

A LETTER TO THE WELSH ASSEMBLY

Make no mistake, the new £67 million Welsh Assembly (Senedd) is a symbol of oppression and subjugation for the people of Wales. The stupidity of voting Assembly Ministers into power is obvious when we realize by doing so we reduce ourselves to mere spectators in the political process.

Anarchists advocate and work for direct democracy as opposed to so called representative (parliamentary) democracy. Direct democracy is based on delegation not representation. The crucial difference is that, with direct democracy, delegates are elected temporarily to implement specific decisions previously made by an assembly of people in the community and workplace. Delegates (unlike career party politicians) can be immediately recalled and dismissed from their mandate if they do not carry out the specific function allotted to them.

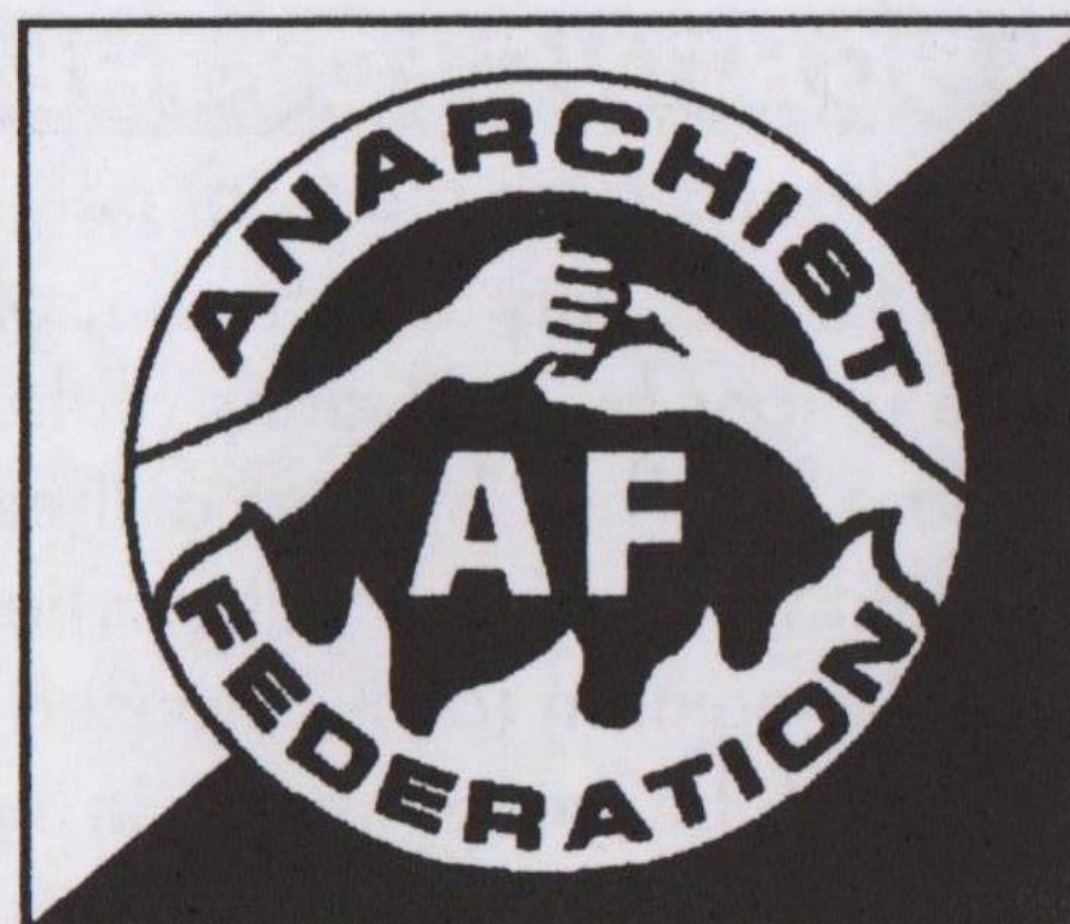
Also, how can you have democracy when the

question of who owns and controls the means of production, distribution and wealth does not come into the equation? Workers must meekly accept the tyrannical and authoritarian structure of corporate capitalism. There is no democracy in the workplace, period!

In direct democracy the oppressive system of exploitation through wage slavery will be abolished with production (work) controlled and I daresay redefined by federated communities on the basis of need not greed in total empathy with the environment.

