

resistance

anarchist bulletin

Free/Donation
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A tidal wave of solidarity

ONE OF THE most encouraging things about the aftermath of the tsunami disaster was the way ordinary people all around the world gave money in a global gesture of solidarity.

This was in sharp contrast with politicians like Bush and Blair who at first failed to even respond to the disaster and then promised derisory amounts of aid. The initial sum promised by the US was the equivalent of a day and half of the money spent on the war and occupation in Iraq and by the UK was the equivalent of five and a half days. When this was exposed the US and UK governments were forced to up their aid.

Even the aid promised by countries and institutions could prove to be a mirage. One example among many is when the International Monetary Fund promised £500 million in aid after the Iran earthquake. A year later, only £9 million had been received!

Likewise, the banks charge a transaction fee, usually between one and 2.5 per cent, each time a credit card is used for charity. The fee is paid by the charity – or anywhere which accepts electronic payment – to a company known as a “bank acquirer” to cover costs such as processing the payment and guaranteeing the funds. Under widespread pressure, the banks were forced to waive this sly way of making profit.

An early warning system for tsunamis was possible, but was rejected by governments in the region as “too costly”. They don’t think twice about spending far more on their military, like Sri Lanka and Indonesia, busy fighting internal wars with ethnic minorities.

Finally, however, how much of the money so generously given by ordinary people will actually get to those who need



it? A lot will be creamed off by the bureaucracies of charities. What does arrive may well be carved up by the State structures and then regional and local administrators. Some of this may well disappear into officials’ pockets, whilst the aid that is distributed will be given to favourites and any ‘troublemakers’ may be discriminated against. Local groups of workers and peasants will have to fight to make sure that aid is distributed fairly. ★

RESERVIST REVOLTS!

ON THE SAME day that the Ministry of Defence released figures citing 790 UK troops as having suffered “serious injuries” as a result of hostile actions in Iraq, Lance Corporal George Solomou called for other Territorial Army reservists to follow his lead and refuse to obey orders to deploy there.

Citing his objections he said “ I believe the occupation of Iraq to be illegal – the weapons of mass destruction, the connection to al-Qaeda – none of it was true. This war is a turning point in history and is about America setting itself on a course to control the world’s petroleum”. He followed this up with a press conference the following day, where he gave his reasons for war resistance in detail. ★

PENSIONS

NEW LABOUR PUT forward new regulations for pensions last December which will come into force in April, increasing the age at which employees can retire with an unreduced pension from 60 to 65. They are also planning under the National Health Service pension scheme to increase retirement age to 65.

The Trades Union Congress as a result of widespread anger and pressure from union members has called a day of action to protect pensions on February 18

The TUC dragged its feet over the day of action and took many months to arrange it. Even then, it was to be a day of action, and not involve anything like strike action

Whether it’s state pensions where payout is low, private sector pensions where final salary schemes are ending or public sector pensions where the retirement age is being raised to 65, pensions are under attack.

At it’s last conference New Labour announced a scheme to discourage people from retiring early. Work until 70 and receive a lump sum of £25-30,000. Apart from some people dropping dead before they get there and so saving the State a lot of money, you stand a good chance of being totally knackered when you get it!

Make no mistake, the attack on pensions is an attack on the working class. It is vital that we stop Blair and his cronies getting their way.

The Russian example

Vladimir Putin, the Russian president, was forced to double pensions after widespread protests across Russia by pensioners. He stated that pensions should go up by 200 roubles. Demonstrations had taken place from Vladivostok on the Pacific coast to Moscow. These days demonstrations and other shows of mass discontent are rare and the Putin administration was obviously rattled. The old pensions system was given out mainly in subsidies, from free travel on public transport to low prices on medicines. The new scheme would be replaced by cash payments. Pensioners were not convinced. ★

ON THE FRONTLINE

OUR MONTHLY STRIKE watch:

THINGS SEEM TO be heating up in Glasgow where there have been two serious disputes – firstly on the underground, where a wildcat four-hour strike following the workers rejection of two year pay deal has been immediately followed up with an overtime ban and a vote in favour of a series of one-day strikes. The speed with which the workers have escalated their action seems to have taken the management by surprise – hitting them hard and fast works – even if you have to go outside of the union bureaucracy to do so.

At Glasgow airport fire-fighters have declared a an indefinite open-ended strike from Jan 29 over drastic changes in working practices that endanger both workers and travellers, and will result in dragging out response times to incidents from two to 14 minutes. Management meddling in working practices is rarely beneficial to anyone but this is also highly dangerous – and they're supposed to be the brains of the operation!

