

FREEDOM

ANARCHIST BOOKFAIR
SPECIAL

£1 www.freedompress.org.uk

Vol 70 No 20 • 24 OCTOBER 2009

ANARCHIST 'BOOKFAIR' PLOT

Undercover report from the anarchist bookfair

Thousands of Anarchists have descended on Queen Mary College in the East End of London in a first step to ridding the planet of Capitalism and establishing a global environmentally sustainable community based on freedom and cooperation.

Under the guise of a 'bookfair', the plotters are working on plans to overthrow the state and emancipate the people of the world through the mechanism of 'class struggle'.

While they appear divided into countless factions and groupicules, *Freedom's* undercover reporter can reveal they are united by a hatred of oppression and tyranny and prepared to work together for the common purpose of ending the exploitation of the poor.

Not only this, they plan to spread their message outside the College and encourage 'normal' and 'ordinary' people to become anarchists themselves and engage in a whole raft of community and workplace activities that will lead to the collective empowerment of the 'Working Class'.

The Anarchists hope that this class will then become conscious of its own power and replace the current hierarchical social

page 3 ►►

LENS CAP PULL THE UDDER ONE



A farmer uses his cow as a weapon and sprays cops with milk during a recent protest in Brussels. Dairy farmers have been taking to the streets, angry at the falling price of milk, which is down by around 40% across Europe. EU officials are discussing how milk production can be made more 'competitive' and whether to set up a futures market for dairy produce. This ignores the enormous power wielded by supermarkets that allows them to marginalise small farmers during negotiations on price, creating a situation where the costs of production are twice as high as the prices farmers receive.

BONE GETS PEACE PRIZE

Veteran peacenik and leading pointyhead thinker Ian Bone has received the Anarchist Peace Prize.

At a special ceremony in the secret underground headquarters beneath Queen Mary College, where the Anarchist Bookfair is held, comrades from all sections of the movement gathered to praise the one anarchist who has constantly refrained from infighting and sectarianism.

The award reflects a lifetime of unstinting effort to end pointless bickering within the movement. "I've always done my best to bring people together and smooth over differences in the hope we can all work together in harmony" said the publicity shy Bone in a rare interview. "I only wish I could share this award with my dear chum Martin Wright –

the true co-ordinator of cooperation."

The award is a statuette depicting the famous scene of Albert Meltzer and Vernon Richards kissing and making up after a minor tiff had briefly interrupted decades of close cooperation.

Professor Chris Knight, facilitator of the judges panel, said "I'm a total fruitcake, there's no point asking me anything, you'll just make up a quote making me out to be a nut".

Many believe the committee chose Comrade Bone as a wind-up to annoy all the stuck-up tossers in the movement with no sense of humour.

"Those fools at *Freedom* will do just about anything for publicity" said Charlotte Wilson of Kemerton. "It's not as good as it used to be."

INSIDE ►►

Postal wars page 3

Prisoner support page 5

Give up anti-fascism! page 7

Svartfrosk column page 10

Federations round-up page 13

Reviews pages 14 and 15

ISSN 0016-0504



NEWS

IN BRIEF

ICE MELT: The Arctic Ocean could be largely ice-free and open to shipping during the summer in as little as ten years time, a top polar specialist has said.

"It's like man is taking the lid off the northern part of the planet," said Professor Peter Wadhams, from the University of Cambridge.

He was speaking in central London at the launch of the findings of the Catlin Arctic Survey. The expedition trekked across 435km of ice earlier this year. Led by explorer Pen Hadow, the team's measurements found that the ice-floes were on average 1.8m thick – typical of so-called 'first year' ice formed during the past winter and most vulnerable to melting.

Professor Wadhams said: "The Catlin Arctic Survey data supports the new consensus view – based on seasonal variation of ice extent and thickness, changes in temperatures, winds and especially ice composition – that the Arctic will be ice-free in summer within about 20 years, and that much of the decrease will be happening within 10 years.

WASTE: The way the Ministry of Defence buys equipment is 'unaffordable', with an estimated budget overrun of £35bn, a report has said.

The review, commissioned by the MoD, said too many types of equipment were being ordered for too large a range of tasks at too high a specification. It found programmes are, on average, five years late into service and cost an extra £300m as a result.

SWINE FLU: A pregnant teenager from the Borders has become the 15th person in Scotland to die from swine flu.

Pregnant women are known to be at greater risk of complications from swine flu. The latest death comes as estimated statistics showed a sharp rise in the number of people contracting swine flu in Scotland.

THE CURSE OF THE AK-47: The Russian firm Izhmash (Izhevsk Mechanical Works) holds the patents for the AK-47, and it is going broke because of all the illegal copies of its weapons being produced worldwide.

Izhmash is having little success in trying to force companies in Bulgaria, Romania, Poland, Israel, China and the United States to pay licensing fees for the AK-47s they produce. Tragic.

SCRUFFY: Lecturers have been told they will be sent home to change if they come to work in jeans or scruffy trousers.

The UCU lecturers' union is protesting against Birmingham Metropolitan College acting like the 'fashion police'.

The dress code for staff requires tidy hair, business suits and skirts, no visible tattoos, no slogans on T-shirts or "ostentatious earrings".

LENS CAP WELCOME TO NOTTINGHAMSHIRE



Police surround Nottinghamshire's Ratcliffe-on-Soar power station as around 1,000 protesters joined the Great Climate Swoop on 17th and 18th October. Over 50 climate change protesters were arrested, mainly for aggravated trespass and criminal damage. One police officer was airlifted to hospital, but released the next day, while many protesters received dog bites and other injuries as police clamped down on activists who want the facility closed down. The 2,000mw coal-fired power station is owned by the energy company E.ON and is one of the largest producers of carbon dioxide in Britain.

Ramparts finally falls

Ramparts, one of London's longest running social centres, was finally evicted in the early morning on Thursday 15th October after battling to remain open for the last two years.

Bailiffs along with 45 police officers raided the building in the run-down garment manufacturing area of the East End at 5.30am, evicting the occupants before securing the premises. The adjacent houses which were being used as living space were also evicted.

The place was originally set up by political activists as a way of offering a non-commercial political and social environment and has over the years become a cultural institution and a beacon for radicals and activists in the capital, holding many events, meetings and raising money through benefit nights for countless political causes ranging from anarchist prisoner support to No Borders, anti-fascist and climate action events, with many thousands enjoying the hospitality over the years. Recently it had been used as meeting and convergence space for G20 protests, Dsej and Climate Camp and during the summer it was used as crash space for 70 visiting Bolivian activists.

The building, previously a derelict Islamic girls school, was originally occupied in 2004 and opened up as a community and activist resource.

It is not unlawful to squat buildings in the UK as long as no crime is committed gaining

access to the property. Usually squatted buildings are reclaimed through the civil courts by the owners which give them a short and unpredictable life expectancy of six months or less.

The owners of the building were granted a possession order on 3rd January 2008, but it has taken almost two years for bailiffs to repossess the property despite several previous eviction attempts successfully resisted by Ramparts.

It's estimated there are over 82,000 empty homes in London with a rising homeless population of 20,000 people, not including the hidden homeless.

London's continued housing crisis was given another blow the day after on Friday 16th as Mayor Boris Johnson revealed his plans for future housing in London.

In a short and largely ignored press conference, the deputy mayor gave a breakdown of Johnson's proposals, notionally, called The London Plan, which is to move away from the previous Mayor's target of 50% 'affordable' homes on each estate, to a capital-wide target of just 13,000 homes subsidised by the state out of the predicted 333,800 homes to be built by 2031. If implemented, the policy will open the door to a return to all-private and all-subsidised estates and push ordinary people further and further out of London by crippling affordable house prices across the capital.



Postal wars

Government and bosses line up for an all out attack on postal workers

As postal workers confirm their support for a national strike, bosses at Royal Mail backed by the government are preparing themselves for an all-out war with the Communications Workers Union (CWU) over the future of postal delivery services.

A series of ongoing regional disputes over the past four months, in response to Royal Mail breaking locally agreed arrangements, have escalated tensions between management and postal staff, signalling a fresh assault on industrial relations on a par with the miners during the 1980s. Talks are ongoing but notice was served for strike action on Thursday 22nd October covering nationwide mail centre staff and network drivers, around 42,000 postal workers, and Friday 23rd

October covering nationwide delivery and collection staff, around 78,000 workers. This was after the CWU offered a peace deal to avoid the walk out by entering into meaningful negotiations which Royal Mail who rejected the idea outright.

Royal Mail's approach indicates a willingness to abandon any dialogue to ensure its policy of 'modernisation' is implemented regardless of union acknowledgement or approval.

Management have already drawn up secret contingency plans in the event of prolonged industrial action intended to curb the effectiveness of union procedure and ultimately crush the anger and growing militancy of the workforce.

The leaked document entitled 'Dispute: Strategic Overview' sets out a policy of achieving change on Royal Mail's terms, and failing that put in place a "framework for delivery of change without agreement". It is seen as a deliberate provocation to antagonise the situation rather than look for a resolution.

Last year Royal Mail made an operating profit of £321 million, with all four group businesses – Royal Mail, Post Office, Parcelforce Worldwide and General Logistics Systems – making a profit for the first time in over two decades, although the pensions deficit has reached a staggering £6.8 billion. Postal workers deliver on average 84 million items every working day with a combined revenue of £9.056 billion. Alternative carriers have already admitted they don't have the capacity to take on Royal Mail's workload in the event of backlogs caused by a prolonged strike. Also it's the Royal Mail who takes responsibility for delivering their competitors' post and packages at uncompetitive rates. Rival operators collect business letters and parcels, sort them and take them to Royal Mail for delivery over the last mile.

Workers themselves remain adamant in defence of the jobs, work conditions and pensions, but are relying on support to ensure a successful strike action.

Anarchist 'bookfair' plot

◀ page 1

structure with a federated participatory method of social decision making.

The change is known as a 'revolution' because it would turn current political relationships upside down.

The Anarchists predict that this will be opposed by a group they call the 'Ruling Class', composed of bosses, rich people and those in positions of power.

This Ruling Class, the Anarchists say, have been in charge for centuries (opinions differ on exactly how long) and have consistently refused to listen to complaints that they are

having a good time while shafting everyone else.

Not only that but the Ruling Class have used forces of repression to maintain their power. These have included 'the Police', a large gang of thugs identifiable by their blue uniforms, and the practice of putting people 'in prison', which involves locking people in little rooms called cells which they can't get out of.

These violent tactics by the Ruling Class are regarded by Anarchists as inherent in the system and only a complete revolution can stop the continuing oppression.

Such is the extreme nature of these Anarchists that they oppose all forms of exploitation and oppression, even thinking that women and men are equal and that people should not be categorised by their appearance, sexual preference or where they are born.

We asked their Leader to give us an interview, but apparently they don't have one and don't want one either.

Freedom will continue to report on these subversives and keep readers posted on their crazy activities.

ANALYSIS

Where does the anarchist movement go now?

When the Anarchist Movement conference ended back in June 2009 most people thought the event a worthwhile experience, and on balance thought it should happen again soon. The feeling was definitely positive and five or six embryonic groups came out of the final session.

Oh, how memories fade. Once the conference was over the knives came out! There was criticism on internet discussion lists over the topics picked – even though in the pre publicity and on the day it was stated these were just suggestions. Any group could pick all, some or none of the topics suggested. Then there were moans the organisers had either somehow let in a load of un-anarchists, or that they hadn't been strict enough about stating who the event was for. Hmm. Just to re-cap, the publicity did say: "This is a conference by and for anarchists. And by anarchists, we mean those opposed to the state, all forms of nationalism, capitalism, sexual/race/gender oppression and all forms of exploitation and domination." And yes, we did forget to employ the anarcho police to check everybody's credentials. But let's move on.

