



ISSUE N° 5 FREE  
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# Neither Labour nor Tory!

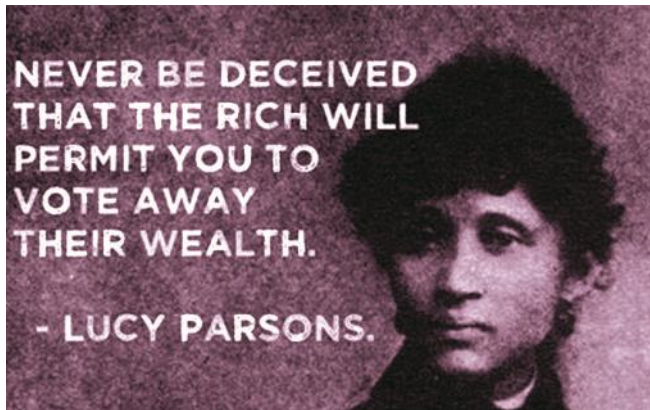
**Nor Lib Dem, UKIPs, Farage, TIG, etc...**

In many towns and cities local elections are happening soon, and in spite of Brexit, the political parties are now gearing up for European elections. Meanwhile, the possibility of a general election is also looking increasingly on the cards.

We are told that we live in a free society, and that this freedom is the result of us casting a vote. In our society it is treated as a truism that because we choose our masters we are free.

But we don't live in a free society, and we don't make a free choice whilst in the polling booth. The system of education, the media, and the corrupting power of money mean that governments end up serving the interests of the ruling elite. But even if these problems could be resolved, elections cannot solve the problems our society faces. The state cannot be democratised and the electoral process is the process of excluding people and ideas.

We call on the working class to reject faith in political parties and elections. The state cannot be reformed.



The ongoing failure of elections and politicians to change our lives is not the result of the personal flaws of politicians, or a flaw in our constitution, or just bad luck. Our political system is not failing to live up to its potential, it is doing exactly what it is meant to do, serve the interests of the powerful. The state is a medieval relic and has all the violent institutions and sites of unaccountable power that you would expect of that age.

The Anarchist Communist Group understands that many people currently vote in the hope that their vote will mitigate some of the worst excesses of capitalism and help the most vulnerable. This impulse is born from the principle of solidarity and as such is welcomed. However we would remind workers that the economic and social security of their class is a product of their willingness to organise and fight, not the

exact makeup of the council chamber or parliament.

We are in all probability heading towards a general election, a period of time where we are told we have to vote or we are failing as citizens. Anarchist Communists have a different view. We want to end the tyranny of capitalism and the oppression of government. In such a revolutionary situation it's vital that people don't re-establish a new government, whether it's legitimatised through the ballot box or through a revolutionary party.

That's why the Anarchist Communist Group is using the coming election period as a platform to call for all of the working class to abandon faith in elections, political parties and all the paraphernalia of the state. Instead go out into your communities and organise to resist capitalism and the state.

## INSIDE

- *Anarchist Origins of May Day*
- *Leave or Remain?*
- *And more...*



**"Our political system is not failing to live up to its potential, it is doing exactly what it's meant to do, serve the interests of the powerful."**



# The Anarchist Origins of

The idea of turning the 1st of May into a day of action for workers was first proposed at the 4th congress of the American Federation of Labor (AFL). It was decided to launch, starting from the 1st of May 1886, a wide campaign of agitation and struggle focused on limiting the working week to forty hours. The most radical actions took place in Chicago. At that time, Chicago had the most developed workers movement in the USA with a strong anarchist presence.

**“The first of May is the symbol of a new era in the life and struggle of the toilers, an era that each year offers the toilers fresh, increasingly tough and decisive battles against the bourgeoisie, for the freedom and independence wrested from them, for their social ideal.”**

**Nestor Makhno**

Following the 1st of May 1886, strikes were still ongoing as the fight with employers became tougher. On the 4th of May, a meeting gathering around 15,000 people was attacked by police. By the end of the day, both sides had suffered numerous dead and wounded. It was a perfect occasion to muzzle the protest. Eight of the main organisers, all anarchists, were arrested and sentenced to death. The sentence was turned to life imprisonment for three of them.

On 11 November 1887, Albert Parsons, Adolphe Fischer, George Engel and August Spies were hanged. Their comrade Louis Lingg committed suicide the day before to avoid execution. A few years later, they were acquitted of all charges and the court admitted that the police and justice sys-

tem set up the case to criminalise and break down the workers' movement. The eight accused were declared innocent and the three survivors set free.

The 1st of May is definitely a page of workers history stained with anarchist blood.

## State, Police and Capital

The 1st of May is an occasion to remind us that the fight against capitalism is still going on.

