

FREEDOM

80P ANARCHIST NEWS AND VIEWS

www.freedompress.org.uk

25 MARCH 2006

INSIDE ►►

A merger of convenience page 3

Hidden hospital sexual abuse page 5

Nietzsche: elitist not anarchist page 7

Svartfrosk page 8

1.5 MILLION STRIKERS

After a massive 80% yes vote, one of the highest to have taken place in recent years, workers are downing keyboards to pick up placards. More than 2% of the UK population (perhaps as much as 8% including dependents) are directly involved in a major dispute with local government over the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS).

The strike is primarily over union bosses' failure to secure a continuation of the 'rule of 85' (where local government workers can retire if their age and time in work exceeds 85 years in total).

Other issues include the attempted separation of support and reserve workers (such as support teachers and reserve firefighters) from the bulk of the workforce, and the attempted raising of retirement age for firefighters from 55 to 60.

Despite strong evidence that it would be extremely dangerous for older firefighters to continue working, a deal seems close to being reached between union chiefs and local government that only existing workers will be protected from the change.

For ex-Freedom editor John, a member of Unison, this will be his second strike action. Although he has misgivings about the effectiveness of the strike, crossing the picket is not an issue. He said: "This strike will affect me, I'm a temp in a local council office with a couple of hundred people there. The union seems very weak and detached from the workforce though – especially

in my department [HR]. We'll only have to catch up the work the next day anyway because it's public service stuff. All in all, this strike's a bit annoying really. I most likely won't cross [the picket lines] because I don't see that I actually could, the idea makes me feel physically sick."

Steve from anarcho-syndicalist group Solidarity Federation was involved in series of local government strikes in the early '90s. He said: "The low turn out reflects the ever-widening gap between the union bureaucracy and the workplace, and the way ballots are conducted now, by post. I don't know what the unions are planning after this but they should carry on some sort of action or the momentum will be lost. I was a member of NALGO and we had a series of strikes and the militancy was lost because of the union running scared."

Under the banner Unions Together Fighting to Protect Our Pensions, Unison, the Association of Educational Psychologists, the Community and Youth Workers Union, the GMB, the National Association of Probation Officers, the Northern Ireland Public Services Alliance, the NUT, TGWU, construction workers' union UCATT and Amicus are supporting the action.

The local government flare-up is part on an ongoing fight over pensions which has seen the rights of future workers dropped by union leaders in order to secure the continuation of the present deal for existing ones.



And it's not just Britain campaigning over workers rights, see page 4 for more

Last year TUC general secretary Brendan Barber signed off an agreement allowing the raising of national-level pensions as existing members leave the service.

The unions twice called a general strike last year as negotiations went on over national-level pensions, but both times backed down, first when the

government promised a better deal after the election, then again upon signing the current deal.

Dave Prentis, General Secretary for Unison, the union most heavily involved in the dispute with around one million members due to come out, said: "We still hope the government and employers will see sense and talk seriously about

finding a fair solution for our members. Civil servants, teachers, police, firefighters and the NHS have all been given protection for existing members of their pension schemes. There is no rhyme or reason in singling out LGPS members for unfair and unjust treatment. Our members deserve the pensions they have already paid for."

BART'S PFI-CARUMBA!

Two major victories for government supporters of Private Finance Initiative (PFI) funding for improvements to public services have been approved in the last two weeks.

At St Bartholemew's hospital in London, £1bn for re-development has been authorised to be split between the facility and the Royal London. The deal will be run on a PFI basis, meaning that companies will effectively loan the hospitals money for the revamp, to be paid back over a 35 year period.

The controversial system of financing has faced powerful criticisms and setbacks over the last few years, after several flagship programmes proved to be massively expensive failures.

Design flaws in projects like the Royal Infirmary in Cumberland, the first NHS hospital project to be financed by PFI, saw a drop in bed numbers, poor design leading to 'bed jams', and major architectural problems after outside contractors with little knowledge of NHS needs took charge of the redesign. Cutting corners in building quality led to sewage overflows and shortages of space. Meanwhile, the cost was £500m for a job which, according to one source, should have cost £64m.

Similar problems have been reflected across the sector, prompting senior figures in the government's own architectural commission to label PFI a 'disaster'.

The furore led last year to the delay of plans to bring 70 hospitals into a massive scheme which would have seen the largest building project in decades for the NHS – financed via PFI. But having diverted the PFI project into schooling and housing, the government announcement, the second recent 'pro' decision (the first allowing construction of new oncology and haematology facilities in Yorkshire) may herald the return of the plan.

Having approved the move, work will begin within weeks and the new facilities have been given a 2016 completion date.

In Leeds meanwhile, tenants on the 'Little London' estate have voted through plans for an £85m PFI project. The scheme affects 900 council homes, and entails selling of attached land to renovators for a 125-house development.

Originally the PFI project had been voted down by a majority of tenants, after a vote in 2000 with a 67% turnout saw 54% say no. The changes were then voted through in a new vote on a 46% turnout, after rebellious voting areas had been excluded from the plan.

The scheme will be paid back over a 30-year period. 435 council homes will be demolished or sold, with the released land used to create 400 new or refurbished private homes. Of these, 300 are earmarked as 'affordable', (£55,000 to £110,000). Only 125 new council homes would be built to replace those lost. At least 435 and as many as a 1,000 people would have to leave, each receiving £3,800 compensation.

WOBBLIES WILL WIN

Multinational Coffee Corporation Starbucks has been made to stop union-busting, after settling a dispute with the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) on 8th March. The Seattle-based company will also have to rehire union organisers Sarah Bender and Anthony Polanco, paying around \$2,000 in damages to them and another barista, Peter Montalbano. Additionally, the National Labour Relations Board (NLRB), has forced the company to abolish national anti-union policies prohibiting the sharing of written information and the wearing of union badges.

A complaint by the radical IWW union, lead to the charging of 15 Starbucks officials with a variety of offences, including firing Sarah Bender to discourage union membership and the surveillance, and interrogation of Anthony Polanco. The NLRB agreement, which the IWW refused to sign, does not require the company to admit any wrongdoing, as is common in US Trade Union law.

IU 660, the Starbucks Workers Union, was happy with the settlement, which

members say will give the wobblies room to continue their organising drive across the United States. "I'm pleased that Starbucks' blatant violation of the law has been remedied in my case," said reinstated barista Sarah Bender. "And now I'm just eager to get back to work to continue the organising drive and chalk up more gains in wages and security of hours with the Starbucks Workers Union." Three Manhattan Starbucks have already 'gone union' with the IWW.

"Though we would have preferred to vindicate our rights in an open hearing, winning a remedy for all of our well-documented charges against Starbucks is certainly gratifying," said Daniel Gross, an IWW organiser and Starbucks barista whose 'final warning before termination' was nullified by the settlement. "It's critical to point out that while the conclusion of this battle took place in a legal setting, the fight was won in the streets and through actions on the job. The union couldn't have done it without grassroots solidarity

ISSN 0016-0504



Vol 67 No 06

9 770016 050009

► page 6, column 4

Home and away

Sussex students shout

Students have occupied the University of Sussex library to protest against falling standards. The occupation has been organised through meetings held every hour, on the hour, involving all the students. The occupiers, who estimated an attendance of 100, issued a manifesto, saying:

- We believe that the recent cuts to the library epitomise the problems facing students at this university.
- We believe that we are entitled to a high level of education and that large seminars and few resources, either academic or material, are not going to achieve this.
- We regret that this action may inconvenience library staff and we stress that this action is in opposition to the library cutbacks and redundancies perpetrated by university senior management.
- We demand more transparency from the university and that it calls an emergency council meeting, open to all students, during term.
- We want to show the university the extent and level of discontent among students and we wish to show our complete support for the aims of the sort-US-out campaign, as well as the staff in *all* their industrial action.

Gangmasters by decree

New 'licensing' of gangmasters is to be introduced to try and regulate the area of mass immigrant exploitation. According to the government, 'legitimate' gangmasters will be expected to abide by a code of conduct when supplying businesses primarily in the agriculture and manufacturing sectors.

The legislation hopes to weed out 'rogue groups' which currently operate outside the law by employing immigrants for below minimum wage in labour-intensive roles, helping to keep costs down for small businesses squeezed by major supermarket chains. The government intend to do so by introducing new regulations for the black-market in labour, but hopes to avoid putting excessive strain on small business.

Aldermaston blockade

Around 20 people turned out to blockade the AWE Aldermaston facility in West Berkshire on 18th March after a decision was made to allow the building of a laser testing facility.

