

BOOKSHOP FIREBOMBED

Despite attack, still anarchist and still standing

At around 5am on Friday 1st February, unidentified individual(s) damaged window shutters at the Freedom bookshop. They then poured in a flammable liquid and set fire to it. The fire raged through the shop, resulting in extensive damage that runs to thousands of pounds.

The majority of damage was to the books, but also included doors, fixtures, fittings and irreparable damage to the newspaper archives that go back to its inception in 1886. The damage could have been much worse, and luckily no one was injured or present in the building at the time.

In the hours, days and weeks after the attack the first question on everyone's lips is, 'who did it?' The only answer to that at the moment is that nobody knows for sure. As you would expect, there has been plenty of speculation. Some blame the far-right, some claim the involvement of the state, whilst others blame disaffected anarchists, and a handful even claim that the attack was part of an elaborate insurance scam.

Just for the record and for those who are not aware, the Freedom bookshop was not insured.

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In a tremendous show of solidarity, over a hundred people came to the shop to help with the clean-up after the fire.

CAPITALISM IS TO BLAME

The last few weeks has seen the great horsemeat scandal grow and grow. For some, the presence of horse DNA in processed beef products is shocking, for others, it is no real surprise. Rumours of meat products containing 'rogue' ingredients have been doing the rounds for decades – doner kebabs and corned beef immediately spring to mind.

The average consumer is horrified at the thought of eating horsemeat. Firstly, they assume they have purchased a beef product, and secondly, horses are not an animal normally consumed within the British culture. Food safety appears to be a secondary issue, although it is reasonable to assume that the crooks that run this scam are not likely to have adhered to basic food hygiene principles. It is also reasonable to assume that the horses have not been bred for the food chain – they

are likely to be work animals that have died through natural causes.

Media coverage of who should shoulder responsibility for this scandal is interesting, but not surprising. The blame has now been manipulated to land at the feet of the consumer – whose demand for low cost meat has led the state to turn a blind eye to the food producer's disgraceful business practices.

Low cost and poor quality food has been a feature of the British diet since the Second World War – and demand has increased over the last few years following the financial crisis. However, no consumer ever signed up to horse meat in beef lasagne, or to have chickens injected with water and beef protein. The blame squarely lies with capitalism and its state protectors.

Luther Blissett

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NEWS

FREEDOM STOCKISTS

You can now pick up your monthly copy of *Freedom* at the following venues.

LONDON

- **Freedom Bookshop**, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX, tel 020 7247 9249 email shop@freedompress.org.uk <http://www.freedompress.org.uk/>
- **56A Infoshop**, 56 Crampton Street, London SE17 3AE, email info@56a.org.uk <http://www.56a.org.uk/>
- **Housmans Bookshop**, 5 Caledonian Road, London N1 9DX, tel 020 7837 4473 email shop@housmans.com <http://www.housmans.com/>
- **London Action Resource Centre (LARC)**, 62 Fieldgate Street, London E1 1ES tel 020 7377 9088, <http://www.londonarc.org/>
- **Newham Bookshop**, 745-747 Barking Road, London E13 9ER, tel 020 8552 9993 email info@newhambooks.co.uk <http://www.newhambooks.co.uk/>

BRIGHTON

- **Cowley Club Social Centre**, 12 London Road, Brighton BN1 4JA, tel 01273 696104 email cowleyclub@riseup.net <http://cowleyclub.org.uk/>

BIRMINGHAM

- **Birmingham Bike Foundry**, 1539 Pershore Road, Stirchley, Birmingham B30 2JH, tel: 0121 459 7276, email: info@birminghambikefoundry.org <http://birminghambikefoundry.org>

BRISTOL

- **Hydra Books**, 34 Old Market, Bristol BS2 0EZ tel: 0117 3297401 email info@hydrabooks.org <http://www.hydrabooks.org/>
- **Kebele Social Centre**, 14 Robertson Road, Bristol BS5 6JY, tel 0117 9513086, email kebelesocialcentre@riseup.net <http://www.kebelecoop.org>

NOTTINGHAM

- **Sumac Centre**, 245 Gladstone Street, Nottingham NG7 6HX, tel 0115 960 8254, email sumac@veggies.org.uk <http://www.veggies.org.uk/sumac>

LIVERPOOL

- **News from Nowhere Bookshop**, 96 Bold Street, Liverpool L1 4HY, tel 0151 708 7270 email nfn@newsfromnowhere.org.uk <http://www.newsfromnowhere.org.uk/>

EDINBURGH

- **AK Press online**, AK Distribution, PO Box 12766, Edinburgh, Scotland EH8 9YE email ak@akedin.demon.co.uk <http://www.akuk.com/>
- **Autonomous Centre of Edinburgh (ACE)** 17 West Montgomery Place, Edinburgh EH7 5HA tel 0131 557 6242 email ace@autonomous.org.uk <http://www.autonomous.org.uk/>
- **Word Power Books**, 43-45 West Nicolson Street, Edinburgh EH8 9DB, tel 0131 662 9112 email books@word-power.co.uk <http://www.word-power.co.uk/>

SOUTHAMPTON

- **October Books**, 243 Portwood Road, Southampton SO17 2NG, tel 023 8058 1030 email info@octoberbooks.org

LENS CAP WOMEN'S LIBRARY OCCUPATION



Protesters were evicted from their two-day occupation of The Women's Library. They had to be dragged from the soon-to-be-closed building by bailiffs and police.

Hoovering up the anarchists

Affidavit indicates FBI targeted anarchists for being anarchists

The newest document released in the Pacific Northwest Grand Jury case reveals the federal government's criminalization of anarchists. On 30th January, a redacted affidavit was unsealed by order of Judge Richard Jones. The affidavit can be found at: <http://nopoliticalrepression.files.wordpress.com/2013/02/redacted-warrant.pdf>

Throughout the document Geoffrey Maron, an FBI Special Agent assigned to the Joint Terrorism Task Force, repeatedly refers to individuals under investigation as being "known anarchists", as if the ideology alone is evidence of a crime. Maron admits that "many anarchists are law-abiding" but continuously points to the "Oregon Conspirators" as being known as part of the anarchist community. Similarly, Maron notes that some of the Portland police had seen many of those individuals at squats in Portland – as if that had any relevance to the investigation



other than that it might corroborate that the targeted individuals are, in fact, anarchists.

Likewise, in justifying a pre-emptive investigation of the May Day protests, Maron points to an article appearing in the anarchist magazine *Tides of Flame*, quoting that writers there "urge everyone there to skip out on school and work to take to the streets". This passage indicates that, not only was the FBI monitoring the anarchist press in advance of the May Day protest, but the quote suggests that it was precisely the possibility of a popular mobilisation under the anarchist banner that prompted law enforcement attention. Elsewhere, Maron also indicates that Portland-based anarchists were personally under surveillance before the May day protests, and were followed by FBI agents when they left the city.

Furthermore, according to Maron's statement, law enforcement used information gleaned from electronic records to identify "associates and conspirators" of the anarchists under investigation. By referring to "associates" (in addition to "conspirators"), Maron as much as admits that the FBI is casting its net over the entire anarchist movement, not narrowly investigating specific illegal acts.

The text of this affidavit further strengthens the argument that the FBI is targeting anarchists for being anarchists, not for any alleged crimes.

At present, three people are in jail for refusing to collaborate with the FBI/Grand Jury witch hunt. The Committee Against Political Repression urges everyone to support Matt Duran, Kteeo Olejnik, and Maddy Pfeiffer, and to demand that US Attorney Jenny Durkan end the investigation immediately.

Committee Against Political repression



Reclaim the bedrooms

Liverpool Mutual Homes are occupied by tenants opposing the 'bedroom tax'

In early February fifty people turned out for Combat the Bedroom Tax's warning shot to the largest Housing Association in Liverpool, Liverpool Mutual Homes (LMH), who we argue are complicit in the implementation of this latest attack on the working class.

With the police already stationed across the road from LMH's head office, the demonstration, also consisting of Liverpool Against the Cuts activists, members of Solidarity Federation, Anarchist Federation and Stand Up in Bootle were content to generate interest from motorists and passers-by, informing them of what the bedroom tax is and getting them to signal their solidarity with tenants who in less than two months will be hit by a chaotic upheaval in their lives and homes.

Once the police had 'deftly' assumed nothing was going on, the call went round to occupy LMH's head office, and within minutes Combat the Bedroom Tax were chanting 'Can't Pay! Won't Pay!' to the bewilderment of LMH staff. We took a little time to explain to those staff who'd been sent out to deal with us that they'd be indirectly hit by the 'bedroom tax', but this fell on deaf ears as they spent most of their time complaining about the noise.

It was horrifying, but unsurprising, to hear the two stooges sent out to 'reason' with occupiers regurgitate the same lies and spin the government pumps out on a daily basis about the bedroom tax: how it will make space for over-crowded families (lie); how it will reduce the housing benefit bill (lie); how nobody will be evicted (lie); how they are helping tenants with the bedroom tax – lies, lies and damned lies!

LMH's chief executive Steve Coffey, who dredged up complaints to have staff sacked, was naturally out-of-the-office, but did find time to console LMH tenants on a local

radio phone-in. This is the same housing association chief exec that's proposing tenants do unpaid work, workfare, so they don't get kicked out over the bedroom tax.

According to the director of housing at LMH, Angela Forshaw, who responded to the protest: "There are many nuances to the bedroom tax that some tenants won't be aware of". Say, for example, eviction? Angela also said that they oppose the bedroom tax and have "lobbied government to re-think its policy".

If they'd seriously opposed the bedroom tax, then Combat the Bedroom Tax would not be occupying their head office. No, instead, they vainly 'lobbied' the government to have a 're-think'.

Fast forward to now, and here we have tenants having to face their housing association coming around and collecting the bedroom tax. They are complicit in its implementation and have already signalled to tenants whose side they're on. And it's not the tenants!

Liverpool Claimants Network

Bookshop firebombed

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Both overt and surreptitious attacks on Freedom Press are nothing new. The state plotted and imprisoned several members of the *Freedom* editorial group on trumped up sedition charges in 1945. In the 1960s a Freedom collective member was 'fitted up' by the police in a scandal that became known as the 'Challenor affair'. In 1993 members of the neo-nazi group, Combat 18, attacked the bookshop, smashing telephones and typesetting equipment with baseball bats, and soon afterwards the building was firebombed, causing significant damage.

The prevailing view is that this latest attack is most likely to have been carried out by individuals from one of the numerous

crackpot far-right sects.

Whoever did start the fire clearly had the intention of shutting down the bookshop and the press. Unfortunately for them, they failed! The fire has succeeded in galvanising everyone involved with Freedom Press and the wider anarchist movement in general – both in the UK and abroad.

In the two days following the attack, over 100 people went to the shop for the clean-up, and ensured that it could re-open on the Monday – albeit much scaled back.

In the days and weeks following the attack, donations and messages of support and solidarity have poured in – far too many to list. Many benefit gigs and events to raise

money for the refurbishment of the shop and stock have taken place, with more to follow. There have been CDs released, with the proceeds going to Freedom Press, as well as a poetry book and much more (see our website for details).

As well as cold hard cash, many comrades have offered practical assistance with the electrics, replacing windows and doors and with painting and decorating.

The solidarity shown by the anarchist community, as well as that from the wider 'left' has been immense and it shows exactly what can be achieved in the face of adversity.

Luther Blissett

THE BIG PICTURE



Anarchists in Kiev picketed the office of the Communist Party of Ukraine to mark the anniversary of the Kronstadt Revolt (7th to 18th March 1921).

