

THE
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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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The Election, Sir Cecil Richshit Speaks out

In this issue The Libertarian Communist is bending its own rules and including a contribution from a member of the capitalist class, Sir Cecil Richshit. In the following he argues that the Labour governments since 1997 have acted as all governments must, in the interests of the dominant class in society. Here is what he has to say.

Dear Underlings

Firstly you need to be clear what this election and indeed all elections are really about. Do not cling to the illusion that they are about democracy and making life better and more comfortable for a majority of people. Those of you who bother to cast their vote will do (or have done so) to preserve a system whereby a small minority can continue to live a very privileged life at the expense of those whose role it is to create all the wealth in society. So what I and the rest of my class are looking for is a government that will take all the necessary measures to make the profit system work as effectively as possible. Of course since it is rather uncontrollable and we may run into trouble it is the role of the government to make the majority or a least a lot of them pay through out the period of any troubled economic waters as we certainly are not going to see a decline in our wealth. So just forget about stupid slogans such as “*we are all in it together*”. Remember the profit system is not designed to benefit the majority and should there be a conflict between need and profit the latter will always be given priority. If you suffer hardships do not put the blame on us at the top it is your own fault for being born into the wrong class.

People like myself, members of the class who own and control the means of production and distribution and our hangers on who benefit disproportionately from their position in society do not care much which party governs providing they govern, as they must do, in our economic interests. If we are to see the end of a run of Labour governments we should acknowledge their role in doing just that. Since 1997 there has been no reduction in the gap between rich and poor. *An Anatomy of Economic Equality in the UK*, reports that the richest 10% are more than 100 times more wealthy

than the poorest. The top 1% each have a total household wealth of at least £2.6 million and unsurprisingly it concludes that being born into a disadvantaged background has an overall negative impact on life chances. Meanwhile *Save the Children* has estimated that 13% of children in the UK are living in severe poverty. So congratulations to the Labour Party.

We are also pleased to report, contrary to the fears of some of my class just after the election of 1997 that Labour governments have kept organised labour in their place by keeping and in some cases strengthening the laws relating to trade union organisation. It is good to see that today it is virtually impossible to have a legal strike in the UK and that recently it has been clearly shown that the courts are more than eager to intervene in favour of employers if workers do vote in favour of industrial action despite all the barriers put in their way. *"Bollocks to all this democracy crap"*.

Of course Labour governments have never been slow to use working class people, (who due to a lack of prospects have been stupid enough to join the armed forces), to fight in wars to protect the interests of the dominant class in society. It is good to report that leaders such as Blair and Brown have shown their ever willingness to carry on this tradition in protecting our interests (not yours) in supporting armed action in places such as Iraq and Afghanistan. The reasons why thousands on all sides must die in such wars is to protect our share, (meaning the dominant economic interests in society) of control over vital resources and places of strategic importance throughout the world.

On the issue of global warming we are pleased to see that various labour administrations since 1997 have not succumbed to the viewpoint that the profit system that we hold so dear is incompatible with protecting the future of the planet. We need to guard against concessions being made which interfere with the economic interests of the elite in society. By this I mean that the government which is merely there to serve the interests of capital cannot be allowed to make decisions that hinder the ability of capitalists in this part of the world to compete with those in other parts of the

world. Since the same can be said for governments across the world, the planet can go and hang itself, profit making must take priority.

So when you cast your vote, (or maybe you will already have done so by the time you read this), be clear about what you are voting for. Which ever party you may support the one which forms the next government will be committed to supporting the continuation of a system where the gap between rich and poor will grow ever wider, where the right to effectively confront the system, by industrial action or on the streets will be met by the law and the armed forces of the state if necessary, where thousands will continue to die in wars fought on behalf of minority class interests, and the future of the planet must remain secondary to the interests of economic growth for the sake of economic growth in order to secure the parasitic wealth of the few.

Yours for the retention of the profit system at all costs.