That the Senedd was opened by a member of an outdated, unrepresentative aristocracy really is hilarious! An historic day for Wales? Certainly but not one to celebrate by the working class.

Originally published as an open letter to the Welsh Assembly from the Anarchist Federation (Wales) in the South Wales Argus.



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.

If you're interested in joining contact us at:

Anarchist Federation,
BM ANARFED,
London, WC1N 3XX.
Email: info@afed.org.uk
Also visit: www.afed.org.uk
and www.iaf-ifa.org

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anarchist bulletin



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Fighting for their future

On the 16th January 2006, The French Prime Minister Villepin announced the creation of a new work contract, the Contrat Première Embauche (CPE). This contract allows an employer to sack someone without giving a reason during the first 24 months of employment, installing a difference in the rights of those workers under 26 and others. The CPE also allows an employer to break a contract and to propose an identical contract to the same person, which would increase the temporary nature of employment. This increases the difficulty for young people to find housing and to put in place a new competition between workers with old-style contracts, who are often better protected, and those on the CPE.

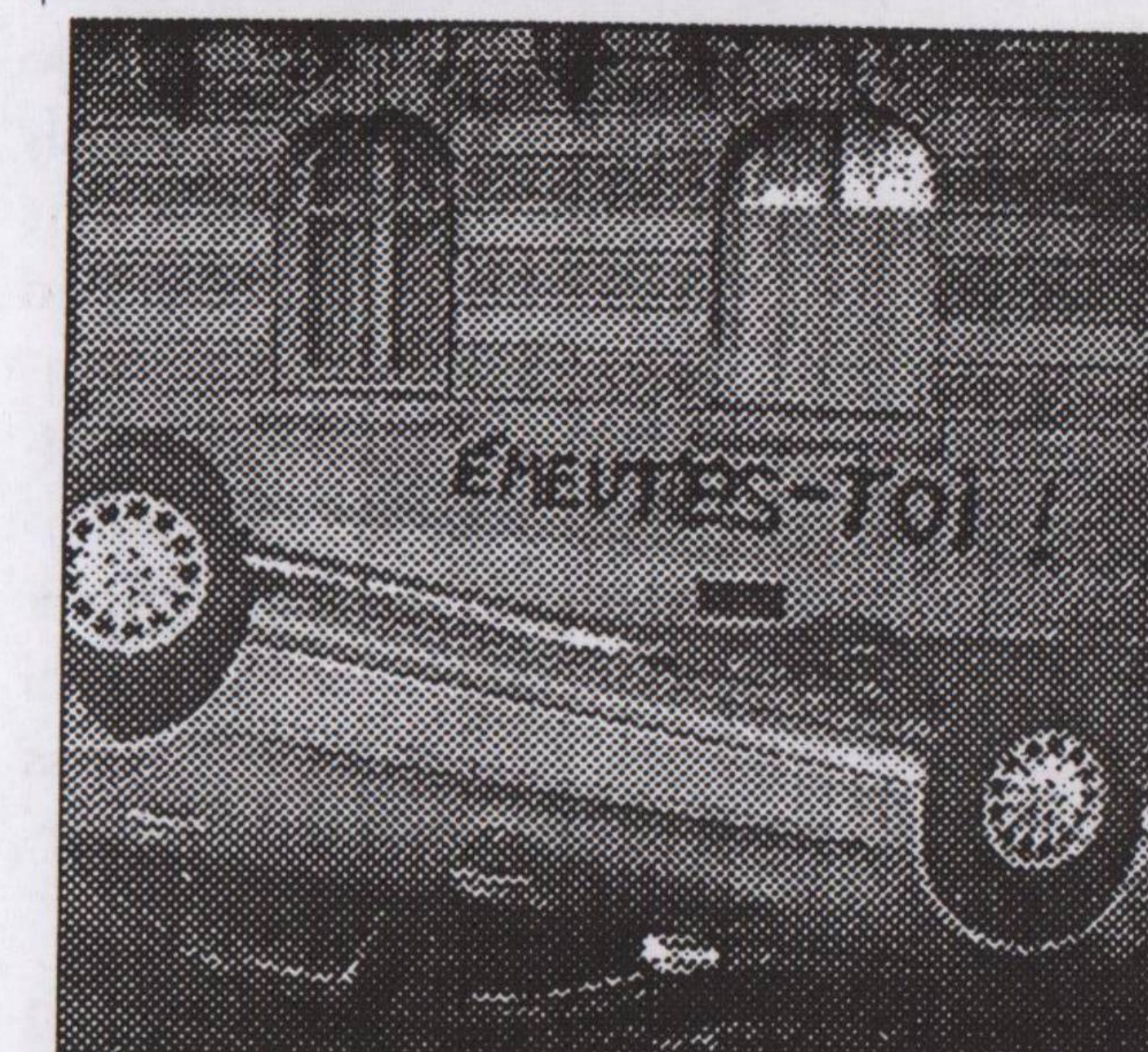
The contract is an attempt to spread the precarity of work and to incorporate it into employment legislation, without doing anything about the problems of young people. It follows recent government measures like the lowering of the age of apprenticeship, and the Contrat Nouvelle Embauche (CNE) which institutes a period of 2 years before a steady employment. Already this contract is stopping people striking, taking sick or maternity leave.

