

resistance

anarchist bulletin

Free/Donation
Issue 63 July 2004



Going Underground

IT MIGHT APPEAR on the surface that the bosses and the government are getting away with attacking us on a number of fronts. However, appearances can be deceptive.

Increased casualisation of work means that 14% of us are temporary employees – with much fewer rights and no union representation. UK workers work the longest hours in Europe, and we get the least number of days off. And it seems that there is no fight back. According to the Office for National Statistics, the number of strikes fell last year to an all-time low, with workers striking for only 500,000 working days. The unions themselves, once seen as bastions of working class resistance, have shrunk to cover only around 29% of the UK workforce. However, looking at the unions to gauge the level of resistance is a mistake. Most workers now recognise that the unions are more interested in compromise and cozying up to politicians than in organizing serious resistance.

So, where is the resistance?

Resistance is all around us, but is less organised and more atomised than it once was. It is less immediately visible as political resistance, but not all political action waves a banner and marches around.

It is not as if there is workplace peace. A poll by HR Gateway showed that two-thirds of workers don't trust their immediate superiors, while 80% distrust their directors. Last month, the Economist warned UK bosses that they were operating in the worst climate in Europe for theft (what they euphemistically call



"shrinkage"). Britain has the honour of having the highest rate of shoplifting in Europe, and it is heartening to know that "shrinkage is increasing alarmingly in some countries and is generally on the rise" throughout the continent.

Despite the fall in activity within the official union, resistance carries on at the workplace in all sorts of ways. UK workers manage to take back £1.2bn a year from their employers through theft. Interestingly, employee theft also shows a pattern of targeting larger capitalists: 19% of firms with fewer than 15 employees have experienced staff fraud, with the figure being more than doubled (48%) for businesses with over 36 staff. This desire to take back what the bosses have stolen from us was highlighted in a survey by Leicester University, which showed that 70% of the 2,000 people questioned admitted they would steal

from their employer if they felt that could get away with it.

Another way of resisting is to take back the time that has been stolen from us. With the increase in workload and hours, people are more likely to suffer physical and mental illness. The only recourse is to take time off. Despite guilt-tripping work cultures, where people are expected to put work above all else, people are holding on to the power to protect their own basic health. The bosses realize that "absenteeism" is costing them billions, but instead of doing anything about the source of the problem, companies like Tesco's are now trying to force people to work when ill.

The real figures for all these acts of resistance are likely to be much higher, as most of it goes unnoticed. How many use company phones to speak to their families, use the internet while at work or knock off early when the boss is out for the day?

Bosses want to pay us as little as possible for the most amount of work, whereas we want to work the least amount possible for the most amount of money. To live we must sell our bodies and minds in return for a wage, which we then have to give back by buying a small proportion of what we produced. In asserting our dignity as human beings, it is natural that we resist this exploitation.

Any act which tries to reduce the control capitalism has over our lives – whether at work or in the shops – is an act of resistance. A world where work and life blend together, where human needs are met and exploitation ends is possible – we glimpse it in every act of resistance. The task before us is to link up with each other, and make our resistance as organised as possible – see inside for the latest news of strikes. ★

ON THE FRONTLINE

RIGHT, LET'S START with the biggy: the threat of first national rail strike for over a decade has made the management drop plans to dismantle the workers final salary pension scheme (something which is going to cause a lot more trouble for the state over the next few years). Staff from London Underground who are involved in their own struggle for a four day week are going ahead with their strike, meaning millions of workers will take a Tuesday afternoon off work in order to be able to get home.

Ambulance staff in the north-east are taking industrial action over plans to stop paying them for periods when they're "on call" but not actually out in the ambulance – that covers things like scheduled breaks and dinner hours – all times when the workers are not allowed to leave the ambulance station – maybe the same should apply to the penny-pinching executives of the health trusts on their heavy one-half day a week for 100 grand schedules?

Looks like a repeat of previous summers of conflict on the airways is on the cards after 1000 check-in staff and baggage handlers at 17 airports voted to strike over a crap 2.5% pay offer – which was immediately rejected in favour of "imminent" strike action – let's hope they've learnt the lesson of the attempted stitch-ups by the unions during last year's mass wildcat at Heathrow and decide to go it alone this time.

A victory for race-stall handlers (the people who operate and maintain the stalls at race-tracks) who fought off plans to cut their allowances and expenses and actually turned it into a 2.5% wage raise instead after carrying out industrial action for over a month threatening race-meetings all over the country.

