As we go to press, over 10,000 postal workers are on wildcat strike. This strike has rapidly spread across the country in a short period of time. This dispute is mainly over terms and conditions, after the Communication Workers' Union's (CWU) ballot on national strike action was lost the Royal Mail management have tried to press ahead with modernisation of the service. 'Modernisation' of course being destruction of the union, wage cuts and slashing of 10,000 jobs.

Walkouts began after the suspension of sixteen drivers in West London who refused to sort mail destined for their managers, try to trick them into sorting mail.试行出来了 when they noticed the action. Sorting managers head-on, together.

Buried an the capital and in many other towns, around 15 of Britain's 73 postal towns, across the country with most sorting offices closed for Christmas. Over terms and conditions, after the Royal Mail management have tried to physically intimidate pickets. in free workers belong to a union. Even where there are disputes workers cross picket lines. There is a job to be done arguing for solidarity and building the confidence of workers.

The situation with the strike is changing rapidly so to keep in touch with the latest developments see www.earger.net/news/newswire.

- The workplace is a battlefield between workers and bosses for control. Control over who determines wages and conditions. Control over how and when people work. Sometimes workers have the upper hand, more recently bosses have. The onslaught on worker's pension rights have come just at the right time.

In 2002 some 1.3 million days were lost through unofficial strike action. In 1972 nearly 24 million were. The actual number of disputes taking place is under 200 (a handful of major disputes make up most of the days lost). During the 1950s, 60s and 70s, three thousand, four thousand, five thousand or more workplaces were hit by actions every year. Very few workers are currently involved in disputes, although the number is rising. It is also sobering to note that in the private sector just one in five free workers belong to a union. Even where there are disputes workers cross picket lines. There is a job to be done arguing for solidarity and building the confidence of workers.

To be more positive though it does seem that the spirit of revolt is building amongst some workers, which could and should help (as the foundations for increased class-consciousness.

The authoritarian left senses that they will always come first, and the safety of workers and users last. Of course for private companies profits will always come first and the safety of workers and users last. Of course for private companies profits will always come first, and the safety of workers and users last.

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Hunger strike continues

The decision for the hunger strike was caused by the attitude of the judicial authorities that regarded the accused as guilty before their trial, thereby denying them the right of an assumed innocence. Moreover, the decision on their pre-imprisonment, as well as the intransigence of requisites for their release, are solely based on a generalizing verdict about their ‘dangerousness’ and the possibility of them committing punishable acts if released. It is however obvious that what in reality is keeping them imprisoned is the already in June apparent need for an ‘occupational punishment’ of the arrested protesters. Additionally to these tactics, there is also the special status of detention of the hunger strikers is worsening by the day and their permanent transfer to the hospital is a matter of days.

when she was arrested at about 4.15pm on Monday. Her trial takes place in November.

14th November Immigration Laws: They Double Unit conference at £y Morden, Victoria & Albert Hotel, Water Street, Carlisle, organised by Greater Manchester Coalition of Displaced People (GMCDP). Details by email, kgucker@blueyonder.co.uk or 01212 378 8417.

11th November Conference on asylum seekers and human rights at The Gran Hotel, King’s College, The Strand, WC2. From 10am onwards. Further info from 020 7739 0443 or 020 7608 7005.

11th November Hunger strike continues. For more details contact us, or please email or write to us, and please see www.ourmayday.org.uk

10th November Immigration laws: They Double Unit conference at £y Morden, Victoria & Albert Hotel, Water Street, Carlisle, organised by Greater Manchester Coalition of Displaced People (GMCDP). Details by email, kgucker@blueyonder.co.uk or 01212 378 8417.

9th November Immigration: They Double Unit conference at £y Morden, Victoria & Albert Hotel, Water Street, Carlisle, organised by Greater Manchester Coalition of Displaced People (GMCDP). Details by email, kgucker@blueyonder.co.uk or 01212 378 8417.

8th November Immigration: They Double Unit conference at £y Morden, Victoria & Albert Hotel, Water Street, Carlisle, organised by Greater Manchester Coalition of Displaced People (GMCDP). Details by email, kgucker@blueyonder.co.uk or 01212 378 8417.

7th November Immigration: They Double Unit conference at £y Morden, Victoria & Albert Hotel, Water Street, Carlisle, organised by Greater Manchester Coalition of Displaced People (GMCDP). Details by email, kgucker@blueyonder.co.uk or 01212 378 8417.

6th November Immigration: They Double Unit conference at £y Morden, Victoria & Albert Hotel, Water Street, Carlisle, organised by Greater Manchester Coalition of Displaced People (GMCDP). Details by email, kgucker@blueyonder.co.uk or 01212 378 8417.