Anti-CPE feelings led to a national day of demonstrations on 7th February and strikes in workplaces and colleges. The government had the CPE adopted by parliamentary majority on the 10th February. The demonstrations continued and universities were occupied. On the 7th march, a new day of action mobilised just under a million people. The 9th March, Parliament definitively approved the CPE. Strikes multiplied in education, in support of the stu-

dents, and the unrest spread to the high schools with occupations across the country. On 16th March, there was a new national student mobilisation, this time with a strong involvement of high school students. Incidents broke out in response to the government's failure to revise its position, or against the extreme right wing commandos which attempted to "liberate the universities from the leftists" with arms. The 18th March, more than one million marched throughout France, sixty faculties were occupied or closed. As we go to press all the union and student bodies have called a new day of action on 28th March. In the meantime, the student strike coordinations and the high school and university organisations have called for a general strike and the blockade of the high schools and universities.

This movement carries on from a general discontent throughout France. On 4th October 2005, strikes and demonstrations took place against casualisation and for the maintenance of public services. A few weeks later, the young people of the suburbs confronted the authorities in the streets. And now it's the students who are drawing in workers. Demands have grown: the demos and mass student meetings are now making the link between casualisation in general where the effects of repression have affected the young people of the banlieues in 2005.

The students are very protective of their independence. They are suspicious of political and union organisations and have created their own national coordination. They are right - the movement of protest against



BELARUSIAN BRUTALITY

Opposition protesters in Belarus are facing massive state repression and brutality after allegations that last month's presidential elections had been rigged. Protesters had been camping out in the capital city, Minsk, for a week at the end of March when their camp was violently broken up by riot police.

As we go to press, demonstrations of thousands of people, including many anarchists, against the vicious and violent reaction from the state have since become a regular occurrence. What we publish below are two unedited reports from protesters themselves.

"Minsk, Belarus. All 460 participants of the October Square tent camp were arrested on the night of March 24th. Before that, in Minsk alone 500 more activists were detained, both during the presidential election campaign and during the protests on the October Square on March 19th-23rd. Overall in Belarus, the number of arrests reaches several thousand.

"The population of the country is under an information blockade: the state media don't cover what's going on, or seriously misrepresent it, resorting even to outright and obvious lies.

"People are intimidated everywhere. In universities, students are directly warned about punishments for participation in protests. After being absent from classes students have to prove that they weren't at the square. All student participants are immediately expelled, a curfew is introduced in dormitories. Students that were barely no-

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INSIDE INFORMATION

Turkish anti-militarist released!

Anarchist, gay, conscientious objector Mehmet Tarhan was released March 9th, following the decision of the Military Criminal Court of Casation located in Ankara. Mehmet has been in Sivas military prison since April 2005 and was sentenced to four years of imprisonment by the local military court. After the decision of the upper court calling for his release, he has taken to the local recruitment center and later in the evening he has been released from there.

Mehmet Tarhan's struggle is widely supported by anti-authoritarians, anarchists, gays lesbians and anti-militarists in Turkey and worldwide. Lots of campaigns has been organized in more than 15 countries including a day of international solidarity with Mehmet.

Support Tomasz Wilkoszewski!

Tomasz Wilkoszewski, anti-fascist prisoner from Poland will soon have his parole board. His hearing should take place at some point of April.

