

Christi-Anarchy /kristiaeneki/ n. Christlike life; lifestyle that is characterized by the radical, non-violent, sacrificial compassion of Jesus the Christ. A way of life distinguished by commitment to love and to justice; to the marginalized and disadvantaged; so as to enable them to realize their potential, as men and women made in the image of God; through self-directed, other-oriented intentional groups and organizations.

- Dave Andrews in *Not Religion, but love*

16—18 July
Christianity and anarchism conference
held in minimum security Hertfordshire.
It wouldn't be the same without you!

a punch of salt



FREE! or nearest offer

The Party Leaders' debate.

by Phil Lane

I saw two white men talking on TV
They knew they were important, born to rule,
But what does all their talking mean to me?
I keep my head down in my flat and fool
The bailiff that I've long since gone away.
There's no heating now, but the lights still work
And at least it's somewhere safe and dry to stay,
Although the loneliness magnifies my hurt
And despair spreads like the mold above my head.
This city of sadness and bolted doors,
In the icy air, each day dawns grey and dead,
On screen they promise spending and new laws,
I'd settle for one friend in this dank tower,
Who'd share with me the silence of the hours.

The orchestration of press, radio and television
to create a continuous, lasting and total envi-
ronment renders the influence of propaganda
virtually unnoticed precisely because it creates
a constant environment.

- Jacques Ellul

**If voting changed anything they'd
make it illegal.**

- Emma Goldman

Inside APoS...

By the time you get this the various political
parties will have already begun to lobby for
your vote. In the blue corner they'll be talk-
ing of revolution. The 'Big Bang Revolution'
is their plan to stop the BBC criticising Is-
raeli foreign policy. The Money Revoution is
their push us even further down the neo-
liberal path.

The Christian Party will continue to look like
a cross between the BNP, UKIP, and Benny
Hinn's embarrassing uncle. And the rest will
make their promises to do it all so you don't
have to for the next four years.

Meanwhile some offer love and resistance,
glean from the bins, find alternatives to the
vote, put their bodies in the way of terror-
states, blaspheme the Money God, stand up
against colonialism on islands easily forgot-
ten, dig the land, build community and all
without reference to government.

Love, peace, and anarchy,
Keith Hebden
editor.apos@googlemail.com

apos-archive.blogspot.com

Reluctantly rendering unto Caesar

by Adam Dickson

Last summer I faced well over a month of
agonising, theologising, debating with others,
weighing up the pros and cons, and yes, even a
little bit of time praying over the matter of
whether to vote in the European elections.

When the time came, I spent a sombre one-
minute walk to the church next door and com-
mitted the dirty deed.

The BNP had gained two seats in the European
Parliament, one of them being in my own re-
gion of the North-West. Despite my resolve,
and the resolve of the others, the attempt to
curb fascism at the ballot box had failed.

The questions of how Christians engage with
the principalities and powers are never easily
answered. Among those tough questions re-
mains that of how and whether we use the
vote. In the time leading up to the European
Elections, when it looked likely that the BNP
would gain power, it seemed as though there
were few options.

As I listened to the woes of voters convinced
that the low turnout had given the BNP their
advantage, I couldn't help but think of the evils
perpetuated by our mainstream parties which
had helped to fuel the xenophobia and social
division upon which racists and fascists feed.
"British jobs for British workers," for example,
is now a phrase spouted in much fascist propa-
ganda but initially came from the mouthpiece
of the Labour Party. This nation's government
seems particularly good at criticising the rise of
racism while subjecting asylum seekers and
refugees to horrific experiences of dehumani-
sation through bureaucratic oppression, the
poverty of the voucher support scheme, deten-
tion centres, and threat of deportation. Low
voter turn out helped the BNP but the vicious
cycle of power, patronage, and subjugation
helped too.

Whatever our convictions on voting might be,

we should appreciate the ballot for the lie it
represents: democracy. The ordering of our
government does not nearly lend itself to par-
ticipatory involvement. Until we wake up to
the fact that the ballot is ultimately a conces-
sion to a public which has little power and con-
trol over the decisions which affect them,
whatever change we wish to see in the world
will remain unrealised.

