

resistance

anarchist bulletin

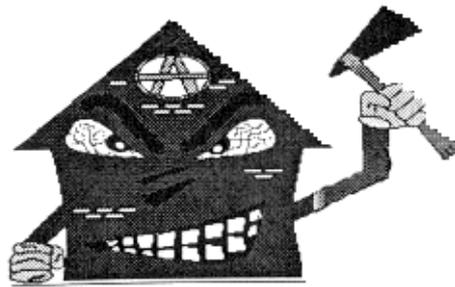
Free/Donation
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Class War on the home front

AS THE STATE privatises council housing, house prices continue to spiral upwards, and private renters continue to pay through the nose, all this is seen as the inevitable course run by market forces. "Affordable" housing developments by private companies (part-funded by the taxpayer) are often affordable only to those with minimum incomes of £30K-£50K, close to or well above national average income, suggesting that just about every other form of housing is now "unaffordable" to working people. Builders, plumbers, architects or electricians aren't paid any more than they used to, so the only people who benefit from this situation are landlords and the directors and shareholders of the housing industry.

Council tenants are faced with increased rent under PFIs/ALMOs/Housing Associations and still live in accommodation that hasn't seen essential repairs for years, new owner-occupiers have historical levels of debt, and private renters have few alternatives and very little security. No-one's getting any more for their money except those who already have plenty to invest in development schemes or buy-to-let. If a house was worth £60K ten years ago, and £300K now, is it five times as good? Of course not, more than likely it's in a worse condition; house prices have little relationship to how useful something is or how much labour has been put into building or maintaining it, they merely reflect the power of a minority to control an essential resource that was built and paid for the first time decades or centuries ago.



We'd like to see all housing become social housing, collectively owned and maintained by communities, so that individuals and families can have homes to live in without spending half their working week to pay for rent to landlords, service charges to PFI companies or mortgages. This means defending what's left of social and low-cost housing in the short term, and trying to build up networks of tenants' and residents' groups that can take control away from private companies, landlords, and the state in the long term.

When people talk about communal ownership of property, they often think that anarchists want to steal someone's nice house away from them and fill it with dirty squatters. That's not the case, we think everyone should be able to live in a decent level of comfort, but no-one should be able to live off the labour of others due to private ownership of a resource they didn't do anything to create, and don't use themselves. Libertarian socialism would allow the community to provide for builders, plumbers, architects, electricians, painters and decorators like everyone,

without exploitative employers forcing them to work in unsafe and often lethal conditions. More than one construction worker dies every week in this country while working in unsafe conditions so the status quo hardly suits them either. Communal ownership of housing would allow for people to take control over their own homes, existing owner-occupiers would be able to keep their houses without paying out tens of thousands to banks, and the only people who'd lose out would be the capitalists and landlords shafting everyone else at the moment, but even they'd have somewhere to live. ★

GET INVOLVED!

ULU Anti-Authoritarians

A NEW ANTI-AUTHORITARIAN initiative has been launched by students under the banner of "ULU (University of London Union) Anti-Authoritarians". A meeting ground for anarchists and radical students as well as non-students alike. In the pipeline so far are movement wide meetings on the G8, Mayday 2005 and the no Olympic bid campaign. If you would like to get in contact or be put on the email list, email: uluantiauthoritarians@yahoo.co.uk

East End Anarchism

Interested in helping set up an Anarchist group in the East End of London (Tower Hamlets/Hackney)?

Contact AF c/o Freedom Bookshop, Angel Alley, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX ★

ON THE FRONTLINE

FIRST OFF, HAPPY New Year to all our readers, and the best of luck to you all in your battles with bosses of all kinds - now onto the class conflict!

Here's a tale that demonstrates the sort of Christmas cheer the bosses specialise in - strikers at the William Cook Foundry in Sheffield have just spent their fourth Christmas on the picket lines, following an industrial tribunal that found in their favour, but with the company refusing to implement the courts decision. A message from the strike committee read "Cook said we would not last one Winter out. Well, it is now our 4th winter of discontent and we are still going strong." (For further info/donations contact Eddie Grimes, WC strike committee 116 Richmond Park Crescent Handsworth, Sheffield S3I 8HG 0114 243 2540 or 07765 546 056.)

Post Office workers walked out in 243 sorting offices nationwide on Christmas eve when management attempted to impose an extra 3½ hours work, taking them well past their traditional 12:30 finish - do the bosses think Christmas is only for them? They might well do given that last year they were given £23 billion worth of unpaid overtime throughout the year - don't give them a penny this year, they steal enough off us as it is without us giving them presents!

