

# RESISTANCE

Anarchist Paper

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Free/Donation

## Tenants' Victory: Letting Agents Pay Up!

Direct action gets the goods after letting agents try to rip off tenants!

Three young women recently took up a rented property in Bethnal Green through the Shoreditch branch of Victorstone Property Consultants, paying £3,451 as rent and deposit. After they had only just moved into the house, Victorstone fell out with the landlords over the fees they would take, the landlords decided they wanted to get out of the letting, and changed the locks.

The women managed to get some money back from the landlady, but the landlady had never been transferred the full amount, because Victorstone had subtracted their fee. Victorstone initially tried to mislead the

women, implying that all the money had been transferred to the landlady. In fact they intended to keep £1200 of their money for a completely failed deal.

Victorstone were sent an ultimatum by supporters of the women, one of whom is a member of Staines Anarchists, signed by North and South London Solidarity Federation and Housing Solidarity amongst others. When the deadline expired at 1pm on Wednesday 1st August scores of people called in to Victorstone to complain, an action supported by members of Solidarity Federation, Anarchist Federation, Staines Anarchists and the London IWW branch. Victorstone found the sheer number of calls overwhelming and by 3 o'clock they had contacted the tenants to offer to repay the money.

As tenants ourselves, or other working class people seeking acceptable housing, we see the struggle against exploitative letting agents as being a collective one. We are ready for more struggles like this one. We encourage people who are treated like this to treat the experience as political and we want to hear from anyone who wants to talk about how to take a stand. Contact us at:

[payupvictorstone@riseup.net](mailto:payupvictorstone@riseup.net)



## Anarchists Victimised By Security Forces

Last month two people were harassed and detained by counter-terrorist officers, following a week spent at the international Anarchism Gathering in Switzerland (for a full report on the gathering see page 5).

Despite having no evidence that either of the individuals had been involved in any criminal activity, police officers denied them access to a solicitor, forced them to waive basic rights, took fingerprints and DNA samples, and detained them

for two hours. The officers were members of the SO15 Counter Terrorism Command unit of the London Metropolitan Police, which has links to the intelligence services.

“We were treated like criminals.” said one of the detainees, who asked not to be named. “I told them I went to the congress as I am an amateur journalist and I write articles about activism. They saw my note book, camera and Dictaphone but they said I was lying. One officer said ‘You said

you are an anarchist, I’ve seen anarchists on the news, they are violent, throw molotov cocktails and disrupt people’s lives not write articles.’ “ In a press statement released shortly after the incident, the UK Anarchist Federation, asserted that the detention of the two anarchists “was not in response to any crime and constitutes repression and criminalisation of a political ideology.” To read the statement in full, go to <http://tinyurl.com/bnckspz>.

## Metro Cleaners Strike Against Pay Freeze

Last month anarchists undertook direct action in solidarity with cleaners on the Tyne And Wear Metro. Upon the commencement of their 48 hour strike, supporters were sure to leave plenty of unwanted mess on numerous carriages, safe in the knowledge that all cleaning duties were to be carried out by scabs and corporate skills.

Churchill’s, the company responsible for contracting Metro cleaners, recently attempted to impose a zero per cent pay award on a workforce already on the bare minimum wage. On top of this, workers have reported victimisation and punitive disciplining of a colleague on trumped up allegations. The bosses have routinely attempted to recruit scabs on rate of pay that far exceeds that of the cleaners themselves, proving that funds that could easily contribute towards an improvement on poverty pay are mysteriously readily available when the suits are inconvenienced.

