

resistance

anarchist bulletin

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A plague on all their houses!

THE WORLD is clearly in a bad way. The war in Iraq and the situation in the Middle East go from bad to worse. The world economy is in permanent crisis, causing hardship for most, and threatening the very survival of some. The predictions of scientists, as well as the evidence of our own senses, warns of ecological catastrophe. So what is the answer? According to the deluge of party political propaganda, our big chance to change the world is the elections. All we have to do is put a tick by the right name and all our problems will be solved. Anarchists argue that not only is voting in elections futile, it actually continues to prop up a system where we choose our own oppressors.

Most people have now seen through the lies and empty promises of the Labour Party. However, there are still some who say 'vote Labour' to keep out the Tories or the fascists. This line of argument is seriously flawed. It is unclear whether there is that much difference between Labour and the others in any case. Labour has pursued anti-working class and racist policies. Whatever the motivation for voting Labour, the likes of Blair and Livingstone will use a victory to legitimise the continuation of their current policies.

Many others agree with these points and are arguing for a vote for an alternative party- The Greens or the leftist coalition Respect. This is also a useless diversion that sows illusions in the whole electoral system. Governments do not break promises, lie or further the system of oppression and exploitation because they are 'bad' people or because they have the 'wrong' policies. Even a 'well-



meaning' politician will soon find that his/her hands are tied, constrained by the demands of large corporations and banks.

It is in the very nature of the State to oppress. Its role is to have power and use it to impose its will. Look what happened in the Russian revolution when the Bolsheviks took over the State 'in the name of the working class'. The German Greens backed down from their original positions once in power. In Brazil the election of Lula, the popular working class leader, soon proved to be another dead-end for the long-suffering workers and peasants. He has already backed down from confronting the corporations, landowners and western moneylenders. He is now even attacking the poorest shanty

town dwellers for not being willing to accept his version of how things should be done. If the Greens or Respect did get in, we could not expect any different from them. Once in power, they become entangled with the institutions of the State and would be quite willing to use them if anyone should dare challenge their authority.

Once we give up our power to others, to 'representatives', we are in trouble. It makes us think that other people can change the world for us. It makes us passive and we lose control. This is why many workers in Argentina said 'no' to all politicians. They were beginning to organise their own communities and taking responsibility for their own lives and futures.

The Respect Coalition puts out the slogan- 'Stop the War, Vote Respect', giving people the idea that by doing this, we don't have to do anything anymore, the new politicians will do it for them. Unfortunately, changing the world is not so easy. It will require all of us to be organising and fighting back in our daily lives. We will have to struggle to find new ways of doing things, where any delegates- and not representatives- are only temporary, completely controlled by those who have chosen them. It doesn't matter what government gets in. It is only the strength of the working class movement, at work, in the community and in the streets, that can bring about peace, freedom, justice and equality. Do something to build this resistance; don't give in to the blackmail of the 'least of evils' argument. You do have a choice- 'no' to politicians and 'yes' to your own power.



ON THE FRONTLINE

AS PREDICTED in last months issue the fire-fighters and rail disputes have flared up again with a near-national wildcat by fire-fighters, and rail and tube workers on the brink of a nationwide stoppage on the day of the elections in June!

Fire-fighters took part in wildcats across the country following the suspension of 150 Manchester fire-fighters for refusing to use anti-terrorism equipment—this was only the spark though, the real issues concern modernisation measures and the refusal to award a raise promised on completion of certain conditions—all of which were met some time ago. Basically, management are trying to shaft the workforce on the sly in order to avoid another nationwide strike.

The rail dispute looks like it could be a biggie. Provisional plans have been made to strike around the 10th June—the importance of the 7,000 signalling and maintenance workers expected to stop work means that to all intents the national rail network will be shut down, for the first time in over a decade (following on from first national stoppages for decades in other key areas, notably the fire-fighters). The core of the dispute is the bosses' attempts to cut pensions and limited free travel to new workers, and the paltry 3% pay rise offer. Links are being made to London Underground workers who are likely to strike at the same time.

Another summer of stoppages is looming at the airports with strikes by baggage handlers, ramp workers and clerical staff expected at all of Britain's major airports - the dispute is over a tiny one year pay offer from the company, despite an increase in profits.

