

FIRE-BRAND?

Celebrity comedian and womaniser Russell Brand attracts controversy with impassioned ‘anarchist’ rants

The notorious Mr Brand recently launched emphatic tirades against the government in the *New Statesman* and on *Newsnight*, revealing that he has never voted in his life. Most of us are understandably loath to trust a loaded misogynistic egotist, however enthusiastically he argues his radical credentials. However, some of Brand’s admirers are – rather inexplicably – just pleased that he has given anarchism some air time, regardless of his dodgy sexual politics, filthy lucre and frankly scary messiah complex.

In case we’d forgotten what an idiot he was, Brand even considerably began both the *New Statesman* editorial and the *Newsnight* interview by informing readers and audience that he’d taken on the task of guest editing the *New Statesman* because a ‘beautiful woman’ asked him. For those out of the celeb chatter loop (i.e. living in a sound-proof nuclear bunker), the comedian’s many and varied misogynistic misdemeanours include the infamous Sachsgate scandal, which saw **page 2 ►►**

LENS CAP CAMDEN, LONDON



On 11th November Labour-Led Camden Council passed a resolution which criminalised the playing of music in *any* public space without obtaining a licence. Under this contentious piece of legislation playing a guitar in the street for fun, even without any container for donations, has become a criminal offence punishable by a £1,000 fine, the seizure of instruments in the streets by force and the sale of those instruments to pay the fine after 28 days. Even singing in the streets is unlawful under this policy! See <http://keepstreetslive.com/>

ENERGY PRICE HIKES

Energy providers have warned that the cost of gas and electricity is expected to sky-rocket by a ridiculous 50% over the next six years. Britain’s ‘big six’ energy companies – British Gas, EDF Energy, E.ON UK, npower, Scottish Power and SSE – have already started to raise prices, just as winter sets in, with an average increase of over £100 a year.

Energy Secretary Ed Davey told audiences on *Newsnight* that even he “wear[s] a jumper at home”.

“If you insulate your home more you can turn your heating down,” he further advised. Unfortunately some providers have only completed as little as 2% of the work planned for their insulations schemes, despite the fact that a whopping half of the allotted time has already elapsed – and despite the companies insisting that it is

green initiatives forcing them to increase prices!

And for Mr Davey’s final suggestion? “Switch!” Again, helpful only if the energy providers are focused on providing a fairly priced service rather than making obscene profits. Meanwhile, the boss of Centrica, which owns British Gas, has also jumped (ouch) on the bandwagon, suggesting that people wear not one but two jumpers to keep warm.

Asked if our dear PM agreed that people could just put an extra jumper on and stop moaning, a spokesperson from Downing Street responded: “He is not going to prescribe the actions that individuals should take but if people are giving that advice that is something that people may wish to consider.”

Charlotte Dingle

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NEWS

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LENS CAP BRIGHTON



Dirk Duputell has finally been acquitted at a re-trial with 'no case to answer'. Dirk was one of three Brighton squatters arrested during a raid in September last year (pictured), days after Hove MP Mike Weatherley's anti-squatting law was introduced.

Source: *Schnews*

Fire-Brand?

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ex-*Faulty Towers* actor Andrew Sachs lewdly informed by voicemail, live on air on Radio Two, that Brand had slept with his granddaughter; an incident where he called talk show host Mika Brzezinski a 'shaft-grasper' because of the way she was holding a water bottle; and an interview in which he claimed that his "great love of proletariat linguistics" means he can't help using the words 'darling' and 'bird' to refer to women.

What, then, do we believe Brand's seeming defence of anarchism is really about – and will it do anything positive for the movement? It seems to me utterly impossible for a super-rich celebrity and relentless misogynist to be a real proponent of anarchist philosophy. He addresses the former point very briefly and nebulously in his *New Statesman* editorial, saying: "The hypocrisy – me, working for MTV with my fancy shoes – is a problem that can be taken care of incrementally. I don't mind giving up some of my baubles and balderdash for a genuinely fair system, so can we create one?." He also recalls the anger he felt at the

'moral superiority' of the left after being recognised on a demo and shouted at because he was a celebrity working for MTV.

The issue of women is addressed only insofar as he makes several references to female sexual attractiveness throughout the piece. Not content with the eye-watering offensiveness of the first line, he hits us with the not-actually-very-funny 'joke' that his motivation for going on an aid trip to Kenya was more "to impress women than to aid the suffering". He later goes on to describe ogling emaciated women with 'perpendicular pelvis[es]' on a catwalk.

One imagines him reading this piece now and accusing me of the 'fucking seriousness' which, according to him, has rendered socialism too 'exclusive' and unable to "compete with *Grand Theft Auto* and the Premier League". Mouthing off about tits and arse from your (as you put it) "velvet chaise longue in [your] Hollywood home" isn't a joke, though, Russell. If you were a real anarchist you'd know that.

Charlotte Dingle



File-sharing site closed



The Isohunt torrent website has been closed following claims of copyright infringement

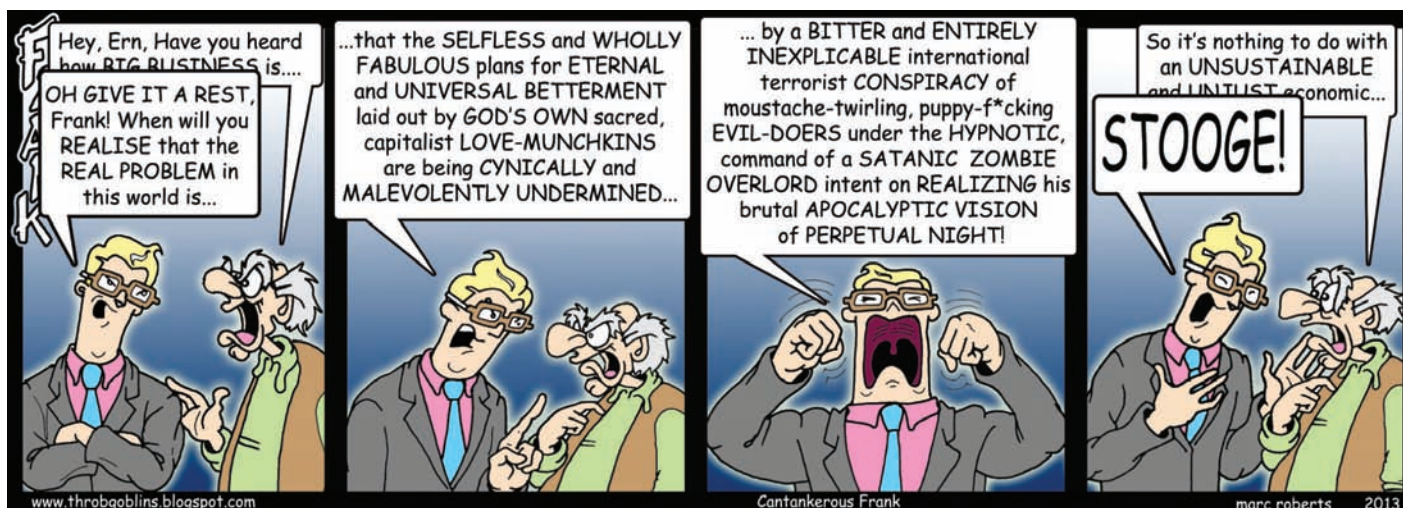
The website isohunt.com, founded in 2003, was shut down in late October, as its owner, Gary Fung, has been subjected to a copyright lawsuit by the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) over a period of seven years. The website was dedicated to providing an index of torrent files, which can be loaded into a BitTorrent client, allowing for computer files to be shared via a peer-to-peer network. It was the judgement of the court that Mr Fung owed \$110 million, however the company is likely to be able to pay no more than \$4 million. The court also issued a gag order, forbidding Mr Fung from making comments to the media, although his personal website and blog have since been updated with references to the case in the meantime.

Isohunt is another in a long line of companies providing file-sharing services that have been forced to close and/or sell their assets. Although websites have been forced to close before due to complaints of copyright infringement, in the case of isohunt.com, judges ruled that Mr Fung 'induced' illegal downloading, a claim that he rejected, since the website merely indexed information provided by its users. Isohunt was not accused of hosting copyrighted material without the permission of its owners. The judgement that the founder of the website owes damages to the clients of the MPAA based on the fact that the website describes the activities of file-sharers is analogous to the claim that a person owes damages to the proprietor of a building, after providing directions to a person who later decides to burn the building down – except that nothing of value is lost. Indeed, if information is to be commodified, file-sharing creates wealth whilst depriving the holder of the original of nothing.

Other companies responsible for creating file-sharing services in the past have been subjected to punitive measures, such as the creators of peer-to-peer clients such as Kazaa and Lime Wire. These efforts have been demonstrably fruitless – the software in each case was open-sourced, and the networks distributed, so that today, superior versions are readily available, running on the same networks, such as the Gnutella network.

In this case, other websites are accessible which provide a similar service, such as the Pirate Bay website, and in any case, the source code and other necessary information are freely available in order to permit the creation of new software and facilitating websites. The necessary hardware can be obtained from the nearest municipal dump. ISPs in the UK are required to block certain websites relating to file-sharing. Readers will find that the website piratebrowser.com is not blocked, and that this website allows access to the Pirate Bay's website. Neither is bittorrent.com blocked.

Lee Taylor



THE BIG PICTURE



Protesters surrounded the Houses of Parliament on 5th November in commemoration of the guy described as the only person who ever went in with honest intentions...

Badger, badger... badger?

Why the cull really is a black and white issue

On 23rd October, the government granted itself an eight-week extension on the Gloucestershire leg of its controversial badger cull, claiming that it had not slaughtered enough badgers to meet its targets. This is in addition to the extension of the West Somerset cull that was granted earlier in October, to last until 1st November. Tory Environment Secretary Owen Paterson had applied to the quango Natural England for the extension, complaining that in the six-week period covered by the original licence, his gun men had only been able to kill 30% of the badger population.

Advisors for DEFRA (the Department of the Environment, who counsel both minister and quango) have insisted a minimum of 70% of the badger population must be killed in target areas over the next four years in order to protect the herd from bovine TB. Yet less than half of this number have been shot in Gloucestershire and reports from Somerset say the kill rate has been as low as 23%. Paterson has accused the badgers of "moving the goal posts" by not allowing themselves to be shot easily. It seems badgers are smart enough to eat crops in preference to the bait of the cullers and move out of the area of danger. Natural England has been smart enough to say that if things get any worse all licences will be revoked. DEFRA has threatened that if numbers do not reach required quotas by the end of the extension period even more badgers will have to be slaughtered in these areas next year, while at the same time maintaining that if the trial culls are instead proven functional then the procedure will be expanded to other areas next year.

Meanwhile scientific experts in the field continue to point out a ten-year study on badger control has concluded that the cull will in all likelihood not only fail to stop the spread of bovine TB but it may actually increase it. But such warnings have fallen on deaf ears with DEFRA.



Bovine tuberculosis was formerly a serious health risk to humans via infected milk consumption, but pasteurisation subsequently removed any risk to the public. Yet since the 1960s cattle infection continued to grow unchecked with increasing loss of cattle.

The farming community, concerned about loss of revenue from the infected herds, has long lobbied the government to prevent the spread of the disease while the removal of its risk to humans has meant this has rarely been a high priority.

The disease has been known to spread from badgers to cattle since 1971 and, following unregulated hysterical attacks on the badger population by local people fearing that these wild roving animals were to blame for the spread of the disease, the Badger Protection Act was brought in, making unlicensed attacks on badgers illegal. As the infection rate increased the EU brought in strict tests on cattle for the disease,



blocking any sale from infected animals, though the tests themselves are notoriously unreliable.