Dissidents challenge party bosses

The Socialist Workers Party (SWP), Britain's largest remaining Trotskyist organisation, is facing the most serious internal rebellion in this history of the party. The SWP's machine minders are battling a sizeable group of dissidents now confident enough to organise openly against their rule, and the outcome of the split is far from certain.

None on the forces locked in the battle for the control of the party apparatus disagree with the essentials of the SWP's programme. This is not a conflict centred in any significant way on matters of ideology or politics, but one that pivots on the question of where authority within the party should reside. The leadership insists that their opponents are defying party procedures and fracturing unity in the process. The opposition counters that the abuse of the party rule book and the distortion of democratic centralism, by the incumbent Central Committee, is responsible for a deepening malaise within the party's ranks. Party bosses are seeking to nullify or purge the opposition; party rebels (though themselves far from united) aim to oust the officials they see as culpable.

After several months of low-level skirmishes, during which some lone critics faced expulsion for voicing their disquiet with party bosses, the conflict entered a new phase following the recent SWP's annual conference. At that gathering, oppositionists who took advantage of the long-standing agreement that temporary factions can be formed in the 'pre-conference period', rallied their forces to critique the performance of the party's leadership. Recent party history has provided critics with a lot of ammunition to hurl at party leaders.

Following the unravelling of the Respect electoral alliance; the breakaway of ex-leadership members to form the Counterfire group; and the failure of numerous political initiatives launched under the party's imprint, discontent in the party's contracting ranks has grown. Criticism in this area has focused on the party not performing its traditional Leninist tasks as well as it should. At the same time, the involvement of some SWP members in initiatives such as Occupy! has exposed the more flexible sections of the party

rank-and-file (many of them members of only a few months standing) to a milieu of activism in which Trotskyist ideas are alien. This has led some frustrated junior party activists to lobby for more libertarian and decentralised forms of organisation.

Despite this, the opposition showing at conference proved under-powered. Critics who challenged the self-perpetuating 'electoral slate' system, the absence of 'real debate', and the failure to account for the party's shortcomings attracted only modest levels of support, as the leadership successfully appealed to loyalty and discipline to win the day.

What provided an unexpected lightning rod for this dissenting minority was the leadership treatment of an allegation of sexual harassment made against a senior male party official ('Comrade Delta') by a junior female party member. Despite the seriousness of the alleged offences, SWP bosses agreed that the matter would be dealt with by an internal enquiry, and heard by a panel of officials (who included many of the accused's colleagues). The majority judgement of this investigation outraged a minority of members of the panel: 'Comrade Delta' (pictured below) was judged innocent, the matter closed, but the accused was demoted within the party for unspecified reasons.

As news of the case spread (despite the efforts of party bureaucrats to stifle discussion on Facebook and Twitter) the opposition mobilised, with the more outspoken voices declaring that the Central Committee's handling of the case proved the unfitness of the current leadership to govern. As the momentum and confidence of the opposition grew, so too did pressure for a special 'recall' conference (permitted under the party constitution) which dissidents hoped would provide a platform to challenge the central committee over a whole range of issues. Even as party bosses moved to silence and discredit their opponents, it was clear that this was a rebellion of a scale and severity not experienced before. Several long-standing party and internally respected figures (who had until now been quietly being watching events without comment) chose to publicly side

with the rebels, amplifying the scale of division, and adding credibility to the rebellion by association.

With their control of the rule-book still in place, the loyalist majority at the party centre were able to frustrate efforts to convene the recall conference, and a special hearing on the case of 'Comrade Delta' reaffirmed support for the *status quo*. Sensing that the ground was shifting beneath their feet, party leaders then offered some concessions to their opponents and recycled their appeal to focus attention on the 'more important' question of opposing the Tory-Liberal coalition government.

With the number of resignations growing (including one by a senior journalist on *Socialist Worker*) and a number of opposition groups declaring themselves as factions (such as 'In Defence of Our Party' and 'Democratic Renewal') news of the schisms within the party reached the national press. This was in large part due to the efforts of the rival *Weekly Worker* to ensure that the spat was publicised, by co-ordinating the leaking of information. What made the leadership's efforts at containment more difficult was the fact that confidential internal documents on the crisis were routinely published and picked over on left-wing blogs and web sites within hours of publication, often with their original 'not for sharing outside the party' embargo notice intact.

The fact that the schism within the party had become such public knowledge appears to have spooked the opposition and made dissidents more sensitive to the accusation that they were acting in defiance of, or even against, the interests of the party. Some chastened opponents now appear to be seeking accommodation and reconciliation with the leadership; while others continue to campaign for a new party order.

Much now centres on the outcome of the recall conference scheduled for early March. Party leaders who had opposed convening such an unprecedented gathering are now in favour because they now believe that they will carry the day, and crush the rebellion. The remaining rebels are judging how far to press their case. As every vote will be crucial, accusations of malpractice in the convening of branch meetings and in the selection of delegates are now rife.

Whatever happens, there is little prospect of the SWP emerging unscathed. Party bosses may be able to minimise losses, but the organisation will still be weakened. More serious ruptures could result in a fractured and enfeebled SWP. The unravelling of the Socialist Workers Party would mean a reconfiguration of the entire terrain of the British far left. If that were to happen it would open up new opportunities for different forces to make the case for a genuine, non-alienated and empowering form of anti-capitalist politics.



ANALYSIS

The internment without trial



Why we need to demand the release of Marian Price

Whilst at *Freedom* we do not share the politics of Marian Price, we believe that there are wider issues at stake. This is the reason why we are publishing this article.

In August around 400 people marched through Dublin to protest against the internment without trial of a 58 year old woman in ill health for over a year. Back in May her husband told the *Belfast Telegraph*: “Marian is so ill that she had to be taken to a recent visit in a wheelchair. Her hair is falling out, she has lost a lot of weight, and her arthritis has got worse. She is suffering from severe depression after a year in solitary.”

Her case could be described as an obvious stitch up except for the fact that she hasn't even been charged with any crime never mind tried – so why only 400 people taking part in a protest march? With the exception of the WSM and other anarchists the left, the far left and the radical's involved in Dublin NGO's were almost entirely absent. Despite being a very well-known republican (she received two life sentences for bombing the Old Bailey High Court in London) there were only a handful of Sinn Fein members on the demonstration.

There is no mystery behind this lack of support. One of the reasons for this is that Price is a member of what may well be the most unpopular political organisation on the island, the 32 County Sovereignty Movement, and therefore associated with the 'Real IRA'. This was the organisation that in 1998 bombed Omagh, killing 29 people and

injuring 220, as well as the shooting of two pizza delivery workers who were being used as bait to lure soldiers out of Massereene barracks in 2009. Alongside this there have been numerous bombings and attempted bombings.

The 32CSM distil some of the most reactionary aspects of Irish 'republicanism' – in particular the view that there is no need for any sort of popular base to their 'war', that the dead hand of the dead generations gives them the only mandate needed. Faced with a million northern Protestants (and a growing number of Catholics) who have no interest in unity with the south, their strategy is a campaign of bombing and assassinations that seemed aimed at deepening sectarian divisions. Alongside a bombing campaign in Britain that could easily result in large scale civilian casualties and a subsequent major retaliation by the British state in the north or against the Irish community in Britain.

All in the name of trying to provoke a resumption of a war in Ireland that no one wants whilst their former republican comrades now hold distinguished positions within the offices of the Northern Ireland devolved government. This is another fact as to why there is little or no support coming from the ranks of Sinn Fein, other than a respectable nod in favour to her release.

Add to this that one of the other prisoners interned (this time on ancient charges from 1981 attack) is the far right Catholic nationalist Gerry McGeough who used his magazine to attack “left-wing revolutionaries and anarchists” whose circles have a “strong homosexual undercurrent”. This makes the lack of opposition to internment understandable but it is still short-sighted, counter-productive and wrong. To put it

simply, we can't only oppose abuses of human rights when this happens to those we agree with.

In the aftermath of the Good Friday Agreement and the acceptance of partition by the overwhelming majority that vote represented, the Workers Solidarity Movement went through a period of debate about what that meant for anti-imperialist politics in relation to Ireland. We recognised that the agreement opened up the possibility of a reactionary end to partition. While the armed actions of the RIRA will hardly succeed, they are illustrative of that sort of possible outcome where revolutionary republicanism is replaced by sectarian head counts. But we also recognised that state repression had to continue to be opposed even where it was directed at this sort of reactionary nationalism (or indeed loyalism) writing: “We generally support all calls for public enquiries and oppose all state repression even where we disagree with the politics of those who are the victims of the repression”.

No revolutionary can allow the state to define who its enemies are and to proceed to intern them without trial. Once that practise becomes established then all of us are targets. It's worth remembering that as recently as 2004, sections of the Irish media were running articles claiming that anarchists were planning a bombing campaign and to 'Gas Bertie and 10,000 Dubliners'. Anywhere you look in the world you see that once a state is allowed to get away with this type of tactics with one group it rapidly expands them out to target others it defines as its enemy. On this basis we would urge our readers to actively oppose the internment of Marian Price and other prisoners despite the contempt you may hold for their politics.

Workers Solidarity Movement

ZAPATA OF MEXICO

by **PETER E. NEWELL**

Zapata was the leading figure of the Mexican Revolution of 1910. He fought for the rights of local communities against greedy landlords, treacherous politicians and foreign-owned companies. Under the slogan 'Land and Liberty' he became the purest embodiment of the Mexican Revolution. Zapata's memory, like his ghost, rides on in Mexico.

£9.50 from Freedom Press

Up the Anarcho-Queers

Amidst the shambles of 'gay marriage', in which LGB (excluding T for trans people, as the same sex couples bill does) activists devoted their time to pushing assimilationist shit through Parliament, queer-bashers were given an opportunity to spout hate. Defence secretary, Phillip Hammond, equated gay marriage (and thus gay relationships) with incest, and numerous politicians made reference to polygamous marriage being the next step after gay marriage. While polyamory is a valid and often fabulous form of relationship practiced by many queer people, it's clear these fuckers were implying they see gay people as sex-crazed orgy-loving fags who can't control themselves. I know *I* am, but that's not for these cockwards to say.

The assimilationist homo-fascists such as Stonewall and the Equal Love campaign, fronted by Peter Tatchell, are destroying the queer community with their hetero-normative shit. Us anarchist queers don't want marriage, we want liberation. We don't want to declare our love in the churches of sex-hating straight people, nor do we want our love approved by the state. We want the freedom to be who we are and not get beat up, spat on and shat on by strangers, pigs and our families.

More gay guys than ever are being diagnosed with HIV thanks to a lack of government funding of AIDS awareness campaigns and assimilation causing self-oppression in young queers. Trans people are beaten up, raped and exploited in prisons every day and their problems are ignored and all the while cops and squaddies march in our parades, sponsored by sweatshop-using corporations and protested by Christian nazis.

Assimilationist fucks need to wake up and smell the violence and hatred they make a platform for, and focus on the liberation of queer and trans people, not their submission to the state. Meanwhile us anarchist faggots, dykes, trans people, riot grrrls, queer POC and dirty freaks everywhere need to organise a bigger, juicier, sexier resistance – with lots of glitter.

Billy Knox



Liverpool losers

At Liverpool Magistrates on 7th February 2013, six members of the far right North West Infidels (NWI) were charged with violent disorder after allegedly attacking three anti-fascists on Bold Street who were going to a benefit gig.

The incident occurred on 6th July 2012 and the defendants were arrested later by the North West Counter-Terrorism Unit in early morning raids. The defendants did not enter pleas and the case is to be heard at Liverpool Crown Court on 21st February. One of the hapless defendants was released from jail in September 2012, arrested in October and bounced across the pavement by anti-fascists in November. Although he has a criminal past, he may well have a limited criminal future.

