

officer. Witnesses, including journalists, will testify that the situation was caused by an aggressive attack by police during an action.

Some other cases relate to comrades arrested for squatting.

There have been some attempts to also stop our activity in defense of workers – namely every few months some bosses threaten to sue us. But this has been going on for 4-5 years, and none of them have been stupid enough to take us to court yet. In each case we are sure that it is because the workers accounts of violations and abuse can be proven and they don't want any more bad publicity.

Workers from Zoliborz clinic fight back

Workers from a clinic in the Zoliborz neighbourhood of Warsaw have decided to take action after contacting us about mobbing, unfair dismissals before retirement and other problems at the hospital. At action at the hospital is being planned.

Wikipedia Censors ZSP

A bunch of right-wingers are active in censoring articles on Wikipedia in Poland. On the Center of Anarchist Information portal, we can read what the censors say about attempts to put up a page about the organization. Amongst the arguments the right-wingers use is that "nobody knows if it even exists and nobody ever wrote about them" and there is a lack of any sources about their activity!!! A few of the wikipedia editors have said there are "no sources" about ZSP's activity.

Of course this is not true and ZSP even appears quite often in the mainstream press and on TV. We have a few articles even reprinted on our home page:

<http://www.zsp.net.pl/zsp/media>

(not all of course... the mainstream press is not always a good source on information :-).

This just shows what organizations like ours face to deal with - constant harrassment from the right wing that ideologically dominate the country.



Continuing the Struggle Against Social Cuts

Social cuts effect both workers and the working class. Many workers from the public sector are now facing the liquidation of their jobs, or new, worse working conditions.

Public schools teachers are one group that has been hit hard. The government is in the midst of liquidating up to 800 schools in Poland. Many of the children will be sent to other schools, where the classes will just be more crowded. Teachers may be offered replacement jobs even in locations far from where they live, and if they do not take them, they risk losing their jobs and other benefits.

Also, teachers are not expected to work more and spend time preparing lessons and marking tests in the school and to be on call during summer vacations. However, this is not evenly implemented as many schools don't have places for the teachers to sit and do this work.

Strike 24 ZSP Warsaw

Education Branch to Start More Actions in the Fall

The education workers union in Warsaw is planning for new actions which will cover a wide range of workers, including precarious and even illegally employed teachers, part-timers, nursery school workers, etc. etc.

About this Bulletin

This bulletin was started at the end of 2007 in order to inform people in other countries about our activities.

Currently there is a new organization of ZSP in Warsaw. A federative structure of different unions should appear soon. However, one of the groups want to retain the name ZSP Warsaw.

In any case, the main person compiling this bulletin and all the native speakers of English will now be in a branch union. Which will not be called ZSP Warsaw.

It is unclear then if the new federation will want to continue this bulletin as a federative project.

Most likely, the blog in English (www.zspwawa.blogspot.com) will become a blog of the federation.

Not knowing the future of the bulletin, we would just like to ensure people that we will continue informing about our activities in one way or another. We hope that people have found this bulletin useful in some way and that maybe it, or some new version will start to come out in the future.

To receive hard copies of this bulletin or our newspaper (in Polish), write to us at:



is@zsp.net.pl

STRIKE

Newsletter of ZSP Warsaw

STRIKE 24 MAY 2012

Protests against Roche Continue



ZSP has been continuing protests at Roche related to their practices of using fictitious self-employment and their plans to fire 200 IT workers in Warsaw and Madrid.

On April 19, Roche corporation held an international meeting in Warsaw to announce „restructuring plans” which means outsourcing of about 200 IT jobs in Warsaw and Madrid.

We found out about these plans a couple of months before. Although we will never know for sure, we now suppose that the firing of our comrade at the end of last may have been related to this, since surely the company did not want any organized resistance. All the more so since we know that workers in Madrid who had tried to organize an independent union earlier were threatened.

The jobs in Madrid were moved there from France, when the government offered Roche some incentives.

We see what the modus operandi of this corporation really is.

On the 19th, representatives of the corporation from different countries came to the Hilton Hotel conference center. One member of ZSP went into the conference hall with leaflets denouncing these actions and calling on workers to take mass action against the company. Some IT workers who would be affected were also present. Outside was a picket in a place right below the windows of the conference.

ZSP is advising the workers about to be fired about how to claim benefits that they were denied when they were falsely employed as „entrepreneurs”.

Unfortunately, we cannot say that this is the best way to fight. Direct action is definitely better, but if there is not wide enough support for it, we will do what we can. The process in Poland though is made to discourage workers in many

ways. For example, the court fees in our comrade's case were about 1250 euro, an enormous amount for any person, not to mention somebody who just lost a job. That's just the fees – so many workers are discouraged by this. The process is also too long: our comrade's case will only first get to court in October.

We are demanding reinstatement and benefits which he was entitled to but denied under this false relationship: the monetary equivalent of due vacation time, all social security and other benefits denied. Roche „non-workers” who are used in this way do not get sick leave, paid vacation, maternity or paternity leave or social security payments.

We also suppose that the outsourced workers Roche use are also not paid well, especially as the intermediary company eats up a lot of the costs.

We still are agitating for direct action, but workers are very afraid. There is clearly a problem for workers who are involved in such things to get hired again and the average Polish worker earns too little to have significant savings and is in a precarious financial situation. This is why they agree to such poor working conditions in the first place.