Sir Cecil Richshit

A Society of Abundance

Most, if not all groups that come under the Anti State, Non Market sector advocate that the society we are aiming at will be based on free access as opposed to a buying or selling system or barter. As it will be a system of non or common ownership of the resources needed to produce and distribute the things we need to live, and therefore a system of exchange would be anachronistic. This is possible, we argue, because we now live in a society where there exists the potential of abundance. But what we mean by abundance is not the mad scramble for consumer goods we see in much of the advanced economies today. Murray Bookchin puts the case for a society of abundance in the following way.

"By material abundance we do not mean the wasteful, mindless "affluence " based on false needs, the subtle coercion of advertising, and the substitution of mere objects – commodities – for genuine human relations, self reflection, and self development. We refer to sufficiency in food, shelter, clothing and basic comforts of life with a minimum of toil that will allow everyone in society – not a specialized elite – to directly manage social affairs." Quoted from *Towards an Ecological Society*, "The Power to create, The Power to Destroy". Page 41 (Black Rose Books).

Letters

We have received two letters in response to the article *"Twelve Months On"* in the last issue. Mike sent in the following letter which provides some correction and further information to the section dealing with the Libertarian Communist grouping in the SPGB in the 1970s.

Dear Lib Com

Got sent a copy of issue 7 by an AF member (and ex SPGB/Solidarity/Subversion) - not seen this before though aware of World in Common.

Your introduction refers back to the 1970's LC but the 'internal' publication you refer to was actually called '**Critical Theory and Revolutionary Practice**', dated October 1972. The main article from that publication was called '*Monument or movement*' (written by a Glasgow SPGB member) and is listed under 'Subversion' in the on the on-line Lib Com library (which also has the article 'Democracy and Ballots - correspondence between Subversion and the SPGB).

By the way the internal 'manifesto' distributed to members during the fractious debates of that period (1972) was signed, by amongst others, two names you may be familiar with - Adam Buick (who also wrote in CT&RP) and John Crump.

A few of the early Lib Com supporters are still in the SPGB today! The rest of us followed the trajectory you describe.

Thanks, Mike

On other aspects of the article Lyla Bryne writes the following.

"In its first year TLC has not led to the sector being any more influential than it was a year ago". Actually we don't know that for sure. Generally influences in society can be growing even if they are still not organised into more obvious decisive action..... Besides, the **What's Happening?** section of Lib Com 7 is pretty exciting and encouraging... .. The future is unpredictable in some ways, but there is still the chance that certain

human conditions and changes beneath the surface that are propitious for communism/socialism will interact, gain strength by unity and break through, shedding capitalism like an old skin. Speed of change is of course relative, but slower change at the beginning is healthier if it results in a more comprehensive understanding of the situation and a deeper knowledge of what we want and how to achieve it. This is essential to the determined and enduring dedication that will be needed to create world wide revolution and a new, sane phase of human cultural evolution.

Lyla Bryne

Corporate Responsibility: but to whom?

In issue 5 of TLC we included an article on Nestles and how they typified the gap between corporate rhetoric and reality. Well the TLC does not want to be accused of being merely anti Nestle, our aim is to rid ourselves of the system that corporations operate in. Perhaps Nestles are worse than some other corporations, perhaps they are bad at public relations or perhaps, to be frank, they just don't give a damn. From a financial viewpoint Nestles results for 2009 make good reading. Their operating profits were (all figures in US Dollars) 14.85 billion (an increase on 2008) and they had a 67% increase in cash flow from 6.8 billion in 2008 to 16.93 last year. The IUF reports that Nestles will spend 9.6 billion buying its own shares for the purpose of channelling its huge cash flow in the direction of its shareholders. As with all corporations the CEO does not fare too badly. Paul Bulcke has a 2 million base salary plus half a million cash bonus and received another 8 million in various stocks and options. To help this pauper in his old age he received three quarters of a million dollar contribution to future pension benefits.

