

Greece

ON 27th OCTOBER the Greek state arrested the fighter for social justice, Yannis Serifis, and sent him to Korydallos prison. Serifis is 63 years old and is known in Greece as an anti-authoritarian trade union militant who, during the past 35 years, has taken part in many struggles, mainly in the name of the autonomous working-class movement.

The magistrates ordered his detention, on the basis of the false claim that he had confessed to the offences of "participation in a terrorist group" and "secret possession of weaponry". Following the announcement of the decision, demonstrators in solidarity with Serifis came into conflict with the police and one demonstrator was arrested.

In his October 2002 statement, Serifis made his own appeal as follows:- My persecution has a long history and many false accusations against me in the past have been brought up again in relation to my

alleged participation in the organisation known as "17th November", and other organisations that have been in the news. I WOULD LIKE ONCE AGAIN TO STATE UNEQUIVOCALLY THAT I HAVE NO RELATIONSHIP WITH THESE ORGANISATIONS, AND THAT THEY ARE NO CONCERN OF MINE BECAUSE THEY ARE IRRELEVANT TO MY POLITICAL BELIEFS, AND TO THE LOGIC UNDERLYING MY ACTIONS.

Visit the website: www.yserifis.org

Poland

Workers in Poland occupying a factory have battled for five days with police and private security, to try and prevent machines being removed. Fifty people were arrested. All of them are free now but they may face fines or prison sentences. The protest has been going on for months while these workers have no income. Most of them cannot afford attorneys. Now, in this hard and decisive moments workers of Ozarów really need a strong support from all of us from outside. Every help is important - it will show that their struggle is not isolated.

Funds, with a note "for Ozarow", can be sent to:

PEKAO BP XX odzial poznan ul.Stary Rynek 44 61-722 Poznan Poland swift code: bpkoplwapoa for USD: 10204085-5999100-270-44787 owner: marek piekarski

Turkey

Thirty five trade unionists - two of whom are anarchists - from the KESK have been sentenced to 1 year 3 months imprisonment for not obeying to the "Meeting and Demonstrations Act".

The charge was about a demonstration organized by KESK on 7th of June 2001 against the law offer about trade-unions banning strikes. The protesters were accused of blocking the traffic, passing through the police barricade illegally, not obeying to the police order telling "to split away".

We call everyone supporting struggles of liberation and labour to protest this venture decision of Turkish state and mobilize solidarity with those people facing imprisonment.

More info: abcankara@yahoo.com ★

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resistance

anarchist bulletin

Free/Donation
Issue 45 Jan 2003



No money for the firefighters, but loads of cash for carnage...

AS MASSES OF US troops build up in the Middle East, Bush looks determined to find any excuse to start a war. The bombing of Iraq has never stopped since the last war in 1991, but we can expect a full scale attack to begin in the next few months.

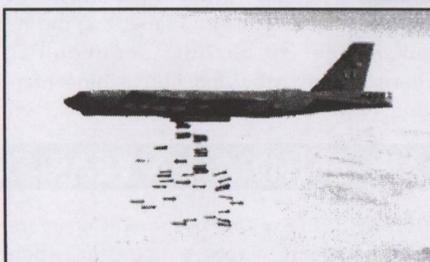
Why do the US and UK governments want this war? Accusations of "weapons of mass destruction" are used as cover, to frighten the population into supporting the war effort. Weapons inspectors' actual findings will not matter but will be distorted to make a war look justifiable to the public. Bush's real reasons for war are much simpler of course: money and power. Control over Iraq's oil fields would net great gains for US business interests and Bush personally.

War is the health of the state

This war will be very convenient for the current British and American governments, providing a common enemy to unite against as a distraction from economic problems and corruption at home. Strikers and dissenters in general are already being accused of aiding the enemy.

What will the consequences of this war be? The war could unfold in several ways and with dire consequences. In economic terms, a quick victory as with the last Gulf war would cost the US \$120 billion, but if the war became drawn out (with prolonged fighting in cities) costs would be as high as \$1.6 trillion.

Much as Bush will go to great lengths to avoid spilling a drop of oil, the war is also likely to have severe environmental consequences. The British government has been avoiding the issue of war funding,



A US bomber delivering freedom and democracy

but has already allocated an extra £2 billion to the MoD...

