

FREEDOM

80P ANARCHIST NEWS AND VIEWS

www.freedompress.org.uk

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LIBERTARIAN PAPER TORCHED

A campaign to silence Moroccan anarchists is reaching new heights as they embarrass local businessmen and governments, reports Rob Ray. On the night of Wednesday 22nd June, persons unknown torched the premises of Morocco's only libertarian paper, Ici et Maintenant.

Since its inception the paper, based in Msemrir, Ouarzazate province, had been under pressure from the authorities and other sources, mainly due to its series of spectacular exposes of the jailing of trade unionists and miners from the Imini Manganese mines in Sacem.

The miners' dispute at Imini had been going on since 2002, when 132 people staged an indefinite sit-in in response to illegal labour casualisation, poor working conditions, pay and hours.

The group also broke with their previous union, the UMT, citing its cosy relationship with the bosses, to join the more militant CDT.

On 15th April 2004, mine directors sent 120 trained and armed militiamen, drawn from foreign sources and local street vagrants, through government checkpoints, to deal with the strikers.

It is alleged that the director of the mine, and the secretary of the regional UMT branch were among the first to throw stones at women and children who were present at the site and incited the mercenaries.

During the attack, fourteen people, affiliated to the CDT, were arbitrarily

arrested. Six were subsequently jailed for assault. After a lengthy investigative campaign by Ici et Maintenant, the decision was overturned by the courts on 22nd April.

It is thought the court victory was the catalyst for a subsequent campaign to repress the paper. Brahim Fillali, editor of Ici et Maintenant said: "I point an accusing finger at the authorities and the local mafia, at all who are disturbed by this paper, those who profit from the poverty, ignorance, marginalisation and under-development of this region."

A threatening letter was first received on 26th November 2004, after the publication of the paper's third issue.

On 3rd June 2005 Brahim was summoned before the judicial brigade of the Ouarzazate gendarmerie in connection with a forged letter sent to the Justice Minister. He refused, having received no written summons.

Nineteen days later there was an arson attack on the paper.

CGT Andalusia in Spain is asking for protest faxes to be sent to:

- The governor of Ouarzazate province, fax number 00 212 44 88 25 68;
- The Moroccan Minister of Justice, 00 212 37 72 37 10;
- The Moroccan Interior Minister, 00 212 37 76 74 04.

E-mails of support for the paper can be sent to tiwirga@caramail.com.

The mine is owned by Omnium Nord Africain (OMA), one of the biggest



Ouarzazate: a 120-strong militia travelled from here to attack the Imini mines (inset)

companies in Morocco with a turnover of at least \$1.6bn, who bought it in 1996 as part of the World Bank's privatisation programme for the country.

The president of the company, Fouad

ibn Abdellatif Filali, is a blood relative of King Mohammed VI, and son of the former Moroccan Prime Minister. The company itself is a holding of the extended royal family. Mohammed has

come under fire recently for being both the architect of privatisation and its main beneficiary, as his companies have snapped up most of the stock he has made available on behalf of the state.

AA ASSET STRIPPERS

All centre workers for breakdown service the AA were marched off the premises by security guards at the company's Newcastle offices as new staff were being offered their jobs on casual contracts on the other side of the site. After showing up to work as normal on the 20th July, AA employees were informed they had been made redundant and told to go on immediate gardening leave. As security escorted the workers out of the left hand side of the building, interviewees were seen entering from the right hand side and being offered jobs after five to ten minutes. Guards continued to monitor the workers until they left the site.

The AA Democratic Union (AADU),

set up by former GMB officials loyal to deposed National Secretary Kevin Curran, supported the move and their reps reportedly (including former GMB bureaucrat Adele Drane, recently named in the union's inquiry into the corruption of the Curran regime) helped pack employees belongings before dumping them in the street on management's instruction.

The GMB union, recently de-recognised by the AA, has denounced the move as being part of a wider campaign of asset stripping and union-busting in preparation for flotation on the stock exchange. Paul Maloney National Secretary of the GMB's AA Section said "It seems that the AA are getting rid of staff with permanent contracts and replacing them with temporary staff who cost less. The role of venture capitalists, who now own the AA has now come to the fore and staff are being treated with total contempt and disrespect. The GMB has never witnessed such vindictive action by a company."

The AA has been at the centre of a controversy surrounding the founding

of a scab union (the AADU) by members of the GMB's AA Staff Association (as reported in Freedom 25th June). Led by former Southern Region Organiser Alistair McLean, the AADU has subsequently signed off on 431 redundancies forced by a recent 'Patrol Performance Review' which unfairly targeted disabled workers, as well as the Newcastle sackings and a further 150 jobs to be lost at the AA centre in Maidstone this September. The AADU has also been instrumental in failed attempts to oust the GMB in favour of a bosses union at delivery company DHL, with GMB claiming proof that the company has been paying McLean £1,500 a month to tour the country promoting the new union. The AADU General Secretary has subsequently been spotted at DHL sites in Norfolk, Brighton, South Yorkshire and Brighton.

The GMB and disabled groups joined together for a demonstration at the AA head office in Basingstoke on 25th July against victimisation of disabled workers and the redundancies around the country.

Jack Ray

PATHFINDER 'RETREAT'

The 'Pathfinder' plan to demolish hundreds of thousands of homes across the North of England to make way for new build developments has seen its remit drastically cut.

The government looks set to reduce its housing demolition targets from 400,000 to between 70,000 and 100,000 over fifteen years. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) at a meeting with conservationists has been forced to remove the necessity to demolish housing from its criteria for awarding grants under the £500m Housing Market Renewal Initiative.

At the meeting ODPM Permanent Secretary Dame Mavis McDonald promised that a survey of the value of historic properties would be carried out before any more were demolished. Conservationists estimate that 20% of homes currently proposed for demolition by the Housing Pathfinders have historical value and fear that the replacement homes which will be built would not be of any better quality.

An ODPM spokesman described the meeting as 'constructive' and noted that phase two of the housing renewal would

look "at how issues of community engagement have been addressed, and the ways in which heritage factors have been taken into account."

The Government has also published its response to the Select Committee report on empty homes and the housing market renewal pathfinders. It has revealed that it is prepared to consider the case for large scale compulsory purchase costs beyond the three year spending cycle in the pathfinder areas.

Finally, the government has admitted that the programme may have to be reviewed to take account of rising house prices. The possible uplift in demand was also the reason why the Government could not commit long term funding to the initiative.



ISSN 0016-0504



Vol 66
No 15

Home and away

FREEDOM

Volume 66 Number 15

Anarchism

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

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

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

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

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

Angel Alley

We're pleased to announce that we've finally gotten vaguely back on track with publication. For those of you who reckon we've probably disappeared or gone monthly, it ain't true folks, at least for the moment. On the contrary, apparently our subs are on the up, particularly online, and two new people have volunteered to help out with editorial.

This is not the only piece of good news, though, as the Advisory Service for Squatters seem to be nearly at the end of their long and challenging refurbishment of the room at the top of the building and are painting it a worrying shade of green.

On the subject of new neighbours, we are due to have some more. A new fancy residential block is imminent on a spare bit of land next to us, which will loom over the Autonomy Club, thus completing our status as a little oasis of anarchy amongst a sea of culture and wealth.

On the one side, art-lovers sitting down for a coffee at Whitechapel Art Gallery overlook the shop, on another, the fancy flats. Still, at least we have Aldgate Press and a big empty building in front of us, it ain't pretty but at least it's home.

Contact details

Freedom Press, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX
Tel/fax: 020 7247 9249
www.freedompress.org.uk
Enquiries: info@freedompress.org.uk
Copy/Letters: copy@freedompress.org.uk
Subscriptions: subs@freedompress.org.uk
Bookshop: shop@freedompress.org.uk
Freedom Press Distribution:
distro@freedompress.org.uk

Next issue

Contributions are wanted for future Freedoms. The next issue will be dated 20th August and the last day to get your copy to us will be Friday 12th August (see contact details above for where to send your letters/articles). If you are interested in writing regularly for Freedom we want to hear from you!

G8 detainees

At the recent G8 protests in Scotland there were some 450 people detained by the police. These are different to arrests, as the police in Scotland have the powers to 'detain' for a set length of time. We know of a number of people who were detained and then released, so the number of arrests is far less than 450. However, we don't know how much less as it was difficult to get details. So, we are putting a call out for a number of requests.

