

# resistance

## anarchist bulletin

Free/Donation  
Issue 55 Nov 2003



# Wildfire Wildcats!

IT WAS A Red October for Royal Mail with two weeks of wildcat strikes at many post offices and depots in the UK.

Over 25,000 postal workers took direct action outside the confines of the Communication Workers Union (CWU) and stuck two fingers up at the bosses. Royal Mail bosses reacted to this show of strength with Gestapo type surveillance techniques.

However, the wildcat strikes spread like wildfire through Royal Mail depots in west and north-west London and then to outside of the capital. The action is said to have flared-up at Southall in west London where workers were livid about aggressive management tactics.

The walkouts spread as people were suspended for such action as refusing to do the work of people already on strike. On Tuesday 21st October 400 workers at Dartford sorting office went on wildcat after a driver was suspended. More than 100 people continued to maintain the picket line even after the driver was re-instated. Also on the 21st about 1,000 workers at Greenford in west London walked out and workers in West Ealing, Acton and Kensington and many more places also took direct action. Up to 100 workers walked-out of the delivery office in Leyton on 23rd of October. All of London's main sorting offices were hit including the city's biggest, Mount Pleasant.

On the 27th of October Royal Mail top boss Alan Leighton turned up at a mass meeting at the Greenford sorting office desperate to convince workers to get back

to the slog. He was ignored.

Roger Baynes, Head of Operations for Royal Mail appealed to the CWU to do its job of helping to control workers when he said, "The union tells us it disowns this wildcat action. Let them prove it by working with us to get their members back to work".

Postwatch the so-called "consumer" group helped illustrate the real role of the unions in this society when it stated. "The management and unions must regain control," or face a "winter of postal discontent".

### Direct Action

On Tuesday 4th November Firefighters in Norfolk took wildcat strike action against a stitch-up two stage pay "deal". The strikes spread rapidly throughout the UK as far as Strathclyde, Grampian, Fife Central, Lothian and Borders, Derbyshire, Wiltshire, Nottinghamshire, Humberside, South Yorkshire and Northern Ireland. The recent strikes show that direct action against all bosses including those of the unions is always possible. As one firefighter put it "For workforces everywhere, if something annoys them enough they take spontaneous unofficial action," he said. "It doesn't matter whether they're in Strathclyde or in the Polish shipyards."

The fire-fighters direct action happened as the unions at Heathrow airport



*Posties on the picket line*

were preparing to stage a two-day strike. Bosses in the UK and overseas got a real shock in the summer after a major wildcat broke out at Heathrow. Check-in staff and baggage handlers were enraged at the imposition of the totalitarian Automated Time Recording system. Now it seems that the unions are attempting to demonstrate to the bosses and state that they can police the anger of workers. By organising two-day official strikes the union can help take the heat out of the situation and pacify the workers with minimal disruption in a vital part of the economy.

But now the spectre of the wildcat strike is haunting the UK again what next? Simultaneous direct action across different workplaces and on the streets? We'll see.

See a leaflet & text produced by a posties workplace resistance group on the Anarchist Federation discussion board at [www.enrager.net](http://www.enrager.net) under "forums". ★

CAN'T PAY,  
WON'T PAY!



A NEW VERSION of council tax has been introduced across the country in recent months, seeing amount payable rocket by up to 18%.

This amount, far outreaching inflation is hitting working class people, especially pensioners, hard. The cost of council tax has risen by 70% since 1997 and is set to rise at least an extra 10% by the end of the next year. Pensioners have been suffering from the raises, with pensions simply not matching the rocketing tax increases. However it isn't all doom and gloom. People are beginning to organise and fight back against these crippling taxes. About 300 pensioners in Devon and Cornwall are refusing to pay, and many more are taking other forms of direct action. This is a tax which effects us all, and the best way for us to halt its destructive progress is to join together with others in your community, old and young(er) alike, to fight the government.