The NWI, a splinter faction from the English Defence League (EDL), met up in the pub at 10am before going to court. After the hearing they went on a caper about town, getting drunk and posing manfully outside a radical bookshop.

The NWI, along with other fascist and loyalist groups, have attempted to attack Irish Republican marches in the city, claiming that they are in fact IRA marches to whip up sectarian hostility. In February 2012, the NWI, along with a mixed rabble of loyalists and fascists, caught Republicans and anti-fascists on the hop and managed to successfully divert the Sean Phelan Commemoration march. In July 2012, they attempted to halt

the James Larkin TU March Against Racism and Fascism as well as an International Brigades Commemoration in October, but failed dismally on both occasions.

Although these groupuscules range from the tiny to a mere Facebook page, it is clear that they have abandoned any coherent politics or campaigning and are now embracing more violent street activity.

The NWI are anti-working class in nature and in the past have threatened pickets, trade union members and the Occupy protest, thus being the skills for the ruling class and doing their dirty work for them.

The NWI turned up at a child abuse case in Liverpool which was almost halted when one of their supporters attacked what he thought was a defendant but who was in fact a solicitor. They are very keen on highlighting these cases when it concerns 'Asian Grooming Gangs' but have been oddly silent over the half dozen sex offenders from the ranks of the far right who have been convicted recently.

The way to deal with these small but morale-boosting fascist attacks is mass mobilisation in solidarity with others facing their threats. On counter-demonstrations the mass swamping technique has proved successful in Brighton, Walthamstow and Bristol. It must be used against the EDL in Manchester on 2nd March 2013 and wherever else they show up.

Malatesta



INTERNATIONAL

NEWS IN BRIEF

GERMANY: Online retailer Amazon is facing allegations it employed neo-Nazi thugs as security guards to intimate foreign workers at its packing and distribution centres in Germany. A TV documentary claims that guards provided by HESS Security had threatened employees and been seen wearing a clothing brand associated with the far-right in Germany. A union spokesperson said staff were afraid of complaining about the situation: "They are all too frightened of being sent home without a job."

RUSSIA: A group of anarchists and community activists has been violently evicted from an occupied railway station in St Petersburg. The group had been squatting a warehouse attached to the nineteenth century station after plans were made public for it to be demolished to make way for a housing complex. Nineteen of the squatters were arrested, 16 received fines and three face court appearances. An appeal has gone out for solidarity donations to help fund legal costs. To contact the solidarity campaign, email: russiakasn@riseup.net.

SOUTH AFRICA: Witnesses due to testify at an inquiry into the massacre of 34 miners have said police have attempted to intimidate survivors. A commission is currently looking into the deaths of the miners during wildcat strike action last year. Video footage taken on a policeman's mobile phone has shown that miners were shot at point-blank range by police without provocation. The president of the South African miners' union has distanced himself from the strike saying: "We urged our members to go to work - we could not anticipate the violence".

SPAIN: In the previous issue of *Freedom* we reported that CNT and CGT members had concluded a strike and occupation at the IMESAPI lighting plant after a negotiated deal to save jobs. The workers have been out again demonstrating against the company's decision to dismiss four workers in retaliation for the industrial action. In a statement, the local CNT federation said: "A strong defence of jobs is the best way to fight unemployment in these times of attacks on the working class by the state and the employers."

USA: Joseph Ratzinger, the first pope to resign in 600 years, has been accused of crimes against humanity by a non-profit legal group based in New York. The Centre for Constitutional Rights has called for an International Criminal Court inquiry on behalf of the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP). It accuses the Catholic Church of maintaining a "long-standing and pervasive system of sexual violence" and names Ratzinger, citing his key role in overseeing cases of abuse committed by members of the clergy.

LENS CAP CAIRO



As part of a wider day of anti-government protests that saw offices and roads and occupied, Cairo's underground was disrupted by hundreds of protesters occupying the railway tracks at both Sadat station and Gamal Abdel Nasser station, both in downtown Cairo, chanting "The people demand the overthrow of the regime".

Solidarity with Egyptian comrades!

Founded on 23rd May 2011 in Cairo, in the heart of the Egyptian revolution, the Socialist Libertarian Movement was not content to effectively participate in the wave that would take away Mubarak and the government, and continued to fight and grow, refusing to leave the street and power in the hands of the Muslim Brotherhood.

On the basis of a draft of a classless society, free of state and capitalism, our Egyptian comrades took an active part in the recent demonstrations opposing president Morsi, through, *inter alia*, an Egyptian black bloc that did not hesitate to confront the police.

Several activists from The Socialist Libertarian Movement were arrested during these days of rioting and produced before the

courts. On Wednesday 23rd January, at a public meeting in Alexandria court, the police in charge of monitoring the room suddenly charged the crowd without reason (beatings and arrests). Among the 31 people arrested were four comrades of The Socialist Libertarian Movement. These comrades are Mohamed Ezzdine, Amir Asaad, Mohamed Albadri and Houssine Mohamed.

They have been accused of conspiracy for acts of vandalism, destruction of public property and the use of violence against members of the police. They are all active members of MSL and are still imprisoned, waiting for a judgment as motive that their release may cause a disturbance of public order.

French Anarchist Federation

Notes from the US

Violence

Talk of gun control is still in the air following several recent mass shootings.

A poll published jointly by ABC News and the *Washington Post* last month showed that support for gun control is growing. It found that 54% of those surveyed favour stricter gun control laws in general – that's the highest figure in five years. Even more (60%) support a ban on high-capacity ammunition clips.

Is it any surprise, though, that in December

last year a record number of background checks (often conducted before a gun is sold) were carried out? This may be seen as a likely indicator that many more people are rushing to buy weapons with stricter laws imminent. The report in question was sponsored by the weapons industry – it probably underestimated actual figures.

James Yeager is the chief executive of a company based in Tennessee which specialises in weapons training. In January he had his

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Who needs bosses?

Factory begins production under workers' self-management

Production has begun under direct workers' control at a building materials factory in Thessaloniki, Greece. The Viomihaniki Metalleutiki factory (Vio.Me. for short) was abandoned by its owners in 2011 and the workers have received no wages since then. Workers decided in a general assembly to occupy the factory to ensure no machinery was moved or stolen and ultimately to manage it themselves.

With unemployment in Greece rising to more than 25%, increasing levels of poverty and disillusionment with the political *status quo* growing, the Vio.Me. workers have been busy spreading the word of their initiative in the hope that other workplaces will follow suit. They have also appealed for financial assistance from supporters during the first few months of self-management, as production costs are high.

A statement from the factory workers said: "We urge all workers, the unemployed and all those who are affected by the crisis to stand by the workers of Vio.Me and support them in their effort to put in practice the



belief that workers can make it without bosses! We call them to participate in a nationwide Struggle and Solidarity Caravan culminating in three days of struggle in Thessaloniki. We urge them to take up the struggle and organise their own fights within their working places, with direct democratic procedures, without bureaucrats. To participate in a general political strike in

order to oust those who destroy our lives!

"Aiming to establish workers' control over factories and the whole of production and to organise the economy and society that we desire, a society without bosses!"

Mike Gonzo

To keep up-to-date with developments, visit the website of the Vio.Me. workers <http://www.viome.org/>

Ninety years of the IWA celebrated

The 90th anniversary of the International Workers' Association has been commemorated with a conference in London to look at the past, present and future of anarcho-syndicalism.

Organised by Solidarity Federation's South London local, the event was attended by around 100 people over the course of the day and was addressed by militants from

SolFed, Priama Akcia in Slovakia, and a former member of Federación Obrera Regional Argentina (who now lives in France and belongs to the French CNT-AIT).

The day after the conference, a SolFed member took a group of comrades on a working-class history tour around the East End where she had grown up.

Twitter users can find live tweets from the

conference by searching for the hashtag #iwa90.

The IWA currently has 13 sections, predominantly in Europe. All sections promote non-hierarchical revolutionary unionism and reject parliamentarism, political parties and the use of the state as a means of bringing about social revolution.

Mike Gonzo

Notes from the US

◀ page 8

gun permit revoked for a rant not unusual in such circles: "I'm telling you that if that happens, it's going to spark a civil war, and I'll be glad to fire the first shot. I'm not putting up with it. You shouldn't put up with it. And I need all you patriots to start thinking about what you're going to do, load your damn mags, make sure your rifle's clean, pack a backpack with some food in it and get ready to fight... If it goes one inch further, I'm going to start killing people."

Economy

At the end of last month a government report 'found' that its own Treasury Department

approved huge payouts for executives at corporations 'rescued' in the several recent 'bail outs' – even though there are rules limiting their salaries under such circumstances.

The Treasury acceded to all 18 of the requests it received in 2012 to increase pay for executives at American International Group, General Motors and Ally Financial.

Fourteen of those requests were for at least US\$100,000 (£64,000) – the largest was for US\$1 million. Those three companies received together some US\$250 (£160) billion in government money.

Environment

The Sierra Club is one of the USA's more vociferous but less radical environmental advocacy groups. In January it sent a somewhat unusual letter to its more than a million members. Executive director, Michael Brune, wrote: "For 120 years, we have remained committed to using every 'lawful means' to achieve our objectives. Now, for the first time in our history, we are prepared to go further... The Sierra Club will officially participate in an act of peaceful civil resistance [at the White House next month on President's Day, February 18]."

Louis Further

ECONOMICS

Frack the dash for gas



The plan for a new 'Dash for Gas' announced by the government last month has been rightly denounced as bad for the climate, economy and environment.

However there is another massive issue which no one is talking about. This is the fact that the whole idea is completely and utterly insane, when taken at face value. Of course one has to be careful about labelling an idea insane, as it may be the case that a particular action makes complete sense when viewed with someone's real motivations in mind. On the face of it this new 'Dash for Gas' has no connection to reality at all.

The first 'Dash for Gas', which occurred in the 1990s, saw over 30 GW of generating capacity constructed, pushing gas from 5% to around 30%. At the time it was criticised as squandering gas since, when used in homes, it can produce heat at close to 100% efficiency whereas huge losses are involved in converting to electricity.

Regardless of your opinion on the merits of the first 'Dash for Gas', the position that the UK is in today could not be more different than that in 1990. Back then gas prices were low, North Sea gas production was rising quickly and it was easy for the establishment of the time to delude themselves that gas would be cheap and abundant forever. However gas production in the UK sector of the North Sea predictably peaked in 2000.

Since 2003 gas production has been declining at a rate of around 7.2 bcm per year. If that rate of decline were to continue then UK North Sea gas production would fall to zero in around six years. In reality gas production is likely to tail off somewhat more gradually, but first it must drop considerably in the coming years. The US Energy Information Administration (EIA) estimates that around 315 bcm of gas remains, which would equate to seven years at current production rates. It therefore seems clear that UK North Sea gas will not be playing a major part in UK supply past the end of this decade.

On the imports front the situation is not a lot better. As gas production has declined, the UK has gone from a net exporter of gas (for a few years around peak gas production)

to importing a significant amount of gas. In eight years the UK gone from exporting gas to importing around 45% of its consumption, and this is only set to grow as production declines further.

The bulk of this imported gas comes from Norway, the Netherlands and Qatar, via liquefied natural gas (LNG) tankers. Norwegian gas production is predicted to follow the UK into decline the next decade. In fact it may have already started, with Norwegian gas production falling 4.6% between 2010 and 2011. Gas production in the Netherlands has been on a bumpy plateau for over a decade and must similarly decline at some point.

