

RESISTANCE

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Vestas: OCCUPIED! Thomas Cook: OCCUPIED!

But spreading the struggle is
the way to win!

Dublin:

On the 31st of July, workers in two Thomas Cook outlets in Dublin occupied their workplaces after managers and security attempted to close them down.

Thomas Cook's operating profit increased by 50% last year, and the moves are part of efforts to increase profits further to £480 million for the 2009/2010 financial year through closures, mergers and staff layoffs.

The CEO of Thomas Cook, Manny Fontenla-Novoa, was given a £5 million bonus at the beginning of the year for axing the jobs of 2,800 low-paid workers in the UK. This was on top of a 34% pay increase which brought his annual salary to over £800,000. However, the same profit-boosting strategy is running up against resistance in Ireland.

The staff went into occupation after management made a pay offer which they described as 'derisory', demanding

Continued Inside ►

The Isle of Wight:

When Danish wind turbine company Vestas decided to stop operations at its two factories on the Isle of Wight, workers decided to occupy. In turn there was massive support from all over the country. Supporters included anarchists, left-wing parties, greens & climate change activists in what the press have billed as the ideal Red & Green coalition.

Police and security initially attempted to impede the occupations by preventing food getting in from outside. On a national day of action on Wednesday 12th August, the official day of closure, there were local demonstrations in dozens of towns.

Continued Inside ►



Inside:

*The siege of Ssangyong,
French workers hold factory
hostage, A4E Target bloggers,
NHS Debates and more...*

► Continued from cover

Much of the support rests on the massive injustice that hundreds of people can suddenly be made redundant at time when the government is supposedly supporting the growth of renewable energy, the banks have been bailed out for billions of pounds, and it is not like the workers are going to walk into other jobs in the economic crisis.

The company is making out that the UK onshore market is being impeded by local councils who are denying planning permission for wind power installations under pressure from 'not in my back yard' rural revolters. This is just playing with the media. Like any multinational company, Vestas have got their eyes on their global profit and are prepared to move to wherever the manufacturing is more convenient. The story has been the same in many other tech industries where companies have in some cases moved their entire manufacturing operations across the world at will, whether it is to open new markets, access cheaper labour or tax breaks, or to downsize in a recession. Much of the market for Vestas turbine blades made on the Isle of Wight

was in the US anyway - shipping them was not really a problem before, so why now? It's a cheap trick to blame local NIMBYism and so divert press from a corporate economic decision to party politics, knowing that the local Tory MP had previously opposed windpower planning permission on the Island. David Milliband is more than happy to blame the problem on Conservative councils and so help dent the opposition's invented green credentials, as he has already done on several occasions.

As usual the Left is talking up nationalisation and selling their papers on demos. Same old, same old - but come on, the idea that the government would nationalise a foreign manufacturer, never mind a British owned one, is nonsense. The Left parties might as well call for renationalisation of the whole of the power industry and while they are at it demand socialist nuclear power as well. The government was never going to intervene to prop up a company that no longer wants to manufacture in the UK - so why not just be honest about that?

In short, the workers were

never really in a good position to save their jobs, and since the 425 redundancies were announced on August 12th, only a small number will now remain in work temporarily to close the factory or redeploy to Vestas' R&D department on the Island. But taking that huge loss aside the support has been inspirational and response by passersby during demonstrations has been positive. Protests continued at Vestas HQ in Warrington. There was also a sit-in at an Isle of Wight job centre demanding the government take action on its pledge to create 1.5 million green jobs. This all shows that people are not being taken in by our leaders'

greenwash and that across Britain solidarity is on the up against redundancies. You only have to go on to the Save Vestas website to see the number of actions that have taken place. The AF has been involved in some of these and many anarchists have been down to the Isle of Wight where the roof of the factory in Cowes was occupied for over a week. Meanwhile, taking action to the doors of Job Centres is a good way to highlight the real level of unemployment that we are currently experiencing which is more than 20%. Long may site and factory occupations continue!

<http://savevestas.wordpress.com>



Thomas Cook occupations

► Continued from cover

instead a redundancy package of eight weeks of pay per year of service. They had originally been offered just five weeks, with the threat that it would be dropped to two if the staff refused to accept the 'deal'. By way of comparison, Tesco provide seven weeks' redundancy pay and Aer Lingus nine.

Some of the staff are members of the Transport Salaried Staffs' Association union, which had already balloted over strike action, gaining 100% approval.

