

FREEDOM

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FACTORY OCCUPATION

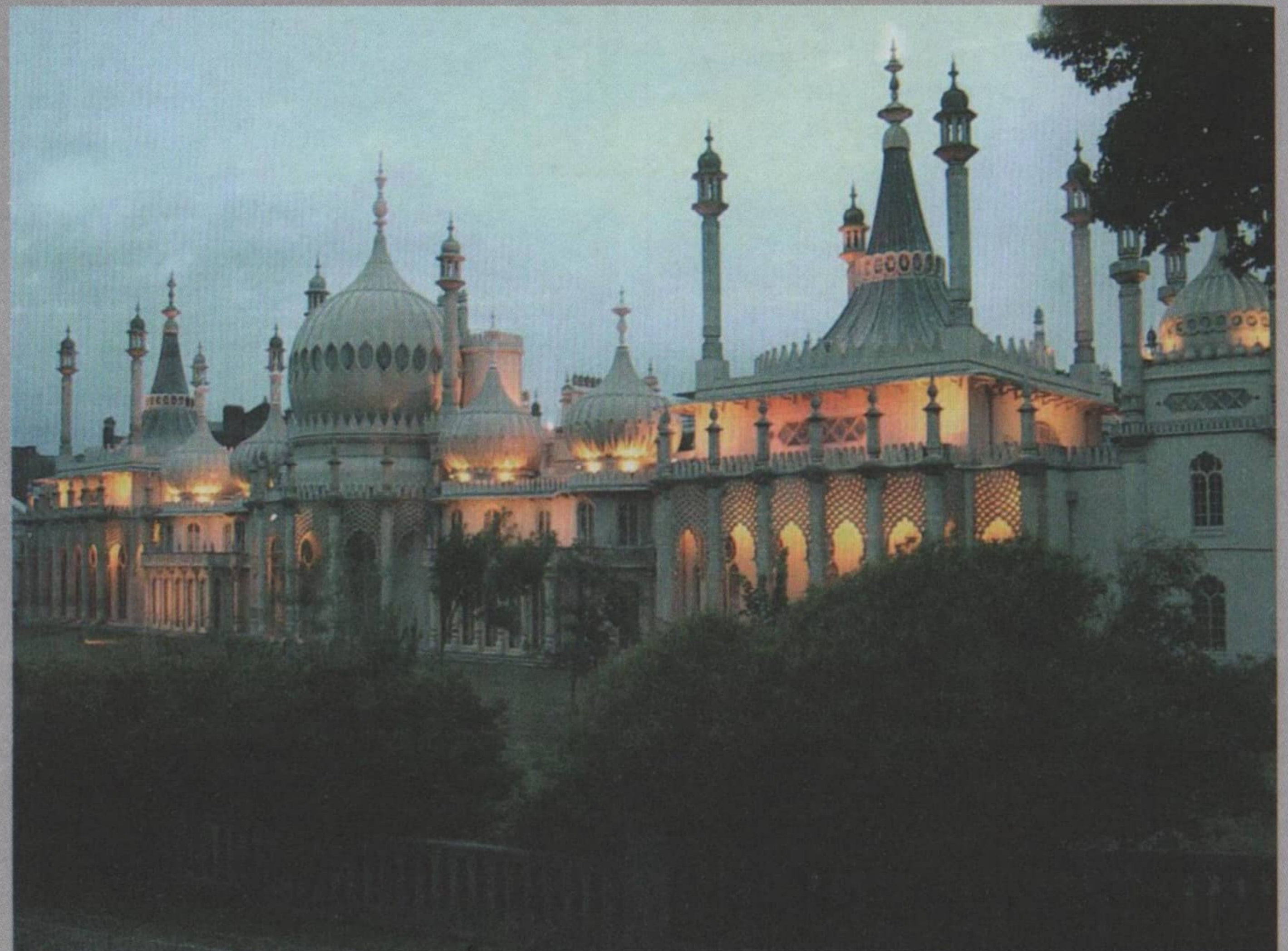
The workers at Visteon take on Ford

At the time of going to press, workers at the Visteon factory in Belfast are in their fourth week of occupation, despite being threatened with eviction. Fellow workers at Enfield and Basildon are on a continuous 24-hour a day picket as part of a co-ordinated campaign of direct action against the company sacking its entire UK workforce without pay, notice or redundancy.

When Visteon UK Ltd, who manufactures specialised car parts for Ford, closed its three factories in Belfast, Basildon and Enfield following years of reported mounting financial losses, 565 jobs were lost. Occupations began on 31st March when workers were told, without prior warning or consultation, to collect their belongings and leave after administrators confirmed the company was ceasing operations. Belfast workers immediately took occupation and refused to leave. Basildon workers, who were given just five minutes notice, were forced out by heavy-handed police threats of violence and intimidation. Workers at Enfield, having already been locked out, occupied the following day when they returned to clear their lockers.

page 3 ►►

LENS CAP BRIGHTON



For those going down to the south coast for the Mayday weekend, here's a picture of a typical Brighton squat you may consider staying in. Don't leave the lights on like these folk did, because it's bad for the environment and we don't want you arrested for abstracting electricity.

BEANO TO BRIGHTON

Mayday greetings to all of our readers

It's Mayday again Comrades! How quickly Anarchist Christmas comes around! And lucky you! In this issue we feature in depth biographies of all the Haymarket Martyrs and astounding new forensic evidence that clears up once and for all who fired the fatal bullets in the aftermath of the 1886 Chicago explosion. Or not.

Actually we focus on the rise in workplace and community struggles and analyse the crisis in public order policing in the aftermath of the G20.

However all social contestation and no

play makes Jackie a dull revolutionary, so we recommend a trip to the seaside.

On page 2 we have the latest on the Smash EDO MBM/ITT campaign from our Brighton comrades, together with a warm invitation to visit their fair city for a weekend anti-militarism conference on 2nd and 3rd May, and a street party on Monday 4th May starting at 12 noon (dress code wear red, for more details see smashedo.org.uk or call 07983084019). So get your bucket and spade and head for the beach.

We hope to report lots of jolly things from events around the world in our next edition and, in the meantime, whatever you're doing we wish all our readers a merry Mayday, be safe but have fun.

INSIDE ►►

Hillsborough remembered page 3

Slaughter in Sri Lanka page 6

G20 analysis pages 8-9

Svartfrosk page 10

School occupations page 13

Reviews pages 14 and 15

ISSN 0016-0504



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NEWS

IN BRIEF

HOUSING: Residents, tenants and workers occupied a two-bedroom council flat on Streatham's Sackville Estate in south London on Friday 3rd April to stop its auction on the following Monday. They demanded that the council withdraw the flat from the market immediately, along with other flats due for auction. Protestors left when the police were called to remove them, but organised and angry demonstrators on the estate drew widespread support and interest. Tenants and residents will continue action against Lambeth's sale of empty homes.

Number 27 Howland House on the Sackville Estate is just one of the council flats currently being sold off at rock-bottom prices by Lambeth Council at a time when more and more people facing homelessness through repossessions and redundancy.

There are already 17,000 people on Lambeth's housing waiting list and almost 2,000 people in temporary accommodation. For more see defendcouncilhousing.org.uk or contact Stephen Hack, secretary, Lambeth Defend Council Housing, on 07944293854.

ECONOMY: UK annual inflation, measured by the Retail Prices Index (RPI), went negative in March for the first time since 1960, to -0.4%, down from zero in February. RPI includes mortgage costs, which have fallen following the Bank of England's reductions in interest rates. The Consumer Prices Index (CPI), fell in March to 2.9% after February's unexpected rise to 3.2%, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) said.

EVIDENCE GATHERING APPEAL: This is an attempt to compile a comprehensive narrative about the situation around Royal Exchange when Ian Tomlinson was assaulted, and subsequent events, referenced to photos, videos and eyewitness accounts. It's still very much a work in progress, and will be updated frequently as additional material is located. <http://www.lasthours.org.uk/news/g20-another-version-of-the-truth/>

CROSSWORD for munters showing this paper's strong moral stance against drugs.

1	2	3
	4	
	5	

Across

- 1 Shortened form of the NMDA receptor antagonist developed Dr Craig Newlands of Wayne State University. (3)
 4 What to say when offered 1 across. (2)
 5 Letter to be worn on the hat of those taking 1 across. (1)

Down

- 1 Even shorter term for 1 across. (1)
 2 and 3 We should put an — the taking of 1 across unless we are a hippopotamus in dire medical need. (3,2)

This question is for Smash EDO... 'Aggravated Trespass' - the charge you're all up on - comes under what section of which public order act?

Section 68 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994

Correct - and for bonus points: can you defend yourselves in court against it without legal representation?

BISHOP BECKETT JOHNSON MAKEPEACE

Smash EDO - SUSSEX UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY CHALLENGE

Picture: Schnevs

Mayday! Mayday!

A brief update on the Smash EDO campaign

Smash EDO, for anyone who doesn't know, is the campaign to close Brighton's local bomb makers, EDO MBM/ITT. EDO is a company making bomb racks and release units for the US, UK and Israeli armies. There has been a campaign in Brighton, born out of the movement against the invasion of Iraq in 2003, for nearly five years. Since 2004 Smash EDO has kept the pressure on EDO with weekly noise demonstrations, blockades, occupations and rooftop sit ins. On 4th May, the campaign is holding its next big demo in Brighton and is calling for support from around the country. The demo, dubbed 'Mayday! Mayday!', is billed as a mass street party against war and greed and is planned to be the biggest show of force against EDO yet.

Last year groups of activists travelled from around the country to the demo that became known as 'Red Wednesday'. Around 800 people gathered in the centre of Brighton on a sunny Wednesday afternoon dressed in red, to symbolise the blood of EDO's victims, and marched to Home Farm Road where EDO is situated. The carnival-goers broke through several police lines and several hundred protesters spilled into the factory car park, spraying 'Fuck EDO' on the walls of the factory and smashing the windows.

