Antifascists from London travelled down to Brighton on 22nd April to link up with comrades from Brighton Anti-fascists (BAf) and protest against the March For England (MFE) due to take place in the town.

MFE is the usual rag bag collection of failed football hooligans, pissed up dimwits and EDL hangers-on that know the local Wetherspoons inside out but very little else. Despite claiming to be 'non-racist', previous marches have degenerated into racist abuse and last year fascist infiltrators amongst the kettled counter-demonstrators were responsible for a number of attacks on protesters.

This year was to be a different matter and BAf are to be congratulated for all the groundwork put into organising an effective and well-stewed militant response that saw upwards of 600 people on the streets delaying the march, curtailling the route, showing the dejected marchers and giving the cops a run for their money too. Whilst the counter demo was genuinely representative and the chant 'Whose streets? Our streets' actually had resonance, the MFE consisted of about 80 people, far down on the 300 organisers expected. EDL banners and an Essex Infidels flag were unfurled at the station and the march contained known EDL faces from Portsmouth and Brighton. However a ‘firm’ of London and local EDL led by Joel Titus have earned themselves the nickname ‘Marlborough Light-Weights’ after a smaller group of anti-fascist stewards confronted them on two occasions, sending them packing.

All in all a good day’s work. A very strong message was sent that fascists are not welcome!
NEWS

ROUNDING UP OCCUPY

Outside Mile End the winter has not been kind to Britain's Occupy movement, with large sections of 2011's big tent movement shutting down under a combination of legal orders and cold weather. But supporters of the loose-knit community are preparing for a hoped resurgence in interest as a dry and warm summer draws near and the Olympics behemoths continue to settle its concrete bulk over East London. The early pace has been set by Occupiers at Leyton Marsh, who had been blocking action against attempts to grab public parkland for an Olympic basketball court at the end of March. After a propping start, protestors ran into legal problems as the courts were called in on 4th April, ruling that they were at the site illegally. Police went in five days later, arresting six Occupiers for breach of the peace as they had been in the camp. Simon Moore, 29, Daniel Ashman, 27, and Olavriace, 25, were jailed for five days each.

Despite a legal challenge, the court ruled on 18th April that the protesters had no right to challenge against their eviction, giving the government the green light to snatch yet more of London's precious green space.

In Finsbury Park meanwhile, the main site of London Occupy since its eviction from St Pauls in February, the mood is more upbeat with celebrations of its six-month anniversay and a jail sentence for the government. But supporters of the loose-knit community organisers hope will re-energise interest in taking people against government austerity and the rule of the 99%.

In a statement, Finsbury Occupy said: "Occupy London is set to strike back as on the one hand an occupation took place on a campus at Oxford Brookes at the end of April despite torrential rain and mud. So we were in place as this article goes to press, with plans for talks, music, banner making and an ongoing debate with students and the media of the nature of the economic crisis. On the other, one of the longest-running Occupations in Nottingham has announced it is to close after legal manoeuvres from the council threatened to cause serious financial damage to volunteers.

Leonard CAPLEGO'S 99%

The protests have failed. A large group came together and inspired themselves with stories about how the world could be changed if everyone stood together and, for a few weeks, it seemed they might be right. They claimed to be part of the revolutions in the Middle East. Occupy Wall Street was fighting in the belly of capitalism. St Pauls clergy tripped over themselves to resign. But civilains being gunned down in Egypt, Libya and Syria isn't a strong argument for pacifism. The smarter Occupiers moved from the cold and took a more political stand, turning a UBS building into a Bank Of Ideas. But without the 99% coming up they lost their spaces, eventually being evicted.

The politics moved on to Finsbury Square and St Pauls, leaving the inspired homeless to split into 57 varieties of occupation, spreading across London to pass on a box of pacifism, conspiracy theories and spiritualism.

The common theme to all the camps at the moment is that they are mostly made up of homeless people. Bolstered by homeless kids, people with mental health problems and unemployed migrants, casualties of the cuts, the doss houses are full and there's no temporary housing.

Occupy are at the point of building shanty towns out of the scraps of urban wasteland and open parks. Where can people go except to the camps? There's a tent and coffee for you. If you pay lip service to a Rainbow Tribe you've got shelter for a few weeks... better than a night alone on the streets.

The government's attempt to impose work-for-benefits schemes on benefit claimants has run into severe problems in the last month as legal issues mix with continuing protests at participating companies.

Workforce, which requires jobseekers to work for private companies or face a loss of benefits, is being challenged in high court by Cal in June.

Cait was forced to quit her voluntary work in a museum, which was directly relevant to her career, so she could stack shelves at Poundland - or face losing her only income.

She is claiming the sanction is an affront to her human rights and, if she wins, the ruling could open the doors for up to 50,000 affected jobseekers to do the same. Meanwhile A4e, the firm administering Workforce, has simultaneously come under scrutiny after no less than six of its employees were arrested following allegations they had lied about how effective they had been in getting people into work.

A4e, which is owned by former 'back to work' taskforce Emma Harrison, is the main company covering the back to work 'market', created in the wake of Department of Work and Pensions privatisation schemes. And beyond legal threats, organised protest and disruption is growing as an anchor against national day of action saw private companies picketed in twenty towns and cities across Britain on 31st March.

This was followed by a number of one-offs which have dogged firms from Tesco to Holland & Barrett, and even the headquarters of the CWU union for its leadership's role in supporting Workfare at the Royal Mail.

More actions were rolled out on Mayday organised by the Solidarity Federation (SolFed) and community organisation the Edinburgh Coalition Against Poverty has scored a victory as it used direct action tactics to win the right for claimants to have representatives attend meetings with A4e.

Despite these growing problems, the government has continued to try and tough it out, backing down in its demands for compulsory work only in the cases of young unemployed people and where high street chains have withdrawn support – and even this may only be temporary. Over 100 people over the age of 18 can still be caught in the government’s rapidly-expanding Mandatory Work Scheme or the Community Action Plan aimed at the long-term unemployed.

In a statement, SolFed noted: “Bosses prefer not having to pay for workers. Instead, we are all paying to subsidise their profits. Protest have already forced some to pull out of the scheme. Let’s make it all of them.”

Notable participating companies: Citizens Advice Bureau, Remploy, Disability Works, A4e, Serco, G4S, Atos, Pimlott, Burton, Boris, McDonalds, Arcadia, Holland & Barrett

CHANGES AT THE PAPER

This issue of Freedom is the first to have been produced without Dean Talent for two years, as he and the collective have parted ways. We wish Dean all the best and thank him for his work on the building, the paper and the website over the last two.

With the editor gone and the appointment of a new editor learning, the collective as a whole is taking the opportunity to take a step back and ask where we wish to go next with the newspaper.

We’ve got our own ideas on this but would welcome your feedback and indeed if you have a bit of free time, your help!