A solidarity demonstration in Dublin saw a turnout of 200 people, many of whom stayed to defend the shops against threatened eviction by the high court. The police, however, failed to arrive. The workers continued to defy a court order evicting them from the shop,

and were finally removed by the police four days later. In a clear display of what the ultimate purpose of the police is, over 150 police officers sealed off the area at 5am and broke down the door. The workers were hauled off and arrested. One of the workers forcefully evicted was a pregnant woman.

Following the arrests, protests were called at short notice to support the workers in both the Republic and in Northern Ireland, with 200 protesting outside the Dublin courts and 40 people picketing Thomas Cook in Belfast. Though the occupation is over, the workers have vowed to continue the fight in the face of both Thomas Cook management and their friends in the courts, government and the police force.

Spreading the Struggle

The recent wave of workplace occupations in this country and abroad is encouraging, showing that many workers are unwilling to pay for their bosses' crisis. However, what the recent wave of refinery strikes showed, along with the struggle by occupying car industry workers at Visteon plants in Enfield, Basildon and Belfast, is that spreading the struggle and avoiding a isolated siege is the best way to win.

If we are cut off and holed up, we can easily be isolated from supporters and fellow workers. However, if we actively seek solidarity from other workers in the same position - as the refinery workers whose wildcat strikes spread through the country earlier this year did - we can scare bosses and politicians with the threat of snowballing unrest. We only get what we need from bosses by terrifying them.

Manchester Anarchist Bookfair

26th September
Jabez Clegg
2 Portsmouth Street
11.00 AM onwards

www.bookfair.org.uk



Every little helps?

Tesco have been humiliated once again in Sheffield. After applying to build a new store on a patch of waste ground in the Commons area in September 2007, and being defeated by massive community opposition, they went away, had a think, and came back with...exactly the same proposal. Once again, the plan encountered a wave of resistance from local residents eager to stop their area being turned into another clone high street filled with the same massive corporate chains. The campaign was a genuinely spontaneous, grassroots one, and quickly attracted the support of Sheffield Anarchist Federation, who produced a special edition of their paper, the Fargate Speaker, highlighting Tesco's poor record on workers' rights and environmental issues, and publicising ways people could fight back against the proposal. Over 2,000 local people signed a petition opposing the plans, and Tesco was beaten once again.

Unlike last time, this struggle was not just a defensive one. While no-one wants to see another huge business strangling the diversity out of a unique area, no-one particularly wants to see

wasteland left empty either, so on Saturday 8th August, Sheffield anarchists squatted the land where the store was to be built to host a free community barbecue celebrating the victory over Tesco. The event had a good turnout and a welcoming, family-friendly atmosphere, with some local residents making cakes and biscuits to bring along. Many people were enthusiastic about the possibilities of turning the space into a genuinely useful facility such as a community garden or allotment, and discussions are ongoing about what the next step should be.

While this victory may be a minor one, and we're sure Tesco will be back sooner or later, it does show that genuine community solidarity does still exist, and that massive companies like Tesco aren't as invincible as they might appear. While a lot of us may feel fragmented and alone much of the time, that can change impressively quickly, and once we realise our collective strength we don't have to be limited to resisting attacks on us, we can actively start reclaiming control over the places where we live and work.

Recession hits students

University graduates are being hit hard by the recession, with the prospects for recent graduates being the direst in years. At least one in ten of this year's graduates is expected to be unemployed six months after they leave university, with the number of unemployed graduates recently hitting the highest level since records began. Nearly 10% of last year's graduates are still unable to find work.

As more and more young people go through further education, and more and more of those people end up in the dole queue, or doing the kind of poorly paid work they were doing before or during university – waiting, working behind bars, retail, admin, etc – the idea that graduates are a privileged section of the population looks increasingly

dubious. Going to university is fast becoming no more of a 'privilege' than passing a driving test, but comes with considerably more debt attached.

The numbers of young people in education are at record levels – 79.6% – as people take refuge from an unforgiving jobs market, hoping prospects will be better when they graduate and that further skills and training will improve their prospects.

At the same time graduate debts are higher than ever before, and those starting University this year can expect to graduate with debts worth nearly £23,000 – up 10% on last year.

Meanwhile, one in six young people is either unemployed or out of education, showing that a generation of 18-24 year olds is being chewed up by the recession.

