

The most heavily armed gangsters are the police

Cult of the gun

Gun crime is back on the agenda of mainstream politics in the wake of shootings outside a Birmingham New Year's party. But there's a curious inconsistency in the way the issue is being addressed. The Birmingham shootings were said to have involved a submachine gun. There's talk of arsenals being built up by drug gangs, who use guns smuggled from the Balkans since the mid 1990s. But apparently the true terror gripping our streets isn't the prevalence of Uzis or Heckler & Koch carbines (Scotland Yard's weapon of choice, incidentally) but the toy guns that through the nation's playgrounds.

Since handguns were banned after the Dunblane massacre in 1996, the use of firearms in robberies has fallen 23%, even while the level of so-called 'gun-related' crime has risen. Obviously just banning the instruments of crime does nothing to address its roots, and sales of replicas have soared to make up the gap. Crimes in which victims are threatened with guns are on the increase and police believe it's these replicas that may be involved, not real weapons. The Home Office has already called an emergency summit, and looks set to introduce lots of new legislation.

What's at the root of gun crime, whether it uses genuine guns or replicas, is frequently misdiagnosed. Leaving aside property crime (which stems, ultimately, from disparity of wealth and opportunity), many shootings apparently involve what police describe as 'respect issues' – punishments for trivial affronts.

These motives, if they really exist, surely indicate either an extraordinarily fragile sense of self-worth on the part of the people who use guns – a desperate attempt to compensate for feelings of powerlessness – or the opposite, an over-inflated sense of self-worth and contempt for others. Either way, it's hard to see how motivations like these can be addressed by a ban on replica weaponry. Nor could a ban do anything to prevent shootings like the one in Birmingham, where the guns used were only too real.

Anyway, the biggest motives of all for using guns, which police say they're trying to address, are rather different. One reason, both for the rise in gun crime and for the rise in replica sales, is that guns are seen as fashion accessories, touted even among school children. There's a developing cult of the gun. Blame has, as always, been attributed to the usual suspects for 'glamorising firearms' – rap singers, shoot-em-up arcade games and violent films. Teenage boys, tucked up in their bedrooms listening to rap, playing computer games and watching DVDs are, it seems, greatly to be feared.

But of course this is rubbish, and Commander Alan Brown of the Metropolitan Police unwittingly, but succinctly, last week outlined a more likely cause of the problem.

(continued on page 2)



Wombling free

Some fifty Santas, Wombles and little helpers gathered in London's Oxford Street on 21st December, traditionally the busiest day of the year in the capital's consumer calendar. The aim was to publicise the first anniversary of the uprising in Argentina and what's been achieved there through popular resistance, as well as to confront the consumer culture that enslaves us all in Britain. A free shop with banners was set up in the street near Selfridges and Top Shop, with food, drink, books, music, clothes and games given away to an enthusiastic response. Leaflets highlighting the Argentinian struggle were also handed out. Many people stopped to chat and find out what was going on, causing a bottleneck on the pavement and an alternative attraction to the Christmas lights.

Given that advance publicity had hinted at

mass shoplifting, it was no surprise to find a massive police presence and heavy private security inside many shops. After an hour, the top cop issued a directive under Section 14 of the Public Order Act, saying he'd only allow the 'protest' if it stayed in one place. Anyone trying to move on would face arrest, he said, as would any groups moving off with more than three people. As a result, one person was later arrested. Ludicrously I and a friend, who'd stopped by merely to offer support for half an hour, were followed for ages by cops from both the Metropolitan and the City police when we left and walked down Oxford Street. Clearly the guardians of capitalism were taking no chances on a day when profit-making was rife.

M.H.

For more information and photographs of the free shop, visit www.wombles.org.uk

Students escalate campaign

On Tuesday 17th December, nine Glasgow University students – four anarchists, two socialists and three student journalists – walked into the Adam Smith Lecture Theatre of the Adam Smith building and refused to leave. Their numbers waxed and waned through the day, peaking at a total of ten activists, until around 4pm a passing security guard noticed that something funny was going on and access to the lecture theatre was blocked. Unfortunately at this point there were only three anarchists present, and though their comrades attempted to return this was made impossible by an ultimatum that any opening of the doors to leave or enter would end the occupation.

The aims of this, the opening volley of a new campaign at Glasgow University, were simple – the sacking of the university vice-chancellor, Graeme Davies, who is responsible for investments by Universities Superannuation Scheme Ltd (these include £64.3 million in deathmongers BAe Systems, £79 million in narcotic sellers British American Tobacco and over £1.4 billion in polluting, war-promoting oil companies), disinvestment from these companies and army recruitment must leave campus.

The occupied lecture theatre was quickly renamed the Mikhail Bakunin. The irony of renaming famous capitalist Adam Smith's memorial lecture theatre after a militant Russian anarchist should be obvious. The theatre was redecorated with slogans on the blackboard, and red and black flags on the walls. The doors were held shut by bike locks.

The administration made repeated attempts to end the occupation by offering to deliver statements of demands to the relevant authorities. While these were delivered, the students refused to leave. One of the remaining occupiers left at 1am, and the other two decided to leave when police involvement was threatened at 10.30am the following morning.

The occupation has been generally regarded as a success by those involved. While the professed aims have not yet been achieved, this is seen as the first step in an increased student militancy in Glasgow University, the start of an escalation from an earlier campaign of high profile graffiti. The last three students involved are currently facing disciplinary action from the university senate, but solidarity actions are being planned at Glasgow and other universities, and the success of the largely anarchist sit-in may yet motivate the leftist elements on campus also to engage in direct action.

Alistair Davidson

Those wishing to become involved in the solidarity actions during January should contact Glasgow Anarchists and Independent Anticapitalists at gaia2k@hotmail.com

This article will be published in the forthcoming GAIA newsletter. © Alistair Davidson 2003

Freedom anarchist fortnightly

Anarchists work towards a society of mutual aid and voluntary co-operation. We reject all government and economic repression. This newspaper, published continuously since 1936, exists to explain anarchism more widely and show that only in an anarchist society can human freedom thrive.

What anarchism means to me

From time to time, republicans are heard whingeing about us being subjects not citizens. As an anarchist, I contend that government is the problem, not the monarchy or any particular form of government.

I would be as unhappy with a republic run by the Green Party or the Socialist Alliance – possibly more so, considering the experience of Germany (where the Greens are now the most militaristic party) or the Soviet Union. I don't wish to be, nor am I, a citizen of the UK or anywhere else.

With republicanism goes the pernicious notion of 'citizenship education': an obnoxious and utterly totalitarian expansion of compulsory education, the purpose of which, I believe, is to produce compliant 'citizens' while employing the language of 'rights'.

Liberal secular humanists, who oppose compulsory religious education, tend to be in favour of compulsory citizenship education – as well as compulsory general education – because they believe it can (and should) be used to indoctrinate children with liberal secular values.

Citizenship education goes hand in hand with the oath of allegiance the government now wants to impose on people wanting to settle here. I suspect that the final legislation will be expanded to apply to the indigenous population. Citizenship education and oaths of allegiance should be rejected and refused by all who value their liberty.

Human freedom does not depend upon what the law says we can or cannot do, or upon 'rights' granted to us by the ruling class, but upon our willingness individually and collectively to assert the principle of self-ownership and act accordingly.

The anarchist way is not mere opposition, but resistance. We do not accept that the government has the right to rule, but should do so humanly and by 'consent'. We can and should rule ourselves individually and, if we choose, collectively in voluntary associations of sovereign individuals. Anything else is slavery.