We’re back on the hunt for writers, sub-editors, people to help with marketing and distribution, and are looking at ways to raise money to keep the old thing ticking over. Get in touch!
On Tuesday 27th March, the House of Lords passed the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Bill, sending it back to the House of Commons. This event, very much unreported in the mainstream press, caused waves in the squat scene since section 145 of the bill proposes to criminalise squatting in residential buildings. As SQUASH (Squatters Action for Secure Homes) commented, “the proposed legislation will have impacts on the most vulnerable people in society, will empower unscrupulous landlords and will burden the justice system, police and charities.”

A report by SQUASH has made it clear that the cost of criminalisation will dwarf any presumed benefits. Presumably most people reading this will agree that criminalisation is a step in the wrong direction and much has already been written about the legislation in general terms so in this short piece we aim to focus specifically on the impacts for political activism. Occupation as resistance takes many forms. Recently, perhaps because squatting has been under threat, there have been plenty of actions – Cardiff has a new social centre (the Red and Black Umbrella); the previously rented Forest Cafe was squatted in Edinburgh; the Hinkley Barnstormers drew attention to the planned construction of a new nuclear power station in the West Country; the Citadel of Hope (an old Salvation Army hall) was cracked in Sheffield and campaigners replaced a phased out social centre (the Red and Black Umbrella); the previously rented Forest Cafe was squatted in Edinburgh; the Hinkley Barnstormers drew attention to the planned construction of a new nuclear power station in the West Country; the Citadel of Hope (an old Salvation Army hall) was cracked in Sheffield and campaigners replaced a phased out social centre (the Red and Black Umbrella). Alongside these great initiatives, there have been plenty of illegal evictions of other projects. In London, the School of Ideas was illegally evicted the same night as the St Paul’s occupation, and then quickly demolished. Previously, a freshly squatted Iraqi bank and was illegally evicted the same night as the St Paul’s occupation, and then quickly demolished. Previously, a freshly squatted Iraqi bank and were illegally evicted soon after. Squats and a proposed law change will not have much impact. Just as those desperately in need of a place to sleep will still enter derelict buildings, activists will still use the empty – there’s more than enough to go round in this time of austerity. Only a small percentage of Britain’s estimated 720,000 empty buildings are actually squatted.

A group of squatters recently opened a shop in Brighton, selling fruit and veg by donation. It’s been wildly popular and shows what can be done with the empty properties blighting every high street. Of course the shop iszoned commercial, not residential (although it comprises one land registry item with the flat upstairs) so it would be ‘safe’ under the proposed legislation.

It remains to be seen how residential will eventually be defined and as a supposed legal brain said recently “that there will at some point be an offence of squatting in commercial buildings […] seems inevitable. The question is simply how soon.” Stand by for smear stories in the media about raves and dangerous artists using warehouses.

If we take a brief look at Europe, in Spain squatting was criminalised in the late 1990s and interestingly, the numbers of squats subsequently increased. The law appears to be unenforceable, with only a few cases being brought so far. In the Netherlands, the squat ban introduced in October 2010 only seems to present at being applied in promenades-extend from buildings linked to trap- enhouse-6295728.html. Meanwhile the squatters will keep on squatting. In London we do not expect the Met to bother with squats more than usual, they’ve got bigger fish to fry, although social centres and the like will still receive undue confrontation, but as you can see, those battles are already being waged. Once squatters are illegalised, despite broad public sympathy they will soon be portrayed as domestic extremists / terrorists, the ‘bad’ activists as opposed to the ‘good’. This may sound paranoid, but there are already precedents, such as the Bloomsbury Social Centre being profiled by the Met’s SO15 Counter Terrorism unit.

In the meantime squatting offers us all a chance to contest definitions of public space and to establish autonomous spaces from which to organise. Whether these spaces are defined as illegal or not seems quite frankly irrelevant. Keep on squatting!
Palestinians hungry for freedom

 Barely a week goes by these days without Palestinian detainees announcing a hunger strike in protest at their treatment by the Israeli prison system. Yet, the world has been pretty much left in the dark as more snippets of information trickle out about what is turning into a cascade of resistance. Now, as Palestinians’ marked Prisoner’s Day on the 17th April, 1,200 prisoners declared an open-ended hunger strike. Demands include an end to prolonged solitary confinement and night searches of prisoners and their cells.

The protesters are in good company. At the end of March, Hisham Shalal, Bilal Diab and Thaer Halahla were finally released from administrative detention, ending her 44-day hunger strike. However, despite being in critical condition she was exiled to Gaza instead of being able to return to her family home of Burqin in the northern West Bank. There were approximately twenty other Palestinian prisoners on hunger strike in solidarity with Shalal, a small percentage of more than 300 Palestinian’s currently being held without charge.

Another striker, Hashan al Safadi was rushed to hospital on Friday 7th April after fainting on the 33rd day of his refusal to take food. Also in hospital are Omar Abu Shalal, Bilal Diab and Thaer Halahla. All are being held without charge. What is glaringly obvious is the need for international solidarity activists to work tirelessly to highlight these acts of non-violent resistance and help bring Israel’s hidden policies to light.

According to the Israeli Prisons Service, as solidarity activists to work tirelessly to highlight these acts of non-violent resistance and help bring Israel’s hidden policies to light. As with other Palestinian prisoners on hunger strike in solidarity with Shalal, a small percentage of more than 300 Palestinian’s currently being held without charge.

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Anders Breivik did not say ‘self defence’

Anders Behring Breivik does not deny that he killed eight people and injured 200 others in Oslo, then went on to shoot and kill 69, mostly teenagers, at a youth camp on the island of Utøya. On the first day of his trial on 16th April 2012, he was reported in the English-language media as telling the court, “I acknowledge the acts. But I do not plead guilty. I did it in self-defence”. He spoke in Norwegian, and I do not read in English quoted the word of the court interpreter, who much later issued a clarification. ‘What Breivik said was not “I did it in self-defence”, but “I did it out of necessity”.

The misinterpretation may not be inexcusable. The word ‘self’ does not always mean ‘self’ in the ordinary, mundane sense of a self-aware person. Sometimes, for instance in political cartoons, nations or ambitions of its own, independent of the individuals who comprise it.

This way of thinking may have been current among the militaristic nations of classical antiquity, and is certainly present in modern fascist ideology. Max Stirner, the author of Der Einzige und sein Eigentum (‘The ego and its own’), is commonly reckoned a precursor of anarchism, because he advocated that individualists should make decisions for themselves, and not sacrifice themselves to causes like patriotism. But Hitler’s mentor Dietrich Eckart, a deeply patriotic fascist, proclaimed himself a follower of Stirner, because when Stirner wrote of ‘self’, Eckart thought he meant the German nation, as a separate, self-aware entity.

Whatever Breivik actually said, he seems to have swallowed the crazy idea that the European race is a more important ‘self’ than himself.
Greece: On-going austerity demonstrations in Greece have been stepped up following the tragic death of Dimitris Christoulas. Dimitris was a 77-year-old retired pharmacist who had found himself poverty stricken due to government austerity measures. During the rush hour he travelled to the Greek Parliament building, stood outside, and then shot himself through the head. His death sparked a new wave of demonstrations and increased police brutality. His suicide note explained that he had chosen to take his own life as he did not want to have to rummage through bins for sustenance, choosing instead to take his own life. He also called on the ‘young people’ of Greece to take up arms and hang the traitors of this country at Syntagma square, just like the Italians did to Mussolini in 1945.

