

resistance

anarchist bulletin

Free/Donation
Issue 72 April 2005



Big Blairther

THE BLAIR GOVERNMENT has increased its repressive powers when it passed its anti-terrorism legislation, which gives them sweeping powers to restrict the movement and behaviour of "terrorist" suspects. The bill was forced through with little time for debate, with the Home Secretary cranking up the fear factor by recalling that *"the Madrid atrocity took place during a general election... Such things can always be possible here, too."*

Blair, too, used fear as the selling point of his authoritarian agenda, saying that there is *"no greater civil liberty than to live free from terrorist attack."*

He also raised Bush's old nonsense that the terrorists' *"war is not with governments or armed forces, but with our way of life."* This ignores the fact that the terrorists oppose the policies of US (and UK) imperialism rather than "our way of life" or "freedom". The obvious conclusion is that it is Blair who is undermining our way of life by his policies. Is there a difference between a terrorist scaring us into forsaking our freedom (such as it is) with the threat of violence and a government scaring us into doing the same with the threat of terrorism? So if, as Blair asserts, the terrorist's aim is to attack our freedoms, then he has ensured that they have already won: our politicians are ready to abandon them at the drop of a hat.

The British state has just gone to war on the basis of secret "intelligence" too sensitive to share. As we all know, that "intelligence" was dodgy, sexed-up and plain wrong. Now the very same politicians want to trample civil liberties and imprison people in their homes on the



same basis, using intelligence that would not be admissible in court! Surely the fact that the government proclaimed "terrorists" in Belmarsh are to go free is clear proof that the imprisonment without trial is unsound. Secret evidence is guaranteed to produce miscarriages of justice.

Nor should we forget that other "anti-terror" regulations have already been used to stop legitimate and peaceful protests and demonstrations.

Combined with ID cards and a host of other measures, new Labour seems intent on completing the Thatcherite legacy in both attacks on civil liberties, and neo-liberalism / privatisation. The idea that the free market needs a strong state to crush any resistance has been confirmed yet again. We need to resist every attempt of the state to remove barriers to its actions.

As usual, Blair has done a total U-turn. In 1994 he argued that *"the liberty of the subject should be taken away not by the act of a politician..."* The erosion of civil liberties has joined a long list of other policies which Labour opposed when out of office, and promoted when it achieved power. ★

ELECTIONS (are a) FRAUD

HAVE YOU NOTICED? Elections come and elections go, but, despite all the promises, nothing ever seems to get a lot better. Whichever party wins, we wake up afterwards to find that the promised golden dawn has not arrived (as ever).

Why? – because all of the political parties serve one master, and it is not the electorate. All the parties are agents of the rich, and represent their interests not ours. Of course each one goes out of its way to be 'different' to its rivals, to that extent we have a choice.

The differences are very small, so, whoever wins we still end up paying more council tax (or income tax with a Lib Dem victory), wait ages for hospital appointments and operations, get a second rate education, and, if you have a job, eventually after years of stress, you end up in poverty, living on a pittance of a pension.

It won't be any different this time round. Tony Blair and his bootlicking army of MPs will promise you the earth and deliver nothing, except power and pay increases for themselves. Like all politicians they are self-obsessed, self-seeking parasites who use elections to give them what they desire more than anything else- the power to control you. If you think that the Tories or Liberal Democrats are any different, remember, they supported the war in Iraq in the end, a war that none of us wanted.

The whole so-called democratic process of elections is nothing more than a circus to establish the power of the State over us. Imagine if nobody voted. Politicians would look particularly stupid and they would have no mandate to govern. The process is already well under way and less people are expected to bother to vote than ever.

Whilst a voting boycott is nowhere near enough to put things right, it is a move in the right direction before we start to take control over our own lives.

Voting solves nothing! Don't vote! ★

Our regular look at workplace struggles:

WELL, WHO WOULD have guessed it - the biggest national strike since the General strike of 1926 called off at the last minute by a combination of Union bureaucrats and Labour party officials panicking over what damage the newspaper headlines could do in the weeks leading up to the General Election. A few meatless bones chucked to the union bosses was all it required to get them to step back into line sharpish. Of course there's agreement between them that this will go down as a government climb-down, but as soon as victory has been assured at the election you can bet your bottom dollar that these 'concessions' are going to be placed under directly attack 'for the good of the country' - it's happened so many times before it's a wonder anyone still falls for it.

