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Aim: the creation of a World wide
Libertarian Communist Society.

A Discussion Bulletin for the Anti State,
Non Market Sector

The purpose of The Libertarian Communist is to promote discussion amongst the Anti State, Non Market sector irrespective of whether individuals or groups consider themselves as Anarchist, Communist or Socialist as all such titles are in need of further qualification. If you have disagreements with an article in this or any other issue, wish to offer comment or want to contribute something else to the discussion then please get in touch. If any article focuses on a particular group then that group has, as a matter of course, the right to reply. So please get in touch with your article, letters and comments. You can do this by contacting com.lib.org@googlemail.com or writing to Ray Carr, Flat 1, 99 Princess Road, Branksome, Poole, Dorset BH12 1BQ.

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After the march is over.

So at last the TUC has organised an anti cuts march and demo for March 26th. We would hope and expect that people would turn up in their thousands and hopefully hundreds of thousands following on from the student protests of November/December and what has and is occurring in many other parts of the world. This is the time, if ever there was one, for workers whether they are students, employed or unemployed, male, female, disabled, able bodied or whatever to show they are united, we **Are** all in this together, there are no special cases and if we try to claim there are our enemies will have succeeded in dividing us and we will be on our way to defeat.

Even in its weakened state of today the trade union movement is, at present, the only working class body that has millions of members and it **could** still be a formidable force so the call for this demo has to be welcomed. Unfortunately that is as far as we can go in praise for the trade union movement. To say that the TUC organises workers in this part of the world is to go too far, yes there have been success stories even in recent years, but in many instances it would be more accurate to say that trade unions are responsible, with exceptions, for the disorganisation of the working class. Why, we need to ask, has it taken the TUC so long to involve themselves in the anti cuts campaign? Similar events have been taking place in other countries for a while and whilst in other places

we have seen industrial action and general strikes being organised the TUC, even at this late stage, is just calling for a demonstration on a Saturday.

Is the March 26th event to be the beginning and end of the TUC campaign? Even if hundreds of thousands of people gather and march and listen to the wisdom of the TUC leadership advocating some friendlier form of capitalism this is hardly going to put fear into the present government or more importantly to the capitalist system, and the truth of the matter is that if anything meaningful is to come out of this struggle then we have to take on capitalism itself; the cuts and the system are one they cannot be separated. To argue for a return of a Labour Government is like pissing in the wind they would be just as committed to cuts in defence of capitalism as the current administration. Unless we and many others are mistaken the TUC is not going to advocate breaking the laws which prevent workers from taking effective industrial action, neither are they going to support methods of direct action, civil disobedience or the like and we can only go forward with this type of strategy organised from the bottom upwards not top downwards; but on its own even this would not be enough.

The TUC march is taking place at a time when the cuts are already in the process of being implemented we therefore have the problem of people turning off from action to fight back feeling that defeat has already taken place and nothing can be done. The point is this has to be a long term campaign not something which we give up on when the cuts begin to be implemented. The whole process of cuts is going to have very long term effects and we need to organise beyond various setbacks. As indicated previously the cuts and capitalism are one problem and it would not be an effective strategy to put forward the view that we can maintain the present system without the cuts. Our sector must not water down the view that the only meaningful response is to organise against capitalism and for a society that organises itself on the basis of need not profit without recourse to the state or market. It would be a fundamental mistake to believe that it is more realistic to persuade workers to organise for something that seeks to maintain the profit system whilst doing away with its worst aspects. Apart from that being a utopian goal it would be just as difficult and time consuming as organising for the only real alternative.

Elsewhere in this issue we are including a piece that appeared, in February, on the World in Common forum about "Peoples' Assemblies". This seems very relevant to the present discussion. If we are to organise for a longer term strategy we need something more than marches and also more than just industrial action as such actions tend to wear people out and cannot be successfully maintained for a prolonged period without something else to support them. The idea of some type of assembly, or council if you prefer, organised on a local level bringing various sections of the working class together to discuss problems in the workplace and local community under the democratic control of its participants is something that warrants further discussion at least and they could be set up to start with on a temporary basis

to see how they develop and what problems are thrown up. They could tie in with the development of more social centres to support various local struggles.