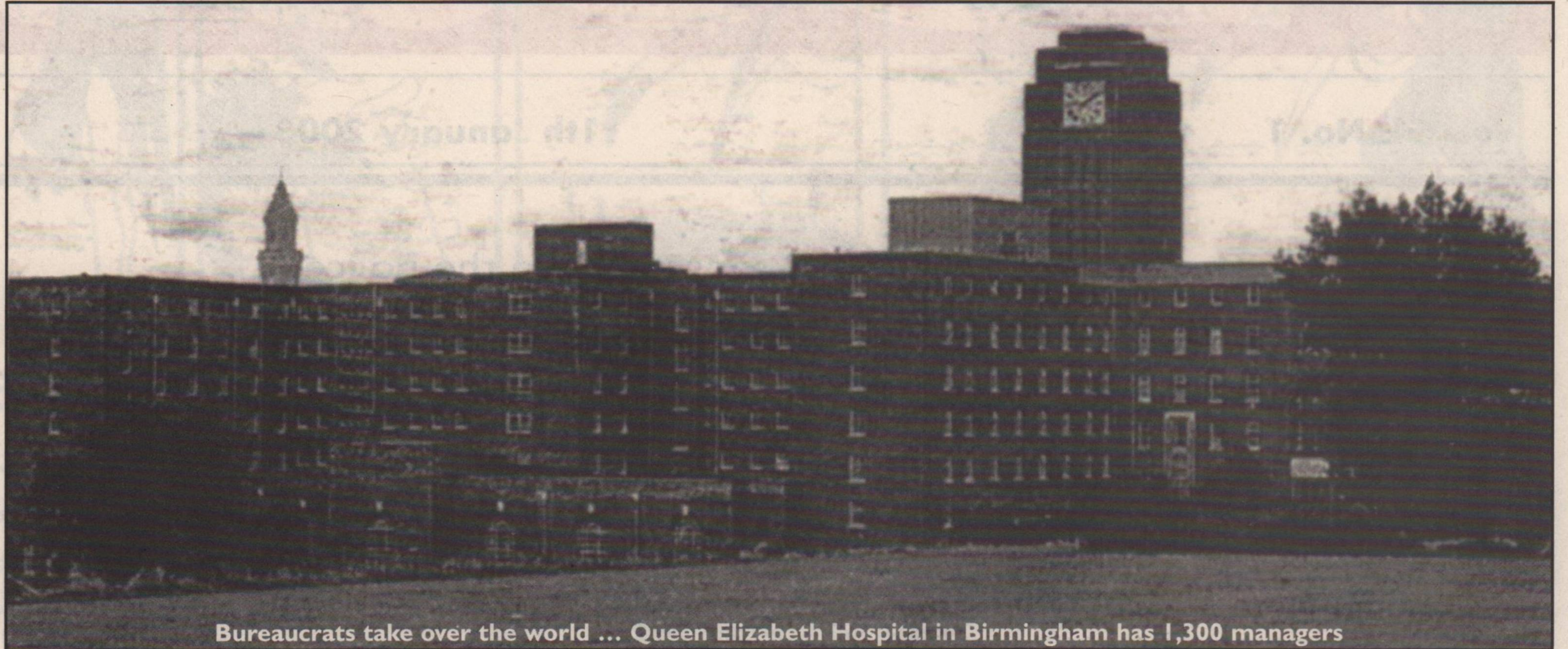
Ed McArthur

What does anarchism mean to you? Send in your contributions for this column (300 words please) to FreedomCopy@aol.com or to The Freedom Editors at the address below.

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Why the pay deal offered to NHS staff under Agenda for Change is ...

A waste of time



Bureaucrats take over the world ... Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham has 1,300 managers

Report from the Industrial Workers of the World

Talks on National Health Service pay ended last month with the government's proposed Agenda for Change settlement. We say NHS workers should vote no to the deal. Three and a half years negotiating and what will health workers get out of Agenda for Change? A pathetic 3.225% next year. Beverly Malone, General Secretary of the Royal College of Nursing (RCN), in the understatement of 2003, said the deal was 'very disappointing'. She has a cheek! What have the RCN, Unison and the rest been up to? Talks have been going on since 1999. This is their deal. RCN evidence to the official Review Body claimed a 15% increase for nurses next year. What on earth are they doing agreeing 3.225% instead?

"Nurses will be furious," Gary, a Grade D nurse said last month. "We've been waiting for Agenda for Change for years. We've been taking on extra work and now we're being told it's only just over 3% next year. Worse still, the new pay scales won't come in fully until October 2004. The consultants turned down a 30% deal in November. They told the British Medical Association to go back and negotiate a better deal. Nurses must do the same. It's vital that a no vote to the deal is organised."

It's not just nurses who are pissed off. Low paid staff will get just £5.18 an hour under the deal – but not until 2004. "Scotland has shown the way," one porter said. "Strike action there has forced three hospitals to pay

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"The gun is a symbol of power in some circles, and there's a knock-on effect down through the criminal ranks all the way to the playground", he said. The 'circles' Brown should have been talking about, though this was far from his intended meaning, were of course the police and army themselves, the forces of the state. It's in their criminal ranks that the gun is a symbol of power most prominently of all.

The state is the arena of society where the 'cult of the gun' is most prevalent. It's the police and army themselves that claim a monopoly on violence, and set the biggest example of disputes being settled by force. After all, the police say they want to increase the number of routine armed patrols in Britain's towns. Their proposed solution to getting guns off the streets? Putting more guns on the streets. Now, you can't fault logic like that.

Anton Pawluk

£5.18 now, not in two years time". Unlike Unison, who are going to push the deal, the IWW don't think £5.18 is anywhere near enough. The fact that the new rate won't come in straightaway is a disgrace. The NHS has some of the lowest paid workers in the country. Now, while the lowest paid will get just £10,100, pay for NHS managers will go up to £65,000.

We want to know why NHS unions have given up so much for so little. Why was the deal pushed through so quickly? Agenda for Change will mean 37.5 working hours a week, which will be longer for radiographers, speech and language therapists, physiotherapists, dieticians and London admin staff than they work now. This increase will slash the pay of radiographers by 7%. Nurses and midwives will get no cut in hours. Holidays will improve, but weekend overtime rates will be cut. Most allowances will go. Low paid nurses in London will see their London Weighting cut by over £200.

Pay in 2003 will increase by just 3.225%. Inflation is already 2.5% and taxes will rise by 1% this year, wiping even this little away. The Pay Review Body will be put into mothballs for three years. New pay scales and grades will be introduced in October 2004. The government says they'll be worth 2% 'on average'. There will be another 3.225% increase in April 2004, followed by a final 3.225% in 2005 – and that's it. Just 12% spread over three years.

There will be performance pay. Unlike now, health workers won't be able to move automatically to the top of their pay scales. Instead they'll be stopped and their performance assessed by management. If managers don't think their performance is up to scratch, they won't get a pay increase. Unions and government alike claim that Agenda for Change addresses equal pay, yet medical staff and senior managers aren't covered by it. Managers and consultants are overwhelmingly male and will earn substantially more than £65,000 a year – in fact £65,000 was the minimum on the consultants' proposed spine, which they rejected.

The unions have sold their members out and they know it. They've given the government all they want, a pathetic 10% three-year pay deal. Performance pay, modernisation, more work and longer hours. Most allowances will go in order to save the government millions. No wonder health secretary Alan Milburn looked so smug when he announced the deal, and no wonder union bosses looked so sheepish. They know the truth. This is a bad deal for staff, and a bad deal for staff is a bad deal for patients. Agenda for Change has taken the unions three and a half years to

negotiate. They've wasted their time.

Health workers have got more through one-day strikes than Agenda for Change will deliver. But all isn't lost. Unions will be balloting their members in the next couple of months. They'll try to spin the deal and claim it's a good one. Don't be fooled. Health workers deserve a decent living. Agenda for Change means most nurses will still earn just £20,000 a year, even though they're expected to take on more work. Hard to recruit staff, like occupational therapists and radiographers, will have to work longer hours. Despite claiming to be family-friendly, the government wants clinics open earlier and later. Some health workers in Scotland, Leeds and Carlisle have already fought back. Enough is enough. Unison, Amicus, the RCN, the Royal College of Midwives and the rest have failed their members. Agenda for Change would be a major set back. Health workers must vote no.