Central Trains in the midlands are also to be the target of strike action after 700 drivers voted for three 24-hour stoppages three consecutive Saturdays – the dispute flared after two drivers were the subject of disciplinary action, which the workers feel amounted to management bullying.

The trouble keeps on coming at the under-construction Heathrow Terminal 5 where access problems for construction workers are adding three hours to their day – strict security issues mean that it takes 90 minutes to get into work and 90 minutes to get out! To make matters worse management are refusing to reimburse some sections of the workforce the £25 that they pay to others for this delay – a clear attempt to split the workers. This has led to a strike ballot that is expected to endorse one-day stoppages. Steel erectors at the site are also holding a strike ballot over disciplinary action against three of their fellow workers.

And in France an estimated 210,000 public sector workers including teachers, postal workers, rail and air traffic control workers, joined a January strike movement against cuts and changes to the 35 hour week rules. The strike saw large demonstrations across France in what the unions have described as warning actions in preparation for an all-out public sector strike on February 5. France's big union confederations find themselves in a difficult situation when they call strikes as history has shown, angry workers don't like being used as a stage army and have a tendency to take things a little further.★

WATER WAR TWO VICTORY!

AFTER THE WORLD Bank promoted privatisation of the water supply in 1997, Bolivian workers have seen water price rise by up to 35%. This provoked a revolt in the city of Cochabamba in 2000 known as the "Water War" when community direct action and mass street mobilisations resulted in the water supply being taken out of the hands of the US Bechtel corporation.

In early January, in what has been described as "Water War Two", neighbourhood organisations in El Alto (pop. 800,000) launched an indefinite general strike against the local private water and sanitation supplier, French firm Aguas del Illiamani whose prices have left tens of thousands of the poorest without access to clean water. The government, fearful of a repeat of the oil price protests of 2003 which swept the country and saw the fall of their predecessor, was forced to immediately cancel the company's contract. The service is now back in municipal hands.



But obviously state ownership means that control of resources remains out of the hands of those people who need them and those who actually run the services, the water and sanitation workers. Indeed, under pressure from the World Bank the Bolivian government may at any time sell to another transnational company

The spokesperson of the Cochabamba campaign, Oscar Olivera, says that "The people want to participate in the management of all that affects their daily lives." Ultimately, as our comrades in the Libertarian Youth (Anarcho-communist) argue, "Only a social revolution and the construction of a new society can offer a future to the workers who fight, not only to solve their immediate problems, but also to construct their self-managed, horizontal, libertarian communist future."

For further information contact:

Juventudes Libertarias, Bolivia

Email: jjll_bolivia@hotmail.com ★

FASH BASHED

AFTER A LOT of confusion and last minute date changing, the fascist National Front (NF) finally decided to have their march in Woolwich on January 15. The march was held to stir up racial tensions following the horrible murder of white teenager Terry Gregory last year. His family have repeatedly said they want nothing to do with the NF or their politics. This was the anniversary of Terry's death, with the NF also holding a march last year.

One group of anti-fascists spotted two particularly ugly and badly dressed boneheads and followed them onto a train heading towards their meet up point. At the next stop, the boneheads were made to feel extremely 'uncomfortable' on the train and one fascist would later turn up to the march looking more than a little worse for wear. One anti-fascist sustained an injury, from the fascists attacking his fists with their faces!

The NF later held their march, bringing out thirty members (almost half last year's total). No arrests were made.

For more information about fighting fascism, contact **Antifa** at: www.antifa.org.uk ★



LIBERTY NOT TYRANNY!



Artists impression of Canek Guevara in a beret

STALINIST ICON CHE Guevara's grandson, Canek Sanchez Guevara, has become an anarchist!

Canek has severely criticised the Castro regime in Cuba set up by Fidel Castro and his grandfather. Adopting a clear anarchist position, he gave his reasons why he thought the regime in Cuba had nothing to do with workers having control of society, and was a dictatorship suppressing freedom of speech and association.

Read about it here: www.ainfos.ca/ainfos336/ainfos16681.html ★

THEY'RE ALL AT IT!

WHEN THE BBC broadcast the Jerry Springer Opera in early January the moral guardians of the right raised their hackles. Mediawatch UK, the UK Lifeleague, and Christian Voice all voiced their strong disapproval. The last group is trying to prosecute the BBC under a 17th century law of blasphemy which "forbids the promotion of reviling, scurrilous or ludicrous matter relating to God, Jesus Christ, or the Bible, or the formularies of the Church of England". It believes Britain is "deep in sin" and drowning under a "tidal wave of filth".