Were you detained, then released without charge?

If you were, or you know others who were, it would be really helpful for us to know. Otherwise we will be trying to find witnesses for people who don't need then. This takes time away from finding witnesses for people who will be in court and were arrested.

Please let us know, by emailing us at g8legalsupport@riseup.net. Remember that any information given to us is handled confidentially and stays solely with the g8 legal team, unless you authorise us to pass it on.

Were you arrested?

We know of a number of people who are up in court, and we think we have most people, but we want to be certain. Email us at g8legalsupport@riseup.net to let us know the following:

- What were you charged with, your name, when you are next in court for your 'intermediate diet' and 'trial date';
- when and where were you arrested (place, date, time) – please be as accurate as you can.

We have a number of witnesses to arrests, but a lot of the time we don't have the name of the person arrested, only a description. So, if we are to tie these up the following information would be useful if you were arrested. Hair colour and length; male/female; what clothes you were wearing when arrested.

We need any film/photos you have. Film or video evidence could help somebody stay out of prison or help with their case in other ways. There were hundreds of cameras and videos

around throughout the G8 protests. If not you, then people you know may have had taken pictures – the cameras didn't all belong to the police and corporate media. Now's the time to help others. We need any film or video footage you have, so please send copies to us at the address below. We also need your name and a phone number so we can contact you as you might be needed to be a witness.



All too often people take pictures and videos for their own collection. These never get presented to legal support groups to help with defendant's cases, so sometimes innocent people get sent down just because someone won't come forward. Don't let this be you!

Did you witness an arrest?

Although we have a large number of witness statements for people either detained or arrested, there must have been a huge number of other people who saw an arrest and didn't report it to the legal support group, or fill in a 'witness statement'. Cases are now coming to court. Without witnesses, innocent defendants could be fined or go to jail. If you haven't already filled in a 'witness statement' please do so *now* by going to <http://g8legalsupport.info/witness-statements/> then either email us the details or send it to us at the address below.

LDMG (Legal Defence and Monitoring Group)
www.ldmg.org.uk

Contact address:

LDMG, c/o BM Haven, London WC1N 3XX

LISTINGS

Every Sunday the Kebele Kafe from 6.30pm, 14 Robertson Road, Easton, Bristol. For info call 0117 9399469.
until 21st August Rebel Flowers, a photographic exhibition by Jess Hurd charting the rising resistance to neo-liberalism and war across the world, at The Foundry, 84-86 Great Eastern Street, London, EC2, free, for info call 07713151765 or see www.jesshurd.com
until 28th August Art Not Oil exhibition – art, music, film, sound, talk and more at Oxford House, Derbyshire Street, London E2, see www.artnotoil.org.uk
7th August London Rising Tide film night and post-G8 action debrief, come along at 3pm to share your experiences of the G8 mobilisations, including the 8th July climate change day of action in Scotland and worldwide, then some food at 5pm before the film 'I Heart Huckabees' at 6pm, all welcome (whether or not you were in Scotland), free, at LARC, 62 Fieldgate Street, London E1, call 07708 794665 or see www.londonrisingtide.org.uk
7th to 8th August Remember and Resist, blockade AWE Aldermaston To remember the 60th anniversary of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and protest against building of next generation of nuclear weapons, for info call 07788 50 3761, see www.aldermaston.net or www.blockthebuilders.org.uk
17th to 21st August Earth First! Summer Gathering in the Peak District, see www.earthfirstgathering.org.uk
1st to 10th September Vegan and vegetarian dolphin camp in Wales (not a place where vegan dolphins stay, but a chance to see dolphins!) contact cetaceadefenceuk@yahoo.co.uk
2nd to 4th September Off The Tracks Festival, Castle Donnington, call 01332 384518 or see www.offthetracks.co.uk
5th September Bristol Indymedia film night at Cube Cinema, Dove Street South (off King's Square), Bristol, screening Rebel Without a Cause and exclusive footage from the recent G8

protests – doors open 7.30pm, film starts 8pm.

13th to 16th September Disarm DSEI arms fair at ExCeL Centre, London Docklands, contact 07817 652029, disarm@dsei.org or see www.dsei.org
17th September Home Education Fair from 1pm to 5pm at Westbourne Grove Church, Westbourne Grove, London W11, call 020 8969 0893 or email info@choicesineducation.org.uk
22nd September World car-free day, see www.carbusters.org/wcfd
25th September Demonstration at Lakenheath, for info contact 01508 550446 or info@lakenheathaction.org
25th September London Vegan Festival from 10am to 7pm at Kensington Town Hall, Hornton Street, London W8, see www.londonveganfestival.org.uk
1st October Star Wars: an international activists conference, organised by Yorkshire CND, for more info see www.cndyorks.gn.apc.org
1st October Planning meeting for climate campaign demo (to be on 3rd December, midway through the next round of UN climate talks in Montreal), from 12 noon to 5pm at the Asian Cultural Centre, Manzil Way (off Cowley Road), Oxford, for info see www.campaigncc.org
16th October International day of action against McDonald's, to mark World Food Day, call 020 7713 1269 or see www.mcsplight.org
22nd October The 24th London Anarchist Bookfair moves to a bigger venue, where you can get the latest books, pamphlets, magazines, etc., plus meetings and discussions on all aspects of anarchist activity, which are open to all, as well as a professionally-run creche and hot food. The venue is the Resource Centre, 356 Holloway Road, London N7, from 10am to 6pm, see freespace.virgin.net/anarchist.bookfair/
23rd October Freedom to Protest conference in central London from 11am to 5pm, for more info see www.freedomtoprotest.org.uk

26th and 27th November BeyondTV International Festival, Swansea, see www.undercurrents.org/beyondtv

International

1st to 14th August Ekotopia alternative technologies festival in Moldova, for info see www.eyfa.org
18th to 21st July Towards Carfree Cities conference in Budapest, Hungary, see www.worldcarfree.net/conference
1st to 14th August Ekotopia alternative technologies festival in Moldova, more info at www.eyfa.org
2nd to 4th September Anarchist cultural event in Florence, for info email marcella.schmidt@unimib.it
27th September to 2nd October Peoples' Global Action conference in Haridwar, Uttaranchal, North India, see www.agp.org
3rd December International Day of Climate Protest, see www.campaigncc.org

Nationwide groups

Anarchist Federation
Network of anarchist-communists
Box 2, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX
www.afed.org.uk
Antifa
Militant anti-fascist organisation
Box 36, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX
www.antifa.org.uk
Class War Federation
Class struggle anarchist group
PO Box 467, London E8 3QX
www.classwaruk.org
Dissent
A network of resistance against the G8
www.dissent.org.uk
Earth First!
Ecological direct action network
www.earthfirst.org.uk
Industrial Workers of the World
Revolutionary DIY union
PO Box 74, Brighton, BN1 4ZQ
www.iww.org.uk
Solidarity Federation
Anarcho-syndicalist organisation

PO Box 469, Preston PR1 8FX
www.solfed.org.uk

Social Centres

Autonomous Centre of Edinburgh (ACE)
17 West Montgomery Place, Edinburgh
www.autonomous.org.uk
The Basement
24 Lever Street, Manchester (contact mustsocial@yahoo.co.uk or 0161 237 1832)
The Common Place
23 Wharf Street, Leeds LS2 7EQ
www.thecommonplace.org.uk
The Cowley Club
12 London Road, Brighton BN1 4JA
www.cowleyclub.org.uk
Freedom
84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX
www.freedompress.org.uk
Institute for Autonomy
76-78 Gower Street, London WC1
Kebele
14 Robertson Road, Easton, Bristol BS5 6JY
www.kebele.org
Lancaster Resource Centre (LaRC)
The Basement, 78a Penny Street, Lancaster
www.eco-action.org/lancaster
London Action Resource Centre (LARC)
62 Fieldgate Street, London E1
www.londonlarc.org
The RampART
15-17 Rampart Street, London E1 2LA
www.rampart.co.nr
SUMAC Centre
245 Gladstone Street, Nottingham NG7 6HX
www.veggies.org.uk/rainbow/
1in12 Club
21-23 Albion Street, Bradford, West Yorkshire, BD1 2LY
www.1in12.com
56a Infoshop
56 Crampton Street, London SE17
www.safetycat.org/56a

News

Haw could stay

Despite the imminent introduction of a new law designed specifically to keep protesters like Brian Haw away from the Houses of Parliament, it seems he will be able to use a loophole to stay.

