

RESISTANCE

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Swindon Anarchists show Solidarity with Striking Hospital Cleaners



For the past month, cleaners and other staff at GWH hospital in Swindon have been on strike against bullying and racism, as well as a blanket ban on holiday time over Christmas, on the part of their bosses at Carillion PLC. The workers, mostly Goan, held nine days of strike action in February and kick started March

with a 12 day strike. Since the campaign started, workers have picketed the hospital, held mass rallies, blockaded Carillion HQ in London and held numerous other demos and pickets. The strike, which started solidly, is only growing stronger by the day. Rather than taking the demands of the strikers seriously however,

Carillion have responded by bus-sing in scabs from all over the South West. In response, Swindon Anarchists, in what is expected to be the first of many escalating actions, decided to show solidarity with the hospital workers by holding a demo at the Swindon offices of Zurich, from where Carillion have been sending scabs.

Continued on page 2

With support from comrades in Bath and Bristol, the short notice demo attracted around 20 people, who leafleted cleaning staff, Zurich workers and passers-by. Support for the demo, and the hospital workers, was overwhelming, with cars constantly honking in support and even workers from Zurich expressing solidarity. What started as a minor dispute is now escalating rapidly and Carillion are beginning to realise that the

Goan workers and their supporters have had enough of being shoved around by racist bullies. On Saturday 17th of March, the striking cleaners - then in the middle of 12 days of strike action - called for a solidarity march against bullying bosses. Attracting around 400 people, including a visible anarchist contingent from Bath, Bristol and Swindon, the noisy demo was well received by thousands of onlook-

ers and ended with a rally featuring some great speeches by the cleaners and their supporters and some truly dismal ones from opportunistic Labour party councillors and ex-MPs, who only seem to remember the word 'solidarity' when they're in opposition. The morale amongst the workers and their supporters is optimistic, and more demos, pickets and strikes are being planned for the near future

Sparks

Electricians in Britain won their long series of actions to stop building employers withdrawing from the Joint Industry Board which would have involved a 35% pay cut and attack on conditions and pensions.

More than 150 workers attended a rank and file meeting in London in the aftermath. They drew up a

20 point document for any future talks on a new agreement. Five of these points were considered non-negotiable, that is they could not be bartered away. These were: 1. Rule 17 to be maintained, meaning direct employment rather than agency work, 2. Increase in hourly rate of pay, 3. No deskilling in any way, 4. Proper apprenticeships, 5. An end

to blacklisting and victimisation of militants.

The meeting decided to start weekly protests at big building sites in London to demand direct employment. Resistance and the Anarchist Federation congratulate the electricians on their victory and wish them well in the struggles to come.

Jock Palfreeman Solidarity Demo

On the 15th of March a demonstration was held outside the Bulgarian Embassy in London in solidarity with Jock Palfreeman. The AF's Stormy Petrel flag and banners with "Free Jock" and "Leeds Anarchist Black Cross" were displayed. About 30 people turned-up to the picket including comrades from Brighton, Bristol, London Anarchist Federation, Norwich, Surrey/Hants AF, Staines Anarchists, Leeds Anarchist Black Cross, London ABC, ALARM and the Traveller Solidarity Network. Leaflets explaining Jock Palfreeman's case were handed out and a Bulgarian Flag was burnt in front of the embassy. Jock Palfreeman is the 25-year-old Australian who was stitched-up by the Bulgarian police and courts. On the 28th of December 2007 in the city of Sofia, he intervened to halt an attack in the street on two young Roma by about 15 men. But during his attempt to stop the assault, the gang turned on him. In the ensuing fight, 19-year-old Antoan



Zahariev and 20-year-old Andrey Monov were stabbed. Monov later died on the way to hospital. Jock was convicted of "murder with hooliganism" and sentenced to 20 years in the notorious Sofia Central Prison. Jock has always maintained that he acted in self-defense. Evidence was blocked from the trial, CCTV evidence was "lost". Even the Appeal court established that five witnesses

had changed their evidence. Jock's case has now been lodged with the European Court of Human Rights based on a violation of Article six but the process can take five years. Write to Jock Palfreeman: Sofia Central Prison, 21 General Stoletov Boulevard, Sofia 1309, Bulgaria. For more info check www.freejock.com

'Nottingham 'Atos Two' Charges Dropped, and Campaign against Police Repression Steps-up.

