

RESISTANCE

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Divide and Rule

If the last few weeks in British politics have shown up one thing, it's how easily suspicion of foreigners and the poor can be made into a major election issue, especially with help from the right-wing press.

Attacks on welfare seem relentless. The rich and privileged tell us that the reason Britain is in debt is that the poor, sick or old cost too much. They call us lazy or undereducated and try to put the blame on the individuals.

We have two things to say about this. Firstly this is a class war. In an unequal class system we should, if we can, find ways to control how much work we do and how much profit for our bosses. If we have a job and can stick it, fine. But if not, let the state pay us a 'social wage' - benefits in other words. 'Worker' must include those of us who are unemployed or they will run rings around us.

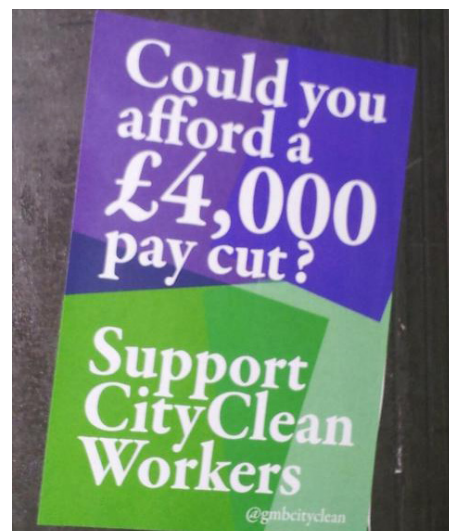
Secondly, the problems with capitalism are structural. Unemployment is used to keep wages

down. The economic crisis means the government is getting a lot less in taxes and they've bailed out the banks, so national debt has increased. Since the economy is hardly growing, tax rates go up (unless you are rich or a company owner) or they make cuts, or sell off assets like the Royal Mail, or all three. It's all part of the system. But it's their fault, not ours.

So what do anarchist communists think about immigration? Well, people born in Britain go to work or live permanently abroad, and people from other countries live and work here. So what? We think people should be able to live and work where they want to, irrespective of borders. In fact, we don't think that nation states should even exist. So arguments over immigration or Europe are just not on our level. To us, all workers are equal.

So what of divide and rule? A report, *Tough on People in Poverty*, from the Joseph Rowntree

Foundation shows that in 2013, only 27% of Labour Party voters now believe social injustice to be the main cause of poverty, down from 41% in 1986 when Thatcher was in power. Individuals are blamed instead. It seems someone has found a neat way to deflect working class anger from the true cause of economic misery. If we don't defend access to the necessities of life for everyone, the state will continue to cut away until we are left arguing over the scraps.



Inside: Brighton Refuse Workers Wildcat Strike...

Bin strikin'

Refuse workers and street cleaners in Brighton and Hove took unofficial action last month over pay and allowances. When given an ultimatum of a £4,000 a year pay cut or the sack, 300 workers struck and occupied their canteen. You couldn't hope for a better wildcat target as Green Party councillor Jason Kitkat tried to placate workers with individual compensations. But workers chanted 'Kitkat out!' and ripped up or handed back unopened compensation letters. On Thursday 9th May uniformed workers marched from their depot in Hollingdean to the town hall where council leader Jason Kitkat was given a personally dedi-

cated rendition of 'you're shit and you know you are'. At time of writing (19th May) Council chief executive Penny Thompson was sending new compensation offers, and the GMB union has now balloted (counting on 7th June).

This is not the first time either. In 2008 an equally strong wildcat walkout took place from the same depot after managers broke up tight-knit crews who had worked together for years in retaliation for falling productivity, calling some of them 'too fat and lazy' to do their jobs. But staff shortages and lack of bin lorries were really to blame for crews falling behind on their rounds.

Although they did not want to affect residents, workers said they were 'at the end of their tether'. When the GMB caught up with the walkout they told the workers to go back and the council claimed to be 'baffled' by the unofficial action. But management ended up backing down completely, allowing workers back to their old crews and also started talks on staffing levels and vehicles. And in 2001 refuse workers of Brighton took collective action after sackings following earlier work routine changes.

It's great to see the wildcat is alive and hissing again.

Police blame anti-blacklist victim for two broken legs

Blacklisting is a systematic effort by bosses to secretly block individuals working in an industry, often when they have exposed poor working conditions or tried to form a union. On 15th May 2013 anti-blacklist campaigners were blocking the road outside Manchester City FC's new training ground because of site developer BAM Nuttall blacklisting construction workers at London Crossrail.

George Tapp who was leafleting ended up needing reconstructive knee surgery after both his legs were broken by a hit-and-run driver. He was carried on the bonnet for some distance before being thrown off. Paul Kelly who was also there said "It was being driven by a complete maniac. It just zoomed off, taking three of them with it. It was going so fast in first gear there was burning rubber, then it braked suddenly and they fell off." George was given morphine for the pain in his legs and also suffered a serious knock to the head which bled profusely at the scene. The two others suffered minor injuries.

