

The Libertarian Communist

A Discussion Bulletin for and of the Anti State, Non
Market Socialist/Anarchist sector

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

WHY THE MARKET SYSTEM IS INCOMPATIBLE



WITH A FREE SOCIETY.

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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 (**please note the new email address**) libcom.bulletin@yahoo.co.uk or writing to Ray Carr, Flat 1, 99 Princess Road, Branksome, Poole, Dorset BH12 1BQ.

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Hi and Welcome to Issue 19.

This issue starts off with a critique of the market system. It focuses on an article in the N Y eXaminer which is of interest in as much as that whilst itself critiquing a blog in the New York Times it goes further than merely opposing "free market capitalism" and provides ammunition against capitalism in general. To those of us in the ASNM sector these criticisms will be very familiar but of interest because of where they are coming from. The point is to keep such discussion alive and widen the agenda. Following on from this and very much related we have a contribution from Krisis 2009 which outlines how the present crisis stems not just from a particular sort or sector of capitalism but has its base in the system itself. A letter from Laurens Otter raises some interesting points and in particular the question of whether reformism based on direct action should be considered in a more positive light than that based on parliamentary methods. This is followed by two short pieces; one on a brief mention of this bulletin that featured on libcom.org and a piece on the same site about the performance of the SPGB in the local elections in May. Whilst some LC readers may consider that contesting elections is a waste of time we have come to the conclusion that the methods used for putting over the case for a

free communist society should be open to discussion. On the surface these election results were encouraging but the hard work will come now the elections are over. We have an article from David Dane on the current state of the struggle to oppose the changes to the pension system. David's analysis seems to mirror what many others are saying namely that if such a struggle is to continue let alone progress the action has to be diverted from the official trade unions to action based on self organisation, the question is have the unions succeeded in fucking up the fight already. Joe Hopkins weighs in with an article to keep the discussion going on the need for an "umbrella" grouping for our sector in which he responds to some of the points made by Martin Bashforth. We finish with a couple of posts on the World in Common forum; one on the social consequences of the 2012 European football championship and one on Anarchism and Terrorism. Unfortunately we can only include a small piece of the latter due to its length but we feel it is well worth including and we hope that readers who have not already read the whole article will seek it out. This is a section that we hope to continue with showing the relationship between this journal and the World in Common project.

Is the Market system failing or is it Incompatible with a Free Society?

Supporters of Capitalism claim that it is the most rational and natural way of running modern society. This claim is based on the fact that the system of the "free market" is both democratic based on liberal democracy where the people elect governments and the market is the best and most rational way of allocating goods to meet people's needs. This claim comes under increased scrutiny when, as at present, the economic system of capitalism is in turmoil. At present it is not merely the economic system that is being scrutinised but the political system that upholds it.

An example of this critical analysis of capitalism is an article by Michael McGeehee which appeared in the NYTimes eXaminer in February of this year. This was a critique of a blog which appeared in the New York Times a few days previous by Thomas Edsall entitled "*Is this the End of Market Democracy?*" The article by McGeehee went further than Edsall contribution in questioning the future of capitalism. It questions capitalism in the following areas: is the market compatible with a democratic system? Is a market economy the best method of meeting peoples needs? It calls for the opening up of the agenda to include anti capitalists economists, rather than just those who are seeking to rearrange the market system. Whilst this discussion is based on the situation in the United States of America it is obviously applicable to so-called "Free market" Capitalism as a whole. Whilst we in the anti state non market communist/anarchist sector would go further it is important that this type of discussion is continued and enlarged upon.

The Market Economy and Democracy.

The term "Market Democracy", McGeehee suggests, is an "*Oxymoron*" as "*markets are antithetical to democracy*". Market systems, he suggests, are closer to social Darwinism, every person for themselves, the survival of the fittest, meaning in this case the richest. "*It suffers* ", he adds, "*from a 'fuck you, I gotta get mine mentality, or what was called the new spirit of the age in the 19th century: gain wealth forgetting all but self*". In contrast, McGeehee adds, democracy should be about people having some control over their own lives and wealth should have no more influence than skin colour. The fact that wealth does have a major say in the so-called democratic process shows how it functions. Edsall in his blog in the New York Times wrote about people being able to choose between two opposing ideologies but what if, he asked, the "Free market" system was facing fundamental challenges that those competing for political power were failing to address. The point is that the existence of "*two contrasting ideologies*" contesting political power in the USA, Britain or any other so-called "Market Democracy", does not exist, or at least as McGeehee suggests such contrasts are limited to such a narrow spectrum, so narrow, we would suggest, as to make them invisible.

In "market democracies", wealth distorts any meaningful democracy at all. McGeehee takes up this point by looking at the work of Thomas Ferguson and his book *The Investment Theory of Party Competition and the Logic of Money Driven Political Systems*, 1995.

" *Political organizations are (sometimes very complex) investments; that while they need small amounts of aid and commitment from many people, most of their major endorsements, money, and media attention typically come as direct or indirect results of their ability to attract heavyweight investors [pp.35-7].*

Ferguson continues:

"If all major investors oppose discussing a particular issue, than neither party is likely to pick the issue up-no matter how many little investors or noninvestors might benefit-not because any active collusion between parties but because no effective constituency exists to force the issue on the public agenda" [ibid].

The incompatibility between markets and democracy is further highlighted when McGeehee points out that capital, *"has undue influence over the political process"* As he outlines it is not surprising that politicians cater to the interests of those who fund their campaigns when private campaign contributions allow for candidates to finance expensive PR campaigns. In addition is the point that the vast majority of senators are millionaires and part of the top 1%. People do recognise the link between wealth and political power. In a poll conducted by Time in 2011, 86% agreed that Wall Street and its lobbyists had too much influence in Washington, 79% agreed that the gap between rich and poor had grown too large. In addition 71% felt that the executives of the financial institutions responsible for financial meltdown of 2008 should be prosecuted and 68% felt that the rich should pay more taxes. However because the financial elite have political power based on their economic power such policies will never be enacted the solution lays elsewhere.

The Market as an efficient Resource Allocator

If the word efficiency as applied to the market is meant in terms of it being the best method of allocating resources to meet human needs then it clearly fails the test. McGeehee notes that in the global economy there are seven billion people and enough food is produced to meet the caloric need of ten billion and yet a billion people starve. Whether he means that this amount of food is produced at present or could be produced the point is that the function of the market system is not to satisfy human need, the only people who constitute a market for food are those who

can afford to purchase it. In terms of the ownership and control of economic resources, as the market system has developed it has done so in a direction **opposite** to bringing about a more equitable distribution of wealth. In terms of the USA, McGeehee notes that the bottom 50% account for just 2% of the wealth, the bottom 40% for 0.3%, the top 20% account for 84% of total wealth and the top 1% for one third. A similar massive disparity in the ownership of wealth applies to the world-wide system of capitalism in general. With the failure of the market system both in meeting the basic needs of the majority of people and in providing for a more equitable division in terms of wealth ownership (and in reality it does not just fail in these regards but does not even function to carry out such ends) it is not surprising that the market system fails in producing a caring society. McGeehee outlines how left to market forces people will not do the right thing as the market is not about people caring or facing up to the consequences of their actions. He continues:

"You care about selling high and buying low. That's it. The environment? The widow down the street? Future Generations? Let them eat cake!"