In October campaigners held the second large demo of the year, dubbed 'Shut ITT'. This time Sussex police, joined by the Met and Hampshire police, deployed the largest

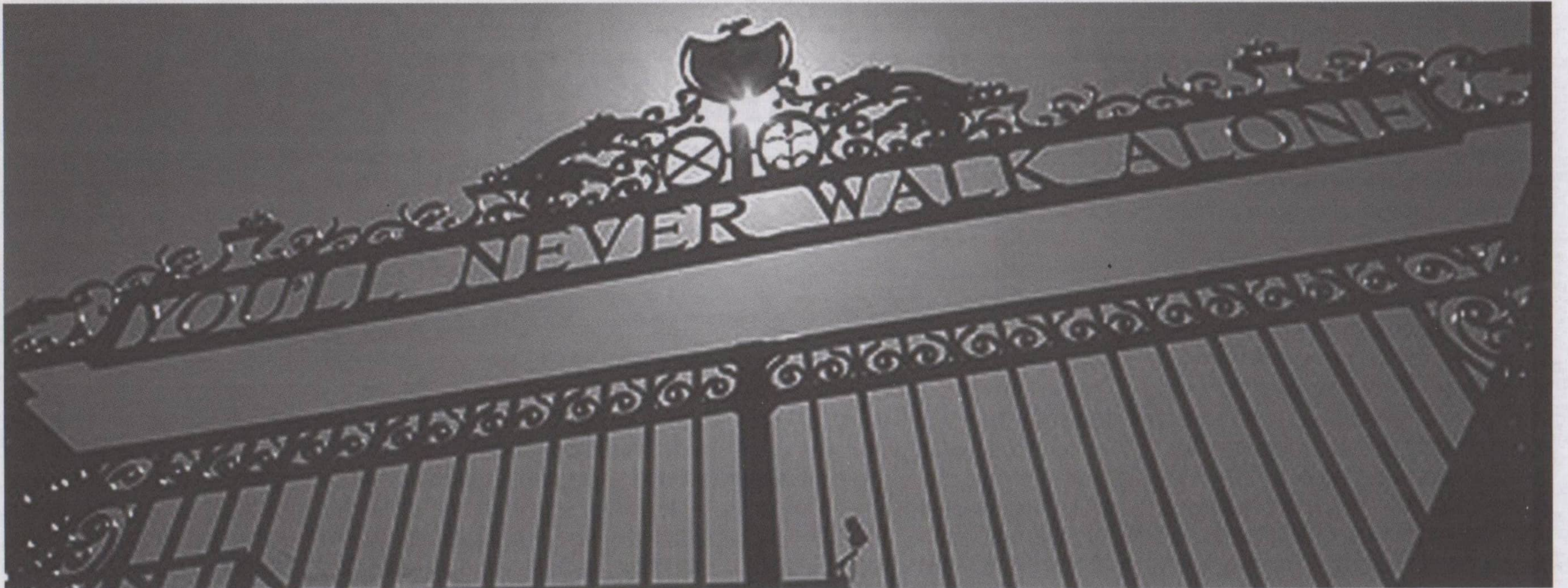
ever police response to a demonstration against EDO. Brighton was effectively occupied by an army of police for the day, backed up by helicopters and dog teams. Hundreds of police were waiting on Home Farm Road to kettle and arrest demonstrators. However, to the police's horror, the march did not attempt to enter Home Farm Road and instead headed up woodland paths to the rear of EDO MBM/ITT, where the factory was pelted with red paint, before then heading into the centre of Brighton.

In January, while the bombs were raining on Gaza, six people entered EDO and effectively decommissioned the factory. Over £300 000 worth of damage was caused and the factory was forced to close for several days.

So where next? On 2nd and 3rd May, an anti-militarist gathering, will be held at the Cowley Club in Brighton to discuss strengthening grassroots campaigns against militarism and future mobilisations against DSEI, Europe's largest arms fair to be held in London in September and the Nato Parliamentary assembly to be held in Edinburgh in November.

The Mayday! Mayday! street party will be a celebration of ordinary people's struggle against capitalism. The Smash EDO campaign is one example of how people power can triumph against private profit. Come and join us on 4th May and be part of a struggle which will not end until EDO closes down for good.

The demo starts at 12 noon, check the website at www.smashedo.org.uk/mayday-09.htm for updates on the starting point of the demo



Hillsborough remembered

On 15th April 1989, 96 football fans were killed at the FA Cup semi-final between Liverpool and Nottingham Forest at Sheffield Wednesday's Hillsborough ground when police opened gates to the stadium allowing the crowd outside to flood into already overfull and confined pens. On the day, 94 people died (both Lee Nicol and Tony Bland died later from their injuries) with hundreds more being injured in what remains Britain's worst footballing disaster.

Over 30,000 people, including the families of those who died, attended an emotionally charged memorial service at Anfield, home

of Liverpool football club, to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the disaster and to demand, yet again, justice for the 96 who died.

At the time the Taylor Report concluded that the cause of the tragedy was inadequate policing, although questions remain unanswered about the role and tactics of the police on the day, as well as the decisions and actions taken in the immediate aftermath. More controversially and damaging to the families was the decision by the coroner at the inquest to declare that the 94 had all died before 3.15pm, which contradicted

eye-witness reports. This meant that police actions after 3.15pm could not be called to account or used as evidence, meaning that cause of death could only be either traumatic or crush asphyxia, meaning that the verdict could only be accidental death, resulting in no-one ever being held responsible for the deaths.

The legacy of Hillsborough is not just one of a tragic and unnecessary loss of life, or the resilience and determination of those families still fighting for justice, but how the state shows contempt for its citizens before, during and after death.

Factory occupation

◀ page 1

The Enfield occupation ended only after the High Court issued an eviction order. A mass rally outside the factory on 9th April saw 200 supporters greet the leaving occupiers with enthusiastic cheers, applause and chants. The workers, some of whom have had over 40 years service with Ford, immediately organised a picket of the factory gates to prevent Visteon taking out equipment, tools and finished parts. Workers from all three factories are solid in their determination to fight for what is owed them.

Visteon workers are demanding that Ford honour their obligations in terms of redundancy pay and job security. Ford sold on the three car plants in 2000 with the promise that the workforce would continue to receive the same pay and conditions as existing Ford employees, mirroring the Ford contracts, as well as a promise of a 'job for life'. Over the intervening years Ford tried to distance itself by colluding with Visteon management in breaking the contracts.

Freedom newspaper has been active in its support of the sacked workers at Enfield. Along with anger at Ford and the Visteon executives, there is also concern over how

Unite has handled the dispute so far. All Enfield workers are members of Unite yet the union offered little in the way of legal advice during the occupation, actively encouraging them to leave and thus relinquishing their most important negotiating tool. They have also offered little or no recognisable material support; all activity is from and by the workers themselves.

A support group (Ford Visteon Workers Support Group) comprising of a large anarchist contingent has been set up to help with picketing and provide equipment, food and financial support for the sacked workers, as well as a way of publicising the ongoing struggle. As a group they have been active in leafleting Ford dealerships, Spurs home games and the massive Ford Dagenham car plant with other Visteon workers. The Support Group organise regular solidarity rallies at the Enfield factory.

Talks over redundancy ended with a derisory offer made by Visteon which amounted to the sacked workers statutory rights. While Visteon executives have protected their own pension schemes and set up a new company in readiness for Visteon's closure, they have

offered the workers nothing in return. Talks are set to continue although no dates have been confirmed

Despite the setbacks, the mood on the Enfield picket is buoyant and defiant with fifty or so people at the entrances at any one time, building barricades to prevent lorries entering the factory in preparation for a long drawn out dispute. Support on the picket is both welcomed and encouraged. There is food available as well as toilet facilities and tents.

To get actively involved in the Support Group email: visteon_support@haringey.org.uk or, if you wish to assist financially, make cheques payable to Haringey Solidarity Group and send to PO Box 2474, London, N8, or pay by bank transfer: account name Haringey Solidarity Group, account number 50642971, sort code 089037, Co-op Bank. All money goes directly to the picketing workers. Email support messages to visteonoccupation@googlemail.com

To keep updated on the struggle visit the Support Group website at www.visteonoccupation.org In next edition of *Freedom* we will have an in-depth article of the ongoing struggle with interviews with Visteon workers, and the Support Group.

NEWS

Mass arrest of climate activists

An early morning police raid on a community centre and school on Sneinton Dale, Nottingham, on Easter Monday, 13th April 2009, resulted in 114 people arrested. In what looks like the largest pre-emptive police operation on environmental campaigners so far in this country, hundreds of police from three separate forces converged on the school in a three hour operation to arrest all the occupants.

It is believed that a demonstration was planned at the E.ON power station at Ratcliffe-on-Soar, as a spokesperson for the company claimed that it was the “planned target of an organised protest”. The Ratcliffe-on-Soar coal-fired power station is the third largest source of carbon dioxide emissions in the UK and has been previously targeted by activists. The arrests – for conspiracy to commit criminal damage and aggravated trespass – come amid growing concern among protesters about increased police surveillance and infiltration by informers.

Similar to past police actions, some of the homes of those arrested have been raided while they were held in custody. It has been confirmed that at least six homes have been raided in Nottingham and personal paperwork and computers have been seized. A school located next to the community centre where people were arrested was also broken into and smashed up by police.

Nottinghamshire police said action had been taken because “in view of specialist equipment recovered by police, those arrested posed a serious threat to the safe running of the site”. The mass arrest has prompted renewed concern about the tactics of officers policing environmental protests, particularly over expansion of airports and coal power. No group has so far claimed responsibility for organising the climate activist event, nor



is it clear what activities they were to carry out. What is apparent is the police had prior inside information about how many and where the campaigners were staying to mount such an operation.

It has also emerged that government officials handed over confidential police intelligence on environmental campaigners to E.ON during the run up to the Climate Camp protest at Kingsnorth power station last August.

Information passed from the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR) included detailed information about

the movements of protesters and their meetings. E.ON was also given a secret strategy document written by environmental campaigners and information from the Police National Information and Coordination Centre (PNICC), which gathers national and international intelligence for emergency planning. Over the years campaign and protest groups around climate change issues have become some of the most resourceful and well organised.

Those arrested in Nottingham were all released without charge but have been bailed to return in July pending further inquiries.

Sea ice young and thin as melt season begins

As spring hits the air we are reminded of the threat of global warming by this report from the National Snow and Ice Data Centre, who have been monitoring the decline of Arctic ice since 1979. We will be following this story through to the ice minimum in late September and examining its wider political consequences.

How vulnerable is the ice cover as we go into the summer melt season? To answer this question, scientists also need information about ice thickness. Indications of winter ice thickness, commonly derived from ice age estimates, reveal that the ice is thinner than average, suggesting that it is more susceptible to melting away during the coming summer.

As the melt season begins, the Arctic Ocean is covered mostly by first-year ice,

which formed this winter, and second-year ice, which formed during the winter of 2007 to 2008. First-year ice in particular is thinner and more prone to melting away than thicker, older, multi-year ice. This year, ice older than two years accounted for less than 10% of the ice cover at the end of February. From 1981 through 2000, such older ice made up an average of 30% of the total sea ice cover at this time of the year.

While ice older than two years reached record lows, the fraction of second-year sea ice increased compared to last winter. Some of this second-year ice will survive the summer melt season to replenish the Arctic's store of older ice; however, in recent years less young ice has made it through the summer. To restore the amount of older ice to pre-2000 levels, large amounts of this

young ice would need to endure through summer for several years in a row.

But conditions may not always favour the survival of second-year and older ice. Each winter, winds and ocean currents move some sea ice out of the Arctic ocean. This winter, some second-year ice survived the 2008 melt season only to be pushed out of the Arctic by strong winter winds. Based on sea ice age data from Jim Maslanik and Chuck Fowler at the University of Colorado, since the end of September 2008, 390,000 square kilometers (150,000 square miles) of second-year ice and 190,000 square kilometers (73,000 square miles) of older (more than two years old) ice moved out of the Arctic.

Follow the annual North Pole Sea Ice Melt Season at <http://nsidc.org/arcticseaicenews/>

IN BRIEF

MEDIA: The file sharing website Pirate Bay has been found guilty by a court in Sweden of infringing copyright. The website allows people to share current music and film releases for free, although it doesn't actually host any files itself. The court jailed the four men responsible for site for a year and ordered them to pay £3 million in damages to global entertainment companies such as Warner Bros and Sony Music. They are appealing the decision and refusing to pay the damages.