A member of protest group Block the Builders said: "Six people were arrested, most were charged with breach of the peace, one was also charged with obstructing a police officer. We did it in January with about 60 people, but at the moment it's mainly just a hard core at Aldermaston with the Womens' peace campaign and Trident Ploughshares, but we need more people. There's two gates on the road either side of a corner, to effectively stop them getting in we need to do both gates. On the northern gates we stopped traffic for about half an hour. On the other gate people were having an interfaith service, they moved when people came through but they weren't afraid to get arrested."

 **media hacklab**
Technology for social change,
independent media, free software
and open access IT

Open every day
from 12 noon to 6pm
at Freedom
84b Whitechapel High Street
www.hacklab.org.uk

Around the world

CHINA: Chinese 'trade unionists' have found that around 13% of Chinese companies paid their workers less than minimum wage last year.

Although the situation varied among regions, it was found that firms often hold off and underpay wages while demanding unpaid overtime in both urban and rural areas.

The report came from the All-China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU), which is the only legal union in China and commonly regarded as a secondary arm of the state.

Leading members have urged the government to make wage rises a criteria in evaluating the work of state firm managers, and to issue regulations guaranteeing fair payment of employees.

The ACFTU went on to attack wealth distribution in the State Capitalist country.

"China is becoming a region where wealth is being accumulated by a small number of people faster than most any other place in the world," said Li Yonghai, a secretary with the All China Federation of Trade Unions. "The wealth gap between rich and poor is terrifying and is the basic source of social instability," the China Youth Daily quoted him as saying.

The 'union' did not comment on how it might pressure for change.

ITALY: A rally dissolved into violence on 11th March when police clashed with a protest against the far right.

Up to 300 people set fire to cars and a building on one of Milan's busiest shopping streets when police tried to break up their protest against a fascist pre-election rally.

The fighting, which saw 45 people arrested, comes ahead of elections which look likely to sling Silvio Berlusconi, Italy's

hard-right premier, out of power. The conflict was described as some of the worst seen since 2001 by one reporter, when police shot a teenager during anti-globalisation riots in Genoa.

Berlusconi, who is lagging by 3.5 percentage points in opinion polls, said that the violence was symptomatic of an anti-democratic element, according to his monopoly broadcasting companies.

The fascist rally that sparked the two-hour pitched battle was led by the Tricolour Flame, an extreme-right group running on Berlusconi's ticket.

PALESTINE: An Israeli who had recently spoken in Cambridge has been shot by police while on a demonstration.

Matan Cohen, was hit in the face while protesting against Israel's 'security barrier', a massive 20ft high wall dividing Israeli-annexed land from the Palestinian West Bank.

Matan (pictured below being arrested), a 17-year old army refusenik and member of Anarchists Against the Wall, had been taking part in a demonstration at Beit Sira, near Ramallah, in the occupied West Bank. He and an American called Sara were retreating and had both been hit in the legs by the rubber bullets, when Matan was hit again in the face.

Border police opened fire on demonstrators, who say they were retreating from the area at the time. Another man had to be operated on to remove a rubber



bullet that had lodged near his kidney.

POLAND: A special commission has been set up in the Polish parliament to investigate the possibility of secret service involvement in the so-called 'Gay Power' affair.

During the second round of presidential elections won by the homophobic Kaczynski, 12 fake bombs were found all over Warsaw blocking traffic in the whole city for hours.

Later on, a letter signed 'Gay Power' was sent claiming responsibility for the incident. This letter denounced the homophobic actions of Lech Kaczynski.

The commission will investigate the possibility that the secret services wanted to increase the chances of Kaczynski in the elections by letting him pose as a 'strong man' able to bring order again.

PORTUGAL: The Portuguese parliament has decided to close the progressive Lisbon Secondary School D citing 'lack of enrolments' from pupils.

The school, which works on a system of participatory democracy, is ranked 24 in the country and is widely regarded as a 'red' establishment, a factor which has led to criticisms that the Secretary of State for Education, Valter Lemos, may be using enrolments as an excuse to get rid of the problem.

The secretary of state argued in the parliament on 10th March that amongst the motives to close down the school was the "fact that pupils didn't choose to enrol."

But the government itself has been held responsible, say critics.

Many parents wished their children to be enrolled in the school's 7th year, but the Ministry forbade them to do so two years ago for classes at the beginning of their 7th year. Doing so, was effectively

a death sentence, according to critics, as it would be highly unlikely that parents would want to shift their children in the middle of the last term of the year.

According to some teachers, up to seven schools could disappear in Lisbon alone, affecting tens of thousands of pupils and around a thousand workers (teachers and others).

SPAIN: Three squatters are due to face trial for assault in Barcelona after allegations were made that a brick was thrown at a policeman from a squatted city centre barrió.

Of the nine people arrested on 4th February, six were released shortly afterwards, all pending trial for minor charges, including the two people who were arrested in hospital and, on the day in question, had not been anywhere near Sant Pere Mes Baix where the alleged assault took place.

Three are still in jail, Rodrigo, Alex and Juan. Rodrigo and Alex are both being charged with attempted manslaughter for supposedly throwing a rock. Juan, who was beaten so badly by police that he lost consciousness even before the cop was injured, is facing charges of attempted assault against authority. Rodrigo and Juan are both under 25 and are being held in a youth prison just outside Barcelona. Alex is being held in the Modelo, the main Barcelona adult lock-up.

Locals have organised an international day of action for the 31st March, asking anyone and everyone who can to organise something outside their local Spanish embassy or consulate on that day.

- For further info and to help with fundraising, contact libertadpresxs4@hotmail.com
- To donate use this bank account: La Caixa, Account number: 2100-3002-01-2105267123, IBAN: ES66, BIC/SWIFT: CaixesBBXXX

Prison news

Mehmet Tarhan released

Gay Turkish Anarchist Mehmet Tarhan has been released from Sivas Military prison, where he has been held since April 2005 for refusing military service. Mehmet was originally sentenced to four years, but that has now been overturned by a higher court. Earlier this year the European Court of Human Rights ruled that Turkey had violated the human rights of another conscientious objector, Murat Ulke, subjecting him to degrading treatment, a decision which was expected to have a positive influence on Mehmet's case.

Solidarity with Ruben and Ignasi

Around the world, there have been solidarity actions in support of Ruben and Ignasi, two anarchist comrades arrested in Barcelona on 9th February. These have included demonstrations and marches, banner drops, graffiti, super-glue attacks, explosive and incendiary attacks (banks have been targeted), embassy pickets, leafleting, and a number of fund-raising events. While Ignasi and Ruben are receiving good support from the international Anarchist movement, particularly in Barcelona itself, where

they are supported by everyone from the CNT to the squatters movement, further solidarity is still called for. Let us also not forget the comrades arrested a few days earlier on 4th February, nor the Barcelona Six prisoners who have sat in jail since 2003. More information on all these cases at www.presosalacalle.tk

Jeff Luers calls for 'Green Scare' Resistance

Jeff 'Free' Luers writes: "This June marks my sixth year in prison. From behind these walls I have strived to remain an active part of this struggle; from contributing to the dialogue and discussion of tactics, to furthering the debate on climate change in the public. Perhaps most importantly I am proof that prison cannot crush the spirit of resistance. This year has seen an increase in state repression against activists and radicals alike. It is truly a scary time. We all know about the 'Red Scare' - the government's attempt to justify repression by labelling dissidents 'communists' back in the 1950s. Today we see their 'Green Scare' attempt to crush resistance by labeling them 'eco-terrorists'. For the last three years, 11th June has been celebrated as

an international day of solidarity with me, Jeffrey Luers. I have been overjoyed with a sense of love and pride at the support I have received from around the world. My deepest and sincerest thanks go out to all of you. Right now there are more than a dozen people sitting in American jails (or on strict bail release) accused of Earth/Animal Liberation Front actions. This June, I ask you to show them the solidarity that you have shown me. I ask that foremost in your mind be the thought that the state is trying to break this struggle with repressive and intimidating arrests and sentences. I hope you understand that it's not just those of us in prison being punished with these sentences; they are designed to be examples to you, to frighten you into compliance. This June I'm asking you to demonstrate that you can't be intimidated." Weekend of Resistance Against the 'Green Scare', 9th to 11th June 2006. For more info see www.freefreemove.org/june2006.htm

Cervantes trial ends

The Italian 'Operation Cervantes' trial, directed against members of the Italian ABC and other anarchists, has concluded,

with six of the nine defendants being found 'not guilty'. The three who were convicted are Marco, who was sentenced to nine years for sending a letter-bomb; Simone, who received a six year sentence for allegedly planting a bomb outside the Viterbo courthouse; and Massimo, who was sentenced to three years for an attack on a McDonalds. Massimo has been released along with those acquitted, while currently Marco and Simone remain under house arrest. Prison details will be given when available.

