

resistance

anarchist bulletin

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Fight the bosses, not their wars!

THE PUBLIC REACTION to the intense bombing of Iraq has been inspiring. The spontaneous demonstrations and blockades that have erupted around the world in reaction to the US and UK led military offensive have caused huge disruption to the functioning of the system.

These actions – from the schoolkid protests to the storming of military airbases are too numerous to report here. Following are some reports from Anarchist Federation members around the country that give a flavour of what has been going on the world over:

Liverpool

“There were three demonstrations in Liverpool. The first was at lunchtime on Wednesday 19th, about 500 people who moved off and blocked roads in the city centre. The second was the day the war started at lunchtime, with only about 50 people but later joined by about 30 students from an all-girls school (the school let all 1000 students out for the day). Later, about 800 people rallied and moved off to block roads throughout the city centre. I produced 600 of the AF North anti-war leaflet and gave 500 of them out during the day. There have been smaller demonstrations and vigils throughout today.”

Nottingham

“With a sizable group, we managed to reach a lot of people on a main road junction this morning with leaflets, banner and placards – lots of horns beeping but also abuse: I think it is good to clearly show we are against Saddam’s govt (and all governments... of course) in tonight’s



protests. Well done to all the school students who left school to protest!

Later, we had a brilliant demonstration starting in the Market Square at 5pm. Must have been 1000 people. After an hour we left the square on a spontaneous march around the city centre, which included a 45 min sit down on one of the main roads in/out of the city. The small number of police had no chance to move us so they let us be. Disruptive, and angry- the best demonstration I have ever been to in Nottingham. Traffic reports must have reached a lot of people trying going home from work, but didn’t get any TV news coverage this morning as far as I know. This morning at 7.30am we repeated the road junction demos at two of the seven points we did yesterday.”

Bristol

“School kids in Bristol demonstrated that they’re more sussed than the liberals and Vicars leading the Stop The War Coalition when they staged a number of wildcat anti-war strikes.

200 pupils at St.Katherine’s school at Pill, walked out of lessons and gathered on the school field for three hours to protest the attack on Iraq. They also blocked traffic on the road outside the school till police were called.

Another 300 students, mainly from Cotham school, also took strike action and protested in the City Centre – no disciplinary action was taken. Pupils from St. Mary Redcliffe were only stopped from staging their own strike by teachers rushing to lock the school gates when they realised people were about to walk out – nevertheless a number of committed pupils ignored these rule-following idiots and clambered over the fences – one breaking his ankle in the process – at least he’s got something to show when people ask what he did to try and stop the war.

Two local people have been locked up for an act of direct action, in which they disabled thirty vehicles which provide essential support to the US B52 bombers at Fairford Airbase (*see article inside*).

The usual round of anti-war graffiti and pacifist peace vigils have also taken place – but the spontaneous and inspiring actions of school students, unencumbered by party positions, surely points out the way to go if we wish to stop the war machine in its tracks.”

Continued inside...

THE LEADERS OF the Fire Brigades Union seem to be suffering from "Shock and Awe" after the start of the latest Gulf War. The executive called off a strike on the day the war started, the time when the fire-fighters had the most leverage, and recommended a 16% pay deal with strings attached be accepted.

However, a delegate conference of the union rejected this and it will now be put to a vote of the membership.

Train guards will still be striking though on 28 and 31 of March and 17 April. So if you do have to travel by train why not hit the rail companies where it hurts and save yourself some money at the same time by fare dodging? The resources section at www.anarchistyouth.net has a leaflet on the best ways of avoiding paying, just in case some scab does try and check your ticket.

In other countries the start of war has encouraged workers to strike:

Greece

Tens of thousands of protesters in Greece took to the streets hours into the war. A general strike was held on 21/3.

Italy

Millions of people took part in protests. The three main trade union federations called a general strike.

Spain

Large protests took place in Madrid, Malaga and cities across Spain. In Barcelona there were 13 miles of traffic jams.

Australia

Thousands of people spontaneously walked out of class and out of work to join protest rallies in town and city centres.

