

# REBEL WORKER

AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL

Sydney, Australia  
Vol.43 No.2 (240) Sept. - Oct. 2025

Paper of the Anarcho-Syndicalist Network 50c

**Organise on the Job for Co-ordinated International Workers' Direct Action required to Halt the Zionist Military Onslaught and Genocide in Gaza aided by the Trump Regime & Albo! Time to defy the Corrupt ALP aligned Corporate Union Bosses!**



Air Strike in Gaza as part of Israeli Military Offensive supported by the Trump Regime.

**GAZA CRISIS & WORKERS' DIRECT ACTION P.2; NSW RAILWAY NEWS P.3; SYDNEY BUSES NEWS P.7; VICTORIAN RAILWAY NEWS P. 8; FRANCE TODAY: BLOCK EVERYTHING P. 12; BRITAIN TODAY P.13; PUTIN'S RUSSIA P. 15; BOOK REVIEW CORNER: THE FUTURE OF REVOLUTION: COMMUNIST PROSPECTS FROM THE PARIS COMMUNE TO THE GEORGE FLOYD UPRISING P.16; GENERAL STRIKE IN ISRAEL P.20; PLUS MORE**



Rebel Worker is the bimonthly Paper of the A.S.N. for the propagation of anarcho-syndicalism in Australia.

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.

**REBEL WORKER**  
P.O. Box 92  
BROADWAY 2007 NSW

E-mail: Via our web site  
[www.rebelworker.org](http://www.rebelworker.org)  
SUBSCRIPTION RATES  
AUSTRALIA: \$12 a year  
OVERSEAS

\$25 (Aus.) by Air mail  
\$20 (Aus.) by Sea mail Free to  
Prisoners Supporters Subs, \$40 pa  
Receives copies of RW & ASN  
Pamphlets as published.  
Send to the above. Cheques should  
be made out to Black Cat Media.

## Gaza Crisis & Workers' Direct Action

Israel's assault on Gaza is entering its final stage. Israeli forces have killed over 50,000 people.

Tens of thousands more are wounded or missing in the rubble. The strip has been flattened. Now, the survivors face a blockade with only a trickle of food and medicine admitted. ---- This has been the goal all along. There was never a war in Gaza - only an attempt to impose a permanent solution on the "Gaza question". Another cease fire deal is being considered. If this one holds, it will be because the Israelis believe they have made Gaza sufficiently unliveable.

With the end in sight, and the judgement of history looming, governments around the world are changing their rhetoric. The genocidal propaganda in Israel has become too obvious to justify outright support. It's

not that these politicians have discovered a back bone or plan to impose real consequences on Israel. The Israeli government's overt extremism has simply forced its allies to save face.

**In the UK, the Labour government has condemned the blockade and**

**Gaza. Some of these parts, like the bomb bay doors, are only made in Australia, and the planes can't fly without them.**

The more isolated Israel becomes, the better. But the reality is that we've failed to stop the genocide. Israel's assault has mobilised one of the largest mass movements in recent Australian



suspended trade talks with Israel, but continues to supply it with parts for the F-35 fighter jet. Here in Australia, the language of the Albanese government has changed too. But while the PM has been willing to call the starvation of Gaza an "outrage" and slap sanctions on a pair of the most extreme Israeli ministers, nothing has been done to end Australian complicity in the genocide. Like the UK, Australia also supplies Israel with parts for the F-35; the very planes now bombing

history and there is now unparalleled international support for the Palestinian cause. But despite this we still weren't able to stop it.

**Why are we failing?**

Why hasn't turning millions of people into the streets been enough to stop the genocide? Why hasn't re-electing Anthony Albanese - who co-founded the Parliamentary Friends of Palestine

**See page 10**

## ASN APPEAL

**The Anarcho-Syndicalist Network requires suitable cost effective permanent premises. A\$750,000 is urgently sought to buy premises for the proposed Rebel Worker-Anarcho-Syndicalist Network Media Centre.**

**Please make out Cheques to Black Cat Media & send to P.O. Box 92 Broadway 2007 NSW.**



## N.S.W. RAILWAY NEWS

By Crimson Coconut

Unions NSW declared that “union members at Sydney Trains secured an historic agreement” after the 92% vote in favour of the 2025 agreement. They also announced that a “redundancy deed” has been written into the agreement providing the best redundancy entitlements in the public sector. That will be handy for the Government and Rail Bosses to continue to downsize the rail workforce. No sooner was the ratification announced then the Minns Government proposed slashing 950 jobs in the Public Transport sector. Though this did not involve sacking rail workers at the coalface interacting with the public at this stage.

**How was the Enterprise Agreement fight conducted?**

As with previous years, EA negotiations did not take place in the workplace with the workers affected. Many workers still don't know or understand what is contained in the agreement. This campaign was largely fought in the mainstream media with daily interviews on television news and opinion pieces in the daily papers. It was not fought for on the job in any meaningful way involving mass meetings or stop-works that possibly could have hastened the process of securing an EBA. An EBA which eventually fell short of the original log of claims.

Taking the fight to the public by using mainstream media, which is opposed to workers rights anyway, seems like a losing strategy. The Shock Jocks on radio and the daily shit sheets went after the union and rail workers spilling out their daily filth and lies about how much train drivers and other rail workers earn. Lies fed to a public that fell for the bullshit and anti-worker sentiment.

It became easy to label rail workers as greedy, incompetent and disruptive as daily work-to-rule tactics, fiddly refusals and bans caused public anger over a year long campaign of defiance and inconvenience. Trains often ran late or were cancelled at short notice for over a year because of the bans and limitations.

At no stage did the Union leadership of any of the unions involved in the EBA negotiations call for a general stop work meeting, picket or mass meeting of rail workers even though this would not have been illegal during the bargaining period. It is

refusal and “work to roster” did little to bring the Government to the negotiating table. Instead it infuriated commuters who were late to work or stranded on platforms because of trains being taken out of service. The media also fed on this.

A complete stopwork and mass meeting of the unions involved until the Government inevitably caved in to negotiate may have been less painful and more productive in terms of the Enterprise Agreement. One thing for sure is that it would have shown our power as workers and instead of pretending industrial action it would



useful to take all workers along and involve them in the struggle for their own working conditions. They get to understand what they are fighting for, it strengthens their resolve and it makes them more resilient and competent. Instead the union's tactics were to tinker at the edges of a campaign, to infuriate the public and cause the least disruption on a daily basis. Tactics such as refusal to clean graffiti, union badge and T-shirt logo wearing, emergency maintenance

have brought negotiations to a head a lot sooner. I can't express enough how important it is to have the whole workforce engaged in such a struggle together in solidarity.

**How did rail workers do out of the EBA?**

Australia's official underlying inflation rate is 2.7% a year. On the face of it the 4% pay rise over 3 years



plus the 4% back pay for 2024 for rail workers looks good as it makes up for years of below inflation pay rises. The catch-up though is an illusion. Many essential food and grocery items have sky rocketed since the last pay rise as a visit to Coles and Woolies will testify. According to recent economic reports the price of food increased by more than 3% per quarter through 2025. ([https://tradingeconomics.com/australia/](https://tradingeconomics.com/australia/food-inflation)

[food-inflation](https://tradingeconomics.com/australia/food-inflation)) A visit to the supermarket will astound most workers at the price gouging that is taking place. Some items such as cooking oils, coffee, cheese, bread have doubled in price in the last few years. Meanwhile house prices have jumped by approximately 40% over the last 5 years while it would be almost impossible to purchase a livable home in Sydney for under \$1.5 million. That is well out of reach of most rail workers with a family to support. Likewise rents have gone through the roof creating a competitive struggle to find accommodation at all. It is common for families to be paying half or more of their wage in rent.