I don't regret my action last summer, seeing it
as a gesture of damage control against the em-
pire in which *all* political parties are both com-
plicit and beneficiaries of racism. There is
room for disagreement over what we do at the
ballot booth, as long as we recognise the diver-
sity of how we act and understand that each
choice is valid. For some, they may want to
spoil their ballot paper - perhaps writing in the
name of Jesus? Others might simply vote for
the party they believe will inflict the *least*
amount of damage. Others still might vote in
place of someone they know and trust who has
no right to vote at all, e.g., a friend or col-
league seeking sanctuary.

Whatever choice we make, God in Christ has
already disarmed the powers and the work he
began will eventually bring their power to
nothing (Colossians 1:15-20 and 2:15; 1 Corin-
thians 15:24-25). The attitudes we take toward
the next general election must be secondary to
how we express God's love in our own com-
munities, whether through solidarity with the
poor and oppressed, engaging in direct action,
campaigning, community organising, fostering
nonviolent resistance, or any number of crea-
tive acts which enact and embody the triumph
of God's Kingdom.

However we decide to act come Election Day,
let us do so in the spirit of resistance, recognis-
ing the ballot box is no substitute for revolu-
tionary tactics, nor is that cross on a piece of
paper *nearly* any substitute for the cross of
Christ. It is only by *that* cross that true change
and transformation enters the world, and before
which all political parties and authorities will
one day lose their seats.

If you want to support this magazine...

- Send a cheque to "Keith Hebden" at
58 Haycroft Drive, Matson, Gloucester, GL4 6XX
- Send articles and artwork to the above address or to
editor.apos@googlemail.com
- Distribute copies to anyone you think might want one.
Don't be shy.

And

Pray.

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Gaza at Christmas in the pink: Reflections on mass action

by Les Gibbons

Code Pink managed to mobilise many to go to the Middle East to be present on the memorial of a catastrophic event, even if it was under the pretext of to Gaza. It was great to meet many people who care about Gaza, Gazans and those who want to thwart Israeli State violence.

Many were inspiring to be around especially in the small group context. What worked well was loose affinity groups - caring and working together over the real issues you needed to deal with. Also to break away from the group when it got so often bogged down - yet continue to be connected by phone, email or in meeting or travelling together.

It was hard to find good information when we arrived in Egypt on the 25th December and after having rested was hard to find. People travelled from the UK from different airports and to different hotels - there were already some connections amongst us, some had met already yet many of us were spread apart geographically. In an unfamiliar place checking emails and talking to others was important and yet it had its pitfalls much information was confusing, contradictory or ambiguous - it engendered mass actions - that can also be highly problematic. On arrival in Cairo one of the first emails I read from Code Pink stated that the authorities were not permitting any Code Pink plans to be allowed on buses and no meeting on 27th. So the meeting planned for the 27th in Cairo was initially cancelled and the buses were blocked. There was a great deal of frustration with the way information was shared and we were in the midst of it. New information was dislodged or contradicted within minutes, like we were all standing on shifting sand. We had to make up our own minds, rather than follow the crowd. We had to work in a different way than idealistic consensus decision

3 making.

Transparency is crucial with such sensitive activities, yet Code Pink were far from clear with us. They had brought up to 1400 people to Egypt with the hope of getting us into Gaza for a march. Those at the top hold the power, which is information, contacts and coordination. Affinity groups can subvert this by making thoughtful, people centred, grassroots decisions - however to some extent we were all dependant on Code Pink for Coordination though I'm not sure they saw themselves like that.

On reaching Gaza I spoke to documentary videographer Marcel Jacobson who told me even one week before we all went to Egypt that there was minimal planning for 1400 people. Code Pink also asked that people make 'risky' actions, and yet it was unclear what support they might be offering. There was little legal information for those considering nonviolent direct action and resistance. Hence Hamas stepped in and took over, possibly causing civil organisations to step back further.

I learned not to be involved in mass organization or if I find myself doing so - to break away if necessary and not be obliged to copy on command. I wanted to go to meet Gazans, fulfilling few words said in July 2009. Sometimes vision is important; I learnt to remember that when up to my neck in Crocodiles (Egyptian police, messy mass meetings, arguments, high expressed emotion) and to focus on the original objective - to pull the plug that drains the swamp. Having a vision of how it's going to be is so important and we ought not allow others to stand on our eyeballs - not even ourselves.



