

RESISTANCE

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UPRISING!

Coming to a democracy near you



Clockwise from top left: mass protests in Brazil, Turkey, Egypt and Slovenia.

The past weeks and months have seen huge uprisings on the streets of Brazil, Turkey, Slovenia and Egypt. In Brazil, protests began over bus fare prices and cost of tickets for the coming World Cup. In Turkey, residents wanted to save trees. In Slovenia, the issue was a speed radar scheme. But these seemingly small issues were just the last straw. In Turkey and Egypt, the problem is increasingly Islamist states. In Brazil and Slovenia, corruption is the issue. And all populations are angry at the growing economic crisis and forced austerity.

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'Who Guards the Guardians?'



This is what we ask when the very people who are supposed to protect the public interest, instead betray it. Usually they are a part of the state. But the state doesn't own up to its own abuses of power, and 'whistle blowers' have often spilled the beans. In June, there were two more important examples of this.

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Also in this issue:

- Industrial actions from up and down the UK
- Prisoner support with anarchists in Spain

Uprising!

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In each case, the state clamped down on peaceful protest at an early stage, and with unprecedented violence. The protesters bravely refused to be forced off the streets, and tear gas, water cannons, rubber bullets and even real bullets have been used. People have died and there have been mass arrests and detentions.

But there is a crucial difference between these revolts and those of the Arab Spring. Unlike the dictatorships provoking that wave of unrest, these countries are supposedly democracies. Their governments were voted in. Whilst anarchists reject this 'representative democracy' in favour of 'direct democracy', it is nonetheless the case that these are countries in which, in theory, people regularly get to elect their rulers.

Of course it is not unusual for mass protests to take place in modern



democracies, nor for states to use 'non-lethal' and even lethal weapons against them. The British state in Northern Ireland is an example close to home. But it is not common, and 2013 has seen a huge escalation in the level of violence by modern 'democratic' states.

We also can see that these democracies were well prepared to attack their electorate. What else is an arsenal of such weapons stockpiled by governments for? It begs the

question, which other states have these weapons in reserve, waiting for a demonstration that won't fizzle out of its own accord?

As austerity bites harder here, and the recently announced measures against the unwaged and public employees kick in, the working class in Britain will have to mobilise more demonstrations that will hold their ground. Then we'll see what 'our' state is prepared to do to us.

'Who Guards the Guardians?' (continued from page 1)

Peter Francis, who worked for Scotland Yard's 'Special Demonstration Squad' in 1980s and 1990s, admitted that when he had worked undercover he had been instructed to find information that would reflect badly on the family of Stephen Lawrence. This was to undermine the campaign to expose police protection of the racists who murdered Lawrence 20 years ago. Francis says that this instruction was authorised at a high level.

Edward Snowden, a systems administrator contracted to work for the National Security Agency in the US, claimed that the US government was obtaining vast amounts of data, to which it has no legal right, on private citizens. It seems that the British government was using this to obtain similar information on British people by proxy.

But 'blowing the whistle' does not necessarily make someone a champion of freedom. Snowden is reported to have worked for the CIA itself 2007-9. In 1212 he apparently donated to the election fund of the right-wing libertarian presidential candidate Ron Paul, who opposes taxes being spent on healthcare and welfare, and opposes the Civil Rights Act. No one forced Peter Francis to spy on political activists, and the Lawrence campaign was not the only one that he infiltrated. Snowden and Francis collaborated for a very long time before apparently putting the 'public good' before their own careers.

Now Snowden is on the run from the US security agencies that his career supported. He is looking for a country hostile to the US, where he can live at the expense of the state. And his story is Hollywood gold dust! Peter Francis' June 25th Guardian interview details uncritically his conversion to the concept of police transparency,

even though, like Mark Kennedy, he admits sleeping with women in these campaigns. You have to ask, how long before he would have been dragged before an inquiry, and maybe even faced charges? He has saved his own skin. Many of the people investigated by the US and British states are not so lucky.

Britain's recent enthusiasm for whistle-blowing as a route to justice, shows how little faith we have in 'official' checks and balances. We feel reassured that there are still people who will say 'enough is enough'. But this reassurance is just another way in which our political anger at the state as a whole is diffused. The whistle-blowing obscures the underlying structures of power and class-interest that give rise to the abuses in the first place. Anarchists argue that the state is fundamentally about repression and exploitation, and it is not the case that freedom and equality are denied to us only when things go wrong.