On the Front Line

workplace roundup



More strike action at Royal Mail

Workers at the Royal Mail have taken further strike action over the company's 'modernisation' plans, which are seen as an attack on jobs and conditions.

Of the 160,000 workers organised by the Communication Workers' Union, 130,000 are to be affected by strike action. This round of action will be followed by a planned ballot in September for company-wide strikes over job reductions.

The union is claiming that cutbacks in jobs at the company will affect services, and that Royal Mail's 'modernisation' plans do not take into account increased internet shopping and package deliveries.

Imagine all the people... on strike

150 baggage handlers at Liverpool John Lennon Airport have started indefinite strike action over plans to sack 23 workers.

The GMB union balloted the workers, who are mounting pickets outside the airport. Employer Servisair has drafted in extra staff for strike-breaking duty.

Meanwhile baggage handlers, aircraft refuellers and terminal cleaners who are members of the Unite union at Manchester Airport have voted 'overwhelmingly' for strike action over pay. Workers employed by Rentokil/Initial and ASIG are to strike over a miserly 0% pay offer while staff employed by Swissport are walking out over the company refusing to honour a pay deal brokered last year.

Fire service disputes heat up

Firefighters in Merseyside are threatening strike action over the sacking of a union official.

Fire Brigades Union official Kevin Hughes was fired over an alleged assault on the son of a strike breaker. However, police investigations found no evidence with which to proceed, and Kevin had a number of witnesses, including independent witnesses, who vouched for his innocence.

According to FBU regional secretary Kevin Brown, "This is a clear case of victimisation of a union official brought before a fire authority's kangaroo court and found guilty. The police had already carried out a professional and intensive investigation and brought no charges.

The fire authority brought a weak case before one of their own senior managers with no independent witnesses and no other evidence... The overwhelming evidence was in Kevin's favour but he has been sacked. Merseyside firefighters are not going to sit back and watch a colleague victimised for representing them."

Meanwhile the government is facing nationwide strikes by firefighters in response to spending cuts. The cuts are following in the wake of the government's banking bailout and the increased budget deficit. Firefighters have been angered further by the news that private contractors are being courted to cover future strikes. The armed forces, which covered prior strikes, are overstretched in Afghanistan.

Read more news
on libcom.org



The Siege of Ssangyong

The 77 day occupation of the Ssangyong factory in South Korea came to an end on the 6th August following a sustained campaign of violence on the part of the state and the company against the occupying workers. The persistence of the occupiers managed to save the jobs of approximately 320 workers.

Ssangyong Motors is 51% owned by China's Shanghai Automotive Industry Corporation. In February the company filed for bankruptcy, proposing a restructuring and offering the Pyeongtaek plant as collateral for further loans to re-emerge from bankruptcy. The court approved the bankruptcy plan, pending adequate layoffs to make the company profitable again.

Following workplace actions throughout the spring in anticipation of the layoffs, strike action began on May 27 when the company announced layoffs and forced retirement of 1700 out of 7000 workers, with immediate additional firings of 300 casuals. The workers slated for layoff immediately occupied the plant, demanding no layoffs, no casualization and no outsourcing. The KMWU (Korean Metal Workers Union) supported the occupation but tried to limit negotiations strictly to the question of layoffs. As of mid-June, about 1000 workers were continuing the occupation, with their wives and families providing food. The government and the company bided their time, in part because of a broader political crisis of the hard-right Lee government which prevented any immediate massive police and thug attack. But two weeks later, they felt confident enough to go on the offensive. The workers, for their part, had armed themselves with iron crowbars and Molotov cocktails.

On June 26th-27th a serious government and employer attack began, as hired thugs, scabs recruited from the workers not slated for firing and riot police tried to enter the factory. They secured the main building after violent fighting in which many people were injured. The occupying workers retreated to the paint sector, which was part of a defensive plan based on the belief

that police would not fire tear gas canisters into the highly flammable area. (In January, five people in Seoul died in another fire set off during a confrontation with police, sparking weeks of outrage.)

The following day, the company issued a statement saying that there had been enough violence, clearly a result of the tenacious worker resistance, and police and thugs were withdrawn. The company urged the government to involve itself directly in negotiations. All water in the plant was nonetheless illegally cut off at the end of June.