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4th November Immigration: They Double Unit conference at £y Morden, Victoria & Albert Hotel, Water Street, Carlisle, organised by Greater Manchester Coalition of Displaced People (GMCDP). Details by email, kgucker@blueyonder.co.uk or 01212 378 8417.

3rd November Immigration: They Double Unit conference at £y Morden, Victoria & Albert Hotel, Water Street, Carlisle, organised by Greater Manchester Coalition of Displaced People (GMCDP). Details by email, kgucker@blueyonder.co.uk or 01212 378 8417.

2nd November Immigration: They Double Unit conference at £y Morden, Victoria & Albert Hotel, Water Street, Carlisle, organised by Greater Manchester Coalition of Displaced People (GMCDP). Details by email, kgucker@blueyonder.co.uk or 01212 378 8417.

1st November Immigration: They Double Unit conference at £y Morden, Victoria & Albert Hotel, Water Street, Carlisle, organised by Greater Manchester Coalition of Displaced People (GMCDP). Details by email, kgucker@blueyonder.co.uk or 01212 378 8417.

Freedom

Volume 46 Number 21

Anarchism

Anarchists work towards a secret of mutual aid and voluntary cooperation. We reject all government and economic repression.

Freedom Press is an independent anarchist magazine and radical newspaper, which comes out every two weeks, we produce books on all aspects of that theory and practice.

In our building in Whitechapel we run Britain’s biggest anarchist bookshop and host a social centre and meeting space, the Statement Club. We’re currently developing open spaces IT provision for activists to use.

Our aim is to explain anarchism more widely and to show that human freedom can only thrive when the institutions of state and capital have been abolished.

Changes

Readers will have noticed further changes in the last few weeks of Freedom, in addition to those which accompanied the redesign in September. These reflect changing personnel, and hence changing priorities, within the editorial group. Two of the editors from the last few years are currently reducing their commitment to in order to move on to other projects, while two of us are taking the group as new editors to replace them.

We consider the primary function of Freedom to be anarchist propaganda. As well as being a paper for people within the movement to read, it should represent the whole of that movement to people outside, who are trying to find our work out. We believe the paper should be based firmly on class struggle anarchism, but also give respect to other tendencies within anarchist thought. Freedom is, and will remain, a fortnightly newspaper, and we welcome submissions, but due to the constraints of space, we will continue to publish everything we receive. We’d like to encourage anyone who’s interested in writing more controversial or controversial articles that we can usually print to continue submitting them to us as Black Flag magazine for publication there. You can contact them at Black Flag, BM14, London WC1N 10X or email black.flag.magazine@free.com.

Submissions

Contributions are wanted for a new monthly culture and community magazine to draw links between underground hip-hop and punk scenes and class struggle activism.

The deadline for submissions will be Wednesday, 1st December. You can email us at submission@freedom.org.uk or by post to Freedom Press, PO Box 175, Roath, Cardiff, CF24 3XZ.

Next issue

The next issue will be dated 22nd November and the last day for copy is 15th November. You can send articles to us, at any time, at Freedom@freedom.org.uk.
Industrial news

Not all quiet on the industrial front

As strike days top one million are we heading into a new winter of discontent?

Industrial correspondents on national newspapers have had a pretty easy job of it in recent years, often having very little to write about. The story went like this – conflict at work was a thing of the past. Where unions existed, partnership was the order of the day. Strikes were becoming a dim memory, particularly in the public sector. This was of course rubbish. The story now has to be rewritten.

It seems likely that the number of days lost to strikes this year will beat 2002’s twelve year high of 1.3 million. The steady increase in industrial action, reported in previous issues of Freedom, continues apace. Strikes are looming or have taken place in the civil service, amongst Heathrow airport baggage handlers, in Britain’s nuclear industry, in Scottish nursery schools, amongst Brylcreem workers at Balfour and in the London Underground. The last couple of weeks have also, of course, seen 30,000-plus postal workers take wildcat action. The union was initially targeted by the suspension of a driver in London.

Improper

The second regular roundup of industrial action, strikes, occupations, ballots and direct action in the workplace from 16th October to 2nd November, brought to you by the Anarchists’ Workers Network and strikewatchUK.

Strikes

• Ninety thousand postal and council workers launched a one-day strike over London weighting allowances. The industrial action in London disrupted mail deliveries, schools and retail collection.

The following day 120 Transport and General Workers Union members attacked against 63 proposed job losses at Laurence Electronics. Intermet is a private company which carries out housing repairs and maintenance on behalf of the council. It is thought that the vast majority of their 424 colleagues refused to cross the picket lines and also downed tools.