Russia: Automotive workers at a factory in Kaluga who supply Volkswagen have ended a strike after they thought they had won significant victories relating to pay, and union recognition. This was in spite on many attempts by the company to break the strike. Bosses brought in university students, office staff, construction workers, and workers from rival car manufacturers in order to carry on production. The striking workers had managed to prevent scabs and deliveries from entering the factory, but unfortunately, since the strikers returned to work they have seen scabs receive bonuses; they have been threatened with disciplinary measures, or demotion if they do not leave the union. The bosses are also in the process of taking legal action against the union relating to the legality of the strike.

Canada: Anti-fascist activists and hundreds of people from the local community managed to prevent an annual ‘white pride’ march taking place from march to take place in Edmonton. Within minutes of the march commencing, anti-fascists blocked their path and chased them off the streets. The fascists took refuge in an underground railway station and had to be provided with safe passage out of the city by the police. No Pasaran!

USA: The FBI has raided a facility in New York, seizing a server that is used by Reispo and other right-wing groups. The removal of the server means that hundreds of email accounts have been closed as well as email lists belonging to anarchist groups, gay rights groups, community groups, and free speech groups. The FBI has described the act as a “sledgehammer of email accounts have been closed as well Riseup and other progressive groups. The FBI has raided a facility in New York, seizing a server that is used by Reispo and other right-wing groups. The removal of the server means that hundreds of email accounts have been closed as well as email lists belonging to anarchist groups, gay rights groups, community groups, and free speech groups. The FBI has described the act as a “sledgehammer

Police close down social centres

There has been a massive police operation in the Exarchia district of Athens which has seen two anarchist social centres closed down and all occupants evicted. At around 5pm on 20th April the police smashed windows and doors to gain entry and arrested all 20 people who were inside. The two anarchist spaces had only been occupied for two weeks, one of which was due to have an opening event the following day.

It is believed that the decision to close down the centres had been taken by E. Tentes, a prosecutor at the Athens High Court whose career had started when he was appointed to his post by the right-wing military junta in the early 1970s.

The police are claiming that the centres are being used as “laboratories for explosives”, despite there being no evidence to corroborate their allegations. The Greek media are claiming that the evictions are just the first stage of a wider operation to close down anarchist havens around the city. Just two days after the evictions, one of the centres has been re-occupied by hundreds of people, who removed the steel plates that covered the doors and windows. The police were looking on, but made no attempt to prevent them from entering the building. Following the re-occupation, over 1,000 people attended a solidarity concert organised by the social centre collective.

Economy

The state of Michigan seems to be nearing the appointment of an unelected emergency manager to take over the city of Detroit. Freedom has reported before on this trend, where (as the economic crisis deepens) cities and municipalities seize the opportunity to put in unelected managers to run them – often in the interests of capital and the elite.

Health

A report by the National Women’s Law Center shows that women are paying US$1 billion (£630 million) more each year than men for the same health insurance coverage. In the states that permit ‘gender rating’ 92% of the top plans charge women more – even though most of those plans do not cover maternity care! In most states, female non-smokers are also charged more than male smokers – again because they are women.

Surveillance

According to ‘Wired’ magazine in mid-March revealed details of the United States’ largest spying complex – ‘Stellar Wind’ and will occupy almost a million square feet and cost nearly US$2 billion (£1.3 billion) to complete with an estimated annual energy usage alone of 2.5 gigawatts. To pump 1.7 million gallons of liquid a day, manage air and sewage as well as cool the servers (27°F) will cost around US$1.6 billion. The site will be self-contained and self-sustaining – due up to three days in an emergency. The purpose of those servers – which are likely to have almost unimaginably massive speed, power and storage capacity! To intercept, tap, monitor, gather and listen in on virtually all emails, cell-phone conversations and exchanges of data originating inside the US as well as abroad. Also included are private individuals’ Google searches, parking receipts, travel itineraries, bookstore purchases and the like. According to the ‘Wired’ report’s author, James Bamford, the NSA lost its lead in the 1990s, failing to predict various attacks on the 1% inside and outside the country. To rectify that, it apparently plans to capture, if necessary decoded/encrypted and detect patterns in... everything!

As similar attempts in the UK to track almost anything in anyone’s life, a new investigation by the American Civil Liberties Union (the equivalent of Liberty

Notes from the US

Notes from the US

Wildcat strikes in Poland

Metalworkers fight back against casualisation

Around 400 metalworkers employed at the Huta Batory ironworks in Chorzów, Poland started a wildcat strike on 2nd April. The bosses had been dismissing staff on a weekly basis, including 50 in the previous week. They then replaced them with agency workers who were paid around 50% of permanent staff wages. The management have made no secret of their intentions and have announced that their long term aim is to have around 80% of the workforce on temporary agency contracts.

The workers had become disillusioned by negotiations between their ineffective trade union and the company management, and decided to walk off the job. They immediately blockaded the factory entrance and refused to let any deliveries in or out.

The bosses responded by hiring large groups of private security guards to try and break the strike. Word quickly got around the local community and that day several hundred people travelled to the factory to support the strikers. Several buses full of security staff arrived, but they were confronted by a hostile crowd and decided to drive away.

Members of the ZSP (Polish section of the International Workers Association) went to picket the company headquarters in Warsaw, and unexpectedly they found the offices to be closed.

Later that day the company announced that they intend on closing the factory, sacking over 100 people who they believed to be trouble makers with immediate effect, and locking out all the remaining workers.

Two weeks after the strike started, bosses organised a shareholders meeting in Warsaw. Members of the ZSP joined ironworkers in picketing and disrupting the meeting.

Tellingly, the only item on the agenda was regarding the decision to close the factory, timescales and how assets were to be liquidised.

Workers are convinced that the decision by the bosses to disregard the agreed ‘negotiation arrangements’ with the unions, and to recruit agency workers was a deliberate attempt to provoke a dispute and enable them to sack large groups of workers for going on an illegal strike. This would have the added benefit on enabling the bosses to ‘bypass’ expensive group redundancy agreements.

Alchemas, the company that runs the ironworks has recently issued its annual accounts which showed that it had made an 800% increase in profits over the last twelve months. The company is owned by one of the richest families in Poland, who have a large portfolio of other companies and are alleged to have a fortune of around 1.8 billion.

Resources

American Civil Liberties Union: www.aclu.org
National Woman’s Law Center: www.nwlc.org
Wired magazine: www.wired.com
The Dutch government has collapsed after only 18 months in power. Prime Minister Mark Rutte and his cabinet resigned after they were unable to reach an agreement with other parties over the 2013 budget, including proposed austerity cuts in the Netherlands. Queen Beatrix accepted the resignation, however Rutte will stay in power as a caretaker government while Dutch political parties decide how to proceed. Elections may be held as early as 27th July.

Rutte’s liberal-conservative coalition had strongly backed the Eurozone’s fiscal union treaty, urging that Greece be penalised for continuing its cuts, despite the figures being “very, very disappointing” and clearly showing that austerity is not generating the promised results.