This only leaves more distant sources of imports to rely on for growth in gas imports. Here too the chances any increases look very slim. LNG imports from places like Qatar have risen quickly since they first became necessary in 2005, particularly since spot gas prices dropped following the recession. More recently however imports have nosedived this year due to competition from Asia for LNG cargoes. In October, 80% lower than the same month in 2011, and total LNG imports for the year are likely to be down 50% on 2011. Even with much higher UK gas prices the chances of LNG imports increasing are not good. The majority of LNG is traded through long-term contracts which are generally already locked up by Asian countries.

The only other potential source of gas imports is Russia, but here again the outlook is bleak. Despite a lot of talk about Russian gas, the UK does not import a great deal at present and there is little reason to believe huge increases are possible. The UK sits right at the end of a long pipeline

network stretching across Europe and is only likely to receive the leftovers at the highest prices.

When all this is stacked up against the desire of corporations and government to maintain business as usual it is not surprising that unconventional gas is seen as the only alternative. However to be a viable (if dangerous and destructive) alternative to North Sea gas, unconventional gas would actually have to be capable of significant production at affordable cost. The continued decline in UK gas production will open up a hole of several tens of bcm per year, whether any new gas-fired power stations are built or not. Imports have risen but competition with other importers seems to be limiting further increases (unless prices rise significantly). This has already opened a hole of 20 bcm a year which has been solved by gas consumption dropping 20% in the last two years. In some ways this gives the lie to the argument that we need the vast amounts of fossil fuels we use now in order to keep the lights on.

The problem is that under our present system, city fat-cats are still be able to spend tens of thousands of pounds a year keeping outdoor swimming pools heated to bath temperature through the winter while the poor are forced to turn off their heating to afford to eat. Sensible planned reduction of energy usage would run straight into these inequalities and cannot be countenanced by the establishment.

In reality, institutions pushing the fantasy that fracking can bring a return to cheap and plentiful gas may well believe their own propaganda, but it is also true that if it doesn't work out they aren't going to be the people who suffer.

Frack Off



A history of violence

Rob Ray looks into the long and winding history of Freedom's survival

As with many of our bookselling comrades in arms Freedom Press's history is littered with examples of enraged opponents trying desperately to shut down the radical voice. We've had editors arrested for sedition, we've been bombed, raided and bombed again.

The first incarnation of the bookshop to be burned down was by fascists, in an air raid on its premises at Red Lion Street during the Blitz in 1940-41.

Then in 1945, four key members of Freedom Press were bullied off the presses again, this time by British authorities following a raid on the paper's archives of *War Commentary* – the name the paper had held from 1939-45.

The government claimed they were breaching sedition laws by working “to undermine the affections of members of His Majesty's Armed Forces,” prompting writers like George Orwell and E.M. Forster to form a committee for the defence of free speech.

John Hewetson, Vernon Richards, Philip Sansom and Marie Louise Richards (better-known today as Marie Louise Berneri) went to trial and, with the exception of Berneri, were repeatedly jailed during that year as they attempted to resist Britain's “total war” footing.

The collective argued the war had reduced Britain to a state of near fascism throughout the period and that oppressive policies threatened to continue after Hitler had been vanquished. Their agitation of troops to “question authority” and “hold on to your arms” came at a difficult time for the state, which was facing rising dissatisfaction among the troops and was well aware of the potentially explosive impact of war-hardened veterans returning home with nowhere to go.

In one article from the period Sansom wrote: “Once we got inside, we found the nicks full to overflowing, not with criminals from the home front but with soldiers sentenced by military courts in France, Italy, Germany, for desertion and subsequent offences.

“Returning soldiers' tales elaborated this story of mass desertions. One ex-8th Army man told us that by the time his unit had travelled from toe to top of Italy, 80 per cent had deserted – and the remainder fell in behind a victory march of Tito's partisans in Trieste to show where their political sympathies lay.”

As the grand “social compact” was forged in the following decade however things



began to quieten down and the state largely forgot about the paper, which had begun a long period of acting as a pacifist and philosophical magazine under editor Vernon Richards.

It wouldn't be until the 1980s and '90s that the press, by this time firmly sited at 84b Whitechapel High Street in Tower Hamlets, would be targeted again.

Whitechapel at that time was on the frontline of a vicious street-level conflict between Anti-Fascist Action (AFA) and the boot-boys of the NF/BNP. Nearby Brick Lane was the scene of regular fights as both the BNP and the pacifist Anti-Nazi League attempted to run stalls, with the fascist group relying on paramilitary wannabes Combat 18 for muscle.

On 27th March 1993, the fighting spilled over into Angel Alley and the Press was raided by C18 members looking for an easy win.

The outcome was recorded in an editorial for the next issue of the paper: “You may find more literal errors than usual in this issue of *Freedom*. It was not possible to make all the proof corrections because the typesetting computer is smashed.

“Shortly after the Freedom Press Bookshop opened last Saturday, 27th March, the building was invaded by five young men wearing balaclava helmets and carrying long wooden truncheons, one with a spike. Two stayed on the ground floor. The others came up to the first floor to attack the bookshop and the Freedom Press office.

“They smashed up everything smashable: the typesetting computer (this being set on a

borrowed typesetter), the photocopier, the telephones. They knocked over the bookshelves. One display case fell on a customer in the shop, pinning her to the floor. Other people were pushed over, but no-one was hurt...

“Before they left, the attackers sprayed ‘C18’ in large letters on the wall above the office door. Combat 18 is the name of a group describing itself as a ‘fascist paramilitary organisation’.

“They left behind a bottle of petrol, which fortunately they made no attempt to explode. It was clear the attackers knew what they were doing. The operation was carried out with military precision.”

Days later, the ground floor of the building was attacked, this time with a firebomb. Significant damage was done to the main room, at that time occupied by Aldgate Press, and accounts from the time suggest it was worse than the recent blaze. The building again only narrowly escaped total destruction.

Despite an absence of social media to report on the incident, Freedom Press's predicament got a national press response and radio coverage, sparking a similar, if slower response to the show of solidarity the Press has seen in the last few weeks.

As is the case today, it was solidarity which got the Press back on its feet all those times when it looked like Freedom would go under for good. So to all those past and present who have been there for us, thank you. The greatest blow to those who have wanted us destroyed from that day to this is that we're still here. Still anarchist. Still standing.

FEATURE

If you exploit us, we will shut you

To view the Boycott Workfare campaigners as a single-issue pressure group – as their name implies – is to underestimate the diverse aims and composition of the campaign. This diversity is a direct response to the multiple ways in which workfare has penetrated the economy and collapsed long-held concepts about the role of the Welfare State.

By extending the range of the Jobseeker's Act of 1995 with the Welfare Reform Bill of 2009, the Labour government placed the notion of 'working for benefits' firmly at the centre of the welfare agenda with the introduction of the New Deal and Flexible New Deal schemes. As the so-called 'Age of Austerity' gained credence and financial rectitude became the defining element of policy-making, a consecutive series of increasingly authoritarian Statutory Instruments regulated multiple new schemes all of which were notable for reducing the possibilities for training – and often employment – while introducing harsher punitive measures against those claimants who failed to meet the criteria for participating in these schemes. As of 22nd October 2012, an unemployed claimant could be subjected to sanctions – the removal of their subsistence benefits – for a period of three years.

And all claimants are now by default 'unemployed', as those in receipt of benefits for disability and long-term sickness are processed by the workfare providers ATOS and Maximus through short interviews by staff with no healthcare qualifications back onto Jobseeker's Allowance and eligibility to return to work.

The initial trialling of Universal Credit (UC) for new claimants this April will, by 2015, extend this regime to those in receipt of 'top-up' benefits, such as Housing Benefit and Working Tax Credits, who, while in jobs, are regarded as underemployed. For the first time the self-employed, part-time and low paid workers will come under the scope of the Job Centre Plus. Currently both the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) and Policy Exchange – the think-tank behind

many of the plans to extend 'conditionality' (claimant responsibility) such as the recently accepted requirement for 35 hours of job searches a week under UC, and the now discredited 'smartcard' system of payments – are inviting selected respondents to put forward ideas on how to push these underemployed claimants towards financial independence. Key to this will be finally making the dubious Universal Job-match (UJ) 'automatic job match' service mandatory for all claimants – purely for the purposes of tracking claimants' job seeking activity, as to date there is still a huge discrepancy between the numbers of jobs posted and those in receipt of benefits. While a previous attempt to force claimants to use this system failed due to its poor security and debates as to its compliance with both the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations 2003 it should be noted that on 31st January 2013 the Information Commissioner's Office reviewed their guidelines – and their own website – to redefine the use of 'cookies' and the implied consent required to allow these tracking devices access to your PC. As the following DWP statement makes clear, in the event of UJ becoming mandatory the freedom of choice given in the e-privacy legislation is illusory.

If we now factor in some of the more commonly reported facts on workfare, such as the enforced retail placements where taxpayers are subsidising the profits of commercial enterprises (while simultaneously reducing the number of paid employees in the same businesses) or the vast sums handed out to the eighteen workfare providers in a sliding scale system which starts with a £400 fee for each claimant on their books, and then attracts further payments dependant on the difficulty of finding the individual client employment we can see just how far this self-perpetuating industry has impacted on the poorest and most vulnerable members of society.

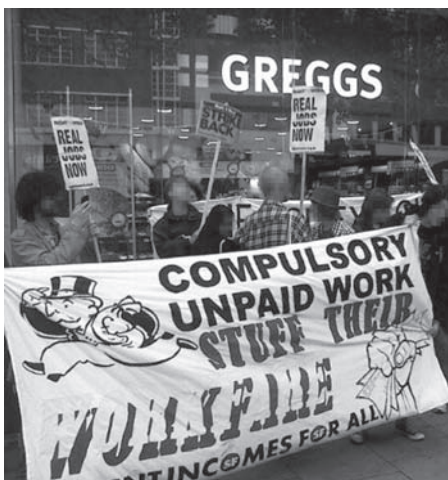
This would also go some way to explaining the extent of the celebrations after the Court of Appeal judgement in case of *Reilly-Wilson vs. The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions*.

While the claims that workfare had collapsed or was due to end were premature – particularly as the unlawful regulations didn't cover one of the most invidious and punitive schemes, Mandatory Work Activity (MWA) – there are a number of very promising outcomes from this judgement which have not yet been fully recognised.

The rush to place an appeal and to produce a new set of regulations – which were placed before Parliament within seven hours of the judgement under the negative resolution procedures which made them immediately enforceable – may have temporarily prevented the DWP from being flooded with demands



for compensation or the reinstatement of benefit from those sanctioned under the unlawful schemes, but it also threw all the existing schemes into disarray as claimants could now legally walk away from any placement until being re-assigned under the new guidance. The scheme onto which Jamieson Wilson was placed – the Community Action Programme (CAP) – has seemingly ceased to exist. This is particularly positive as it was widely believed that the CAP was to be used against those claimants who had been through a two year stint on the Work Programme without obtaining employment. PCS, the public sector union which covers the majority of DWP staff have publicly called for an end to workfare. Unions and renegade Labour MPs are uniting around John McDonnell's Early Day Motion 1072 amidst speculation that the new regulations may not be able to withstand judicial scrutiny.



You down!



Yet while all this parliamentary and judicial manoeuvring is interesting, Boycott Workfare accepts it is unlikely to produce any concrete results. MPs already know that workfare just doesn't work, as the latest Public Accounts Committee report released on 22nd February 2013 on the subject of the Work Programme shows: "...performance was so poor that it was actually worse than the Department's own expectations of the number of people who would have found work if the Programme didn't exist.

"None of the providers managed to meet their minimum targets."