The Relationship between the Economic and Political System

In terms of the current crisis we hear much about the 1% and whilst it is encouraging that a substantial minority, at least, now recognise that it is this elite that needs to be challenged, whether it is the top 1% or 5% or whatever, it is often approached from the point of view that something must have gone wrong to allow a small minority to usurp such control. What we need, many suggest, is more regulation or the election of a government to bring an end to or control this elite and return things to how they should be. But it has to be pointed out that nothing has gone wrong, this is the way capitalism operates and governments do not exist, and never have, to protect the less well off from the economic elite. The domination of a small group of capitalists is not, McGeehee notes anything new. In the case of the USA, (and again a similar analysis is transferable), it can be traced back to the earliest foundations of the U.S government. *"The 'Founding Fathers' enshrined private enterprise into the constitution"*. He outlines how the elite designed the political system to support "their" economy and therefore "their" economic interests. [See Charles Beard: *An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution of the United States*] The domination of an

economic elite with their own interests is, McGeehee argues, an inevitable result when you have an economy whose only aim is for the owners to make as much money as they can and a government whose function it is to defend and promote the interests of the propertied class.

One of the main people responsible for framing the U.S constitution was James Madison. Madison understood how the political system had to operate and that the job of government was to protect the powerful from the working poor. McGeehee quotes Madison as once saying:

"If elections were open to all classes of people the property of the landed proprietors would be insecure."

This fear of the rich being insecure led Madison to pronounce that:

"Landholders ought to have a share in government, to support these invaluable interests, and to balance and check the other. They ought to be so constituted as to protect the minority of the opulent against the majority. The senate, therefore, ought to be this body..."

McGeehee suggests that:

"There is no place for the 'majority' to 'have a share in government' or 'to balance and check the other'. For Madison the only one who 'ought to have a share' in making decisions were 'the minority of the opulent.' Madison prevailed and the 'senate' was created to be the political 'body' to see this through."

Free Market or Capitalist Crisis?

As indicated previously much of the debate around the present economic crisis is based on the criticism of the 'Free Market' and the neo liberal agenda. It's as if there is a model that could work such as more state intervention and so on. The first question that needs to be asked is: do we live in a free market economy? Indeed: is there such a thing as an economy where the market operates without any state intervention? The short answer is **no**. McGeehee quotes a South Korean economist, Ha-joon Chang, as saying that free market capitalism is a 'myth'. As McGeehee suggests the modern capitalist economy is largely built on state protectionism.

Indeed it is pretty clear that despite all the talk in the last thirty years or so about deregulation and the actual selling off of state enterprises the state has a heavy role in capital accumulation. There may be subtle differences in how various countries organise capitalism but such differences are within a narrow corridor. Basically call it what you want but capitalism is capitalism. The point of this, as McGeehee points out in criticising Edsall is:

"It's not 'free market capitalism' that is 'facing fundamental challenges', as Edsall thinks, but the inherent inequality in any capitalist system".

McGeehee points out that the inherent features of capitalism such as private enterprise; market allocation and the profit motive are alien to democracy and even human decency. We could not put his following argument any better.

"It's not just a 'crony capitalist' or 'free market capitalist' system that are incompatible with democracy, but capitalism period. Even 'social democracies' are constantly in danger of losing the protections needed to provide basic social goods and services. And that's because capitalism provides the incentive to put greed above need, and will always look to cut corners, save costs, and maximise returns."

Widening the Agenda

Of course it is all well and good offering a critique of capitalism but it is not being suggested that writers as McGeehee can be lined up as supporters of the anti state, non market socialist/anarchist sector. There is however a positive side to such critiques as they are going beyond criticising supposed variants of capitalism such as the 'Free Market' and at least belong to a grouping that considers that capitalism is fundamentally flawed. Indeed McGeehee's article is in part a criticism of a blog by Thomas Edsall, New York Times, February 2012 which limits itself to a critique of the 'Free market'. McGeehee criticises Edsall for failing to propose an opening up of the debate and include people who are thinking outside of the box. By not proposing to provide space to economists and anti capitalists who are proposing a radical alternative: *"Edsall is"*; McGeehee argues; *"providing a buffer for capitalism by limiting the critique to advocating 'social democracy'".* The debate, McGeehee suggests needs to be widened and space should be given to anti

capitalist like Robin Hahnel, Richard Wolff, Doug Henwood and David Harvey. We could of course add more and if the debate does begin to widen our sector needs to get involved and it needs to get involved as one voice advocating anti state, non market socialism/anarchism as an alternative. Our basic critique could be along the lines that it is not the case that the market system, "free" or otherwise, is failing in the way that some like Edsall argue but it is operating in the only way it can operate and this is why it is not a case of reforming it so it could work better, it needs to be abolished and the debate needs to move on to what might take its place. But, as suggested earlier, the positive thing is that such a debate is beginning to get on to the public agenda.

Since this article has largely been based on Michael McGeehee's article in the NY Times eXaminer "New York Times Critiques 'Free Market' Capitalism? It is right we let him have to final say. Near the end of his article McGeehee refers to Robert Jensen a professor of journalism at University of Texas (Austin) who said: "*unsustainable systems can't be sustained*", to this McGeehee adds:

Though here I would add that capitalism isn't just unsustainable (including in ecological terms), it is also anti social and undemocratic".

The following article is from *Krisis* and is dated October 2009

[The "return of the state" as crisis administrator](#)

By Norbert Trenkle

Parts of the left are attributing the current global economic crisis to political causes. Neoliberalism, so the argument goes, with its total deregulation of markets and particularly the radical increases in freedom accorded to the financial markets, has failed. Now, they claim, we are approaching an era of regulation and control by the state, and our task is to influence the forms it will take. The central demand is for the rolling-back of the influence of finance capital and a strengthening of the real economy, which in turn should itself be reformed both ecologically and socially. Whether or not this will succeed is treated primarily as a

question of the balance of social power and of political mobilisation.

However, this analysis overlooks the fundamental character of the global crisis. Even if it was precipitated by a financial market crash, its causes are to be found somewhere else entirely. The prodigious inflation in the financial markets over the last 30 years was not caused by wilful or incorrect political decisions, but is the expression of a structural crisis of the valorisation of capital, a crisis that began with the end of the post-war Fordist boom. Through the fundamental reorganisation of conditions of labour and production in the course of the third industrial revolution (automisation, flexibilisation and precarisation of labour, transnational chains of value-creation, etc.), there was a massive rationalisation of labour in the central capitalist sectors. This substantially undermined the foundation of the valorisation of capital, which consists in the continually increasing exploitation of labour-power. This in turn led to the diversion of more and more capital into the financial markets: capital could no longer find sufficient opportunities for valorisation in the 'real economy' and a gigantic bubble of unsecured 'fictitious capital' (Marx) was inflated. Without this diversion, which allowed the crisis of capital-accumulation to be postponed, the global economy would have collapsed long ago. The cost of this diversion, however, was the building-up of ever more potential for crisis. It is thus no wonder that the crash came: what rather needs explanation is that it could be so protracted.