A pensioner and a wheelchair user in Nottingham were charged with aggravated trespass, after a demonstration of about 40 people peacefully occupied the Nottingham offices of Atos Healthcare in September last year.



Atos is used by the Department of Work & Pensions (DWP) to administer the Work Capability Assessment, testing sick and disabled people who apply for benefits. Amongst the various complaints made against Atos is that they collaborate with the DWP in declaring people fit to work, and therefore eligible only for JSA if they don't have a job, when many are

not in fact able to work and therefore need more expensive benefits and support. Atos is being opposed locally and nationally because of its practices. This demo was called by Notts. Anarchist Federation and other anarchists and anti-cuts activists.

Support for the 'Atos 2' involved a demonstration in November outside the court, and a planned national activists meeting and demonstration to coincide with the next court date, in February. The huge support was also the result of the disclosure by Nottingham police that there was going to be a crack-down on political protest in the city. In this context Notts. UnCut activists had also been arrested on flimsy grounds, and a journalist had his footage of an arrest at Nottingham's Occupy camp seized by police.

In the event the ridiculous case against the Atos 2 was dropped. But because of the police activity the



planned solidarity demo was transformed into a joint demo against Atos and against police repression.

Five Nottingham police stations were attacked in last Summer's riots. The police seem to think it's pay-back time! But people are fighting back and refuse to be bullied off the streets by aggressive policing.

Greek Embassy Demonstration

Up to 300 people attended a protest outside the Greek Embassy, in West London, on Saturday 18 February, as part of the international day of soli-

arity with the Greek people. Speakers from the lecturers' union, UCU, from the NUS, from the Jubilee campaign, from Occupy UK, and from the

Anarchist Federation offered their solidarity, alongside speakers from Greece, who talked of the resistance to the austerity measures.



"There are a lot of myths about Greece," one speaker said, "and we need to expose them." Another Greek speaker talked about the need to cancel the debt and break with the IMF and the EU. A representative of the Turkish community organisation, the Refugee Workers' Cultural Association, also brought solidarity greetings.

The protest

turned into a spontaneous demonstration and march, which blocked the main road nearby. A favourite slogan was "Athens, Cairo, London and Berlin, We shall fight and we shall win!"

Tips for Writing to Prisoners

One of the hardest things for many prisoners to cope with is the feeling of isolation. A letter or postcard from the real world, even from a complete stranger, helps to maintain a connection with the outside and relieves the infernal tedium of a regime that often involves spending 23 hours of the day in the same cell. For a first-time prisoner, especially in the early stages of a sentence, this type of support can make a huge difference, helping them cope with the unfamiliar and often intimidating surroundings. For political prisoners or victims of miscarriages of justice, it's a simple message of solidarity –

you're not on your own! For the first letter you should tell them about yourself, what you do, what you're into, where you got their address. This breaks the ice and also makes a reply easier. So just fill a side of A4 with whatever you can think of – crap jokes, reminiscences, what you did last Friday night. Ask a few questions; how they're doing, plans they have for the future, what their interests are. Basic rule; don't put anything in a letter that you would not say to a copper's face. If the prisoner is in for a political offence you should let them know that you support their actions but don't start

praising them as some sort of hero. Make sure that you use the correct address, ensuring the prisoner's full name and prison number are written at the top of the letter. Many prisons will not allow stamps to be sent but should allow stamped-addressed envelopes in. Write your address in pencil so the prisoner can remove it if they want to use the envelope to send a letter to someone else. Check the Anarchist Black Cross sites for addresses of prisoners. Leeds ABC has an excellent leaflet, "Writing to Prisoners" as a PDF download. <http://leedsabc.org>

South Korea Peace Activist Arrested

Peace activist and Nobel prize nominee Angie Zelter was amongst those who have been arrested in ongoing protests against the building of a new naval base on Jeju Island in South Korea. The military base is due to be built on the island which was named an "Island of World Peace" by the South Korean government in 2005.

