

resistance

anarchist bulletin

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INTERNATIONAL RESISTANCE

ITALY

FIAT, THE ITALIAN CAR GIANT, has always played a central role in the political and economic struggles of Italian workers. Its recent plans to restructure, which involve laying off about eight thousand workers have emphasised this.

The traditionally rebellious Fiat plant workers have done their predecessors proud by meeting the proposals with fierce resistance.

The main centres of struggle have been at the company's huge industrial complexes at Turin and Termini Imerese in Sicily.

The Sicilian workers have been particularly aggressive, with the dispute smashing some of the artificial boundaries which all too often isolate workers' struggles.

Firstly, the struggle has involved many non workers. There is a highly militant Wives and Families support group as well as actions by students, No Global protesters and workers in other industries.

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ARGENTINA

2002 WAS ONE of the most inspiring years of Argentinean history – a year in which the working class demonstrated once again that it has the ability and creativity to run society in the interests of the many, and the bosses simultaneously demonstrated that they did not.

Following the original "Argentinazo" in December 2001, there has been an incredible growth of working class self-organisation – neighbourhood assemblies; barter clubs; workers' control; community gardens; the varied activity of the Piqueteros (unemployed groups); pensioners' groups; national congresses of all the above; and many local initiatives.

These initiatives have developed outside of the state and its institutions. The co-operation between the groups over the year has built up very strong bonds of solidarity - solidarity that was highlighted during the important National March by Piqueteros, made possible through the wider networks established in the struggle.

This March lasted five days, blocking highways and organising soup kitchens whilst passing through towns and cities that have played a central role in the uprising and in building up resistance.

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COPENHAGEN

This is a report from the newly formed Danish Anarchist Federation -

THE EU-SUMMIT IS OVER, the Danish government is in ecstasy over their self-proclaimed success, the police are being congratulated for a job well done by politicians, tabloid press and even some of the NGO's, not surprisingly including the NGO forum "Stop the Violence".

But let us ignore those bigots for one moment. The Anarchist Federation would like to send a heartfelt thanks to all of our comrades who traveled from far and wide to participate in the demonstrations against the EU.

Especially those who participated in the demonstration against the policestate Europe, the unity and strength you showed towards the police aggression is more than admirable. If nothing else, the demonstration provoked a reaction from the authorities that could only be interpreted one way; this is a police state!

As all who traveled to Copenhagen will know, the city was a very difficult place to move around, people were were stopped and searched constantly and repeatedly.

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ITALY

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Secondly, the participants in the struggle have not restricted themselves to picketing the factory gates but have shown that they are more than willing to attack any other part of the economy, using direct action as their tool.

On 12 November, after vowing that "not a single bolt would leave the factory" the workers and their supporters completely isolated Palermo's airport by blocking all the underground and overhead railway links and all the motorway links to it.

A couple of days later, with the railway lines still blockaded, the workers moved in on the naval port at Termini Imerese in order to stop the shipment of a consignment of 3,700 Punto cars.

The workers positioned themselves so as to stop all movement of people and cargo in and out of the port and so it was made impossible for the ship to leave.

By the 15th, the blockade of the Straits of Messina became total.

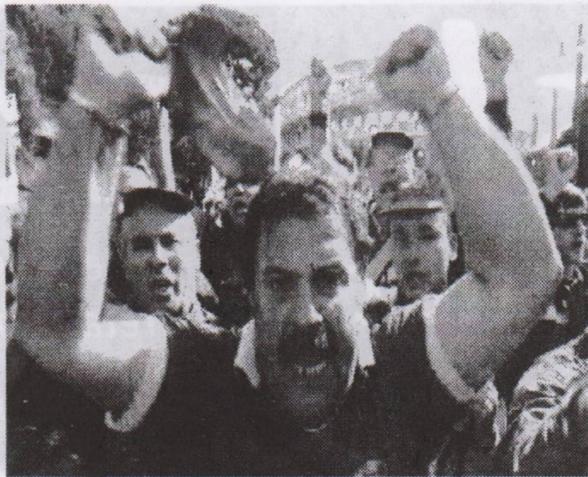
Over 1,000 workers positioned themselves at various strategic points around another of the island's major ports - Messina - to impede the arrival and departure of trains and motorised transport.