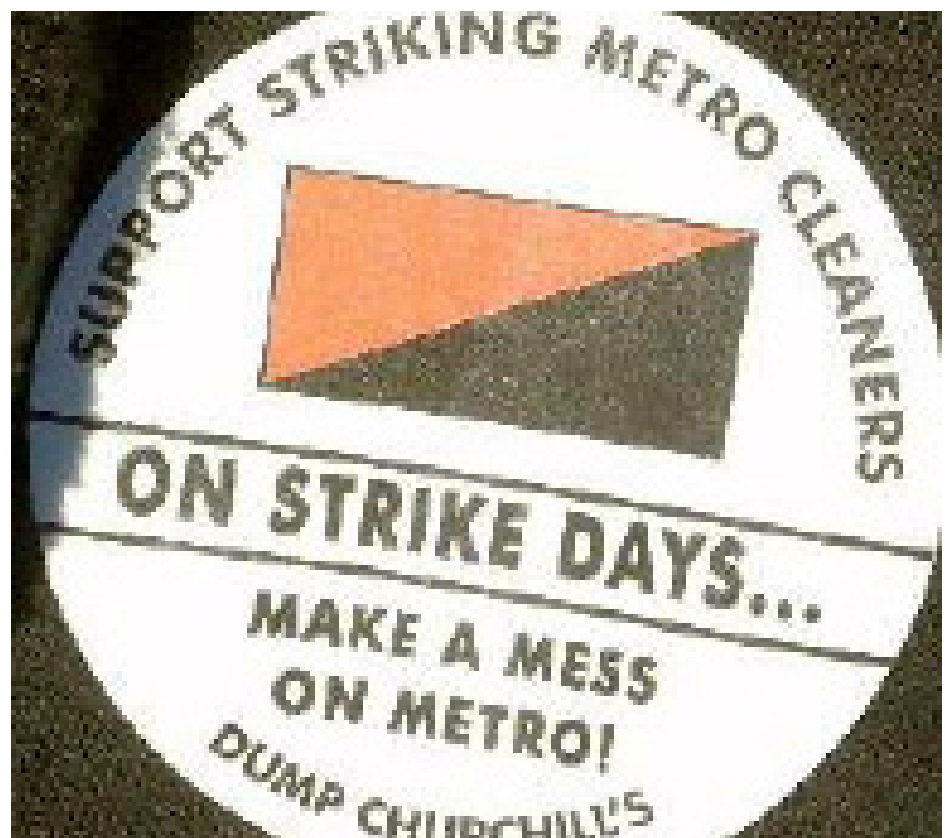
Churchill’s client, DB Regio, have offered no increase in basic pay whatsoever. The company has announced a doubling of profits in the past five years, channelling around £7 million from the

exploitation of essential cleaning staff, whose current contract does not include sick pay or pensions. The cleaners are even denied the basic travel concessions rights enjoyed by other NEXUS workers.

While the company is trying to maintain low pay for the staff who deliver vast profits for the shareholders, its own highest paid director had a salary increase of more than 18% in the last 5 years, up to nearly £160,000. This makes nonsense of their claims that they

can’t afford a decent offer to the front-line cleaning staff.

As anarchists we realize that the reformism of the trade union bureaucracy can only enhance the position of a privileged few as mediators. Only by collective defiance and direct action will the bosses get the message: Don’t let these sharks use the threat of unemployment as a weapon with which to intimidate workers! On strike days, make a mess on the Metro!



## Cleaners Win Pay Increase At John Lewis

The dispute between cleaners at the John Lewis Partnership's flagship Oxford Street store and their employers has ended in a victory for the workers, who took strike action on 13th and 20th July in protest at planned cuts in jobs and hours, following a 90% vote in favour. A further strike set for Thursday 26th July, as the Olympic Torch passed the store, was cancelled following fresh talks with the cleaners' direct employers, contractors ICM (Compass Group), and the facilities company MML, hired by John Lewis Partnership. In addition to defending their jobs, the cleaners at

John Lewis turned the cuts situation around, securing a 10% pay increase backdated to the start of the contract in March 2012.

A union spokesperson said: 'First 50% of cleaners hours were to be cut, then nearly a third of the workforce were to be made redundant, now after a courageous struggle not a single cleaner at John Lewis Oxford street will be forced to lose their job. In an age of austerity this is no small achievement'. However, whilst the pay and allowance increases are a significant step up from the £6.08 per-hour the cleaners previously earned, it is still



well below the London Living Wage of £8.30. In a press statement, the union said they saw the victory as a "stepping stone" and that the Living Wage remained a "key objective". To read the press release in full, go to <http://tinyurl.com/buo97ae>.

