

REBEL WORKER

AN INJURY TO ONE



IS AN INJURY TO ALL

Sydney, Australia

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Paper of the Anarcho-Syndicalist Network 50c

ALBO, HANDS OFF BUILDING WORKERS' WAGES & CONDITIONS! TIME TO BUILD A GRASS ROOTS CONTROLLED, DIRECT ACTION UNION? TO BURST THE TENTACLES OF THE ALP, ACTU, ENTERPRISE BARGAINING & SECURE SAFETY!



Former CFMEU NSW secretary Darren Greenfield addresses a rally in Sydney yesterday.

CFMEU Takeover p.2; NSW Railway News p.4; Letters p.6; Sydney Buses News p.6; Victorian Railway News p.8; Anti War Congress in Prague p.11; Big Brother in the European Union p.12; Britain Today p.13; Book Review Corner: The Jewish Anarchist Movement in America & No Harmless Power : The Life & Times of Ukranian Anarchist Nestor Makhno p.15; News & Notes p.19; Neo-iberalism in Russia & Ukraine p.20;

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Unless otherwise stated, signed Articles do not necessarily represent the position of the A.S.N. As a whole. Any contributions, criticisms, letters or

Comments are welcome.
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CFMEU Govt. Takeover

The attacks on the CFMEU have more to do with the interests of capital than any organised crime within the union.

The capitalist media in Australia have launched a massive propaganda attack on the Construction & General Division of the Construction, Forestry & Maritime Employees Union (CFMEU). Though initiated by Nine Entertainment, the battle has been joined by all organs of the media, from the ABC to the Murdoch gutter press. The capitalist class sees an opportunity to smash the strongest union in the country and drive down wages for the best paid section of the working class, with inevitable flow on effects for all workers. This is class war.

Grainy footage leaked by the cops and a handful of workplace delegates who are former bikies have been woven up to create a story of a thoroughly corrupt union. We'll be honest there are corrupt union officials, and they should be disposed of. Any official who takes a



bribe should have a black mark against their name for eternity. But the attacks on the CFMEU are not about union corruption, they are about breaking the wages and conditions of construction workers. Governments have been happy to let developers rip vast sums off buyers in high-rise residential towers that were never fit for habitation and allow stand over merchants to settle disputes between contractors, so they can't be believed when they say they want to root corruption out of the CFMEU.

It is the job of members to organise against corruption in the union movement and root it out. "Unions" like Shop Distributive and Allied (the SDA) routinely collude with big business to hold down the wages of retail and fast food workers.

The Australian Workers Union (AWU) undermines wages and safety in civil construction, cleaning, road works and more. The ACTU and ALP affiliated unions routinely put the electoral interests of the ALP ahead of workers.

The CFMEU's real crime is that they have achieved a de facto closed shop over the state government's "Big Build" and much of the city's high rise development. In theory, the AWU have coverage over civil construction, but the CFMEU drove them out by delivering much better wages and conditions. This is a good thing. ACTU coverage rules allow Australia's Worst Union to operate by undercutting wages and safety conditions in order to get preferential treatment from the bosses. When the capitalist press says "we all pay" for the CFMEU, what they

ASN APPEAL

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mean is that construction workers wages should be lower.

The last Liberal government launched a Royal Commission into Trade Union Corruption, targeted squarely at the CFMEU. No substantive prosecutions resulted. They re-established the Australian Building and Construction Commission (ABCC), tasked with fining the CFMEU out of existence. They did not succeed. They passed laws to enable the Fair Work Commission to place unions into administration, but they didn't dare use them.

The Labor government, ever keen to demonstrate their reliability to capital, has now moved to crush the CFMEU. In less than a week, Albanese has moved to do what the Liberals never could.

The Federal Labor government has asked the Fair Work Commission to apply to the Federal Court to place branches of the CFMEU into external administration. An administrator would be able to act as the union, taking over its assets, firing union staff, purging members, removing delegates, and ousting officials.

But the real prize of administration is the ability to rip up Enterprise Agreements (EBAs). Labor have made clear they are prepared to pass special legislation to give any administrator "full powers" to "act in the public interest". An administrator appointed by the Fair Work Commission, acting as the union, will have little trouble applying to the Commission to terminate union agreements and drive union members down to the award (industry specific minimum pay and conditions) which, in construction, is vastly below industry standards.

Government administration of a union is an affront to the very concept of unionism. Workers build unions in order to build their collective strength, and coordinate their collective action. We fight to defend unions as organisations built by workers, consisting of workers, and democratically controlled by workers. In the face of union corruption, we have to organise and overthrow corrupt or self interested officials. The only people who should be "cleaning the house" are union members.

The ALP is historically a party of the trade union bureaucracy. Through the ALP, the trade union bureaucracy

attempts to negotiate a compromise with capital on the overall management of capitalism in Australia. In 2021-2024 the CFMEU gave \$4.3 million to the ALP, stumping up a sizeable portion of the funding to get Anthony Albanese elected. Albanese and the ALP are now moving to destroy the CFMEU. There is a lesson in this. The interests of individual union leadership (let alone any group of workers) will always come second to the collective interest the ALP has in perpetuating its own position as a party of government within Australian capitalism.

The treacherous nature of the trade union bureaucracy can be seen in the actions of the ACTU. Faced with a frontal assault on the principles of trade unionism, Sally McManus and the ACTU executive demanded that "the leadership of the CFMEU support the appointment of an independent and external administrator and to cooperate with such an administration". CFMEU representatives on ACTU executive were not even permitted to argue against the motion!

Far from supporting a government administrator, the members of the CFMEU should fight it with every tool at their disposal and call on their officials to follow them. There should be a campaign of complete non-cooperation with any government appointed administrator. The hard won pay, conditions and strength of tens of thousands of construction workers is at stake today and that of the rest of us tomorrow.

Sally McManus said she could count

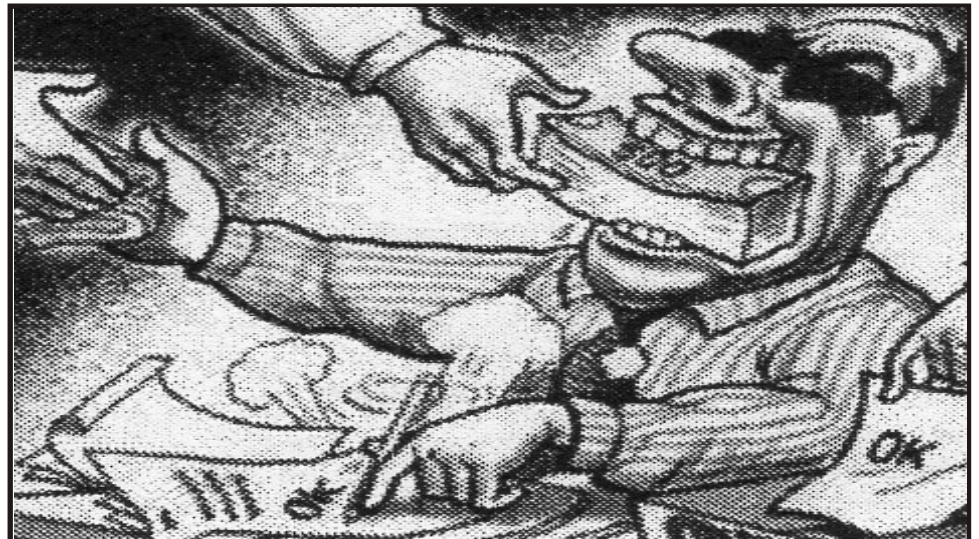
the unions opposing the CFMEU's suspension on one hand. It's up to the rank and file of every union to make sure that number grows. Members of every union must organise in solidarity with construction workers and their union.

Thanks to MACG

Editorial Comment: Deposing "corrupt" corporate union officials is easier said than done. Definitely at the top levels there is "no union". Its just an illusion conjured up by the Corporate media, the State and employers. Its another component of the corporate set up. The corporate unions are interwoven by innumerable threads with the corporate set up and receive massive funding from Super Funds and employers using various pretexts and therefore "corrupt".. Allegedly elections for key positions are rigged by ALP networks in the AEC (Australian Electoral Commission) and ASIO. There is also the issue of victimisation of militants by the union officials and employers. (1) The only way forward would be initiating a process leading to major syndicalist splits from the Corporate unions and steps toward a new syndicalist oriented industrial union confederation.

Notes

(1) See articles "RTBU Elections 2018 Were they rigged?" In RW Vol.36 No.2(231) Aug.-Sept. 2018 & "Spotlight on rorts in the union office" in RW Vol.36 No.2 (231) Aug. - Sept. 2018 on www.rebelworker.org



N.S.W. RAILWAY NEWS

Combined NSW Rail Unions EBA Campaign

Some of the most important news is the “NSW Combined Rail Unions EBA Campaign,” It has already commenced with a regressive note with the union officials refusing to call mass union stop work meetings to discuss the log of claims and industrial action, to head off consideration of opposing the

Why “Fee for Service Unionism” is a Terrible Idea

by *Crimson Coconut*

Newly non-elected NSW RTBU Secretary Toby Warne announced publicly on radio that the union had recently gained agreement from the Minns Labor Government at the last State Conference, amongst some other progressive concessions, that they would support charging a fee to non-members who wished to receive wage rises or improved conditions arising from an agreement with the union.

The Fair Work Commission’s act would contradict this position for obvious reasons.

I quote:

“Bargaining Service Fees

1. An industrial association, or an officer or member of an industrial association, must not:

3. demand; or

4. purport to demand; or

5. do anything that would:

1. have the effect of demanding; or

2. purport to have the effect of demanding;

2. payment of a bargaining services fee.

3. A bargaining services fee is a fee (however described) payable:

1. to an industrial association; or

2. to someone in lieu of an industrial association;

closure of the Bankstown line and its conversion to a Metro and the bogus NIF (New Intercity Fleet) Deed. The demands of the Combined Rail Unions for the new EBA campaign are below the soaring cost of living rate. There are a range of “nasties” in the fine print of the EBA clauses. Adversely affecting train crews and station staff. An important likely hidden agenda of the EBA campaign is to camouflage and to divert attention away a new DOO (Driver Only Operation) push with the NIF (New

Intercity Fleet) later in the year opening the floodgates to the generalisation of DOO (Driver Only Operation) on other train types and privatisation.