So how is that 4% PA looking? There has been no catch-up as the wage rise has been swallowed up in the increased cost of living. This is a pay rise that fell short of that in the proposed union log of claims.

**While there are some progressive changes in the EA which are positive there are issues for concern ahead which still have to be negotiated.**

The amalgamation again of Sydney Trains with NSW Trains may lead to some job losses and downgrades of some positions. NSW TrainLink have already cut staff and hours on platforms without taking into account the concerns of employees. The EA still gives NSW Trains and Sydney Trains the right to make changes to working arrangements and employee reductions according to business needs. We say people must come before business needs.

The old idea of aggregate payments of

current specified payments for Train Crew is again raised in this EA, although none of the language is specific. Does it mean that some allowances will be rolled into an aggregate payment in lieu of the allowances?

**Many clauses in the EA are still up for grabs but are proposed to be**



negotiated. They are vague, without detail and may affect workers in the future. One such principle to be agreed to is the “staff work locations agreement” for station staff and cleaners. We don’t get to know what’s in the changes. Does it mean that you could be shuttled around the network at the employer’s whim no matter what is inconvenient to you.

All in all there are many unanswered questions surrounding the use of EA 2025. Many clauses still remain to be worked through, it is a work in progress. The Government has been given the right to continue the drive to privatisation. Much of what is contained within the EA with any clarity is just rehashed clauses continuing on from previous EA’s.

**Is it really a “historic” agreement or more of the same?**

Problems with this EA, like those before this, stem from the lack of union democracy, obfuscation, omissions, lack of clarity, ambiguity and

interpretation. The same union hacks are called up to make decisions on behalf of a lot of other workers. To make sure that a bargaining process is agreed and understood all employees need to be involved. That can be done a number of ways.

**Often we only get to hear about disputes in the EA through a press**

conference by a union leader. There is also the fact that the union bureaucrats that make decisions on our behalf know very little about our day to day tasks and how to solve problems that we face. They would spend more time talking to rail bosses than those of us who cop it each day on the shop floor.

Consultative committees in each workplace with elected leaders that represent the people in the workplace could be useful to give feedback to the main body of the union so that they are better informed. Due to political considerations of those same leaders the possibility of consultative committees is unlikely. For instance the log of claims proved to be rather a lame duck. It did nothing but draw out negotiations over a year.

**It would have been OK if the union leadership had ramped up a campaign of democratic control and implementation of dialogue that reached down/up through the workforce. That didn’t happen so**



the whole campaign routed internally and into hostile media was a partial failure. Their answer is always, “you voted for us, we provide the service”. That may be true, however providing the service does not necessarily mean cutting out the large majority of workers from the information and feedback loop or keeping them disinterested.

The fight for representation at grass roots level has to continue. After 12 months of negotiation, misunderstanding, fatigue, half arsed strategies, and fake industrial action many workers hurting economically voted YES to the incomplete EBA. The 4% cash deal backdated to May 2024 sweetened the deal for those tired of the s h e n a n i g a n s .

It was not a “momentous” deal nor an “historic” one despite the redundancy change increases that foreshadows job losses. Let’s make sure in future that we make our voices heard and that our input has weight. We can only do that if we have the organisation in our own workplaces that reflects our varying voices and desires and that they are amplified.

## Opinion on the Rail EBA

The Fair Work Commission’s decision in [2025] FWCFB 117 addresses applications under the Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth) involving Sydney Trains, NSW Trains, and the Communications, Electrical, Electronic, Energy, Information, Postal, Plumbing and Allied Services Union of Australia (ETU). The ETU sought bargaining orders under s 229, alleging breaches of good faith bargaining by Sydney Trains/NSW Trains and the Australian Rail, Tram and Bus Industry Union (RTBU). Sydney Trains/NSW Trains sought a voting request order under s 240A to allow employees to vote on a proposed multi-enterprise agreement, despite the ETU’s refusal to consent. The Commission dismissed the ETU’s applications, finding no breaches of good faith bargaining, and granted the voting request order, deeming the ETU’s refusal unreasonable and the vote consistent with good faith bargaining.

The decision prioritizes finalizing a beneficial agreement (4% annual wage increases, back pay, and improved conditions) after a lengthy bargaining process, emphasizing employee and public interests over the ETU’s late-raised concerns (Trades Uplift Claim and minor amendments to a clause). It sets a precedent for applying ss 240A and 240B, particularly on assessing “unreasonableness” and good faith bargaining in multi-union contexts.

### Precedent Offering Employers Greater Leverage

The decision establishes a significant precedent that enhances employers’ leverage in multi-enterprise agreement

bargaining, particularly through the application of ss 240A and 240B. Key aspects include:

#### 1. Low Threshold for “Unreasonableness” (s 240B(a))

- The Commission’s finding that the ETU’s refusal to consent to a vote was unreasonable due to the trivial nature of its proposed amendments and the late introduction of the Trades Uplift Claim sets a precedent that employers can seek voting request orders when a union’s objections are minor or

this precedent to bypass minority unions with specific concerns, particularly in protracted negotiations, by arguing that refusals to consent are unreasonable if they do not significantly alter the agreement’s core terms.

#### 2. Prospective Focus on Good Faith Bargaining (s 240B(b)):

- The decision clarifies that a voting request order will be granted unless the vote itself would undermine good faith bargaining, focusing on future impacts



untimely. This lowers the bar for overriding dissenting unions, giving employers a strategic advantage in pushing agreements to a vote, especially when most bargaining representatives agree.

- Implication: Employers can leverage

rather than past conduct. By rejecting the ETU’s claims of exclusion and withheld information, the Commission signals that minor or resolved disputes do not preclude a vote. This allows employers to move forward with employee votes even in

contentious bargaining, provided no significant ongoing breaches of s 228 exist.

Implication: Employers gain leverage by framing dissenting unions' objections as historical or minor, reducing the risk that past bargaining disputes will block a vote.

### **3. Flexibility in Engaging Bargaining Representatives:**

- The Commission's finding that separate meetings with the CRU (excluding the ETU after its withdrawal) did not breach good faith bargaining (s 228) affirms employers' flexibility to negotiate with different bargaining representatives separately. This precedent allows employers to prioritize discussions with majority or cooperative unions, marginalizing dissenting voices without violating statutory obligations.

- Implication: Employers can strategically focus on majority coalitions, weakening the bargaining power of smaller unions like the ETU, especially if they opt out of collective groups.

### **Using Employee and Public Interest to Undermine Genuine Bargaining**

The decision highlights how employers can leverage employee and public interests to override legitimate bargaining concerns, potentially undermining genuine bargaining:

#### **1. Employee Interests as a Justification:**

- The Commission emphasized the proposed agreement's benefits (e.g., wage increases, back pay) and the fact that employees had not received a pay rise since May 2023. It framed the

ETU's refusal as denying employees the chance to vote on a beneficial package, prioritizing the majority's interests over the ETU's concerns about trade relativities and clause wording.

- Impact on Genuine Bargaining: This approach risks undermining genuine bargaining by pressuring unions to consent to votes to avoid appearing obstructive, even when raising valid issues. The ETU's Trades Uplift Claim, while late, addressed pay equity a substantive concern that could affect workplace morale. By dismissing it as untimely, the Commission prioritizes expediency, potentially sidelining issues that require further negotiation to achieve a fair outcome.

#### **2. Public Interest as a Lever:**

- The decision underscores the public interest in avoiding further disruptions from industrial action, given Sydney Trains/NSW Trains' role in public transport. The impending expiry of the s 425 suspension (1 July 2025) added urgency, framing the ETU's refusal as a threat to public welfare.