Why was the conference called. For me at least, the conference was meant to be a small part of trying to bring together our disjointed movement – and the 'intervention' alone shows we are not 'one' movement. The national organisations have their conferences; Earth First! have their gatherings; there is Climate Camp; some local areas have regional events, as do single issue campaigns and groups active in identity politics. But, where is the space where these, and all the rest of us can come together, sit down and discuss the issues which affect us all and can look at how we move forward as one (many parted) movement.

Okay, there's the Anarchist Bookfair in London and as an event I love it (I would, I help organise it!). But this ain't, and can never, fulfil the remit for a national anarchist conference. The format is just too different to try and combine the two.

If we intend to be a threat as a movement or ideology we need somewhere we can all come together; discuss how we relate to each other; workout what we really agree and disagree on; and start discussing a movement wide strategy for the coming months, years – and, yes – decades. Discussion boards and the like can't do this. So, until somebody comes up with something better, I suggest all we have is the (possibly) yearly Anarchist Movement Conference. No, it is not perfect. The first time we may not have got it quite right. But, without it, or something similar, how do we move forward outside of the remits of our national organisation, local areas, single issue or identity politics groups? Maybe we don't want to? Maybe we actually like just moaning about each other? Maybe we like



"If we truly aim to be a part of making history we need to remake ourselves as an organised, pragmatic movement to become an effective part of revolutionary change."

being that big fish in a very small pond? But, assuming we actually want to put our politics into world wide practice, how do we move forward together?

I feel one way is the yearly Anarchist Movement conference (or whatever we want to call it). So, should we have a 2010 conference? I say yes.

In 2009 it was very London dominated, and I guess was always going to be. This needs to change. The venue needs to move around the country. The organising group needs more input from people outside the capital. Organising meetings need looking at. But, this will only happen if others take up this call.

I feel the format worked. Breaking into small groups means less confident participants were more comfortable about speaking. The idea of having pre set topics worked both in June and at a similar event in Bradford in 1998. Hopefully, for future conference more contributions would come in about subjects for discussion and maybe we could produce discussion documents in advance to get participants thinking. Like the London bookfair I suggest the conference would grow over the years, both in importance and size.

Although two day of intense discussions, I feel the conference was not long enough – most groups only scratched the surface of discussions. Should future events be over a

bank holiday weekend with people registering on the Friday night with the conference lasting Saturday, Sunday and Monday. With more time, the final session could be more productive as well.

All this can all be argued over. The question is, is there a will to do it and a belief that it's needed? This is something the wider movement will need to decide.

As a first step towards this, there's a meeting at this year's London Anarchist Bookfair. We will look at the 2009 conference and the desire to do it again in 2010. Come and have your say, face-to-face, on Saturday 24th October from 2pm to 4pm, room EB1.

Finally, somebody recently told me they didn't come to the conference as they thought it was about setting up another national organisation. We have four, five, six, or more national organisations already. We have numerous local groups. We have abundant single issue campaigns we are involved in. For me, as I have said already, the Anarchist Movement conferences should be a vehicle to bring all these together, to see how we can work together, understand each other (outside of cyberspace) and have a co-ordinated strategy for seriously looking at bringing about an anarchist society. If we are not serious about our beliefs, why the fuck are we involved!

Tony Wood

THE BOOKFAIR SONG

Singalong with the Bookfair Song! To improve your enjoyment of the bookfair here are the lyrics of the Twelve Volt Vandals song 'Bookfair'.

The chorus is reminiscent of the Batman theme tune and it is traditional to add in 'Zap', 'Wham' or 'Kerpow' at appropriate points.

The bookfair song is dedicated to those happy hostelrys the Apple Tree and the Coronet and to all Munters and Muppets everywhere.

All you grasses, all you groupers, all you cunts,
I don't know where you find the front,
But you always still turn up,
To the bookfair.
And there has to be a fight
At the bookfair.
It's the highlight of the year,
It's the place to settle scores,
And we know your getting yours,
At the bookfair.
This year.

Chorus:

Na, na, na, na, na, na, na, na, na, na, na, na, na, na,
na, na, na, na, na, na, na, na, na, na, na, na,
Bookfair!

Na, na, na, na, na, na, na, na, na, na, na, na, na, na,
na, na, na, na, na, na, na, na, na, na, na, na,
Bookfair!

Bookfair! Bookfair! Bookfair!

You're all so stupid,
You always think you've got away,
Like you can fuck over our movement
And then just be okay.
But now you're sorry
'Cos it's a very special day
And everyone who hates you
Has turned up with their mates to
The bookfair.

Chorus

'Cos our scene is not a playground
For wankers to hang out
And pose at revolution
While fucking us about.
We're tired of your delusions
And it's time we chucked you out
But first some retribution
From the happy bookfair crowd.

Chorus

We've got Marx, Bakunin and Kropotkin
We've got everything you need
But what Tony doesn't know
Is that we don't come here to read.
And there has to be a fight
At the bookfair
It's the highlight of the year
It's the place to settle scores
And we know your getting yours
At the bookfair.
This year.

Chorus

Why prisoner support?

Prisoner support should be an essential facet of any anarchist's political activities, yet our prisoner support groups attract so little actual support from our fellow anarchists. Why is this?

Of course, it is natural for us to support someone we are close to, friends and family, or even a comrade from one's affinity group, when they are banged up. Yet why do so few anarchists support comrades from within the wider movement, let alone prisoners in general? Mutual aid and solidarity are surely a central tenet of the anarchist 'belief system', one brick that any anarchist society should be built upon, yet it is something that often doesn't extend beyond one's immediate environment.

Not sexy enough

We all know that prisoner support is not particularly glamorous or possibly rewarding in terms of apparent immediate effect: we don't see our 'circle A' spray-painted on the wall, cashpoints superglued-up, disruption caused by a picket or the reality of an article appearing in our favourite organ of propaganda (though most of those can also be used as a weapon in any prisoner support campaign). Instead, prisoner support is largely invisible, the writing of letters, the sending of money and the giving of other practical support. Yes, we might go along to a gig raising funds for prisoner support, but are we doing that to donate funds or because we want to see the bands?

We might read a call-out for support for a particular prisoner's campaign, but are we really paying much attention? Or are we going along to prison pickets when they are called? This is in fact one really simple and effective way of showing solidarity and support for individual prisoners, as well as showing the managers of these factories of repression that we outside the prison walls know and care about what they are trying to do to our comrades, those we chose to support, on the inside. And prisoner support groups regularly get feedback on these events showing clearly that they work, that the prison authorities take notice and are much less likely to abuse the prisoners supported.

The 'social prisoner' problem'

Which brings us to the so-called 'social prisoner' issue, which has long been a problem within the anarchist movement, with the more liberal elements in the anarchist movement decrying any involvement with 'common criminals'. Fortunately, most anarchists involved in prisoner support see it somewhat differently.

If you are a long-term prisoner in any prison system, you have two options: either you do the 'bird', knuckle down and toe the line, making as little trouble for yourself as possible; or you stand up as an individual and fight for your dignity and the dignity of other prisoners against a system that is designed to squeeze that dignity out of everyone. Prison after all is still, despite what all the PR about rehab-



ilitation and behaviour modification therapy would have us believe, designed to punish the individual prisoner, to make them not want to return and therefore not commit that next 'crime' that might earn them more time.

Therefore, when we come across prisoners who have become radicalised by the prison experiences, who are engaged in the class struggle against the system of social control that is prison, we should be supporting them in their struggle. After all, even the most cynical anarcho must see that we as a movement need to get the idea of a non-hierarchical decentralised class-free society more widely accepted and those at the sharp end of the state's system of social control and conditioning should be more receptive than most.

Practical Things You Can Do:

- Write to prisoners – practical solidarity that entails a commitment to the prisoner we write to as well as a trip to the post office.
- Financial support to prisoner support groups – we spend a lot of our time and effort fundraising, time and effort that could be better spent elsewhere.
- Books to prisoners – instead of spending your 'hard-earned' on that next tome on anarchist history, give the money to Haven Distribution books to prisoners project.
- Other letter/faxes/e-mail writing – prisoner support groups often fight campaigns at the behest of prisoners to get them better conditions/parole/even not being executed.
- Organise – in the workplace and community. This is something we could all be doing. No excuses now!

You can download leaflets on 'Writing To Prisoners' and 'Social Prisoners' from: brightonabc.org.uk/merchandise.html

- Brighton ABC, PO Box 74, Brighton, BN1 4ZQ, e-mail brightonabc@riseup.net
- Bristol ABC, c/o Kebele, 14 Robertson Road, Easton, Bristol, BS5 6JY, e-mail bristol_abc@riseup.net
- Cardiff ABC, email mail@cardiffprisonersupport.tk
- Leeds ABC, PO Box 53, Leeds, LS8 4WP, UK, email leedsabc@riseup.net

INTERNATIONAL

IN BRIEF

EGYPT: Workers at the Maasara Telephone Company on the outskirts of Cairo have wrapped up a 12-day sit-in during which they held company board and syndicate members captive for ten hours.

Frustrated workers only agreed to free the men after prominent MP Mustafa Bakri assured them they would receive unpaid salaries and bonuses by 18th October.

CHINA: Police in Changchun have detained the chief suspect in the killing of a steel factory manager in July in northeast China's Jilin Province. Ji Yigang, 50, was a worker in the Tonghua Iron and Steel Company. Police say he has confessed to his part in the murder, which took place during an anti-merger demonstration.

COSTA RICA: A march for dignity has been held in the south of the country in protest at a series of damaging plans for the region.

The 6th October protest demanded an end to policies which were seeing the expansion of environmentally damaging, low-paying pineapple plantations and the construction of an airport and hydro-electric dam.

GREECE: Shipyard workers have clashed with police forces in Athens after workers blocked the exit of the minister of labour, Lomberdos, following inconclusive negotiations. The clashes, which left two protesters hospitalised, erupted after inconclusive talks with Lomberdos over pay and retirement demands from the workers.

