

resistance

anarchist bulletin

Free/Donation
Issue 57 Jan 2004



A tale of two tyrants

YOU COULD BE forgiven for thinking that "The War Against Terror" is just an excuse for aggressive American foreign policy. Certainly someone needs forgiving judging by the range of excuses we've been given for starting the war on Iraq.



Spot the difference: An imprisoned tyrant and our new friend

First it was because Saddam had "Weapons of Mass Destruction" ready to use within 45 minutes. When no such weapons were found, despite rigorous inspections both before and after the war, the excuse was changed to one about human rights. Now the war was to bring freedom to the Iraqi people, though how a country being occupied by foreign armies is free is unclear.

Of the fact that Saddam Hussein murdered and tortured thousands there can be no doubt. But this never bothered the American or British states when he was fighting Iran. When Saddam used poison gas on the people of Halabja Donald Rumsfeld, now US Secretary of Defense, personally visited Saddam to reassure him that the faint criticism from the US government was only words and they continued to support him. Saddam only became a problem when he started to control more of the world's oil supply than the US was happy with.

Now Muammar Gaddafi, one potential member of "the axis of evil" and candidate to be the latest "new Hitler" has made a stunning transformation into a friend of Britain and the US.

Has he done this by ending his tyrannical oppression of the people of

Libya? Are Libyans now safe to exercise such basic freedoms as, say, criticising his government without fear of arrest by the secret police? In a word, no.

Human rights are off the agenda again and it's by renouncing weapons of mass destruction that Gaddafi has rehabilitated himself. Some old machine parts and an ageing stock of mustard gas (a first world war era weapon) will be destroyed and Libya will be welcomed back into the "international community" (AKA the international ruling class). Expect US oil companies to set up shop in Libya anytime soon. Once again "ethical principles" behind US and British foreign policy are clear: they'll support whatever's good for business.

The term "human rights" is used as a weapon by the ruling class to justify actions in their own interests. By selectively showing concern for human rights our rulers justify in one case starting a war and in another making peace with a tyrant.

The rulers of the world will continue to act in their own interests, irrespective of the consequences for others, or appeals for human rights to be respected. It's time the rest of us started to act in our own interests. ★

HAPPY NEW YEAR

THE SEASONAL FESTIVITIES are now over and it's time to cope with the hangover. OK, this time of the year is a time for celebrations. Let's face it our lives can be pretty crap all the year through but in the dark months we need to brighten up our lives.



But of course there's a payback. With credit card firms screwing what they can with extortionate interest rates you can guess who had the best Xmas. Loan organisations like the Provident charge even more. So, we'll be paying for our holiday fun for months to come.

Now you are back at work, the boring emptiness and stress of everyday life are all back in force. After we have battled to get to work on over-crowded and over-priced public transport we face all sorts of controls over our lives when we're at work. But the pay is not good and the boss is worse. However, do not despair. We can find ways to take our lives back. Instead of work controlling us, it is time for us to take our lives back. There are countless ways of slowing down and sabotaging the work/slave system. It just takes a little imagination, that's all.

So, our new year's message is clear. Fight back against the countless little dictators who govern so many aspects of our lives. Demand more of the things we really need like friendship, community and freedom. Reject what we don't need, endless, pointless toil. The year is new and so is our determination to fight back.

See inside for more examples of people fighting back. ★

CHRISTMAS HAS DONE nothing to dampen workplace resistance.

The first strike by refuse collectors in Scotland for more than a decade meant the waste of thousands of households and businesses was not collected on 10th Dec. More than 150 members of the GMB in North Lanarkshire Council's cleansing department refused to work in the first 24 hours of a two-day stoppage.

Workers at a Stoke-on-Trent security company staged a wildcat strike mid-December in a dispute over pay. Staff at Security Plus' Hanley depot staged the unofficial action after bosses at the Uttoxeter-based company turned down pleas for a pay rise. The employees, who all work in the packing department at the Samson Street depot, said they were angry because drivers at the company had already received a wage increase.

