

resistance

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G8: Unwanted heads of state

AT THE BEGINNING of July, eight men from eight countries are coming to Gleneagles, Scotland, with the aim of making decisions that will affect the entire planet. What makes them think they have the right to decide on our behalf? There are many people, from all over the world, who think that these so-called leaders do not have this right. Some of them are assembling in Scotland and others are initiating actions in their own countries and communities in order to protest against the arrogance of these world 'leaders' and to affirm that the only people we trust are ourselves.

There are many reasons to reject their leadership. Firstly, they come together in order to discuss world problems, such as poverty, terrorism and international crime, that they themselves have created. It is their policies and support for a global economic system based on competition and greed that has brought humanity to the brink of disaster. No one feels safer after five years of the 'war on terror'. The war in Iraq and support for Israel and reactionary governments such as Saudi Arabia and Uzbekistan have only managed to increase religious fanaticism.

Though many people were glad to see the back of the Islamic regime in Afghanistan, the American and British supported-government is hardly an improvement. Heroin addiction has increased and recently a female singer who dared go against the Islamic mould for women was shot dead. Many people are beginning to wonder what the real motivation was for the invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq. The lack of serious interest in human rights abuses leads to the conclusion that access



to oil was the real reason for wanting to overthrow these oppressive regimes.

Similarly with the lip-service paid to poverty in the developing countries; they express concern and set 'targets' that they never meet or make any effort to meet. In fact, they can't meet them because they also support the banks and companies who undermine the poorer economies of the world, as well as turning a blind eye to weapon sales to dictators to use against their own people. The same goes for their 'leadership' in their own countries. As we all know, Blair's Britain (as was Thatcher's Britain) is riddled with problems of redundancies, inadequate services, spiralling housing costs and alienated young people. It is the same for other countries that make up the G8. So why should we think these politicians will sort out the world? We can only conclude that they either have no interest in solving the world's problems or they are completely incompetent!

Our 'leaders' would claim that they are representing us because we vote for

them. However, voting turn-outs are low every election. The politicians may argue that this is because people are apathetic, but this is not the case. Rather, people don't vote because they have no confidence in any of the political parties. Years of broken promises, with no sign of any improvements in people's quality of life, have made people very cynical. It is very clear that the politicians, no matter who they are, represent no one but themselves and their own interests.

It is for these reasons that it is important to let them know what we think of them. Though we can really only change things in our own communities and workplaces, where we experience the concrete hardships and brutality of a profit-driven economic system and oppressive State directly, it is important to let our voices be heard. You can do this in a number of ways. The obvious way to protest is to come to Scotland itself and join in the demonstrations and actions. This may be financially difficult for most, but you can still organise protests where you are, aimed at anything that is part of the problem – an oil station, a company headquarters, weapons suppliers – the choice is endless! If you live and work in Scotland, refuse to have anything to do with servicing the G8 summit. If you need to work, then make their lives difficult in whatever way you can: spit in their soup! Whatever you do, let the message be heard- these eight men are not our leaders, they do not speak for us; we want a different future from the one they are helping to bring about. And, long after the summit is over, we will fight everywhere against their world and for ours.

DEFY-ID

The BBC strike has finally started over the coming month after weeks of union foot dragging. Four 24 hour work stoppages have been called to protest plans to lay off 4000 workers (20% of the workforce) as a cost cutting exercise. News programs on TV and Radio have been hit badly with essential studio managers, broadcast assistants and researchers strongly behind the strike action. Some high-profile presenters have crossed the picket lines (following the example of Nicholas 'ratface' Witchell in 1989) including Terry Wogan, Chris Moyles, Jo Whitley and Vanessa Feltz.

Incidentally in the last year the 18 members of the BBC's Executive Committee between them shared £6.2 million pounds (more than 50,000 licence fees) in salary, bonuses and taxable benefits, and have individual pensions as high as £2.5 million.

Continuing trouble for the bosses on the railways with strikes at opposite ends of the country. In Norfolk a series of one day stoppages on One Rail is expected to bring all train services in the county to a stop. The strikes are planned to gradually spread to wider areas and to eventually cover the whole south east. The dispute is over plans to introduce new ticket machines. There's also a dispute over working hours on MerseyRail and four one day walkouts are taking place throughout May and June.