This was only possible because at the state level and beyond, policy has been primarily directed towards sustaining the dynamics of the financial markets, and has thus reacted to the onset of every crisis (those in Mexico, Asia, Russia, that of the New Economy) in the same way: with the creation of additional credit, to induce the inflation of a new bubble. The pattern of these reactions is evidence that the structural cause of the crisis-process lies beyond the reach of politics, for it is a result of a fundamental contradiction in the historical internal dynamics of capitalism, itself a prerequisite of all conscious action. Capitalism creates immense forces of production and potential for riches which in and of themselves would

enable a good life for everyone (really, for everyone). These riches are however not compatible with the narrow-minded aim of exploiting living labour, because they render more and more labour superfluous. They thus lapse into becoming the propellant of a fundamental process of crisis, which undermines not only the foundations of the valorisation of capital, but also the network of social reproduction that depends on it, along with the natural foundations of life. The inflation of the financial markets is not the cause of the crisis, but one of its symptoms. It shows that capitalist accumulation can only function precariously as an appendage to fictional capital.

In this context the actual content of the much-evoked 'return of the state' becomes clear. Despite all the lip-service paid to 'regulation' and the return to the real economy, supporting the financial markets and inflating a new bubble of speculation and credit will continue to remain at the centre of every policy of crisis-administration. Even left-wing social democrats, trade unionists and ATTAC-representatives are bound to demand that the banks be saved. The only differences lie in the detail – that is to say, whether or not they should be nationalised, and who should bear the cost. This last question is however already resolved: the costs are so huge that they can only be covered by massive public borrowing. Everything else ('tax the rich', salary-cuts for managers, bankers' private liability etc.) is merely symbolic. There is fundamentally nothing to be said against taking money away from the rich, bankers and employers in order to distribute it to claimants (as if it would ever happen), but the function that these demands fulfil in political debate is regressive, because they serve only to brand scapegoats and to diffuse moral outrage, thus masking the true dimensions of the crisis.

Alone the massive public borrowing to save the financial system suggests – even if it succeeds in precariously delaying the process of crisis with a violent surge of money – that in the next years many aspects of social reproduction will be cut back because they are no longer deemed 'financially viable'. But the sums needed to repay the amassed debts will never be saved through restrictive policies of austerity. It is therefore not in any real sense the case that

the mass of waged, precarised and unemployed workers will have to pay them back. It is these workers, however, who will feel the effects of the 'bailouts' most acutely, because the debt will serve as a brutal restriction on every future politics, no matter for which party or tendency. For while there will be limits to future public borrowing, the burden of interest-payments will grow massively. The consequences are obvious: politics will in the first instance concentrate on the maintenance of 'functions relevant to the system', and these are, in addition to the financial markets, the remaining cores and 'clusters' of productive valorisation of capital, along with the infrastructure and personnel that they require. General infrastructure, social welfare, public healthcare will be dismantled further, wages and pensions decreased (through cuts and as a result of inflation), and the number of precarised and 'superfluous' people will continue to grow. Administration of the crisis, for them, means soup kitchens, authoritarian discipline and exclusion. Even political parties that come to power with promises of 'social and environmental reforms' will follow this logic of the political crisis-administration.

The current debate about reforms is a farce, because it suggests a perspective for which the material foundations are no longer present. During the boom-periods of capitalism, and particularly in the times of the Fordist post-war boom, a relative improvement in living- and living-conditions – was possible within the framework of capitalism, because the growth-dynamics of the movement of valorisation brought about pressure to integrate increasing numbers of people into the system of commodity-production and labour-exploitation. Since more and more have been rendered 'superfluous' from the point-of-view of capital, the function of 'politics of reform' is being reduced to the organisation and facilitation of the increasing social and regional fragmentation of society. This tendency will become more prominent in the further development of the crisis. A new perspective towards social emancipation can only be formulated in the consistent opposition to the dismantling politics of crisis-administration: through the consistent attempt to make the standpoints of material riches and of the satisfaction of sensual needs apply to everybody. This is as true for struggles over wages and labour as it is for

those which aim at the direct, collective appropriation of social resources (means of production, housing, cultural and social spaces etc.). As long as riches can only be thought in the value- and commodity-form and access to material riches appears possible only via the detour of money, the restrictions and insanities of this form will in the end continue to be presupposed and accepted. It is in this way that large-scale shut-downs of production-facilities in which useful and sensible things (such as good food) are made appears 'unavoidable', while at the same time there are bitter struggles to continue and expand the production of cars, although their climate- destroying effects have been widely-known for a long time. This blocks the only way out of the destructive course of commodity-society, a process that starts in our heads, and proceeds, as if as a matter of course, in our actions. Our task is to break through this blockade.

Translated by Josh Robinson ([Principia Dialectica](#))

Is there a link between reformist and revolutionary activity?

Dear Lib Com

Thanks for the Lib Com (Issue 18).

From the cover you seem to be stressing the Communist over the Libertarian. From my point of view, fair enough in that "Libertarian Communist", ought to mean Communist in the real sense of the word, not the Bolshevik, prior to 1917 the word would have implied what we mean. But unfortunately in a post Stalinist world it could be alleged by our enemies that putting the Libertarian in smaller case print, means that it means less.

I suspect you've misunderstood Martin Bashforth in as many places as you think he misunderstood you. I've no doubt he'd be as keen as you to see greater dialogue between anarchists and 'impossibilist Marxists', in the years I known him he has been both.

Stefan's article was excellent: I hope it breeds further discourse. I think however

there is a need to re-examine what we are saying when we dismiss reformism when we are referring to activity, not to parliamentary politics. Obviously single-issue campaigns may be reformist, (though in some cases transitional), it would be plainly impossible to get any class-state to abandon its major weapon of coercion without abolishing the state and the class interests that gave rise to it – so unilateral nuclear disarmament was never just reformism.

But there's also the question of challenging the dominant culture – philosophy. Putting an oversimplified case, if the dominant philosophy as carried by all the most popular information media, says that militant trade unions are "*the enemy within*", "*treasonable conspiracies*" and so forth, though there will be a bloody minded minority that joins and belongs to them; there will be a lot of potential members who will only join if they can either be convinced on the basis of a partial class analysis or on something of a civil liberties – cum – internationalist one. Therefore the dissemination and of Trot and/or left liberal or reformist anarchism and fighting for the reforms they want, can be an essential way of preparing for more revolutionary organization. It is not just the media of course, but the education system, psychology, ..., which is why "*permanent protests*" anarchists used to concentrate so much on those issues appearing – even to themselves – to take issues out of the context of the class state.