France

Anit-war demonstrations swept France on Thursday (20/3), with over 100,000 taking part. In Paris around 80,000 people joined an evening protest, after a day of marches and protests which had seen large numbers of high school and university students take part.

Ireland

Thousands of workers walked out in protest at 12 noon, including government and factory workers.

Canada

In Toronto between 15,000 and 30,000 marched. Dockworkers in Saint John, New Brunswick, on the Atlantic Coast, members of the International Longshoremen's Association, voted to halt military goods headed to the Gulf.

Belgium

In Charleroi the Caterpillar factory has gone on strike against the war, with workers from many different unions taking part and distributing leaflets to locals explaining why they are on strike. ★

Hereford

"Anti-war protesters brought many roads around Hereford to a standstill on 20/3, as there were scenes of protest against the current war on Iraq.

Approximately 200 demonstrators took civil disobedience against the war, disrupting 'business as usual' and bringing the war home to the and politicians.

The day included a mass 'die in' outside the army recruitment office and another in 'High Town', as well as a blockade of the busiest road in the city. Five arrests were made, for minor public order offences. One witness explained how she observed a police officer declare, 'Don't be afraid to use force, even if they are children!'"

Glasgow

"Demo in Glasgow was great, about 10,000 at the start, but people moved through police lines when Tommy Sheridan was speaking and from there ran up the hill towards Charing Cross, unfortunately everyone got cut off by police so there were around 2,000 people trapped between police lines in Sauchiehall Street.

The AF contingent managed to avoid this by hanging back, but it'll be interesting to see what happens over the next few hours. Mostly kids at the front."

London

"In London, smaller local protests starting with school walk-outs in the morning converge into Parliament Square around noon and remain centred around that area into the evening. Schoolkids in a sit-down protest are punched or thrown aside in an attempt by cops to clear the streets - but some of these teenagers prove to be the most valiant in resisting the police.

Later on, as the square fills with several thousand protesters, graffiti, and bonfires, breakaway marches head towards Victoria but are pushed back, and others block Westminster bridge. The square is surrounded by police."

Manchester

"We managed to distribute 1000 leaflets and a number of resistance without too much effort. Lots of people also took our stickers and wore them throughout the march. It was reassuring to see people clutching scrunched up Trotskyist pamphlets whilst reading our one carefully." ★

Newcastle.

"The first day of war in Iraq saw some of the largest and most militant activity that Newcastle has experienced in recent times. Events began at 8 am at the Haymarket. At 8.20 the crowd of 80-odd that had gathered

moved into the road and blocked traffic for three quarters of an hour.

Eventually, the crowd moved on. Some went to work but the schoolkids present weren't finished yet. They marched to the Monument and spent half an hour chalking anti-war slogans all over the area. Then they got off and made straight for the Tyne Bridge. Stopping traffic on the Tyne bridge was child's play. No coppers showed for ages.

The group then marched back into Newcastle, this time accompanied by police vans the whole way. At lunchtime, it met up with the 1,000 strong main march and again stopped traffic at the Haymarket. A large group hung about until the end and then marched up to the Haymarket and again stopped traffic by sitting in the road. Then they tried to march onto the main road north out of Newcastle but were stopped by large numbers of police vans. They turned round and tried to march the other way, moving towards the civic centre but again were corralled by the cops. So, the crowd ran over the park by the church and sat in the road back where they'd just been; the cops didn't have a clue what to do.

The Socialist Workers Party regional organiser then announced that the demo was over and everyone should go to the next one. After, some argued that loud hailers should not be allowed on marches. But it's not really the loud hailers, but the fuckers using them. The way in which such a high level of solidarity, spontaneity and militancy was effectively killed by people who were meant to be supporters of the cause was nothing short of a disgrace. It remains to be seen whether the experiences of that night will encourage people to hold their nerve in the future or whether the shiteness in which it ended will put people off doing similar things again. It didn't need to end that way, and we need to find ways of combating those who elect themselves to sell us out.