Keeping with long standing 'On the Frontline' tradition we bring news of yet another strike involving Stagecoach workers. 400 drivers in the east midlands have started a series of five one day stoppages over pay. There's a trend towards this being successful at the minute with this company - though the all out strike in Yorkshire has produced the best returns so far...

Council workers in Coventry are out in their thousands as we write this. 50% of the workforce is out on an open ended series of 24 hour strikes against the unilateral imposition of a new pay system that means wage cuts for many workers.

Whilst all these and many other disputes have been taking place, whilst working class people struggle to ensure they have a decent life Gordon Brown (The left's knight in shining armour) was at the Amicus conference urging "wage discipline" - this from a man who already earns £133 000 from his own job, with an added £130 000 on top in expenses, not to mention being housed, fed and transported at the cost of those scrambling around for a few quid a week extra - the same ones who he calls to exercise "wage discipline"! ★

THE ELECTION OVER, the government is pressing ahead with its plans for a National Identity Register and compulsory ID cards for everyone in the country. Carrying personal information in the form of fingerprints, iris scans and other electronic data, these cards will set us back £93 each. That's over £370 for a family of four.

We'll need these cards to visit the doctor, the chemist, go to hospital, collect benefit and family allowance. The police will have the right to demand that we show them our cards. If we fail, then a trip to the local nick will be in order to sort things out. Lose them and we face a fine. Private companies will have access to our records. This will be with our "permission" of course, but who fancies telling a future boss he can't look at our files?

Even more frightening than the attack on our civil liberties is the ability of the

state to cock up with their databases. None of their great computer systems yet has worked properly. Pensioners have had their details lost, single parents been unable to claim benefit. They can't even manage to computerise health records properly. Fancy being the victim of mistaken identity? The ID database makes that more likely. We've all heard tales of people being refused credit because they are confused with others. Now imagine that magnified to 60 million people.

Add all this to dispersal orders, CCTVs, ASBOs, attacks on kids in hoodies and we see the beginnings of a frightening interference in our ability to go as we please, where we please.

Efforts are already being made to fight this. In the North West, Defy ID Groups have been set up in Liverpool, Preston and Manchester. We urge all our readers to get in touch with Defy ID, to join an existing group or set one up themselves. Defy ID can be contacted at: admin@defy-id.org.uk ★

HANDS OFF OUR HOLIDAY!

MILLIONS OF FRENCH workers refused to turn up to work on Monday May 16th after the Pentecost bank holiday was cancelled by the government for the next four years.

Workers were told that the cancelled holiday would let employers pay into a government health care fund. This was to pay for the expenses incurred by the 2003 heat wave that killed 15,000 people, mostly elderly. People quickly saw this as a blatant rip-off, particularly as the government had failed to respond adequately at the time!

Demonstrations took place in many cities throughout France on the day. Prime Minister Raffarin, when asked how many people had turned up to work had to ★

HAVE A BUTCH AT THIS...

RESIDENTS OF A WOLVERHAMPTON neighbourhood are fighting back against an abattoir that has been making their lives misery for years.

The Abattoir, owned by H+L Butchers has a long history of causing too much noise late at night and early in the morning, stinking the area out, and dumping animal parts in the vicinity. Local people have had enough and are trying to get the polluting abattoir shut down. They've already invaded council meetings and are threatening to barricade the entrance unless the butchers clean up their act.

residents resist

Other residents are up in arms over a decision by the high court to restrict any information about the locations of Care Homes for disadvantaged youth set to open across the city.

The company that runs the centres, Green Corn, took at an injunction against anybody wishing to report the location of their centres. This follows intense pressure from local communities resistant to more drains on already cash-strapped areas and concerns over anti-social behaviour that have not been addressed. Residents have now announced they will take direct action to oppose both the restriction on reporting and the construction of the homes. Here at **resistance**, we support the important social role played by care homes, but if companies and the government think they can do as they like without any consultation with local residents they are in for a shock! ★



Organise!
64
out
now!

A new issue of Organise! The magazine of the Anarchist Federation is out now. Subscriptions are £4 (details on the back page) or you can download it from our website: www.afed.org.uk

IT MIGHT COME as a surprise to some that wind farms are now the object of a growing protest movement across many parts of rural Britain, notably in the Highlands of Scotland. The Scottish Executive is supposedly committed to significantly increasing the amount of energy coming from renewables in the next decade. Onshore wind farms, rather than tidal or offshore, have been the preferred choice. Wind farms planning applications are proliferating across Northern Scotland. This area is a prime target because of the supposed 'emptiness' of the country. Several large scale planning applications have been made, including new power lines through the Cairngorm National Park to bring the energy supplies to the urban areas of Scotland and then further south to England.