From a Libertarian Communist perspective the present crisis is just a natural cycle within capitalism. At such times life becomes more difficult for a majority of the working class but it does offer us an environment where people are probably more willing to listen to anti capitalist perspectives. We have to come up with ways of using this environment to help develop a movement or movements which aim to build a society freed from the inhuman constraints of capitalism. Perhaps the development of "Peoples' Assemblies" is a method worthy of consideration; we would welcome feedback on their pros and cons, (the full article on them is on page6).

Letter

A comment on
**Notes on the Chinese Student
Democracy Movement**

From June 18th 1989, and reproduced in LibCom 12.

"The student movement represented a movement by a rising new class of technocrats to assume state power. Its victory would have brought China no closer to democracy than it is now in the throes of counterrevolution. The rule by experts is not democracy."

The point being made above about the 'technocrat' forces behind the scenes is interesting and may be true. Whether or not, however, I think that the first sentence of the piece, reproduced above, misrepresents the whole truth. As, I think, does the final sentence of the piece as follows: '*No social revolution happened in China, the student movement for democracy was only a public and bloody manifestation of a bureaucratic power struggle.*' In which I take issue with the words 'no' and 'only'.

If we find out a particular truth, we should not (to be accurate) be so enamoured of it that other relevant truths get left out. When we present a partial truth as the whole truth this is actually an error, and can be extremely

misleading. It is not that we have to always go into tremendous detail, only remain aware that more than one thing can be going on at once. 'No social revolution' in the above context gives the impression that there was not a popular revolutionary movement that may have been crushed as and when it was *because* it was growing - and if this had continued, could have overthrown the leadership and changed China into a political democracy.

The student movement may have been partially encouraged and supported by technocrats, but it represented much more than the interests of any minority group. Instead of 'representing a new class of technocrats' it would be more accurate to say that the student movement was 'vulnerable to being – and perhaps was to some degree - exploited by them'. It is also important to note, as was said in another article on this subject in the same lib com, that the demands for democracy were spreading beyond the student population into other areas of society.

What it *presented*, and *represented* for many around the world, was the desire for freedom from oppression and corruption and the determination and courage to achieve it. But not only this either, because the struggle was sufficiently informed to desire freedom in the context of democracy, i.e. freedom with responsibility. It

presented and represented a sense of the potential of democracy, which is a necessary ingredient for true socialism/communism. Other ingredients were of course widely lacking, such as awareness of the potential of the dissolution of the state and of common ownership, but why discount the ingredients that we have because others are lacking? Instead I think that we need to recognise the likelihood that the ingredients that we do have are necessary achievements on the way to having all the ingredients we need.

Connected to this is the point that success for the democracy movement in China at that time would not have ushered in full socialism/communism. Well no, and we would not expect that it would – for one thing because the majority was not yet, and is still not aware of and desirous of this possibility. Socialism/communism will first have to grow to being a strong, majority movement for democracy AND common ownership of the means of life. However, I disagree with the statement that success would have 'brought China no closer to democracy'. What would have been deemed success at that time by most of those involved would have been the establishment of democracy of the type that we presently have in the west. Here the word 'only' is appropriate because in capitalism we only have political democracy and not economic democracy -because it is democracy functioning in the capitalist system.

Using financial ownership the capitalist system legalises a minority having vast amounts of extra economic power over the means of production and distribution. This means that despite democracy there is still a minority ruling class. This in turn means that profit is prioritised over needs for wellbeing (to maintain and extend financial ownership), massive and frequently violent security and military

sectors (to protect and extend the 'property' of the rulers), and that community autonomy for the majority is severely restricted. These conditions, in turn, mean that capitalism is extremely inefficient and wasteful concerning resources, including human ingenuity and initiative, and damaging to human life and to the living environment as a whole.

However, political democracy can be used as part of the process of ridding ourselves of economic inequality, and the brutal and disastrous system that supports it. We can use it towards achieving world socialism/communism and indeed it may be a necessary part of the process. Political democracy generally means more freedom for workers to organise to improve their economic conditions, to practice some common ownership and democracy within communities, and to spread knowledge and ideas about socialism/communism. Also, political democracy holds the potential for a majority to *demonstratively* vote out capitalism, and at the same time to demonstrate the overwhelming majority support for socialism that is needed for it to be established as a world system. Potentially it could thus powerfully contribute to revolution and indeed to peaceful revolution. Socialism/communism means democracy along with common ownership of the means of life, i.e. full economic democracy. In this way we can overcome the suffering, environmental devastation and general impediments to healthy development which are imposed by capitalism, and cooperate efficiently and enjoyably for mutual benefit, directly supplying for our needs and wellbeing.

