

Post Office Closures

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government, keeping these offices open would apparently affect the "viability" of other offices. This is unacceptable. The postal service is first and foremost a public institution which should be for the benefits of local residents and workers, NOT for profiteering. Closing post offices means depriving local residents of what is both an important service and a community centre.

The fact that local residents, especially elderly and disabled members of the population will now

have to travel much further distances to use a service people should be able to take for granted is unacceptable. Offices such as Commonsense which serve a huge local and student population closing leave people with little option but to go into the city centre for what should be a simple local errand.

This episode shows the disregard both Post Office Limited and the national government have for local communities when presented with the option of making a quick profit. •

Fargate poses the question

Is N.C. the next J.C.?

Atheists will be troubled by local developments in the Liberal Democrat party. Nick Clegg, MP for Sheffield Hallam and leader of the Lib Dem's, has been displaying some worryingly messianic qualities. A self-described "maverick" and "rebel" Clegg has been baying at

establishment squares since his rise to leadership of the party. In the face of the recent economic crisis, for example, Nick wrote a "strongly worded" letter to Gordon Brown in which he insisted that banks should only be able to repossess family homes "as an absolute last resort". You tell em Nick! If I am having all my worldly possessions stripped from under my nose because city bankers have been gambling with my savings I will take great comfort in the fact that they have really taken the time to reflect on the decision before I say goodbye

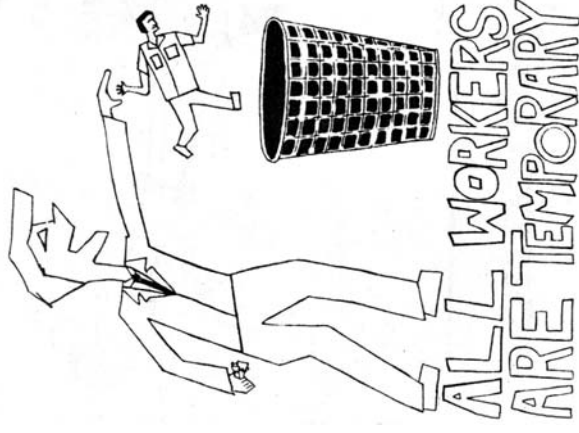
to the powers of the man! We only hold hope here at the Fargate Speaker that Clegg goes whole hog with his JC imitation act and opts for a similar demise. If he fancies cutting to the chase I am sure we have a spare 2 by 4 and some nails kicking around the office ... •

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Temploitation

All of us have observed there's such thing as recruitment agencies on the labour market. If we take a closer look at it, it doesn't look as good as it seems to be. The first thing is you don't get a full time contract which means you cannot say "I've got a job".

At the beginning you're told to wait for a phone call. When you finally get it (30 min before you have to get to the agency) you go to the "desired" workplace and you are treated as a "worse one" cuz you are only temporary/agency staff. If you wanna go for a holiday – no problem, but don't expect the work place to wait for you back unless you've been there for long time. If the factory you work needs to just get rid of some staff or you get late all you hear is "you're a very good worker but there's no more job at the stand you've been held" (in fact the next casual worker arrives to hold it). The agency calls you – they don't even say it to you themselves. If you're very lucky you get a contract after some time. Overall – don't expect it to be easy and quick way to get a job. •



The Fargate Speaker is produced by Sheffield Anarchist Federation.

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Homeless or helpless?

It is an unfortunate belief, for many people, that homelessness is due to people's own personal failings in life. For instance, a previous house mate of mine believed that all homeless people were inherently lazy and had no excuse for not having a job or anywhere to live. I see this as a sad misguided view of people in this situation but it is often a common opinion and a seriously inaccurate one.

Homeless people are not sleeping rough due to being idle or 'work-shy' nor is it due to them failing in life; it is because of factors completely out of their control, and these then escalate over time, until they reach a breaking point that consequently makes them homeless.

Research into the many causes of homelessness have found that people have often suffered family disputes, causing them to leave home at a young age. These disputes generally involve issues of domestic violence and/or sexual abuse; also having had parents with drug or alcohol dependency, leading to their own misuse of substances. 37% of homeless people in 2007 were found to have no qualifications what so ever, usually due to the fact that they left home or care at a young age. A study conducted by Shelter (a homeless charity) found that homelessness was often due to a combination of reasons including domestic abuse, inability to adjust after leaving prison or the army, drug

and alcohol dependency and/or the loss of a loved one.

Yet still, after all these factors, the general public tend to hold a grudging and dismissive attitude towards homelessness. This is not only the case with those sleeping



had been doing before the police turned up was sleeping in a corner on the floor. I don't see how their behaviour was in anyway justified because at no point had he been violent towards anyone or them. I have also seen community officers

harass a Big Issue worker, while he sold newspapers nearby the Starbucks on Tudor Square. This is a public space, not owned by Starbucks or any business in that area. But it was obvious that the manager had expressed a dislike to him being there. It eventually led to the poor guy being physically dragged away by them because he refused to move. Again this is outrageous, he had a right to be there just like anyone else.