The lesson of this - don't trust your union bosses, they're only using you as muscle for their bureaucratic manoeuvres - organise yourselves, directly contact other workers when this comes up again (and it will), set up your own committees, form your own networks and don't let the Prentis' of this world use you as cannon fodder for their own battles.

A strike is looking increasingly likely at the BBC following the announcement of plans to cut nearly 20% of the workforce over the next few years - a strike ballot is in preparation and early indications show that it appears to have majority support. Also in medialand Daily Express journalists have voted to strike over low wages.

Conductors on Central Trains have been out this month over the companies failure to make promised compensation payments for work over holiday periods - with two further walkouts planned for the next few weeks - almost all services in the Midlands are expected to be effected.

Serco - part of the PFI (Private Finance Initiative) consortium Octagon are facing industrial action in one of the hospitals they run in Norfolk over implementation of the "Agenda for Change" pay rates and benefits plans - given that these have been negotiated nationally there might well be some serious follow up to this. (See last months story on the North Cumbria Acute NHS trust).

French seamen have been blockading ports, the channel tunnel and various motorways in protest at plans to reform shipping rules. Numerous clashes with riot police were reported with teargas being fired to disperse strikers.

DOES A LOT OF WORK FOR CHARI-DEE

LAST MONTH OXFAM published a study in which it revealed that only 20% of all monies given to charity does actually reach the poor and needy of the world.

Though many will be ready to point the finger at the local politicians and ruling elite, this happens to be only partially true. Of course there are a whole lot of leeches in the highest ranks of third world countries. Ministers of all kinds, company executives, rich "entrepreneurs" suck the living blood of the workers in these societies and divert all the money to their coffers. They do the same with international aid. That is, with the tiny bit that reaches them.

Because, to the surprise of many, the same kind of people do the same kind of thing in the rich countries. Its only that they don't do it under the counter, but "legally". They have devised many ways of doing that. From commissions on the completion of a deal, to draconian conditions on the aid given, such as the obligation to buy the required equipment for a project from a particular company and of a particular kind, always in a western country. It has been found that for every dollar given by the US to international aid they receive seventeen



back. The only surprising thing is why, then, the rich countries give so little. And don't forget the debt, which was instrumental for the rich countries to avoid recession and the fuel crisis in the eighties.

But what Oxfam conveniently forgets to mention is the number of people living off the business of charity. If you check the adverts in the paper you'll see there are many people in charities with salaries well over 20k. These they call the administration expenses, and they can be huge in many charities. I thought it was supposed to be all voluntary, and not a business for some Westerners to travel to exotic places, earning more than a decent salary. By the way, the Oxfam PR executive who presented the study mentioned above must be on around 40k a year. Much more than most of the working class of this country, and certainly of the third world.

There happens to be a net flux of money, aid and all, from the poor countries to the rich ones and it is benefiting mainly bankers, corporations and politicians, here and there. Many people, when thinking of these poorer countries, see the need of these corrupt elites to go, and let the working people live their lives in peace. Now, what about here? ★

TIME TO PUNCH OUT

REPORTS HAVE BEEN sent to **resistance** that a temp had "punched out" his team leader at a warehouse in Morley, near Leeds.

Team Leader X, described by employees as "a cocky gobshite", was said to have been "bleeding" profusely and "bawling like a baby".

Temp Y "lost his temper" half-an-hour after the official end of the Thursday shift, as the temps hurried to complete their work. Most of the management and workforce had already left for the Easter break. At this time, Team Leader X approached Temp Y, threw a cloth and a spray bottle of detergent in his direction, and ordered him to "clean the tables".

Temp Y defends his violent reaction, stating that, "I'm contracted to do order picking. Someone else is contracted to clean". Furthermore he accuses Team Leader X of "sitting around on his arse all day" in which case, "why couldn't he clean the fucking tables?". Temp Y will not be returning to the warehouse. ★



INSTITUTE FOR AUTONOMY

THE INSTITUTE FOR Autonomy is a newly occupied social centre in central London, created in a disused university building which has lain empty for over 5 years.

