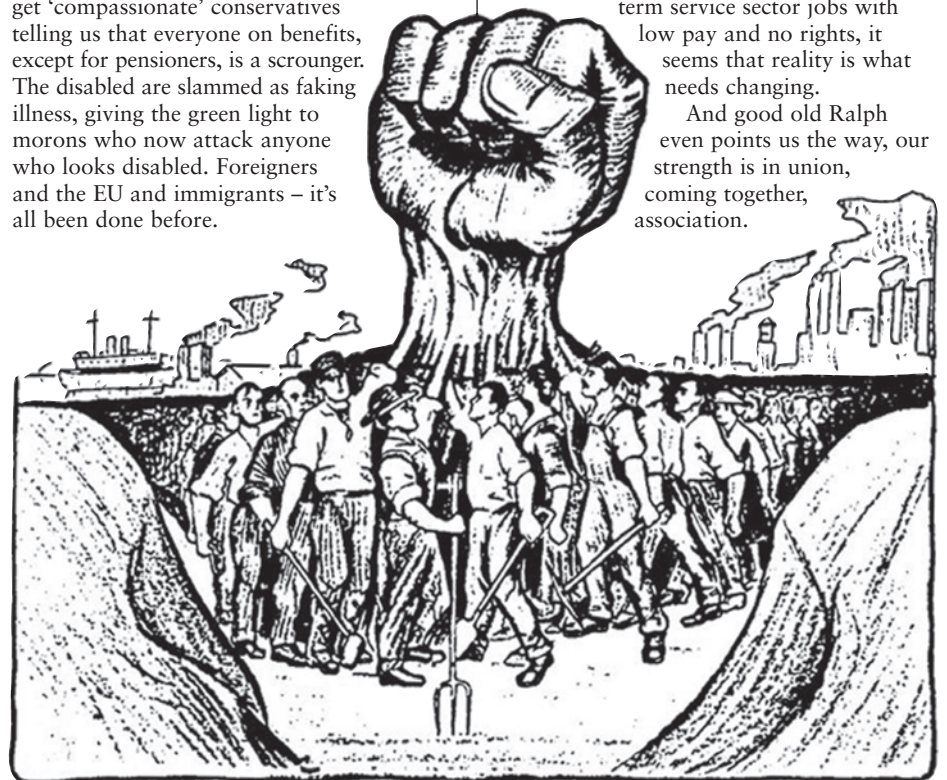
But what else does Chaplin suggest? That the only thing left, the only option we have, is to organise and fight. No one else will deal with our problems for us. The mainstream unions have, for the last three decades, put their faith in either a Labour government or the European Union to curtail the worst habits of employers in the UK. It has been abject failure – Labour in power did nothing for workers. They spent money on tax credits so that the lowest paid could afford to feed their kids, but that's actually subsidising bad employers. The minimum wage has moved to become the maximum wage in much of the country. And that's the positive stuff – taking solidarity action is still illegal.

The EU is hostile to workers' rights, and what it does say about them is from a North European partnership model, with no place for sour-faced incompetent management and surly workers who know their manager is lying because they've seen their lips move. It is the EU that has pushed through the privatisation decrees, something recognised at least by the RMT which is explicitly against Brussels.

So if there are no saviours, does that mean there is nothing that can be done? Of course not. Even now, people are starting to do so: cleaners, bar and restaurant and shop workers, pizza deliverers, warehouse workers, more and more are looking at what they have and thinking: why not improve it? The fear among union organisers and the joy for bosses has been that it is a powerless sector, with workers easily replaced, or even deported. These things are true, but they are not the only truth. If the reality of the economy is short

term service sector jobs with low pay and no rights, it seems that reality is what needs changing.

And good old Ralph even points us the way, our strength is in union, coming together, association.



FEEDBACK

Surely conciliation is needed in the row between the Anarchist Federation and *Northern Voices*? Common sense says both sides need to move towards a way forward to resolve outstanding issues.

I write as a supporter of Brian Bamford who has over 50 years of writing and activism in respect of libertarian issues.

Does it help to remind readers that Brian was writing articles from Spain during the early 1960s when he ran a real risk of imprisonment and worse by Franco's henchmen. Brian's article 'Shanty towns of Barcelona' was published by *Freedom* circa 1962 when he was living in Spain

Recently Brian has worked well to focus attention on the abuse of power at Cambridge Road Boys Hostel in the 1960s by Cyril Smith, former Member of Parliament for Rochdale. May I remind readers that knowledge of Cyril Smith's activities were largely suppressed when Rochdale Alternative Press exposed Cyril's activities in 1979.