Local communities have been divided, with some people putting up fierce resistance and others accepting compensation or hoping to get jobs. It is understandable that many working class people would see wind farms as a way to bring in much needed work rather than being reliant on the low-wage tourist industry.

So what's wrong with these farms? Aren't these protesters just blocking any serious solution to global warming out of their own trivial concern with a 'view'? This is certainly the message given out by pro-wind farm developers and there is an element of truth in this. Often those most against wind farms have moved into the area and are angry that their rural idyll is being spoiled. However, who actually stands to gain from wind farm development? 60% of planning applications have been put forward by the property consultants Bidwells.

Immense profits

These large companies stand to make immense profits and very little of these profits will go back into the local community. Most of the jobs will be temporary construction and will not provide much stable employment. The wind farm in the Monadhliath Mountains is expected to make more than £125 million for the London-based Renewable Energy Systems company. The turbines themselves will be built by the Italian multi-national Gruppo Falke. Energy companies are not really interested in the problems of global warming. The governments' Renewables Obligations scheme means that companies can come to Scotland, build a wind farm and get green certificates that they can then use to offset the limitations on their production of carbon emissions.



Wind farms will also provide the Scottish lairds with an easy way of making a lot of money. As the Skye Action Group says: "During the Highland Clearances the present day landlords took the people from the landscape, now their descendants want to take the landscape from the people." Much of the Highlands is owned by a few landowners and they are in a position to use the land for their financial benefit, regardless of the consequences. Before it was sheep farms and deer stalking, now it's wind farms. The absentee landowner of Dunmaglass Estate in the Monadhliath Mountains stands to make £9 million.

Campaigners also argue that these wind farms aren't really needed anyway. The vast majority of the energy produced will be for the urban areas. But as property is so expensive in the urban areas, (and there are more people there to object!), developers find it more profitable to 'industrialise' the rural areas, knowing that they have the support of greedy landowners and that they can win over many less well-off locals with the promise of jobs. The Energy Saving Trust has shown that insulating a loft and installing condensing boilers in 15% of UK households would save an equivalent amount of energy of 3000 turbines.

Wind farms aren't a problem as such, as long as they are on a small-scale and completely controlled and run by the local community for its own benefit. And, renewable energy sources are needed as an alternative to fossil fuels and nuclear power. But as part of a capitalist-driven energy strategy, they will blight the landscape, provide few jobs or benefits for the local community, make the rich richer and just encourage us in the illusion that we can go on consuming endlessly without any energy worries.

More info at: www.wind-farm.org and www.stopdunmaglass.com ★



Portuguese Revolution

ON APRIL 25TH 1974 a radical faction within the Portuguese Armed Forces, the MFA, revolted against the 50 year old fascist dictatorship.

New political parties sprouted up. The parties all used the situation to gain political power in the government. Ordinary folk, in contrast, used the situation to improve social conditions in their communities and workplaces through new autonomous organisations.

Strikes had been met by brutal force under the fascist regime but lack of experience proved no deterrent to the Portuguese working class. A workers assembly of the TAP airline demanded the purging of all fascists in the company and the election of union representatives to the administration council. When it was discovered that some of the representatives had raised their salaries the union came under a lot of criticism. An assembly, held without union officials, drew up a list of demands which the government rejected, so the workers struck.

Another assembly of maintenance workers reduced their 44-hour week to 40 by refusing to work the extra four hours! All international flights were halted. The Minister for Labour, a Communist Party member, called on the workers to resume work. The military were sent to occupy the airport and arrest the strike committee. 200 were sacked but were reinstated after mass demonstrations. The 40-hour week was gradually introduced.

People also began occupying empty property. The jittery government decreed a rent freeze and allocated money and tax exemptions to builders. 260 families from a Lisbon shantytown moved into an empty apartment block near the city. The military ordered them out but were forced to back down. Autonomous Revolutionary Neighbourhood Committees were set up, elected from general assemblies of local residents. They arranged occupations of property for use as free crèches, workers' centres and for other community services.

Rural workers began taking the land with co-operation from industrial workers. In Santarem a meeting of 354 farm workers declared that a massive amount of land was to be occupied. Other workers, armed with pickaxes, arrived in trucks to aid them and at the end of it over ten major farms were collectivised.