A welcome bit of news from the posties who've taken the decision not to deliver BNP election material in Wales and Somerset, invoking a conscience clause in their contract, and forcing the reluctant union to back them up – a far more effective tactic than the state bans that the left call for, and one which opens the door to further collective action in pursuit of other gains.

Bernard Matthews is also facing strike action at his Norfolk poultry factories, as he tries to impose a work increase of 20% - protests outside the factories have already taken place and walkouts are expected soon.

Finally, we would like to thank Aslef president Martin Samways for belting Blair's pet bureaucrat, general secretary Shaun "barbecue" Brady - many Aslef members have wanted to do so for some time – next time let's hope it's a rank-and-filer meting out the justice! ★

NEW ANARCHIST PROJECTS...

London

Just over a week ago an unused building in East London was occupied by a group of international artists and activists with the aim of opening up a new social space. The building has been secured, tidied up and some essential repairs made. The Rampart will provide a meeting and workshop space, free internet access, info shop, community cinema, cafe, free shop, art gallery and theatre space. The building contains a cosy hall in which a stage has been built and the whole place decorated. As is usual with such projects, we urgently need people to volunteer some time on an occasional or a regular basis so that the building can be open everyday. People are also welcome to organise events, run workshops etc. The address of the hall is 7a Rampart Street (nearest tube Shadwell) Phone 07050 618445 or visit. email rampart@lists.riseup.net

Glasgow Autonomous Project

We are a new group that came together because we found out that Glasgow was going to be one of the trial sites for the biometric ID card scheme and we felt that this was a serious threat to our civil liberties. We have started educating our-



selves about the issue, produced a leaflet, thousands of which have so far been distributed. We have started having regular meetings and we would really welcome anyone else who wanted to get involved. We are a collective currently operating a resource centre in Glasgow's city centre. 58, Albion St (corner of Bell St) Merchant City noon to 9pm every day. Our long term aim is to establish a permanent radical resource in the heart of the city. Our main aims are to encourage individuals and groups in the Glasgow area to take more control of their lives - to work together for social change, rather than depending upon political parties and other bosses. Our guiding principles are solidarity and mutual aid. Phone 07952 969102 or 0141 552 4551 or email: gap@glasgow-autonomy.org

South Wales

Gwent Anarchists have just brought out the second issue of their newsletter Gagged! It's got articles on the battle to save St. David's Wood in Blackwood, killer Cola alias Coca-Cola, and an anti-election rant. If you live in South Wales, contact Gwent Anarchists at PO BOX 70, Newport, NP20 5XX email gwentanarchists@yahoo.co.uk ★

POLICE KILL IN LONDON

ON SATURDAY MAY 15TH, 42 year old father of six Kebba "Dobbo" Jobe was asphyxiated while being arrested by police in Camden Town, London. A week later approximately 250 people of all backgrounds joined a vibrant, militant march held in his memory and to protest at his death, to the Kentish Town Police Station, base for the arresting officers.

The gathering was angry and defiant and was addressed by a number of speakers including Dobbo's wife and father. Since 1990 there have been 237 deaths in police custody or caused by police actions in the London area alone. Over the same period not one police officer has been suc-



cessfully prosecuted for their actions. The Justice for Dobbo Campaign are holding nightly vigils at Kentish Town Police Station from 6-8. For more info call 07951 596048 / 07949 158 898. No justice, no peace! ★

TESCOS - EVERY LITTLE HURTS

NOT HAPPY WITH making £4.4 million profit A DAY out of staff and shoppers, greedy bosses at Tesco have decided to trial a scheme of cutting sick pay for staff for the first 3 days they are off. Sickness of 4 days or more will require a doctors note.

We see this move for what it is - an attempt by Tesco to squeeze even higher margins out of their staff. Tesco are the UK largest private sector employer. If Tesco bosses see the 12 month trial as a success and introduce the policy across the board this will be bad news not only for their existing 220,000 staff but for all workers as no doubt it will kick off a chain reaction through the whole of the retail industry and beyond, giving a green light for all other private sector employers to follow suit.