This is an edited version of an article which will appear in issue two of *Healthworker*, the IWW newsletter for NHS staff. To get a copy or for more information visit www.iww.org.uk or write to IWW Healthworker, PO Box 591, Hull HU5 2WZ

Building Worker

winter 2002



This is the paper of the Building Worker Group (BWG), the rank and file organisation for construction workers. It contains timely advice on how to claim holiday back pay (building workers have been entitled to 20 paid days a year since 1998), but its focus is safety on British sites. It outlines how a 'blitz' by the Health and Safety Executive last year actually showed only that the HSE was 'useless and toothless', with two workers still being killed every week.

It's dismissive of union bureaucrats as well as bosses. "As it is only building workers, not HSE or union officials, who are killed and maimed in unsafe site conditions, then it is obvious building workers are the only people with the will and desire and who have the power to stop this." The BWG's advice? Get organised and stop production.

Available for stamps from *Building Worker*, 2 Bitten Court, Lumbertubs, Northampton. Tel 07767 615 354

Curing the British disease



The Romans, according to one of their victims, created a desert and called it peace. The same could be said of British industrial relations. The legacy of Thatcher, fortunately, seems to be under erosion. The firefighters have been taking their first industrial action for 25 years. London tube workers, as well as organising their own strikes, closed down over twenty stations during the firefighters' strike last month. Glasgow tube workers meanwhile took part in a wildcat strike, as did workers in a hospital. In London, all the unions in higher education took joint strike action over the London Weighting allowance.

Union membership is rising, as is union militancy. These are all encouraging signs. Needless to say, the Tory media are working themselves into a frenzy. The current wave of action has been compared to ones back in the 1970s, with pundits muttering and pondering whether the 'British disease' is back. Thatcher, of course, was supposed to have provided a 'cure' for this 'disease', using a combination of economic crisis (caused, in part, by Tory incompetence) and state repression, aided no end by the union bureaucracy and trade union sectionalism.

It says a lot about capitalism that strikes and resistance are considered a 'disease'. In nature, it's considered a sign of health to lash

out at oppression and what causes pain. An animal which doesn't defend itself would be considered sick (or more likely, dead). The real 'British disease' isn't militancy but servility. To sit back and tolerate oppression is a sign of illness, not health. The letters page of the London's free *Metro* 'newspaper' provides an unhealthy number of inane arguments against strikes and strikers. How many are genuine, of course, is a moot point, but they do point to the true British disease. One *Metro* letter from 14th November sums this illness up. The author offered this advice to firefighters: "if someone does not like the salary offered to them ... they get another job".

This neatly expresses the serf mentality at the heart of capitalist society. Shouldn't freedom mean more than picking a master and following their orders without question? Equally missing is an awareness of the economic reality facing the bulk of workers. Simply put, it is no easy task to find a new job at the drop of a hat. The labour market is skewed in favour of the capitalist class, making it hard to find willing buyers for our liberty. Hence the importance of collective resistance to the power of the boss, which is our only hope of creating a force capable of abolishing class society once and for all.

And I wonder what the author's reaction would be if the firefighters took his advice and

quit *en masse*? If the strikes are threatening life and property, how much more damage would be inflicted while new fire crews were hired (at higher rates) and trained? Of course, the fact that the firefighters can't do this says more about the reality of wage slavery than a thousand inane letters. Like those letter writers who claim to earn a pittance but who don't go on strike or form unions to change their situation (which explains why they get a pittance), I can safely say the person misses the point.

Anarchists aren't surprised by the British disease. From Godwin onwards, we've recognised that property and hierarchy generate a servile mentality in many of those subject to them. Luckily, this isn't all they generate. Where there's domination, there's resistance. Our task is to encourage the spirit of revolt, to help the resistance of the minority inspire the majority to join in.

We need to cure the British disease. The way forward can be seen. We need to support and build upon the struggles that are happening now. We need to discuss how to apply our ideas in industry and our relations with the current trade unions. As a union member and a recent picketer, I know there's a lot wrong with them. But I also know that, at least for the time being, the unions aren't holding back a militant workforce looking for direct

action. This may change but we need to work from where we are now.

It's time to start a serious discussion of how we work within the unions, evaluating the ideas raised by groups like the Solidarity Federation, Industrial Workers of the World and the Anarchist Federation, and seeing how we can best apply what all these strategies have in common – the self-management of struggle by strikers' own assemblies. Perhaps we can revive the anarchist Trade Union network as a first step? At the very least, we can start a discussion of what we should do, both as union members and as strike supporters, during industrial disputes. This is a key issue for us and our ideas.

Whether the mainstream media know it or not, the label of 'industrial anarchy' they apply to the 1970s is very apt. Whenever working class people take direct action and manage their own struggles, the embryo of an anarchist society is created. We should try, in and outside the workplace, to encourage the libertarian tendencies in any struggle. Capitalism causes the disease. We have the cure. We have a clear message that will ring true for every striker – they, not union bureaucrats, should run their struggles and organisations themselves. How we spread that message is what we need to think about.

Iain McKay

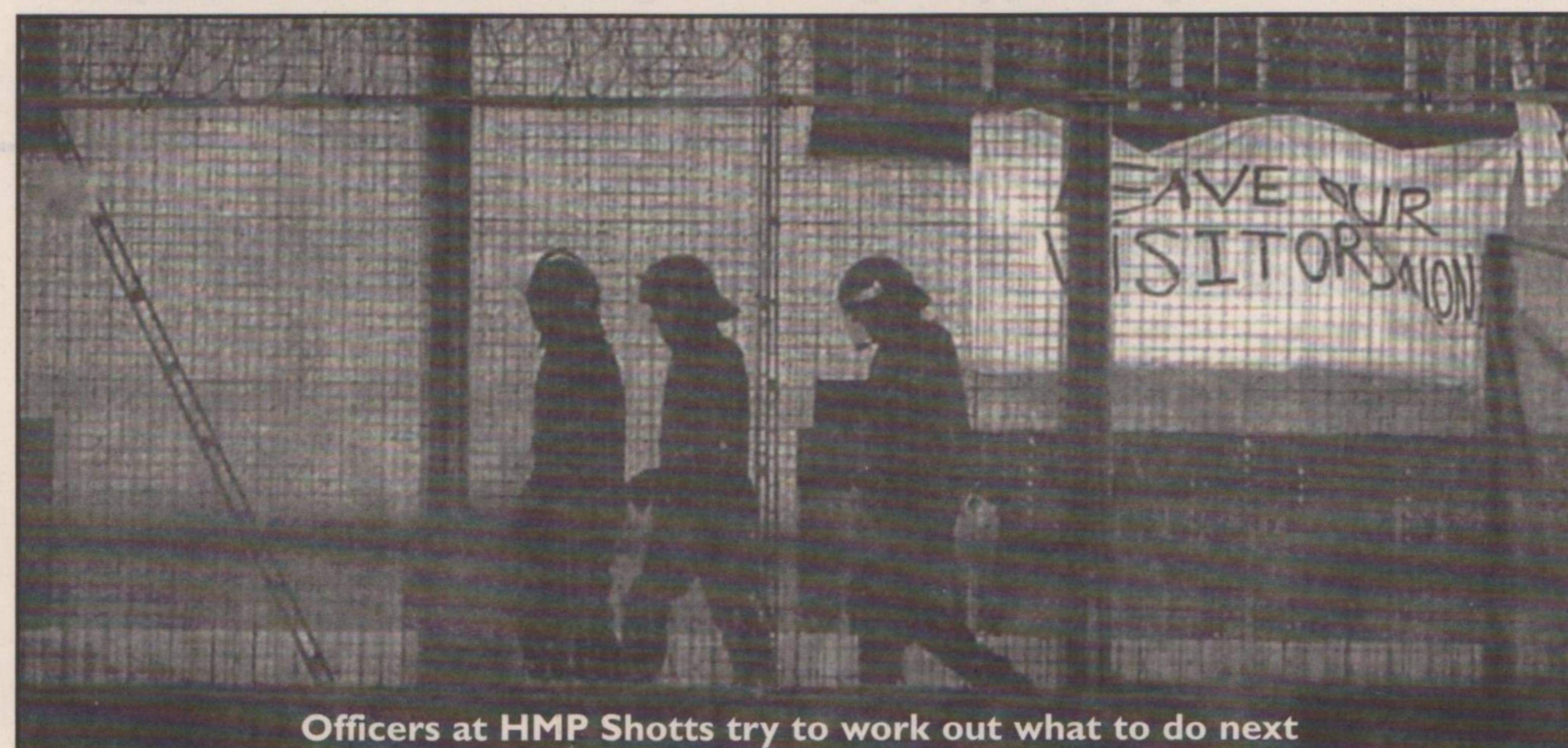
• **South London** A fence intended to keep people out of their local park was torn down during the night of 23rd December. The barrier, set up round the ridge of Crystal Palace Park by its owners, Bromley Borough Council, was removed by a group calling themselves the Crystal Palace Park Liberation Front. A representative of the group said "we wanted the park to be open for people to enjoy over the holidays, though ultimately it shouldn't be fenced off at all".