Brian has spent the last four years outside the houses carrying on a daily protest against the Iraq war, and it was thought that his long vigil would be over when the Serious Organised Crime and Police act comes into force on 1st August.

But a clause in the law which clearly states that only the starting time for future protests can be regarded as falling under the legislation. As Brian's demonstration is ongoing, it is not covered by the Act.

Prison ship closes

The infamous HMS prison ship Weare is to close after eight years of being an 'emergency measure' to deal with prison overcrowding. The ship was criticised last year by no less than Chief Inspector of Prisons Ann Owers, who listed 116 problems that required fixing: "[The prison] has no space for workshops, and insufficient space for exercise or education." The lack of fresh air has led to significant health problems for some inmates, although the sea views were apparently much appreciated.

Weare will close on 12th August.

Car jobs at risk

The fallout from UK de-industrialisation demise continues, as Collins & Aikman, the car part manufacturers, have gone into administration. The move means the company could shed as many as 1,000 staff from its five factories in the West Midlands, as well as others in Carlisle, Manchester, Sunderland, Basildon and Cambridgeshire. Some redundancies have already been made, apparently without union consultation, says the TGWU.

EDF hikes prices

EDF energy, which controls supplies for five million people across Britain, has raised its prices for the fifth time in under two years. The company, which is fronted by London Energy, Seaboard energy and SWEB Energy, has set an average raise of 10.7% for electricity and 12% for gas. The company has blamed stricter environmental controls and increased wholesale tariffs for much of the rise, which now totals a nearly 1/3 increase since March last year.

EDF made £103m retained profit last year, up from £56m the year before

IRA disarming?

The provisional IRA have made a statement demanding all paramilitary operations cease immediately. The group's entire arsenal is to be destroyed, while volunteers continued to work through 'peaceful and democratic means' for a united Ireland. See editorial analysis on page 6.

Economic worries

Apparently the number of companies on the verge of insolvency rises by 17%, according to year-on-year figures. Lending has also slowed to its lowest rate in four years, and first-time house buying has tumbled off the edge of a cliff, down to 16% of transactions in rural areas and 35% in towns.

Manufacturing confidence has continued to deteriorate, amid increasing pressure on the Bank of England to stimulate further borrowing by lowering interest rates.

Gordon Brown has been advised by the National Institute of Economic and Social Research that he will have to raise taxes by £10bn, due to a drastically cut national growth rate forecast of 2%.

Tube repairs derailed

Private companies have taken billions but won't do the work and can't be brought to heel, reports Rob Ray

Private companies hired to maintain the London Tube system under the Public Private Partnership scheme (PPP) are failing to deliver the improvements they promised, according to a new report.

Analysis of the project to upgrade London's tube network commissioned by London Underground (LU) has shown up upgrades that have fallen a year behind schedule a massive list of missed targets, and vast amounts of missing funds.

Tim O'Toole, Managing Director of LU, said: "This report shows improvements in many of the asset categories, but that could hardly be otherwise given the sums of money involved. Performance is not good enough and less than what was promised."

LU have called for significantly higher maintenance spending by Metronet and Tube Lines, the two companies under the PPP scheme who have responsibility for maintaining the lines.

Metronet, part-owned by Balfour Beattie, Thames Water and EDF among others, has been singled out for its poor performance.

£97.9m of public funds supposedly destined for investment in tube facilities has also gone missing, while payments to investors are double what they should be, the report found.

Under PPP, investment levels are not specified in the contract, in favour of 'performance outputs'. As such funding flow doesn't have to be justified, which has led to complaints from LU over holes in Metronet and Tube Lines' accounting.

Bonuses are given for improved availability, capability and quality of the tube system.



The companies have missed their targets in every single category.

Tim O'Toole said: "The intention of the PPP was that the infracos (infrastructure companies) would develop techniques for economic and efficient asset management ... We cannot be assured that the infracos are doing this. We cannot be assured that the financial flows represent the actual investment being made."

"The base cost of PPP increases in year three whether or not any improvement is seen."

Improvement hasn't happened, according to the report. Repair over-runs have increased by 35% in a year, and are up

to one a week. The rate of repairs is due to go up from next year, and it is expected to get worse.

Both Metronet and Tube Lines have fallen behind on refurbishments and station modernisations have reached less than half of the contracted levels.

Rail replacements – the primary focus of PPP, have uniformly missed targets, with Metronet a third behind schedule after two years and Tube Lines two-thirds. 845km of track is due to be replaced within eight years. Barely 42.3km has been replaced since 2003. LU has estimated work would have to go five times faster to catch up.

On the district line, rolling stock upgrades and replacements are a year behind schedule, and every service missed their targets for avoiding line disruption.

The corporate structure of Metronet has also come in for major criticism, in that it is owned by its suppliers. LU said: "There is evidence that payments to contractors are running ahead of schedule." Accounting for the company has been blurred because the number of payments to the supply chain have not equalled the work done, and have not been made dependent on performance.

The companies' control of the contracts can only be reviewed every 7½ years.

It was the terror wot done it

A report by Chatham House and the Economic and Social Research Council states the British state's support for the Iraq invasion has increased the risk of terrorist attacks.

The government has attempted to dismiss the claims. Blair's official spokesman said: "Iraq was under the thumb of Saddam Hussein who killed hundreds of thousands of Iraqis. Afghanistan was under the thumb of the Taliban. Is the report saying it was a mistake to allow Afghanistan and Iraq to exercise their democratic rights?"

However, the statement is at odds with earlier government policy. Cabinet members stressed before the wars began that Britain was not invading Iraq or Afghanistan to give their peoples 'democratic rights'. The ostensible reason why Britain helped invaded Iraq was Weapons of Mass Destruction.

Regime change was explicitly eschewed by Blair as the reason. Both Saddam and the Taliban, Blair argued, could stay in power if they had done what the US and UK had demanded.

John Reid, the defence secretary, said:

"When this report says that we have made ourselves more of a target because of our involvement in Afghanistan and Iraq and our efforts to tackle Al Qaeda, what alternative is it proposing? That we should stand back while others take on the terrorists? I do not think this is what the British public would want."

A recent national poll in The Guardian (19th July), shows that two-thirds of us believe there is a link between the decision to invade Iraq and the London bombings.

The Chatham House Report follows the word of the government's intelligence chiefs, who said exactly the same thing before the Iraq invasion, warning Blair that the threat to the UK would increase if he invaded Iraq.

This message was repeated mid-June this year, when a report by the Joint Terrorist Analysis Centre – including officials from MI5, MI6, GCHQ and the police – linked the invasion of Iraq with terrorist activity in the UK.

The report said: "Events in Iraq are continuing to act as motivation and a focus of a range of terrorist-related activity in the UK."

One less shit in the world

John Tyndall, founder of the BNP, died on 19th July. That day marked the start of the Spanish revolution, the day when the workers and peasants of Spain (with anarchist influence) took to the streets against Franco's fascist coup.

Tyndall was one of the dominant figures of the British far right for the last 50 years and died of a heart attack two days before he was due to appear in court charged with inciting racial hatred. He founded the modern BNP in 1982, imposing his particular form of nazism on it until deposed in 1999 as leader by Cambridge graduate Nick Griffin.

Tyndall's explicit nazism was an embarrassment to Griffin's desire for a new look BNP and a liability in its attempts to gain mainstream respectability. Only last year, Tyndall was told by the new leadership that the "many photographs of you in neo-nazi uniform ... are a public relations handicap for the party."

Of course, the BNP still harbours its nazi core, which came to the forefront

when a spokesman, in response to news of Tyndall's death, described him as a "great fellow who knew exactly what our movement was about" and an "excellent chap with a keen analytical mind."

With Tyndall dead, the BNP may suffer some problems. The more hardcore nazis looked to him as a leader and a source of opposition to Griffin's attempts to soften the BNP's image in return for electoral success. This may mean that Griffin's grip on the party is strengthened. It could, therefore, lead to a split in the BNP as the followers of Tyndall's explicit and unapologetic neo-nazism give up hope of retaking control of the organisation and leave to form a new organisation.

If that happens, the BNP may be in a stronger position to peddle its fascist populism as the knee-jerk anti-nazism of the Anti Nazi League (ANL, a Trotskyist front) will be even more at odds with developments within UK fascist circles. It also means that anti-fascists will have to rethink strategies and tactics.

