

resistance anarchist bulletin



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Free/Donation

Fingerprinting of children on the rise **Get 'em while they're young**

Ahead of its national Identity Card juggernaut, New Labour is creating separate databases for children. The information they want on file is very wide-ranging - school achievements, health visits, social security and police records for all young people under 18. It's all about child protection, we are told. But the government should not be believed. Even before the Children Act (2004) was passed, the state was confusing its message. Margaret Hodge, in her Blair-created role of Children's Minister admitted, in true New Labour style, that such databases could "also be used to support service planning and delivery". So it's clear they will want to use information to control entitlement to public services needed by children, in the same way they want to use the National Identity Register for everyone else. We now hear that the government is intending to allow children of 'celebrities', which will undoubtedly include top politicians, to be exempted from the database in case their identities are abused. This proves that identity databases are not at all secure, and that money and power can buy anonymity. ID is most definitely a class issue - it will not affect everyone the same way.

Worse still, moves are afoot in the European Union to get children fingerprinted for passports, residence permits and visas. The 25 EU states plus Norway, Iceland and Switzerland met in July to discuss making it compulsory for children aged over 12. This basic plan was supported by Portugal, Hungary and UK. But any EU member state will also be allowed to decide if they want to do it to even younger children. Already

the Spanish state has decided to take fingerprints and facial images from children at birth, the Czech Republic say they will be taking fingerprints from age 5 and facial images from birth. Latvia and France are in favour of fingerprints from age 6 and facial images from birth. So it's vitally important that we make links with activists across Europe.

At the same time, in Britain and elsewhere in the world, pupils and parents are getting more vocal and organised in their protests against the growth of fingerprinting in schools. Private companies are known to have installed thousands of these noddy biometric systems across the country already. Many schools are now taking students' fingerprints, and even iris eye-scans, for every school dinner, at registration or for taking out library books. It's very encouraging to know that school students in Britain are starting to organise against this. At Edgbarrow school in Crowthorne, Berkshire, six formers are opposing their school's plan to pilot a fingerprint registration scheme that is due to start in September. Plus it's amusing to hear that children could easily fool the system with fake fingerprints and register friends who are absent, and that systems often fail to recognise real fingers anyway.

Headteachers and other teachers who are wowed by these new technologies need to be opposed. Many people already see schools as places where our children learn conformity, and so understand that biometrics in schools are a way of conditioning them for ID cards and a lifetime of being tracked by the authorities and future em-



ployers. One campaign, LeaveThemKidsAlone, has a website opposing fingerprinting and is compiling an A-Z list of schools, plus there are numerous reports of fightback on the Indymedia newswire.

See www.leavethemkidsalone.com and www.indymedia.org.uk/en/topics/technology.

The second edition of the AF's free pamphlet, *Defending Anonymity*, is still available online at www.afed.org.uk, and from our postal address (please send Stamped Addressed Envelope).

ON THE FRONTLINE

We'll start with an important battle in east London this month, where 200 cleaners, porters and other domestic staff employed at Whipps Cross hospital have begun a three day strike to force Rentolkil Initial* to fully implement wage parity with NHS members as agreed following another strike three years ago. The management have unilaterally decided to only give around 33% of the back money owed as London weighting. This is an important fight with wider consequences for other non-NHS employed hospital staff nationwide.

Fire-fighters on Merseyside have been out on two 4-day strikes over plans to cut around 150 jobs. Over 1000 walked out and the strikes have been solid so far, with the prospect of further action over the coming weeks.

The usual trouble in the Post Office as well, where management bullying has led to yet another local strike, this time in west Oxfordshire where a three day walkout with two more to come by staff has led to severe disruption.

Driving test instructors are not really what springs to mind when you think of industrial militancy but this month they've been out on strike at plans to shut down a number of driving centres and dilute the knowledge necessary to pass the test, effectively bringing down safety standards not just for themselves but for everyone. Four thousand tests have been cancelled so far following two one day stoppages. Talks seem to be blocked so it looks like there'll be a few more walk outs yet.