That a food retailer is pioneering a policy of forcing staff to come in and serve shoppers when they are ill speaks volumes about what they think of us all.

Staff - organise to take action against



Tescos CEO Terry Leahy. Screwing his employees for slightly more profit.

this measure. Strikes and mass sickies will see the back of it. Shoppers - hit them where it hurts. Take your money elsewhere until this trail is abandoned.

Walthamstow Anarchist Group held a demonstration outside the Tescos in Walthamstow on the 29th May. For more info contact:

*info@walthamstownanarchy.org.uk
07810 288 889*

WORLD NEWS:

PALESTINE

A REPORT FROM ISRAELI ANARCHISTS: There is an emergency situation right now (20/5/04) in the Gaza Strip and the town of Rafah, in particular, with scenes that bring to mind Israel's invasion of Jenin and Nablus in the spring of 2002. So far today, 18 Palestinians were killed, but the action continues. Last weekend, 116 homes were destroyed, making over a thousand people homeless. Hundreds more are slated for destruction.

Even Yossi Sarid from the Yahad Party (the social-democrats), normally a staunch defender of the Israeli Occupation Forces, described actions in Rafah as "war crimes". Many - Israelis, internationals and Palestinians - are desperately trying to halt the bloodshed. The Israeli women's peace movement called for an immediate halt to the violence and renewal of negotiations for what they call "a peace agreement that will extract us from all the occupied territories". Although we, anarchists from Israel, are against any kind of peace between the ruling classes, we decided to participate in the united front against the genocide in Gaza strip. Forty women drove to Gaza to see if they could intervene physically, but they are being prevented from entering Gaza by the occupation army. The women have set up an encampment at the Sufa checkpoint and say they will not leave until the army stops its actions there. In addition, the ruling of Israel's High Court of Justice allows the Israeli Army to continue its mass house demolitions in Rafah. Since the beginning of the Intifada, the Army has demolished some 1,800 homes in the Rafah Refugee Camp.

Gush Shalom, Israel's peace movement, reports: "We heard what happened in Rafah while preparing in the Gush office for the already announced Friday protest at the Gaza entrance. We couldn't think of a more fitting reaction than sending out a call to come to the Defense Ministry for an immediate protest. We felt rather futile compared with those on whose behalf we were going to protest: the Rafah demonstrators in the middle of whom a helicopter gunship had sent a missile wounding dozens. Still, the protest of some 250 - with besides Gush Shalom a very visible and loud presence of the dissident reservists ("Courage to Refuse") and the Anarchists - had more spirit than the mass rally some days earlier." Reactions of passers-by were not unfriendly, but soon police arrived. Eight were arrested and are facing charges in Israeli courts.

PUPIL POWER!

STUDENTS AT Acland Burghley Secondary School were among people who defended the squatted social centre at the former Grand Banks wine bar in Tufnell Park, north London.. Police and bailiffs were turned away by 60 centre supporters behind a makeshift oil drum barricade on 17th May . Pupils gave their support because the centre gave them the chance to run the place for each other, with everyone having a say. There is a blackboard up with ideas and a weekly meeting in which people discuss ideas for events . The centre has been open since March and has organised a programme of film screenings and political debates, open to all. The wine bar had been empty for 2 years. Last year, a youth club run at the school was forced to close after council spending cuts.

Anarchy!

A comprehensive was forced to close for the day in May when pupils walked out in support of a teacher threatened with disciplinary action for telling them they were being denied a proper education. When the school threatened to discipline him around 100 pupils walked out of lessons after the morning break on



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management seem to be changing everything. All the best teachers have been leaving." In the open letter to histutor group Mr Walker said that he was leaving at the end of term for reasons that he could not disclose. He wrote: "I do not agree with the way staff and pupils have been treated since the new management took over. "I think the permanent teachers have been treated without respect and students have been neglected (denied a proper education). One Headlands teacher, said: "It was anarchy. After period three the kids refused to come back into class. Hundreds of them took part in a sit-down protest in the field and half of them ran out of the school grounds.