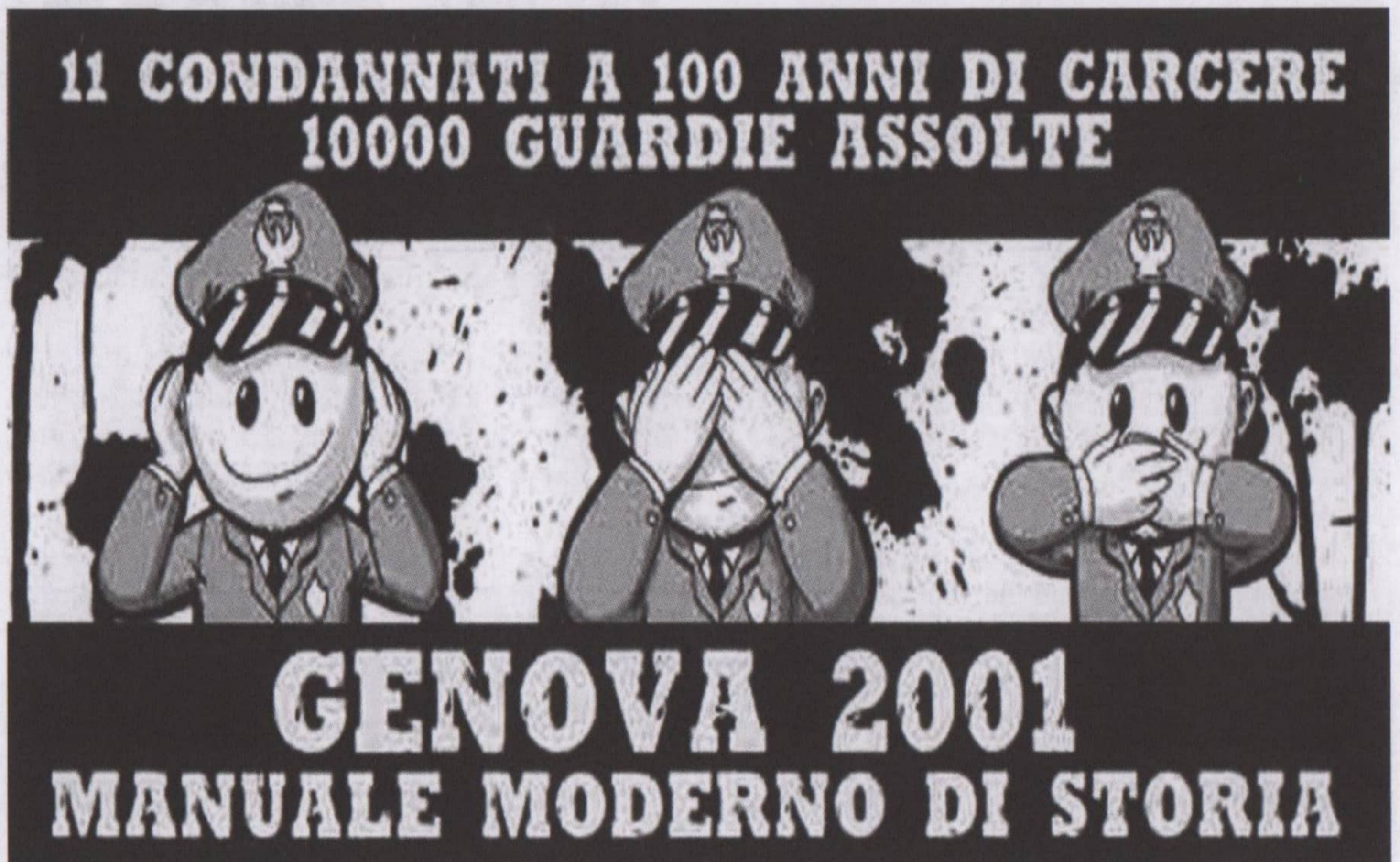
PUERTO RICO: Thousands of Puerto Rican union members have taken part in a one-day general strike which brought large parts of the capital of Costa Rica to a standstill. There were no reports of violence, though several shops and private schools had closed.

MEXICO: Amid the annual September celebrations of independence and revolution, a series of explosions hit symbols of capitalism across Mexico, each accompanied by anarchist graffiti. The Subversive Alliance for the Liberation of the Earth, Animals and Humans – a previously unknown group – claimed responsibility for the bombings, which police have used as an excuse to attack the country's large student radical movement.

UGANDA: A draft 'Anti-Homosexuality Bill' introduced on 14th October would violate human rights and should be withdrawn, according to a coalition of international NGOs. The bill would criminalise the work of activists and organisations working for human rights in Uganda and hamper HIV/AIDS prevention efforts, the groups said.

WORLD: The US has agreed to join negotiations towards an international Arms Trade Treaty, but only if it is given veto powers. This would allow the US, the world's largest arms exporter, to avoid any measures which could hamper its exports.

LENS CAP ITALY



An illustration used in Italy to satirise the 2001 Genoa killing of G8 protestor Carlo Giuliani by police officer Mario Placanica. The picture was used earlier this month to illustrate the difference in the state's attitude towards the killing of Guilani, for which no officer was indicted and no senior officer took blame, and the case of ten G8 activists who, after eight years, have now been handed a century of jail time between them for destruction and vandalism of property and fines totalling over 200,000 euros.

Ortiz condemned by Mexico's highest court

Mexico's Supreme Court has ruled that hated governor Ulises Ruiz Ortiz was responsible for gross violations of human rights during the 2006 Oaxaca uprising – but no sanctions are to be brought against him.

Ortiz, who presided over the brutal repression of thousands in the region during a mass uprising against his rule, has retained his control of the state despite near-zero approval ratings. The court's decision overturned a previous legal judgment by Justice Mariano Azuela by agreeing with claims from union and civil groups in Oaxaca that Ortiz had failed to take appropriate measures to maintain public order.

Activists expressed disappointment that the judgement did not go further, saying that judges failed to implicate former president Vicente

Fox in the repression and did not go far enough in their condemnation of Ortiz.

However it has given a legal gloss to calls from activist groups within Oaxaca for Ortiz to resign, as it is only the second time that an incumbent of such a senior regional position has faced such condemnation from the country's top court.

Along with Ortiz, some commanders in the state police, including director general of Public Security José Manuel Vera Salinas, director of Ministerial Police naval lieutenant José Moreno Rivas, and director of Auxiliary Police Joaquín Darío Berges were held responsible for using excessive force.

Justice Silva Meza alone argued that violations of rights continued after the inauguration of Calderon.

Notes from the United States

At the G20 summit last month in Pittsburgh, two protesters were arrested for using the social networking system, Twitter, to co-ordinate their protests.

At the start of the event, early on the afternoon of 24th September, Elliot Madison and Michael Wallschlaeger were sitting in front of computer screens in Room 238 of the Carefree Inn on Kisow Drive in Kennedy (a district of Pittsburgh) listening to police and other emergency services scanners – a perfectly legal activity in the United States.

They were alerting others who were following them, including reporters from the *New York Times*, CNN and other major media organisations) to movements of the police.

How the police knew that the two were there has not yet emerged, but they did. They burst in on Madison and Wallschlaeger, arrested them and charged them with hindering apprehension, criminal use of communication facility and possessing instruments of crime.

Dam lies

Mozambique project a disaster waiting to happen

A giant damming project in Mozambique could leave the entire region without water in order to provide huge quantities of electricity for export, according to environmentalists.

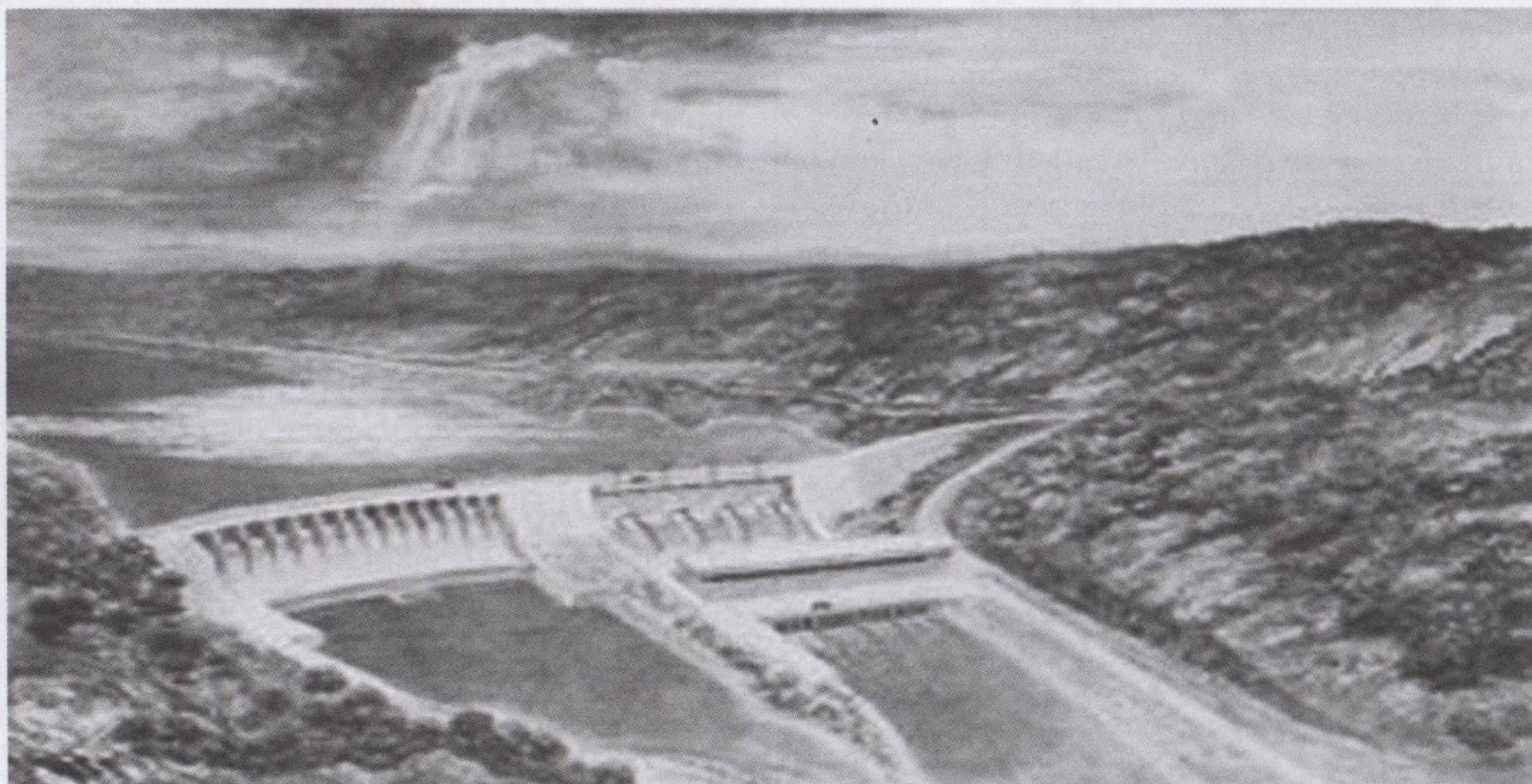
The \$2billion Mphanda Nkuwa Dam on the Zambezi River would shatter the already delicate balance in the region, potentially leading to an agricultural disaster zone which would leave millions without water, according to a new report released by the International Rivers Network (IRN).

Directly, it has already been acknowledged that 1,400 people would have to be moved and that around 200,000 farmers would lose their livelihoods once the project was completed, placing the project on a par with recent Chinese plans to divert vast tonnages of water across the country, which will displace 330,000 people by 2011.

Alongside the displacement of local farmers, the dam would exacerbate fluctuations in river levels, effectively rendering huge swathes of the area downriver uninhabitable.

In return for the damage, the dam would produce 1,300mw of power in a country where the vast majority of the rural population is not electrified and is unable to benefit from such megaprojects, meaning most of the energy produced would go for export to urban areas abroad.

The total electricity use of Mozambique is just 350mw annually – around 4.6% of the population have access to power, almost entirely in urban areas.



Due to the high-cost requirements to bring power from the dam site across country, it is thought that the building of the dam could damage rather than improve the prospects for the country's electricity infrastructure, by diverting investment into providing for the dam which could be better spent elsewhere.

There are also serious safety fears, as an earthquake zone is nearby which has not been researched to see what impact a serious quake could have on the dam itself.

The IRN's research, led by renewable energy expert Mark Hankins, suggests that by contrast, decentralised renewable energy would be cheaper to build, actively allow for the electrification of towns and villages throughout the region and is easily implemented.

"It's time we begin to address our own energy needs, and in ways that will protect our important natural treasures like the

Zambezi River," said Anabela Lemos, the director of the Maputo-based NGO Justica Ambiental (JA!). "Clean, decentralised energy for all should be the top priority, not damming the Zambezi to support energy-hogging industry and cities in South Africa." JA! is the sponsor of the report.

The report backs a similarly damning report from the WWF in 2004, which predicted that local subsistence agriculture would lose \$10m annually from the project while seeing "no direct benefits in the short term ... alongside heavy social and environmental impacts".