Is it now time to resolve issues between the Anarchist Federation and *Northern Voices* and move on in a way that is constructive to the libertarian movement?

Kevin Brennan
Bristol

In November 2012, the American Bishop's Conference decided unanimously that the campaign to canonise Dorothy Day may go ahead. The American Bishop's conference includes all the Roman Catholic bishops and archbishops in the USA.

Dorothy Day (1897-1980), was an anarchist who worked hard in working-class causes during the Great Depression, then converted from agnosticism to Romanism while remaining an anarchist, and founded the *Catholic Worker*.

Dorothy Day is now designated a "Servant of God" and Catholics may pray to her, asking her to intercede for the production of a miracle, for instance the

miraculous recovery of a relative given up for dead by the medical profession. If one miracle is attributed to her she will be "Blessed" and if she is credited with "Two Stupendous and Indubitable Miracles" she will be recognised a Saint.

Anarchists tend to reject religion because, to quote Bakunin's *God and the State*, the best justification for a tyrant on earth is a tyrant in Heaven. Those who allow the supernatural mostly go for free-thinking sects like the Quakers, who allow no human to dictate what people believe. Most British Catholics follow Irish tradition, in accepting the authority of the parish priest in matters of belief, but there are other traditions in which it is permissible to doubt the infallibility of the Pope himself. Dorothy Day seems to have been a very liberal Catholic. When it was put to her, that she might be a saint, she dismissed the idea as stupid.

Donald Room



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GETTING ACTIVE

WHAT'S ON

DECEMBER

■ **1st** Manchester & Salford Anarchist Bookfair from 10am until 4pm at People's History Museum, Left Bank in Spinningfields, Manchester city centre, M3 3ER, see <http://www.bookfair.org.uk> for details.

■ **4th** Radical Anthropology talks, *Did the Neanderthals have art and language?* with Camilla Power at St Martin's Community Centre, 43 Carol Street, London NW1 0HT from 6.15 to 9pm, £10 waged, £5 low waged, £3 unwaged, for further details see www.radicalanthropologygroup.org

■ **4th and 18th** Practical Squatting Evening at LARC, 62 Fieldgate Street, London E1 1ES from 7pm to 8pm, for more see <http://www.squatter.org.uk/>

■ **6th, 13th, 20th and 27th** 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.

■ **8th** News from Nowhere Club presents 'The Necessity of Utopia', with speaker Ruth Levitas, at The Epicentre, West Street, Leytonstone E11 4LJ, buffet 7.30pm, talk starts 8pm, for details see <http://www.newsfromnowhereclub.org/>

■ **11th** Radical Anthropology talks, *The origin of language: 'The hardest problem in science'?* with Chris Knight at St Martin's Community Centre, 43 Carol Street, London NW1 0HT from 6.15 to 9pm, £10 waged, £5 low waged, £3 unwaged, for further details see www.radicalanthropologygroup.org