Finally, a crucial struggle is brewing in the NHS logistics department, which in a very telling move has just been privatised with DHL taking over in October. NHS logistics organise and delivers supplies to all of the hospitals in the country. A ballot is currently being held amongst the 1700 workers who are to have their contracts switched to the private sector, informed comment expects a strong yes vote for strike action. These 1700 workers have the potential to shut down every hospital in the country if they do decide to walk out. Even a go slow, a work to rule or other partial obstruction can do massive damage. This is a central part of the plans to sell off the entire NHS piece by piece - already private companies are performing all sorts of surgery and have started buying up Doctors practices. This struggle has to be seen in the light of the longer term plans, and support needs to be offered as soon as the ballot results are in. Piecemeal battles are the way the state has planned it's campaign, not one mass battle like the miners strike this time.

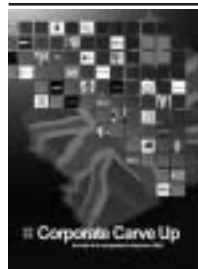
*In the first half of this year Rentolkil Initial made £102.1 million profit.

CORPORATE CARVE-UP

The first comprehensive listing of British companies involved in Iraq is published in Corporate Carve-up, a report by the independent research organisation Corporate Watch. The report reveals that British companies are playing a major part in the effort to create an Iraqi economy based on neo-liberal, pro-corporate principles.

Everyone knows that the invasion of Iraq was a war fought for the control of oil, but many still do not realise that the war had another economic purpose. This was the penetration of US and UK corporate capital into the Iraqi - and wider Middle Eastern - economy. The 'reconstruction' of the Iraqi economy is the vehicle for this penetration, and as such is an economic invasion and occupation that complements the military invasion and occupation.

Through privatisation, and projects remarkably similar to a PFI scheme, corporations are being brought in to dominate Iraqi industries, services and natural resources. In the words of the senior British officer in Iraq, Lt-Gen Sir Robert Fry, the aim of the US/UK forces is 'to take what was an entirely moribund state socialist economic system and begin to introduce it to the disciplines of the market.'



**Corporate Carve Up,
available from
Corporate watch.**

Our report shows that UK companies have made over £1.1 billion from Iraq since the 2003 invasion. There is no doubt that this is a lot of money. This figure is certain to be much higher - but many corporations have forbidden the government to give out information about their activities in Iraq. However, the £1.1 billion amounts to only a fifth of what the British government has spent on the military invasion and occupation - and is a small slice of the \$40 billion total funds for Iraq reconstruction. Most of this money has gone to US companies. In the first year of occupation, more than 80% of major contracts were given to US companies.

The hundreds of millions of dollars that UK companies have made in Iraq must be compared to the many billions that US companies have made. In March 2003, just a few days after the invasion of Iraq, Patricia Hewitt made a public plea to the US that British business should not be overlooked as reconstruction contractors. This supplantation may have had some effect - in March

2004 a partnership of US firm Fluor and UK construction giant Amec was granted one of the bigger reconstruction contracts. This report by Corporate Watch shows that while British firms may have been excluded from the main reconstruction bonanza, they play a major role in three sectors of the corporate invasion.

Firstly, private security. British-run firms provide a large proportion of the armed escort and guarding services that accompany all private contractors in Iraq. British private military companies (PMCs) such as Erinys and Aegis were formed shortly before the 2003 invasion to exploit the burgeoning Iraqi market in security provision and have mushroomed from small firms worth thousands to major operations with turnovers of tens of millions. In terms of revenue British security firms are easily neck and neck with their US counterparts.

Second, British companies have also taken the lead in 'selling Iraq'. British government agencies, or enterprises with close connections to the government, have organised fifteen of the most important corporate reconstruction meetings on the Iraqi conference circus. Access to those conferences for some smaller British firms has enabled a few to crowbar their way into the reconstruction markets.