Hopefully, the kids, who were the main inspiration of the days' events, will learn to deal with this in the future, and won't be put off by it." ★



STOP THE WAR

KIDS AGAINST THE WAR

SCHOOL KIDS ACROSS the UK walked out of lessons to stage demonstrations against the start of the war with Iraq starting on Thursday March 20th.

Hundreds joined crowds protesting at Westminster.

School kids have been played a big part in many demonstrations across the UK while others have staged their own protests at their schools.

In Carlisle, the police were called to a school after hundreds of pupils staged an anti-war demonstration.

Around 200 11-to-16 year olds from the Caldew School in Dalston marched into the centre of the village chanting anti-war slogans.

A demonstration in Edinburgh caused extensive disruption in the city centre. The demonstrators were mainly school-age youngsters who gathered near the Scottish Parliament and then split in to smaller groups which stopped traffic

Stirling University was closed due to protest action.

There were two separate demonstrations in Belfast with more than 1,000 students and schoolchildren mounting a sit-down protest, blocking the road outside Queen's University.

In Nottinghamshire, more than 100 pupils walked out of lessons at West Bridgford School to stage a demonstration on a nearby playing field.

In Manchester, about 200 school students joined a big demonstration.

In Sheffield, two schoolchildren were arrested by police for alleged criminal damage during a demonstration. They occupied



Lancaster town hall, shut down the centre of Leamington Spa and took to the streets of Northern Ireland. Meanwhile a Manchester head teacher took up police tactics to intimidate pupils who protest against the war.

In Bristol, the centre of the city was gridlocked as thousands joined protesting students in blocking roads. Crowds pushed through police lines and the M32 was blockaded.

In Edinburgh, demos and student strikes started on the Monday before the war broke out. Protesters stormed the castle and Princes Street several times. Up to a thousand school kids were holding a demonstration inside school grounds in Glastonbury - supported by the school authorities who even called the local media to come and film the event.

Students rallied on campus in Keele, and in Leeds council workers joined students for a day of protest, and further actions took place in Aberdeen, Barnsley, while in Cardiff evening protests brought the city to a standstill, which were later attacked by police

Near the City of London, kids blocked a road, whilst over 400 schoolkids in Walthamstow were blocking traffic and causing mayhem; demos of mainly schoolkids all over the place. In Edinburgh, they stopped the city centre. In Lewisham, schoolkids had a walkout to demonstrate at the town hall. When many of them took a bus to join the protests in Central London they were violently stopped by the police. Most were forced to go back to school but some were detained. ★

RETURN OF A GREAT U.S. MILITARY TRADITION

THE CURRENT WAR on Iraq has seen the return of a great U.S. military tradition: soldiers throwing grenades at their own officers! This practice known as "fragging" was a popular way of getting rid of unwanted officers during the Vietnam war.

On the 23rd of March Army Sergeant Asan Akbar made a well planned assault on the command centre of the elite 101st Airborne Division's 1st Brigade. He knocked out a generator that supplied electricity to the three tents the command centre was based in before throwing a grenade into each. An officer was killed and 15 others wounded.

He is also alleged to have opened fire with his rifle before he was tackled and detained when found hiding in a bunker.



The attack took place around just as members of the 101st Airborne Division, a fighting force that specialises in rapid air assault advances, was preparing to move into Iraq to join the U.S. and British invasion force.

One military source, who did not wish to be identified, said of Akbar: "He's a Muslim, and it seems he was just against the war."

An officer added: "It is just unbelievable. It's terroristic, it truly is, Everybody is a bit jumpy, edgy. You never want, especially at a time like this, to have to think whether you can trust the guy to your left or your right." A journalist who witnessed the attack, described scenes of what he called chaos and carnage when the grenades exploded, saying soldiers thought they had come under Iraqi missile attack and pulled on gas masks. ★

ANTI-WAR ACTIONS

IN FIFE ACTIVIST Ulla Roder broke into an airbase on 12/3 and damaged a Tornado jet. She said that the Tornado jet which she damaged at Leuchars airbase is unlikely to fly again. She was remanded to Cornton Vale Prison in Stirling. Write to her at: Ulla Roder, HMP Cornton Vale, Cornton Road, Stirling, FK9 5NY.