Local villagers and activists have raised concerns over the environmental destruction of the island, which has several UNESCO World Heritage sites, and its potential to escalate military tensions in the region.

Explosions have already begun on the Gureombi rocks on the island to prepare for the construction and hundreds of protestors have been involved in blockades of the site.

There are reports that local police have used aggressive tactics against non-violent protesters.



Local villagers have been engaged in a five year long struggle to prevent the construction which threatens the coastline of the village and the fragile corals in the bay. 94% of Jeju islanders voted against its construction and have mobilised to oppose it. There has been support for their stance from the local governor and police but it is feared that the

Korean government is under huge pressure from the US to complete the project. A popular slogan used by those protesting against the construction is "Touch not one stone, not one flower"

The base will contribute to the growing US military presence in the region, with China as the focus. It is set to become a port for U.S. Navy Aircraft Carriers and Aegis destroyers fitted with SM-3 missile interceptors as part of a growing global US Missile Defence system. The growth in the Missile Defence system risks heightening international tensions as it is seen to enable the US to launch a first nuclear strike without fear of retaliation and could precipitate a new global arms race.

Kenya Health Workers Strike

The Kenyan government sacked 25,000 health workers when they went out on strike in early March. This nasty response from the government came after seven days of

strikes for better conditions, involving non-provision of cover to the public health service. The health workers responded with a march of several thousand in Nairobi, the cap-

ital of Kenya. Thousands of strikers marched through the east African country's capital Nairobi on Saturday to show their defiance.

New Zealand Port Workers Strike

Port workers at Auckland in New Zealand went on strike in early March, with solidarity actions spreading nationally and internationally. Wellington, Tauranga and Lyttelton workers all threatened strike action and refused to unload “black” cargo — cargo that had been worked on by un-unionised labour — before being forced to do so by the Employment Court, which issued injunctions with the possibility of financial consequences. Latest actions have seen up to 3,000 workers protest in the

Now we all know when bosses talk about “flexibility” and “efficiency” its doublespeak for raised profits. It means an increase in unpaid labour time — that part of our labour that is beyond what is needed in terms of wages, or in terms of what we as workers produce. An increase in productivity means the bosses get more for less.

Instead, what the Port workers want — like most of us — is to have a life.

what little aspect of our lives that are not directly dominated by work. Casualisation on the docks, in what has traditionally been one of the more militant union sectors, does not end at the shore’s edge.

This struggle has begun to spread, as is evident in the solidarity actions across various ports. However at the moment, the potential for this struggle to deepen seems tied to legal forms. It will be interesting to see whether port workers will go beyond employment law and the motions of the court, motions so obviously stacked against them. For example, it took the employers a matter of hours to bring injunctions against solidarity strike action (which is already illegal under law, thanks to the Labour Party), yet the injunction taken by the Maritime Union has been given a processing time of two to three weeks.

There is no doubt about the consequences such a move would mean. The full weight of the state, as evident throughout New Zealand’s history, is poised against the workers. Yet the prevailing mood, a heightened sense of something being broken, and the conditions affecting all aspects of our working lives, has the potential to create possibilities. The spreading of struggle, especially one around the further imposition of work into our lives, is something almost all workers would benefit from. Making the issue of casualisation clear, and with a perspective that questions the extension of work (indeed, work itself), could resonate widely.

Adapted from a report from an NZ anarchist



streets of Auckland (with international affiliates present), and Australian workers refusing to unload black cargo in Sydney.

