

resistance

anarchist bulletin

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Tax is theft

POLITICIANS ARE THE enemies of the working class, and recently they were positively crawling over each other to illustrate it. Jack Straw said: "If British companies benefit from working with Indian service providers in Bangalore and elsewhere, then Britain as a whole benefits", predictably substituting the interests of owners for those of workers.

Tory Oliver Letwin, on the other hand, chose to try and help business put yet another boot in: this time in the guise of tax structure. Companies doing business in the UK already contribute less than in any other country in Europe, but this wasn't enough for Letwin, who believes those much-maligned do-gooders the rich are being "squeezed for every penny" by being forced to pay VAT. Quite unsurprisingly, his desire is to reduce the "tax burden" on businesses operating here. A Tory solution, but like so many others, implemented with vigour by a Labour Party eager to please it's corporate masters. Government policies already managed to reduce the average level of corporate tax in the 30 richest countries from 37.5% to 30.8% in just seven years.

Along with politicians eager to do the work of the capitalists, these threats help the capitalist class displace costs from its own shoulders and onto ours. Prem Sikka, a leading accountancy specialist, estimates that up to £85bn of tax is avoided each year just through the use of offshore tax havens. In the four years to June 2003, Murdoch's News Corporation paid just 6% of the pre-tax profits for the same period, much less than the rest us have to pay. During the nineties, he paid a grand total of no tax whatsoever in the UK. For some reason, his mouthpieces the Times, the Sun and Sky attack working class "dole scum" but never their masters.

Whilst our communities are plastered with scare-tactic advertisements warning us that the benefits agency "are onto us",

the state seems remarkably less interested in pursuing tax cheating by the rich. Inland Revenue statistics reveal that businesses illegally avoid billions in taxes.

But it is not just blame that gets targeted at us. The avoidance shifts the tax burden onto the working class, whose council and income taxes go up to com-



pensate for the shortfall. Taxes extracted from workers increased by over 120% between 1989-90 and 2002-03, whereas corporate tax collection increased by just 36%, despite a massive rise in corporate profits.

Parliamentary democracy is simply a method of managing society in the interests of capitalists. The minutes of meetings between the Inland Revenue and top corporations reveal promises "not to examine in any detail" fraudulent tax payments.

At the current time class conflict seems at a low ebb. The boss class use weapons like taxes, productivity deals and "outsourcing" to grind us down. But we also have weapons. It is all too easy to forget tides always turn and the fight back has already begun. Resistance to council tax increases is spreading and the government is running scared. At work the number of strikes is increasing as people take direct action to improve their lives - see inside for more details. ★

SCHIZOPHRENIA SPREADING

YOU'D PROBABLY HOPE for politicians to be, at least to some extent, sane and sound. Forget now about Bush, just focus on British and European ones.



First there's the homicidal urges. Killing people by ordering the bombing of a foreign country surely must be murder.

Then they seem to be developing a split personality and holding different opinions on similar issues. For example according to Tony Blair borders must be both opened and closed at the same time. Is this possible?

On the one hand, as a country leading capitalist globalisation, the UK wants to have every market on the planet open to its products, so these don't have to bother about customs or borders. That this can destroy the economies of many households in developing countries, as well as working conditions here, doesn't bother politicians. Big money 1, normal people 0.

On the other hand the controls at the borders, for people trying to cross them, are getting tighter. Those who can fill gaps in "our" labour market, so Blair said, will be allowed in, but without the right to benefits at all. They'll still have to pay taxes, though, probably on an emergency higher rate. So borders will be closed for the people, unless required by the companies, but still open for exports. Big money 2, normal people 0.

We, as working class anarchists, can't help but express our solidarity with all those arriving to this country, either fleeing an oppressive political regime or the equally threatening, and much more widespread, economic misery. Borders are only a tool in the rulers' hands to impose the society they have designed on a worldwide basis, a profoundly divided one between privileged and dispossessed. So don't believe their lies. Campaign for sanity. Bring down the borders. ★

ON THE FRONTLINE

Many major strikes happend last month:

- 85,000 workers from job centres and benefits offices went on strike. Also 5,000 driving tests could be cancelled as more than 1,000 examiners joined a strike by office staff at the Driving Standards Agency. The strike has added to the biggest outbreak of industrial unrest in the civil service for 13 years. Civil servants across Northern Ireland staged another one-day strike as part of their ongoing pay protest and thousands staged walkouts of up to two hours to attend protest rallies. Meat inspection staff staged a four-day strike as part of the civil service pay dispute. Meat plants in Ballymena and Crumlin have been closed.