Rather than a rerun of the failed 2022 EBA campaign, “grass roots” committees could be established to help build a united campaign across public transport: Rail, Buses, Trams & Ferries, to achieve the “real demands?”



4. wholly or partly for the provision, or purported provision, of bargaining services, but does not include membership fees.

5. Bargaining services are services provided by, or on behalf of, an industrial association in relation to an enterprise agreement, or a proposed enterprise agreement (including in relation to bargaining for, or the making, approval, operation, variation or termination of, the enterprise agreement, or proposed enterprise agreement).

Exception for fees payable under contract

6. Subsection (1) does not apply if the fee is payable to the industrial association under a contract for the provision of bargaining services.

What is the protection?

An industrial association (such as a union) cannot charge non-members for bargaining services in relation to a proposed enterprise agreement which will also cover the non-members.”

It’s not that we necessarily agree with the Fair Work Commission, however it would require a change of legislation to be able to charge a fee. So statements about State Government support don't

have much meaning.

However there are more compelling arguments for not accepting bureaucratic fee-for-service unionism per se.

One of the arguments put forward by the union for the fee are the “countless hours” that the union puts into bargaining process. They say the union should be compensated in monetary terms for this time. Let me say at the outset that organisers and officials are already paid well above the median wage of the people that they represent and in most cases work less hours. As workers we don't begrudge them that. Often though these are non-elected officials that are paid.

Our idea of unionism is not about how much money the union takes in, even though it essential for day today functioning, but how well it prepares it's shop floor members to stand up and fight back. How effective it is in bettering their members lives and communities, how those same members and communities interact with the Union and feel as they are part of it matters.

Fee-for-service unionism is the opposite of that. It says to workers, you pay your fees, we'll provide a service by trying to get the best deal for you. It's exactly how the union hierarchy want it. It provides no incentive for fee paying non-members to lift a finger to help themselves, their union or their fellow workers. The union on the other hand can go about it's secrecy and dealing without having to consult members and non-members alike.

The idea that non-members are somehow “free loaders” on the Union are absurd. Everyone should have the choice to join or not join whatever organisation they wish. It would also be prudent for non-members to join unions based on their class consciousness and their commitment to their collective power with fellow workers than any monetary reward they might receive for paying the fee. This would make it a very uncommitted undemocratic Union, which would just be a shop front selling a particular product, i.e. “bargaining for you”. A bureaucratic shop front collecting the rent perhaps?

But unions should be much more than that. They should be inclusively

educating the non-members on workers struggle, solidarity, openness and democratic organising. Unions also have a duty in the larger community to improving the lives of all working people, not just members. By doing this non-members would see the moral imperative to join and partake actively in unions.

There are many other reasons why non-members are non-members refusing to pay a fee. There have been



people in the past that are not members due to being expelled from the union, had disagreements with the union bureaucracy, or had policy differences for whatever reason. They should not be punished monetarily for their beliefs. It does not help the union to grow anyway. The fee would be just a monetary book entry, it shows no commitment to either membership or unionism. We can't change the world like that.

Members also have no say over where their money goes. Affiliation fees are one thing that is unavoidable but donations to political parties are another. What for instance can you do about money that is donated to a party that you don't support. (For example, the ALP that continues to support genocide against Palestinians.) Basically it is taken for granted that money is raised and spent propping up political tyrants without any discussion or input from members.

How much input would a fee paying non-member have in the bargaining process anyway? Even members decry

the fact that they are often dismissed during the bargaining process.

The whole process of selecting delegates to take part in Enterprise Bargaining Agreements is fraught with undemocratic decision making anyway. There is no formal election process to select delegates to take part in bargaining, consequently we may not be getting the best representation for the workplace.

Often those at the shop floor have a better understanding of the issues in the workplace than many of the toady representatives that cosy up to the union leadership. So the outcomes are often less than the expectations of those punters at the shop floor who are largely ignored.

Union agreement proposals and MOU's are often drawn up by public transport bureaucrats at the behest of Government rather than the union. It is management's task to seek agreement for any particular proposal. The union is just the bargaining representative. Union hierarchy takes the edge off particular management proposals moving them in their favour, however at the end process there are usually pay rises for trade off's and compromises. Workplace change such as privatisation, new deleterious work processes, job losses etc. are usually contained and retained in agreements. Historically workers have never ever been better off after the implementation of an agreement which always favours the corporate

body.

It also makes no sense in implementing a fee for non-members while the State government still has a salary cap in place. The Government sets the boundaries for EBA's not the union.

So it is ridiculous to agree to limited pay rises while the Government pulls the handbrake on them. It is a fee with limits to what you can achieve by paying it.

Under the Fair Work Commission's Act the union does not necessarily have to be the bargaining unit. Any one or group can form a bargaining unit for the purposes of negotiating an Enterprise Agreement. Sure the union has a massive membership, the experience, and skill, to negotiate on your behalf. In truth the power of the membership is never mobilised.

However what happens when there is no compunction on behalf of the union hierarchy to negotiate a reasonable and better deal from an agreement?

(Usually for political or economic reasons). There is little to stopping the disaffected non-members from seeking a better deal by forming a bargain unit outside of the unions involved. This of course would not be preferable to Management as they would much rather bargain through one entity, i.e. the union. They could attempt to sabotage an independent bargaining unit. However, depending on the skill, militancy of the formed unit, it remains to be seen what could be achieved. Done well, as the Shearers Union did in the past, outside the formal structures of the industrial system, a more democratic and useful agreement could be struck.

All in all, the fee-for-service bargaining model is undemocratic and more like a ransom for a payment. It does little to further the understanding and solidarity within the union. The union instead should be decentralising power out to the members so that they

own and decide the decisions that are made, whether they be right or wrong. The reason that unions are losing membership and hence membership money is that the union leadership has lost touch with it's base. Quite a lot of members don't understand the functioning of the unions, they feel alienated from it and feel as if they are on their own. That has been proven by some opinion polls of workers who have been found to just change jobs when the going gets tough rather than fighting back. This is a failure of organisation within the union movement. A bargaining fee won't help, but it may bring in a bit of money in the short term. Although non-members will expect a return for the money out laid.

Link to the 2GB interview.

<https://www.2gb.com/forced-unionism-non-union-members-face-paying-levy-if-labor-backs-rbtu-push>

Dear RW

We are waiting for for details of the new restructures including management in Sydney Trains. The big question for us, is will the NIF's (New Intercity Fleet) trains run guard less.

In regard to the new EBA. Its already 4 months late as management is delaying its approval.

Railway Jeffrey.

LETTERS

Dear RW

The worker lost big time in last EBA and will lose again in this EBA. Train Crew will be screwed with electronic Transposition slips and Electronic time sheets. Also train will be pre prepped in the yards therefore train crews lose prep time. As when train crew turn up,

trains ready to go.

Station staff are also to lose qualifications, therefore the death of the salaried station duty manager position It will be replaced with a low paid team leader.

Railway Johnny

SYDNEY BUSES NEWS

Leichhardt Depot News

RW: What is the latest with the meal rooms?

Leichhardt Driver: We are continuing to have serious problems with the Bondi Junction meal room. As part of the bosses' "Optimisation" push, using existing rules to corner cut and tighten the screws on our jobs and conditions, they are now having Waverley drivers sharing the meal room at Bondi Junction. So they can save a meagre 5-7 minutes on rosters/runs. Not many use the meal room. So the problem is bus parking due to meal breaks. There is congestion at Bondi Junction without

these added 50 minutes to the equation. In early July the power was down at the Lee Street meal room. However later the radio room advised that power had been restored. Subsequently when Leichhardt drivers came to this meal room, they found Port Botany drivers there sitting in the dark. As a result the Leichhardt drivers had to return to the depot for their meal breaks, resulting in the cancellation of runs. In mid July there has been another development, the roof fell in at this meal room. Again resulting in drivers having to take their meal break at the depot and cancelled trips. The roof also fell in at the Campsie meal room.

Rozelle Interchange: Corporate Hidden Agenda & Continuing Traffic Congestion

RW: What's happening on the road?

LD: We are continuing to have problems with the Rozelle interchange traffic congestion, delaying our runs. However the congestion has improved somewhat since the opening of the Interchange. Due to Victoria Road Tunnel to Anzac Bridge signage saying "Toll Free".

According to the SMH 24/4/24 "Rozelle traffic woes known in advance": "Motorists using Victoria Road and other local streets have

endured major delays while vehicles exiting the WestConnex tunnels from the spaghetti Junction enjoyed clearer runs onto Anzac Bridge during morning peaks. It has sparked concerns that vehicles from WestConnex tunnels have been prioritised over motorists using local routes such as Victoria Road.

A likely significant contribution to the traffic congestion associated with the Interchange according to a NSW Parliamentary Upper House inquiry, are the ramp meters of traffic lights that allow one or two vehicles to pass at a time installed on Victoria Road, the City West Link and the toll free Iron Cove Link but not the West Connex Tunnels Exit, which motorists pay to use. There are concerns that these meters which Transport for NSW operates are designed to give priority to West Connex tunnels traffic over other vehicles. Also there is no merging or metering for traffic exiting the tunnel.

The Government inquiry into the Rozelle Interchange has heard evidence that the traffic forecasting undertaken for the planning application was manipulated to underestimate the volume of surface traffic entering the interchange from City West Link. To achieve this deceit, the traffic modelers assumed that Parramatta Road which feeds City West Link has only four traffic lanes. We all know it has six. NSW Planning approved the project, despite being informed of this egregious fraud.

Sydney's Inner West residents and small business owners have for months vented frustrations at the chaos caused by the spaghetti junction and dissatisfaction at the transport agency's response. The opening of the WestConnex motorway interchange late last year caused severe congestion on roads in Rozelle, Balmain, Drummoyne, Lilyfield and Annandale as motorists struggled to navigate multiple-lane merging."