If you think about it similar points apply in the growth of pacifism or indeed impossibilism. Also even where the worker joins the union in the heat of struggle, for his/her membership to continue as a revolutionary commitment, rather than just as a customary ticket holding, s/he needs to be involved in just such ideological challenges to the prevailing orthodoxies. So each advance has to be won at least twice, a change in the mind, and a commitment to actual activity, (under different circumstances they come in a different order.) Both parts in isolation look reformist.

Laurens Otter

A Reply to Laurens

Thanks for your letter Laurens you raise some interesting points.

On the point of changing the font on the cover and emphasising the word **Communist** over Libertarian, the reasoning behind this was the point you make mainly that what we mean by that word has nothing to do with the regime in Russia following 1917 or other similar states. We would regard them as state capitalist although it is quite true that not all LC supporters would see this as an accurate description but the point we all agree on is that they were not communist/socialist. On the point that our enemies may accuse us of diminishing the libertarian aspects of the type of society we are aiming at well firstly we made a concession not so much to our enemies but more to friends and the mass of people we wish to convince because there was a case for changing the title to "**The Communist**" but we felt this might be misunderstood. But the main point is that the word "Libertarian" has almost as many problems as Communist. To many it has right wing connotations and so at the end of the day it is not so much what we call ourselves but how we explain what we stand for. It was therefore felt that it would be best to maintain the present title but emphasise the Communist aspect because we stand for communal or social ownership but keeping libertarian in should, we hope, indicate to those still wading through this minefield that we represent something different to Leninism or Stalinism.

On the issue of misunderstandings with Martin Bashforth you could be correct but if so we hope that those misunderstanding have been cleared up. The current issue has another article on the subject of an ASNM Umbrella Grouping so hopefully it is not a dead issue just yet.

The point of having a different attitude to groups who seek a reformist agenda by methods of direct action to those who seek it via parliamentary methods; well we can see where you are coming from. There is the argument that the direct action method involves a degree of resistance to capitalism which is not inherent within the parliamentary method as it is based on self organisation and activity rather than asking

leaders to do something for you. However we would suggest that the problem lay with the nature of reformism itself. Direct action reformism may be based on activity but reformism is a belief that capitalism can be ended by a continuing series of reforms and whether one seeks to achieve this via parliament or direct action this seems to be a non starter. People have been seeking to reform capitalism by various methods more or less since its inception and look where we are now. Secondly capitalism by its very nature creates a need for reforms far faster than any reform can be achieved so we would always be taking one step forward and three back. There is also the point that such reform movements would be engaged in an endless struggle for reforms that would leave them exhausted and finally the reform movement would consume so much of our energies that we would have no time to organise for building movements that sought to deal with the cause rather than mere effects.

You are right when you say "*it would be plainly impossible to get any class-state to abandon its major weapon of coercion without abolishing the state and the class interests that gave rise to it*". But how many of those involved in the Nuclear disarmament campaign understood this and was it really a movement with the object of abolishing the conditions that gave rise to nuclear and other weapons? The same applies to reformist movements challenging the status quo. For reformist movements to reach a position where they desired to challenge the status quo and get rid of the state they would have to change themselves from a purely reformist movement, one dealing with the effects of capitalism into one dealing with the cause of those effects, a revolutionary movement.

However the argument here is not that reformist movements do no any good at all, it is of course far better that there are groups, individuals and movements that are objecting to the problems created by capitalism than everyone just accepting that such effects are inevitable and that nothing can be done. The question that needs to be addressed is how we can turn movements for reform into educated movements that seek not just to end capitalism but also who begin to discuss what could replace it. This is the very old dilemma how do we involve ourselves in the class struggle in a way that

seeks not just to win some reform that will probably be taken back in the next decade but that seeks to end the class struggle by removing a society based on classes.

As we have already indicated direct action reformism has the advantage over parliamentary reform movements in as much as it advocates self organisation rather than leadership based organisation. However it does not seem likely that any type of reformist movement holds the key to a way forward. Let's take, for example, the current Anti Cuts Movement. Parts of that movement might have some innovative aspects to it such as different forms of action and ways of organising but if it is just tied to opposing the cuts and the austerity agenda advocated by the present government it is severely limited. It cannot seek to get an alternative government elected as that would merely, once in power, carry on with the same agenda even if modified so slightly to make no difference. To prevent the cuts or get the rich to pay for them is clearly not going to happen. What could be a way forward is the coming together of social movements whose agenda can only be achieved by opposing capitalism whether they realise it or not and maybe this is what you are suggesting rather than traditional reformist movements. The problem with the latter is they generally have one specific goal to remove a particular problem. By social movements we would be thinking of the ecology movement, student movements which go further than opposing cuts but which begin to critique the whole education system, an anti war movement that was opposed to all wars rather than specific ones and which sought to get to grips with the root causes of war and of course segments of the anti cuts movement which understand that it is the system as a whole that must be taken on. On NHS reforms what we need is not just opposition to the reforms but a discussion of how a health system could operate in a society not governed by the profit motive. But such social movements would need to come together and realise that whilst they may be concentrating on separate issues, they are all confronting the same root cause. For this reason there may be some mileage in the Occupy movement it obviously has its limitations at present but there is still a possibility that it could bring various social movements together and whilst there is no doubt that it is dominated, at present, by a

reformist agenda it is open enough for a more radical perspective to be put forward.
(1)

Perhaps relevant in this discussion are suggestions made by David Harvey in his book *[The Enigma of Capital]*. Harvey rightly suggests that capitalism will not collapse of its own accord nor will the capitalist class relinquish its power, it will have to be taken from them [page.269]. Harvey suggests that the starting point for a movement necessary to challenge capitalism is one that could provide a mental revolution to pave the way to getting a more radical perspective on to the agenda to combat the problems inherent in a system that can only survive and prosper by endless economic growth. Such a movement, Harvey suggests could be provided by a youthful student movement [page.239]. Arising from this perspective is the point that a way forward is more likely to be provided by radical social movements that are forced to challenge the logic of capitalism rather than more traditional reformist movements that merely seek the solution to a specific problem within the confines of the current social system. I think it is here where your point about challenging the dominant culture – philosophy is relevant.

Traditional reformist movements are different to the social movements that have developed in recent years and the latter are more likely to be forced to oppose capitalism and offer increased hope for the development of a meaningful alternative. But something will have to bring these social movements together not in one organisation but in some grouping where commonalities can be discussed. This might provide a role for the Occupy movement and it may also provide a platform for ANSM ideas. This needs an ongoing discussion and it is positive that the issue has once again been raised and we look forward to further contributions.

(1) See the last issue and the couple of articles on the occupy movement; "Occupy: Some Personal Comments, Dave Flynn and Leaflet for the Occupy (Boston USA) Movement

The Libertarian Communist on libcom.org

The following brief mention of this publication appeared on libcom.org a while ago. Thanks to spikeymike for the mention.

Some people might find this spgbish inspired anarchist-socialist hybrid publication, still apparently going under the title of 'Libertarian Communist', of interest, in so far as it attempts to encompass the views of both 'pro and anti' camps on the issue of standing in state elections. It lists as recommended this libcom site as well as a number of the well known UK anarchist organisations but not any left communist type groups/publications:

<http://www.scribd.com/doc/88139055/The-Libertarian-Communist-No-18-April-June-2012>. Seems to have links with the USA based Libertarian Socialist Network as well. Has some occasionally interesting articles but still fails to break free of the SPGB mindset as far as I can see.