In the meanwhile, we try to inform people more about this issue and open more public discussion about this form of precarity.

Besides protests in Warsaw, there was one at the Poznan office of Roche Polska, at the global headquarters of Roche in Basel (made together with the comrades from FAU in Switzerland) and international solidarity actions in Moscow, Madrid and Bratislava.



Picket at Roche Poland.

Against Precarious Working Conditions

The situation at Roche Poland has added another dimension to our on-going campaign for normal employment contracts for workers who are illegally given contracts for specific tasks. Just a couple of years ago, nobody had even heard about „the precariat”, as we call this class of workers, and now it is spoken about in the mainstream. Partly this is due to some loud cases and articles that appeared in the mainstream media, especially after the scandal in one Warsaw bar, illegally hiring the waitstaff.

Now we hope that there will be more pressure on the companies which for years have been forcing their employees to be „entrepreneurs” to avoid paying them any benefits. At a time when the government is raising the retirement age to 67, because supposedly their is not enough money in the social security system, ZSP has pointed out that employers of workers on trash contracts were paying minimal payments for them, and this also meant a lower pension over the long term. We see that there is more awareness of this issue now and even there may be steps to change the system so that the companies are not able to make these smaller payments.

IT and Education Workers Organize

We are happy to announce that IT workers will be part of a branch union in Warsaw.

This is part of new projects to start a few branch unions in this city. The Education Workers' union, which was not a new project, but which was not active for a while, was also reformed.

As a result, we will be organizing a federative structure in Warsaw. So far, the biggest group is education workers.

Recently we have been taking part in some struggles against closing schools and privatizing schools cafeterias, which also means job loss for cooks. More information about the protest against school closures was published in the last issue of this bulletin and can also be found on the English-language blog of ZSP Warsaw:

www.zspwawa.blogspot.com

Against Privatization of School Cafeterias

Over the last few months, we have been struggling with parents and school cooks against privatization and in defense of their workplaces.

ZSP has been organizing against a series of attacks on public education. This includes the proposed closure of up to 800 public schools in Poland, raising fees for day care and the privatization of auxiliary services and the liquidation of jobs.

In all cases, this is not our exclusive struggle, but something we try to encourage people in. Sometimes parents and teachers have taken the lead in this, sometimes they have resigned. Sometimes our help has sustained or radicalized a protest. In the situation of school closures in Warsaw, it was one school in the neighbourhood where we are headquartered alone that was saved, because the teachers and pupils did not give up and had a more decisive and confrontational protest. In the situation of day care however, it was a determined group of parents who managed to legally challenge the outrageous fee increases of the city and to overturn them!

The city would like to outsource more and more jobs. They privatized some school cafeterias last year and plan on more starting in September. This time, parents and cooks, as well as us and a student group have been fighting.

The proposed privatization of school cafeterias means the liquidation of permanent jobs and an increase in the costs per meal as private catering companies charge more for these services. While the price per meal can increase between 30-70%, the difference will be pocketed by the private firms. The cafeteria staff will either be fired or transferred to the private firm using a legal loophole. As a result, they will become precarious workers in jobs known for extremely bad working conditions.

The protests have included major disruptions and protests at council meetings and a few demonstrations.



From the beginning, a group of parents became quite engaged. In fact, they are unfortunately more engaged than the workers, a sad pattern in Poland. The school cooks are typically women over 50, many who have worked 25-30 years or more in the schools. They are in an extremely precarious situation, as it is very difficult for women over 50 to find any job and whatever is out their will be much worse than what they have. Only a small portion of the cooks have decided to protest now, the rest hoping that somehow maybe some miracle will happen, perhaps that they will be transferred to other jobs. A couple were offered jobs as cleaning women in other schools. But of course that work will surely be the next to be outsourced.

It has to be said, that the decision to privatize the cafeterias also took place with serious violations of procedures. We attended city and local council meetings about this and found outrageous and scandalous practices. For example, we saw how the neoliberal party boycotted two sessions, in order to sabotage them with lack of quorum.

People were outraged, because the organization of these meetings cost money, and these parasites are paid to come to them.

People demanded that the politicians are not paid and fined. The chairwoman of the council, the only one from that boycotting party announced that they cannot be accused of not attending the session... because since there was no quorum, there was no session.

Other things that scandalized the public was that the decision to privatize the cafeterias never got passed by the council. We forced the politicians to publically admit this and explain the basis on which they intend to privatize the cafeterias. The answer was simple: well, we are not privatizing them, but we won't give money in the budget for those workplaces. So of course, it is the director of the school's choice what he or she wants to do, but you can't expect cooks to work for free.

Such arrogance really radicalized people who, up until then that been trying to negotiate with politicians. This kind of behaviour is just a gift to us anarchists, who always say that people need to just fight this people, since dialogue is completely useless. The parents have now decided to organize a type of strike against payments. Because there is no such thing as free education or health care in Poland. Everything is underfunded and parents are

expected to collect money and even buy things like chalk and toilet paper for the schools. For years, parents have had to shoulder the burden of overfunding, paying teachers out of their pockets to make extra lessons, paying for very basic school supplies, including books, which are not provided for free. Now these parents are saying enough is enough and are determined to fight. We will support them as we can and hope that once again, direct action will have effect.