Lyla Byrne

The Following article, as mentioned in our lead article was posted on the World in Common forum in February 2011. Its source is www.aworldtwin.net/blog/uniting-theory-and-practice.html

People's Assemblies

Uniting Theory and Practice

At a recent meeting of students who had come together from a range of occupations against the rise in tuition fees, a proposal about creating People's Assemblies (PAs) was described as a "deeply philosophical" question. The remark, which was not made in a derogatory way, was spot on. Advancing a concept like PAs is both practical and theoretical at the same time, which appears as a philosophical conundrum. That's a good sign because all revolutionary ideas - and PAs are just that - are rooted in both the present as well as the future. They are, therefore, a real contradiction. But isn't that bad? Aren't contradictions harmful? Wouldn't the world be better off without them? Can't we come up with a simpler proposal that everyone can grasp immediately without further reflection and put into practice?

In the struggle against the coalition's draconian public spending cuts - made in a bid to rescue capitalism from itself - "simpler" proposals and plans have emerged spontaneously. Anti cuts campaigns have spread throughout the country. Protests and lobbies take place on a nightly basis. Students and education workers reacted to the cuts with strikes, marches and occupations. Now that movement is at a turning point. The cuts are going through town halls - many of them Labour controlled. Tuition fee rises have passed through Parliament along with the abolition of maintenance allowances. Planned cuts in higher

education spending will devastate the universities.

The weakness of the direction of the movement so far is that it is largely restricted to the "present" situation. It is aimed at stopping, halting or reversing the cuts made by a government that has staked its existence on carrying through a massive reduction in the budget deficit. The deficit itself is a product of the global crisis of capitalism and the devastating way it has impacted on the British economy. The government has made it clear that it is not for turning. Indeed, were it to collapse under the weight of events, a likely outcome would be a national government rather than some mythical formation that would immediately start on a programme of public spending. As we know, Labour is also committed to reducing the deficit and is doing so with gusto at local government level.

So where do we go from here? Putting all our hopes on the results of the March 26th demonstration called by the Trades Union Congress would be a mistake. One demonstration, however large, is not going to change the world. Ask those who took part in the two-million strong march against plans for the invasion of Iraq in 2003. That's where PAs come in. They are connected to the present by presenting an opportunity to all those with grievances that the Parliamentary system tied to corporate and financial power is incapable of addressing. These include trade unionists, service users, students, the unemployed, minorities and climate change activists. They also build on the struggle for democracy and representation that dates at least from the Levellers and Diggers of the English Revolution - and in other ways is traced back to the Peasants Revolt of 1381 and the Magna Carta of 1215. But PAs go further in proposing new forms of democracy beyond the existing capitalist state framework, which can

then begin to transform how the economy is owned and run.

They are a philosophical question in the sense that PAs require a leap in thinking out of the present ideological framework which is dominated by impressions and acceptance of the capitalist status quo. But they are also deeply practical because they offer a way forward to an alternative progressive future.

Paul Feldman
Communications Editor
8th February 2011

Problems of Revolution

Below is the second and final part of Why the World Socialist Movement (WSM) is not growing. In this part Robin Cox puts forward the view that the ban on people who hold religious views from joining the WSM is outdated and superfluous

The religious ban

Of course, there have to be some theoretical boundaries that need, as it were, to be officially sanctioned protected and patrolled. This is what defines a party and differentiates it from others. Here I am talking about the first kind of theoretical positions - primary positions - which are obligatory. However, I think the effect of "resolution creep" has been to blur the distinction between these kinds of positions and non-essential or non-obligatory positions. (See part 1 of the article in issue 12)

A prime example of this is the Party's attitude towards religion. This should never have become a primary position; it should have instead been no more than a secondary position. In effect, the Party requires that you hold an atheistic perspective in order to become a member. I think this is frankly ludicrous. It more than smacks of an old fashioned 19th century socialist evangelism. The business of the WSM is not to convert workers to atheism; it is to make socialists and nothing more. Being a socialist does not necessarily imply being an atheist anymore

than being an atheist implies being a socialist. Some of the most vocal atheists around are fervent supporters of capitalism. Whether or not one is a socialist in practical terms is an empirical question which cannot be inferred *a priori*. In just the same way as a Christian scientist would not let his or her religious beliefs intrude into his or her world of scientific research, so for all practical purposes a religious socialist can quite easily envisage socialism in plain historical materialist terms