News

Police brutality in India

Police injure hundreds of demonstrating Honda workers causing a political scandal for the ruling Congress Party reports Jack Ray

Workers for Honda Motorcycles and Scooters India (HMSI) were on the receiving end of a police baton-charge which left around a hundred workers hospitalised and hundreds more with injuries. The factory operatives have been subject to a month long lockout by the Japanese automobile giant after a six month long dispute over unionisation, collective bargaining and management bullying.

On 25th July thousands of assembly workers gathered for a mass union meeting at the Kamla Nehru Park in the industrial township of Gurgaon around 40km from the capital Delhi. There they listened to speeches by union leaders before deciding to march on the local authorities' 'mini-secretariat' to present a memorandum listing their grievances. The local police force, deciding to stop the march on the grounds that it was unauthorised, were filmed brutally attacking demonstrators as they approached the building. Police claim that workers had initially attacked a smaller group of police and damaged property. Further clashes occurred on 26th July, with police attacking an angry stone-throwing crowd by firing into the air and lobbing teargas at relatives attempting to access the civil hospital where injured workers were being treated. Over sixty workers were also arrested as a result of the protests with some being

charged with 'attempted murder'.

The extent of police brutality has provoked a political crisis for the government led by the centrist Congress Party in a coalition with left-wing groups. Two days after the attack, members of parliament representing both opposition parties and allies of the governing party walked out in protest at the government's handling of the violence. A spokesman for the Prime Minister Mahoman Singh's office remarked that "[the PM] felt that the Haryana police had mishandled the crowd and the pressure created by the Left by the embarrassing comments made to the Home Minister really irked the PM who did not like the anti-worker image being projected on the entire Congress party." The Congress MP for Haryana had initially tried to imply that police violence had been provoked by political opponents of the government.

Industrial relations at the Honda plant have reportedly been strained for some time, with reports of violence against workers, fixed timings for toilet breaks, fines for inattendance and one manager attempting to force his way into the women's toilets. Attempts to unionise were met with a lockout on 27th June when workers were told at the factory gate either to sign an undertaking promising not to form a union, strike or engage in collective bargaining and committing them to a three year wage



freeze. Honda spokesman Gaurav Sharma said, "we advised Union members to sign the undertaking and then discuss contentious issues with the management to avoid delay in getting back to work". According to Nagraj Adne of the Peoples' Union for Democratic Rights, "this kind of corporate malpractice is absolutely unconstitutional as per the Indian labour laws and impinges upon the fundamental

rights of the workers to organise and protest." Workers stayed out until the 23rd July, workers who had missed a month's pay agreed to sign a new non-binding undertaking and return to work. The company then insisted that workers could only return in batches of a hundred, provoking further protests for workers. The company also refused to reinstate four union leaders and fifty

other suspended 'agitators' with the other 1,700 employees.

An agreement was eventually struck on 30th July for workers to resume production with all employees reinstated with no disciplinary action and a wage increase. Further protests against the police brutality are planned for 1st August, with a general strike threatened for the following month.

Letter from America

Bomb Mecca!

Republican congressman Tom Tancredo of Colorado was on a Florida radio show the week after the 7th July London bombings. He was asked how he felt the United States should respond if there were to be another attack on the United States.

His response was not a joke: "If this happens in the United States, and we determine that it is the result of extremist, fundamentalist Muslims, you know, you could take out their holy sites."

The interviewer asked, "You're talking about bombing Mecca?"

"Yeah", Tancredo replied.

When challenged elsewhere on these remarks – for which he has not been censured by Bush – Tancredo, who is known for his sustained attacks on undocumented quest workers, expanded that that an "ultimate threat" might have to be met with what he called an "ultimate response".

Tancredo is reportedly considering running for president in 2008.

Vindictiveness

An ongoing 'scandal' which, after two years, surfaced in the mainstream media earlier this summer and of which

we should expect to hear more, is the 'outing' of undercover CIA agent Valerie Plame by the Whitehouse. Ms Plame is the wife of ex-US ambassador Joseph Wilson; he exposed as false claims made by Bush before the invasion of Iraq that Niger had uranium and was selling it, or prepared to sell it to Saddam Hussein.

Karl Rove is deputy chief of staff in charge of policy at the Whitehouse. Earlier this month it was finally confirmed that, as 'punishment' for this, Rove was closely implicated in (if he did not actually instigate) the naming of Plame as a CIA agent. This effectively ended her career and is also a federal offence under the Intelligence Identities Protection Act, if it can be proved that Rove actually knew Plame was acting undercover.

In their first responses, Bush and his staff claimed they would sack anyone found to have leaked the name of a CIA agent. Earlier in July Judith Miller went to prison for refusing to reveal her sources on Plame's status to a grand jury.

This month, however, when tackled on the role of Rove in breaking the law and trying to cover his tracks, Bush and his spokespeople changed the rules. Bush is now saying that he will only sack anyone who 'committed a crime' rather than

who was 'involved' in the leak. This episode in the Bush dirty tricks department is unlikely to go away.

Iraq elections

The January elections in Iraq – touted as 'free and fair' outside that country – were probably interfered with (if not actually fixed) by the United States.

That is the finding of Pulitzer Prize-winning investigative journalist Seymour Hersh writing in *The New Yorker* on 25th July. Hersh exposed the recent Abu Ghraib abuse and the Mi Lai massacre in Vietnam in 1968.

It appears highly likely that in 2004 Bush authorised covert plans to give financial and propaganda support to the election campaigns of Iraqi candidates and political parties sympathetic to the US elite.

Hersh's sources include former military and intelligence officials; they stated that, once congressional opposition surfaced, Bush went ahead anyway with the plan – only 'off the books'.

He suggests that after the initial delay in the timing of the election from December 2003 – also manipulated to benefit US aims – there was concern in Washington that a 'fair' election of one person-one-

Considering the cost of war

While the occupiers of Iraq may not do body counts of the people they kill, others do. According to Iraq Body Count (IBC) and the Oxford Research Group, two independent researchers, nearly 25,000 Iraqi civilians have been killed in the two years since the invasion of Iraq. Of these, four times as many were killed by US-led forces as from the various elements which make up the insurgency.

What was significant about this study was how it was reported. According to the *Guardian* (20th July), the study "calculates the toll of dead and injured since March 2003." That is not entirely true. As the report indicates, it should be regarded as the "baseline of the minimum number of deaths."

The report concludes that at least 24,865 civilians were killed up to 19th March 2005, of which 9,270 or 37% died at the hands of the occupying forces. The second largest cause of death (36%) was criminal violence while the insurgency accounted for only 9%, or 2,353 of the civilian total.

Most media compared these results with the *Lancet* figures from last October. According to the *Guardian*, the "total number of deaths in the study is significantly lower than the estimated 98,000 figure in a disputed study in the

medical journal *The Lancet* last autumn." Likewise, the *Independent* noted that the "only previous attempt to assess the level of civilian casualties was published in *The Lancet* medical journal" and somewhat incredulously noted that "its methodology was subsequently criticised." Yes it was criticised but it would have been more accurate to note that it had been criticised by those who either knew little about statistics or were pro-war. The *Lancet* article's methodology is the standard one for estimating civilian deaths in conflict situations.

The IBC methodology was to record all deaths reported in the Western press. Many deaths will have been unreported and others reported only in the Iraqi press. To rely on Western language wire services is, obviously, less reliable than the household survey used by the *Lancet* article.

As such, these figures do not refute or replace the *Lancet* conclusion but rather complement it by providing a minimum of deaths attributed to war of choice Bush and Blair lied to get. Sadly, this has been obscured by the media, even those who took an anti-war position. Yet even if this 25,000 figure is the bare minimum, it is still over eight times the number killed on 9/11.

Iain MacKay

Feature

At the printers

Swallow examines the anarchist contribution when Murdoch took on the printers for the future of newspaper production

This is an account of the anarchist activity during the Wapping strike, it is by no means exhaustive – there was anarchist activity in Glasgow and Cardiff to my knowledge and there was very likely other activity which we don't know about. This article does not deal directly with the most important question about the strike: why did we lose? However this question is touched on and the debate is very much open.