Tube drivers in London also walked out for 24 hours in protest at management bullying a fellow worker, and fresh strikes look on the horizon for early January.

A very interesting cross-Atlantic action took place in London, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois and Minnesota - demonstrations and protests against the union busting activity of the notorious FirstGroup multinational bus and rail Company. First is now the 2nd largest private provider of school bus transportation services in the US and has been using all sorts of methods to drive down wages and safety conditions and to expel unions from workplaces, despite posing as a worker and union friendly company over here - ask the Sheffield drivers and hundreds of others who've been forced to strike in this country about that...

A series of strikes is planned for the first week of January in the Clyde shipyards where workers are angry about bosses manhandling of a worker who was correctly complaining about fire evacuation procedures being ignored following an alarm - which the company accepts happened, but are refusing to rescind a final written warning. The strikes are timed to coincide with an overtime ban by electricians in the yards. ★

ID CARDS

BLUNKETT'S GONE, BUT not because of his increasingly authoritarian policies. Just before he left, he planned to draw up plans to fine people who resisted his ID cards scheme. Moving house without informing officials would carry a fine of up to £1,000. Refusing to sign up to the scheme would carry a penalty of up to £2,500 while anyone who intends to submit a fake or spoiled application would face a fine of £1,000. Like his fast tracking with visas, Blunkett intended pushing the ID scheme through quicker than at first thought, that is, making it compulsory sooner. Ministers had said that they would wait until 80 per cent of adults had registered before making it mandatory but the Bill leaves open the option of forcing people to register.



Blunkett has gone but Labour still plans to push through ID cards. Their plans for an even stronger State must be fiercely resisted.

Day of Action January 28th

Defy-ID is putting out a call for a day of direct action on the ID cards issue on Friday January 28th. Your group could do anything from leafleting, to blockading one of the companies involved in the ID cards process. There's going to be a page on the Defy-ID website soon with loads of ideas for actions, and some possible 'targets'. They hope to list the companies and organisations who are involved with, or stand to profit from the ID card legislation, and their locations around the country.

Visit: www.defy-id.org.uk ★

SAVE OUR COUNTRYSIDE!

COMMUNITY BASED FIGHT the Plan Group (FTPG) in Torfaen, South Wales have been very busy fighting the Labour controlled council's desire to build 1,200 private houses on the greenbelt between Cwmbran and South Sebastapol (Pont-y-pwl).

Although over the years opposition to this development has slowed down the process the council (whose motto is laughingly "Putting People First"!) have ignored the wishes of Torfaen residents and decided to go ahead and vandalise our environment. House builders' profits come first not our countryside or our health.

The last FTPG demonstration was outside a REVIT conference held in County Hall, Cwmbran. Delegates from the UK/Europe were given copies of ASBOs which highlighted the hypocrisy of Torfaen



Council hosting this event which promotes the environmental benefits of building on brownfield sites when they themselves are hell-bent on destroying our greenbelt! The council were not happy with the demo, calling in 2 lots of cops who tried to move us off "private land"! (Obviously we didn't move!)

The FTPG are mounting a legal challenge in the courts and need to raise £8,000 plus. Donations are much needed. As building is due to start in the near future we are going to try and occupy the site.

For more info contact www.torfaen-fighttheplan.org.uk or Gwent Anarchist Group (GAG) c/o PO BOX 70, Newport, NP20 5XX or gwentanarchists@yahoo.com ★

THE OLYMPICS SHOULD HAVE DIED IN GREECE!

AN OLYMPICS 'BACK the 2012 Bid' presentation was disrupted at the University of London Union (ULU) by a group including AF members.

The 'Back the Bid' campaign had - rather optimistically, since only six supporters showed up (seriously!) - booked the main room in ULU, to explain why destroying East London will be good for Londoners. Around 10 people who oppose the bid came to the meeting to disrupt this vision of de-

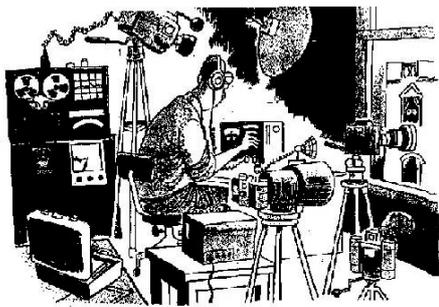


struction of working class communities and to present an alternative vision of the world based on mutual aid and solidarity. After about forty minutes, the organisers started packing up, and the loyal supporters started to

leave, at which point the faithful servants of capital - the Met police - turned up to chuck the group out, and support the ULU security decision to ban the group for life!