- Over 100 workers at the Beagle aircraft firm in Christchurch staged a one-day strike on 23/1 in support of a pay claim. A spokesman said they were demanding a 6.5 per cent increase, and had not received an expected pay award in August. Some delivery lorries were also turned away from the Stony Lane factory.

- Tram services in Manchester were disrupted on Saturday after drivers went on 24-hour strike.

- Staff from Bristol's Crown and County courts went on strike in protest against poor pay. Clerks, ushers and administrators picketed outside the courts to protest against below-inflation pay rise proposals. Let's hope there's more strikes!

- Production of Land Rover vehicles was hit by another 24-hour strike over pay. Thousands of workers out of the company's factory in Solihull staged a second walk-out in two weeks after rejecting a two-year deal worth 6.5 per cent.

- Workers at black cab manufacturers London Taxis International have pledged to stay out on strike until company chiefs agree to a four per cent pay rise. Production was halted when all 199 workers walked out in protest over the company's 2.9 per cent pay offer.

- Bus drivers in Lincoln manned a picket line in a strike over pay. Around 150 workers from the travel firm were expected to take part in walkout today and again on Monday.

- Disgruntled bus drivers from First Scotland East held a one day on strike last Saturday, as part of an ongoing dispute with management over conditions and pay. Many drivers began an unofficial overtime ban on Monday.

- College lecturers in Leicester struck in protest over workload and holiday concerns.

- About 4,000 nursery nurses have taken part in further strike action as part of a pay row. ★

CELEBRITY PRAT OF THE MONTH

"Only the fake succeed"

YOU SAID IT Johnny. Rotten, with an overdose of supreme irony, by taking part in the so-called "Reality T.V. show" (bikinis in a jungle: Reality?) "I'm a Celebrity - Get me out of Here" confirms what any genuine anarchist, even in the '70's, knew about his phoney posturing, which included the filthy habit of spitting on people.

As (in)famous for the wearing of safety pins and swastika emblems as singing "anti-establishment" songs. Rotten passes the time reading the *Economist* while working property deals in the egotist's paradise of Hollywood. Some working-class rebel our Johnny, eh?

Now he joins the publicity seeking desperadoes who'd do literally anything to



Rotten: Prat

keep their fading faces in the media spotlight. What is the point of this show? More to the point, what is the point of prats like Rotten who fall all over themselves to appear in it? REAL anarchist punk bands like Crass not only made more meaningful music than the sex pistols, they never sold out either, still turning out songs urging our class to revolt. Which is more than can be said for Rotten and the idiotic company he keeps these days. 'Get me Outta Here' indeed - we say get the fucking lot of 'em out of here! Permanently.

Rotten/swamp/parasites/celebrities/snakes/piranhas: the Jungle - a murky, slimy, slithery mass of glop. We couldn't come up with a more accurate description of Capitalism if we tried. Thanks Johnny, yer PRAT! ★

BREAK WITH LABOUR

THE RAIL UNION RMT has been thrown out of the Labour Party. Some of its branches supported the Scottish Socialist Party. Labour demanded complete allegiance from its union associates, the RMT leadership refused.

The RMT leaders have not broken with "old" Labour politics though. The support of branches for the Scottish Socialist Party, for the now nearly dead Socialist Alliance and the new lash-up of the Respect and Unity Coalition between George Galloway MP and the Socialist Workers Party shows a frenzied search for a replacement for Old Labour politics. A break with Labour has not meant a break with old-style reformist politics.

Today, Labour has adapted itself to the market. There is no room in today's world for reformist, social-democratic, politics. The choice is either to completely adapt to the market, or to develop revolutionary positions. In this process, a number of political groups have/will set themselves up, as alternatives to the Labour Party. But their solutions are no solutions at all, just a return to dreary, dead end politics that offered and still offer no real solution to the hell of capitalism.