Last month's action was the latest in a long series of moves to halt Bromley Council's planned 'development' of the site. In the late 1990s, a protest camp stopped bulldozers from moving in. Last autumn, an earlier fence was also removed by protesters (see *Freedom*, 5th October 2002).

For info email savcrystalpalacepark@yahoo.co.uk

• **Lanarkshire** Two screws were injured during a rebellion at a high security jail last week. Disturbances at HMP Shotts began on 2nd January, when prisoners refused to return to their cells. Several small fires were lit, and some demonstrators went up on the roof. Although officials claimed not to know

NEWS IN BRIEF



Officers at HMP Shotts try to work out what to do next

what the protest was about, a banner was hung from a window saying 'leave our visitors alone' (see illustration above).

HMP Shotts has been affected by rebellions in the past, most recently last April when power supplies were cut following an storm. In January last year, prison inspectors criticised conditions at Shotts, saying boredom was a common complaint.

• **East London** SolFed activists are appealing for support to help stop scab labour being brought in to break a year-long strike by staff in Hackney's libraries. Workers have refused to work Saturdays since November 2001, when their wages were cut. But Hackney Borough Council has announced its intention to break the strike at three libraries on 11th January. Four more

will remain shut. Meet at 8.15am outside the Central Library.

Contact North and East London Solidarity Federation on 07799-251 035.

• **Opposing the war** A day school is being held in east London on 18th January to discuss the social context of the forthcoming war on Iraq and tactics for revolutionary opposition to it. The event, organised by the Disobedience network, will take the form of a series of workshops followed by a plenary.

It's designed to bring together anarchists, autonomists, anti-capitalists and others. One member of Disobedience said, "we need to strive towards a unity of theory and practice in all our activity. We fail to see how the existence of separate groups, one centred around discussion, the other on action, helps achieve such a unity".

Revolutionary Opposition to the War will be held at the London Activist Resource Centre, 62 Fieldgate Street, E1, 10am-6pm on Saturday 18th January. For details, visit www.disobedience.org.uk

The winner of our prize crossword will be announced in the next issue

Orwell and his critics

Orwell's Victory
by Christopher Hitchens
Penguin £9.99

Orwell in Spain
edited by Peter Davison
Penguin £9.99

In recent years, British writer George Orwell has joined his friends, the Italian novelist Ignazio Silone, and American journalist Burnett Bolloten as a politically dodgy commentator. Bolloten, who wrote a history of the Spanish civil war critical of the Stalinists, was supposed to have had CIA connections, while Silone was damned because he wrote for the journal *Encounter* at a time when it was receiving secret CIA sponsorship. All three have also been seen as friends of the libertarian left. Christopher Hitchens, not to be confused with his right-wing brother Peter, argues in *Orwell's Victory* that the controversial list of minor 1940s celebrities with communist sympathies which Orwell gave Celia Kirwan, a former girlfriend and an officer of the (MI5-sponsored) Information Research Department, in no way "denied his credit for keeping [the] libertarian and honest tradition alive".

Hitchens supports this by drawing attention to Orwell's work with the Freedom Defence Committee and his opposition to attempts to purge political extremists from the Civil Service. The Freedom Defence Committee was founded in 1945 to deal with infringements of civil liberties. Orwell was its Vice Chairman. In March 1948 Orwell wrote a letter to George Woodcock, editor of literary journal *Now* and secretary of the committee, in which he asked, "is the Freedom Defence Committee taking up any position about this ban on communists and fascists?"

Naturally he reserved the right to attack crypto-Bolsheviks and fellow travellers too. He'd suffered in Spain at the hands of the Stalinists and ended up on the run from their secret police, sleeping on building sites in Barcelona. But he was fair in so far as he gave people like Konni Zilliacus, a Bolshevik-inclined Labour MP, the credit they deserved, arguing that Zilliacus was "sincere if not honest".

Hitchens shows up many of Orwell's left-wing critics as feather-bedded intellectuals. Some, like E.P. Thompson, Raymond Williams and Claude Simon, were all once supporters of Stalin. And the hangover of power worship continues for many intellectuals in the west up to the present day. Most of Hitchens's scorn is reserved for Raymond Williams who, in his 1958 book *Culture and*



George Orwell "always striving to tell the truth"

Society, declared that Orwell was "the spokesman ... of another kind of despair: the despair born of social and political disillusion". Political disillusion! Hitchens writes that "the transcendent or crystallising moment (for Orwell's last book, *Nineteen-Eighty-Four*) undoubtedly occurred in Spain, or at any rate in Catalonia".

In 1971, Williams wrote "most historians have taken the view that the revolution – mainly anarcho-syndicalist, but with the POUM taking part – was an irrelevant distraction from a desperate war. Some, at the time and after, have gone so far as to describe it as deliberate sabotage of the war effort". Hitchens responds by arguing that the words "most historians" are meaningless as "no such consensus exists".

Besides writing *Orwell's Victory*, Hitchens also contributes an introduction to *Orwell in Spain*, edited by Peter Davison (both books are published by Penguin). In this introduction, he insists that material recently released from the Soviet Military Archive in Moscow makes it clear Russian agents were plotting a seizure of power to take place in Barcelona in early May 1937. What happened when the

police tried to take the telephone exchange from the workers was, it now seems, a prelude to a coup attempt against the syndicalist Confederación Nacional del Trabajo (CNT), the leftwing Partido Obrero de Unificación Marxista (POUM) and the "staunchly anti-Russian positions taken by Largo Caballero and his Republican cabinet".

On 11th May 1937, a further paper released from the archives reported to the Comintern on the mixed results of the action. Hitchens writes, "regretting the extent to which the POUM and other forces had been able to resist the Stalinist onslaught, the author (whose identity in this instance is uncertain) relays the demand for 'energetic and merciless repression' by means of a 'military tribunal for the Trotskyists'". The documents in question were disclosed, Hitchens says "as a consequence of an exclusive agreement between the State Military Archive and Yale University Press".