In the current round of budget talks, the Dutch deficit was revealed to be 4.6% of gross domestic product, well above the 3% limit for Eurozone countries. Rutte’s proposed budget included €19 billion in spending cuts, in order to bring the deficit down to 3% next year. The government could be fined €1.2 billion if unable to reach this target. Rutte’s coalition is facing strong criticism from the Labour party, the Dutch Central Bank and the government’s own Central Plan Bureau. Rutte’s minority government was originally proposed to run until 2016, but was reduced to five years after the collapse. Consequently, the Netherlands have a many-pronged battle behind tough Eurozone rules, particularly the 3% deficit limit and in 2011 proposed that heavily indebted states be taken into “guardianship” under the direct control of a European commissioner. As caretaker, Rutte will submit a provisional budget on April 10th for future governments to build on.

The Malatesta Club was an anarchist social club with its own hired premises, founded in 1954. It hired its premises full time, but did not use them full time. On some days, rented it to other organisations, one of which was the African Forum, a group of politicians from the British Empire in Africa hoping to take power when their countries became independent. Oppression was rife in the 1950s, but all the inhabitants of British subjects with the same legal rights, in London, as other British subjects. Black Britons, however, suffered from the widespread belief that black people were inherently inferior to white people.

Members of the African Forum came to see what anarchist club nights were like, and four of them became regulars of the Club. Manny Malam, professionally known as “Rufus Segar”, was the impresario who had the idea of hiring the room. He published and edited The African at Home and Abroad, printed by Express Printers, which was owned by Freedom Press. Philip Saison, who was an Express Printer, was also the prime mover for the foundation of the Malatesta Club, so Manny was there from the beginning.

Manny was a Benin, a son of Benin nobility (the European-imposed border of modern Benin cuts through the ancient Kingdom of Benin stretching from Benin City (in Nigeria), Ria Milon, who worked at Express Printers, said she believed he was an anarchist, but he had not spoken to her because she found him attractive. In fact, he was more of a Maoist.

Manny taught me the rudiments of Nigerian politics, which I found useful in the 1970s, when the Prime Minister of East Nigeria, one of the British delineated regions, declared himself independent country, ‘Bafeta’, to prevent it from being divided into smaller regions by the new federal government. Some British radicals were misled into thinking this was a move for freedom. Manny also attracted me to some useful Yoruba greetings. In 1963, I heard that ‘Funfun l eye nsu, funfun leye nsu’, which is Yoruba for ‘Whiteness is dead by birds’. An English woman invited him home and offered him food, by which he said he was insulated, because where he came from, food was only offered to beggars. A well-educated man, he must have known that in England it is good manners to invite strangers to tea, so his pretence of feeling insulted was very rude.

After Wenike Briggs returned to Nigeria, Omubu saw himself as the senior Ijo resident in London, and took the name of Omubu Briggs. When he returned to Nigeria himself, it was as editor of a newspaper owned by Wenike Briggs.

Beginning the first elections after Nigerian independence, he became Minister of the Federal government, and subsequently in several other federal governments of different political complexities. Later, he was a lawyer of some local importance.

Susaku Omubu was another Ijo, a journalist employed in London as a sub-editor on the News Observer. Omubu, a lively guitarist, entertained at the Malatesta club with African-style songs of four bars, continually repeated. One song, in English, was “Never marry a white woman, or you will go hungry”, changing after many repetitions to “Never marry a white woman. All you get is fish and chips”. Much hilarity was caused among the Africans when English people joined in songs in African languages, such as for instance ‘Funfun I eyi nsu, funfun leye nsu’, which is Yoruba for ‘Whiteness is dead by birds’. An English woman invited him home and offered him food, by which he said he was insulated, because where he came from, food was only offered to beggars. A well-educated man, he must have known that in England it is good manners to invite strangers to tea, so his pretence of feeling insulted was very rude.

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Donald Routon
Private health firms’ tax grab exposed

While in public they have been presenting themselves as the future of the NHS, a Corporate Watch investigation into the accounts of five of the major private healthcare companies has found a use of tax havens and tax avoidance schemes that Barclays or Vodafone would be proud of.

Spire Healthcare

Spire is one of the biggest private healthcare providers in the UK. It treats 25% of its patients through the NHS, providing operations such as hip replacements. Spire was formed in 2007 after private equity firm Cinven bought 23 hospitals from Rupa for £1.4bn. Since then it has acquired 12 more hospitals to take its current total to 37. The company has said it is aiming to be a “provider of choice” to Lansley’s new GP company has said it is aiming to be a

Care UK

Care UK is one of the biggest private providers of NHS treatments, is the largest operator of independent sector treatment centres and also operates GP practices and out-of-hours services, NHS walk-in centres and Private Clinical Assessment and Treatment Services around the country.

The company has had contracts with all of the current Strategic Health Authorities, works with one in three Primary Care Trusts and is currently bidding to take over the management of the NHS George Eliot Hospital in Nuneaton. It also runs 85 residential homes and provides care for over 17,000 people across the UK.

Previously a publicly listed company, it was bought by the private equity company Bridgepoint Capital in 2010. The investment was seen as a way of taking advantage of the credit crunch, increasing its levels of debt and introducing a tax avoidance scheme that sees interest payments on borrowings and dividends on shares channelling money out of the company.

Care UK paid £151m in finance costs in 2010. £52m of this was the interest on a £250m bond that had to be issued for Bridgepoint to pay it in the first place. £8m is going in interest payments on £130m of loan notes – essentially IOUs – Care UK issued on the Channel Islands stock exchange straight after its acquisition. Usually when a UK company borrows from a non-UK company it has to pay 25% of the value of the interest to UK tax authorities. But there are exceptions to this, one being the Channel Islands stock exchange which is eligible for a “quoted Eurobond exemption” – meaning the interest payments are taken off Book UK’s taxable earnings.

In addition, £8m a year is going straight to the Bridgepoint fund investors that bought Care UK as dividends on £126m of ordinary shares. Customers now pay into the company and a significant part of the proceeds are going straight into the pockets of the Bridgepoint fund.

But its accounts show that, when it does, those owners are well placed to minimise these tax burdens. CareUK’s corporate structure is far from the social enterprise model its publicity claims. Circle Health Ltd – the company that actually provides healthcare – is 50.1% owned by a company called Circle Holdings, with the other 49.9% owned by Circle Partnership. Circle Partnership is part-owned by Circle employees and is the social enterprise part.

But while this may mean some of its staff benefit when the company starts making a profit, as it is registered in the British Virgin Islands, any such profits will not be shared. Companies registered in the Caribbean island do not have to pay tax on dividends from investment in a UK company. Companies registered in the British Virgin Islands do not have to make their accounts public – and Circle did not respond to Corporate Watch’s requests to see them – so we cannot see exactly how much of the Circle Partnership is owned by its employees. But Circle Holdings’ financial statement shows that at least 10% of shares in Partnership are held by a company called Health Partners Limited, a “wholly owned subsidiary of Health Trust (Jersey), a family trust of which the Chief Executive Officer (former Goldman Sachs bigwig Ali Parsa) is a beneficiary” and which, as suggested, is registered in Jersey – another tax haven!