Chief Superintendent Russ Jackson of Greater Manchester Police admitted there was an "incident" but said that CCTV showed men



having climbed onto the bonnet of the car which then drove off slowly and, "While we respect the democratic right of anyone holding a peaceful protest, if we believe individuals have behaved in an unlawful manner, we will take action." Just who is he referring to here? Is he planning on arresting a man with two broken legs and a shattered knee for a crime? The reference to CCTV is also an extreme irony considering a Special Branch 'Special Demonstration Squad' are widely believed to have colluded with industry blacklisters by bugging union offices.

He is likely to be in hospital for 8 weeks. If you would like to contribute to a solidarity fund please send a cheque to "Salford TUC (George Tapp), 84 Liverpool road, Eccles, Salford M30 OWZ

Get well soon, George!

More info on blacklisting: <http://www.hazards.org/blacklistblog/>

Rosspport solidarity call-out

The AF has previously supported the 13-year-long Shell to Sea campaign near Rosspport, County Mayo, on the West coast of Ireland. The campaign is against a high pressure raw gas-pipeline coming ashore right next to their neighbourhood. This is being built by Corrib, a collaboration of Shell, Statoil and Vermillion oil companies.

The campaign has always been creative and outward-looking. The associated Rosspport Solidarity Camp has welcomed large numbers of international visitors at key times during the pipeline development. Support is invited again during a week of action on 21st-30th June. Campaign imagery is inspired by the Asterix comics of a tiny village opposing the might of the Roman empire. But as they don't have any magic potion it'll need feet (and tents) on the ground instead.

More details:

<http://www.rossportsolidaritycamp.org>





Fighting for safe factories in Asia

Since the factory collapse in Dhaka, Bangladesh, in April (see Resistance 151), the death toll has risen to over 1000. With the catastrophe publicised throughout the mainstream press, the finger of blame was pointed squarely at the high street retailers that use suppliers based in buildings like this. As a result, some retailers signed up to a new legally binding initiative to offer financial support for fire safety and building improvements.

This comes too late for 3 people who recently died when a Cambodian factory making Asics shoes collapsed. And for 23 people who were injured while making clothes for H&M. And for 8 people killed after a clothes factory caught fire, also in Dhaka.

But at least eight of the UK's leading fashion retailers failed to put their names to the initiative. George at Asda, Next, Matalan, River Island, Sports Direct, Peacocks, Shop Direct and the Arcadia group - which includes Topshop, BHS and Dorothy Perkins - all failed to sign up.

This matters because such working conditions do not only exist at the factories of economy brands such as Primark. The amount you pay at the till has little to do with the pay at the factories. High-end retailers also systematically exploit poor working conditions to maximise profits.

So should we boycott retailers? If the result is that retailers end contracts with suppliers, this results in depriving people of jobs. We need to support workers' struggles for decent wages and conditions, world-wide.

Greek prisoners take hunger strike action

A hunger strike by more than 580 prisoners in the Larissa jail in Greece started on Monday 29th of April. There was wide scale participation in the hunger strike by those incarcerated in the high-security prison. All inmates from section B and C refused food, as did one hundred inmates from section A, followed by 25 more people from section E. The prisoners expressed their demands and complaints about the jail regime in an open letter. They demanded "Better health care" and "no reference or mention of any statute-barred disciplinary offense." They insisted on an end to the "Inadequacy of social workers" and no more "detention of immigrant inmates for an excessive period of 2 months in Larissa penitentiary, despite their entitlement for conditional release". They also stated, "We demand these conditions to be changed and for those who are responsible to be replaced also".

For info on resistance by prisoners check Anarchist Black Cross and the Campaign Against Prison Slavery websites.



"Strength to the 585 hunger strikers at Larissa prison"

Greek teachers: Resistance and Betrayal

In the continuous onslaught on society at the hands of the Greek state and the International Monetary Fund, which has already meant austerity measures for the last three years, further injury has been inflicted upon working-class conditions in the form of a 'civil mobilisation' against strikes. This most recent assault in the name of profit and power has increased the working week of teachers by two hours.

The Greek teachers' union OLME, responding to the transfer of employees on to the new measures, declared a strike on the 17th of May. The Greek government

responded with the civil mobilisation, where striking teachers now face potential arrest. The Education Ministry justified these actions by describing the strike as a 'threat to society'.

On the 18th of May, however, OLME abandoned its members by scrapping plans for further strike action. This decision was backed by other major unions and opposition parties, including SYRIZA (Greek Coalition of the Radical Left) and the Communist Party of Greece, despite teachers voting 90% in favour. So workers are now not only under targeted attack from the government and the IMF, they are also subject to systematic betrayal by those who claim to represent them.



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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