## Police Kettle Antifascists in Glasgow

On Saturday 28th July, the BNP were scheduled to hold what Nick Griffin had been trailing for weeks before as 'the biggest nationalist demonstration ever in Glasgow'. Prior to the date there had been two consecutive weekends of rumours about fascist activity in Glasgow that failed to materialise. Judging by previous showings earlier in the year, things weren't looking promising for the far right: the SDL's demonstration in Glasgow in February numbered less than 100 and was cordoned off into insignificance behind police lines. In May, even by the authorities' estimates, the SDL were outnumbered 2-1 by antifascists and local activists in Edinburgh. On the 27th July, the SDL withdrew their support (owing to the arrests of at least five of their members the same day) leaving the BNP to officially call off the demo, citing some vague concern for the authorities during 'their busiest time of the year'.

It was pretty obvious that despite this call-off there was a high likelihood of a fascist presence, and as counter-protestors and antifascists began to assemble on Buchanan Street, the sighting of dubious-looking spotters began as early as 9.45, and continued

throughout most of the morning. Finally, when three members of BNP-splinter group Britannica emerged on the streets, they were quickly identified and opposed by over 100 counter-protestors. Police encircled both groups almost immediately, at least to forty to fifty cops containing both sides with mounted police in tow.

Watching police lines beginning to close around the counter-protestors, with more and more police arriving on Buchanan Street, a few anarchists crossed through to let protestors know that this was about to happen. Few moved, and the police inevitably 'kettled' the group. Only after spending well over an hour in the blazing sun were people then allowed to leave, one and two at a time, subject to being searched. In a disgusting attempt at profiling the police attempted to take the details of protestors as they left the kettle, however, Legal observers were on hand to counter this, letting people know that they were under no compulsion to provide this information nor were they compelled to consent to photography under the terms of the Section 60 order the police were enforcing. Two individuals were arrested for refusing to consent to

being searched, while the three Britannica members were instantly arrested upon leaving the scene.

As the dust began settle, news came through that in Dalkeith – where Griffin had attempted to capitalise on a rally being held against the presence of a convicted sex offender in the local community, after the prospect of the Glasgow Demo collapsed – the BNP's presence was met with a vigorous response by local anti-fascists.

While the far right consistently being denied any kind of a platform is positive, the pattern of total policing attendant to these occasions is not. The profiling of protestors witnessed in Glasgow on the 28th July follows on directly from the policing of the Refugee Solidarity Demo, held the previous month, where the police actively curbed and forcibly dispersed a demonstration of around 400 people protesting the forced destitution and evictions of over 150 refugees in the city, in order to actively facilitate 20-30 fascists there to disrupt and counter-protest, again with the police quoting off sections of the public order act to justify the intimidation, kettling, profiling and arrest of protestors and activists.

## Swindon workers get stuck into bullying bosses

*The following piece is a guest article from a brand new anarchist paper to be published in the South West of England, the West Country Mutineer. If you would like to get involved or want a copy of the forthcoming paper, email:*

***mutineerpress@riseup.net.***

For the past half a year, cleaners at Swindon's GWH Hospital have been taking action against their employer, Carillion, who take on the maintenance, construction and management of hundreds of buildings across the UK. The action comes in response to a culture of bullying and racism from Carillion bosses towards the mostly Goan cleaners. As well as routine racist abuse, Carillion managers frequently forced workers to present them with 'gifts' in return for time off and other basic rights at work. The Goan workers were also denied the right to take enough of their holiday in

one go to visit their families in Goa.

Since the first strike in February, the workers have given the rest of us a shining example in how to treat your boss, taking dozens of days of strike action (always involving nearly 100% of the workforce), blockading Carillion HQ, holding well attended meetings, a 400 strong demo through Swindon and numerous solidarity events and protests with Swindon Anarchists and other union and activist groups.

The campaign has already seen one racist boss get kicked out, but instead of taking the strikers demands seriously, Carillion have responded by sending scabs to undermine strikes, lying, faking and fudging internal 'investigations' and further victimising the victims by launching disciplinary procedures against 10 of the strikers. With Carillion losing their reputation in the industry, not to mention

lucrative contracts, as a result of the campaign, they have also been caught playing a central role in a blacklisting scandal, where major companies have been denying work to 'troublemaking' workers for 'crimes' such as attending anti-fascist protests and being members of a union! With Carillion refusing to take the hint and sort out their racist, bullying behaviour, more and more ordinary workers are getting drawn into the fight, voicing disgust (and yet more stories of bullying and intimidation) against Carillion. With more strike action on the horizon – not to mention planned support actions from supportive anarchist and activist groups – you can be sure that we'll all be hearing more from the brave Goan workers that refuse to be trampled by an arrogant bully of an employer and you can be equally sure that they ain't gonna quit until they've won the rights we all deserve at work.