- Impact on Genuine Bargaining\*\*: Employers in essential services can exploit public interest arguments to justify voting request orders, portraying dissenting unions as obstacles to stability. This precedent may discourage unions from pursuing unresolved issues, fearing they will be overridden in the name of public interest, thus weakening their ability to negotiate robustly.

#### **3. Risk of Marginalizing Minority Concerns:**

- By prioritizing the majority-supported agreement and public interest, the decision marginalizes the ETU's concerns, which represented a

smaller but significant group of trade-based employees. The Commission's focus on the agreement's broad benefits and the need to avoid further disruption risks setting a precedent where employers can bypass legitimate minority concerns by appealing to the greater good.

- Impact on Genuine Bargaining\*\*: This approach could chill genuine bargaining by discouraging unions from raising late-emerging issues, even if justified by new developments (e.g., the CRU's in-principle agreement revealing relativity issues). It may also embolden employers to rush agreements to a vote, knowing that employee and public interest arguments can override dissent.

### **Conclusion**

**The precedent set by [2025] FWCFB 117 enhances employers' leverage by establishing a low threshold for deeming a union's refusal to consent to a vote unreasonable and affirming their flexibility to negotiate with majority coalitions. It allows employers to push agreements to a vote by leveraging employee benefits and public interest, particularly in essential services, even when minority unions raise legitimate concerns. While this promotes efficiency and resolution, it risks undermining genuine bargaining by marginalizing valid, late-raised issues like the ETU's Trades Uplift Claim. Future cases must balance these dynamics to ensure that employee and public interests do not consistently override substantive bargaining concerns, preserving the integrity of good faith bargaining under the Fair Work Act.**

is this will be run by unions, so unions members get the course for free but non union members will have to pay a hefty fee. A further disgusting aspect is that everyone has 6 months grace to do the course.

Bringing down the gold free travel pass from 30 years to 20 years is a surprise, but this confirms that the Government believes hardly anyone will get to 30 years service in the future.

The other big positive is that wages employees now get the same penalty

## **LETTER**

Dear RW,

**The Rail EBA (Enterprise Bargain Agreement) is nothing spectacular: 4 percent per year for 3 years.**

The First lot is backdated to 01/05/2024. But workers then lose 2 months as the 2nd rise is from 01/07/2025. Then the 3rd from 01/07/2026.

As a RC grade gets not one benefit

extra.

**It was unfair that Transport officers were given a 30 dollars meal allowance but other RC grades don't get it.**

The \$1310.00 union member only allowance is disguised, as it is probably unlawful. So you get the allowance if you do a union course in regards to workplace rights. The catch



rates as salaried employees. Previously Salaried employees could take a sickie and keep their overtime, but wages staff overtime was counted from the 11th day. It is now equal. There are some vague things e.g. SDM (Sydney Trains) reforms.

I don't like the word reform as it usually means job cuts.

A higher grade SDM is proposed but I believe it's for a group SDM concept.

I also fear massive job cuts coming in the railways as AI starts to takeover.

Latest news regarding the EBA is that

with the normal pay plus back pay ended with \$10,500 in the hand payment as a lump sum.

Tax was \$6500 deducted to get the \$10,500.

Railway Jeffrey

## SYDNEY BUSES NEWS

### Leichhardt Depot News

**RW: What is the latest with the rosters at the depot?**

**Leichhardt Driver1: With the rosters introduced in early Aug. there was a major change which has upset and angered many of us. The day shift rosters were removed and incorporated into the AM shift rosters. Now some AM shifts which used to finish at 3.30pm are now finishing at 5pm. This has turned upside down the lives of many AM drivers. As it affects their family child minding responsibilities and routines. The bosses are also keeping tightening up our running times.**

**RW: What is the situation with the renewal of Bus Region contracts?**

**LD1: As you may have heard Transit Systems which has the contract for Region 6 has had its contract renewed for only 2 years rather than the normal 5 years. We believe the Transit Systems bosses weren't very keen about renewing their contract, as a result of making a loss. So the Govt. had to bribe them to do so with the "forgetting" of millions of dollars in fines over cancelled bus runs. Leichhardt and Kingsgrove have the most cancelled runs. In the case of the Eastern Suburbs depots such as Waverley there has been some talk that John Holland which has the contract, doesn't want to renew it due to losses and would be replaced by Veolia. However all bus companies in Sydney are making losses. Important contributions to the losses and cancelled runs are poor bus maintenance as part of management corner cutting.**

**RW: What is the situation with management?**

**LD1: Recently we gained a new depot manager, but we also have gained a new general manager. In the meal room at the depot, there are notices which have**

been put up inviting us to approach him to raise our concerns with the job. No one has taken up the invitation. We all consider its all just a PR exercise, and no action will be taken on our concerns and issues.

**RW: What are the latest developments at the depot?**

**Leichhardt Driver2: As of late Aug.**

rosters. We are facing tighter running times. Its all push, push push! You have a 5 minutes layover break at one terminus and then 5-6 minutes at the next. We aren't getting adequate layover breaks. There has been a lot of anger amongst various drivers over roster issues leading to very heated arguments with the guy in charge of rosters. We are also facing cut backs to



things have been relatively quiet for the past several months. The most significant recently was a management reshuffle in Mid Aug. We now have a new manager: We will have to see how things pan out with our new boss.

**RW: What are your impressions of the new rosters introduced in early Aug?**

**Leichhardt Driver3: The one significant aspect I have noticed is that those on the scrap are now having to do a range of weird runs.**

### Kingsgrove Depot News

**RW: What's the situation at the depot?**

**Kingsgrove Driver: In early August we have a worsening situation with the**

**bus maintenance. I've noticed on many occasions mirrors not being adjusted properly, you have to put in some folded up paper to fix the mirror issue yourself amongst other issues. The bosses are completely ignoring the likelihood of bus accidents due to the tight running times they are imposing on us and the corner cutting on bus maintenance.**

**RW: What do you see as the reasons for these increased management attacks and worsening of the job?**

**KD: Definitely since the buses were sold off by the Government and we were privatised, there has been a considerable worsening of the job. According to what I have heard, Transit Systems which has the franchise for**

Region 6 is running at a loss for the franchise. Meanwhile, their contract/franchise for Region 6 has only been renewed for two years, rather than the five years as in the past. As a result of these factors management is engaging in all manner of corner cutting to boost profits and productivity to counter the loss.

### Tempe Depot News

#### **RW: What are the latest developments at the depot?**

Tempe Driver: As of Aug. I have found the normal roster clerk is very accommodating regarding assisting us with changes to our rosters. However when we have a replacement roster clerk we often face serious problems

with getting changes. We are facing a continuing problem of inadequate layover breaks. Just this morning on one run I had only a 2 minutes layover break. The bosses are constantly trying to compress more work into our rosters.

#### **RW: What are other issues you have with the rosters?**

The biggest problem for me with the rosters is that the 5 hour maximum for one proportion of the roster occurring either in the first part of the day's roster or in second part has been extended to 5 hours 15 minutes. It was a trade off by the union officials as part of the EBA. I find the extra length too long and a struggle for me. However others who want more money, may have a different point of view I suppose.

### Burwood Depot News

#### **RW: What's the latest at the depot?**

**Burwood Driver:** As of mid August we are continuing to face tight running times particularly with the 461 Monday to Friday. The problem has been exacerbated by the rainy weather we have been experiencing lately. Today I have been continually running late with my runs, eliminating layover breaks. The union is failing to take action to remedy the rosters and running times issues associated with management corner cutting. The roster guy doesn't seem to be able to do much to remedy the problems we are facing.