Financial statistics pale into insignificance when you look at the cost in lives. Press coverage may only be concerned with deaths of western troops, but medical researchers estimate that with Iraq already weakened, the death toll this time around will be very high, with 260,000 dying in the first few months and two hundred thousand more later deaths from famine and disease.

For people in Britain the war will mean potential tax increases and cuts in funding health, education, etc. Striking firefighters' demands could easily have been met. There will be an increased threat of terrorism, which will in turn be used to justify attacks on civil liberties, as we have witnessed with the Patriot act in the US and new "anti-terror" laws in the UK.

Of course, this is only if the war finishes quickly. Otherwise we could witness a drawn out war with heavy casualties on both sides, escalation involving Israel, severe ecological damage from burning oil fields, or even nuclear strikes.

resist!

This war is being already being met with lots of opposition at home even before it's started. Opposition to the Vietnam war, for example, was much smaller scale until several years into the conflict. If we can successfully resist Bush and Blair's plans with direct action, strikes and sabotage we will have taken a small step towards taking control of our lives and the world around us.

See inside for reports of anti-war actions. ★

...AND PRISONS TOO

ANOTHER INDICATION OF our rulers priorities is the news of how much they're prepared to pay to keep imprisoning us. An extra two-and-a-half pence will have to go on income tax to pay for an expected 37,000 rise in the prison population over the next seven years.

Home office statistics showed the number of prisoners in England and Wales could rise from 73,000 to 109,600 in 2009. Ministers would have to spend £3.5 billion building 49 new jails for the extra convicts, with an additional £1.5 billion a year running costs.

The forecast does not take into account the effects of the new Criminal Justice Bill, which some experts predict will add another 10,000 to prison population.

Jails are already at their most overcrowded ever after a seven percent rise in the number of inmates in the first nine months of this year. The cost of custody has already doubled in the last four years to £3 billion. ★



Subvert and resist

Take precautions when going on demonstrations and don't take cameras, booze or drugs. If you're nicked give your name and address then say 'no comment' to any other questions.

- JANUARY:**
 11 Workers are calling on anyone who supports workers' struggles and public services to join mass pickets at the libraries in Hackney Central, Stoke Newington and Shoreditch. For more info contact: Solidarity Federation, PO Box 1681, London, N8 7LE, Tel: 07799 251 035.
 18-19 Mass Nonviolent Blockade of Northwood Military Base, London. To mark the anniversary of the Gulf War. Info 0845 458 2564. For more info Visit: www.j-n-v.org
 19 Injustice - film about black deaths in police custody. 1.30pm at Birkbeck College, Malet St., London, WC1.
FEBRUARY
 15 Don't Attack Iraq demonstration in central London from 1pm. Organised by Stop the War Coalition. For more info Tel: 020 7053 2155, Visit: www.stopwar.org.uk
APRIL
 22 Really Big Blockade, Faslane naval base, Scotland. Help close down Britain's Trident base. Scottish CND Tel: 0141 423 1222, Email: big_blockade@hotmail.com
- LEICESTER ANARCHIST FEDERATION meets every FIRST TUESDAY of the month at 8pm, upstairs at the Ale Wagon pub Charles Street, Leicester LE1

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- I enclose £4 (£6 EU, £12 Rest of the world) for the next 12 issues of **resistance** bulletin (cheques payable to "AF") and send to AF, PO Box 375, Knaphill, Woking, Surrey, GU21 2XL
- I enclose £4 for a year's subscription to **Organise!** the magazine of the AF.
- I am interested in the **Anarchist Federation** and would like more information.

Name.....
 Address.....

Join the resistance

The **Anarchist Federation** is an organisation of **class struggle** anarchists aiming to abolish capitalism and all oppression to create a free and equal society. This is **Anarchist Communism**.

We see today's society as being divided into two main opposing classes: the **ruling class** which controls all the power and wealth, and the **working class** which the rulers exploit to maintain this. By racism, sexism and other forms of oppression, as well as war and environmental destruction the rulers weaken and divide us. Only the **direct action** of working class people can defeat these attacks and ultimately overthrow capitalism.

As the capitalist system rules the whole world, its destruction must be complete and world wide. We reject attempts to reform it, such as working through parliament and national liberation movements, as they fail to challenge capitalism itself. Unions also work as a part of the capitalist system, so although workers struggle within them they will be unable to bring about capitalism's destruction unless they go beyond these limits.