Such statements are easy propaganda targets, and demonstrate that workfare is at base another primarily ideological exercise to attack the recipients of social welfare. For Boycott Workfare the two most beneficial outcomes in the wake of the Reilly-Wilson judgement have been the withdrawal of Poundland and PDSA (The People's Dispensary

for Sick Animals – to date one of the few remaining charities involved) from the Government's work experience schemes.

This is because Boycott Workfare, and those groups which run complimentary and cross-pollinating anti-workfare campaigns such as the Solidarity Federation, Disabled People Against Cuts (DPAC) and Black Triangle, are primarily direct action organisations. These differing groups encourage a plurality of approaches, and have seen Boycott Workfare develop into a flexible collective that encourages the participation of autonomous groups that take up oppositional stances against workfare. Faced with what can only be viewed as indifference to the failures of the workfare system in Parliament, it has long been recognised by campaigners that to make the system unworkable relies on shutting down both the workfare providers and those businesses and charities that offer placements under the various schemes. It is a campaign of harassment, via email, twitter, facebook and appearances in the mass media to refute the propagandists and expose the hypocrisy at the heart of workfare. It is a campaign of pickets, occupations – the odd public party such as happened in Brixton when Emma Harrison resigned from A4e in the middle of a series of fraud enquiries – and the occasional mass demonstration as on Mayday 2012. Campaigners have also introduced novel new forms of protest such as 'The Walk of Shame' (see it on YouTube) and the production of curious legal sounding documents from a variety of institutions such as the Jobseeker's Alliance and the Centre for Social Inclusion which are handed to those businesses engaged in workfare.

Most of all it is a campaign which is making a change in the public's attitude towards these vicious policies and empowering the vulnerable to refuse to engage in such irredeemable valueless 'working for benefits' schemes.

And the campaign will continue to challenge the policy-makers and all their approved agents where it matters, at the points where these schemes are foisted onto claimants every day.

Boycott Workfare



INTERVIEW

'We farm or we die, resist the iron mine'



The following is a passage from a pamphlet produced by Indonesian farmers and the 'Unrest Collective'. It looks at the on-going struggle of farmers in Indonesia against corporate mining that will devastate their land.

It comes as no surprise to almost anyone even remotely politically aware that corporations and their conglomerates are unconscionable when it comes to their end goal of making record profits. Time and again they do so at the expense of people, culture, the environment, economic stability for those not at the top of their 'food chain' and anyone or anything else that may stand in their way.

We have seen forests destroyed, the oceans slowly dying, rivers and lakes becoming dried up husks, more and more land turned into unusable wasteland all for the final and ultimate product: Power and wealth for the top few percent, starvation and repression for the rest of us.

One of the ways these corporations manage to ruthlessly pursue this heartless profiteering is by moving their operations to 'remote' locations. Corporations have been stripping the 'third world', i.e. developing countries, of their natural resources for hundreds of years. Indonesia is just one of the most recent on the list of countries being sold out from under the people by their own government to these corporations in order to make a profit.

But the local peasants and indigenous people of Indonesia are not willing to merely offer their land, livelihood and culture up for sacrifice to the CEOs. Many recognise that to lose their land now will mean to lose their culture and livelihood forever. The various ways mining corporations specifically have managed to manipulate, terrorise and forcibly take land from local and indigenous people has been silenced for too long. It's time for people the world over to know that

this isn't just about land. This is about the livelihood and culture of over 42,000 people being stolen from them. It's about forcing them into oppressive poverty. It's about exposing entire islands through the destruction caused by mining to serious and deadly 'natural' disasters. All for a (extremely large) cut of a profit.

In Kulon Progo, one of the many land bases under threat currently from mega corporation mining companies, they also stand to lose the knowledge and ability of a unique farming technique developed there 30 years ago and this environmentally friendly low-impact method of coastal farming will be all but eradicated. All of this will be erased based on an entirely illegal claim to land using repression, intimidation and clear violations of human rights.

Corporate sponsored mining has been taking advantage of the natural resources in Indonesia for many years. But it seems to be increasing its violent and aggressive methods to achieve the end goal of profit. It doesn't merely mean the absolute destruction of the environment, local landmasses and the homes of indigenous people but blatant violations of human rights.

To begin with, tens of thousands of local and indigenous people have been displaced by corporate mining in Indonesia. These people have not just lost land, but their homes, their primary food resources, their way of obtaining income and supporting their families and communities. These people are forced into an unwilling poverty and unsustainable ways of living.

As we have seen the world over, corporations will use any means necessary to achieve record profits. This has included, in Indonesia alone, extortion, bribery, intimidation, threats, torture, sabotage, kidnapping, rape, unlawful imprisonment, brute and blatant force, and in some cases suspected murder and genocide.

The extortion and bribery are supported and applauded by the government on a local and national level ranging from officials falsifying reports to police acting as hired thugs to enforce illegal claims to property rights and aiding and abetting kidnappings and unlawful imprisonments or displacements of local and indigenous people.

The intimidation, threats and fear-mongering are meted out by hired thugs (often police-escorted or by the police themselves) in order to divide and separate communities and obliterate local culture and work techniques. While due to the sheer amount of mining in Indonesia currently one may think these terrorist techniques have been successful the people continue to fight valiantly for their land and their rights.

Time and again independent studies have proven irrefutably that there is no possibility of sustainability and in some cases no hope of recuperation from such vast and rapid destruction of these resources that until only a short time ago served to provide food, shelter, work and community for hundreds of thousands of Indonesian people.

We call for the immediate cessation of such brute acts of terrorism against the Indonesian people and their precious land bases before all of Indonesia becomes a vast wasteland of factories, mines, and corporate gain.

At the start, of 2007 the shoreline residents were becoming restless about the planned mining project. This nervousness soon spread, as farmers worried about losing the land that had supported them for so long. They shared their fears from one to another and also within their farmers' groups. Finally different farmers groups from various villages along the coastal strip decided to meet and discuss the problem. So, one night in April, hundreds of farmers, delegates of their groups and villages got together to determine attitudes towards the plans. That night farmers exchanged opinions and analysed their fears about the news of the mining plan. Clear evidence of the problem this iron mine would have on their livelihood was revealed that night.

The discussion revolved around three possible approaches. Firstly, farmers could unconditionally accept the mining plan. Secondly, they could accept but with certain conditions and stipulations. Thirdly, they could unconditionally reject the proposal.

In the end it turned out that not a single individual was in favour of the first option, and not a single individual was in favour of the second option. All the farmers present that night made clear their unconditional opposition to any plan to mine iron sand from their land.

Hidup biasa

The complete pamphlet and more information can be found at the 'hidup biasa' website <http://hidupbiasa.blogspot.co.uk/2013/01/kulon-progo-farm-or-die.html>

A titanic volte-face

- Back in May last year, a group of thirty anti-fascists armed with baseball bats and hammers descended upon a restaurant in the Chicago suburb of Tinley Park where the fifth annual White Nationalist Economic Summit and Illinois White Nationalist Meet-and-Greet was taking place. The White Nationalists were targeted inside the restaurant and physically attacked, causing several injuries and completely shutting down their meeting. Five members of Hoosier Anti-Racist Movement, which is part of the Anti-Racist Action Network, were arrested and remanded on charges of felony mob action, aggravated battery and criminal damage to property.

The Tinsley Park Five, as they became known, appeared in court on 4th January and all pleaded guilty, against the advice of their lawyers, to three felony counts of armed violence each. Fearing that their pre-trial detention could drag on for years and, if found guilty, they could have received a maximum sentence of seven years, they decided to go ahead and “just get it over with today” according to one of their attorneys – receiving sentences between three and seven years.

- Long-term prison resister John Bowden is currently facing a renewed attempt by the Scottish Prison Service to find excuses for not freeing him on long overdue parole. Sentenced to life in 1982 for a senseless drunken murder, John has seen some of the worst that prison can throw at you. Yet he has survived and become a constant politicised thorn in the side of the system. An active jailhouse lawyer and prolific and articulate writer on the politics of prison, he has long been a target for the prison authorities and even managed to escape in 1992, going on the run for a year and half.

Given John's high profile resistance, one would be forgiven for thinking that the prison service would be desperate to be shot of him, but not a bit of it. Long over tariff and having gone through a host of parole applications, the Scottish Prison Service (SPS) continues to put everything it can into preventing his release. In 2007 they used a right-wing external social worker to write a hostile parole report, claiming that John associated with terrorism, namely the Anarchist Black Cross. At the same time, he had his drugs test tampered with and, fearing yet another stitch-up, he went on the run from open prison resulting in his parole being denied. Now he is up for parole yet again. Having been back in open prison for nine months, somewhere he wouldn't be if he were a threat to the public, SPS have commissioned yet another negative parole report.

Send letters/cards of support to John at: John Bowden, 6729, HMP Shotts, Cantrell Road, Shotts, Scotland, ML7 4LE.

The Tories have long wanted to close down the majority of the dilapidated Victorian goals in the prison estate but the financing of their replacements has always been the major stumbling block.

In the run-up to the last election, and seizing on the refurbishment of the long-closed Oxford prison as an up-market hotel, they thought the money for new cheaper-to-run out-of-town privately built and operated prison clusters (smaller prisons grouped together on the same site run with smaller amalgamated administrative staffs) could be financed by selling of the Victorian jails (up to 30 of them) and their highly valuable attached land for redevelopment, the ultimate in grey-field sites. Except almost all were listed buildings subject to strict planning controls on any potential development that they would accommodate and were therefore effectively unsaleable white elephants.

Back to the drawing board and the adoption of Iain Duncan Smith's Centre for Social Justice report *Locked Up Potential* on prison labour which, with an unhealthy dose of free market steroids in the shape of the payment by results model, became the new Frankenstein monster of the Rehabilitation Revolution. Except that the Tory peasants that stormed Dr Ken 'Frankenstein' Clarke's castle armed with their True Blue pitchforks in their outrage at his tinkering with the reactionary heart of Conservatism installed Chris 'Igor' Grayling in his place. And he has not wasted any time in turning things back to the true faith of Prison Works, with a new beefed up backbone of further privatisations of both the prison and the probation services.

So, in addition to his speeding up the introduction of the payment by results model across the 'Rehabilitation Revolution', the new one size fits all solution to all of the problems surrounding the provision of cheaper and supposedly more effective government

services, introduced even though the evidence from the prison and probation pilots is not yet in and that for the benefits sector shows that such schemes are next to useless, Igor has gone back to Tory basics: bang more of 'em up and for longer.

First came his erroneous announcement that prisoners will “not be automatically released after serving half their sentence”, as he bizarrely appears to believe currently happens. This would inevitably counteract the recent decrease in the prison population, the first sustained decline in two decades. Then came the recent bombshell of plans to build a new 2,000-bed prison, presumably to hold all these new 'over tariff' prisoners (joining the unsolved backlog of IPP prisoners). Slated to be built either in the London area, the North West or in North Wales, it revisits the swiftly abandoned 2007 proposals by New Labour to build a series of 2,500-bed Titan prisons, plans vehemently objected to by the Tories and virtually everybody else.

In order to finance the building of this new 'son of Titan' mega-prison (by far the largest in the country), plus the four new houseblocks (another 1,260 places) now planned for other prisons, the closure over the next few months of seven smaller dilapidated Victorian prisons (and older wings at another two other prisons) has been announced, loosing around 2,800 places but saving £63m a year for the Treasury. So, having just eased the prison population pressures, the poor old cons are going to be jammed in sardine-tight again for the foreseeable future. And give the experience of prisoners at the newly opened G4S-run 1,600 place mini-Titan HMP Oakwood near Wolverhampton (and not to mention the recently privatised HMP Birmingham), this new incredibly cheap to run 'son of Titan' prison will prove to be universally despised by those who have to do time there.