There has been a long association between anarchists and the print. Proudhon, the father of us all, was a printer. In the 1960s and '70s there was anarchist-inspired agitation in the print and there were at least half a dozen strikers who would have called themselves anarchists. I should imagine that number would have been very much greater by the end of the dispute.

All are faced with decisions of principle in a strike. If you say, for example, I am not a scab, I am not a grass, these are matters of principle and they are not negotiable. How can you make a public statement of this? The answer is simple: join a picket line.

Anarchists understood this well and many came to the picket line. They were there from the beginning to the bitter end. This in stark contrast to many other radical groups who found all sorts of bizarre reasons ranging from the lunatic to the ludicrous not to be there. Anarchists were bold, patient and resourceful and this was welcomed by all the pickets.

Early on in the strike a strikers' bulletin called Picket started to appear. It is worth taking another look at this publication. Picket was not an anarchist publication, indeed it was started by a Marxist and labour party member, but it was anarchists who facilitated the printing of it and in effect became the driving force behind it.

Picket was written entirely by pickets, it consisted of reports of all pickets and information that was relevant to the strike. It came out at least once a week and was read by all pickets. Over fifty people wrote for it and a book was also published about the strike, which has been reprinted at least twice.

Picket had no political stand other than to support the strike and the boldest of the pickets. Perhaps this was a weakness, that Picket is an excellent history of the dispute is not in question. Wapping is the best recorded strike in British working class history, it was after all a printers' strike. Could Picket have been developed to become a more political and agitational publication? Again that question is open to debate.

None of us will forget the wonderful spoof Sun that originated in the 121 anarchist bookshop (editor, is it worth reprinting?). Some of them were inserted in every quire of the Express and found a supplement with the banner headline 'Murdoch fucks donkeys' and on page three, was the promised donkey itself.

Class War was read by many of the pickets. Battered copies would be handed out and read from cover to cover. Indeed



if the idea of Class War was to be read by the most militant sections of the working class then it succeeded, at least half my chapel read it.

Anarchists are not looking for converts or souls. We can leave that to the religions and the Marxists (is there any difference?). However by the end of the

dispute most pickets had a pretty clear idea of what anarchy is. Some, no doubt, would have described themselves as anarchists. Anarchists made a significant and meaningful contribution to the strike. But with this much anarchist activity, is it pertinent to ask the question 'could we have done more?'

We never organised as a group, in fact we never even thought about it. We never tried to form a group around Picket. In fact the criticism of the anarchists is the same as the criticism of the strike. We went down with all guns blazing, it's just that we weren't hitting the target.

NAN bites back

The Northern Anarchist Network met for its conference at the Barracuda Bikers' Club in Telford, Shropshire, on the 23rd July. The conference was hosted by Wrekin Stop War. Twenty or so assorted northern anarchists lay aside their sectarian swords of truth three or four times a year for the conference, but not entirely. The move southwards from the event's traditional base is a temporary one in recognition of the contribution at several conferences in the Yorkshire and Greater Manchester areas of the more southern-based Revolutionary Socialist Network (now defunct).

One of their stalwarts, and far from defunct is Dave Chapple, who from 1989 to 2003 was Union of Communications Workers (UCW/CWU) representative at the Bridgewater sorting/delivery office in Somerset.

Dave gave a fascinating account of his experiences in organising and winning unofficial strikes by postal workers at a

time when these were not fashionable due to Tory union law. Dave is not an anarchist nor even a syndicalist. He seems to select his influences according to other than ideological criteria.

Dave has asked participants to support Jerry Hicks, a Rolls Royce Test convenor and deputy chair of the Confederated Site Committee at the Patchway plant in Bristol who has been sacked for his effective defence of workers.

Management want to break the back of a union that has a proud tradition of standing up for its members. Dave said: "No trade unionist can let the bosses at Rolls Royce get away with this attack. The whole trade union movement needs to defend the right of workers in any factory, office, school or shop to choose their reps.

If the workers at Rolls Royce win this battle, it will tell representatives and bosses everywhere, that the trade union movement can and will defend its own". Messages of support to

jw1610@blueyonder.co.uk and copy to Derek.simpson@amicustheunion.org

As an irregular visitor to the NAN I was pleased to see that the emphasis on practical action on a broad front was maintained. But perennial issues will out. Dave Chapple's belief that we have no choice but to go with the trades' union movement as participants provoked analysis from Mike Ballard to the effect that no revolution will ensue from that.

Several people present had been or were active unionists as stewards or reps, and most were workers, and it was asked why anarchists never stood as senior officials of unions, on a workers wage, to set an example.

Mike Ballard's riposte was that such candidates would not get elected, which begs the question: on what manifesto? Brian Bamford, an anarchist who sees syndicalism in the shop steward's movement of the '70s, Scargill and the miners of the '80s and the last gasp of

the Liverpool dockers in the '90s, seemed to think the question a funny one but did not venture a reply.

Martin Gilbert (see reviews, page 7) asked the gathering where all the poetry was amongst the prose, suggesting we should not forget to dream when everyone was involved in practical matters. The matter led to several questions: Why are we so few? How can we get our message across? Where are the youth?

Anarchism seems not to be a mature movement that unites generations in this country. The majority of NAN participants are mature and vastly experienced, yet mostly unregarded by the younger generations. Anarchist dreams seem rooted in a different reality in space and time. Is quasi-insurrectionary type activity the natural territory for such dreams?

At the NAN there seemed to be a general belief that we do not need to demonstrate numbers in order to feel

useful. The more prosaic and mature task of economic organisation at work and in communities is something younger anarchists will have to grow into. But where does that leave the dream?

Dave Chapple, non-anarchist, had made a suggestion that a timely and relevant contribution of anarchist or syndicalist ideas would be to provoke a national discussion about common ownership of the railways. That seems to me to be a worthy project for anarchists to promote, if only they were more connected to the way things happen in this country other than as critics, workers, and protesters.

At a time when ideas abound on alternative ways of running things, an argument for the democratic common ownership of an essential industry could well emerge, with or without the anarchists. It won't bring the revolution though.

John Lawrence

Editorial

The recent statement from the IRA announcing the end of the armed struggle is formulated to clearly comply with the various demands made by the British and Irish governments over the last year and to so try and expose the Unionist political parties as the ones opposing progress.

As such it not only prepares the ground for Sinn Fein to re-enter government in the north but also for it to go into coalition in the south. The years of the peace process have seen a real growth in southern electoral support for Sinn Fein.

The other side of the peace process has been the ditching of much of the radical left rhetoric of the republican movement of the 1980s. Pragmatism became the new watchword whether that meant imposing education and health cuts as part of the government of Northern Ireland or voting for the bin taxes in Sligo in order to get power in the council.

There is still a radically inclined grassroots in Sinn Fein, in particular in the urban areas, but it is a well disciplined one – accustomed to following the line coming from the top.

The 'whiff of cordite' was always part of the reason this was possible – this and the lack of any serious alternative. As the IRA disarms and the libertarian movement grows the space may open for a dialogue with many rank and file republican activists.

Today's statement is the culmination of over 11 years of a public process and more years of secret negotiations with the British government. Irish anarchists have written in depth about this process, extracts from key moments are reproduced below but see the full archive at www.struggle.ws/wsm/peaceprocess.html

In 1988 in advance of the Good Friday/Belfast agreement: "The people of Ireland, North and South will be asked to vote on the 'Good Friday' agreement. There is a great desire for peace which is being used to pressurise us into choosing between two completely flawed alternatives. The agreement, which was drawn up in secret by our so-called 'representatives', does not challenge the sectarian divisions which have bedevilled this country.

"What the agreement proposes is bringing some nationalist politicians into a power-sharing arrangement with some unionist politicians. The division between rulers and ruled, between bosses and workers, between rich and poor remains. The biggest change will be a few nationalist faces sitting down with bigots like Trimble and Taylor, to make laws which preserve the dominance of the rich over the poor."

After three years of Stormont rule in 2001: "These politicians have spent their time in government proving to the British government and to international business that power is in safe hands. Thus we witness the farcical situation where parties supposedly ranging across the political spectrum from republican socialist to right-wing unionist can agree – with no controversy whatsoever – a programme of government. The only rows they seem to have are over what flags should fly and when, and what flowers should be put in the hall display."

It is also true however that the years of the ceasefire were a period in which Irish anarchists discussed, debated and changed their understanding of partition. This is not a process that is over by any means but the WSM positions paper 'The partition of Ireland' reflects much of the changed understanding that has been developed in that time.