Blaspheming the Money God

by John M Hull

Human beings are creations of God and the image of God rests upon us. Money is a human creation, and because we ourselves are made in the image of God, everything that we make has the potential for carrying the divine image. But the image of God is distorted by human selfishness and greed, and so the things we make may also be distorted.

Money has the potential for binding us in solidarity, since it is a way of sharing resources and making life stronger, but when the human will for power and domination influences money, then money begins to become dominant. If we put all our hopes and desires into money, money will grow stronger and stronger, and then we start to worship it. Then money becomes a god.

We have to start a resistance movement. We

have to claim back our true human image, in which we are to live for each other, not against one another. One form of resistance is to blaspheme the money god. Jesus continually blasphemed him. Think of the story about the foolish rich man who thought he would live forever, of the workers who were all paid the same regardless of how much work they had done, and how Jesus praised the widow who gave a tiny offering although it was all she had. There is a delightful humour about the way Jesus cheated the money god by paying his taxes with money found inside a fish!

Money loves money, and money is attracted to money, making the pile grow. OK. So we do the opposite. Instead of getting we start giving. Every time you give, freely and

Every time you give, freely and joyfully, you shake the throne of the money god.

joyfully, you shake the throne of the money god. This is why St Paul says 'God loves a cheerful giver' (2 Corinthians 9:7).

Money is a medium of exchange. By means of money, one thing is exchanged for another. Everything, we say, has its price. OK. So let us break the exchange thing by giving away our unwanted stuff. If you have a kitchen table you don't need, ring up the charity that distributes furniture and give it to them. There is a limit to this but that does not mean you can't make a start. If we get into the habit of this, then what Jesus said will come truer: 'Freely you have received; freely give' (Matthew 10:8).

The money god loves vagueness and secrecy. How many bankers to you hear being interviewed? Money hates transparency. OK. So we encourage openness. We don't secretly store **4**

up money, except to give someone a nice surprise! We don't boast about having more money than we actually have. We don't tell lies about having less money than we really have. This is part of what St John meant when he wrote 'If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another' (1 John 1:7).

The money god is a self deceiver and encourages people to deceive themselves. OK. So we take steps to avoid self deception about money. Know what proportion of your income you give. It is easy to have an inflated idea of this. If you work it out, it may not be as much as you fondly imagine. One practical way to do this is to tithe. This is an old fashioned way of blaspheming the money god, but it still hurts him! It doesn't matter if it is ten percent, twenty percent, or only one percent; the thing is that you know, and you keep a check on it.

'if you are a hearer of the word and not a doer, you are self deceived' (James 1: 22).

Finally, the money god is utterly selfish. He encourages us to think that our money is really ours but the truth is all money is social. The money god talks of taxation as if it was the Treasury taking our money out of our pockets and giving it to the tax man. OK. So we don't think of our money as ours but as belonging to the community. We don't think of it as tax but as community money, the money we give to support the community. That is how to live as St Paul said 'The body is a unit although it is made up of many parts' (1 Corinthians 12:12).

But what you do not do to blaspheme the money god is to set fire to a five pound note, or flush it down the loo. Although it has become demonic, money is still potentially in the image of God. The money you burn could be the bread of the poor.

Objections to anarchism

By George Barret 1888 – 1917

No. 2 The House of Commons and the Law have been used by the present dominant class to gain their ends; why cannot they be used by us to gain ours?

This question takes for granted that Capitalism and the Workers' movement have the same end in view. If this were so, they might use the same means; but as the capitalist is out to perfect his system of exploitation the worker is out for emancipation; the same means cannot be employed for both purposes.

It is thought by the enthusiastic politician that once they can capture government, then from their position of power they would be able quickly to mould society into the desired shape. Pass ideal laws, and the ideal society would result. But, alas, the short cut to the Golden Age is an illusion. Law cannot shape society. Those who understand forces behind progress will see the law limping along in the rear, never keeping up with the progress made by people; always in fact resisting any advance.

The present ruling class, who are supposed to be a living proof that the Government can do anything, are in themselves quite candid in the admission that it can do little. If there was any logic to the question, which there is not, we might restate it thus: "Since the present dominant class were unable to gain their ends by use of the House of Commons and the Law, why should we hope to gain ours by them?"