• Student strike shut down Salford University. Power Plant who works voted on their first industrial action in thirty years over a long-running pay dispute. Some 1,700 GMB and Amicus members were to strike to equalise pay between different grades of staff.

• Bus drivers in North Ireland began a series of one-day strikes over the pay dispute. The strikes will affect Ulsterbus and Citybus services, and about 100,000 passengers.

• Seven hundred bus drivers crippled the public transport in Newcastle and Tyne and Wear, with a strike following the rejection of a new pay deal from Stagecoach. The company believes around three hundred routes would be halted, affecting around 100,000 passenger journeys.

• In Dundee nursery nurses struck for 48 hours at nursery nurses in Scotland. Five thousand nursery nurses in workplaces across East, North and South Ayrshire, Perth, Angus and Bute, Moray, Aberdeenshire, Dumfries and Galloway, Stirling, the Borders and Orkney are involved.

• Workers at troubled Belfast aerospace company Bombardier Shorts began industrial action on the weekend of the 1st November. As Freedom goes to press, EECG and Amicus members – 4,000 out of the 5,000-strong workforce – were to start an overtime ban.

• Two one-day strikes were staged by workers at the Yeovil based helicopter manufacturers Westland last week after union members rejected a new pay offer. More strikes are planned for November and December. Around four hundred staff from the Westland Transmissions site and a further 800 technical staff from the bargaining unit of Westland Helicopters were to walk out on November 2nd.

• Eight hundred mint (coin manufacturers) workers at the plant in Livingston, South Wales, return after walkout. The union Amicus says its members will stop work one day a fortnight until they get an increased pay offer.

Campaigns

A report after the McDonalds Workers Resistance (MWR) had several lots lost with a number of people leaving the role or the organisation, it looks like things are on the up again as in the last few days several new workers have indicated they would like to become involved. One of the things that is rejuvenating the resistance is the pay campaign for 6p an hour in the UK that was initiated by MWR in Birmingham.

As the news spreads through the workforce we face the strange prospect of negotiating directly with McDonalds for the first time ever. How will we get them to talk to us? Well, they will have no choice when we turn up on their doorstep. We have addresses and are not afraid to go door to door knocking... after all, it seems to work for the Jehovah’s Witnesses!

To publicise the pay campaign and generally raise the profile of the resistance, we have recently printed 200 stickers to give away to anyone in the UK who can speak up on our behalf. If you live in the UK, just send us an envelope stamped to the value of £3.20 to our address below, and we will also include free campaign leaflets and an introduction to McDonalds Workers Resistance.

Contact MWR, c/o 17 West Montgomery Place, Edinburgh, EH7 5NA. Email infowmauk.org.uk or see www.mwr.org.uk
How was it for you?

Annual anarchist bookfair ... biggest ever ... huge success ... over three thousand people ... largest anarchist event in the world ...

There's something about a successful anarchist bookfair that brings about feelings of better oppression and depression. All those small little tables with little vendors peddling their absolute crap. Okay, so it's a flea market for the materially challenged. But why do we have to revel in it? "You may not like my stuff, but that's because you lack my insight..." Yeah, right.

Because something is badly written, designed and printed doesn't make it worse. It just makes it badly written, designed and printed. Something to say needs presentation, and a good cover doesn't make a book the spasm of Dickens. What happened to people from the 1980s.

There were no scrappy little products and feel good. Perhaps we put it in the free table untainted by exclusiveness. And then nobody reads it, and it's thrown away at the end of the day. We make tackiness into a revolutionary virtue.

We're not a political movement; we're a religious one peddling a morality and lifestyle. An insular little sect peddling itself on its purity and exclusiveness. Settings were booked and held on the basis of "oh well, we suppose we better do something." If people couldn't see the inner beauty of what was being provided (meetings or printed) then that was down to the 'consumers' lack of knowledge.

Where are some of these vendors peddling their 'inner beauty' of what was being presented? Perhaps they are preventing reaching out to people, of trying to make a connection, of having something to say. I suppose Christians have some justification for peddling the same thousands of years old crap, but why do anarchists have to do the same? It's not just the lack of creativity, the lack of anything new, but the feeling of sticking to this code: Nothing new to say is just a death.

All these pictures of cats with their brains exposed are just our equivalent of the anti-abhorrents. And there is something essentially odd about basing a liberation movement on living things other than ourselves. Another fox saved while another dog on a string gets trampled by the bookfair. We even finance ourselves like a religion with just under half of the cost of the bookfair financed by paying the collection plate/bucket.

And at what point did it become so obligatory to be so religious. My resistance was about lack of constraints and a real freedom, not a code that marks people. Black books are black, please.