Third, UK firms such as the Adam Smith Institute, the Hedra Consortium, Solace Enterprises and Bell-Pottinger have played a major role in shaping Iraq's government, civil service and media. British firms have provided a crucial network of information and public relations services which provide the propaganda, intelligence and knowledge resources required to transform Iraq into a neo-liberal corporate-friendly economy.

The US/UK led reconstruction is designed to put corporations at the centre of Iraq's economy, through giving them contracts to run services such as power and water. Meanwhile, British consultants, such as Adam Smith International, attempt to foster an Iraqi civil service that is just as wedded to the idea of privatisation and public-private-partnerships as the US and UK governments already are. The damaging effect this has on Iraqi society is obvious, as Iraqi expertise is ignored and profit-driven US/UK companies deliver meagre results for the billions ploughed into reconstruction.

The report Corporate Carve Up, the role of UK companies in Iraq since 2003, can be obtained from Corporate Watch for £5. Contact 01865 791 391 or visit www.corporatewatch.org

SONIC WARFARE AGAINST YOUTH

Few people like mosquitos, but a new breed of mozzie menace has recently begun appearing in the UK. This particular mosquito doesn't fly or bite you, but it may leave an unpleasant ringing in your ears. Some victims report it causes headaches and mild nausea, even from a short exposure.

"The Mosquito" in question is a sonic device, marketed as an "anti-social teenager repellent", that property owners are being encouraged to buy and install in order to disperse groups of youths. It creates an increasingly unbearable whine using high-pitched sounds that only younger people can hear. (No, this really isn't a joke!)

This device is being encouraged with rapturous praise by local councils, the Home Office and the Police. It's nothing short of a deliberate assault on an entire section of society - regardless of whether they are "trouble makers" or not.

If councils didn't have such chequebook-shaped eyes, and weren't continually turning our streets into sterile altars of capitalism, removing anything that's not a shop, a bar or some other profit-making venture, then this kind of "preventative" measure wouldn't be needed.

Instead of installing dehumanising repellent devices, why not just leave some non-



commercial town centre spaces for people to hang out?

Little wonder that many youngsters behave badly when the State encourages capitalists to treat them like worthless rodents! The council "town planning" morons are patting each other on the back with glee - well done indeed, for disinfecting the streets of the cancer of unruly youth!

As ever, these corporate bastards and their lackeys view anyone who isn't a good little consumer trapped in the big rat race, as simply a parasite to be steam-rolled out of the way. Few people stop to consider who the real parasites are - the business owners and politicians, seeking to eradicate all traces of youthful rebellion from the corporate high street, sucking the very lifeblood from our society and replacing it with nothing but hollow consumerism.

Evidently "anti-social behaviour" now includes such shocking crimes as being young and having nowhere better to hang out with your mates. Meanwhile, business owners carry out a form of sonic assault on kids, and the politicians and Police hail this abuse as a "success".



LABOUR'S NANNY STATE

"'We can clamp down on anti-social children before birth,' says Blair", "Teachers warn over school uniform debts", "Parents pack focaccia and sushi in lunch boxes". Three headlines in one paper on one day recently, the measure of the society New Labour is making. A society of enforced conformity with middle-class tastes and values. Values defined and shaped by capitalism's endless search for profit. Blair thinks that working class kids born on estates he is afraid of, to parents he dislikes, will inevitably become "a menace to society and a threat to themselves". He intends to criminalise people not for what they have done but who they might become, a racism of class, a eugenic program for the poor. Why not just sterilise us Tony, and get it over with?

Nanny Labour thinks all school kids should wear school uniforms but is strangely quiet when it comes to the companies making huge profit by monopolising their supply. Why should schools be able to tell children what to wear or force parents to buy only from certain places they've approved in sweetheart deals? We are compelled to

send children to school, served parenting orders when we refuse, our children bullied when they go and expelled when they complain, force-fed an education that only those who conform can benefit from.