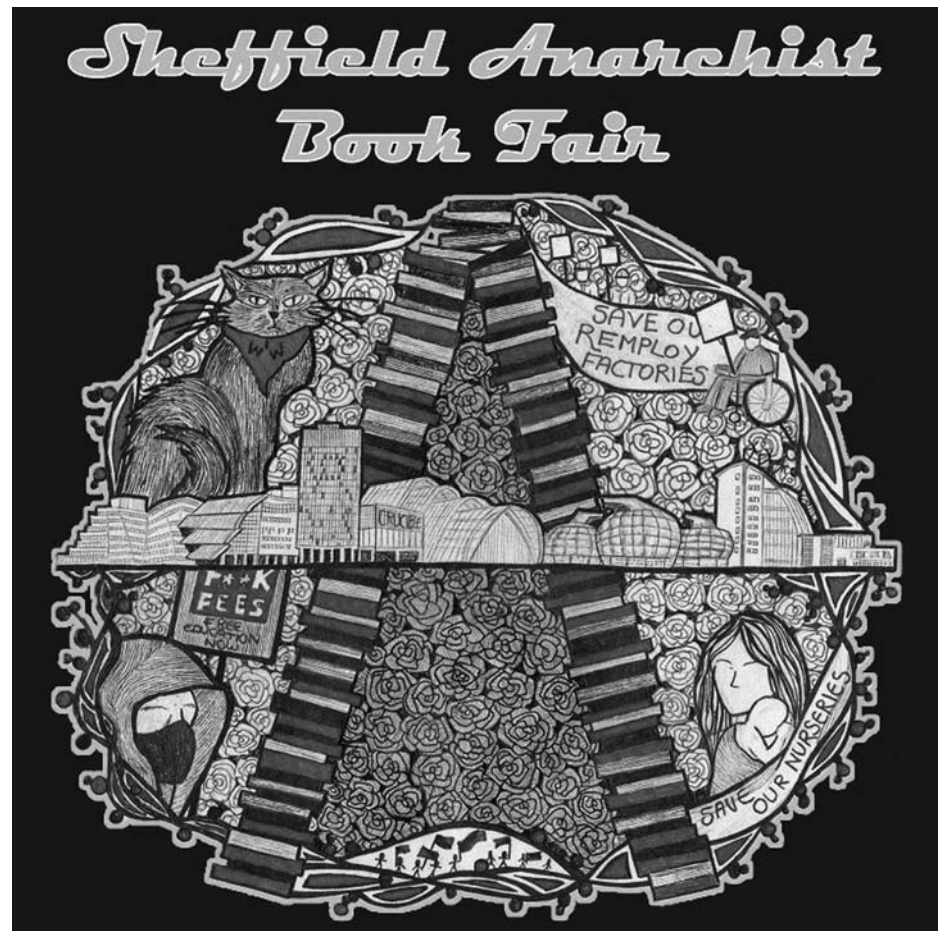
■ **11th and 25th** Practical Squatting Evening at 56a Infoshop, 56a Crampton Street, London SE17 3AE from 7pm to 8pm, see <http://www.56a.org.uk/> for details.

■ **12th** Class Wargames will be hosting the playing of Guy Debord's 'The Game of War' and Jim Dunnigan's 'Chicago! Chicago!' which replays the 1968 Chicago protests against the Democratic Party convention, see www.classwargames.net for more. Starts at 6.30pm in the basement at Housmans Bookshop, 5 Caledonian Road, London N1 9DX, see www.classwargames.net for details.

■ **18th** Radical Anthropology talks, *A Christmas fairy tale: 'The Shoes that were Danced to Pieces'* with Chris Knight at St Martin's Community Centre, 43 Carol Street, London NW1 0HT from 6.15 to 9pm, £10 waged, £5 low waged, £3 unwaged, for further details see www.radicalanthropologygroup.org

■ **21st** 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** Freedom Press social at the bookshop, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX from 2pm onwards.



● Between 80 and 100 people attended a meeting organised by the **Liverpool Claimants Network** to discuss and plan local resistance to the government's proposed Bedroom Tax.

The initial presentation by a member of the network gave a good overview of what the Bedroom Tax is, the implications it has for housing association tenants, and the need to organise direct action against what is a callous attack on the working-class.

As of 1st April this year, housing association tenants who have a spare room will be faced with a reduction in their housing benefit of between £40 and £80 a month (a reduction of up to 25%) as part of the government's welfare reform plans. In Liverpool alone, 12,000 tenants will be affected. Nationally, the figure is around 660,000. Meanwhile, the Empty Homes Agency says there are 725,000 homes lying empty across the country, enough to house 1.8 million people.

Apart from very isolated calls for us to try and get the Labour Party 'big guns' involved (i.e. the same people implementing austerity locally), the mood of the meeting was angry, militant and in favour of direct action (including occupations of housing associations).

Many people also spoke of the importance of engaging with the communities affected.

After some strong contributions from those present, we broke off into groups of those who live in the north and south of the city to discuss ways of fighting the Bedroom Tax where we live.

Follow-up meetings are planned in our local areas to organise implementing the

ideas about how to resist this attack on our class within our communities.

Solidarity Federation

● The fourth annual **Sheffield Anarchist Book Fair** will be held on 11th and 12th May 2013.

Year on year the event has grown, and for 2013 we are looking to expand into a much larger venue that will also be more accessible than previous years.

The Sheffield Anarchist Book Fair is a free two-day event organised by local activists and volunteers. If you would like to get involved with the organising of the event you can contact the co-ordinating collective at sheffield@bookfair.org.uk

Each year, the book fair brings together over 50 radical booksellers, distributors, independent presses and political groups from around the country, and features books, pamphlets, zines, art, crafts and films. The one-day fair includes speakers, panels, and political lectures as well as a cinema. This is followed by an evening social. On the second day we host a radical walking tour around the city as well as an open game of three-sided football.