Analysis by An Irish Anarchist

Commentary

Against terror

I thought Iain McKay's article 'Against Terror' was spot on for the most part. I think though that there remains a difficulty in that the 'serious anarchist movement' both Iain and I would wish to see as an anti-imperialist alternative to random fundamentalist terror, does not, in any real sense exist at present. In the week prior to 7/7 we had, as two sides of the same counterfeit coin, Geldof, the man who wrote 'Mary of the 4th Form', and his sidekick Bono, the Pope's favourite rock star, offering us a love-in in Hyde Park as a solution to world poverty, and on the other, the anti-G8 movement's 'throwing stones at copper's helmets' brand of empty Situationism as an alternative. Little wonder the anti-imperialism of militant Islam looks like a serious option.

The anarchist movement has to raise its game if it wants to reclaim the ground lost. One difficulty is that the Bin Laden-inspired resistance movements, in Iraq and elsewhere, in military terms hit hard against their targets and are way ahead in terms of creating 'facts on the ground'. We have to find a militant anti-imperialist politics that is equally effective without resorting to random terror and mutually assured barbarism as resistance. We have to demonstrate the effectiveness of a direct action that doesn't reduce itself to terror but doesn't either flinch from the fact that demonstration-based politics – even when millions hit the streets, went work in isolation from other forms of resistance. The blood spilled on 7/7 shouldn't make us draw back from considering whether and how, in the current circumstances, it is possible to devise a militant anti-imperialist that keeps physical force as part of its armoury.

Equally, we have an intellectual duty to maintain and develop a critique of both imperialism in its current mode and the false alternative of Islamic resistance. Moreover, when the state moves to offer up 'unity' as a response to 'terror' (we're all Londoners now) we must be steadfast in resisting such 'uniting' myths in a society riven by inequality, and where such 'unity' is daily exposed by the detention and deportation of asylum seekers, the attempts to privatise the services on which so many of us depend, the growth in the income gap between the rich and poor in London and elsewhere, and the rise in the number of the poorest of us rotting in jail cells.

John Shute

Rewriting history to defend failure

Blair has taken to the cameras again to attack those who raised the truth, namely that the invasion of Iraq had been a contributing factor to the London attacks. He used his monthly Downing Street press conference to criticise those who claim that western policies in Iraq (and other Muslim states) provided some justification for such tactics. Yet no one said that these policies justified the attacks, simply that they explained them. As a lawyer, you would expect Blair to know the difference between understanding the motive of a crime and justifying that crime.

After beating one straw man to death, he then rewrote history, stating that he had never said that the attacks on London had "nothing to do with Iraq" – only that it was an excuse and that the roots of the crisis go much deeper. Yet in the House of Parliament days after the attack he had rejected any link between foreign policy and the threat of terrorism, stating that this was "a form of terrorism aimed at, not at any particular Government or policy."

According to PM's Official Spokesman at a Press Briefing on 12th July, "it was a fact that terrorism of the kind that we had seen in London ... was a factor before the Iraq war. Therefore it was naive frankly to believe that you could say that this kind of terrorism was due to the Iraq war ... Therefore to put it down to the Iraq war was misplaced." Fast forward a couple of weeks and Blair is now denying that he denied that Iraq had any influence on the bombings!

While Blair may try and deny it, this was the government line. Jack Straw, for example, was at pains to dismiss any link to Iraq, arguing that "the terrorists have struck across the world, in countries allied with the United States, backing the war in Iraq and in countries which had nothing whatever to do with the war in Iraq." Surely he was aware that such attacks were on Western interests within them.

Faced with the utter stupidity of this argument and the fact that very few people believed it, the line has changed and the rewriting of history starts. And not only on this. The 12th July Press Briefing stated that it "would it have been right just to leave Saddam Hussein in power carrying out the atrocities that he had against his own people. As such the reasons for going to war in Iraq ... were set out. People may agree or

disagree with them..." Except, that is not why we went to war in Iraq. We went to war over non-existent WMD but that is now in the memory hole.

Blair warned the independent judiciary ("a principle of our democracy") had better start doing what the government says as "it is important that we do protect ourselves." And so Blair, according to his own logic, is appeasing the terrorists – by urging us to change the way we live our lives. And so if, as Blair and Bush assert, the terrorists 'hate our freedom' then they are the greatest appeasers of terrorism in the world.

In light of the bombs, Blair was adamant that Britain should not abandon its policies and alliance with the US. So in response to the failed policies which helped produce the London attacks, Blair is using those very same attacks to continue the same disastrous policies.

And so we can continue to expect plain clothes police to shoot to kill, Belmarsh imprisonment without trial and the steady elimination of the rights we have taken centuries to wrestle from the state.

While, of course, continuing to fuel the terrorist problem with billions of pounds from our taxes to fund the occupation and stand 'shoulder-to-shoulder' with a regime which regularly practises torture and indulges in wars of aggression.

According to Blair, we had to "expose the obscenity of these people saying it is concern for Iraq that drives them to terrorism. If it is concern for Iraq then why are they driving a car bomb into a group of children and killing them?" Yet Blair's current rationale for invading Iraq was his 'concern' for the Iraqi people (WMD, as noted, have been put into the memory hole).

So while there was "no justification for suicide bombing" anywhere apparently there is justification for bombing if it is done by advanced ground attack aircraft, tanks and artillery. What really grates is that Blair is implying that anyone not holding his position on terrorism is somehow seeking to justify the actions of terrorists. This is an attempt to narrow the debate and, consequently, allow him to avoid some difficult questions.

It does raise one question, even if this were true is it worse than, say, using terrorists to justify an illegal invasion and occupation, the deaths of at least 25,000 people (more like 100,000), the torture of men, women and children, the use of napalm, the levelling of a town, the imposing of a neo-liberal economic regime, and so forth?

It is good to know that most of us never bought into Blair's arguments. Before the war started, over a million took to the streets and nearly 80% of Londoners thought that that invading Iraq would make a terrorist attack on London more likely. In this, the Intelligence agencies concurred. After the bombings, two-thirds thought that they were linked with the war in Iraq. Blair's current rewriting of history is a reaction to this.

Blair's policies have put us at risk. They have also chosen to ignore the intelligence services, departmental advisers and independent experts who told them that the chances of 'something terrible' occurring (like a terrorist attack) would be greatly increased if Britain proceeded to invade Iraq.

If he had any morals, Blair would resign. But unless we take to the streets to demand it, he will not. Time for action.

Iain McKay

America

→ page 4

vote might result in a Shia government which with close ties to Iran.

After opposition to Bush's first proposal, no money or support was able to pass through the CIA's or Congress's hands but substantial sums of money nevertheless did find their way to Iyad Allawi's campaign; his support rising from a projected 3% or less of the vote to 15% in the 30th January poll.

Hersh also unearthed cases of former CIA people who boasted after the election that they had 'stuffed ballots'. There were 30,000 polling stations throughout Iraq but no more than 8,000 observers. Several weeks before the election in Iraq, Margaret McDonagh, a political operative close to Tony Blair, was also known to have been campaigning for Allawi (a close advisor to Hussein and Ba'ath party luminary) and supporting him financially.

What is so worrying is not this case in and of itself, but that it is symptomatic of Bush's semi-dictatorial style of rule. Decisions are made and carried out – like the illegal attack on Iraq itself – despite the judicial and governmental infrastructures by which even they pretend to operate. Bush has decided that any action touching on the war or national security need not go to Congress, because he is Commander in Chief. Surprisingly even the International Republican Institute, the National Democratic Institute and the National Endowment for Democracy refused this time to become involved in subverting elections, as they have a record of doing.

Meanwhile, the chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Richard Myers, said on a visit to Berlin in mid July that a draft constitution is expected by the end of the month. But the New York Times reported a few days later that this new constitution would significantly lessen women's rights. It is set to impose the Sharia or Koranic law in personal affairs (marriage, divorce and inheritance). Only as long as women did not 'violate Sharia' would the proposed constitution safeguard legal rights for women. In effect Shia women would not then be able to marry without their family's permission; husbands could divorce them simply by saying so out loud three times.

It also would limit women's representation in parliament dropping or phasing out a measure included in the interim constitution requiring that women make up at least 25% of the parliament. The constitution is set to be finalised by mid-August. On 20th July Sunni representatives withdrew from the drafting panel.