On 14th March thirty B52 support vehicles were disabled at RAF Fairford in Gloucestershire by two Trident Ploughshares activists. These vehicles provide essential support to the B52 bombers stationed there.

Margaret Jones and Paul Milling used bags of sugar to contaminate the fuel, grinding paste and treacle to add to the oil systems, spikes to puncture the tyres, and crowbars & hammers to damage the vehicles. They were arrested but are currently out on bail. More info from: www.tridentploughshares.org

The Saturday after the war started hundreds of thousands marched against it on the streets of London and thousands protested at U.S. bases in Fairford and Menwith Hill.

The police presence at Fairford had increased considerably since the demonstration last month when protesters forced the gates open (see resistance 47). Despite the anger of the crowd we were unable to get in this time, in fact some people were even unable to get to Fairford. Three coaches were stopped two miles from Fairford by over a hundred police.

An Anarchist Federation member on one of the coaches reports: "[the police] searched every single person on the coaches, taking about two hours, arrested one person, confiscated a few scarves, masks, helmets and foam shields, then told us we were suspected of intending to cause a breach of the peace, and we were escorted by police vehicles all the way to London, causing a massive tailback.

On the way in to London we found out that there were 10 extra police vans waiting for us at Euston. By this time we were pretty pissed off with being held up like this so we decided to make a run for it - seeing some people escape from one of the other coaches I jumped out of the emergency exit and others followed ...

The police didn't know what to do and couldn't react until they had been given orders. We ran through Shepherd's Bush, blocked the roads for a bit until the pigs regrouped and attempted to arrest a few of us - there was a bit of a running battle.

We eventually made it to Hyde Park at around 5:45 and joined the road blockade at Oxford St., then the one further down until around nine o'clock." ★

INSIDE INFORMATION

Anti-war action prisoner

EASTON RESIDENT JOSH RICHARDS has been imprisoned after being accused of attempting to enter RAF Fairford. He faces prosecution for several alleged crimes including property damage and possessing a mixture of petrol and detergent with intent to endanger life, cause injury or damage property.

Write to:

Josh Richards JT5130, c/o Prison Governor, HMP Gloucester, Barrack Square, Gloucester GL1 2JN.

More info from Bristol ABC : www.geocities.com/bristol_abc/

Shannon Solidarity

A total of 18 people are currently facing prosecution out of the October and March mass direct actions at Shannon airport, a civilian airport in the west of Ireland being used to ferry American troops and supplies to the Middle East.

In addition five people are in the courts

out of the Catholic Worker/Ploughshares autonomous action, and four of them are in Limerick prison. Also Mary Kelly is facing charges for taking a hammer to a U.S. military transport plane.

Write to each prisoner individually:

Deirdre Clancy, Karen Fallon, Damien Moran, Nuin Dunlop c/o 210 Le Fanu Road, Ballyfermot, Dublin 10, Ireland

Donate to the Ploughshares Defence Fund by making cheques payable to "Peace and Reconciliation" c/o Ploughshares 134 Phibsborough Rd. Dublin 7 Ireland.

Donate to the 18 mass direct action defendants: Cheques to Shannon Solidarity, and sent to Shannon Solidarity c/o Ecology Society, Students Centre, NUIG, Newcastle, Galway. Or money can be sent to the Bank of Ireland in NUIG, Newcastle, Galway, Account Number: 89174196, Sort Code: 90 40 18, Account Name: Shannon Solidarity.

Send a message of support to Mary Kelly c/o Shannon Peace House, 19, Inis Ealga Shannon Co. Clare Ireland.

Further Information on arrests et al: <http://www.indymedia.ie/cgi-bin/newswire.cgi?id=33594>

Anti-militarism prisoners

In the beginning of February, 30 people were jailed in Finland for total objection to military service.

