

1831

Issue 02a June 2011
Free/Donation

Special June 30th
edition

LET THE FIGHTBACK BEGIN!

Around 750,000 public sector workers are out on strike together today. Workers are striking to stop reforms to their pension schemes. Bosses and the government want workers to pay more and receive less. Some workers could lose tens of thousands of pounds that they have already paid in.

The NUT, PCS, ATL and UCU have all taken simultaneous action, for many this is a view to build for a general strike.

Bristol Anarchist Federation would like to express their support and solidarity for all those on strike, those supporting the pickets and refusing to cross the lines, as well as all those attending rallies and demonstrations across the country.

We would like to congratulate the members of the unions and the Bristol Anti-Cuts Alliance who have worked hard to make today a success, as well as all those groups and individuals who have mobilised and organised in their own way for today.

However we do not place faith in the union leadership to change anything; they will happily settle for a second rate deal for all of us. Only when we organise ourselves independent of union bureaucracy and stand in direct solidarity with each other are we strongest. Such organising has already begun at Bristol University. We also do not look to

the Labour party for a way out, let's remember they started many of the austerity measures this government has continued.

The government and media will try to divide us between public and private sectors, good and bad protesters and so on. We must rise above such attempts to weaken us and hold solidarity as our highest principle. Only if we are defiant and unified will we prevail.



In solidarity,
Bristol Anarchist Federation

For more information visit www.bristolanticutsalliance.org.uk
and bristolaf.wordpress.com

or contact admin@bristolanticustalliance.org.uk and
bristol@afed.org.uk

EVERY RIOT HELPS...

Anarchists profit from petrol bombs as hundreds descend on Stokes Croft for annual bookfair.

Saturday May 7th saw the fourth annual Bristol Anarchist Bookfair take place in Hamilton House, Stokes Croft. With over 60 tables packed with books, pamphlets and merchandise, five rooms of workshops, discussions, films and talks, a cafe and a creche, the bookfair did a fantastic job of showing Bristol that Anarchism is not all face masks and smashed windows. And with what must have been over 1000 people through the doors, clearly more and more people are taking an interest in radical ideas.

Of course the high foot fall must in part be to do with everyone's favourite vandal Banksy selling posters of a Tesco Value petrol bomb to commemorate the recent riots. Hundreds queued to get hold of one, proceeds of which went to local community groups. Others were not so keen however, city council leader Barbara Janke said: "What a sad, sordid way to thank Bristol for providing this talented, privileged but misguided young man with a springboard for his career as a graffiti artist."

Copies of the poster were given out

to stall holders and many were quickly sold on to dimwitted Banksyphiles. These posters were selling for anything from £5 to a whopping £190 with much of the proceeds going to support those arrested during the riots. Other groups have used some of the proceeds to fund further campaigns and actions. This very news sheet was paid for buy one such poster!

Of the riots, Stephen Williams, Lib Dem MP for Bristol West said: "These protests have been hijacked by extreme leftwing groups." Kerry McCarthy, Labour MP for Bristol West went to the Commons to ask Policing Minister Nick Herbert for financial help to replace the money spent. We can only assume they are fuming at the thought these "extreme left wing groups" are cashing in on the riots.

Speculation is already rife about how much a Banksy of Buckingham Palace on fire will sell for.

OFFICE DEVILS

Temping agency Office Angels coughs up unpaid wages after campaign threatens to go international.

On Thursday 12th May Office Angels' offices in Bristol were picketed as part of a national week of action organised by the Solidarity Federation. The campaign started after SolFed were contacted by an Office Angels employee Dan. He had worked three days for Office Angels in December but had only been paid for one. Despite substantial evidence to the contrary – Dan had sat next to the company manager at work on his third day – Office Angels refused to acknowledge he had worked beyond his first day. *continues page 2*



DIRECT ACTION GOT THE GOODS

continued from page 1 The campaign started with a picket and delegation at the Wimbledon office where Dan had been employed. Office Angels responded by banning him from company premises. The delegation then went to the Oxford Street office, where management was spoken to and a demand for the wages to be paid in full laid down.

Picketing up and down the country, e-mails and phone calls continued to add more pressure. Finally, with the threat of the struggle becoming international as groups around the world prepared for a week of action against the parent company ADECCO, Office Angels paid up.

