



CHANGE OF REGIME?

- Don't think so

After months of hear-say and speculation on who would "succeed" Tony Blair, June gave us the official coronation of Gordon Brown as leader of New Labour and a new prime minister for Britain. After the change over of power was made official, he announced his priority areas would be education, health and restoring trust in politics. Those of us with long memories will find these commitments somewhat familiar: They are the customary promises to the British public. Gordon is nothing new. He is yet another member of the ruling class using the same tactics to justify his own control. Committing once again to a "fresh start", "to honest politics", to a better life for working people to a public sick and tired of politicians and their "promises". There wasn't even a contest to determine if he should govern this time round.



Gordon Brown wasn't put under any pressure on his road to power. This is quite fortunate for him, for despite a recent "image re-vamp" he is not a man with a reputation for charm or charisma. He is after all first and foremost an economist. A man who has spent ten years toying with public money, maintaining a system which keeps wealth in the hands of the few and bankrolling the murder of millions of Iraqi civilians in an illegal foreign war. Fortunately for him, British neo-liberal rule does not depend on any sort of real democratic system where we get to actively make decisions that affect our lives. *Why shouldn't* the government just do without the illusion of democracy altogether and choose the prime minister for us eh?

In spite of running with no challenger Gordon managed to raise a staggering £113,000 for his leadership contest. The money was spent in the end on a series of media-friendly, staged meetings and dinners disguised as hustings for a contest. True to form, we also saw New Labour's business friends come out in force to buy their piece of the Brown pie. Gordon's leading supporters were Lord Paul and Lord Bhattacharyya, men with interests in engineering and securing their own steel supplies. Between them they donated £50,000. The less cynical amongst us will also be surprised to hear that Mr. Brown proposed a knighthood for one of his donors. It seems that old habits die hard in New Labour.

In capitalist society subtle propaganda is used to ensure the population submit to leaders. We are taught from an early age to follow the leader and those who claim to know best. Party members revel in this system, with their dress codes and lifestyles brought into line to keep in uniform with the leadership. This keeps them a part of

the structures of power which use "democracy" to dictate decisions for us. How dissimilar are the party cronies from the scores of nobles that propped up our monarchs under the absolutist rule we are supposed to have moved on from. The cult of leadership still pervades in society. True democracy can never be achieved whilst people are prepared to submit their will to the authority of a single human being. We will never be involved in the decision making process that this system proposes. This form of power can never be justified. Gordon's coronation showed us just how acceptable it has become to sit back and let these decisions be made blindly in our own names.

You will often be told that those who have authority over you – your boss, your councillor or politician – are somehow there because they are better than you, that there are "natural born leaders". There are no "natural leaders" in government, only a class society which uses power to exploit the majority of humanity. The state turns the idea of "natural leaders" into an institution, giving a free reign to people like our new prime minister to continue this exploitation. This hierarchy filters down into our every day lives. Leaders are accepted in our workplaces and homes, but collectively they can be challenged. As anarchists we do not accept the need for leaders. Democracy starts from the bottom-up, not the other way around. We decide everything collectively using reason and logic to make sure that the best decision is made. We ensure that everyone has their say and that no-one is forced against their will. Such a system is not impossible; it works and it can work right now. There are no honest politicians and there is no future in Gordon Brown. The truth is that it is only through real democracy, through our participation and through mass action that a real trust in politics will be realised.

BUSINESS AS USUAL

The controversial national identity scheme will be a twenty-first century public good comparable to railways and the national grid, the Home Office minister Liam Byrne, (the Minister of State for Immigration, Citizenship and Nationality) told a conference in London.

He said the national identity scheme will become ubiquitous in everyday life in the same way railways did in the 19th century and the national grid did last century. The scheme, which includes e-passports and identity cards, is expected to cost £5.3 billion over the next decade.

"In 20 years time, I suspect that the National Identity Scheme will be a part and parcel of everyday life in Britain - another great British institution without which modern life, whatever it looks like in 2020, would be quite unthinkable," he said.

This shows that so-called regime change means more of the same, as Gordon Brown and his flunkys are as much committed to bringing in ID cards as Tony Blair was. A great British institution? **Resistance** thinks not and cites the great British institution of civil disobedience (nuclear weapons, the Poll Tax, etc) in reply!

The seeing eye everywhere

Britain now has a vast number of CCTV cameras - a total of 4.2 million, more than in the rest of Europe put together. This accounts for 20 per cent of the global total, even though Britain only has 0.2 per cent of the world's population.





Communication workers come out in force

Friday 29th June saw the first postal strike in eleven years in the UK with a 24-hour stoppage. This was in opposition to Royal Mails plans to cut 40,000 jobs, cut pay and pensions, as well as hikes in stamp prices, fewer collections, later deliveries, reductions in weekend service and more post office closures. Despite company calls for "essential" cut-backs, Royal Mail boss Alan Leighton received a bonus this year of £165k on top of his already substantial £800k salary. Over 95% of postal workers took part in action across the UK, further strikes are anticipated.