Lambeth has been in existence for nearly thirty years. Lambeth Council is now attempting to evict fourteen houses from it. On October 24th a large presence of concerned citizens scared off the bailiffs, and it was feared they would return at the end of October. On the 20th and 31st October, residents were on alert, building barricades and erecting a scaffolding tower. Police were on alert, building barricades and erecting a scaffolding tower. Police were on alert, building barricades and erecting a scaffolding tower. Police were on alert, building barricades and erecting a scaffolding tower.

And at what point did it become so mandatory to be so joyless. My revolution was about lack of constraints and a real freedom, not a code that marks people. That's why I've been a non-anarchist to the Bookfair, I'm embarrassed. People are embarrassed; they hear we're a group of losers. And then they come along to something less embarrassing. People are embarrassed; they hear we're a group of losers. And then they come along to something less embarrassing and less attractive than an Essex car boot sale, populated by people from the 1980s.

 Luckily anarchist realise this. What they want is to move back to the confines of Conway Hall and have the old mini-Bookfair with just the selected few. Where everyone you meet you know.

We can hand out leaflets to each other, talk on our broken food and drink in our usual comforted way.

Because we don't have anything new to say, and we don't want to say it well. We want to be a collection of young white males with far right authority issues rather than as an alternative vision of society. We've got no big, we're in danger of getting bigger. It's sad. It's time to downsize.

Martin
Workers march as new forms of self organisation develop in Brazil, according to the Anarchist Federation of Gaúcha (FAG)

From 22nd to 23th June there was a march from Gramado (Mercosur city) to Porto Alegre, in defence of the Emergency Funds for Work and Housing for about 2,310 unemployed families. The march was organised and carried out by the Committees of Popular Resistance (CRPs), the National Movement of Garbage Reclaimers (MNCR) and the Movement of Unemployed Workers (MUD). The current governor of the State, Germano Rigotto (PMDB) and his government had cancelled the project of the Fronts Emergenciais de Trabalho which had been set up in 2000 by these movements, and which were organised in the Metropolitan Area during 2001 and 2002 to give support to hundreds of families. The demand is

- minimum wage for one year for such unemployed families
- food subsidies of 10 Reais
- availability of microcredit for work projects

Organised in these movements, in which the FAG directly participates in the CRPs and in the MNCR, workers and unemployed workers are setting up bakeries, clothing groups, community halls, recycling exchanges, and have been strengthening their recycling associations, etc. Once financing is obtained, we will guarantee the support and the viability of these projects, that are, in the opinion of the FAG, benchmarks for the popular struggle. Yes, because as we all know, an empty bag will not stand up, and the people need to win work and income to have more and more vitality in order to move forward in the struggle. We don't want economic structures simply to win a few points and then we all be happy. We have never believed in this for a moment.

Economic structures are needed to feed and to give a minimum of dignity to those families who struggle in the social movements, and starting from that to go on struggling.

At the end of this march, the governor confirmed our list of demands. However, so far the only thing that has arrived was a miserable basket of basic goods that didn't last even two weeks. Therefore, our fight goes on pressing the government through marches, occupations, etc., while at the same time the CRPs have been growing reasonably well in the peripheral areas of Porto Alegre and the metropolitan area. The struggle for work is without a doubt central axis to mobilise this social movement, the residents of the city outskirts.

The committees of popular resistance

The CRPs are organisations of the residents of the urban periphery where the FAG contributes directly through direct social insertions, in other words, residents that belong to FAG and live the same drama as their neighbours. The CRPs, besides accomplishing the direct struggle for immediate conquests, are also an educational means for the popular participation of the people in all decisions that our day to day those values that we want to build: solidarity, mutual respect, active and direct participation, direct democracy, direct action, and an end to groups, apathy and divisions. How? Through what we call "popular actions", the residents participate directly in everyday actions, and from there, they carry out to practice the new values. This regular activities vary in accordance with the situation: child recreation, educational activities, popular festivals, community radio, community halls, community clubs, popular festivals and parties, etc. The important thing is to insert in the CRPs a regular group that exercises solidarity and struggle and that little by little can influence others.

The Movement of Garbage Reclaimers

This movement exists at a national level, and here in the Metropolitan Area the bases of the mobilised 'catadores' (the garbage reclaimers) are under our influence: both in the State and throughout Brazil itself there exist several other forces active in this movement, with the greatest influence being that of the Articulação de Lixo (the Movement of Garbage Reclaimers). The movement is organised through nuclei. Each recycling hangar or warehouse of materials can form a nucleus of the movement.

Today, there is a state organisation that amutivates the movement, and a federal organisation, that articulates it on a national level. This movement has been growing day by day, together with poverty and the casualisation of labour.

