

resistance

anarchist bulletin

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FINGERED! BIG BROTHER IS HERE

Tuesday November 25th was marked by countryside action against the introduction of identity cards for some UK residents, namely people from outside the EU who are applying for or renewing visas for study or marriage.

So-called 'ID cards for foreigners' are the first step in the government's plan to get everyone living in the UK fingerprinted and photographed, registered on a national database and tracked wherever we go. Protests were called by No Borders, Defy-ID and NO2ID. These highlight the connection between the ID Cards Act of 2006 and the UK Borders Act of 2007, the twin legislation that is putting the scheme in place.

In Liverpool, a joint demo with Manchester activists was held. There, No Borders, Defy-ID and NO2ID protested outside the UK Border Agency's offices and short-term immigration prison in Reliance House on Water Street wearing barcodes around their necks. Leaflets were given out, a megaphone was used to explain the reason for the demo and the Samba band provided rhythm. During the demo, a long queue of non-EU citizens, including many small children, snaked out the door and into the freezing cold. Three cops were also present, one who complained about being photographed.

In Solihull, Birmingham, a banner proclaiming "Freedom of Movement for All" was held by the entrance of the UK Borders Agency office and leaflets were handed out to passers-by. Three police vans, 12 cops and an evidence gatherer were in attendance, as were a couple of environmental health council officials who seemed to have been called in to hassle demonstrators using an anti-littering bylaw. But Birmingham No Borders knew the law and it can't be used against political leafleting.

In Newcastle, during the peak morning rush hour, four activists from No Borders



DEFY ID—Anti ID card protests took place across Britain (top to bottom): Outside the UK Border Agency offices in Cardiff; at Lunar House, Croydon; outside Reliance House, Liverpool

North East performed a banner drop from a bridge over one of the city's busiest inner motorways. The largest banner read "No To ID Cards, Freedom For All!" and was accompanied by a smaller No Borders banner. This time the cops turned up and actually suggested that an anarchist symbol can be deemed offensive and thus removable under a public order act! But in fact the reaction from the drivers below was overwhelmingly positive, with many honking horns, waving and giving thumbs up. Later in the day the group took to the city centre to distribute leaflets.

Elsewhere, Leeds NO2ID burnt a mock ID card in the city centre. London No Borders and NO2ID picketed Lunar House in Croydon, the UK Border Agency headquarters. Over 60 people gathered in Cardiff outside the UK Border Agency on Newport Road with placards and "Big Brother is coming – No ID cards" amongst the banners, organised by No Borders South Wales and joined by Bristol No Borders who together waved giant mock ID cards and gave out 600 leaflets. A demo organised by Glasgow Anarchists was held outside the immigration centre on Brand Street. Leaflets were distributed in St. Andrews. Across the country many letters were written to local newspapers to build support for a complete boycott.

By starting with 'foreigners' the government is using a divide and rule tactic, hoping that some people will not care or think it won't happen to them. But protests will continue as the registration offices get up to speed over the coming months. There is still time to organise a countryside boycott if solidarity is shown with international students and others affected. The petty harassment of some of these demonstrations by police and local officials just shows what kind of state we'll all be living in if the government gets its way.

On the frontline

● Workers at Dover Port received overwhelming support for their 48 hour strike in early November following a 83% yes ballot. The action restricted ferry operations. Workers are striking to protect their jobs from outsourcing. They resumed strike action on the 27th November, against management plans to outsource various jobs at the port entailing attacks on pay, pensions and job security. The three-day strike follows a 48 hour walkout on the 18th. Management had earlier attempted to use Gurkhas to break the strike, but this backfired when they refused to scab and walked out of training.

● Thousands of Scottish Water workers struck for 24 hours from the 27th November. Staff there are fighting pay rises which are less than half the rate of inflation, amounting to a real terms cut in the value of pay. Services across the country are affected.

● Workers in Derry occupied their factory in order to force proper redundancy payments from their employers. Bosses had sacked 90 of the 102 workers and offered 12 jobs in Belfast. If an employer makes over 99 staff redundant, they must pay three months redundancy pay, however, if they make fewer than 99 redundant they only have to pay one months worth. Union negotiators brought in have settled 'enhancements' to the original package – what these will actually mean is not yet clear.

● Industrial action in the NHS planned in December (as we go to press) was after a 76% vote in favor in protest against this year's below inflation pay rise. Unite members, who include pharmacists, health visitors and mental health nurses were planning to work to rule on 3rd December. The union has warned that it will take strike action in January if the government refuses to improve its pay offer. Predictably other NHS unions including Unison are not joining in.