Oxford Street Traffic Congestion

However, we have been affected by another trouble spot with Oxford St. Traffic can be backed up to Victoria Barracks. The single lane westward is from South Dowling Street to College

St. on Oxford St. from 10am till 6am following morning when the Clearway begins. For some time now, there has been quite a bit of road work on Oxford Street to construct bike ways. Now at peak hour, we are facing the situation where only one lane is open for traffic inbound (west) Oxford Street past Taylor Square, but two lanes are open in the other direction in this area. Overall creating tremendous traffic congestion and delaying our runs with the 440, (333, 352, 311 Waverley, etc.)

RW: What is other news with

Greater Sydney currently (deficit) i.e. existing jobs are vacant.

Tempe Depot News

RW: What are your impressions of the new merged rosters?

Tempe Driver: Since the introduction of the merged rosters last year associated with the "parity" agreement between the RTBU and TWU and the outcome of EBA 2023, we have been facing severely worsening conditions. We have particularly been



Transit Systems?

LD: The Minns NSW Govt. is forking out more than \$73 million to Transit Systems for replacement rail buses for the planned closure of the Bankstown Line which the Government is now talking about commencing from late Sept. In line with plans for the conversion of the line to a Metro. This expenditure on rail buses will cover three quarters of the required services for the 60,000 commuters inconvenienced by the line closure and the 200 drivers needed to operate 100 buses for the services. As part of the deal with Transit Systems, the company has offered to buy 60 diesel buses to be built in China for "dedicated use" during the line closure. But where will the drivers come from as 300 are not employed in

experiencing big cuts to layover breaks. Previously layover breaks were much more generous allowing 10 to 20 minutes, now they been cut back to 5 minutes. If you are late running you don't get any break. You don't even have the time to go to the toilet! Its all rush, rush, rush! With the rosters the bosses have seized the opportunity to squeeze in more trips into runs. In the case of the 430 to Sydenham, the bosses have now increased the number of trips per hour from 4 to 6 trips. From speaking to drivers in other bus companies, drivers in these companies are all facing a similar worsening situation with their jobs and conditions.

Randwick Depot News

RW: What are your impressions of the impact of privatisation?

Randwick Driver: I definitely don't consider it was a good idea. Under State Transit, the buses were a community service, now its a business. We have been hard hit with the new profit making push associated with the private owner. They are desperate to save any few dollars through cutting minutes from our layover breaks. We are particularly angry with management constantly pushing to attack our amenities such as the removal of our Home and Duty Opal.

RW: What are your impressions of the routes?

RD: We are being confronted with a completely new dynamic in the buses with the light rail and now the Metros. As a result of the Metro introduction our routes are being affected such as the 320. It has been affected as now its not going to Artarmon. With the

introduction of these different modes of transport replacing bus routes, particularly disabled commuters are likely to be very adversely affected.

Kingsgrove Depot News

RW: What are your impressions of the new merged rosters?

Kingsgrove Driver: At the depot we are all angry with the new rosters. However we all voted for the EBA in 2023 and the associated "Parity Agreement" between the RTBU and TWU which created the basis for the new merged rosters. With the new rosters the bosses have seized the opportunity to savagely attack the running times of our trips. Significantly cutting back our lay over/rest breaks at the end of runs. Causing a new speed up in our jobs. We need to approach the union to fix up our concerns with the rosters.

Lane Cove Council Invites Bus Service Complaints

There has been reports of long waiting times for buses at Lane Cove following bus routes cuts for the new Metro.

Lane Cove Council has invited local commuters to report problems with the buses.

"Have you experienced bus cancellations or significant delays in Lane Cove?" The Lane Cove Council Web Site asks.

"While bus services are not operated by Council, we are currently collecting information to help stay updated on how changes to bus services are impacting our community."

The Council will share feedback with Transport for NSW and other relevant stakeholders to advocate improvements where possible. To report experience of service issues to the Council, visit the Lane Cove Web Site "Have Your Say" page.

VICTORIAN RAILWAY NEWS

In this issue of RW, conductors, drivers and station staff will discuss the new Rail Operations EBA. As in previous issues of RW names have been changed.

RW: What is the current situation regarding the EBA?

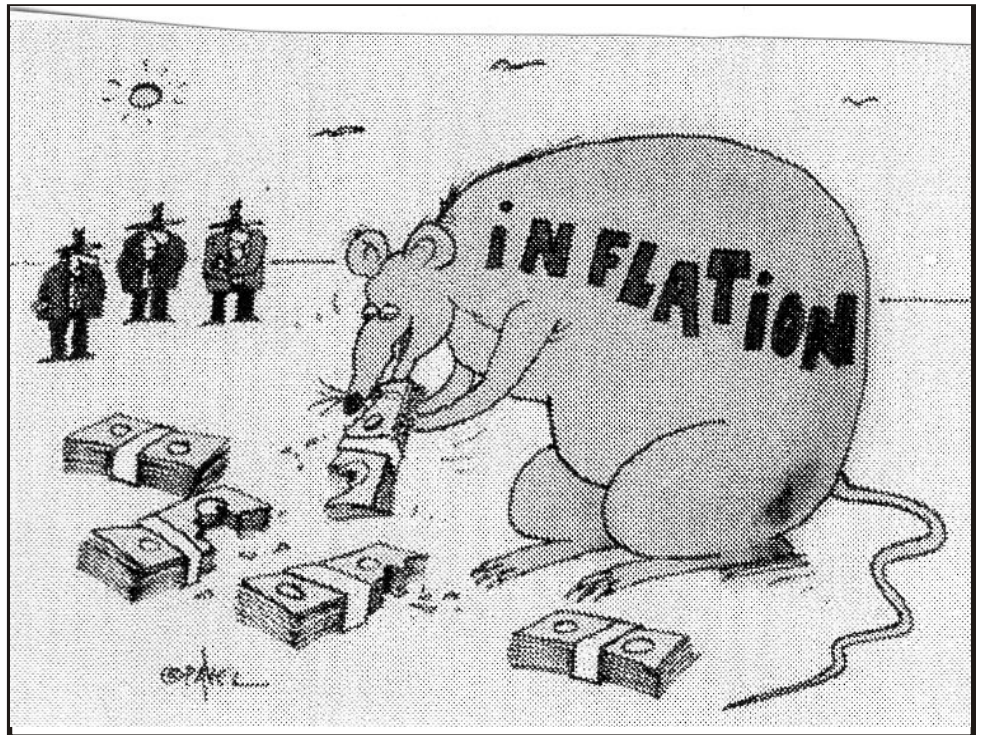
Florence: After seven stoppages a satisfactory result has been achieved.

Fergus: As a result of a proposed stoppage on the Monday before Easter and Easter Thursday, the State Government had enough. The stoppages were called off. The negotiations were held over six weeks with an Arbitrator appointed from the State Government resulting in an in principle agreement reached in early May.

Forsyth: RTBU delegates had voted overwhelmingly in support of the proposed deal. The deal will be put to members over the next few weeks before settlement.

Clarence: The main points are:

(a) Industry standard pay increase of 17%. This is made of 14% over four



years plus a 3% Modernisation Allowance which will continue until the agreement ends in 2028.

(b) An additional one off cash payment with 2% of the employees aggregate

earnings for the financial year ending in 2023.

Jethro: Improved leave entitlement:

(a) Bonus days additional to current leave entitlements applied no later than

the fourth year of the agreement.

(b) Improved parental leave.

(c) Trauma leave Paid as per roster including any previously agreed overtime and applies for all emergency call outs.

(d) Natural Disaster Leave f This is a new clause with up to 20 days paid if impaired by a Natural Disaster such as Bushfire Damage, Storm Damage, Earthquake. Paid as per roster.

Cedric: Job security -locked in protections provided for conductors, station staff, authorised officers, shunters, yard masters and Train Controllers.

(a) No closure of Booking Offices.

(b) Conductors must be on every revenue service.

(c) Yards must be controlled and operated by shunters and yardmasters.

Archie: With regards to job security most V/Line employees regarded this clause as the main issue in the EBA. Many employees remember what happened in January 1993 when the Kennett Government wanted to cut a large number of V/Line services (also Metro Trains and Trams). A fair number of employees lost their jobs. At last job security is now written into the EBA.

RW: What are some of the other results of the EBA?

Clarence: There is a Redeployment Agreement through retraining opportunities and a tighter requirement for redeployment.

Rastus: This clause was an old clause updated. This came about due to a campaign by drivers in the early 1970's. In 2008 a V/Line conductor was terminated as medically unfit. The conductor due to union pressure was retrained for the Booking Office but on completion of training had to compete with 17 other applicants both internal and external. As a result the conductor was unsuccessful and was terminated. The union was able to get the conductor a position as a Booking Clerk with Metro Trains. This shameful treatment of the conductor was discussed in Sparks issue No.136.

Archie: Part time employees are now guaranteed minimum hours of 16 hours with an option for a 24 hour minimum. In other words the practice of an employee at a Country Location working 8 hours per week has ceased.

Roscoe: The Retired Railway Pass has

been reinstated. All employees with 20 years service regardless of starting date with continuous service will receive a retirement pass. Originally the pass was 15 years service but in 1993 without consultation with the union was extended to 20 years. With Privatisation in 1999 only employees with 20 years service to 1999 were to receive the pass. This was altered to employees who commenced service after 1979 but before 1999 receiving the Retirement Pass as it was a condition of employment.

Clarence: Internal Recruitment and Transfers Guaranteed opportunities arising from vacancies for part time to full time, location transfer and internal recruitment requirement.

Cedric: This has taken years to achieve. With regards to conductors if a part time employee applied for a full time position, they had to compete with an outside appointee. The same if a conductor wanted to transfer to another depot. They had to compete with an outside appointee. This issue caused a fair amount of tension over the years. Human Resources would not compromise over the issue. This has been reported in previous issues of RW.

Clarence: Improved roster change process. This allows members to design their own rosters. This was attempted over the last 18 years but management would not compromise. At least we will now have rosters that are family friendly.