Nowadays in Europe, strikes and social struggles are seriously discredited. Yet, the difference between rich and poor keeps growing, the financial markets are back in the saddle and traders are still handling billions of dollars. Are we wrong to ask for more when half of the world's wealth is owned by 1% of the population? Meanwhile, workers are asked to make more and more effort to “save” the economy and put the State back on its feet with its batch of new taxes (such as the bedroom tax) and cuts in public services. We are heading toward a neo-liberal capitalist system in which the State's main purpose is to maintain social control so capitalism can develop without constraint.

Workers are producing everything and yet they own very little. This analysis is old and well known but despite it, workers in Europe slowly give up the fight for a fair redistribution and instead just hope that troubles will fall on someone else. In addition, work has been sanctified so that the idea is widespread that if you don't want to be a good worker that produces and obeys it makes you lazy, a parasite or an ideal-

ist (choose yours!).

As anarchists, we think that human beings shouldn't be defined by the surplus value they bring to capitalism. Work should be the way to produce by necessity and not to create new needs. Work must be organized so everyone can work less, and for means other than profitability. No capitalist society will ever achieve full employment because it needs a pool of unemployed people so the necessity to work can make us accept bad working conditions. In order to reorganise work, we need a society free from class and leaders, and in which society is managed in a self-organised way. This is what the Anarchist Communist Group is fighting for.

It's well over a century since the first May Day demo. Now we slowly amble through the streets to end up listening to boring speeches from union bureaucrats. You have to remind yourselves that May Day was once upon a time when workers all around the globe showed off their collective strength. But we can do it again. We need revolutionary politics that can lead us to a free, just and equal society – a society where production is to satisfy needs, not make huge profits for a tiny privileged elite.

**Direct action gets the goods, not waiting for an election, which just might deliver another Labour government that will continue with business as usual.**

## At the Café: ACG's New Podcast Series

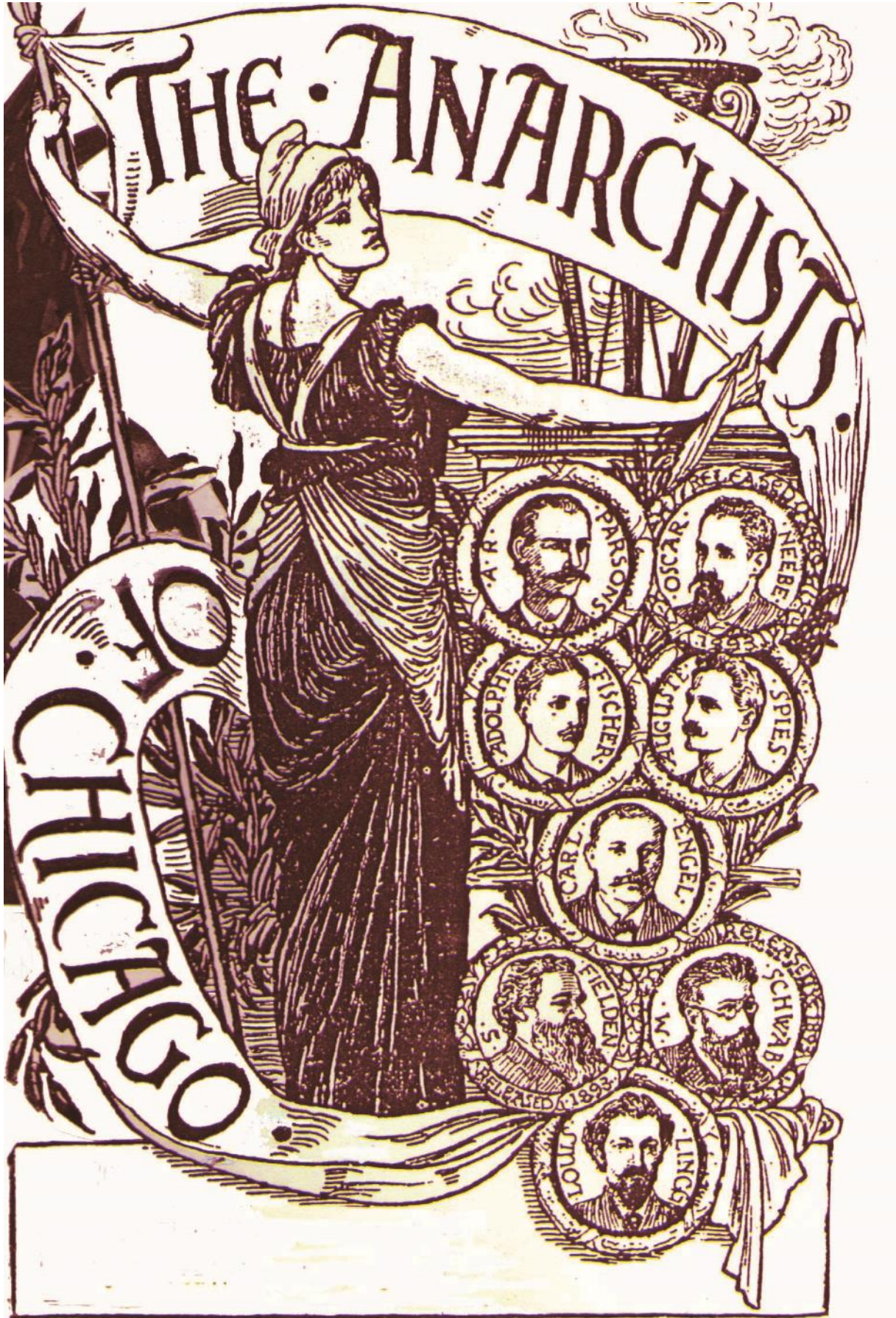


The ACG is proud to present its new podcasts. *At the Cafe* is a series of informal discussions about the key issues and ideas related to Anarchist Communism.

