

JACKDAW

REVOLUTIONARY CLASS STRUGGLE NEWS

**BACK OUT ON
THE STREETS!**

ISSUE N° 10 FREE

ON WHOSE AUTHORITY?

Government moves to make protest illegal!

THE VERY NATURE of capitalism and the State is authority. Acceptance and respect for authority is a necessary part of the whole capitalist racket. For such a system based on exploitation to function, it requires our obedience to the ruling class.

Here in the UK, the ruling class generally favours the idea of *obedience by consent*. In other words, the “velvet glove” approach. Yet sometimes, that glove comes off and we are faced with the iron fist of capitalism and the State. Under the Johnson regime, the velvet glove is coming off more and more frequently, and we are increasingly being threatened with the iron fist.

The government came to power on a wave of right wing populism which has festered into a massive anti-left and “anti-woke” crusade against anyone who wants people to be nice to each other, is socially aware, or has a sense of fairness. This populism is against anyone that questions the government narrative.

So, Black Lives Matter protesters, footballers taking the knee, the topplers of the Colston statue in Bristol, Extinction Rebellion and Insulate Britain activists, workers going out on strike, people participating in a demo, taking part in the most non-violent

type of direct action or even reading this copy of *Jackdaw* – all are seen as a challenge to the Johnson clique’s authority and will need stamping out.

Here are a few of the government measures aimed at stamping us all out.

Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill

The “Police Bill” criminalises protest (unless that protest is given prior permission from the authorities, isn’t seen, isn’t heard, doesn’t disturb anyone... and has zero effect). It also allows increased police powers of Stop & Search and brings heavy restrictions into the lives of Gypsy, Roma, Traveller people, so it’s heavy on the racism. The bill was shelved for a while, then it came back with even more bite. It includes:

* *Locking on* (in other words, when a person attaches themselves to, another person or an object) is punishable by up to **51 months** in nick.

* *Being equipped to lock on* – i.e. not actually doing the above but being equipped to do it.

* *Serious Disruption Prevention Orders (SDPOs) and Protest Banning Orders* – ASBO style orders that prevent you from attending certain events, protests, demos and even from associating with others with similar opinions.

The Nationality and Borders Bill

This is one of the government’s more overtly racist attacks which allows them to strip up to six million people of their citizenship if the government sees them as a potential threat to the



“interests of the United Kingdom”. It targets those born overseas and those with dual nationality.

**Question:* what sort of threat to UK interests is it talking about? *Answer:* nobody knows! It’s all a bit vague - which is exactly how the government

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VOICE OF THE ANARCHIST COMMUNIST GROUP



Lies, corruption and sleaze

THE WHOLE “PARTYGATE” scandal is just the tip of the iceberg with the lying, corrupt and increasingly dictatorial Johnson regime; a government which has already been responsible for tens of thousands of unnecessary Covid deaths. The bullshit from the Conservative government knows no bounds, creating a backdrop of “white noise” of constant bluster, trickery and sneaky deals. As we go to press, Johnson is still Prime Minister. Whether he’s still PM as you read this issue of *Jackdaw* is anyone’s guess. Either way, he’ll soon be gone but who’ll replace him? That’s an easy answer: another criminal from the Conservative cabal! Meanwhile, these wannabe dictators will continue to push ahead with their increasingly authoritari-

an plans to crush dissent while they bleed us dry.

Starmer Chameleon

But let’s not forget Her Majesty’s Most Loyal Opposition in the form of the Labour Party, currently led by Sir Keir Starmer. As the former Director of Public Prosecutions, Starmer was ruthless in his defence of the State’s monopoly on violence by clamping down on protesters and making the lives of prisoners even more of a misery. Since he became Labour leader, he’s used this ruthlessness for weeding out anyone remotely leftist from the Labour Party while being generally meek and mild at criticising the Johnson government. In other words, blending in like a chamele-

on. That said, he’s currently riding high in the opinion polls. This is not because of anything he’s done that people actually like, though, but because the current ruling party is seen by most as so hideous.

Lib Dems, SNP, Greens, Plaid Cymru and the rest

Whether more or less Tory, or more or less social democratic, none of the other political parties have anything to offer the working class either. At best, they offer slightly bigger cages and longer chains. In reality, it’s more of the same old shit. Real change can only come about when we organise *for ourselves* in our communities, workplaces and out on the streets.

“At best, [the politicians] offer slightly bigger cages and longer chains... Real change can only come about when we organize for ourselves in our communities, workplaces and out on the streets.”