Editorial Comment: It seems workers are being bribed with a sort of bonus to sign the EBA off which would provide wage rises below soaring inflation levels. The bonus would be affected by income tax. Also the increase by 2% of Super contributions must be taken into account. Also a common technique with enterprise agreements, some seemingly ok clauses are used to divert workers attention from other seemingly benign clauses dressed up with legalese which can have seriously adverse consequences. An experienced industrial lawyer independent from the political establishment and the union hierarchy needs to make an interpretation of each clause. Job security can only be preserved with

direct action or serious threats of it. Not by duplicitous pieces of paper written in legalese!

RW: What about non unionists?

Florence and Fergus: We have worked at V/line for a number of years and we are upset that these individuals refuse to join the union, yet they reap the benefits.

Rastus: Some of the excuses these non unionists use for why they refuse to join the union:

(a) Some have a grudge against the union.

(b) Will affect their career paths in the railways.

Roscoe: What these individuals don't realise is management sees these people as being weak.

Fergus: It costs the union a fair amount to negotiate the EBA and these persons expect the union to negotiate for them.

Florence: Most reported for work during the stoppages but what disappointed myself was the union members who worked during the last stoppage on March 8th.

Rastus: Management will know who to rely on if a future stoppage occurs. They will regard these people as weak.

RW: Once again we have run out of space. The membership at V/Line should be commended for the industrial action that was taken.

Florence and Fergus: In having the final say we regard the individuals who worked during the stoppages as SCABS.

In this issue of RW we will discuss West Coast Railway from 2000 to 2002. As in previous issues of RW names have been changed.

RW: What was the situation in Victoria in 2000?

Clarence: V/line had been franchised and operated by an English Company National Express. West Coast was operating a Saturday Steam Train every Saturday from April to November, leasing Locomotives to various freight companies.

RW: What was West Coast's marketing for the Warrnambool line?

Ichabod: West Coast Railways marketing was superior to V/Line in many ways. They sent their employees to various schools, clubs, Pensioners'

Organisations and various Chambers of Commerce promoting the services on the Warrnambool Line. In August 2000 V/Line Travel Business was shut down. The closure of V/Line Travel was condemned by various groups and V/Line training. West Coast was successful with their day trips. Their trips to watch the Whales in the winter months were successful.

RW: What was West Coast's operations in South Australia?

Rastus: West Coast with the break up of Australian National purchased a number of carriages. This train was to be called the "Murraylander" which was to operate from Adelaide to the Tailm Bend. A locomotive was painted in Murrylander colours. This venture never got off the ground and the carriages were once on a special train from Adelaide to Gladstone.

Roscoe: By the end of 2000 local governments along the Warrnambool line were asking when West Coast were going to obtain new rolling stock. West Coast was hoping to obtain a grant from the Government so as to build these carriages. Drivers heard the rumours West Coast was to obtain via a leasing company former Australian National EL Class locomotives. It was rumoured the Government knocked back this proposal.

RW: What were the West Coast operations in New Zealand?

Clarence: West Coast Railway entered into an agreement with Toll Holdings who owned New Zealand Rail to operate Inter City Passenger trains. A Railway Company was set up 50% owned by West Coast Railway and Toll Holdings. The Company acquired all Intercity Trains except Auckland to Rotorua, Wellington to Napier and Christchurch to Dunedin. These trains were discontinued because they were competing with Buses which were deregulated.

RW: What about Saturday afternoon services from Warrnambool to Melbourne?

Ichabod: From October 1981 the last train out of Warrnambool on a Saturday afternoon departed from Warrnambool at 1.00 pm instead of 4 pm. By this method extra crew with the train was eliminated. Despite approaches from Local Governments in South West Victoria, the times of this train were not

changed. The authorities refused to alter the times of Saturday services. This discouraged day trippers.

Rastus: In 1998, 1999 and 2000 an extra train was operated leaving Warrnambool at 5.05 pm. This train only operated when the steam train ran.

Archie: In February 2001, West Coast decided to introduce a new train on Saturday. This train departed from Melbourne at 12.20 pm returning from Warrnambool at 5.05 pm. This train was a stand alone operation as it was not subsidised by the Government. The train proved popular with day trippers and it was operated all year around.

Roscoe: The train was operated by Loco crews employed by West Coast Railway, all other trains were operated by V/Line crews. West Coast crews operating this train, on other days, operated transfer trains to Bathurst from Geelong or Melbourne plus Heritage trains. From January 2001 West Coast operated all Heritage trains on Broad Gauge Lines throughout Victoria. This came about because V/Line withdrew from Heritage Trains. This was because when a Heritage Train was late it could delay trains thus V/Line operator National Express would be fined due to on train performance rules. West Coast was not covered under OPR rules.

Forsyth: Towards the end of 2001 a new investor bought into West Coast. The investor was rumoured to be CONNEX.

RW: What was the story about the Victorian Government financing the modification of Carriages for Mobility Aides.

Forsyth: In the middle of 2002 the toilets in the first class carriages were modified to take wheel chairs. Over the

years complaints were received from people with disabilities that there was no provision for toilets for disabled passengers. These modifications were paid for by the Victorian Government.

Ichabod: In early 2002 it was reported to the Rail Union that a labour hire company was being used to supply labour. This came about because West Coast covered labour shortages by using members of their family as Conductors. They were sons and daughters of the director plus the staff from Head Office. These employees who were employed by labour hire companies were not allowed to work public holidays due to costs.

Rastus: The union had this practice stopped and labour hire employees were offered jobs with West Coast.

Roscoe: The steam train did not operate from 2002. This was due to two reasons. The first because the new Directors said that the running of the train was not a core business. The other reason was one of the Directors passed away. This Director was a Rail Enthusiast and the Steam Train was his project. With his passing the Steam Operations ended.

Ichabod: In early 2004 the Company hit hard times. The employees were worried about the company's future. Their contract was due to expire in 2009. The signs that changes were not too good was that drivers of replacement coaches were informed they were not to drive the buses over "City Link" due to road tolls.

Also new employees were issued with used uniforms. These uniforms had been dry cleaned or mended.

RW: Once again we have run out of space. In the next issue we conclude the story of West Coast Railway.



ANTI WAR CONGRESS IN PRAGUE

"Together Against Capitalist Wars and Against Capitalist Peace!" May 2024.

After a promising start on Wednesday 22nd, things appeared to fall apart on Thursday. After an event hosted by Kites not Drones, news of cancellations came as the original Congress Centre, secured, and paid for in February withdrew at the last minute to the consternation of delegates. --- It was at this point the various visiting comrades decided to proceed with a parallel program in the absence of confirmation of alternatives. This group of around 50 secured spaces on the Friday to initiate discussion and debate.

59 predominately anarchist groups were invited to the 'official' Congress. 10 decided to work with the parallel group (for easy reference calling itself the 'Self Organised Assembly' or SOA.), 8 of them Exclusively. Whilst not all the invitees were able to attend, the remainder that did continued to focus on the Congress weekend.

The context was hard for outsiders to grasp, but threats and provocations had preceded any events compelling the organisers to issue the following statement:

"The organizing team ...has been facing provocations and sabotages for a long time, which are supposed to complicate the organization of the anti-war activities... we are watching the attacks of our opponents grow in intensity."

AnarCom made the decision to devote its limited resources to meeting and discussing with specific groups who had approached us while waiting for further news on the Congress venue.

We remained in contact throughout with both the Organising Committee and comrades from the Czechoslovak Anarchist Society (CAS), gaining insights from their experience. From

them we learned:

"The anarchist movement in the Czech Republic has been in crisis and in retreat for several years now, including the split over the war in Ukraine. Afed has few members, but it has strong media coverage and background (autonomous centres, contacts to ex-anarchists, nowadays left liberals at universities).

So, when they started to preach pro-war propaganda, the anti-militarist

in the middle of an election, next to a country (Slovakia) which just had an assassination attempt on its PM.

We were able in part to attend the relocated Congress on Saturday and participate in some discussion. There were around 50 people there at any one time and literature stalls. It took place in an ecology training centre with lunch provided and amenities for other refreshments. We had not seen the majority of attendees before.

Amongst key topics were the splits in



voice was not heard, and they poisoned the thinking of many people - especially the youth."

There was general consensus the loss of the first venue was attributable to sectarian (or rather pro war partisan) sabotage.

Additionally: "...there was an anarchist bookfair in Prague this weekend. It's very well attended, last year about 2000 people passed through. We, as anti-militarists, were not invited, as it was co-organised by Afed and the Ukrainian Solidarity Collective were performing there with their pro war propaganda."

There may have been a lot more going on for them than we were privy to. It is worth remembering as context that Czechia is a firm supporter of Ukraine

the so-called movement, the division of our class through the exploitation of culture-wars and the centrality of the action of our class rather than our own efforts to change the forces on the ground.

Though good examples of blockade actions at some Italian ports in conjunction with unionised workers were shared - acknowledging the implied limits of ideology and bureaucracy on the potential for more.

A recurring question from the Wednesday to the Saturday had been "what can we do?". We suggested this question be turned around to ask ourselves "what are we doing?"

Only we can answer this ourselves on the ground and our defining geographies and political and social

circumstances will inform us of resources and potential.

Continuing security concerns had led to request for mobile phones not to be used to communicate for the Sunday session which we were unable to attend as unfortunately we couldn't access the email links notifying us.

Other comrades continued their parallel program throughout and elements of the SOA were working on some form of communique by the time we left. We look forward to seeing the outcome of the work of that group.

We have continued to liaise with comrades - perhaps a coalition of the

willing - to draw learning from this and to find common ground for a joint statement, primarily relating to the wars and the veritable split in our movement. We will report more on progress on this in the coming days.

<https://anarcomuk.uk/2024/05/31/pr>

Big Brother in the European Union

The Artificial Intelligence (AI) regulation adopted by the European Union

The Member States adopted the AI regulation on May 21, 2024, dedicated to the regulation of Artificial Intelligence systems. This text had been under discussion since 2021 and was presented as an instrument for protecting rights and freedoms against the steamroller of AI.

