

resistance

anarchist bulletin

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Down with dictators!



War, what is it good for?

Big business!

BY THE TIME this issue of **resistance** appears, The US and its British ally might already have launched attacks on Iraq.

We can be sure that so-called opposition within Labour will be soon reduced to a small rump, as Labour Party whips explain the potential damage to their careers. We can be sure too, that the unions will tone down their criticisms, as they always have with this Labour government. At the same time, the unions have attempted, along with their accomplices in the left organisations, to tame any anti-war movement, and stop it spilling out into direct action on the streets.

The aim of the US war effort is not the liberation of the Iraqi people from Saddam Hussein, but the overthrow of Saddam and his replacement by another vicious regime, this time more at the beck and call of the US. They kept Saddam in power for many years, and only now do they want to remove him. This will guarantee them cheap oil supplies. This was one of the reasons behind their attack on Afghanistan – the supply of oil in Central Asia.

An overthrow of Saddam by the

Americans will not then benefit the Iraqi masses. Only a full-blown social revolution can achieve that. If such a revolution happened, the US and its allies would do their utmost to destroy it.

A US-led attack on Iraq will strengthen support for Muslim fundamentalism and anti-Western nationalism. This will increase the chances of further terrorist attacks.

But at the same time, the US may have committed a major miscalculation with the launch of anti-war movements throughout the world that may lead to greater radicalisation and the realisation that capitalism is the root of war.

The huge demonstration in London in late September was a sign of massive opposition to the war in Britain. But a walk from Embankment to Hyde Park is not enough. If we want to hinder the war effort and eventually bring it grinding to a halt, then we must escalate actions on the street: direct action preventing the movement of material and supplies – road blocks, boycotts, workers blocking transportation of war materials, strikes and riots will all raise the political temperature and push the anti-war movement forward

Down with democracy!

Bush, Blair and the whole pro-war bandwagon love to contrast their democratic credentials to those nasty little dictatorships to be found dotted around the globe.

But just what does democracy actually mean? It means capturing the political parties, for example. Remember how Blair manipulated the Labour Party, filled it with his hangers-on and suppressed all opposition.

Or how about when Bush fiddled the vote in Florida to capture power in the USA? Or how Blair and co. wheedled their way into forming a government on the basis of support from only about a quarter of the electorate?

Democracy, in the USA and Britain in particular, is a massive lie. It is a means by which we are duped into believing that what **we** think counts when in fact it is only what **they** say that matters. And this lie is spread by a conniving mass media which gains from spreading the delusion that politicians are responsive to our interests, wishes and desires.

The reality, of course, is that democracy is really a dictatorship of the rich, the unaccountable multi-national companies and their hangers-on. Real power lies with them so long as the working classes of the world continue to be seduced into slumber. That is why we in the Anarchist Federation are fighting to tell the truth, why we are arguing for real peoples control over our lives and highlighting the struggles of those like in Argentina (*see inside*) as possible ways forward. ★

ON THE FRONTLINE

ANOTHER BUSY MONTH of industrial disputes – official figures show that this year has seen the highest number of strikes since 1989 – and we still have a national fire-fighters strike yet to come...

Wildcat strikes returned to the postal services with 30 workers at the Filton (Bristol) Royal Mail Cashco depot walking out unannounced – to be joined later by 90 members of the morning shift. The walkout was over the planned selling off of part of the business to Securicor – who were also the inspiration for a wildcat in Scotland where stoppages at Broxburn, West Lothian and Glasgow took place after they were sold part of Consignias cash-handling services.

More strikes on the London Underground – a 24-hour strike on the 25th is to be followed by another on 3rd October. Drivers are demanding a 5.7% pay rise and moves towards implementing a promised 35-hour week. All twelve lines were fully shut down – at a cost of £60 million – London Underground itself loses about £3 million every strike day and so cannot hold out indefinitely without damaging itself and making it a worse investment option for PFI/PPP funds.

24-hour strikes also took place on Arriva Trains Northern, where conductors are fighting a long running (19 days of action) and increasingly bitter battle with bosses. They've now been joined by Station and retail staff who are involved in a separate pay dispute. Arriva has been in dispute with workers in almost every corner of the country, and have seen their operating earnings drop by 4% as a result.