Security Guards on strike at Great Ormond Street Hospital (GOSH)

“It is hard to believe, but I do not get sick pay. What this means is if I go to work I put myself and others in danger. If I stay at home – I don’t make rent. I do believe in the NHS, I really do. But what kind of institution treats their workers like that?” Erica Rasheed, security guard and UVW member.

Great Ormond St Hospital (GOSH) is refusing to meet the demands of the 30 security staff to be brought in house and given the same pay and conditions as all the other 5000 workers at the

hospital. The security guards, members of the United Voices of the World, have already taken some strike action but the management has remained intransigent. In addition, the security guards have been subject to racist abuse. The UVW website highlights the way a WhatsApp group run by supposed colleagues is using racism to union bust.

“Comments leaked from a WhatsApp group run by colleagues intent on union-busting, described the action as ‘shit Kala behaviour’”. The Urdu word “Kala”, is a derogatory, racist term used to refer to people of a dark complexion, in this case, the predominantly Black security guards at GOSH, who are employed by a private contractor, Carlisle Support Services.

“Other comments included ridiculing the Black Lives Matter movement and the security guards campaign for equal rights and the three-day strike action they took last week.”

The situation at GOSH is an example of how management uses racism to divide workers as well as illustrating the institutional racism that permeates institutions such as the NHS.

As we got to press, the security guards are taking further action starting on the 19th of January. Support them by donating to the strike fund, sharing their story, and supporting the picket.

www.uvwunion.org.uk

www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/support-gosh-security-guards



‘Living with the pandemic’ demands Occupational Sick Pay for all!

A CONSTANT REFRAIN coming from the bosses staunchest supporters in Parliament is that we must “learn to live with” or “live alongside” the Pandemic. That 99 Tory MPs voted against more restrictions to combat the spread of the Omicron variant is a symptom of this. Apparently, there seems to be a concerted effort to normalise living in a world where deadly, infectious diseases ravage the working class but leaves the ruling class free to exploit whatever opportunity there is to add to its wealth. That this is done in the name of ‘liberty’ is both a travesty and a falsehood. We are not “free” to live our lives without restrictions if the lack of some restrictions means that we are constantly threatened by poverty, sickness and even death.

We do indeed need to learn to “live with” pandemics. Globalisation, increased international travel and the destruction of natural habitats will lead to the transmission of more diseases from animals to humans. Zoonoses (animal diseases passed to humans) are a fact of life in our global village. We need to protect ourselves from this and the fact that many working class people do not get

occupational sick pay shows that the bosses are not helping to protect their workers from the consequences of pandemics. We have to protect ourselves by demanding occupational sick pay for all.

One of the reasons why the SARS-CoV-2 (Covid-19) pandemic has gone on for so long is because we keep passing the virus on to each other. This gives it the opportunity to both multiply and mutate. This makes it more difficult to control. When a person catches Covid, they need to isolate themselves from others so that they don’t infect even more people. Workplaces, including schools, colleges and universities, are where large numbers of people congregate. Under Pandemic conditions, therefore, workplaces become “vectors of transmission” – places where lots of people become infected. That is why people who have to go to workplaces are told to self-isolate. If they keep away from others, they can’t infect them. It is no good, though, telling people to self-isolate if self-isolation amounts to homelessness and starvation for those who do self-isolate. You can’t pay your rent, feed yourself or your family and pay all of the

other bills on Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) of £100 per week. That means that we are faced with the choice of either following the rules and accepting poverty, or breaking the rules and infecting others. Not surprisingly, many of us are choosing the latter.

The obvious solution is to pay workers their full wage if they have to miss work as a consequence of Covid. If we become sick, if one of our kids becomes sick, if one of the people whom we live with becomes sick, we still get paid. Of course, the bosses will say that that is not affordable, it would make us uncompetitive and have far worse consequences than not paying people properly if they or their families or friends get sick. That is wrong. The boss class can afford it and the consequences of not doing the right stuff to bring the present Pandemic under control and protect ourselves from future variants and other Pandemics are far worse than curbing profiteering.

Unfortunately, the boss class has an aversion to spending money on anyone but themselves. We will have to make it impossible for them not to do so. Visit: www.nosafetynowork.org for more info.



“There seems to be a concerted effort to normalise living in a world where deadly, infectious diseases ravage the working class but leaves the ruling class free to exploit whatever opportunity there is to add to its wealth.”

The Refugee Crisis

As anarchist communists we believe in Mutual Aid. We believe that if a fellow human being needs help, and we have the means to help them, then we provide that help. For example, if someone is fleeing from conflict, persecution or destitution, then we provide them with a safe place to live and the means to live a better life. We don’t do this purely out of altruism. We do it because, in an uncertain world, we are never sure when we

will need help ourselves and when we will need to call upon others to aid us. Mutual aid has helped the human species to survive and, as one of the great anarchist communist thinkers, Kropotkin, has observed, it is a “factor of evolution”.