COMMENT

ABOUT FREEDOM

ANGEL ALLEY

Thanks loads to everyone who's donated books in the aftermath of the firebomb attack. We've had contributions from AK Press, Five Leaves, Zed Books, Verso and countless individuals. Come and check out the new stock.

As a result of increasing pressures on his time, our current *Freedom* editor Matt Black will be having to step back from the role as of this issue. We would like to thank him for doing some really great work over the last seven months and wish him all the best in the future.

A guest editor will be taking over the next issue and then over the next month or so we will be looking to confirm a new permanent editor (or possibly a working group) to bring in their ideas and energy for the task and make sure that the anarchist community has something that brings together the best of our thought, debate and action every month.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

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NEXT ISSUE DEADLINE

The next issue will be dated April 2013 and the last day to get copy to us for that issue will be Tuesday 12th March. You can send your articles to us by email to copy@freedompress.org.uk or by post to 'The Editors', Freedom, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX.

A sideways look

by SVARTFROSK

In 2012, six children died after a house fire in Derby. Their parents, Mick and Mairead Philpott and a friend, Paul Mosley, have been convicted of their manslaughter after they deliberately set the fire. It was reported that his motivations were to win a custody battle for a further three of his children so that he could continue to get the benefits associated with them. From this report, there was the predictable bashing of anyone and everyone needing benefits by the ruling class's useful idiots at the *Daily Mail* and the *Sun* and gleefully jumped on by Goerge Osborne as well. The conclusions drawn by the tabloid press, that Philpott's actions were what happens when you pay money to parents with lots of children, is easily knocked down. There were few similar stories about middle class doctors after Harold Shipman, or multi-millionaires after the Rausing case because people recognise that there was something unique about those people. In my view the same is true of Mick Philpott and it is something that is deliberately missed by the tabloids.

After his conviction for this crime, it was revealed that he had stabbed a former girlfriend in 1978 and also wounded her mother when she tried to help her. In 2010 he was cautioned after slapping his wife and dragging her outside by her hair. He had a history of treating women badly. He manipulated his wife and mistress so that both skivvied after him. Indeed, he was unemployed but they were not, they were working (and of course getting benefits as a subsidy to their low pay). This was not a relationship freely entered into by both women – he was in charge. And despite all the political point

scoring against the Welfare State being done around this, what marks him out is that he was a manipulative, deceitful misogynist who abused his power over women.

It is not hard to look around us and find people stuck in bad relationships, but class and gender make this something that disproportionately affect poor working class women. Low self-esteem and lack of other options mean that some people, and it is overwhelmingly women, end up in relationships where the other person abuses their power. Philpott is a textbook case, he is arrogant, egotistical and self-centred but lacks the ambition to be a CEO. Talking about the welfare system is to look at a symptom rather than the cause – a system built on exploitation and domination over women. At the root of anarchism is our opposition to hierarchy and authoritarian power.

If someone has power, what checks are there on it? Even bourgeois democracy has checks and balances built in because it recognises the threat of unconstrained power. The government will try to use Philpott as an excuse to cut back even more on benefits – they have already capped them for large families at £500 a week including housing, hitting parents who are not vicious enough to kill their children. But less money in the hands of the poor will do nothing to prevent further victims of violent, selfish controlling men. I've no magic solutions for this, but misogyny needs to be challenged wherever it raises its head and those who are working at the sharp end, in rape crisis centres or around domestic violence, need support, both practically and politically.



FEEDBACK

I was interested to read the article 'The Jewish anarchist movement' by Paul Williams (*Freedom*, December 2012). Paul is, I think, correct to give Anarchists Against the Wall in Israel a mention as the only surviving Jewish anarchist movement as such, since the ending of the Yiddish anarchist *Frei Arbeiter Shtimme*, though the influence of Jewish anarchists as individuals remains strong. From North America there are Noam Chomsky, who cut his teeth, I believe in the Yiddish anarchist movement, and Murray Bookchin, both of whom have been influential internationally. Other figures include the writer and publisher Fredy Perlman, the counterculture figure Abbie Hoffman who used Yiddish insults to attack the – also Jewish – judge in his Chicago conspiracy trial and the Earth First/IWW activist Judi Bari who was blown up by persons unknown in 1990 while involved in environmental campaigning. Further Jewish anarchist counterculture figures included the musician Tuli Kupferberg of The Fugs, also from a Yiddish speaking background. A complete list would be long.

In the UK there are few recent well-known-to-the-public Jewish anarchists (George Melly?) but older readers of *Freedom* might remember Leah Feldman. *Black Flag's* Albert Meltzer describes his own Zionist background in his autobiography. A few years ago I was at some anarchist do at Housmans which just happened to be on the first night of

Pesach/Passover, usually celebrated as a festival of liberation, when I realised that there just happened to be many Jewish anarchists at the event including Dave Morris, of McDonald's fame, and the now late John Rety as well as others I'd met through the Jewish Socialists' Group.

There is one group that is anarchic, if not anarchist, in London called Jewdas which seems to have stalled but until very recently was the centre of a modern and specifically Jewish counterculture.

I should mention, however, that the picture illustrating Paul Williams' article, of someone being arrested at the Battle of Cable Street in 1936 was of Charlie Goodman, a young Communist, who later joined the International Brigades and, post-war, became a tenants' leader in London.

Ross Bradshaw
Five Leaves Publications

Born in 1962, Liverpool anarchist and anti-fascist Keith Hodgson passed away this month at the age of 51. Keith was radicalised during the Thatcher years and had been prominent within local activism from the 1980's onwards in both the DAM and Solidarity Federation. Keith suffered a debilitating stroke several years ago which limited his activities – however he never lost his passion or drive. Keith was well liked and respected by all who knew him, and he will be sadly missed.

Luther Blissett

We are happy to announce that Sheffield's annual anarchist book fair will be back for a fourth year. Every year we have aimed to grow the event and this time we are pleased to also announce that the book fair will be in a much larger, higher profile and more central venue with better facilities for lectures, meetings and films, disabled access and childcare.

Events are being hosted over the weekend of Saturday 11th and 12th May. The book fair itself will be on Saturday 11th May between 10am and 6pm at the Showroom and Workstation, 15 Paternoster Row, Sheffield S1 2BX. The venue is a two minute walk from the train station and bus interchange. By car it can be accessed from the M1 Parkway. There is limited on-road parking on Paternoster Row and Shoreham Street but is preferable that vendors use the street spaces for loading/unloading and then use the pay-and-display at the Sheffield Hallam Students Union (The Hubs) across the street. For more directions see the website for details.

We are also taking proposals for meetings, lectures and workshops. One of the meeting rooms has the capacity to facilitate video presentations or Powerpoint slides so if this is an aspect of your proposal please submit this detail in the web form.

See the website for more details, and there's also a Facebook event page.

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

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The ravening wolves of capitalist depredation are constantly howling around Angel Alley seeking the destruction of our noble bookshop.

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GETTING ACTIVE

WHAT'S ON

MARCH

■ **2nd** The Ghent anarchist bookfair at 'De Centrale', Kraankinderstraat 2, 9000 Ghent, Belgium, from 10am until 7pm, entry free, with after-party starting at 9pm, see www.aboekenbeurs.be for details.

■ **5th and 19th** Practical Squatting Evening at LARC, 62 Fieldgate Street, London E1 1ES from 7pm to 8pm, for more see <http://www.squatter.org.uk/>

■ **5th** Radical Anthropology talks, *Community, individual and the origins of money* with Richard Seaford 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

■ **7th, 14th, 21st and 28th** 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.

■ **9th** News from Nowhere Club presents *Timeley Rhymes* with performer Racker Donnelly (see www.rackerdonnelly.com) at The Epicentre, West Street, Leytonstone E11 4LJ, buffet 7.30pm, talk starts 8pm, for details see <http://www.newsfromnowhereclub.org/> or call 0208 555 5248.

■ **12th and 26th** 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** Radical Anthropology talks, *Khoisan trickster tales (Africa, Kalahari)* 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

■ **15th** 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.

■ **15th** Benefit gig and party for Freedom at The Horse Hospital, Colonnade, London WC1N 1JD from 7pm, musicians and DJs to be confirmed and there will also be a bring-and-buy books/zines stall, for details see <https://www.facebook.com/events/274596786005307/>

■ **19th** Radical Anthropology talks, *Myth, market and media: the bauxite rich Niyamgiri in the Stock Exchange* with Samarendra Das 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

APRIL

■ **2nd and 16th** Practical Squatting Evening at LARC, 62 Fieldgate Street, London E1 1ES from 7pm to 8pm, for more see <http://www.squatter.org.uk/>



● A special 21-track album has been released to raise funds for Freedom Press Bookshop after the recent firebomb. **Demanding the Impossible** by Skribbo can be downloaded in your choice of MP3 320, FLAC, or just about any other format you could possibly desire, and includes contributions from Skribbo, Scatabrainz, Loki, DJ Sonny, Bill Breakz, OJ Loopz, Butterscotch aka the Badger Sized Rat, Konchis, The Ruby Kid, Nity Gritz, Wurrd Jenkins, The Matchstick Men, Doonhamer, Big Div, Marrik Layden Deft, Gasp, Bigg Taj, Supa Sleuth. See <http://skribbo.bandcamp.com/album/demanding-the-impossible>

● There's also a 71-track music compilation from Iron Column Records, **A New World in Our Hearts**. "This compilation is our small contribution to the rebuilding effort. All artists have given their time, energy and creations for free, and we're hugely humbled by their selflessness. It means that every penny raised here will be used directly to benefit Freedom." The compilation will be available until 1st May 2013. See <http://ironcolumnrecords.bandcamp.com/album/a-new-world-in-our-hearts>

● The Elephant & Castle area in South London, one of the last remaining central locations that is still inhabited by some less well-off communities, has seen massive changes in the past years. Pioneers of regeneration have 'discovered' the area as an 'ultra hot-spot' for investment, and the local authorities are eager to serve their needs. This leaves the diverse and organic communities around Elephant & Castle confronted with

soaring rents, demolition of social housing and displacement – in short, gentrification has kicked in.

We, a group of social centre collectives, together with many other local initiatives, refuse to accept rip-off housing and social cleansing! Instead of luxury flats and fancy office towers, we propose a radical and free space for community self-organisation!

As such, we will invite you all to our upcoming self-organised social space in the Elephant & Castle area. We aim to create a vibrant community centre which will serve the true needs of the Elephant's residents. Our space will be open to use for all groups, initiatives and individuals that seek to provide alternative services to the community (people's kitchen, clothes swap, education, music and art) or need space for projects, self-organisation and collective action. It will be open all week, to locals and Londoners and who want to pop in for a tea, discuss matters, attend our events or just have a good chat!

Come down to the Elephant and visit our space when it will open in one or two weeks. We need help with cleaning, setting up the space, putting on events! If you have donations (kitchen stuff, clothes, books, material, etc.), bring it along!

If you would like to use free and open space for your and the communities' purposes, please let us know!

Keep your eyes open and use your networks to spread the news. We will keep you updated!

Fight gentrification! Reclaim regeneration! For self-organised alternatives.

Library Street London

See <http://librastreetlondon.wordpress.com/>

The Spirit of Shankly

Britain's first football club supporters union, the Spirit of Shankly from Liverpool FC, have expressed outrage at the latest round of ticket price increases that are effectively pricing generations of young people out of football matches.