[Spikymike](#)

Comments

One again thanks for the mention. On the question of not listing any left communist type groups/publications if they fall within the remit of the anti state non market sector we would be pleased to include them in the directory, so if interested please get in touch.

We do not have any direct links to the Libertarian Socialist Network which has now changed its name to the **International Libertarian Socialist Alliance** but we do support them as being close to the ASNM sector.

We are pleased that the author of the piece has found the occasional interesting article. On the fact that the LC has failed

to break free of the SPGB mindset we would just like to say that the point is not to break free of any particular mindset within our sector or indeed to be restricted to any one mindset. The aim of this publication is to bring about an understanding between groups and strands within the sector on the basis that all have something to contribute and we should strive to concentrate on issues we have in common and to discuss differences in a constructive manner. The aim of this dialogue should be to update and clarify our own positions and be willing to change them if the evidence is that a position we hold is clearly in error.

SPGB election results in local elections May 2012.

We are including the following because what ever you opinion about contesting elections we feel if there is good news to report about getting the anti state, non market message across then it should be highlighted. These election results were back in May and although they do not indicate a revolution in the coming period they are encouraging. The problem for the SPGB will be in following up these results. How do you find out who voted for you? And how do you get them actively involved beyond just putting a cross on a bit of paper? More activity in the areas contested one would presume. So well done and lets hope for something positive in the longer term.

The SPGB got 2938 or 1.9% in the Lambeth & Southwark ward, more than we got last time around (1588) and more than the Left List did too on that occasion (1956). In this election the TUSC (supported by both Militant and the SWP) on the list vote in Lambeth & Southwark got only 1891 or 1.2%

At Merton & Wandsworth the SPGB received 1343 votes, 0.9%, this compares with 1714 or 1.0% for the Left List (as the SWP called themselves for the election) at the last GLA election there 4 years ago.

And this time around TUSC list vote was just 904 or 0.6%.

Offering an attractive menu of reforms ("jobs with a living wage for all", "no cuts", "cheap, efficient and safe public transport", "affordable homes for all", "free education") doesn't necessarily get you more votes than standing just for socialism. Being the only party listed as socialist on the ballot paper obviously helps but the question remains why was it still higher than what the TUSC got on the list vote. Some who voted for the SPGB deliberately didn't vote for TUSC. Was it because they didn't believe in their reformist approach or the feasibility of their reforms within capitalism? Or technical...too many names on the list sheet?

Also the SPGB got more votes in the 4 London boroughs than the BNP 4281 as against their 4086. **This was posted on libcom.org by A J Johnstone**

Notes on the Pensions Struggle

By David Dane

I teach science at a Further Education College in London – The College of Haringey and Enfield and North East London, (I am a member of the University and College Union (UCU) and the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW)). In the following article on the Pensions issue the opinions expressed are my own.

From April 2012 increased contributions were taken from the pay packets of FE lecturers, teachers and public service workers, along with a rise in the pension age to 67 for many workers. In effect this amounts to an increase in taxation and a cut in pay. It can be seen as part of a general attack on working conditions and a move to redistribute wealth in the direction of the ruling class. I think it is important for libertarian socialists/anarchists to be involved in the pension struggle partly because it is a defence of rights and conditions governments were forced to grant after hard struggle and also because our anti market, anti state sector can help spread a

different method of struggle rather than the usual state socialist/ liberal responses.

There have been a series of strikes. Last year there were strikes on the 30th June and November 30th. After this there seemed to be a "cooling off", of the unions' interest (or at least the union leadership). After the large November 30th strike which saw millions stop work and was probably the largest strike in a generation, it was followed by a further strike this year on the 28th March. It was only in London and involved the National Union of Teachers (NUT) and UCU. The general secretary of UCU has been lukewarm in supporting the pension issues and it has been regions and branches that put most of the effort into the strike.

On May 10th there was a national day of action involving more unions including PCS, UCU, UNITE, NIPSA and RMT members. There was also an unofficial strike by police prison officers and probation officers. There was a march from Westminster Bridge to a rally at Westminster Hall, which I went on. The event was not that large and was overshadowed by the much bigger and separate off duty police demo – which seemed to claim most of the media attention. Inside Westminster Hall we listened to various union leaders, such as Bob Crow, expressing support. It was noticeable that Sally Hunt, the general secretary of UCU was not there. The general idea endorsed by these union bureaucrats was that there should be further one day strikes, one every month.

I think for the pension struggle to succeed one day strikes are not enough and fall into the trap of passively expecting the union leadership to do it all. All too obviously they are quite capable of dropping it. It is worth remembering that UNISON, the largest public service union, is not involved in the pension struggle at the moment, and has signed up to the government's Heads of Agreement. I think the struggle has to be taken up at a more local level and inside local workplaces. No doubt in this situation some people would be trade union members but they do not have to be.

Prefigurative organisations such as workplace and community groups could be created. These organisations could be based on direct democracy and federate with other groups. There are already groupings of this

nature in some of the Anti Cuts campaigning groups. The pension campaign at the moment (late May 2012) is at a crossroads. Which way it turns will depend very much on the decisions and activities of its ordinary members.

David Dane (May 18th 2012)

An Open Letter on Unity

Joe Hopkins

When I was a boy of 15 I had one of many conversations with a friend of mine two years my senior about China and Mao Tse Tung, the USSR and Trotsky, Lenin, Stalin and Kropotkin. The subject though was not these particular men but the form of government that had developed around them and the social conditions the average person, the worker class, lived in. We, my older friend Randy Belchek and I touched upon state formation and rulers and how they had so much power and wealth and did so little. I am sure discussions such as these were common among reasonably bright young people of modest but comfortable material means. Randy said that **"If everyone worked for free everything would be free"** . . . There would be no place for rulers and no reason for states to exist.

I wanted to genuflect to this young sage for his penetrating insight and wondered if this bright shiny new idea he'd just thought up was because of the hashish we were smoking – it was the late 1960s! That's about the moment Randy mentioned Karl Marx. Maybe Randy was more than reasonably bright. He had a lot of background and historical knowledge on Communism and thinking back on him and all that we talked about I realise he intellectualised about a lot of things kind of like thought experiments – ghosts with no substance. Randy chalked it all off as a pipe dream – as we lit another pipe full.

I am obviously much stupider than Randy. I've been a Communist, (or Socialist, if you prefer), since that day. I educated myself at a community college in Kentucky and then did a brief stint at Indiana University (USA); Psychology, Economics, Public Speaking and Sociology comprised the bulk of my studies.

Like Kid Rock sings, *"It's all good and it's all in fun – just get into the pit and try to love someone"*. Sometimes action calls for action; the concerted efforts of dedicated people toward the universal. Collectively we've got to get into the pit. I left school for the real world.