The study that ran from 1997 until 2007 concluded that badgers were a major cause of the spread of the disease, yet culling was seen as doing little to prevent it, partly because the indications were that the poor quality of cattle testing and other factors indicated that infection was far more likely to be spreading from cattle to cattle. Moreover it was found that due to an effect called perturbation, reducing the badger population disrupted their territorial patterns, causing them to range more and therefore spread the disease. This initially led to the rejection of culling and a concentration on vaccine production. Ironically the government's pet vet uses the perturbation effect to argue for more killing in 'low kill' areas in order to offset it, completely misunderstanding the science and increasing the effect he says he is avoiding.



The vaccine approach has allegedly been hampered by lack of funding and the claims that vaccinated cattle can not be properly tested for bovine TB and so are excluded from the EU market by the zombifying bureaucracy of the EU. At the same time, it is often claimed that the caging and vaccination of sufficient numbers of badgers is difficult and not cost effective.

The government has so far refused to fund serious vaccine research. Worse still, the expensive trapping method involved in the 'humane killing' of badgers has been rejected on cost grounds and predominantly replaced by 'free shooting' which often causes terrible suffering to the badgers themselves, particularly given the poor training of hired 'marksmen' and the growing presence of illegal amateur shooters.

Serious studies of the losses to farmers through bovine TB compared with the losses from the funding of an ill thought out scheme and its general ineffectiveness has shown that farmers have little to gain financially from the cull and may end up losing far more.

The Badger Trust and others continue to challenge the cull in the High Court, observing that it is illegal under international conservation laws to cull if there are alternative methods of disease control available. Other groups are attempting to ban the cull on public land, a move recently undermined by the National Trust's cowardly decision to reject such a proposal. Since then calls have been made for its chair to resign as increasing numbers of angry middle class liberals cancel their membership.

Meanwhile grassroots activists continue to demonstrate against the cull and more and more direct action is occurring in the killing fields, causing the police to double their numbers on cull protection, as tension between shooters and activists increasingly flares, raising costs further and weakening other policing in the affected areas.

Steve Ash

ANALYSIS

Bad reaction

Rich Cross looks at the expansion of Britain's nuclear power programme

On 21st October, the government confirmed the long-predicted news that Britain's nuclear power programme would be entering a period of major expansion, kicked off by the building of a new pressurised water reactor at the Hinkley site on the north Somerset coast. The 3,200 mega-watt Hinkley Point C twin-reactor will be the first new nuclear plant to be built in Britain for two decades.

At any time, this would be an appalling decision, contrary to the wealth of evidence stacked up on the issues of cost, health risks, the environment, safety and sustainability. In a post-Fukushima world, increasing dependence on the nuclear generation of electricity would appear to represent the complete meltdown of reason.

As the result of a deal struck between the British government and an international consortium of companies, headed by French power supplier EDF, the enormous construction costs (estimated at around £16bn) will be outsourced to the private sector. Under the contract, EDF secured extremely lucrative terms; with the coalition guaranteeing that a future government will pay a minimum of twice the current market rate (known as the 'strike price') for every megawatt hour produced when the station comes on-stream in 2023.

Many industry analysts suggest that this figure hugely inflates the likely wholesale cost of electricity ten years from now, ensuring fat profit margins for the EDF consortia. Ministers crowed that Hinkley C would be built "without spending a pound of taxpayers' money": a ridiculous assertion given that every penny of the construction costs will be met by domestic bill-payers a decade from now. The locked-in thirty-year contract should generate the plant's owners a return of more than £80bn.

Responsibility for paying for the future decommissioning of Hinkley C has been handed to the consortium, but EDF and their partners will only have to meet what the coalition obliquely calls "a share of the costs of waste management". Dealing effectively with huge quantities of hazardous radioactive waste is a challenge which continues to elude nuclear technologists more than 50 years on from the birth of the industry. In the end, the risks and costs of all attempted 'waste solutions' will not be borne by EDF. It does appear though that the consortia are evaluating the use of the Hinkley site as a permanent large-scale nuclear waste dump; which would enable them to offer 'cut-price' rented storage on-site.

Hinkley A (an obsolete Magnox power station) was shut down in 2000, following the discovery of reactor problems which would



have been prohibitively costly to fix. Hinkley B was due to be decommissioned (at public expense) in 2016, at the end of its 40-year lifespan; until a new survey concluded that the plant could be run safely (and at profit) for a further ten years. That safety report was commissioned by the plant's current owners, EDF, but a decade's delay in dealing with the intractable headaches of decommissioning this second Hinkley plant also suits the current government's purposes.

The disaster which crippled the Fukushima nuclear plant (wrecked in the devastating tsunami which struck Japan in March 2011), further undermined public support for the 'nuclear option' right across the globe. But although interest in renewable and alternative energy sources continues to grow, the anti-nuclear lobby in the UK is weaker than it was back in the 1970s and 1980s.

The announcement of the Hinkley C go-ahead was met with a dishearteningly muted response. In the area around Hinkley Point the small but vociferous 'Stop Hinkley' pressure group has kept up a vigil of opposition to the development of the new reactor. In rallying resistance, the group has faced the acute problem of the power station's status in the local economy. Often when plans are announced to site an 'unpopular' facility near to residential areas NIMBY ('Not In My Back Yard') campaigns emerge to press for its relocation 'anywhere else'. In north Somerset, the position is more complex.

From the late 1950s onwards, the construction and expansion of the original

Hinkley site was the engine for the revival of a rural area no longer able to rely on agriculture, mining or fishing. Building power generation at Hinkley pulled in contractors, developers, engineers and construction workers, and boosted the order books of existing local suppliers and tradesmen as the population mushroomed.

Many local residents keenly support the renewed extension of the Hinkley site, not out of any particular enthusiasm for nuclear power, but from the expectation that (despite the risks) the project will bring jobs and money to an area where both are in short supply.

What has made it easier for EDF to smother the voices of the opposition is the large discretionary funds that they have been handing out in the area for several years. Cash-strapped councils have found themselves able to win funding for local projects that would be simply unaffordable otherwise. Many councillors have found such thinly-disguised bribery very difficult to resist.

At the same time, not all of the arguments put forward by the local anti-nuclear lobby deserve support. A lot of Stop Hinkley's campaign materials focus on the fact that the development will be owned by 'foreign companies' – as if it matters, in an era of transnational capital, where the headquarters of the profiteers are located. Such regressive comments undermine the case against nuclear power, by conceding the idea that 'British-owned' nuclear plants would somehow be more acceptable.

THE DEFENCE OF PRIVACY



Privacy is something intimate. To violate it even in the slightest terms is, without overstating the matter, an encroachment by a government upon the rights of the individual, not to mention the community. At this stage, a distinction may prove to be important. A clutch of rights such as privacy, freedom of speech, etc., are fundamental. The rest (such as property rights) are derivatives from these basic few. The government is charged to ensure that the proper maintenance of the former is conducted via the administering of the latter. When an authority violates this principle, for example conducting intrusive internet surveillance on a grand scale, it is obvious to anyone thinking clearly that the ends do not justify the means, regardless of what they may know about the persuasions of power. Organisations have no more rights than their members, and any attempt by them to overstep their limitations can be seen as an offence against the populace they are meant to serve.

In light of this perspective, it would seem then that the recent venting of frustrations by the heads of MI5, MI6 and GCHQ are a distraction from the original point of the hearing, namely to ascertain details and justifications about spying on the civilian populations of numerous countries. But they are more than that. By overstepping the boundaries of individual privacy, an unquestionably fundamental right, an organisation such as PRISM forfeits its rights to exist in its current form. Of course, it goes without mentioning that all associated rights, e.g. self-defence of criminal acts, are null. The defence of the conduct of GCHQ can therefore be seen as a further proliferation of wrongdoing. At the very least the supine attitude of the inquiry should be made drastically more acute in ambition, the first stage to long-lasting and effective legislation against cyber spying. But as ever, where we go from here is up to us.

Thomas Mutton

Who'll defend the League?

Len Gish on Robinson and Carroll's resignations from the EDL

The resignation of two key leaders from the English Defence League (EDL) in early October marked the latest twist in the bizarre pantomime of the boneheaded far-right street organisation. Tommy Robinson (and his nondescript sidekick Kevin Carroll) announced that they were both quitting the EDL at a surreal press conference convened by the oddball 'counter-extremism think tank' the Quilliam Foundation.

Of the group's original founders, Robinson became one of the more audible rent-a-quote minders to emerge within the EDL's ranks. His racist, bigoted soundbites have often provided the soundtrack to media footage of the latest EDL city-centre rallies.

The decision to decamp from the EDL did not reflect, Robinson explained to the assembly of journalists at the invite-only press event, any change in belief system. Walking out on his former comrades was an entirely tactical calculation about how best to serve the Islamophobic cause, he explained. He suggested that while EDL street demonstrations had served the far-right lobby in the past, these events were "no longer productive." He immediately reaffirmed "the ongoing need to counter Islamist ideology", which in future would be tackled "not with violence but with better, democratic ideas."

The mission statement of the Quilliam Foundation, an obscure lobby group formed in 2007 by three former members of pan-Islamic organisation Hizb ut-Tahrir, declares fulsome support for "liberal democratic values" and firm opposition to extreme Islamism. In

2009, the foundation was given £1m by the British government, hopeful that the group might win hearts and minds within Muslim communities in support of the state's official anti-terrorist agenda. But disappointed ministers came to realise that Quilliam's impact was negligible, and the funding was not renewed. Since then the foundation has struggled to find either leverage or profile: hence the absurd lash-up with Robinson. Taking credit for having "facilitated" Robinson's break with the EDL, the Quilliam group raised the possibility of future co-operation with Robinson and Carroll around the common cause of anti-Islamism. But the ex-EDLs 'unlikely lads' gave few hints as to their next moves.

The pair's departure has clearly astounded the EDL. The topic of succession planning has rarely drawn much attention amongst the lager-swilling louts who clamber aboard the EDL's coaches and few convincing new figures have stepped forward to take the quitters' place. Most have contended themselves with outrage, though a few have opted to issue 'death threats' against the duo for 'race betrayal' (a kind of jihad against the heretics, if you will). Robinson dismissed the attacks as the work of fringe elements beyond the EDL's ranks; effectively blaming 'outside agitators' for fomenting discontent.

Within anarchist circles, opinions have differed on whether the EDL is a serious political entity which needs to be physically confronted, or is instead little more than a flash-mob of disaffected part-time hooligans with the likely longevity (in historical terms) of a pub car-park brawl. Whatever the judgement, the EDL has clearly been wounded by the loss of two of its bosses, and is currently preoccupied by the pressing need to defend itself.



Maajid Nawaz, director and co-founder of the Quilliam Foundation, with the ex-EDL leader Tommy Robinson.

INTERNATIONAL

NEWS IN BRIEF

CAMBODIA: Protesting garment workers in Cambodia have clashed with police leaving scores injured. Workers employed at SL Garment processing – who make clothes for Nike, H&M, & Gap – marched on the Prime Minister's house, demanding better pay and working conditions. They were met by heavily armed police who were intent on violence, using live bullets and tear-gas to disperse the marchers. A woman selling rice at the side of the road was shot and killed by the indiscriminate shooting of the security forces.

COLOMBIA: Striking Nestlé worker and trade union organiser Oscar Lopez was shot four times by multiple gunmen in a local bar. 'Sinaltrainal', his trade union, had been locked in a bitter dispute with Nestlé over union recognition and report receiving several death threats via text message from a right-wing paramilitary group, 'Urabenos', the day before Lopez was murdered. The messages read: "We are going to chop you up" and "Death to all Communists".

GREECE: Greek riot police have forcibly evicted dozens of journalists from the former state television headquarters (ERT), bringing to an end a five month occupation that started after the TV station had been taken off air, and the journalists sacked. The closure had been part of a programme of public sector job cuts to meet their austerity targets. Many of the workers had stayed behind and kept the station running with an illegal news feed via the internet. Scuffles broke out between the journalists, their supporters, and the police.