The more thoughtful comrades in the WSM will frankly acknowledge that, of course, an individual can be a socialist in the sense of wanting and understanding socialism and all that that entails (such as rejecting reformism, nationalism and leadership) while still holding religious beliefs. Indeed, they will candidly admit that some of the most active supporters of the WSM have held religious beliefs. All this is undeniable. And yet still it is held that in some abstract theoretical sense religion stands in the way of socialism and must therefore be systematically excluded.

This is the triumph of dogma over pragmatism. If a religious person was to depart from his or her socialist convictions in any way then this would, as the saying goes, "come out in the wash". You would soon enough discover this through the mere fact that such a person might be advocating views that truly are contrary to a socialist position e.g. vanguardism or the belief that women were somehow inferior to men. In other words, the prohibition on religious beliefs is a totally redundant and superfluous safeguard against deviating from a socialist perspective. You don't need it because such deviations can be completely recognised and responded to on their own terms and I have yet to hear a single serious counterargument to this from the Party itself. In fact the Party's position on religion is thoroughly muddled and confused. While members are not themselves permitted to hold religious beliefs they can now apparently (or so I have recently discovered) believe with impunity that non-members can be socialists and simultaneously hold religious views. One has to wonder why on earth in that case is the Party refusing to accept such socialists into its ranks

There are of course quite legitimate criticisms one can make of religion. For example, the social policies of certain official religions are often deeply offensive and obnoxious from a socialist viewpoint; they clearly lend support to the status quo. However, such criticisms are empirically-grounded. They are very different from the abstract theoretical or metaphysical claims that belief in some god or an afterlife is false and necessarily prevents you from becoming a socialist. This is not empirically-based argument at all and is, in fact, contradicted by the Party's own admission that some of its most fervent supporters are religious. It is ironic that the Party criticises religion on the grounds that it is irrational but, in abandoning a pragmatic position of facilitating its own growth by removing this self imposed obstacle to its growth, the Party shows itself to be highly irrational. It is simply not rational to make it more difficult for the organisation to grow when the whole purpose of the organisation is growth and when you have all the means at hand that you require to ensure that such growth unerringly goes in the direction you intend - towards genuine socialism. The requirements that you need to satisfy in order to become a member are ample enough to determine whether or not you are a socialist without religion being brought into the question at all.

While I favour the complete scrapping of the religious ban as totally unnecessary and superfluous I recognise that, for traditionalists in the Party, this might be too much to take in one go. So a compromise solution might be more realistic under the circumstances. This could involve a more selective or discriminating approach to religious applicants. For instance you could disallow applicants who hold theistic religious beliefs but not those who hold deistic or pantheistic beliefs. Alternatively, you could admit individuals who hold personal religious beliefs but not those who belong to any official religion.

Even membership of an official religion may not really be a problem (and this in itself strongly suggests that what you really need is to judge each case on its own merits). For instance, you cannot simply assume that because an applicant belongs to a particular church, that he or she goes along with everything that this church has to say. To

give an example currently in the news, many Catholics have for years completely ignored the Pope's crackpot views about the use of condoms and it is interesting that the Pope himself has now been forced to modify his views on the subject or continue to lose credibility. Religion is a highly adaptable phenomenon and once a socialist movement really begins to take off it is reasonable to suppose that religion itself will tend to become more and more accommodating towards socialist principles. In precisely the same way, I might add, as the Party says the capitalist parties will tend to become accommodating towards the needs of the workers by offering them more generous reforms.

A selective approach to religious applicants would be superior to a blanket ban for several reasons. For instance, insofar as it utilises both a "carrot" and a "stick" approach - allowing some kinds of religions while disallowing others - it encourages potential members to shift allegiances towards those kinds of religious beliefs that may be judged to be less, or not, harmful to the socialist cause. It thus helps to undermine those other kinds of religions that are deemed clearly harmful by eroding their support base.