Tipping, Skipping, Dumpster Diving...

I'd rather call it Gleaning

by Shannon Hope Fisher

At the Catholic Worker Farm we have a weekly ritual; this is a story of my first time participating in it. Last night was a nice night. After we ate a delicious lasagne dinner I made myself a cup of tea and settled in with Scott, Maria and Tanya to watch *Into the Wild* on the projection screen. We laughed, we cried, and when it was over Scott told us it was time.

Tanya made a tea flask and I grabbed a granola bar, because, as you know, you should never go to the grocery store on an empty stomach. We proceeded into a near town's posh supermarket that Scott and Maria have previously had great luck at. Favourably, the gates were open. Quickly and quietly we jumped out of the car and opened the dumpsters (bins if you will) and were amazed. We found loads of fresh fruit and veggies, along with other random necessities.

As the night went on, we stopped at two other shops finding potatoes, breads, fresh cut flowers, and cheeses, yogurts and other dairy products (the weather is cold enough for it not to spoil). When we returned [this is the best part of the trip] the ladies were ready for us.

Everything was put on the kitchen table to be sorted and inspected. Here we "oohed" and "awwwed" at our treasure. The regiment began with looking for holes—which required us to re-bin those goods. Anything passing the test was then put through bleach water, rinsed in fresh water, dried and put away. I kept a tally how much the goods were worth: over 140 pounds. This did not include the fresh fruits, veggies and (my favourite) three beers which were without price tags.

Around 1am we set out for bed with visions of bleached plums, bananas, potatoes, and kiwis dancing in our heads. The spirituality behind our work: This ritual, which many might simply dismiss as mere tipping, is for us, a very spiritual occasion.

"When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Leave them for the poor and the alien. I am the LORD your God."

Leviticus 23:22

When Scott, Tanya and I partake in this act we know full well that we have the capability of working hard to provide enough food for ourselves and our immediate families to survive. We each value the honesty in hard work. The work we do in the bins is not for the rush of finding our favourite foods still in good condition for free. We also do not do it for the joy of wading through leaked muscle relaxant and years old bin slime. The reason we engage in this sometimes elating sometimes degrading work to is feed those who cannot work to feed themselves.

The Hebrew Bible's story of Ruth and Naomi provides much inspiration to us. Like Ruth, the seven guests at the farm are foreigners in this country. Boaz allows Ruth to glean from his fields according to the laws established and recorded in the books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy. This tradition demands that when you harvest a field you do not harvest the edges or anything that falls when harvesting from a vineyard for that is to be for the poor and the alien; this is called gleaning. It is Boaz's kindness and adherence to the law that saves Ruth and her mother in law Naomi from starvation. Here at the farm we feel that when we go to the bins we participate in this millennia old tradition of gleaning. While we first ask shops to donate their outdated food and help us in our God given responsibility to feed the poor, many choose not to. It is only at this time that we dig through the edges of their fields and under their vineyard branches to sustain those who do not have the ability or opportunity to do so for themselves.

Want to volunteer at the Farmhouse?

The Catholic Worker Farm are working to support and accommodate destitute women (whom we call 'Guests'). These are vulnerable homeless women and children dis-entitled to benefits or work permits, literally "street homeless". The house is located near Rickmansworth, Junction 17 of the London Orbital.

The Catholic Worker Farm would like to extend an invitation to all people interested in living in community. Internships are open to anyone over the age of 20 who would like to experience a year living and working within a rural, faith-based community.

www.thecatholicworkerfarm.org

Scott and Maria Albrecht: 07983 477819

Alexandre Christoyannopoulos,
Christian Anarchism:
A political commentary on the gospel,
Exeter, Imprint Academic, 2010.
 review by Keith Hebden

Alex Christoyannopoulos's new publication, *Christian anarchism* has been a labour of love for the author who has worked with thoroughness and care to present an almost exhaustive everything of Christian anarchism.

The only word of caution would be that because it is a doctoral-thesis – turned-book it can feel dry in its thoroughness sometimes and so won't suit every reader. But as academic works go there's no fancy language and everything is properly explained.