Nevertheless any break with Labour can be used by those arguing for real independent working class politics in the workplace. As part of this we should point out that members of other unions can fill in a form that stops their dues going to finance the Labour Party.

Alongside the move by RMT, and possibly the Fire Brigades Union, to disaffiliate from Labour comes a counter-



move. The Labour government wishes to forestall any further signs of revolt by promising millions of pounds to "modernise" the unions. This money is designed to ensure the loyalty of the union leaders, which is forthcoming anyway, as a whole bloc of unions with

UNISON and GMB at their head consistently argue for continuing affiliation to Labour.

Any hopes in these other union leaders leading a breakaway from Labour politics, whether of the "Old" or "New" varieties, are false. Workers will have to rely on their own efforts at self-organisation and not on a bunch of union bureaucrats.

No Vote for War! Boycott the Next Election.

Don't back Labour's warmongering

If you do not wish to contribute financially to the Labour Party, who think blood for oil company profits come before the welfare of the populations of Iraq and here, copy the following, and send it to your work's wages section.

Political Fund Exemption Notice

I hereby give notice that I object to contributing to the political fund of the union and in consequence exempt, in the manner provided by Chapter 6 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (consolidation) Act 1992, from contributing to that fund.

Sign it, print your name, union membership number, address, union branch and date. Tony Blair's money will then be in your pocket. Enjoy! ★

ONE LUMP OR TWO?

ON MONDAY 16th February the fascist British National Party held two demonstrations in Central London. Counter demonstrations were called, but noticing a pair of fascists had left their demonstration to get a coffee some anarchists decided to take more direct action. A short while later the fascists were wearing their coffee and had sprouted lumps on their heads!

Directly confronting fascists makes it more difficult for them to operate. We need to have a political climate where the BNP can not come out and hold public events. Racism and fascism are weak



when workers are fighting for their own class interests. Struggle will re-emerge. There are already signs of this which the media prefers to hide news of beneath a barrage of false debate over capitalist issues. To get involved in militant anti-fascism contact London AF (details on back page). ★

ANARCHISTS AGAINST THE WALL & OTHER NEWS

THE ISRAELI ARMY fired live rounds against the Anarchist Movement Against the Wall, which organised an international camp against the wall being built in Cisjordan. These attacks took place on the 28th and 31st December. Two activists were seriously wounded, including the Israeli anarchist Gil Naamati. This adds to a long list of Palestinians, Israeli anti-militarists and foreign activists seriously wounded or murdered. The movement unites Israelis and Palestinians in internationalist action against Israeli colonialism and Palestinian and Israeli nationalism. It calls for the free federation of communes in the region, the coexistence of the populations whatever their origin, and a break with the logic of nationalism, colonialism, militarism and religious bigotry. Such ideas divide Israeli workers from their Palestinian and Arab counterparts, to the greatest profit of the ruling classes of the region. To make contact with Anarchists Against the Wall: noa_revoltng@yahoo.com or gshalif@netvision.net.il or cat@squat.net

London Anarchist Youth

London Anarchist Youth have relaunched themselves, with a clear organisational structure and five agreed principles:

- Anti-Authoritarian
- Anti-Capitalist
- Anti-Prejudice
- Class Struggle
- Direct Action

The resistance editors see this as a very positive step and wish them well for the future. Contact London Anarchist Youth, c/o 84b Whitechapel High St, E1 7QX or visit: www.anarchistyouth.net

Repression in Mexico

In October paramilitaries attacked a meeting at Santa Maria Yaviche of the CIPO-RFM (a libertarian organisation based among the native inhabitants of Oaxaca State in Mexico).

A libertarian militant, Bartolome Salas Chavez, was murdered, and nine others seriously wounded. Behind these paramilitaries, the CIPO-RFM sees the hand of Jose Murat, governor of Oaxaca State. They demand his immediate sacking, as well as that of his secretary Hector Anuar Mafud, and the dissolution of the paramilitary groups.

More info at: www.nodo50.org/cipo

Not even wage slavery!