These are on topics such as: *What is Anarchist Communism? Why Work? Crime, War, historical examples of anarchism and how might anarchist communism happen?*

You can listen to these by going to the ACG website at [anarchistcommunism.org](http://anarchistcommunism.org) and following the podcast link.

# International Workers' Day





## ANARCHIST COMMUNIST GROUP

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## Remain or leave? Time to organise!



The spectacle of the Brexit debacle would be comic if it weren't for the fact that the consequences of the antics of the politicians will be felt largely by the working class. We are seeing the complete inadequacy of politicians of all shades. The phrase- 'they couldn't organise a piss up in a brewery' comes to mind! So why do we still let them decide our future?

It is clear that they are only thinking of their own political futures rather than sorting anything out. The right-wing Tories want to see Britain becoming some kind of Singapore- an offshore unregulated tax haven off the coast of Europe in which workers are exploited even more than they are already. The SNP has eyes only for what might make people more likely to vote for an independent Scotland. Labour is divided between those who think leaving the EU and curtailing immigration will somehow make it possible to have a workers' paradise under the leadership of Corbyn and those who are forging links with business interests who want cheap labour and free trade. The centre, some Tories and Liberal Democrats, are mainly concerned with business stability and keeping markets open to trade. Then there are the racists and the little Englanders who think that by leaving the EU the British Empire will live again.

The problem is that at the moment we are prisoners in three ways. The state of the economy, which affects our jobs and our ability to afford what we need like housing and food, is dependent on a global economy that is out of our control. And we will have no more control if we leave the EU - it is still the same corporations and financial institutions that will ensure

that the economy is run to provide them with profit.

We are also prisoners of the electoral system and the State because it **seems** that the only way to change anything is by voting in different people. Every demonstration and protest is basically just a plea to be listened to and for the government to **do** something, whether this be about Brexit or climate change.

And, we are prisoners of propaganda that creates divisions and gets the bosses off the hook. It is not migrants that are to blame but the way capitalism, colonialism and governments have created a world of inequality and conflict that force people to leave their country of origin. And then, in Britain, the bosses, helped by the mass media, create divisions between people so that we cannot resist effectively. Of course there are people, including many from Britain, who choose to live elsewhere. In 2017 310,000 UK-born people lived in Spain. With 1.3 million 'ex-pats' (in reality migrants), the UK ranks 5<sup>th</sup> in terms of number of citizens living in other EU member countries.



## WHO WE ARE...

The Anarchist Communist Group (ACG) is a revolutionary anarchist communist organisation made up of local groups and individuals who seek a complete transformation of society, and the creation of anarchist communism.

This will mean the working class overthrowing capitalism, abolishing the State, getting rid of exploitation, hierarchies and oppressions, and halting the destruction of the environment. To contribute to the building of a revolutionary anarchist movement we believe it is important to be organised.

We are committed to building an effective national and international organisation that has a collective identity and works towards the common goal of anarchist communism, whilst at the same time working together with other working class organisations and in grass roots campaigns.

We do not see ourselves as the leaders of a revolutionary movement but part of a wider movement for revolutionary change. In addition, we strive to base all our current actions on the principles that will be the basis of the future society: mutual aid, solidarity, collective responsibility, individual freedom and autonomy, free association and federalism.

If you are considering joining the ACG, then to see where we are coming from in terms of ideas and politics, we suggest you look first at our **Aims & Principles** on our website [www.anarchistcommunism.org](http://www.anarchistcommunism.org)

Then if you think the ACG is politically the right place for you, simply drop us a line at [info@anarchistcommunism.org](mailto:info@anarchistcommunism.org) or, if contacting us by post, just fill out the form below and post it off to us.

So let us stop being prisoners and begin to take control of our future. Whether in or out of the institutions that are the EU, we know that the only way we will be able to resist the attacks from the bosses and the State and to create a better society is to build up a strong international working class movement that actually takes control of the economy, trade, work and all other aspects of our lives. This means overthrowing capitalism and the State and developing a new society which we call anarchist communism.

## Join the ACG!



Go to:

[www.anarchistcommunism.org/join](http://www.anarchistcommunism.org/join)

REVOLUTIONARY CLASS STRUGGLE NEWS