RAIL: Workers employed by Carlisle Cleaning Services on a Eurostar contract at St Pancras International station are being balloted for industrial action following the installation of fingerprinting machines to replace clocking-on/clocking-off machines. Leader of the RMT commented "The introduction of routine staff fingerprinting is totally outrageous and further proof that our surveillance society is spiralling out of control".

FIRE: The Court of Appeal has ruled as unfair government changes enabling Fire Brigades to sack disabled and badly injured firefighters without a pension or redundancy payment. Three firefighters won a judicial review after their ill-health and injury pensions were removed after the government changed the guidelines to the Firefighters Pensions Scheme. The court stated "The Secretary of State's case remains deeply unattractive".

HEALTH: Department of Health statistics show that over 141,000 people in the Midlands have turned their back on NHS dentists since the unpopular new dental contract was introduced three years ago. The contract changed the way dentists were paid with critics saying it was more profitable for a dentist to take out a tooth than try and save it. Ten per cent of Birmingham dentists left the NHS when the new contract came into force.

COUNCILS: The government is to introduce curbs on the way councils use the controversial anti-terror laws to spy on noisy neighbours. The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act was introduced in 2000 to regulate the ways which the Government could use surveillance against suspected terrorists. Croydon Council has used the law 77 times in the last two years against such activities as fly-tipping and benefit fraud.

MINING: Miner's knee has received recognition as an official occupational disease in the UK. Osteoarthritis of the knee is to be added to the list of 'prescribed diseases' by Department of Work and Pensions, meaning sufferers will be eligible for government payouts. Coal miners with the disease who have worked underground for ten years or more are entitled to claim Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit.

Ian Bone is unwell

Welcome to our new regular column with well-known anarchist blogger, troublemaker and now radio personality, Ian Bone. Sadly, in the fashion of Jeffrey Bernard, Ian is unwell, and we've brought in the less well known but, we hope, equally contentious Matt Delgado to fill the gap. Atheism willing, Ian's 'What the Butler saw' column will appear in our next issue. Meanwhile, you can follow the adventures of the 'most evil man in Britain' on his blog, which you'll find at <http://ianbone.wordpress.com/>

Keeping occupied

As reported in these pages and across the various newswires and discussion forums, there's been a burst of factory occupations across Europe (and 'bossnappings' in France), including Britain, and also a school occupation in Glasgow, which is ongoing at the time of writing. In Britain anarchists of various stripes have played a positive role in supporting these struggles, providing bodies on the picket lines, materials, and raising funds. Of course, this is something small anarchist groups and individuals have been doing for years. However recent changes within the anarchist movement, in London and in Britain as a whole, have allowed us to make more co-ordinated and impressive contributions to actual working class struggles in the here and now.

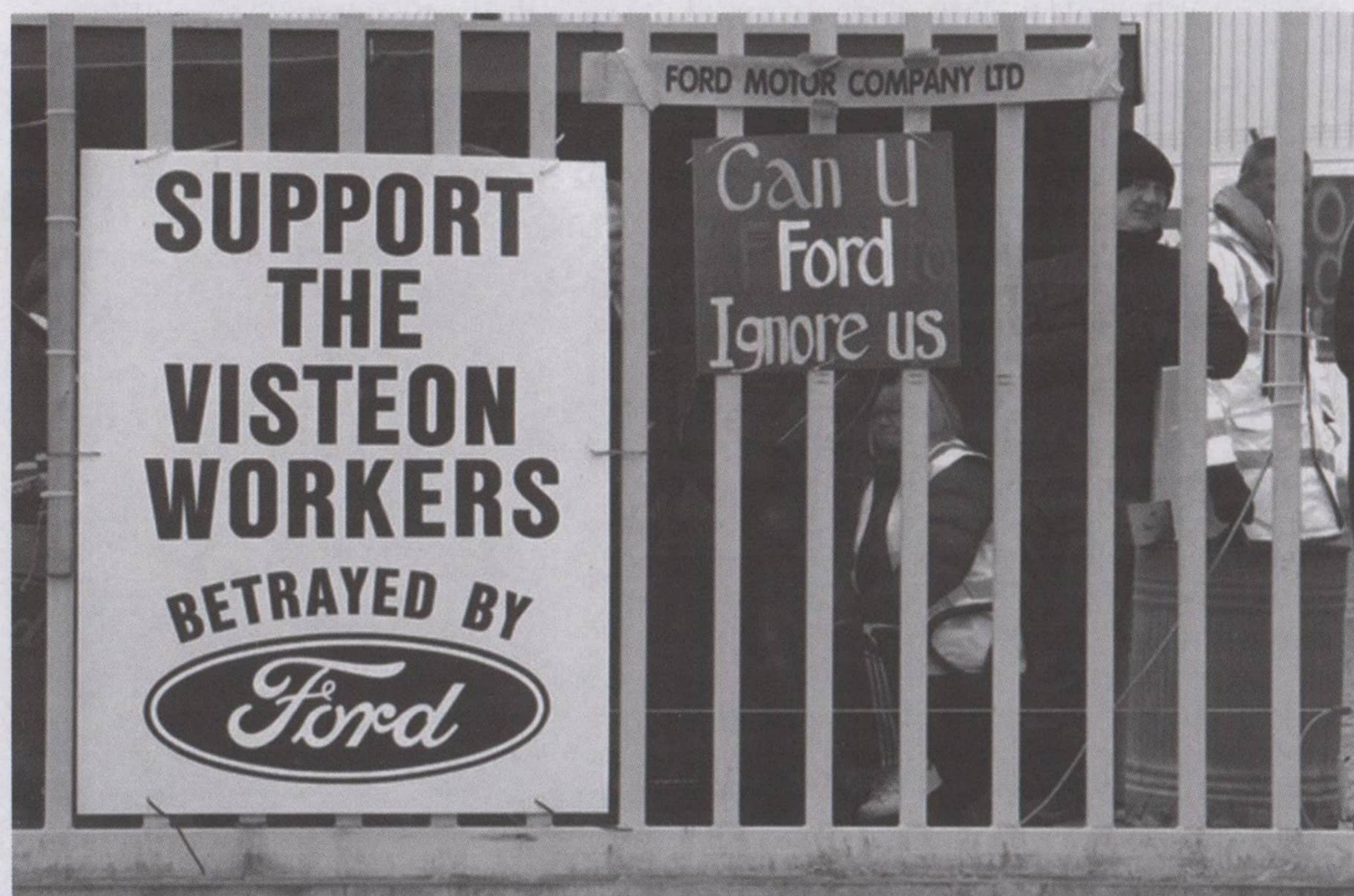
Over the last couple of years the launch of groups such as London Coalition Against Poverty, the growth of Industrial Workers of the World, and the London Anarchist meetings have done quite a bit to show up the falseness of the divides between those who are often criticised as 'workerists', or 'activists', or 'localists', or those allegedly guilty of 'stuntism'. These various pejorative terms, while maybe being based on a grain of truth, have too often served as a distraction from the main event – this is now changing.

Part of an ongoing process that can only be facilitated by the current wider economic situation, which while it would not force us to work together if we really didn't want to; provides us with numerous spaces for discussion with each other, as well as the wider class.

This is particularly important with regards to the factory occupations, strikes and other struggles in the workplace. At the moment the mainstream unions are willing to at least pay lip service to support militant direct action in a limited way, when their members take it without warning, and catch them off guard. This apparent new found radicalism among the unions is partly due to their increasing adoption of the 'Organising Model', which has come about due to a realisation that ongoing mergers are not enough by themselves to save the trade union movement from ongoing decline and marginalisation.

As we can see from how Unite, the Visteon worker's union, managed to defuse the occupations on the promise of talks with the employer, which led to no clear result for the workers. There is a real need for anarchists to provide political as well as material support to workers taking action. Our increasing ability to co-operate with each other means that we are able to do that. The only remaining obstacle I can see is the fear many anarchists seem to have of coming across like Leninists and presenting ourselves as the leadership of the working class. That's not what I am saying – our involvement with these struggles gives us the right to put forward our ideas on politics, tactics, and strategy not as some leadership imposing itself from outside, but as partners in struggle. People will not resent our advice, if offered in the spirit of co-operation, after we have proven ourselves through practical solidarity.

Matt Delgado



INTERNATIONAL

IN BRIEF

DOOM AND GLOOM: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has warned that potential losses from the credit crunch could reach \$4 trillion (£2.75tn) and damage the financial system for years to come. It says that even if urgent action is taken to clean up the banking system, the process will be “slow and painful”, delaying economic recovery. It says that banks may need \$1.7 trillion in additional capital. But it warns that political support for further bank bail-outs is waning. One year ago, the IMF estimated that total losses from the credit crunch would be \$1 trillion, which has been exceeded, showing how rapidly the financial meltdown has escalated.

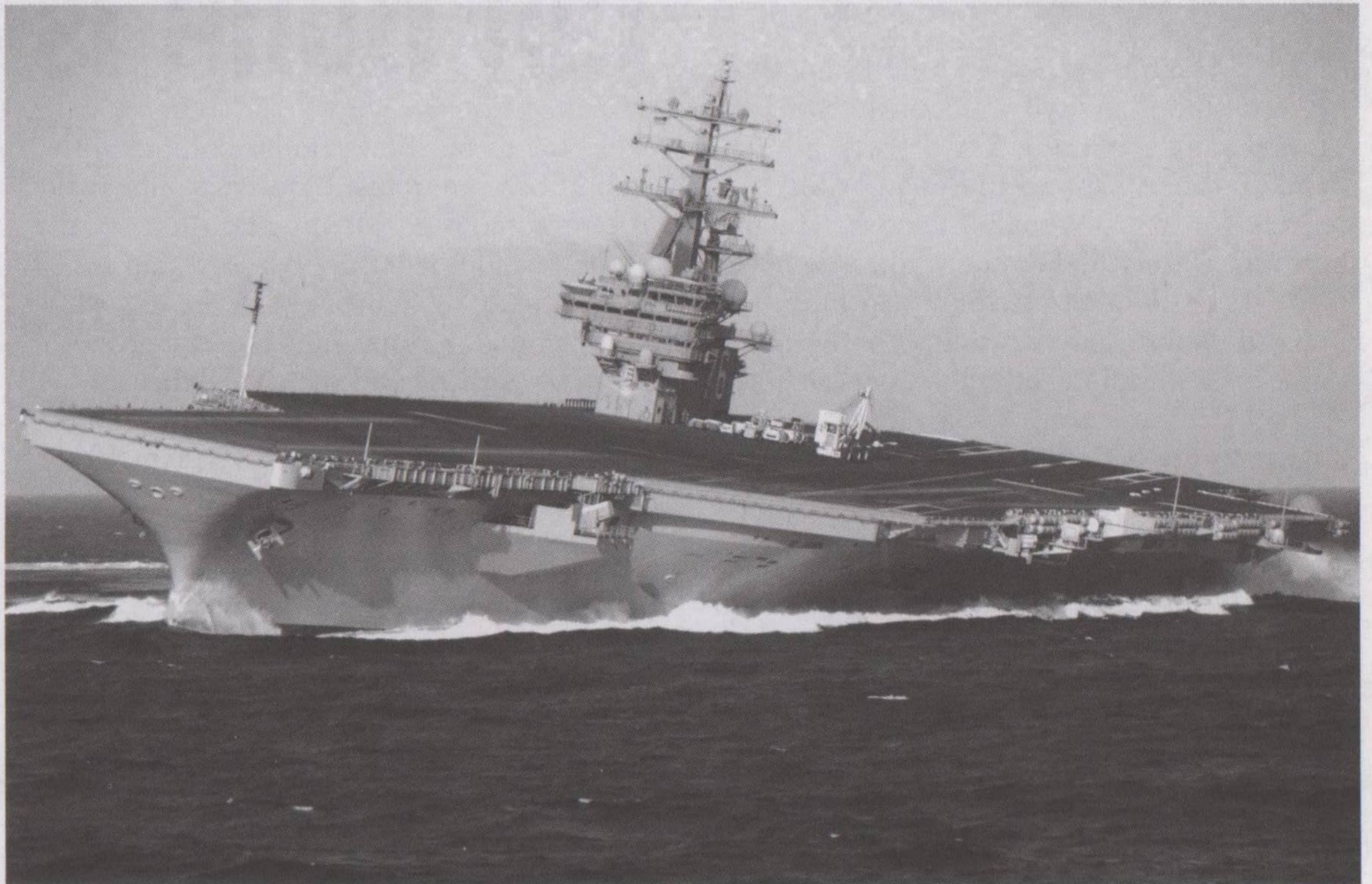
And how it hits workers. Bangladesh is seeing the return of hundreds of migrant workers every day as the global recession hits an economy reliant on remittances. There are more than six million Bangladeshis working abroad, many in areas hit hard by the downturn. Already they have been affected – last month Malaysia cancelled the visas of 50,000 Bangladeshi workers.