Capitalism does not support mutual aid. It glorifies selfishness and condemns those who need help as losers who are just a drain on resources. The present refugee crisis is an

example of this. The capitalists started the wars, caused the climate emergency and deny human beings the means to live – all of the things which have brought about the refugee crisis. Instead of helping the victims of their wars, their irresponsible use of fossil fuels and their economic system, the capitalists demonise them and encourage the working class to regard them as potential threats and not as potential friends and neighbours. The refugee crisis shows that capitalism stinks and that we have to get rid of it.





Anarchist Communist Group

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WHO WE ARE...

The Anarchist Communist Group (ACG) is a revolutionary anarchist communist organisation which is dedicated to seeking a complete transformation of society, and the creation of anarchist communism.

This will mean the working class overthrowing capitalism, abolishing the State, getting rid of exploitation, hierarchies and oppressions, and halting the destruction of the environment. To do this, we believe it is important to be organised.

We are committed to building an effective organisation that works towards the common goal of anarchist communism, in cooperation with other working class organisations and in grass roots campaigns.

We strive to base all our current actions on the principles that will be the basis of the future society: mutual aid, solidarity, collective responsibility, individual freedom and autonomy, free association and federalism.

If you want to join the ACG, then look first at our **Aims & Principles** on our website www.anarchistcommunism.org

You can also drop us a line at info@anarchistcommunism.org

Zero For Conduct



Rebel Education Worker Soapbox

educationworker.wordpress.com

Health Workers United

For working class independent action

healthworkersunited.wordpress.com



On Whose Authority? (from front page)

likes it, as it gives them more leeway to apply it as they like. Consequently, the impact on many black and brown people, or those born in another country could well be devastating if they are seen to step out of line.

The Human Rights Bill

This attempts to overhaul the Human Rights Act. Using the excuses of “common sense” and “foreign criminals”, this bill aims to remove rights to privacy and family life. It also removes the obligations of public bodies to protect the rights of whoever those public bodies deal with. It also claims to protect “free speech” but I think we can all guess which type of free speech it will be protecting.

Judicial Review and Courts Bill

Judicial review is a mechanism that allows anyone to legally challenge public bodies (government included) and question the lawfulness of those public bodies’ actions. The Judicial Review and Courts Bill seeks to undermine this abil-

ity to challenge the powers that be. This will make it more difficult for all those campaigning organisations, such as Liberty, The Good Law Project and many others to do what they do.

What can we do about all this?

For starters, get involved the *Kill The Bill* and *No Borders* groups and protests – whether these bills are passed or not. It’s essential that the campaigning around these continues because we’ll need to fight the *impact* of these measures when they are used by the State. It could also mean launching a wider *right to resist* campaign. What it will ultimately come down to is more solidarity, more mutual aid and more resistance. And for this, we’ll need to be organising in our communities and workplaces. The government and the police can be resisted (as the community did in Pollokshields last May), but it will mean large scale coordinated action.

Let’s get organised!

Fermenting Real Change

WHEN BRIENNE ALLAN, a brewer at Notch Brewing in the USA, asked on instagram if other women had experienced sexism in the brewing industry she had a flood of responses from women employed at a huge number of breweries and bars. Hundreds of stories of discrimination, harassment, violence and sexual assault were posted, with high profile companies and prominent individuals being implicated. The public pressure forced several guilty parties to resign their positions.



Before long the flood of women raising their voices had crossed the Atlantic as Siobhan Buchanan asked a similar question about sexism in the brewing industry in Britain. Though the craft brewing industry likes to present itself as modern and progressive, it’s still part of the same old capitalist system with all the sexism, racism, homophobia, transphobia and exploitation that entails.

One company mentioned several times was craft beer standard bearers Brewdog. Over a hundred former and current staff formed the group Punks With Purpose and wrote an open letter to the company condemning their toxic workplace culture and demanding change. Outspoken member of this group, Charlotte Cook, a London based brewer, is also member of the Industri-

al Workers of the World (IWW). Appearing on national radio and at an online industry conference she stated clearly that an important step workers in breweries should take is to unionise.

The IWW has launched the Brewery Workers Union, bringing together current and ex-brewery workers to create a network of support, workplace organisation, solidarity, training and necessary legal advice and aid. The Brewery Workers Union builds on skills and experience gained from the IWW’s members and officers, whether they work in a brewery setting or not.

They are organising workplaces, providing training on legal rights (including health and safety), contracts, grievances and disciplinaries, and more. For more information contact:

breweryworkers@iww.org.uk