There are a variety of projects underway within the social centre, initially these include:

Infoshop and Library: The infoshop sells various books at pretty much cost price and also has a whole host of free literature and leaflets. The library is available for people to read in the building.

Art Project: A regular screen printing workshop will be run allowing people to print their own t-shirts, jackets, posters, leaflets, etc.

Solidarity Kitchen: An all-volunteer, not-for-profit cooking collective. Open Wed - Fri, from 12-3 pm, also available to be approached to cook for political events, demonstrations and direct actions. Cafeteria Rebelde: Open the same times as the kitchen,

The Institute for Autonomy can be found at 76-78 Gower Street, WC1. An open meeting is held every Monday at 8pm to discuss progress, and for new projects and events to be proposed. ★

INTERNATIONAL ANTI-MILITARISM

Against war and militarism: for international anarchism

THE MEMBER FEDERATIONS of the International of Anarchist Federations (IAF-IFA) organised a day of action against war and militarism to coincide with the second anniversary of the war in Iraq.

Our aim was to highlight the fact that the world is now facing a situation of "permanent war", which must be resisted both locally and internationally.



Anarchists marching in Italy

The Anarchist Federation in Britain took part in the March 19th anti-war demonstration in London, which was attended by tens of thousands. Thousands of copies of a special anti-war issue of **resistance** which were widely distributed in communities across Britain. We have also produced a new range of sticker (see below). These stickers were translated into Czech and used by the Czech/Slovak Federation in their actions.

The Italian Anarchist Federation organised a specifically anarchist demonstration in Rimini, attracting over 1000 anarchists (see picture above).

A fuller report will soon be available on the IFA/IAF website (www.iaf-ifa.org).

MEXICAN ACTIVISTS VISIT BRITAIN

ACTIVISTS FROM MEXICAN indigenous direct action group CIPO-RFM (Consejo Indígena Popular de Oaxaca - "Ricardo Flores Magón", named after a famous anarchist from Mexico) visited the UK for the first time on a five date tour in February.

They spoke in Nottingham, Oxford, Cambridge, Brighton, London promoting their struggle against globalisation in Oaxaca. They hoped to raise awareness about the recent increase in state repression being suffered by Mexican activists. There was also a benefit gig in London.

In Oaxaca, the CIPO-RFM are



organising direct action against the politicians and institutions that oppress them. They organise through mass assemblies and are active in 24 communities. They maintain a protest camp which has been attacked by the authorities but they remain defiant in the face of increased state repression against them.

All of the meetings they went to were packed. They left the UK to continue their speaking tour in Spain. CIPO-RFM (www.nodo50.org/cipo/ourstory.htm) is an anti-authoritari organization of Mexico - Oaxaca province, member of the International Libertarian Solidarity (ILS-SIL) network ★

TIME
BOMB



Our regular look at the lessons from history:

The 1945 Labour Government

THE RECORD OF the 1945 Labour Government which ruled Britain until 1951 proves that it broke most of its pre-election pledges. These betrayals were reflected in its domestic, foreign and colonial policies.

The direction of Government policy was clearly formulated by a high party official, Sir Hartley Shawcross, in February, 1946: "I take the opportunity of making it quite clear that ... like any Government as an employer, would feel itself perfectly free to take disciplinary action that any strike situation might develop demanded."

Although Labour had pledged not to use troops as strike-breakers, within six days of coming to power they ordered troops to break a strike of London dockworkers. This was repeated three months later. The Government decreed wage freezes and compulsory arbitration.

Pre-election pledges that the unions would have direct representation in the management of state owned industries were forgotten. The Party, once in power, reversed its traditional opposition to military conscription in favour of *permanent peacetime* conscription.

When the Bank of England, the coal mines, railways, canals and other utilities were nationalised, Labour guaranteed the stockholders the same income as before.