International news: In **Ireland** there is to be a national work-stoppage on October 4 in Support of "Irish Glass Bottle" and Peerless Rug Workers, who are both fighting for full payment of their redundancy payments. A General strike has been called in **South Africa** to protest the current wave of ANC imposed privatisations and resulting redundancies. General strikes are also in the pipeline in **Italy** and **Venezuela**. In **France** Air France pilots are planning to strike against partial privatisation on 3 October, and **Italian** air traffic controllers have also been striking. A Europe wide co-ordination of these stoppages looks likely in the coming months - as happened earlier this year. ★

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CELEBRITY PRAT OF THE MONTH

"Ten years ago every position I held was militant, be it Christianity, Marxism, veganism, whatever. Then I realised that militancy was really serving no purpose other than alienating the people I was close to. I didn't make the world a better place. I was just being obnoxious and annoying."



Moby: Prat

DELUSIONS THAT THERE have ever been anything "militant" about Moby's past affiliations are risible. Christianity, Marxism, veganism... nothing there, then or now, to oust the status quo.

What is there in Christianity that could be deemed revolutionary? It's all bowing and scraping to some figment of the imagination concocted aeons ago by the ruling establishment to maintain their dominance, power and lions share of the worlds wealth. Not much different with the Marxists, it'd just be exchanging one clique of "do-as-we-say's" for another lot. No thanks, we've had enough of that. Vegan-

ism – well, it's a fine principled code of ethics to live by but, sure as eggs are eggs, it's never going to change the social structure, not in the slightest.

No, capitalism per se is **the** problem and class-ridden society is its manifestation.

Until we, the workers, the wealth creators, organise ourselves into a unified force to be reckoned with, seizing back our own lives from the boss class, politicians, priests and what-have-you, until we refuse to be sucked into the comforts of complacency by the likes of the self-admittedly obnoxious, but ineffectual, Moby, ambitions to attain a genuinely humane world will never be realised.

If workers are ever to become anything other than pawns in the competing games of the exploiting classes, opposition must be total, rising and evolving from a position of strength firmly rooted in the anarchist communist practice that ensures our class never again falls prey to the brutality at the core of capitalism. ★

EXAMS ARE A FAILURE

SO AT LAST the exams issue has blown up in the governments face. Everyone at the top of the examinations tree have been desperate to slag each other off. Why, because the system has been revealed to be a complete mess.

Young people in England and Wales sit more exams in their years at school than in most other countries. They are tested at 7, 11, 14 and 16. If they decide to stay on, they are tested again at 17 and 18! Both students and teachers are fed up with the system. So what is the purpose of having constant exams? Education under capitalism is to prepare people for work. Bosses want workers who not only have the right skills, but who will show "respect for authority" and have a "good work ethic". Teachers used to have more freedom over what they taught. To the state this meant the possibility of teachers "subverting" their students by doing topics that might get people to question society. Constant exams, to a set curriculum, controls what is taught.

The government would like to go further in controlling the teachers by introducing performance related pay. Another use of exams is that they force young people to constantly think about "achievement" and "success". They compete with other students, and those who work hard-



Exams fail us

est or are most willing to conform, will be seen as successes. Those who don't, will be "failures". This prepares people to accept what happens at work when some people earn stacks of money and others get the shit jobs and earn peanuts. Exams give the false impression that we live in a society of "equal opportunity" where anyone can

rise to the top. Exams are supposed to be an impartial way of judging people. Social class, gender or ethnicity aren't supposed to matter.

Students go along with this because they are worried about what will happen to them if they don't play the game. Teachers go along with it because they are being judged on the exam results so they can't afford to be the odd one out. University students are also under tremendous pressure and most have to do part-time jobs to survive. Teachers are also fed up with the extra work that all the exams have meant.

One of the biggest challenges to capitalism in recent European history happened in Paris in May 1968. It started in the schools and universities with students and teachers rebelling against the latest educational reforms. The rebellion then spread to the streets and the workplaces. Lets see it happen again! ★

ARGENTINIANS AT WORK

TEN MONTHS AGO the Argentinian working class rose up and seriously threatened the power of the state – five governments were brought down in three weeks and momentum was building for more widespread resistance. Since then though, it all seems to have gone quiet – if you believed the capitalist press anyway. The reality is very different however – the struggle continues and has, if anything, taken on a more determined character.

Activity has shifted from the Popular Assemblies to the occupied factories and to establishing link-ups between the unemployed *piqueteros* and the occupying workers. Over 300 factories and workplaces have been taken over by their workers – for example the Brukman textile plant in Buenos Aires has been occupied since December 18th when the boss fled owing months of wages. Hired goons were sent to take back the plant but were met with physical resistance by the workers and *piqueteros* – which helped to develop practical solidarity.