We have been active in this area since 1993, and the MNCR today is also the fruit of our efforts. One of the fights that we took part in was the one to obtain public resources to sustain the work structures of the 'catadores', who were not subsidised by the State or by local government, that left the workers to 'decide' to do a service that is, in effect, a public service and that helps to save the budgets of the municipal district for recycling, since the 'catadores' do it practically for free. Therefore, we struggle to obtain subsidies for this work from the State and the municipal authorities, to be administered directly by the CRPs. Both the CRPs and the MNCR look to strengthen from below four basic principles: class solidarity, class independence, grassroots democracy and direct action.

Our policy is to try to connect these movements to each other and to all the other struggles movements, like the MUD, the unions, neighborhood associations, schools, etc. The whole organised spectrum of the oppressed classes that are connected even remotely with the question of direct struggle is looking for solutions and united work. Our objective is, in the long term, to form a front of the oppressed, where several movements arrange for only one objec-

The direct struggle for their needs. Therefore, amid many difficulties, conflicts and small victories, we continue these movements, looking for relations and united work.

Serbia

More than 13,000 Serbian doctors went on strike for a 40% pay increase. They had already been working for two months without pay. The strike was called by the Anarkhi female health workers and the trade union of doctors.

Poland

People from FA Krakow (part of the Polish Anarchist Federation) participated in a picket organised by single parents (mostly women) against the government's plan to cut the funds for single parents. The government argues that it's trying to "decentralise" social services and bring it "closer to the people", by placing the cost of social services on the local government. The local government of course doesn't have funds for it, so in fact it's a way of liquidating the service. The police have pressed charges against some of the women, claiming the demonstration was illegal.

Canada

Almost three years after the large protests against the Summit of the Americas and FAA in Quebec City in April 2001, Canadian anarchist Jaggi Singh was tried in Quebec City and began on 19th January 2004. He is facing a penalty of up to two years in prison if convicted, though if found guilty a sentence of several months is more likely.

Jaggi has issued an appeal for assistance from the anarchist movement. If you can help in any way, please get in touch by e-mail at AnarchistLiquidation2003@yahoo.ca and at jaggi@trash.net. Also, if you can send him any money towards his legal costs, email him!

Iraq

Thirteen American servicemen were killed and more than 20 wounded in an attack on a US military Chinook helicopter. It has taken the heaviest toll on US personnel since the fall of Saddam in April. Villagers collected pieces of wreckage as souvenirs and inhabitants of nearby Falluja rejoiced in the achievements of their anti-piquetera brigade. Moves to criminalise social protest also appear to be in the agenda in Argentina. The MTDV are pressing the Argentine government to hold a thorough investigation into the massacre of 21 June 2002. They further demand a special benefits payment at the end of the year to all those in receipt of unemployment benefits; strong investment in production projects; an affordable housing plan for the unemployed; and a review by the employment ministry of plans to end unemployment benefits – and a guarantee by the government that these payments continue.
Editorial

Primitive

I was disappointed by the first Green and Black Bulletins, Freedom, 25th October. This isn't because I'm against freedom covering ecological issues, for that isn't my view. But the first two issues were too vague. They would benefit the paper immensely. Anarchism and ecology are intertwined and an absence of it in the last publication can be rooted in an ecological perspective. But I have reservations about the Bulletin's laudable call to make the Green Bulletins 'a primeval column', so excluding most forms of ecological anarchism from the start. To suggest that the Green Bulletins are 'genuine anarchism' is blinkered, sectarian and false. This, in turn, doesn't fill me with confidence for the future. As far as I can tell, nothing positive is about to happen, so there isn't anything positive to say about 'genuine anarchism' or, indeed, anarchism itself. The Bulletin's importance is that it is the paper of a new generation of anarchists.

This isn't the only convergence with Moore's suggestion to share with Lenin a 'vivid discussion over the question of social change. For Lenin, it's the creative abilities of the bulk of the population that are important. The Bulletin's value is that it is the paper of a new generation of anarchists.

For some, the Bulletin is a welcome here because they 'see' a change in what passes for anti-racist argument these days. Yet to many immigrant workers, it's 'good for the economy' because their illegal status means they work for pennies wages on two or three cars. It offers them nothing and it doesn't reassure a working class concerned about being undercut in the labour market. I'm sure those 200 million people who have been sent Western European to meet the new demand for labour. This follows a long tradition of recolonisation, an increased division of labour, shift work and piece work. Capital has always demanded immigrant workers to gain in cheap labour.

