

resistance

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GM food at the crossroads

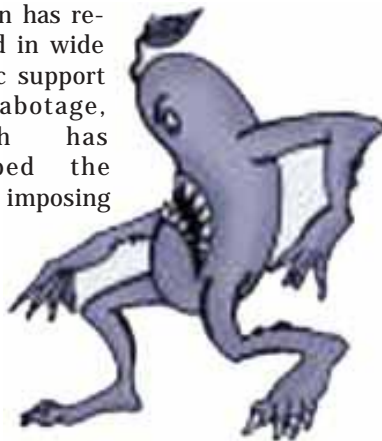
THE GENETICALLY MODIFIED food industry arrived in the UK in 1996, when a few Multinational companies planned to flood the market with GM crops.

At the time there seemed to be little opposition, and unlabelled GM Soya and maize products began to proliferate on supermarket shelves, crop trials were multiplying, and the commercial growing of GM crops seemed inevitable.

In 1997, large-scale sabotage had appeared, targeting the scientific trials that were crucial for legal approval of the GM industry. Faced with huge public opposition, as well as effective sabotage, the government and industry came up with the PR exercise of Farm Scale Trials (FSCs), and agreed publicly to delay commercialisation of GM crops for 4 years, until the trials were finished. These trials were supposed to scientifically evaluate the impact of GM crops on farmland ecosystems. This was shown to be a sham when saboteurs began to destroy whole fields of GM crops, as the scientists began to constantly move the goalposts to prevent their experiments being invalidated e.g. saying that they only needed a percentage of the crop for the experiments to be valid.

The industry has been on the backfoot since 1998. GM products have largely disappeared from British food, FS Trial trashings have continued, and there is still no commercial growing in the U.K. The majority of the FS Trials have now been completed. In the 2002-03 season (by June 2003), saboteurs had destroyed 17% of the trials and 50% of the National Seed listing trials (the final pre-legal stage). The high level of public opposition to GM in

Britain has resulted in wide public support for sabotage, which has stopped the State imposing



severe sentences for GM crop pulling.

The result has been that a wide spectrum of people has been encouraged to take direct action. Sabotage in Scotland and Wales has kept them GM free. In September 2002 Aberdeenshire farmer Shirley Harrison was presented with a GM cake and a bottle of whiskey containing 2.7% methanol (within the GM acceptable limit of contamination). Following the destruction of her field of GM oil seed rape in October 2002, she withdrew. Monsanto, the GM cheerleader, responsible for over 80% of the world's GM crops, has been taken over and broken up, and fellow biotech giants AstraZeneca and Novartis are getting rid of their agricultural divisions. Two thirds of European biotech companies have left GM research, cancelling millions of pounds of investment, sending the industry into a steep slump. The major companies see this as a blip however, that will pass in four to seven years, as opposition dies down.

Governments also continue their sup-

port, and farmers in the US have managed to sell all of their GM harvests. The industry and government are now planning their final push in the U.K. The FS trials are complete, there has been the farce of 'the great (government funded) public debate'. Bayer, the last company to carry out British trials, has just decided to pull out of future test programmes. This is in response to the Agriculture minister insisting that all trial locations continue to be made public.

A new national group, Greengloves, has also just been set up, members pledge to non-violently pull up crops, or support others who do (we say yes to direct action, forget the pacifist ideology). The government may start granting applications for commercial growing before the end of the debate. They have admitted that some of the 18 applications awaiting commercialisation permission may be allowed to use GM in food. The GM companies have been flooding the European Union with applications since the start of the year, to pressurise them into dropping the present moratorium, and setting up the conditions for a trade war with the U.S in the future. The current (and excellent) Do or Die, Issue 10, suggests pressurising dairy companies, seed suppliers and distributors, continuing sabotage of trials (especially R& D), sabotage of farms and their machinery, and demos against scientists and laboratories who are involved.

Contact - Genetic Engineering Network, tel 0845 4569329 Web: www.geneticsaction.org.uk

Do or Die (£7), c/o Prior House, 6 Tilbury Place, Brighton BN2 2GY. ★

ON THE FRONTLINE

OUR REGULAR ROUNDUP of workplace resistance:

Wildcat by 2,800 Shipyard workers

In mid September 1,200 workers at Swan Hunter in Wallsend and 1,600 workers at the nearby Amec yard walked out in support of 98 sacked sub-contractors. The sub-contractors were sacked whilst working on the Bonga oil platform refit at Amec and the Royal Navy amphibious landing vessel contract at Swan Hunter. They had walked out in protest as they earned £9.35 an hour while yard workers are paid £11.30.

