

London's Freedom Bookshop Torched

Neo-Nazis Suspected

Fifth Estate Collective

2013

The London bookshop Freedom was damaged in an arson attack in the early hours of February 28. Nobody was hurt in the fire which partially gutted the ground floor and damaged the building's electrics.

However, there was extensive damage to the shop's archives which contained publications dating back to the 1800s. Freedom Press is Britain's longest running anarchist publisher and traces its history back to the original *Freedom* newspaper started by Charlotte Wilson and Peter Kropotkin in 1886. It is still printing and is available through freedompress.org.uk.

An unknown assailant smashed a window and poured a flammable liquid into the bookshop and setting it alight. Nobody has claimed responsibility for the attack although many believe that the far-right may be responsible. The Freedom building was last seriously attacked in 1993 by a now defunct neo-Nazi terror group, Combat 18.

The community was quick to respond to help with a clean-up of the premises which were quickly restored and became operational again in just a few days. Benefits were also held to express solidarity and cover costs.

As well as selling books, Freedom Press publishes a number themselves, produces a monthly paper and provides office space for several radical and anarchist groups such as the Solidarity Federation, Anarchist Federation, Advisory Service for Squatters, Corporate Watch and London Coalition Against Poverty.

Due to financial problems the press has suffered recently, the insurance on the building had not been renewed and the shop is requesting donations. Freedom said: "We are setting up a donation page. In the meanwhile, anyone who wants to donate can do so by ordering a book through our website."

Visit freedompress.org.uk or write Freedom Press, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX for ordering.



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