PIRATE OR CAPTAIN KID?: A Somali teenager, captured by the US during the rescue of an American sea captain from pirates, is due to appear in a federal court in New York. Abde Wale Abdul Kadir Muse will be the first person to face piracy charges in the US in over a century, US media reports say. He was held over the seizure of Maersk Alabama Captain Richard Phillips off Somalia and flown to the US on Monday. Earlier, his mother appealed to the US President Barack Obama to free him. Adar Abdurahman Hassan told the BBC her son was innocent and just 16 years old.

STILL RABID: Former US Vice-President Dick Cheney has urged the CIA to release memos which he says show harsh interrogation techniques such as water-boarding work. His comments follow the publication of memos written by Bush administration lawyers which justified the techniques. Mr Cheney said that the decision to publish the memos was a mistake. And it was misleading, he said, because the documents did not include those demonstrating that harsh interrogation delivered intelligence “success”. The old loon then added “One of the things that I find a little bit disturbing about this recent disclosure is that they put out the legal memos ... but they didn’t put out the memos that show the success of the effort.”

SOME GOOD NEWS: A South Korean blogger accused of spreading false information on the internet has walked free from court. Park Dae-sung, better known as Minerva, built up a huge online following by making largely negative – and accurate – predictions on the economy. Prosecutors said his brand of financial journalism was damaging to the public interest, but a Seoul court ruled there was no proof of malicious intent. The verdict is seen as a victory for freedom of speech.

LENS CAP GUESS THE NAME OF THE PIRATE SHIP



Pirate Ship! That was an apt reply which was given to Alexander the Great by a pirate he had captured. For when that king had asked the man what he meant by keeping hostile possession of the sea, he replied boldly: “And what do you mean by seizing the whole earth? Because I do it with a petty ship, I am called a robber, while you who does it with a great fleet are styled emperor.”

Slaughter in Sri Lanka

If there’s one thing worse than being the victims of a brutal military machine, it’s being the victims of a brutal military machine that no one gives a fuck about. Hence this article on Sri Lanka is tucked away on page 6.

As we go to press, new reports of more than a thousand civilians being killed in a single day are emerging, while the Sri Lankan Government admits 50,000 have had to flee in the last week.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said it was “extremely worried” about civilians still trapped in the zone. “The situation is nothing short of catastrophic. Ongoing fighting has killed or wounded hundreds of civilians who have only minimal access to medical care,” said

Director of Operations Pierre Kraehenbuehl.

Meanwhile in Britain there have been a series of protests against the massacre and demanding that the British Government do something about it, or at least say it’s a bad thing.

In a stroke of serendipity, the death of Ian Tomlinson is saving the protesters from the normal bashing they would get off the Met. Indeed, on the basis of the 20th April demonstration (see picture of Parliament Square below), the cops are planning to let Parliament be blockaded by anyone who feels like it until the politicians come to their senses and restore the right to batter peaceful protestors without fear of being suspended on full pay.



Notes from the United States

Some more positive news to start: at the beginning of April, Vermont became the first state in the US to recognise same sex marriage by legislation. Although governor Jim Douglas vetoed a law passed the previous week, the state legislature voted to override his veto and legalise gay marriage.

As at least nine other state legislatures are considering similar measures, Representative Bill Lippert, a Vermont state legislator, chair of Vermont House Judiciary Committee and long time gay rights activist commented: "I ... credit ... the Vermont Freedom to Marry group for really carrying forward the message, the ongoing message, for Vermont over the past ten years. And we in the legislature continued to work toward this achievement, but it was really the grassroots movement of the Vermont Freedom to Marry Task Force and others who continued the conversation all throughout the state."

The governor of New York, David Paterson, has now also announced plans to introduce legislation to legalise same sex marriage.

Then the former CIA operative and terrorist (by his own admission) Luis Posada Carriles has been indicted for lying about his role in several 1997 bombings at tourist areas in Cuba. The darling of the right (on whom *Freedom* has previously reported) Posada is also wanted in Cuba and Venezuela for the 1976 bombing of a Cuban airliner which killed 73 people. These charges mark the first time that the US government has acknowledged Posada's part in these attacks. The Bush administration honoured and protected Posada refusing to extradite him.

But things are not so positive elsewhere. Only a day before the Vermont breakthrough, the Supreme Court denied an appeal to overturn his conviction for the 1981 killing of a white police officer following a controversial trial before a predominantly white jury from the celebrated journalist and former Black Panther Mumia Abu-Jamal. He commented: "[this] shows you that precedent means nothing, that the law is politics by other means."

The law has been working in favour of the state elsewhere. In the same week immigration officials in Florida arrested Youssef Megahed, a 23-year-old student only three days after a jury acquitted him on federal explosives charges. His attorneys point out that he now faces deportation on the same charges for which he was found not guilty. If at first you don't succeed...

Attorneys are also in the news too for thinking differently from the Obama administration. Clive Stafford Smith and Ahmad Ghappour face six months in prison because of a letter they sent to Obama outlining the allegations of torture by US agents by one of their client's, Binyam Mohamed; he's the British resident newly released after seven years in US custody,



where he claims he was repeatedly tortured in a secret CIA prison and at Guantanamo.

In a report which was previously secret, the International Committee of the Red Cross reached the conclusion that US medical personnel were heavily involved in the CIA's torture of prisoners held in various prisons outside the country. The report said that their actions "constituted a gross breach of medical ethics and, in some cases, amounted to participation in torture". In April the *New York Review of Books* was the first to publish the report in its entirety.

Still on torture, Senate Republicans are threatening a filibuster. They say they will block the appointment of two nominees to top positions in the Justice Department nominees if the Obama administration were to release hitherto secret memos written by the Bush administration that authorised the torture of prisoners. The nominees are Dawn Johnson as chief of the Office of Legal Counsel (Department of Justice), and Yale Law School Dean Harold Koh as legal counsel (State Department). Horton writes: "It now appears that Republicans are seeking an Obama commitment to safeguard the Bush administration's darkest secrets in exchange for letting these nominations go forward."

The filibuster is also a factor in the passage of federal legislation which would make it easier for workers to form trade unions. Supporters of the bill need six votes to defeat such a filibuster. That seems more likely now that a leading Democratic senator

for Arkansas, Blanche Lincoln, declared at the start of the month that she can no longer support the bill. Arkansas is the home state of Wal-Mart, which recently hired one of Lincoln's former aids to lobby against the act. Rumours that the company is also thinking of hiring every tenth ten-year-old of the state to clean factory chimneys seem far less credible.

In Los Angeles an area psychiatric hospital has admitted that it abandoned over 150 mentally disabled and homeless patients in dangerous neighbourhoods over a two-year period. College Hospital now has to pay a \$1.6 million (£1.09 million) penalty. This highlights the practice of so-called 'hospital dumping', which is now believed to be widespread throughout the United States.

And we end with positive news, again – well almost. University of Utah student Tim DeChristopher recently stood up in a government auction and 'bought' over a fifth of 100,000 acres of federal land up for sale for oil and gas bidding. Although arrested at the time, government officials and auction organisers were understandably unsure of how to proceed. So they arrested DeChristopher, who now faces up to ten years in prison for trying to prevent environmental degradation.

Louis Further

References:

- International Committee of the Red Cross: www.icrc.org
- Vermont Freedom to Marry Task Force: www.vtfreetomarry.org

G20 analysis: the lessons to be learned

“What was most surprising was the repeated spectacle of militant left-wing and anarchist groups chanting the most blood-curdling slogans calling for the destruction of capitalist society, while meekly complying with police directions ... What is truly remarkable is that radical leftist and anarchist groups remain as bounded by the tacit conventions of social protest as do mainstream organisations – P.A.J. Waddington, *Liberty and Order: public order policing in a capital city 1994*”

Amid all the attention on the police after Ian Tomlinson's death, we turn to how the protests were put on and what can be learned from them, specifically focusing on the planning, negotiations with the cops and the campaign around Ian Tomlinson's death.

THE BUILD UP

Media and the Mad Professor.

Two separate planning groups emerged to call for actions against the G20: the ongoing Climate Camp and the specially set up G20 Meltdown group. Yes, we know, Stop The War had a march, but we said 'actions'. Anarchists were prominent in both these groupings, but were by no means the only element, or, more correctly, actual anarchists were outnumbered by those who thought they were while many who would never call

themselves anarchists were out practicing anarchist principles.

As so often before, the media went to town and in Chris Knight, an anthropology professor at East London University, found the perfect comedy villain. Now the media love stirring it up and it's no easy thing to expose yourself to the glare of publicity, but it must be possible to conjure up an organised media strategy that puts forward eloquent and level headed spokespeople while allowing those suffering delusions to the point of mental breakdown to get help in private. In hierarchical organisations people rise to the level of their own incompetence in anarchist ones to the level of their own ego.

G20 Meltdown and Climate Camp agree to be kettled

Given that the police have a strategy of containment, all plans for demonstrations in Britain can be classified into three types: those that aim to avoid being kettled, those who aim to break out if kettled and those who accept being kettled. The last is the default option. If you don't have a plan otherwise, you accept that the police can kettle you if they feel like it. Plans came there none, kettles came aplenty.

Climate Camp, by the very nature of aiming for a static protest, knew they would be surrounded by the cops. Although much thought was put into the 'swoop' to take the space in the first place, none seems to have been given to what to do if the cops chose to close it down.