Staff working at the plush headquarters of one of Britain's most powerful unions are threatening to walk out over alleged harassment and bullying by the organisation's new leader. Employees at ASLEF, the train drivers' union, based in Hampstead, London, have decided to hold a strike ballot in protest at the allegedly authoritarian regime introduced by Shaun Brady, the recently elected general secretary.

Workers at Land Rover are to ban overtime as part of industrial action in a dispute over pay, it was announced. But union leaders pulled back from calling workers at the company's plant in Solihull out on strike even though they voted in favour of stoppages. Which side are they on?

Hundreds of school pupils staged a walkout in Colchester at St. Helena school where they rose up in revolt. Around 300 school kids walked out of lessons, demonstrated, ran amok and caused general mayhem. The protests have been a reaction to plans by the school to split up classes (and class mates) into divided houses. The shouts of "strike, strike, strike" and "we will not be moved" were heard as kids rushed round their teachers who helplessly looked on and tried to gain some sort of command of them. Burning school ties and blocking the road the protesters were not going to be moved and were learning strategy and tactics as they marched, blockaded and sang.

More from: www.prol-position.net ★

Anarchist Federation members in Hereford are trying to set up a local AF group there. Anyone interested should contact Hereford AF, c/o PO Box 7, Pontypool, Gwent, NP4 8YB or Email hereford@afed.cjb.net

"Not...peasantry but professionals and business people" stand to benefit from a Stanstead upgrade. "Airports are the cities of the future" so says Germaine Greer.

AS IF SUITED types are somehow of more importance than rural working class communities when these decisions are taken. Greer's radical feminism was always mostly self-serving anyway. She did little for women who didn't enjoy her own arty-farty middle class values. Greer persistently feigned lip service to limp shades of socialism whilst living the life of a grand dame luxuriating in the comforts of an ancient Essex farmhouse. Her home is situated on the outer fringes of the area designated to suffer most from the increase in jet noise if the Stanstead expansion goes ahead as she advocates. Her brand of feminist ideology was flawed by the vitriolic anti-maleness she



Greer: Prat

employed in '90s work like "The Change". Who is Greer speaking for now?

True to form, typical of her class, Greer comes out in favour of hard-nosed strategists, greedy profit makers of the Global Airline and Airport industry, propped up by the government of the day.

What do the likes of Greer care, that 3000 acres of recreational unspoilt countryside are up for development and that up to 200 planes will take off once Stanstead is made into one of the worlds largest airports? Do working class people (peasants the arch-feminist calls us) need this expansion? Whose interest rates does it best serve? That's right, lukewarm, red professor Greer obligingly parades her influence as a celebrity alongside the destroying infrastructures of capitalism. Some socialism! Some prat! ★

TRANSPORT

UNLESS YOU ARE obscenely rich you will likely be familiar with the rigmarole that is public transport. You won't need us to tell you about the cost, the never-ending delays and cancellations, the dirty conditions of carriages/busses and even the injuries caused by neglected states of service

However for many of us we see using these expensive, uncomfortable services as a necessary evil. After all, in the current society we often have little choice but to spend eight hours a day cooped up engaged in often pointless work. To reach our oh-so exciting workplaces we need to travel. For those of us without cars or where we have little option but to be squeezed in to public transport, "tighter than cattle" - this isn't just the opinion of a bunch of pissed off anarchists, these are the words of a recent Parliamentary report on public transport in the UK. By the time we get to work we are unsurprisingly knackered, let alone by the time we get home!

It isn't all negative though. There are numerous instances of people not taking this bad situation lying down. Fare Evasion is described as "common" with a link between bad service and refusal to pay, and with the fines relatively low it is often cheaper not to pay and risk a low fine.

Of course the bosses and their lackeys will moan, but us here at resistance we can't help but notice that not paying for crap services eases the strain on our finances.