Current projections would see construction for the dam starting in 2010. It is primarily being financed by the Chinese state, with the government holding just 5% of the stock in the project in exchange for an offer to make the dam near tax-exempt.

Notes from the Unites States

◀ page 6

Madison explains that "there were protests during the G20, and a group of people came together called the Tin Can Comm Collective ... they were putting up basically message boards. There was a message board for food. There was a message board for legal. There was a general message board. There was a message board just for announcements..."

"Using Twitter ... we allowed points to go to everybody in the group ... So it was a point of access issue. So it changed Twitter and made it more decentralised, so people could carry on a conversation knowing that people were spread out throughout the city ... Anybody could join ... We don't know who joined. It wasn't important. And anybody could send information to the group, and it would be sent out to everybody."

Does that sound like a criminal conspiracy? Exactly a week later, FBI agents raided Madison's Queens (New York) residence at

six in the morning with guns drawn. They held Madison and others in the house in handcuffs.

Over the next 16 hours, they seized many items, some of which obviously had no bearing whatsoever on Madison's activities – posters of a cat and the popular children's cartoon character Curious George, in addition to photographs of Karl Marx and Lenin, along with MP3 players. Madison and the others were unable to read the sealed search warrant.

Madison has filed a motion in federal court in New York asking for the return of much of this 'evidence'. Files of clients of Madison's were also taken: he is a social worker in Manhattan with two Masters degrees.

They work as part of The NYC Peoples' Law Collective, which worked to oppose the presence of Republicans at their convention in New York last year.

Louis Further

Israeli anarchists celebrate string of victories

Recent activities from Israeli group Anarchists Against the Wall have contributed to the recent resignation of hardline anti-immigration unit chief Tziki Sela, as protests grow against the treatment of immigrants in the country.

Sela headed up the Interior Ministry's 'Oz' unit, which arrests and deports illegal immigrants. His decision is a victory for Israeli media, anarchists and other left-wing groups, which have been fighting the unit since it stated its crack down on illegal immigration to Israel and increase deportations. Sela was severely damaged by a backlash following a disastrous interview with the *Ma'ariv* daily newspaper in which he condemned his detractors as "anarchists who want the destruction of the State of Israel, with three exclamation marks".

Libertarian groups are hoping to follow up the victory with a campaign to save 1,200 migrants, including hundreds of children, from planned deportation next summer.

Give up anti-fascism: an anarchist response

An article appeared in the August edition of *Red Pepper* magazine entitled 'Anti-fascism Isn't Working'. Written by a non-aligned anarchist it was originally called 'Give Up Anti-fascism' (presumably as a nod to the old 'Give Up Activism' article written by disgruntled activists after the J18 mass mobilisation) and it is this version we shall be referring to here for the simple reason it's both the author's original edit and the one most read, by radicals at least.

Putting a case together

'Give Up Anti-fascism' offers up an interesting and valid addition to the debate on anti-fascism and should be viewed positively in that regard. Too easily radicals adopt and maintain familiar political criteria out of ideological loyalty, or just plain laziness, that stops them looking critically at what it is they are trying to achieve and the methods and tactics employed to achieve it. Although the article doesn't mention anarchists' relationship to anti-fascism, addressing itself as it does to the liberal left and radical left (we can only speculate as to why the author didn't mention or even acknowledge Antifa in his assessment), anything that encourages us to look at and reassess how we apply our ideas is always useful, especially at a time of the anarchist movement's continued disorientation and lack of purpose, impact and confidence.

The article focuses on three distinct aspects: 1) where the BNP currently stand electorally; 2) the failure of the left to successfully combat the rise of the BNP; and 3) positive suggestions how the left could and should reformulate itself, laying out the problems with the on-going strategies for opposing the BNP. In a frank and considered way it centres itself around the question: is anti-fascism the answer to the BNP?

Conditions of participation

On the surface it commits a common sense approach to the problem of the BNP, and has a lot to commend it, but it also suffers flaws and contradictions. The first part of the article is expressed as "some brief facts and figures to situate the debate". The problem with this is it doesn't put those figures in any social or political context. This is troubling for two reasons. Firstly it gives us nothing to anchor our understanding about just why people are voting for the BNP in the numbers they are; secondly we are given no frame of reference, no insight into just who the BNP are appealing to and under what circumstances. No political party is cut off from the social, cultural and economic conditions of the day and simply presenting statistics this way does just that. We have had 12 years of a Labour government most of which have been spent involved either directly or indirectly in wars in the Middle East bringing with it the rise of political Islam and the hardening of Muslim identities; we've seen the imposition

of official multi-culturalism as government social policy; we've seen the opening and expansion of the internal European Union borders resulting in economic migration on an unprecedented scale; we've seen escalating military conflict across the globe creating mass population displacement; we no longer have in this country sustainable heavy industries or large scale manufacturing to bind communities together or build discernible class dynamics in the traditional way. As reported previously in *Freedom*, we are living through a unique set of social conditions, and the BNP operate within these conditions. How and why the left have failed to address and capitalise on the same conditions in the same way is beyond the scope of this piece but one that will have to involve some fearless soul searching for all those concerned. The irony being in order for Labour to enjoy the longest uninterrupted term in office in its history it had to get rid of Clause 4, take away all elective and decision-making powers from the largely working class dominated area branches, effectively barren outposts of the Millbank Empire, and rope in endless middle-class consultants as policy makers to fill the gap. In abandoning the working class they have achieved their biggest victory.

Internal affairs

Similarly there is no mention of the internal mechanism of the BNP; Griffin's ongoing strategy of 'modernising' the party – appealing to a wider electorate by watering down its political rhetoric. This continues to be at the heart of the BNP growth but brings with it its own fragile tensions. To keep those newly won voters placated the party must continue to remain accessible and not too politically extreme, moving from the political fringes, both in policy and presentation, to be subsumed in the arena of bourgeois parliamentary democracy. This may allow the BNP the privilege of rubbing shoulders with other career politicians on *Question Time*, but it means their fascist and overt racist tendencies must remain disused, if not completely discarded. It also causes divisions within the party with the more hardline membership feeling betrayed and sidelined by the current political trajectory. These ruptures can threaten to overwhelm the party at any point, as they almost did with the party split and challenge to Griffin's leadership in 2007 and remain manageable by the leadership only as long as the BNP's popularity is in the ascendant and the funds remain buoyant. If the party is diluting its political rhetoric in homeopathic proportions to gain votes, and have committed themselves not to engage in any 'street based' physical force activity, the revolutionary nature of fascism being all but buried beneath the desire for respectability, just where is the real threat from the BNP coming from? A question we shall come back to.



The second part of the article does a fairly assured job of highlighting the failures of current anti-fascist methods concerning Hope Not Hate, connected to the state-associated Searchlight organisation, and Unite Against Fascism, essentially a Socialist Workers Party front group (although supported by mainstream politicians and organisations across the political spectrum) and dismantling their various tactical approaches – 'isolate and expose' being the favoured one. This is where the author gets it spot on, from the absurdity of calling for 'vote anyone but BNP' to the policy of exposing the past indiscretions of various party members. Where the article is at its most interesting it is also at its weakest in the third section with the positive suggestions.

Real dangers, real solutions?

But first we must understand where the real danger from the BNP lies. According to the article it is in them "colonising the anti-mainstream parties vote and loyalty, thereby blocking the development of an independent working class politics capable of defending our conditions and of challenging neo-liberalism". This sounds like rhetorical bluster. Certainly future BNP strategy, according to Griffin, will be based around 'community politics work', intended to build trust within communities and ease people into the idea of the BNP as decent neighbours rather than political extremists. The problem with this is

while engaging politically in working class resistance from an anti-authoritarian and anti-capitalist perspective. Then there's the IWCA. Formed out of the ashes of the Red Action, who were more than successful in confronting the far right in the 1980s and '90s, the IWCA were the first to recognise and take seriously the BNP's shift from 'street based' politics to proper electioneering, adopting a strategy of "promoting and celebrating the political independence of the working class" as a direct challenge to the BNP. But after almost 15 years in existence, and eight years as a political party, the question remains why have the IWCA failed to engage with the working class on the same scale and with the same success as the BNP and why have the working class failed to turn to and embrace the IWCA as they have with the BNP? However valid the politics of the IWCA are they have yet to capture the imagination or interest of the working class in any significant way leaving the BNP to grow and indulge itself as a "radical alternative".

Another key point is why these community unions would be a part of the opposition to the BNP at all? Unless going head to head with the BNP on issues in those areas or unless they're invested with an outside political dynamic – confronting the BNP at election time, promoting a left-wing party alternative, this approach is simply one of successful community organising. Which brings us on to the confusion over voting/not voting. If these community unions aren't based on electioneering, how is their success defined? Less BNP votes, councillors, MEPs? Less support for Labour? All of which of course could only ever be validated at election time. Being critical of the failings of a government in power is still simply that, a critical voice.

The anarchists

Where does all this leave anarchists in the fight against the BNP? Solidarity Federation, in the latest edition of their magazine *Direct Action*, re-confirms its policy of no platform for fascists encouraging its members to support militant anti-fascist campaigns. The Anarchist Federation states: "The AF does not have a single perspective on fascism and the way to counter it", but offers no immediate methods of engagement with the BNP. Liberty & Solidarity have yet to express an opinion, although their members have been active in physically confronting the BNP – none offer a coherent long term strategy of dealing with the BNP.

With Antifa currently gone to ground, anarchists need to seriously consider how they organise around the issue of the BNP's continued and seemingly uninterrupted growth. 'Give Up Anti-fascism' is worthy starting point for that discourse.

they can only be a certain type of good neighbour to a certain constituency. But does it necessarily follow that colonising the anti-mainstream vote means a block on the development of an independent working class politics? And if so how? It's wishful thinking or worst case scenario perhaps but it's a prediction that relies on a lot of good will afforded the BNP by the working class themselves (with or without the job of the left being the defenders of the needs of working class communities).

The point is we as radicals have had no impact in creating those social conditions listed above nor have any means of changing them directly. All we can do is be a part of the discourse. The whole thrust of 'Give Up Anti-fascism' rests on the idea we don't stop the BNP operating but we become an alternative and competing voice to the BNP about 'the state we are in'. And the way that voice gains credibility is through operating in positive and practical ways in our communities. Essentially be a better good neighbour than the BNP.

Getting our hands dirty

The need to build 'community unions' is the article's key positive suggestion as an alternative to the current ineffectual model of anti-fascism. These unions would "work directly on helping to meet the needs of those politically abandoned working class communities where conditions are deteriorating by the

day. Based around the self-identified needs and plans of those communities" All solid enough stuff but a little idealistic especially in the suggestion they could be funded by trade unions while remaining organisationally independent. The three groups London Coalition Against Poverty (LCAP), Haringey Solidarity Group (HSG) and the Independent Working Class Association (IWCA), named as examples of those already engaged in this approach, need to be looked at a little closer. LCAP base their activity on helping the homeless and unemployed gain access to what they are legally entitled to from the state. As an advocacy group they draw their core membership from the middle-class activist scene, skilled and experienced in dealing with officialdom to essentially help people less fortunate than themselves, the very same methodology as criticised by the original J18 'Give Up Activism' authors. Admittedly there are some in LCAP who wish to move beyond their current status and LCAP as a group should be encouraged and supported in that endeavour. HSG has been attempting for years to build a network of community groups in every London borough, based on precisely the same principles as these 'community unions', which only now seems to be bearing fruit. Going under the title Radical London, it's a network of locally instituted groups made up largely of anarchists, or with anarchist sympathies, with the intention of offering practical support on local issues

COMMENT

ABOUT FREEDOM

ANGEL ALLEY

Welcome to the bookfair edition of *Freedom*. We're hoping to see as many of our readers as possible at the bookfair, or at our party afterwards. This is your opportunity to tell us face-to-face what you really think about the paper.