● Even though the majority of National Union Teachers members voted for industrial action in defence of decent pay, the NUT Executive again predictably has decided not to go ahead with more strikes. The union has backed off doing anything more than encouraging union members to write their MP!

● Meat hygiene inspectors have voted two to one in favour of strike action in a dispute over cuts to overtime payments and the introduction of a 'work anytime' system. The Unison members—who make sure that the meat on our plates is safe to eat—voted in favour of strike action by 65.7% to 34.3%.

● The leadership of the Public and Commercial Services union cancelled strike action scheduled for the 10th November following secret talks between union and government representatives. The ballot, which endorsed the strike, was tight, undoubtedly to do with disillusionment with the general union strategy of calling one-day strikes followed by long periods of inactivity. The action was to be coordinated with the NUT, who had cancelled their own plans (see above). The dispute was over pay 'rises' which are well below inflation, amounting to real terms pay cuts.

FASH TRASH

The British National Party recently suffered a major blow, with their entire membership list being leaked on the internet. The names, addresses, emails, phone numbers, and even hobbies and jobs of around 12,000 members appeared on the internet after apparently being leaked by a disgruntled former member.

Party leader (or should we say, Fuhrer) Nick Griffin immediately issued a statement and appeared in numerous interviews saying that the persons who leaked the document should be put before the courts, claiming that it was in breach of the Human Rights Act, the very same Human Rights Act that the party want to abolish. More hypocrisy from more politicians, no change there then!

By the time the police were said to be investigating, and the original blog containing the details had been removed, the damage had already been done. BNP members showed their outrage at the party leadership claiming that they may lose their jobs because of being included in the list. Sure enough that is what happened, with TalkSport DJ, Rod Lucas being dropped and Merseyside Police Constable, Steve Bettley being subject to an investigation. The reason that many closet racists of the BNP appear alarmed is because their full details have just fallen into the laps of neighbours and anti-fascists alike, and they quite rightly fear the consequences.

The BNP, like all politicians, say what they want to appeal to as many people as they can. The BNP is a racist political party, no matter how respectable they hope to look. They clearly state that the freedoms of many will be taken away if they ever achieve power, whether they be 'reds', 'foreigners', or anybody that does not fit into their idea of the 'master race'. They offer absolutely nothing to the working class, which they aim to divide and weaken and this cannot be forgotten.

The coming weeks and months will be interesting viewing. Will there be yet another power struggle within the party? Will party members leave in droves, disillusioned with the myth of 'the foremost patriotic political party in Great Britain'? Will Nick Griffin crumble under the pressure? One thing will be certain; resistance to the fascists will be strong.

It should be remembered that the list contains ex-members (resigned, expelled or deceased) as well as people who requested literature or made a donation to the party. It's causing strife within the BNP as it shows that inflated membership numbers have been used to ward off challenges to Griffin. Also that the media are talking about them having 12,000 members when they have half that is making them look more powerful than they actually are.

To find out more about the struggle against fascism visit www.antifa.org.uk



Bastard of the Year: Jake 'Two Jumpers' Ulrich

Well, its that time of year again ... the wind is blowing cold and the heatings going on, but not this year, thanks to Jake Ulrich, winner of the 2008 'Bastard of the Year' competition!

Ulrich, the managing director of Centrica Energy (parent company of British Gas) gave working people a kick in face after telling them to "put on two jumpers" after raising gas prices by 35%. He then admitted that prices are likely to rise up to 70% over the next few years pushing up the average gas bill to over £1000 per year.



Good ol' Jake earns almost a million pounds a year and often gains huge bonuses. He also has access to a monumental pension of over £3 million. In the midst of a massive economic crisis people like Jake Ulrich demonstrate the total callousness of the capitalist system. Desperately squeezing all the profit they can out of working people while raking in huge personal wealth regardless of whether or not it means leaving a huge amount of the population in fuel poverty.

So, let's raise a glass and give a toast to Jake Ulrich, the massive bastard that he is!

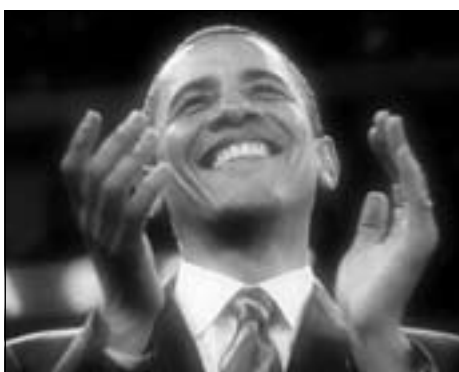
OBAMA: DON'T BELIEVE THE HYPE

Barack Obama's victory in the United States does not mean liberation for black people any more than Margaret Thatcher's government was a victory for the women's movement. Neither does it herald a new dawn for the world, as mainstream commentary would have us believe.