Louis Further

Sources

Get Out The Vote by Seymour M. Hersh (www.newyorker.com/printables/fact/050725fa_fact)
New York Times (www.nytimes.com/2005/07/20/international/middleeast/20cnd-iraq.html?hp&ex=1121918400&en=bc722043cbd273d4&ei=5094&partner=homepage)

Quiz answers

1. Motorists. Speed cameras are painted yellow so that they can be seen and anywhere there isn't one, the chances of being caught speeding are negligible.
2. He fought at the Eureka Stockade when he was 18, in 1854, and was imprisoned with the IWW for fighting conscription when he was 80.
3. Walt Disney. In an early cartoon of his, a character called Alice ran a small egg farm. Her cat was the foreman and treated the chickens badly. Little Red Henski was a rooster drawn to conflate the IWW with Bolshevism – as well as to suggest that fighting oppression wasn't a good idea!
4. Bruce Chatwin's 'In Patagonia'.

ZAPATA OF MEXICO
by **PETER E. NEWELL**

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

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REVIEW

Christopher Draper reviews *Anarchists in Social Work*, now in its second printing, and likes what he sees

If you want to read about Bakunin in Berlin, Proudhon in Paris or anarchists in revolutionary Russia or Spain you'll have no trouble finding an informative text. If you want a book on the activities of British anarchists you'll have a problem finding anything useful. Most anarchist authors prefer romanticising revolutionary struggles abroad than recording and analysing the everyday anarchism around them. Colin Ward has long proved an honourable exception and now Martin Gilbert, Mark Newns, Peter Good, John Evans and Doreen Frampton have together compiled a chronicle of their everyday lives and conflicts as anarchists engaged in social work.

Soft cops?

Crudely dismissed as 'soft cops' by unthinking anarchists the authors eschew the temptation to portray themselves as fearless subversives and instead patiently describe and dissect the complex, ambivalent social work roles they have played. They each demonstrate that however restrictive and demanding the state may appear there are always opportunities to create bubbles of libertarian space.

Martin Gilbert's contribution reminds us that economic oppression is only one of the ties that hold us down. Individuals psychologically crushed by society gained strength from simply enjoying a fishing trip together. As an anarchist Martin helped 'clients' avoid mind manipulation and the chemical cosh by creating an opportunity to get together and spend a relaxed, mutually supportive time angling in the local canal.

He didn't supply anarchist tracts but offered transport and equipment. The powerful recuperative value of this simple non-manipulative strategy was neatly portrayed in the film 'One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest' when McMurphy (Jack Nicholson), yelled at a fellow asylum escapee 'You're not a loony anymore - you're a fisherman!'

The days of creative social work are over

Martin Gilbert's rather hopeful chapter is followed by a darker, more overtly political and historical piece by Mark Newns. Mark's interest in music and Tai Ji comes through in his writing. He

provocatively quotes Zappa's lyric "All your children are poor unfortunate victims of systems beyond their control."

He weaves his CV of social work initiatives through a powerful, sustained critique of the all-embracing hegemony of globalised consumerism. Mark takes us on a guided tour through his 'career' with (amongst others) Liverpool Social Services, the Chalk Farm Simon Community, Stevenage New Town Family Centre, Peckham Adventure Playground, 'a rehabilitation home for bad lads run by De-Le-Salle monks' and H Wing of Durham Prison.

Occasionally Mark risks tipping the reader from criticism to despair. On page 39 he observes that as an anarchist social worker "you don't have a career but a series of engagements or skirmishes," but 16 pages later he implies even salaried skirmishes are impossible, claiming in the current authoritarian work climate, "If you don't collude with it, you don't work."

Imaginative industrial action

Peter Good's work in a long-stay institution for people with learning disabilities erupted into imaginative full-scale industrial action that eventually ended in tears. He reveals how the hierarchies of the health service unions oppose radical action every bit as determinedly as management.

Supplying a salutary lesson Peter's piece suggests there is more solidarity amongst our enemies than our friends. He concludes by reminding us of the urgent need to transform the NHS into a decentralised, community-led organisation. Unfortunately Peter didn't mention that just such a libertarian scheme had actually existed in pre-war Peckham.

Commended by Herbert Read as a "great experiment with far-reaching consequences in politics and sociology," the Peckham model was rejected by the 1945 Labour government that instead created the top-down, state-controlled bureaucratic national sickness system.

The dead hand of Labour

The malign influence of Labourism runs like a thread through John Evans' three short chapters. Working in the Calcot project in South Wales John got into trouble for the heinous crime of



allowing a 'client' to use his office phone to make a complaining call to her local Labour councillor.

Next, as Director of the Afan Community Aid Council, John fell foul of his management committee of mainly Labour Councillors when he began digging too deeply into the scheme's finances. When John subsequently became Senior Community Development Advisor to Telford Development Corporation he reveals that "Very soon I clashed with Labour Councillors, though, I still had this curious belief in the party." However that particular episode ended happily following the favourable intervention of John's local MP, "An amiable man who had taken many gay holidays in the West Indies."

A word from Matron

In a downbeat final article Doreen Frampton SRN warns that whistleblowing can seriously damage your health. The writing's fine and the depiction

accurate but the message is misplaced. As a reader, by that stage I didn't want to be reminded of the limitations of social work but inspiration and encouragement not to abandon hope.

Anarchy in action

Anarchists, social workers and normal people will all find much food for thought in this book. It works both as a witness to vital historical change and as an encouragement to fight alongside and on behalf of the dispossessed.

Refreshingly the authors follow no predictable party line. In fact the various accounts are as full of frustrations and inconsistencies as social life itself.

Yet these stories of the strategies employed by the authors in creating libertarian spaces and relationships in the face of overwhelming odds make fascinating and inspiring reading.

Just getting the book to press required courage and creativity as it was originally planned as a volume of The

Raven. A rethink was required when that publication ceased but Martin Gilbert bravely grasped the nettle and financed the printing himself.

Apart from the almost indecipherable front cover, he's done a grand job. It's nicely printed and well illustrated with photos and cartoons and not too expensive at £8.50 for 154 pages.

A note from the editors:

There has been a catalogue of errors and let-downs regarding both the book and this review. In the case of the book, the manuscript was originally intended for the Raven, but this journal ceased publication before his hard work could appear. He then, as Chris Draper mentioned, printed it himself and got Chris to review it for him. The review was then lost, found, lost again, re-found and finally disappeared completely. Following his letter in the last issue, we had it re-sent to us, and have now finally printed it here. Our most heartfelt apologies go to both Martin and Chris.

V FOR VERY ANNOYING

Recently, I reported that Alan Moore's classic graphic novel *V for Vendetta* was being made into a movie. The novel, set in a future fascist Britain saw V, an anarchist superhero, fight the powers that be. I wondered in my previous article how much of the anarchist politics of the novel would survive the grip of Hollywood. The answer, unsurprisingly, seems to be not much.

The first reviews of the movie script are coming out. Yes, it is a script and things may change, but it is looking bad. As well as unforgivable cultural slips

(what exactly is 'eggy in a basket?'), the movie has simply removed the anarchism of the central character. The script starts with the death of Guy Fawkes. In the graphic novel, V dresses up as Guy Fawkes but that is it. No attempt is made to put Fawkes at the centre of the novel, rather V's anarchism is. In the script, it becomes central.

To fit this in, it simply drops anarchism. The classic 'Anarchy versus Justice' conversation which starts the book has been eliminated, as does the V sign (far too close to the circled A). V's television

address is no longer as God urging his creations to take responsibility for their own lives but rather to explain the Guy Fawkes motif. Nowhere is the idea of anarchy being a force for good suggested. And as for psychedelic drugs freeing the detective's mind to successfully hunt down V? Not a possibility.

As for the well reported 'everyone-dressed-as-V' storming the Houses of Parliament at the end of the film, this is extremely silly (and not in the book). Where did all the costumes and masks come from? Is there a factory in fascist

Britain mass producing them? Has V got one somewhere beneath London? Did the masses seize the factories and spontaneously mass produce them? All very unlikely and, yet again, misses the point of the book.

And so the key, the central theme, of *V for Vendetta* has been removed and instead we get Guy Fawkes. Ironically, the mask has replaced the body. Unsurprisingly, Alan Moore has (once again!) requested his name be removed from the film. I can see why. So while it may be a good film and incorporate

elements from the books, it looks like it is far from Moore's intention and while it may share the same name it is not the same story.