Flights grounded by Wildcat

Security guards at Charleroi airport, Belgium succeeded in bringing flights to a standstill in an unofficial walkout. Low-cost airlines fly about 2.5 million people, mainly business travellers, to Charleroi every year. A row over the privatisation of public sector security personnel caused the disruption, which began at dawn and spread to Liege airport in the east.

And Sweden...

An unofficial strike broke out at a Volvo Trucks plant in Umeå, Sweden on June 28th. 150 workers downed tools for one and a half hours. The walkout came in response to wage negotiations at the plant, where unions and Volvo are finding it hard to reach agreement.

At 10 am the workers left their positions, in what management describes as a wildcat strike. Around 150 employees in the factory, which makes truck bodies, were away from their work for about one and a half hours.

Indian airports strike

Tens of thousands had flights cancelled as workers at the Indian state-owned airline walked out over wages in arrears in June. Employees of Indian airlines went on a snap strike over pay.

Across the country, the industrial action crippled air services, forcing passengers to either cancel their flights or - wait for a delayed departure. Nationwide, over 25,000 domestic passengers were affected as the airlines employees went on strike demanding better pay packages and payment of arrears that they say have been pending since 1997.

New Zealand

800 coal miners in New Zealand have been engaged in industrial action since Monday June 25th after negotiations in their multi-employer pay agreement (meca) broke down earlier.

The miners are seeking a 5 - 5.5% pay increase, while Solid Energy (which directly employs 1/3 of the miners and the rest indirectly via contractors) has refused to go higher than 4%.

The action started with an overtime ban, and "spontaneous rolling stoppages" at sites around the country. Additional informal action has also taken place, with miners turning up late to shifts, leaving early and refusing to load trucks.

Solid Energy's largest mine, Stockton, was shut down after miners all walked off the site in solidarity with 3 workers who refused to accept final warning notices, as they had not received verbal or first written notices as per the agreement.

Further actions took place at other mines.

The Stop the War demo on June 24th in Manchester to mark Brown's coronation was the usual stroll round the city centre with the occasional tired chant. The police took loads of photos, the organisers sold Socialist Worker, the same stale old ritual.

Then Rhythms of Resistance - Manchester's samba band - decided to hold an impromptu sit down outside G-Mex and near enough for the Labour leaders to see, joined by a couple of AF members and many others. It was quickly surrounded and isolated by the cops. What was shocking was the way the SWP/STWC stewards acted to help the police. They kept telling curious marchers who were tempted to join in to "move on", "keep to the other street", "divert the march". This wasn't just inexperience. This was the voice of their Manchester leader.

Once the march had passed, the cops got really unpleasant. They threatened protestors and then manhandled one to the ground and dragged him off in their van. Later they arrested one of the



samba band for walking on a road which was already blocked off.

Demos like that are never going to change anything. But an action like the sit down gave those taking part a feeling of solidarity and of sticking two fingers up to authority. It was a nice change to the boredom of the event.



BORIS BOPPED!



A few comrades were enjoying alfresco drinking in central London when who should bicycle by but shadow Minister for Higher Education Boris Johnson, editor of The Spectator and Conservative MP for Henley. Eager to commend the portly man mountain on his obvious commitment to reducing his (rather heavy) carbon footprint, the comrades gave chase crying "What ho, old bean!".

In the confusion of so many chaps trying to shake the portly Tory's hand at once poor Boris was knocked from his bicycle and jostled most rudely! At this point he seemed to think he was being attacked, and before they could remonstrate with the right on, right wing professional adulterer he had beat a hasty retreat screaming "Fuck off!".

Its just not cricket.

THE FIGHT FOR CRICHTON CAMPUS CONTINUES ...

IWW Glasgow University Job Branch requests solidarity in its continuing fight to halt the shutting down of Crichton Campus. The University (which made a profit of £2 million last year) hopes to spend the money it will gain from closing its part of the Crichton campus (liberal arts) on recruiting just 3 researchers to boost the University's image. Money which should have been directed to the Crichton campus has gone to fund a new business school in Glasgow. Crichton has some top quality academic and non-academic staff who have battled against the odds to make it a successful campus, please help support their continuing struggle;

Contact the Principal, Sir Muir Russell and complain at the decision.

Email: principal@gla.ac.uk;

Tel: 0141 330 5995

NEW AF STICKERS



Free/Donation
Contact: <http://www.af-north.org>



AGAINST FASCISM

Friday the 15th of June saw the National Front (that's right, all two dozen of them) converge on Downing Street in counter-protest to the radical Muslim fundamentalist group British Oppression, who announced a few weeks before of the big demo against "British oppression of Muslim brothers". While it's no secret that the British government (along with the American, Iranian, Chinese, every government in the world) daily oppresses innocent people both at home and abroad, the leaders in the mosques use this to create hatred and mobilise the British Muslim youth into fighting the British people, people who would otherwise be neighbours, friends, workmates and lovers. They do this to gain personal power.