On the stall and at the shop in the evening you can find the editors, Dean Talent and Andy Meinke, international editor Rob Ray and reviews editor Scott Wakeham, who will be only too pleased to listen to any comments you may care to share about the paper. Also around will be Jayne who does the layout and design, along with many of the shop workers and contributors to the paper and, most vital of all, the envelope-stuffers without whom *Freedom* simply wouldn't happen.

Those who make it to the shop in the evening may also be privileged to meet Louise de Golderine, co-ordinator of the Angel Alley Rat Collective and successor to the late lamented Bakuno. Any leftover food and rubbish dropped in the alley will make them very happy and us rather sad.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

To work out if your subscription is due for renewal, look at the number above your name on the address label. This issue is vol 70, no 20, so if your subscription runs out with this issue you'll have 7020 above your name. If the number is 7020 or less, then your subscription is now due for renewal. See page 16 for the current subscription rates and a renewal form or, if you don't want to worry in the future about remembering to renew your subscription to *Freedom*, just ask us to send you a standing order form by emailing subs@freedompress.org.uk or you can write to us at 'Subscriptions', Freedom, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX.

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 (trade book orders): distro@freedompress.org.uk

NEXT ISSUE

The next issue will be dated 7th November 2009 and the last day to get copy to us for that issue will be Thursday 29th October. 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

It's fair to say that since the BNP abandoned the streets in the 1990s for the comforts of the town hall chamber and local government expense accounts, there has been a debate within anarchist circles on the virtue of continuing with the strategy of no platform.

For those who don't know, no platform is the policy of not allowing fascists space to publicly express their ideas. The application of it by militant anti-fascists is generally different to that done by student unions, who generally disallow certain groups from organising or speaking on campus. The students usually target white fascist or Islamist groups with this policy.

For militant anti-fascists, and much of the left during the 1970s and '80s, this meant denying the fascists a place to physically organise. The rationale behind it was that such space, even if originally gained by fascists on the grounds of 'free speech', would be used to organise racist and other attacks. Indeed, allowing fascists and racists to appear respectable would increase their confidence and that of other bigots to act. It's no surprise that all the time the BNP maintained their bunker headquarters in Welling, race attacks in the area grew and there were several high-profile racist murders, culminating in that of Stephen Lawrence.

But times change. The BNP tell us they are now a respectable political party who like Jews and stand up for the oppressed white English. They have seats on councils across England and their snouts are in the trough at Strasbourg with their leader Nick 'holocaust denial' Griffin and his pal Andrew 'Death to Jews' Brons elected as MEPs. So respectable are they that they claim they have nothing to do with the English Defence League (EDL), which is supposedly proscribed for BNP members.

The EDL was set up after some Muslims protested at a homecoming parade of the

Anglian Regiment in Luton. Its prime purpose is to prevent Islamism, Sharia Law and Islamic terrorism spreading in Britain. (Presumably far-right terrorism is okay?).

The EDL is certainly a confused organisation. It's made up of a handful of internet warriors (who run some shockingly bad blogs), football hooligans and far right activists. Despite the BNP 'distancing' themselves from the EDL, the latter's website was set up by a BNP activist. Comrades who attended the counter-demo against the recent EDL attempt to march in Manchester were surprised to find a few black faces in the right wing crowd, and observed some of them saying to some Muslim women that they weren't against Islam, just Islamic extremists.

However, just as many racists thought it was fun to run with racist skinhead gangs until militant anti-fascists started beating them, so quite a few of these people will drift away as they come face to face with more violence. Of course this doesn't apply to those frustrated football hooligans in it solely for the violence.

The people behind the EDL, and those who seek to profit politically from its actions, hope to provoke violent confrontations across Britain between themselves and Asian Muslim youth. They are keen to have it portrayed as a war between English values and those of Islamists. If English values include racist chanting, Nazi salutes and senseless violence, I think we can ditch them. Still, makes a change from having 'tolerance' described as an English value by people who are anything but. It should go without saying that I think Islamists need to be opposed as well. The one thing we can safely say is that the actions of the EDL will strengthen Islamists within their communities, as they will argue that only they can defend those communities and that they have nothing in common with non-Muslims. For that alone we should be taking a visible stand against the EDL.



Masked-up members of the English Defence League in Luton

EDITORIAL

Hide this paper under your bed...

Or otherwise dispose of where it cannot be found by unsuspecting members of the public. Under no circumstances, give it to your friends neighbours or workmates or in any way shape or form allow it to be read by inormali people who might come to think anarchism is a philosophy of liberation building a society without bosses and leaders.

Since taking over as editors we have discovered that a small but determined minority within the movement are trying to spread anarchist ideas outside the comfortable ghetto that is our rightful home. Worse they are using our beloved paper to further their insane plan to make anarchism relevant to the working class. When we asked for people's feedback on the future of the paper positive contributions were the last thing we expected. Under pressure from this self appointed cabal of activists we have been forced to set out a vision of how and where we see the future of *Freedom*.

What is the place of Freedom in anarchist publishing?

The Anarchist Movement in Britain has a wide range of regular publications (most stocked in the Freedom Bookshop). Ideally these should all be coordinated to work together to promote anarchist politics. Here's how we see *Freedom* fitting in.

Obviously some publications are local or specific to certain struggles and some are 'internal' to the movement, so we will turn quickly to general ones about promoting libertarian politics to those not already involved. These include *Direct Action*, *Class War*, *Organise*, *Resistance*, *Schnews*, *Black*

Flag, *Now or Never* and doubtless others who will feel snubbed that we haven't mentioned them.

The national federations/groups quite rightly produce publications reflecting their specific political positions but we believe there is a need for both a newspaper and a theoretical magazine with ecumenical libertarian communist class struggle politics that can be distributed by all revolutionary anarchists.

Ideally an Anarchist Movement paper should be accountable to the democratic structures of the movement, unfortunately anarchism in Britain is far from having that level of organisation but being in the position of the 'anarchist BBC' if you like we will aim to fairly reflect the general will of the movement as a 'journal of anarchist socialism' as our first issue of 1886 put it.

Staying in print

In the internet age internal debate within the movement can be best conducted online where it is not possible to do it face to face. The unique advantage of a hard copy journal is that it can be sold or given to people who are not already in the anarchist milieu. Therefore we are writing the paper from a general class struggle anarchist point of view, aiming particularly at those people involved in struggle who may be interested in, or want to find out more about, anarchist ideas. Thus the paper is structured to draw people in with general news on the front pages and with more of the in-depth stuff tucked away inside.

The downside of this is that the content may become repetitive for many of our subscribers and state the blooming obvious – you all know that climate change is a social issue and the solution is class struggle, but we will have many news stories with this theme in the coming year.

We hope that subscribers will bear with us, knowing that their subscriptions enable us to spread an anarchist message to a wider audience. We also try to add a dollop of humour to entertain and avoid pomposity. Like Dr Who, we are serious about what we do but not necessarily about how we do it.

Spreading the word

For *Freedom* to achieve its aims, the Anarchist Movement needs to distribute and sell the paper outside its own scene.

We have thought long and hard about going monthly and doubling the size to enable more in-depth analysis (and save £1,500 a year). However that would lose the news element and would be a step backwards.

In the long run we aim to bring the paper out more frequently and it is to be hoped that a movement-wide magazine such as *Black Flag* can fill the monthly magazine role. We hope that you will want to make *Freedom* into a major force for spreading anarchist ideas. If you enjoyed it, then tell your friends.

Website

Thanks to the hard work and technological geekery of Danny and Martin we are now able to take subscriptions to the paper and payment for Freedom Press books on our website at www.freedompress.org.uk. The next step will be to put previous issues of the paper online so everyone can enjoy the wondrous prose that flows from the pens or computers of our knowledgeable contributors.

Just when one thing is going well another thing goes wrong. We have been having trouble with our phone so if you can't get through to the shop number try Andy on his mobile 07913 865 928.

After the Bookfair why not come down to

FREEDOM PRESS

www.freedompress.org.uk • 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX

Once again Freedom Bookshop will be hosting a post Bookfair social in Angel Alley, 84b Whitechapel High Street, from 7pm until 11pm. Nibbles and various refreshments will be available, together with high quality repartee.

No queue for the loo before 8pm, CND members welcome, bring your dog.

GETTING ACTIVE

PRISON NEWS

Riots in private prison

HMP Addiewell, the new supposedly 'state-of-the-art' 796-place private prison in West Lothian, saw its second riot since it open in December last year. The £130m Kaylx-run Category B and C nick has been branded as cushy because of the en-suite shower rooms and 15in flatscreen TVs with inbuilt Freeview in the prison's cells, and the nickname amongst some of the cons is 'The Addison', after the Radisson hotel chain.

On Sunday 11th October during visiting hours, it kicked off in the Lomond B Hall when prisoners barricaded themselves in with pool tables and fought off staff with mop handles, following staff brutalisation of a prisoner.

According to one of the 30-odd cons quoted in the local press, "We just decided to fight back this time. A short-term inmate was hit by a member of staff and we all got involved."

"We attacked five of the staff with mop poles and drove them out of the hall. Staff are lifting their hands to the boys who are then moved to another prison and nothing is ever done about it. Enough is enough. Everyone reckons the Addiewell is cushy, but lads are getting doings in here. It's got to stop."

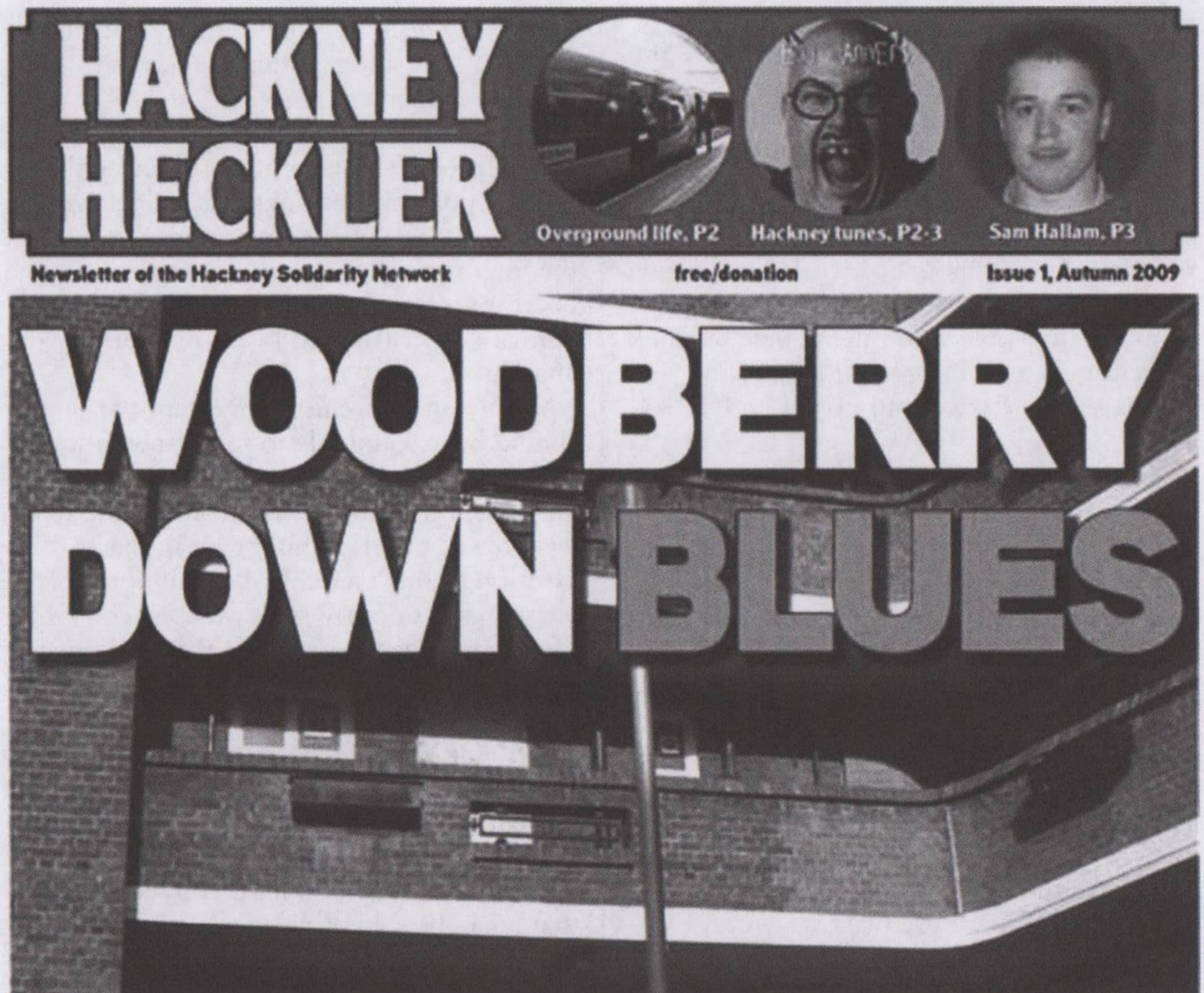
Another prisoners claimed, "We leathered five of them with mop poles. They don't break bones or anything, but they sting."