A blanket ban on religious applicants cannot have this kind of effect. All it will mean is that the person in question, still unable or unwilling to dispense with his or her religious beliefs, will most likely simply not bother any more with the WSM and will quite possibly lose all interest in socialist ideas altogether. This will almost certainly be the case if socialism is identified too closely with an atheistic perspective. Thus, paradoxically, a blanket ban may not only not help to dislodge the religious beliefs of such an individual but may actually help to steer him or her away altogether from socialist ideas and so help to reinforce capitalism. By contrast, a selective ban may far more effectively serve to undermine the pernicious influence of religious beliefs, to the extent that this is indeed the case, by modifying the form of these beliefs and perhaps even thereby making it easier in due course to drop one's religious convictions altogether. It will also almost certainly mean that the religious sympathiser is far less likely to lose interest in socialist ideas, knowing that he or she does not have to forsake all of his or her core

cherished religious beliefs in order to become a member.

Persuading workers to become socialists is surely what the WSM all about - not indulging in metaphysical debates, interesting though they may be, about whether or not there is such a thing as a god or an afterlife. These things are irrelevant to the quest for socialism and I have no doubt that religion will continue in some shape or form once a socialist society has been established. The argument that religion needs to be opposed because it is "irrational" and "unscientific" is predicated on a stupendously naive assumption that irrationality is something that we can actually get rid of altogether. It is to ignore the fact that as human beings, and even as socialists, we are always going to be, to some extent, "irrational" and that life is really a question of finding the right balance between our rational and irrational sides.

At any rate, if individual socialists want to promote atheism as an outlook there is nothing wrong with that in itself. Where it becomes wrong - and indeed highly irrational - is when you tie the growth, and the fortunes, of the socialist movement to the spread of atheistic ideas so that the former can never surpass the latter but must always remain contingent upon the latter. This is folly on a grand scale. We cannot hang around waiting for the world to become completely or even largely atheist. We will probably be waiting for ever in that event. We cannot pin our hopes on so called "secularisation thesis" - firstly because there is no guarantee that religion, if indeed it is declining, might not make a comeback perhaps (in some other form) perhaps in the wake of some unforeseen catastrophe and, secondly, because there is no compelling reason to suppose that the spread of atheism in itself will facilitate the spread of socialist ideas. The immense majority of atheists are not socialists and indeed some are implacably hostile to socialist ideas.

I suspect that over the years there have probably been hundreds, if not thousands, of workers who have come into the orbit of the WSM and have been initially enthused by its case but who, on learning about this absolute prohibition on religious beliefs, have dropped out of contact altogether. We will never know

the numbers involved because the vast majority of them, I suspect, just quietly disappear from the scene; only a few will openly declare their religious convictions when applying to join and then be knocked back on discovering they cannot join but these few will be just the tip of an iceberg.

What needs to be done?

What I have been talking about is symptomatic of a deeper malaise within the WSM and why it has not been nearly as effective as it could have been. Not by a long way. "Resolution creep" or "party line-ism", I believe, lies at the very heart of this malaise.

As a revolutionary political organisation I still think the WSM stands head and shoulders over any others I can think of. But it is now entering what could turn out to be perhaps the most critical stage of its entire existence. Decisions that it makes now - or fails to make - could seal its fate for good.

What is absolutely clear is that things cannot go on as they have been doing. Anyone who seriously believes that the WSM can just continue doing what it has always done is living in a fool's paradise. The statistics speak for themselves. There is a very real possibility that, perhaps, in two or three decades the WSM may simply go out of existence altogether. Its membership has been shrinking steadily and rapidly and it is now only half the size it was when I was a member just a few years ago. If it is not careful it will soon slip below the figure of 100 plus members, the same number of individuals who got together 106 years ago to found the Socialist Party of Great Britain.

Ex-members such as myself (and there are quite a few others out there who similarly think like me) look upon this seemingly irresistible decline with a sense of deepening dismay and sadness. It might be asked "why not rejoin if you are so concerned". Well, yes indeed, why not? But here we face a formidable problem. If the Party is determined to remain the same political animal it has always been, if it is determined not to address the very real issues that have been raised here and elsewhere, then rejoining is not going to arrest this decline. At best it might slow it down for a while before

disillusionment once again sets in. It is like - as the saying goes - "throwing good money after bad". It will frankly be a waste of time and effort to rejoin the good ship SS Titanic in order to simply rearrange the deckchairs if, indeed, this is all that "rejoining" is going to amount to.