Highfield's Minimum Wage Project in Leicester has revealed that a factory worker, who they describe as having "learning difficulties," was recently being paid the princely sum of just 29p an hour! Unfortunately, the Highfield's project have not named the employer, but if any of our readers in Leicestershire happen to know the leech responsible for this, then drop us a line at:

Leicester Anarchist Federation, Dept. Z, 73 Humberstone Gate, Leicester, LE1 1WB. Email: leicester_af@yahoo.co.uk

The Hereford Insurgent

Hereford Anarchist Federation have launched a new bulletin called "The Hereford Insurgent", Herefordshire's only working class newspaper.

For a copy write to:

Anarchist Federation (Hereford), PO Box 7, Pontypool, Gwent, NP4 8YB or Visit: www.afed.org.uk or Email: hereford@afed.cjb.net ★

TIME
BOMB



Kate Sharpley

IN 1917 QUEEN MARY was handing out medals in Greenwich, most of them for fallen heroes being presented to their womenfolk. One 22-year old girl, said by the local press to be under the influence of anarchist propaganda, having collected medals for her dead father, brother and boyfriend, then threw them in the Queens face, saying: "If you think so much of them, you can keep them". The Queens face was scratched and so was that of one of her attendant ladies. The police, not a little under the influence of patriotic propaganda, then grabbed the girl and beat her up. When she was released without charge from the police station a few days later she was scarcely recognisable.

The girl was Kate Sharpley, who had been active in the Woolwich anarchist group and helped keep it going through the difficult years of World War 1. After her clash with the police she was sacked from her job on suspicion of dishonesty (there was nothing missing, but a policeman had called to check up on her...) and, selling libertarian pamphlets in the street, she was recognised by the police, and warned that if she appeared there again she would be charged with soliciting as a prostitute (which in those days would have been a calamity, and even today a disaster, if once convicted). Isolated from her family, and with the group broken up, she moved out of activity, away from the neighbourhood, and married.

By chance, shortly before her death she re-connected with the anarchist movement. She remembered the movement with nostalgia, and gave a fascinating account of the local group in the years before World War 1. Some young anarchist women asked her if she had a message to the Anarchist movement today. Her answer: "tell the kids they're doing all right, they don't need any advice from me". Especially she praised the young women of today: "I wouldn't have had to take cover like I did if women of my day had any guts" she said. But she did have guts. Only a few in 1917 dared take any action in beleaguered England.

In 1978 The Kate Sharpley Library was formed, dedicated to researching and restoring the history of the anarchist movement, it regularly publishes information on lost areas of anarchist history. It was named in honour of Kate Sharpley, one of the countless "unknown" members of the movement so often ignored by "official historians".

Kate Sharpley Library, BM Hurricane, London, WC1N 3XX or Visit: www.katesharpleylibrary.net ★

INSIDE INFORMATION

Support: anarprisonersupp@hotmail.com
or Visit: www.anarchistps.org

Anarchist Jailed in France

René Riesel has been sentenced to seven months in jail because he destroyed Genetically Modified Organisms in a "on ground" crop and also in a research laboratory in the south of France, in 1998.

René Riesel, an anti-capitalist militant has been in jail since the 1st of December. In the jail he reads things for his jail mates, including Tatchanka (the newsletter of the anarcho-syndicalist CNT-AIT Gards'Union). You can send letters and reading material to: René RIESEL, n° d'écrou 4612, Maison d'Arrêt, 37 chemin Séjалан, 48000 MENDE, FRANCE

More info: <http://cnteducation30.free.fr>

Sardinian anarchists

An virulent media campaign against anarchists, is being carried out in Italy. The Minister of the Interior, Pisanu, has drawn attention to a demonstration in Cagliari, capital of Sardinia on 22nd October 2003, where two anarchists were arrested for "Resistance with violence

against the agents of public force". The trial looks set to last several months. This is linked to the arrest of another Sardinian anarchist, Massimo Leonardi after a demonstration in Rome in October 2003 and has already spent three months in prison. Another anarchist, Marco, was arrested on 3rd December. Write to: Massimo Leonardi, carcere di Rebibbia, via Majetti 70, 00156 Rome and Marco Ferruzzi, carcere di Regina Coeli, via della Lungara 29, 00165 Rome.