Abolishing short sentences

The recent Prison Governors' Association (PGA) conference certainly caused a furore in the press, with the call to abolish prison sentences of less than a year. Their argument was that not only would it save money but that sentences of less than a year are useless as there's no time to 'rehabilitate' prisoners and all they do is increase the overcrowding problem.

Needless to say the tabloids rose to the bait, with the *Daily Mail* claiming that "More than 60,000 muggers, burglars and yobs would escape jail every year under a scheme proposed by prison governors", completely ignoring the fact that nearly half of these sentences are for drug and motoring offences.

Some of the papers also picked up on the PGA's warning that proposed efficiency savings, i.e. prison budget cuts, would lead to 'widespread disorder' within state-run prisons in England and Wales (private prison contracts cannot be renegotiated), because of the combination of overcrowding and massive cutbacks in activities. However, it was only the *Guardian* and the *Morning Star* that managed to get the truth behind these two PGA statements, new demands from Jack Straw for a 7% reduction in the overall prisons budget next year instead of the previously announced 3% year on year saving that had reduced prisoners' time out of cells to the lowest level for nearly 40 years.



● After the co-ordinated display by No Pretence at the Anarchist Movement Conference earlier this year, anarcha-feminist ideas are once again being actively discussed, expressed and organised around in the movement. **The London Anarcha Feminist Kolektiv** have planned a gathering for the day after the Bookfair to ask the question: is it possible to create a national or even international network of anarchafeminists (of any gender) to work on countrywide actions, activities and publishing? The day starts at 1pm with lunch followed by a meeting to discuss the possibility of a network for national and international anarchafeminist actions and solidarity, ending at 3pm. All those committed to developing a constructive dialogue are encouraged to attend. Sunday 25th October at LARC (London Action Resource Centre), 62 Fieldgate Street, London E1 1ES. Further details can be found on the website: <http://lafk.wordpress.com/>

● A new social centre is opening in the heart of Bath. Comrades from the **Bath Activist Network** have occupied the building, as yet unnamed, and are looking for all those in the area with time, skills, ideas and energy to get involved and contribute to the success of the project. In particular they need people to help get the place ready for opening, and to run activities once the place is open – cleaners, painters, electricians, artists, minor hole in roof menders, artists, musicians, radicals, dreamers, schemers, your mates and assorted malcontents are all welcome!

Several initiatives are already in the pipeline, such as a freeshop, infoshop, radical library, salsa, café, workshops, activist self defence sessions, squat games and more.

The social centre is being run as a counter-capitalist initiative, run by consensus, and giving a living example of how we can create

a world based on solidarity, mutual aid and co-operation, not greed and authority.

To get involved in any way, big or small, contact: bathsocialcentre@gmail.com or check the website at bathactivistnetwork.blogspot.com/

● The October edition of the **Anarchist Federation's** monthly agitational newsletter *Resistance* (issue 116) is now available. It has gone through a complete redesign and increased its size to eight pages, allowing it to cover a greater variety of subjects. Articles range from the continued war in Afghanistan, solidarity with Calais migrants, Tower Hamlets teachers strike, Dsei arms fair, English Defence League, and a rather obtuse article critical of anarchist local group networks.

Resistance can be downloaded directly from the Anarchist Federation website at afed.org.uk/

● Talking of local groups, **Hackney Solidarity Network** has launched the borough's only truly independent non-commercial community newspaper the *Hackney Heckler* (see picture). Beautifully designed, produced and written, care has been taken to ensure it's an entertaining and informative read that appeals to the community at large. It aims to be a focal point for resistance in Hackney providing a much needed platform for groups to report on ongoing campaigns. The first issue includes articles on the council housing scandal, Hackney TUC's campaign against the BNP, the witch-hunt against local Unison branch officers, as well as top ten tunes about Hackney (Girls Aloud get a favourable mention). Most of the 3,000 copies printed have already been distributed around the area and work has started on their second issue. Any campaigns who wish to submit articles or help to distribute the *Hackney Heckler*, please contact info@hackneysolidarity.info

Federations round-up

Freedom usually does a round-up of reports from the 'national' federations at the end of the year but, as the bookfair is the anarchist Christmas, we thought it should go out with this issue.

Solidarity Federation

The Solidarity Federation is a network of anarchists which seeks to build revolutionary unions in the workplace and their counterparts in the community. This method of organisation is known as anarcho-syndicalism. We believe that these tactics give structure to anarchist ideas like grassroots democracy and workers' control. They allow us to answer vital questions such as 'how would an anarchist society be organised?' and 'how would the economy function under anarchism?' We don't need to invent answers to these questions – generations of anarchist militants who have struggled before us have already developed the basic theories and put them into practice. Our job is to apply them to the conditions we face today.

Without coherent strategy and tactics, anarchism is little more than individualism and utopianism. We want to build an anarchist movement which offers a real alternative to the outdated Marxist parties, to the capitalist collaboration of Labour and the failed reformism of the TUC unions. To do this we need to be organised. We are a membership organisation and we want you to join your nearest SF branch. In the workplace, we are forming networks of like-minded activists as a first step to the creation of functioning unions which can defend their members on a day-to-day basis and build for workers' control. We are affiliated to the International Workers' Association (IWA) and draw on the experience of anarcho-syndicalists in struggle across the world.

Contact Solidarity Federation at PO Box 29, SW PDO, Manchester, M15 5HW, or call 07984 675. 281.



Liberty and Solidarity

L&S is a libertarian socialist organisation building an effective strategy to take place in the areas of the class struggle we consider crucial; we are not a propaganda group, defenders of the faith or addicts to our own name: we work collaboratively with others where we can, within broader organisations, and so much of our activity does not bear the L&S name.

In the community, activity in the Glasgow Residents' Network and local paper *Burgh Angel* increased, with campaigns for secure doors taking the tenants fight to the headquarters of the housing association.

In Reading, work in residents' associations continued, with the main event being the 'Jollydarity' initiative to save a community pub.

London L&S focussed on LCAP, and are pleased to hail two new branches and move to campaigns as well as casework.

Our commitment industrially to the IWW was reaffirmed at our Glasgow conference, as well as the National Shop Stewards Network – of which there are now two new branches in the West Midlands and Reading.

Building links overseas has taken us to France, Russia, Italy, Norway and Sweden in support of the Anarkismo project and tighter coordination between fighting unions.

L&S's first full year has seen it double in size and expand to Cardiff and Edinburgh, but with most growth concentrated on our two largest branches in Reading and London. We also maintain groups and members in Glasgow, Birmingham and Bristol.

L&S will be holding a meeting at 11am in Room LG1-70 at this year's anarchist bookfair to discuss this all in full detail.



Class War Federation

In the last two and half year Class War has gone through a bit of change. Members have come and gone, some have adjusted their activity level within the federation or split their commitment to set up or work with other local groups, which is great and makes these times even more exciting from an anarcho perspective. There hasn't been an official CW conference in a few years too. Not to worry though. The well-oiled machine that is our anarchist newspaper, continues to act as a bad flu to the state and their lackeys.

The main focus of CWF has in this period has been our newspaper. Issue 97 is progressing and will hit a street near you on 24th October. Subscriptions are rising, unlike Murdoch and his shite rag of papers. We're getting more and more street vendors across the country, as well as setting up new distributions abroad. We made a bid for taking over the deal of vending on the London underground, but strangely never got a reply back.

CW is a regular at Anarcho Book fairs and throughout the music scene with stalls, selling a variety of merchandise and of course the paper *Class War*. Do watch out for all the new CW gear at the London Bookfair.

As the most recognisable anarchist newspaper in Britain and with the current level of injustice against the lower classes in

our society, CW want to make sure we're doing our bit by publishing and spreading the words and ideas of fellow anarchist. Contributors to the paper are increasing too, from bloggers, weirdos, sugarbeet bhoys and what not. We're dead pleased with that. Everyone can be part of forming this newspaper – 'get out there and do your worst'.

See londonclasswar.org or get in touch on 07986041207, email londoncwf@yahoo.co.uk, or write to Class War Federation, PO Box 467, London E8 3QX.



Anarchist Federation

The Anarchist Federation has experienced another good year of growth and now exceeds 150 members in England, Wales and Scotland. New groups formed in Brighton, West Kent and Edinburgh. We can report a significant and active presence in Scotland, a highlight being members' involvement in the Glasgow schools occupations. Numbers are smaller in Wales but increasing, and a Cardiff group is in the making. In England it's worth mentioning that since the last London Bookfair, Nottingham AF co-launched The Sparrows' Nest library and archive, which is building its collection and is open to visitors.

The AF meets four times a year. We had a very enjoyable summer camp in Derbyshire, which as usual incorporated one of our national delegate meetings and featured daily cook-ins plus optional hiking, drinking and singing of anarchist songs (usually in that order).

At our annual conference we discussed our involvement in education workplace networks and groups, as workers and students, and consolidated our two new caucuses. The women's caucus has met at all of the last national meetings and the Fed as a whole is having ongoing stimulating internal education and discussions on feminism, gender and sexuality. The Lesbian/Gay/Bi/Trans/Queer (LGBTQ) caucus is producing another news-sheet building on from *What's Wrong with Angry?* and members intervened at Manchester Pride.

Near future activity at home includes opposing the likes of EDL and in 2010 we hope to grow the number of local groups and so continue to spread anarchist communism far and wide. As usual we welcome joint activities with other organisations.

Contact the Anarchist Federation at BM ANARFED, London, WC1N 3XX, email info@afed.org.uk or see afed.org.uk (regional and local group contacts on website).

REVIEWS

WHAT'S ON

OCTOBER

24th London Anarchist Bookfair at Queen Mary & Westfield College, Mile End Road, London E1 4NS, from 10am until 7pm, see anarchistbookfair.org.uk for details.

24th Bookfair after party at Freedom Press bookshop, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX, from 7pm until 11pm, see freedompress.org.uk for details.

30th SchNEWS 15th Birthday benefit, celebrating 15 years and nearly 700 issues of the weekly direct action newsheet, at the Cowley Club, 12 London Road, Brighton BN1 4JA from 8pm, entry £4, call 01273 685 913 or see schnews.org.uk or cowleyclub.org.uk for more.