Christoyannopoulos works with texts and ideas that have been key for Christian anarchists to show coherence and diversity in the tradition. Part one would make a great reading-circle for radical Christian groups to explore their own response to the Sermon on the Mount or Romans 13 for example or the relationship between the state and the Christian community. Almost all of part one and much of part two is Jesus-focused and Leo Tolstoy features heavily throughout. Plenty of room is left in the book for exploring Christian anarchist practices too.

Christoyannopoulos highlights a need within Christian anarchist thinking to develop a more thought through Christology. He does this without criticising the present thinking but by simply outlining them he reveals their inadequacy.

Christoyannopoulos refers to Christian anarchist understandings of history as mysteriously unfolding. He claims they are united by a refusal to "hasten God's kingdom by political means" (276). They anticipate the kingdom but they don't precipitate it. This is important because the Christian anarchist critique of the State arises out of a commitment to non-violent resistance and not vice-versa. This means Christian anarchists would rather live in submission to the state than violently overthrow it because the means matter as much as the ends. This is what sets the radical Christian approach in contrast to much of the secular anarchist approach to social change.

Christoyannopoulos's social ontology is a brilliantly clear apology for a theology of love as social transformer. He chooses to draw on Paul Ricoeur and Paul Tillich to describe society's struggle to articulate justice. This is a wonderful antidote to the cynical view it is so easy to fall into of a Manichean state hell-bent on domination for the sake of exploitation. Christoyannopoulos seeks to widen the Christian anarchist understanding of the state from "the monopoly

over the legitimised use of violence," to a more generously phrased "articulation of a society's definition of justice".

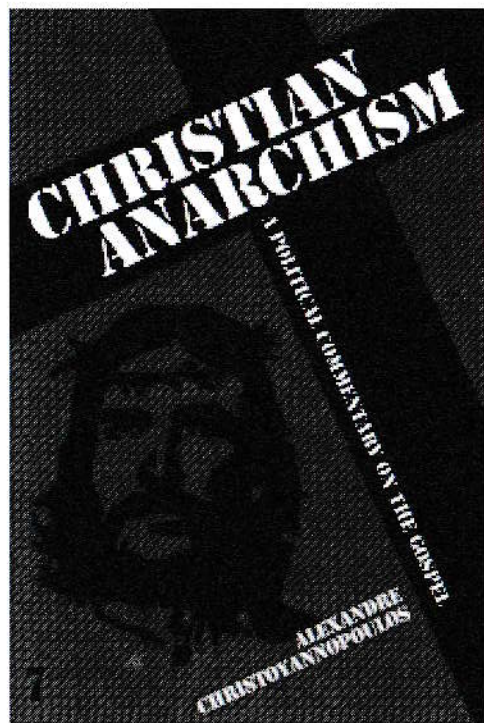
The arguments of Christian anarchists are based largely in a literalistic or deferring reading of selected parts of the Bible, mostly in the New Testament – they often ignore church traditions, being sceptical of any theology produced within a Church grappling with its compromise with the State. But Christoyannopoulos draws Christian anarchists back to these Christendom theologians.

Christoyannopoulos notes the literalism in much of the Christian anarchist tradition as evidence of its place in a modernist worldview. This happens to be the same enlightenment worldview out of which anarchist theory was born. A post-modern shift in thinking for Christian anarchism would helpfully push boundaries of thinking, speaking and doing. Perhaps engagement with other faiths and contemporary anarchists will help make this happen.

Alexandre Christoyannopoulos does a great job of outlining the arguments that have been made and suggesting a number of possible directions for future discussion. This book could easily be for Christian anarchism what Gustavo Gutierrez's *A Theology of Liberation* was for that school of thought. And if anyone thinks theology can't change anything look at The Jubilee Debt campaign, Fair Trade and the many other ways in which liberation theology has shaped political agendas and policies over the last fifty years. Buy this book and see if Christian anarchism can do it all over again.

This is Alex's second book, the first was as editor of a collection of papers on various traditions and insights of religions anarchism, mostly from a Christian perspective. *Religious Anarchism: New Perspectives*, Cambridge, CSP, 2009.