The strike, is essentially about casualisation — that is to say, the imposition of capitalism into even more areas of our lives. In the name of “flexibility” and “efficiency” the Ports of Auckland want workers to be on call 24-7, working casualised hours without permanent rosters and the benefits they entail. “In plain language, the employers are seeking this: that workers will turn up on site as and when required with no guarantee of paid employment.”

A life that isn’t dominated by work, as opposed to a life where in order to survive we have to sell the biggest commodity of all — our labour-power. In protesting against casualisation, port workers are opening up a struggle against whether capital has the power to impose work on even more aspects of our already work-ridden lives.

That is why this struggle is an important one. The results of this struggle sets a precedent for working conditions across New Zealand, and as international supports have pointed out, across the globe. In essence, this struggle is about hanging on to

The Developing Social War in Barcelona

In February in Barcelona was the Mobile World Congress, which brings together many mobile phone and other tech companies to show off their latest gadgets. The Congress is a high status event, bringing millions of euros in commerce to the city and thousands of low paying temp jobs to those who make the city run.

The metro and bus workers decided to call a four day strike for the duration of the Congress, from the 27th of February to the 1st of March. The workers of TMB (Barcelona Metropolitan Transit) were on the war path now that the pervasive austerity measures had come to the transportation sector. Since the end of 2011, the users of public transport were already in an uproar against the price hike to TWO euros a ride. The only cities with more expensive metro or

bus fares have median incomes two or three times higher, making Barcelona city transit the most unaffordable in Europe or North America. On an almost weekly basis in January, there were popular actions sabotaging the metro or opening it up for free riding.

The TMB workers joined the fray, adding two new demands to the users' rejection of the price hike: a rejection of the reduction of services and the upholding of TMB's prior agreements with its workers, particularly the payment of overdue wages and the honouring of an agreement made with bus workers after an important series of strikes in 2008. The bus workers and metro workers agreed in assembly to go on strike for as long as four days, to support all protests and solidarity ac-

tions called in those four days even if the strike had been discontinued, and to not accept any separate deals with TMB but to continue until the demands of both the metro and bus workers had been met.

As a possible general strike approaches, important lessons have been learned about the power of the media and the erosion of the practice of solidarity in society. But the faith in movement leaders, be they unions or student politicians, has also been eroded, and in at least some cases people have turned not to apathy and cynicism but to direct action.

Anarchism has now re-shown its self in Spain and the quest for a new society out of the old remains today ever as it has been in the past and will surely continue.

Bitter Wildcat Strike in South Africa

A bitter wildcat strike at Rustenberg in South Africa has ended with no victory for the platinum miners involved. The strike lasted six weeks and ended on March 5th. Two thousand have been left locked out and out of work. However, the militancy of the struggle shows that South African workers are increasingly turning to direct action and are increasingly ignoring the union leaderships which are attempting to tame the workforce.

The platinum mine at Rustenberg is the biggest in the world. On January 12th rock drill operators (RDOs) refused to work at the Impala Rustenburg 14 shaft. They demand that the dispute be settled without the involvement of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM). On the 18th they started a second illegal work stoppage, once again demanding a salary increase and insisting they will have nothing to do with the NUM. Two days later the RDOs went on wildcat strike. Management

arranged a meeting between the RDO spokespeople and the NUM branch committee. The delegation representing the RDOs walked out of the meeting. Management then obtained a legal decision that the strike was illegal. The RDOs who took part in the strike were sacked on January 24th and are told to reapply for work on the 27th.



The strike escalated with a further legal decision obtained by management declaring that the action was illegal. Management then sacked all 17,000 workers. Struggles broke out and the local police station was

burnt to the ground.

By February 19th over seven and a half thousand workers were back at work. On February 20th the police attacked a march of 150, killing one worker and three others were injured. The following day the general secretary of the main trade union central in South Africa, COSATU, told workers to return to work and was shouted down. However by now 8,368 workers are re-employed. On February 22nd the boardroom of the mining company, Impala Platinum, was burnt down. By March 5th, fifteen thousand workers were re-employed under the old conditions with no pay rise as demanded by the strikers.