## VICTORIAN RAILWAY NEWS

*In this issue of RW we will discuss issues at V/Line. As in previous issues of RW names have been changed.*

#### **RW: Can you explain to us why the Acting CEO of V/Line had to front the Media?**

Allison: The reason he fronted the media was due to trains being reduced in size during both AM and PM Peak periods, train delays and other issues.

Rastus: The reduction of trains in the peaks is an ongoing issue: A number of times Ballarat, Bendigo trains have been reduced to three car trains in lieu of six cars. The same thing happens on the Wyndham Peak Vale peak hours trains whereby the nine car Velocity train is reduced to six cars.

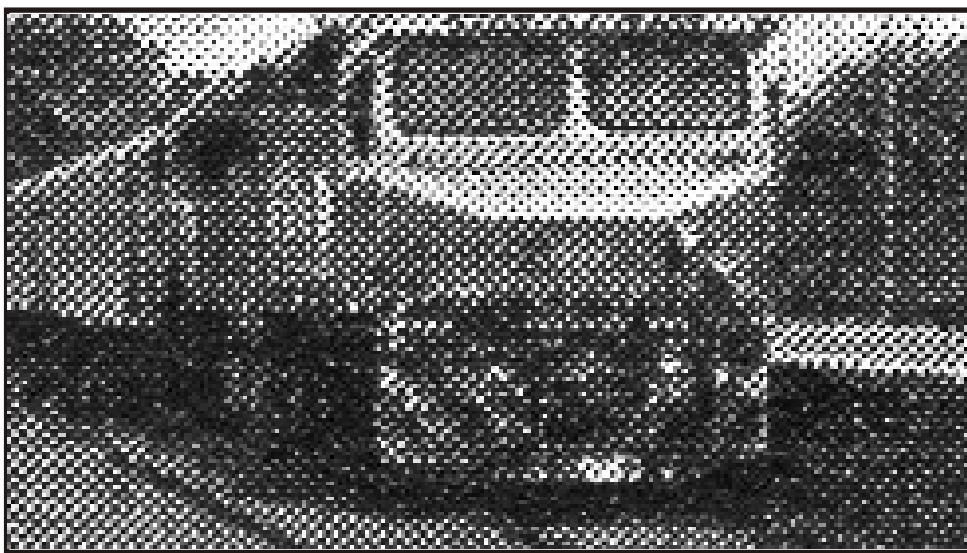
Roscoe: We feel sorry for the conductors who have to operate these services. They have to face the passengers and if they do not give a satisfactory answer, a complaint is made, the conductor has to face the Customer Service Officer.

Allison: Most times if a complaint is made, the conductor is interviewed by these goons from Human Resources, always them.

Ichabod: The acting CEO behaved like a spin doctor on a Melbourne radio station.

Forsyth: He used the excuse that the reason the Velocity trains were laid up was because they were being damaged by Kangaroos crossing the lines hitting the trains.

divided in to three car trains consisting of two motors and an intermediate trailer car. The conductors are of the opinion that the company who services the units has not increased the



Archie: This may have happened to a few Velocities but the main reason for these trains being out of service is because the early units are over twenty years old and they are due for a major overhaul.

#### **Ichabod: The acting CEO should have FESSED UP on the radio and told the truth about why these units were out of service.**

Allison: There are 400 Velocity carriages in service. Three trains

employees who service the units.

Archie: There are 130 Velocity trains plus 21 Sprinter trains and a few passenger carriages. There are repair depots at Southern Cross, Ballarat and a small depot at both Geelong and Bendigo. The contractor who maintains these units has a factory at Dandenong, where heavy overhauls are carried out.

Allison: You can see why morale amongst staff is low.



**Florence: As of June the trains are still operating. The rumour of a shut down beyond Eaglehawk has proven to be false.**

Rastus: To operate Velocity trains to Swan Hill a fair amount of work will have to be undertaken. There are automatic crossing Coops needing to be installed, boom barriers replacing crossings with only flashing lights, and automatic signaling installed.

Roscoe: The situation with locomotives as of June: 25 N Class locomotives, V/Line will return two Y Class shunting locomotives, plus seven N Class locomotives.

**Ichabod: The remaining 18 N Class locomotives and Y Class locomotives are to be leased to Victorian Freight operators.**

Rastus: The terms of the lease are if the locomotives are only to be used within Victoria and these freight operators will have to obtain extra freight business within Victoria.

**RW: What is the situation with Warrnambool, Albury and Bairnsdale services?**

Allison: One word: CHAOS.

Ichabod: The Warrnambool line complaints have been aired a number of times on local radio stations. The main complaints are overcrowding, no buffet service and cancelled trains.

**Rastus: The same with Albury as regards overcrowding. Despite buses being introduced from Seymour to Albury connecting with trains at Seymour, back up buses from Wangaratta and Benalla. There is still overcrowding at busy periods.**

**Forsyth: Despite the trains being fully booked, local passengers prefer the trains to the buses.**

Roscoe: With the Albury trains, these trains are to be replaced by buses at certain periods over the next 12 months. ARTC who operate the line are upgrading the line to take Double Stock Container trains as part of the inland rail project. Overhead bridges are being replaced with larger structures.

**RW: What about Bairnsdale trains?**

Allison: Bairnsdale trains as opposed to Traralgon trains are operated as six car trains of which two carriages are second.

Ichabod: Over the last few months three car trains have operated at certain times due to a shortage of Velocity

trains.

**Allison: These operate on Saturday nights, Sunday morning to Bairnsdale and return to Melbourne in the evening.**

Forsyth: In one instance a few years ago a six car train had already been crowded at Southern Cross and was ready to depart. At the last minute staff were told to clear the rear unit and the train ran to Bairnsdale as a three car train. The conductor copped a fair amount of abuse. The rear unit was sent to Bendigo.

**RW: Once again, we have run out of time. It seems V/Line management haven't the power of postage sticking.**

Allison and Roscoe: In having the final say, the Acting CEO of V/Line should be awarded an Oscar for being a SPIN DOCTOR. As for Positive thinking, we wonder whether management has any thoughts about what the passengers and employees have to put up with due to reduced carriages.

*In this issue of RW, we will discuss HUMAN RESOURCES. As in previous issues of RW, Drivers and Customer Service employees will discuss these issues. As in previous issues of RW names have been changed.*

**RW: In the last issue of Sparks mention was made of a new head of Human Resources being appointed.**

Rastus: A new head has been appointed and changes have occurred.

Ichabod: One of the changes is that conductors have been informed in a round about way that they cannot apply for the position of Customer Service Officer. Only persons in Customer Service positions can apply.

**RW: Why?**

**Clarence: Human Resources says conductors don't have Customer Service skills.**

Jethro: This is rubbish. Conductors have the Customer Service skills by working on the trains.

Archie: It is the same with Authorised Officers. Conductors have applied for the positions, attended the interviews but get rejected. V/Line management prefers to recruit AO's from METRO TRAINS.

Forsyth: This is a breach of the EBA.

Ichabod: In the EBA career paths were negotiated for employees. The attitude of the Union is employees should not be confined to their original job. They should be given an opportunity to climb the ladder.

**Rastus: The same had happened in the Driving Grade, Conductors and Station Staff and other grades have applied for Driver Positions and have been passed over.**

Roscoe: Recently V/Line advertised for Drivers. A number of Male applicants applied but were told the positions were for female applicants only. The males who applied were informed that they would be interviewed at a late date.

**RW: Has this happened?**

Roscoe: One word "No".