Picket at Empik



On April 21, ZSP held a picket at an Empik store in Warsaw against working conditions in the chain and in support of workers who are organizing and beginning to take some actions. Empik is a huge chain of bookshops and for the last three years we have been in contact with workers from around the country. The initial contact was made through the Worst Employer of the Year contest. Every year we get dozens of complaints about them and last year they received 3rd place, for which they threatened to sue us. But that just caused more workers to send us evidence, with which we helped them to organize complaints and now some legal cases. Furthermore, we have heard that some employees have started to engage in various acts of sabotage as some sort of revenge.

It is better to get organized!



This year, we gave Empik the first place, because of the sheer amount of complaints against them. Among the most common were unpaid overtime without work evidence, workers being forced to do other, additional jobs like moving heavy stacks of books, not having sick days and being threatened with dismissal if ill, mobbing, lack of fire safety measures and liquidation of employee social funds. We also know some cases of improper dismissals and there were workers who claim that they had to attest that they were not members of unions. We will follow with a series of informational actions and continue supporting the workers who want to take action, encouraging them to organize.

Solidarity with the Workers of Huta Batory! Action at Alchemia Shareholders Meeting

Members of ZSP were inspired by the action of workers at Huta Batory ironworks in Chorzow, who went on a wildcat strike against the actions of the company. The ironworks is owned by a vampire holding company by Alchemia, owned by a billionaire, who specializes in making huge profits. The ironworks started to hire agency workers who earned about half of the other workers (350 euros a month net). At the same time, they planned group dismissals. When 50 people were fired, the workers got fed up with the negotiations of the conciliatory unions and went on strike, occupying the plant and preventing production from leaving.

Alchemia responded with threats and hired some bus loads of private security forces to go deal with the strikers. Our comrades in Silesia, along with many other local people (well over a thousand), went there to defend the strikers. It was a rare show of solidarity that we hadn't seen for years!

As a result of this amazing solidarity, when the buses with the security goons arrived, they saw the people and decided to refuse the job and go back.

However, Alchemia decided to complain that the strike was illegal to the prosecutor and announced that they would close the plant.



Although we know the decision was already taken, we found out when the extraordinary shareholders' meeting would be, and went there early to protest, delaying its start for some while.

Against the Politics of the Euro



ZSP and tenants organizations will demonstrate on June 8 when the Euro 2012 opens in Warsaw. President Komorowski has already made an appeal not to protest and we suppose the local authorities will take different steps to try and make things difficult. But we will not be deterred!

The city spent loads of money on big showcase investments like the National Stadium and other things related to the Euro 2012. There were many scandals related to the stadium itself.

While it was built, there was a wildcat strike and a few workers

died due to negligence. The ZSP was active in exposing this and getting workers to speak out, as well as helping Ukrainian workers to get better housing conditions. Despite the poor working conditions for many on the building site, the stadium is reportedly the most expensive one in the world.

When the stadium finally opened, the roof didn't work and there were other safety concerns. The city didn't even want to let the public in for the grand opening. Despite all these problems, the politicians overseeing the project received huge bonuses

Around the area of the stadium, a gentrification process began and some people were evicted. The city condemned some houses without providing replacement housing for everybody. And thousands of people, mainly immigrants, were forced out of the marketplace that used to be around the stadium. Instead of the highly popular market, which was the largest in Europe, local residents now have a parking lot and rising rents.

All of this is costing taxpayers a lot of money, but most of the benefits are for the elites and the few business people who will make some money off the event. In the meantime, the city claims that there is no money in the budget for anything. As parents who were protesting the privatization of school cafeterias pointed out, the price of the zone for football fans in front of the Palace of Culture will be eight times the money the city wants to save by eliminating the jobs of school cooks.

The Tenants' Defense Committee will also organize a EURO REALITY TOUR of the slums around the National Stadium during the Euro. Visitors to Warsaw can see the state of public housing and effects of gentrification around the area, as well as visit some interesting landmarks that haven't been destroyed by developers yet.

Not Guilty Best Verdict in Ages

We are happy to report that at the end of April, our Jakub and Marek were found not guilty of holding an illegal demonstration.

The whole matter became quite a big deal as the authorities tried to make a big repression out of a little demo, held at the beginning of March 2011. Parts of the trial were on TV or the press and the case became well known. Finally, the judge decided that even if it was illegal, it wasn't worth punishing.

The verdict was shown on national television which called it "an absurd trial". The media was quick to pick up on the fact that the costs of the case will have to be paid by the state treasury.

May Day - The Struggle Continues



On May 1 anarchists and anarchosyndicalists held a May Day march in Warsaw. During the march we spoke about the worsening situation of the working class: the widespread use of trash contracts, raising the retirement age and the capitalist attack on all that workers' had gained in the past hundred years. We criticized the mainstream unions, which compromise with the bosses and refuse to call strikes, even when faced with the most drastic of situations.

ZSP had banners with slogans like "Enough compromises" "the Class war continues" and "We don't want to die working" and gave out leaflets with criticized the pseudoleft, which was also

marching on that day. In particular we condemned the neoliberal formation, RP, which incorporated some liberal lifestyle issues and poses as a left party, while voting to raise the retirement age. We also had pointed out before the demo how the nationalists try to take over May Day and infiltrate the working class movements.

Passing by streetside cafes which were open for business, we pointed out to the people at the tables that the staff there earn less per hour than the price of their lattes, and they not only have to work on May Day, but get no paid vacations at all.