In 1940, Orwell wrote to a friend saying he'd never had any fear of the workers being in charge because he'd never met "a genuine working man who accepted Marxism". But, he continued, "I admit to having a perfect

horror of a dictatorship of theorists, as in Russia and Germany". This attitude was based, he claimed, on "certain things I saw in the Spanish war ...". But it was Spain, or rather Catalonia, that inspired in Orwell the greatest hope for what Hitchens calls "his most oft-repeated statement", of a "society of free and equal human beings". And it was his Catalan experience of 'spontaneous fraternity' that sustained him throughout the rest of his life. Not for nothing did he write, in his undated *Notes on the Spanish Militias*, "had I had a complete understanding of the situation [in Spain], I should probably have joined the CNT militia".

Q.D. Leavis in *Scrutiny* (September 1940) wrote of Orwell, "starting from an inside knowledge of the working class, painfully acquired, he can see through the Marxist theory, and being innately decent (he displays and approves of bourgeois morality) he is disgusted with the callous theorising inhumanity of the pro-Marxists".

Orwell has critics amongst postmodernists, as well as amongst feminists and anti-homophobes (he dismissed the Bloomsbury Group as 'pansy poets' and 'nancy boys' among other things). In France, Claude Simon claimed that his account of the Spanish experience in *Homage to Catalonia* was "faked from the very first sentence". But of course Orwell's work can be checked, and his work is full of health warnings about his own subjectivity. As Hitchens says, "Objectivity", though in practice as unattainable as infinity, is useful in the same way, as a fixed point of theoretical reference". He thinks Orwell stumbled on the near impossible, "the synthesis of the empiricist dialectic", and that in his rigorous methodology he "went native in his own country", consorting with the unemployed and destitute of England.

Neither the Marxists with their mechanistic approach nor the postmodernists with their promiscuous relativism, can stomach his keenness for observable facts. He was, as Nicolas Walter wrote in *Anarchy* (October 1961), "always striving, striving to tell the truth about what he saw and what he felt". But on the three great issues of the twentieth century – imperialism, fascism and Stalinism – it's hard to fault Orwell's observations. These are books anarchists ought to read.

Brian Bamford

Both books are obtainable from Freedom Press Bookshop, add £1 p&p for each within the UK, £2 for each elsewhere

Bookfair on the move

This year's Anarchist Bookfair will be held at the University of London Union on 25th October. It will be housed in two halls, with at least ten meeting rooms on the site, as well as food and drink at the student union bar. Ironically, ULU refused a booking for the Mayday 2000 conference, although they're booked every year for the Socialist Workers Party 'Marxism' jamboree. When challenged about this contradiction three years ago, they said it was because "anarchists mean what they say (and write)".

There will be no evening event at the venue – perhaps others will take on organising something? Costs for the booking are roughly the same as for last year's Bookfair

at the (smaller) Camden Centre, but there will be no income from the bar or food, both of which will be retained by ULU. Fortunately, last year's Bookfair ended up with a healthy bank balance allowing a deposit to be put down for this year. Benefit events will be held during 2003 to raise more funds. These will be advertised in *Freedom*, but offers of help are needed now.

In November, the bookfair collective hosted a public discussion to review last year's event, to which a disappointing two people turned up. Discussion centred on what the purpose of the Anarchist Bookfair was. Is it an opportunity to buy books and meet old friends, a chance to introduce anarchist ideas and practice to newcomers, or both?

There was also a debate around whether the bookfair should be more of a conference and organising event. Central to the discussion was the fact that six people can only do so much. Without the involvement of the wider movement in publicising, organising and actively participating in it, it's likely that the Anarchist Bookfair will continue to attract only those who are already committed to anarchist ideas. As Britain's largest annual anarchist gathering, is this good enough? The collective will hold another public meeting in the spring. Come along, have your say and get involved.

MH

For more information, visit the bookfair website at www.anarchistbookfair.org

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Anarchist economics

I read David Dane's reply to comments I made with some amusement ('Market socialism', 14th December). Not only does he contradict himself, he also raises an old straw man that anyone familiar with communist-anarchist ideas would see through in a nanosecond. David wants me to give a "coherent account of how a modern industrial society could coordinate production, supply and demand while ensuring high quality". I didn't try to do this, partly because of lack of space, but far more importantly because of the simple fact that a communist-anarchist society will be created from below, by the mass of people themselves – not by me. Of course I've got my own ideas of how such a society could operate, but ultimately it's speculation. The new society will be created by the masses themselves.

David simply states the obvious when he argues that "an anarchist society can't just be imposed on the world", as if communist-anarchists ever argue that it could, or would, be imposed. If he were interested in honesty he'd start by acknowledging this, rather than by implying that we plan to impose our will. We want voluntary communism, built by those who desire it. Rather than impose it on the working class (an impossibility), we try to encourage tendencies that exist in the class struggle. By our propaganda we try to convince people that such a society is both possible and desirable. In summary, communist-anarchism is based on the self-liberation of the working class.

I suppose the weakness of David's argument explains why he raises an old bogeyman by associating communist-anarchists with what "Marxist political parties are trying to do". If he bothered to read our ideas he'd quickly see that, while Marxist political parties aim to take political power for themselves and decree 'socialism' into existence, communist-anarchists have always stressed that socialism would be created by the masses themselves through their own actions and organisations. In these circumstances, how can communist-anarchists 'impose a unity' or anything else? And if David thinks a free communist society would be a homogenous one, it suggests a distinct lack of imagination on his part!

I also find his statement that communist-anarchists want to "impose a unity on all these different people" somewhat ironic. After all, for all his talk of pluralism he's arguing that there's only one way economic decisions can be made – via the market mechanism. Moreover, by noting that price isn't "the only process to be considered in economic activity", he acknowledges that the 'market mechanism' doesn't do a particularly good job in meeting human needs. Surely he knows it penalises those who do take other processes into account?

The failure of the market mechanism is one that many across the world are aware of, and they're trying to find new, better ways of life. These are people who are refusing to sacrifice themselves to the 'market mechanism', working class people who are organising themselves to improve their lives. They are 'contracting' the kind of 'other relationships' that David is so strangely quiet about, in trade unions, community assemblies and so on.

David mentions the anti-globalisation movement, arguing that it's trying to create "economies people can have more control of on a local basis". Yet according to the economics of the 'market mechanism', there can be no control of it. After all, 'perfect competition' requires a multitude of firms, none of which can influence (that is, control) the 'market mechanism'. And the idea that



Mutualist daddy Pierre-Joseph Proudhon

local communities should control markets can be dismissed out of hand (it's bad for the 'market mechanism'). So the process David supports excludes, by definition, the 'preference' he claims is 'right'.

Unlike David Dane, communist-anarchists have no desire to decree for humanity how it should make economic decisions. Anarchism, as communist-anarchists have always stressed, would reflect the needs and desires of those creating it. We simply try to influence any revolt towards an end we think desirable, by convincing those involved of its desirability. An anarchist society would reflect both the political ideas of the people involved and the objective circumstances they face. This means that the level of socialisation would vary across the world. Revolution is a process, it doesn't imply an overnight transformation.

There's also the question of means. David raises the possibility of civil war, posing the alternatives of "economics and non-violence to help move society in a more libertarian direction". Ignoring the obvious point, that he implicitly acknowledges that his methods can't actually result in a libertarian society, I'll say this. There's no disagreement that non-violence is the preferable means. But if David thinks the ruling class will sit back and watch its power and wealth eroded by peaceful means, he clearly hasn't learned any lessons from history. If non-violence is effective, the state will attack.

Faced with the non-violent factory and land occupations in Italy in 1920, the ruling class turned to fascism. Faced with the non-violent blockade in Seattle in 1999, the state turned to the nightstick and pepper-spray. Anarchists have to recognise the need for self-defence. Not doing so simply means that we've presented the state with yet another weapon in its arsenal. If we're effective, in other words, then we'll face civil war no matter how 'non-violent' we are. In other words, David's arguments are simply arguments for doing nothing.