Many fans are suffering from crippling austerity measures, pay freezes and job losses, yet the owners of Liverpool FC have seen fit to increase ticket prices by 9%. This is on top of the 716% rise in prices since 1989.

These prices rises are not dissimilar to other premier league teams, yet not exactly in keeping with Lord Justice Taylor's post Hillsborough recommendation that: "It should be possible to plan a price structure which suits the cheapest seats to the pockets of those presently paying to stand".

A spokesperson from the Spirit of Shankly had this to say: "It is our belief that ticket

prices are already too high, pricing out many of those that kept the club on its feet during its darkest days. Spirit of Shankly is already working with away supporters to build a national campaign to fight for a reduced away ticket prices. We urge supporters facing these price rises to join with the club's regular away following, Spirit of Shankly and the national supporters organisations in saying 'Enough is enough' – football without fans is nothing."

Another issue that sticks in throats of working class fans is the fact that inflated ticket prices are being charged to enable mediocre players to indefinitely sit on the benches whilst being paid several million pounds each every season.

A club spokesperson responded with: "Following last year's price freeze, this year we have reviewed our overall stadium pricing structure and, similar to many other Premier

League clubs, from next season we will also be introducing a multiple-tier pricing structure which will more accurately reflect seat location and view."

It would seem that clubs will be happy to keep pushing huge annual rises on fans – and unless attendances drop then neither will the prices.

Most premier league clubs will not worry about falling attendance – if and when ordinary supporters stop going, it will then give bigger scope to corporate boxes. Twenty years ago groups of rich toffs would go to the races, formula one, or to a boxing event – now they can be seen at football stadiums around the country.

I for one hope that supporters groups from around the country throw their weight behind the 'Spirit of Shankly' campaign, and try to reclaim their clubs, and football.

Luther Blissett

Phoenix from the flames

◀ page 24

Conference League and was finally wound up by a High Court judge as the result of an unpaid tax bill.

For many football clubs, this would have been the end of the road. Chester City's fans, however, were not prepared to see their beloved club and nearly 125 years of footballing history disappear down the drain as a sad footnote in the demise of 'the beautiful game'.

Plans were already underway, led by the supporters group City Fans United, to establish a phoenix club to rise from the ashes of its defunct predecessor. On 21st May 2010, Chester FC (having dropped the word city 'City' and reverted back to its original name) took its place in the Evo-Stik Division 1 North as a supporter-owned club.

Since its rebirth, the club has gone from strength to strength, winning promotion two seasons on the bounce and regularly drawing crowds of over 1,500 on matchdays. The club also has a ladies and several youth teams. Following the recent heavy snow, scores of volunteers gathered to clear the pitch ensuring that scheduled matches could take place.


While many bemoan the gentrification of the top flight game and the obscene wage packets of players, at a grassroots level community football is alive and crying out for support.

While the city of Chester may be best known to many for its Roman heritage and as the setting for the TV series *Hollyoaks*, most of its population is largely working-

class and the city has what was one of Europe's biggest council estates (now run by a housing trust).

Chester FC is a shining example to other cities where working-class fans are being priced out of football grounds in favour of the comfortably-off 'prawn sandwich brigade'. Many fans have begun campaigning against extortionate hikes in ticket prices or have set up new clubs from scratch (such as FC United and AFC Liverpool). Yet there is a plethora of established community clubs that already provide an affordable alternative to those who genuinely love the game. It's simply a case of voting with your wallet and bidding farewell to the corporate brands of the Premier League.

Mike Gonzo

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REVIEWS

FICTION

Monday Morning

Dom walked into the office at 8.45am sharp, drawing a “Blimey!” from Paul who was sitting at the next desk.

“You’re early,” he said. Dom nodded.

“Yep, got things to do, want to chat a bit later about what’s going on?” Paul shrugged.

Part of the training Dom had done at the weekend had looked at who was most likely to help in the organising effort. Dom knew Paul was against the changes, but he also had no desire or fight to do anything about it. He would get Paul involved later.

He went over to Vik’s desk and talked to him. Vik was up for helping and suggested that training be a key demand. He also thought Sarah would help.

Dom’s next stop was the coffee machine, where he caught up with Ged and Lucy.

“We’re getting a union going for the IT section,” said Dom.

“You?” said Lucy.

“Yes, I know, it’s a bit of a change for me, but I like my job and don’t want to leave. And that means doing something about LobCo’s plans,” Dom replied.

“Okay,” said Lucy. “So what’s the plan?”

“We make some demands and back it up with action.”

“What sort of action?” asked Ged.

“Good question. What do you think would put pressure on them?”

“I dunno,” said Ged.

“Hmm, maybe we could stop using the new helpdesk system until we have had training?” suggested Lucy.

“Good idea,” replied Dom. “We’re getting together at 1pm in the cafeteria; see if you can think of any other ideas for then.”

Dom called by on Alison.

“How’s the job hunt?” he asked.

“I’m off,” she said. “Not told anyone yet, but I have something with a software company in Orpington. Don’t let on, I’m working my notice now but LobCo are so crap they haven’t told anyone and the local management don’t know.” Dom smiled and congratulated her.

Last point of call was Graciela, who usually started even later than Dom. Dom explained the union idea and told her about the meeting.

“One more thing,” he said. “Don’t tell Janet. She’ll go and tell management straight away and we’ll lose the element of surprise.”

“But she’s my friend,” said Graciela.

“I know,” said Dom, “and that’s not a problem. But we really don’t want to let on and Janet tells everyone everything, don’t you remember?”

Graciela flushed.

“Okay, I understand.”

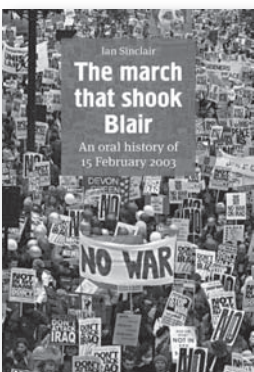
At 1.45, round a large table in the cafeteria, Dom read out his notes. “So, our demands are: 1. Consultation on all changes; 2. Full training on all new systems; 3. Introduction of flexi time; 4. Protection of pensions. Agreed?”

The others all nodded.

Martin H.

To be continued...

BOOKS



The march that shook Blair: an oral history of 15 February 2003

by Ian Sinclair
Peace News Press, £11.50

This book has been published to coincide with the tenth anniversary of the march itself, which is still the largest march ever seen in the UK. I was interested in reading it for three reasons. Firstly, I was on the march and, as my memory of the day and events leading up to it are fading, I thought it would be good to look back. Secondly, it is an oral history which I always find interesting, and thirdly the book publicity blurb suggests that the march was more successful than I recall, and that it actually came close to derailing the war itself.

The book is really well put together and includes the words of hundreds of people. I had forgotten many of names and personalities of those involved in the anti-war movement at the time, so it was a good refresher. There was perhaps too much of an emphasis on the testimony of the political establishment

and the main players in the Stop the War Coalition rather than grassroots activists, however, I suppose that is what people want to read so is to be expected.

The number of quotes from George Galloway gets tiresome, but again, his inclusion is obvious. There is one quite amusing passage from him in which he describes himself as the “biggest enemy of the SWP in the UK”, which is kind of strange when you think he jumped right into bed with them within a year of the march.

If you had been asleep for ten years and knew nothing of events, you would read the book and think that we had won and the war was stopped. One contributor states that “we came within a hair breadth of derailing the war”. I recall being quite deflated at the time because it didn’t stop the war, and nothing has really changed for me since.

The book is understandably positive about the march and the anti-war movement as a whole – but sometimes puts too much of a shine on what ultimately did not ‘stop the war’. It rightfully highlights the influence of the march going further than its immediate aims. It genuinely inspired a whole generation of activists – many of whom were radicalised at the time – and remain so today.

Overall the book is a good document of the time, the people, and events. It is well worth a read.

Luther Blissett

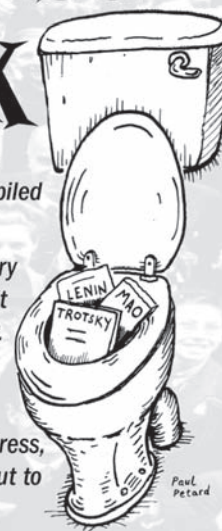
The Anarchist Quiz Book

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QUIZ ANSWERS

1. Adam Ant in ‘Ant Rap’.
2. The US asked Britain to remove the Marxist leader Cheddi Jagan, who was likely to be Guyana’s first elected leader. Democracy is all very well, as long as the

right people win.

3. He wrote “Does ‘sceptic’ mean ‘a person who has not even glanced at the data.’”
4. The Republic of San Marino, a tiny republic in Italy.

Zero Dark Thirty

Tom Jennings considers the new softcore torture porn entertaining justifications of crimes against humanity in the name of its greater good

Set against a relentless backdrop of global jihadist attacks and culminating in the assassination without trial of the alleged 9/11 mastermind in Pakistan, *Zero Dark Thirty* follows Kathryn Bigelow's directorial Oscar for *The Hurt Locker* (2009; reviewed in *Freedom*, 30th January 2010). The latter developed from journalist Mark Boal's observation of US bomb disposal personnel in Iraq, while this time the mendacious hype of documentary authenticity hinges on him stitching up accounts by intelligence staff who prosecuted the decade-long manhunt for Osama bin Laden. Faithfully rendering their assertions of the prevalence, acceptability and effectiveness of the abuse of prisoners – who are never humanised sufficiently to convey its full horror – the most enthusiastically skilled culprit is even shown rapidly ascending the CIA hierarchy. This all precipitated valuable publicity from media consternation and disclaimers among bigwigs accused of facilitating Hollywood access, but hardly elevates the finished artefact above shallow triumphalism – albeit with sufficient ambivalence and worldweary ennui to satisfy cynics. Irrespective of its integrity, the film is also superbly designed, structured, performed, edited and shot.

Resonating with a backstory of prejudice around her own mastery of cinematic machismo, Bigelow's hook to spice narrative inertia arose from discovering significant female figures in the investigation – so Jessica Chastain's single-minded sleuth neatly sidesteps distracting male narcissism and lazy expectations of empathic sociality. *Complicit* (Channel 4, 17th February 2013) deploys a comparable device in writer Guy Hibbert's avowedly fictional protagonists: a black MI5 official (played by David Oyelowo) convinced that a radical Islamist (Arsher Ali) is implicated in an imminent UK atrocity.¹ A different texture and tenor emerges from a similarly downbeat and frustrating plod, but here definitive truth as well as tidy closure are withheld. The putative plot may not even exist and, given less contextual hysteria to infect events with a false sense of insecurity, the tenuous complexity of the case exacerbated by arse-covering convolutions in the spy fraternity finally project into confrontation between hunter and quarry. The ensuing violence symbolises defeat for the former, unable to defend a freedom and democracy whose rhetoric of legality and rights is



tactically hijacked by the latter in support of religious absolutism.

The dogged determination of both secret agents entails vicious circles of inflated self-belief, self-importance, and certainty about the efficacy of their dirty work – character arcs relying on obsessively sustained, rationally flimsy and personally bleak cognitive-emotional constellations. This parallels the ideological schizophrenia displayed in alternate denial by politicians and pious pronouncements handwringing about the sad pragmatic necessity of brutality and downplaying its obscenity no matter how extensively practised. Revealingly, the unfolding crime-procedural storylines in the two films should trump hubris among the bloodhounds and their cheerleaders, since solving the puzzles requires negotiation of the Byzantine office politics and labyrinthine webs of false leads and junk data generated by the War on Terror's Kafkaesque infrastructure itself. Nonetheless, existential angst among conflicted spooks is scant consolation to those on the receiving end. Especially as the 'mission' creeps inexorably from 'asymmetric warfare' into everyday life, no suggestion of legitimacy can be innocent.