Anarchist run public transport in revolutionary Spain (see resistance 55)

Over the summer on one very delayed train on route to Glasgow the passengers on the train united and showed how powerful they could be collectively. They took over the train and the nearby tracks and refused to move until they were given alternative forms of transport and compensation!

In Sweden and Paris striking transport workers have adopted novel tactics - tactics our often striking transport workers could well benefit from learning. Instead of shutting down public transport they instead open up all gates and refuse to charge for travel!

Transport workers certainly wouldn't have to worry about public support and situations like this give brief glimpses of how much better society would be if it was run for collective needs, not the greed of a few. ★

WORKING CLASS RESISTANCE!

A new Irish anarchist organisation has formed and published a new publication.

WORKING CLASS RESISTANCE (WCR!) is a new eight page anarchist paper which will be appearing six times a year from this point on. The next edition will be ready by early February 2004.

Who are involved with 'Working Class Resistance'? The appearance of this publication marks the coming together of the Anarcho-Syndicalist Federation, Anarchist Federation (Ireland), Anarchist Prisoner Support and a number of other individuals to create a more effective and better resourced class struggle anarchist organisation across Ireland. Together they have created a new organisation, Organise!, with local groups and individual members throughout the country.

Some background

The ASF and AF in Ireland had already collaborated on two previous publications, called Wildcat, which presented agreed positions on the trades unions and the "north". The impetus for the creation of this organisation goes back to a proposal made earlier this year asking anarchists to look seriously at building more effective organisation across Ireland. The response to this proposal was mixed, but



discussion on moving things forward took place between those who were most interested in pursuing it and who felt they had most in common. Their attitude to those class struggle anarchists outside their organisation is com-

radely and co-operative; while we may have differences, we seek to work to overcome these where possible and to build stronger links and more effective methods of working together as part of the process of building a broad libertarian movement in Ireland. They will not, on the other hand, shy away from debate and discussion of differences, but attempt to deal with these in an open and comradely fashion.

Most importantly, they seek through their activity and propaganda, through discussion and practical solidarity with their fellow workers, to show the relevance of anarchist methods of organising and ultimately the benefits of a future libertarian communist revolution for workers everywhere.

A new website should be online in the very near future.

If you would like more information, to get in touch with Organise! members, or distribute WCR!, contact them at:

ORGANISE!, PO BOX 505, BELFAST, BT12 6BQ.

Email: organiseireland@yahoo.ie ★

FASCISTS FLEE

ON 9th DECEMBER, two fascists from the BNP were spotted door-to-door leafleting in Dorking, Surrey. Two angry residents quickly confronted one of the BNP pair, who weren't local, in the street. He quickly walked off towards some nearby flats where the second man was. An aggressive verbal exchange took place. The fascists quickly left the area heading towards the other side of town, but after a third resident joined the other two, they decided that they would go and give the BNP some more grief.

They soon spotted the pair in nearby roads. Having seen the residents coming towards them the fascists fled into a side road – a dead end. The locals waited at the entrance of the road until one of them went to see where the leafleters had gone and found them, hiding behind a large hedge, where they had been for over half an hour. Then having realised that their hiding place had been found they began making frantic phone calls and concerned that the fascists had called the cops, the residents headed home leaving the pair behind the hedge. It doesn't take much to get the fascists running scared.

Info from: www.surreyanarchy.org.uk ★

DESERTERS IN THE DESERT

PLANS TO DEPLOY the first battalion of Iraq's new army are in doubt because a third of the soldiers trained by the US led forces have quit. Touted as a key to Iraq's future, the 700 man battalion lost over 250 men over recent weeks as it prepared to begin operations.

Pay of just £40 a month and fear of violence from Iraqis fighting the occupying armies are thought to be to blame.

US soldiers deserting too

And it's not just Iraqis that are deserting. According to a French weekly magazine over 1700 U.S. soldiers have deserted their posts in Iraq, with many of them failing to return to military duty after getting permission to go back to the United States.