Over twenty anti-council tax groups have sprung up and details can be found on the "Is it Fair" campaign website: [www.isitfair.co.uk](http://www.isitfair.co.uk) (though if they think petitions to Tony Blair will help they're going to be sadly disappointed). The poll tax was defeated by a massive campaign of non-payment, local organising, massive demonstrations and riots. "Is it Fair" would do well to learn from this. ★



A new issue of *Organise!* the magazine of the Anarchist Federation is now out. Only £1.50 from the address on the back page. ★

## GATECRASH THE CBI CONFERENCE

- WHAT? The Confederation of British Industries' National Conference.
- WHEN? The opening cocktail reception that we are targeting is at 6pm on Sunday the 16th of November 2003
- WHERE? The ICC, Birmingham
- WHY? Because the CBI is essentially a bosses' union which calls itself "the voice of British business". It lobbies for a "competitive atmosphere" for business, which obviously translates into attacks on workers, the environment, and pretty much everything that we as activists oppose. This event is even billed as "the most high profile business event in Europe outside Davos", so it seems a worthy target to us. Just have a look at their own website at [www.cbi.org.uk/conference2003/](http://www.cbi.org.uk/conference2003/).

- HOW? However you like! In recent years the police seem to have cottoned on to our tactics and have become irritatingly effective at stopping some of them. You have only to look at the recent DSEi arms fair protests: the tactics which worked were those carried out unannounced by small affinity groups, whereas the announced street party was an abysmal failure with people walking straight into a police cordon.

To avoid a repeat of this and recent May Days, the West Midlands Anarchists are encouraging you and your group to come up with your own way of disrupting the CBI's dinner. They have provided a map of the area (and a plan of the building?), and nearer to the date they will provide anyone interested with any other in-



Firefighters protesting at last years CBI confernece

formation that they have. They ask any groups who are likely to come to Birmingham for this to let them know if accommodation is required and to contact them to help co-ordinate actions etc., although you should obviously use your own judgement as to how much information you share. If there is sufficient interest then they will hold a meeting to plan and co-ordinate protest before the event.

In recent years Birmingham and the West Midlands has seen very little activism, so they really do not know how the police will react to this demonstration. They would like to use it as an opportunity to break away from always tagging along to boring left demonstrations and spread our ideas as a separate movement, as well as if possible developing more effective tactics.

To contact West Midlands Anarchist Group visit: [www.wmanarchists.org](http://www.wmanarchists.org)  
Email: [wmanarchists@email.com](mailto:wmanarchists@email.com) or  
Tel: 07973 697 430 ★

## BOSSSES CELEBRATE MAYDAY!

ALTHOUGH IRELAND WILL not hold a traditional council of leaders summit during its six-month presidency because of logistical problems, it is likely that two meetings of EU leaders will take place in Ireland during that period.

The second gathering of EU heads of state will take place at Farmleigh House in Dublin's Phoenix Park on 1 May to celebrate the new enlarged union. It will be the first time that the heads of all 25 member states will meet. Invitations have already been issued for the event which will coincide with a street carnival in the capital.

So the EU bosses are planning to hold a meeting on the Workers Holiday, when the anarchists murdered by the State in Chicago are commemorated. What a miscalculation! They may soon realise their mistake and cancel this meeting. If not they may need a little help to do so.

For more information contact the Anarchist Federation (Ireland), PO Box 505, Belfast, BT12 6BQ, Tel. 07951 079 719  
Email: [contact@afireland.cjb.net](mailto:contact@afireland.cjb.net) ★

## ANARCHISTS AT WORK

ANARCHISTS HAVE TAKEN steps to improve their effectiveness in workplace struggles.

The Anarchist Workers Network is being set up with a number of aims; to provide a means for anarchists in individual unions or industries to link up and support each other (including unemployed or retired workers), to coordinate campaigns like disaffiliation from New Labour, to raise awareness of anarchist methods of organising society and industry, to circulate and share news, advice and information.

AWN will be a means of bringing anarchists together. It will work alongside and with the anarchist national federations. To get involved on the internet you can access the egroup and discussion boards via the AWN website: [www.awn.org.uk](http://www.awn.org.uk) for more details write to:

Anarchist Workers Network (AWN)  
c/o 84b Whitechapel High Street  
London E1 7QX ★

## ON THE BOIL IN BOLIVIA

FOR OVER TWO months, there has been massive unrest in Bolivia in opposition to the export of gas to the USA. The peasants of Altiplano region have blockaded all the main routes to the capital La Paz. As a result there were hard struggles with the forces of order, leading to six dead.

In the town of El Alto, with a population of 650,000 a "civic strike" organised by the neighbourhood associations, paralysed the town and spread through the La Paz valley. The army surrounded the town with tanks. As a result of struggles with the military, at least 30 people were killed. In response, electric power stations and gas pipelines were attacked. Rumours are circulating of mutinies in the barracks and police stations.