I reject his either/or logic. Either you support revolution or you support "contracting other relationships", he says. Sorry, but I don't buy

it. I support both. By building alternative, libertarian institutions in the here and now, we strengthen the possibilities of an anarchist revolution in the future. By organising in our communities and workplaces ('contracting other relationships' which the state and bosses can't ignore), we build the framework of a free society today. This is the core idea of communist-anarchism. Ultimately, David reinforces what I thought all along. His 'anarchism' is simply militant liberalism.

Iain McKay

For mutualists and individualist anarchists, the market is simply a world or society where people are free to exchange goods, services and other products of their labour as they see fit, unregulated by the state or any other involuntary institution. The capitalism that dominates the world today is a creature of government, protected and empowered by laws (and the police who enforce them) that grant monopolies and oligopolies in land, money and the means of production to a favoured few. In an anarchist society, where people can form voluntary associations to provide credit (like Proudhon's mutual bank), and where land is allocated on the basis of use and occupancy, individuals will be able

to work for themselves, alone or in voluntary groups. Non-producers won't be able to wring profit from the work of others.

Market mechanisms are essential to a working system of exchange. And some form of exchange is essential to human society. Price may be an imperfect basis for decision-making, but it sure as hell beats the dictates of committees and planners. While people now appear to be rebelling against (state-capitalist) markets, only ten or fifteen years ago an even more successful movement brought down the planned economies of Russia, Poland, Mongolia and elsewhere.

More importantly, the drawbacks of either state-capitalist or state-socialist systems shouldn't be used to criticise the economic ideas of anarchists who, whether they're mutualists or communists, advocate societies free of the governmental institutions that have created and protected both capitalism and socialism as we know them. While some concepts, like markets, collectives, competition and communism have been adopted and (mis)used by our authoritarian enemies, anarchists should be as easily able to see the difference between an anarchist market and that of the World Trade Organisation as they can between an anarchist collective and a Soviet collective farm.

While Iain McKay writes off the history of cooperatives as unsuccessful, and mutualist movements as dated and redundant, the same can be said for the various collectivist and social revolutionary projects. The syndicalists and communists of Europe have been no more successful in instituting viable societies than were the individualists and mutualists in the United States. Both movements produced shortlived voluntary societies that either collapsed or were destroyed. The union movement all over the world has lost any revolutionary potential it may once have had, and it often promotes authoritarian ideologies and movements like nationalism and nationalisation.

We shouldn't be trying to buy back what's been stolen from us by the state and its favoured corporations, banks and landlords. Occupations of workplaces and farms by those who do the actual work, as well as refusal to pay taxes, will surely play a part in bringing down the state-supported capitalist economy and the state itself. But cooperatives and other alternative economic arrangements not only provide more voluntary and just relationships between people now. They can also inspire their participants and others to strive to change all of society, and the world, into a network of voluntary relationships between individuals and groups. And that is what Landauer, no passive evolutionist, meant by "contracting different relationships".

Joe Peacott

Fighting fire

Richard Garner's call for a "fire service shaped entirely by voluntary cooperation, run by those who use it" looks like orthodox anarchism ('The fire this time', 14th December), but his call for competing private fire brigades resembles privatisation freakery. Fires should be tackled at once, not preceded by research into which fire brigade covers the endangered building.

Something like an anarchist fire service existed in London back in the seventeenth century. Following the Fire of London in 1666, the Corporation had public fire pumps placed at intervals, for the use of neighbours

using their own initiative whenever a fire broke out.

They were still there during the 'Glorious Revolution' of 1685, when James II's army fled London before William of Orange's army arrived, abandoning the city to a few days of mob rule. The mob took the opportunity of burning down Newgate Prison, the judges houses and various government buildings. Samuel Pepys recorded in his diary how he watched the arsonists using the public fire pumps to prevent the spread of fire to neighbouring buildings.

Donald Room

Practical suggestions

On 30th November, we printed more contributions to a discussion which began with an article by Iain McKay in August. Do we need a new type of anarchist federation in Britain? The debate continues ...

I'd hoped my original article would lead to more discussion. Surely a question of this importance should produce more input from readers? On 21st September, Ed from Woking Anarchist Federation suggested that, in order to strengthen our movement, we should all join one of the existing national federations. But he missed the point I was trying to make. If these federations were stronger more anarchists would join them, for a start. But in any case, many people seem happier outside the existing groups. Asking them to join one would be fruitless. Even if all anarchists did join, the question of co-operation would still be an important one, and one that isn't currently being addressed. (Nor, incidentally, did I suggest setting up a brand new anarchist federation, though if one did result from increased cooperation I'd be happy).

Turning to Paul Maguire (30th November), I really wonder what he's on about. Perhaps I shouldn't be too surprised that he spends more time lambasting those he considers 'freaks' than actually addressing my original article and the ideas it raised. If he did address them, he'd have to comment on my suggestions for how we, as anarchists, could apply our ideas and make them relevant to our class. Certainly I don't need him to tell me that anarchists are isolated from the working class either. I said as much back in August, when this discussion began. Ironically, though, Paul turns my own point into a stick to beat me with. Then, after ignoring the bulk of what I said, he says my suggestions are like "pissing in the wind"! Well, better than taking the piss.

If, by the term 'anarcho-librarian', he simply means an anarchist who bothers to read what others actually write, I plead guilty. Looking at what he wrote, it's significant that for all his talk about finding means to "our assumed constituency" (the working class), he singularly fails even to mention the means by which I proposed we could do so. I take this lack of discussion to signify a lack of support for what I called community and workplace syndicalism. But where does that leave us? Paul says we could "learn more from the recent successes of the BNP, lessons we can turn against them, than we can from what the CNT did" in Spain. Which means that, as workplaces and community assemblies are rejected, we're left with the dead-end of electioneering. And he accuses others of not wanting to learn from previous errors!

It's a shame that, after expressing so much venom, Paul can't be bothered to suggest anything practical himself. Need I remind him the reason Durruti and Makhno inspire us today is because they supported workplace and community assemblies, and direct action – not electioneering? As for Brian Bamford's contribution, I'd say he gives us a practical example of one possible way forward. Any coordination of anarchist activity will have to be built from the bottom up, and the experience of the Northern Anarchist Network could be something to learn from. Can we have more details of what's done there and, as importantly, how?

Now I've got a practical suggestion to make, and one which could provide a test run for



picture taken from Breeding Free (available from Freedom Press Bookshop at £3 add 50p towards p&p in UK £1 elsewhere)

the coordination I think would strengthen our presence. The 'Don't attack Iraq' lobby of parliament on 15th February would be an ideal event for which we could concentrate on the 95% that we, as class struggle anarchists, have in common. Libertarian Lad said on 30th November that we should work on "organising a fightback in the UK against capitalism", rather than bothering with "thousands of bible thumpers, CNDers and treehuggers". Well, I think he's wrong on five counts.

First, fighting the war and capitalism aren't, and mustn't be, mutually exclusive. Second, the costs of the war will be dumped on the working class, both here and in Iraq (the working class suffers most in any war). Third, if Libertarian Lad thinks that people on the anti-war march will be limited to his colourful list he's wrong. Fourth, if we want real anarchism to predominate, we need to be active. We need to present our ideas in a militant and practical way. Ignoring a mass event like this would mean leaving it to the 'radical liberals and lifestyleists' he criticises, so ensuring that fluffy 'anarchism' continues. Fifth, working together on 15th February will allow us a test-run for joint activity in the class struggle.

So, what could this cooperation involve? At its most basic, a joint leaflet by all the national anarchist federations and class struggle magazines and papers. This would explain the anarchist analysis of war and how to stop it, and shouldn't be difficult to agree and produce. It could advertise a follow-up public meeting, and give contacts for all the groups. Perhaps this could be fleshed out on the AF-SolFed-CWF mailing list? One of the problems people complain of is the lack of visibility in our movement. Leafleting an anti-war demo like this would be a massive boost to our visibility.