General Healthcare Group

GHG describes itself as “the leading provider of independent health care services in the UK”. It owns BMI Healthcare, the biggest private healthcare provider in the UK. BMI has a network of over 70 hospitals and clinics, which treat NHS patients through the Chiswick and Book system, and is looking to sign more NHS contracts in the near future.

In December last year it signed a contract to provide procurement and consumables purchasing on behalf of four London NHS trusts. It has strongly argued more patients should use private providers within the NHS.

GHG is owned by a consortium of companies including private equity firms Apax Partners, London & Regional and Brookline, alongside South African hospitals giant Netcare which holds a controlling 50.1% share.

The GHG deal was financed by borrowing and issuing bonds for a total of £1.9bn from a variety of third party sources. As this was all set up pre credit crunch, the interest rates are low, though conditional.

The proceeds for almost £400m of asset-backed bonds issued by the company in May 2007 for example makes clear that companies within this group must be resident for tax purposes in the UK.

Ramsay Health Care

Ramsay, Australia’s biggest private hospital chain, bought Capio UK in 2007, acquiring its 22 hospitals and nine Independent Sector Treatment Centres for NHS patients. Almost 40% of Ramsay’s work is with the NHS, a proportion that has increased for the past five years. A 5% rise in NHS work over the last year came in large part from the increase in NHS work the company was getting through the Channel Islands.

Ramsay’s accountants will be more interested in their parent company’s tax authorities that HMRC. In 2010, Ramsay UK borrowed £57m from RHC Finance Ltd, a subsidiary of its Australian parent registered in the Caymans, to finance the acquisition of a 57% share of French chain Proclif, now re-branded as Ramsay Santé. This led to £1.5m leaving the UK for the Caymans in interest payments.

Why the company routed the financing for its investment through the Caymans is unclear as RHC Finance’s accounts are not made public. When asked, Ramsay UK told Corporate Watch that RHC is the subsidiary of its Australian parent and the UK company does not have any information about its operations.

A longer and fully referenced version of this article is available on the Corporate Watch website: corporate-watch.org/?lid=4251
**INTERVIEW**

Broke but making films

Award winning film-maker, writer and director Greg Hall talks...


How did you come across radical politics?
The first event that evoked a political response in me was the anti-war protest before the attack on Iraq. I was at art school and I remember we organised some street parties amongst the students and went along as a contingent to the big demos. I was coming away from the protests with bundles of propaganda.

Radical politics began to have more of an effect on me. In my second year I was making a film project about the 121st squad in the 1980s, looking at the Brixton riots and the Whitechapel Anarchist Group and it was an excuse to have a pint with Ian.

I went to a few Class War meetings, mainly because I was on the fringes of the political scene and then I came across Ian Bone’s winning film-maker, writer and director of Kapital (2007) and Bash the Rich (2004), SSDD.

I wanted to get involved with political work but there had been a lot of stuff that had happened in the WOBMLES, so a few of us decided to form the Whitechapel Film Group (WFG). There was always a kind of becoming a big thing, bigger than it actually was. It gained a media reputation; really WFG was just a crew of good people that wanted to have fun. Radical politics had been eyed by Roots, but they were something that we just wanted to have fun, we learnt our politics as we did it, it was a good laugh.

Has politics influenced your films?
George Orwell was asked “Do you think art makes politics as we did it, it was a good laugh. We feel that as a film-maker I need to stand up and put ideas out there that can combat the dominant culture.

All you get now is a remake of Shakespeare, a rom com, a ‘how wonderful Britain is’ take on life. Films coming out about the Queen, Margaret Thatcher or the King’s lisp. They’re not critical, they don’t engage the audience into asking questions. If there’s a film set on an estate then it’s got to be a gangster film, working-class youth depicted as violent stereotypes.

In my films I try to show real life, reflecting working class culture because there’s an authenticity there, even if it’s broken into little pockets. In The Plague a lot of my best actors were untrained, they were kids from those estates. If you’re making a story about kids from a gang, you might not be from that exact experience so getting an actor that is brings an authenticity and realism to it that doesn’t exist in mainstream cinema.

Orwell’s answered “to even suggest that is a political argument”. For me film-making, media, culture, it’s used for political means. Everywhere we look from billboards to TV there is a continuing war of communication. I think that as a film-maker I need to stand up and put ideas out there that can combat the dominant culture.

Even a lot of a change in terms of online distribution, you’re never going to get away from people wanting to come together and watch a film, which is what cinemas used to be. But, the multiplexes have been shutting down any sense of individuality in cinemas, they’re all showing the same films.

What really lacking is the infrastructure for independent film-makers to work together to get their films out. You can put your film online, but without marketing no one will ever see it. At the same time a lot more people can make films, but that doesn’t mean a load of good films are coming out. A lot of people aren’t really saying anything, just making cheaper versions of the mainstream. As independent and underground film-makers, we have to be telling stories that will engage an audience.

What’s your next project?
The first short film called Brüised which I co-wrote and co-produced with the main actor, Paul Marlon. It was made for under £1000. It follows two characters, Mick and Ru. Mick takes part in illegal street fights, with Ru as his manager. We shot it in Dartford, a post-industrial white working class area. At points it’s very real, at points cinematic, at points very funny.

It was made just to get it out there, not looking to the film industry but trying to build a network with underground and independent film-makers.

It’s going to have its world premiere on 11th May at the Booting film festival in Toronto, a film-maker-led festival. The UK premiere will be on 14th May at Write Club in Edinburgh, with a London screening 18th May, and then going online on 19th May.

Above, a still from Brüised with characters Mick and Ru below, Greg on the set of SSD.

What do you see as the future of film?

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You can buy Greg’s films and follow his work at brukemakubreakfilms.wordpress.com

Another month of Coalition policy making gone by and more of the already tamished veneer of the ‘Rehabilitation Revolution’ has peeled away to further reveal what we already knew: a) that the system cares little or no resemblance to anything any rational person would consider to be in any way revolutionary; and b) the notion of the ‘rehabilitation’ of ex-prisoners was never really the core of it. Yes, the ideological raison d’être of the policy was to cut so-called ‘re-offending’ by newly released prisoners, but alongside the more pressing motive force – saving money by cutting prison populations, and rehabilitation (*to restore to health or normal life by training and therapy; restore the standing or reputation of; restore to a former condition* – OED definition) was never the bottom line.

In fact, the central piece of the Coalition’s criminal justice legislation, the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Bill (LASPO), was originally due to actually include the word Rehabilitation (i.e. LASRO) but No. 10 decided that they needed the ‘hang em, flog em’ faction in the Tory Party (who really don’t give a damn about the non-existent condition) to be on board in order to get it passed through Parliament. Not that it had such an easy ride despite that the Lords, particularly miffed at the curtailment of Legal Aid provisions, but it was the final hurdle in that chamber, though with a further 11 amendments for the government to muck about in, the bill eventually reached the Commons on 17th April.