Ultimately, this text is tailor-made for the tech industry, European police forces and other large bureaucracies eager to automate social control. This development can be explained by the battering rams from Member States, including France, which have helped eliminate most of the initial promises. This AI regulation aims to proliferate the production and collection of data for the benefit of industry. European texts such as the European General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which came into force in 2018, are partly weakened by these new special rules applicable to AI systems. But for the public and private actors who pushed for the adoption of this text, the priority issue has never been, as we might have expected, to protect fundamental rights. The regulation is based on a "risk-based" approach, classifying the types of AI systems or their areas of application (police, health, employment, etc.) according to four risk categories (low risk not targeted by the regulation; limited risk for certain systems subject only to transparency measures; high risk subject to the various obligations of

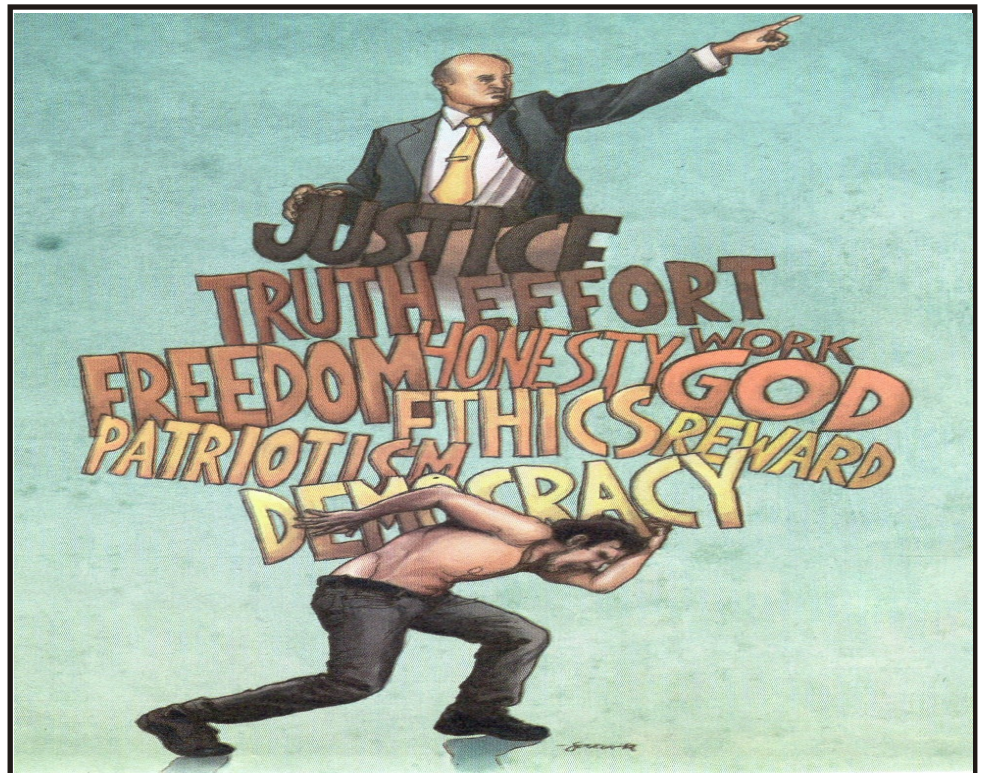
the regulation; unacceptable risk for the few prohibited practices.

Under the regulation adopted yesterday, it is the companies that design AI systems that will be the first to decide on the level of risk presented by their products! They will then be free to consider that these systems are not risky and therefore exempt from any regulation under the regulation.

While it was clear from the beginning that the risk-based approach promoted by the European Union to regulate AI was designed to regulate a market rather than protect fundamental rights,

this area, giving free rein to the police and the surveillance industry. Thus, the use of real-time facial recognition will be possible when it comes to finding victims of "kidnaping, trafficking or sexual exploitation of human beings, as well as the search for missing persons", if it is a question of preventing "a specific, substantial and imminent threat to the life or physical safety of natural persons", or to prevent "a real and present or real and foreseeable threat of terrorist attack".

Similarly, "social rating" - for example that practised by the Family



at least one could hope that the most dangerous uses of AI systems, such as facial recognition, would be banned under the heading of "unacceptable risks". Here again, France has worked with other states to thwart all claims in

Allowance Funds - remains permitted as long as it does not involve, like the systems tested in China, a centralized system capturing data from different social contexts (police, work, school, etc.). The sector ratings used by social

organizations will therefore be able to continue in full swing: although it classifies them as high-risk applications, and apart from a few

procedural obligations, the regulation does nothing to effectively combat the discriminatory algorithms of social administrations in terms of rating and

monitoring beneficiaries.

Source: Excerpt from the text of the Quadrature du Net dated May 22.

BRITAIN TODAY

RAW INJUSTICE

An article about the ongoing industrial dispute at the Port Talbot Tata Steelworks in South Wales. Printed in the British Anarchist Federation's magazine Organise. It was published on the 1st July.

*Peter O'Maille
Anarchist Federation*

In 1709 Abraham Darby discovered coke smelting, advancing the mass production of brass and iron goods. This discover was the seed which gave birth to the Industrial Revolution. 315 years later on the 20th of March the coke ovens at the Port Talbot steelworks spewed forth their last batch and were shuttered, this is likely to be Britain's last.

This was the first step of the shuttering of Port Talbot's two Blast Furnaces and the transition to Electric Arc Furnaces and more the the point, the gutting of Port Talbot's community and the livelihood of some 3000 people direct and thousands more by proxy, the latest in a long history of class war at the hands of corporations and central governments as they drive forward with reckless social and economic transformation, the workers little more than numbers to be caste aside the moment their labour is no longer part of the grandiose visions of ensure long term profits. Another volley in the class war, the workers however said No.

A Little History The Steel Company of Wales Ltd formed in 1947 and was Nationalised by Labour's Atlee government in 1951, only to be chocked into inaction and privatised by the following Conservative cabinet, subsequently being renationalised in 1967. This is how it stood until 1999 when the Blairites had better things to do but consider the working class and it's back

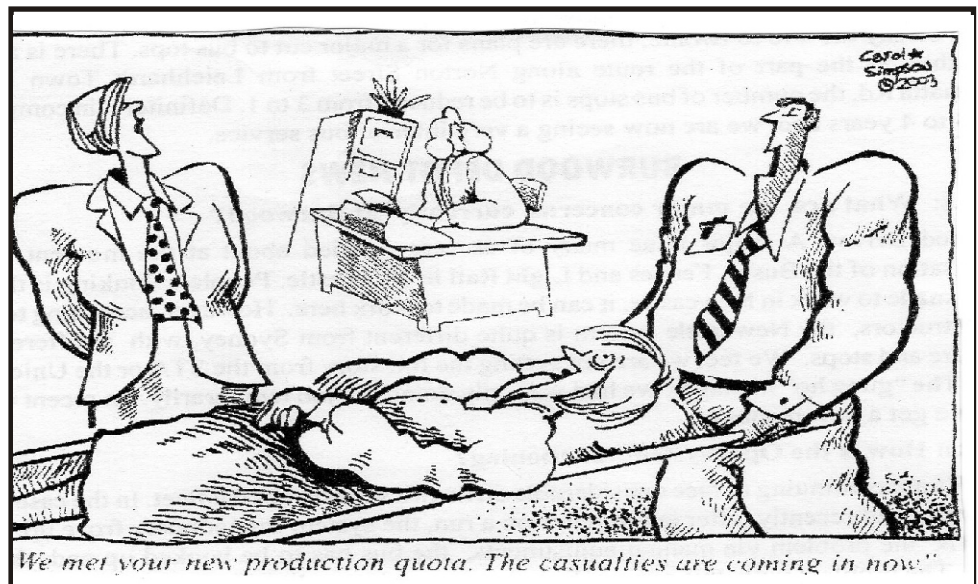
to reckless corporate profiteering, ultimately ending up in the hands of Tata in 2007.

By the 2010's it was clear that the future was Green, the realities of several hundred years of catastrophic recklessness have made themselves apparent and even if you really really don't want to agree with the hippies and dossers, the creeping reality of the cascade failure of our biosphere has started to affect profit margins and firmly rooted itself as a political hot potato.

Come 2016 and Britain has allowed a nationalist skidmark Farage and aristocratic puddle of piss Johnson to

progressive and secure the future for the capitalist elite.

In 2023 the government decided to put half a billion into Port Talbot and replace the Blast Furnaces with Electric Arc Furnaces. While EAF is far from some environmental miracle and being itself a producer of toxic gases laden with heavy metal and coming with greatly increased demands on power production and the increase on heavy goods traffic it exists as one of the critical industries of the manufacturing future, the truth behind these decisions couldn't be any less about environmental concerns. It's about maintaining profits across the



churn out enough bullshitery and chaff that even Trump would blush. The UK votes for Brexit. The UK leaving the EU and the eventual signing of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) in 2020 absolutely gutted profitability of the UK's Steel industry. So it's time to slap on some green paint and call it progressive, never mind that Tata continue to run blast furnaces elsewhere and the UK government continues to endorse the most horrific environmental disasters of the coming decade, there has just been another COP and we need to look shiny and

vast monolith of a global empire and the first thing any empire is willing to sacrifice in the name of profit it's the working class.

EAF is more more autonomous and replacing the two blast furnaces means some 3000 workers (directly and even more effected indirectly) that are surplus to requirement. The unions rightly object to this, Community and GMB outline a plan for Tata and Unite would issue Statements of intent. Ballots for industrial action went out.

Industrial Action Time The lingering memory of the deep mine closures echoes through the

valleys, starting with the loss of some 6000 job cuts in Wales through the 70's and the killing blow of 25,000 through the 80's leaving just 3000 in the early 90's. Then as it was now, the working class are being tossed onto the scrap heap, with neither care for their individual well-being or that of the wider community. The raw injustice behind the decision being made masked over with green washing platitudes and displaced promises of eternally imminent high tech jobs, jobs which on paper fill the maths but still leave the working class cut out of a market in-favour of the middle class aspirants.

Two generations might have gone by but the scars are deep and it's absolutely no surprise that the ballots returned with a demand for action. The Industrial Action has already been dismissed by bosses and politicians alike as union bluster and the result of "troublemakers" as such action tends to be by filth in suits however the truth of it is that it's works showing the absolute best of solidarity with each other and fighting for a just transition for fellow workers and for Port Talbot.