The demo drew a lot of interest, both from passersby and from the media. Various people took part in the march. Besides the ZSP and the Anarchist Federation, there were a lot of individual anarchists, some people from the Indignant group, as well as different radical leftists who joined the only anticapitalist march on this day.

Support for the Ryanair Don't Care Campaign

ZSP participated in the International Week of Support for the Ryanair Don't Care campaign on March 12-18. We put up posters and handed out leaflets in various places, including the airport in Warsaw. Since we made some actions where we could find tourists, we also made leaflets in English, which can be found in the PDF section of our main page: zsp.net.pl In the section of our page called IWA news, there is an article about solidarity campaigns in different countries.



Solidarity with the CNT-AIT in the Complutense University and the National Library in Madrid



On February 25, members of the ZSP went to a cultural event co-organized by the Spanish Embassy, the Ministry of Culture of Spain and the Cervantes Institute at the Staszica Palace in Warsaw. We chose to go to this event because of the presence of people from the Spanish government and lecturers from the Complutense University in Madrid, where our comrades are demanding better working conditions, employment contracts for teaching fellows, an end to anti-union repression, the reinstatement of fired comrades and an end to budget cuts in education.

We came with a banner which we hung by the entrance next to the stairs everybody had to use. We prepared leaflets in both Polish and Spanish explaining that we support the demands of both our comrades in the University and in the National Library of Spain. Both unions, part of the CNT-AIT, are fighting against precarious working conditions, against budget cuts in areas like culture and education and against their commercialization and privatization.

The ZSP this month already sent protest letters about the situation in the University and prepared some informational actions in solidarity with the comrades from the National Library. The comrades from the union in Complutense University explained that there are many budget cuts

and a decapitalization of the universities. At the same time, precarious working conditions are on the rise. They have been fighting for the recognition of teaching fellows as employees and some of their members have been fired. They are demanding that these people be normally hired and that the university stop exploiting such workers.

We support these demands and point out that our situation in Poland is even worse as on top of the huge amount of precarious labor, we have horrible conditions for regular employees as well. The ZSP famously held protests of doctoral students a couple of years ago who threatened to go on strike. The doctoral students pointed out that they are required to do normal work, but especially after the introduction of certain changes related to the Bologna Process, they are treated as students on stipends, not as workers. The money they received was far under the minimum wage, meaning that people lecturing at the university and performing other work there were earning a lot less than their fellow students working at McDonalds.

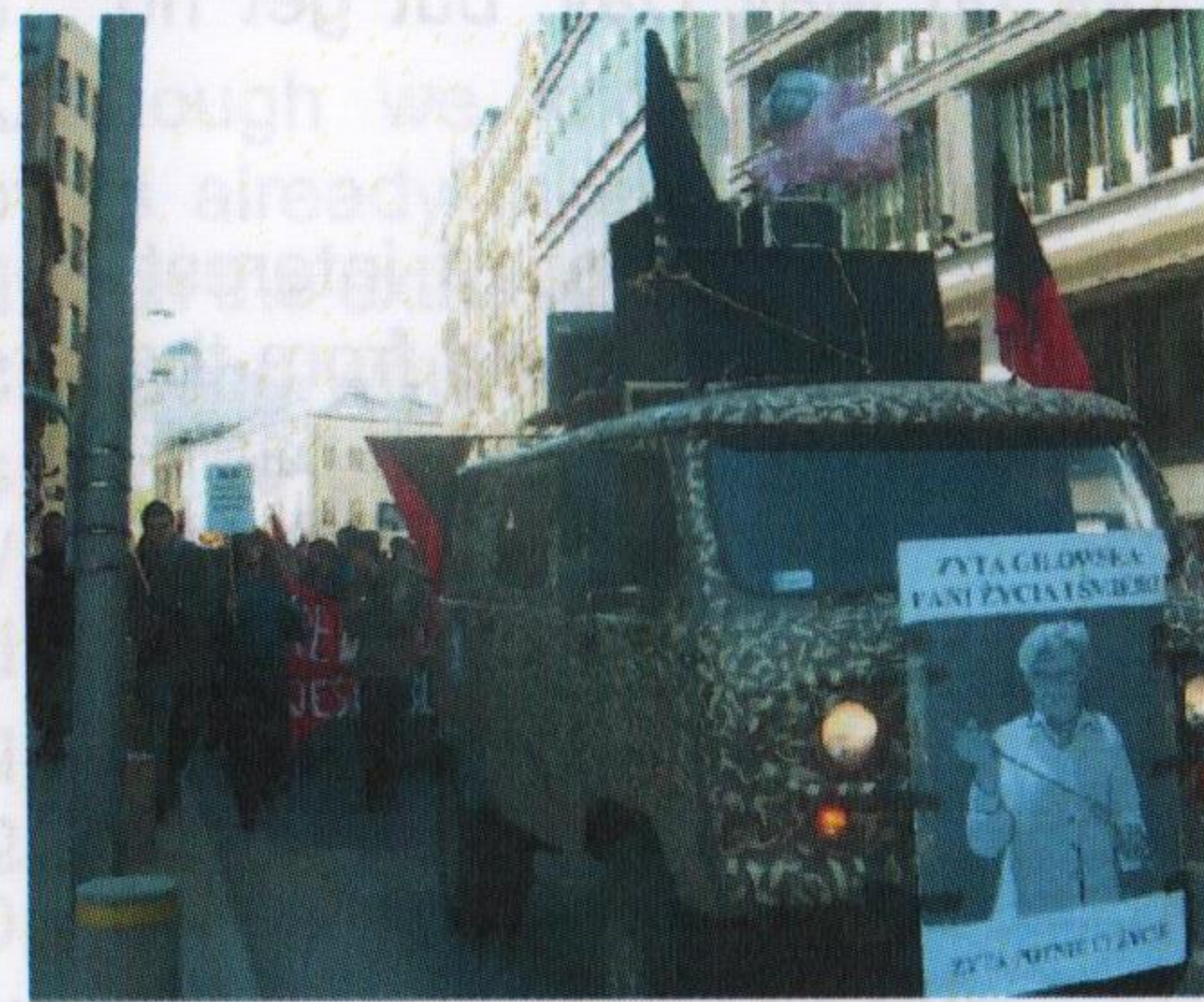
We also remembered the struggle of the comrades at the National Library in Madrid, as it is another educational-cultural institution where our comrades are present. The library illegally employs over 400 outsourced workers, paying huge money to intermediaries instead of to the workers. In some cases, about half of what is paid by the Library goes to the intermediary, leaving the workers with miserable salaries and more precarious working conditions. The comrades from the CNT-AIT in the National Library have been fighting for the regular employment of the staff. Several of the comrades were repressed and fired. The union demands their reinstatement and an end to the use of outsourcing, among other things.