Pricing for tables will be available mid-February. Check the Facebook page (see below) for irregular updates.

Authors and activists interested in speaking at the book fair should also email sheffield@bookfair.org.uk.

For more see <http://www.sheffieldbookfair.org/> or <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Sheffield-Anarchist-Book-Fair/16091677367840>

Return to standing?

Several premier league and championship clubs have given their backing to a campaign for the re-introduction of 'standing' facilities at football matches. Added to this, around fifty MPs have signed an early day motion calling for a 'trial' of standing sections.

Many other are strongly opposed to any return to standing at 1st and 2nd tier football stadiums, not least the Hillsborough families. The disaster of 1989 was not the first occasion that fans had been crushed at Hillsborough. In a 1981 FA Cup semi-final 38 Spurs fans were injured after being crushed – similar incidents occurred in 1987 and in 1988.

I feel that the re-introduction of standing at matches will lead to a return to the bad old days of football. Issues of overcrowding and crushing aside, I would be concerned about the return of the violence that tainted the game so badly in the 1980s, plummeting

attendances, and 'no go' areas.

The promises of robust and modern day crowd control techniques, and policies and procedures are all well and good, however, I am sure that the footballing authorities would have claimed that similar systems were in place prior to Hillsborough.

The game and wider fan culture has changed immeasurably since the Hillsborough disaster and the Taylor report. Many clubs and stadiums are much more family friendly environments than they once were. I vividly remember going to many matches in the mid to late 1980s with my father, and whilst it was exciting to go and see my heroes in the flesh, it was also terrifying.

Part of me believes that there is a certain amount of rose-tinted lenses being peered through over this issue. I have spoken to several people about a return to standing,

and the stock responses are generally tales of 'the good old days', and how great the atmosphere used to be – although some of those who make these claims have never been to a football match.

I do not believe that the use of a small 'trial' and the hand-picked fans that will participate in them will achieve anything other than give those who want a return to standing all the evidence they need for its safe use. A small and false situation that will be heavily managed by stewards and police proves nothing.

For many, apart from the cost, going to a football match is a much safer, inclusive and enjoyable experience than it was 25 years ago. The cultures and problems exacerbated by old fashioned stadiums have been largely eradicated.

Matthew Black

Anti-semitism in Rome

◀ page 24

At the match itself the following day, Lazio fans *en masse* were noted to be chanting "Juden Tottenham", and unfurled a 'Free Palestine' banner.

The visit of Spurs to Rome was always going to be too good an opportunity for the fascist contingent at Lazio to miss. On the one hand you have Spur's, a team noted for having a large Jewish fan base, and on the other, you have Mussolini's favourite team, whose supporters regularly display fascist flags, and anti-Semitic banners at matches.

A Lazio spokesperson has issued a statement saying that any suggestion that Lazio fans were involved in the attacks as "Totally groundless". Since the attacks fifteen people have been arrested, including two that are allegedly supporters of Rome's other team, AS Roma.

It is worthy of note that there has been a rise in the militancy of far-right youths across Rome in the last few months. There have been weekly protests held by the neo-fascist youth group 'Blocco Studentesco', which have often ended in violent clashes with the police. Many within such groups are said to have strong links with the local football hooligan firms.

There has been much criticism of the security arrangements for travelling fans in Rome, and not just relating to this incident. This view has been rejected by the Rome police commissioner, who claims that, "The police do more for the Jewish community in Rome than anywhere else in the world". This laughable statement was backed by the cities mayor Gianni Alemanno, a man who was greeted with fascist salutes, and cries of "Duce! Duce!", when elected the city's mayor

in 2008, and who was a former neo-fascist youth leader and organiser.

Lazio have been fined token amounts by UEFA on several occasions due to the racist behaviour and violence from elements of their supporters, but on the whole nothing is being done about a growing problem. There is a long list of attacks against opposition supports that have been attributed to the Lazio Ultras, yet the club denies the problem exists at all.

Those in any doubt about the attitudes of the Lazio hierarchy to the fascist elements within their ranks, need only remember former player Paulo Di Canio, who at the end of one match, made a fascist salute towards the fans as a mark of respect. The clubs response? Yes, you guessed correctly, absolutely no response.