There was of course another core ideological drive behind the policy, one that is conveniently smoke-screened behind the supposed need to cost-cut: the mass outsourcing of government ‘services’ under the ‘Pensions and Benefits Bill’, and in particular, as much of the criminal justice sector as the Tories could get away with, given the need for a significant reduction of policy horse-trading with the Lib Dems. And the past month has been further confirmation of the tentacles of the private ‘security’ sector into the State’s business.

Chief target has been the provision of community sentence monitoring and, by inference, the Criminal Justice and Courts Bill. Already, part-privatised via the Trust model, it now appears that it is due to be flogged off to the highest bidder as the direct result of a newly announced consultation into making community sentences ‘more effective, exciting and attractive to yer average Daily Mail reader’, via ‘an intensive community punishment sentence’, and the greatest use of electronic tagging, curfews and travel bans.

Thus, the latest iteration of the Probation Service, Probation Model, helping ex-prisoners to re-settle in the community, will be consigned to the scrapheap in favour of the of the Service effectively becoming just another wing of the Prison Service – we can’t afford to send people to prison, so let’s send the prison to them.

Most post-release prisoners are already subject to some or other form of control, whether that’s the new Community Hi-Tech Tag, or a host of other sanctions, including some cases amounting to external exile. Add to that the introduction of the early release Home Detention Curfew tagging regime that has at least managed to free-up a few prison places, and the model is obvious (not that there is any evidence available for the effect of HDC on re-offending rates and electronic monitoring itself has been shown to be no more effective than other forms of community punishment). Double the heavy-duty lobbying by up to 50 companies last year when the previous eight-year tagging contracts held by G4S and Serco, and worth around £1bn, were up for tendering had something to do with it, especially as the industry was touring new hi-tech tags that can monitor a wear’s blood alcohol levels in addition to carrying out standard monitoring in real-time.

Given that there are a potential of 100,000 to 120,000 new ‘customers’ a year, it’s a market many want to get into. Currently a 90-day tag costs the taxpayer around £1,100, assuming no additional callouts (to reset the tag, etc.) compared to roughly £1,000 for a similar length stay in prison, but this new model is unlikely to save the government that much money in the long run given the number of breaches of both HDC and, more particularly, licence conditions that lead to recall to prison, in the latter case often for the most mundane of reasons.

In another announcement, newly released prisoners will be subject to yet another intervention by private service providers, this time with regard to benefits. Now any prisoner who intends to claim benefits upon leaving prison will, in addition to having Jobcentre Plus staff process benefit claims while still in prison, will also be referred onto the Work Programme (WP) from ‘Day One’ (as the DWP press release ostentatiously frames it) but who famously claim Jobseeker’s Allowance within 13 weeks of release. Plus, WP providers will get £5,600 if they manage to get an ex-prisoner into work and keep them there for two years.

All the same JSA sanctions will apply to prisoners of course. So, not only will they have the current problems that apply to any newly released prisoner – license conditions, probably having to live in a bail hostel, attending probation meetings on time, trying to re-establish contact with friends and family, and generally finding one’s feet after being stuck in an environment where all your decision-making and most of your thinking was done by someone else – they will have to effectively do any job they are offered (not much change from being in prison then).

Except this plan completely ignores the key hurdle that prisoners face when finding a job: a post-release: the vast majority of companies refuse to employ ex-cons, and the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, even allowing for Ken Clarke’s recent low-level tinkering, remains an effective barrier to prisoners even getting so far as the interview stage. No amount of bribery (of potential employers) or connections (in the case of recent ex-prisoners) is going to overcome this barrier…

But hey, a select few will get rich just trying and screw those who fail to overcome this in this brave new outsourced world. So prepare to be sucked by G4S cops, held in a G4S custody suite, escorted to a G4S-run court* by G4S guards, sent to a G4S factory, found guilty, released on a G4S tag, supervised by a G4S probation officer and shoved on a G4S-run workplace scheme.

* How long before there are G4S-provided judges?

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PRISON NEWS

A brave new outsourced world?
**A sideways look**

by SVARTFROSK

In all the opposition to education cuts and the ramping up of fees, adult education hasn’t had a lot of airtime. There are basically four reasons people want adult education: for basic skills, to learn something they need to improve their job opportunities, for fun and to have a second opportunity.

Despite pretensions otherwise, all are under attack. Basic skills education is needed for those who didn’t pick up enough at school, or have come from somewhere else where English is not spoken. One of the things the last government did was to talk about the responsibilities of immigrants, but they did at least make a point of funding some teaching of English as a second language (ESL). I know enough people working in this sector to see it as a soft target for swinging cuts. After all, the people who need to learn English are often marginalised anyway, and a particular area that has been cut has been ESL for women. For we have the situation where the right wing presses complain about immigrants not speaking English, their husbands don’t see the need or their wives to communicate outside the home, and the women themselves cannot afford to pay for private lessons.

The other three are usually provided by local council’s adult education departments, FE colleges and a couple of specialist universities such as the Open University (OU) and Birkbeck. Adult education has long been a soft option to cut and every year the list of courses offered seems to get smaller and smaller. The range depends on the facilities, but usually includes languages, arts and crafts and basic skills. Fees depend on whether it is for a qualification or not, but are usually fairly reasonable. As a lot of these courses are aimed at pensioners, though, the timings can be completely impossible for anyone holding down a job.

FE colleges mainly cater for 16–19 year olds, but will run evening classes as well. They are often tied into a range of qualifications and include things that would have been part of apprenticeships when they happened.

The specialist universities were set up to allow working class people, especially those who didn’t do well at school, a second chance. Birkbeck is increasing its fees and the OU is tripping fees for its modules, so that the equivalent of an undergraduate year will cost £3,500. Apparently OU management think they will pick up undergraduates who cannot afford to leave home to go to a conventional university. Birkbeck is thinking along the same lines. Be point out in their justifications that the new fees regime brought in by the Tory-LibDem coalition allows for part time students to get loans, which was always the argument against massive fee increases before. Given that a lot of students using these universities are people dipping their toe into higher education for the first time, do they really do have the money to go to this at £5,000 for a couple of books, an online forum and a handful of tutorials? It seems to me it is a case of “welcome young undergraduate, piss off older workers”.

One loophole that I intend to exploit when I’m older, if they’ve not closed it, is that if your income doesn’t reach over £21,000 a year you don’t have to repay the loan. So I’ve started to do catch up with my ever-increasing retirement age.

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**Anti-Fascist Network**

This letter is just a quick heads up to say that in the next few weeks all libertarian/ anarchist groups, and the syndicalists will be receiving an invite to join the new UK Anti-Fascist Network (AFN). Below is just a short introduction to the network and is made up in part from the AFN unity statement that groups will be asked to display, as well as parts of a letter we are sending out.

The Network comes in response to recent events that have seen all our fascist tactics on the streets of the UK, by you without sufficient opposition. We believe it is every libertarian’s duty to oppose fascism, for the benefit of the communities we live in and for the others of rights and ourselves, to operate freely without the fear of threats and intimidation.