## Traffic Wardens Fight Low Pay In Camden

Camden traffic wardens were on strike last month demanding better pay and a reduction in hours. Workers struck from the 9th to the 11th of August, following on from a previous two-day strike in July. Further action is planned if bosses refuse to give in.

Strikers demands include a wage increase of £2.50 an hour (their current wage is only £8.09, less than the London living wage), a reduction in working time, overtime pay for night shifts and weekends, and paid holidays. Their employer, NSL, which describes itself as "an expert outsourced service provider", has offered them an increase of just 21 pence an hour this year, an offer that was unanimously rejected by union members.

According to UNISON support for the strike has been "exceptionally high", with at least half of union members actively picketing their

workplaces over the course of the strike. The three-day strike also included a small but lively demonstration by fifty strikers and supporters, accompanied by chants of "Low Pay, No Way" and "NSL - No Slave Labour".

Further action is likely over the coming weeks. At a mass meeting

held at Clarence Way Tenant's Hall on the second day of the strike, workers voted unanimously for holding a four-day strike "at the earliest opportunity" along with other forms of industrial action. For updates and a full report of the struggle so far visit:

**[www.camdenunison.org.uk](http://www.camdenunison.org.uk)**



Photo: Camden Unison: [www.flickr.com/photos/camdenunison/7554993284/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/camdenunison/7554993284/)

## International Gathering In Swiss Town Hailed A Success

Over a long weekend from the 9th to 12th August, thousands of anarchists and interested visitors from across Europe and elsewhere in the world were gathered in the town of St. Imier, in the Jura region of Switzerland, to celebrate the 140th anniversary of the founding of an anarchist international.

In 1872, an anti-authoritarian international movement was born after anarchists and others broke from the ideas of Marx to envision a society based on freedom from both capitalism and the state. Karl Marx had taken control of the original First International (called the International Workingmen's Association) but some sections in the Jura were determined to maintain an autonomous spirit and practice. Many of the members in these sections were working in their homes as watchmakers, were well read, and had an independent spirit. When Michael Bakunin came to the



region in 1869 there had been a true meeting of minds.

The 2012 gathering took the form of a festival and educational, with music, films and entertainment as well as the many workshops and discussions. In addition to the gathering the modern day International of Anarchist Federations, formed in 1968, met for its congress, with delegates from 10 different organisations including the

UK Anarchist Federation.

One highlight of the weekend was a meeting held by anarchists from Japan about the re-emergence of libertarian organising there following the Fukushima nuclear plant disaster. Another was the announcement on the last day of an international anarcho-feminist initiative to be held in two years time.

The Swiss press was overwhelmingly positive about the gathering, calling it a success, and local people were impressed. Sadly the British counter-terrorist police either

hadn't got the message or were confusing the word 'tourist' with 'terrorist', choosing to arrest two conference attendees on their return to England via Heathrow airport, and refusing to release them until they had harassed, searched, and interrogated them for several hours (see page 2, *Anarchists Victimised by Security Forces*).

## Spanish Unions Get All Robin Hood Against The Cuts

*From the West Country Mutineer.*

Across Europe, millions of ordinary people have been fighting back against massive cuts to jobs, wages and welfare. There have been massive protests, occupations, strikes, direct actions and even the odd riot. But now, members of the Spanish field workers union, Sindicato Andaluz de Trabajadores, along with supporters, have stepped up the fight back by raiding one supermarket and forcing another to 'donate' most of its produce, before distributing the looted groceries to families impoverished by the cuts. Hundreds of union members entered supermarkets in two towns filling up trolleys with basic food stuffs and after a tussle with some supermarket security left without paying. The food was

distributed to those who needed it via locally coordinated food banks. The actions saw only two arrests, one being the mayor of Marinaleda, who stated 'If I end up in jail because I highlighted the crisis, it will be an honor'. A second supermarket raider said 'Taking some food and giving it to families who are having a really hard time. If this is stealing, then I'm guilty.'

The situation in Spain is worsening for ordinary people while the rich keep getting richer (sound familiar?), with the top 10% earning 12 times the average wage. Unemployment stands at 25%, higher amongst young workers and 22% of families have plunged below the poverty line. If planned cuts over the next decade go ahead, things look set to get much worse.