This enforced middle-class conformity doesn't just extend to what we wear or are allowed to think but also to what we eat and how we behave. Due to peer-pressure 'to be fashionable' and 'cool', apparently 20% of parents are now putting focaccia and ciabatta in lunch boxes while thousands of little Tamsins and Timothys regularly tuck in to sushi and smoked salmon, an affectation costing £2bn a year! No wonder the priggish, prissy, stuck-up little lords of creation are regularly getting mugged for their iPods and MP3 players. Capitalism is seducing us with the lure of equity windfalls, gap years and endless holidays. Conform, get on, climb the corporate tree and capitalist society will shower you with wealth, wealth taken from the billions who labour and redistributed unfairly. If you don't or can't, then poverty, suspicion and control by the nanny state is all you get. It shouldn't be this way, should it?

Anarchism means chaos, right?

No, we want no division between rulers and ruled, workers and bosses, leaders and followers, order givers and order takers. We want a world run from the bottom up, where decisions are made directly by those affected by them, not by authorities, elected or imposed.

Surely workplaces need bosses to run them?

No, In an anarchist society, workplaces, communities and other associations would be run by face-to-face meetings of all their participants, with everyone having an equal say on the decisions that effect them. Rather than promising to obey an authority, individuals would participate in making their own collective decisions, their own commitments to their fellows.

Let's put it another way, if the boss got off your back, would you work smarter or harder? Sure you would. Just about everything that needs doing can be done without anyone telling us to do it, and gets done better. You could work alone, with a few people or as part of a big organization, without bosses and on your own terms.

Who would run things, then?

You'd run your own life, and so would I. But we might do the things we can't do alone together and so would society. We could stop the wars, the poverty, the disease, the tin-pot dictators tomorrow if they'd let us, by working together to do the right thing. And we'll decide what's right, for ourselves and no-one else.

Simple administrative tasks could be carried out by elected committees, but these would have no authority, only the duty to carry out the wishes of those who appointed them. The delegates would be temporary, given binding instructions (mandated) and would be instantly recallable if they step outside their mandate. That means they could be sacked at any time!

You mean loads of endless meetings?

Well, if you don't like them, don't go, that's your freedom. But if you want to be involved, no-one can keep you out and your say is as important as everyone else's. Imagine your workplace as somewhere enjoyed by everyone, working as equals. Imagine that instead of being told what to do by the boss, the government or policeman we could live without orders and rules, regulations and restrictions; but together! That's anarchism.

I want to find out more!

Then visit our website: www.afed.org.uk

DON'T DRINK AT STARBUCKS

Starbucks hate unions. They hate it when their workers stand up for themselves. Now they are sacking workers in the USA for joining the Starbucks Union.

They've just sacked Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) member Daniel Gross after more than three years of organizing at the company. His crimes were to go on a union picket line to support a fellow worker and refusing to grass on his mates.

Daniel is the fourth union member to be sacked in a year. His union are asking people not to buy Starbucks coffee till they get their jobs back. Drink somewhere else.

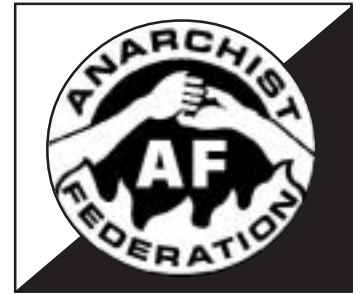
Solidarity actions with the fired baristas have taken place in Germany, Austria, the British Isles, and



Daniel Gross (left) with fellow worker Anthony Polenco

the United States. You can help by taking part in an email action. <http://starbucksunion.org/node/1015>

For more information, visit the union's website at www.starbucksunion.org



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.