More lamentable is the failure of G20 Meltdown who had the options regarding kettling pointed out by experienced activists when their logistics group was set up. One responded "if we're peaceful, then the cops will let us do what we want". We have no wish to reopen the fruitless violence/non-violence debate, but there is a naive/sussed debate to



be had. In fact a principled Pacifist demo would be fine, everyone would know what to expect and could chose on that basis.

What G20 Meltdown and Climate Camp had in common was no plan for dealing with attack by the police. Their approaches differed. Chris Knight's "if they press the nuclear button we'll press the nuclear button" subtly reversed Teddy Roosevelt's dictum of speaking softly and carrying a big stick. Climate Camp simply seemed to think that if they were good little girls and boys they wouldn't be off to see the Head for six of the best – let's hope they've learnt for next time.

Negotiation

One controversial part of the build up to the G20 was the decision by the media and legal sub-groups of Climate Camp to have a meeting with the police. This meeting, facilitated by a Liberal Democrat MP no less, featured our old friends Commander Bob Broadhurst and Chief Superintendent Ian Thomas, Gold and Silver on the 1st April.

Learning and growing.

There is no doubt that the police have been very naughty and shouldn't cover their numbers, kill people or slap middle class kids round the chops. So far we agree with the liberal outcry. We hope that this will keep the police on the back foot for some time to come.

However there are underlying issues about process of organising public demonstrations that leave cause for concern. Anarchism often returns to the question of 'experts', but with demos it takes a new turn. Planning demos is a normal part of being a political activist, like being able to chair a meeting, take minutes or sell papers (well maybe not the latter). The vast majority of people should be able to take on these activities rather than leave it to a small group of experts, as would rightly be the case for, say, brain surgeons. But they are skills that need to be learned and studied. A chair who fails to notice people wanting to speak or a minute taker who can't write simply can't do those jobs. Yet many wholly unfamiliar with police resources, organisation and methods happily spout forth upon plans to 'outfox' cop professionals who have 30 years experience in deceiving and, if needed, battering protestors.

We are generally good at recognising our technical limits, few will claim to be able to put up a web site if they are afraid that their mouse may bite. Yet only a little research would have avoided. Most of G20 Meltdown thinking Chris Knight had a vision to nobble the cops' breakfast when told that the TSG had 25 'serials'.

'Taking rioting, protesting and policing seriously'

This phrase was stolen from a chapter heading in Waddington's book quoted at the top of the article. In it he sat in on a year's worth of negotiations between protesters and the police and attended the demonstrations that followed. While it dates from 1991, it remains the best insight into the thinking behind British public order policing. However we don't suggest everyone spends their time becoming police geeks. A quick trawl through the internet will provide a sufficient grasp of the theory of public order policing while practical experience can be found by spending a little time on the boring A to B marches we all go on to check out what the cops are up to. Improved tactics can not of themselves create a political movement but if we allow the outpourings of discontent to be wasted in ineffectual actions then disillusionment will set in very quickly.

Having whinged enough for one issue we will return to this theme soon by looking at the place of demonstrations in the anarchist theory of class struggle and, as ever, we hope for informed contributions to that debate.

THE AFTERMATH

Responding to Ian Tomlinson's death. Where we did best as a movement was in the immediate response to Ian Tomlinson's death. Calling for a demonstration the following day at Bank was a key move, avoiding a pointless trooping around Canning Town with no prospect of getting near the ExCel centre where the delegates were meeting.

The meeting on Thursday 2nd April which set up the G20 witnesses appeal led to the facts of Ian Tomlinson's death coming out. We should not underestimate how close a call this was. Despite eyewitness accounts, it was only the footage of the push to the ground that broke through the cops attempt to cover it up. That came from an American already on his way to the airport when he connected his footage to the death. The hard work of people trying to keep the story alive and the courage of witnesses who would have faced a concerted police smear campaign if no pictures had been found deserves the highest praise.



COMMENT

ABOUT FREEDOM

ANGEL ALLEY

The Whitechapel Art Gallery has reopened and brought with it lots of curious art loving folk into our bookshop. We have donated a bundle of anarchist propaganda to the Gallery where posters, flyers and bustcards now live happily in a posh glass case. We are also grateful to the gallery for inviting us to a panel discussion about their Guernica exhibition and the role of art in contemporary radical politics, not to mention letting us baby-eaters come to their VIP opening where we quaffed loads of their free booze. At this rate you can expect an Art column next issue.

Otherwise everyone in the Alley has been snowed under with all that's happening in the Big Smoke. The Advisory Service for Squatters have been particularly busy giving good advice to the Visteon workers and dispelling the bad advice from their union's lawyers. The London Coalition on Poverty are slaving away at their direct action roadshow and seemingly innumerable other projects and we will have a full update from them next issue.

P.S. See if you can spot the deliberate error in the Svartfrost column ...

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NEXT ISSUE

The next issue will be dated 9th May 2009 and the last day to get copy to us for that issue will be Thursday 30th April. You can send your articles to us by email to copy@freedompress.org.uk or by post addressed to 'The Editors', Freedom, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX.

A sideways look

by SVARTFROSK

A friend once remarked to me that one of the best uses for liberals is that they are easily outraged by things that many anarchist take for granted, like the police behaving badly. The death of Ian Tomlinson, a bystander who died after being assaulted by the police on the G20 protests, was shocking, but hardly a surprise. Liberals, however, often believe that apart from a few racist 'bad eggs', the British police are the finest in the world. As more details began to emerge of what happened to Ian Tomlinson, they became outraged. It's no surprise that it was *The Guardian*, of all the mainstream media, which pushed the story.

Demonstrations, especially ones associated with Reclaim the Streets-type protest, are seen by the police as an opportunity to let off a bit of steam. In this sense they are a bit like football matches, the only other time when police crowd control gets heavy. Obviously, there are degrees of police aggression, and I think the police had set their own bar quite high for G20. The warning of impending violence came from the top – senior coppers briefed the media who duly reported it. In fact they hyped the violence beforehand to such an extent that questions would have been asked if there hadn't been any.

Some believe that all coppers are bastards; I don't. I think many are there for quite sincere reasons, and most of the time what they are doing is not particularly harmful. Sometimes it's even positive – someone has to catch the serious anti-social criminals after all. However, the problem with the police isn't the individuals, but the institution. The top brass whip up a lot of hype; which then gives the green light to the rank and file to be as brutal as they like. And at the end of the day, however humane an individual officer is, he is subject to the line of command. If beating protesters, strikers or anyone else is what he's told to do, beat them he will.

The individual shown in the video striking Ian Tomlinson from behind and pushing him to the ground is from the Tactical Support Group. He's taken off his ID numbers and

masked up. The hypocrisy of New Labour knows no bounds on this subject – happy to criminalise protesters, forcing ID cards on the population, but conveniently quiet when the police do anything they shouldn't.

Everyone who's ever been on a demo knows that the police take off their identifying numbers when they intend to get stuck into a bit of protester-assaulting. The government have even made it illegal to film or photograph the police – if this had been enforced on 1st April, Ian Tomlinson might have become another Kevin Gately or Blair Peach, killed by policeman unknown.

With the exception of *The Guardian*, the mainstream media didn't touch the story until it became too big to ignore. They were all happy to report the police's spin that the officers had tried to save a dying man under a hail of bottles. Thanks to the witnesses who were there filming it, we know this to be total bollocks. The police assaulted Mr Tomlinson, at least once. He collapsed moments later. The first people to come to his aid were protesters, who alerted the police. Some police medics came to help, one bottle was thrown and immediately the crowd told the person throwing it to stop.

As the first witnesses published their statements, the prepared whitewash by the Independent (sic) Police Complaints Commission had to be changed. The City of London Police were shown to be involved, so could no longer be the allegedly independent investigators. More witness statements came, including footage from City traders, not naturally on the side of the protesters.

The individual cop who assaulted Ian Tomlinson has been suspended as I write, and will certainly have to face some sort of sanction. His colleagues who let him do it will presumably have their wrists slapped as well. But the problem remains with the institution, something noted by former copper Brian Paddick, who called for the culprit to be prosecuted. Paddick would like to see this as a problem of a bad apple or two; it's not – it is much deeper.



Dealing with the police: a handy guide

A lot of people have trouble with the police. It is important to know what the police can and cannot do legally, what your rights are, and to stop the cops getting away with it.

PACE is the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984. The codes of practice issued under s66 of the act can be found at the Home Office website <http://police.homeoffice.gov.uk/>

An Indictable offence is one where you are tried at the Crown Court before a Jury. In this context it includes 'either way' offences where the defendant can choose whether to be tried by a Crown Court with a Jury or by a Magistrates Court. The most common Indictable offences for squatters are Criminal Damage (s1 Criminal Damage Act 1971), Theft (s1-6 Theft Act 1968), Burglary (s9-10 TA 1968) and Preventing Escape from a Shipwreck (s17 Offences Against the Person Act 1861)

If you have unpleasantness with the constabulary always note the cops shoulder numbers and write down what happened as soon as possible after the event. Any injuries should be photographed and recorded by a Doctor or Casualty (not the television show). Court cases may take place months or even years later so be prepared.

Entry, Search and Seizure

Searches of premises are governed by Code B. The police can enter and search without a warrant to arrest for an Indictable offence or s6,7,8,10 CLA 1977, s76 CJPOA 1994, s1 Public Order Act 1936, s4 Public Order Act 1986 and s163 Road Traffic Act 1988 plus anyone 'unlawfully at large'. They can also enter save life or limb, prevent serious damage to property (PACE s17) or prevent/stop a breach of the peace at common law.

The cops can search of premises occupied or controlled by an person arrested for an Indictable offence (PACE s18).

And also the premises where an arrest takes place or where the arrested person was immediately before the arrest. (PACE s32)

Just in case you need to know, members of the public can also enter to save life, (Handcock v Baker 1800)

The police can enter and search premises if they have a search warrant. The police should identify themselves and produce and give you a copy of the warrant. As always there are exceptions, if there are reasonable grounds to believe that doing this would endanger the officers or frustrate the search the cops can enter without even letting you know. Warrant can be issued for many offences with the rules about their execution in a PACE s8-16.

The police can enter your premises if you give your consent! Don't! Theoretically you can withdraw consent at any time but it's often not very easy to get them to leave. This is why entrances should always be kept secure and you should be aware of your rights.

Seizure: Once lawfully on premises the police can seize anything they believe may be evidence of a crime or obtained from criminal activity. This includes 'search and sift' where they take stuff away and then decide if it should be kept (s50-51 Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001) They can retain items while they are needed to investigate a crime (PACE s19-23) and you must be given on request a list of items seized.

Getting stuff back: If the police will not respond to requests to return property they have no right to keep you can apply to a magistrates court for an order to return it (Police (Property) Act 1897).

On the Street

Your Name and Address: You do not have to give your name and address to the police unless under a specific legal obligation (Rice v Connolly 1966). The most common exceptions are if you are the driver of a car (s165 Road Traffic Act 1988), or if a cop reasonably suspects you of Anti-Social Behaviour (s50 Police Reform Act 2002). You only have to give your date of birth if you are a car driver-(s164 RTA).