July 20th saw the start of a nine day assault by police in an attempt to evict the occupiers. The cops and the strikebreaking gangsters ("kkang-pae") resorted to using taser guns on individual strikers, in addition to using helicopters to spray a thinner-based teargas liquid directly onto the strikers on the roof of the occupied paint department. With no water in the occupied factory to wash off the toxins, this became a severe health problem for the occupiers. Medical workers and other community solidarity supporters were continually blocked from delivering water and aid to the factory.

Negotiations resumed briefly, only to be followed by another outbreak of violent repression from August 4th-5th. A special division of 2,500 police engaged in the assault, supported by 3 helicopters. Hand-to-hand battles between workers and riot police occurred at flashpoints with many sustaining serious injuries. Once the fierce fighting ended around 100 strikers left the occupation (many out of disgust at the ruthlessness of the state and company's violence).

While the state clearly played a decisive role in breaking the occupation, the sabotage of the KMWU should also not be ignored. While the workers displayed immense courage and determination, the unions restricted opposition to partial strikes and limited protest actions. The four-day union-management talks that broke down also undermined the possibility of wider support for the besieged workers. As the negotiations dragged on, major workplaces employing tens of thousands of union members were in the process of breaking for summer holidays, lessening the chance of an organised response. The government, in the meantime, used the time to beef up the police

presence in and around the plant to prepare an all-out assault. The union has also failed to comment on the fate of the workers who have been charged with serious offences during the occupation. According to one media report, police plan to detain at least 21 strike leaders and have begun questioning around 100 workers who allegedly attacked police during the siege.

The Ssangyong occupation was the first large-scale action of its type by workers in South Korea since the global crisis erupted last year. It was also a test case for President Lee Myung-bak, who came to power in 2007 pledging to crack down on "excessive labour disputes" and make the country "investment friendly". Moreover, this should not be seen as an isolated episode, governments across the globe are bracing for the backlash from failing industries, shrinking public sectors and increasing levels of unemployment. When labour disputes, even for relatively small companies such as Ssangyong, threaten the smooth running of the economy we should hold no doubt that the state will do everything it can to break working class solidarity.

class warfare: The strikers defend the occupation from police attack

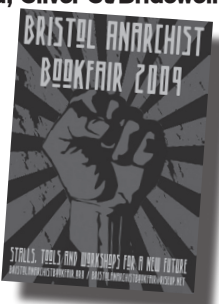


Bristol Anarchist Bookfair

12th September 2009

10.30am-6.00pm

The Island, Silver St/Bridewell St, Bristol BS1 2PY



London Anarchist Bookfair

www.anarchistbookfair.org

Saturday 24th October

Queen Mary & Westfield College, Mile End Road, London, E1 4NS.



Va-Va-Boom!

One of the most common myths about anarchists is the idea that we're all a bunch of violent balaclava-wearing nutters who just want to blow everything up. Of course, this dated, offensive stereotype is completely untrue: for one thing, it's far too hot to wear a balaclava in this weather, and for another, we're a reasonable lot who recognise that the struggle to take back control over our own lives will be a long and complex one, requiring the use of many different methods and tactics.

Of course, this doesn't mean that sometimes the best course of action to take isn't just to blow stuff up. On Sunday 12th July, workers at French bankrupt car factory New Fabris decided that rather than asking politely for redundancy payments, they'd fill the factory with gas cylinders and threaten to blow up several million euros worth of equipment

if they didn't get a decent deal. It's easy for companies to ignore someone asking for money, someone with explosives asking for money is a bit harder to tune out. The tactic quickly spread, as soon-to-be-laid-off workers at the French arm of telecommunications manufacturer Nortel pulled a similar stunt at a plant near Paris a few days later, followed by employees at manufacturing company JLG. We can only hope that British workers start taking a few tips from across the channel (in fact, you could say we want "French tactics for British workers!")

In the end, all three groups of workers won banging victories: the New Fabris workers won severance pay averaging 28,500 euros, while those at Nortel got at least 7,300 euros each, plus proceeds from an assets sale. Perhaps most impressively, the JLG workers quickly won 30,000

euros each in compensation.

Of course, in the grand scheme of things it doesn't matter whether a specific bit of factory equipment gets blown up or not (unless you're the owner of the equipment in question). What does matter is that we start exploding all the miserable, defeatist, and just plain wrong ideas that keep us in our place, and that's what makes this action so inspiring - these workers didn't go grovelling to their bosses or union bureaucrats, and ask how they were allowed to behave, they just decided for themselves how to fight, and then got on with it. Although those gas cylinders didn't get set off, they did stick a bomb under the idea that redundancies are inevitable and irresistible, and that, at best, all we can do is ask a lefty politician or union official to negotiate on our behalf.