The general (and simplified) plan from the workers is this: maintain a single blast furnace for ten years alongside the development of the EAF furnace, allowing for a suitable transition phase, one which would allow workers time to take appropriate steps, whether that'd be secure retirements, further work, savings or training. This while maintaining profitability for Tata and maintaining a secure diversity of production methods during times of economic instability.

This has been roundly rejected by Tata, it's primary arguments is that they've got "Net Zero" targets to meet and well it just isn't profitable, Port Talbot losing £1m a day! Both arguments are of course hog wash.

Surprise! The Bosses Lie
Tata Steel Limited has reserves of £1.6 billion and has paid out dividends of £1.4 billion to shareholders between 2019 and 2023. It's global revenue is £117.78 Billion (FY 2023), up on the previous year. Choices are being made here and when the bosses section off their assets in such a manner it is little more than a weak attempt to obfuscate to wider picture so that they may validate (in the short term at least)

redundancies.

The second of these arguments is even more laughable. You can't claim environmentalism and pin "Net Zero" as your purpose for closing two blast furnaces and tearing apart the economic well being of 3000 households as you build one of the largest blast furnaces in the world in India, and maintain numerous others including in the EU, such as the vast IJmuiden Steelworks in the Netherlands.

Their IJmuiden Steelworks was subject to a criminal investigation in 2022 into "intentional and unlawful introduction of hazardous substances into the soil, air or surface water." and was the focus of a report on dangerous emissions just last year. The Dutch are now considering subsidising this plants "green development" to the tune of £2.5 Billion. Public money again going into corporate greed.

Tata's Kalinganagar industrial complex in India equally is an absolute obscenity, consuming the ancestral lands of locals and the ecological splendour of the surrounding national park alike. Vast and polluting. It's one of four such plants in India.

The final hammer to this preposterous claim and the offloading of carbon responsibility is that even the most ardent advocates for the environment From Greenpeace to Friends of the Earth, Reclaim the Power, to Extinction Rebellion stand with the workers of Port Talbot.

The future of this planet cannot be secured at the expense of fellow workers. It is secured by the holistic and global end of growth capitalism, profiteering, and industrial recklessness. We must first and foremost stand with the workers. Investment into so-called "green steel" and the future of the industry must place their well-being before profit.

From The Anarchist Perspective these industries should be operated for the benefit of their communities providing a strategic material resource for construction and manufacture, the economic loss made moot, if not by the post-economic social model then at the very least the social, logistical, and environmental benefits of local manufacturing of Iron and Steel.

While we can and should pursue

environmentally sympathetic and balanced manufacture, we should do so earnestly and not by displacing manufacture to less economically developed regions of the world or by pursuing rapid transitions without consideration to the people and communities at the heart of it. Our solutions should be rooted in localism and internationalist in consideration. Kicking the carbon can down the road like this is just the latest face of colonialism, building an artifice of green splendour at home, built upon endless factory-scapes across Asia, Africa and South America.

Ultimately this conflict is repeated in numberless reflections around the world. The capitalist ethos views the workers are collateral, little more than abstracts in the math. Human beings are not collateral – let alone to the false promise of "Net-Zero". While we maintain these abusive relationships with the bosses we will only be maintaining the suicidal cycle of capitalism. The workers of a blast furnace are no more free than the workers of an electric arc furnace. They are subject to the same whims of their pay masters no matter green the whip. While profit is the aim and purpose of such industry we will never be working towards balance and well-being. Green capitalism is no different, especially as we socialise the cost while privatising the profits.

The trade unions, de-fanged and neutered as they are, present no revolutionary purpose towards a true green future. They seek to find compromise with capital and restrict the capacity for swift and meaningful direct and radical action of the workers, instead of stoking flames of change they turn furious rage into a palatable whimper for the bosses consideration. They appeal to the social conscience of those consumed by profit and power. At their most radical, they whisper about Nationalisation, tho rarely as little more than a empty threat to hopefully birth some corporate compassion.

Nationalisation is you could argue, in ideal circumstances at least, one step towards autonomy, a bringer self determination for the working class. I can think of few cases where this has been the result mind, instead it's

implementation has been little more than utopianism by the stats and something the rest of us appeal to as a tiny step of reform towards something better. No, while the state maintains a ethos of growth this is a hollow exchange. The workers are still sent to toil for their bosses and the planet is still treated as a exploitable resource, people still treated as playthings for vast and indifferent bodies of powerful men in some distant boardroom. If the government wants to build a motorway through your house they will, you're in the way of a new factory?. Your family's farm in the getting in the way of factory profits? Time to move. Just ask the residents of Llanwyddyn and Tryweryn. Even today if we take even a passing example of nationalised industry we see the same apathy and hubris. The Chinese state's power scheme from the Three Gorges Dam to the vast fields of solar power have

caused unimaginable disasters for local fauna and flora. The workers from Beijing to Bristol, whether their live under free market capitalism it's state mandated reflect, are still treated as disposable playthings. Under their rule we'll always be kept in line with a mixture of pacification and de-radicalisation at the hands of trade unions and facilitation from the local constabulary when they get a bit too uppity.

The anarchist solution, as always, is rooted in placing authority at it's most local point. Industrial complexes such as the Port Talbot Steelworks would be collectivized by the workers and operated by the workers for the benefit of the communities local, regional, national and international. Coordinating with guilds and federations across the land to balance need and capacity, ensuring the materials are there when needed

without starving the local labour pool in to maintain competitive standing in a growth market. This can't exist in a bubble, the revolution isn't an island and we lack the social courage for collectivisation to be on the cards for your average industrial worker, so for now we consider solidarity, for this is fabric upon which with ferment the liberated future.

Solidarity with the workers of Port Talbot, give the bastards hell, stand firm on the pickets and should your actions turn militant or find themselves being "facilitated" by the South Wales police I hope and expect you'll find many an anarchist stood beside you.

Peter O'Maille

Since this article was written Tata have responded to Industrial Action with the looming threat of more immediate job losses across the works.

BOOK REVIEW CORNER

The Jewish Anarchist Movement in America: A Historical Review and Personal Reminiscences By Joseph Cohen Published by PM Press.

No Harmless Power: The Life & Times of the Ukranian Anarchist Nestor Makhno by Charlie Allison Published by PM Press.

An iron law governing the dynamics of revolutionary movements is that if they fail to expand and wipe out their establishment opponents they will be encircled, crushed or radically marginalised. Some obvious historical examples of this process are the Paris Commune of 1871, the Kronstadt Commune of and uprising against the Bolshevik regime and new ruling class of State managers and officials in 1921 and the Spanish Revolution of 1936-39. This law certainly applies to the circumstances leading to the decline and fall of the Jewish anarchist movement in the USA and the Makhnovist movement during the Russian Civil War 1917-21.

The author of the memoir of the American Jewish anarchist movement, Joseph Cohen 1878 - 1953 was an editor for 12 years of the Yiddish anarchist Fraye Arbeter Shtime (FAS), (The Free Voice of Labour), newspaper of the Jewish

Anarchist Federation. He was also involved in helping launch a daily Yiddish anarchist newspaper, Abend Tsaytona. In his later years Cohen moved away from the revolutionary/anarcho-syndicalism of his younger days and was involved in setting up anarchist colonies and cooperative ventures and Ferrer Modern schools. Cohen provides interesting critical anecdotes about other leading personalities in the USA and international anarchist movement, such as Saul Yanovsky, Rudolph Rocker, Emma Goldman and numerous lesser lights.

Cohen considered his most important achievement in his years in the Jewish anarchist movement to be his article "Anarchism and Dictatorship", written in 1921. He recalls it played a key role in preventing the Jewish Anarchist movement in the USA and the FAS being taken over by Bolshevik/Communist Party

supporters in the wake of the Bolshevik coup in 1917. In 1921, he was also involved in the formation of the Jewish Anarchist Federation of America and Canada with 21 affiliates. He notes that Alexander Berkman organised an Anarchist Federation of New York in 1908 involving both English and Foreign language speaking members but on an individual membership basis. However, it seems the notion of setting up an America wide "international" anarchist federation based on groups emphasising the English language for its organs and activity was not considered, which would facilitate the Jewish anarchist movement breaking out of its migrant/Yiddish ghetto.

Anarchist Yiddish Newspapers

A major focus of Cohen's memoir is the publishing of Yiddish anarchist newspapers. In particular he supported the launching the above daily Yiddish newspaper to counter the daily Socialist "Forverts" (The Forward). He emphasises the important role a daily newspaper would play in helping organise

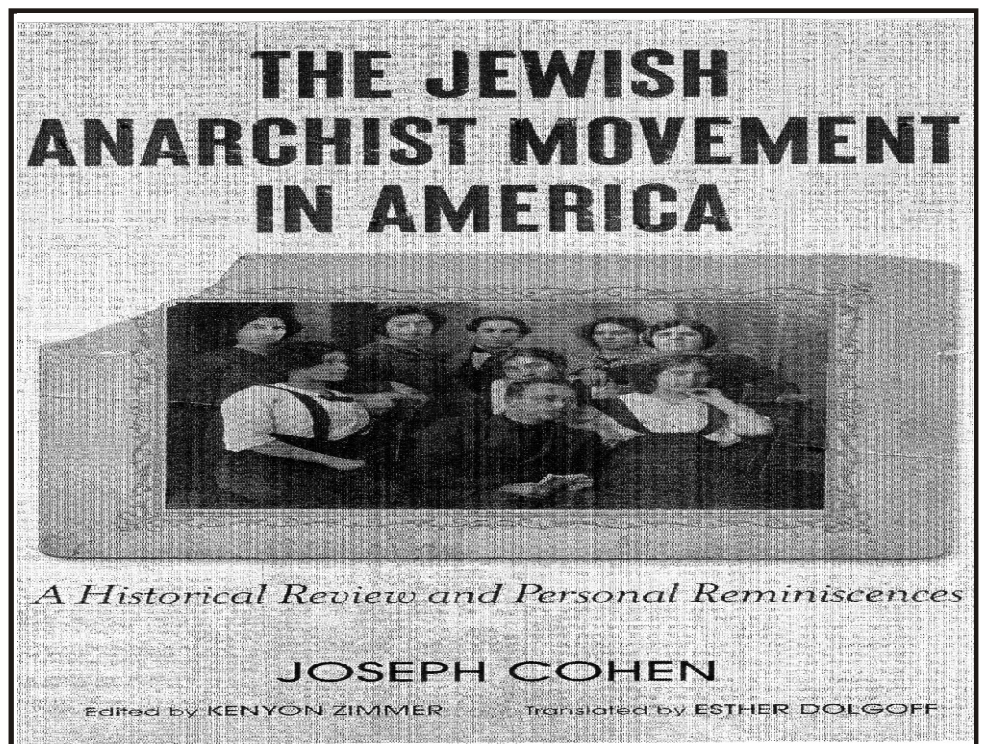
anarcho-syndicalist unions and helping these unions win strikes and industrial campaigns. Other reasons he cites are providing employment for many in the anarchist movement and providing them with various skills for diverse movement activities. The daily "Abend Tsaytong" with a print run of 1,500 copies per issue commenced publication on 18th February 1904 and was unsuccessful lasting only a few editions, according to Cohen's memoir. He sees this failure stemming from sabotage by its editor Saul Yanovsky, also editor of the FAS who wrote editorials for the new daily too late, delaying copies coming from New York where it was printed. Seriously affecting daily sales in Philadelphia and so unable to compete with the other Yiddish daily press. Cohen argues the failure of the daily caused the loss of a major opportunity to build a much larger movement. As after the 1905 Russian revolution, the movement was enriched in its ranks with many new young members from London and Russia contributing to a mushrooming of journals and groups. These new people would have greatly assisted with their activity via their role in the daily. However, given the scarcity of experienced and competent editors there is also the issue of an insufficiently large scale of organisation and the absence of mass anarcho-syndicalist unions to support the daily.