3,000 miners marched from Huanuni to La Paz to join the protests. The army blocked their route on 15th October a hundred miles from El Alto. Another vicious attack took place, leading to two dead and more than 15 wounded by rifle fire. The soldiers used the situation to rob the miners of their personal possessions. On the 15th also, the military closed down several daily papers that have criticised the Sanchez de Lozada government. The television studios were also attacked by the military, but huge assemblies outside them caused the retreat of the army. This was not the case with various radio stations which the army dynamited.

Various ministers began to resign, but "Goni" Sanchez de Lozada then appeared in public surrounded by fascist and far right leaders and proposed a referendum to "consult" on the question of gas sales. This was meant to calm things down, but only led to larger demonstrations, where the subject of 75 dead murdered by the



regime in the confrontations, and avoided by "Goni" was put on the agenda. Goni referred to anyone opposing the government as "terrorists, drug traffickers, enemies of democracy, anarchists and delinquents".

The military panicked more and began to destroy TV aerials in the working class areas. On the 16th enormous demonstrations converged together on the administrative capital. More confrontations with the military took place leading to more dead. The vice-president broke ranks and said he was opposed to the government's policies. 700 people set up "hunger strike pickets" in various regions, demanding the resignation of Goni. Goni was forced to resign, to be replaced by his vice-president, Carlos Mesa. Despite this new attempt to restore order, the blockades are continuing and the mass mobilisations have not – as yet – been fooled.

The situation is evolving. Watch this space. ★

## SOLIDARITY WITH REFUGEES

WITH THE SCOTTISH winter now upon us, Glasgow City Council has begun a programme to evict nearly 200 asylum seekers from their homes in Glasgow.

They have no right to work, no entitlement to benefits or help from social services, and once evicted will have no access to housing or council homelessness services. In many cases financial support, through the Home Office's National Asylum Support Service (NASS) was stopped months ago, but the council has allowed them to remain in the accommodation – mostly flats that no one else wants to live in, many of which were scheduled for demolition before the government dumped asylum seekers in them. This has created a backlog of people not entitled to housing, and NASS has started putting pressure on the council to evict. The council has so far put up no resistance, and is trying

to avoid the issue, shifting the blame to Westminster and ignoring pleas from the Scottish Refugee Council and others to take a stand or find an alternative solution.

The natural solidarity of Glaswegians with oppressed people from around the world has been evident in sympathy and in practical support but is now turning to anger. Over the past three years, in the housing schemes of Glasgow where refugees live, local groups of Glasgow folk and refugees have been set up to help refugees re-build their lives. They are furious at this latest attack. People remember well the massive grassroots campaign against the Poll Tax, which included strikes, blockades of homes against the hated Sheriffs' Officers and occupations of council offices. Hopefully this attack on refugees will be a step too far, and the people of Glasgow will stand by their neighbours again. ★

TIME  
BOMB



*Our occasional history column:*

IN RESPONSE TO an attempted fascist coup in 1936 the anarchist workers of Spain rose up to fight. They took up arms against the army, and in the areas they won control of started to build a new society based on freedom and equality.

So how well did the anarchists do at running society?

The industries collectivised in the anarchist stronghold of Barcelona included construction, the metal industry, bakeries, breweries, slaughter houses, public utilities (gas, water, electricity, etc.), transportation, health services, theatres and cinemas, hotels and boarding houses.

Wages were equalised for all workers (which meant an increase for most) and there was free medical care for all workers in the city.

The takeover of industry was surprisingly quick. And it proved beyond the slightest doubt that modern industry can be efficiently conducted without share holders and very highly placed executives. Wageworkers and salaried employees can themselves operate the complicated machinery of modern industry.

We'll look in a little more detail at the collectivisation of municipal transportation. The first measure in the collectivisation of the street railways was to discharge the excessively paid directors and company stooges. The saving was considerable. The next step was the reduction of working time. With the profit motive gone, safety became more important and the number of accidents was reduced. A new automatic safety and signalling system was introduced. Sections of track were repaired and re-laid.

Before the revolution, streetcars, buses, and subways were each privately owned by separate companies. The union decided to integrate and consolidate all transportation into an efficient system without waste. This improvement meant better facilities, rights of way, and incomparably better service for the riding public. Fares were reduced with free transportation for school children, wounded militiamen, invalids, and the aged.

The repair shops worked extra shifts to repair damaged, and remodel old, conveyances. And these achievements must to a very great extent be ascribed not to competition between fellow workers, but to the spirit of good will and mutual aid that inspired the workers.