By any means unnecessary

If torturing suspects on the off-chance might conceivably yield important information, then the only practicable course is to assume that anything remotely plausible so extracted may be accurate. When few have relevant knowledge, and despite overwhelming evidence that victims confess whatever you want to hear, analysing and acting on the ensuing farrago diverts massive resources in the remote hope of worthwhile results.² Of course, even when questions of truth, justice and morality dominate PR and preoccupy loyal oppositions, the real underlying utilitarianism of the fascist paraphernalia of militarised states is to intimidate and bludgeon populations into acquiescence – and it's scarcely credible that Western foreign intelligence operatives are unaware of this, from their exhaustive colonial

experience in selecting, training, installing, bankrolling and arming dictatorships across the world (such as where 'rendition' is perpetrated). Perhaps, after the upfront malevolence of the neocons, crocodile tears pandering to liberal guilt are deemed appropriate in sweetening the bitter pill of the Obama regime's drone of business-as-usual.

After a cinematic flurry of ethical paroxysms over wars in Iraq and on terror,³ Bigelow's film thus shoehorns into resurgent patriotic identification with the US state and its leadership factions. Traducing or ignoring political movements and discourses other than the mainstream, elite and conformist, the fallacious logic of this hypocritical revisionism mirrors the 'manufacture of consent' in current affairs insisting that there is no alternative.⁴ This is most ridiculously blatant in the camp Manichean paranoia of *Homeland* (Channel 4, 2012), whose producers pioneered in *24* (2001-10) the legitimisation in television fiction of 'enhanced interrogation' and stereotyping all Arabs or Muslims as Al-Qaeda supporters. But in purportedly more thoughtful films too, like *Zero Dark Thirty* and *Complicit* as well as *Argo* (Ben Affleck, 2012), *Syriana* (Stephen Gaghan, 2005) and *The Quiet American* (Philip Noyce, 2002), undesired outcomes are attributed merely to bad executive or administrative apples or, more subtly, intrinsically impenetrable dilemmas decent middle-class protagonists can't resolve.

With systemic and deliberate institutional responsibility (as opposed to corruption and incompetence) absolved from blame, best-case scenarios are heroic gestures to salve consciences or temporary minor victories against historical juggernauts caused by evil or natural forces beyond anyone's ken. Whereas, rather than the marginally better management of crisis, a more disrespectful tradition – including *Generation Kill* (David Simon/Ed Burns, 2008), *Three Kings* (David O. Russell, 1999), and earlier subversions like *M*A*S*H* (1972-83) and *Catch-22*

THE ARTS

THE POLITICS OF M

The politics of mythogeography are all about dispersing control of the production of space. That can mean a corporeal control; just having the right to be somewhere, to have your body there without obstruction or threat, to have access to views and vistas, to choose distance and/or closeness, but also the right and power to make the meanings of space, to re-name, to define by your everyday use of space.

If everyone is to have a right to pleasure in the making of space and its meanings then in the end that is going to mean (as well as much free pleasure) the end of entrance fees, membership fees, rents, and so on. It also means that large sections of the 'entertainment industry' will be challenged by the loss of parts of their markets to the alternative attractions of free pleasures. It means a challenge to property through subjectivity.

Just as the situationists imagined putting routes across the rooftops of Paris, so we would like to see people extending a 'right to roam' that runs through GCHQ, Whitehall, through factories and foundries, through naval yards and company boardrooms: a sort of rambler's version of the old syndicalist demand to 'open the books!' In other words,



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(1970) – takes seriously ordinary folks' cynicism about the pretensions affected and illusions peddled by the powerful, and may even hesitantly invoke the spectre of organised rebellion. Meanwhile the lack of any such collective common wit and wisdom in the state's 'intelligence' services speaks volumes about the purported benevolence of governmental rationality abroad or at home – as reflected in pompous, narrow-minded mystifications from fantasy factory apologists

a massive extension of public space and an intensification of the public's presence in it.

We would also like to see large 'wild' corridors introduced with no farming or building and no domestic animals (dogs, and so on) so that people could have access to sublime landscapes again and the natural landscape could become more dangerous again.

Mythogeography's fundamental principle is multiplicity, so its primary battle is with those forces that close down meanings; that impose mono-meanings. Mythogeography makes certain assumptions about the meaningfulness of space. The dominant contemporary assumption is that the production of space is either accidental or serial, but mythogeography deploys a low-level paranoia to generate a hypersensitivity to meanings and constructions of space, to meaningful symbols and the spatial marks of organisation. It seeks to shake loose these symbols and meanings so that they can become the raw materials for a re-making of the meaning of spaces.

At a low level spaces can be re-made as acts of personal dissidence (re-imagining the significance of spaces and acting accordingly, changing everyday use of spaces, invent new rituals for old spaces, 're-opening' inscribed spaces, announcing festivals for public spaces and preparing nothing). Small groups of friends, social, family groups – the 'cells' that we already operate in – can access together the potential but rarely travelled hovering zones between what places are and what they can become. Among the places where the portals are widest are tourism spaces, heritages spaces, sports stadia and nightclubs. These can be 'stages' for out-surgent actions, creating situations of generous sociality that subvert the commercial striations of these sites – by providing covert and free guided tours, opening up back doors, parading your own artefacts outside museums, and so on.

So, this is a politics with fairly clear aspirations. It also has many tactics. But where it is weakest (and not alone) is in strategic thinking, in ways of joining the disparate tactics together. We may have speculated on the possible connecting up of small groups, of dedicated and tight associations, of the



suggestive ambiguities of tourists and terrorists, but none of these have had any resonance with the people we talk to and walk with. Instead, the best activity is happening within the structures that people already have – social and family and sexual and working relationships. Mythogeography is a politics that can be practised anywhere – overtly or covertly, for a few seconds or for a couple of weeks.

We are increasingly moving away from urging people to organise in strange 'political' ways – when the structures are already to hand, no more inscribed than other alternatives. Whatever we try, we try from within a spectacle of alienated relationships. Increasingly, we are drawn not to exo-organisation, but to a more radical subjectivity, to 'The Other Side' (in an imaginary rather than occult sense, but sensing that the distinction may simply be about different ways of getting to the same playing field), to a hypersensitivity that constructs the everyday in a way that is as yet unrecognisable for most people. Beginning with a radically divergent looking and touching and sensing – not for aesthetic purposes, but for the excavation and production of a new space through pleasure.

portraying the squirming of compromised bureaucrats and embedded functionaries that viewers are invited to identify with.

<http://libcom.org/blog/tom-jennings>

1. Peter Kosminsky previously interrogated British identity using Asian siblings divided on terrorism in Channel 4's *Britz*, and Hibbert also wrote BBC2's North of Ireland drama *Five Minutes of Heaven* (reviewed in *Freedom*, 2nd February 2008 and 9th May 2009 respectively).

2. *Complicit* hints at, while *Zero Dark Thirty* glosses over, this absurdity – which could stand as a working metaphor for statecraft in general.

3. A survey of UK and US films about the Iraq war can be found in 'The Ill-Health of the State', *Variant*, 36, 2009 (www.variant.org.uk).

4. For a recent critique of Western foreign policy along these lines, see *Why Are 'We' The Good Guys? Reclaiming Your Mind From The Delusions Of Propaganda* (Zero Books, 2011) by David Cromwell of Media Lens.

MYTHO GEOGRAPHY



STARTER KIT FIVE STEPS TO A DRIFT OR DÉRIVE

1. Knowing why

It's not a stroll in the park, but it doesn't have to be complicated. 'Drifts' are for opening up the world, clearing eyes and peeling away the layers of spectacle, deception and that strange 'hiddenness in plain sight' that coats the everyday. The disruptions that set a 'drift' or 'dérive' apart from other kinds of walk are there to shake up things (and you) so that rather than wandering ankle deep through the sediment of discarded images and illusions, you can explore the whole whirling snowglobe.

2. Knowing where

You can 'drift' anywhere. But to begin with, start somewhere you know well, next to somewhere you don't. Start in the familiar and straightway head off into the unknown. Remember, you don't have to get anywhere,

there isn't a set destination. It's all about the journey. Generally, keep out of shops, museums, art galleries. Go to places you wouldn't normally visit – courtrooms, waste tips, fairgrounds, industrial estates, morgues, stadia car parks, ornamental gardens, bad zoos. Avoid suburbia and countryside on a first 'drift'. Slip down alleys, chase any intriguing detail, follow instincts not maps.

3. Knowing me, knowing you

While 'drifting' alone is fine, start with at least one other. Above six or seven you'll probably split into smaller groups. Even if you organised the meeting place and the time and maybe a starting idea, you don't need to be in charge. Let the group develop its own instincts and make its own discoveries. Drifts do *not* have guides or leaders. Remember, your focus is on the place you're passing through, let it shift from self and others for a while – that leaves a space for 'our (dis)placed selves'. 'Drift' with friends, with friends of friends. The 'drifting group' should be a web of friendship and acquaintance. You do not need to be a history buff or an architectural boffin to make mythogeography. In fact, experts may have to be tamed (distracted, really) and prevented from turning drifts into guided tours. Any group of people will have different skills, stories and sensitivities that can be shared in teasing out the mythogeography of the journey.

4. Knowing how

You need to free yourselves from your usual walking habits. Maybe start at a time that is odd for you – 4.30am, 9.15pm, noon... Make sure you have at least half a day – the drift is not a stroll. Find a way to get you off your beaten tracks. Jump on any bus at random and get off at the seventh stop. Order a cab, close your eyes and ask the driver to drop you 'somewhere anonymous'. Start with some kind of theme – look for traces of rebellion or snuffed-out difference, for wormholes, for powerful symbols, for



voids, for where things are interwoven. If the drift diverts you onto another theme, that's fine. The drift may begin to tell a story and you can look out for things that will develop the narrative. You might set out to collect things or take things to leave as memorials or surprises or plan to seek particular types of place: the tops and bottoms of buildings, rooms without windows.

5. Knowing what

Sensible shoes, maybe – needs vary. Maybe, something to leave behind. Small torch. Some chalk. Notebook and pen. Camera. Water. Food to pass round. Something a little luxurious or unusual – a treat. Not maps usually. You'll notice what you miss the first time, so take it on the second.

Après dérive: make some memento of your drift to share with your fellow drifters or show to others. They may become your next companions.

<http://www.mythogeography.com/>



SPORT

Phoenix from the flames



From the ashes: the rise and rise of Chester FC

In 2009 things looked bleak for Chester City FC. The club, originally formed in 1885 as an amalgamation of Chester Rovers and Old King's Scholars, had been relegated to non-

league football, then handed a 10-point deduction for going into administration, which was increased to 25 points by the Conference League. The FA then revoked the club's licence to play, but after reaching an agreement to pay its creditors, Chester City were given the green light to start the season.

Within the space of three months, two managers would lose their jobs and the

hostility of Chester's fans towards club chairman Stephen Vaughan continued to grow. Match attendance at home games declined and players refused to board the team bus due to the non-payment of wages. Subsequently, the club was expelled from the
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THE QUIZ

1. Which early 1980s pop star was tired of anarchists looking at him and did not need their credibility?
2. To what was Harold MacMillan referring when he remarked on the irony of an "anti-Imperialist America" pleading with Britain to stick to "colonialism and Imperisliasm" at all costs?
3. In his book, *Sustainable Energy – without the Hot Air*, how does Professor David MacKay describe climate change sceptics?
4. Which was the first country to elect a Communist government in free elections?

Answers on page 20

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