Cohen details that the Red Scare following WWI associated with the Palmer Raids of 1919, the rise of the Communist party associated with illusions workers had about the Bolshevik takeover in Russia following their coup in 1917 and the financing of the Communist Party with "Moscow Gold", contributed to a major split in the Jewish anarchist movement in 1921. Causing a decline in affiliated groups and individual members and associated public activity. Cohen reports that when he came to New York in 1920, there only a few groups/newspapers and members left. Cohen considers his most important initiative was his writing of the article "Anarchism & Dictatorship" in 1921 which played a key role in countering the takeover of the Jewish

anarchist movement and its publications by Bolshevik/Communist Party supporters.

Cohen recalls, that the Jewish anarchists were caught between the warring of the "Lefts" supporters of the Bolsheviks/Communist Party and the "Rights" associated with the officials' machine in the bureaucratic garment unions connected/supported by the Socialist Party and its newspaper "Forverts". Severely weakening anarchist influence. He provides graphic details of Communist Party manipulation of a ILGWU (International Ladies Garment Union) mass meeting by the ôLeftö bribing police to use their mafia boss contacts to stop opponents from addressing the meeting.

agitation newspaper, whether to support "dual unionism" such as the syndicalist IWW (Industrial Workers of the World) formed in 1905 in opposition to the conservative craft unions composing the AFL (American Federation of Labour) this strategy gained wide influence in New York or "boring from within" pushing the bureaucratic unions toward ultra democratic processes, direct action and countering corruption within them, influential in Philadelphia. Pursuit of both strategies by different sections of the Jewish anarchist movement was severely weakened by the Red Scare repression following the Russian Revolution of 1917 particularly the Palmer Raids of 1919, the rise of the Communist Party and bureaucratic industrial unionism of the AFL-CIO-CIA.



Debates & Controversies

In his reminisces, Cohen discusses various controversies, debates and splits which affected the Jewish anarchist movement such as over "propaganda of the deed" influential amongst a minority of anarchists particularly in the late 19th Century. It entailed debate over whether to support violent attacks on various figureheads of the ruling class to spark revolts, whether to publish an educational/theoretical journal or an

In recalling his later years, he discusses his involvement with the Stelton "Libertarian Socialist" colony in New Jersey formed in 1914. It became heavily affected after the Russian Revolution of 1917 by warring between anarchists and the "Left." (Communist Party/Bolshevik supporters). He was also involved in founding the Sunrise Colony in Michigan in 1933. It drew mostly anarchist workers, who had become unemployed due to the depression. He details how its financial difficulties

associated with the slump, caused it to become drawn into the Roosevelt New Deal WPA program. With the WPA even buying the colony's farm.

Like other foreign language anarchist movements in the USA and other parts of the Anglo world, the Jewish anarchist movement was unable break out of its foreign language/migrant ghetto and link up with English and other language anarchist groups and the syndicalist movement. To head off the emergence of bureaucratic industrial unionism associated with the AFL-CIO-CIA. It has become a major bulwark of the Corporate set up in the USA.

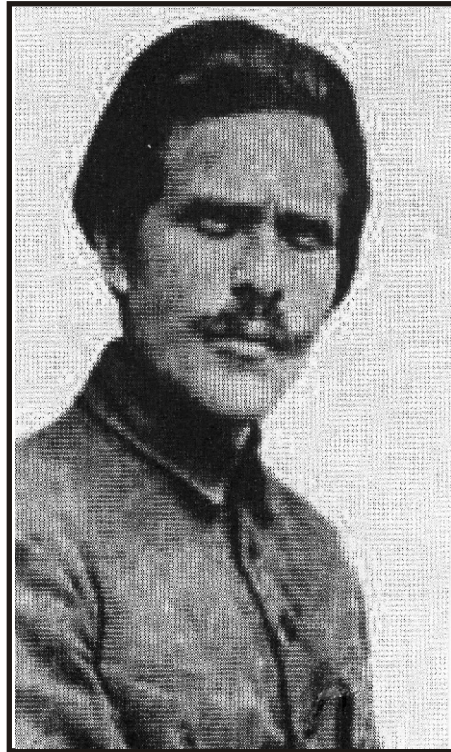
In looking at the reasons for the decline of the Jewish Anarchist movement from the 20's onward, the author considers a variety of factors. Many members rose up into the middle class as well as their children and ceased using Yiddish.

Following the Bolshevik seizure of power in the Russian Revolution of 1917 there was a decline in morale amongst FAS members, anarchists being caught up in the above warring between Left and Right, many FAS members going over to the Communist Party and following the end of WWII there developed wide support amongst needle trades bureaucratic unions which previously had significant anarchist influence, for Zionism and the establishment of Israel. This decline continued into the 60's and 70's. The Jewish Anarchist Federation dissolved in 1966, Anarchist branches of the Workman Circle disbanded or merged with non anarchist branches and the FAS ceased publication in 1977.

Nestor Makhno 1888-1934 was a towering figure in the Russian/Ukrainian anarchist movement wraithed in myths and legends. The Makhnovist polity involved millions in the Ukraine with its principle base and city Huliaipole. In 2013, the Ultra Right Ukrainian Government issued a commemorative coin with his face on it. Ignoring Makhno's strident opposition to Ukrainian nationalism. The author of the volume while providing a very detailed portrait of Makhno also provides many

detailed and interesting sketches of a gallery of less prominent militants drawn into the movement. Such as Peter Arshinov, Marusya Nikiforova, anarchist terrorist, Max Chernyak, Makhnovist guerrilla fighter, Voline, leading figure in the Nabat Anarchist Federation and anarchist theoretician, Fedir Shchus, member of the Makhnovist Military Command, Ida Mett and others.

The author details how members of



Nestor Makhno

the Ukrainian Nabat anarchist federation played an important role in the Makhnovist movement supplying cultural/educational workers and propagandists. However many became disturbed by Makhno's autocratic actions.

In contrast to other Makhno biographers, the author throws new light on parallel anarchist insurgencies and associated prominent militants. Such as the anarchist "Shinmin" movement involving 2 million people in Manchuria composed mostly of Koreans who fled the Japanese invasion of Korea, associated with Chua-Chua-Chin and an anarchist guerrilla movement in Siberia associated with Nestor Kalandarislvili. The author shows the Makhnovists were aware of the danger of their isolation and the need to link up with

other anarchistic movements and build an expanding and coordinated movement to defeat the Bolshevik Dictatorship. He details how they sent an armed detachment formed out of former Siberians to facilitate coordination of the campaign against the initially fragile Bolshevik dictatorship with the Siberian insurgency, see page 139. However, with the pressures on the Makhnovists in the Ukraine and the vast distances, this move proved unsuccessful. The author shows also weakening the Makhnovist forces was a constant lack of basic supplies and weaponry caused by the Bolshevik authorities keeping them on a tight rein during periodical alliances with them. Meanwhile according to the author in Bolshevik controlled cities, the Makhnovists received a cool reception from many anarcho-syndicalists/anarchists due to suspicions about its orientation.

The author provides more details of the Makhnovist movement campaigns against the White Army. Particularly, Makhno's defeat of the White forces at Perehonivka in 1919, which proved of great importance in derailing the White Army push on Moscow. During 1920-21 the Makhnovists engaged in a campaign of harassment and tactics based on cavalry and tachanka (machine guns mounted on carts) against the Red Army invasion of the Ukraine. As a result of the constant warfare during the Civil War, the Makhnovist experiments with communal farms in their base areas were disrupted and short lived. Ultimately they were overwhelmed by constant onslaughts and huge troop numbers. Makhno and his closest associates were forced to flee into exile following constant guerrilla actions to escape Red Army dragnets. Initially, they fled to Romania, Poland and finally to France.

Anarchist Vanguard Party?