**Jethro: The same happened for vacancies in train control. A number of conductors applied. They were rejected. In Feedback they were told they had failed the "Psychometric Test."**

Rastus: We remember an incident 15 years ago where via the Back Door the husband of an HR Consultant was appointed to a Train Controller position. There was a fair amount of ill feeling over this appointment. Refer to Sparks issue 134.

**Ichabod: Years ago when advertising in the internal appointments job applications, the positions for Authorised Officers and Conductor Service Managers, the application stated, this was a career path for conductors.**

**Forsyth: The problem is: How can Conductors upgrade their skills when they are working voluntarily shifts. With the present rosters it is impossible.**

Archie: Years ago a position for a trainer was advertised. A conductor applied and was rejected. Human Resources said the conductor had no training experience. The conductor was able to do a training course. Another position became vacant The conductor applied and was unsuccessful.

Ichabod: You can see why morale at V/Line is low.

Deidre: The union is going to take V/Line to Fair Work Australia over this issue.

**RW: What is the issue with Customer Service Complaints?**

Ichabod: Passenger complaints are now referred to Customer Service Managers. These managers were originally Conductor Service Managers.

Archie: Some of these complaints are trivial but Human Resources made a big issue over the complaints.

Rastus: In one issue a conductor on a train in the Eastern Region asked a passenger to move from the Driver's Door of a Velocity Train. When those trains are in operation the light above the Door is illuminated telling passengers to keep clear.

**RW: What happened?**

Rastus: The person complained, the conductor was interviewed and Human Resources threatened the conductor

with dismissal. The driver supported the conductor but Human Resources did not want to know.

Roscoe: We drivers think this person was a stooge for Head Office. There has been a fair number of complaints occurring with V/Line.

Archie: It seems certain conductors are being targeted.

**Jethro: You are correct. This sort of complaint is occurring regularly and the same conductors are being targeted regularly.**

Roscoe: With the drivers they are making big issues over trivial issues. We are of the same opinion as the conductors.

Diedre: In some instances, managers are saying they will support the conductors but it is not happening. In

other words these managers are two faced. They all tell the conductors they will help them with the complaint but in reality they are liars.

Rastus: Drivers have voiced the same complaints.

**Roscoe: Managers and customer service managers should have the guts to stand up to Human Resources.**

**RW: Once again we have run out of space.**

Rastus and Roscoe: In having the final say, if you have to front Human Resources on these issues you may have to sneak a tape recorder into the meeting, enough said.

## Continued From Page 2

in 1999 - been enough to change things?

**The Palestinian solidarity movement lacked the kind of power necessary to force real change. In the place of that power, there has been a strategy based on two mistaken assumptions. The first mistake is the idea that Australia has no interest in supporting what Israel is doing, or that it only supports Israel because it is following the orders of the U.S. The second mistake is that government policy can be changed if enough people become educated on an issue, turn out to protest, and vote the right way in elections.**

**The reality is very different. Australia has a real interest in maintaining its relationship with both Israel and the U.S. To confront this interest, we need working class power.**

## U.S. puppet or willing accomplice?

The idea that Australia is an unwilling puppet of the U.S. is used to explain our participation in everything from the Vietnam war, to the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq. Many on the Left share this idea. At the last election, the Greens argued for "an independent foreign policy" capable of "reducing reliance on the United States". The language of "independence" has also been embraced by some socialist

groups. It paints a picture of Australia as a bullied nation, acting contrary to its peaceful instincts.

This is wrong. When Australia joins the U.S. in its imperialist wars, or support for Israel, it is because it is in the independent interests of Australian capitalism. Australia is a willing

enthusiastic junior partner in a U.S.-led alliance. For instance, supporting General Suharto's dictatorship in Indonesia was good for the U.S. dominated world-system. But that didn't stop Australia establishing domination over Timor Leste when Indonesia had unrest in 1998.



accomplice.

Australia is an imperialist power-a minor one-but still imperialist. Our ruling class seeks to dominate the Pacific and parts of South East Asia, projecting power through its role as an

Australia's main contribution to the U.S.-led alliance is the Pine Gap facility in Alice Springs. Pine Gap is jointly run with the CIA, and conducts surveillance over a third of the world, including China, Korea, Eastern



Russia, and West Asia. Central Australia was chosen because it was too remote for spy ships to intercept its signals from international waters.

**Again, there are parts of the Left that like to talk about Pine Gap as if it were a purely American base which has been forced on Australia. While it's true that the base is largely managed by U.S officials, no Australian government has ever seriously objected to its existence or following U.S. leadership. They supported Pine Gap's use in the Vietnam War and later for coordinating drone strikes. Today, they support its being used to provide targets in Gaza.**

### **The Israel connection**

Israel has played a similar role in the alliance, and likewise benefitted. It is a strong counterweight to the threat of Arab nationalism - and so control over one of the most strategically important and oil-rich parts of the world. Like Australia, Israel has also been a reliable ally in the struggles against communist movements. By serving the alliance, Israel has gained support for its own colonial and imperialist ambitions over the West Bank, Gaza, Lebanon, and Syria.

Israel and Australia share another unique connection in the alliance, which stems from their shared history as settler-colonial states. Like the United States (and apartheid-era South Africa), both countries consider themselves islands of European, capitalist civilisation in a "savage" part of the world. This is a powerful psychological link, but the real driving interest is material. As colonial outposts, these countries have been able to extend American power across the world, and establish their own regional dominance in reward.

### **Where do we have power?**

Australia is directly complicit in the genocide, and has a real interest in maintaining that complicity. This is why protesting hasn't been enough. This raises the question of how and where we have power. It's clear that we can't build it in parliament. Government policy isn't dictated by

morality, popular opinion, or even the personal positions of elected leaders. Capital calls the shots. Government's either ensure those interests are served, or they get replaced.

**Clearly, we also have very little power in the streets. Governments can ignore or wait out protest movements, while the police are equipped to deal with both civil disobedience and riots. Where we really have power as ordinary people is as workers, primarily in the workplace. Workplace power gives us two points of leverage. First, workers in key industries can refuse to participate in harmful work. Second, all of us can strike and hit the ruling class where it hurts them most: their profits.**

### **Hitting them where it hurts**

**To operate, Pine Gap needs electricity, water, and other logistical support supplied by workers who don't work for the base itself.**

**University workers can fight to end research assistance to weapons companies. The engineers, manufacturers, and logistics workers who supply Israel with crucial parts for the F-35, or the R400 remote weapon system, can limit the Israeli army's supplies. Union dock workers at the French port of Fos-sur-Mer took this kind of action on 5 June, refusing to load a container of machine gun parts bound for Israel. Because of their industrial action, fewer guns will be aimed at the people of Gaza.**

**If we're going to do the same here, it requires getting organised and having the strength to pull off unprotected industrial action. This is the kind of power that the Palestine solidarity movement has largely failed to focus on.**

As long as we keep our activism to our free time, and bosses' profits are safe, the Government can ignore us. Hundreds of thousands of people around Australia can turn up every Sunday, for years, and it won't force them to stop. But workers' make society run, and we can decide to run it differently if we want.

**Never Again' means getting organised**

It's time we place a price on Australian imperialism. If we want to save what's left of Gaza, and make sure that Never Again means never again for anyone, we need to build the kind of movement that we don't have today.

**Building real power means building strength in our workplaces. All of us need to be organised with our co-workers in our unions. Our delegates and branches need to be linked together in rank-and-file networks across every union in every industry - including those that produce and transport weapons.**

Only workers' power can put us in the driver's seat. Without it, Australia will continue to follow the imperialist demands of capital. With it, we can make a revolution - and build a new world.