More trouble for the Labour Party as a second large union disaffiliates from the Party – the Fire Brigades Union has now followed the lead recently set by the RMT and taken their funding elsewhere – various leftist groups are undoubtedly already rubbing their hands in glee at the thought of bureaucratically getting their grubby hands on some proper working class loot.

A series of marches highlighting the UK's pensions crisis took place on the 19th June – London saw about 10,000 people marching – this issue is not going to disappear with companies seeking to slash final salary or "defined benefit schemes" that pay out two-thirds of final salaries at retirement and is one to keep an eye on – a lot of potential and a lot of very angry people. ★

DIVIDE AND RULE – DON'T BE FOOLED!

THIS JUNE'S ELECTION results have been more than a little disappointing for the likes of Nick Griffin and the British National Party. Despite people's disillusionment with the traditional parties and the huge investment in glossy leaflets, they gained no more than one councillor in the Bradford area and no seats at all in the European elections. So why dedicate so much time to fighting a failed bunch of politicians?

Fundamentally because the BNP and their mates in the National Front, White Nationalist Party and other neo-nazi sects aren't just about the crap policies, lies and bullshit that distinguish most other politicians. Whilst they offer up the same solution – "vote for me I'll sort it out" – what they attempt to instill in people is a sense of identity, an identity based not around our interests or place in society, but on the colour of our skin, our ethnic group and where we were born.

In Bradford, they have managed to sell this identity to both the working and middle classes. Those living in smashed communities, working in shit jobs or struggling on benefits, are resentful of what they perceive to be one-sided 'multiculturalism' and those in the leafy suburbs are victims of a general media-induced fear of immigrants. Not only do the BNP provide something to be proud of, they also provide someone to blame as well for just about any problem people have. This



may explain why both Bradford's estates and well-off places like Howarth now have BNP councillors.

The system only survives by constantly presenting new scapegoats to blame and new politicians to "sort things out", and the BNP aren't the only bastards who thrive as a result. The divisions and hostility that exist between ethnic groups in Bradford, Burnley, Halifax and countless other places across the country and the world aren't accidental, or "natural". They're sustained and exploited by "community leaders", religious hierarchies and of course politicians of every creed and nationality.

What's more, in a society dominated by unnecessary misery and exploitation, someone's got to be responsible, and if we weren't so busy hating each other, like our leaders and "representatives" tell us to, we'd hate them instead.

Groups like the BNP swell in number, as they have in Bradford, when people grow tired of the shite of conventional politics. They manage to divert the anger in our workplaces and communities away from the struggle for a free society for all. The ruling class would far rather we torch each other's houses, than their jobcentres, prisons and council chambers – and much prefer that we vote for fascists than run the world ourselves...

Contact Bradford Anarchist Group at: bradfordcalling@yahoo.com ★

ANARCHISTS AGAINST THE WALL



THE NEW "security perimeter" being built by the Israeli government – several hundred kilometres of walls, razor wire, electrified fences and watch towers – will severely hamper Palestinians' already very restricted freedom of movement, preventing them from reaching their jobs or families by an accident of geography.

Furthermore, the wall encircles all the good land and water, conveniently grabbing it for the Israeli side. In a country already plagued by racial hatred, where Palestinians and Israelis no longer speak each other's language, this wall will further divide two peoples.

But there are still a few people who can see through the racial and religious lies and are prepared to fight together against all systems of separation. Anarchists Against Walls is one such group.

Formed a little over a year ago, it now numbers a couple of hundred activists and many more supporters, both Israeli and Palestinian. Acting directly, by dismantling checkpoints and tearing down sections of the wall, they are noted for their dedication. The shooting of one member by the Israeli army provoked controversy. This was the first time an Israeli civilian, rather than a Palestinian, had been shot by the army in a demonstration.

Here they are in their own words: "We forced open the gate at Mas'Ha to open a gap in the wall of hatred and to provide with our actions a living, kicking alternative to the apartheid policy of the Israeli government. We regard the separation wall not only as a huge disaster for the Palestinian people, but also as a direct threat for us and for anyone who desires a peaceful and secure life. This is not a security fence. This is a racist apartheid fence that will cause bloodshed for all of us for many years to come..."

Continued on the next page...

TO VOTE OR TO PARTICIPATE?

WHEN IT COMES to elections, the standard cry of the anarchist movement is "Don't vote!" This was the "line" of many anarchists during last months European and local elections. But the Anarchist Federation – Hereford have been calling for campaigns encouraging participation in place of the anti-voting strategy.

A spokesperson for the AF – Hereford said: "Obviously we're not calling for participation in those structures that government has created for us, we are encouraging people to set up their own community and workplace action groups to fight back against injustice.