Reading Lib Com #18, P. 3 – An ASNM [sic] Umbrella Grouping . . . I found a letter from Martin Bashforth of York; Martin writes, in part:

"It is suggested that [] [the umbrella group] 'could play a role in developing the [ASNM] sector as a whole', 'promoting ideas', 'playing an educational role' and possibly 'co-ordinating', though what it would co-ordinate is not specified."

It is pretty clear to someone stupider than Randy that it's the Anti State, Non Market Sector that needs co-ordinating. At college I also studied what we here in the USA call English (with no insult to you in England on my part intended) and by definition co-ordination means: *"Harmonious adjustment or functioning"*; Co-ordinate means: *"Equal in rank and order; of the same rank and order – not subordinate: to bring into common action."* THAT is what the collective "We" needs.

With the first sentence of his next paragraph Martin writes:

"Perhaps it is assumed that existing groups would wish to collaborate together under this umbrella in a more formal way than is already done."

My dictionary [**All definitions from Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, 1953**] defines Formal as: *"Established form or custom; conventional. Due form; regular. Having the form or appearance without the substance; external"*. (I wish Martin would have writ: *"Perhaps it is supposed . . ." supra*) This, it seems to me, is what we've got, and need to rid ourselves of – *Formality*. Martin writes;

"The discussion would go round in circles because of different strategic concepts" That's what we need to get over. How do we allow ourselves to get bogged down by such things as *strategic concepts*? Concepts my dictionary defines as: *"A thought; an*

opinion." Even philosophically the definition is: "A mental image of a thing formed by generalization from particulars". This definition of *Concepts* brings to mind Walter Lippmann's book {**Public Opinion: 1922**} where the twice Pulitzer Prize winner quotes from the letters of William James, Vol 1, p.65:

"No one sees further into a generalization than his own knowledge of detail extends". Lippmann himself writes that, "Sometimes consciously, more often without knowing it, we are impressed by those facts which fit our philosophy". {**Public Opinion, p.65**}

Surely those who conceptualise generalizations without a complete index of particulars or details create stereotypes as shorthand – labels and catchwords do not lead to clarification but to forced simplification of matters that are really complex. These concepts become used in rote fashion and resist being contaminated by understanding.

An umbrella group could turn out to be no more capable of organized action than a gang of feral cats. An umbrella group could turn out to be a lynchpin holding the wheels of our wain true to course in actions that will convince ever greater numbers of people that there is an alternative, a better alternative, than everyday life under the domination of state and capitalism. I trust we are all familiar with the phrase "The tyranny of the market"?

In "A reply to Martin", p. 4, the editor tries with what I consider great success to clarify the aims of the proposed umbrella group. To my mind the UG would be an addition to the fora already in existence for communication, but at the same time a NEW forum – where a different social etiquette may develop resulting in freer exchanges and deeper consideration of ideas discussed between what the LC editor refers to as "strands".

Under bourgeois pluralism the most powerful version of control is through inclusion. Rather than expand its control by pushing what is unacceptable to the periphery, it operates by including more and more peripheral voices. This bourgeois pluralism domesticates subversive voices by appropriating them. Various voices are allowed to speak but only if they've made a

prior commitment to consent to a larger unity; though different the various voices within bourgeois pluralism have a way of sounding alike. Differences are acknowledged but the differences are dominated by and absorbed into the master logic that rules the day, i.e., the logic of the masters, our masters, who through their private property rights own and control access to their microphones and their unfree presses. As free thinking and radical revolutionaries we still have a margin of manoeuvre on the internet for world-wide reach – and our small "alternative" presses operating on the fringe. It would be wise and in the interests of the planet and all its inhabitants for us to attempt to cross the boundaries of our own inherited or personally developed tradition (*Strand*) to understand one another. This could contribute to the erosion of existing boundaries (*partly imposed by "Different Strategic Concepts"*) and perhaps not so much a displacement of these concepts (and their aims) as a cross-pollination of existing strands.

In his most famous work, *Die Philosophie Des "Als Ob"* [*The Philosophy of the "As If"*] Hans Vaihinger wrote:

"It is owing to the state of tension occasioned by an unverified hypothesis and the concomitant feelings of mental distress, that our natural tendency is always to turn an hypothesis into a dogma." [p. 220]

Vaihinger also wrote that the proper result of thought is purposive action.

Labels, catchwords, stereotypes, ideologies, et alii are tantamount to dogma – and the ASNM sector members and fellow travellers would be wise to investigate whether their thinking has undergone such an infection. We as groups deal in unverified hypothesis about a currently unknowable future – talk about a "state of tension" and "mental distress"!

Another term that can be a proxy for dogma is paradigm. In "*The structure of Scientific Revolutions*" Thomas S Kuhn quotes a passage by Darwin at the end of his "*Origin of Species*"

"Although I am fully convinced of the truth of the views given in this volume..., I by no

means expect to convince experienced naturalists whose minds are stacked with a multitude of facts all viewed, during a long course of years, from a point of view directly opposite to mine.” [p. 151]

Kuhn reports that Max Planck sadly remarked that:

“A new scientific truth does not triumph by convincing its opponents and making them see the light but rather because its opponents eventually die and a new generation grows up that is familiar with it.” [p. 151]

The inability, or at least the disinclination to change the practical application of effort into new lanes of operation, still heading toward an unchanged goal, may be attributed to what Pierre Bourdieu termed Habitus, (an idea borrowed from Aristotle and modified, through empirical research, to describe behaviour in today’s society). In “*The Logic of Practice*” Bourdieu defines Habitus as:

“The conditionings associated with a particular class of conditions of existence produce Habitus, systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organise practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them. Objectively ‘regulated’ and ‘regular’ without being in any way the product of obedience to rules, they can be collectively orchestrated without being the product of the organizing action of a conductor. [p. 53; emphasis added]

By way of explanation Bourdieu goes on:

“The tendency of groups to persist in their ways, due inter alia to the fact that they are composed of individuals with durable dispositions that can outlive the economic and social conditions in which they were produced, can be the source of misadaptation as well as adaptation, revolt as well as resignation.” [p. 62]

The “Weekly Review” section of *The Guardian Weekly* for 24 February 2012

reprints an article from *Le Monde* (“A decade after his death, French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu stands tall”, p. 31) according to which: “*Bourdieu is the second most frequently quoted author in the world after Michel Foucault, but ahead of Jacques Derrida*”

(<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/feb/21/pierre-bourdieu-philosophy-most-quoted>).

Due to the fact that the greatest number of revolutionaries of today depend on the most accurate truths attainable to get their point across it would be a positive move for us all to extend the olive branch of peace and trust to each other that we are all anti state and anti market proponents and not listen to those who, like John Molyneux, advocate putting a gun to people’s heads to make them work, in the name of anarchism. This man is surely an outlier . . . or the ‘*he say, she say*’ of pro-market anarchists (a creature described by a contradiction of terms) claiming that Marxists are by definition statist (another contradiction of terms if you ignore one part of the Manifesto written by the 29-year-old Marx and concentrate on his later and more mature writings in *Das Capital*).