There are occasions when cyclists (RTA 168) and pedestrians (RTA 169) commit an offence by refusing to give their name and address. If you are a poacher (Game Act 1831 s31-31A), a pedlar (Pedlars Act 1871 s17) or attending a public meeting (Public Meeting Act 1908) or electoral meeting (Representation of the People Act 1983 s97) there are also special rules. Giving a false name and address may amount to obstructing a constable in the course of their duty.

Stop and Search: There are many different powers of stop and search see Code A annex A for all full list). Code A of PACE details how they must be conducted. Before doing any search the police must give you their name, (unless they are scared, Code A 3.8(b)) and the police station they are based, the object of the proposed search, what

LETTERS AND COMMENT

grounds they have to search you and that you are entitled to a written record of the search

The most commonly used search powers are below:

- S1-3 PACE searches require reasonable suspicion to search for stolen items, equipment for stealing, weapons, items to commit criminal damage and prohibited fireworks.
- S23 Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 searches again require reasonable suspicion to search for illegal drugs (listed in Schedule 2 MDA)
- S60 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 gives a power to search for weapons without need for reasonable suspicion if authorisation has been given by an Inspector or above for a designated area.
- S44 Terrorism Act 2000 searches don't need reasonable suspicion but there must be an authorisation for that area by an ACPO level cop and confirmed by the Home Secretary. These are rather common e.g. all of London since 2001.

During a search the cops cannot make you take off more than gloves, coat or outer jackets in public. (PACE s2(9), Code A3.5) A more thorough search must be carried out in private (e.g. a police station) by an officer of the same sex as you (Code A 3.6-3.7).

Arrest: The distinction between arrestable and non-arrestable offences has been abolished (Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005 s110). The cops can arrest anyone they reasonably suspect of committing, having committed or being about to commit any offence. They can even arrest you if no crime has been committed providing they reasonably suspect you of a crime they reasonably suspect has been committed (PACE s24). They can also arrest to prevent or quell a 'breach of the peace' even though it is not actually a crime (Albert v Lavin 1982). After arrest you should be told what you are being arrested for (PACE s28) and cautioned.

the anarchist movement

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GETTING ACTIVE

PRISON NEWS

Free Hicham Yezza!

On 6th March, Hicham Yezza was sentenced to nine-months in prison, convicted of 'securing avoidance of enforcement action via deceptive means'. Hicham, originally from Algeria, has lived in Nottingham for 13 years, first studying and then working at Nottingham University. He was a well-respected student activist and editor of the independent political magazine *Ceasefire*.

On 14th May 2008, Hicham and post-graduate research student Rizwaan Sabir were arrested at the university under anti-terrorism law. They were detained for six days, without charge, and interrogated, while their homes were searched, their property seized and their families questioned. All this because a 'colleague' had telephoned the police to report that Hicham had an Al Qaeda training manual on his computer – which, it transpired, Rizwaan had downloaded from the US Department of Justice website and passed on to Hicham, who was helping him draft a PhD proposal on radical Islam.

On 20th May, after widespread protest, the two men were released. Hicham was then re-arrested under the Immigration Act and an order for a fast-tracked deportation issued with a flight scheduled for 1st June. Protests at the university and elsewhere, together with a legal challenge, averted this and, after three weeks in various immigration prisons, Hicham was released.

The conviction (essentially for not renewing a visa in time) exposes the state's campaign to criminalise immigrants and to suppress freedom of expression and dissent.

More prisons

On 5th February, the Prison Service announced it would be building a new 1,000-place prison near Caernafon in north Wales. Belmarsh East prison, being constructed next to the existing Belmarsh prison, is due to open in 2010, while a second prison (in addition to HMP Kennet, which opened in 2007) is due to be constructed on the site of the Maghull secure mental hospital near Liverpool. Scotland's second privately built and run prison, HMP Addiewell, opened in December 2008, and another new prison is due to be constructed at Bishopbriggs in East Dunbartonshire. Two women's prisons in England, Drake Hall and Morton Hall, have been changed from open to closed facilities and there is endless building of new wings taking place in prisons around the country. All this is set to massively increase prison numbers.

Meanwhile the locations for two out of three of the proposed Titan prisons remain shrouded in mystery. The government had announced that construction of the Titans will begin in 2010 and they will open from late 2012, but the only site which has been clearly earmarked for is in Warrington, Lancashire, where a vociferous local campaign Warrington Residents Against Prison Proposal (www.wrapp.org.uk) has sprung up against the government's plans.

**the anarchist movement
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● Registration forms are now available for the **Anarchist movement's Conference 2009**. The two-day gathering, to be held at Queen Mary & Westfield College in London on 6th and 7th June, is open to all UK anarchist groups and those active in anarchist politics. The Conference is intended to bring together all the disparate elements to talk through our ideas and differences in order to develop an organised and relevant anarchist movement that has practical applications in today's current social and political climate. Registration forms can be downloaded directly from the website at: <http://www.conference09.org.uk>, ordered by post or collected from Freedom Bookshop, Angel Alley, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London, E1 7QX

● The **Bristol Radical History Group** have been developing as a project since 2006, holding numerous events over the years from walks, talks, gigs, exhibitions and film showings, as well as producing a range of pamphlets tapping into the rich radical history and traditions of the city and surrounding area. Completely self-financed, relying on donations and the sale of books, they approach history from below examining and challenging common held ideas about historical events.

Their spring programme of events continues with: Friday 1st May at 12.30pm, Cry Freedom, Cry Seven Stars! The plaque in Celebration of Thomas Clarkson's stay at this historic pub will be unveiled at Seven Stars pub. At 7:30pm, Wet The Plaque's Head, a party to celebrate the unveiling of

the new plaque at the Seven Stars. On Tuesday 12th May at 7.30pm, John Gregory, Radical Poet, an evening of readings from the works of a lesser known Victorian radical poet and cobbler, to be held at Sublime Bar. Those who wish to contribute to the ongoing celebration of Bristol's working class history can contact the group at BRHG c/o Booty, 82 Colston Street, Bristol BS1 5BB. An archive of their publications can be found on their website www.brhg.org.uk.

● At the time of going to press Organise, the Belfast anarchist group, are calling for an **International Day of Action** in support of the sacked Visteon workers provisionally pencilled in for 9th May. They are seeking to co-ordinate activities with other international anarchist and radical workers groups, such as IWW and IWA, as a way to increase international support and recognition for ongoing struggle at the three closed Visteon factories. Events and activities have yet to be finalised, although highlighting Ford's role in the treatment of the workers seems central to the day. So far it has the full support of the Belfast Visteon workers.

● Freedom Bookshop is the venue for a joint **Mayday celebration** hosted by Anarchist Federation and Solidarity Federation on Friday 1st May. The evening includes speakers on the meaning of Mayday followed by a social with food, drink and music. It starts at 6pm and admission is free.

Glasgow's occupied schools

Wednesday 15th April saw Glasgow City Council Labour Group meet to decide what to do about its plans to close 23 schools and nurseries. A wave of protest has ensued from the planned cuts (which are a follow-up to cuts which took place in 2006), which has seen parents in two adjoining Maryhill schools occupy their local primary. In the end, Labour voted to stick to what it was good at – cuts. The Labour whip will be pushing all Glasgow Labour Councillors (Labour has a thumping majority in the city) to vote to slash, with a reprieve for two nurseries and a school.

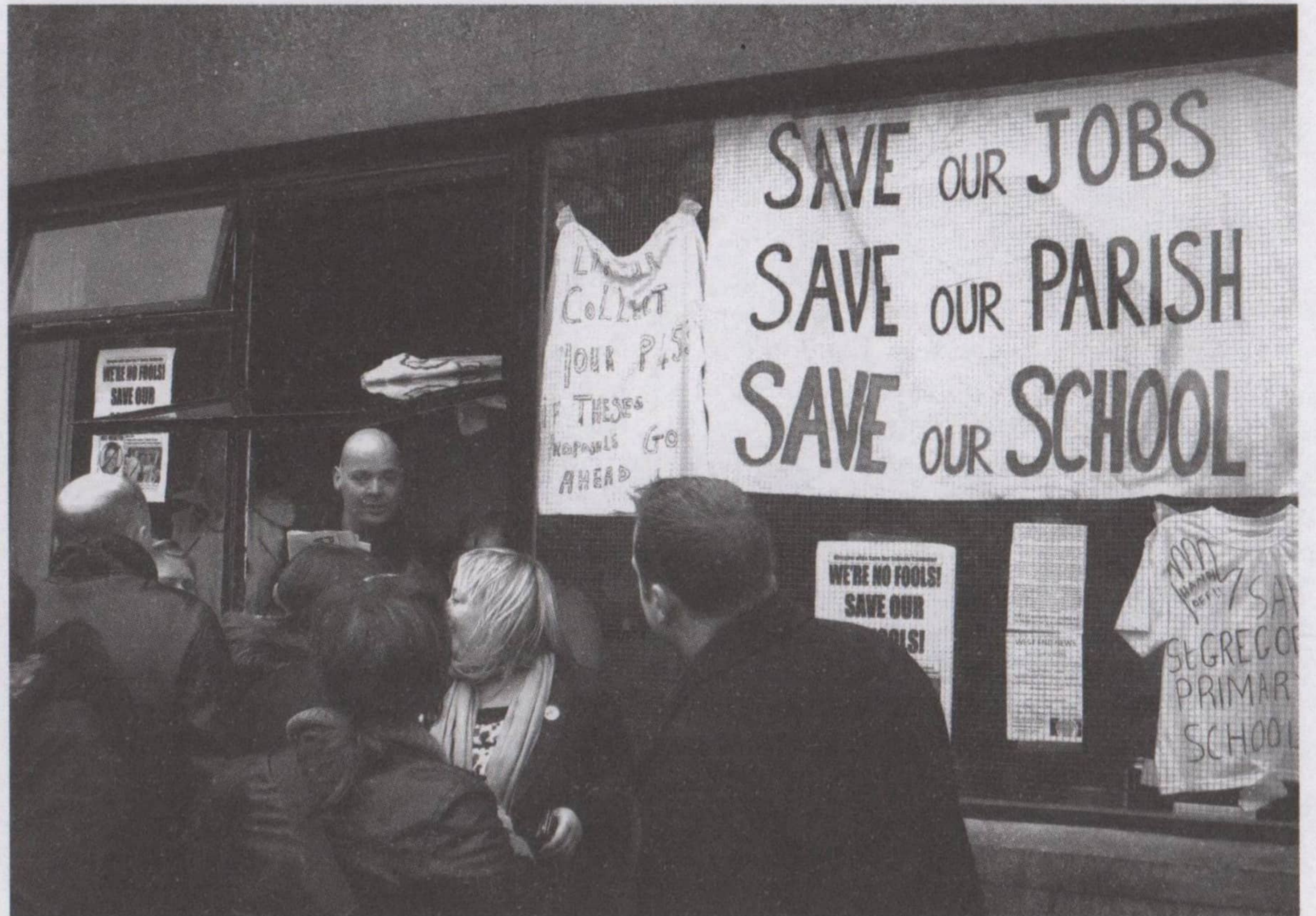
As *Freedom* goes to print, the Council's executive has been meeting to finalise plans for cuts. With the Labour group entrenched this is for the most part a formality. Indeed, a sham consultation, where the council (which one would think might have a grasp of what its own schools 'assets' are) bungled repeatedly, forgetting that one school had an autism unit attached to it and mistakenly claiming that another had a swimming pool, has repeatedly been put forward as evidence of due democratic process by the council. Campaigners claim 96% of feedback on the schools closures has been against the council's plans. From comments issued to the press yesterday, Council leader Stephen Purcell appears to admit that closure plans were despite, rather than because of, what ordinary citizens think about the plans. "We began this strategy six years ago and we have closed 68 schools and are now into the next phase ... I can say, hand on heart, that the experience so far of closing and merging secondaries and primaries has taught us that when the new schools are up and running the vast majority realise it is a better place for it. We are convinced we are doing the right thing for education in

“The only reason they have saved Ruchill Primary is because of the mistakes they made concerning the autism unit – comment on Evening Times website”

Glasgow.” – Disambiguated: the council knows best, parents can naff off.