On the other side of the coin the IUF point out that if Nestles are really concerned about the destruction of the rain forests and peat fields caused by palm oil plantation why are they more concerned about copyright infringement than their supply chain in response to the Greenpeace palm oil campaign. Meanwhile a quick glance through the IUF website reveals that

they are either in or have been in dispute with their workforce in Russia, Indonesia, Tunisia, Hong Kong, Argentina and Ecuador. What is all that about a financially successful company being good for its employees? But this is not merely about Nestles or corporations in general but about the system they operate in. In the introduction (xxiii) to his book **Life Inc**, **Douglas Rushkoff** states the following: **"..... the corporation is itself a sociopathic entity, created for the purpose of generating wealth and expanding its reach by any means necessary. A corporation has no use for ethics, except for their potential impact on public relations and brand image. In fact, as many on the side of the environment, labor, and the left like to point out, corporate managers can be sued for taking any action, however ethical, if it compromises their ultimate fiduciary responsibility to share price."**

The following piece is a edited and very much shortened version of an article entitled "**Communique From an Absent Future**". Part of this was posted on the World In Common forum in April. It is dated September 2009 and the full version can be found on <http://wewanteverything.wordpress.com/2009/09/24/communiquefromanabsentfutur>.

Communique from an absent future

The university has no history of its own; its history is the history of capital. Its essential function is the reproduction of the relationship between capital and labor. Though not a proper corporation that can be bought and sold, that pays revenue to its investors, the public university nonetheless carries out this function as efficiently as possible by approximating ever more closely the corporate form of its bedfellows. What we are witnessing now is the endgame of this process, whereby the façade of the educational institution gives way altogether to corporate streamlining. Even in the golden age of capitalism that followed after World War II and lasted until the late 1960s, the liberal university was already subordinated to capital. Its role during the Cold War was to legitimate liberal democracy and to reproduce

an imaginary society of free and equal citizens.

But if this ideological function of the public university was at least well-funded after the Second World War, that situation changed irreversibly in the 1960s, and no amount of social-democratic heel-clicking will bring back the dead world of the post-war boom. Beginning in the 1970s, capitalism entered into a terminal downturn in which permanent work was casualized and working-class wages stagnated, while those at the top were temporarily rewarded for their obscure financial necromancy, which has proved unsustainable.

The old student struggles are the relics of a vanished world. In the 1960s, as the post-war boom was just beginning to unravel, radicals within the confines of the university understood that another world was possible. But their mode of radicalization, too tenuously connected to the economic logic of capitalism, prevented that alignment from taking hold. Because their resistance to the Vietnam war focalized critique upon capitalism as a colonial war-machine, but insufficiently upon its exploitation of domestic labor, students were easily split off from a working class facing different problems. In the twilight era of the post-war boom, the university was not subsumed by capital to the degree that it is now, and students were not as intensively proletarianized by debt and a devastated labor market.

That is why our struggle is fundamentally different. The poverty of student life has become terminal: there is no promised exit. If the economic crisis of the 1970s emerged to break the back of the political crisis of the 1960s, today the economic crisis precedes the coming political uprising meaning we may finally supersede the cooptation and neutralization of those past struggles.

We seek to push the university struggle to its limits. Though we denounce the privatization of the university and its authoritarian system of governance, we do not seek structural reforms. We demand not a free university but a free society. A free university in the midst of a capitalist society is like a reading room in a prison; it serves only as a distraction from the misery of daily life. Instead we seek to channel the anger of the dispossessed

students and workers into a declaration of war.