INDONESIA: Three million workers across all sectors (mainly textiles) have begun a week-long strike to demand a nationwide pay rise of 50%, stricter rules on outsourcing, and universal health cover.

Indonesia's economy grew by 6% last year and the workers want a bigger piece of the pie. A group of 37 huge companies – mainly in the textile industry – have submitted a statement to the government demanding no wage increases in 2014, or they will close their factories and leave the country.

KAZAKHSTAN: A campaign to free imprisoned activists and to expose the truth about a massacre by the police has been launch in Kazakhstan.

The 'Justice for Kazakhstan oil Workers' campaign had its first meeting recently, which was attended by over 200 activists and trade unionists. They are planning a series of rallies and protests to highlight the cases of ten activists jailed following the 2011 oilfield strike which saw the police shoot over 75 people, killing 16 of them. The massacre ended a seven month strike by thousands of workers.

LENS CAP FRANCE



Leonarda Dibrani, a 15 year old school girl, was dragged off a bus during a school trip and deported back to Kosovo by French authorities. The incident led to 12,000 students on to the streets to protest in support of Leonarda Dibrani, disrupting or closing over 170 schools across Paris, Marseille, Angers and Grenoble.

Solitary for being an anarchist

A prisoner at Pontiac Correctional Centre, Mark Neiweem, has been sent into solitary confinement for possessing literature from the Anarchist Black Cross, and for writing essays on the prison industrial complex. Following a disciplinary hearing – at which he was denied a lawyer – he was given six months in solitary for possessing 'gang related material' (anarchist symbols) and for possessing 'written materials material that presents a serious threat to the safety and security of persons or the facility.

Alan Mills, Neiweem's lawyer, stated: "I have been doing this kind of work since 1979 and I cannot think of another case where someone has gotten a disciplinary report for something so obviously political as this. At no point did they even ask him, 'what is anarchism?'"

Prison authorities identified Neiweem as an anarchist have been investigating his activities for several months, even using a paid snitch who gathered information on Neiweem's plans to start an anarchist collective within the prison. Prison authorities are not claiming he has been plotting to harm the screws or other prisoners, just that his 'beliefs' are a threat.

Despite being in solitary and having to experience the usual sanctions which come with such a move – no exercise, no visitors, no mail, and no books – he has been given a cellmate (a white supremacist). Giving someone in solitary conditions a cellmate is an unprecedented move, and it is clear by the nature of the cellmate that it is just another move to antagonise and break Neiweem.

Luther Blissett

Notes from the US

Crime

Ex vice-president Cheney's former oil company, Halliburton, pleaded guilty in late September to destroying evidence after the 2010 oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. A former Halliburton manager also faces a new charge of destroying computer simulations after the blast. The fine? US\$200,000 (£125,000).

Economy

The House of Representatives has passed sweeping cuts to the nation's food stamp programme. Funding to feed the hungry will be reduced by US\$40 (£25) billion over 10 years and new work requirements will be made... Nearly four million people will now go without food stamps starting next year;

Boston bus drivers strike

School bus drivers in Boston protest union-busting

In late October over 600 school bus drivers in Boston took wildcat action, angry at the complete ineffectiveness of their trade union (USW), at the union-busting city administration, and the management style of Veolia, the private company now running the buses.

Following an unsuccessful attempt at gaining an injunction, the mayor arranged a city wide scabbing operation by the police. The predictable purge and victimisation by bosses and union bureaucrats has now begun.

The dispute has been brought to a head due to the knock on effect of the government shutdown. A dispute had been lodged with the National Labour Relations Board, but as they have not been working the dispute has not been looked at yet. The drivers decide to take matters into their own hands.

A handful of scabs entered the yard and tried to board their buses. As pickets tried to prevent them, police and USC bureaucrats intervened and enabled them to drive the buses out. A shouting match between pickets and bureaucrats ensued outside each of the four depots.

Drivers are furious that their pay is rarely ever paid correctly and can be as much as 40% down, which then takes two months to rectify (affects hundreds of drivers a week).

Veolia acknowledge that there are problems but blame the drivers for not submitting their hours in the correct manner. Other issues is the bullying by Veolia management, and the use of a GPS tracking system that was intended to be used by parents to see where their children are, but is now being



used by Veolia as a management tool to bully drivers.

Mayor Thomas Menino has stated that the action is 'illegal' under the terms of their contracts and that their behaviour will have 'consequences'. His comments have been echoed by the USW bureaucrats. One of Melino's advisors has gone on record to say that the participants in the strike are all 'immigrants' who really do not understand the issues, and have been 'hoodwinked' and 'tricked' into taking part.

The court injunction was not granted as the sitting judge agreed with the USC that the strike was the work of one 'rogue

employee' – Steven Kirschbaum. Kirschbaum and one other person have been suspended, and a further seven workers are 'under investigation'.

As the issues that led to the walkout have not been resolved, and now participants are being bullied, it is likely that further actions are on the horizon. The drivers have submitted 16 demands to the bosses. They include, resolving the pay issues, scrapping the GPS system, proper breaks and restrooms, fair benefits, withdrawal of the Veolia employee handbook, and a halt of any action against employees resulting from the wildcat action.

Luther Blissett

Notes from the US

◀ page 8

three million each year thereafter.

The partial shutdown of government in the United States that began on 1st October seems to be based entirely on dogma: the right wing (the Tea Party) of the Republican party objects to the 'socialist' tinge of ObamaCare, or the Affordable Care Act.

They needn't worry, though, as many of the most needy are already also excluded from the new law. The new healthcare law will still leave out two-thirds of the nation's poor blacks and single mothers and more than half of low-wage workers who do not have insurance without health care. For those who live in the 26 states which are controlled by Republicans Medicaid was an option, but it too has been scaled back. Indeed the necessary large-scale expansion of Medicaid has been rejected: the Supreme Court allowed states to

opt out of the Medicaid provision earlier this year. The result is that up to seven million poor and needy are now also *ineligible* for Medicaid.

Among the first things to be shut down were most provisions for the poor and needy, drug safety inspection and the work of the (admittedly largely ineffective) Environmental Protection Agency.

Racism

The NYPD's (New York Police Department) 'Demographics Unit' secretly infiltrates Muslim student groups, sends informants into mosques, eavesdrops on conversations in restaurants, barber shops and gyms, and has built a huge database of information. The CIA itself is officially barred from domestic spying. Yet it worked with the NYPD on this project. Muslim

organisations, including a dozen mosques, have been called 'terrorist groups'. Now we know the number is much higher, covering at least 50 such groups. As a result of such a classification, the NYPD can now carry out what they call 'Terrorism Enterprise Investigations'.

Since 11th September 2001, the spy program has been intrusive. And even the NYPD itself has admitted that the Demographics Unit has failed to promote a single terrorism investigation or yield a single lead. The spying included listening in on and provoking conversations by the Muslim 'targets' around the president's state of the union address, drones, foreign policy, American civil liberties. The resulting data ends up in police files because the NYPD "needs to know" how these communities are thinking.

Louis Further

ECONOMICS

Live to work

Wage slavery under the coalition government

The latest government report on low-paid work and the issue of work simply not paying must be greeted with a healthy scepticism and a historical awareness of why there will never be, and from the point of view of the capitalist economy can never be, full employment or an abundance of fulfilling occupations for the workers of the world. Scepticism because we need only examine the record of this administration alone – workfare and the cuts, as two quick examples – to anticipate that the upcoming change in the benefits system to universal credit will result in only more oppression and exploitation of the most vulnerable and economically precarious sections of society, to the benefit of the capitalist class. The government has been toying with different ways to enslave more people and chain them to an occupation – paid or unpaid, as in the Big Society – and the upcoming revamp of the benefits system is a radical threat to workers' rights that will impoverish more.

In short, benefits is a very different concept from credit. Benefits are held in trust by agencies such as the Job Centre, who are nothing more than that – agents. They facilitate the exchange of funds between benefactors and the beneficiaries – the State and the unemployed. Benefits are paid as compensation for the failure of the government to create an economy capable of adequately supporting the citizens within its borders. Though you would never guess from the superior attitude you are treated to when signing on for JSA, in this situation, legally all the rights and power are with the beneficiaries. This is a hangover from the welfare state created to appease the masses after the Second World War, whereby the socialist minded reimbursed, or bribed, those who were not provided their own source of income by the government-administered economy. The concept of credit, of a loan, is closer to borrowing from a bank, and under Universal Credit, the power and rights will lie solely with the money-lender. This is an intentionally constructed state of affairs to further diminish the scarce protections set up for the most needy in society. The government spokespeople know exactly what they are referring to when they call this the “biggest change to the benefits system since 1945”.

Historical awareness is necessary because this process – the struggle between employer/employee, capitalist/worker, top/bottom – has been ongoing since the first societies organised around a system of inherent domination. Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth century, the concept of wage slavery was widely promoted and discussed by workers as being on a par with chattel slavery, that selling one's time for the profit of another

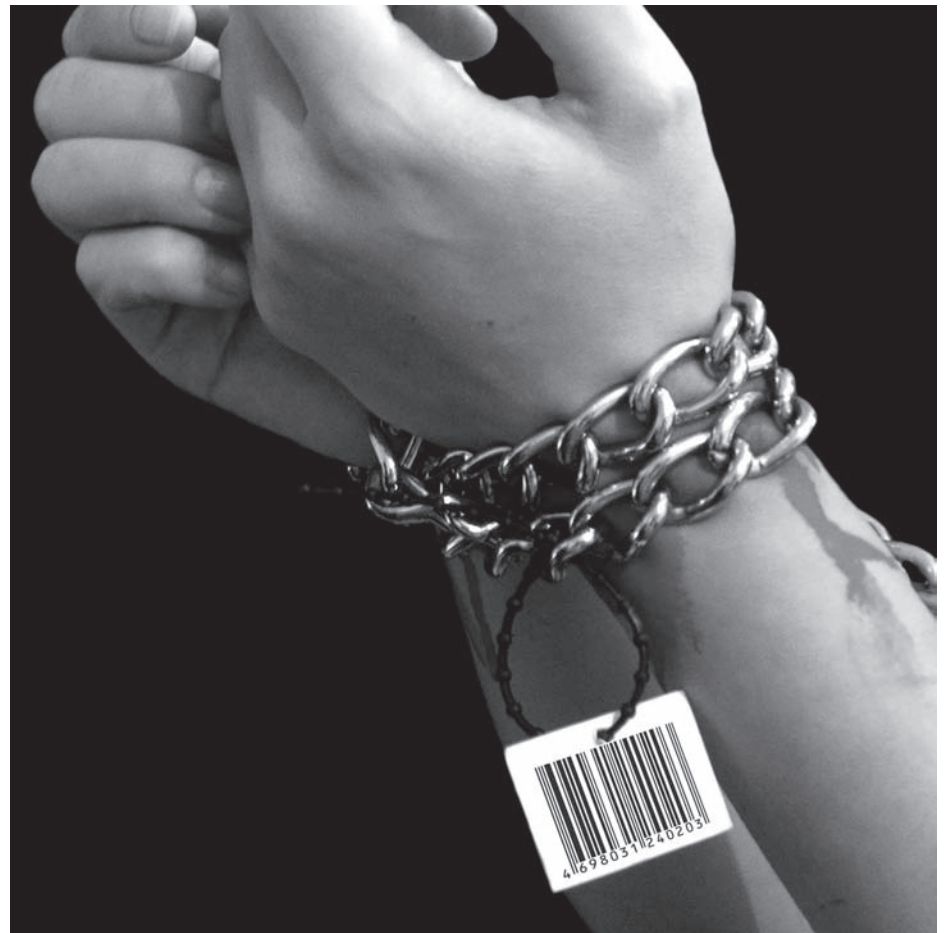
was akin to being owned by them, to being their slave. The development of wage slavery as industrialisation boomed lead directly to the development of syndicalism as worker's organised to try to improve their working conditions and rights.