We support both struggles and this small action was a sign of our

solidarity. We pointed out that we are facing many of the same problems in Poland, but there is not much awareness or resistance. We mentioned that we are resuming work in this area and also invited people to the upcoming protest against school closures.

In Madrid or Warsaw, the problem is the same and so is the solution: workers' self-organization and resistance!

Solidarity with the comrades from Madrid!



First demo of ZSP, 1 May 2007.

May 31, 2012 – Fifth Anniversary of the ZSP

ZSP was founded on March 31, 2007 in Gliwice, Poland. Since then, our membership has grown and we have been involved in a number of labour conflicts, as well as activity in other areas, especially involving the material situation of the poor and working class. We present a short list of events and activities over the past 5 years. We have participated in many other protests and solidarity actions: for more information, see our web page: zsp.net.pl

2007

* ZSP is founded. A month later, it organizes an international conference and May Day demonstration as its first public action.

* ZSP supports member in the Opel factory in Gliwice during strike action. ZSP condemned the working conditions of workers sent from temporary agencies, especially Adecco.

*ZSP actively supports the actions of striking nurses, including some logistical support during camp.

2008

* ZSP actively supports the occupation strike of Budryk miners, relaying information and gaining international solidarity.

* ZSP organizes solidarity pickets at Auchan and Tesco supermarkets in response to anti-union dismissals.

* ZSP intervenes in the cases of workers cheated by Adecco and Workforce and a comrade working in Bausmeat in Holland. All payments are regulated. Picketing action held at Adecco.

*ZSP starts publicizing information about people cheated while working abroad which becomes well-known with job seekers.

* ZSP helps bakery workers to get extra pay for work on weekends.

*March against US Missile Bases in Slupsk.

* Ukrainian bus drivers in Warsaw hold wildcat strike for payment that was owed. ZSP helped document their claims and defend their strike. They received the money.

* ZSP makes active support of post office strike and defends dismissed comrade and other workers.

* Comrade fights against unfair dismissal from railways before his retirement and wins compensation.

* ZSP visits and supports the occupation strike of bus drivers in Kielce. The union makes a criticism of the legal form of worker-owned firms that allows, among others, for regular shareholding and majority shareholding, transfer of ownership rights and use of wage

labour without voting rights, at the time that Solidarity union supported that. This criticism becomes widely circulated in bus companies, some of which already took this legal form and the workers still suffer. (Example: wildcat strike of Ukrainian bus drivers occurred in such a „worker-owned firm“.) These ideas bring ZSP in touch with minority independent unions in bus companies throughout Poland.

* ZSP in Wroclaw campaigns against price increases.

* Founding of union in Lionbridge multinational, dismissal of comrade and international action campaign for reinstatement, Was not reinstated but received big compensation from the company.



* Counterball in Warsaw.

2009

* ZSP organizes solidarity actions against repression of union activist in Nestle. FAU Switzerland organizes picket at corporate headquarters.

* ZSP helps worker who in injured in Holland while working through the temporary agency Groenflex get compensation and hospital bills paid. Actions organized in the Netherlands and Poland, with an occupation of the company office. Workers receive health insurance afterwards.



* Members of ZSP in Warsaw create the Tenants Defense Committee along with neighbours.

* ZSP supports comrades from the ZOZ in Bielsko-Biala by occupying office of Starosta.

* ZSP pickets the opening of Starbucks cafes in Poland, in solidarity with the Starbucks workers union in the US. It had previously taken part of an international solidarity action called by the IWW in the US and the CNT-AIT in Spain.

* Campaign with Chinese subcontracted workers at JW Construction. They were cheated by the subcontractor and wanted to be paid return to China. They received tickets home, some payment received.

*ZSP campaigns against the political repression of anarcho-syndicalists in Serbia.

*ZSP in Wroclaw organized a campaign against raises of public transport prices, calling for a fare boycott and free transportation. It caused a serious public debate about transport in the city.