Moore suggests that capital needs the poor of the world to produce labour, capital needs it to be exploited. Some elements of capital still need low-paid illegal workers, but the greater need is for the lettering of labour. In other words, to argue that immigrants are 'good for the economy' misses the point and reduces the left to being interested only in the current economic system. To reduce the anti-racist argument to 'from outside' rob the benefit system and take work away.' I hope so, but let's wait and see.

Ian McKay

It's the elite

There's a gap in the logic of Paul Magarey's reply to my comments (Commentary, 25th October). He admits that many workers oppose immigration, yet he defers to the view that 'we' are the 99%. If they're not stupid, they must be racist. If they're not racist, they must be stupid. If they're both stupid and racist, they must be racists. If they're not stupid nor racist, they must be something else.

This isn't to say it's all their fault. Someone who receives a subsistence education, who reads The Sun and who has never been encouraged to think for her or himself, is under a lot of pressure to be stupid and racist. Working class disillusionment with the political process - the surprise is rather the few who manage to maintain critical awareness in spite of the context. So it's not so surprising that many anarchists and dissidents are based in colleges. Students are simply more likely than undeveloped working class peasants to develop the critical abilities necessary to understand and adopt radical ideas. Even those anarchists and lefites who live on grants and work in jobs that identify with the mass of the student body, 'from outside', by way of a universality of education.

The idea of 'shared experience' is misleading. What Paul refers to as 'shared' is a socially static, practically similar and homogenous group who identify with certain events, but no one can ever be convinced that an equal unwillingness to develop as they are, yet do not see any alternatives. Hence, I argue that the working class needs to become in a sense 'outside' what it is today in order to become in any way 'our class' for anarchists. Workers must undergo a qualitative change in their identity before they can become a revolutionary force.

This requires an intensive learning/anti-capitalist process, not a reassertion of a pre-conceived, collective identity. Hence, I suggest that the working class need to be the working class in order to pull this class 'outside' itself, so its identity, what it is and how it is, before deciding what it means and how it should be. I hope, as Paul does, that white workers, black workers and immigrant workers unite and fight for improved conditions. But such a struggle isn't a simple or logical outcome of the existence of similar needs. The choice to co-operate rather than compete is of crucial importance, based on a political decision or a high-level generalist approach. but the mutation of the working class power. The choice to fight against offices for those who influence is the simple, the choice to be consistent with the ethical approach in relation to immigrants.

This is because they think they're competing with the world. They aren't because they know that it comes to a fight in the present political context, they and the immigrants against the capitalist system. The struggles I want and want, cannot come about as a result of his proposed multi-culturalist idea of a transformative change (not merely an appeal) to what white workers think it is.

I disagree with Paul about difference and identity, because it strikes me that an alternative movement, constructed around what we have in common, the world system and racist immigration, doesn't exist. I see now Deleuze, Guattari and 'Spivak' as 'communities of resistance', yet he surely be racist! If somebody opposes immigration, she or he is necessarily stupid, racist, stupid and racist.

Are we to ignore these issues or dismiss them as devious middle class political manoeuvres? Of course, freedom necessarily exceeds exactness and sana, and necessitates a politics of difference. Anarchism is a very complex thing. I'm not advocating a 'simple revolution', and find it difficult to see how Deleuze and Guattari can be accused of 'simply' anything - that's the opposite, in fact! I wish these anarchist ideas were more widely accessible, but there's something to be said for the view that a politics of difference is concerned in explaining in any case you understand within the confines of the system's ideologies. Certain it has little in common with the radical, working, anti-racist Leef. Situationism, autonomism and deep ecology are closer parallels to what I see here.

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How many of those brought up on the Beano realised the serious intent behind some of its best-known characters, asks Piran Ray

L

e Baxendale was for many years a comic artist. Memirs, Plum and Bash Street Ur 40, currently showing at London's Cartoon Art Trust Museum, is a fifty-year retrospective of his work. Beginning his career as a freelance artist for the Beano, he'd sent his black and white drawings from Preston to Dundee, where staff artists at D.C. Thomson would add watercolour, ready for Interpress publication. His first creation was Little Plum, in April 1953, followed in rapid succession by Minnie the Minx that September and the Bash Street Kids in October. Baxendale states that the overriding philosophy behind his art is to "overcome the impersonality of large-scale capitalist commodities by putting into [his] drawings an intensity of passion that would make each printed copy of the Beano personal to the child." As a result of this spiral of "more passion, more response," artists, he helped the comic's circulation rise from 400,000 in 1953 to two million by 1960. (Some of the early cartoon strips appear in this exhibition having been saved from falling by digital copying from the archives.)