No talking in the workhouse!

As the government desperately scrambles for new schemes to disguise the rapidly growing numbers of unemployed people and their total inability to do anything about it, a few companies have managed to make hefty amounts of money by providing glorified cages for some of the poorest, most disadvantaged people around. One particularly notorious company is A4e, who specialise in utterly useless "training courses", where "clients" gain valuable skills such as sitting around for long periods of time doing nothing, looking through the backs of newspapers for jobs, and then looking through the backs of the same newspapers again because there's nothing else to do. The luckiest get farmed out as unpaid workers - the closest thing to slavery that's legal in Britain today, because the minimum wage doesn't count if you call it "training".

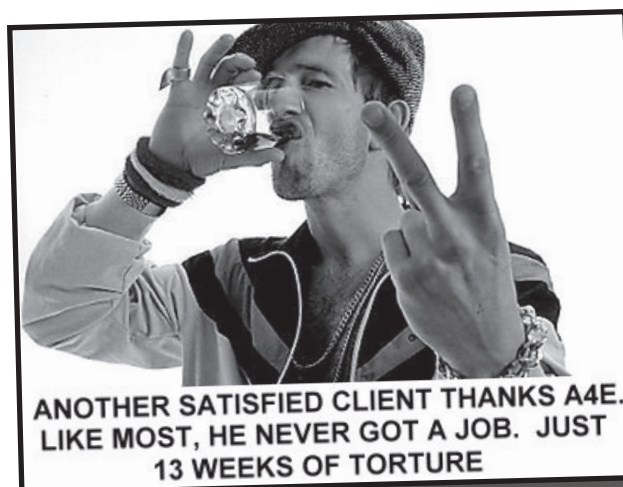
It's hard to describe quite how pointless A4e's courses are, so if you've not been unlucky enough to encounter them, you probably won't have any idea what conditions in their training centres are like. And A4e want to make sure it stays that way. When blogs like Watching A4e and New Deal Scandal started publishing information that A4e didn't want people to hear, they used heavy-handed threats of legal action to force critics off the internet. For some reason, they don't like people talking about the fact that they've been fiddling their figures, trying to improve their unimpressive record of getting people back into work, and so are now under investigation for fraud. And they really don't like people talking about the fact that Mark Watson's just resigned as finance director.

At the moment, it looks like A4e's authoritarian attempts at censorship have failed. The informa-

tion they've tried to suppress is now freely available on the internet, and even more encouragingly, those affected by A4e have started organising to fight back, as Edinburgh Coalition Against Poverty have begun publishing a free news-sheet for local benefits claimants, and unemployed action groups have begun forming in places like Ipswich and Harin-

gey. As the rest of the economy collapses, unemployment is the one sector that looks set to grow and grow. Thankfully, it looks like resistance is growing too.

<http://watchinga4e.blogspot.com>
<http://newdealscandal.wordpress.com>
<http://intensiveactivity.wordpress.com>



ANOTHER SATISFIED CLIENT THANKS A4E.
 LIKE MOST, HE NEVER GOT A JOB. JUST
 13 WEEKS OF TORTURE

Comment:

Private or 'Socialised' healthcare

The noisy, controversial and increasingly confrontational 'debate' in the USA over the Obama administration's proposed healthcare reforms has received a good deal of attention in the UK, especially after opponents of the plan began making outlandish claims about both the contents of the proposals and the UK NHS, which is supposedly the model for the new system. Former vice presidential candidate Sarah Palin, not someone known for thoughtful analysis, chipped in with a comment which would be entertainingly absurd if it wasn't representative of the level of debate: "The America I know and love is not one in which my parents or my baby with Down Syndrome will have to stand in front of Obama's 'death panel' so his bureaucrats can decide, based on a subjective judgment of their 'level of productivity in society,' whether they are worthy of health care. Such a system is downright evil." Some of the more focussed claims have been just as detached from reality. Senior Republican senator Chuck Crassley claimed that the 77 year old Ted Kennedy would have been denied treatment for his brain tumour in the UK due to his age. Though the falsehood of the statement was quickly pointed out, similar claims have been made, with one circular email claiming that those over 59 are ineligible for Heart Disease treatments and the US paper Investor's Daily stating that if Stephen Hawking was British (which he is) he would be dead (which he isn't).