Roberto Catrino Lopez

Anarchist prisoner Gabriel Pombo Da Silva is calling for solidarity with a comrade recently arrested in The Netherlands in possession of false papers and a firearm: Roberto B. Catrino Lopez, P.I. Leylstad - AFD 1116, Cel. E06B, Larserdreef 300, 8233 - H.B. Lelystad, Holland.

Gabriel himself is one of the 'Aachen Four' prisoners, three of whom were sentenced last year, and remain in prison and in need of support. More information on the Aachen prisoners at www.escapeintorebellion

News

Diversity on sale

Rob Ray investigates the possible fallout from a merger between two of Britain's biggest book chains

Early April will see the final decision by the Competition Commission whether to allow the buyout of the Ottakars bookshop chain by HMV – the owner of Waterstones.

The move is potentially highly significant in the publishing world, representing, according to authors and publishing groups, a move away from diversity and further towards promotion of 'branded' writers.

According to HMV's own figures, the combined company would control approximately 23% of the total book-selling market. However, this figure has been disputed in submissions from independent retailers to the Commission, who point out that this number includes internet and supermarket sales, and that the real number is far higher on the high street. In commercial terms, a monopoly would control 30%.

One writer pointed out that: "Within Scotland it means that Waterstones would have control of 21 of the 31 major bookshops."

Of most import, according to critics, is the impact on publishers and authors of the move. One submission explains: "Waterstones' buying procedure is highly centralised, while Ottakars allow some autonomy – the takeover will result in a change of emphasis and likely, the exclusion of non-central movement."

The creation of a major conglomerate, expanding from 195 to 336 stores in-house, with a central remit could prove enormously damaging to the prospects of new writers and small publishers. WHSmiths, which operates a similar policy has become extremely difficult for local or small scale publishers to stock through in recent years.

Both Ottakars and HMV have said in the submissions that competition in the

field would be maintained by the new entrants online and in supermarket sales. The move itself, and the language of the major stores, suggests a pervasive fear of supermarket encroachment.

In 2004-5 supermarket book sales increased by over 60% as retailers such as Tesco increased their range and the number of discounted titles. In the Tesco giant alone, 635 stores now stock books, with massive discounts of up to 50% offered on major titles.

The internet also experienced an upsurge to 40% growth, having already experienced averages of 10-20% in previous years.

In response, high-street focus has also shifted in the last few years – part of an ongoing shift over the last few decades – towards 'best-selling volumes' (top 100 sellers in any given year) which can guarantee profits, and away from specialist or minority merchandise, which is according to the groups, available online and thus removes the need for competition controls.

Best-sellers now comprise 15.7% of the market, up from 12.8% in 2003 following the upsurge – suggesting that consolidation will only add to this problem as the new conglomeration strive to use bulk-buy to best effect.

But the shift has caused a massive lock-out of smaller titles. One publisher said that a definition of 'reasonable volume sales' was around 10,000 paperback copies. Below this level it was difficult for a publisher to profit and for a title to be available in the shops in sufficient quantity to be visible.

Between 2003 and 2005 the total number of paperback fiction titles that sold between 10,000 and 100,000 copies fell by 21% in the industry, from 862 titles to 681 in 2005.



But new books hitting the mainstream are almost always broken, according to industry sources, by one of the major specialist stores – Waterstones, Ottakars or Borders. One major publisher pointed out that without the three major stores, most of its adult titles would not have 'broken'.

According to one Freedom Press

volunteer, the move is not an unexpected one. "With ongoing big-business consolidation in the face of continuing supermarket and online encroachment, in order to secure the lucrative bulk buying deals from publishers, is probably inevitable. But the outcome is increased pressure on publishers and authors to only push books that are guaranteed

mass-bulk sellers, further pushing minority publishing to the sidelines. Today's publishing sector is capitalism's contribution to culture – innovation and diversity are not improved by expansion, they are retarded by it. Which is of course another very good reason to have a go at ending the bloody thing."

AUT on the pickets

The AUT and NATFHE, who are set to merge into a new Universities and Colleges Union, called a one-day strike on 7th March to mark the start of an indefinite 'action short of a strike', which includes boycotts of assessments, appraisals and staff cover. The action was widely supported by the National Union of Students.

Universities and colleges across the country had lectures cancelled and many universities saw good levels of attendance among unionised members. The best turnout was reported in some of the Scottish universities where almost all lectures were cancelled and most students didn't cross the picket lines.

The core of the dispute according to unions involved is pay. For years university staff salaries have lagged behind, dropping in real terms by about 40% in the past 20 years. Former Higher Education minister Alan Jonson said in the House of Commons in April

2004 that at least a third of the money collected from top-up would be used for salaries and education staff salaries was one of the key arguments to sell the idea of top-up fees. Two years later this enthusiasm to improve the pay of the staff has disappeared and prompted the unions to call for an industrial action.

The vast majority of union members voted for the strike action, but the reasons can not be reduced to wanting a bigger piece of the stolen student top up fee cake. In discussions among colleagues various concerns about the working conditions and the state of the education sector as a whole are raised.

"Workers voted for the strike action for many reasons", said one striking comrade from Solidarity Federations Education Workers Network (EWN), from the University of Manchester. "The discontent runs much deeper than just pay issues. Universities are facing further commercialisation,

privatisation, outsourcing and casualisation of staff. The whole direction of where education is going got over 65% of the staff to vote for strike action, and many more for action short of a strike".

The dispute is not over and the one-day symbolic strike has so far changed nothing. Anarchists working in the sector or studying in higher education are continuing to put forward their case. We call for uniting workers across the union lines and of course non-unionised staff as well. We continue to call for the end of student top up fees as it blocks many working class peoples access to education.

The writer is a member of Solidarity Federations Education Workers Network, which has re-emerged in the last month after an initiative in Manchester university. If you are interested in getting involved with the EWN, please get in touch with Manchester Solidarity Federation local, www.solfed.org.uk

George Fox 6 lose

A group of students have lost their appeal against a verdict of aggravated trespass, delivered after they were prosecuted by their own university for a peaceful demonstration on campus. The judge ordered that the six pay an extra £300 each, taking the total fine to £600 per person, and extended their conditional discharge to 3½ years.

The Six were put up on the dock after staging a protest at a funding conference held in Lancaster University. The group had briefly handed out leaflets explaining crimes committed by companies present at the conference, before being dragged away by caterers for the event.

The demonstration then continued outside. The police were called and told the demonstrators they were doing nothing illegal.

Lecture Theatre 1 of the George Fox building at the university had been used as the venue for a 'Corporate Venturing' Conference – a networking meeting for multinational corporations. Speakers at

the conference were drawn from controversial arms manufacturer BAe Systems, Shell and other companies the six say have 'long histories of human rights abuses and environmental destruction'.

The Vice-Chancellor of the university, Professor Wellings, referred the matter to the police, who then brought charges, and university staff were called as witnesses.

During the trial, the students had to defend themselves against allegations by the Vice Chancellor that they violently disrupted the conference. One of the group said: "We were convicted because in the judge's words we 'momentarily disrupted' the conference, and were explicitly cleared of any acts of intimidation."

The conference should, under the university's own Freedom of Speech rules, have allowed dissenting voices.

Failing to abide by its own statutory obligations, the defence argued, should have invalidated the conference's right to be there.

Generation précarité

Protests across France are growing against the government's unpopular new labour law reports Yan Say

On Saturday 11th March at around 4am, French riot police evacuated the Université de la Sorbonne of its three-days-long student occupation. Despite a night-time occupation in 1986, it was the first time since the 'événements' of 1968 that students have occupied this symbolic university, which they have designated a 'historic place' that 'should be the spearhead of the blockage of all universities'. Despite calls for an 'active non-violent defence', clashes between students and the 1,000-strong teargas-firing riot police which was encircling the university building led to arrests and wounded on both sides. Opposition to Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin's new CPE law has been growing since early March, with more than a million expected to demonstrate their opposition on 18th March, and union leaders threatening a general strike for the following week.

The occupation of Sorbonne University is part of a larger picture of weekly protests against a new government labour law. On the 7th March, up to one million people demonstrated in opposition to the CPE (Contrat Première Embauche, or 'first employment contract'), a law passed by special decree, bypassing parliamentary debate. During the night of 8th and 9th March, the law was passed by cutting short the parliamentary debate referring to the 44-3 article of the French constitution which allows the government such special procedure. The law was consequently implemented immediately. The law provides

employers with the right to fire workers under the age of 26 without explanation if they have been working for the company for the less than two years. Critics have pointed out that the plan will exacerbate problems of youth unemployment and will make secure employment harder to find.