We are all facing increased casualisation and attacks on pay and conditions at work. It's important to remember when we act in solidarity with one another we can successfully fight back against our bosses. This campaign succeeded without courts, lawyers, industrial tribunals or even union reps. Direct action got the goods.

If you have a workplace issue and need help you can contact Bristol Solidarity Federation (bristolsofed@gmail.com) or Bristol Industrial Workers of the World (bristoliiww@riseup.net)



THE WHOLE ROTTEN BARREL

A life lived entirely inside a factory complex; every movement tracked by 24 hour electronic security; your living, eating and sleeping arrangements decided by your boss; your clothes colour coded by your department; and high suicides rates.

This may sound like a work of science fiction or a tale from the USSR but this is the grim reality for workers at the chinese factory of Foxconn: a multinational electronics company who produce all the worlds Apple iPads, iPods and the iPhone 4. No that wasn't a misprint; Apple, the poster child of capitalism providing us with the shiny new things we 'need' and the trendy alternative to the evil Microsoft (who incidentally also work with Foxconn). At first glance it can be hard to reconcile these two images of the same company, but this is how capitalism functions. It's not surprising Apple gets away with treating people this way; in fact it's demanded by the capitalist system – lower costs with no regard to human life, whilst putting on a nice happy face to the customers.

Workers in the UK may be far better off than those in Chinese factories, but capitalist companies will always try screwing over the working class as much as they can. The latest 'economic crisis' has given them all the excuse they need to lower our wages, working conditions and safety. These things we often take for granted were won through hard fights, like those that are now being fought by a new generation of Chinese workers.

Whilst we must build international links and stand in solidarity with all those struggling against

DISABILITY IS NOT A CRIME

On Thursday 12th May from 3.30pm - 5.30pm the Social Care, Claimants and Welfare group (of Bristol and District Anti Cuts Alliance) organised their second picket of the ATOS testing centre, Government Buildings, Flowers Hill.

Atos Healthcare has secured a £300 million contract through the Department for Work and Pensions to conduct disability assessments for people claiming disability benefits.

As a result many claimants now face being moved onto the lower Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), and losing a range of support. For some this will mean a drop of over £1,600 a year and all the insecurity that being on JSA bring

The idea that claimants are work-shy scroungers is a vile and nasty myth. A myth being used to excuse treating some of the most vulnerable people in our society in a degrading and utterly disrespectful manner.

Atos is being given three hundred million pounds to test disabled peoples ability to work. Allegedly they will also receive a bonus of £14,000 for every person they send back to work. This will undoubtedly result in legitimate disabled people being taken off benefit just so Atos can profit.

If any evidence was needed of this, 40% of all appeals against Atos are upheld. That means at least 40% of the people they take of benefits should not have been. One of these cases even involved test results being forged to make someone fail.

In the case of George from Chesterfield, he died whilst appealing Atos' decision to declare him fit to work. Killed by a heart condition Atos had deemed not to be "uncontrollable or life-threatening". His widow is convinced the stress caused by this process contributed to his death.