And again my friend has recounted a similar situation to me where he has witnessed community officers

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Letters to Fargate

Do you have an opinion on any of the issues covered in this bulletin? Would you like Fargate to publicise your news? Are there any local issues or campaigns you think Fargate should cover?

Contact Us!
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Homeless or helpless?

throwing out a homeless woman from the winter gardens. Apparently her sitting on a bench counted as loitering, even though on a neighbouring bench two clean looking people sat happily doing exactly what she had, enjoying the space, only they weren't wrapped up in a tattered blanket.

There are instances of this bullying attitude all over the country by police and even certain councils who should be trying to offer help to people. Bristol council is a prime example of this uncaring, unwavering attitude towards the homeless. They aim to combat the city's 'homeless problem' and reduce begging by teaming up with the police and arresting those sleeping rough on the streets. The council claims that these people aren't actually homeless and are trying to somehow trick the public into believing they are. I'm sorry but do they really think someone would happily sleep on the streets just to scrape a few pence together, when they had a warm house to live in somewhere. Bristol councillor Claire Cook has stated, "begging has no place in Bristol". So yer I suppose the best way to get

these dirty beggars off the streets is



to get the police to round them up and throw them in a cell. I'm guessing it saves a lot of time and money not trying to actually sit down with these people and find out the reasons behind why they are begging for money, no because then you'll probably have to feel obliged to find homes for these people.

Councils often state that help is readily available for the homeless and that they will do everything they can to support people. But is this truly the case? LCAP (London Coalition Against Poverty) highlight the rights people have if they are in danger of becoming homeless, but more often than not the council will try to do their best to get out of it. If the council has reason to believe an individual is homeless they have to

put them on the housing register immediately. However, what usually happens is they will either refuse to or delay housing people. Even if there is an urgent need for a person to be helped, like in instances of domestic abuse, they will try to do this by saying they can't help until they conduct a home visit. They can't help until you've been evicted, they won't help until you bring a doctor's report; they won't help until they see police evidence of violence; and they won't help unless you go through mediation. The council is breaking the law by doing this, but because a lot of people on the streets don't have access to their rights, they are none the wiser.

This negative attitude to the homeless is appalling and needs to be changed. How can these people ever hope to get out of the rut they're in if state institutions like the police, who are supposedly there to help people and keep order, end up treating them like dirt and with violence or their own councils do their damned best to get out of helping them get re-established in life? •

The Fargate Speaker

The bulletin of Sheffield Anarchist Federation
Freedom • Equality • Autonomy
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No Nonsense.

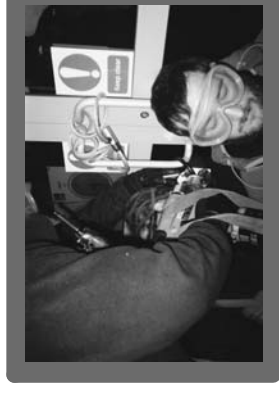
In this Issue: Temp recruitment agencies • Nick Clegg • Homeless or helpless? • Religious nutters • Post Office closures

Warning: you are being watched

Due to the ID card database being widely opposed the government are trying to introduce it in stages. The first victims to have their personal and biometric information added to the new national identity register have been non-EU nationals. Sheffield hosts one of the five public enquiry offices in the country where the information is collected for the database and the ID cards issued. On 1st December twenty activists from Sheffield and Bradford staged a direct action protest outside the Sheffield office as part of nation wide activity, locking themselves to the doors of the building and



unless we make them." This demonstration will likely be the first of many against the register - a store of peoples DNA and personal information - with many individuals claiming they are prepared to break the law to stop its existence: "We have to build a large and confrontational movement of opposition against the database. If we don't stop this Orwellian surveillance we're giving ourselves up to the states excesses, and then what?" •



preventing the immigration service from issuing cards. Eleven activists were arrested but no one was charged. One of the arrested activists later said: "We have no choice but to use civil disobedience in order to fight against an ever increasing surveillance state. The government wants to remove our anonymity and keep a tighter check on people and they won't listen

Fargate Review

Sheffield has many attractions and amusements to offer, but few are better than our outstanding collection of religious nutters. Here we review a few of the best:

The Jesus Army



The Stormtroopers of God's Love. Refuse to confirm or deny rumours that they do actually own Holy Hand Grenades.

Swingin Scientologists



The hip youth come flocking from all around to get down to the swingin' sounds of that Scientist Jive. Or something.

Mentalists



Scientists have calculated if it was possible to harness the energy of mental old blokes who walk up and down Fargate telling everyone they're going to go to Hell, we could meet over a third of the UK's energy needs by 2010.



Thanks for Nothing!

Following a lengthy period of consultation with the public, on November 3rd Post Office Limited have decided to push on with their controversial decision to close 15 Sheffield post offices. This includes post offices in Silverhill, Commonside, Loxley, Wincobank, The Moor, Shalesmoor and Crookes.

All 15 affected post offices will shut from mid-November onwards. This is due to these offices not meeting Post Office Limited's "national criteria" for what makes an eligible post office during the wide-ranging post office closures initiated by the



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