The magazine says the French intelligence agency obtained the information from what it described as an "American colleague." Citing a senior French official posted in Washington, the magazine also said that 7,000 U.S. soldiers have left Iraq allegedly due to psychological troubles and other illnesses. Some 2,200 others sustained serious injuries including the loss of limbs, it said. ★

TIME BOMB



"YA BASTA" (Enough is Enough) declared the EZLN (Zapatista National Liberation Army), as they burst to international attention ten years ago, New Years day 1994.

The rebellion started in San Cristobal de las Casas, Chiapas, Mexico in the tradition of all peasant armies: ransacking town halls and burning land deeds! Destroying 10 government offices, freeing 179 prisoners, then attacking an army garrison, and in one town shooting down an army helicopter, and torching the town hall before quietly slipping back into the jungle. The timing for the international "audience" was crucial, coinciding with the controversial introduction of the North American Free Trade Agreement.

It didn't take long for the state to respond, on January 4th ten towns near San Cristobal were bombed, 400 people died. On the 5th tanks arrived in the area along with more troops, yet more died. The government began to distribute black propaganda, and prevent human rights organizations entering Chiapas. The EZLN then withdrew to the jungle, and a tense ceasefire began on January 12th. Since then the Mexican army has been using a tactic of low intensity warfare (killing and displacing civilians), which continues to this day.

The Zapatistas have organised international "ecuentros" attracting thousands of people from around the world which have been influential on the global anti-capitalist movement.

The Zapatista uprising has allowed over 1100 communities in Chiapas of 300-400 people to organize federally into 32 autonomous municipalities where power lies at the base. Local decisions are taken at a local level and important decisions are made at a wider regional or municipal level, discussions continuing until something like consensus is reached. In these areas the people have much more control over their lives than before and women can play a much bigger role than traditional society allowed.

On the negative side the EZLN is hierarchically organized with officers of different ranks and high profile leaders. Their stated aim is a programme offering little more than liberal capitalism and it's even backed up by appeals to the Mexican constitution.

Nevertheless, the struggle of the peasants in Chiapas has been inspirational to many people around the world. On this the tenth anniversary of the Zapatista uprising the people producing resistance send our solidarity to all those struggling for freedom and equality in Chiapas. ★

INSIDE INFORMATION

Prisoners Support Email List

NOT BEING AWARE of any anarchist mailing list in Ireland or Yorkshire concerned with Prisoners, Prisons and related areas, Dublin and Hull Anarchist Prisoner Support has decided to try and create some sort of place where information of this type can be exchanged. It has thus created the lumpenlist@anarchistps.org.

They see no reason to keep this discussion limited to political or POW's and would encourage posting & debate about all categories of prisoners and prisons.

To subscribe to the list send an Email with the text "subscribe lumpenlist" to majordomo@anarchistps.org

Email:

anarprisonersupp@hotmail.com

Visit: www.anarchistps.org

Anarchists Arrested in Italy

During the early morning of the 3rd of December a furious man-hunt led to the arrest of an anarchist comrade after many

searches throughout Rome and its surroundings. Marco, the arrested comrade, is accused to be one of the two people who, together with Massimo (who was arrested in October) had rightly beaten the police infiltrator inside the demo against the intergovernment conference of the EU on the 4th of October.

A picture, taken by one of those informers who populate demos, has been enough to cause the arrest of both Massimo and Marco. Write to them at: Marco Ferruzzi c.c. Regina Coeli via della lungara, 28 00165 Roma Italy and Massimo Leonardi c.c. Rebibbia via R.Majetti, 165 00156 Roma Italy.

Prisoner of War Against War Needs Our Solidarity!

Write to a prisoner today! Sue Brackenbury is on remand in HMP Eastwood Park - having climbed one wall and cut one fence too many, at UK nuclear establishments. She has five trials in the pipeline - most of them in magistrates' courts - and one in Plymouth, in the Crown Court ("Going equipped" = Looking for a submarine with a hammer, at Devonport

nuclear dockyard) .