30th The Miners' Strike and Politics Today, pre-conference (see below) debate and reception including Tony Benn introducing Ken Loach's anthology of striking miners' poems and songs *Which Side are You on?*, from 7pm until 10.45pm, at The School of Pharmacy, 29-39 Brunswick Square, London WC1N 1AX, for details see cpbf.org.uk/index_conf.html.

31st Media for All, Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom conference at The School of Pharmacy, 29-39 Brunswick Square, London WC1N 1AX, see cpbf.org.uk/index_conf.html, call 020 8521 5932 or email freepress@cpbf.org.uk for details.

31st CAAT National Gathering from 9.45am until 5pm at Toynbee Studios, 28 Commercial Street, London E1 6AB, see caat.org.uk/events/nationalgathering for details.

31st to 1st November, UK training with ISM activist Jenny Linnell and Seeds for Change for those interested in taking part in the Gaza Freedom March in December, call 0845 458 2564, email gazatraining@gmail.com or see gazafreedommarch.org for more details.

NOVEMBER

12th to 17th NATO not welcome, action to shut down the NATO parliament assembly which is meeting in Edinburgh, see antimilitaristnetwork.org.uk or <http://natowc.noflag.org.uk> for more information.

DECEMBER

5th National Climate March 2009, join hundreds of cyclists on the streets of London for the Climate Emergency Bike Ride to urge the government to make major cuts at the UN climate talks in Copenhagen, bring sirens, horns, bells and whistles, and decorate your bike, starts at 10am in Lincoln's Inn Fields and finishes at 12 noon at Speakers' Corner in Hyde Park to join the Climate Emergency Rally which will then lead to the Stop Climate Chaos 'The Wave' event starting from Grosvenor Square at 1pm to surround Parliament at 3pm, for more information see campaigncc.org, call 020 7833 9311 or email info@campaigncc.org.

FILM

Le Donk and Scor-Zay-Zee

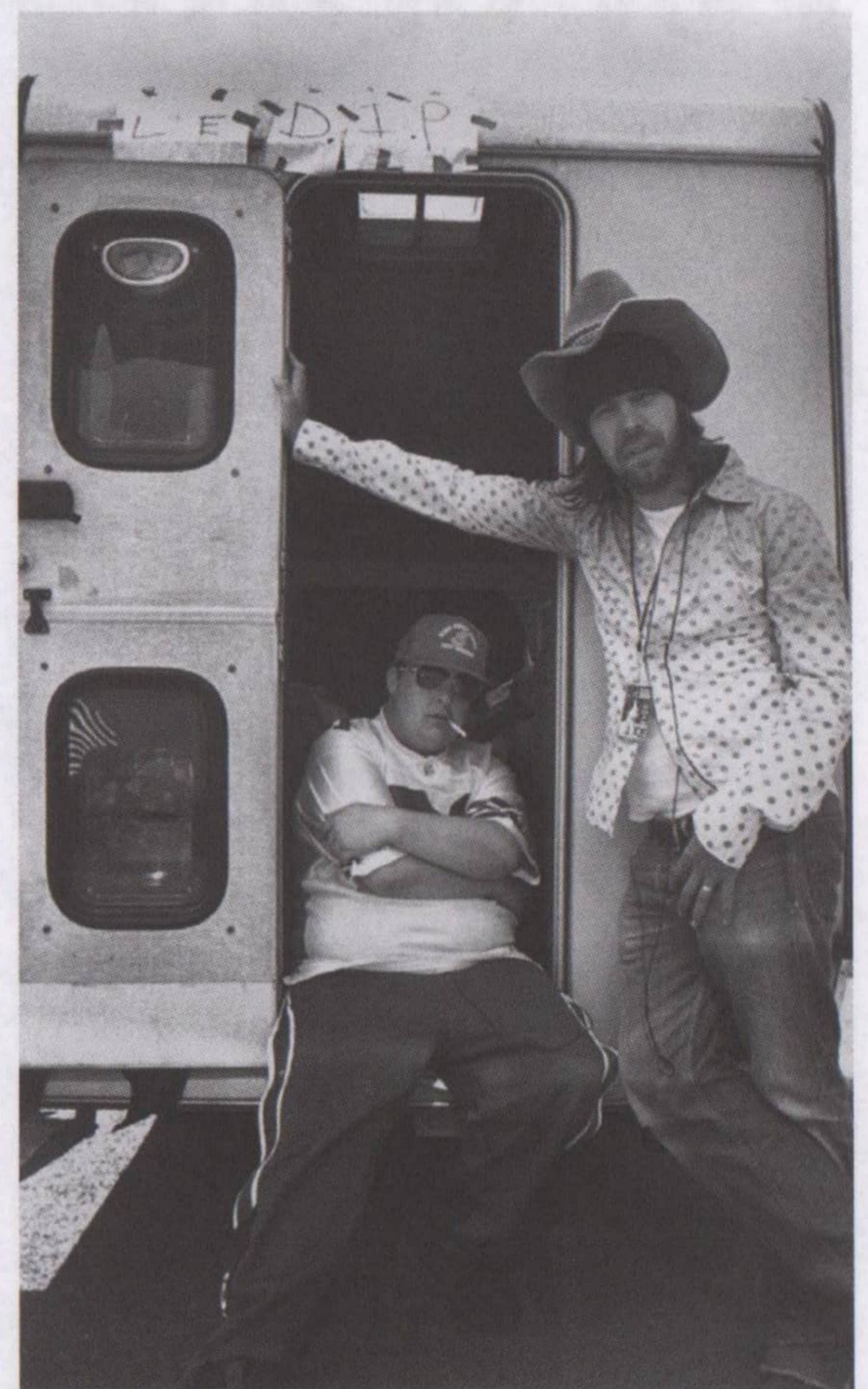
directed by Shane Meadows

This good-natured 'mockumentary' romp is essentially a single-joke sketch tenuously extended to feature-length (as was Shane Meadows last film, *Somers Town*, reviewed in *Freedom*, 25th October 2008), showcasing Paddy Considine's *tour-de-force* improvisation of a hapless failed musician with delusions of grandeur. Born when schoolfriends Considine and Meadows larked around with video cameras while bunking off, Le Donk – who's figured in several shorts (some released as extras on earlier DVDs) – now roadies on megatour with indie-rock band Arctic Monkeys (who, typically, he misnames 'Article Monkeys'). Meanwhile he plays Svengali to his lodger – an aspiring rapper played by 'real' MC Scor-Zay-Zee (former member of Nottingham's renowned Out Da Ville) previously famous for precipitating a Beeb kerfuffle over 2004 single 'Great Britain' (excoriating its imperialist past and present; equating the Queen and Saddam Hussein!). Perhaps surprisingly (to those not *au fait* with UK hip-hop), he eventually delivers an absolutely blistering set at Old Trafford thanks to Donk's bluffing blustering blagging.

Meadows and trendy label Warp Records' Mark Herbert also play themselves – giving a pronounced whiff of complacent cool-Britannia entrepreneurs mocking those less culturally and economically *nouveau-riche*; resembling so much 'alternative' comedy mining the tedious stratifications of student-union pretension. Yet affection and respect shine through – certainly for Scor-Zay-Zee's genuine subaltern talent, but for his devilish advocate's grotesque ego too. Visiting his heavily-pregnant ex – now stably shackled-up with new man – Donk's scattershot vituperative envy demonstrates hysterical defence against the overwhelming shame of painful inadequacies which have doubtless been amply confirmed at all class-prejudicial angles from his get-go. Thus primed with suitably intuitive understanding, we can appreciate without judgement or contempt the poignancy of these particular peccadillos of the working-class masculinity that this director always displays and unravels with such acute skill. Plus, the joker gets the last laugh – his obstinate persistence anticipating reflected glory from his protégé's breakthrough – and, remember, temporary triumphs aren't always mere consolations.

QUIZ ANSWERS

1. *East End Jewish Radicals 1875–1914* by Bill Fishman, which is the definitive study of the Jewish anarchist movement in the East End.
2. Stuart Christie.
3. Modern Spanish History.
4. Paul Preston, who is now at the LSE. While not sympathetic to anarchism, he did correct a lot of the wild nonsense written by Stalinist and conservative historians.



Freestyle manifesto

The film also heralds Meadows' and Warp's initiative supporting 'Five-Day Features' completed within a week – "like Dogme, only in a hurry" – favouring grassroots underground production tactics but with proper distribution prospects. And for further UK hip-hop-related proof of 'guerilla' cinema's power, check Greg Hall's *The Plague* (2006) – chronicling a weekend in the life of four twenty-something London friends; shot on mini-DV for a miraculous £3,500 – which says as much about contemporary multicultural metropolitan youth as bigger-budget efforts like *Bullet Boy* (Saul Dibb, 2004), Noel Clarke's urban morality tales *Kidulthood* (2006) and *Adulthood* (2008) and Erin Creevy's middle-class melodrama *Shifty* (2008) put together. Okay, none of the above has the wit or artful chutzpah of *Le Donk*; plus the agonies of shoestring fundraising demand massive gratis time and energy for downlow operations to float. But staying so close to the sources – of the filmmakers' motivations and the subject-matter – can pay dividends rarely conceivable with the multiple alienations of mainstream industrial apparatuses.

www.tomjennings.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk
<http://libcom.org/blog/4271>

More counterpower to your elbow

Iain McKay finds much to recommend in an ambitious new work on anarchism

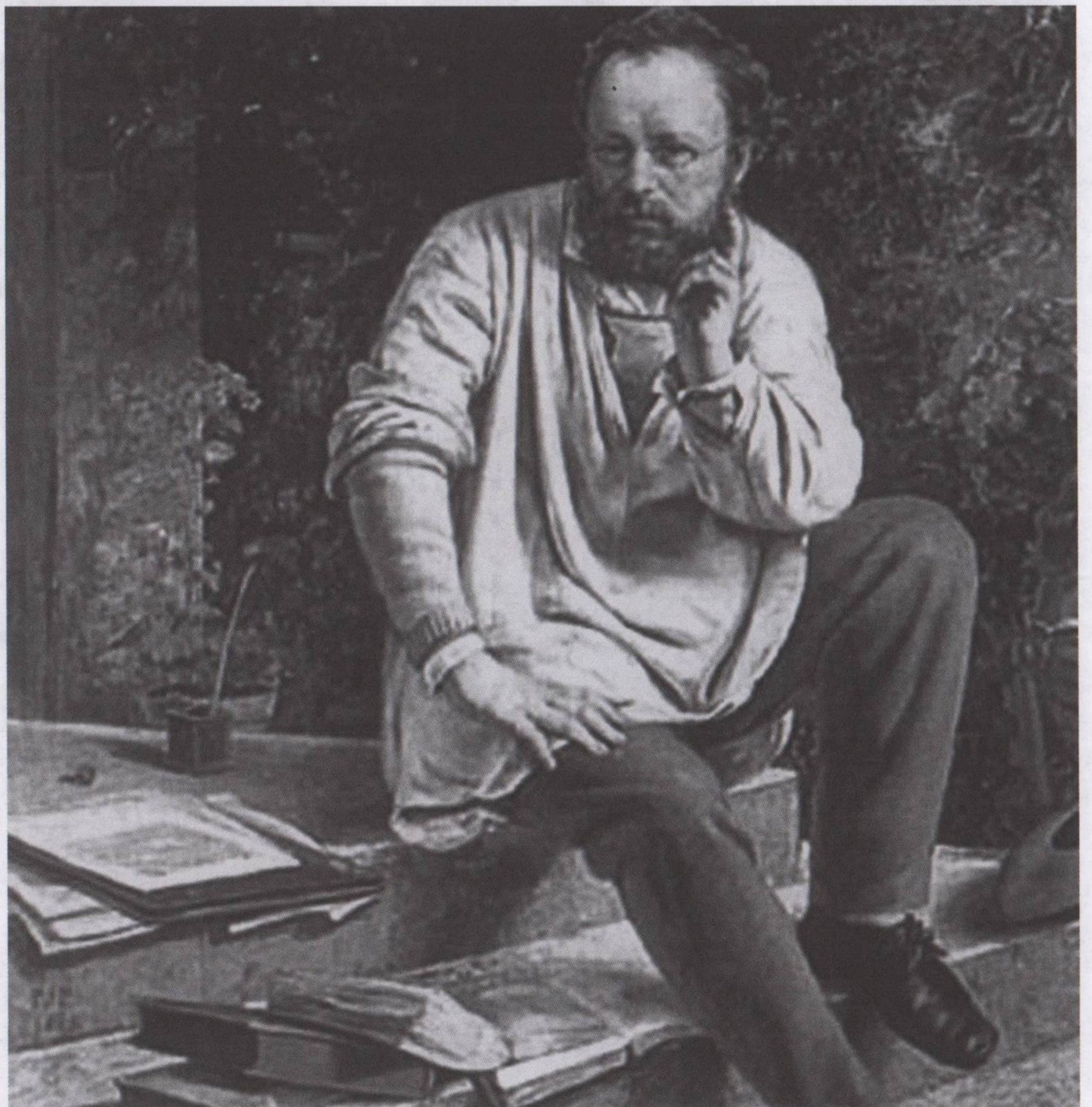
This is an excellent work. Wide ranging, both in terms of subjects covered and geography. The latter makes a welcome break from most accounts of anarchism which are sadly all too Eurocentric. The former sees anarchist analysis expanded from the usual subjects of political authority and economic class into gender and imperialism (and national liberation struggles). It covers such perennial issues as anarchist organisation (including Platformism), the Spanish Revolution and a host of others.