As well as this, there has been a huge 50,000 strong demonstration at Termini Imerese and a 6,000 strong demonstration of Palermitan students in solidarity with the workers and the arrested "No Global" organisers.

After Fiat/government/union talks broke down on 6/12, workers in Turin poured out of the factory blocking roads and railway lines, bringing much of the city grinding to a halt. About 5000 workers were involved in angry and dramatic scenes. Workers from the Fiat plant in Cassino near Naples reacted by blocking Italy's main North-South motorway for a number of hours.

9/12 was the first day of unemployment for the workers and those that turned up at the Mirafiori plant in Turin were greeted by a sign forbidding laid-off workers from entering. Turin-based workers who still had jobs downed tools for four hours, blocking Mirafiori's car assembly line.

In Sicily, where all 1,800 workers at the Termini Imerese plant have been laid off, a group of about 200 blocked the road between the island's two main cities, Palermo and Catania...



Wives of workers from the Termini Imerese plant organized a sit-in in front of the Rome offices of the prime minister, and when results of the talks were made known they began chanting, "Clown, swindler, it's a disgrace."

Around 700 people who used to work at the Arese plant near Milan blocked a major motorway north of Italy's financial capital for an hour. These were the same workers who days earlier occupied Milano Centrale railway station. A regional General Strike was held in the Piedmont area on 13/12 and was coupled with a major demonstration in the regions capital, Turin.

Students blocked the cities roads in solidarity. Mirafiore workers held another strike on the 16th, sadly the Union limited it to two hours, reducing it to a token gesture.

In Sicily about a hundred Fiat employees at Termini Imerese and industries linked to car manufacturing blockaded the two entrances to the Palermo branch of the Rinascente department store, which is part of the empire of the Agnelli family who own most of Fiat. The workers' intention is to cause the famous clothes shop to make a loss. "We want to make the Agnellis pay some of the very high costs resulting from their disgraceful industrial plan", said a spokesperson.

The Fiat workers' best hope though has to lie not just with industry wide action, but with action by the wider working class. The last year has seen a huge level of industrial militancy in Italy with 28 million working hours being lost to strikes in the first 10 months of 2002.

Links made across different industry sectors now will not only help win this battle, but be a step closer to the type of organisation needed to win the class war once and for all.

ARGENTINA

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The slogan for the march was "Throw the bums out!" and ended up at the Plaza de Mayo (scene of bitter fighting and many deaths last year) on the one-year anniversary of De la Rúa's resignation.

Solidarity actions under the banner of "Que Se Vayan Todos" (They All Must go) took place at the same time in every corner of the globe, from Australia to Yugoslavia. The Argentinean resistance is spreading worldwide.

The links and solidarity that will surely grow out of this march are going to ensure that 2003 will be as least as inspirational as 2002. Argentina shows that we can take back our lives when we join together in collective action - we have the power, we just need to use it!

COPENHAGEN

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Hundreds and hundreds have had their civil rights violated by police. 94 have been arrested; all for ridiculous minor misdemeanors, except 4 who are charged with violence and have been sentenced to remain in custody.

ABC Copenhagen is currently working with the arrested and imprisoned comrades.

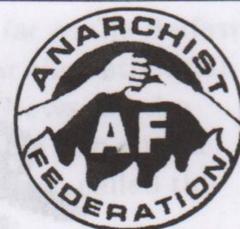
Until now the press have been busy glorifying the police leaders and talking about why there weren't burning cars and mutilated law enforcers.

They have had very little information about the counter summit.

We hope that will shut the mouths of those who claim that it is the fault of militant activists that the press doesn't write about peaceful demonstrations.

The press simply doesn't want to cover them. One story which the press is running though, and this is interesting, is a massive critique against the undercover cops who tried to infiltrate the anarchist, and several other demonstrations, officially without being ordered to do so (which is of course a lie).

To receive the e-mail version of **Resistance**, send a blank e-mail to: ResistanceIreland-subscribe@yahoogroups.com
Or for an anarchist discussion list, send a blank e-mail to: irishanarchism-subscribe@yahoogroups.com



There will now be an official investigation against the undercover cops, who also violated the mask-prohibition.

We can't help finding it slightly amusing that some of the bastards who attacked our demonstration could actually lose their jobs because of this.

But it should be the high ranking police that should get kicked, because they gave the orders, of course they did.