*By a bloke I met  
Thanks to ACF*

### *Editorial Comment:*

*To realistically facilitate workers' direct action on the Gaza Crisis and Israeli onslaught issues workers in strategic sectors such as transport industries would have a critical role in spearheading the strike/direct action wave movement which can spread across industries. This direct action would likely focus initially on immediate, bread and butter style issues. Later on issues like the Gaza Crisis. It would also realistically entail long term, intensive outside-the-job assistance for on-the-job organisation in these strategic industries, to assist workers to win victories in the class struggle.(1)*

*In this context it would be possible to also counter the influence of the ALP aligned Corporate Union hierarchy leading to major break aways from the Corporate Unions. Creating major steps toward establishing an anarcho-syndicalist style new union confederation based on grass roots control, direct action and opposed to all political parties.*

### *Notes*

*(1) See "From Corporate Bureaucratic Unionism to Grassroots Ccontrolled Direct Action Unionism" RW Vol.41No.3 (235) On libcom.org & www.rebelworker.org*



# FRANCE TODAY - BLOCK EVERYTHING

## September 10: A Planned Revolution?

No, they need numbers with multiple zeros in their accounts, they need the fantasy representation of money and the smell of power, of authority. ---- So, since the politicians they placed on the throne disappoint them, they installed a true manager, bold and inflexible, in 2017. He's done a lot of work to destroy everything, but he still needs to be boosted, to take advantage of the time he has left as president to go even faster, even further: to destroy everything that remains of social protection. These are uncertain times: we have to move forward.

### It's buzzing on the web

And it's Bayrou who's doing it. But since the austerity-laced announcements of our first sinister Francois Bayrou on July 15th, it's buzzing on the web. We're being promised, via social media, a nationwide lock down for September 10th. For now, we don't know much except that it looks like a resurgence of the Yellow Vest protests. Although the movement claims to be unrelated to political parties or unions, the far right, still active on social media, is already trying to co-opt this hypothetical movement in the making.

**It's important to keep in mind that**

the fascist galaxy has been waging a fairly effective multi-front offensive for several years, and even more so now that they're feeling the need to grow wings, with a well-thought-out strategic vision.

The steamroller is occupying all fields in the quest to build a cultural

July 14th, on TikTok, by an organization called "Les essentiels" (The Essentials) (see Liberation, July 25th), and was then immediately relayed by former Yellow Vest figures. With a strong crypto-fascist flavor...

Since then, quite a few



majority: institutions (RN, hard right, etc.), cultural dissemination (Bollor, Strin, etc.), popular debates and digital networks (Zemmour, Hanouna, X-rated posts, etc.), student circles (UNI, Cocarde, etc.), infiltration of popular protests (GJ, anti-vaxxers, etc.), etc.

**It's unclear exactly where the September 10th movement came from, except that it started shortly before the announcement of Bayrou's austerity plan on**

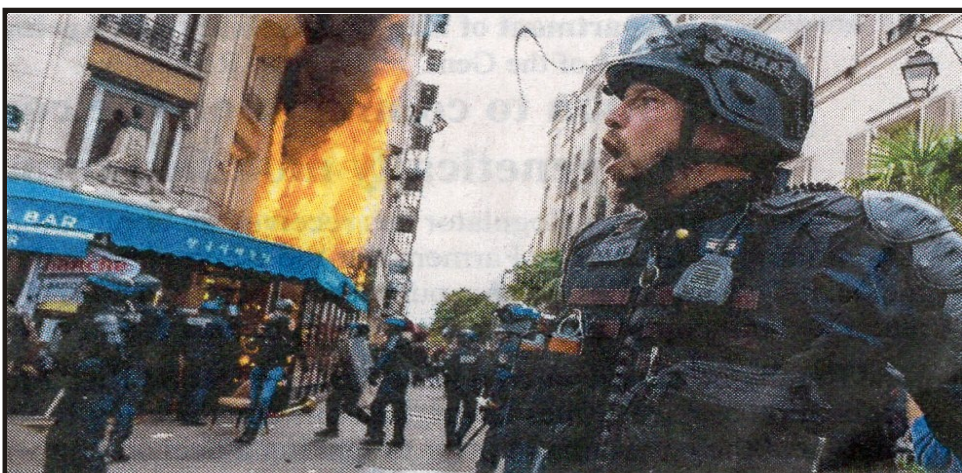
organizations have supported this call, from Earth Uprisings to Extinction Rebellion, including Contre Attaque, the autonomous milieus, LFI, and the far left.

**On the union side, there's been almost total silence for the moment. At the time of writing, FO (French Labour Union) has issued a strike notice starting September 1st, and the CGT (French Trade Union Confederation) trade and chemical industry federations are calling for a strike on September 10th.**

**If the spark were to ignite...**

**What should we make of all this? Well, any popular reaction and attempt at direct democracy seems like a good thing in itself.**

If, as with the Yellow Vests, the spark were to ignite, a mass popular movement could well emerge.





If this were the case, the demands and organization of what is launched would not matter. This could be a great opportunity for unions, as for all protest movements, to join forces on the dates and methods of action. Not to hijack the movement (which is always harmful), but so that each organization can advance its own legitimate demands alongside one another. This would not leave initiatives in the hands of "fascist-friendly" groups, but

rather by creating a kind of Assemblies of Struggle, bringing together organizations that fight and demonstrate against the right and the far right.

Therefore, perhaps, on September 10th, there will be an opportunity to create a large mass popular movement that could bring together all those who are fed up with austerity for the benefit of profiteers.

Let's hope, then, that if the match strikes, all of France's activist organizations will support the movement in order to give a chance to a multi-demand movement capable of challenging the true common enemy of all: capital.

*David Perdrix and Franck Plazanet*

*H t t p s : / / m o n d e - l i b e r t a i r e . f r / ? a r t i c l e n = 8 5 0 3*

## BRITAIN TODAY

### KEY WORKERS UNITED

In the beginning were the words. Key Workers United newsletter was launched during Covid to record what key workers in Norwich were experiencing at work during the pandemic and lock down.

We began by asking our contacts in the NHS, rail, retail, education, and the post office to write short accounts of work and our contacts responded wholeheartedly. What seemed unique was that these were the voices of workers themselves, most of whom were not in a party or sect- a kind of local 'Notes from Below' with worker correspondents. It was bi-monthly, giving us enough time to collect articles and images and went from 2 to 4 pages very quickly.

After Covid, it was inevitable that contributions would fall off but the 2022-23 strike wave began to reactivate people. The strikes brought a massive revival. Picket lines at the local hospital (Norfolk & Norwich), pickets at rail stations and postal depots were regularly supported. RMT picket lines were set pieces of solidarity supported by NOR4NOR, Unite Community and DPAC: we sang 'Oh show me the way to the next picket line'. At UEA, it has chronicled the long running disputes over redundancies whilst the closure of Norfolk's flagship adult centre Wensum Lodge provoked a community fight back. Over time, it

has evolved: more general articles, a regular column called 'Whatever would Gerrard[Winstanley]say?' as well as play and book reviews and regular comments on the Palestine genocide.



And the opening of new left bookshop called Caracol has been a welcome home for reading, writing and gathering in Norwich.

It's clear that any local newsletter rides a wave of wider political and social currents e.g. Covid, the strike wave and Palestine. But unlike the national publications of the left, it talks about identifiable local workplaces or issues e.g. Benjamin Court in Cromer and in Lowestoft

and Yarmouth. Secondly, that it is not affiliated to any political party (especially not the Labour Party or the Socialist Workers Party).