There's also plenty to read for free here:
<http://sites.google.com/site/christoyannopoulos/publications>



The Chagos Islands: Paradise Stolen

by André de Raaij

The Chagos Islands make up an archipelago in the Indian Ocean, halfway between Africa and Indonesia. Colonised by French plantation operators, populated by slaves taken from other French island colonies in the Indian Ocean and from the African continent. In 1804 the British conquered the islands and abolished slavery. Plantations and workers however stayed.

And then the government of the United States of America decided that the archipelago was of high strategic value and wanted to have the natural harbour of the main island, Diego Garcia, as a navy base on condition that nobody be close enough to snoop around.

The islands, annexed from the original main island colony of Mauritius, were not given independence and the British government decreed that the population of slave descendants was really an itinerant worker community. For specialist medical care and for necessities which could not be found on the islands, the Chagossians regularly went on a boat trip to Mauritius. At a certain point they were denied the return trip home; "the islands have been sold". The colonial administrators in Westminster meanwhile made joking remarks about the inhabitants, "some man Fridays" with "some birds". The first act of ethnic cleansing was the collective killing of the islanders' dogs, meant as a warning for the humans. Plantations were nationalised and immediately closed down. Remaining islanders were deported and the US navy and air force moved in in 1973.

In the so-called war on terror the islands are used as a prison and torture camp under the incredible code name 'Footprint of Freedom'. The Subcontinent, East Africa and the Arabian peninsula and beyond can and indeed are being bombed from the island.

Although the indigenous people won their court cases against their deportation they are still being denied the right of return. The main interest for the UK government seems to be the preservation of nature in the archipelago. Global warming, which is of no interest to the government generally, is cited as an argument against the return of the islanders: they will be drowned by rising sea levels. Deportation, continuing colonisation, making human habitat a nature reserve without inhabitants but with a navy and airforce base for the US – the grim reality of Multicultural Postcolonial Britain.

Chagos is the latest and perhaps the most poignant example of how islands and their inhabitants are treated as asset or burden in the pursuit of global security. Why this preference for islands?

*

The people who were deported from Chagos describe the islands as paradise. There was everything necessary for a modest existence. A life without poverty or riches. It looks like you cannot say anything worse than that to white Europeans with a Christian backstory: Paradise is a place from which humans have to be expelled.

It is hard to say whether life was really idyllic on the many islands conquered by white European colonialists. Compared to the existence of many Chagossians now, deported and left to their own devices in the slums of Mauritius and the Seychelles, life on the islands looks like life in paradise. Many Chagossians descend from people who were violently taken away as slaves from their own hearths in Moçambique or Madagascar. A treatment that is a sufficient refutation of any pretense of civilisation. If the *Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies* of Bartolomé de las Casas had not been sufficient (more on that some other time).

People following a military line of thinking will see a "strategic position" in their offices. From an occupied island sea and sea lanes can be controlled. People living on the islands are a burdensome side issue. They can be deported if deemed necessary. The people of Kwajalein in Marshall Islands are only allowed to work as wage labourers on their island and must leave for other islands after work at the base where US Security is guarded. People from Okinawa and other islands in the Ryukyu archipelago have been deported to Bolivia to make place for bases. The Chagossians are witnesses to the way paradise was turned into a hell: hell for the Chagossians and for those on the receiving

end of the bombing flights and those tortured in the concentration camp Footprint of Freedom. But also for those who impose this hell on other humans.

In their desertedness, their apparent untouchedness and paradisiacal allure, islands represent a feminine principle. Specifically when measured against the paradise myth with which the bible begins, the story which for many people means both the beginning and the end of this collection of books. Neither Woman nor Island are seducers but the more-than-symbolical rape which they undergo in a culture dominated by male violence provides a qualification which serves to justify this misbehaviour.



Apocalypse Now

"Unveiling Empire, Conceiving Communion"

16—18 June 2010
Catholic Worker Farmhouse, Herts,
thecatholicworkerfarm@yahoo.co.uk
Scott Albrecht 07983477819

After three conferences (Leeds 2006, Bradford 2007, Sheffield 2008) there was a sense among delegates that more affinity and more clarity on decision-making is needed. The 2010 conference, Apocalypse Now: Unveiling Empire, Conceiving Communion aims to address that issue more squarely.