"People should be involved in the everyday issues that affect all of our lives, and voting gets in the way of this. Certain people end up thinking that politicians can solve our problems for us. They won't." She said.

AF – Hereford say that people should tackle all the problems impacting on our daily lives they effect. Government and capitalism create them and it's these institutions that need to be removed. They are a barrier to equality and freedom, they say.

And what of the people that vote?

"We know that voting won't change anything so why waste time telling people not to do something that won't have an effect! The people that choose to vote will soon see it changes nothing. What's important is that we are encouraging everybody to participate" she said.

AGAINST THE WALL continued

"We try to live in our daily lives the changes we are striving for. We work in a spirit of full cooperation, without leaders. We are realists and understand that the abolition of the state system will not occur tomorrow, but even today we can already demand a way of life with 'no rulers and no ruled' – 'no masters and no slaves'. Direct action is the democratic act when democracy stops functioning. The Berlin wall was not dismantled by rulers and agreements, but by the citizens who felled it with their own hands... Since we can remember, we have been brainwashed with hatred and fear of our Palestinian neighbours. But these lies were exposed and are clear for everyone who participates in the action to see. We will continue to struggle together – ... for justice and equality for all." For more info Email Vegan_politics@yahoo.com



Meanwhile there were the usual low turnouts in the elections for local councils, London Mayor, and London Assembly. People could not identify with the world of bankers, bureaucrats and bosses.

Where people did vote, Labour received a hammering for their policies on the war, on public services and a whole range of other issues. As for the so-called left alternatives they also did badly.

What these results show is, both here and throughout Europe, is an increasing dislike and active distrust of parliament and politicians. This has to be translated into real activity at the grassroots, both in the neighbourhoods and in the workplace. We should not hide the fact that the votes for the fascists and other candidates of the right like UKIP showed growing trends towards xenophobia and flag-waving nationalism.

This is in part due to the collapse of the welfare state and the social democratic and Labour parties turning away from any identification with working class needs at all. This has created a vacuum that the fascists and xenophobic parties are keen to fill. But this vacuum cannot be filled by any phoney left alternative at elections. A real movement has to emerge, whose main weapons are direct action, outside and against parliament, that can develop a real alternative to the vanishing welfare state, and gives working class people back their confidence. ★

NO COMMENT REPRINTED

NO COMMENT: the defendant's guide to arrest has just been republished. This handy little guide to what to do if you are arrested has just come out in a third edition of 10,000 copies. It has been updated and reprinted by former members of the Anarchist Black Cross in conjunction with the Legal Defence and Monitoring Group. It was funded by proceeds of a damages award from the Metropolitan police, who were sued for false arrest and imprisonment and breach of human rights. We are sure that they will be pleased to know that their funds are being invested in a public information campaign as vital and deserving as this.

You can get a copy by sending a second class stamped SAE to: No Comment, c/o BM Automatic, London, WC1N 3XX or you can download copies from www.ldmg.org.uk

TIME BOMB



Storm the Bastille!

THE FORTRESS OF the Bastille was one of the symbols of the old regime in France in 1789. Looming over the populous quarter of the Faubourg Saint Antoine in Paris, there were suspicions that it would be used by the King to crush the uprising of the people of Paris. The crowds armed themselves and started building barricades in the neighbourhood. At 7am on July 14th, seven to eight thousand people swarmed over the defences of the Hotel des Invalides, whose garrison already had a "seditious spirit". Artillery and 32,000 muskets were seized by the crowd. 200,000 people gathered in the streets of Paris. The middle class wanted the fortress surrendered to their militia, who would then guard it jointly with the royalist troops. The crowd foiled this. They advanced, crying out: "We want the Bastille!" A rumour had circulated that the fortress's cannon had been aimed at the street of St. Antoine in what appeared to be a threat to the people of Paris. People gathered around the Bastille to demand that the cannon be redirected. A deputy met with de Launay, who assured him that the cannon were aimed as they always had been. Dissatisfied with this report, some members of the crowd began to take more direct and violent action. Ten men managed to scale the walls and lower the first drawbridge. They then set to work on the second drawbridge when the soldiers opened fire. For four hours the crowd tried to lower the second bridge and storm the fortress and for four hours their assaults were turned back with musket fire. 98 people in the crowd were killed and many injured. Finally the defenders urged de Launay to surrender. But instead of surrendering, de Launay threatened to blow up the fortress. Before he could realize his plan, the soldiers surrendered on condition that no harm would come to them. The militia of the middle class could not control the crowd, enraged by the large number of dead, and several soldiers were killed. De Launay had his throat cut and his head was carried around the streets of Paris. Two days after the Bastille was taken the National Assembly ordered that it be razed. No stone was left standing.