Black Flame gets almost everything right. It concentrates on the mainstream of anarchism, class struggle anarchism (collectivist, communist and syndicalist anarchism, in other words). It is comprehensive, discussing all important issues, people and movements. The authors are right in showing the anarchist roots of syndicalism and exposing the Leninist myth that anarchism and syndicalism are fundamentally different. They debunk the notion that Sorel was the creator or main theoretician of syndicalism. They place anarchism where it should be: as part of the wider socialist movement, its libertarian wing. It is right to say that anarchism is “a product of the capitalist world and the working class it created” (page 96), and that thinkers and activists alike “defined anarchism as an anticapitalist ideology and a form of socialism” (page 46). It does a great job in discussing the ins and outs of our movement and theory, using practice to illuminate our ideas.

I have two somewhat minor quibbles about it, which I hope that the comrades will take as positive feedback to an outstanding contribution to anarchist theory and history.

The first, minor, criticism is the claim that Daniel De Leon, Big Bill Haywood and James Connolly can be included in the broad anarchist tradition. They were Marxists! By no stretch of the imagination can they be considered anarchists. The reason why *Black Flame* has “described De Leonism as a form of syndicalism” is that “syndicalism was a type of anarchism” and “self-identification as a Marxist or an anarchist is less important than the *content* of the ideas adopted, and the ideas of the IWW are certainly within the ambit of the broad anarchist tradition” (page 161).

But that is confusing a tactic with a theory. Syndicalism is an anarchist *tactic*, and like other tactics can be utilised by non-anarchists. Thus we can have Marxist as well as anarchist syndicalists (although the irony of Marxists subscribing to the ideas of Bakunin



Proudhon – so what has he done for us?

rather than Marx should be stressed). The authors themselves acknowledge this when arguing that the Italian syndicalists who later became fascists were not really syndicalists. But they were – they just happened to be *Marxist* syndicalists! However, the authors are right that the IWW should be considered as part of the wider anarchist tradition. Its revolutionary unionism is straight out of Bakunin, not Marx.

My major criticism is their relegation of Proudhon to being a forerunner of anarchism. It is strange to read that Proudhon was not an anarchist *and* that “the anarchists took [from him] the notion of the self-management of the means of production, the idea of free federation, a hatred of capitalism and landlordism, and a deep distrust of the state” (page 84). So, except for anti-statism, anti-capitalism, anti-landlordism, federalism, communes, self-management, the vision of a revolution from below, the name ‘anarchist’, what has Proudhon done for us?

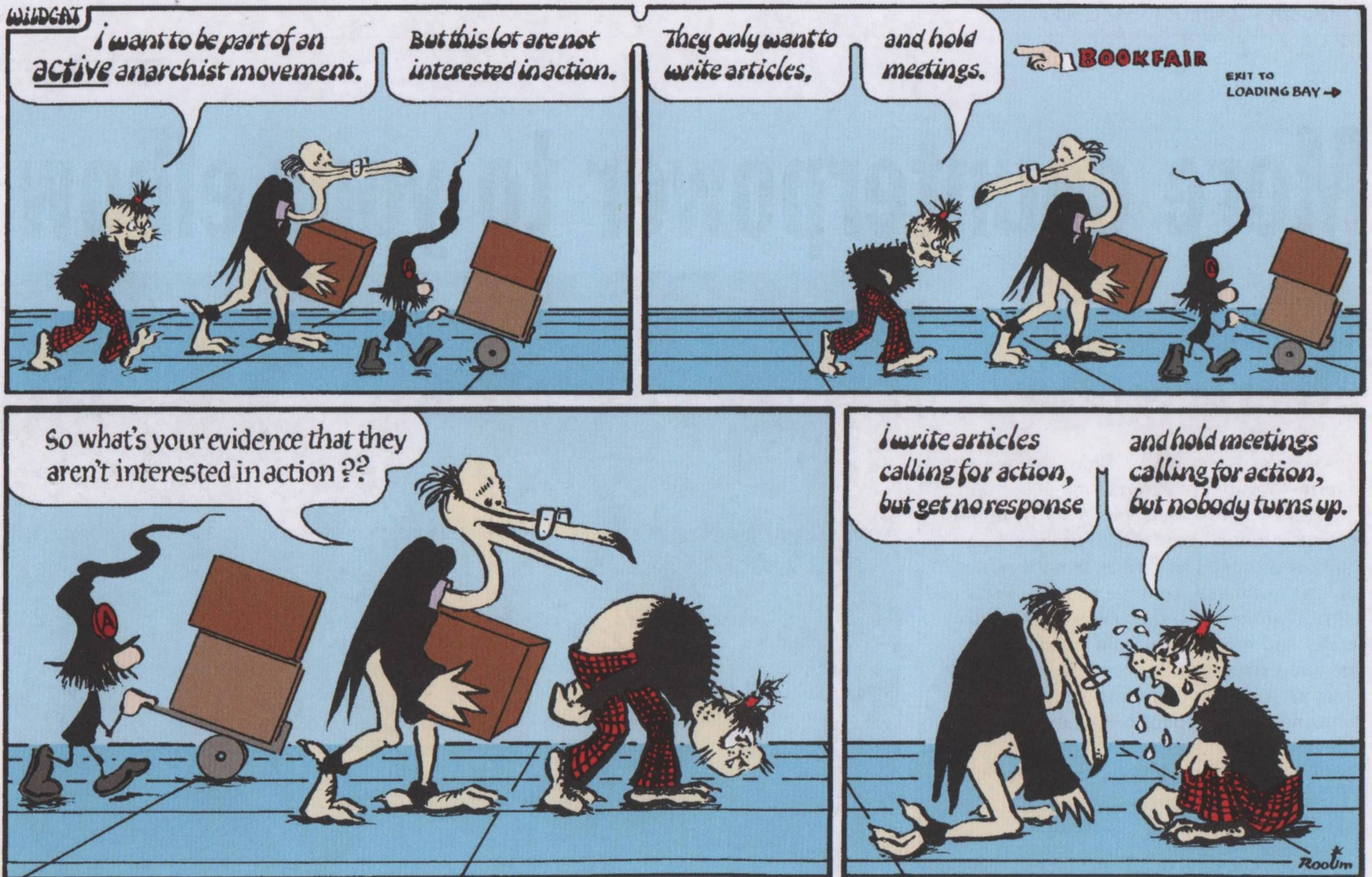
Given his contributions to anarchism, which Bakunin and Kropotkin built upon, can we seriously suggest he was not an anarchist? Yes, he was not a *revolutionary* anarchist but not an anarchist at all?

When discussing Proudhon, *Black Flame*

makes a rare error, stating that “workers were not exploited in the market, as Proudhon believed, but at the workplace” (page 86). In fact, Proudhon saw wage-labour causing exploitation – hence his call for its abolition by workers associations. Yes, in the First International the “mutualists supported small proprietors” but unless you believe in forced collectivisation, we all do! Yes, the International “generalised acceptance of common ownership as a core demand of the popular classes” (page 84), but that position was shared by the mutualists within it who only rejected public ownership of *land*.

Black Flame also has an excellent discussion of the sadly too common ‘problem’ of how to define anarchism, effectively refuting those who reduce anarchism to just ‘anti-statism’. They rightly argue that anarchism is a form of socialism with its roots in working class protest. By basing itself on the actual development of anarchism as a theory, rightly rejects the all too common history of anarchism framed by a list of grand-thinkers of anarchism, starting with Godwin and Stirner. This is flawed for the reasons the book outlines. Neither had an influence on how anarchism developed as a movement, being

page 16 ►►



Review

◀ page 15

rediscovered in the 1890s and the links with anarchism recognised.

As such, *Black Flame* is right *not* to discuss Godwin, Stirner, Tolstoy and American individualist anarchism in detail. Yet it is wrong to exclude them from anarchism – they were anti-capitalist and anti-state – so while their influence was nowhere as important as Proudhon, Bakunin or Kropotkin, it would be fair to mention but not concentrate upon them. The mainstream is social anarchism and, in particular, revolutionary social anarchism and the book correctly reflects that.

It rightly rejects the 'dictionary definition' of anarchism – as if a rich socio-economic

theory and social movement can be summed up in such a way! As *Black Flame* stresses, anarchism needs to be defined in terms of its ideas and history, not by who calls themselves an 'anarchist' or has been so labelled. While being anti-state is necessary to be an anarchist it is not sufficient – as can be seen from the fact that anarchists themselves have *never* restricted their politics in such a way.

Black Flame is a wonderful book which every anarchist will enjoy reading. It is well researched, well argued and should be read by every one interested in anarchism. Do yourself a favour and buy it now! You won't be disappointed. Roll on volume two.

Black Flame: The Revolutionary Class Politics of Anarchism and Syndicalism by Lucien Van der Walt and Michael Schmidt, AK Press, £18.

THE QUIZ

1. Which seminal work on anarchists in London was written by an academic at Queen Mary College?
2. Which famous Scottish anarchist attended Queen Mary College in the 1980s?
3. Which specific area of historical study made Queen Mary attractive to anarchists in the 1980s?
4. Who is the academic most associated with that area of study in the UK and where does he now work?

Answers on page 14

The Anarchist Quiz Book compiled by Martin Howard with illustrations by Paul Petard is available from Freedom Press at £5 (post free).

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 special '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.

For more details contact
subs@freedompress.org.uk

FREEDOM fortnightly ISSN 0016 0504



Please return completed form to: Freedom Subscriptions, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX

- Please start a NEW subscription / RENEW my subscription to Freedom (to avoid errors, please circle required subscription rate, see right)
- I enclose a donation
- I'd like to pay by Standing Order, please send me details

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

Name

Address

..... Postcode