Gradually the political parties destroyed the gains of the working class. But the Portuguese Revolution had been a great experiment in how to start organising for a future society. ★

INSIDE INFORMATION

Conscientious objector in danger

A report from May 24:

"GAY ANARCHIST CONSCIENTIOUS objector Mehmet Tarhan is under arrest for more than 45 days. He's held in Sivas Military Prison and will have his next trial on Thursday, 26th of May. He has faced threats, torture and lynching attempt by some of the prisoners who are under the manipulation of prison administration.

His lawyer Suna Coskun made a press release today. However according to the latest news, he's still under threat and risk of physical assault. His lawyer Senem Doganoglu declared that in today's visit he was again threatened by the same prisoners (one of whom is held with the claim he killed four people). Anarchists, anti-authoritarians and anti-militarists in Turkey are actively working under the name of "Solidarity Initiative with Mehmet Tarhan" and calling all comrades and friends to support his struggle.

PLEASE SEND PROTEST FAXES TO THE FOLLOWING NUMBER

Fax (of Sivas Military Prison): (+90346) 225 39 15

To send solidarity messages to Mehmet Tarhan: Postal address: Mehmet Tarhan 5. Piyade Egitim Tugayi Askeri Cezaevi Mūdūrlūgū, Sivas/Turkey."

(Euro) Mayday

Mayday saw the first EuroMayday action in London, which was organised by the precarity network. This targeted a Tesco supermarket in Hackney. The police were very heavy handed and some scuffles broke out with several people arrested. For a report of the action see www.precarity.info

In all there were about a dozen arrests. If you witnessed any arrests, or police assaults on people, please contact the Legal Defence & Monitoring Group (LDMG) c/o BM Box HAVEN, London, WC1N 3XX.

Visit: www.ldmg.org.uk or email: ldmgmail@yahoo.co.uk

For the latest news on supporting prisoners visit: www.brightonabc.org.uk ★

THE FACE OF THE STATE

ON THE 18th of May, at the Colombian consulate in London, about 30 activists expressed their anger for the brutal killing of Nicolas Neira. "Nico" was brutally slaughtered by the Colombian police when taking part in a peaceful Mayday demonstration. The cops attacked the anarchist part of the march, without any previous warning and beat whoever was in their way. As a result of this, Nico, only 15 years old, sustained such a severe brain damage that he entered a coma and died a few days later. The murderers proceeded to intimidate his family in the following days, through threatening calls, so they abandoned any attempt at bringing the culprits to justice.

This is the real face of the state. A brutal, repressive machine. The state's repression unfolds in many ways. By killing, torturing and imprisoning the dissidents, no matter how peaceful and harmless they are. Or by condemning millions to starvation through the implementation of neoliberal policies which benefit just a tiny few. As the G8 does.... ★



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: 4 Anarchy Bear's Grrr8 Picnic. Reclaim a city centre greenspace for peaceful festive gathering against privatisation, cuts in local services, Big Brother (ID, ASBO's etc), and the G8. From 12 noon College Green, Bristol city centre dissentbristol@subsection.org.uk

4 Gwent Anarchists G8 info night Le pub in Newport. Showing short films about the upcoming G8 summit and footage from previous protests from around the world.

<http://riseup.net/cardiffanarchists/images/spanner-newport-gig.gif>

4-12 Stop the Arms Trade Week. Organised by Campaign Against Arms Trade 020 7281 0297 www.caat.org.uk

10-12 Weekend Of Resistance For environmental activist prisoner Jeff Luers www.freefreenow.org/june2005.html

11 Norwich's 2nd annual anarchist bookfair. 10am to 7pm 07941 657485. norwichanarchists@hotmail.com www.norwichanarchists.org

18 Community Action Gathering Oxford House, Bethnal Green Rd., London E2 12 noon-6pm 0208 374 5027 info@hackneyindependent.org

JULY: 6 Global Day of Action at the opening day of the G8 Summit www.agp.org www.dissent.org.uk For a comprehensive list of events from the 2nd July go to www.nadir.org/nadir/initiativ/agp/resistg8/timeline.htm

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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

Address

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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**, 84B, Whitechapel High Street, London, E1 7QX. Tel: 07946 214 590 Visit: www.afed.org.uk Email: info@afed.org.uk