Tomek spent already 10 years in prison out of his 15 years sentence. Now his support campaign is growing bigger and bigger. Recently there was a leak of information from prosecution office to the media and in local newspaper printed an article about him, in which prosecutor admits that there has been mistake in Tomek's case and he shouldn't be that long in prison.

Please keep sending petitions and letters to authorities. Please support him by sending the letter (in Polish with English translation below) available at www.brightonabc.org.uk to the Polish authorities responsible for his case...

Tomek would also love to get letters from people, to break the isolation of prison. Letters and postcards are, as he put it, "his only window on the world". He can understand some English, but finds it difficult to write, so don't necessarily expect a reply...His address is as follows:

Tomek Wilkoszewski, Zaklad Karny, ul. Orzechowa 5, 98-200 Sieradz, Poland
Information from: www.brightonabc.org.uk

SUBVERT!

When going on demonstrations stay sober, don't talk to the police and if you're arrested give only your name and address then say 'no comment' to any other questions. For more info visit: www.ldmg.org.uk

April

2nd - "Unauthorized" demo Naming the Dead - Mass Civil Disobedience against the Occupation of Iraq, demand for reparations, prosecution of those responsible for war crimes. On the 2nd anniversary of the April 2004 siege of Fallujah. 12 noon, Parliament Square. www.j-n-v.org www.voicesuk.org or tel. 0845 458 2564
14th -16th - Radio 4A On Air Around Brighton on 101.4 (ish) FM. www.radio4a.org.uk
28th - Workers Memorials Day. Protest outside

Canada House besides Trafalgar Square, Pall Mall East between 9am and 10am in support of the European wide protest against Canada's promotion of asbestos. Followed by main event with a March from behind the Tate Modern Gallery on the South bank at Holland St assembling at 10.30am to proceed out march at 11am to HSE HQ national offices at Rose Court, Southwark Bridge Road, SE1 to protest against de-regulation of safety laws, especially asbestos. We will then march to the Greater London authority to hold a rally at 12.15pm at the south side of Tower Bridge, SE1.

29th - Manchester Anarchist Bookfair 12 noon-5.00pm The Basement, 24 Lever Street (off Piccadilly Gardens) central Manchester manchester@bookfair.org.uk www.bookfair.org.uk

ON THE FRONTLINE

The 28th March saw the largest single industrial action since the general strike of 1926. Over a million public sector workers staged a one day strike in anger at the government fiddling with the current pension plans and attempts to impose a blanket 'work till you're 65' rule. The changes will directly affect two million workers. There is a large potential for this to develop into a real challenge to the government but only if it can escape from the official unions control - currently Unison, the TGWU and the GMB have the issue firmly under control and are damping down any enthusiasm for wider more militant action, preferring instead to just vaguely threaten another 24 stoppage in the run up to the may local elections - they don't want to embarrass their Labour Party co-workers on the 'other' side of the battle.



The situation is ripe right now for workers to set up and run their own 'defend the social wage' committees - the attack on pensions and other hard won rights is not limited to public sector workers, it's happening across the whole

of society as more companies are jumping on the bandwagon after being given the green light by the government - this week alone BA, Harrods and Rentokil announced major changes to their pension schemes that significantly damage the workers. These people should be involved in this dispute - not hived off under the control of the separate union bureaucracy - networks and contacts need to be set up now, not when the unions want to put on a left-wing pose to regain credibility.

Lecturers were also out on one day strike this month in their long running pay dispute. Thousands walked out forcing the cancellation of lectures and seminars all over the UK. Lecturers pay has dropped by 40% over the last 20 years. Over the same period college managers pay has increased by a similar amount.

Job Centre staff are on the verge of a national strike as well following massive cuts on staffing levels. Fifteen thousand jobs have already been lost as part of a plan to lose over 30,000 in total. Staff workload has increased massively leading to a level of service that a select committee described as "truly appalling".

Family supermarket chain Asda were found guilty this month of attempting to bribe workers not join a union. It was ordered to pay £850,000 to around 400 workers.

ASYLUM SEEKERS GET TAGGED

All asylum seekers arriving in the UK who are not held in detention centres are to be tagged, announced Labour's immigration minister, Tony McNulty, last month.

The government hope that the scheme, which was piloted in Liverpool and Croydon last December, will make it easier to deport failed asylum seekers back to their countries of origin.