Organisation is vital if we're to beat the bosses, so we work for a united anarchist movement and are affiliated to the International of Anarchist Federations.

The Anarchist Federation has members across Britain and Ireland fighting for the kind of world outlined above. Contact us at:

Anarchist Federation,
 84B, Whitechapel High Street,
 London, E1 7QX. Tel: 07946 214 590
 Visit: www.afed.org.uk
 Email: anarchistfederation@bigfoot.com

ON THE FRONTLINE

THERE'S BEEN NO sign of the recent rise in industrial action cooling off during the holiday period. "Trouble" continues on the railways as conductors on Arriva Trains-Northern are holding a series of 24 and 48-hour walkouts over the Christmas period. First North Western train drivers also carried out a 48-hour stoppage in December and are planning more of the same for the New Year. These two disputes have rumbled on for most of the past year – a clear indication of the strikers determination to win this one.

College lecturers are expected to strike for better pay in January, closing a at least 40 further education colleges, with 30,000 lecturers and support taking part. Drivers working for Borders bus company in Edinburgh are also set for industrial action after the company decided to impose its own pay structure, despite it being rejected five times by the workforce. Ambulance crews in Yorkshire have imposed an overtime ban – their first industrial action since the 1991 dispute.

Industrial disputes are also on the rise in Europe:

France: Truckers, railway, subway and bus workers, air traffic controllers, nurses, civil servants, postal workers, telecoms, radio and TV workers – the list seems endless as strikes, blockades and street demonstrations involving hundreds of thousands shook the country. People "from Luxembourg, Germany, Great Britain, Austria and the Ukraine travelled to the French capital to show their solidarity" with the strikers.

Poland: 10,000 miners, steel workers and nurses demonstrated in Katowice to protest at government moves to close "unprofitable" coal mines; **Macedonia:** 500 miners are on hunger strike to demand their unpaid wages; **Croatia:** More than 1,500 angry workers from a bankrupt steel mill scuffled with riot police as they attempted to march towards the capital to demand unpaid salaries. **Germany:** 3 million state employees are on the verge of an indefinite all out strike, that would see nurses, bus and train drivers, firefighters and garbage collectors striking for only the second time since WW2.

And to end on a festive note – Almost a million people were forced to work on Christmas Day, even more worked on New Year's Day, (according to the Labour Force Survey). And more than three million workers with those days off will receive no holiday pay – UK workers have the second fewest number of paid holidays in Europe. ★

CELEBRITY PRAT OF THE MONTH

ELEMENTARY OBSERVATION of public office tells anarchists that politicians and the champagne circuit they swirl around in are unfailingly corrupt, deceitful and polluting, so let's waste little breath on the many irregularities of Cherie Blairs dodgy property deals.

What has to be questioned is how Cherie B. apparently feels so inadequate as a person that perceives the need to shell out something in the order of £3000 a month on a "lifestyle adviser". Airhead irrationality like this exposes the myth that the Prime Minister's partner retains down-to-earth working class roots. Hardly. Working class women of our acquaintance possess an abundance of common sense, struggling daily to negotiate endless obstacles and prejudices, under their own resources, meagre at the best of times, without recourse to the aid of "gurus". They don't have high-priced "personal counsellors" inducing them, even could they afford it, into Planet Zog indulgences like "re-birthing ceremonies" where Cherie baby and her asinine husband (you're supposed to vote for him



Cherie: Prat

folks, and place your future in his hands!) chant to the four winds whilst imagining animal apparitions arising from lava rocks doused with herb-infused "holy" water. Amidst other oddball fads Cherie is obsessed with are: Feng shui, spiritualism, bio-electrical crystals, secret plant potions and some weird ritual known as

auricular therapy (don't ask, we don't know either!) – it's all too deep for us simple proles to understand, yet this is the bonkers mentality of a woman sitting in judgement on "fellow" human beings in the *real* world as a QC. And what does it tell us about the sanity of the prat she is wedded to – a man-poodle determined to drag his country into war that will slaughter thousands of innocent people for no fault of their own. Is it really any surprise not only anarchists but growing numbers of ordinary sensible folk simply refuse to go along with the phoney charade of ballot-box democracy?