The Anti-Fascist Network seeks to join together small and large groups alike, with the aim being to eventually ensure anti fascists are never outnumbered on the streets. As a part of the network we will not tell people how to campaign in their areas, what politics they should adopt, what form of Anti- fascist activity they should choose. We will however support each other to defeat all forms of fascism and organised racism.

Individuals who want to join a public email list to share information about the activities of the far right can sign up by sending a blank e-mail to antifascism-news-subscribe@lists.riseup.net – this list is public so please do not treat it as secure, it is good for sharing general information, that may already be in the public domain as well as last minute calls out etc. There will be a private e-mail list for trusted groups to sign up to.

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**COMMENTS**

**ABOUT FREEDOM**

**ANGEL ALLEY**

Despite the unhappy events described on page 3 of this issue’s work at Freedom Press continues apace.

For the benefit of new readers, and a refresher to our old ones, the building at 48 Whitechapel High Street contains the following: bookshop, the ‘Autonomy Club’ meeting room, and ‘Autonomy Club’ shop. In addition, numerous groups use the building for meetings and as a postal office, store room and ‘Autonomy Club’ meeting room, which currently showing some of Tracey Moberley’s (OU) and Birkbeck. Adult education has long been a soft option to cut and every year the last government did was to talk about the responsibilities of immigrants, but they did at least make a point of funding some teaching of English as a second language (ESL). I know enough people working in this sector to see it as a soft target for swinging cuts. After all, the people who need to learn English are often marginalised anyway, and a particular area that has been cut has been ESL for women. For we have the situation where the right wing presses complain about immigrants not speaking English, their husbands don’t see the need or their wives to communicate outside the home, and the women themselves cannot afford to pay for private lessons.

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**BEATING THE FASCISTS**

Charlotte Wilson, the founder of Freedom Press, wrote (anonymously) about what anarchists believe, in the first issue of Freedom:

“We therefore, reject every method of enforcement and every form of compulsion, including effective co-optation and further, a direct strategy to combat the rise of fascism on the streets in our areas. Since the first meeting

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**HELP LONDON ABC**

We always need money, the majority of which gets spent on postage and, when possible, sending postal orders and stamps to prisoners who are low on funds. We also need cash for printing costs, such as flyers and prison guides.

We welcome any donations, no matter how large or small; both money and stamps are always useful to us. If you like, we don’t have much cash then you could always organise a fundraiser and nobody ever makes threats to anybody. But we did not live in an ideal society, and therefore that some threats are regrettably necessary. People who drive cars without regard for the safety of other road users face the threat of being deprived of their cars. People who go for raping, killing people, or (not to put too fine a point upon it), face the threat of various social sanctions.

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**SLIDING SCALES**

Sanding scale: £20 – £75

See more information

See more information

http://antifascistneathweb.wordpress.com/
GETTING ACTIVE

WHAT’S ON

6.15pm until 9.00 pm, for details see

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7QX. If you would like to attend please email london@fuel.org.uk beforehand.

8th Jos of Nazareth in Anthropological Perspective, a lecture by Chris Knight at the St Martin’s Community Centre, 43 Carol Street, London NW1 0HT from 6.15pm until 9.00 pm, for details see radulantarchaeologypop.org.

6th and 22nd Practical Squatting Event at 56a Infoshop, 56a Crampston Street, London M17 3AE from 7pm to 8pm, see http://www.56a.infoshop.co.uk for details.

12th News from Nowhere Club presents The Voyage In Bangladesh and London, with Tulip Siddiq at The Epicentre, West Street, Leytonstone E1 4LJ, buffet 7.30pm, talk starts 8pm, for details see http://www. newsfromnowhereclub.co.uk

15th Blind sacrifice and the Hunter’s ‘Own Kill’ rule, a lecture by Chris Knight at the St Martin’s Community Centre, 43 Carol Street, London NW1 0HT from 6.15pm until 9.00 pm, for details see radulantarchaeologypop.org.

18th The Red & Black Club at LARC, 62 Fieldgate Street, London E1 6ES from 8pm, Dissident Island Radio will be broadcasting live as the local anarchists host a traditional east end knees-up.

● The All London Anarchist Revolutionary Movement (ALARM) are holding a Annual General Meeting on 15th May. Currently the location is secret squirrel so check out the ALARM website for details.

In its first year ALARM had a number of exciting adventures and will hopefully be pulling off some more fun stuff in the year to come. As it says on the tin, ALARM is for all London (and anyone visiting) anarchists to work together on projects requiring intergroup co-operation and strategic thought.

We don’t have the full details as the planning meeting is after we go to press, but early indications are for an open format with people very much encouraged to bring their ideas along on the day. See http://www.thekettlebells.org.uk/

● This year’s conference by the Network for Police Monitoring, Police, brings together activists, lawyers and others working at the sharp end of challenging unlawful, violent, racist or excessive policing, to look at the ways in which our lives and freedoms are being affected by the Total Policing approach both in London and across the country — and asks how we can defend what we have, and resist any further erosion of our civil rights.

Entry by donation: a suggested donation £5/£10 and includes lunch, with the opportunity to join us for informal discussion and networking (to ensure your lunch, please register in advance at http://kettlepolicewatch.wordpress.com/registration/).

The Network conference will be held at the Bishopsgate Institute in London on Sunday 20th May 10:30am to 4:30pm, for further details see http://kettlepolicewatch.wordpress.com/

● We make no apologies for giving another plug to Smash Edo, the big anti-demo arms factory. As always there will be a highly trained team of legal observers present and, while we uncertainly hope no laws are broken, should the police prove over enthusiastic the recommended solicitors in Brighton are Kellys, tel 01273 674 898.

For more information on subscriptions/bundles, email subs@freedompress.org.uk for details.

SMASH EDO Summer of Resistance

A summer of antiapes and opposition to Brighton’s very own peddlers of death www.smashedo.org.uk

With the Jubilee nearly upon us, the powers that be are plugging the Epsom Derby as national celebration of 60 years of Queenery. Yet May is a big follower of the ants and doubtless knows all the past winners of the race, such as 1782’s Assarion or 1802’s Tyrant, but may yet be puzzled over the meaning of the name of the 1807 winner, Electron. We on the other hand would like to see a black horse win, but the chances are slim as only two have since 1780, Smolensko in 1811 and Grand Parade in 1919.

The ‘sport of kings’ may not have a very anarchist ring to it, but there is a history of radicalism and popular culture surrounding Epsom. The long tradition of the London middle classes descending on the downs for a day of revelry has revived in recent years, particularly since the big race was moved from its traditional Wednesday slot to Saturday in 1993. While we have not booked a Persimmon full stack, it has become traditional for London anarchists to join the throng for sure, all we are aiming for a social revolution and if you can’t dance or at least win a few bob... Rinder with similar spirit of Emily Davison at the 1913 running, but would perhaps not agree with the sentiments of the telegram sent on behalf of the then Queen to Herbert Jones, Amers’ juicy: “Queen Alexandra was very sorry to hear of your sad accident caused through the abominable conduct of a brutish and lunatic woman” — Hopefully this year the royals will also receive a message that all is not roadway in their realm and that radical change is in the air though we hope not at such a cost.