The NGO forum "Stop the Violence" is also glorifying the police. Monday the 16th of December the organisation actually presented the police chief inspector Kai Vittrup, with a big cake, "for good teamwork".

The Anarchist Federation finds this not only outrageously grotesque, but also a direct act of disrespect towards all who participated in actions and demonstrations which were attacked by the police, and especially those people who've been harassed, arrested, and imprisoned during the summit.

During the summit, the police broke all the promises they had given to those NGO's naive enough to start negotiations with them in the first place.

They did not keep their distance from the demonstrations, they did make preventive arrests, they used undercover cops as police provocateurs (the best proof of this is that the police managed to arrest one of their own undercover cops during the anti-police state demo, because he was too provocative) and they have harassed people constantly on the streets of Copenhagen.

This is not in the least bit surprising to us. But we hope that some of these organizations now have learned that it is never possible to make deals with, or trust the police.

Those who haven't can fuck off.

Right now 4 of ours are imprisoned on false charges. 2 Swedes, a Frenchman and an English woman. These 4, which have been charged with "assaulting a police officer", were arrested in order to justify the police attacks on the demonstration "Against police state Europe".

If you want to write supportive letters to them, then you can do so through AnarchistBlackCross-Copenhagen at:

abc-kbh@animail.net

<http://www.anarchistblackcross.dk>

We demand the immediate release of all the political prisoners in the European Police state. Whatever they do, we will never surrender, so now we are going for Thessaloniki (Greece) in June 20. - 21. 2003, and we hope that many of the people who demonstrated with us in Copenhagen will come along
...Love and Anarchy
The Anarchist Federation - Denmark
Info@resist2002.dk
<http://www.resist2002.dk>



Victimised Wobbly

Hi Alex. Thanks for agreeing to meet with us today. Can you tell us a bit about your problem? Who do you work for?

I work for Lee Hestia Housing Association which is owned by Novas-Ouvertures, a company which has bought up numerous charitable type organisations. They work closely with the Blairite policy of privatising social services. They also have a high turnover of workers due to their shoddy treatment of staff.

So what happened?

I had always been critical of the way workers were treated and thus became unpopular with Novas management. I'd point out that Novas thinks nothing of evicting tenants from their properties for small arrears of service charges.

In September I was off work due to stress. After a fortnight I received no sick pay. I complained about this and was then told to attend a meeting with management who began victimising me for being off sick. During this meeting I pointed out the rotten practices of the firm -nepotism, cronyism etc...

Can you give us an example?

Well, a manager has three family members working in my workplace. Management were very annoyed at me for speaking out on this subject.

Following the meeting, they failed to pay me sick pay. I signed off sick, yet they wouldn't let me return to work. I have had no pay since September. It's a clear case of victimisation.

What organisation do you belong to, Alex?

I've been an IWW (Industrial Workers of the World) member for about a year. Previously I'd been the T&G shop-steward for our work place. I have had great support from IWW members and have received messages of support from individuals and organisations all over the world. Our union's motto is - an injury to one is an injury to all.

Unlike most unions which encourage sectional interests and work closely with the exploiters of working people, the IWW is a revolutionary union.

We believe workers must be organised in the struggle against capitalism.

So, what's happening now?

The most recent developments in my case that Novas have offered me £2000 to take redundancy. I have initiated proceedings to take Novas to an industrial tribunal. Some friends who I work with, in an act of solidarity, chained the management's carpark's hut, preventing them from getting into work! It's ironic that Novas's mission stresses empowering people when in reality they treat their workers like shit.

Please contact Novas to urge them to reinstate Alex's sick pay.

Write to: Mary Connolly, Novas, Chancery House, Paradise Street, Liverpool, UK.

Email: policy@novas.org

Tel: 0870 9019701

I.W.W. website is:

www.iww.org.uk



TIME BOMB

The Kurdistan Shoras

(continuing our series on the history of workers' councils. A longer version appears at our website)

OUTBREAKS OF RESISTANCE spread rapidly across the north of the Iraq, towards the end of the Gulf war, and were completely spontaneous, popular insurrections free from, and in spite of, the influence of Kurdish nationalism and leftist splinter-politics. What they would have achieved if they had been joined by returning Iraqi soldiers massacred along the now infamous road to Basra in the south of the country, and if the too short-lived revolt there had lasted long enough to link up the struggle, is another question.