In hot pursuit, they sport a variety of WMDs, such as Elefunt Guns and Bears. In hot pursuit, they sport a variety of WMDs, such as Elefunt Guns and Bears. The futility of politics; the Ministry of Trade, Alan Clark. His Freedom Press, £3 cartoons by Donald Roum depict as a 'stiffness' crept into his drawing style. The main enemies are 'boys', headteachers, and a samba band on recent demos. There's much in this small gem of an exhibition to inspire anarchists and radicals of all hues.

The only difference is that the coal stocks under the ominous front lawn. Again, quite apt given the recent travails render any imminent change in the country (unlikely - "Washington and London had no intention of forcing a real 'regime change' on Iraq and, when the regime dissolved ... the US and UK attempted to rebuild it").

Wildcat: anarchists against bombs cartoons by Donald Roum Freedom Press, £3

My current library book is a volume of the diaries of the late Tony MP and Minister of Trade, Alan Clark. His diaries are bestsellers and they expose, devastatingly, the futility of policies; the way the government works, the way politicians lose the chauffeur-driven, top-hatted and tail-coated lifestyle, the rivalry, not between, but within the political parties. I was pulled up sharply by one story that Clark tells with pride. As different departments of government worked, "I could eat my own cauliflowers," he remarked. And in 1984-85 the Baxendale artwork appeared with the faculty of the mind and body working as one, but the artist's nervous system takes the strain."

The last section of Minnie, Plum and Bash Street Ur 50 concentrates on Baxendale's work from the Willy the Kid era. It features numerous examples of line-drawn characters such as Spotty Dog and, particularly, Baby Basil. It includes a wonderful set-piece drawn for the Women Against Pit Closures book, Deep Dugs, during the Miners' Strike of 1984-85. This shows several characters doing their bit to cut down the coal stocks under the ominous approach of the police. From 1990, Baby Basil appeared in the Guardian and Baxendale was able to give free rein to his political views for an adult audience. He used the opportunity to poke fun at a variety of social attitudes. In one series, three-year-old Basil opines that "boys don't cry," only to be castigated by his older friend Cynthia for indulging in "biological necessities." This strip ran until 1992 when Baxendale had to end them, again due to workload (though he continued to produce work elsewhere). The final exhibit is his poem, written specially for the exhibition. In this, the four Horsemen of the Apocalypse are redirected to the World Bank president's front lawn. Again, quite apt given the recent shenanigans in Cancun and elsewhere. M Baxendale also tells us that his cartoons have provided a "ridiculing companion of comedy" to walk beside him and to "nudge against the straight and narrow (and tell) warn of peril to avoid — in particular, the quack prescriptions of things how should be." There's much in this small gem of an exhibition to inspire anarchists and radicals of all hues.

Minnie, Plum and Bash Street Ur 50 is at the Cartoon Art Trust Museum (CAT), 113 Brunswick Centre, Bernard Street, London WC1, until 24th December. Tel 020 7728 7172. Loo Baxendale will be talking at CAT, 6.30pm on 11th November. Tickets £5. His own website is at www.reaper.co.uk

BOOKS

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There are just two hopeful signs in an otherwise grim situation. The first is the extent to which protests nearly undid their assault. The second, purchased at vast human cost (which means 'Iraqi and civilian' cost), is that Bush's current attacks render any imminent attack on the Iraq's neighbours unlikely. But never mind, George Baby. There's another junior dictator who's currently riding roughshod over human rights, and in an oil rich country to boot. The only difference is that the president of Karachi is pro-mosque. But what does that matter when you know, to paraphrase the words of your best buddy, that what you're doing is right?

Toby Crowe

Regime Unchanged is available from Freedom for £10.99 (add £1.10 postage in the UK, £2.20 elsewhere).

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The "Banding process" has a way of snuffing out the unpalatable truths behind every political situation, from the gross distortion of the arms trade in protecting British jobs to the equally significant need for ill-rewarded illegal immigrants to do the really important, but unappreciated, jobs the British shirk, but depend upon. The Wildcat is an anarchical berserker!

C.W.

Wildcat: anarchists against bombs is available from Freedom for £4 (postage free in the UK, add £1 elsewhere).

Regime Unchanged by Milan Rai
Photo, £10.99

"Soon Iraqis will see the great compassion of the US," George Bush promised earlier this year. Iraqis are still waiting, like everybody else, and on the evidence of Ali Bab's new book, we might have another long wait to come. The postwar 관심 to the same author's War Plan Iraq, Regime Unchanged describes the mendacity and political manoeuvring that allowed Bush and Blair to launch their assault.

Mal analyst the options for meaningful change in the country (unlike Bush — "Washington and London had no intention of forcing a real 'regime change' on Iraq and, when the regime dissolved ... the US and UK attempted to rebuild it").