The bitterness of the strike points to even harder struggles to come in South Africa, with workers looking towards their own organisation and not relying on COSATU and the NUM.

International Anarchist Conference

The Anarchist Federation is organising a series of public meetings around the forthcoming international anarchist conference in St. Imier, Switzerland. As the conference statement notes:

From the 9th to 12th of August 2012, an international anarchist meeting will be held in St-Imier (Western Switzerland) for the 140th anniversary of the anti-authoritarian First International, which was organized in St. Imier in 1872. So far, the organizations that have initiated and are organizing this important event are: the Federation Anarchiste (FA) of France, the International of Anarchist Federations (IAF), the Swiss organisations Fédération Libertaire des Montagnes (FLM), Organisation Socialiste Libertaire (OSL), and Espace Noir. IAF will hold its own congress in St-Imier during the time of the international meeting, and it is likely that the federated organizations of Anarkismo will do so as well. Red and Black Coordination will also be present. The Anarchist Federation will be participating in these events and hopes to send a sizeable delegation.

These international gatherings are open and organized by different

units of the international anarchist movement:

1. The International of Anarchist Federations (IAF)
2. Anarkismo
3. Anarcho-syndicalist Red and Black Coordination (CGT, CNT, SAC Sweden, etc..)
4. International Workers Association (IWA)
5. The Industrial Workers of the World (IWW)
6. Independent collectives and organizations of international groupings

The international gathering is open to all groups acting at the international, national, regional or local levels, as well as individuals on the basis of adhering to the "St. Imier 2012" statement.

This meeting aims to provide a challenging and structured dialogue around and based upon the idea, that anarchism is a general, consistent political ideology that generates and is an actor in popular struggles, based on an identifiable theoretical foundation that is constantly evolving.

As part of the process of building up

to the summer event, the AF is hosting a series of meetings around the country. The theme of the meetings is the struggle against authoritarianism- from St Imier to today. The following issues will be discussed:

- The background to St Imier and what was involved in the split
- How the struggle against authoritarianism continued in key revolutions such as Russia and Spain
- The debate about human "nature" and why humans do not need authority to flourish
- The role of authoritarian tendencies in struggles today e.g. the cuts movement, the strikes in the public sector, the student movement and within the anarchist movement itself
- Examples of organising without authority

Meetings so far planned are Glasgow, Thursday April 19th. Venue to be confirmed.

Edinburgh (date and venue to be confirmed)

Sheffield (at Sheffield Anarchist Bookfair in June. date and venue to be confirmed.

Surrey. May. Date and venue to be confirmed

London. 3pm onwards, Lucas Arms, Grays Inn Road, WC1

Portsmouth Workfare Picket

Anarchists from Portsmouth and Southampton took part in a picket on Portsmouth high street over Workfare as part of the build up to the National Day of Action against Workfare on the 31st March. The day offered a good opportunity for anarchists in the area to make contact and the picket saw support from both Anarchist Federation and Solidarity Federation members. The reception from the public was good with many people taking leaflets and others stopping to discuss the matter. Workfare is the new government initiative that aims to make people work in order to earn their

benefits with various high street stores already signed up to profit from cheap labour. The picket aimed to raise awareness over the fact that people will be forced to work for well below the legal minimum wage and explain how this will also have negative effects on those already in precarious employment.

Anarchists in the Southampton/ Portsmouth area are planning more actions against Workfare and urge anyone in the Solent area interested in getting involved to get in touch at surreyhants@afed.org.uk

EMPLOY THREE

GET ONE FREE

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HOLLAND & BARRETT
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SAY NO TO WORKFARE

Sheffield Black Rose Centre

Like Social Centres in other towns this is an anti-capitalist space for people to get together to discuss ideas and take action for social change. It is also a space to share skills and food, run events and watch films in a non-commercial setting. This social centre is run without leaders (non-hierarchically) with a "safer spaces" policy that rejects racism, sexism, homophobia and all other forms of oppression.