The following would like to receive letters of support:

Pekka Kauhanen (7.10.02-24.4.03)
Markus Mattsson (10.1.03-27.7.03) Otto Miettinen (25.11.02-11.6.03) Henrik Murdoch (11.11.02-12.5.03) Toni Maki (21.11.02-7.6.03) Timo Turunen (15.11.02-11.6.03) Helsingin tyosiirtola PL 36 01531 VANTAA FINLAND

Heikki Ulmanen (30.9.02-17.4.03) Satakunnan vankila/Koylio PL 42 32710 HUITTINEN FINLAND

Jussi Ollikainen (2.12.02-15.6.03) Kuopion vankila, avovankilaosasto PL 7 70101 KUOPIO FINLAND

Mikko Saarinen (2.1.03-14.6.03) Naarajarven vankila PL 1 76851 Naarajarvi Finland

Ilkka Lipsanen (13.1.03-8.7.03) Sulkavan vankila PL 40 58701 Sulkava Finland

Markku Rintala (28.10.02-13.5.03) Pelson vankila Pelsonsuolinnantie 1 92800 Pelson vankila Finland ★



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.

APRIL: 5: Campaign Against Prison Slavery day of action. More info: CAPS, The Cardigan Centre, Cardigan Road, Leeds, LS6 1LJ Email: againstprisonslavery@mail.com

5-6: Reclaim the Bases - A weekend of protest and direct action at military bases across the UK. planning meeting on 2nd March www.reclaimthebases.org.uk

22: Really Big Blockade, Faslane naval base, Scotland. Help close down Britain's Trident base. Scottish CND Tel: 0141 423 1222 Email: big_blockade@hotmail.com

23: Picket court in support of asylum seekers detained for Yarlswood fire 9 am Harrow Crown Court, Hailsham Drive, Harrow. (Nearest station is Harrow & Wealdstone) Tel: 07767 414 714 Visit: www.stoparbitrarydetentionsatyarlswood.co.uk

MAY: Mark Barnsley Speaking Tour - prisoners survival and prison support - contact the campaign to help and organise an event in your town/city. JfMB, PO Box 381, Huddersfield, HD1 3XX, England. Email: markbarnsley@mail.com Tel: 07944 522 001

1: London Critical Mass. Part of London Mayday 2003 a day of action against capitalism & war (www.ourmayday.org.uk). Critical Mass is a celebration of the alternatives to car culture capitalism. Calling all bikes, skates, anything without an engine. Meet 11am NFT, under Waterloo Bridge - South Bank, London. Email: londonmayday@yahoo.co.uk Visit: <http://cmlondon.enrager.net>

Visit the West Midlands Anarchist website at: www.wmanarchists.org.uk

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- I enclose £4 for a year's subscription to *Organise!* the magazine of the AF.
- I am interested in the **Anarchist Federation** and would like more information.

Name.....

Address.....

Join the resistance

The **Anarchist Federation** is an organisation of **class struggle** anarchists aiming to abolish capitalism and all oppression to create a free and equal society. This is **Anarchist Communism**.

We see today's society as being divided into two main opposing classes: the **ruling class** which controls all the power and wealth, and the **working class** which the rulers exploit to maintain this. By racism, sexism and other forms of oppression, as well as war and environmental destruction the rulers weaken and divide us. Only the **direct action** of working class people can defeat these attacks and ultimately overthrow capitalism.

As the capitalist system rules the whole world, its destruction must be complete and world wide. We reject attempts to reform it, such as working through parliament and national liberation movements, as they fail to challenge capitalism itself. Unions also work as a part of the capitalist system, so although workers struggle within them they will be unable to bring about capitalism's destruction unless they go beyond these limits.

Organisation is vital if we're to beat the bosses, so we work for a united anarchist movement and are affiliated to the International of Anarchist Federations.

The Anarchist Federation has members across Britain and Ireland fighting for the kind of world outlined above. Contact us at:

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London, E1 7QX. Tel: 07946 214 590
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Email: anarchistfederation@bigfoot.com