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Mutual respect

I can understand why Nick Heath might not like my pamphlet. Revolution or Reform? Third Sumpostion, May 1994. But I would hope he'd try to put a little bit of objectivity into the fact that we are both trying to do the same thing, even if we don't agree on exactly how to do it. The state is not the only thing that can challenge capitalism. There are other forces at work. The state can be used to maintain the status quo, but it can also be challenged. And when it is challenged, it can change. We need to challenge the state, and we need to do it in a way that is effective and just.

As for my reducing anarchism to a matter of individuals, I think that's a misunderstanding. Anarchists believe that society is not just a collection of individuals, but that it is a whole entity. Anarchists believe that the state is a tool of the ruling class, but they also believe that it is possible to challenge the state and to overthrow it. Anarchists believe in the power of the people, and they believe that the people can use this power to change the world to their liking.

In conclusion, I think that mutual respect is important, but it is not enough. We need to challenge the state, and we need to do it in a way that is effective and just. Anarchists believe that society is not just a collection of individuals, but that it is a whole entity. Anarchists believe that the state is a tool of the ruling class, but they also believe that it is possible to challenge the state and to overthrow it. Anarchists believe in the power of the people, and they believe that the people can use this power to change the world to their liking.

Larry Gammon

Moral position

Once again, in Johnny Mole’s piece (“Words we use”, 11 October), we see anarchist violence defended by abstract generalizations. Johnny says that “real anarchism is not the use of brute force but of the use of reason and persuasion. When people use reason to change others’ minds, it is not an act of violence, but an act of collaboration.”

But this is a false distinction. Violence is not just a matter of brute force. It is also a matter of persuasion. When people use reason to change others’ minds, they are using a form of violence. Anarchists believe that society is not just a collection of individuals, but that it is a whole entity. Anarchists believe that the state is a tool of the ruling class, but they also believe that it is possible to challenge the state and to overthrow it. Anarchists believe in the power of the people, and they believe that the people can use this power to change the world to their liking.

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Ivan Redick

A sideways look

Since the showing of The Secret Policeman’s last month (a television foray into great ecstacy northern English police force), Chief Constables, police reformers, politicians and all the Queen’s men have been queuing up to denounce police racism. What is it that the BBC is, creating the ‘change that the race were tactics, called, and civil rights groups, tried to get the programme stopped. Some cops have threatened to leave work and some have called for the programme to be boycotted. But many see this as a herring.'

His solution: new training programmes to root out racist attitudes. I do not know how well this will work, but it is an obvious public interest defence. Additionally it is unfair for the police to have to carry the burden of proving their innocence. It is incumbent on those who believe police racism is true to prove it by putting their arguments forward in an open and fair manner.

In conclusion, it is clear that the police are racist. The problem is how to prove this. One solution is to introduce new training programmes to root out racist attitudes. But this is not enough. We need to challenge the state, and we need to do it in a way that is effective and just. Anarchists believe that society is not just a collection of individuals, but that it is a whole entity. Anarchists believe that the state is a tool of the ruling class, but they also believe that it is possible to challenge the state and to overthrow it. Anarchists believe in the power of the people, and they believe that the people can use this power to change the world to their liking.

Ivan Redick

New models

Written papers and balanced discussions have their place, but other ways of demonstrating and investigating political and social ideas may have certain advantages. Computer models of social interactions, with their rules, assumptions and outcomes may help people to get a feeling for the patterns of behaviour that may follow from a set of ideas and how changing some of these elements may change the behaviour. These models do not necessarily prove or disprove social theories, but they could help us to enter into a more dynamic interaction with ideological or academic terminology. And then, of course, provide a point for further discussion and writing. Computer strategy games provide a similar experience, although many argue that rapid, brute force of ourselves is to give away a tactical advantage to the other side. If we have many variations on the ‘King’s game’ theme, based on running the same program through different rules and to exploit this knowledge.

Essentially, anarchistic theorists should be able to show, given an acceptable set of human characteristics and a realistic environment, a model society without a hierarchical leadership should be able to form from orderly and sustainable relationships with each other and the environment. People disscussing anarchistic models should be able to change the models to reflect different social ideas and compare the results.

Anmol Sethi

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The quiz

1. On the 15th March 1933, who did three Korean anarchists, Park Chung-Ke, Wun Sun-Chum and Gung Bum, try to assassinate in Shanghai?

2. Who said, “You can’t have boss and brains at the same time. Get rid of one of them”?

3. At the Asia Pacific Economic Forum in October, what did business consultant Robert Bosch advocate?

4. What is the Year of Popular "Freedom"? How would you answer?

Answer on page 6.