We have seen this kind of upsurge in the recent past, a rebellion that starts in the classrooms and radiates outward to encompass the whole of society. Just two years ago the anti-CPE movement in France, combating a new law that enabled employers to fire young workers without cause, brought huge numbers into the streets. High school and university students, teachers, parents, rank and file union members, and unemployed youth from the banlieues found themselves together on the same side of the barricades. (This solidarity was often fragile, however. The riots of immigrant youth in the suburbs and university students in the city centers never merged, and at times tensions flared between the two groups.) French students saw through the illusion of the university as a place of refuge and enlightenment and acknowledged that they were merely being trained to work. They took to the streets as workers, protesting their precarious futures. Their position tore down the partitions between the schools and the workplaces and immediately elicited the support of many wage workers and unemployed people in a mass gesture of proletarian refusal.

As the movement developed it manifested a growing tension between revolution and reform. Its form was more radical than its content. While the rhetoric of the student leaders focused merely on a return to the status quo, the actions of the youth - the riots, the cars overturned and set on fire, the blockades of roads and railways, and the waves of occupations that shut down high schools and universities - announced the extent of the new generation's disillusionment and rage. Despite all of this, however, the movement quickly disintegrated when the CPE law was eventually dropped. Ultimately the movement was unable to transcend the limitations of reformism.

The Greek uprising of December 2008 broke through many of these limitations and marked the beginning of a new cycle of class struggle. Initiated by students in response to the murder of an Athens youth by police, the uprising consisted of weeks of rioting, looting, and occupations of universities, union offices, and television stations. Entire financial and

shopping districts burned, and what the movement lacked in numbers it made up in its geographical breadth, spreading from city to city to encompass the whole of Greece. As in France it was an uprising of youth, for whom the economic crisis represented a total negation of the future. Students, precarious workers, and immigrants were the protagonists, and they were able to achieve a level of unity that far surpassed the fragile solidarities of the anti-CPE movement.

Here content aligned with form; whereas the optimistic slogans that appeared everywhere in French demonstrations jarred with the images of burning cars and broken glass, in Greece the rioting was the obvious means to begin to enact the destruction of an entire political and economic system.

Ultimately the dynamics that created the uprising also established its limit. It was made possible by the existence of a sizeable radical infrastructure in urban areas, in particular the Exarchia neighborhood in Athens. The squats, bars, cafes, and social centers, frequented by students and immigrant youth, created the milieu out of which the uprising emerged. However, this milieu was alien to most middle-aged wage workers, who did not see the struggle as their own. Though many expressed solidarity with the rioting youth, they perceived it as a movement of entrants - that is, of that portion of the proletariat that sought entrance to the labor market but was not formally employed in full-time jobs. The uprising, strong in the schools and the immigrant suburbs, did not spread to the workplaces.

Our task in the current struggle will be to make clear the contradiction between form and content and to create the conditions for the transcendence of reformist demands and the implementation of a truly communist content. As the unions and student and faculty groups push their various "issues," we must increase the tension until it is clear that we want something else entirely. We must constantly expose the incoherence of demands for democratization and transparency. What good is it to have the right to see how intolerable things are, or to elect those who will screw us over? We must leave behind the culture of student activism, with its moralistic mantras of non-violence and its fixation on single-issue causes. The

only success with which we can be content is the abolition of the capitalist mode of production and the certain immiseration and death which it promises for the 21st century.

All of our actions must push us towards communization; that is, the reorganization of society according to a logic of free giving and receiving, and the immediate abolition of the wage, the value-form, compulsory labor, and exchange. Occupation will be a critical tactic in our struggle, but we must resist the tendency to use it in a reformist way. The different strategic uses of occupation became clear this past January when students occupied a building at the New School in New York. A group of friends, mostly graduate students, decided to take over the Student Center and claim it as a liberated space for students and the public. Soon others joined in, but many of them preferred to use the action as leverage to win reforms, in particular to oust the school's president. These differences came to a head as the occupation unfolded. While the student reformers were focused on leaving the building with a tangible concession from the administration, others shunned demands entirely. They saw the point of occupation as the creation of a momentary opening in capitalist time and space, a rearrangement that sketched the contours of a new society. We side with this anti-reformist position. While we know these free zones will be partial and transitory, the tensions they expose between the real and the possible can push the struggle in a more radical direction.