* ZSP campaigns for workers rights in the cafe / bookshop Falanster in Wroclaw, condemning the use of trash contracts and abuse of trial periods.

* ZSP becomes the newest section of the International Workers Association.

2010

* ZSP organizes solidarity actions in defense of our sister union, FAU from Germany, which was fighting for the right to call itself a union. This was the result of repressive action taken after workers organized themselves at the Kino Babylon in Berlin but the boss claimed they were not a union. The FAU eventually upheld its rights in court.



* Campaign for workers rights at Greenway restaurant chain. Protests against working conditions and the illegal use of unpaid trial periods. Due payments made to most workers who claimed.

*ZSP organizes emergency demonstrations after racist killing of trader in Warsaw.

* ZSP makes direct actions in Carrefour against some anti-worker practices. Bad publicity forces supermarket to eliminate them.

* Campaign to help stranded Chinese construction workers. Building company refuses to pay and subcontractors blame each other. ZSP campaigns against the repeated exploitation of such workers,

* ZSP supports the position of a small independent union (15 persons) during the occupation strike at the bus company in Gostynin. It intervened against the use of scab bus drivers, helping the strike.

* Member of ZSP organizes against unfair practices in public gardening and some changes made.

* ZSP pickets against illegal deductions at Azteca Bar in Warsaw and spreads information about this issue among workers.

* ZSP calls for a rent strike in Warsaw. People refuse to pay but resistance goes underground at the threat of mass reprisals by the city.

*Members of ZSP in Wroclaw

become involved, along with local residents in setting up Tenants' Action.

* ZSP helps Ukrainian workers at National Stadium construction site to get better living conditions. It later helps to expose facts related to the death of two workers due to negligence.

2011

* ZSP supports OBI workers for better working conditions and the right to organize in unions. It organizes actions at OBI stores in Poland and an international day of action with pickets throughout Germany (where OBI is headquarter), organized by our sister union, FAU.

*OTTO campaign, against abuses of international temporary work agency, OTTO workforce. Actions in Holland, Poland, Slovakia and Czech Republic. A number of workers received missing pay, sick leave and other monetary claims, some practices where changed, including cheating on pay in one factory in Wroclaw. The campaign continues.

* ZSP organizes first Days of Social Rage, during the visit of Barak Obama.



* ZSP Warsaw organizes protests against rising prices for transport, day care and sewage. It promotes free public transport.

*ZSP organizes actions about workers who were not paid at the Torun Plaza shopping mall construction site, with actions in Warsaw, Torun and Silesia. Partial payment is made but workers

give up after some repression (colleague is fired).

*ZSP organizes pickets at Brave New World bar in Warsaw against the use of trash contracts and bad working conditions of barstaff.

* The Plenary of the International Workers' Association is held in Warsaw.



* In Warsaw, ZSP starts neighbourhood patrols in Praga against arsonists who are setting fire to municipal housing.

2012



*ZSP campaigns for activist dismissed from Roche and condemns the use of fictitious selfemployment. It begins an information campaign on this issue and informs workers how to get their benefits.

* ZSP campaigns against the raising of the retirement age and against social cuts.

*In Wroclaw, it campaigns again against rising ticket prices.

*A demonstration was held in Warsaw on March 31, its 5th anniversary

[www.zsp.net.pl/5 anniversary zsp](http://www.zsp.net.pl/5_anniversary_zsp)

ZSP Participation During IWA Days of Action

March 29-31 the IWA held actions against capitalism, austerity measures and oppression.

March 29

When the government announced the day that they would discuss raising the retirement age, unions big and small decided to protest. A tent city was set up at the Parliament. There we raised a banner saying that „The strike is our best weapon” and gave out radical leaflets, including information about the general strike in Spain. We spoke for a long time with the rank and file members of mainstream unions about how their unions do not support the idea of general strikes and many of them agree that decisive action is necessary in situations like this, where the government is raising the retirement age to 67. Many sent greetings to comrades on Spain who were on strike and said that it should be that way in Poland.

After that we went to the Spanish Embassy for a picket against the labour reform. During the picket, we also spoke to some employees of the embassy that supported the strike.



Unfortunately we had heavy rain showers on and off during the day and that was the weather right before the next action. Despite that, a couple of dozen people, from ZSP and Spanish exchange students who were involved with the M15 movement in Spain made a demonstration in the center of Warsaw, giving speeches, singing

songs and chanting slogans in both Polish and Spanish.

March 30

We participated in the morning in the protest against raising the retirement age in Poland. A few thousand people took part in the protest, with lots of noise and pyrotechnics.



In the afternoon there was a protest against the privatization of school cafeterias and against the firing of cooks.

Due to several reasons, some cooks and others wanted to demonstrate the next week, so we made a smaller action at the city hall, giving out leaflets to the rush hour crowd nearby. We will go again next week to protest at the city authorities. We returned back to the Parliament where the mood was getting more radical and some small disturbances were occurring.

March on March 31 - Capitalism is Cannibalism!



On March 31, we marched in Warsaw against various anti-social nightmares created by the capitalist disease. Despite the mixture of rain, hail and snow throughout the day, and despite rumours in the papers that we'd start a riot and occupy key

government offices which scared away some of the people, a few hundred people marched through the city, stopping at various locations to talk about problems such as eviction, reprivatization of buildings, militarism, the high cost of education, poor working conditions, anti-union repression, corruption in the government and the role of the police, etc. etc. etc.