Those of the 130 million Americans who voted in the election for Obama will soon be sorely disappointed. Barack Obama is appealing because he is young, handsome and above all not George Bush. Bush, for many, is associated with election fraud, economic crisis and increasingly unpopular wars, with over 4,000 troops dead and 100,000 injured in Iraq alone.

Huge sections of the press supported Obama in the election, even much of the right-wing Murdoch empire. Many sections of the US business world see him as a fresh break. Obama is presented as a Mr Clean who will sweep away the stench of corruption that haunts US politics. A Mr Clean he may be, but he spent over \$200 million to get elected – more than \$40 million a month. Clearly that money is not coming from the poor—a quarter of African Americans live below the poverty line—or the quarter of the workforce in low paid jobs in a country where the minimum wage is \$6.55 an hour (just over £4). It is coming from wealthy donors like bankers and financiers Goldman Sachs, Citigroup and companies like Microsoft, whose founder Bill Gates is worth \$45 billion. Clearly these press barons and big companies are going to expect something in exchange.

We expect the wars to continue. His commitment to pulling out of Iraq excited many, but he is only continuing a plan for withdrawal which has been agreed by negotiators from Bush's government in the last month – leading to huge protests by Iraqis who want the troops out now. The government will need to stay friendly, and



troops will be replaced by advisers, security guards and 'contractors', who are in reality heavily armed thugs and mercenaries. He will send more into Afghanistan, and strike Iran and Pakistan if deemed necessary. Although the hell that is Guantanamo Bay will close, we doubt he'll do much for the 2.5 million (mostly black and Hispanic) Americans who rot in prison. The US will continue its backing of other oppressive and aggressive regimes around the world.

Most importantly capitalism is sliding deep into another of its inevitable economic crises. Obama has the backing of the rich and powerful because he will be better able to inflict pain and hard times on the working people in the States and the rest of the world. He is the 'moderate' face which will sell austerity to the poor and working class people of the United States. He has been elected to bring change, but ultimately he is the friendly face which will stand against real change.

Elections come and elections go. The faces of our rulers come and go. But the need to struggle and fight against the bosses and the state goes on every day. Whoever the Americans voted for, the government got in. We need to be building a fighting alternative, the confidence of normal people to fight to defend their interests and ultimately create a world of real freedom and community.

Red hot in Chile

Chile's Senate unanimously approved a 10% wage increase for public workers in November, ending a four day strike by 400,000 state employees that had halted refuse collection, and affected health and school services.

After the unanimous 32-0 vote in the Senate, union leaders announced the end of the four day-strike.

The Senate vote came hours after Chile's lower house rejected a 9.5% wage increase. Following the lower house loss, the government had increased its wage hike offer to 10% and senators approved the sweetened deal.

The wage hike proposal now returns to the lower house for a vote, where it is expected to pass.

Strikers were asking for a 14.5% but had suggested a two-digit figure could end their stoppage.

Immigrants fight back

Riot police have once again attacked immigrants queuing outside the central immigration office in Athens, Greece. In their last attack a Pakistani man was killed on the spot, whereas two more succumbed to their wounds days later in the hospital.

The killing had caused a mass rally in the centre of Athens called by the Pakistani community and joined by hundreds in solidarity. This time the reaction of the immigrants was immediate. They erected barricades blockading the avenue running past the immigration office.

Joined by local anarchists they demanded the immediate release of three persons wounded and arrested during the morning raid.

Over 500 people blockaded the road for over five hours leaving only after their comrades were released and the police agreed to begin talks with Pakistani community reps about improving and speeding up asylum procedure.

RECLAIM THE CAMPUS!

The Autonomous Students Network (ASN) was founded at the October 2008 London Anarchist Bookfair at a meeting organised by London Autonomous Students Network (LASN). ASN has a strategic outlook based on tackling our problems at source, from the bottom up, which enables us to directly create alternatives to capitalism ourselves. This is why we choose to work on issues directly affecting us at our colleges, because we can have a real effect on these, which in turn have knock-on effects for people elsewhere.

We favour methods such as going on strike with canteen workers and spreading information to others on campus about companies here, rather than going on a general anti-war demo or twinning our college with a less well off college elsewhere.

Our common values are autonomy, anti-capitalism and horizontal organising and direct action.

It is a federation of groups based at different colleges and individuals, not everyone involved is a student, but the issues we focus on are often education-based. We're keen to work with like-minded people, so get in touch if you want to struggle with us!

Email: autonomous-students-network@riseup.net

Mailing list: autonomous-students-network@lists.riseup.net

'We're desperate for cash to sort out our fuck-up'



Local residents came across this nice bit of subvertising on a telephone box in Stockwell Road, London.