The principle behind these domestic policies guided Labour action in foreign and colonial affairs as well. Before the gratuitous dropping of the atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August, 1945 (surely one of the worst acts of terrorism ever), President Truman had obtained the agreement of the British Labour Government. The military adventures in Greece, Egypt, Iran, Indonesia, Korea and elsewhere caused an increase in the "defence" budget from 692 million pounds in 1948 to 1032 million in 1951. *One hundred and thirty six Spanish anti-fascists were deported into the arms of Franco to certain imprisonment, torture or death.*

Labour's defeat in the next General Election was due primarily to the justified disappointment of the workers with its actions when in power. In 1945, Arthur Greenwood (Labour Government Privy Seal) said: "I look around my colleagues and I see landlords, capitalists and lawyers. We are a cross-section of the national life and this is something that has never happened before." ★

INSIDE INFORMATION

Solidarity needed

Following the fire of the factory of Daewoo in Mont Saint Martin (North east of France), a former employee of DAEWOO, Kamel BELKADI, in 2003 spent four months in jail waiting for his trial. During his trial, obvious contradictions and inconsistencies in the charge were shown by the lawyer defending him but nevertheless he was found guilty, and was condemned by the correctional court of BRIEY on October 12, 2004, and sentenced to three years of prison, including 18 firm months, and to pay a penalty of 30 000 Euros (almost 3 years of his full salary). Kamel Belkadi made call of this decision. The judgement in call will take place on April 5, 2005. Support is needed.

Who is Kamel Belkadi?

A former Daewoo factory worker who took part in a very hard fight against the direction of his company two years ago, when management wanted to close the factory and to lay off everyone. Kamel was

one of the most active workmen to defend his/her colleagues.

What is the context of the committal for trial of Kamel Belkadi? The workers of Daewoo-orion had fought for several weeks to defend their job and had obtained, two days before, the opening of a negotiation as regards preventive social aspects with the authorities and the Korean direction, when a fire devastated the whole of the building where the stock of finished products was. This event made it possible for the direction of DAEWOO to be left there without spending one centime to finance the social plan which would have cost the company over 10 million euros.

Information from: CNT International Secrétariat: cnt@cnt-f.org

Free Free!

On June 10-12 the is a Weekend of Resistance for Jeff 'Free' Luers

June 2005 marks the five-year anniversary of the imprisonment of Oregon environmental political prisoner, Jeff "Free" Luers. Jeff was sentenced to more than 22 years in prison for burning three

Sport Utility Vehicles (SUVs) at a car dealership in Eugene, Oregon, USA, and on trumped up attempted arson charges. Jeff set fire to SUVs to call attention to climate change and to protest oil wars and environmental destruction. Prior to his arrest, Jeff was a popular community activist in Eugene. He was well-known to law enforcement because of his involvement with national forest protection, anti-police brutality activism (documenting rampant police abuse in Eugene), free food programs in a local park and his teaching of self-defence to women. Since his imprisonment, Jeff has continued to be extremely active in prison and fight oppression with his words and inspiration.

During the weekend of June 10-12th, 2005, social justice activists from across the world are called upon again to organize and show their outrage about Jeff's imprisonment and the continued abuse and isolation of dissident prisoners across the globe. Read more about Jeff's case at www.freefreenow.org

European Contact:

Brighton Anarchist Black Cross, email: mail@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.

APRIL: 1-7 Week of action against the corporate plunder of Iraq Called by Stop the Plunder! Call 07749 421 576 or email stoptheplunder@yahoo.co.uk

6 Peanuts4benefits Campaign day of action outside Job Centres 10am www.disabilityalliance.org/peanuts.htm

9 Arbeit Macht Fleisch : Refusal, Resistance, and the Embodied Collectivity of the Social Factory, speaker Stephen Shukaitis. Freedom Press, Angel Alley 84b White Chapel High Street, London E1. www.freedompress.org.uk

9 and 16 Cancel the ExCeL arms fair. Musical protest outside the ExCeL Centre, next to Custom House DLR. 07817 652 029 Visit: www.dsei.org

16 Protest Motorcade against Caterpillar, who supply bulldozers to the Israeli army. Meet Hopwood Service Station Junction 2 M42. Drive to Caterpillar at Hockley Heath, rally for Palestine in Central Birmingham 2.30-4pm 0207 700 6192

21-25 Spring peace camp at RAF Brize Norton. For directions to the camp from April 21, phone 07711 214 168.

29 London Critical Mass monthly bike ride 11th birthday party. Meet on the southbank at Waterloo (NFT Cafe under Waterloo Bridge) from 6pm www.cmlondon.enrager.net

30 Manchester Radical Bookfair, the Basement, 24 Lever Street (off Piccadilly Gardens) Manchester. Visit: www.radicalbookfair.org.uk

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