Matthew Black



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FREEDOM fortnightly ISSN 0016 0504

REVIEWS

FICTION

The first thing Dom did after his chat with Connie and Dave was to finally join the union. He didn't hold out much hope but the rep was friendly enough and mentioned that quite a few people had joined recently, with all the changes.

Then, he started talking to his workmates. There weren't a lot of them in the IT team, but other areas of work had been handed to LobCo, like security and reception and personnel. Sorry, "human resources". At least the security guys sometimes stood up for themselves.

After a morning where he discovered he'd needed to talk to everyone else in the section, all work-related of course, he knew that everyone was pretty hacked off. Two of the three people who had already been in the union were holding out for something from the regional officer; the other, Paul, had no illusions. Unfortunately, he also had no belief that anything could be done, and was fatalistic about how bad things were going to get. Alison, who ran the projects part of the team, said she already had two interviews lined up elsewhere.

"Seriously Dom, you should do the same. I've been through this sort of thing before, these companies are only interested in profit and will chew you up and spit you out," she told him.

Later, he called Dave.

"I'm lost here," he said. "I don't know where to start. You're the only person I know who's even been consistently active in a union. What should I do?"

"Sorry, mate," replied Dave. "I'm not sure I can be a lot of help. Where I work, I joined an existing union; you're effectively starting from scratch. But it is something we need to work out, as lots more people are in the situation you're in."

"But Dave, I really am stumped. It's the first time I don't have any answers, not even smart-arse ones, before you say anything."

Dave laughed. "Okay, mate, I do know someone who can give you some pointers. I'll give her a call and see if we can arrange something. In the meantime, is the union having a meeting?"

"There's something next week," said Dom.

"Okay, go to that, we can meet up later in the week to discuss it. Find out everything you can about it, who's going, what's on the agenda, how it will operate. You're a newbie, it's okay to ask."

Dom sat back, smiling. He finished his coffee in one gulp and put his cup back on the stained corner of his desk. He took out a cigarette and strolled out.

Martin H.

To be continued...

PHYSICAL RE

Malatesta reviews a new history of one hundred years of anti-fascism

A frequent phenomenon in the world of literature is the simultaneous publication of two books on the same subject, so it came as little surprise that as the Malatestas were putting the final touches to our *Militant Anti-Fascism* history, Zero Books announced the imminent release of *Physical Resistance*, a book on militant anti-fascism by Dave Hann (who sadly died in 2009). Crivvens! On the sunny side though, this means there will be two new additions to the small number of books defending physical force anti-fascism in 2013.

The book is prefaced with an introduction by Louise Purbrick, Hann's partner, who explains that it was put together posthumously and goes on to criticise the sectarianism of the anti-fascist scene. Those who are familiar with Hann's first book *No Retreat* (written with Steve Tilzey, Milo Books, 2003) will know that Hann is firmly on the side of physical resistance to fascism. They may also know that this thoroughly enjoyable book

was subject to dispute by some of his former comrades in Red Action/Anti-Fascist Action regarding dates and accuracy. No doubt his new book will garner some opprobrium from these critics but as a history of militant anti-fascism it is literally a blow by blow account.

Hann situates militant anti-fascism in British working class history and documents very briefly the development of European fascism – though not the preconditions that allowed it to occur. It also centralises the role of the pre-war Communist Party in supplying most of the anti-fascist impetus. Hann points out the disastrous 'class against class' policy of the CP against other socialists and social democrats, but does not acknowledge that the Popular Front strategy that replaced it was equally dubious: the broad coalition with MPs and the left to oppose Mosley, or Leon Blum of the French Popular Front's failing to intervene in Spain, 1936, this last being the biggest disgrace of all. Hann does explain that there were many militant activists who operated on a local level at odds with the desires of the national leadership, militants who the opposition were happy to stereotype as the global threat of 'Godless Jewish Bolshevism'.

The Mosley (*pictured below*) section and



QUIZ ANSWERS

1. Marie Lloyd
2. She was murdered by her husband, Dr Crippen.
3. Obviously he lies all the time, good Christian that he is. He claimed that working tax credits, which are effectively a subsidy to crap employers who pay low

- wages, had gone up by 58%. The real figure was 8%. Nasty man.
4. The smug suit overspent by over £1.1 million. Mainly on "consultants". And he's recommending that A&Es be closed so that PFI profits remain. Emphasis on the "con" then.