We reckon anyone stupid enough to be in need of a "lifestyle coach" to sort themselves out should be put out of their misery immediately. Chop chop Cherie! ★

ARGENTINA – A YEAR OF STRUGGLE

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; 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 (Rosario and Cordoba being particularly noteworthy). 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 Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Russia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK, Ukraine, Uruguay, USA, and Yugoslavia. The Argentinean resistance is spreading worldwide.

There was no violence this year – but 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! ★

SABOTAGE THE WAR EFFORT!

MANY ACTIONS AGAINST the war happened last month, some reports are below:

Night time, 8/12 – "The Armed Forces recruitment office in central Bristol was attacked. All windows were smashed, locks glued and walls splattered with blood-paint. "NO WAR" was the spray-paint message...This is direct action against state terrorism and social control. It is also a call to the anti-war movement to begin serious, effective resistance. The genocidal system is not challenged by marches, rallies and petitions. Polite protest poses no threat to the war machine. It is time now to get in the way and do some damage...Pick your targets and fight back. Anyone can take direct action..."

Women with bolt croppers, 14/12 –

"We, the Women with Bolt Croppers claim responsibility for breaking into US spy base Menwith Hill in Yorkshire and destroying their devices for intercepting radio communications...we made our way through fields and fog and rain to the fence of the base..."

RESISTANCE CONTINUES IN ITALY

OVER THE LAST month thousands of Fiat workers and supporters have continued to resist redundancies and restructuring.

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. The 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, Tu-

No alarms sounded, no-one came to challenge us...We walked to our target unhindered. Armed with just a pair of bolt croppers and a hammer we set about our task of causing hundreds of thousands of pounds worth of damage to the US listening devices...We had been inside the base, undetected sabotaging the war effort for over an hour! It was easy!...Imagine the power we would have if just 1% of the people on the last anti-war demo decided to take their opposition to the war a step further..."

RAF Fairford, 8/12 – Over 500 anti-war demonstrators went to Fairford in Gloucestershire. RAF Fairford is one of only three B-2 Stealth bomber forward bases in the world. First wave of attacks on Iraq will most likely be carried out by Stealth bombers flying from Fairford and Diego Garcia. Some people managed to enter the base...

For a list of actions planned when the war breaks out visit:

<http://www.schnews.org.uk/pap/ifwarbreaksout.htm> ★



rin. 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. ★

TIME BOMB



Continuing our series on revolutionary history (see the Irish AF website for longer version at www.afireland.cjb.net).

BY THE BEGINNING of 1918 the Austrian war machine was on the verge of collapse. While the Hapsburg Empire tottered, and while soldiers starved at the front, the working class back in Vienna took matters into their own hands. In January 1918, 250,000 workers, ignoring their unions' plea for calm, struck and elected councils to represent them. The workers' and soldiers' councils that grew out of the strike were in imitation of the councils that had been established in Russia just months before, and, like the councils there, were never given the time to fully develop any degree of lasting political consciousness. They were dismantled by a combination of political intrigue on the part of the Social Democrats (SDAP), and a fair amount of naiveté on their own part. In Moscow, the Bolsheviks though were confident...

"The All-Russian Congress sees in the powerful protest of the workers of Vienna, Lower Austria, and Hungary against an annexationist peace, and in the awakening revolutionary movement of the German proletariat, the best guarantee against an imperialist peace, based on enslavement, violence, and a disguised indemnity."

(Resolution of the third All-Russian Congress of Soviets on the terms of peace proposed by the Central Powers.)

...which doesn't really explain the terms of the Treaty of Brest Litovsk!

The SDAP in Austria were no less bent on destroying any signs of working class self-activity than their counterparts in Germany. Indeed, the Germans no doubt learned a thing or two from the Austrians. Although they were the smallest of the three parliamentary blocs, they received a pre-eminent role in the post-war provisional government because it was perceived as best able to maintain public order in the face of the revolutionary situation created by economic collapse and military defeat.

With Bauer's Marxist rhetoric and the party's strong ties to organized labour, the SDAP was easily able to outmanoeuvre the KPÖ (the Communists). They soon suppressed the old imperial army and founded a new military force, the Volkswehr (People's Defense), under SDAP control, to contain revolutionary agitation and guard against bourgeois counter-revolution. It was the Volkswehr which kept a lid on the growing radicalism of the councils, and enabled the SDAP to apply its reformist tactics. ★