Needless to say, joint activity could happen for any event, and it's a disgrace that it isn't

often being done now. We've managed it in Glasgow, even taking leaflets, stickers and placards down to the London RTS/Dockers' march in 1997. I remember being dismayed then that London anarchists hadn't done something similar. What about now? Is it more of the same or an attempt, no matter how flawed, to get our ideas across to others in a big way? Will it be anarchy in action or anarchist inaction?

Iain McKay

On 8th February, there will be a special anti-war issue of *Freedom* to coincide with the lobby of parliament a week later. For details of how to contribute, email FreedomCopy@aol.com or join the Freedom discussion list by sending an empty email to FreedomAnarchistFortnightly-subscribe@yahoo.com

Like Paul Maguire, I and the rest of the Anarchist Federation agree our focus must be on raising levels of resistance among the working class. The question is how to do it. With only just over sixty members spread across the British Isles I think the AF punches above its weight, but we're spread mighty thin. We encourage members to form local AF, anarchist or campaign groups, and to provide support in the form of leaflets, flyers, pamphlets, posters and stickers. We provide money to pay for venues, travel for speakers, a benefit fundraiser or whatever. We help fund agitational bulletins like *Merseyside Resistance!*, which feature local campaigns and more material issues.

Hopefully a group forms and begins to fight back, joining in local struggles and raising new issues via propaganda and direct action. Hopefully it creates a culture of resistance. Then the task is to form a non-electoral challenge which has the potential to abolish the local state, or to force it into significant concessions to freedom – not an easy task! Until then, a permanent federation

helps sustain these groups and, if they peter away (which happens), members of the AF aren't lost to the movement but carry on the fight knowing that others are fighting too.

The national federations also provide the means for people to debate strategy and tactics, which is important in the struggle to win back the allegiance of ordinary people. It's true we haven't done enough to create a connection in people's minds between poverty, inequality and capitalism – unfortunately, most people's attitude is that they'd like a piece of it, if only the fat cats would stop guzzling the cream. It's hard to argue for the abolition of money when it's the want of it that drives people crazy!

Paul Maguire was exactly right, but here's a question. Do we try to stimulate people's desire for freedom while pointing out that it's the injustices of capitalism that deny them that freedom? Or do we challenge injustice while pointing out that this injustice stems from our lack of freedom? Or, like the Anarchist Federation, do we try to do both, unifying those for whom liberty and justice are the twin poles of the same struggle?

Odessa Steps

Anarchist Federation

Paul Maguire's frustration with the anarchist movement may be understandable, but ultimately standing on the sidelines shouting 'you're all wrong' is no solution either. As someone who has a partner, two children and work to do, I can understand his frustration with a ghetto that seems to want to talk only to itself. If anarchism is a valid philosophy, which I believe it is, then it has to be relevant to the real struggles of working class people.

I've recently joined the Solidarity Federation, after ten years' involvement in a local anarchist group that came out of the campaign against the Poll Tax. What I find there isn't "a syndicalist equivalent of trade union routinism", despite what Paul says, but a small group of people trying to put their anarchist politics into some kind of positive direction. There are only about six active people in our local group, and quite a few more or less inactive ones.

Yet we're involved in disputes in local government, including the year-long dispute in Hackney libraries, in campaigns against the sell-off of council housing and also in producing a free newsletter that we give out at demonstrations, tube stations and workplaces. It would be easy, given the scale of the task we face and, as Paul says, our distance from having a widespread base in the working class, to feel we were just 'pissing in the wind'. But I'd defend our activity, not because I think we have all the answers, but because otherwise we'll always be starting from zero.

So what I'd say to Paul and other isolated or inactive anarchists is to join one of the national organisations or a local group – there must be somewhere you can get together with other people and put your politics into some useful activity. It's only by doing things that we actually learn about our politics. There must be some group or organisation that's near enough to what you believe to get involved with. And if there isn't, get some people together and set it up.

Steve Fisher

For the latest on the Hackney libraries dispute Steve mentions, see page 3.

This discussion will continue in future issues of *Freedom*.

What we say ...

Tony Blair's New Year message, and the actions linked to it, provided further evidence of New Labour's agenda and the tactics they intend to deploy in pursuit of it. According to Blair, 'we' are entering 2003 faced by some of the most 'difficult and dangerous' problems of recent times. Among the problems on their way this year, he said, were "the terrorist threat, the economic slow-down, the effect on jobs and pensions, and the sense that, in key areas of social behaviour and in our asylum system, those that play by the rules are being damaged by those that don't".

A perfect snapshot of New Labour in action, in other words – hyping up fears about terrorism, crime, social disorder and asylum in order to manufacture generalised insecurity, with the spectre of economic slowdown as a code for 'sacrifices' to maintain economic stability and the introduction of new state powers to make the social order 'safe' once more. That the sacrifices will be borne by the working class, that it's always the poorest who are to be policed, of course goes unsaid.

The response in practice to Blair's latest 'difficulties and dangers' has taken two forms. There are new laws being planned to allow police and military personnel to evacuate or quarantine urban areas by force 'in case of terrorist attack'. And there's the appointment of Louise Casey to head a new 'anti-social behaviour unit', targeting 'community cohesion'.

The proposed Civil Contingencies Bill will create a 7,000-strong armed reaction force. Under the guise of dealing with 'terror', the 14 regions of the UK will have large numbers of armed military police on the streets (the north of Ireland has them already, of course).

The appointment of Casey, previously 'homelessness czar', represents the extent to which social issues are seen as purely security matters by New Labour. The consequence is that 'social policy' is now a matter for the Home Office. Insecurity – the real insecurity of joblessness and poverty as well as the manufactured insecurities of the 'asylum crisis' and of law and order – is the enemy of solidarity. It undermines the 'community cohesion' Blair and his cronies pay lip service to.

Sociologist John Vaill has said that "insecurity has seeped into the fabric of our lives and has become the template of our daily experience". The solution advanced by New Labour is the increased policing of everyday working class life. The cohesion to be preserved is the cohesion of class society.

In his New Year message of doom, Blair said "the blunt truth is that there has never been a time when domestic and foreign policy were so closely linked". It's this acknowledgement which underpins the New Labour project. Modern capitalism is a globalised system of exploitation which relies on high speed transport and communication to secure internationalised production. The defeats inflicted on working class organisation in the last 25 years have facilitated the compression of space and time that the market depends on today.

But this 'speed-up' renders capital yet more vulnerable to disruption. As a result, the norms of liberal democracy are norms which capital can less and less afford. Even before September 11th the United States had 470 emergency power statutes, delegating legislative power to the Executive. As legal theorist William Scheuerman has pointed out, "liberal democracy has increasingly blurred the dividing line between 'normal' and 'exceptional', or emergency, powers ... most important, the definition of what constitutes an 'emergency' has taken on ever broader contours". To maintain its 'order', capital is dispensing with the 'democratic norms' it formerly claimed were the guarantees of 'security' in capitalist society.

Readers' letters

No sects please

Dear *Freedom*,

In the piece I wrote about a Catford cinema being taken over by the loony church whose members killed Victoria Climbié ('God beats culture', 14th December), I got the name slightly wrong. It's actually called the Universal Church for the Kingdom of God. It's a Brazilian racket that already owns the Rainbow and Brixton Academy. I understand it's also tried to buy a cinema in Gravesend to convert. The cult works on the basis of telling the poor to give lots of money to the church, and in return god will give them a new car or a better job. On a more positive note, Lewisham Borough Council have now publicly stated that they welcome submissions on the church's planning application, which will be heard on 7th February.

Martin H.

Dear *Freedom*,

As a new reader, who came to be interested in anarchist ideas through reading Lorenzo Kom'boa Ervin, I was surprised to read the article by Martin H. The Universal Church for the Kingdom of God is indeed a sect, but it has a lot of support in the black community (my mother is a member!), and to suggest a 'campaign of direct action' against it appears to me ill thought-out, particularly in circumstances when most people in my community are unlikely to listen to the anarchist perspective on war, never mind on religion!