Prisoners riot at jail

In early February a riot and a siege took place at Exeter Prison. Inmates damaged computers and doors during the five-hour disturbance. Some of the prisoners armed themselves with chair legs and pool balls. The incident started just before 8pm when a group of about 15 inmates refused to return to their cells after socialising. Prison staff tried to negotiate with them but were forced to withdraw when the prisoners became aggressive. The Home Office said that "moderate" damage was caused on the wing. The authorities regained control by 12.45am. ★

Anti-War activist on hunger strike!

Eoin Rice, who has refused to accept a ban from Co Clare as a bail condition and has been jailed, has gone on hunger strike. Mr Rice, an anti-war activist, had been before the bench for motoring offences and this new condition was introduced by the judge himself and not the prosecution. For a full report on this at: www.indymedia.ie

Send letters to:

Eoin Rice, D-wing, Limerick Prison, Mulgrave Street, Limerick, Ireland.

Anarchist Jailed in England

ON the 23rd Jan, in Southwark Crown court anarchist James Borek pleaded guilty to attacking a policeman at the J18 protest in London plus an additional charge of skipping bail in 2000. Jim will serve four and a half years in prison.

Please write to: James Borek LL6803, B4-14 HMP Wandsworth, PO Box 757, Heathfield Road, London SW18 3HS

More info contact Anarchist Prisoner



Subvert and resist

Take precautions when going on demonstrations and don't take cameras, booze or drugs. If you're nicked give your name and address then say 'no comment' to any other questions.

MARCH:

1: Libertarian parent and kid drop in – then every Monday 4:30-6:30pm Autonomy Club, Freedom Bookshop, Angel Alley, 84b Whitechapel High St. Email: libertarianparents@yahoo.co.uk

6-7: Frock On! Women's Music/Skill-Sharing Festival in honour of International Women's Day. At the Pearse Institute, 840 Govan Road, Glasgow. 10 am-6pm daytime, 8pm-midnight nighttime Daytime - everything free, nighttime - £3-£5. Email: info@frockon.org or Visit: www.frockon.org/march04.htm

6-14: Global Women's Strike Week of Activities. Tel: 020 7482 2496 Email: womenstrike8m@server101.com Visit: www.globalwomenstrike.net

8: International Women's Day Visit: www.enrager.net/hosted/m8/

19: Blockade and demonstration against US militarism at Menwith Hill, North Yorkshire. Visit: www.blockthebase.org.uk Tel: 01274 730795

20: Anti-war march. 12 Noon, from Hyde Park to Trafalgar Square. For info on the Anarchist block visit: www.enrager.net/bloc or contact London AF.

25: Anarchist discussion meeting organised by London Anarchist Federation and Freedom collective. 7pm Autonomy Club, Freedom Bookshop, Angel Alley, 84b Whitechapel High St. More info from London AF.

Subscribe to resistance

- I enclose £4 (£6 EU, £12 Rest of the world) for the next 12 issues of resistance bulletin (cheques payable to "AF") and send to AF, PO Box 375, Knaphill, Woking, Surrey, GU21 2XL
- I enclose £4 for a year's subscription to **Organise!** the magazine of the AF.
- I am interested in the **Anarchist Federation** and would like more information.

Name.....

Address.....

Join the resistance

The **Anarchist Federation** is an organisation of **class struggle** anarchists aiming to abolish capitalism and all oppression to create a free and equal society. This is **Anarchist Communism**.

We see today's society as being divided into two main opposing classes: the **ruling class** which controls all the power and wealth, and the **working class** which the rulers exploit to maintain this. By racism, sexism and other forms of oppression, as well as war and environmental destruction the rulers weaken and divide us. Only the **direct action** of working class people can defeat these attacks and ultimately overthrow capitalism.

As the capitalist system rules the whole world, its destruction must be complete and world wide. We reject attempts to reform it, such as working through parliament and national liberation movements, as they fail to challenge capitalism itself. Unions also work as a part of the capitalist system, so although workers struggle within them they will be unable to bring about capitalism's destruction unless they go beyond these limits.

Organisation is vital if we're to beat the bosses, so we work for a united anarchist movement and are affiliated to the International of Anarchist Federations.

The Anarchist Federation has members across Britain and Ireland fighting for the kind of world outlined above. Contact us at: **Anarchist Federation**, 84B, Whitechapel High Street, London, E1 7QX. Tel: 07946 214 590 Visit: www.afed.org.uk Email: info@afed.org.uk