The author does a much better job discussing Makhno's years in exile, than other of his biographers. He particularly focuses on Makhno and other Russian anarchist exiles role in the controversy over the "Organisational Platform, of the

(Draft) known as the “Platform”. In 1926 the Group of Russian Anarchists Abroad based in Paris publishers of Delo Truda edited by Peter Arshinov with other members such as Makhno, Ida Mett, Henryk Walecki and Maxim Ranko produced the “Platform”. It was based on lessons Makhno and Arshinov had learnt from the Russian Revolution and Civil War about how anarchists were out organised by the Bolsheviks. It involved having uniform positions on various issues and organisation practices similar to political parties. It soon received many rebuttals from anarchists for perceived centralisation and Bolshevisation. There were concerns from those who were familiar with Makhno's role in the Russian Civil War that it could degenerate into a Bolshevik style party regime or cult of personality. As a result of his “cutting corners” and disregarding anarchist councils decisions in the Makhnovist region. In the case of the Bulgarian anarchist movement, one of the rare anarchist movements which adopted the platform, it was unable to tackle the Stalinist/Communist Party takeover supported by the Red Army toward the end of WWII. Also competing with Marxist Leninist style parties in various arenas would contribute to developing a vanguardist orientation as occurred with some anarchist groups associated with the FAI (Iberian Anarchist Federation) in the lead up to the Spanish Revolution and Civil War 1936-39. Voline, the most prominent militant in the Nabat anarchist federation and involved in the Makhno movement cultural section, is on much firmer ground in explaining in his book “The Unknown Revolution” the success of the Bolshevik coup by pointing to the absence of experienced mass anarcho-syndicalist unions creating the vacuum for the Bolshevik coup and subsequent dictatorship. The author considers the “Platform” if it had taken off on a major scale in anarchist movements internationally, it would be Makhno's most important achievement, other than his victories on the battlefield.

“The Platform” & the Anarcho Milieu in the Anglo World Today

The problem with the “Platform” in

the Anglo World today would be the impact of the Stalinist legacy the predominance of Communist Parties for 4-5 decades in the 20th Century to the left of Social Democratic/Labor Parties in many countries with the extreme marginalisation of anarchist/syndicalist currents, the blossoming of Marxist Leninist groupings from the Trotskyist and Maoist heritage in the wake of May 1968, the impact of the dangerous and divisive bourgeois ideology of identity politics promoted by the Deep State particularly the CIA's “Operation Chaos” of the 1960's and 1970's, the Bourgeois cultural, educational and corporate media



apparatus. (1) In Australia it has been promoted by the Albanese ALP Federal Government with its failed “Indigenous Voice” referendum. Meanwhile quasi sacred, beyond debate and discussion in line with Stalinist political practice “indigenous welcomes” and rituals together with navel gazing, hypocritical, identity politics informed “Safe Spaces Policies” are a common feature of many middle class/student left subcultural events/hot houses. Also the anarcho milieu's social base among lower middle class elements (workers with high levels of autonomy in their jobs often connected with the university milieu), students, a sprinkling of demoralised workers looking for a pseudo church, and long term unemployed in these countries needs to be taken into account. (2) Low workers' morale and defeats orchestrated by the Corporate set up and union hierarchy particularly during the “official and unofficial” ACTU & ALP Accord years in Australia must be considered. These factors would mean any “Platform” type formal anarchist organisation would end up looking like a poor

photocopy of the Marxist Leninist sects and micro parties. Another problem would be its formal organisation being open to sophisticated Deep State infiltration (3). The informal catalytic network form like the ASN (Anarcho-Syndicalist Network) has proven to be the only group in Australia to effectively assist workers to defeat privatisation pushes (with important spin off's such as advertizing worsening air pollution due to privatisation associated cuts to rail services and slowing the push to privatise State Transit Buses) and facilitate the early stages of strike wave/direct action movements in the NSW Railways since the late 1990's and the defeat of important nasties in Enterprise Agreements in DSS/Centrelink in the 1990's. Slowing the tempo of the employer offensive and the Neo Liberal push. (4)

In conclusion, both books under review throw important light on aspects of their respective anarchist movements. providing much more details on diverse aspects of these movements together with interesting critical portraits of Joseph Cohen and Nestor Makhno and lesser figures. Together with new insights on their contributions to anarchist organisation and propaganda.

Notes.

(1) See review of “*Mind Games: The Assassination of John Lennon*” in *RW Vol.42 No.1 (236) May f June 2024* on www.rebelworker.org re this **Deep State activity.**

(2) See “*Report on the Workers' Control Conference*” on archive section of www.rebelworker.org regarding middle class leftist views involving “*oppression mongering*”.

(3) See “*Undercover: The True Story of Britain's Secret Police: The True Story of Britain's Secret Police*” by Paul Lewis & Rob Evans Published by Guardian Books.

(4) See “*From Corporate Bureaucratic Unionism to Grass Roots Controlled Direct Action Unionism: Perspectives for Activity & Strategy for Australia, Today*” *RW Vol.41 No.3 (235) Dec. - Jan, 2024* on Libcom.org and www.rebelworker.org

Mark.

NEWS & NOTES

Some of the most important news has been the Albo ALP Federal Government takeover of the CFMEU on the basis of alleged corruption. As regular readers of RW would be aware all the “corporate” unions would fit the bill for the “corrupt” label. Together with Government Departments, employers and the political establishment! Tellingly the targeted CFMEU officials have refused to launch any sustained industrial action over the takeover, just focusing on a High Court case challenge with occasional rallies with associated stoppages. See article page 2.

In the NSW Railways, the ASN has been assisting militants fight the closure of the Bankstown Line and its conversion to a Metro. Resulting in mid Sept. with the RTBU officials taking industrial action over the issue. The ASN has also assisted militants agitation regarding the NSW Rail EBA. Resulting in the union officials sudden bursting into action on the EBA Industrial campaign. In this edition we throw light on the hidden agenda of this campaign and nasties in the proposed EBA. We present an alternative campaign organised by grass roots committees. In this edition we also present a critique of the RTBU officials' new “Fee for Service Unionism” push. See articles page 4.

In Sydney Buses, a continuing issue is widespread anger about new “merged rosters” associated with the Region 6 EBA 2023 and the RTBU/TWU “Parity Agreement” which has worsened the jobs of many drivers. Another issue adversely affecting the jobs of many drivers is the traffic congestion associated with the Rozelle Interchange with its hidden corporate agenda. Together with traffic congestion on Oxford Street. See article page 6.

Help Build Rebel Worker! Your help with distro is most welcome. Why not consider ordering copies of RW to sell on Saturday mornings in your local shopping area, at demos, leave copies in the meal room at work, at your local café or cinema? Your help on the financial plane is also most welcome.

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Where we stand:

1. Our aim is to create a free and equal society.
 2. We are a revolutionary labour movement that uses as its only means of struggle, direct action in all its forms: occupations. Strikes, boycotts, sabotage, etc. We are independent from all reformist and hierarchical unions and political parties, and we are creating an alternative to these and existing society. We do not seek to gain political power, but rather to see it distributed amongst all.
 3. We are a network of anarcho-syndicalists practicing co-operation and mutual aid. We have an equal part in making decisions. Responsibilities within the network are subject to agreement by the members.
 4. We are engaged in struggle where we work and where we live, to develop self managed production, distribution and servicing for the world community to meet human needs rather than profit. We give solidarity to others in their struggles.
 5. We are fighting to abolish all authoritarian institutions such as the State (including its communist variety), capitalism, all hierarchical and oppressive divisions between people.
 6. We have no country and are organised on an international basis in opposition to oppression everywhere. The ASN is striving to build a viable revolutionary syndicalist movement in Australia as part of a world wide movement able to meet the challenge of the global employer offensive.
- TO FIND OUT MORE:**
I would like more information about the Anarcho-Syndicalist Network. Please send me information.
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Neo-Liberalism in Russia & Ukraine

Neoliberal "economy" of everything and everyone and the hardships of the situation in warring Russia and Ukraine continue to lead to crisis phenomena in the supply of electricity and water to the population.

Meanwhile, in Siberia, the population is fighting against the predation of mining companies. On Tuesday, July 16, several million Russians were left without electricity due to a failure in the operation of generating equipment at the Rostov Nuclear Power Plant. In Krasnodar, the outages affected about 40% of the city's energy system, reported the publication 93.RU with reference to the city administration. In the Rossinsky microdistrict, in eight houses Druzhny-1 and Druzhny-2, mass power outages have been occurring for a month. According to local residents, the power was turned off at first once a week, then three times.

On July 20, residents of Krasnodar blocked the street near the Lyubimovo shopping center in protest due to the disconnection of water and electricity supplies. According to the local publication 93.RU, Kraeved a Solovyova Street was blocked off. People complained that in the heat they had to sit for days without electricity and water. In protest against the inaction of utility workers, they began to cross the road back and forth and chant "Give us the light!"

"Every day the lights were turned off, every day. There has been no light for 24 hours now, the heat is 40+, 10-15 houses have no light, each house has 600 apartments," one of the protesters told the Telegram channel "Beware, News." People are demanding that the electricity supply be put in order. In the hellish heat, refrigerators and air conditioners do not work in houses, and many have their water turned off.

The mayor came to the protesters and tried to calm the tension. But later the police showed up and began making arrests. According to Krasnodar media, several protesters were detained, but they were soon released. Subscribers to city public posts posted videos with jokes about how it has finally started to rain and they can "take a shower" by leaning out of their windows.

Krasnodar Mayor Naumov, who came to support the protesters, explained that there was no power and water due to an accident on the power grid. Work to eliminate the accident is underway, and a new power cable is being laid at the same time, he added. After the protest, the power and water were partially restored. According to an RBC Krasnodar correspondent, electricity has already been restored to the Kraski residential complex, but residents of the Atlant, Druzhny, Druzhny 2, Red and Titany residential complexes were still without power.

Problems with the power supply this summer are happening not only in Krasnodar, but also in Yeysk and a number of other cities in the south of Russia due to a power shortage in the power grid and network overload due to high consumption.

Residents of Anapa, who gathered at the intersection of Shevchenko and Ivana Golubtsa streets, blocked the road in a similar way. As reported by the Telegram channel "Beware, News", the protesters only let ambulances pass and are communicating with police officers. According to them, they have been without water and electricity for four days.

Judging by the video published by the channel, an employee of "NESK-Elektroseti" addressed the people, asking them to leave the street and assuring them that "generators are already on their way to their houses". The crowd refused to disperse.

(According to information from <https://rtvi.com/news/mer-krasnodara-prisoedinilsya-k-stihijnomu-mitingu-protiv-otklyucheniya-sveta-i-vody/>; <https://bloknot.ru/chp/v-krasnodare-miting-lyudej-zaderzhivaet-politsiya-zhiteli-protestuyut-protiv-otklyucheniya-sveta-1315840.html>).