Refugees arriving into this country as a result of war, poverty and environmental ruin already face treatment from the hands of the British state of the same kind as a criminal. Those who seek asylum are frequently sent to detention centres around the UK where they are locked up and treated like prisoners. Asylum seekers who aren't detained are now to be tagged allowing the state to keep a check on their every movement.

Tagging has now become a common method of monitoring criminals who have actually been convicted of various crimes and not just those who have fled war or famine in search of a better life in a country like ours that is seen by many foreign peoples as a haven of freedom and democracy. Indeed, Britain is a signatory of the Declaration of Human Rights which

states that all citizens of the world should enjoy the freedom to move to and within any country they choose. The UK has also signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights. But in practice, governments operate in very different ways. They say that all citizens of the world are welcome in their countries and can seek shelter here in time of crises yet do their very best to limit how many people can actually get in to the country.

The British government has also announced plans to bar low-skilled workers from entering the UK. A new system, which comes into place from mid 2007, means that immigrants from non-EU countries will have to gain 'points' based on work experience, qualifications and language skills. Those who fail to pass this test will be denied entry.

We can be in no doubt that it is not personal need that determines a person's movements across the globe, instead it is the interests of capitalism that decide where a person can live. Those people who look like they can't make profit for the boss will be tossed back on the scrap heap and deported back home to their droughts, civil wars and poverty.

BELARUSIAN BRUTALITY

Continued from the front page
ticed around the tent camp had to write explanations. Many students were expelled without any official explanation.

"Workers of state enterprises are also under constant pressure. Minsk is flooded by undercover cops who 'react' to any 'unsanctioned' action, which last week included even carrying any food to or around the October square.

"Production of sentences by courts is fully automated; many people get charged with 'minor hooliganism' even though the only ones who acted disorderly on the square were undercover officers themselves."

* * *

"After the meeting a part of protesters began to move towards the prison where arrested people are held. The idea of the rally was to provide support for the arrested and



to demand the possibility to pass food and clothes to them. Some hours before the prison guards were strengthened, snipers were placed on roofs.

"The way of the peaceful demonstration was met with lines of soldiers in riot equipment. After people had stopped moving, explosions (presumably gas or noise grenades) sounded at the forefront and special troops went on the offensive. Some people fell, armoured soldiers stepped on their bodies. Other demonstrators started to run: they were being caught up, severely beaten and arrested. Two or three persons were lying on the ground without consciousness. One of them was in extremely grave condition and therefore thought to have been killed. As it was known later, he is alive, but doctors of hospital refuse to give any additional information.

"After beating and dispersal more than one hundred person were arrested and loaded into armoured lorries. According to an eyewitness, the police had never made such slaughter before."

The Belarusian Anarchist Federation are calling for international solidarity. Please email the Belarusian Embassy (uk@belembassy.org) to protest the brutal treatment of the protesters. Organise pickets of embassies, consulates and airlines. **More information can be found at belarus.indymedia.org**

FIGHTING FOR THEIR FUTURE

Continued from the front page
the CPE is very much controlled through the unions by politicians of the left and extreme left. The objective of these union representatives of the left parties is to steer public opinion (68% opposed to the CPE!) against the government, in the run up to the 2007 elections.

A hardening of the movement is supported by a section of public opinion. First by the students who have been in struggle for five weeks and then by a growing number of people who do not understand the refusal of Villepin to withdraw the project. The government refuses to back down and now a social war has been engaged. Victory is necessary against the CPE, but also because if it is not won, a new period of deep discouragement will once again take hold. As always in struggles which last more than a few days, collective consciousness ripens quickly; political contradictions appear, the apprenticeship of direct democracy, collective and self-organised practices, the assertion of autonomy, debates on the profiteers and the victims of short-term work

flourish. A new generation is in the course of politicising itself.

For the moment, anarchists and anarcho-syndicalists are present, as far as they are capable, in this vast movement. They push for and participate in the creation of and communication between mass meetings, in the self-organisation and independence of struggles, to raise awareness of an unlimited general strike and to participate in the demonstrations with their own ideas: general strike against capitalism which exploits and the State which spies and represses, and self-organisation of the means of production, of distribution and education! Daniel (militant of the Federation Anarchiste, France and Belgium)



BAE SYSTEMS - MERCHANTS OF DEATH

BAE Systems weapons and armaments factory at Glascoed UK (Gwent, Wales) have opened up a new Education Centre. The target? Primary school children, who will, according to Steve Rowbotham (Managing Director Land Systems) be provided with "a unique learning opportunity to bring the subject of World War II to life".