The Black Rose Centre is an alcohol and drug free space. We aim to make this space a practical example of what we can achieve when we work together.

If you have any ideas of events you would like to run in the space that fit with the principles of the project (or would like to get involved) please come along to our next general meeting – these happen every 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month.

What will be happening at The Black Rose Centre?

- Public meetings and discussion groups
- Bitfixit café, offering computer maintenance and free wi-fi
- Drop-in clinics for people having problems at work
 - A radical library
 - Sheffield Anarchist Archive
 - Art workshops
 - Skill-sharing

The centre will be open until 10:30pm in the evening.

Black Rose Centre website:

<http://sheffieldsocialcentre.org.uk/>

Liked Resistance? Try Organise

Organise! is the Anarchist Federation's theoretical and historical magazine. It is published in order to develop anarchist communist ideas. It aims to give a clear anarchist viewpoint on contemporary issues, and initiate debates on areas not normally covered in agitational journals. You can order or subscribe online at www.afed.org.uk, or get in touch with your local AF group for a copy.

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For UK addresses only: £8.00

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Rest of World: £20.00

ANARCHIST FEDERATION

The Anarchist Federation is an organisation of class struggle anarchists (based in Britain and Ireland, but with many contacts overseas) which aims to abolish Capitalism and all oppression to create a free and equal society. This is Anarchist Communism.

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

ultimately overthrow capitalism.

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

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

NATIONAL CONTACT

Web: www.afed.org.uk

organise@afed.org.uk

England & main national/international email address

Resistance editors
Resistance, BM ANARFED, London, WC1N 3XX

resistance@afed.org.uk

Write to: BM ANARFED, London, WC1N 3XX, England, UK.

email: info@afed.org.uk

International of Anarchist Federations:

<http://i-f-a.org/>

Organise! editors
Organise!, BM ANARFED, London, WC1N 3XX

LOCAL GROUPS & CONTACTS

Scotland/Alba

scotland@afed.org.uk
<http://scotlandaf.wordpress.com/>

Edinburgh & the Lothians
edinburgh@afed.org.uk

Glasgow
glasgow@afed.org.uk

Stirling
stirling@afed.org.uk

Wales/Cymru

cardiff@afed.org.uk
wales@afed.org.uk

England

Brighton AF (including Lewes)
brighton@afed.org.uk

Bristol AF
bristol@afed.org.uk
<http://bristolaf.wordpress.com/>

East Kent AF
eastkent@afed.org.uk

Lancashire AF
lancs@af-north.org

Leicester AF
leicester@afed.org.uk

Leeds AF
leeds@af-north.org
<http://yorks-afed.org>

Lincoln AF
lincoln@afed.org.uk

Liverpool AF (including Merseyside)
c/o News From Nowhere Bookshop
96
Bold Street
Liverpool L1.
liverpool@af-north.org

London AF
BM ANARFED, London, WC1N 3XX,
England, UK
london@afed.org.uk

Manchester AF
manchester@af-north.org
<http://www.af-north.org/>

Newcastle AF (including Tyneside)
Anarchist Federation, PO Box 1TA,
Newcastle
Upon Tyne, NE99 1TA
newcastle@af-north.org

Nottingham AF (including Nott's)
Box AF c/o The Sumac Centre
245 Gladstone Street
Nottingham
NG7 6HX
nottingham@afed.org.uk
mansfield@afed.org.uk
<http://www.afed.org.uk/nottingham/>

Sheffield AF
sheffield@af-north.org
<http://thefargatespeaker.wordpress.com/>

Surrey and Hants AF
surreyhants@afed.org.uk

Worcester AF
worcester@afed.org.uk

York AF
york@af-north.org