While France faces one of the highest rates of unemployment in Western Europe (9.6%), especially among young people for which the rate is at least doubled, the French government faces fierce criticism from a growing number of parties concerning its propositions. The growing opposition of students, rallied by secondary school-pupils and working class youth has blocked more than three quarters of all universities throughout the country, mobilising about 500,000 people on Thursday 16th March. A mobilisation by the entire French labour movement has been called to start 18th March with the prospect of a possible general strike on the 23rd March.

Youth organisations and workers' trade unions have joined together in opposition to the lack of discussion and debate before the implementation of the new law said to be passed 'in force'. In fact, when Dominique de Villepin, simply announced the creation of a new labour contract for the less than 26 year olds, no social partners had been involved in the project nor even in any discussions. The prime minister argued the CPE was a specially designed "for those who have the more problems on the job market", i.e. the youth from the



suburbs who had rioted last autumn. The reaction in France shows nevertheless a deeper crisis, as not only youth are being stigmatised while general issues of unemployment are not

being tackled with, but the lack of democratic debate starts to deepen what Bruno Julliard, president of the UNEF (the National Union of Students of France), the main French student

union, has called a 'social gap' which the CPE is extending.

For updates on the ongoing situation in France, visit www.libcom.org/blog which is constantly updated.

No mining in Mexico

More than a quarter of a million miners and steelworkers shut down 70 companies across Mexico, in a three day wildcat strike, from the 1st to 3rd March. The spontaneous walkout demanded the immediate reinstatement of the recently deposed General Secretary of the National Union of Mining and Metallurgical Workers of Mexico (SNTMMRM), Napoleon Gomez Urrutia, as well as the resignation of the government's Labour Minister, Javier Salazar and improvements to mine safety. The protests were followed by a 30,000 strong demonstration in Mexico City on 7th March, with threats of an all-out strike to come if demands were not met, and even a national general strike.

Workers are protesting to assert the independence of the trade union movement, after decades of corruption and interference by the Mexican government. The SNTMMRM is a member of the Workers Congress (CT) which has historical links to the

Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) which governed the country from 1929 until 2000. In the past the close relationship of government and trade unions has led to corruption and business friendly unions. Right-wing President Vicente Fox had promised to restore the independence of the movement, but CT head Victor Flores Morales had been an active supporter of the government privatisation agenda, as well as labour market 'flexibilisation'. Gomez Urrutia had until recently been planning to challenge Flores Morales for the leadership of Mexico's main union federation.

The miners leader had also frustrated the government by decisively opposing proposed labour market reforms, backing a successful 46-day strike by 2,400 steelworkers in September last year and accusing mining company Grupo Mexico of 'industrial homicide' in the wake of last month's Pasto de Conchos disaster, in which a gas explosion killed 65 workers.

At the Mexico City demonstration, miners and metalworkers were joined by members of the dissident National Workers Union (UNT) and the Mexican Electrical Workers (SME), who have pledged their support in defending union autonomy and democracy. The UNT was formed as a breakaway union, in protest at the links between the PRI and the labour movement. The UNT asserts that the conflict over Gomez Urrutia is representative of wider struggles; against government interference, but also against creeping privatisation and the anti-worker policies of the unpopular Fox administration.

The government alleges that the miners' leader misappropriated some \$55m of compensation money intended for sacked workers and is wanted by the police in relation to these charges. He has been replaced by the loser in the last miners elections six years ago, Elias Morales Hernandez, a candidate apparently popular with the Grupo Mexico mining company.

Desert games

A much hyped US offensive in the Samarra province of Iraq from the 16th March, billed as the biggest airborne operation in the country since the beginning of the war, has left the world's media scratching their heads as 1,500 American and Iraqi troops, 200 vehicles and 50 aircraft have now spent two days searching the desert to little effect. With American officials courting press attention with boasts of the size of the operation, and the release of video footage and pictures, speculation is rife that the whole assault was faked for propaganda.

US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice was quick to flag up the contribution of Iraqi troops, saying she "would call attention to the role that Iraqi Security Forces have played in this offensive," showing "that Iraqi forces are indeed taking on more of the security side."

Other US officials were keen to play on the same theme, praising the work of the 900 Iraqi soldiers involved in the 'offensive'.

Iraqi politicians criticised the timing of the offensive, claiming it was distracting the already fractious debates over the opening of the Iraqi parliament. Kurdish and Sunni parties refuse to accept Interim Prime Minister Ibrahim Ja'afari as leader of the new government, the latter over the activities of Interior Ministry death squads.

Dr Fair Bakri, Director of Baghdad morgue, who has subsequently fled Iraq, told UN Human Rights Officer in Iraq John Pace, that some 7,000 people had so far been killed by militia loyal to the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, with some 700 bodies a month arriving at the morgue, often tortured, peaking at 1,100 last July.

An international official in Baghdad has also reported that 1,000 people were killed in the aftermath of the Al-Askari mosque bombing, up to 3rd March. This includes 47 Sunni and Shia protesters massacred at an unofficial checkpoint south of Baghdad.

Feature

Abuse of power in the NHS

Ellen Kemp looks into the sexual abuse scandal involving vulnerable people that didn't rock the nation

In July 2005 the Kerr Haslam Inquiry reported its findings to the Minister of Health. Unlike of the Shipman inquiry or the inquiry into the deaths of babies in Bristol, this report has not made the headlines. The report that needed to unravel conspiracies of silence concerning 30 years of the sexual abuse of women psychiatric patients became itself a silent conspiracy to bring closure to this disgraceful episode.

This abuse of women psychiatric patients was done by senior consultants at Clifton Hospital in York between the 1960s and 1990s. Many persons knew what was happening and numerous complaints were made by patients and staff. But there was a failure to investigate the abuses committed by Dr William Kerr and Dr Michael Haslam, what did take place?

The background

In 1983 Lin Bigwood worked at Clifton psychiatric hospital and a female patient reported that she had had a sexual affair with Dr Kerr that was now over. She also said that Kerr had had sexual relations with other patients, and one had even tried to commit suicide after being abused. Lin expected that after she reported her concerns to senior members of the nursing staff that there would be an investigation into the complaint.

In fact these staff coerced the patient into signing note withdrawing the allegations. Repeated efforts by Lin for an investigation into the complaint were stonewalled. In fact the nursing management took action against Lin by moving her (demoting) to a geriatric ward. She was also placed on probation to monitor her performance. Lin then circulated to clinical staff a dossier about what she knew, only to be advised by a Dr Rugg that if it wasn't withdrawn she would be sacked.

In the meantime Lin's union, COHSE, give her full support. It further transpired that the hospital had received another letter from the patient withdrawing the allegation against Kerr. In fact two members of the clinical staff had visited the patient (who had been discharged) in her own home to obtain the withdrawal letter.

Ten months after hearing the allegation Lin began a new job as an unqualified nurse tutor at a Wakefield psychiatric hospital. She was seconded to the College of York and St Johns in York to undertake formal training as a nurse tutor. After being absent due to illness the College issued Lin with final written warning.

Lin's protestations that the College had failed to follow procedures, and therefore had no grounds for issuing the warning were ignored. However, her tutors let it be known that she was

a troublemaker and a threat to the nursing profession. The College went on to dismiss Lin from the course in June 1985.

In the meantime the York Health Authority was stalling on the complaint against Kerr. Only later did it emerge that the College Principal involved in dismissing Lin from college – a Dr McGregor – was also in fact an executive member of the York HA. After Lin's dismissal McGregor met with the other nurse tutor trainees and claimed that Lin "had made false allegations against the College, she had refused to meet him, and she had used violent and abusive language." Lin's nursing career was destroyed and she did not work in nursing again until 1997.

The criminal prosecutions

In 1996 a patient made a complaint against Kerr to the police, who were basically uninterested. After all, is it not madness if the mad complain against psychiatrists. Phil Willis Liberal MP for Harrogate decided to support her and after meeting a wall of silence he threatened to use his privilege and raise the issue in the Commons. The police were then instructed to begin an investigation. In all "726 people were interviewed, including 157 doctors. Of 1,200 known former female patients, 120 complained of abuse. This abuse ranged from sexual suggestions and threats through uninvited touching and perverse intimacy to outright assault and rape. About 30 former patients complained of abuse by Haslam."

