

# FREE JOHN BOWDEN NOW!

As a young man, John committing a murder along with two of the event are not well known up as moral adjudicators concerns that had roots in the conditions of life, which they have lived with and gone beyond. has been held for 25 years now released a long time ago. We so much how you get in that



Bowden was arrested for com- other men. The circumstances to us. We don't set ourselves cerning the past actions of oth- individual's particular condi- accepted responsibility for, What we do know is that John and that his co-imputees were also know that in prison it's not counts—apart from rare totally abject cases that prisoners themselves deal with by getting rid of the pollution one way or another—as how you relate to your fellow inmates and the attitude you have to the screws.

During his imprisonment, John has suffered all kinds violence inflicted on him by the latter and has spent long periods in isolation. Why this disparity of treatment? Why have the two men who committed the same crime been released whereas John has been held for such a long time?

The fact is, John was not indifferent to the violence committed day after day inside the prison walls. Having entered prison as a murderer, he soon became aware of the brutality and injustice that reign inside the jails and started speaking out in defence of prisoners all around the world. In other words, he became more and more conscious of the system of exploitation upon which the prison system and the whole society outside it are based. And he has never kept silent. He has always been in the front line every time he witnessed abuse against prisoners. He has participated in revolts and written poignant and true words in support of prisoners' rebellion, also showing unconditional solidarity towards struggles carried out in the world outside. That is the reason why he has been punished by the system for so long: for his courage, his awareness and his determination to struggle against injustice.

Eventually, however, after 25 years he was moved to an open prison from where he was allowed to get out to work and was soon to be released. But the system could not tolerate the fact that John has never bowed down to its brutality and found the occasion to put him back in a closed prison. Relying on the statements of a social worker, John was labelled a 'terrorist' who had contacts with 'terrorist organisations' (the Anarchist Black Cross!), a prisoner 'at risk' with no right to regain freedom.

It goes without saying that John can count on our solidarity and support, which we also showed by taking part in an initiative organised outside the Parole Board office in London. Any action of solidarity to prisoners is welcome but we would like to point out that the main point is the struggle towards the destruction of all prisons and detention centres, for the freedom of all prisoners. Many social rebels have been inside for decades and have little hope of even getting even as far as the parole board. We do not want to focus everything on the personality and history of one single prisoner or hold placards with the sole intent that they be filmed, and that few will see apart from those who surf the websites where they are displayed.

That day the very few London anarchists who attended the initiative did not just want John Bowden free. In fact, we were there not only for John but for all the people who are locked up in jails and for all immigrants imprisoned in immigration detention centres. We want John free, but we honestly do not feel like begging some parole board for his release. The struggle for one prisoner must comprise a struggle against all prisons, at all times, everywhere, until they are finally razed to the ground.