For more info and future actions see: <http://www.nolondon2012.org/> ★

INVASION OF THE BODY SNOOPERS



THE GOVERNMENT IS going to spend £40bn over ten years on a program of 'modernisation' of the Health System: the 'National Program for Information Technology' (NPFIT). This will include a national database of the medical records of all the NHS patients (Integrated Care Record Service', ICRS). The NHS presented their brief for a national database at a conference in July 2003. Significantly, the participants were asked to keep the 'specifications' highly confidential. But doctors made public their criticism as soon as they found out that:

- The national database of medical records is going to be created without patients' consent.

- Our right to 'opt out' will be limited to our right to deny access to an 'identifiable' version of the database (where our names are explicitly written). But another version of the same data will be created in a where our names are coded ('pseudonymised'). This will be widely accessible to non-medical companies without our consent.

- The keywords to decode our 'pseudonymised' data will be kept by the government, and government authorities such as the police will be allowed to decode our data in 'special circumstances'.

In June 2004 the annual meeting of local medical committees of the British Medical Association voted to boycott the ICRS. The NHS plan to go ahead anyway, because, they say, modern patients want an IT service! But who among us has ever been consulted?

The truth beyond the spin.

In practice, the Health Authorities are going to create a national database of our medical records without our consent. Even if they tell us that our data will be safe and our authorisation will be required for access, this is a lie. Any database on-line is vulnerable - even the Pentagon can be hacked! And it won't respect our consent: the police will have access to our records in (conveniently vague) 'special circumstances'. Plenty of repressive laws have already been introduced in the UK for 'special circumstances' and have been used against political protests, extremely petty crime, and to harass ethnic minorities or the poorest in society.

There are also plans to link the NHS

to the National Identity Register connected to the new ID card. If these plans go unchallenged, one day the police, the DSS (DWP), etc. will be able to read all about our health problems (unwanted pregnancies? impotence? drug addictions? phobia of rats?...); our accidents and their circumstances; our sexual relations and next of kin... just in case.

Surveillance state

Medical records can reveal private facts and relations. They can be humiliating. Medical records have been effectively used to design and implement psychologically and physically coercive interrogations of prisoners by the US, with whom our government claims to share its values. The ICRS is an effective way to realise the surveillance dream of a comprehensive and reliable database of UK citizens: it will be comprehensive because we all are NHS users and it will be extremely reliable because we have been sincere with our doctors.

The ICRS and big business.

Our medical records are useful also because they are information - and today, information, of any kind, is a valuable 'resource'. When information becomes 'resources', power, money and greed is inevitable. 'Modernisation' means 'gathering and distributing' these 'resources', freeing them from the hindrance of old-fashioned ethics. This will help the transformation of the health service into a business - where we and our GPs are not persons, whose feelings, professionalism and dignity have a (non-monetary) value, but mere sources of 'resources' - and where these 'resources' are (monetary) value, worth to be exploited.

Virtual access to our records will be possible only if our doctors adopt a new and uniform computer system which allows for remote 'link' to our records. This will be soon realised. The NHS is now introducing the new 'Choose and Book' system in some of surgeries. This system makes patients' records helplessly open to automatic remote access and download! The 'Choose and Book' system is the thin edge of the wedge: once our records are put on a system which is open to remote access, there will be no obstacles to the national database.

What to do

Ask your GPs to confirm that your medical records are and will be safe in their custody. That they won't be loaded without your consent into a system that allows for remote access. Ask your GP to stick to the boycott of the Integrated Care Record Service. Publicise this issue. Contact your doctor and tell others to do the same! More info from: brighton_against_databases@yahoo.co.uk ★

TIME
BOMB



IN 1839, THE *La Amistad*, a slave bearing Spanish vessel, was carrying 53 captives all previously taken from the African country of Sierra Leone when an insurrection occurred. The insurrection started when the ship was taking the slave captives from Cuba to a slave market in South America. *La Amistad* was sailing in the Caribbean when Singbe, a 25 year old African, later given the Spanish name Joseph Cinque, was able to free himself and the other captives from their chains. During the night, they went on deck and killed the captain and his cook. Two other crew members were saved and directed by Cinque to turn the ship back toward their homeland of Africa. Instead of going toward Africa, the ship was steered to the shores off Montauk, Long Island. Here the ship docked for food and water, but it was noticed by the American naval ship, *U.S.S. Washington*. The captain ordered the ship to dock over at New London, Connecticut. New York was bypassed as a docking area due to slavery being illegal in the state. Connecticut still had not abolished slavery at that time period.