Although the comrades involved in the meetings are from all shades of opinion and bring with them huge reserves of political experience they're not dogmatic. Thirdly it is an independent forum with a clear formulation of working class politics

and tries to overcome the 'silo syndrome' that divides campaigns and projects. It asserts that it is vital to link the workplace with communities, for example in the work of NOR4NOR which argues that rail workers need to forge links with local passenger groups as shown successfully by the fight to retain guards on trains and by the ticket office victory.

If Key Workers Unite can begin to unite struggles in Norfolk is, as yet,



unclear. This is urgent but difficult. But the issues of climate change, inequality, migrants' rights, Palestine and the proto-fascist

right/militarism do not stop at county boundaries.

It is now the newsletter of the Norfolk

& Waveney Solidarity Network. Dave  
<https://www.anarchistcommunism.org/>  
 w p -  
 content/uploads/2025/06/jackdaw23c.

## Workers & The Environment

If we are to succeed in addressing the ecological crisis, then the environmental movement needs to be much, much larger and be based firmly in the wider working class, both in the community and in the workplace.

It must be willing to not only make demands of government but to challenge capitalism directly. Those at the point of production, who have the power to bring everything to a halt, have a critical role.

Imagine port workers refusing to let imported Brazilian soya into the country. Imagine the fossil fuel workers refusing to work anymore and demanding full pay until they get alternative jobs.

However, it is not easy to integrate the union movement into the environmental movement. Take the example of Port Talbot. This steelworks was the 2nd highest source of CO2 from any single site in the UK.

Transitioning this steelworks is expected to make a significant impact on the UK's emissions. The steel works created high levels of PM10 air pollution that blows all over the area. Decarbonising steelworks is necessary in order to tackle the climate emergency as well as pollution for local communities. But what about the workers? 3000 jobs have been lost as only a few hundred workers are needed for the new operation.

This will have a devastating impact on workers, their families and the community.

The campaign against the third runway is another example of conflict between environmentalists, supported by residents, and the workers. According to the General Secretary of Unite: "We welcome Heathrow's commitment to UK produced steel and we look forward

to further cooperation with Heathrow Airport and the government on the much needed third runway."

Many industries that provide jobs for thousands of workers in the UK and

of corporations and government. But as long as corporations and profits are the main aim of the economic system and the government, there will be no Just Transition. In fact, there will be the worst of both worlds- no serious



millions around the world, are major producers of CO2 emissions. The government's attitude towards climate change is largely based on ensuring corporations can continue to make profits. At Port Talbot they allow 3000 jobs to go so emissions will be reduced and then in North East Scotland and the Shetlands they support more drilling in the North Sea which will provide jobs and increase emissions. Many talk about a 'Just Transition'- but clearly that is not happening. Workers in Port Talbot can hardly move to the north of Scotland to get these new jobs that are meant to appear. What both actions have in common is supporting big corporations in their drive for more profits.

Workers need to take control of the transition, not leave it in the hands

action against climate change and any green washing actions will be at the expense of the workers.

There have been some examples of this happening. Back in 1976 workers at Lucas Aerospace put forward an alternative plan to weapons production and the idea is currently being revived. 1. Workers at the Belfast shipyards, threatened with closure, have plans for producing infrastructure for renewable energy. In Italy, workers at a closed car factory are putting proposals forward for an alternative green production plan. 2. We need to overcome the jobs vs environment division. Only with a complete change in the system can we deal with climate change and social and economic justice issues.



# PUTIN'S RUSSIA

## Anarchists Imprisoned for Attacks on Military Offices & Infrastructure over Ukraine Invasion

Alexey Rozhkov has been sentenced to 16 years for setting fire to a military enlistment office, whilst Ruslan Sidiki has received a prison sentence of 29 years. Sidiki was beaten and received electric shock torture in custody. --- Rozhkov made an arson attack on a military enlistment office after the invasion of Ukraine by the Russian army on March 11th, 2022. He said in an interview:. --- "I just understood that I couldn't stay indifferent. (...) Any war means death for ordinary, simple people. War in the 21st century seems completely alien to me. Especially with such absurd reasons[they gave]. We annexed Crimea in 2014, and even then I said it was all done in vain. Crimea is not ours and never will be. There will be consequences. And that's exactly what happened.

I find it deeply upsetting that people are dying - civilians are dying, and those who don't want to fight but were conscripted are also dying. I wanted to make a statement, to get people to fight against this war. I wanted to influence the situation, to do something to stop or at least weaken[the Russian military]. That's why I set fire to the military enlistment office."

Rozhkov was abducted from Kyrgyzstan where he had fled, by Putin's secret police, the FSB. In addition to the arson charge, now updated to "terrorism", he was also accused of "justifying terrorism" and spreading "fake news" about the Russian military due to an interview he gave to the Khodorkovsky Live channel.

Another anarchist, Roman Shvedov, 39 years old, had been earlier sentenced to the same number of years imprisonment on similar charges.

After his sentence, he committed suicide in December 2024..

You can write to Alexei to show support:

Mailing Address:

Rozhkov Alexey Igorevich, born



1997

Repina St. 4, SIZO-1

620019, Yekaterinburg, Russia

Letters should be written in Russian, you may use automatic online translation tools.

## Ruslan Sidiki

Ruslan Sidiki, a Russian-Italian, was sentenced by a military court in Ryazan to 29 years, nine years of which in a prison, and the rest in a maximum security prison. He was accused of derailing a freight train and attacking a military airfield near Ryazan on the orders of Ukrainian special services. He denied working for Ukraine. Here is part of his final statement in court:

My targets were Russian military equipment and the logistical chains used to transport military hardware and

fuel. In this way, I wanted to impede military operations against Ukraine...I have said more than once that I had no intention of deliberately intimidating anyone. I chose the targets myself. I attacked the military aircraft parking area, intending to destroy the aircraft. The train was derailed to disable the railway line on which I had observed the movement of military equipment.

I would like to point out that I monitored the train traffic on the

line I sabotaged and made sure there were no passenger trains running on it. For additional assurance, I maintained visual contact. If I had been indifferent to people's lives, I could have derailed the train without direct involvement...The impossibility of peacefully influencing the authorities' actions and the criminal prosecution of those who disagree with them leads some to leave the country, while others decide to take Action. In any case, regardless of the severity of the act, the use of torture during interrogation is unacceptable if we live in a state governed by the rule of law. To torture someone with electric shocks and beat them while they are tied up is an utterly despicable act.

Responsibility here lies not only with those who used these interrogation methods but also with those who know about it, those who fail to react, and those who help to cover it up.

And finally, I will read an excerpt from

a poem by Nestor Makhno\*:

"Let them bury us now,  
But our essence will not sink into  
oblivion,  
It will rise up at the necessary hour  
And will triumph, I believe in this."

As soon as we obtain an address for  
Ruslan, we will publish it

\*Nestor Makhno, Ukrainian  
anarchist who inspired a mass  
insurrectionary movement during  
the Russian Civil war.