This sounds harsh, I realise, but it's a thought that constantly bubbles up to the surface every time I contemplate the idea of rejoining (and I have contemplated this many times since leaving the Party). What I find astonishing is that there does not seem to be any sense of real crisis or urgency within the Party about what is happening. Perhaps I might be misreading the situation completely here but the prevailing mood seems to be one of apathetic resignation punctuated by short bursts of enthusiasm for doing the same old thing that the Party has always tirelessly done and to little effect - distributing leaflets at some demo or debating some minor luminary - as a way of hiding from itself the awful truth that it is an organisation that is quite possibly in terminal decline and about to go the way of its "political cousins" in the US - the poor old SLP.

Of course, it goes without saying that, as an ex member, I have no say in how the Party decides on its political future. It is up to the membership itself, and no one else, to decide this. The suggestions that I make here are those that comrades can thus take up or leave just as they see fit. They are quite at liberty to completely ignore everything I have said on the matter if they so wish but to not even consider them would, I think, be a little foolish. After all, if you want to know why the organisation is not growing then one good way of finding this out is by looking at the reasons that prompt people to leave. Speaking for myself, I can assure comrades in the WSM that if I was not concerned with what was happening to the WSM, if I was indifferent to its all too apparent plight, I would not have even bothered to have offered these thoughts in the first place. I offer them precisely because I happen to care. It is important to me, as it to others who have left the WSM, what becomes of the WSM despite us having left the WSM.

Let there be no doubt on this score - the WSM has a positively huge potential to make a real impact - now more than ever

with the Left generally in utter disarray - if only it can get its act together, if only it can get itself to fundamentally rethink what its real purpose is about. There are all sorts of reasons for being optimistic - the phenomenal growth of the Zeitgeist movement advocating a moneyless world being just one of many - but the history of the WSM has been one of almost willfully squandering its potential for growth. Little wonder members have become disillusioned. It needs seriously to take some time out, to sit down and reconsider everything from scratch. Perhaps organising some kind of "crisis conference" might be a useful first step. Somewhere along the line the WSM has lost this sense of purpose and, amongst other things, has succumbed to the paralysing effect of "resolution creep". It needs to see that the rigid theoretical carapace that it has built up around itself is actually a severe limitation that can only serve to ossify the organisation rather than revitalise it.

Above all, it needs to stop laying the blame for its lack of progress on everyone else but itself. As I said at the beginning, it must take some responsibility for not making progress. If it cannot induce ex-members like myself to rejoin who know more or less what the Party is about and who are fundamentally committed to the socialist goal, then how on earth is it going to persuade the immense majority of other workers who are not yet even socialist in outlook? It needs to move at least some way towards taking on board what ex-members, such as myself and others, have to say on the subject, to make it easier or more attractive for such ex-members to rejoin. In short, to give us a good enough reason to rejoin. If we can feel more comfortable and confident about rejoining then, I suggest, others who never yet joined would be more likely to do so.

This is not a question of point scoring or winning arguments. Ultimately, if the WSM falls by the wayside this will be an absolute calamity for socialists everywhere - whether or not they happen to be members of WSM. In that sense the fate of the WSM is a matter of common concern.

Robin Cox

Marxism and Anarchism: are they incompatible?

How should we evaluate the great thinkers of the past who have contributed to the development of a critique of capitalism and the idea of a free society that could replace it? Thinkers and theorists such as Bakunin, Goldman, Kropotkin, Luxemburg, Marx and Morris; listed here in alphabetical order rather than in terms of importance. There are of course others but we cannot list them all. One thing we should definitely avoid is to engage in hero worship or regard every word of our chosen thinker as gospel; we should not be in the business of turning their various ideas into something that almost smacks of a religion. All these thinkers were human beings not super beings, yes they contributed much, but like all of us they made mistakes, their times and conditions had a profound effect on their thinking. What we really need to do is to focus on and develop the ideas that seem relevant whilst leaving behind the ideas that have not stood the test of time.