Shooting down the Olympics

The other sounds like a glorified fire truck.

One is unlikely to be on the inside in a rogue state with planes decides to use one on the Olympics. They could be in any context. The other could take your eye out whilst the other sounds like a glorified fire truck.

In one sense, the question should be ‘why are we defending like this so close to such a high populace?’. That question aside, the scenario for which these weapons system are being placed in various London locations is both extremely unlikely and, if it were to occur, very likely to result in massive numbers of deaths to quite a substantial number of very ordinary people. It has no use in a public order, civil liberties or common crime fighting situation. Its just not possible to make use of it like that.

I would be very concerned if a shiny Ground Based Air Defence system caused us all to forget the more mundane ramping up of the populace in the name of national pride (and terrifyingly, sport) that is going on around us. Across the policing and the acceptability of soldiers patrolling London’s streets in times of perceived danger to the state is the real and lasting damage these Olympics will bring, and I think its towards these that we should put our energies in defence of freedom and a non-militarised society.

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SUBSCRIPTION RATES

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Sport

Dead heat for the Queen

With the Jubilee nearly upon us, the powers that be are plugging the Epsom Derby as national celebration of 60 years of Queenery. Yet May is a big follower of the ants and doubtless knows all the past winners of the race, such as 1782’s Assarion or 1802’s Tyrant, but may yet be puzzled over the meaning of the name of the 1807 winner, Electron. We on the other hand would like to see a black horse win, but the chances are slim as only two have since 1780, Smolensko in 1811 and Grand Parade in 1919.

The ‘sport of kings’ may not have a very anarchist ring to it, but there is a history of radicalism and popular culture surrounding Epsom. The long tradition of the London middle classes descending on the downs for a day of revelry has revived in recent years, particularly since the big race was moved from its traditional Wednesday slot to Saturday in 1993. While we have not booked a Persimmon full stack, it has become traditional for London anarchists to join the throng for sure, all we are aiming for a social revolution and if you can’t dance or at least win a few bob... Rinder with similar spirit of Emily Davison at the 1913 running, but would perhaps not agree with the sentiments of the telegram sent on behalf of the then Queen to Herbert Jones, Amers’ juicy: “Queen Alexandra was very sorry to hear of your sad accident caused through the abominable conduct of a brutish and lunatic woman” — Hopefully this year the royals will also receive a message that all is not roadway in their realm and that radical change is in the air though we hope not at such a cost.

While Freedom is a pillar of internationalism, we can only hope for a repeat of the merriment of 1907, when Orby became the first Irish-trained winner of the blue ribbon of the turf, when his trainer was congratulated by an old woman with the words ‘God bless you to God and you sir, that I have lived to see a Catholic horse win the Derby’.

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Prisons of the body and of the mind

Frederick Douglass was a political member and writer who was condemned to a terrible prison by the British as was his companion Hezekiah Holland. In his treatise on the subject of the British prison system, he said: “The prison is a place of torment, and the mind of the prisoner is a place of torture. It is a place of cruelty, and the mind of the prisoner is a place of pain.”

In modern times, the prison system has changed, but the principles remain the same. The prison is a place of suffering, and the mind of the prisoner is a place of pain. It is a place of cruelty, and the mind of the prisoner is a place of pain.

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Sig Waller grew up in Swansea, Wales, and Saarbrücken, Germany. She studied Fine Art and Art History at Goldsmiths College, London, and after graduating worked in animation, music videos and design. In 1995 she moved to East Berlin, where she became involved in the local art scene and is currently based in both Brighton and Berlin.

“How will future intelligence make sense of our times? Which aspects of our civilisation will survive the years and how will they be interpreted? My work explores the dark borders of our culture of excess, drawing attention to human destructiveness, human frailty and the delicate balance of life on Earth. We may have it all now, but what does the future look like? I am interested in the archaeology of the present, in utopian visions of the future crumbling into dystopian decay – and in hope born from despair.

“There is black humour behind a lot of my ideas. Wit functions as critical social anthroplogy, helping us acquire an alien perspective, and letting us view the world as if we had just arrived from another planet.”

Sig Waller’s current series of work is about contemporary forms of protest. If anyone has any interesting photos or memorabilia please get in touch with Sig via her website, sigwaller.com as she’d like to include them in the project, which is a work in progress.

1 All that is solid melts into air: Smash the banks 2011, mixed media on canvas, 70 x 90 cm
2 All that is solid melts into air 2011, oil on canvas, 70 x 90 cm
3 All that is solid melts into air: Stop the war 2011, oil on canvas, 70 x 90 cm
5 All that is solid melts into air: Atomkraft? Nein Danke 2011, oil on canvas, 60 x 90 cm
6 Burning desire: Burning car II 2012, oil on canvas, 75 x 75 cm
7 All that is solid melts into air: The lovers 2012, oil on canvas, 90 x 70 cm

Review

Mr. Tickle (Mr. Men Classic Library) by Roger Hargreaves, £2.50.

We note that Mr Tickle himself is no slave to sensory delight – quite the opposite; he is a model of psychical equilibrium. At the end of his day’s escapades he relaxes in an armchair, sated and quiescent. Our hero preaches a message of catharsis – a call to arms against becoming too bogged down by self-suppression and normative regulation. Via psychoanalysis, we arrive at an Aristotlean middle way, and are left with the gentle realisation of our need to give a measure of expression to desire and joy.

Because one thing we can be sure of is that the more we repress the pleasure principle, the more we guarantee that sooner or later we will fall victim to an overpowering and fervid release from the id.

And rest assured, it will be at just that hour we fail our Superego the most.
Graham Martin takes a look at how the Games play with civil liberties

There's been a lot of general anger on twitter and Facebook recently concerning the positioning of missiles on residential buildings for use during the Olympics. It's a terrifying thought in some ways, but it's also kind of irrelevant to civil liberties, and a very big distraction from the more worrying, and lasting, changes brought on by the games.

There are a great many things going on around the Olympics that are incredibly worrying developments, both for civil liberties and for public well-being. A police officer may enter your house to remove a window display that is felt to be offensive. A demonstration anywhere close to an Olympic site will face immense repression. Major corporations with hideous human rights records are using the Games to gain legitimacy when they should be facing massive court cases or even dissolution.

Whilst I understand exactly why missiles on apartment blocks is terrifying, it's not really the biggest issue, just perhaps the most visible. There are several reasons for this. The first is that, in order to store ordnance on a roof for more than a few months, an awful lot of staffing will need to be committed. The longer they're up there, the more likely it is that someone will try to nick them. It's a very short term development, in comparison to any damage to civil liberties. Budgets are too tight to keep that stuff up there for any length of time.

The other main reason is that these are pretty specialised weapons. Most modern weapons are. These things are for shooting down aircraft. Now, the odd pub joke about needing to hire an airship to invade Buckingham Palace for a protest aside, none of us are likely to be the targets for such a weapons system.

A rooftop Ground Based Air Defence system sounds pretty terrifying, but compare it to, say, a water cannon. One of those sounds like something in a futuristic dystopia, and...