So buy the graphic novel now before it gets 'Now a major Motion Picture' plastered across it. At least that way you can get a firm idea of how much they have gutted the novel when it does appear in the cinemas.

Iain McKay

The comic book version of *V for Vendetta* is available from Freedom at £16.99 (please add £1.70 towards p&p inland, £3.40 elsewhere).

Strikewatch

Roller strike
Ballots have been sent out over the possibility of strike action at Rolls Royce's plant at Frinton in Bristol, after the sacking of Jerry Hicks, a convenor at the site.
Amicus have refused to rule out the possibility of any strike spreading to other sections of the aerospace and shipbuilding sector.
Ian Waddell, Amicus' national officer for aerospace and ship building, said: "Rolls Royce are scapegoating an individual for poor industrial relations on the site of their own making. It's difficult to see the dismissal as anything other than a cynical move to attack workers and the union to enable them to maximise their already record profits." See John Lawrence's report on page 5 for supporting information.

At war at ASDA
The GMB union are approaching a 'state of war' with ASDA, as the company attempts to break union recognition in its stores.

A subsidiary of the US-based union nemesis Wal-Mart, ASDA has operated a highly campaign against British unions, in particular the GMB. Having narrowly lost a battle for recognition at Washington, Tyne and Wear, against a well-funded campaign comprising anti union leaflets, a 'helpline' and divisive pay offers, the GMB have gone on strike at a second Washington distribution centre.

Five hundred people went on strike from the 27th to 30th July, after a pay offer of 10%, conditional on giving up their right to collective bargaining, was mooted.

Temp against Tesco
Polish temp workers have gone on a wildcat strike in Ireland against 'dangerous' and 'unhealthy' productivity demands from managers. They have organised a 'Committee of Defence of Temp Workers in Tesco', which has issued a list of demands and held a picket outside their Greenhills workplace, and others have downed tools in sympathy strikes.

One striker said: "They were treated very badly because the target of their work was increased all the time and there wasn't any more pay for the part-timers. Apart from today's protests in Ireland there were also some in Poland over this horrible situation of workers in Tesco and all over the world."

We take it personally
DHL have horrified workers at their Vauxhall Depot in London, after they fired a terminally ill and highly confused worker for not showing up at work. Bernard Doherty, from Catford, went missing in early July having informed the company he was ill. On his way to post an official sick note, he became confused and wasn't found until days later.
The company phoned his wife, who told them her husband was missing. When she phoned them again to inform them he had been found and was in hospital, she was informed he had been sacked.

Imagine If...

Charlie, affectionately known as 'the runt' by his dog-loving mum, was feeling a bit like he was being watched.
He wondered if it was to do with his zodiac, or his chi. Maybe his chakras were out of alignment. He tried breathlessly to control his rising panic as he surmised that maybe his mansion was not properly feng shui.
Then he looked out on his garden and relaxed. He was at least eating the most healthy of the healthy food, which counted for a lot in his book.
He'd decided to give over some of his fields to the concept of 'biodynamics', where livestock are treated with homeopathic remedies rather than antibiotics, and signs of the zodiac decided when he should plant his crops, as opposed to stuffy old science.
He beamed when he thought of what the brown sludge of nanotechnology would do when it encountered those plants!
He was trying to breed them strong enough to tackle any problem thrown at them.

But he wasn't just doing it because he thought the crops would be of a higher quality. Oh no. He was going much further. Unbeknownst to his family, this was his newest attempt to take the crown of England.

His crops would be infused with the power of the zodiac, and, he hoped, would rise up at his command to surround Buckingham palace in a vice-like grip of wheaten fury!

He knew there would be difficulties. His first attempt to turn armies of wheat into armies of, well, armies had ended with failure when the hyper-organic vegetables had rebelled during the training stages and stormed the cowshed. He still remembered the rustling as they lay in wait outside (fortunately a strong wind and some rain came along at the right moment or he imagined that even now they would still be there, waiting patiently).

He also hadn't counted them being quite so flammable.
But one day, soon, he would regain control of his ancestral birthright, and then those dreadful people would see! Ahahah!

Something whinnied in the background. "Coming dear," he said, as he turned away from his project.

The quiz

1. Who are the only group in Britain who are regularly advised when the law will be enforced and when they can safely ignore it?
2. What distinction did Monty Miller achieve in Australia?
3. Who created a character called 'Litte Red Henski' to attack the IWW?
4. Which travel writer wrote a book that included accounts of Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid, Welsh-speaking farmers far from home and an anarchist insurrection?

Answers on page 6



A Sideways Look

The point of free speech is that opinions you don't agree with are aired. While I wouldn't build it up into an absolute position it is still an important principle. Ideas are powerful things and we have enough examples from our own history to see why the powerful want them suppressed.

Which brings me to the latest response from 'world statesman' Blair - to deport those who incite, condone or glorify terrorism and ban any organisations who are 'concerned' in terrorism. Where do you start? The two organisations named are Hizb ut Tahrir and the successors to al-Muhajiroun. I find these groups' ideas repellent - particularly al-Muhajiroun who happily advocate suicide bombings. Both groups have more than a whiff of anti-Semitism about them and are particularly vile when talking about Hindus. However, being banned by the state will not make these ideas go away - if anything, experience from the recent past in Ireland suggests the opposite. People hold views because of a combination of factors, but there is always some sort of materialist basis to them - even when those advocating them are religious. In this case, the alienation of young Muslims expressed through the open sores of Palestine and Iraq. I'm angry about it and I'm an atheist, so I can see why a Muslim might be particularly pissed off.

Some on the left claim that Hizb is fascist, though it appears to me to be a combination of religion and Leninism, even adopting a workplace-cell approach to organisation in Uzbekistan. But even if it is fascist, a state ban is not something I would support, just as I don't think the BNP should be banned by the state, either. Banning either organisation in the society we are in would merely heighten their kudos.

The literature put out by Hizb claims

that they are non-violent and anti-capitalist. I'll take both claims with a pinch of salt, but it's really besides the point - they see themselves as the alternative to western capitalism and, effectively, it is the political territory which should be that of secular socialist and anarchist movements. Personally, I'd take something where my choices are not proscribed by the lifestyle and morals of a 1,400 year-old book, but for plenty of the world's poorest anything that offers something better than what they have will look attractive.

And what of supporting terrorism abroad? Why does this sound to me like it will be remarkably one-sided? Will David Aaronovitch be hounded for his support for US terror in Iraq? Will the next Lib-Dem MP to suggest that they can see why Palestinians become suicide bombers be deported to North Uist? Or will it just be people who call their god Allah?

Hizb are strongest in central Asia, where they are banned, thousands of them have been imprisoned and tortured and at least one boiled alive by the US-backed dictator Karimov. The various authoritarian governments of the region have been lobbying the US to add Hizb ut Tahrir to its list of 'terrorist organisations'. And then, debate is closed down and what the dictators and their secret police do becomes officially off-limits, the more so because we will risk being accused of 'supporting terror', unlike our government which merely exports it.

Blast from the Past

Parkhurst fought back, taken from Freedom of 2nd August 1980:

News of a significant development within prison has surfaced with 45 prisoners at Parkhurst maximum security prison smuggling out a document signed by them which states: "We the undersigned wish to form a prisoners' union."

According to People's News Service (18th July) a spokesperson claiming to be associated with the prisoners has called on prisoners elsewhere to take up the demand for the right to organise a union.

A list of demands were provided which were:

- The recognition of the right to form a prison union;
- An end to all censorship;
- An end to chronic overcrowding;
- An end to cellular confinement/isolation;
- Consultation with prisoners about changes in the penal system.

The idea of a prisoners' union was advocated by Radical Alternatives to Prisons in its submission to the May inquiry into the Prison Services which reported late last year. RAP said that "Within prisons, it is desirable that prisoners should be allowed to organise their own union and to be consulted about conditions and proposed changes in penal policy."

The possibility that British prisons are about to experience attempts to establish a prisoners' union is made more likely by the signed document from Parkhurst. Despite the fact that the British government is a signatory to the UN document 'Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners', something tells the author of these words that the prison authorities will respond to the prisoners' demands in the only way they are able to - by punishing the 'offenders'.

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