Chanting slogans such as "throw out the government" and "the city is for people, not for profit", the demonstrators started off under the King's Palace and headed down the most expensive street in Warsaw. Since the demo was called by the ZSP and Tenant's Defense Committee, and since the government made it easier to evict people starting the day of the demo, many speeches and



slogans about evictions were made. People carried portraits of the "Queen of the Slums" (a reference to the President of Warsaw) and shouted "off with her head".

Different issues came up if something appeared in the streets. Next to the starting point, there was a huge banner advertising a conference on shale gas, so issues such as this and even GMOs were mentioned.

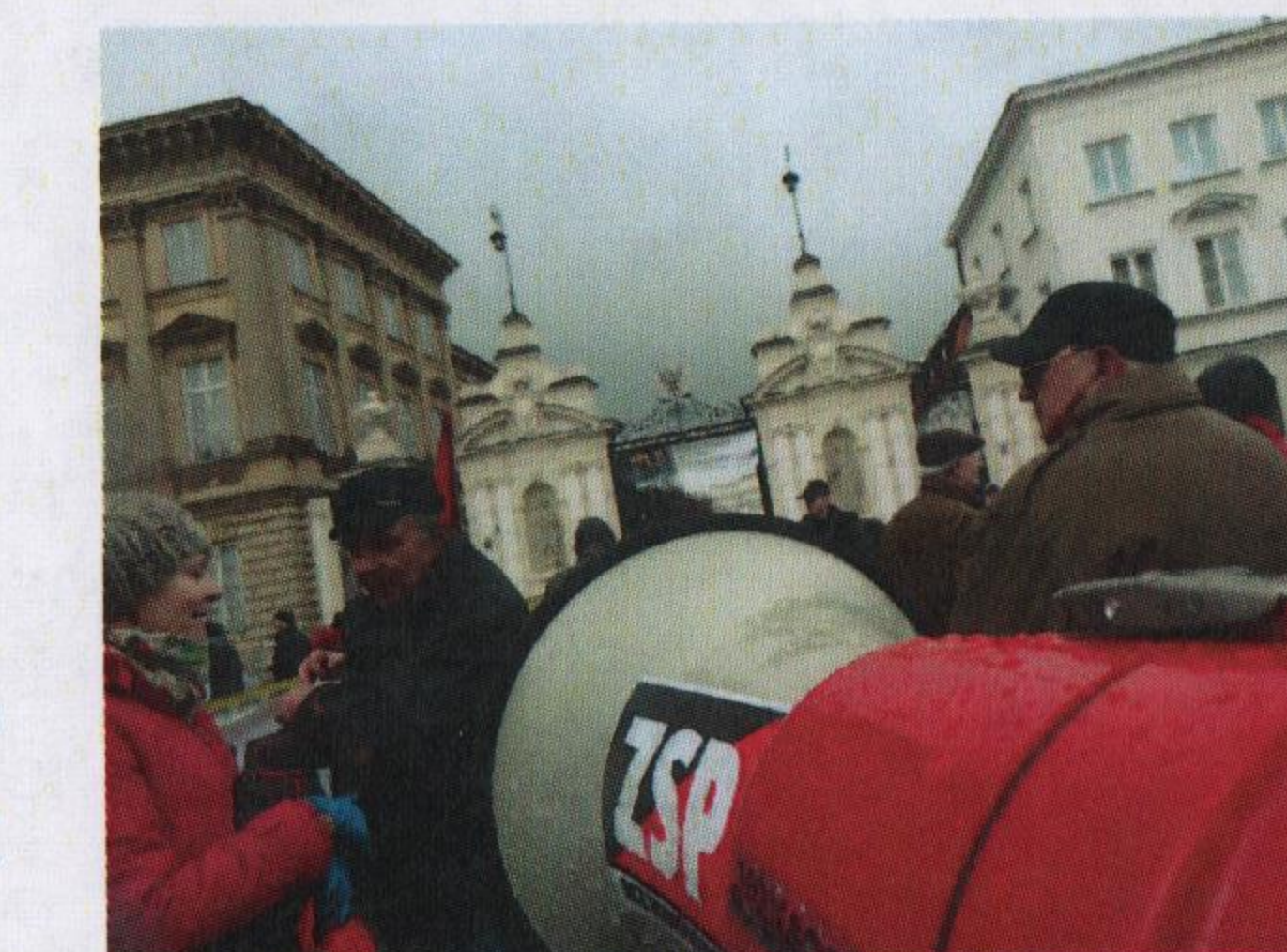
The first stop was under a house managed by the infamous slumlord Mossakowski, most famous for being the landlord of the murdered tenant activist Jolanta Brzeska. This house, along with another about 100 meters away, has been empty for a long time since the tenants were harrassed and then kicked out.



The demonstrators pointed out the effects of this real estate speculation, that on the most famous and expensive street in the heart of Warsaw, there are dozens of vacant buildings, just gathering our posters. (Hopefully this somehow brings down the value of the real estate.)



Next stop was the presidential palace, where lots of noise was made and anti-government slogans chanted. After the palace, we made our way to the University. There our comrade spoke about her difficulties with surviving her studies, since she has to work in crap jobs and cannot afford the rents. Activists pointed out the class implications of the commercialization of education and that the experience of our comrade was unfortunately much too typical.