Much of the rhetoric plays on deep-seated fears about "socialism" which have been ingrained into the American psyche since before the beginning of the cold war. References to creeping tyranny, the erosion of liberties and ballooning government are easy enough to find in the literature and placards of protestors against the plans, alongside references to Nazi Germany and its "euthanasia" policies.

However, party political manoeuvring, rather than any genuine concern over "big government" or "liberty" lies behind the origins of the current campaign. The US right has been dealt a bloody nose over the last year, as Obama (who, it should be remembered, is to the right of many European conservatives) managed to portray himself as being better posed to manage capitalism in that country and globally. The failure of the McCain/Palin campaign and the deep unpopularity of the Bush administration in its final years have put the Republican section of the ruling class on the back foot. Capitalising on sixty years of anti-communist propaganda and whipping up hysteria over "Orwellian" "socialised" healthcare is an opportunity to put a dent in their rivals' popularity that they can't afford to miss. High profile Republicans have made as much clear, with Senator Jim DeMint of South Carolina claiming that Healthcare reform would be Obama's "Waterloo".

At the forefront of the campaign

has been the rightwing organisation "Conservatives for Patients' Rights" (CPR), founded by Rick Scott. Scott's history of corruption and mismanagement in healthcare shows that the rights of patients are at the bottom of his list of priorities. In 1987 he founded a hospital which would grow into the financially successful healthcare company Columbia/HCA. Ten years later, the FBI raided HCA hospitals across the country following evidence that the company had been overcharging one of the existing government health programs, Medicare, and passing on the difference to doctors in exchange for patients being sent to HCA hospitals. Scott was ousted by the board, but HCA was still found to be responsible for what the Department of Justice called the "largest health care fraud case in U.S. history." CPR has hired the PR firm responsible for the notorious "Swift Boat Veterans for Truth" attack ads during the 2004 elections, and similarly scaremongering ads have been produced for the current campaign.

There are clearly significant concentrations of private power behind the attacks. However, there are concentrations which are even more significant behind Obama. We should not fall into the trap of seeing the controversy as one where "corporate interests" are clashing with the popular will. Universal healthcare has had wide popular support in the US for many years, and the emergence of plans to put in

place something with a vague resemblance to it during the last presidential elections were not due to any change in public opinion. That the resemblance is vague is important, as the Obama administration is proposing to allow a government healthcare option for everyone, whilst at the same time stressing its commitment to "competition". Healthcare options already exist for the elderly, those on low income, members of congress and members of the armed forces, amongst others. What the administration is not proposing is the wholesale replication of the NHS. According to Noam Chomsky, "the opposition, who regard themselves as free market advocates, charge that the proposal would be unfair to the private sector, which will be unable to compete with a more efficient public system. Though a bit odd, the argument is plausible." Chomsky goes on to quote the economist Dean Baker's observations that on the open market, medicare has outcompeted private alternatives. However, Chomsky goes on to note that 85% of the population support the government negotiating drug prices with pharmaceutical corporations, a proposal not on the agenda. The Obama-backed plans look set to create, in Baker's words "the largest tax increase in the history of the world - all of it going into the pockets of the health care industry."

Significant sections of the ruling class look set to do pretty well from healthcare reform, and so



it's no surprise they support it. This is the only reason why it's even on the political agenda. The US healthcare system is a disaster by comparison to those of similar countries, with the cost of healthcare per head being twice that of the UK despite life expectancies being lower. Though demands for healthcare reform have been consistently popular with much the population for many years, the move to reform the system is really a result of the effects of the economic crisis on private capital – according to General Motors Chairman and Chief exec G. Richard Wagoner Jr, “Failing to address the health care crisis would be the worst kind of procrastination, the kind that places our children and our grandchildren at risk and threatens the health and global competitiveness of our nation’s economy.”

Ordinary working class people are being drawn into a faction fight between sections of US capital, where our needs and requirements are less important than their profits. However, it is

undeniable that healthcare is of vital importance to the lives of ordinary people, forming part of what we can call the “social wage” – the range of social provisions which are vital to both the reproduction of the workforce for capitalism, and to the quality of life of the majority of the population. Under capitalism these will be cut back when the system requires it (for example with likely cuts to the NHS following the banking bailout here) while the popular need and demand for them continues, which makes them a site of class struggle in their own right. The question is how to approach the issue without being trapped by the false choices of capitalist politics.