Because global economic stagnation is a more powerful taskmaster than ideological commitment our greatest opportunities for successful peaceful revolution exist when the social inertia of the 99% has been disturbed by crisis. Let’s get with the programme and stir the pot!

The old axiom holds forever true for revolutionaries (as well as for reactionaries) – a crisis is a terrible thing to waste.

In Solidarity **Joe Hopkins**

Dialogue will be accepted and responded to at: joehopkins@verizon.net

From World in Common

For a trial period to see how things go we are going to include a page or so highlighting some of the recent and perhaps some not so recent posts on the World in Common forum. The reason for this is to show that the LC supports the ideas of WiC, still promotes its rejuvenation process and still sees it as the best means of creating an open anti state, non market organisation off as well as on-line.

As we are putting this issue together the Euro 2012 Football championships are just about to draw to a close. This post appeared on the World in Common forum at the end of April this year. It concerns Poland who are jointly hosting the tournament with the Ukraine.

Against the Politics of the Euro

Over the past couple of years, more and more social and political organizations and grassroots initiatives in Warsaw have been fighting against the city's social spending policies. We have seen movements and protests against public housing policy, the closure of schools, the privatization of school cafeterias and huge fee increases in nursery schools. (The latter have been cancelled due to a judgment in favour of parents who launched a legal challenge against that decision.) All of these initiatives share a common sentiment: that the city does not care about the basic social needs of most of its residents, who are working but poor and who cannot afford private hospitals, education and rents.

Among the city's big showcase investments is the National Stadium in Warsaw and other investments related to the Euro 2012. There were many scandals related to the stadium itself. While it was built, there was a wildcat strike and a few workers died due to negligence. The ZSP was active in exposing this and getting workers to speak out, as well as helping Ukrainian workers to get better housing conditions. Despite the poor working conditions for many on the building site, the stadium is reportedly the most expensive one in the world.

When the stadium finally opened, the roof didn't work and there were other safety

concerns. The city didn't even want to let the public in for the grand opening. Despite all these problems, the politicians overseeing the project received huge bonuses. Around the area of the stadium, a gentrification process began and some people were evicted. The city condemned some houses without providing replacement housing for everybody. And thousands of people, mainly immigrants, were forced out of the marketplace that used to be around the stadium. Instead of the highly popular market, which was the largest in Europe, local residents now have a parking lot and rising rents.

All of this is costing taxpayers a lot of money, but most of the benefits are for the elites and the few business people who will make some money off the event. In the meantime, the city claims that there is no money in the budget for anything. As parents who were protesting the privatization of school cafeterias pointed out, the price of the zone for football fans in front of the Palace of Culture will be eight times the money the city wants to save by eliminating the jobs of school cooks. Tenants organizations, ZSP and others will protest on June 8 when the Euro opens with its first match in Warsaw. The Tenants' Defence Committee will also organize a EURO REALITY TOUR of the slums around the National Stadium during the Euro. The first dates are planned for June 9-12 and tours will be held in Polish, English, Russian and Spanish. Visitors to Warsaw can see the state of public housing and effects of gentrification around the area, as well as visit some interesting landmarks that haven't been destroyed by developers yet.

New Website

<http://Stephenshenfield.net>

Themes: Section that includes articles on War, Disarmament, the Environment, Climate Change and Pre History

Systems: Capitalism and Socialism

Places: Articles on different regions around the world.

Archives: Section includes all issues of The Libertarian Communist

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Unfortunately we cannot include the entire article that follows due to its length: this is the final section and we hope it will encourage readers to read the whole pamphlet.

Posted on World in Common on May 1st 2012

You Can't Blow up a Social Relationship -

The Anarchist case against Terrorism

This essay was published as a pamphlet around late 1978 or 1979, in the aftermath of the Sydney Hilton Bombing. The black humour of the time around the anarchist movement was that the police and security forces framed Ananda Marga because they came before Anarchism in the alphabet. The arguments in this pamphlet are still as valid today as when they were written 20 years ago. Reprinting or linking to this text is encouraged.

Anarres Books Collective

Minimise Violence by Emphasising Politics

The very essence of libertarian revolutionary strategy is the idea that there is an inextricable link between the means used and the ends proposed. While there may be a link between the rotten authoritarian ends of nationalists and marxist-leninists and rotten terrorist means, it is unquestionably clear that libertarian ends must disallow terrorist means. In fact the majority of marxist-leninist groups oppose terrorism, though, as Lenin says in *Left-wing Communism - an Infantile Disorder*, "It was, of course, only on grounds of expediency that we rejected individual terrorism." Leninists are the proponents of vanguardism par excellence. They also are proponents of terrorism by the state - as long as they control it.

Libertarians look at history and at the ruling classes of the world and conclude that a libertarian movement will face state violence and armed struggle will be necessary in response. It is quite obvious that political activity could not even commence in certain conditions without taking up arms

immediately. Also in certain conditions, as in peasant-based societies, it would be necessary to set up armed bases in the countryside. But the aim here would not be to carry out "exemplary" clashes with the military but to protect the political infrastructure to enable the spreading of ideas to continue. This may involve some guerrilla tactics but it cannot mean the strategy of guerrilla-ism. Nor can it mean the creation of a separate, hierarchical, military organization, which is not only anti-libertarian but is also vulnerable and inefficient. The Tupamaros were, being marxist-leninists, hierarchically organised. One of the factors in their defeat was the treason of Amodio Perez, a "liaison director" in the organization, i.e. a second-level institutionalised leader who knew so much that he was able to single-handedly put police onto large sections.

In Baumann's book he makes it quite clear that the capture of members of groups was often the result of betrayal by sympathisers. This was not ever a result of hierarchical structuring as this did not exist in the group he belonged to. Though the police did use virtual torture methods on some sympathisers this was not the main factor either. It rather follows from the life of illegality.

Three people who were illegal would sit in one apartment and two or three legal ones would take care of them ... (p.56) You only have contact with other people as objects, when you meet somebody all you can say is, listen old man, you have to get me this or that thing, rent me a place to live, here or there and in three days we'll meet here at this corner. If he has any criticism of you, you say, that doesn't interest me at all. Either you participate or you leave it easy and clear. At the end it's caught up with you - you become like the apparatus you fight against." (p.99)

As well:

Because you're illegal, you can't keep contact with the people at the base. You can no longer take part directly in any further development of the whole scene. You're not integrated with the living process that goes on. Suddenly you're a marginal figure because you can't show up anywhere. (p. 98)

It is obvious that these aspects of such a life are counter-productive for libertarians. On the whole then it would seem that such organisations could only have a survival function for certain people under threat of murder or torture by the state. At one stage the Tupamaros were able to stop systematic torture by threatening torturers, but once the state resumed the offensive, torture was resumed. To prevent executions and torture, armed activity might be justified, but its anti-political features would have to be weighed carefully.