One thing however is clear, with the growing popular resentment at council hubris being shown across the city, a number of parents campaigners are digging in for a longer term fight. It looks clear that this is fightback from local residents and ordinary workers across the city, that is set to change attitudes and build confidence through experience of collective organisation.

Several months ago children at St Gregory's and Wyndford primaries (Catholic and



Protestant primaries which share the same campus) had to have different times scheduled for breaks and lunch, in order to avoid sectarian bullying, which had become a real problem. Now parents at both schools, who have been occupying their schools over the Easter break, are in constant contact and have been running a campaign together that has seen parents travel to the union conferences at the other end of the UK, appear (twice) on GMTV, and led to a 'unity march' through the housing scheme where the schools are situated. The campaign in the Wyndford has certainly politicised parents, the first time many have taken part in political or social activism of this nature, and, for most, their first direct action.

The media attention that has been thrown on the closure plans by the Wyndford occupation and all this local activity has led to Council leader Stephen Purcell making a specific statement in respect of the Wyndford. Purcell claims the Council plans a family centre, because he understands that the council have left the area to rot without any civic resources. That this statement was accompanied with threats to those occupying the schools that their kids would be bussed to schools elsewhere (prior to the scheduled closure taking place) should the occupation continue, and ominous noises made about investigating whether any damage had occurred to the (doomed, and apparently soon to be shut) school by 'specialist cleaning teams' is however less well known and reported. As the Burgh Angel blog, quoting Council boss Purcell makes clear, even this commitment is a shoddy sop, to mask the hardball tactics: "It has become clear during the consultation that there are a whole

number of reasons why people in Wyndford feel their community is being let down. I have asked deputy council leader Jim Coleman to lead a special team of council officials who will work with parents and other community activists to improve the whole Wyndford estate. The schools will close, but I would invite parents to work with us in the development of the new children and family centre to make sure what we plan for the area is something driven by their needs."

Was that statement made in good faith?

What is clear from this outburst of popular disgust, however, is that this level of grassroots campaigning and engagement is unprecedented in recent times, and it appears that efforts to save schools from closure will continue until the August closure dates, and beyond.

Anarchists and other campaigners involved in the schools fight aim to ensure that this grassroots momentum is channelled into positive organisation for the future battles and contests which are inevitable, as the state and private capital try to make us pay for their crisis. Glasgow has for many years been devoid of strong community organisation, and a community based culture of collective organisation, despite being seen by many as a strongly left wing city, and being home to thousands of active socialists. While the final tally of which schools are to be lost, over which will be saved is very much still in the balance, this renewed impetus to community organisation can only be welcomed by all those who want to see working class people, and our priorities, setting the political agenda. Reporters for *Freedom* will keep readers briefed on the latest campaign developments.

REVIEWS

WHAT'S ON

APRIL

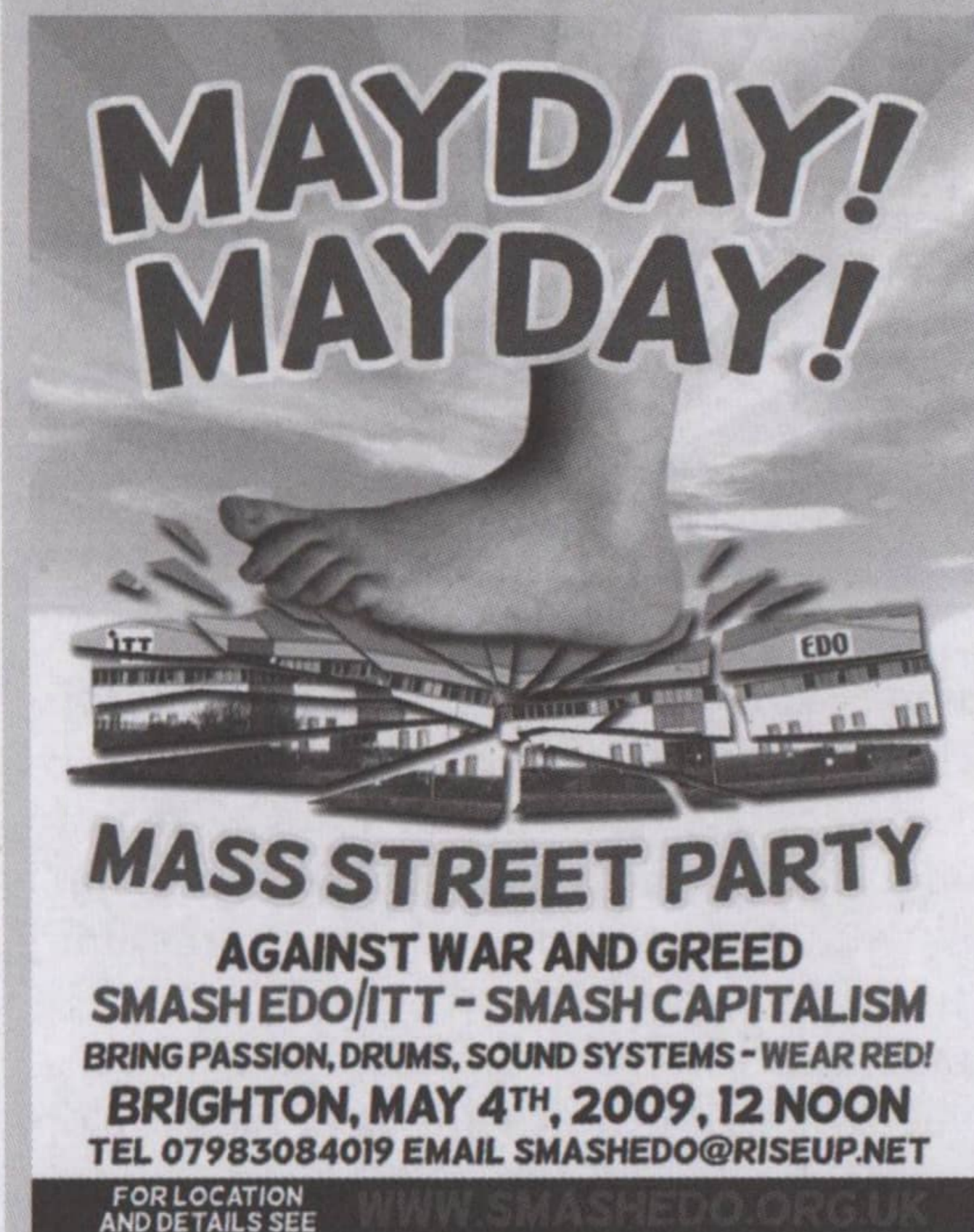
25th March and rally to call for an end to animal experiments, meet 12 noon at Reformer's Tree in Hyde Park, for details see wdail.org.

25th Reel News and Smash EDO film night at Housmans Bookshop, 5 Caledonian Road, London N1 9DX, for more details see housmans.com, reelnews.org.uk or smashedo.org.uk.

MAY

1st Anarchist Federation (London) event from 6pm onwards at Freedom Bookshop, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX, with speakers from AF and SolFed followed by food, drink, music.

4th Mayday Reclaim the Streets against EDO MBM/ITT, Brighton's bomb factory, wear red, see smashedo.org.uk for more.



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FOR LOCATION AND DETAILS SEE

6th Art Not Oil invites you to a 'Wake for BP' at the British Museum, Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3DG, between 6pm and 7pm, see artnotoil.org.uk for more

9th Out of Step, anarchic punk-rock poetry and music from 6pm at Housmans Bookshop, 5 Caledonian Road, London N1 9DX, see housmans.com for more.

9th Benefit for Anarchist Movement Conference 09 at Cross Kings, 126 York Way, London N1 0AX, see conference09.org.uk for details.

10th 'Do people have the right to have children?', open discussion facilitated by Ed McArthur from 3pm at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1 4RL

16th Demonstration at Nestlé UK HQ from 11am until 12 noon at St George's House, Park Lane, Croydon CR9 1NR, see babymilkaction.org/action/demo09.html

16th Benefit for Anarchist Movement Conference 09 at Boston Arms, 178 Junction Road, London N19 5QQ, see conference09.org.uk for details.

23rd Cardiff Anarchist Bookfair at Cathays Community Centre, 36 Cathays Terrace, Cardiff CF24 4HX from 10am until 6pm, see <http://southwalesanarchists.org> or email cosmoinnit@talk21.com for more.