Kerr's case took 28 months to come to court because of the obstructions of his defence team. Eventually it was decided that he was unable to plead due to an 'organic mental impairment'. This impairment did not stop him becoming president of his local golf club once the trial was over. The judge decided that the case should be put in front of another jury to 'find the facts'. The trial began at Leeds Crown Court in December 2000 and the police and prosecution expected the trial to last three months, however the judge made it clear that the trial was to be completed by Christmas.

The judge was full of other shenanigans. He constantly questioned the memories of the victims, and demanded that the jury make a decision on 12 charges in a day, unable to do this the jury was dismissed. In the end Kerr was found guilty on one charge of indecent assault – but of course this didn't count – and his name placed on the register of sexual offenders. Not only had these former patients suffered sexual abuse while supposedly receiving psychiatric care, now there were abused a second time by the British criminal justice system.



Silence: Clifton Hospital in York was closed in 1994, but it would be another decade before the abuses of power that went on at the mental health centre were to be exposed

York HA advised Haslam to retire in 1988, but he then went on to work in the NHS in Durham, where complaints continued. He was brought to trial in 2003 and was found guilty of rape and four charges of indecent assault. On appeal the rape charge was rescinded.

The aftermath and the Kerr-Haslam Inquiry.

Before both trials had finished Phil Willis MP and the ex-patients support group began to pressurise the Department of Health for a public inquiry. Its work only really began after the conviction of Haslam.

The inquiry, chaired by Nigel Pleming QC, from the outset sought to limit its impact. The inquiry was held in secret excluding the press and public. The ex-patients support group was allowed to attend but could not take notes during the proceedings. This is probably the main reason why there has been so little heard about it.

On hearing of the inquiry Lin Bigwood wanted to tell her story. As the only whistleblower involved it would seem obvious that her role would be central to any inquiry. However the inquiry

was obstructive about her participation. It failed to provide her with a solicitor even though every other party were given one. She was not offered any protection from libel or slander, nor was she offered any financial support to attend or to organise the enormous amount of documentation that was available. This meant that the whistleblower was going to be denied the right to be heard twice over.

The Inquiry posed three questions: why were the patients' protests not listened to, why were the opportunities to investigate abuse not taken and why did the abuse go undetected for so long?

For Lin Bigwood the Inquiry failed on all counts. It failed to find a conspiracy among the nursing and medical staff and the management in which Haslam and Kerr exercised maximum power ensured that their activities remained hidden. No blame was to be attached to individuals whose culpable behaviour betrayed the patients in their care. It failed to examine why if health care professionals worked under codes of conduct and there were definite reporting procedures, these

procedures were not used. And perhaps most importantly for Lin, it failed to find out how her career had been destroyed.

The Inquiry cost the taxpayer £3.2m, and the lawyers did well out of it. £300,000 was paid in compensation to those who claimed, about ten ex-patients. Kerr and Haslam are retired and their cases were never examined by the General Medical Council. Lin Bigwood and all the other ex-patients have received nothing. Although the report runs to 995 pages it "is itself evidence that the problem of the abuse of power still blights the NHS ... It is a disgraceful document, obviously motivated mainly by cynical thought concerning public relations and possible claims for compensation."

This article is based upon a critical review of the Kerr-Haslam Inquiry written by Phil Virden and published in *Asylum: the Magazine for Democratic Psychiatry*, available from Asylum Associates, Limbrick Centre, Limbrick Road, Sheffield S6 2PE. All quotes are directly from this article. The full report and an executive summary is available from the Department of Health at www.dh.gov.uk

Commentary

FREEDOM

Volume 67 Number 6

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

As it happens, this has been a good week for getting papers out. We've changed the times and dates of when we are producing, and were generally a bit more organised about the whole process, so this shouldn't be at the horrific level of lateness we have seen in recent months.

So the column, for once, begins on a cheery note. It also continues on one, as we've had a few new volunteers come forward, much to our delight, who we'll be contacting and, hopefully will ease some of our problems. These are mostly on the organisational side of things though, so we're still looking for copy, experts on any relevant subjects, industries, geographical areas, unions, etc. At present we'd particularly like reviewers for the latest Freedom Press titles. Most positive one wins (nah only joking, be brutal if you wish).

In other news, we have another struggle going on right beside us. Following the gutting of the Whitechapel library, one of the area's main community resources, a group has been set up to save as many of the books as possible and set up an alternative. We'll hopefully be doing a bit more on this (it is a noble thing to commit to your neighbours, after all) in the near future, but in the meantime, email whitechapelcommunitylibrary@yahoo.co.uk for more information.

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:
distrib@freedompress.org.uk

Next issue

The next issue will be dated 8th April 2006 and the last day to get copy to us (see contact details above) will be Friday 31st March.

'Blame the workers'? Seriously?

Longer waiting lists, delayed treatment, redundancies, staff training slashed, patients discharged from hospital too quickly, public health programmes at risk – the NHS is in crisis. Despite increasing its budget from £34bn in 1997 to £92bn this year the NHS is facing a deficit of around £800m. How did it go wrong?

According to Patricia Hewitt, Secretary of State for Health, it is all the fault of the workers. "It has been clear for a while" she said that new pay deals for nurses, porters, care assistants, doctors and others "are all costing rather more than anticipated". It is widely expected that NHS staff's pay increase this year will be low and staged.

One of the government's flagship Foundation trusts, University College London, is forecast to be £40m in the red. Yet it has only put half of its staff on the new contracts casting doubt on Hewitt's claim that the new pay deals are at the heart of the current crisis.

When Sir Nigel Crisp NHS chief executive resigned over the deficit he was given a peerage and pension worth £3.5m. The thousands of NHS staff currently facing redundancy, some compulsory, won't be in line for a huge pension payout or a seat in the House of Lords. They face a much bleaker future than Sir Nigel.

Rather than causing the problem health workers are actually paying the price for the failure of government policy. North Staffordshire NHS trust has said it will cut 1,000 jobs from its 7,000 workforce, while NHS Direct has announced hundreds of jobs are to go.

The Royal Cornwall is over £8m in debt is closing wards and operating theatres and making 300 staff redundant. The trust points to a number of reasons for its debt including the cost of providing better services, government targets and competition from the private sector.

Unison's head of health Karen Jennings said "more than £5bn has gone to Independent Sector Treatment Centres that don't come under the tariff system and are guaranteed the contract price, regardless of how many operations they actually carry out. By contrast the NHS is paid less for dealing with patients who have multiple conditions and then they are accused of under-performing."

Yet rather than look at these issues the government points its finger at staff costs. Hewitt has actually claimed that

job cuts are a good thing because they "give hospitals more incentives to improve patient care and get value for money".

For decades NHS staff have been underpaid and the pay system riddled with unequal pay. While far from perfect, Agenda for Change has at least given the opportunity for staff to earn a decent wage. Rumours are that the pay deal is just £200m over budget, raising the question where does the rest of the deficit come from?

The coming year will see hospitals competing against each other for patients under the payment by results system. The private sector will also increase the share of the NHS it runs as primary care trusts pull back from providing services. This privatisation is already creating resistance from communities.

As the influential think tank the Kings Fund has pointed out payment by results and the introduction of the market will mean hospitals closing as they are unable to attract sufficient 'business' (patients to you and me).

The government is keen on choice. It has a choice. At the moment it is choosing to blame workers for the NHS's problems while continuing down the road of privatisation. The NHS is £800 million in the red. ID cards will cost £12,000 million to bring in. What would you spend the money on?

Richard Griffin

Wrong, again...

Back in January, 2004, Bush stated to reporters that "Iraq is more free every day. The lives of the citizens are improving every day. And one thing is for certain; there won't be any more mass graves and torture rooms and rape rooms."

The exposure of US torture and abuse in Abu Ghraib prison had proven the last part of that claim to be false (recent claims it is being closed have been called premature by the US Department of Defence). What about the mass graves? March saw a mass grave discovered in Shia East Baghdad. Evidence of government death squads is mounting and being reported in the mainstream press. Unmentioned is that fact that US state sources had been talking of applying what they termed the 'El Salvador' option against the insurgency last year.

Today, Bush continues to show his grasp on reality by arguing that he was still on course for victory (three years after the invasion started and nearly three years since he had declared victory). He

asserted that "my decisions on troop levels will be made based upon the conditions on the ground and on the recommendations of our military commanders, not artificial timetables set by politicians here in Washington DC."

Having ripped up the Constitution, he obviously forgot that it states there is civilian control over the military. Equally, does he not realise that he is a politician in Washington? Nor does he acknowledge that polls in Iraq consistently report that the occupation is deeply unpopular and that most Iraqis want it to end, now. Not only is he dismissing democracy in America, he is rejecting it in Iraq as well. Perhaps unsurprisingly, as the Bush Junta's contempt for it is well known.