The propaganda machine in service of the employing class has worked tirelessly over the last century to shatter the stigma of wage slavery and normalise the status of quasi-slavery of employment. Selling ourselves and our time to another is broadly seen as perfectly acceptable, even desirable, and above all, it is promoted as a voluntary decision. Now the government is pushing to remove this last factor, but to do it in such a way as to legitimise forced labour, reviving a class of worker within our society closer to indentured servitude. Notoriously, the syndicates and organisers of the early twentieth century collaborated with this, moving from *wage slavery* to *wage work* as they focused more on improving wages rather than taking over the means of production directly. Nowadays, people don't bat an eyelid at the idea of being employed, and the underlying attitude is highlighted in our application of the idea of being 'self-employed' as the most common alternative. 'Self-employed' is a clumsy construction, revealing conceptually how work independent of a boss is barely even expressible except in a crude referential manner.

Various grandiose bearded anarchists of times past have cogitated on wage slavery as a class condition emerging from the existence of private property and the State. Concentration of ownership and the intentional abandonment of property into disuse contribute to the blocking of access for the employees to a means of production, in combination with a constant over-supply of workers, creating a self-perpetuating system of haves and have-nots. Fear of unemployment and subsequent impoverishment and abandonment by society to destitution are motivating factors to keep people in line at work and at home, either too busy or too afraid to challenge the *status quo*. Waste, excess and even a special class of middle men and bureaucrats who suck up any surplus are all tools to keep prices high and ensure the continuation of a narrow margin of benefit for the workers.

The economy needs the excess labour of the unemployed as a threat to those already subscribed to wage slavery just as the class system needs the poor and the downtrodden as fodder for the continuation for the minority of the opulent. It is essential that a critique of work and its role in society as a system of control and domination is developed and disseminated, so that people might see how they are further being crushed through a vice of wage slavery.

Gyorgy Furiosa



¡Digan revolución!

Joe Herbert on the role of photojournalism during the Spanish civil war

Foreigners flooded to Spain during the civil war. It was mostly ordinary workers with a smattering of intellectuals and adventurers who came. Not all came to fight with rifle and bomb, however. Some came as journalists to report the truth. The new advances in photographic technology from Rolleiflex and Leica helped bring a new breed of newspaper correspondent, the photojournalist. The medium format Rolleiflex available to the public since 1929, was a twin lens reflex camera allowing portability and reliability. The 35mm Leica was even smaller. The superb quality of the lens allowed the small negative to be enlarged in the dark-room, making the tiny device a practical tool. The Leica, particularly the Leica III range introduced in 1933, became legend. Its distinctive profile is still copied today by compact digital camera manufactures.

Well-known civil war photographers include Spain's Agustí Centelles, Poland's David Seymour (Chim) and Hungary's Robert Capa and – less well-known due to their gender – Kati Horna, also Hungarian, and Gerda Taro (pictured), a German of Polish decent. Both Taro and Horna were close friends of Capa. Taro was his colleague, companion and lover during her brief photographic career. She died at the Battle of the Brunette in 1937 while still in her twenties. Capa taught her photography and dedicated the book *Death in the Making* to her. This reads: “For Gerda Taro, who spent one year at the Spanish front – and who stayed on.”

Kati Horna, born Kati Deutsch, broke new ground in the photography of conflict, documenting the effect of war on civilians. Unlike Taro, Horna survived the war and finally settled in Mexico with her partner, the Spaniard José Horna. José had been imprisoned by the Nationalists in 1938 before Kati rescued him. They then made their way to Paris, the United States and finally Mexico City. Kati Horna died in 2000 leaving a horde of photographs from the Spanish Civil War. Although she never gained the fame and notoriety enjoyed by some of her contemporaries, she was at least their equal in photographic ability. Of the photographers mentioned, three (Taro, Capa and Chim) died while covering conflicts around the world. Taro was killed at Brunette in 1937, Capa died in 1954 in French Indochina and Chim lost his life during the 1956 Suez War.

Using the camera in support of a cause for which one is sympathetic must test one's powers of impartiality. The phrase ‘The camera doesn't lie’ is one of the greatest misconceptions ever. The camera has always lied



and it is becoming easier to ‘doctor’ an image. The pressures on these photojournalists to portray ‘action’ images or images which would show the Republic in a favourable light must have been tremendous. It is now known that Capa changed the provenance of his ‘Fallen Soldier’ image. It was taken at Espejo and not Cerro Muraino as he suggested. This is not proof that it was staged but as there was no reported fighting at Espejo when Capa was there, some doubt must be cast on its validity. Who took which picture is also in dispute, particularly between Capa, Chim and Taro as they worked together on occasions and I would imagine shared equipment. One picture attributed to Taro taken on board the warship Jaime I in Almería harbour, appears to show herself in the shot. There is never ending debate regarding authenticity.

Centelles's images show the bitter street fighting, mourning mothers and wives as they weep uncontrollable over the corpses of their loved ones. Perhaps his most poignant images are those of shuffling masses of refugees heading north across the Pyrenees and into internment in France. Frail women consoling frightened children in the hastily erected French camps. Uncertainty and fear all too evident on their young faces. David Seymour (Chim) specialised in photographing children. He photographed the orphaned and the injured. Images of children with missing limbs playing football on crutches, trying desperately to regain normality by performing a familiar task. One of his images simply shows two Republican militiamen gently carrying a heavy crucifix to safety. The impact of this photograph in the propaganda war was immense.

Capa reacted with people, if ever there was a person who possessed the ‘common touch’ it was he. His images are well known and moving. At Montblanch in October 1938 he captured the faces of the parading soldiers. The pride and resignation as they said goodbye to the International Brigades. One can see the fate of the Republic in the eyes of these men. Their gratitude to the departing columns and the belief in their now almost certainly lost cause. It is arguable a masterpiece of photojournalism. Taro, who fell somewhat under the shadow of Capa, made some moving images of the refugees from Málaga as they tried to find safety in Almería. Of the children once more, the innocents who suffered so badly. Left to her own devices she tended to be more openly political. She covered conferences and meetings, helping the propaganda machine of the Republic. Horna was overtly political and much involved with the anarchist cause. Her images depict those behind the lines. The agrarian struggle which was a major cause of the war, threshing grain and ploughing amidst the uncertainty of war. The backbreaking toil with antiquated and inefficient tools. Her work above all others echoed many of the causes which led to war.

Photojournalism is still an extremely dangerous and necessary job. We have seen a new wave of development in photography: long focus fast lenses, digital cameras and sophisticated editing software. These are simply tools, however. We still need the courage, compassion and dedication of individuals to produce moving and thought provoking images.

FEATURE

SEX IS NOT THE EN

Gyorgy Furiosa on the lads' mag and page three debate

As the news cabaret wheel out their paltry tit-for-tat arguments about lads' mags and the page three campaign, it's important to throw in a perspective on sexuality and pornography from outside the limited constraints of the mainstream media, lest we all be convinced that the spectrum of argument is so narrow as to really be a cause to celebrate increasing media regulation and the death of the euphemistically monikered 'free press'.

Enter the loveable Euro-trash at Fuck For Forest (FFF) – an erotic, non-profit ecological organisation. A force for fornicative change in the world: ethical pornographers who use the money they earn for the support of ecological and green causes. Now with over 1,300 sex-activists uploading their home-made skin flicks and cam-whore snaps on to the website, FFF and friends are shagging themselves into a greener future. The organisation was the subject of an eponymous documentary which they have subsequently derided by claiming "the movie is a lie".

Even more fascinating than the delightfully amateurish sex-tapes and naturalistic photos is the rhetoric splashed across their propaganda, pimping a sex-positive message with irony and tongue firmly in butt cheek. Example quote: "When did a tit ever hurt anyone?" The idea of normalising public nudity and sexual activity in solo, couple or group formations with a grungy hipster chic is achingly Berlin. Which is, incidentally, where the group is now based after some legal trouble in Norway. The real appeal, however, is in the forthright brazenness of their attitude and philosophy – one which has a deep streak of anarchism running through it.

Their website highlights how sex is used daily to attract us to all kinds of products,

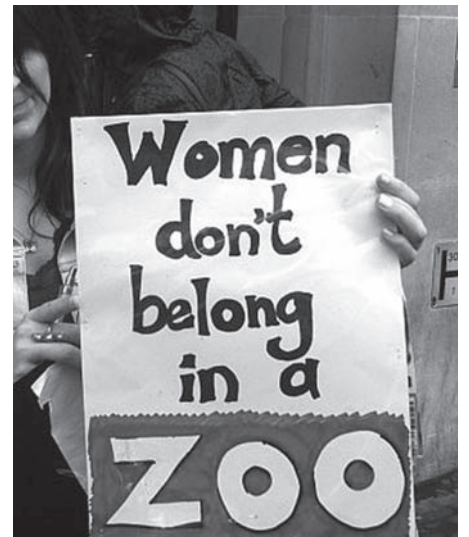
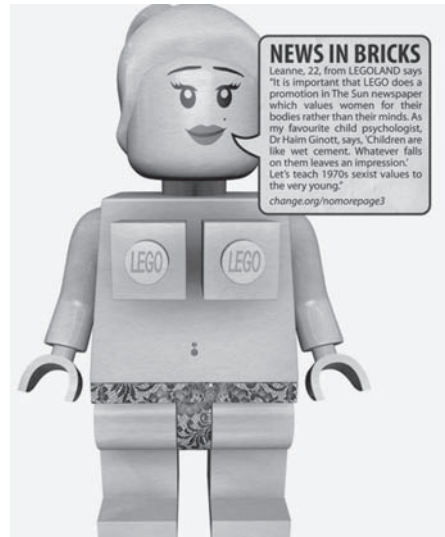
and how the libidinal urge is constantly subverted in modern society to manipulate people's desires – so why not use the same tactics to generate money for an ethical cause? Their 'Love Manifesto' asks the pertinent question: "What is moral when we do not respect nature? War and nature destruction is normalized, while public love-making and nudity is offensive and criminalized." Most recently they donated 12,000 Euros to a Slovakian charity for the protection of forests. Their donations have been refused by the WWF in Holland and Norway because they are "an industry they don't accept money from".

Russian activist 'sextremists' FEMEN similarly employ nudity as a shock tactic to upset the status quo and reclaim women's bodies from the patriarchy – a tactic of empowerment rather than shame. Most recently they are campaigning in Sweden for the "You don't buy, I don't sell" legislative model which criminalises the people who pay for sexual services rather than the workers who provide them, and they have organised a training centre for budding sextremists in Paris. They can be considered a more radical progression of the 'slutwalk' flashmobbing and marching that became popular several years ago. Other actions they have been involved in have been the storming of a catwalk in Paris during fashion week, resulting in one activist taking a punch from a model, and founder Anna Hutsol is militantly anti-prostitution. FEMEN explained its methodology of topless protesting by saying: "This is the only way to be heard in this country. If we staged simple protests with banners, then our claims would not have been noticed." The group claims 150,000 members in countries ranging from its country of origin in Ukraine to Spain and across South America.