In light of this, the supermarket looters have realized that, while protesting against cuts is important, if we are to keep our heads above water, we need to start taking what we need from the rich, who would let us go homeless and starved rather than sharing their wealth. All we should care about is the fact that we need food, housing, health care and, hell, some entertainment once in a while, and we still live in a continent of plenty. Despite (or because of) the recession, whilst we've all been tightening our belts the richest in our country, and all across Europe, have been hoarding even more wealth, soon the time will come when we have to start taking some of it back for ourselves. Trip to Tesco's anyone?

## University Strikes Continue In Brazil

The general strike at Brazilian state universities has just entered its third month, which, as this edition goes to print, is showing no signs of a quick resolution. One union has stated that up to 350,000 education workers are now engaged in industrial action and it is now being regarded as the biggest public sector strike of recent years. Starting on 17th May, the action has forced the closure of 94 federal institutions across the country as administrative staff and lecturers square up to the government on a number of issues related to the planned restructuring and privatisation of higher education. A positive aspect of the strike has been the support shown by students even though the standoff has meant that the second halves of their courses have been postponed. However, it was clear which side students were on when the CNGE (Student Strike National

Command) announced that student strikes were in place at 40 federal institutions.

The dispute revolves around the government's plans to open up state universities (including the state funded on-campus hospitals) to private capital and comes after years of cuts in education (\$R5b [£1.5b] in the last two years). This has led to pay freezes, inadequate facilities, unfinished construction on campuses, below subsistence funding for students, and an increasing student-teacher ratio. However, when taking into consideration the government's clear neo-liberal agenda, it should be of no surprise that amongst the backers of plans to privatise state universities are Brazil's three biggest banks, who stand to gain most from future student demand for private loans.

The only offer tabled so far by the

government has been a tiny pay increase that would only affect around a third of those on strike and was obviously designed to divide workers and break up the solidarity within the movement. The reality is that the government has consistently maintained an aggressive stance towards workers by docking pay, making threats, and coordinating a media campaign designed to discredit the legitimate demands of those on strike.

The result of this has been an increase in direct action with the CNGE recently stating the need to "get more radical". How this will develop remains to be seen but so far acts of direct action have included roadblocks, occupations of university and governmental buildings and general assemblies seeking to engage students and workers in decision-making processes outside of union bureaucracies.

### Resistance In A Russian Prison

On the 22nd of July almost 900 prisoners at Prison Colony No. 4 in Salavat, Russia went on hunger strike and five of them slashed their forearms. The outbreak of collective resistance in the high-security prison that holds 1,100 people was in retaliation for the murder of Sergei Lasko, who was beaten to death by guards on the night of the 17th of July. The Public Monitoring Committee (PMC), an organization which defends prisoners' rights, discovered the truth about Lasko's death and the hunger strike only after a lawyer visited the prison about a separate issue. Almira Zhukova of the PMC said: "Then we discovered the beatings; we found proof... It was terrifying. They beat [prisoners] till they were blue. All the rooms were covered in blood."

A prisoner described how as Lasko was being beaten, guards played loud music over prison speakers

to mask their victim's shouts.

"Whenever the music starts, we know that they are going to beat someone."

The hunger strike is just one of several recent uprisings against the judicial and penitentiary system in Russia.

### Australian Solidarity Demo For G20 Prisoner

On the 5th of August anarchists in Australia hung two large banners and scattered over 200 hundred leaflets from the Cahill Expressway bridge in Sydney. The actions were carried out to express solidarity with Kelly Rose Pflug-Back. Kelly is an anarchist who was recently sentenced to 15 months in prison for her resistance to the Toronto G20 meeting in 2010. Her supporters explained: "Our small act was an expression of our solidarity with Kelly and all the rebels who rejected the passive logic of legal protest and made a concrete stand

against the annual meeting of the managers of global capital.

"On July 19 our friend Kelly Rose Pflug-Back was sentenced to 15 months in jail followed by 3 years of probation for her involvement in the Black Bloc at the Toronto G20. The crown stated that this sentencing was meant to send a clear message that the actions of the Black Bloc would not be tolerated. Kelly spent much of the preceding year under house arrest and strict conditions, designed to isolate her from the movement and disable her from doing the work she believes in. Yet through it all Kelly has remained active, strong, and defiant!"