Out of this comes the idea that if two thinkers who both had much to contribute were at logger heads when they were alive we do not have to accept the ideas of one whilst rejecting the work of the other. One prime example of this is the work of Bakunin and Marx. To some who see themselves as Marxists, and here I am speaking of genuine socialists not supporters of state capitalism, Bakunin is to be rejected, he is viewed as believing in violence and terror and as advocating the formation of secret societies rather than concentrating on mass action. Maybe he did hold some of these views but as previously mentioned you have to take into consideration the times and conditions he lived in and do these blemishes mean that the whole body of his work has to be rejected. Talk to some anarchists, and here I mean genuine

class struggle anarchists, about Marx and you might come away with the idea that the degeneration of the Russian Revolution was single handedly the work of Marx despite the fact that he died over thirty years previously. Maybe there were aspects of Marx's thought that were vulnerable to Bolsheviks thinking and tactics but to conclude from this that Marx would have approved of how the Russian Revolution developed is to ignore the libertarian aspects of his writings.

One of the major ideas that The Libertarian Communist aspires to is to bring the different strands of the anti state, non market sector together and this would include anti state socialists, anarchist communist, council communists, anarcho syndicalists. Not in one organization but in such a way that we recognize what we have in common and realize that what divides us does not stop us working together. With this and the Bakunin/ Marx controversy in mind we were heartened to read in the mid 2009 issue of Black Flag an interview Iain McKay did with Mark Leir who had then just written a new biography of Bakunin, "The Creative Passion". When asked the question: Do you think that a merger of Bakunin and Marx is possible? Leir said that Alvin Gouldner had called Bakunin the first post Marxist meaning that he had focused on points such as the nature of the state and the problems of vanguardism which Marx had perhaps failed to come to terms with. He ended the question in the following way;

"But I think it is fair to say that Marxism becomes more palatable and inspiring the more it approaches anarchism, while anarchism becomes more powerful as a way to view the world critically the closer it approaches the best Marxist traditions"

For what it is worth, and thankfully we are not alone, we would agree wholeheartedly.

Contact Details for Groups in Anti State, Non Market Sector.

Radical History Network of North London.

For details contact Alan Woodward on
020 8292 8862 or RaHN at
alan@petew.org.uk
Email: radicalhistorynetwork@googlemail.com

worldsocialistmovement/SPGB:

worldsocialism.org/spgb: Postal
address: 52 Clapham High Street
London SW4 7UN.

Email spgb@worldsocialim.org

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Northern Anarchist Network (NAN)

If you want further information about this group
contact: **Brian Bamford, 46 Kingsland Road,
Rochdale, Lancs O11 3HQ** or email
northernvoices@hotmail.com

World In Common: www.worldincommon.org
Email worldincommon@yahoo.com

Anarchist Federation: www.afed.org.uk:
**Postal Address BM Arnafed, London WC1N
3XX.** Email info@afed.org.uk

The following three groups are industrial unions.
They offer an anti bureaucratic alternative to trade
unions. You can join either as an individual or if
there is support for organising at your workplace.

Solidarity Federation. www.solfed.org.uk or **PO
Box 29, South West P D.O Manchester M15
5HW** Email: solfed@solfed.org.uk

Industrial Workers of the World: www.iww.org Or
P/O Box 7593, Glasgow, G42 2EX Email:
rocsec@iww.org.uk.

Workers International Industrial Union.
www.wiiu.org or www.deleonism.org/wiiu.htm or
see the article on Industrial Unionism in issue
9

www.Libcom.org:

Another place to keep up with news from
around the world from a Libertarian
Communist view point.

Wrekin Stop War

This can be found at www.wrekinstopwar.org or
contact

**Duncan Ball, 23 Sunderland Drive, Leegomery
Salop, TF1 6XX** email:
Duncan.ball@blueyonder.co.uk.

Red and Black Notes

You can obtain some RBN items from
libcom.org as listed above. If you want to
know more than read issue 6 Of The
Libertarian Communist and the article by Neil
Fettes pp.4-7. Recommended site if you can
still obtain the full listings.

See also: Institute for Anarchist Studies, the
similar but separate, Anarchist Studies
Journal and the Socialist Labour Party of
America (www.slp.org). Not to be confused
with the Scargill mob.

Red Anarchist Action Network (RAAN) www.redanarchist.org

Another place to get your books/Literature.

Looking for books, pamphlets or Journals
from the Anti state, non Market perspective
well try the following: STIMULANTS at
www.radicalbooks.co.uk

Libertarian Communist Literature has a few
pamphlets and journals related to the anti
state, non Market sector. Journals Include
Black flag, Aufheben, Socialist Standard,
Organise and others. If you are interested
please contact the postal or email address on
Page 2 with your details so we can send a
full list of the literature we have in stock
including their prices.