Armed struggle means people would be killed and there is no getting away from the fact that violence threatens humanism. But libertarians would hope to preserve their humanism by ensuring that armed struggle would merely be an extension of a *political* movement whose main activity would be to spread ideas and build alternative organization. The forces of repression (police, army) and the rulers themselves would not be excluded from such efforts. In fact much effort would be devoted to splitting them with politics to minimise the necessity for violence. In this situation everyone would have a choice. Libertarians are extending to people the hope that they can change. We are extending to people our confidence that a self-managed society will be more satisfying for all people. This includes our rulers, even though we recognise the limitations created by the characters people have developed in their lives, especially those adapted to the exercise of power.

Small groups operating outside the control of a mass movement and often in the absence of any mass resistance at all, who take upon themselves decisions of "class justice" in the name of groups who are unrepresented but whose interests are affected by action based on these decisions, are nothing but dangerous. The SLA killed a school superintendent after a community coalition failed to prevent the introduction of draconian disciplinary measures in schools. This failure was a reflection of the political level of the community and exactly the opposite of an invitation for the SLA to kill a mere pawn of the Board of Education. "The SLA recognises no authority but its own will which identifies with the will of the people in much the same manner that many psychopathic killers claim to be instructed by

God. It has killed a defenceless individual whose guilt is not only not proved, but is mainly a fantasy of his executioners."

These comments of Ramparts magazine apply to many a similar incident.

If in these cases guilt can at least be attributed as a justification, what can be said of those actions against the public at large (indiscriminate bombing, taking hostages, hijacking planes etc.)? Usually terrorists will attempt justification in terms of the kinds of strategies described above. The expected end results from these strategies supposedly justify the means used. Enough has been said about these strategies. But it should be emphasised again that foul means, far from being justified by distant ends, merely provide a guarantee that the ends achieved will be horrible.

You can't blow up a social relationship. The total collapse of this society would provide no guarantee about what replaced it. Unless a majority of people had the ideas and organization sufficient for the creation of an alternative society, we would see the old world reassert itself because it is what people would be used to, what they believed in, what existed unchallenged in their own personalities.

Proponents of terrorism and guerrilla-ism are to be opposed because their actions are vanguardist and authoritarian, because their ideas, to the extent that they are substantial, are wrong or unrelated to the results of their actions (especially when they call themselves libertarians or anarchists), because their killing cannot be justified, and finally because their actions produce either repression with nothing in return or an authoritarian regime.

To those contemplating political violence we say, first look to yourselves: is destructiveness an expression of fear of love? There are political traditions and political possibilities you have yet to examine. To the society which produces the conditions of poverty, passivity, selfishness, shallowness and destructiveness in which the response of political violence can grow we say, take warning. These conditions must be overthrown. As a French Socialist said in 1848 - "If you have no will for human association I tell you that you are exposing civilisation to the fate of dying in fearful agony."

Anti State, Non Market Sector Groups

worldsocialistmovement/SPGB:

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

Promotional Material for the World Socialist Movement

Tee-shirts Blue with a polar bear and *"If You Were a Polar Bear, You'd be a Socialist,* **Yellow**, with blue and green globe and *"The World is a Common Treasury for All"*. **Sizes S, M, L, XL, XXL State size when ordering. £7.00 Plus postage and packaging. (P&P).**

Mugs: Standard size, red and white. On the front, *"Only Sheep Need Leaders"* and on the reverse side, *"Famine? War? Pollution? Capitalism is the Problem, World Socialism is the Solution"* **£5 Plus P&P.**

Pens: blue and white with blue ink; *"Only Sheep Need Leaders"* and a sheep. **Red and white** with blue ink with *"Workers of the World Unite"* **Black** with black ink, *"Only Sheep Need Leaders"* and a sheep. **50p each Plus P&P.**

Baseball Caps: Navy blue with embroidered *"World Socialist Movement"*. **£7 each plus P&P.**

Balloons: different colours with *"World Socialist Movement"*. **15p each plus P&P.**

All items carry the WSM website address. Cheques and Postal Orders made payable to SPGB SW Regional Branch. Also available, a SPGB enamelled badge, *"The World for the Workers"*. £10. For further details on all items contact Veronica at veronica.clanchy@hotmail.co.uk or phone 01202 569826

Read issue 22 of the World Socialist Review: Publication of World Socialist Party US. *"Socialists take a look at Obama" "Is Obama a socialist? He does not regard himself as one. Neither do we. This issue of World Socialist Review examines Obama's outlook and life story, his packaging as a politician, and his policy in such areas as healthcare, the economy and the environment. It also places*

Obama in the context of world capitalism and the American political system."

Also available *"Role Modeling Socialist Behaviour: The Life and Letters of Isaac Rab"*. There is a review of this book in the World Socialist Review 22 and further details can be obtained by contacting the address below.

World Socialist Party US (WSPUS) website wspus.org Postal address: World Socialist Party, Box 440247, Boston, MA 02144.

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Vist <http://Stephenshenfield.net> For details see page 16 of this issue

Take a look at Andy Cox's website which looks at how socialism might be developed: <http://socialistmatters.webs.com/>.

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

www.Libcom.org;

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

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

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

The Commune

For workers' self management and communism from below.

Website: thecommu.ne.co.uk

Postal address: The Commune, Freedom book shop, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX

Comrades may be interested in the following links:

For Libertarian Communists in Russia and Belarus: <http://wiki.avtonom.org/index.php>

"Eretik" (Heretic) is a left communist journal in Russian and English that appears both on the net and in print. This is produced by a group in Moldova.

See: <http://eretic-samizdat.blogspot.com/2012/immunity-of-rich-and-powerful.html>

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A couple of places to purchase Literature and help support the ASNM sector.

"there is an Alternative!"

STIMULANTS: A collection of material highlighting an opposition to the Mantra that "There Is No Alternative" to how we live today. Journals, Pamphlets, Books, DVDs and Cds etc available www.radicalbooks.co.uk

Libertarian Communist Literature has a selection of pamphlets and journals related to the anti state, non Market sector. Journals Include: **Black flag, Aufheben, Socialist Standard, Organise** and others. We have a variety of pamphlets and a few books.

If you are interested please contact the postal or email address on Page 2 with your details, (please note the changed email address libcom.bulletin@yahoo.co.uk) This list is also included in our blog which can be found at <http://lib-com.blogspot.com/> This also includes issues 1 to 18 of The Libertarian Communist. The Libertarian Communist can also be found at www.scribd.com and <http://stephenshenfield.net>

Worth taking a look at

Institute for Anarchist Studies, the similar but separate, Anarchist Studies Journal and Anarchy Archives.

See also the Socialist Labour Party of America (www.slp.org), and the Marxist Internet Archive Library

Direct Action Industrial Unions

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.html or see the article on Industrial Unionism in issue 9

The following groups although not strictly defined as anti state, non market are still worth taking a look at

International Libertarian Socialist Alliance: **Formerly called the *World Libertarian Socialist Network***

An excellent resource for groups who come under the heading of Libertarian Socialism many of which come within the remit of the anti state, non market sector www.libertyandsocialism.org

Radical History Network of North London.

For details contact Alan Woodward on 020 8800 1046 or RaHN at alan@petew.org.uk
Email: radicalhistorynetwork@googlemail.com

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

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.