Send letters and cards of solidarity to Kelly at:

**Kelly Pflug-Back.**

**Vanier Centre for Women.**

**P.O.Box 1040.**

**655 Martin Street.**

**Milton, Ontario.**

**L9T 5E6. Canada.**

## Call For Solidarity With Imprisoned Anarchists in Belarus

*We reproduce below a statement issued by the International of Anarchist Federations, appealing on behalf of the Belarusian Anarchist Federation who are struggling in the face of massive state repression:*

It has been a long time since the last call for solidarity with the Belarusian anarchists appeared. Today we have to admit that the new wave of solidarity is needed urgently to help them out from the prison. That's why we call you to participate in days of action in solidarity with Belarusian political prisoners on 22nd-23rd of September (parliament election day is 23rd).

The activists Ihar Alinevich, Mikalai Dziadok, Artsiom Prakapenka, Pavel Syramolatau, Aliaksandr Frantskievich, Jauhen Vas'kovich that were detained in autumn 2010 and winter 2011 and then sentenced to 3 to 8 years of prison in May 2011 for a series of attacks on state and capital symbols are finishing their second year in jail. During this time their comrades and relatives did their best to help them feel comfortable in custody and set them free. In October

2011 they were acknowledged political prisoners by right-watch organizations. This fact gave them bigger chances to be freed as soon as possible, because at the moment the President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, faces pressure from the European Union with the demands to set free all the political prisoners and decriminalize them. From August 2011 he has already pardoned more than 30 of them, but none of our comrades was granted freedom. Lukashenko said publicly, that he will pardon only those, who will write the petition for pardon, thus admitting their guilt and asking him personally for mercy. All the rest will remain in prison, he stated. In fact all imprisoned anarchists were many times asked if they want to sign such petition. Five of them refused to do it. Artsiom Prakapenka signed it under pressure but he is still in prison. Now there are 15 political prisoners left in Belarus, among them are 5 our comrades and 1 more, imprisoned for the action of solidarity with them. All the prisoners are experiencing different kinds of pressure from the administration of the prisons they

are held in, because Lukashenko wants to be a winner in this situation and make it as if it is not the EU that forces him to set free the political prisoners in fear of more political and economic sanctions, but as if it is his good will to pardon them, again only if they ask for it. We strongly oppose the fact that our comrades are now traded for benefits from the EU and condemn the pressure that they experience. We call everybody to protest against these tortures and demand the immediate liberation of the political prisoners of Belarus, including anarchists.

We welcome solidarity actions of ANY kind starting from now on to accumulate amount of it on days of solidarity, we also ask you to make solidarity actions at least once a month if you find it possible even after the days of solidarity. We need constant pressure on the regime and the EU politicians in this situation.

**A solidarity demo for the prisoners has been called for 1pm on 23rd September at the Belarusian Embassy, 6 Kensington Court, London W8 5DL.**

## Write to a Prisoner!

Paddy Besiris pleaded guilty in May 2012 to violent disorder during the Stokes Croft riots in Bristol last year. Paddy was sentenced to 14 months in prison, however he will serve 7 months because of his early plea. Paddy is a Greek socialist who was involved in various political groups and was recently moved from HMP Bristol after he tried to organise a prisoners' union on G-wing. Paddy would like letters, cards, newsletters and books sent to him. Write to:

**Paddy Besiris c/o ABC  
14 Robertson Road  
Easton  
Bristol  
BS5 6JY.**



Many more prisoners' addresses from around the world are listed on the websites of the Anarchist Black Cross groups.

For excellent advice on contacting prisoners download the free PDF leaflet by Leeds Anarchist Black Cross called 'Writing to Prisoners' from:

**[www.leedsabc.org](http://www.leedsabc.org)**

For loads of news, information and links about prisons check the Campaign Against Prison Slavery website at:

**[www.againstprisonslavery.org](http://www.againstprisonslavery.org)**

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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.

### National Contact

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#### International of Anarchist

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[www.yorks-afed.org](http://www.yorks-afed.org)

#### Lincoln

[lincoln@afed.org.uk](mailto:lincoln@afed.org.uk)  
[lincolnaf.wordpress.com](http://lincolnaf.wordpress.com)

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