If you're interesting in joining contact us at:

Anarchist Federation,
BM ANARFED,
London, WC1N 3XX.
Email: info@afed.org.uk
Also visit: www.afed.org.uk
and www.iaf-ifa.org

Subscriptions to **resistance** costs £4 from the address above for 12 issues. A two issue subscription to our magazine, **Organise! for revolutionary anarchism**, is also £4.

You can subscribe to **resistance** by email for free via the website above.



INSIDE INFORMATION



On Wed 9th of August, Krzysztof Wantoch-Rekowski - a longtime activist of the Polish Anarchist Federation and Food Not Bombs from Poznan - was detained by the police. He has been put into jail for six weeks for... destroying his identity card (article 276 of the Penal Code).

We are calling for expressions of solidarity with Krzysztof:

1. sending protest letters to the Ministry of Justice
2. sending solidarity letters to the prison where Krzysztof is being detained.

Below is a sample of the letter to the Ministry: *I, signed below, protest against the detention of Krzysztof Wantoch-Rekowski - a longtime activist with the Polish Anarchist Federation from Poznan and Food Not Bombs group - in prison in Poznan. His sentence is unnecessarily harsh and illustrates*

the repressive character of the Polish state. I demand his immediate release!

Address of the Ministry of Justice:

Ministerstwo Sprawiedliwosci

Al. Ujazdowskie 11

00-950 Warszawa, POLAND

Sygnatura akt (file signature): WK 1481/03/4

Solidarity letters to Krzysztof (postcards, letters, leaflets, newspapers, etc. please remember that all of them will be filtered by censors). Address of Krzysztof in prison:

Krzysztof Wantoch-Rekowski

AS Poznan

Mlynska 1

61-729 Poznan, POLAND

Anarchist Federation Poland/Poznan

Anarchist Black Cross/Poznan

SUBVERT!

When going on demonstrations stay sober, don't talk to the police and if you're arrested give only your name and address then say 'no comment' to any other questions. For more info visit: www.ldmg.org.uk

September

15th - International Day Of Action Against The Icelandic State Aan Alcoa No matter the environmental and social cost, no matter the ever increasing protests from the Icelandic and international communities and the intensifying warnings from the scientific sector, the Icelandic government is hellbent on going ahead with its plan to inundate the projected Hálslón reservoir at Kárahnjúkar between 15-30 September. They must be stopped! www.savingiceland.org

16th - Campaign Against Climate Change - Race Against Climate Doom Put on your jogging gear, join the race and spread the message! Gather 12.30pm outside ExxonMobil London Offices, St Katherines House, on the corner of Kingsway and Aldwych. Finishes at the US Embassy for a party

16th - Party For Global Climate Justice Climate change will affect the poor the most. Come and

show solidarity with those at threat around the world and call for climate justice. 2PM - 6ish US Embassy, Grosvener Square (Bond Street Tube) 0207 8339311 or 07903 316331 email info@campaigncc.org www.climatecc.org

19th - Justice in the Middle East. March for Peace Silent March Starting from Despensers Gardens, Riverside, Cardiff at 2.30pm. Please wear black. 3.00pm Rally City Hall.

23th - Time To Go Demonstration Troops Out of Iraq, No Attack on Iran, No Trident Replacement, Get Blair Out, End Israeli Terror. Manchester assemble 1pm Albert Square, Brighton coach tickets - only £10 return (call 07917 300419) London coach Leaves 7:00am, Shepherds Bush Road, (outside Old Fire Station)., near Hammersmith, Police Station. W6 Tickets: £15 waged, £6 unwaged, £3 under 18s. Call Explo on 07984 405307 Or email: stwc_ham_sb@yahoo.co.uk for more info on London coaches.

23th - "No Trident Replacement, Don't Attack Iran" - a demonstration on the eve of the Labour Party conference, Manchester, called by CND and the Stop the War Coalition. Meet 1pm, Albert Square, Manchester. For more info see www.cnduk.org