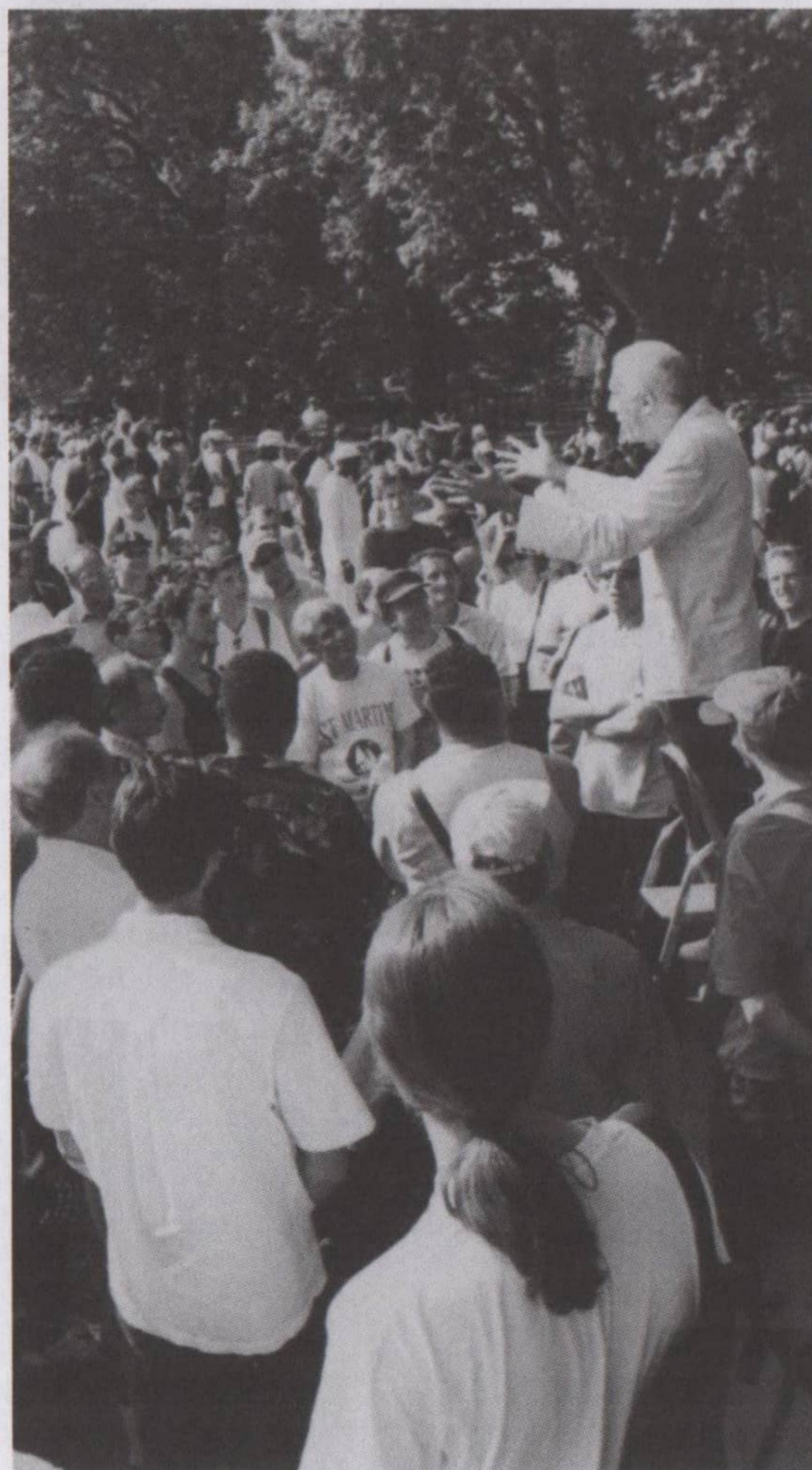
REVIEWS

The Sound and the Fury: The Art of Great Speeches

Tuesday 7th April 2009 at The British Library

Having seen Tony Allen perform at Speakers' Corner, I had to go and see him appear with Philip Collins, ex-chief speech writer to Blair, and Jonathan Freedland from *The Times*, in a discussion chaired by Charlotte Higgins of *The Guardian*.

What a disappointment. I left feeling angry with Tony because he pulled his punches. This was all set up to be like television. Tony did his best to inject some controversy, but overall I found this to be a dispiriting experience which would have been more accurately billed as 'The Cowed and the Puny'.



QUIZ ANSWERS

1. A practice originating in France whereby workers lock up their boss in order to encourage negotiations. So far workers at Sony, 3M and others have held their bosses to get an improved deal. Patrick Hachaguer of the CGT union at Sony said "Holding him for a few more days would have allowed us to get more. The advances we made were minimal, but we wouldn't have got anywhere without kidnapping the boss."
2. Evolution in progress. Darwin thought evolution too slow to be observed. The Grants have been studying one island's finch population since 1973 and have

'Our' Tony was seated on the extreme left [where else? – Ed.] next to Collins, then the *Times* man, with the Chair on the extreme right. This formation, with attention focused towards the Chair, caused 'the opposition' usually to have their backs turned on Tony. The proceedings followed a set format: there was no freedom for a debate to develop; each said what he thought before Charlotte moved things on. Tony told me afterwards that he was "outside his comfort zone".

They used clips from well-known speeches by J.F. Kennedy, Churchill, Thatcher, Blair and Obama as starting points for a discussion which dwelt heavily on technique, i.e. how to influence (rather than inform) the audience. There was an ideal chance to bash Collins for the devious emptiness of his boss, when he foolishly said "Content is more important". There was the open goal, but sadly neither panel nor audience seemed inclined to score.

John Griffin

Part of 'The Sound and the Fury: The Power of Public Speaking' exhibition at the British Library, 96 Euston Road, London NW1 2DB, until December 2009

Handbook for NonViolent Campaigns

War Resisters International, £5.00

Anarchists are against government and pacifists are against violence. Since most violence is committed by governments there's a considerable overlap between the two philosophies. There is also the point that most activities are, in fact, non-violent, whether the participants call themselves non-violent or not. But to elevate non-violence to a principle, rather than a tactic or a practicality, is a step I won't take.

I think violence is regrettable and to be avoided but I reserve the right to self-defence and to defence of others. Anti-militarism yes, non-violence no.

If you're interested in pacifism then this book is both an introduction and a how-to guide.

Mo Moseley

demonstrated how very rapid changes in body and beak size in response to changes in the food supply are driven by natural selection.

3. The incumbent won, despite dying before the elections occurred. Lincoln County Clerk Elaine Luck said of Mayor Harry Stonebraker, "he seemed to get even more popular after he died".
4. Sir Max Hastings, former editor of the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Evening Standard*. Unlike others who have called for retribution against bankers, Sir Max has yet to lose any of his many well-paid jobs.

Yorkshire noir lite

Tom Jennings detects much of the hellish intensity of David Peace's 'Yorkshire noir' in Red Riding's television adaptations, but with its most subversive elements lost

Scriptwriter Tony Grisoni's three *Red Riding* films (based on the novels 1974, 1977, 1980 and 1983) paint a compelling picture of time and place. Screening in March and representing a substantial wedge of Channel 4's drama budget, the superb design, filming and acting drip with grey-brown authenticity, showing 1970s/80s decay, depression and desperation in Northern England's rapidly post-industrialising pit villages, rotten boroughs and collapsing communities breeding the sociopathic barbarism neoliberalism would soon legitimise. But its seeds were sown long before, exemplified in the period's notorious sexual violence sagas, and in each of these intricately-linked stories a deeply-flawed protagonist gets to the bottom of botched cases of abducted schoolgirls and butchered prostitutes.

A naive *Yorkshire Post* hack, supercilious Manchester DI and wretchedly ineffectual local solicitor dig into stalled police investigations – including the Ripper hunt – convinced of incompetence, stitch-ups and cover-ups, their faltering progress hindered at every turn by out-of-control coppers whose obstruction quickly shades into outright intimidation. Recurring throughout unremitting menace and brutality are seedy property developers, vengeance-seeking rent-boys, creepily ubiquitous priests, paedophile rings, and disintegrating detectives trying belatedly to do the right thing surrounded by unredeemable West Yorkshire Constabulary colleagues. The latter's endemic corruption extends beyond collusion and parasitism to running vice and pornography operations as well as enforcing for local Big Money, underlining their thorough integration into 'polite' society and establishment hierarchies. And the deeper we get, the worse the nightmare becomes as torture and death-squad tactics paper over the cracks.

Unfortunately the missing story (cut when the money wouldn't stretch) emphasised the author's primary concern to represent the struggle to understand the horrors that surrounded him while growing up in the area – helping to orientate confused readers, but not now available to viewers. Thus the controversial fictionalisation around real events (with names and details changed) given the most nightmarish spin is developed



in 1977's loose theme of collusion between cynically-bent journalists and marginally well-meaning and slightly less-compromised cops – representing the cream of professional 'truth-seekers' – during the punk era's crystallisation of hopeless fury. Peace's own feverishly obsessional boyhood fears and imaginings around the Ripper were later supplemented by sources such as the 'parapolitics' of *Lobster* magazine which – however outlandish in respectable discourse – made what happened potentially intelligible. Nevertheless he insists that his 'occult history' doesn't in principle exaggerate the scale of official wrongdoing – recommending doubters read high-profile accounts of police foul-play such as Tony Bunyan's *The History and Practice of the Political Police in Britain*, Chris Mullin's *Error of Judgement*, John Williams' *Bloody Valentine*, or books by Paul Foot (we might add Stuart Christie and Robin Ramsay, among others). So it's not as if he's ploughing a lonely furrow here – and his masterpiece about the miners' strike, *GB84* (Faber, 2004), required less psychotic hyperbole because the political machinations were themselves sufficiently monstrous. Meanwhile the *Red Riding* quartet ties together in literary form the philosophical, psychosexual, visceral and political corollaries of wading into such morasses – hoping to emerge with sanity intact.

This Septic Isle

Peace's fractured hyper-modernist writing juxtaposes styles from expressionist exposition to pared-down pulp prose and noirish dialogue, diary entries, mental lists, streams of consciousness and incoherent ravings, with different kinds of texts

breaking any naturalistic flow. Inspired by science-fiction writer Philip K. Dick's paranoid existentialism, the effect is precisely to blur times gone by into now, actuality into distorted perception, downright hallucination and fantasy. In the *Red Riding* novels, apprehension of the awful situations dealt with then evokes and resonates with repressed sexual and violent impulses – with neither characters nor readers sure of distinctions – which then circulate and materialise in exaggerated figures and actions in the narrative. We are not necessarily meant to interpret the results as objective reality, but are at least obliged to ponder what framework of knowledge could account for the facts such as they are. Crucially, the complete – and continuing – failure of official accounts to give satisfactory explanations of these most appalling events brings into question conventional disavowals placing such 'inhumanity' outside the purview of both normal society and official structures. Ultimately the television version timidly shirks this final imaginative leap in favour of exactly those recognisable crime-procedural and conspiracy-thriller genre clichs that the author transcended – its grubby specificity then generating scarcely more explanatory power than a *Da Vinci Code* or *James Bond*.

Reducing to offscreen allusion the body counts and actual depictions of the heinous crimes further censors the voices of victims previously given due weight. Instead, the narrative arcs are "made more distinct than those in the novels", privileging minor heroic gestures which otherwise drown in the implacably malevolent logic and interchangeably vicious complicity of serial

WILDCAT



Review

◀ page 15

killers and erstwhile pursuers. Wanting “to be released from that hell by the end”, and stressing that Peace “doesn’t save anyone. Whereas I needed to”, * Grisoni gropes for what the books refused – an overall solution, redemption, and an identifiable locus of organised evil pulling the strings to excuse the State from ultimate culpability (if only its guardians lived up to ideals). So the story’s salience no longer radiates from past to present throughout the land, merely envisaging bad apples infecting this particular barrel of northernness. Main-stream critical responses eagerly followed suit, working overtime to refuse any wider persistent real-world relevance, able to

blame the author’s intransigent interpretive idiosyncracies on his own maniacal genius/perversion – just as the general prevalence of socialised and sexualised abuse is peremptorily dismissed as so much personalised sickness with none of the intimate relationship to respectable patterns of power we might suspect. The net effect here is to consign *Red Riding*’s ‘dark Satanic’ costume drama to pretty much as conservatively remote a terrain as *Life On Mars*.

www.tomjennings.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk

* Cited by Nick James in ‘Bloody Yorkshire’, *Sight & Sound*, March 2009.

The *Red Riding* trilogy, based on novels by David Peace, is now available on DVD, as are new editions of the novels.

THE QUIZ

1. What is bossnapping?
2. Peter and Rosemary Grant have studied the Galapagos finches that were part of Darwin’s inspiration. What have they observed which might have surprised him?
3. What happened in elections in Winfield, Missouri in April this year, and the US Senate seat for Missouri in 2000?
4. Which well-known radical suggested that “these bankers think they are above criticism and the lesson for us, the public, is that we need to get the boot in and keep kicking.”?

Answers on page 14

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