The above examples are both the use of sex and nudity for political reasons, however, for the majority involved in the industry, it



comes down to a matter of money and survival, much the same as for most people's jobs. Ex-porn star Sasha Grey has talked about her teenage career (she started at 18), and highlights the cultural hypocrisy of hyper-sexualised advertising and media combined with a regressive and near Victorian attitude towards female sexuality: "We still don't know how to be confident sexually without feeling like we're going to be labelled a slut or a whore. We're given so much conflicting



NEMY



information – we want you to look this way and act like a slut or look like a slut but you can't be a slut." Most recently it's difficult to watch Miley Cyrus 'twerking' on-stage and think that a double-standard is being touted by the media. Campaigns against lads' mags and the like are surely only serving to promote a social schizophrenia when daily we are bombarded from all sides by hyper-sexual imagery on billboards and in newspaper and magazine representation of women.

Nickie Roberts, author of *Whores In History*, is a former sex-worker who has written extensively on the subject, in particular on the 'whore-stigma'. She identifies the transition from matriarchy to patriarchy as the defining moment when women's sexuality became a tool for control. Prior to patriarchy, women were free to make their own sexual choices, and whore-priestesses were revered in tribal societies for their connection with fertility, renewal, and using their sexual energy to channel creativity into the material world. When this was shattered with the rise of male-dominated societies around 2000 BC, she reports that the whore-priestesses were cast down, and female sexuality made subservient to male. She highlights through history how women are kept divided from one another, and therefore in a weakened position, which makes the contemporary memes of anarchy-feminism and female

empowerment all the more vital in effecting social change within patriarchy and, most recently, capitalism.

Roberts succinctly expresses a hypocritical distinction between sexual exploitation and other forms in the following quote: "As far as I'm concerned, working in crummy factories for disgusting pay was the most exploitative work I ever did in my life. I'm aware that, in a sense, it was Hobson's choice for me. But I maintain that I had more control over my life as a worker in the sex industry than as one as a worker in an ordinary factory."

The key difference between sex work and other forms of work is that one is done with your clothes on and for the other it is not necessarily required. With such a view, notions of morality should not enter into the equation. This is not to say that women's liberation and the premise of equality should be allowed to be co-opted by cynical marketing managers. This was the case during the height of the Suffragette movement. At the turn of the century, advertising executives led by public relations founding father Edward Bernays organised women to march up and down Fifth Avenue in New York smoking 'Liberty Torches' to promote the idea that females smoking cigarettes was an act of emancipation. This was merely a tool to double the market for cigarettes by challenging the stigma of

women smoking, and highlights the danger of denigrating any movement that genuinely tries to challenge systemic forms of domination. The campaign against lads' mags and Page 3 girls should bear this in mind, that what is really the problem is an exploitative social system that takes advantage of men and women who are really only looking for a way to survive and prosper, irregardless of the manner in which they choose, or are coerced, to do so.

Harnessing the power of free love and sexuality is a weapon against control. We must flip the perspective so that it is not our bodies that are considered degraded by public nudity and erotic activity, but in fact the rape and destruction of our environment and our planet, the systemic manipulation and control of women by men, and the institutional exploitation of capitalism, that is the real cause for outrage and indignation. It comes across as a very direct 'fuck you' to those who would use shame, fear and control to dominate others through that most potent of personal powers – our sexuality.

As the mainstream sallies forth to debate whether young women exposing their breasts in magazines for the masturbatory titillation of the masses is unacceptable, cheeky or just plain raunchy, we have to remember that it is a voluntary choice of those individuals, and done in exchange for money. Therefore, it is on a par with all forms of exploitative manipulation, such as jobs and reading newspapers. The current debate is a spunky whitewash, and clouds the very real fact that really, flashing a nipple does not matter one iota when placed against the ongoing apocalyptic destruction of our climate or the hegemonic oppression of half the world because of their private parts. When Sharon from Epping Forest pops out her bountiful pontoons for some greasy paper, it's far more worrying that she is quoted as saying: "Climate change is of course a concern, but I trust the government will sort it out."



PRISON NEWS

OBITUARY: HERMAN WALLACE

A tribute to the Angola Three member, who tragically died three days after his release from prison

Following the news that Herman Wallace had finally gained his freedom on 1st October and that he might be able to get some much needed medical treatment and be able to live out his final days in relative freedom and comfort, the sight of him barely able to speak whilst laying on an ambulance trolley came as a shock.

This was compounded by the news that Louisiana state authorities had convened a grand jury in order to indict him on murder charges two days later. Fortunately Herman never found out about the indictment as friends and family kept the news from him. Sadly, the following day – nine days before his 72nd birthday – he died in his sleep from complications associated with liver cancer whilst in his friend Ashley Wennerstrom's house, where he had been staying following his release. "He didn't say a lot. He was exhausted," said Ms Wennerstrom. "We told him he was free. He nodded and he knew."

Herman, or 'Hooks' as he was known to family and friends, was the fourth of eight children whose mother, Edna Clark Williams, ironically worked in the Orleans Parish Prison.

Like many black teenagers, he had a number of minor run-ins with the police and ended up in prison for the first time in 1967 aged 25. However, in 1971 he was sentenced to 50-year in prison for armed robbery and ended up in Louisiana State Penitentiary. This is the largest maximum-security prison in the United States, and is more widely known as Angola after the name of one of the four slave plantations that had previously occupied the site.



Three-quarters of Angola's prisoners are black and 97% are doomed to die there without chance of release. On this 18,000-acre prison farm, they still harvest cotton, corn and wheat today for between four and twenty cents an hour under the watchful eye of armed guards on horseback.

Back in the early 1970s, the conditions were even worse. The mainly black prison population worked a 16-hour day guarded by an all-white guard force and administration with the small number of white prisoners also acting as armed trustees.

In addition to the widespread brutality and use of segregation, and the almost total lack of medical care, there operated a gruesome system of sexual slavery, where new prisoners were openly bought and sold, fully sanctioned and facilitated by the guards.

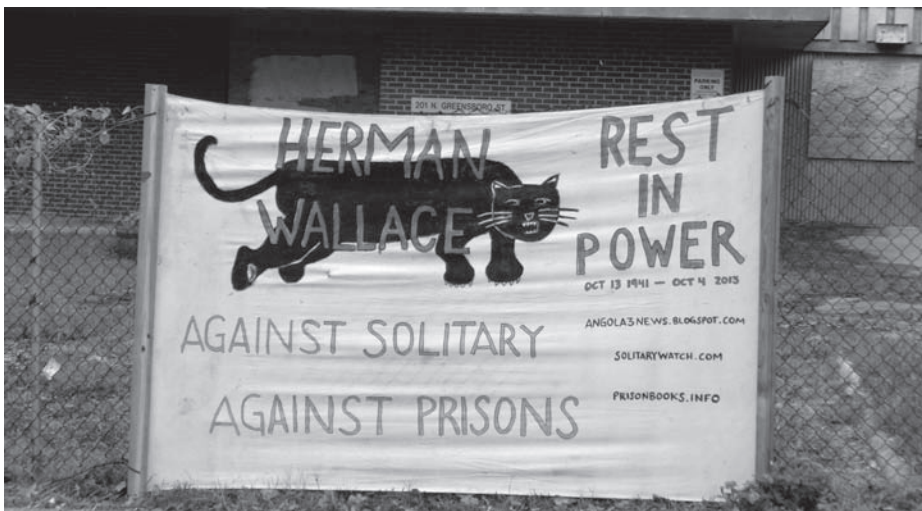
This was the environment Herman Wallace and his fellow prisoner Albert Woodfox, also imprisoned on a separate armed robbery sentence, were confronted with in 1971. Though neither had previously

been politically active, they decided to try and form a Black Panther Party (BPP) chapter in Angola and began organising non-violent hunger and work strikes and sit-ins in a campaign for desegregation in the prison and better conditions, and against rape and violence. When, in April 1972, a 23-year-old prison guard Brent Miller was stabbed to death during a riot at Angola, the prison administration seized their chance to silence these dangerous radicals and put an end to the burgeoning solidarity and resistance amongst Angola's prisoners.

Despite neither being anywhere near the scene of the riot and death, Herman and Albert, together with a third prisoner, were charged with Miller's murder.

At the time of the killing, Herman had been working in the licence plate factory and would have had to pass through numerous locked and guarded gates. In addition, 'witnesses' at their trial stated that he was covered in blood following the stabbing, yet as he had passed each gate and was given a thorough pat-down at the end of his shift, no security guard ever testified to seeing any blood on him. In fact, there was no evidence against him except the tainted statements of bribed 'witnesses', one of whom was legally blind and another, 67-year-old serial rapist and 'star' witness Hezekiah Brown, was later shown to have given his statement in return for the promise of a pardon, a packet of cigarettes a week and a house of his own in the prison grounds complete with television for the remains of his sentence.

The key evidence of a bloody fingerprint found at the scene, which did not fit any of the four defendants, was quickly 'lost' and the statements of unpaid eyewitnesses putting Herman and Albert elsewhere during the killing counted for nothing. Prison authorities even tried to link Robert King, who had already been involved in the BPP and had



AN WALLACE

arrived in Angola shortly after Miller's death, to the killing, such was their desire to try and put an end to the Black Panthers organising in their fiefdom.

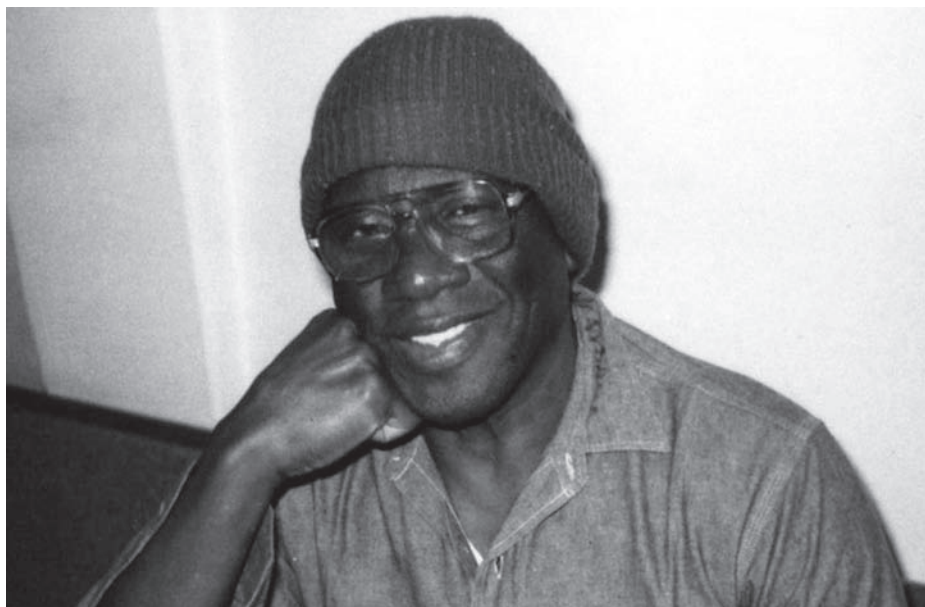
However, in 1973 they managed to frame King (who was already serving 35 years for a crime he had not committed) for the murder of another prisoner and he was sentenced to life without parole during a trial which he spent bound and gagged and unable to defend himself.

All three ended up in solitary confinement, which is where Robert first met Herman and Albert. The Closed Correction Cell unit, as it is known, consists of six-foot by nine-foot cells in which prisoners spend all their time except for an hour a day for exercise and a shower a few times a week. Contact with the outside world is limited to occasional visits and phone calls. Under these conditions, they set about to continue their struggle, successfully organising their fellow prisoners to improve their prison conditions, despite their isolation from the rest of the prison population. They also vowed to collectively resist the desocialisation commonly suffered by prisoners in long-term solitary.

Herman and the others also filled their waking hours with reading and correspondence, which, with their gathering fame as the 'Angola Three', was significant. They also became prolific litigators and Herman went before review boards more than a hundred times to appeal his placement in solitary. They made chessboards out of tissue paper, fastening sixty-four tissue squares to their concrete floors with toothpaste to make boards, and made expertly sculpted tissue paper rooks and kings.