SISTANCE

the section on the Spanish Civil War (the most documented era of militant anti-fascism) do not tell us much new but instead establish a narrative that continues after the war. Anti-fascism being an essentially reactive form of politics responds to the ebb and flow of fascist organisation but, as Hann shows, although the far right sometimes maintain a low profile, they never really go away. One of the main problems in compiling a militant history is that many activists simply did not record their experiences as a lot of those were 'outside legal parameters'. The reputations and successes of the 43 Group and 62 Group have suffered from this lack of documentation, the 62 Group especially as there is still no definitive history yet. To make up for this latter shortfall, Hann wrote to and interviewed several anti-fascists whose testaments are a welcome addition to the small catalogue of which we speak and we hope that transcripts of these can be archived somewhere for others to access. (May we suggest the Online AFA Archive?).

Hann demonstrates how the Battle of Lewisham against an increasingly belligerent and successful National Front (NF) in 1977 led to the formation of the Anti-Nazi League, and how mass anti-fascism was regenerated in the 1970s and 80s. Drawing on the energy of the nascent punk movement, the SWP's ANL and Rock against Racism motivated and inspired a new generation of anti-fascists. However, problems of Popular Frontism and the differences over effective anti-fascism in the SWP led to the formation of Red Action (RA) and ultimately Anti-Fascist Action (AFA) who organised successful physical resistance to the NF, British Movement (BM) and the BNP (BNP) throughout the period and maintained the militant narrative into the late 1990s.

Hann's own involvement in militant anti-fascism was around Manchester. He expands on the activities of AFA's Northern Network



Above, the battle of Lewisham on 13th August 1977; below, Dave Hann.

drawing on interviews with key players, some of whom describe their gradual attraction to militant activity. Although AFA's 'set pieces' were mainly London based, as Hann points out, the mill towns of Lancashire were the scene of many skirmishes with the far right. Hann does not go into great depth on the problems within AFA's 'broad front' strategy nor does he dwell on its gradual dissolution (something which remains contentious to this day). The election of Derek Beackon as a councillor in the East End in 1993 was a shock to many anti-fascists but also a clear indication that times had changed. The BNP had been booted off the streets but now opted for electoral respectability, hoping to emulate the success of 1990s Euro-fascism such as that of Le Pen and the Front National.

Some militants claim that AFA was 'stood down' following the BNP's 'no more marches, meetings, punch-up' declaration, but in parts of the UK the struggle against the far right continued just in less dynamic shape. Local groups and individuals faced their own problems and AFA was not simply called to a halt by 'London'. What did happen was that anti-fascists were now faced with the problem of the new 'respectable' BNP and that physical resistance was not necessarily the right strategy for the present. RA formulated the Independent Working Class Association which was a route anarchists were simply not prepared to follow. This issue will no doubt continue to be disputed elsewhere.

Hann quotes activists at length, despite the fact that some contain inaccuracies, and he left no clue as to their sources for further

reading. This acceptance at face value of the testaments of others, especially their chronological errors (and some interviews lack any dates) is annoying, as is the non-existent referencing – despite an extensive biography (something which Louise Purbrick had to compile whilst editing it). There are also gaps (2003-2010), understandably so given that the book was left unfinished. In mitigation, there are lengthy excerpts from an interview with Mickey O'Farrell who had been part of the SWP squads, ANL, RA and AFA, an invaluable contribution to anti-fascist oral history which will hopefully be transcribed and archived somewhere soon with the previous interviews. Despite these quibbles the book is very readable.

Hann identifies a clear shift when racist politics began to focus on 'militant Islam', and begins to look at how the EDL rapidly expanded on the back of it which is where the book cuts off. The anti-fascist movement was hardly moving in 2009 and it took a while for the left to consolidate a response. According to Hann this was mainly led by Unite Against Fascism (UAF) until more militant activists mobilised. Again, there are some good interviews with eye witnesses who saw the EDL phenomenon happening first hand. The story ends with the EDL's Tower Hamlets debacle in 2011, which many anti-fascists will now identify as the start of the EDL's decline (along with the Blackburn schism in the same year).

Historically, anti-fascism has been most effective when employing a three-pronged approach: physical resistance, local and

THE ARTS

ABC PRISONER ART

After a debut viewing at Kebele Social Centre in Bristol, the Anarchist Black Cross Prisoner Art Exhibition in September 2012 began its UK tour, visiting 13 venues in 10 cities across England, Wales and Ireland over 11 months.