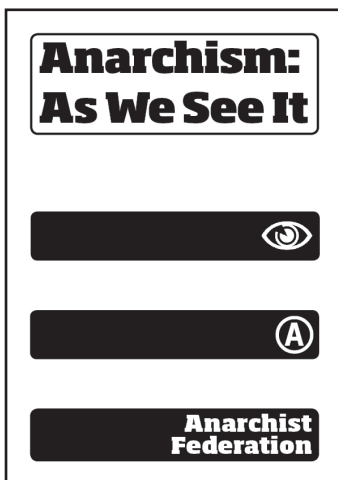
Likewise, healthcare in the UK is by no means “socialised”, as critics in the US claim. Though healthcare in the UK is undoubtedly better than healthcare in the US - just as other countries have better healthcare than the UK - it is still subject to the pressures and dynamics of capitalism, existing as it does in a capitalist society.

It has also been increasingly marketised over recent decades, with attacks on both patients and NHS workers coming under the cover of “reform”. The introduction of payment by results has introduced a market in health services, many non-frontline services have been privatised or contracted to companies like DHL, the introduction of wholly privately owned and operated “NHS treatment centres”, the rollout of Private Finance Initiatives etc., all represent part of the same project of “rationalising” social provisions to the benefit of the overall capitalist system. Even the NHS in its classic form, as the centrepiece of the postwar welfare state, came as part of the attempt to stave off prewar-style class conflict and integrate the working class more closely into the state following the end of the war. In a change of tactic known as the postwar settlement, capitalism was able to use the welfare state to stabilise itself after the turbulence of the 1920s and 30s.

The question then is how we,

as working-class people, go about defending our immediate living conditions. This must be an issue of asserting our needs, independent of faction fighting inside the capitalist class. Clearly, in the US, free access to quality healthcare is vital, and should be fought for on its own terms – and that fight for quality will have to include the fight against the distortions produced by capitalism alongside “responsible” attempts to keep the costs of our quality of life down. Though quality of life may be improved in one sector – through access to universal healthcare - it may be attacked in another – through tax hikes and the like. To avoid getting drawn into the question of how to successfully and “responsibly” manage the capitalist system, making “sacrifices” in one area in order to make gains in another, we must consistently struggle for our needs, whether that means fighting for better services in “privatised” systems or “socialised” ones.

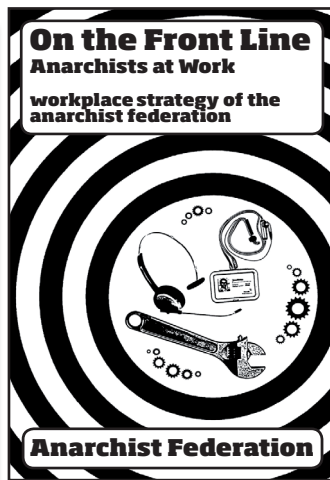
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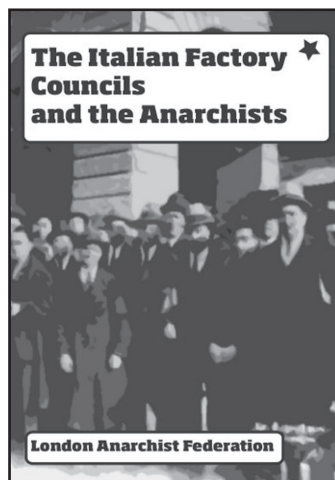
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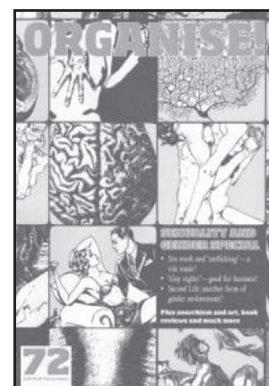
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Organise! is the Anarchist Federation's theoretical and historical magazine. It is published in order to develop anarchist communist ideas. It aims to give a clear anarchist viewpoint on contemporary issues, and initiate debates on areas not normally covered by agitational journals.

The latest issue, #72 is a gender and sexuality special, with articles on sex work, 'gay rights' & business, neuromyths & neurosexism and much more besides.

You can order or subscribe online at www.afed.org.uk, or get in touch with your local AF group for a copy.



ANARCHIST FEDERATION

The **Anarchist Federation** is a growing organisation of class struggle anarchists which aims 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.

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