Rather than seminars led by experts in a field or from an organisation, there will be facilitated, structured discussions on more general themes. This means everyone will be able to participate more fully in the outcomes of the conference while only a few participate in the hosting and organising of the event.

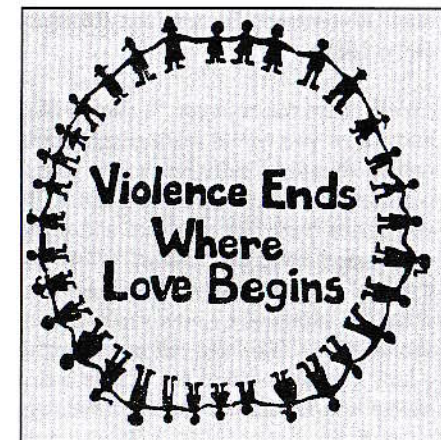
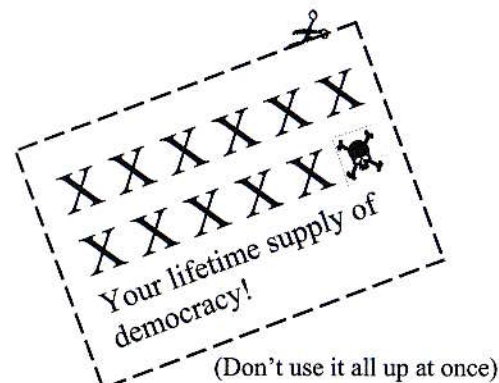
There are main three aims to the 2010 Conference:

- To explore our emotional and spiritual dependence on the state (using Fowler's spiritual development model)
- To analyse the many injustices that prop up and stabilise the nation state
- To begin to form a communion of our own to increase our commitment to one another and to the kingdom of God

Those involved in past conferences have come from a vast range of groups and communities including Catholic Workers, The Society of Friends, Roman Catholics, Christian Peacemaker Teams, Student Christian Movement, Prayer 158, Anglicans, Baptists, non-aligned Christians, Humanists, Political Scientists, Tolstoyans, Evangelicals, Liberals, and more beside. Our commitments to non-violent resistance to rule brings together an eclectic mix of people.

In order to keep the discussions lively you will be asked to let Scott know if you are part of a group or denomination so that we can deliberately mix it up in the discussion groups on the weekend. This follows the successful model used at the Anarchist Movement Conference in East London last year.

If you are interested in joining a discussion on this issues it would be great to see you there!

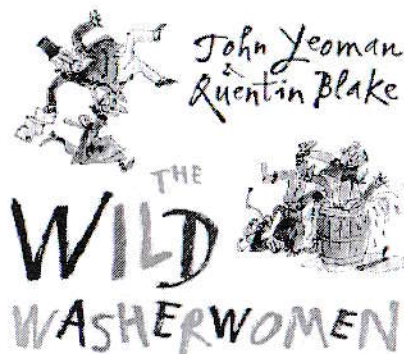


If you are interested in creative and thoughtful writing on anarchist thinking based in the UK from friendly folk you might read...

Anarchist Voices: A journal of evolutionary anarchism
Subscriptions are available at £8.00 for four copies a year (£5.00 conc.)
J P Simcock, Total Liberty, 47 High Street, Belper, Derby, DE56 1GF, UK

The Cunningham Amendment: The Journal of East Penine Anarcrisps.
Dedicated to revolutionary acts of joy and irreverence.
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Organise! The parish magazine of the Anarchist Federation.
BM ANARFED, London, WC1N 3XX, England, UK. email: info@afed.org.uk



A Pinch of Salt's recommended bed time reading. Two year old Martha loves this story of anarcho-feminist-syndicalist revolution; she especially likes the Marxist critique of the exploitation and alienation of the worker.

Ask your library today!