After speaking about working conditions of students, there were lots of slogans about workers'



rights. When we got to the next corner, we stopped at the Brave New World Bar, where we had picketed about the use of trash contracts last year. (Apparently, after much bad publicity, they have stopped this practice.) People told this story yelling that temporary work is permanent exploitations and that we want work contracts without any manipulations. (A reference to the fact that many employers in gastronomy manipulate and give the wrong type of contract illegally.) Next we stopped in front of Starbucks, where there was more talk about working conditions and about the anti-union activity of the firm against the IWW and the strike in Chile.



Next we headed towards the American Embassy where people complained about US policy and some Americans on the march started yelling "General strike! May Day is ours!" In reference to the monument to Ronald Reagan near the embassy, our comrade pointed out that he was not the



Further down the street we mentioned several things, like the illegal reprivatization of one building or the working conditions in the bookshop chain on the corner, where ZSP is beginning to take action against various violations of workers rights.



"liberator from communism" that he is made out to be in Polish history, but rather an enslaver to neoliberal ideology.

Next there were some hard condemnations at the Ministry of (In) Justice. Housing activists pointed out the role of this



Passing some buildings connected with banks and the economy, and approaching the Ministry of Economy, people started chanting that the end is approaching for the bankers and the bourgeoisie. There were different speakers talking about the economic crisis, the effects of the government's policies and other matters.



institution and of the police in helping to carry out illegal evictions.

The police in general were criticized, as were the courts, who usually bend over backwards to find weird interpretations of the law to help maintain the lawlessness of property reprivatization and mass evictions.

Passing by the statue of the fascist idol Roman Dmowski, we were surprised to see that it was in fact the single most protected object along the route - much more than the Presidential Palace, the American Embassy or the Prime Minister's Office. People pointed out that we are against his nationalist ideology and that nationalism is used to keep the working class divided.



We also pointed out that both traditionally and presently, several Polish extreme-right groups support the elites in various ways. And it could be mentioned that they organized the week before a demo under the same name as ours, trying to confuse people. The initiative to do that was made by a right-wing activist who also is a scummy landlord.



Update on the case of Karol M.

On Nov. 3, Karol M., who had been illegally employed to do building works, had an accident and fell into a coma. It was not clear if he would regain consciousness after the accident and the boss denied that he ever saw the guy. Karol was not insured and the situation was very grave. Karol's family wanted to do something and contacted us about a campaign.

We helped the family track down the employer, who it turned out was the owner of a very shady employment agency. We managed to get tape recordings proving that they were hiring people for this type of construction work. He had previously claimed that he was not at all an employer and had no relationship with Karol.

We had a small action campaign. Small because the employer, with his shady firm, seemed to disappear off the face of the earth. We are rather sure that when we described the case in details, it became impossible for him to do business. At least above ground.

Finally we ended at the Prime Minister's Office, where we let out with a general criticism of the neoliberal government. With a hailstorm starting to hit us, we ended the demo but reminded people that demos are not enough and that they need to organize everyday. We also thanked people from other organizations who joined us: the Warsaw Tenants' Association, the Anarchist Federation and a couple of individuals from the Indignants and Young Socialists (the normal faction :-)).

The demonstration was part of IWA action days and also coincided with other international protests against capitalism. It also occurred on the 5th anniversary of the founding of the ZSP.

Photos are here: http://cia.media.pl/fotki_z_dgs

On the same day, our comrades in different countries also held various actions, ranging from a nationwide protest against Workfare in the UK, to protests of different types in places like Germany, Russia, Brazil, Spain, France, Italy...

An account of some of the actions can be found on the IWA News section of our webpage:

zsp.net.pl

the family, who tried to get help from the State Labour Inspectorate or the Public Prosecutor's Office, have been either ignored or just not helped.

When we first discussed this with the family, we stressed that these organs are extremely bad at protecting workers and that is why we need to take direct action. But, although action could drive the employer underground or maybe out of business, it could not get him to pay for hospital bills.

We are of course outraged, but not surprised. In particular, the Public Prosecutor's Office actively aids criminals of all sorts, particularly bosses and landlords.

On May 11, there will be a court case to pressure these organs to take action. We will be there to support the family and to condemn the state in its complicity in such crimes against workers.

Legal Troubles

The members of ZSP have been very bad in recent times, and, as a result, we have court cases all the time. (At least 6 cases pending in Warsaw.)

One case related to activity of ZSP members but in the Tenants Defense Committee. After making a video which caught a slumlord in action, she sued us to get her ugly face taken off the internet.

We were able to fight against her famous lawyer's attempts to get an injunction in court. Then, very oddly, the case kept getting postponed and we got an injunction to remove the video. This was not decided in court - the judge just wrote it out one day, contradicting what she decided in court. We decided to refuse to comply with the injunction.

Another serious case relates to a criminal case against one comrade who resisted arrest. She is charged with assaulting a police

There are some good and bad developments in the case. The very good news is that Karol regained consciousness. He can speak a little, but he doesn't remember things, like the accident. He still has a long way to go to recover and it is not clear if he will be able to work again anytime soon. Although this will be a tremendous burden on his family, they are extremely glad he is alive.

The bad news has to do with developments concerning the employer.

The family naturally want to sue the employer but to do that, some official organs have got to find negligence or criminal wrongdoing.

From day one after the accident,