The hypocrisy is obvious and really sickening! We have a producer of weapons of mass destruction that maim and kill thousands of men, women and children throughout the world for profit, having the obscene gall to invite children to their death factory to show them a war exhibition! Where we are informed they can play at trying on gas masks and "learn about what life was like" e.g. all about rationing etc.

We doubt if they will be told about how armament companies promote war and mass murder by selling weapons to anyone who wants them regardless of the consequences. We doubt primary school children will be shown the carnage and the slaughter of war! Nor told that BAE Systems for example supplied the armaments such as cluster bombs and depleted uranium shells that were used in the illegal "blood for oil" war on Iraq!

Making lots of money for corporate capitalist killers comes before the people of Iraq who are killed and ripped apart for private profit.

We wonder if Career Wales, Newport City Council Advisory and Don Touhig MP (Minister for Defence and Veterans) who fully

support the Education Centre could get together with BAE Systems to open up a similar facility in Iraq to teach children the benefits of being victims of war? ("Shock and Awe" bombing works wonders on local communities and will, no doubt, give them an "educational experience"!)

Or maybe, part of the "war experience" for the pre-pubescent children of Gwent would be to take them on a school holiday to Iraq?

No doubt Steve Rowbotham and Don Touhig could explain how a career as an engineer at BAE Systems making weapons of mass destruction will "pull out all the sops to challenge outdated perceptions of engineering being all grim and grimy"? Perhaps the Schools Challenge will design an emergency vehicle project that will come up with an ambulance that has the capability to Hoover up children's body parts? But, hey, why let the bloody gore of war get in the way of the militarization of our young children's minds!

"Want 2C some cool" results of an engineering career with BAE Systems. Parents and teachers log onto: www.robertfisk.com/iraqwarvictims or to find out more about BAE Systems corporate crimes check out www.corporatewatch.org/?lid=185 or hrw.org/backgrounders/arms/clusterv04052.htm or www.caat.org.uk/press/recent.php?url=221205prs

Children should be told the truth instead of the spin of BAE Systems "education" programme!

BIRD FLU SCARE

Bird flu is the latest in a line of global health scares. What's happening, why and how should we react?

Bird flu (H5N1) started in poultry kept in insanitary conditions in SE Asia. Close links with poultry have led to some people being infected. Increasingly rapid environmental changes are a major factor in the proliferation of diseases: HIV/AIDS, West Nile virus, Ebola, SARS, BSE and Lyme Disease, which are emerging and crossing more easily to people due to human activities such as roadbuilding, the mass movement of people to cities and increasing air travel. Globalisation has spread intensified, industrial agriculture worldwide. Global livestock has increased 38% since 1961 to 4 billion animals (17 billion poultry, 2 billion pigs). Many of these animals are kept in factory farms - animal concentration camps where they are fed each other, and pumped full of drugs all solely to maximize profits. Throw in the global transportation of animals and ever increasing air travel, with the trade in wildlife and you have a lethal cocktail.

Because people share many pathogens with animals, humans impact on driving animal diseases in turn increasingly threatens public health.

Intrusions into the world's areas of high biodiversity (a large variety of plant and animal species) such as rainforests disturbs biological reservoirs and exposes people to new forms of infectious diseases.

There is no evidence of human infections from wild birds which have been demonstrated in the interests of agribusiness. Politicians in Russia and Iran have called for hunters to wipe out incoming migratory birds, and some governments in Asia and the Middle East have begun reviving plans to drain wetlands, using bird flu as a convenient and false excuse for their money making schemes.

Solutions

Keeping forests and other ecosystems intact would be the best protection for humanity against new diseases. Biodiversity dilutes the pool of virus targets and hosts, reducing their impact on people, and providing a form of global health insurance. Stopping factory farming and the transportation of livestock and poultry, together with the trade and transportation of wildlife. All of this will be achieved through concerted social action, but we can also act to conserve our local green patches for the enjoyment of ourselves and our children and as a real insurance policy. Where possible we can also minimize or replace air travel and grow and buy locally produced food to minimize air and road miles.