This has been demonstrated in a series of National Conferences, the latest of which took place on Sept 28th – attended by workers and delegates of the *piqueteros*. Nearly every industry was represented – miners from Río Turbio, Grissinópolis bakers, the Junín Clinic of



Córdoba, Tigre Supermarkets in Rosario, to teachers' occupying School Boards in La Plata, Berisso and Ensenada. San Juan, Tucuman, Entre Rios, Cordoba, El Jagüel, Floresta, Chilavert have all seen occupations – and this trend is rapidly spreading throughout the country.

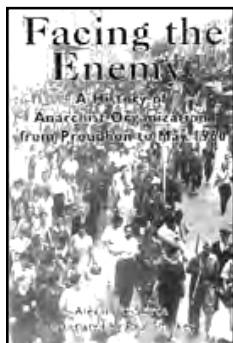
The *piqueteros* have formed themselves into a National Picketeer Bloc and have established links with other groups especially the MIJD (Independent Movement of Pensioners and the Unemployed) and *Barrios de Pie* (Neighborhoods on their Feet), and the *CTD Aníbal Verón* (Coordinator of Unemployed Workers). Each group militancy encourages the others – statements like “we repudiate the electoral trap which proposes that ‘All of them must go’ so that all of them remain... and we place no confidence in those who say that the social crisis... is to be resolved with a change in government...” are accurate reflections of the mood of these groupings.

The importance of independent class action and the value of establishing links with other working class groups in struggle is evident here – there's a lesson for the posties, transport workers and other struggling workers here – rely on your collective strength and solidarity – not on union bureaucrats whinging about legality and protecting their assets. ★

ANARCHISM IS ORGANISATION

“IT WILL BE readily appreciated that I cannot remain indifferent to the nonchalance and negligence currently obtaining in our circles. On the one hand, it prevents the creation of a coherent libertarian collective that would enable anarchists to take their proper place in the revolution, and on the other, it permits a making-do withy fine phrases and grand notions, while shying away when action is called for... Responsibility and collective discipline should not cause alarm: they are the fellow travellers of the practice of social anarchism”.

This quote from the anarchist militant Nestor Makhno features in a new book from AK Press (www.akuk.com), *Facing the Enemy: a history of anarchist organisation* by Alexandre Skirda. Lessons can be drawn from the book which pinpoints what is wrong with the anarchist movement in **this** country: The fear of effective organisation, the cult of the individual and of lifestyle, the false understanding of “spontaneity” is, still makes what passes for the anarchist movement



on these islands ineffective. Too often effective propaganda and activity are never attempted, too often even in a neighbourhood or in an industry no coordination between individuals and groups is attempted, too often great opportunities to advance the influence of anarchist ideas are frittered away.

What we need is effective organisation built around core ideas of class struggle, federalism and anarchist communism. We appeal to all anarchists who take the task of furthering revolutionary anarchism seriously, to think deeply about the need to coordinate propaganda and activity more efficiently. Obviously, we feel as many people as possible should join the Anarchist Federation. But if you do have political differences with the AF, then join one of the other anarchist organisations in Britain and Ireland, or, failing this, take part in the work of local groups where they exist, or help them come into existence. And above all, work towards coordination and united action between the groups that make up the body of anarchism on these islands. ★

TIME BOMB



St. Petersburg Soviet 1905

“ONE EVENING WHEN there were several workers at my house, as usual Nossar was there too, -we had the idea of forming a permanent workers’ organisation: something like a committee, or a council...”

Voline: The Unknown Revolution

The meeting above took place in mid-January 1905. A decision was made to inform workers in all large factories about the idea of the Soviet, and to proceed next to the election of officers which would name a council (soviet) of workers’ delegates. The petition, in January 1905, to Tsar Nicholas II was an example of the overwhelming faith the working class had in their “little father”, but betrayed a similar naivety in its faith in the system that exploited them. Among the measures demanded were complete freedom of the press, freedom of speech, the right to organise, the right to strike, the right to join unions, agrarian laws which would lead to the expropriation of large landowners, and the immediate convocation of a Constituent Assembly that would greatly reduce the power of the Tsar himself.

On Sunday January 9, the march which carried this petition to the Tsar was gunned down by government troops. The day after the massacre, the factories and shipyards throughout the capital were silent. The strike itself was spontaneous, not directed by any union apparatus, political party or strike committee, simply a mass demonstration of resistance. Meanwhile, the soviets spread like a virus, representing most of the labour force of St. Petersburg, and 80,000 workers in Moscow. Overall, 50 soviets of workers and peasants were formed. The Tsar needed to bide his time before bringing his full force to bear against the people. In August, the monarchy pretended to recognise the gains the people had already taken for themselves. Before long bakers and printers called for another general strike – a call that was soon heard by the rest of their class. The general strike in October began on the railroads but soon spread, suspending the life of the country.