Non-Resistance

by Adin Ballou (from *Non-Resistance to Human Government*, Boston Non-Resistance Society, 1839)

"Well," says the objector, "I should like to know how you would manage matters if the ruffian should actually break into your house with settled intent to rob and murder. Would you shrink back like a coward and see your wife and children slaughtered before your eyes?" I cannot tell how I might act in such a dreadful emergency – how weak and frail I should prove. But I can tell how I ought to act – how I should wish to act. If I am a firm, consistent non-resistant, I should prove myself no coward; for it requires the noblest courage and the highest fortitude to be a true non-resistant. If I am what I ought to be, I should be calm and unruffled by the alarm at my door. I should meet my wretched fellow-man with a spirit, an air, a salutation, and a deportment so Christ-like, so little expected, so confounding, and so morally irresistible that in all probability his weapons of violence and death would fall harmless to his side. I would say, "Friend, why do you come here? Surely not to injure those who wish you nothing but good? This house is one of peace and friendship to all mankind. If you are cold, warm yourself at our fire; if hungry, refresh yourself at our table; if you are weary, sleep in our bed; if you are destitute, poor, and needy, freely take of our goods. Come, let us be friends, that God may keep us all from evil and bless us with his protection." What would be the effect of such treatment as this? Would it not completely overcome the feelings of the invader, so as either to make him retreat inoffensively out of the house, or at least forbear all meditated violence? Would it not be incomparably safer than to rush to the shattered door, half distracted with alarm, grasping some deadly weapon and bearing it aloft, looking fiery wrath and mad defiance at the enemy? How soon would follow the mortal encounter, and how extremely uncertain the outcome? The moment I appeared in such an

attitude (just the thing expected), would not ruffian's coolness and well-trained muscular force be almost sure to seal the fate of my family and myself? But in acting the non-resistant part, should I not be likely, in nine cases out of ten, to escape with perfect safety? ...

Contrary to all probability, we will suppose that no moral majesty, no calm and dignified remonstrance, and no divine interposition availed anything towards the prevention of the slaughter of an innocent family; what then would I do? I would gather my loved ones in a group behind my person; I would cover their retreat to the farthest corner of our room; and I receive the blows of the murderer. I would say, "Since nothing but our blood will satisfy your thirst, I commend my all to God in whom I trust. He will receive us to his bosom, and may He have mercy on you. Strike if you will, but you must come through my poor body to the bodies of these helpless victims!" Well, suppose the horrible tragedy is complete and our butchered remains are all lying silent in their gore; what then? We are all dead; we fell clinging to each other; in a moment the pains of death were over; the "debt of nature" is paid; where are we now? Our happy spirits, conveyed by holy angels, wing their lightning flight to the bowers of Paradise.

Adin Ballou (1803-1890), a staunch pacifist – his preferred term was "non-resistant" – preached and wrote some of the most moving and compelling arguments for Jesus' Sermon on the Mount to be taken literally. Similarities with Tolstoy led the two to correspond with one another, though they disagreed on a number of issues. Ballou however always rejected anarchism both as a label *and* as a theory or as a possibility. Nonetheless, he was extremely critical of "human government." Besides, that he found himself obliged to rebut accusations of "anarchism" suggests that his arguments were indeed sometimes heard to logically imply such anarchism.

by *Alex Christoyannopoulos*

A Pinch of Salt to shake the Empire

In 1930 Gandhi led a march to the Indian coast challenging colonial tax-theft. As he held high a lump of salty mud he said, "with this I am shaking the foundations of the British Empire".

Gandhi and his companions were protesting against what they saw as an unjust tax law. It was illegal for Indians to make their own salt yet they were taxed heavily on the salt they bought from the state. The result was more hardship for the poorest to the benefit of the wealthy.

Looking back at that historically significant event the contemporary dissenter would do well to remember that the British Empire wasn't centred at Dandi beach. Until that day it is likely that most British administrators, save the local 'Collector', would struggle to know where it was on the map.

Perhaps Gandhi was advised by friends on how to tackle this injustice. "Go to Delhi and dump a sack of rice outside Lord Irwin's house", "Find a way to put salt into his water supply," "send bags of salt to London with a petition for tax relief". But Gandhi did none of these things nor in any other way petitioned the government or even protested the injustice. He could see that in this case the power for change lay in the hands of the people through making their own salt, thus rendering the salt law impotent.

Just as Jesus' most revolutionary message is in the way he lived his life, so Gandhi has discovered that the most revolutionary act is the one that is independent of state. How do we challenge the principalities and powers? Creatively seeking first the kingdom of God. Power isn't scared of megaphones and placards; he's scared we may turn our backs on him altogether.

by Keith Hebden

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