This crew of Christian fundamentalists were much encouraged by the protests by Sikh fundamentalists against the play by Gurpreet Bhatti (herself a Sikh) which succeeded in closing the play down. One Sikh who set himself against the action of these fundamentalists said that "the promotion of religion in public life, especially under New Labour, has not only legitimised 'rotten' multiculturalism-where culture has long given way to religion, particularly if it is capable of delivering ethnic minority votes". He went on to say that the result is often to stifle dissent within religions and make particular traditions as representative of the whole of the Sikh, Muslim, Christian or Hindu way.

Around about the same time, the Rampart social centre in East London and Indymedia Cinema organised a festival of documentaries from India. The social



centre received threatening phone calls from Hindu fundamentalists who claimed that the films had an anti-Hindu agenda. These threats began after fundamentalist groups (the BJP and the VHP) were alerted on a mailing list. The social centre refused to give in, especially after the solidarity it received from many quarters.

These incidents are a backdrop to the plans by Charles Clarke, successor of Blunkett as Home Secretary, to push through "religious hate" laws.

We anarchists stand for a secular society. We oppose all attempts by reactionary religious groups to impose their agendas. We stand for free speech and free expression. These moves by religious fundamentalists are equally to protect the vested interests of groups within the Sikh community against rebellion within its own ranks, as is the case within the Muslim communities.

Multiculturalism as pushed by the New Labour establishment is meant not to promote tolerance and understanding but to promote rigid ideas of ethnic identity. Instead of competing communities defined by fake ideas of ethnicity and by religion, we look towards a working class that will be united in action whilst remaining ethnically and culturally various and different. We must fight any attempt to gag us with dodgy laws based on clapped-out ideas about blasphemy. ★

WELFARE FOR THE RICH

WHEN RACHEL'S ORGANIC (Dairy) Ltd announced a "massive new extension" to its headquarters and main processing plant in Aberystwyth at a cost of £3m, BBC Wales News focused on the extra 50 jobs that would be created and that the company were getting huge political and financial support from the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) and the Welsh Development Agency.

In fact Rachel's Organics Ltd received £1.2 million from the public purse in the form of a grant. No wonder Neil Burchell (Managing Director) stated that "Wales is a great place to do business".

It seems Rachel Organics were milking its success but they were also milking the general public. Why should the WAG give £1.2 million in public monies to a private company so that they can make a private profit? It's bad enough workers are exploited on a daily basis through the

wage system whereby the rewards workers receive in the form of wages are less than the value of the products and services they bring about. The difference in value between what workers produce and what they earn is the basis of profit which goes to the capitalist boss class. So not only are workers exploited at the point of production but the WAG/WDA have no qualms in handing over large sums of taxpayers' monies to private companies. This is the norm and is how the capitalist system works.

What is so interesting about the Rachel's Organic Ltd state handout was the way it was reported. The emphasis put by BBC Wales was on the wonderful jobs being created. It was a success for "our" economy of mid-Wales and we should all be happy. (You would have thought the workers actually owned the factory they were working in!) ★

TIME
BOMB



The Potemkin Mutiny

THIS YEAR MARKS the 100th anniversary of the Potemkin mutiny, one of the events that sparked the 1905 Revolution in Russia.

In June, 1905, sailors on the *Potemkin* battleship of the Black Sea fleet, protested against the serving of rotten meat. These are the words of Afanasy Matushenko, the quartermaster on board:

"Hearing of the unrest among the crew, the Captain of the Potemkin... sent the senior surgeon of the ship... to examine the meat. He approached the meat, put on his pince-nez so as to see the maggots better, twisted it round in front of his face, sniffed and said that the meat was very good, that the crew was merely faddy and therefore did not want to eat it. All that was necessary was to wash off the maggots with water, and the meat would be excellent ...

Captain Golikov ordered a sentry to be stationed by the meat... The sentry was instructed to write down the names of all who came to look at the meat and afterwards to report them to the Captain."

The captain ordered that the ringleaders be shot. Matushenko appealed to the guard with the words:

"Comrades, don't forget your oath – don't shoot at our own men."

The muzzles of the rifles dropped to the deck – they had refused to shoot. Matushenko shouted:

"Comrades, look what they are doing to our fellows! Grab rifles and cartridges, shoot them down, the swine".