In 2001, after 29 years in solitary, Robert King had his murder conviction successfully overturned and was released after pleading guilty to a lesser conspiracy charge. He continued to campaign on behalf of his imprisoned comrades and prisoners around the world.

Meanwhile, Herman and Albert remained in solitary, except for a brief period in 2008 when they were both moved to a maximum-security dormitory after Albert had his



conviction overturned and was granted full *habeas corpus*.

Within months the decisions were overturned and both were back in solitary before the year ended. Shortly thereafter they were moved away from Angola to separate prisons: a massive wrench after having spend so long in neighbouring cells, helping each other maintain their spirits via what little passing contact they could snatch.

Herman was moved into a prison hospital ward in June this year following a diagnosis of liver cancer, probably a result of the Hepatitis C that he had contracted either from contaminated blood or from a prison tattoo. Following this news, his supporters redoubled their efforts to get him decent treatment and even compassionate release, an effort further spurred on with his terminal diagnosis.

That it took two orders from a federal judge (the first overturning his conviction because women had been excluded from the jury in his and Albert's 1974 trial) and a further threat of contempt before prison officials finally released him.

"If I was actually guilty of this crime, why would the authorities plant evidence, create false witnesses, discard valuable evidence and then place me in an isolated cell for 26 years, denying me of the most basic human needs in this twentieth century? The State and the FBI committed every dirty trick possible to frame me for this murder. They believed I would never find out the truth about their demonic behaviour because the FBI and the DA's files were then considered confidential... I am innocent of the death of Guard Miller, and I vow to fight this farce to the last pulse in my veins." He did, and his friends and comrades worldwide respect him for that.

Herman Joshua Wallace (born 13th October 1941, died 4th October 2013)

Bra

Meanwhile, Albert Woodfox remains in solitary despite his conviction now having been overturned three times, most recently in February 2013 following a finding of racial discrimination in the selection of his grand jury foreperson. He still needs our help to bring him home – preferably before he is left with only days to live.



COMMENT

ABOUT FREEDOM

ANGEL ALLEY

Thanks loads to everyone who visited the Freedom Press stall at the London Anarchist Bookfair and/or came to our after party down in the Alley. It's always good to catch up with old comrades, but on Bookfair weekend there never seems enough time to speak properly, so apologies to those who didn't get to tell us where we're going wrong – or right even.

As every year, our thanks go to all those who helped out at the stall and after party and, of course, to all those good folk who bought books – well done!

Praise is also due to the Bookfair Collective for organising the event. As the postal address for the LAB (we know all anarchos love acronyms) we get a very special insight into how hard they work and the amount of nonsense they have to put up with.

Back at the shop we've just about sorted out the bookshelves and are now the proud owners of glass in all our windows, working lights and heating to face the winter chill. We're hoping to have some events and exhibitions lined up soon and, to get in early, the Freedom Seasonal Party will be on Saturday 21st December in the bookshop from 2pm – we hope to see you there.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

It's now even easier to work out when your subscription is up for renewal. The number above your name on the address label now tells you the year and month when your subscription runs out. There's a renewal form on page 19 of this issue if you need it, or you can subscribe online at freedompress.org.uk/news/subscribe. Don't forget that donations are always extremely welcome, or you may like to take out one of our special supporter subscriptions. If you're passing by, you can also drop off your sub payment at our shop in Angel Alley, off Whitechapel High Street.

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NEXT ISSUE DEADLINE

The next issue will be dated December 2013 and the last day to get copy to us for that issue will be **Tuesday 12th November**. 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

Trying to avoid doing any work the other day, I came across an article from the economics magazine *Moneyweek* called 'The End of Britain'. It makes some bold claims that the British economy is going down the pan, because of unsustainable welfare spending on poor people and suggests that "sensible investors" can avoid being robbed by the government by subscribing to *Moneyweek* and putting all their money into tax havens. I'm paraphrasing, but you get the gist. Oh and inflation is a worry and could be the end of the world, but there's no need to adjust any scaremongering graphs to take it into account.

I'm not going to do a major debunking of the arguments in the article, other people have done that from within a perspective of a less brutal vision of capitalism. But I think it is interesting that so negative a portrayal of the economy and the doom that awaits us all, picks up so many positive reports from the far right and the conspiracy theory community. One of the debunking blogs report that the article was actually produced by the marketing department rather than editorial and the content is clearly in *Daily Mail* scaremongering territory.

But what most struck me about this was that this is a paper aimed at the relatively wealthy, that can be so ideologically blinkered and ignore history. It makes it out that the expansion of the welfare state was something

that was a bit of benign behaviour from the rulers, giving a few crumbs to those workers lucky enough to live to pensionable age. It wasn't – it was a conscious ploy to avert revolution. If you read the pages of contemporary radical papers in the 1900s, you find articles weighing against any form of welfarism as it is a sop to derail militancy. It talks about a general strike in the 70s and has no idea of any different perspective; perhaps if there had been one we might not be in the mess we are in this country. It concludes by talking about ways to protect your wealth from the government and civil unrest in the forthcoming collapse of western capitalism as we know it.

Now I'm perfectly prepared to think this is just a marketing man's expression of his inner *Daily Mail*, but what if it really is what sections of our ruling class think? I remember there were real jitters among people I knew with connections to the City when the crisis broke in 2008. Jitters along the lines of Gordon Brown's comments recently revealed by Damian McBride, that there would be anarchy on the streets if cash-points ran out of money, to the point where he wondered whether troops would need to be deployed. Is capitalism really likely to collapse because of a bit of inflation and debt? The answer is no, obviously. But it should also concern us that if it really was on the brink, how ready would we be?



Known as the Winter of Discontent, 1978/79 saw widespread strikes in Britain, marking the largest stoppage of labour since the 1926 General Strike.

Fair dos!

I came to the London Anarchist Bookfair for the first time ever this year (I'm very new to the scene). I was a bit worried about coming along on my own but I ended up having a brilliant time and partying well into the night with a whole group of new friends. Before that, of course, I took in some inspiring talks and workshops, with highlights being the Black Panthers talk and the film on the 2011 riots. I also found myself seriously considering veganism after a delicious burger from the Veggies stall that was well worth the half hour wait!

Anyway, I just wanted to say thanks to the organisers and thanks to everyone who was so friendly to me. I know the scene has its issues but on the whole, to me as a newbie, it seems one of the friendliest scenes I've encountered.

Midge
Nottingham

Not voting

The radio (16th October) announced that two convicted murderers have lost their legal appeal to be allowed to vote. That reduces the number of us with official exemption. The television programme *QI* revealed that the Queen, contrary to general impression, does have the right to vote but just chooses not to. The list of those disallowed used to be "peers, criminals and lunatics" so I qualify on the first (see signature). According to the *Daily Mail*, anybody who dislikes the British state verges on the criminal, and I must be a lunatic for supporting the anarchist movement.

David Peers

Electricks...

Technology dominates our world, but many people think "It's just a neutral tool" or that technology = progress. Although it does bring some benefits, most technology designed and controlled by corporate, military and technocratic elites to serve their interests and exert their power. Luddites200 is organising a series of monthly events to look at the technology politics of food, energy, work, gender, war, the economy, health etc. There will be speakers from campaigning groups and lots of time for discussion. We are preparing for a three-day gathering in May 2014 to discuss these issues.

Upcoming talks:

- 9th December: Extreme Energy (fracking, tar sands etc) and climate change/ Christmas Party
- 13th January: The politics of alternative technology and workers' plans
- 10th February 10th: Digital technology, surveillance and Big Data
- 10th March 10th: Toxics and nanotechnology
- 14th April: 'Mental health', big pharma and the new eugenics

Talks will be held at Fairly Square Cafe, 51 Red Lion St, London, WC1R 4PF from 7pm, for more information search Facebook for 'Breaking the Frame' or contact luddites200@yahoo.co.uk

Breaking the Frame

Raise up!

This is a friendly reminder to donate to Riseup if you can (<https://riseup.net/donate>). We are 25% through our funding drive.

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3. Because we've been around since 2000, which means we've been working, thinking and learning about privacy issues for a long time and are not panicked people who suddenly woke up in 2013 to the idea that massive surveillance states are being built across the globe and we should do something about it.
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5. Because you've been using Riseup for years and you like us. (Thanks! We like you, too.)
6. Because you value a tech collective that keeps a minimum amount of information on its users and will push back when asked for user information. Did you know we went to Federal court and won when the biggest US right-wing legal defence fund tried to strong-arm us into turning over user information?

If you'd like to help Riseup you can go to <https://riseup.net/donate>. We've set it up so it's super easy and will take just a minute. For more information on what we do go to <https://help.riseup.net/en/projects>.

The Riseup Birds
riseup.net

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GETTING ACTIVE

WHAT'S ON

NOVEMBER

■ **5th** Radical Anthropology talks, *The revolution which worked* with Chris Knight at St Martin's Community Centre, 43 Carol Street, London NW1 0HT from 6.15 to 9pm, see www.radicalanthropologygroup.org or Twitter: @radicalanthro for details.

■ **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 'We are the 99%': A Personal and Social-Psychological View of Occupy with speaker Alexandra Stein at The Epicentre, West Street, Leytonstone E11 4LJ, buffet 7.30pm, talk starts 8pm, see <http://www.newsfromnowhereclub.org/> or call 0208 555 5248 for details.

■ **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.

■ **13th** North East London Waterways, a people's history of campaigning for access to drinking water, recreation water and navigation systems at the Wood Green Social Club, 3 Stuart Crescent, London N22 5NJ, see <http://radicalhistorynetwork.blogspot.co.uk/>

■ **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.

■ **28th** Reel News film night at The Grosvenor, 17 Sidney Road, Stockwell, London SW9 0TP, from 7.30pm until 11.30pm, see <http://reelnews.co.uk> for further details.

DECEMBER

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

■ **5th, 12th and 19th** 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** Luddites200 talk on Extreme Energy (fracking, tar sands, etc.) and climate change from 7pm at Fairly Square cafe, 51 Red Lion Street, London, WC1R 4PF, email luddites200@yahoo.co.uk for details.

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

■ **14th** News from Nowhere Club presents *Poetry and Place: Reading Poetry Through Maps* with speaker David Amery at The Epicentre, West Street, Leytonstone E11 4LJ, buffet 7.30pm, talk starts 8pm, see <http://www.newsfromnowhereclub.org/> or call 0208 555 5248 for details.



● On 14th November a picket of the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) offices in Wakefield at 1pm will highlight the **Orgreave Truth and Justice Campaign** (OTJC) demand for a public inquiry into policing at Orgreave coking works on 18th June 1984. The date marks the first anniversary of South Yorkshire Police's referral of itself to the IPCC to decide whether there should be a full investigation and there is currently no indication as to how long it will take the IPCC to examine all the police files.

At Orgreave near Rotherham 95 miners were arrested after thousands of police officers – many dressed in riot gear, with others on horseback – brutally assaulted miners participating in a year-long strike aimed at defending jobs and mining communities.

However when the subsequent court cases took place all of the charges – which included, in many cases, riot – were abandoned when it became clear that the police's oral and written evidence was unreliable. Each prosecution had been supported by two police officers making near-identical statements.

Later, South Yorkshire Police (SYP) paid out £425,000 in compensation to 39 pickets in out of court settlements. Nevertheless, no police officers were disciplined for misconduct or charged for the injuries they caused to those they attacked.

● The OTJC protest outside the IPCC offices in Wakefield will be held on 14th November at 1pm. The address is IPCC Northern Echo, Pioneer House, Woolpack's Yards, Wakefield WF1 2SG. Go to <http://otjc.org.uk/> for further details.