Industrial Roundup

Posties strike at Bridgewater

When a militant postal worker at Bridgewater delivery office in the West Country was victimised and suspended from work last July, 110 fellow workers went out on a wildcat strike that lasted 48 hours. The activist was reinstated and workers forced employers to agree to national talks about the deteriorating situation at the Delivery Office.

However, bullying tactics by bosses continued, with workers made to work faster, and when full-time workers left for other jobs, their positions were replaced with part-time posts, increasing the workload pressure. Now posties have overwhelmingly agreed to strike on three consecutive Saturdays from June 29th.

The discontent at Bridgewater is not an exception. All over Britain postal workers are concerned over pay, pensions and conditions. The situation is tinder dry and could lead to action right across the UK.

Solidarity delivers the goods!

Building workers wildcat at Runcorn

670 building workers came out on wildcat strike at Runcorn Thermal Power Station in late June. They took action against bullying from bosses. They had previously walked out in January over appalling conditions in the kitchens and toilets. That time they were paid £250 to return to work.

NUT/NASUWT Teachers' Strike: Failing to engage the working class

Anarchists in the education sector don't view the prospect of a one-day strike as the start of the revolution, but on Thursday 27th June in Manchester we went on strike with our colleagues, and turned out at 10.00am for a march and a rally in Piccadilly Gardens.

There were many things wrong with the action. A 10.00am assembly missed the commuters and 11.00am was too early for lunchtime people to catch the rally. Anyhow, when the whistle blew, a noisy and friendly assembly of around 1,000 teachers, children and supporters set off on their strike trip from Cathedral Gardens, accompanied by the usual trotskyst hangers-on.

Our arrival for the rally was equally noisy with whistles and hooters. We stood around waiting for the rabble-raising words of the union leadership. Nothing! No words of wisdom, telling us how wonderful we were coming out on strike. Nothing! Instead, stewards herded us into a hotel for the speeches. The leadership had spent OUR money on a hotel to remove OUR visibility from the streets. Inside! We needed to show other workers in Manchester that we are angry about the loss of pay increments and the prospect of working until we are 68, and seriously not happy with cuts in pensions whilst paying increased contributions. But no!

Unions like the NUT and the NASUWT will never be truly about bringing struggle to the membership. We have to do it for ourselves. They have had a mandate for industrial action at strike level for almost a year, but left the first strike until June, when exams are over and we are winding down for the Summer.

This is not the way. We need grassroots organisation which includes all education sector workers, and to take wildcat and lengthy strike action, with the support of students, if we are going to make any perceptible dent in government policies and attacks on our working conditions.

Brighton bin workers

300 workers at Cityclean in Brighton went on strike for 7 days after the local council, controlled by the Green Party, imposed pay cuts of up to £4,000 a year. There were mass pickets for up to 12 hours a day at the depot. The strikers organised a march through Brighton ending in a rally. They have now suspended strikes whilst they conduct a ballot over a new offer. GMB union officials engineered a second strike to take place the following week, but for refuse cart drivers only. United action by all the refuse workers would have strengthened their hand. The dispute caused a rift in the local Green Party.

The unrest among bin workers spread to Bromley and Croydon with three day strikes in those boroughs announced for early July over a derisory 2% pay offer by employer Veolia.

Spanish Anarchist Prisoner Support



On June 21st around 200 people with flags and banners held a march through the centre of Barcelona demanding freedom for five jailed anarchists. They had been moved from the Soto del Real jail into the FIES isolation and monitoring regime set up in 1989 as a counter-terrorism measure

but extended to other inmates in 1991. This was as part of the pre-trial detention conditions ordered by a judge. They had been arrested in May during raids on an anarcho-syndicalist (CNT) centre in Sabadell, near Barcelona. The charges include alleged participation in demonstrations that ended in rioting, and using Facebook for spreading political ideas. Essentially they have been accused of supporting terrorism and belonging to a terrorist group, but as supporters write; "Their situation cannot be misinterpreted as an isolated case, but as yet one more action from the repressive strategy of the Spanish State, which is currently re-tracing past steps to reinforce its authoritarianism. The arrest of these five anarchists is a precedent that will be used in the future to justify indiscriminate persecution."

Resistance Online



Thousands of Parisian anarchists and others protest at the murder by skinheads of Clément Méric, an 18 year old antifascist.

For the full story and more visit www.afed.org.uk



Liked Resistance? Try Organise!

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 in agitational journals.

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ANARCHIST FEDERATION

The Anarchist Federation is an organisation of class struggle anarchists (based in Britain and Ireland, but with many contacts overseas) 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 it's destruction must be complete and world wide. We reject attempts to reform it such as working through parliament and national liberation movements (like the IRA) 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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