Finally, the government gave way, and issued the famous “Manifesto of October 17th” which promised the setting up of a state Duma (parliament) with the right to proclaim laws, along with greater civil liberties, and extension of the franchise. The workers were suspicious, but the strike was called off, and the Tsar bought himself the time he needed. By the end of the year, the freedoms granted a few months before were rescinded. The revolutionary press was censored, major uprisings were put down, all workers’ organisations including the soviets were suppressed. ★

INSIDE INFORMATION

Mayday Appeal for Witness

WE ARE PASSING on this appeal from a solicitor about a person arrested on Mayday in Wardour St at 8.50 pm: I represent Philip Paden who is accused of affray in Wardour St. on 1st May 2002 at 8.50 pm. He is accused of using a plastic dustbin lid to hit police officers shields. Philip denies the charges and it is very important that I contact any eye witnesses who may have seen his arrest and the events leading up to it. Philip was wearing a white paper suit, a white arm guard and was holding a pink plastic dustbin lid. If anybody can help please contact me :

Andrew Katzen Moss & Co. Solicitors, 17 Lower Clapton Rd, London, E5 0NS. Tel: 0208 986 8336 Email: andrew@mosslaw.co.uk

Cypriot Anarchist imprisoned

On September 4, 2002, anarchist George Karakasian was sentenced to seven months in prison for "assaulting a police officer" at a demonstration outside the Is-

raeli ambassador's home. For more info email: exegersi2002@yahoo.com or: anarchy@vip.gr

New Defence Network for Free

In June 2000, two US anarchists, Free and Critter, were stopped by police in June 2000 and ended up charged with Criminal Mischief and Arson. They had been followed by undercover agents after setting fires to vehicles at a car showroom. Critter was sentenced to five years and five months, Free was convicted and sentenced to an outrageous 22 years and five months, with no possibility of parole. Friends of Free's have recently formed a new defence network to co-ordinate support.

Check out the websites to see how you can support Free: www.freefreenow.org or www.spiritoffreedom.org.uk/prisoners/fc/free.html

Brighton Anarchist Black Cross will be the UK contact, for information (please send an SAE) and for donations toward Free's costly appeal process, and/or his college education in prison.

Contributions however small are welcome and will be passed on regularly (please make cheques payable to ABC)

Brighton ABC, PO Box 74, Brighton, BN1 4ZQ

Contact Free and Critter directly at: Jeffrey Luers (Free), #13797671, OSP, 2605 State Street, Salem OR 97310, USA and Craig Marshall (Critter), #13797662, SRCL, Stanton Boulevard, Ontario OR, USA

Support the prisoners on dirty protest at HMP Frankland.

Tony Daniels, Greg Newland, Keith Pringle and Tony Woods are on a dirty protest against their shit treatment.

For more info & copy of a protest letter contact: Miscarriages of Justice UK (MOJUK) Tel: 0121 554 6947 Fax: 0121 554 7891 Email: mojuk@mojouk.org.uk Website: <http://www.mojuk.org.uk/>

Online information

Much of the information for this column came from the excellent Brighton ABC website. Vist it at: www.brightonabc.org.uk

Prison Action meeting

The Prison Action Email group has organised a meeting at the Anarchist Bookfair (see below): Room two, the Camden Centre from 12 - 1.



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: 6: Demo and actions at Lakenheath US air force base in Norfolk Tel: 01508 550 446 Email: info@lakenheathaction.org. Visit: www.lakenheathaction.org

16: Worldwide anti-McDonalds day of action. Adopt Your Local Store - leaflets from Veggies Tel: 0845 458 9595 Visit: www.veggies.org.uk This will also be worker led mobilisation by the McDonalds workforce. Email: info@mwr.org.uk Visit: <http://mwr.org.uk/proposal.htm>

19: Anarchist Bookfair, Camden Centre, Euston Rd., London WC1 (Kings Cross tube) Visit: www.anarchistbookfair.org Remember to visit the AF stall.

25: Anarchist Federation and Hereford Anarchists benefit gig. 9pm at Karlo's, Widemarsh Street, Hereford.

26: Stirling Campaign for Justice Not War. War - What is it good for? Conference, Cowane Centre, Cowane St, Stirling 12-4 (register from 11.30). For free registration Tel: 07941 769 809. Creche available if requested.

NOVEMBER: 9: Scottish Anarchist Day School in Glasgow. Kinning Park Centre - nearest underground Kinning Park. 10 am - 5 pm. Admission £3/£1 concs. Workshops on anarchist alternatives to capitalism, Anarchists organising in the community, Getting the message across- libertarian media, The libertarian movement today- Scotland and beyond. Refreshments available.

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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

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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