We intend to employ this tactic until it becomes generalized. In 2001 the first Argentine piqueteros suggested the form the people's struggle there should take: road blockades which brought to a halt the circulation of goods from place to place. Within months this tactic spread across the country without any formal coordination between groups. In the same way repetition can establish occupation as an instinctive and immediate method of revolt taken up both inside and outside the university. We have seen a new wave of takeovers in the U.S. over the last year, both at universities and workplaces: New School and NYU, as well as the workers at Republic Windows Factory in Chicago, who fought the closure of their factory by taking it over. Now it is our turn.

To accomplish our goals we cannot rely on those groups which position themselves as our representatives. We are willing to work with unions and student associations when we find it useful, but we do not recognize their authority. We must act on our own behalf directly, without mediation. We must break with any groups that seek to limit the struggle by telling us to go back to work or class, to negotiate, to reconcile. This was also the case in France. The original calls for protest were made by the national high school and university student associations and by some of the trade unions. Eventually, as the representative groups urged calm, others forged ahead. And in Greece the unions revealed their counter-revolutionary character by cancelling strikes and calling for restraint.

As an alternative to being herded by representatives, we call on students and workers to organize themselves across trade lines. We urge undergraduates, teaching assistants, lecturers, faculty, service workers, and staff to begin meeting together to discuss their situation. The more we begin talking to one another and finding our common interests, the more difficult it becomes for the administration to pit us against each other in a hopeless competition for dwindling resources. The recent struggles at NYU and the New School suffered from the absence of these deep bonds, and if there is a lesson to be learned from them it is that we must build dense networks of solidarity based upon the recognition of a shared enemy. These networks not only make us resistant to recuperation and neutralization, but also allow us to establish new kinds of collective bonds. These bonds are the real basis of our struggle. **We'll see you at the barricades. Research and Destroy.**

Tolpuddle Festival 2010

This year's Tolpuddle Festival will take place on Friday July 16th to Sunday July 18th. The Libertarian Communist will be hosting an Anti State, Non Market stall on the Saturday and Sunday and anyone in our sector is invited to lend a hand. I am in contact with Freedom to get literature from a variety of groups in our sector. Hope to see some of you there. The Stall has cost £50 so contributions to this would be very welcome.

capitalism, socialism and ethics

Lyla Byrne

In the present age of humanity global communications have multiplied making information available from all the interconnected fields of endeavour. It has never been more possible for people to share knowledge for mutual benefit; but access to and application of knowledge is prevented by the numerous shackles on ideas and actions which are necessary to maintain minority rule.

Ideas about democracy, human rights and environmental justice are among those that have developed through interaction, but their dissemination and implementation, as with other information, is held up, or is much slower than it need be, and in some places there has even been a reversal of development of ideas and practice in these respects. These problems are all caused and/or held in place by the present system – capitalism - in which the owning minority must prioritize financial profit to keep their power, and the working majority generally do the work that the profit motive dictates – and in the way that the profit motive dictates that it should be done - to get money just to survive. This puts innumerable preventions, obstacles and distractions in our way; from indoctrination into believing that capitalism is a necessary system for our wellbeing to the unnecessary poverty and war that it produces.

It is significant that, in capitalism, people who have organized to campaign and take action for democracy and for human rights, other animal rights and environmental justice are in constant conflict with business interests and with governments. There are also many people who have been overwhelmed by the chaos, the horrific suffering, the waste of previous efforts and the waste of present resources that happens as a matter of course in this

aggressively competitive, divisive, psychotic system.

Humanitarian principles however have survived so far and continued to develop here and there, and are perhaps more influential than they are thought to be by some. For example, despite the U.N. being set up within capitalism, and in many ways under the auspices of the U.S. business empire, to have any credence, it's statements of purpose have to be based not only on the integrity of states and financial ownership (which are merely constructs for serving the minority owning class) - but on valuing human health in the widest sense, scientifically understood, and on democracy.