Enter the National Front, white supremacist nationalists who believe that Britain should "stay white". Anyone with a bit of sense can see the huge logical flaws in racism, so nothing much has to be said about that. Of course, if we look at the way their leaders work, it's not much different to the Muslim leaders in the mosques: they present the angry and oppressed poor (in this case, white working class Brits) with one of their problems, then they blame it on "them browns coming here and taking our jobs", or some similar baseless accusation, create hatred towards innocent non-whites (who are, likely as not, only here because of our government's greedy foreign policy) and use this to gain power for themselves. It's the same story wherever we look.

As anarchists, we believe that neither side is right and that really there is no difference between these two "opposing" sides. We believe that people don't need greedy leaders to oppress and exploit them for their own selfish reasons.



TWEEDLE- DUM



TWEEDLE- DEE

People can run their own lives better than any ministers sitting in inner-city mansions or religious fanatics in gold-covered temples. We need to rise up together and take power over our lives back for ourselves, to control our own destiny, be responsible for our own problems and form our own solutions.



ANARCHIST FEDERATION NEWS

BROWN HUSTINGS

Some fortunate AFers in Sheffield were treated to a Gordon Brown "hustings" visit. Despite the rather grim northern weather and the unfortunate timing of an early Sunday morning the anarchist presence proved quite strong. Law enforcement officials appeared confused at first, accustomed to the co-operative attitude of local SWP and STWC groups, unhelpful and obstructive anarchists proved quite a new experience. After a fruitful discussion on SOCPA laws (SOCPA according to Sheffield bobbies) we attempted to enter the hustings venue.

Entry proved difficult with a combination of disapproving SWP petitioners, party cronies and coppers all in our way. We even took the drastic step to offer to join the party just to see the "Brownster" in action. Sadly, the old-party bureaucracy was in the way and we were told we had to wait two to three weeks for our application to be approved.

Sure enough, half an hour before Brown's arrival a few party hacks were lined up to ensure a smooth entry for their leader and a nice media-friendly image. On his arrival the lowly party members were treated

to a (somewhat brief) handshake and perhaps a sentence or two from their new ruler: the highlight of their day. A confused Brown was treated to shouts of "Bastard!" and "Brown-nosers!" from behind his rather worried security detail: the highlight of our day.

EDUCATION CONFERENCE

Manchester AF hosted a conference for Education Workers on July 1st. Discussions were held on examinations, the fight against Academy Schools, the changing role of the universities and a session on the way the Solidarity federation's Education Workers Network organise at the University of Manchester. We are part of an email discussion group run by education workers and students.

If you want to get involved, send an email to education@afed.org.uk.



TIMEBOMB

"I would not wish to a dog or a snake, to the most low and misfortunate creature of the earth — I would not wish to any of them what I have had to suffer for things that I am not guilty of. But my conviction is that I have suffered for things that I am guilty of. I am suffering because I am a radical, and indeed I am a radical; I have suffered because I am an Italian, and indeed I am an Italian... If you could execute me two times, and if I could be reborn two other times, I would live again to do what I have done already".

- Vanzetti at his trial

This year marks the anniversary of the State executions of the Italian American anarchists Sacco and Vanzetti. They were both electrocuted on August 23rd 1927.

On April 15, 1920, a paymaster and his guard were carrying a factory payroll of \$15,000 through the main street of South Braintree, Massachusetts, a small town south of Boston. Two men suddenly pulled out guns and fired on them. The gunmen snatched up the cash boxes dropped by the mortally wounded pair and jumped into a waiting car. The gang, numbering four or five, then escaped.

STATE MURDER

Three weeks later the anarchists Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti were arrested and charged with this crime. So began both a long agony for these two committed activists, and one of the most notorious trials of the 20th century.

Neither men had any previous criminal record, but their politics and their nationality aroused the prejudice of the police and the judges. Their arrest came during the "Red Scare" of 1919-20 when many radicals suffered repression from the US authorities. Both men had been heavily involved in anarchist propaganda, strikes and anti-war activity. An anarchist friend of theirs, Salsedo, had been picked up a few weeks earlier and had "fallen" many stories from a police building window two days before their arrest. Despite alibis that they had been working the day of the robbery, both men were charged with the robbery and murders.

The judge at the trial showed bias against the defendants repeatedly and found them guilty despite little evidence. World wide protest resulted. The judge blocked a retrial six times. He finally sentenced them to death in April 1927. In the meantime they had been on death row for seven years.

The Sacco-Vanzetti case became a cause celebre and people like Albert Einstein, H G Wells and many others protested their innocence.