The exhibition features over 30 pieces, as well as poetry, from current and past radical prisoners including Phil Africa, Peter Collins, Lucy Edkins, David Gilbert, Alvaro Luna Hernandez Hier and Thomas Meyer-Falk.

The tour aims to show the artistic and poetic talent of those behind bars, as well as highlighting the political cases of the prisoners themselves. Additionally the exhibition features a wealth of sketches and writings from a Close Supervision Centre (CSC) prisoner, yet to be revealed.

Commenting on the art exhibition in July 2012, Ben Gunn, a recently released lifer who spent 33 years inside, said: "In attempting to see into the darkest corners of the state's activities, we are privileged to have the spotlight provided by prison artists... Struggling to obtain their bare tools for creativity they tower above their captivity to reveal their unique perspective – I hope that their art invites you to think – and be moved to *act*."

Since the beginning of the twentieth century the Anarchist Black Cross (ABC) has been on the frontline supporting and showing solidarity for those imprisoned for struggling for freedom and liberty. The organisation has by many states been deemed illegal, 'terrorist' and many members have been tortured, killed, arrested, imprisoned and fled persecution. ABC in the early years took part in the 1905 Russian Revolution (where six members were imprisoned), organised defensive units under the anarchist Black Army in Ukraine, fought against the Bolsheviks regime a decade later, and aided anarchists fleeing fascism during the Spanish Civil War and Second World War in the 1930s.

After its revival in 1967 in England to aid prisoners of the Spanish resistance, ABC eventually grew into a global network of anarchist prisoner support groups, organising international days of solidarity, letter writing nights, prison demos, financial aid for prisoners, art shows, supporting struggles inside (and on top) of the prisons, and much more.

With this tour we therefore distance ourselves from mainstream, state-funded prisoner art shows, such as the exhibition launched in London by Koestler Trust this month, campaigning instead for abolition of the prison industry and all states. Or as social prisoner John Bowden puts it: "There are frontlines of class struggle throughout the whole of society, violent interfaces where the poor and their oppressors confront each other, and prison represents one of the most overt and undisguised frontlines of class struggle that exists" (Solidarity without prejudice article, 2009).

Contributors (wishing to be listed):

- **Phil Africa** (from the MOVE family)
The MOVE 9 are innocent men and women who have been in prison since 1978 following a massive police attack on their home in Powelton Village, Philadelphia. This was seven years before the government dropped a bomb on MOVE, killing 11 people, including five babies. Following the cop shot dead during the 8th August 1978 police siege on MOVE's headquarters in West Philadelphia, MOVE members Janine, Debbie, Janet, Merle, Delbert, Mike, Phil, Eddie and Chuck Africa were convicted of third degree murder, conspiracy, and multiple counts of attempted murder and aggravated assault. Each was given a sentence of 30–100 years and are contesting both the evidence and the fairness of the MOVE 9 trial.

- **Peter Collins**
Peter is in the 29th year of a Life 25 sentence in Canada. He completed his correctional plan in 1998, and has participated in many positive and pro-social activities while inside. Peter is currently suffering from the effects of long-term incarceration, his support committee are currently campaigning to get full parole for deportation to England.

- **Lucy Edkins**
Although Lucy's experience of incarceration fades over 20 years into the past, the impact on her life still has reverberations today. Lucy went to art school before her imprisonment and continued to paint throughout her

sentence, initially swapping pictures of loved ones for tobacco and then going on to get a self-portrait accepted by the National Portrait Gallery for its 1991 Summer Exhibition. In 2004 her affinity with prisoners helped her to illustrate the harrowing report charting the human rights abuses suffered by the Tipton Three at Guantánamo Bay, capturing international attention. She subsequently illustrated reports on the SIAC detainees at Belmarsh and the forced removals of asylum seekers. Her drawings of women at HMP Holloway were used to illustrate a book on suicides in women's prisons *Dying on the Inside*. Currently Lucy exhibits and works for commission producing landscapes, sculptures and portraits.

- **David Gilbert**
David was a founding member of Columbia University Students for a Democratic Society and a member of the Weather Underground Organization. After eleven years spent underground, he was arrested with members of the Black Liberation Army and other radicals following an armored car robbery in 1981. He is currently serving 75 years-to-life.