Martin refers to the Lewisham Humanist Group. But humanism always remembers Marx's injunction about religion being the 'opium of the people' while forgetting his point about it serving as the 'heart of a heartless world'. Large numbers of poor black people turn to the various churches because

of the promise of Utopia after life has been endured. Humanism in the UK is a materialism of the middle class – it offers no Utopia, only the fact that this life is all there is. Easy to accept if your life is easy, less so if it's shit!

Surely the best way of combating the false promise of the Kingdom of God is to offer the possibility of a Kingdom for everyone here on earth? The faith in a future after death could be replaced by a struggle for a real future in the here and now. Because humanism offers up only a crude materialism, it holds no appeal to anyone who needs a future to fight for, because their here and now is so dire. Churches offer a combination of future hope and daily community. We have to find ways of offering the same.

A number of your writers have commented on the gulf between anarchism and working class communities. Martin's tactics would only widen that gulf. We need to win people to our ideas and away from the reaction of sects like the Universal Church, but winning their congregations to a perspective of working class struggle over housing, policing and so on is more realistic than 'direct action' against the church.

Shola Keenan

Contrary views

Dear *Freedom*,

Mick Vick's point about the Socialist Party of Great Britain trying to reach a dialogue with other anarchists couldn't be more wrong (letters, 14th December). For starters, what does he mean by 'other anarchists'? Since when has the SPGB been anarchist? Although some of its members might be in the closet, most would balk at the mere suggestion. As for them wanting to reach a dialogue, Mick

should know that the SPGB will only engage with other groups in order to convert them to their particular brand of salvation – socialism. The sad fact is, you don't discuss with the SPGB, you shut up and listen. Finally, since 1904 the party has adhered to its hostility clause, which states that it "enters the field of political action, determined to wage war against all other political parties". The declaration extends to all political groups. Where's the room for dialogue there?

H.L.

Dear *Freedom*,

Let's have more interaction with the SPGB and less involvement with the past. The only way the system is going to be overturned is by all the people on the left finding a common ground. Anarchy in itself is not the whole answer. As a reader of *Freedom* for some five years, I must say that you and your correspondents haven't yet demonstrated that you have a plan for how a future society could operate its affairs. We need to find that common ground.

Trevor Smith

Remembering Vero

Dear *Freedom*,

Here's a poem to commemorate the first anniversary of Vernon Richards's death.

Violin strings vibrate
enriching my life
real memory of
nostalgic sound and
oneiric vision
never forgotten

Fiamma Chessa

Vernon Richards set up the modern Freedom Press in 1936. He died in December 2001.

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AND
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HACKNEY LIBRARIES PICKET
Saturday 11th January from around 8.15am
North & East London Solidarity Federation are calling for an anarchist contingent to gather at the Central Library in Hackney to prevent the use of scab labour.
NELSF, PO Box 1681, London N8 7LE • 07799 251 035

DISARM DSEI OPEN MEETING
Saturday 22th January at 2pm
St Ann's Church Hall, Berwick Road, Canning Town, London
contact: 07817 652 029

DIRECT ACTION TRAINING
Sunday 12th January • 11am to 4.30pm
St Werburghs Community Centre, Bristol BS2
contact: james@venables.plus.com

ANARCHIST READING CIRCLE
Every Tuesday from 8pm
Currently reading *The Female Eunuch* by Germaine Greer
contact: insurrectionist73@yahoo.co.uk

HARINGEY AGAINST PRIVATISATION
Tuesday 14th January meeting at 7.45pm
Wood Green Labour Club, Stuart Crescent, London N22
email: hdg@globalnet.co.uk • tel: 020 8374 5027

LANCASTER RE-SOURCE CENTRE
Wednesdays from 12 noon to 7pm
Check out new Re-Source Centre, 78a Penny Street, Lancaster
contact: 01524 383012

BRISTOL PEACE VIGIL ACTIONS
Wednesday 15th and Saturday 18th January
City Centre, St Augustine's parade, opposite the Hippodrome
see: <http://www.iacenter.org/rcun.htm>

WORTHING GREEN SOCIAL
Wednesday 15th January from 8pm
upstairs room at Barney's Café Bar, Portland Road, Worthing
email: Richard at rdowra@hotmail.com

PERFORMANCE CLUB CABARET
Wednesday 15th January from 8.30pm
The Kings Head, The Broadway, Crouch End, London N8
see <http://www.newagenda.org.uk/perfclub.htm>

DISRUPT THE MASTERS OF WAR
17th to 19th January
Weekend of anti-war events/action at Northwood military HQ
See website or get in touch for details
www.voicesuk.org • tel 0845 458 2564

ANTI-WAR DAY SCHOOL
Saturday 18th January from 10am to 6pm
Day school on revolutionary opposition to the war at the London Action Resource Centre, 62 Fieldgate Street, London E1
see <http://www.disobedience.org.uk>

'INJUSTICE' FILM SHOWING
Sunday 19th January at 1.30pm
at Birkbeck College, Malet Street, London WC1
see www.londonsocialistfilmco-op.com • tel 020 7278 5764

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Sunday 19th January at 11am
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TACT SOCIAL NIGHT
Tuesday 21st January from 7.30pm
This TACT social gathering for anti-capitalists will be upstairs at the Princess Louise, 208-209 High Holborn, London WC1

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Tuesday 21st January at 8pm
Manchester Libertarian Socialist Discussion Group meet at the Hare and Hounds, Shude Hill, near Arndale Centre

DON'T ATTACK IRAQ
Tuesday 21st January from 2.30pm onwards
Lobby of Parliament and rally to speak out against war
www.cnduk.org • www.no-war-on-iraq.org.uk

LONDON ANARCHIST FORUM
Friday 24th January from 8pm to 10pm
Anarchist-communism a discarded myth? (speaker Dave Dane)
at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Holborn, London

CLOSE CAMPSFIELD DEMO
Saturday 25th December from 12 noon to 2pm
see www.closecampsfield.org.uk

DISOBEDIENCE ANTI-WAR BENEFIT
Saturday 25th January from 8pm
A disobedience anti-war benefit featuring singer-songwriters **Leon Rosselson and Robb Johnson**
at the London Action Resource Centre, 62 Fieldgate Street, London E1 • admission £6/£4
see www.disobedience.org.uk

RECLAIM THE FUTURE 2 BENEFIT
Saturday 1st February from 3pm until late
All-day event in self-organised space in London brought to you by RTS 2003, Wombles, Social Centres Network, Disobedience, Indymedia and random collection of London anarchists
Starts with kids' space in afternoon, party until late
£2 in afternoon • £5/£3 after 7pm
For venue details ring 07931 560 569 or check indymedia.org.uk from noon on 1st February

BOOKFAIR IN BELGIUM
Saturday 29th March from 10am to 8pm
The third international anarchist bookfair in Gent, Belgium, with stalls from Belgium, France, Germany, UK, Holland
see <http://www.anarchie.be/aboek>

RADICAL DAIRY SOCIAL CENTRE
Get in touch for details of events
The Radical Dairy, 47 Kynaston Road, London N16
tel 020 7249 6996 or email theradicaldairy@hotmail.com

USE YOUR LOAF SOCIAL CENTRE
Veggie café every Friday from 7pm
Infoshop: we have loads of free stuff on many campaigns ring hotline or call in to find out more ...
Use Your Loaf, 227 Deptford High Street, London SE8
Hotline: 07984 588807

LARC SOCIAL CENTRE
many events - check website for details
The London Action Resource Centre, 62 Fieldgate Street, London E1 1ES (Whitechapel or Aldgate East tube)
for more info tel 020 7377 9088 or email fieldgate@gn.apc.org
see www.londonarc.org

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