Over 250,000 people took part in a demonstration in Boston on the day of their execution, and there were massive demonstrations all over the world. Both men went courageously to their deaths, protesting their innocence and crying out "Long live anarchy!"

On August 23, 1977 Michael Dukakis, Governor of Massachusetts, issued a proclamation stating that Sacco and Vanzetti had been treated unjustly and that "any disgrace should be forever removed from their names."



PRISONER SUPPORT

BRENDAN WALSH, 12473-052, FCI Allenwood Low, Federal Correctional Institution, PO Box 1000, White Deer, PA 17887, USA.

Serving 5 years for an arson on an army recruitment office in protest at the War on Iraq.

Brendan was transferred several months ago from Allenwood, PA to Lisbon, Ohio. Since his transfer, he has lost much of any previous correspondence he had received from supporters on the outside and thus has been unable to reconnect to those that had written him in the past. Brendan has communicated that he is battling bouts of depression and that he has felt very isolated from those on the outside.

Please show him that he has the support of our movement for what he has done. We don't want people to feel discouraged and alienated for militantly confronting the current war.

Send letters, cards, and words of support :
Brendan Walsh 12473-052
FCI/FSL Elkton
PO Box 10
Lisbon, OH 44432

LASANDRA BURWELL W063658 Ohio Reformatory for Women (ORW) 1479 Collins Avenue Marysville, Ohio 43040

Burwell, a mother of 2, was sentenced to 5 years for fighting with the police during an antifascist protest in 2005. The police were attempting to clear the way for a Nazi march on a black community in the town of Toledo, Ohio.

She is thankful for letters and support and has said to "Keep writing cuz letters are like fresh air, when I hear was goin on in the outside world... Its like a dark cloud hanging over this place. But I try not to let it get me down, if its nothing positive I stay away I'm missing my husband and kids dearly. I spend the days I'm not working reading and trying to stay out of the way."

See breakthechains.info for advice and guidelines on sending books, packages and letters of support.



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,
BM Anarfed, London,
WC1N 3XX
Email: info@afed.org.uk
Also visit: www.afed.org.uk
and www.iaf-ifa.org

Subscriptions to resistance costs £4 from the address above for 12 issues. A two issue subscription to our magazine, Organise! for revolutionary anarchism, is also £4. You can subscribe to resistance by email for free via the website above. ★

SUBVERT!

When going on demonstrations stay sober, don't talk to the police and if you're arrested give only your name and address then say "no comment" to any other questions. For more info visit: www.ldmg.org.uk

July :

5th - 7pm, Public Meeting in Marchmont Centre, Marchmont Street,

London WC1. nearest tube Russell Square. The topic of discussion is Consumerism: Lost In The Supermarket.

11th - Worthing Anarchists Summer Gathering. 11am-5pm at Camp Titnore, Durrington, followed by socialising.

18th - 22nd - Earth First Summer Gathering.

Five days of low-impact eco-living. Playing, planning and plotting to avert the destruction of our precious planet. Place: East Anglia. Price: £15 per adult. Info: www.earthfirstgathering.org.uk or efgathering@aktivix.org

29th - 30th - Disarm DSEi: Days of Action Against the Arms Trade.

In the run up to DSEi 2007, DISARM DSEi is calling for two days of autonomous actions against the arms trade. There were 1,201 exhibitors at the last DSEi, find out which one is nearest to you (www.dsei.org). Take action and say no to death and destruction on your doorstep.

August:

4th - 21st - Camp for Climate Action

After the success of last year's at the Drax Power Station, this summer the camp will take place at a location near Heathrow airport to highlight airport expansion and the role of the aviation industry in carbon emissions and climate change. Also, Climate Camp permaculture workshops. If you're interested in giving a workshop, you can ask for an application form: www.climatecamp.org.uk

11th - 20th - No Borders Camp Ukraine

The eastward expansion of the European Union has resulted in moving the walls of "Fortress Europe" to the Western border of Ukraine. No Borders are calling actions in the main region of transit and labour migration in Ukraine, Transcarpathia. For more info: www.noborder.org

27th - 30th - Smash EDO Summer Action Camp

Direct Action against the War machine. The Protest Camp will be a chance to work together to close down the arms factory in Brighton. We will have workshops on effective campaigning, actions against EDO MBM and lots of fun together. Come and join us! Call 07875708873 or see www.smashedo.org.uk

Ongoing:

Protest against Guantanamo Bay outside the American Embassy every Friday, 6-7pm, Grosvenor Square, London.

Picnic protest against Protest Exclusion Zone every Sunday at 1.30pm on the grass in Parliament Square, London.



Apologies to all our readers and subscribers for the non-existence of our June issue of *Resistance*. Due to technical difficulties we were unable to get that issue to press in time. - all at the AF.