The harm that can be done by violence is recognized. Hence terrorism and wars of aggression are illegal. It is held unlawful that states, communities or individuals should be coerced by violence or threats of violence or economic pressure without reason being demonstrated concerning self defence or defence of others. It is stated as a founding purpose of the U.N. that it provide for disputes to be settled with negotiation and democratic procedure. Inherent in this is the realization that this is the way for reasonable beings to behave, i.e. that this is the informed ethical choice.

In practice of course, in capitalism, despite the stalwart efforts of many, law making, and general policy making and implementation are affected and manipulated such that more often than not what happens is the complete opposite to the stated intention. There are many cases of U.N. employees committing the kind of crimes that they are supposed to be preventing, but I would argue that this is largely due to ignorance produced by the system and the pressures it imposes. Peace keepers have been put in situations in which it is impossible to carry out the assigned task due to the power of the minority financial interests involved in the

conflict and due to having insufficient resources and support themselves. Despite having to function in such a corrupt and insane system, there are also U.N. employees who work compassionately and diligently to protect and promote health and democracy, for instance conducting research into poverty and disease, studying the causes and effects of climate change, monitoring elections, bringing food and medical aid, and in war zones as peace keepers and observers – not infrequently being killed or injured.

However, the belief amongst U.N. workers, or any one else, that the U.N. as it stands in capitalist system is primarily for peace, health and democracy world wide is an illusion, because minority ownership generally means minority power in the U.N. as everywhere else. And even if this domination by the most powerful minority groups is not accepted (where there are majority votes against), within capitalism it will in one way or another be imposed, whatever harm this does to the chances of peace, human health or democratic systems.

For example, numerous U.N. resolutions against actions by Israeli forces in Palestine have been completely ignored. The Israeli government and business interests can get away with this because the U.S. not only turns a blind eye, but actively supports them by supplying funding and military equipment. This is mainly because U.S. business interests want to keep Israel as a strategically important and nuclear armed U.S. base from which to control the resource rich Middle East. As well as blocking peace initiatives, reasons given to the U.N. for sanctions or war are usually fabricated or insincere and hypocritical. 'Bringing democracy' to Afghanistan and Iraq actually meant *military and corporate take over with positive media coverage and funding for election candidates who support this*. Again, the real reasons (or

causes) are to do with extending or protecting the business interests of a minority.

Capitalist governments are highly pressured by the general financial priorities of sustaining capitalism and the particular financial priorities of the minority capitalist class where power resides due to capitalist laws of ownership. There is immense wealth behind certain lobbying groups and the most powerful states or economic groupings have extra 'rights' of veto at the highest level in the U.N and else where. Indeed this is the only way that they agree to take part. Minority rule is dictatorship of some sort. In 'the west' there is simply an extra layer of mendacity; the dictatorship is disguised by a façade of democracy behind which a wealthy minority have inordinate power by 'owning' the means of life and the mass media.

For many, the façade is not really needed, as they simply prize capitalism and capitalist morality; the laws that justify minority ownership, lack of control of their own lives for the majority, home repossessions, poverty, harsh punishments, war and mass starvation. However, to return to my point above, even as we stand, surrounded by capitalist propaganda, health and democracy including human rights *are there as stated aims*. I.e. they are accepted as *what should be* and thus as *what is ethical in that sense*. Governments in the main pay lip service to U.N. principles, and they try to persuade us that they have noble intentions to do with human wellbeing – and many believe their own lies. So why the pretence? Presumably it has to be done to maintain sufficient support from the majority – which in turn means that the majority have a moral sense of direction beyond the capitalist law of 'power from financial ownership', 'prioritise financial profit' and 'might is right'.