Meanwhile, US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld stated that the US military would not intervene in an Iraqi civil war, leaving it to Iraqi forces. So if the US military is not in Iraq to prevent a civil war, as previously claimed, then why are they there? Obviously to guard the oil and ensure that America's 14 permanent are constructed and manned. In other words, to protect the imperial interests that caused the war in the first place.

Iain Mackie

Sorry Richard

In the 11th February edition of Freedom, we mistakenly dropped Richard Alexander's byline from the review of Rudolph Rucker's Anarchism and Anarcho-Syndicalism. Many apologies to Richard for the confusion.

Wobblies win

page 1

from around the world from places as far off as Edinburgh, Scotland and Auckland, New Zealand to places as close to home as New Brunswick, New Jersey and the streets of Manhattan."

Seven Auckland Starbucks recently went out on strike for better wages after joining the UNITE union, which has become increasingly successful in organising traditionally casualised workers in 'McJobs', moving on recently to take on McDonalds.

Following the settlement, a Starbucks statement maintained that, "while Starbucks respects the free choice of our partners and remains committed to complying fully with all laws governing the right to organise collectively, we also believe firmly that our progressive, positive work environment, coupled with our outstanding compensation and benefits, make unions unnecessary."

Book review

page 7

and Emma Goldman – his solidarity form of individualism with its aesthetic appeal to self-making (so alluring to cultural aesthetes), the radical critique implied in his 'reevaluation of all values', his strident attack on the state in 'Thus Spoke Zarathustra', and in his impassioned celebration of the life instincts and personal freedom and power.

But was Nietzsche really the 'good anarchist' as Cafard describes him? Hardly. For his aristocratic individualism was more than offset by his thoroughly reactionary mindset. The 're-evaluation of all values' did not for Nietzsche extend to challenging aristocratic values, hierarchy,

the class structure or economic forms of exploitation – and anyone who did so was denounced by Nietzsche as a 'dolt, or blockhead' or as 'poisonous'.

Though opposed to 'tyranny' and 'oligarchy' it is clear that socio-economic power for Nietzsche should protect the strong, the noble, the aristocracy – under no circumstances should power benefit the weak, the lower classes, the slaves, or the rabble, let alone usurp the aristocratic order.

Nietzsche heaps praise upon the caste system and its ranked hierarchy, clearly admired dictators like Julius Caesar and Napoleon, and even played around with the idea, not simply of improving the human race, but of eradicating the 'weak' by poisoning their wells! Or was he simply being ironic.

His misogyny is well known, and he often described women as chattel or property. Reciprocity, mutual aid, and equal rights for all were 'poisonous' doctrines according to Nietzsche, for what he valued was a "good and healthy aristocracy" (his words).

Dionysian philosophers, he implies, should be the "commanders and legislators" in the aristocratic order he envisaged. As a sympathetic biographer put it: "Nietzsche always identified with the nobility and advocated a 'social system in which a small number of select human beings dominates the rest and employs them as slaves'" (Hollingdale 1972).

Hardly the kind of society anarchists envisage, one based on mutual aid and co-operation and voluntary associations – an free communism, a politics of community and of difference, to employ current labels.

Contributors to this collection may express their admiration and enthusiasm for Nietzsche and his concept of the *ubermensch* – but give me Kropotkin, Malatesta and Rucker any day. For all their limitations you at least knew which side of the fence they stood on – on the side of the oppressed, and creatively engaged in developing alternative modes of social life, not like the Nietzscheans, intent on promoting some parasitic cultural elite.

*Complexity theory

I am Not a Man I am Dynamite: Friedrich Nietzsche and the Anarchist Tradition, edited by John Moore, published by Autotedia.

Quiz answers

- The Jura Federation. Kropotkin wrote that "the egalitarian relations which I found in the Jura Mountains, the independence of thought and expression which I saw developing in the workers, and their unlimited devotion to the cause appealed far more strongly to my feelings; and when I came away from the mountains ... my views upon socialism were settled. I was an anarchist."
- Paul Avrich, who died this year. The richly deserved tribute comes from the Kate Sharpley Library.
- An early anti-imperialist novel by Eduard Douwes Dekker about corruption in the Dutch East Indies colonial administration. It was published in 1860 and the Dutch were forced to make several reforms because of the controversy it caused. The main character's name is now used for a fair trade foundation.
- Deputy Leader of the Labour Party Michael Foot said it in 1977 on the occasion of the Battle of Lewisham, where nazis were stopped.

HISTORY OF THE MAKHNOVIST MOVEMENT

by PETER ARSHINOV

The Russian Revolution was the time when the old order was totally swept away. Nestor Makhno stood for freedom, and his struggle to destroy both the old and the new oppressors is as powerful today as it was then. It was in prison in 1911 that Peter Arshinov established a close personal and political friendship with Makhno, which continued after their release, and Arshinov's history of the Makhnovists is undoubtedly the most important source work available.

Now available at £9.90 (post free inland) from Freedom Press

REVIEW

Brian Morris finds linking anarchism to Nietzsche an interesting but ultimately pointless exercise in theoretical gymnastics

This interesting collection of essays, mostly male academic philosophers, is largely an attempt to convince us that the reactionary philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, now in vogue amongst academics, was actually a true anarchist – pure, creative, life affirming, elitist.

In contrast, those awful nineteenth century anarchists like Bakunin and Kropotkin, who in criticising and challenging state power, economic exploitation under capitalism and all forms of social oppression, were not real anarchists – for they were motivated only by envy, weakness and resentment, and were lacking in any creative impulse. These academics, of course, have got things back to front.

The collection is edited by the late John Moore who is described in the introduction as an eccentric 'iconoclastic' thinker, even though Moore joyfully embraced every intellectual fad around, from primitivism and spiritualism to Nietzschean aristocratic individualism, and never lost an opportunity to denigrate reason, socialism and class anarchism.

Moore also repudiated the Enlightenment – unlike his guru Nietzsche! – and arrogantly described Kropotkin as "obsolete, ignorant of the fact that Kropotkin had critiqued 'modernity' even before Nietzsche".

Apparently Moore did not advocate the revolutionary transformation of the capitalist order and the creative development of other forms of social life based on mutual aid and voluntary cooperation.

Instead he advocated 'insurrection' by cultural aesthetes. This starry-eyed follower of Nietzsche seemed oblivious to the fact that the 'hermit of Sils-Maria' (as Nietzsche called himself) feared, hated and repudiated all forms of insurrection, especially on the part of the 'lower classes' or the 'rabble', as he contemptuously described ordinary working people. Moore's conception of a linear two-stage conception of anarchist history is equally simplistic and quite fallacious.

Within the collection there are thoughtful essays exploring the links between Nietzsche and the anarchist tradition – thought the esoteric philosopher Ananda Coomaraswamy was certainly no anarchist, being an ardent supporter of the caste system, his 'anit-politics' being related to that of the Brahman caste!

There are also essays on the theory of chaos, an advocacy of which is said to be shared by both Nietzsche and anarchists – anarchists have long been criticised for being apostles of disorder and chaos – as well as being a characteristic of the world.

The world we are told is anarchistic! These detached academics do not appear to have heard of complexity theory,* which was, of course, expressed in embryonic form by anarchists like Kropotkin at the end of the nineteenth century.

There are essays also on topics such as nihilism, religion, and the theme of 'death of god'. Unfortunately these essays consist largely of scholastic jargon and theological blather, with ample reference to the esoteric writings of Deleuze and Heidegger. I'm afraid they left me cold, and conveyed precious little about Nietzsche and anarchism that I did not already know.

But the essay that represents the main thrust of this collection is the one by Max Cafard. In a previous life he was known as John Clark and was the author of a sterling critique of Max Stirner as well as being a keen promoter of Murray Bookchin's social ecology. Cafard has now, it seems, adopted liberal politics, with his advocacy of bioregional representative government with coercive legal powers, and a market economy, as well as whole-heartedly embracing Nietzschean aristocratic individualism.

What is surprising and quite deplorable about Cafard's essay – apart from his critique of postmodernism – is that he not only applauds the farrago of nonsense and misunderstandings that Nietzsche expressed towards anarchism but applies this same crude psychological



analysis to contemporary anarchism.

Venting his spleen on Murray Bookchin (in particular) and scores of other unnamed leftists, class struggle anarchists and anti-capitalists, this liberal professor informs us that all resistance to the state, capitalism and other forms of social oppression is purely motivated by 'resentment'!