The Northern Uprising

The main centres of the northern revolt were in the regions of Sulaimania, Kirkuk and Hawlia. As Iraqi soldiers deserted the front in their thousands (30,000 in Sulaimania!), thousands more took to the streets, organising themselves into committees (shoras) across the region. Demonstrations took place everywhere. Over 50 shoras sprung up in Sulaimania and Ba'athist centres (Ba'ath being the ruling party in Iraq), army bases and security headquarters were attacked. Listed below are examples of some of the activities in which the shoras participated.

- 1) Every Shora had its own radio station.
- 2) Every shora set up medical posts.
- 3) Each shora had a number of committees dealing with the media, the militia, medical matters, administration, finance and general assistance and the law, as well as a committee for relations between the shoras and a foreign relations committee.

4) The building up of a militia for resistance purposes.

5) On the 16th of March, 1991, the anniversary of the massacre of Halabja, the shoras incited the entire city even threatening the Kurdistan Front (KF).

6) On the 17th, a general meeting of all the shoras took place at the Majid Bug shora to elect a supreme shora covering the city.

(Abridged from *The Kurdish Uprising...*)

It was at this point, on March 17th, that the shoras came under attack, not from the Baathist regime, but from the Kurdistan Front (KF).

Defeat

So frightened were the nationalists by the Shoras that by March 18th they were openly calling for them to be disbanded. Through a concerted campaign of misinformation regarding a government backlash and other lies, but mainly because of their large stocks of food supplies, the nationalist parties were able to undermine the Shoras. After years of hunger and conflict, people were, naturally enough, desperate enough for security.

Given time the shoras could have created the building blocks for a society organised along libertarian lines. The 'organised left' and the nationalist parties preferred, however, to pursue their own narrow agendas and set out to **destroy** them with the twin tactics of propaganda and food. Sufficient confidence had yet to be built up in the shoras for the people not to be hoodwinked by the duplicity of these methods.

If the shoras had spread, this confidence, the confidence which, after all, had destroyed in the space of a few days the institutions of Ba'athist terror that had stood for decades, could have manifested itself into a completely new system of social organisation.

AF PUBLIC MEETING

At least once a year the Anarchist Federation hosts an open forum. The next one, **Subvert and Resist** is in Belfast on Sunday the February 2nd from 12.30p.m to 7 p.m. All are welcome.

Topics:

12.30-1.30 Ecology and Activism: A short talk and workshop given and led by a member of the AF (London). The member has been an eco-activist for over 20 years and is author of the popular AF pamphlet: **Where's there's Muck There's Brass**

1.30-2.30 Gender, Class and Anarchism.

Open discussion introduced by the Women's Commission of Organise! - A.S.F .

This talk/workshop focuses on the women's movement today, and what pro-active measures women can take to organise class struggle.

2.30-3.30 Break

3.30-4.30 The Other Marxism.

Autonomism is a Marxist current which developed in Italy in the 60's and 70's. It is characterised by. Emphasis is on worker's autonomy from capital, from the 'official representatives' of the working class (i.e. parties and unions), and on the autonomy of sectors of the class in their fight against specific oppressions.

A talk given by a member of the AF (Bristol), experienced activist, and co-maintainer of the web site: **Class against Class**
<http://www.geocities.com/cordobakaf/index.html>

4.30-5.30 Prisoner Support Workshop.

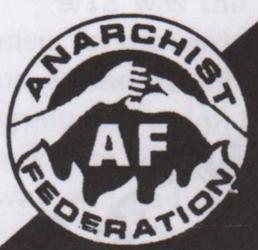
How can we improve the support network for anarchist prisoners in Britain and Ireland?

5.30-6.00 Break

6.00-7.00 Anti-War Direct Action Workshop.

- a libertarian response to the upcoming war.

Venue: is upstairs in the Front Page bar. To get there you first find the front of the City Hall, walk down the road directly in front of it as far as the Belfast Telegraph building (near the cathedral), turn left, past the Irish News (on the right), until you come to a pub with a tacky flashing red neon sign called the Front Page.



Subvert and resist

Take precautions when going on demonstrations If you're nicked give your name and address then say 'no comment' to any other questions.

Demo. against military re-fuelling in Shannon. Saturday January 18th.

Anarchist Conference in Belfast. Sunday February 2nd. (see above)