Postal Workers Go Wildcat

Hundreds of postal workers in Oxford took wildcat action in a dispute over pay and conditions at on Friday 19th of Sept.

Around 350 sorting staff refused to clock on and another 50 workers at the Headington delivery office walked out in support on Saturday morning.

The strikers wanted to halt the imposition of a national pay deal and job cuts.

Communication Workers Union (CWU) bosses called an emergency meeting hoping to convince the strikers to get back to the grindstone

Workers Occupy Shipyard

At the end of September the workforce at Appledore Shipbuilders, North Devon occupied their workplace after a mass meeting in the yard in an attempt to save 550 jobs as the firm went into receivership. The workforce has been on short time working for 15 weeks, taking home 75% of normal earnings. The yard was due to close on 30th of September. On 29th of September up to 700 people lined the entrance of the Appledore Shipbuilders barricading gates and blocking the main entrance with a digger.

Contact: 07800 545844
appledorefuture@hotmail.com

Airport Wildcat Strike

A wildcat strike halted take-offs and baggage handling at Tel Aviv's Ben-Gurion Airport in Israel on Tuesday 16 September. All take-offs were halted and no baggage was unloaded from incoming flights.

Polish Coal Miners Strike

At the end of September coal miners in southern Poland paralysed rail and road traffic in the industrial Silesia region to stop government plans to close down several mines. The miners blocked some 16 roads and railway lines around the city of Katowice, and a group of miners held an underground sit-in.

Earlier in September miners threw rocks and Molotov cocktails at police in Warsaw who responded by firing tear gas and using water canon. ★

CELEBRITY PRAT OF THE MONTH



Willis and his tambourine

AND THE WINNER of this month's nomination for celebrity prat of the month is none other than Bruce Willis, star of the Die Hard films and the Sixth Sense. He takes this prestigious award for "doing his bit" for those good ol' US troops in the Iraqi desert. Performing with his band, in a US Air Force flight suit, Brucey offered a one million dollar award for the capture of Saddam Hussein.

To follow this up he commented on how well the troops had been received in Iraq, stating "I think the Iraqi people are happy we're here" although notably, he did own up that he hadn't actually seen or met any Iraqis on his trip. Congratulations Mr Willis, our sixth sense tells us that the Iraqi people have welcomed your visit and that of your troops with open arms, and armed grenades! ★

THESSALONIKI UPDATE

THE 21st OF September marked three months of imprisonment for those arrested in the Thessaloniki anti EU summit demonstrations in Greece.

Since late June, in which the Greek police brutally repressed those demanding a more democratic EU and a fairer immigration policy, seven comrades, of different nationalities, have been kept in jail, awaiting trial. One Syrian, two Spanish, three Greeks and a Briton (Simon Chapman) have been accused of everything from being leaders of an international terrorist organisation (the existence of which no one knew about before) to crossing the street when the red man is on.

Due to the peculiarities of the Greek legal system the judge seeing the case has turned down some of the main evidence in their favour and refused to accept it as proof, while accepting the indictments of the police.

As it is, the images broadcast by the national Greek TV, in which Simon is being badly beaten up by the police, then having his bag removed and being forced to accept a different one (which contained the petrol bomb that makes the case for possession of explosives), have not been accepted, though they clearly prove his innocence. The others are in similar circumstances. Even the fact that the national newspapers made the framing of the prisoners front page stories seems to have no relevance for the judge.

In the face of all this injustice they have started a hunger strike to demand their



A solidarity demonstration in Greece

immediate release and the dropping of all the charges, since these are so blatantly false. On Sunday 21st Kastro, the Syrian, started his, to be followed by the two Spanish a week later and Simon joining the 1st of October. The answer of the Greek authorities to this has been their immediate removal to isolation cells, which seems to be the standard procedure. They are backed all the time by a legal team, and by a medical one, to oversee their general condition. Though we know that the hunger strike of the Syrian is indefinite, the others might decide to stage different ones, increasing their duration progressively, according to the development of the case.

Now is the time for all of us to step up the solidarity and the support. Use the freedom they lack to organise, protest, raise money for the appeal, get media attention... Every bit of help is needed.