Thus contemporary anarchists are dismissed by Cafard as power hungry individuals, dogmatists, fanatics, sectarians, nihilists, as violent and rigid personalities who not only have a contempt for people but are quite unable

to love other humans or the earth.

Cafard's long essay is simply a banal regurgitation of Nietzsche's own critique of anarchism – full of venom, malice, slander, misunderstandings and resentment. Enough said.

What is of interest with regard to the collection of essays 'I am Not a Man I am Dynamite' is that they take a rather sycophantic and uncritical attitude towards Nietzsche (with a few exceptions), hardly challenging Nietzsche's confused understanding of socialism and anarchism; completely fail to engage with the concept of 'aristocracy' – which

is a key notion and ideal for Nietzsche; and interpret the philosopher's 'will to power' as purely a psychological category, involving creative agency.

In fact, for Nietzsche it also involved social relationships of power – in terms of exploitation, domination, suppression, command, overpowering the weak, mastery, and of course, war – all of which Nietzsche approved of and affirmed.

There is undoubtedly a libertarian aspect to Nietzsche's philosophy, which is why he long ago inspired Guy Aldred

➔ page 6, column 4

BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS

The people at Kate Sharpley Library, have been as busy as usual in recent months. In addition to their informative quarterly newsletter, they produce a series of relatively inexpensive pamphlets on anarchist history, many of which are having their first publication in English. These pamphlets will add considerably to most people's understanding of anarchist activities in the twentieth century. The latest batch includes:

Beating Fascism: anarchist anti-fascism in theory and practice

edited by Anna Key

This pamphlet consists of a range of articles and interviews covering the variety of anarchist responses to fascism throughout the twentieth century, not

just on places such as Spain, Germany and Italy, but also Britain and Canada. Could have done with a list of contents and a less tedious layout but the content is generally very good.

Remembering Spain: Italian Anarchist Volunteers in the Spanish Civil War

by Umberto Marzocchi (expanded second edition)

Unknown Heroes: Biographies of Anarchist Resistance Fighters

by Miguel Garcia

Keeping with the anti-fascist theme, both of these pamphlets have material that has been published before but now usefully collated and expanded.

Marzocchi covers the practical assistance that many of the anarchist refugees from Fascist Italy gave to the struggle to defeat fascism in Spain during the Civil War, whereas Garcia's pamphlet covers the period after Franco's regime had successfully assumed power despite the heroic efforts of the anarchists and others.

Konstantinos Speras: The Life and Activities of a Greek Anarcho-Syndicalist

by Leonardos Kottis, edited by Paul Pomonis

This will probably cover completely new ground for most readers. It deals with a period following on from KSL's earlier pamphlet, The Early Days of Greek Anarchism, and in particular the activities of one of the most prominent

anarcho-syndicalist activists of the period of the First World War up to the Second World War. In an all-to-familiar scenario, someone who had devoted their working life to the struggle for the emancipation of the working class, against bosses and the state, was finally murdered, along with many other working-class militants, by the Communist Party.

Also available, written as a preface to the book by Konstantinos Speras, The Strikes of Serifos: that is narration of the bloody scenes of 21st August 1916 in the mines of Megalo Livadi of Serifos.

Kate Sharpley Library, BM Hurricane, London, WC1N 3XX website katesharpleylibrary.net

Freedom Bookshop stocks these and many other KSL titles.

FREEDOM

ANARCHIST BOOKSHOP

84b Whitechapel High Street

London E1 7QX

tel/fax 020 7247 9249

OPENING HOURS

Monday to Saturday

from 12 noon to 6pm

You can also use our mail order service or order books online via our website

www.freedompress.org.uk

A Sideways Look

Skimming through the web the other day I came across one of those headlines that you expect to come from the Department for Research into the Bleeding Obvious. "It's Official: Class Matters!" No prizes for guessing that it was on the Guardian website, but the context was interesting. It was a brief report on a study that showed the overwhelming factor in educational success was class background. The full study won't be out until later this year, but we can draw a few thoughts.

Perhaps the most obvious thing to say is that class is about the only thing that educational authorities don't have a strategy for. There are all sorts of things for racial minorities, or to make sure that either girls or boys aren't disadvantaged. They may not all work, but there is an acknowledgement that they are 'issues'. My daughter's school has a Black Parents and Carers Group and a Turkish one. But not a working class parents forum.

We wouldn't go, because we allegedly don't care about our children's educational achievements. The assumption here is that working class parents aren't excluded, just as working class kids don't face different issues at school. The people making the assumption of course aren't the same people who face the problems, but I digress. Someone who worked for the old Inner London Education Authority before it was abolished once told me that class discrimination was their next big project, fated to fall victim to Thatcher's spite. If there was ever a MacPherson-style enquiry into education, it would find that individual teachers and schools do their best to help kids fighting the tremendous social disadvantage of being poor. Overall, however, it would find education (and much more), to be institutionally classist.

A lot comes down to confidence. Like most working class people I've been on the receiving end of a lifetime of propaganda telling me to know my place, in one way or another. I rebel against it, but it's insidious and creeps in under my defences. I hardly ever hear working class voices in the media, unless they are entertainers or criminals – they don't get to do any serious stuff. When the comedian Linda Smith died one of my first thoughts was that I'd lost one of the few voices on the radio or TV who sounded like me. She was one of the many academically-gifted working class kids who found academia not for her. In one of her obituaries I learnt how she passed her 11-plus but went to a good secondary modern rather than the grammar school because neither she nor her parents felt comfortable with it. When she did A-levels at the local college it was with a similar crowd of misfits who'd passed the academic exams but not the social tests.

Confidence is however something that can be built, and again Linda Smith is instructive. Getting voted the Wittiest Person in Britain didn't come from nowhere – she spent much of the '80s involved in political theatre and cabaret in South Yorkshire, including a lot

during the miners' strike. Struggle isn't just about what you get at the end of it – it's an end in itself. It educates and builds confidence, which is why it's always a good idea.

Svartfrosk

Blast from the Past

Taken from Freedom of 26th March, 1960, entitled Massacre in South Africa:

Mass violence is always only a stone's throw away in South Africa. Last Monday it broke out on a scale which shocked hard-bitten South African newsmen and even, they say, shocked the police who had opened fire on a crowd, killing in all fifty-six Africans – men, women and children – and injuring 162.

This 'incident' took place at Sharpeville, a township near Vereeniging and arose out of a demonstration called for by the Pan-African Congress in protest against the pass laws.

The Pan-African Congress described themselves as an extremist break-away of the African National Congress, had called on their 31,000 members in the Union to come out without their passes (identity cards which all Africans are required by law to carry) and surrender themselves for arrest at the nearest police station.

At Sharpeville the crowd grew to 20,000 strong and surrounded the police station, shouting. One African was shot dead and four injured after the police had been stoned (according to Reuters). The Africans retaliated and then the police opened fire.