Some of the major supporters of capitalism would like it to be ethical concerning human welfare, but it cannot be, because its driving principle is for capital accumulation, which means that financial profit must come before our needs for wellbeing. It is inherent to capitalism that it is non ethical with regard to health, the environment and democracy; and hence to sell itself it has to pretend to be and/or pervert ethical concepts and/or distract people from awareness of our common interests and the potential of peaceful cooperation. Thus in capitalism so much information is withheld, obscured, or partially presented so as to give a false impression, and people are set against each other. This largely happens without conscious intent due to the simple passing on of indoctrination.

Conversely to capitalism, socialism is inherently ethical with regard to health, the environment and democracy. This is because it is produced by 1) knowledge of how workers are exploited by a ruling class, 2) knowledge of how the processes of exploitation affect us, 3) knowledge of a different system in which it is possible for the world to be free from oppression and deprivation, so that communities can make decisions for themselves and directly for wellbeing 4) wanting and choosing this different system. The capitalist case is full of deceptions and divisiveness; where as the socialist case relies on the truth and compassion.

Votes do not really count, or the resultant changes that benefit workers are not safe unless there are no other powers that can usurp their power; and in capitalism there are always other powers at work. The only way to solve this problem is to change the system. Socialism is about the power of the majority to unite for this purpose; to do away with a ruling class and instead to establish the equality democracy of common ownership and free access. This is wanted *because* this is how we

can cooperate for mutual benefit; *because* this makes it possible to put an end to war and poverty; *because* this enables us to prevent and to ease suffering and to bring wellbeing and enhancement of life.

To deny that socialism is ethical in this sense would be to a) deny the existence of core values that we need to motivate us to get rid of capitalism and to explore the potential of human cooperation using equality democracy or b) refuse to accept the way that ethical terms are being used the world over to express dissatisfaction and frustration with capitalism, to express that its deceptions are wearing increasingly thin, and to completely sweep them aside, so that the benefits of socialism may be clearly seen.

The following quote is from **Towards an Ecological Society, Murray Bookchin page 66.**

"Accumulation is determined not by the good or bad intentions of the individual bourgeois, but by the commodity relationship itself, by what Marx so aptly called the cellular unit of the bourgeois economy".

"To appeal to his human interests over his economic ones is to ignore the brute fact that his very authority is a function of his material being. He can only deny his economic interests by denying his own social reality, indeed, by denying that very authority which victimizes his own humanity. It requires a grotesque self deception, or worse, an act of ideological social deception, to foster the belief that this society can undo its very law of life in response to ethical arguments or intellectual persuasion."

What's Happening?

News and contact information from the ASNM Sector.

The following is from the **Radical History Network of North East London (RHN)**. By the time you receive this issue that non event called the General Election may well be over but this is well worth including, although we would not endorse all of it.

Our five-minutes-every-five-years worth of "democracy" happens on 6 May. But is there anyone out there who still believes that the world, owned and run by a partnership of private property and state regulation, is in any way controlled by electing members of parliament? That the great dictatorship of modern society is supervised by the House of Commons? That any social control exists over bankers running up massive debts to someone or other, or over police seen murdering and attacking people on television, or over judges finding them NOT GUILTY? Or any of the tin pots? or any MPs claiming expenses? or any of the "celebrities"?

But people know the real situation and we should not waste time and effort repeating it. Our energy should go in outlining our alternative:

- Every workplace, administrative unit, public institution, housing estate, media outlet, bank, be taken into common ownership and run by elected committees
- That federations of these councils or communes are co-ordinated for greater administration
- All private and state property is abolished and replaced by a network of these collectives

Voting only keeps the present gang in charge. Perhaps one sole exception is voting against fascists. Some people say democracy gives us space to operate as socialists but this space was not won by voting but by direct action in the forms of strikes, riots, occupations, demonstrations and suchlike. Voting will not keep out the fascists if the ruling class decide on fascism to keep us down, as they did with Hitler and co in the 1920s. But we should not invite a bloody struggle and should do all we can to prevent modern day fascists getting political

positions by voting against the BNP and their Euro mates.