You can find more information at www.enrager.net/simon or get in touch with the support group at ThessalonikiPrisoners@yahoo.co.uk ★

A LIFE OF DEBT – THANKS TO CAPITALISM

A REPORT RECENTLY published shows that nearly one in four of us are living off debt facilities such as credit cards and loans to get by. They are being used as a means to purchase everyday necessities, such as food, water and heating that should all be free. The study has also shown that around half of us living in debt are losing sleep over it. That's an awful lot of people suffering from stress due to the inequalities of capitalism.

Of course these one in four people living in debt aren't likely to be the rich parasites that take from our society. No, while we're living a life of poverty they'll be living "the good life" in their big homes, spending lavishly on pointless things like a 4th car, another holiday home in south-

ern Spain or even a private swimming pool in their back gardens - just to boost their status!

The people suffering the problems of poverty will be the working class - those who are left with no other option but to borrow from loan sharks with interest rates that rocket through the roof. The people that can barely afford one home of their own (let alone a holiday home), or a taxi now and again to do the weekly shop.

Some decent, free, practical advice is available from The National debtline on 0808 808 4000. Their website is www.nationaldebtline.co.uk

But working class people will always suffer until we've got rid of capitalism. One solution - revolution! ★

YOUR PAPERS PLEASE!

THE GOVERNMENT'S PLANS to impose compulsory ID cards appear to be well underway, with unsurprisingly, no consultation with the general public whatsoever on the issue.

Blunkett has apparently launched a six-month consultative exercise to gauge public reaction. But has anyone asked your opinion? Repackaged as the entitlement card, it is seen as a vital tool in tackling the problem of "health tourism", thus reducing the need for NHS staff to act as immigration officers. The card is supposed to give so-called lawful citizens of the UK the right to access social services, benefits, healthcare, and employment and to prevent fraud.

The government also claims that it will be vital in the battle against the growing problem of illegal immigration, and the working of immigrants in the 'black economy'. An ID card for asylum seekers has already been in circulation in the UK that contains fingerprint ID and microchip information. Blunkett has submitted a document to parliament that already contains proposed designs for the new card, which will probably contain four key components:

- 1) Use of the card itself for low-level identification purposes,
- 2) an electronic storage chip containing multiple levels of information about the card holder such as their employment, and any drinking, driving, or other criminal offences, along with all our personal information.
- 3) An information matching system, with each card is assigned a unique number that links the card-holder to a central population database holding core data on every UK resident.
- 4) A biometric identity verifier, such as an iris scan or fingerprint. Biometric data is already being collected on a much smaller scale, as recent reports show with the fingerprinting of schoolkids in one re-



WWW.AFED.ORG.UK

New T Shirt available from the AF for £8

gion; the introduction of biometric library cards for students in another; and the use of biometric ID cards for benefit claimants in the North-East; and finally a special offer on the back of a pack of Ready-Brek cereal, encouraging kids to send off for their own photo-ID cards.

Whilst the government are claiming we will only need the card to access public sector services, and that carrying it will not be compulsory, there are plans to combine it with photo-card driving licences, and the proposed passport card, so we will actually need it whenever driving or travelling abroad. As if this was not enough, the government has even gone as far as proposing that we pay for the privilege of having these cards-as much as forty squids each, as the treasury is very concerned to make sure it doesn't have to foot the bill.

The introduction of these new ID cards- because that's what they are, whatever the government calls them-is taking us ever closer to a society reminiscent of Orwell's 1984 as our rulers develop both state and corporate surveillance technology. We step closer each day to a society based on Bentham's nineteenth century Panoptic Principle for the Perfect Prison, where we can all be watched every minute of the night and day, unaware moment to moment of when we actually are being monitored.

For more info, and to take action against ID cards, see <http://www.defy-id.org.uk/> ★

ANTI-MILITARISM



Destroy DSEi

A WEEK OF ACTION including demonstrations, protests and blockades was held against the "DSEi" arms fair in London between the 6th to 11th of September. On several occasions transport to the arms fair was disrupted.

In the preceding week an occupation organised by people from the Anarchist Federation took place on the roof of British Aerospace at Brooklands, Surrey. A banner was displayed "Destroy the Arms Trade".

London Anti-war demo



On September 27th tens of thousands marched through central London to show their opposition to the ongoing war in Iraq.