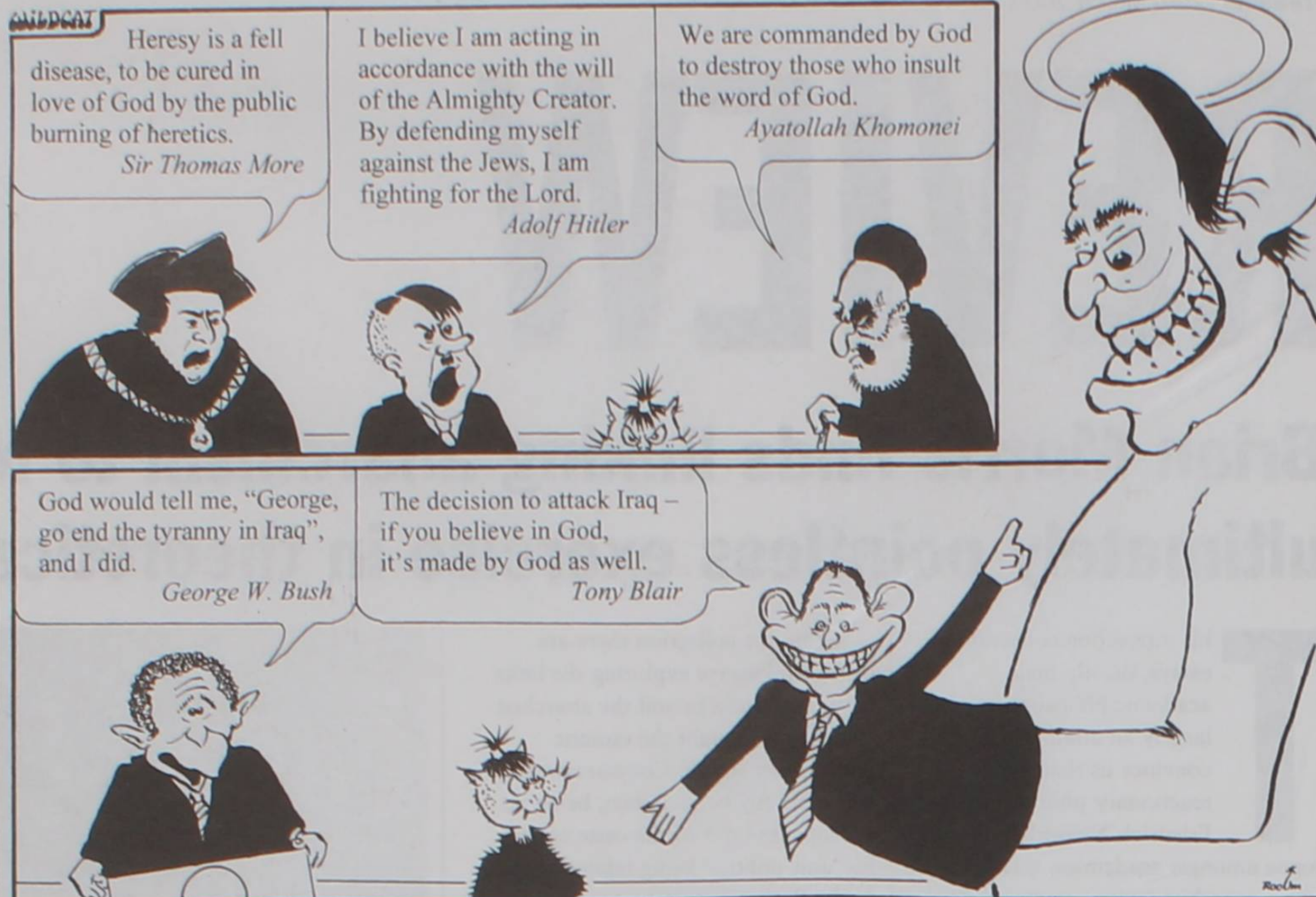
This following attempts to intimidate and disperse the Africans by the use of aircraft diving low over the area, and Saracen armoured cars (supplied to the South African Government by the British armament industry) forcing their way through the crowd to take up defensive positions by the police station. But these provocative actions only angered the crowd still further.

The local area police commander, Colonel J. Pienaar, is reported as saying: "I don't know how many we shot. It all started when hordes of natives surrounded the police station. My car was struck by a stone. If they do these things they must learn their lesson the hard way."

But what are the things the Africans did? The trigger-happy, baaskap-minded policemen obviously think they are justified in shooting down Africans who throw stones at cars, but behind the African's demonstration is a serious demand for alleviation from their slavery to the pass-laws.

These laws bind Africans to employers, govern their relationships with their families, limit their freedom of movement, and render them liable to immediate arrest and summary imprisonment if they are not carrying their various passes. They make the whole of the Union of South Africa one vast prison and are one of the primary causes of racial tension.

WILD CAT



Imagine if...

Tommy looked up from his Biology lesson paper and sighed, there would be another ten minutes on the clock before the lesson ended.

"Now here, children, is a fossil. This was created by God in order to test the unbeliever." Tommy sighed. Biology lessons were much simpler these days, but sometime he wondered if he wasn't just 'not getting it'.

The OCR exam board had introduced creationism saying the syllabus was intended to 'make students aware of scientific controversy'. He glumly looked back at his notes. He'd preferred Biology before. Okay it had required a bit more study, but at least it made sense.

He'd asked the new teacher: "But surely our existence can be categorically shown as the cumulative change occurring in populations through positive reinforcement of good genetics over time? Isn't creationism just a bunch of loons in America trying to retard logic and science out of faith in a pointless religious hangover from the dark ages?"

He'd earned himself lines for that one. 'Thou shalt not question teacher'.

But questions remained. He'd taken in recent weeks to hiding a book on evolution inside his textbook, and he took a sneaky peek.

From over his shoulder, teacher boomed at him: "Smith you are blaspheming in class again! Go and see the head preacher!"

Tommy picked up his bag and left. As he exited the door he brightened – at least Peoples' History and How to be a Bad Citizen were next, controversial topics both!



Listings

Now pledge to form part of a human chain around the Westminster 'no protest' zone on 1st May, but only if 6,000 other people join in, to sign the pledge see pledgebank.com/protest

28th March Wombles meeting in the main hall at 21 Russell Square, London WC1, from 7pm to 10pm

30th March South London Radical History Group presents 'Stop the City: anti-capitalism, then and now' featuring a film on the Stop the City March 1984 at 7.30pm, followed by a brief talk by Stop the City activists and then some hopefully feverish discussion – lessons, differences, links, experiences... at The Pullens Centre, 184 Crampton Street, London SE17, for more info contact mudlark@macunlimited.net

31st March to 2nd April The Anarchist Bookfair in Zagreb (Anarhisticki sajam knjiga) to help organise or confirm participation email ask-zagreb@net.hr or see ask-zagreb.org for info.

2nd April 'Unauthorised' demo against the occupation of Iraq to mark second anniversary of the April 2004 siege of Fallujah, meet 12 noon in Parliament Square, London. A non-violent direct action workshop and legal briefing on 1st April, see www.j-n-v.org

29th April Manchester Anarchist Bookfair at The Basement, 24 Lever Street, from 12 noon until 5pm, for more details see manchester@bookfair.org.uk

6th April Ken Campbell impro show at The Performance Club, Inn on the Green, 3 Thorpe Close, London W10 from 7.30pm, see newagenda.demon.co.uk

8th April No Borders demonstration at Harmondsworth Detention Centre from 11am to 2pm

1st May Kent Anarchist Group meeting in Canterbury to bring together anarchists in Kent to discuss forming an anarchist group in the county, venue and time to

be confirmed, for more info contact swaleagainstar@aol.com

4th May AGM of leading war profiteer BAe Systems, and Campaign Against Arms Trade (CAAT) have plans, for more info ring 020 7281 0297 or see www.caat.org.uk

20th May Global boycott of Procter & Gamble, see uncaged.co.uk/pg

3rd June Strawberry Fair in Cambridge, see strawberry-fair.org.uk

4th June Camden Green Fair, Regents Park, London, 12 noon to 7pm

15th to 29th July Earth Activist Training in Gloucestershire, for details email eat2006@riseup.net (closing date for applications is 31st May)

26th August to 4th September Camp for Climate Action in north of England, see www.climatecamp.org.uk

Occupied Social Centre



The quiz

- Which organisation, expelled from the First International in 1872 by Marxists, played a key role in Kropotkin's conversion to anarchism.
- According to one obituary, who "allowed anarchist voices, missing from history, to speak for themselves"?
- Who or what was Max Havelaar?
- Who said "You don't stop the Nazis by throwing bottles or bashing the police" and of what event did he say it?

Answers on page 6

SUBSCRIPTION FORM

Send to Freedom Press, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX

- Please start a NEW subscription to Freedom for issues
- Please RENEW my subscription to Freedom for issues
- I enclose a donation
- I'd like to pay by Standing Order and have completed the form (see right)

I enclose £ payment (cheques payable to Freedom Press please)

Name

Address

Postcode

STANDING ORDER FORM

Please return to Freedom, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX

To the manager (your bank)

Bank name

Bank address

Postcode

£ each month/quarter/year (delete as appropriate) starting on (date)

Name(s) of account holder(s)

Account number Sort code

Signature

For bank use only

Please pay this sum to Freedom Press, account number 82946905, sort code 72-00-05, Alliance & Leicester Commercial Bank plc, Bridle Road, Bootle, Merseyside GIR 0AA

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

| | Inland | Europe | outside Europe (surface) | outside Europe (airmail) |
|--|--------|--------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
|--|--------|--------|--------------------------|--------------------------|

| Freedom (24 issues) half price for 12 issues | | | | |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Claimants | 16.00 | - | - | - |
| Regular | 20.00 | 29.00 | 29.00 | 41.00 |
| Institutions | 28.00 | 36.00 | 36.00 | 46.00 |
| Supporter | 48.00 | 60.00 | 60.00 | 72.00 |

Get in touch with us for details of bundle rates.

Note that we have a new 'supporter' sub rate.

You can also use the Standing Order form to ensure that your subscription always gets paid on time, or if you want to make a regular donation to Freedom.

All prices are in £ sterling.

You can now subscribe online at www.freedompress.org.uk

FREEDOM fortnightly ISSN 0016 0504