Of course not all parliamentary candidates are careerists on the gravy train but, with the best will in the world, their efforts are quite unable to change the country, or even parts of it. Those on the political left should see the futility of seeking political representation and get down to organising against poverty, ill health, illiteracy and homelessness all over the world. This point was made by the early libertarians against those who wanted political parties for change in the long lost history of the last centuries. Many ordinary people, following the Chartists, campaigned for the Right to Vote for all. We now find our choice limited to Tweedle Dee or Tweedle Dum and a new choice faces us. What we need is not new leaders but a new system. Peter Kropotkin was right, Marx and Lenin were wrong, and we should learn from past mistakes.

Elections are not just a subject for abstaining or ridicule and derision but a time for serious argument and debate. People may still believe in politicians, we have to argue hard to expose every promise, word, dot and comma of this short-sighted option, not just seek to impose it. A recent discussion sparked off by the People's Manifesto came up with some interesting ideas -

- Arm pensioners on request so that they can rob banks to get enough money to live
- Put a 'None of the Above' option on ballot papers
- Disguise leopards as foxes to give the gentry a scare
- Make the police wear 'I'm Here To Help' badges
- Those in favour of ID cards with nothing to hide should be banned from having curtains

And so on, very amusing, but it doesn't change the basic facts - the rich get richer while we still have no control over our lives. For us the best option is a hung parliament, which they all are against. Use the system for its own destruction, vote tactically for a hung parliament and watch them squabble, while we get on and organise.

Radical History Network of North East London

Email: radicalhistorynetwork@googlemail.com

The piece on the previous page refers to a meeting due to be held on Wednesday May 5th, **Vote for a New Society not a Political Party.** The group covers subjects that are, "local, topical or of special interest". It is broadly Libertarian Socialist in outlook.

worldsocialistmovement/SPGB:

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

Forthcoming Meetings

All to be held at the above address on Saturdays commencing at 6.00 PM

June 5th "Slums and Slumps: Housing under Capitalism"? - Speaker Paul Bennett.

June 19th "Class Struggle and Climate Change - the Politics of Personal Consumption" - Speaker Paddy Shannon.

July 3rd "Business Growth in conflict with the Environment" - Speaker Glenn Morris

Northern Anarchist Network (NAN)

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

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

As stated previously very good for discovering groups that do, or have made up the Anti State, Non Market sector. Like all discussion forums it sometimes suffers from discussions that go on too long but it is well worth exploring as some of the posts give out information you might not have picked up elsewhere. Some of the news from this section has come from this source. So join the forum and help take it forward.

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

A new pamphlet has recently been published, **An Introduction to Anarchist Communism.** Must get a copy myself as I am just getting into Kropotkin The Manchester website is well worth a visit for looking

at texts from former organisations such as Solidarity, Subversion and Wildcat.

Industrial Workers of the World: www.iww.org Or P/O Box 1158, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE99 4XL Email: rocsec@iww.org.

Get in touch if you want advice on employment law, if you want to join as an individual or if there is support for organising at your workplace but you do not wish to pay high dues or get involved with large bureaucracies.

Much the same applies to the next group.

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

www.Libcom.org:

Another place to keep up with news from around the world from a Libertarian Communist view point. Also has Library, History and Gallery sections as well as active online forums.

Wrekin Stop War

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

Duncan Ball, 23 Sunderland Drive, Leegomery Salop, TF1 6XX email: admin@wrekinstopwar.org

Red and Black Notes

The geo cities site that used to host RBN has been out of action for some time. 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 very similar but separate Anarchist Studies Journal, Anarchist Archives, Red and Anarchist Action network redanarchist.org. And Socialist Labor Party of America www.slp.org. (Not to be confused with the Scargill mob).

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