Sue would LOVE to hear from people. Her address is:

Sue Brackenbury HT 6792, HMP Eastwood Park, Wotton-under-Edge, Falfield, Gloucestershire, GL12 8DB.

She can also receive (and would love to have) CDs, and stamps. If you wish to further show your solidarity with Sue, why not arrange to visit her? If you wish to do so, Email: nabataat@yahoo.co.uk to sort it out.

Freedom for Michel Gaucher!

Anti-capitalist militant Michel Gaucher is currently illegally imprisoned in Portugal.

The Comité de Libertação de Michel Gaucher is calling for solidarity in the fight against the abuse of power and law, committed by the authorities of France, Germany, Portugal and the European Union by detention and ill-treatment of MG.

You can write to him at:

Michel Gaucher, E.P.L., Rua Marques de la Fronteira 1, Lisboa, Portugal

Visit: www.geocities.com/freemichaelg

Email: freemichaelg@yahoo.com ★



Subvert and resist

Take precautions when going on demonstrations and don't take cameras, booze or drugs. If you're nicked give your name and address then say 'no comment' to any other questions.

JANUARY: 5th - London Earth First! is holding an open discussion on the plans for a new runway in the South East and how we can fight it. 7pm Autonomy Club, Freedom Bookshop, 84B Whitechapel High Street, London E1

17-18th - Reclaim the bases weekend of anti-militarist action. . Start organising an event at a base close to you. Networking via: www.reclaimthebases.org.uk reclaimbases-discuss@yahoo.com

17th - From World War II...to Iraq 2003...to...? A Bloody History of Northwood HQ, Assemble at 12pm Northwood tube, Or 11am Baker St exit of Baker St tube. Northwood is where the UK Permanent Joint Forces HQ are based. Contact: info@thed10group.org.uk www.thed10group.org.uk 07887 585721

18th - Disarm DSEi 2005 Open Meeting. To target Spearhead the company who organize Europe's biggest arms fair. 2pm, London Action Resource Centre, Fieldgate Street, London. www.dsei.org

18th - Open Meeting to Plan for Mayday 2004 2-5pm, London Action Resource Centre, 62 Fieldgate Street, London. Visit: www.ourmayday.org.uk

22nd - Discussion meeting on workplace struggles organised by London AF and other anarchists. 7pm, Autonomy Club, Freedom Bookshop, 84B Whitechapel High Street, London E1

Subscribe to resistance

- I enclose £4 (£6 EU, £12 Rest of the world) for the next 12 issues of resistance bulletin (cheques payable to "AF") and send to AF, PO Box 375, Knaphill, Woking, Surrey, GU21 2XL
- I enclose £4 for a year's subscription to **Organise!** the magazine of the AF.
- I am interested in the **Anarchist Federation** and would like more information.

Name.....

Address.....

J.

Join the resistance

The **Anarchist Federation** is an organisation of **class struggle** anarchists aiming to abolish capitalism and all oppression to create a free and equal society. This is **Anarchist Communism**.

We see today's society as being divided into two main opposing classes: the **ruling class** which controls all the power and wealth, and the **working class** which the rulers exploit to maintain this. By racism, sexism and other forms of oppression, as well as war and environmental destruction the rulers weaken and divide us. Only the **direct action** of working class people can defeat these attacks and ultimately overthrow capitalism.

As the capitalist system rules the whole world, its destruction must be complete and world wide. We reject attempts to reform it, such as working through parliament and national liberation movements, as they fail to challenge capitalism itself. Unions also work as a part of the capitalist system, so although workers struggle within them they will be unable to bring about capitalism's destruction unless they go beyond these limits.

Organisation is vital if we're to beat the bosses, so we work for a united anarchist movement and are affiliated to the International of Anarchist Federations.

The Anarchist Federation has members across Britain and Ireland fighting for the kind of world outlined above. Contact us at:

Anarchist Federation,

84B, Whitechapel High Street,

London, E1 7QX. Tel: 07946 214 590

Visit: www.afed.org.uk

Email: anarchistfederation@bigfoot.com