The Department for Work and Pensions has lately been continuing a patronising campaign against 'benefit theft'. As the 'subvertisement' points out, banks and major insurance companies are being bailed out with billions of pounds by working people—one of the biggest thefts in history—but obviously the government chooses to target the poorest in society.

SCHOOL'S OUT!

The campaign by Italian students and education workers against Silvio Berlusconi's education reforms continues to escalate.

The government aims to rectify the financial problems of the Italian state by making significant cuts of the value of around \$2 million to expenditure reserved for education. This will result in the layoff of half of the staff of Italian universities in the long term, with the expected loss of 130,000 jobs in state schools. Teachers' hours will be cut back to effectively part-time levels. The nature of universities will be redefined, and rather than being public institutions they stand to become part-privatised foundations in order to make up some of the funding from outside investments. The separation of Italian and non-Italian students in schools is also proposed.

Huge protests have taken place throughout Italy in response to the "rationalisations". Five hundred thousand marched through Rome on the 14th of November. The protesters were quartered in the occupied Sapienza University, and militant students from Milan continued the tradition of auto-reduction (deciding and haggling their own fares en masse) and demanded extra trains, which were delivered after the occupation of the station. Protests in Rome on the 29th of October were attacked by armed fascists in the Piazza Navona, resulting in the swift removal of the far-right activists by ambulance after a bout of strong remonstrations with militant antifascists. Universities have been occupied since October,

and teaching staff have held open-air lectures on the theme of the reforms and the anti-social, pro-business priorities of the Italian government. A physics lecturer from La Sapienza speaking in the square declared that today "Einstein would be a precarious worker, maybe considered a wasted man who enjoys himself in formulating theories instead of working". The government has responded by stating that "squares are not the place to discuss political issues which should be discussed only in the parliament", and that police could be called in to enforce this.

A strike by Italian school teachers took place on the 30th of October, with up to a million teachers, students and supporters marching in Rome. It followed a general strike against the cuts on 17th October. Another general strike is lined up for the 12th of December.



The Anarchist Federation is an organisation of **class struggle** anarchists 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 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 the British Isles fighting for the kind of world outlined above. Contact us at—

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Subscriptions to Resistance cost £4 to the address above for 10 issues. A two issue subscription to our magazine, Organise!, is also £5. You can subscribe to Resistance by email via the website above.

CAMPUS IS NOT DEAD

A few weeks into the new academic year and it's the beginning of recruitment fair season, a time when union spaces in universities across the country are sold off for corporate interests to exhibit careers in anything from weapons manufacturing to managerial jobs in sweatshop industries. There is a growing student movement against the marketisation of education and particularly the heavy investment of universities into the arms trade and organisations that support the invasion of Iraq. This past month saw a wave of student protest across the country.

Students at Nottingham University got the ball rolling with activists dressing as grim reapers to highlight the hypocrisy of organisers AIESEC—who claim to embody "Peace and fulfilment of humankind's potential"—giving a platform to arms dealers at the fair. Protesters had a stall from which to disseminate literature including alternative careers guides. The students later commandeered the neighbouring Army stall whilst their representatives were on a break and invited students to "join the imperial death machine". This is part of a wider campaign for the university to de-invest in the arms trade.

At London School of Economics, a student was assaulted while protesting against the naming of a lecture theatre after Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the dead dictator of the United Arab Emirates. He was a dictator who sanctioned torture of his citizens and refused to sign international agreements on human rights, outlawed trade unions, outlawed homosexuality and imprisoned LGBT people. When

the group dropped a banner reading "No more Dirty Money at LSE", a policeman approached the group and—without warning—kneaded a student in the crotch and punched him on the side of the head twice. The group also wish to highlight the universities investment in arms companies such as BAE and Rolls Royce, along with accepting donations of over £1m from BP, a company whose cuts in safety budgets has led to the death of fifteen workers.

Finally at Sheffield University, security did its best to exclude a coalition of activists from its graduate recruitment fair, but this did not stop protesters getting their voices heard. No Sweat (an anti-sweatshop group), a local animal rights group, People and Planet and the newly formed Kick 'Em Off Campus group were all present at the fair. Environmental activists tipped charcoal over the E.On stall to highlight the company's investment in the new generation of atmosphere crunching coal-fuelled power stations. Animal right activists trashed the Procter and Gamble stall (a company known for testing on animals) while Kick 'Em Off Campus activists dropped a banner on the roof of the fair reading "Keep your bloody hands off our students", to protest army recruiters and arms manufacturers at the university. Army recruiters use events like these to normalise war and paint a misleading, romanticised portrait of army life. There is a growing movement in the university to kick the military off campus.