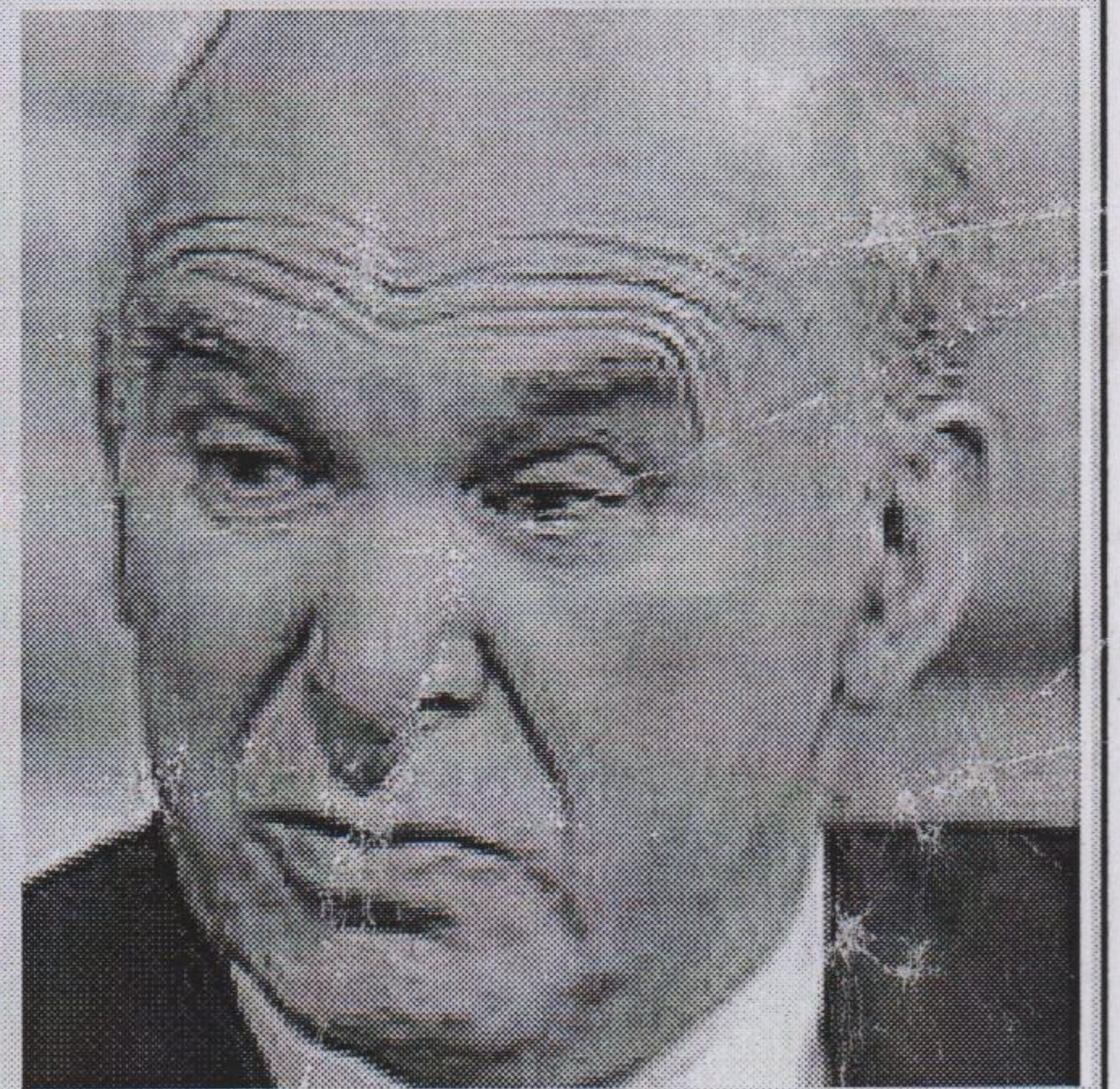
To get involved with the campaign against Atos or for more information visit bristol.indymedia.org and serach 'Atos' or go to www.bristolanticcutsalliance.org.uk.

oppression across the world, it is in the struggle of our own work places and communities that we have the real power to overthrow capitalism.

Boycotting one corporation or another may be a tempting way to wash your hands of guilt (assuming you can afford the extortionately priced ethical alternatives) but it is only when we've done away with all of them and are in control of our own lives that we can end this type of exploitation.

WANKER OF THE DAY - VINCE CABLE

Vince Cable proved once again how much being in power turns you into a tosser. At a GMB conference in early June he threatened tougher strike laws should anyone dare use their right to strike. The UK already has the most restrictive strike laws in Western Europe but apparently that still gives us a bit too much freedom. So while our government urges other countries to grant their citizens more rights it takes ours away. Vincey is really showing just how concerned Westminster is about the possibility of co-ordinated strike action. Like all bullies, Vince and co prefer to pick us off one by one. Let's not give the bastards that opportunity!



Bristol Anarchist Federation

Bristol Anarchist Federation is a branch of the Anarchist Federation. It is an organisation of class struggle anarchists which aims to abolish Capitalism and all oppression to create a free and equal society. For more information, to join, come to our meetings or if you would like to write an article, visit our website bristolaf.wordpress.com or contact us bristol@afed.org.uk