● The ARB is delighted to announce that the Little Rebels Children's Book Award for radical children's fiction is back for its second year. The award is given by the **Alliance of Radical Booksellers** (ARB) and is administered by specialist children's booksellers, Letterbox Library, a not-for-profit children's booksellers and social enterprise specialising in children's books which celebrate diversity, equality and inclusion (www.letterboxlibrary.com). The closing date for nominations will be 13th January 2014. The shortlist will be announced in April 2014, and the winner at the ARB's London Radical Bookfair in May 2014 and full submission guidelines can be found at www.littlerebelsaward.wordpress.com.

The Little Rebels Children's Book Award is a sister award to the Bread & Roses Award for Radical Publishing, administered by Housmans Bookshop, which recognises radical adult non-fiction published in the UK. Both awards are the inspiration of the Alliance of Radical Booksellers. Both prizes will be presented at the second London Radical Bookfair on Saturday 10th May 2014, Bishopsgate Institute, London.

● The Alliance of Radical Booksellers is a supportive community for the UK's radical booksellers: www.radicalbooksellers.co.uk. For information on the Bread & Roses Award go to www.bread-and-roses.co.uk

● For details of the Little Rebels Children's Book Award go to www.littlerebelsaward.wordpress.com

● The London Radical Bookfair, hosted by the ARB, was run for the first time on 11th May 2013, see www.londonradicalbookfair.com for more.

Football legend accuses FIFA

Legendary Brazilian striker, Romário, has accused the football world governing body, FIFA, of “Robbing the Brazilian people” and has urged people into widespread protest before and during the World Cup next summer.

His comments come on the back of the Confederations Cup, held in Brazil this summer, was blighted by tens of thousands of protesters who wanted to highlight the Brazilian government’s infrastructure spending on huge sporting vanity projects whilst the average Brazilian has not got a pot to piss in.

Romário described Brazil’s own football governing body as a “disgrace” and claims that they have no interest whatsoever in the Brazilian people. He went on to say that “FIFA got what it came for, money. Things like transportation that affects the public after the tournament is over? They don’t care about what is going to be left behind. They found a way to get rich on the world

cup and they robbed the people instead. This is the real shame.”

The government initially claimed that no public money would be used for football stadium construction, however, at least £2.9 billion of public money has been used, and the total cost of holding the event to the Brazilian people is expected to be a minimum of \$13.8 billion.

Romário added that “You see hospitals with no beds, hospitals with people on the floor. You see schools that don’t have lunch for the kids, schools with no air conditioning, where kids are going to school in 45 degrees. There are buildings and schools with no accessibility for people who are disabled. If you spend 30% less on the stadiums they would be able to improve things that actually matter.”

He was asked whether he thought that the protests would continue at the world cup in 2014. He said that “Not only do I think they will return, I think they should return as it is a way of making politicians wake up.”

One of Brazil’s greatest ever players, Ronaldo, has hit back at Romário, claiming that “It is easy to be the opposition and attack everyone”, and that the world cup will “Bring nothing but benefits for the Brazilian people.” It then transpired that the multi-millionaire is part of the FIFA world cup organising committee and was just parroting the party line. Romário rubbished his remarks, claiming that he is part of the “corrupt entities”.

Luther Blissett



Anarchists set to target the World Cup

◀ page 24

holding the two biggest and most prestigious sporting events in the world.

Anarchists and their ideas are rapidly gaining attention in Brazil following prominent activity in the recent demonstrations regarding public transport ticket prices, and last month’s school teacher strike. Whilst many Brazilians may not agree with some of the violence that has taken place, they are becoming increasingly disillusioned with the corrupt government and the police force that support them, and are broadly supportive of the protesters, and of the anarchists who show solidarity with them.

Rafael Alcadipani, a professor at Sao Paulo University, claims that “The more

aggressive and violent the police are, the more they will fuel the protesters. My guess is that they will try and stop a match during the World Cup, which will be big news. Brazilians are crazy about football but the majority of people cannot afford a ticket. It is a tournament for the rich, and the people are upset about it.”

During the Confederations Cup the Brazilian police deployed 10,000 heavily armed riot police around the football stadiums. When they failed to quell the protesters FIFA threatened television companies with their contracts if they showed civil unrest during match coverage. This was no more obvious than on the BBC who conducted an interview

with a pundit outside of the Maracana stadium just before the final was about to kick off. He claimed that there was no trouble or protests. The footage was clearly several hours old and edited to look live, as a quick glance at a live internet feed revealed that the weather had changed and the police were attacking thousands of protesters in and around the stadium complex.

The state response to the plans for civil disobedience at the tournament will be two-fold. They will undoubtedly increase the number of officers available, perhaps utilising the armed forces, and they will ramp-up the media and television manipulation.

Luther Blissett



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REVIEWS

FICTION

The Birthday Drinks

It was getting dark when Dom arrived at the pub. With his involvement in things at work, he'd not seen much of the Hurstbourne Anarchist Group. Tonight was Dave's birthday, so he could at least catch up and maybe get some advice on the quiet state of things in the two months since their minor victory.

"Dom, great to see you!" said Dave. "What you having?"

"Some trendy American-style lager, please, none of your real ale stuff," he replied. He could see Pete and Connie were there too, as well as a couple of Dave's real-ale non-league football mates.

"So, how's the transition from rugged individualist to committed trade unionist going?" asked Connie after a while. Dom laughed.

"I've not been into the rugged individualism bit so much since management started ganging up on me," he said.

"When I first met you, you'd read everything by Ayn Rand and took it seriously," she said.

"Well, I've still read it all, I just have a bit more experience now. And on that note, I do need to ask you, and Dave, a few things." Connie nodded.

"Since we drove the last boss out, I thought things would get more intense. But if anything they've got quieter," said Dom.

"What's the new boss like?" asked Dave.

"Well, he's a bit dull, by the book, and seems to have none of the personal aggro of the last one. He strikes me as the proverbial safe pair of hands."

"And is that a bad thing?" asked Dave.

"It is if you're an agitator!" chipped in Connie.

"Maybe not," said Dom. "But I was expecting more and the involvement in the union has dropped off quite a bit. One of the members is even talking about quitting now that MacKenzie has gone and LobCo are being reasonable."

"To be honest mate, that's to be expected," said Dave. "If you get anything going with a union there will be ups and downs and a lot of people are only interested when there is something directly at stake. They don't see the hard graft that goes on behind the scenes."

"I'm not sure I'm interested when we're not actively doing something," said Dom.

"No need to worry on that score, a new management attack on terms and conditions will be along shortly," said Connie.

"Connie's right, you know, for all the talk of reasonable workplaces you read in the press, it's usually just one sided with them taking what they want."

"It's hard to motivate people though," said Dom.

"It is. You're right. Have you tried involving people in anything else? Like having a get together outside of work, going bowling, that sort of thing?"

"No, but that's an idea," said Dom.

"Anyway, enough of this, it's my round."

BOOK



Autonomy: the cover designs of Anarchy 1961-1970

edited by Daniel Poyner, published by Hyphen Press, £25.

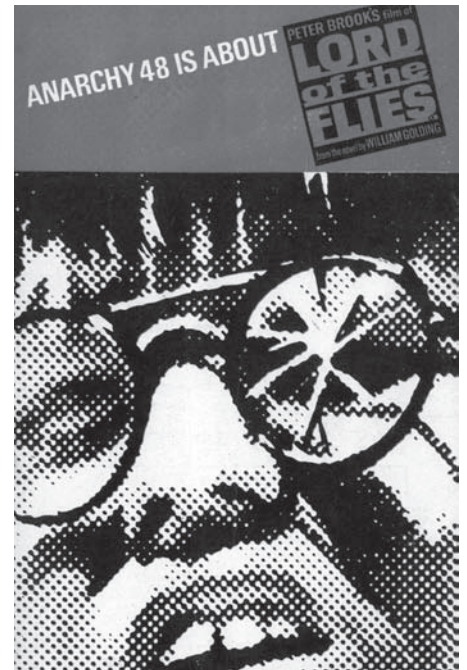
This is a most welcome book, bringing together all the covers of Freedom Press's monthly journal *Anarchy* (first series) and reproducing them in all their glorious colour at full size. Most of the covers were designed by Rufus Segar, and the book also features an illuminating interview with him. He discusses in this interview the process by which the magazine itself was conceived, by Colin Ward, and how he himself was given *carte blanche* (or *carte jaune*, to be more precise, for the first 58 issues) to design most of the covers for the entire run of 118 issues.

There's also an essay by Raphael Samuel on the place of *Anarchy* magazine in the 1960s,

and Richard Hollis discusses the graphic design of *Anarchy*, citing it as an excellent example of design in the 1960s, without some of that decade's graphical excesses. A useful touch is a complete index of articles in the magazine. The production values of the book are exemplary, and anyone interested in either graphical design or anarchism will find it a delightful book to have. And if you have any of the bound volumes of *Anarchy*, this will give you the covers that are lacking from them.

Price-wise, it's not exactly an impulse buy, but a little shopping around should find one at a substantial discount... My only criticism is that for a book on design, the publishers have done themselves a disservice by omitting the subtitle from the spine, so that if that's all that's showing on a bookshelf nobody will know that the title refers to *Anarchy* magazine ('Autonomy' in fact refers both to the original title considered for the magazine and the autonomy that both editor and designer had in the production process). Minor quibble aside, this book is well worth buying.

Mal Function



QUIZ ANSWERS

1. He was required to ensure that a machine gun could be mounted on the bonnet.
2. The Association of Autonomous Astronauts.
3. Gordon Brown, according to his former spin doctor Damian McBride. In an extract of his book, McBride quoted Brown as saying: "You don't understand... If the banks are shutting their doors, and the cashpoints aren't working, and people go to Tesco and their cards aren't being accepted, the whole thing will just explode. If you can't buy food or petrol or medicine

for your kids, people will just start breaking the windows and helping themselves... It'll be anarchy... We'd have to think: do we have curfews, do we put the Army on the streets, how do we get order back?"

4. He said, "I would prefer the homes to be sold on the private market because you generally get people in who would be paying a higher price and rely less on public services. My ideal Barnet household is one which pays council tax and does not rely on council services."

The Albert memorial

I wasn't aware of this book, initially published in 1997, until its author, Philip Ruff, tweeted a link to the newly published e-book format. I saw it almost by accident whilst scanning through the countless irrelevant tweets that had arrived within the previous two minutes. Two bits of text jumped out at me, the first was 'Albert Meltzer', and the second was the price-tag of £1.08.

Albert Meltzer was a bit before my time, in fact, when he died in 1996 I was only 18 months out of school and busy sticking pictures of Chairman Mao above my bed, but that's a different story.

Since my discovery of anarchism a few years back, Albert Meltzer has been someone that I wanted to know more about. I read his book on *Anarchism: arguments for and against*, but I wanted to know more about the 'man'. I purchased his autobiography *I Couldn't Paint Golden Angels* two years ago but have yet to make a serious attempt at reading it. So when I saw that there was a 56-page biography available, written by someone who knew him, and at the crazy price of little over £1, it seemed rude not to buy it. It quickly transferred to my e-reader and was I was engrossed for the next hour or so of my train journey.

The book kicks off when Albert is 15 when he discovers anarchism at a boxing gym via a young Glaswegian anarchist seaman, Billy Campbell. Radicalised, Albert immediately immersed himself in solidarity work, helping Emma Goldman and the Polish anarchist Leah Feldman in collecting money and clothes for Spanish anti-fascists. The book portrays Albert as someone who was focused very much on practical work and action, even in those early days of activism in his late-teens; he joined a group that was 'gun-running' to Spanish anarchists.

Still in his teens, Ruff describes how Albert formed an affinity group who gained some notoriety by burning down a stand glorifying Franco at a fascist exhibition. It was due to this act that Emma Goldman referred to Albert a "young rascal and hooligan".