So we can see when the anarchists were in control things worked better than they did before. It was only the dual attacks from Communists and Fascists that ended this successful experiment. ★



## INSIDE INFORMATION

### Hunger strike goes on

A MEDICAL TEAM has been checking up on the hunger strikers, Suleiman "Castro" Dakduk, Carlos Martinez, Fernando Perez, Simon Chapman and Spiros Tsistas held in a Greek prison. As can be expected, most of them have lost around a stone and half each in weight but their spirits are high. A decision on the latest bail application is expected in a couple of weeks, but it does not seem hopeful.

At this difficult time, Simon and the others need support more than ever. Please write letters of support to: Kratoumeno Simon Chapman, Dikastikes Flylakes Diavation, T.K. 540 12, Thessaloniki, GREECE (be sure to include a return address on the back of the envelope). The Thessaloniki Prisoner Support Campaign have produced 5,000 colour leaflets describing the background and events of the EU summit in Thessaloniki as well as detailing Simon Chapman's case. 5,000 postcard have also been produced, ad-

dressed to the ambassador of Greece. The Thessaloniki Prisoner Support Campaign meets every Wednesday at 7.30pm at the Autonomy Club, Upstairs at Freedom Bookshop, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1.

### Political Prisoner needs help

Political Prisoner, John Two Names, needs your help! For over seven years, John has been held captive by the State, not for any crime, but for his activism and involvement in "confrontational politics." John, an Echota Cherokee, is involved with Indigenous Rights Campaigns, Anti Racist Actions and Prison Struggles.

In 1996, Two-Names was captured by the ATF, FBI., and the Cullman County Sheriff's Department in, Alabama, an area notorious for lynch mobs, crooked politicians, and the Ku Klux Klan. He was charged with two-counts of Arson 2nd Degree, four counts of burglary, 3rd degree, and one count of unlawful breaking and entering a motor vehicle. Two-Names was considered a suspect because he was labeled as a "militant, terrorist/extremist."

After ten months of being held with-

out bail, he was taken to trial. In this time, the District Attorney tried unsuccessfully to link Two-Names for the crimes. The finger prints didn't match; no recovered merchandise was found, and there were no witnesses to put him at the scene-just two-blocks from his home. So, just 3 days before trial, a "lost" transcript of a witness conversation appeared which said that John confessed to the crimes while in jail.

John Two Names has a parole hearing set for Nov 13. He has requested letters, emails, and faxes of support to be sent to the parole board in favor of his release. Send letters to: State of Alabama Board of Pardons and Paroles, Lurleen B. Wallace Building, 500 Monroe St. PO Box 302405, Montgomery, AL 36130-2405, USA.

Emails: sziglar@paroles.state.al.us  
cdillard@paroles.state.al.us

State of Alabama Board of Pardons and Parole, Lurleen B. Wallace Building, 500 Monroe St. P.O. Box 302405, Montgomery, AL 36130-2405, USA

You can write to John directly at:

Andy "J.2.N." Riendeau, #193786  
Dorm C-2-168, Elmore Corr. Fac., PO Box 8, Elmore, AL 36025, USA. ★



## 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.

**November: 16** Disrupt the Confederation of British Industries' National Conference opening cocktail reception 6pm The ICC, Birmingham. Organised by West Midlands Anarchists. 07973 697430 wmanarchists@email.com www.wmanarchists.org/

**17** Big Noise Demo against Bayer From 10am, all day at Bayer House, Strawberry Hill, Newbury. www.stopbayergm.org/

**24** Film showing: New Century of Protest, Halt Bar (lounge) Woodlands Rd Glasgow 8pm Organised by the Glasgow Autonomous Project autonomy@nocog.org www.nocog.org/~autonomy

**20** Police Review Gala Awards Dinner, Merchant Taylors Hall, Threadneedle Street, City of London 6pm "Turn up and boo them!" Organised by Class War

**29** Mayday Conference to chat about next years demonstrations. 1-5pm in Room 3a at ULU, Malet street London WC1. www.ourmayday.org.uk/

**December: 6** Fifth Manchester Radical Bookfair. Bridge 5 Mill, 22A Beswick Street, Ancoats, Manchester. 11 am - 5pm www.radicalbookfair.org.uk

**13** Scottish Anarchist Dayschool in Glasgow. Organised by Glasgow Autonomous Project and Anarchist Federation. www.autonomy@nocog.org

**13-15** Menwith Hill Spy Base women's peace camp and blockade. 01943 458 593 helenmenwith@yahoo.co.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: anarchistfederation@bigfoot.com