The sailors rushed to the gun deck, seized rifles, loaded them, and ran out to their comrades who stood surrounded by the guard. Captain Golikov threw himself on Matushenko with the order:

"Drop your weapons," who replied:

"I will drop my weapons when I am no longer a living being but a corpse. Get off the ship. This is the people's ship and not yours."

The crew threw the officers overboard and sailed into Odessa. Fearing that the Potemkin would be attacked by other ships of the Russian fleet, the mutineers decided to sail to Romania where they surrendered to the local authorities.

The brave Matushenko was an anarchist and the following year, after having spent some time in London, he returned to southern Russia to carry out underground anarchist activity. He was caught and hanged with many other anarchists. The mutiny has been immortalised, above all in the classic movie *Battleship Potemkin* by Eisenstein. ★

INSIDE INFORMATION

Polish ABC and Antifa News

ANTIFA 5 TRIAL unfortunately still continues. Despite the acquittal of all five defendants, both the prosecutor and the nazi that accused the anarchists filed an appeal what means another trial.

This farce has already gone on for three years and it seems that prosecution is really determined to prove those charged guilty. It is clear sign of repression, which eased a bit last year, still exists.

Lapa, an anarchist from Bialystok sentenced to one years jail on grievous body harm charges filed an appeal and was finally acquitted after three years of court hearings and lots of money being spent in his defence. This verdict was welcomed with relief, as Lapa was very close to a jail sentence, especially taking in account that he has a suspended sentence for other anti-fascist actions.

Soja, an anarchist from Bialystok, had his trial opened again. Charges are "violently resisting arrest" and two counts

of "insulting a police officer". Charges are related to police raid on DeCentrum squat in bialystok three years ago. Process was stopped before due to inability to interrogate all witnesses, but now the police have finished new investigation and send the case to court again.

Five people who took part in anarchist action against the visit of Russian diplomat in Poznan in September 2004, when a convoy of diplomatic cars was attacked by anarchists, had been finally sentenced by local courts to fines for breaking of public order (all people got between 30 and 65 euro fines). It is definitely not such a bad end, as for action like this they could face criminal offences. There are a few more people charged for the same event who will be having trials soon.

Prisoner in Poland needs support

Sebastian Ksiazek is serving a six year sentence for alleged armed robbery of a shop (seems that shop belonged to a policeman) and stealing ammo and surveillance equipment from there.

He is interested in any anarchist and punk literature and can understand pretty

well English and Russian.

Recently he has been having some problems with the prison authorities for receiving some anarchist magazines (after the last issue of Akcja Bezposrednia, kind of Polish Class War equivalent, he was accused of trying to organize sabotage in prison, however ridiculous it sounds...) but he is in good spirits. Its possible that he will be released on parole in next few months, but its not sure yet.

Address: Sebastian Ksiazek, Nowosolska 40, 61-171 Poznan, Poland

Solidarity needed in Russia

Recently Russia has been shaken by huge protests against cuts in pensions. Little surprise, that in some cities anarchists and their friends organizing and participating to these protests have been targeted with a fierce repression.

They need your help now! To stay updated, read: www.avtonom.org (this has an English section) and www.russia.indymedia.org

More info from: **Brighton Anarchist Black Cross:** www.brightonabc.org.uk ★



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.

FEBRUARY: 11-13 PROJECTILE: International festival of anarchist film and culture, Side Cinema, Newcastle upon Tyne. Visit: www.projectile.org.uk

12-13 Dissent! Gathering, Glasgow. If you wish to attend, please email g8gathering@yahoo.co.uk

14 Scrap the Olympic Bid Public Meeting. 6.30 pm at Bryant Street Community Centre, off West Ham Lane, Stratford, E14 4RU. All Welcome.

14 KISS IT! XX Human rights protest against psychiatric assault. 11am Whitehall place with march to Imperial War museum. Tel: 01332 366 447 Email: info@kissit.org Visit: www.kissit.org

18 Cycle Against The Olympic Bid. Critical Mass Bike Ride. Meet 6pm outside Greater London Authorities HQ City Hall.

19 Scrap the Olympic Bid March - Meet 1pm outside Stratford Station, Meridian Sq, E15. www.nolondon2012.org

MARCH: 6 -21 Trial and celebration of resistance in Dublin. Five Irish saboteurs are up on a trial expected to last 2 weeks at Dublin's Four Courts for disabling a US war plane at Shannon Airport, on Ireland's West Coast. Visit: http://geocities.com/pit_stop_ploughshares/pitnews.html

8 International Women's Day

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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.

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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: info@afed.org.uk