Israeli Pilots Refuse to Strike at Palestinians

A group of air force pilots have refused to carry out air strikes in Palestinian territories, the first such protest from pilots in Israel. The declaration was made by 27 pilots in the reserves who regularly carry out combat missions. Israel frequently strikes at Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, describing the operations as "targeted killings." The pilots said: "We, veteran and active pilots, are opposed to carrying out the illegal and immoral attack orders of the sort that Israel carries out in the territories," they also added "We are refusing to continue to attack innocent civilians."

The pilots also refuse to ferry ground troops for attacks in the Palestinian territories. The pilots' protest comes after about 500 Israeli reserve soldiers have chosen prison over military service in the Palestinian territories during the last three years of Israeli-Palestinian violence. ★

INSIDE INFORMATION

Spanish Anarchists Arrested

Around 4am on September 16th, the Guardia Civil (one of Spain's police forces) arrested six people in Barcelona's Ciutat Vella neighborhood. Counter-terrorist Legislation has been applied to them, so they are isolated and without legal assistance, awaiting trial at the Audiencia Nacional (supreme court), in Madrid. Judge Guillermo Ruiz Polanco, sadly remembered for his participation in many police actions against anarchists, will be presiding over the trial.

The Home Office version presents the arrested people as "a clandestine anarchist group" and tries to link them with an letter-bomb sent to the greek embassy in Madrid, and deactivated by police, and also with many sabotage actions referred to by police as "Urban terrorism". According to this version, the sending of this package would be a protest action done due to greek police's repression in the last EU summit and because two spanish



citizens are still in prison in Greece. They're also been charged with firearms possession.

The mass-media has been spreading the police's justification of these arrests, and qualifying the police operation as "Counterterrorist operation" in a totally non-critical way, and forgetting about their "code of practice" articles. Politicians are also playing the whole affair up for their own gain.

Solidarity demonstrations took place in Barcelona, and many other demonstration and fund-raising actions are being prepared at many Spanish locations. For more info visit www.alasbarricadas.org

Campaign Against Prison Slavery Harassed by Police

Not so busy with fighting the war on drugs and terror that they can't find time for a good old-fashioned bit of political intimidation. CAPS organiser, Mark Barnsley; "As most of you know prior to our last conference, when it was agreed to move the CAPS postal address to Brighton, our address was at the Cardigan Centre in Leeds, where Leeds Prisoners Solidarity Group also have a box. Since the Leeds address has been widely advertised we renewed the box a few months ago. Recently however it has become apparent that the State are intercepting and withholding both CAPS and LPSG mail, and the police have visited the Cardigan Centre to 'make enquiries' about CAPS, with my name being mentioned specifically. Clearly they're worried about CAPS, an entirely legitimate campaign, which is shaping up into an effective one, and I think we can expect that more of this (presently) low-level police harassment will follow." The campaign has a new website at: <http://www.againstprisonslavery.org> ★



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.

OCTOBER - 2-6: Devonport Disarmament Camp, Plymouth. Mass blockade on Monday (6th). For more info phone 0845 4588363 or go to www.tridentploughshares/devonport **4:** Manchester people's assembly, Methodist Central Hall, Oldham Street, city centre. contact manpeoplesassembly@riseup.net **also:** 10.30-6 ,The First London Social Forum LSE, Houghton Street, London WC2. Themes include media, transport, war, peace and civil liberties. With Civil Society Fair (bookstalls etc) contact info@londonsocialforum.org.uk **5-6:** Lakenheath demo and tresspass day, 12-4pm on 5th, 6am to midnight on 6th. Contact dwhiggin@dhiggin.fsnet.co.uk **7:** Leicester Anarchist Federation meeting - 8pm, upstairs at the Ale Wagon pub, Charles Street. **11:** Demo at Menwith Hill, Yorkshire, 12-4pm. Come dressed as a celestial body (eh?) See www.takethepeace.com **20:** Defend Asylum! Public meeting at 7pm, St Johns Church Hall, Grainger St., Newcastle. **25:** National Demo- against deaths in police custody @ Trafalgar Square. 1pm for march to Downing St. All Welcome. Please wear black. United Families & Friends 0845 330 7927, 07770 432 439, www.uffc.org **25:** - Anarchist Bookfair - all day event at University of London Union, Malet St. www.anarchistbookfair.org.uk
NOVEMBER - 11-16 at Saint-Ouen, Paris, France. Libertarian social forum and anarchist book fair.

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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.

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:

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