The importance of the Amistad Insurrection brought the focus of slavery to the attention of many more Americans. The abolitionists were looking for evidence of cruelty and the profiteering involved in slavery. The abolitionists wanted slavery abolished in America. An 18 month legal battle ensued, and the black Africans did not seem to have a chance of gaining their release from prison as they were accused of murder and mutiny.

The Cubans and the Spanish government were diplomatically trying to force President Martin Van Buren to side step any conflicts between America and Spain, and send the "murderous Africans" back to the slave port in Cuba. The technicality was that Spanish law "had by 1817 prohibited the importation of slaves into any of its territory, including the colony of Cuba." Attorney Roger Sherman Baldwin of Connecticut was able to secure a translator of the Mende language to help with the documentation of Cinque's journey and the others being kidnapped in Africa where they were put into the hold of the Portuguese Slave ship and sent via the middle passage to Cuba. They were acquitted and the court decided: "they were illegally enslaved, their papers were forged and they were never Spanish speaking Cuban slaves." The verdict favoured Cinque and the 35 surviving Mende Africans. Before leaving Connecticut, Cinque, with an interpreter, spoke at several abolitionists' meetings. The Africans returned to Sierra Leone in 1841. ★

INSIDE INFORMATION

Action Alert!

A SOUTH KOREAN anarchist and peace activist was arrested on November 21, 2004 and now he is in prison. His name is Eunkuk. He was very active in the Korean peace movement, but about a week ago he was physically detained by the police. The police say the reason he was arrested is he obstructed justice and used Molotov cocktails to harm policemen during the national workers rally 2003, which was held in November 9, 2003. The situation is very bad for Eunkuk. He may have to stay in prison for more than 2 years. For more information contact: zo@dopehead.net

Polish anti-fascist faces prison

Patryk Cichon, anti-fascist from Stalowa Wola and founder of RASH (Red & Anarchist Skinheads) had been sentenced to three years in jail for alleged assault and robbery. However, he remains free on bail until his appeal against

the sentence is heard. It is clear that the case had been based on his political beliefs from the very beginning. Patryk is well known anti-fascist and anarchist, notorious among nazi-bonehead scum in his city for his uncompromising and militant stand against them in the past. Boneheads managed to convince few of their friends to testify against Patryk and his friend in alleged case of assault and robbery. As it appeared later, his friend had a very good alibi and was acquitted, so Patryk ended up as superman sentenced for beating four people on his own!

Patryk appealed this decision and another trial will take place on the beginning of 2005. Adding to that he has a 300 euro fine to pay for assault on police officer (the average wage for two months in Poland). It is necessary to show our solidarity to people who dared to stand against nazi menace and show them that they are not alone! If you want to help Patryk you can send some money to his bank account- every little bit counts!

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Patryk Cichon PKO BP SA ODDZIAL 1 W STALOWEJ WOLI

Solidarity With Polykarpos Georgiadis

On 16th April 2004 civil police stopped anarchist Polykarpos Georgiadis on one of Thessaloniki's streets and brought him to Police Headquarters. Just hours after his detention the cops presented proudly to the mass media their story, bragging about having "caught a bomber in the act". Polykarpos was initially presented as being responsible for undefined number of arsons that took place in the city and finally accused of an arson attempt against a car belonging to private security company, parked on the street where they caught him.

He denies all the charges and clearly states that as an anarchist he's a police target and had been followed for a long time.

Some demonstrations and numerous attacks (e.g. many arsons) took place in solidarity with Polykarpos Georgiadis. The best form of solidarity with imprisoned anarchists is always continuing, spreading and escalating the struggle!

Information from:
www.brightonabc.org.uk



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.

JANUARY:

8: International day of action in support of those arrested at the Salonica (Greece) summit.

15-17: Trial of the Caterkiller Blockade 9 The nine people that blockaded the Caterkiller HQ are on trail! These people were arrested under the Anti Social Behaviour Legislation, which is expected to be used more and more against protesters, so it's vital that we support them. The action takes place at Solihull Magistrates Court, crash accommodation in Birmingham, If you want to support the case call 07900 698 550 or Email: thewallmustfall@hotmail.com

FEBRUARY

11-13: Labour Spring Conference, Gateshead. Inside the conference Neo-Labour tell us how caring they are while announcing proposals to crack down on dole scroungers and immigrants - the unions wring their hands and do fuck all. Outside the People of Gateshead get to have armed police and random stop and searches to make them feel safe.

11-13: PROJECTILE: A festival of anarchist film and culture, Side Cinema, Newcastle upon Tyne www.projectile.org.uk

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- 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.

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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