A symbol of despotism had been spectacularly destroyed. All revolutions have destroyed symbols of power – coming up, the Houses of Parliament? ★

Issue 62 of **Organise!** the magazine of the Anarchist Federation is out now. Available online or £2 for a hard copy from the address on the back page.

INSIDE INFORMATION

Indigenous activist needs support

INDIGENOUS SOVEREIGNIST JOHN Graham (<http://www.grahamdefense.org>) is currently fighting against extradition from Canada to the USA. In December of 2003 he was arrested in Vancouver, BC by the Canadian government on an extradition order from the FBI. The FBI is framing him for the murder of Anna May Aquash, another AIM activist who was found, murdered, on the Pine Ridge Reservation during the stand-off at Wounded Knee in 1976. She was most likely executed by the FBI during its Counter-Intelligence Program - COINTELPRO.

John Graham has only until September or October until his next extradition hearing in Vancouver. This hearing is likely to be only a formality that will result in his extradition, conviction and life imprisonment in Amerikkka.

He needs all the support that we can organize for him - letters, demos, whatever can be pulled together; ideally a day

of action in September.

A Canadian activist is currently trying to organize a speaking tour about this in the UK in mid-August/early September to raise awareness about this case and the ongoing genocide and indigenous resistance in Canada.

Do you know any group or individuals in your community who might be willing to organize a speaking event of this kind?

If you can help Email: bryce@appropriate-economics.org

Still fighting in Russia

OLEG SEREBRENNIKOV IS one of two anarchists who were brutally beaten by fascists on the 23rd February at Izhevsk, capital of the Udmurt Republic (Russia). His crime was to have taken part in a picket commemorating the 60th anniversary of the deportation of the Chechens and Ingushs by Stalin¹.

Beaten about the head with an iron bar, he is lucky to be alive, but he still suffers from serious health problems and has been hospitalised twice already. To continue to receive treatment, he needs

financial aid.

Since he started being active in the Votkinsk campaign² in 2001, Oleg has never spared his efforts for the anarchist movement, and it would be shameful if he is disabled because we cannot provide him with the medical aid he needs. The cheapest place in a hospital plus medicines costs 100 roubles a day, about 80 euros a month. The Moscow Anarchist Black Cross has collected 200 roubles, but they have already been spent on medicines and Oleg's family is very poor. Contact: Anarchist Black Cross of Moscow. PO Box 13, 109028 Moscow, Russia.

¹Stalin deported nearly all Chechens and Ingushs from the Caucasus to Kazakhstan in 1944., which resulted in tens of thousands of dead.

²The Votkinsk campaign: Votkinsk is a working class town, where following an agreement between the Americans and Putin, the authorities wanted to place a factory for the treatment of old American nuclear missiles (the US Congress opposed this factory being placed in the Nevada desert, judging it "too dangerous"). ★



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.

JULY: 3 – Boycott Caterkiller. Meet 12 noon at junction of North Road/Kensington Gdns. They will be visiting several local shops that sell Caterkiller goods, asking shoppers not to buy them and persuading the shops to stop selling them. www.bigcampaign.org www.brightonpalestinecampaign.org/Boycott_Caterpillar.asp

4 – Peace Makers Ball! Part of the Independence FROM America Day! 4.30pm at Lakenheath US nuclear airbase, Suffolk. Come to party, wear your ballgown, bring a picnic! Tel: 01508 550446 www.motherearth.org/lakenheathaction

4 – Protest at Menwith Hill US spybase. Visit: www.caab.org

10 – Anarchist alternative to Marxism public meeting, 6pm, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, WC1.

16-18 – 3rd Anarchist Youth Network Summer Gathering. If you want to participate, please let the AYN know. Tel: 07866 933 927.

19 - 25 – Disarm Farnborough Airshow. For more info contact: Disarm DSEi, BM Box 3679, London, WC1N 3XX, Email: disarm@dsei.org Visit: www.dsei.org

22 – London AF/Freedom public meeting on casualisation. 7.30pm, Freedom bookshop (in Angel Alley), 84b, Whitechapel High St, London, E1 7QX.

AUGUST: 4 - 8 – Earth First! Summer Gathering for anyone interested in ecological or social direct action. Tel: 08453 550 111, Visit: www.earthfirstgathering.org.uk

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- I am interested in the **Anarchist Federation** and would like more information.

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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