From <http://www.ainfos.ca>

Anti-fascists jailed

"Slick" is an anti-fascist who took part in the October 1993 demonstration against the British National Party offices in Welling, London, England. The police aggressively defended the BNP, and fighting broke out between anti-fascists and cops. As a result of his involvement in the "riot" Slick was sentenced to 5 years imprisonment, but he disappeared before he could be jailed. Eleven years later and Slick was arrested during a noisy argument. Once arrested the cops worked out who he was and he has now started his five year sentence. Letters of support should be addressed to:

C. Varkki, JR9335, HMP Elmlea, Church Rd, Eastchurch, Sheerness, Kent, ME12 4AY

Matthew Lamont

Below are details of Matthew Lamont, an American Anarchist who was jailed for possessing explosives allegedly for a bomb attack on fascists in the USA. Details of his arrest and conviction are at:

<http://www.breakthechains.net/prisoners/lamont/background.html>

Write to: Matthew Lamont, #T90251, CSP/A5-114, PO Box 901, Imperial, CA 92251, USA

ARISE

Support needed on or around March 25, Timothy Jones, founder and member of A.R.I.S.E. (an internal prisoner support/abolition group) was forced into administrative segregation at the Missouri State Correctional Center at Potosi. Tim had been involved in filing grievances on behalf of prisoners at Potosi in response to practices of the prison law library. Potosi's policy dictates that an inmate must choose between going to the law library to work on their case or going to recreation time. Many prisoners go weeks without outdoor or indoor recreation so they can spend time filing needed paperwork for their cases.

Send letters in support of Tim and the rights of prisoners to full access to the law library AND recreation time: Don Roper, Superintendent, Potosi Correctional Center, Route 2, Box 2222, Mineral Point, MO 63660, 573-438-6000, USA.

Missouri Department of Corrections
Director Gary B. Kempker, PO Box 236,
Jefferson City, MO 65102, 573-751-2389,
USA

Send words of love and solidarity to Tim at:

Timothy Alphonso Jones 505163,
Housing Unit 2B-1, Potosi Correctional
Center, Route 2, Box 2222, Mineral
Point, MO 63660, USA. Visit:
www.kansasanarchist.net/ABC/tim.pdf

Anarchists in the former USSR

7 activists of Minsk Anti-Fascist Action are in prison awaiting trial for "malicious hooliganism" after several beaten up fascists claimed that they were mugged, probably encouraged by local police who are known to have fascist sympathies. This is a serious charge, and they could be looking at several years inside. To help, contact antyfa@mail.ru, or abc-moscow@avotnom.org

An anarchist in Izhevsk, and an Ethiopian migrant in Moscow, who were both badly beaten by fascists are in need of financial help for their medical treatment. Contact Moscow ABC abc-moscow@avotnom.org ★



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.

JUNE: 3rd: London AF/Freedom Public Meeting - 2 members of the North East Federation of Anarchist Communists talk about anarchist opposition to the right wing government in Quebec. Freedom Books, Angel Alley, 84b Whitechapel High St London (Aldgate East tube).

5th: The 6th Annual Cannabis March & Festival. Carnival style march from Kennington Park (assemble 12pm) leading to an all day free festival in Brockwell Park, Brixton. Poets and rappers, soundsystems, live acoustic stage. info@thecannabisfestival.co.uk www.thecannabisfestival.co.uk

10th: 'Vote Nobody' Election Rally on election night, Le Pub, Caxton place, Newport, Wales. With music, poetry and speeches, free.

12th: Norwich Anarchist Bookfair, Waterloo Park Pavilion, Angel Road, Norwich. 12-late. Stalls, meeting, music.

15th: Manchester Anarchists meet at Friends Meeting House, 7:30 pm

19th: Manchester Radical Bookfair, Bridge 5 Mill, Ancoats, Manchester. See www.radicalbookfair.org.uk

25th: INTERNATIONAL CALL-OUT! Ambush Bush at Shannon military base in Ireland - contact ambush2004_international@yahoo.com for more details.

Every Thursday: Manchester Social Forum, 7.30, Friends Meeting House, Mancs.

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- 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.

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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**,

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London, E1 7QX. Tel: 07946 214 590
Visit: www.afed.org.uk
Email: info@afed.org.uk