- **Alvaro Luna Hernandez Hier**
Alvaro is a Chicano-Mexicano activist and political prisoner serving 50 years in prison for an alleged assault on an Alpine police officer. He has been long-time anti-police brutality and prison abolition activist, which has led to constant harassment by local and state police in west Texas. He was sentenced in 1997 for defending himself by disarming a police officer drawing a weapon on him (unarmed). The trial evidence clearly showed Alvaro was the victim of 'witch-hunts' and a police-orchestrated conspiracy to frame or eliminate him.

- **Thomas Meyer-Falk**
Thomas was imprisoned in 1996 for a bank robbery in aid of political projects, and since September 1998 has been in isolation in Bruchsal, Germany. He self-identifies as a 'red skin'/rash (red and anarchist skinheads).
Bristol Anarchist Black Cross

Review

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national organisation and propaganda. Each must be used as and when militants deem appropriate. Nowadays most people interact with the far right online and the outing and discrediting of an individual's fascist tendencies has replaced the more effective violent confrontations. Things have changed drastically. In an era of CCTV, DNA swabs, FIT teams and plod running round on demos with digital cameras, the militant tactics

described in Hann's book are difficult, and indeed often foolhardy, to replicate. Although fascism rarely changes its countenance, different political climates require different strategies. As a new generation of anti-fascists has emerged in response to the EDL's dramatic rise and dismal fall, it is essential that the arguments for, and history of, militant anti-fascism are made accessible and that the tradition of Cable Street, Spain,

Lewisham and AFA is continued. This book helps to do this and is a welcome addition to the small but growing number of books on anti-fascism from a militant and participant's point of view.

Malatesta

Physical Resistance: or A Hundred Years of Anti-Fascism by Dave Hann, published by Zero Books (released 25th January), £18.99.

T UK TOUR

ANARCHIST BLACK CROSS PRISONER ART EXHIBITION UK TOUR



SEPTEMBER 2012:

LONDON – *COLORAMA #2*

OCTOBER 2012:

LONDON – *FREEDOM BOOKSHOP*

NOVEMBER 2012:

CARDIFF – *RED & BLACK UMBRELLA*
(CARDIFF ABC)

DECEMBER 2012:

NOTTINGHAM – *SUMAC CENTRE*
(AUTONOMOUS NOTTINGHAM)

JANUARY 2013:

BRADFORD – *1 IN 12*

FEBRUARY 2013:

LIVERPOOL – *NEXT TO NOWHERE*

MARCH 2013:

BRIGHTON – *COWLEY* (BRIGHTON ABC)

APRIL 2013:

PLYMOUTH – *VENUE TBC*

MAY 2013:

BRISTOL – *EMPORIUM* (BRISTOL ABC)

JUNE 2013:

BELFAST – *WARZONE COLLECTIVE*

JULY 2013:

DUBLIN – *SEOMRA SPRAOI*



FOR MORE INFO OF TOUR DATES CONTACT VENUES OR GROUPS
BRISTOLABC.WORDPRESS.COM / ABCCARDIFF.WORDPRESS.COM
BRISTOL_ABC@RISEUP.NET / CARDIFF_ABC@RISEUP.NET



SPORT

Anti-semitism in Rome



Football fans attacked by fascists in Rome

Last month saw Tottenham travel to Rome to play Lazio in a Europa League group game.

As you would expect on such an occasion, the Tottenham fans that travelled spent the day before the match in the bars and cafe's of Rome, soaking up the atmosphere and culture.

During that evening a highly organised and drilled gang of around fifty thugs wearing crash helmets, and armed with bats and

knives attacked a small group of Spurs fans. Ten people required admission to the local hospital, four had 'serious' injuries, and at least one person had been stabbed. During the attack, the assailants were heard to be shouting, 'Jews, Jews, Jews...'

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THE QUIZ

1. When the Variety Artistes Federation went on strike against an attempt by musical hall owners to create a monololy and limit the freedom of performers, which musical hall star raised money and joined picket lines?
 2. The same star recognised the singer Belle Elmore trying to cross a picket line and said "Let her through girls, she'll close this music hall faster than we can". What later happened to Elmore?
 3. Can you believe a word Iain Duncan Smith says? What was his most recent outrageous lie (December 2012)?
 4. Matthew Kershaw was brought in as hatchet man to make cuts to the NHS in South London. He lectured residents about the need to stay within budgets. So how well did he do with his own £4 million budget?
- Answers on page 20

WILDCATS