At this point of the book I started thinking that he had managed to fit more into a couple of years than most people do in a lifetime, then I read about how he published a bulletin called *The Struggle*, and how he found time to travel to Germany with false papers and get involved in the pre-war anti-Nazi underground movement who plotted to assassinate Hitler and Goering.

Remarkably Albert still found time for the more mundane aspects of life – paid work. He left school in 1937 and worked for a gas company, a greyhound track, a brewery, a fairground, and as a film extra, often being dismissed for his trade union activities. Still not yet 20 years of age, Albert started a newspaper called *Revolt*, and made a failed attempt to organise a UK-wide anarchist federation.



Ruff then focuses on the war years and his involvement with Syndicalist Tom Brown, the *Freedom* editorial group and *War Commentary*. At this point an anarchist federation had been formed with Albert as its secretary. They produced a regular bulletin entitled *Workers in Uniform*, which was distributed inside the armed forces and had a circulation of 4,000. Unfortunately Albert was arrested and gaoled on charges of desertion.

The book spends a few pages detailing a 'bleak' period for British anarchism in the decade following the end of the Second World War, and briefly touches on the ideological and personal differences he had with the group based around Freedom Press. Ruff then describes a period of 'wilderness' for Albert. Despite putting himself in the wilderness he still managed to find time to set up an Asian prisoner's aid committee, edit a newspaper, take part in rent strikes, and contribute countless articles of various publications. Some wilderness!

By now the book is up to the 1960s and Albert has taken a holiday to Spain where he meets up with some old comrades and starts getting involved in intelligence work

with the 'First of May Group'. It was soon after that he met Stuart Christie, who was to be a close friend for the rest of his life.

There are a few pages covering much of Albert's work in Spain, the friendships he made there, various kidnappings, the book he wrote with Christie *The Floodgates of Anarchy*, and the formation of the Anarchist Black Cross, *Black Flag* magazine, the Angry Brigade, the DAM and the miners' strike.

Albert retired from work in 1987 but continued to play an important role in the DAM and latterly, the Solidarity Federation. Ruff highlights how Albert became critical of the CNT and attitudes within the wider IWA, and how his relationship with Vernon Richards and the Freedom group led to accusations of him being sectarian. It was at this point in his life that he formed the Kate Sharpley Library and saw the publication of his autobiography. Albert suffered a fatal stroke in 1996.

Following what feels like the tiniest snapshot of an extraordinary life, Ruff provides extensive notes, an in-depth obituary written by Stuart Christie, a tribute written by Stuart Christie that was read at Albert's

THE ARTS

SARAH LUCAS: SIT

Sarah Lucas: Situation

Whitechapel Gallery, London
until 15th December 2013

With her show at the Whitechapel Gallery Sarah Lucas is the third of the big beasts of the once Young British Artists (YBA) to have a major retrospective in London, following in the wake of Tracey Emin at the Hayward Gallery in 2011 and Damien Hirst at Tate Modern in 2012. Given the history of the YBAs and their media savvy promoters, it is hard not to think this is some kind of concerted attempt to lionise these artists as the backbone of the British art world at a time when, I am told by a senior tutor at the London University for the Arts, young art students are increasingly antipathetic to their art and its legacy.

While Hirst has long been seen as a canny businessman, and Emin elevated to the status of National Treasure, Lucas has always been a more enigmatic figure in the YBA pantheon. In part this is due to her effective withdrawal from the British art world for the past decade. But mainly it stems from her well-publicised refusal to allow her work to be nominated for the Tate's annual Turner Prize.



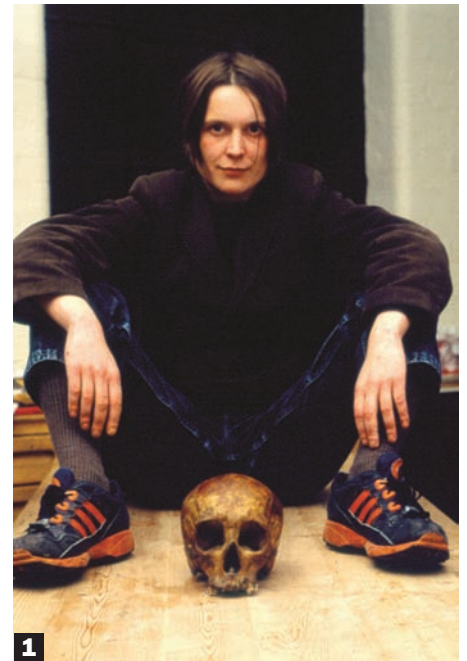
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Cynics might argue this earned her more kudos in the art world than she could ever have gained by actually winning the Turner Prize. Certainly it has allowed Lucas to appear distanced from the cabal of artists promoted by Tate Director Nicholas Serota and former advertising mogul Charles Saatchi. This might have long term significance for Lucas if my contact at the London University for the Arts is right.

However, as the Whitechapel exhibition makes clear Lucas is no Left Bank anarchist. Sponsored by Louis Vuitton, the exhibition is in effect a paean to fashionable grunge. Far more than Emin or Hirst, Lucas has given wealthy collectors like Vuitton, Saatchi and Lord Rothschild, the frisson of brushing with the dangers of bohemian poverty without really having to experience it. In this her work panders to a kind of rich man's voyeurism, as demonstrated at the Whitechapel by the succession of dirty toilets and soiled mattresses. These are undoubtedly more visceral than anything Emin has ever presented, but in the context of the plush interiors of the Whitechapel it is hard not to think of them as icons of urban poverty that are no more authentic than Marie Antoinette's decorative peasants living in the grounds of Versailles.

The exhibition is divided into two main sections. On the ground floor is a dense display of familiar early works. This includes Lucas's trade mark self-portrait photographs, such as *Fighting Fire with Fire*, and several of the 'food nudes', most notably *Two Fried Eggs* and *Kebab*, made in 1992, comprising a kitchen table on which eggs and a kebab are set to look like breasts and a vagina.

As well as breasts and vaginas, the room is also full of penises, and mechanical masturbating hands waving helplessly in the air in search of a penis. But this phallic obsession becomes more evident in the second section of the show, located upstairs in the gallery, where penises both large and small have been modelled and cast in plaster and bronze. As Boris Johnson might want to note if he is looking for a new London landmark, one of these, an erect plaster penis entitled *White NOB*, clearly has the potential to become a cultural icon as a succession of



1

visitors seemed to want themselves photographed standing next to it.

Perhaps the desire to induce giggling at giant penises is as good a reason to make art as any, but you have to wonder whether this is a rather slight ambition to build an entire career on. We are still being told by enthusiasts for Lucas's work, like Alastair Sooke writing on this show in *The Daily Telegraph*, that Lucas is a feminist. But it is a bizarre kind of feminism that revels in the degradation of the human body. It is worth remembering that it is not just male bodies that are mutilated, depersonalised and humiliated by Lucas, so we are not talking about a redressive counterbalance to the objectification of women's bodies with her work.

In truth Lucas is emblematic of a far sadder story of artists in the late twentieth-century, in which the key theme is loss and disillusion. Looking at Lucas's work you are constantly reminded of something else. The chairs on which pairs of stuffed tights have been tied look a bit like an Eva Hesse, and the mobiles like an Alexander Calder. The

Book review

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funeral, a communiqué from the CNT and some thoughts from Albert's friends. There is also a postscript by 'Acrata' that discusses Albert's relationship with Vernon Richards and Freedom Press. Whilst I am well aware that there was conflict, I did not know or meet either of them, so to comment further would not be necessary or appropriate.

It is interesting to consider that Albert not only lived through the most momentous events of the last century, but also involved

himself to the point of risking his life and imprisonment for his beliefs, meeting along the way some of the most important contributors to anarchist theory and action during the twentieth century

The book is a brilliant and easy to read introduction to the remarkable life of Albert Meltzer and left me wanting more. As I am writing this review I have just pulled my copy of *I Couldn't Paint Golden Angels* down from the shelf and am now looking

forward to tomorrow's train journey.

If you want to know more about Albert Meltzer but don't want to read a 400-page book, then this is for you, and at £1.08 it's as cheap as a cup of tea. Highly recommended!

Luther Blissett

The Albert Memorial: the anarchist life and times of Albert Meltzer, an appreciation by Phil Ruff with a postscript by Acrata, Meltzer Press, £5 but out of print, now available as a Kindle e-book for £1.08.

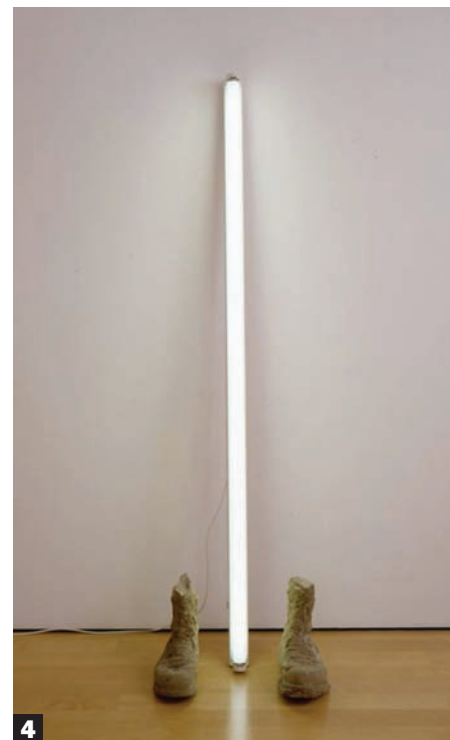
UATION

endless toilets remind you of Marcel Duchamp, and even the giant phalluses upstairs seem to be attempts to do a Henry Moore. You could go on with the reference spotting, but the point is Lucas, like many artists of her generation, lost faith in art. The task of emulating and excelling the past generations of artists seemed too vast and difficult, to the point where originality, creativity and even personal identity in art looked like false goals. The only thing left for an artist like Lucas was to become a kind of Tyro, as envisaged by Wyndham Lewis, revisiting and plundering the history of art whilst sneering at and debasing the very culture she longed to join. It is in that we see the rationale for allowing Vuitton to sponsor the show as nothing embodies the debasing of art better than an haute couture fashion house.

Michael Paraskos

- 1 Self-Portrait with Skull, 1996
- 2 Two Fried Eggs and a Kebab, 1992
- 3 Nice Tits, 2011
- 4 Unknown Soldier, 2003
- 5 Au Naturel, 1994

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SPORT

Anarchists to target World Cup



Various anarchist groups in Brazil have pledged to target next year's World Cup which is to be held across several Brazilian cities. A spokesperson for an unnamed anarchist groups said that "FIFA lies to us all, it is money laundering. The people get nothing out of it. They have spent millions on stadiums and have a law saying they do

not have to disclose how much they spend. FIFA will rule this country for the duration of the World Cup. The World Cup is absurd, it will be a focus for us and we will fight it."

Brazil is under a great deal of pressure from FIFA to show that it can prevent the kind of protests that accompanied the Confederations Cup earlier this year. The huge infrastructure

projects that Brazil are building for the World Cup in 2014 and the Olympics in 2016 are way behind schedule and massively over budget.

The organising committee now have the added headache of potential social unrest during the events that they had hoped would have made way for pride and excitement at

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THE QUIZ

1. When the Nazis asked Ferdinand Porsche to design what became the VW Beetle, what additional requirement was added to the bonnet?
2. Which group, which he describes as anarchist, features tangentially in Jake Arnott's novel *The House of Rumour*?
3. Who thought anarchy was around the corner in 2008?
4. How did Barnet Tory councillor Tom Davey, justify dropping the affordable housing in a local development?

Answers on page 20

The Anarchist Quiz Book by Martin Howard, illustrated by Paul Petard, is available for £5 post free from www.freedompress.org.uk or from our bookshop.