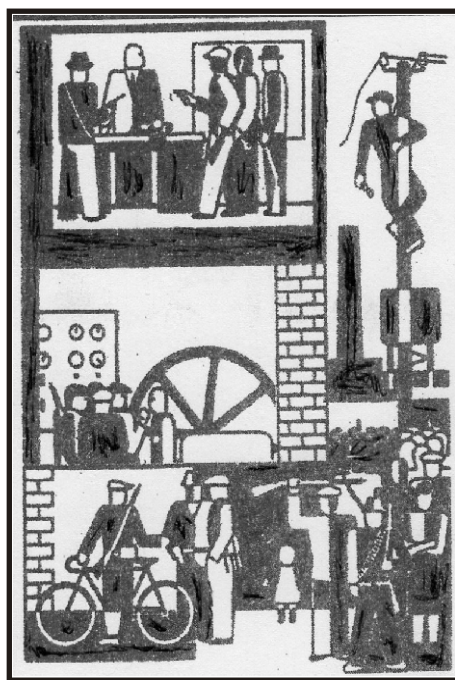
## BOOK REVIEW CORNER

### **The Future of Revolution: Communist Prospects from the Paris Commune to the George Floyd Uprising by Jasper Bernes Published by Verso**

Recent months have seen the Trump Regime launching military occupations of Washington DC, Los Angeles to be followed by Chicago, with plans for similar occupations of other major cities controlled by the Democrats. Obviously in line with preparations to suppress any uprising against Trump's accelerated neo liberal push and the roll back of the gains secured by the working class since the Roosevelt Govt. 'New Deal' of the 1930's. Trump has now also been talking up plans for establishing a 'Dictatorship.' These latest moves have been preceded by ICE agent raids on immigrants likely a precursor for dragnets against various opponents of the Trump Regime.

The book under review focuses on a range of uprisings, revolts and revolutions from the Paris Commune of 1871 to the George Floyd Uprising of 2020. Including the Russian Revolutions of 1905 and 1917, the German Revolution of 1918-23, the Spanish Revolution and Civil War of 1936-39, Hungary 1956, the France May 1968 General Strike and factory and university/schools occupations, the Portuguese upheaval of 1974 and others. The author focuses on a range of theoreticians and 'ultra left' groups which have promoted Mass/General Strikes/Workers Councils/Workers Self Management of industry/communities over the period under discussion. Particularly the Marxist theorists Rosa Luxemburg and Amadeo Bordiga, Cornelius Castoradis and Claude Lefort of the Socialisme ou Barbarie group and the International Workers'

Correspondence Committee, Guy Debord and the Situationist International, Root and Branch journal, CLR James and Raya Dunayevskaya of the Johnston Forest tendency, amongst others.



### **The Murky Origins of the First Russian Soviet**

A problem with the author's discussion of the first workers' soviet or council of delegates which occurred in the 1905 Russian revolution, is that he fails to grasp the murky aspects of its very early days. He fails to consider the account of the Russian Anarchist Voline who played a key role in its emergence, observations in his book 'The Unknown Revolution'.

In particular how workers who had been delegates of the Gaponist union

<https://www.anarchistcommunism.org/2025/05/25/two-russian-anarchist-opponents-of-war-receive-savage-sentences/>

(police created union headed by Police Agent, the Russian Orthodox Priest Georgy Gapon) resorted to duplicity with the appointment of the officials of the Soviet. The Soviet was created at a secret meeting to avoid police surveillance attended by the delegates and Voline. Particularly they provided a certain Nossar/Khrustalev, a legal clerk with contacts with wealthy opponents of the Czarist regime who helped fund major general strikes against the Czarist regime with an identity card as a factory delegate. So he could become the first President of the St. Petersburg Soviet. After his arrest, they gave a similar bogus credential to Leon Trotsky, at that time a Social Democratic Labor Party member and journalist. This resort to duplicity by these workers shows a lack of workers' self confidence in running their own workers' organisations. The delegates were also not strictly mandated and revocable. (1)

It provides an important back drop to understand the degeneration of the Soviets particularly in the 1905 revolution and the much more rapid degeneration in the subsequent 1917 revolution which the author does a better job at sketching. Particularly how the Soviets in the largest cities in 1917 from the beginning were effectively mini Parliaments established and dominated by political parties.

Then later a launching pad for Lenin and the Bolshevik Party's seizure of power in October 1917 and the subsequent establishment of a Dictatorship playing a key role in the counter revolution. Another key factor contributing to this degeneration of the Soviets and the subsequent Bolshevik Dictatorship was the absence of experienced mass anarcho-syndicalist style industrial unions. Particularly the lack of the syndicalisation/co-ordinated/federated workers committees/councils in workplaces within industries linking up with



federations of community associations/councils contributed to the industrial chaos and shortages. It massively contributed to such dictatorial policies of the early Bolshevik regime such as the imposing 'one man management' of factories. Leading down the slippery slope to Central Planning, State Capitalism and the Stalin Regime.

### **The Betrayal of the Spanish Revolution**

The author's analysis of the failure of the emergence of workers councils/Soviets during the Spanish Revolution/Civil War of 1936-39 and the associated collaboration of the CNT (National Confederation of Labour) (Anarcho-Syndicalist union confederation) and the FAI (Iberian Anarchist Federation) with the Republican/Popular Front Government and its highest committees being drawn into the counter revolution is very inadequate.

The author fails to examine the impact of the 'Insurrectionary Cycle' of the early 1930's which the CNT was drawn into by a minority of anarchist groups in the FIA and those who just 'identified with it' who had secured control of key mass circulation CNT/FAI newspapers and important CNT committees inciting the insurrections in various towns. The subsequent massive state repression led to an unfavorable climate within the CNT/FAI for the discussion and adoption of a more realistic revolutionary strategy than the CNT being self sufficient for a revolutionary takeover. Such as a 'Workers' Councils' State model.

This concept was becoming very influential amongst many in the international anarcho-syndicalist movement particularly in the highest committees of the IWA (International Workers Association - international anarcho-syndicalist union organisation).

Another problem with the author's discussion of the role of the CNT and FAI in the Spanish revolution is his ignoring the influence of Spanish nationalism. Prior to the Civil War there was no focus by the CNT on materially assisting other anarcho-

syndicalist style movements in other countries which had been hard hit by the rise of mass Stalinism, Fascism and military dictatorships, particularly in Latin America. Some prominent figures in the international anarcho-syndicalist movement accused the CNT of being affected by a 'national socialism' orientation. This orientation contributed to the isolation of the Spanish revolution and success of the counter revolution in the Republican zone and Franco's forces.

### **Unraveling the Riddle of the France May 1968 Events**

In the author's discussion of the France May 1968 near revolution, he over emphasises the 'spontaneous' spread of the strike wave across French industry, following the student protests and university occupations. He fails to adequately consider the important role of the Socialisme Ou Barbarie Group in the prelude to the May 68 events. Particularly with its role in the publication of the work place paper 'Tribune Ouvrierre' at Renault Billancourt in Paris the largest factory in France employing 30,000 workers. It was launched in the early 1950's associated with one of its members Daniel Mothe and a group of other plant workers involved in a wildcat strike in 1947.

In the late 1950's it inspired and linked up with similar workplace papers in other factories and firms. Facilitating an anti-Stalinist/union hierarchy pole of attraction, which played a crucial role in the spread of the strike wave and occupations across industry. However, even in the case of Renault Billancourt during the May events, Stalinist CGT (General Confederation of Labour controlled by the Communist Party) union reps prevented revolutionary students such as those led by Daniel Cohn-Bendit to enter this factory complex and others to agitate amongst workers for a revolutionary push and workers' councils. However the existence of mass anarcho-syndicalist unions in the lead up to the May events certainly would have the potential to push the events in a revolutionary direction with the establishment of

workers councils.

Associated with the 1947 strike wave, the prospects for establishing mass anarcho-syndicalist unions looked promising associated with the ballooning membership of the anarcho-syndicalist CNT-F (National Confederation of Labour - France) and many major splits from the CGT. However due to the onset of the Cold War and a major rightward split from the CGT to form the CGT-Force Ouvrierre engineered by the CIA, these prospects of a revival of mass anarcho-syndicalist unionism was massively stymied.(2)

### **The 'Corporate Unionism' Challenge**

In the author's discussion of the type of uprisings which have erupted after the Global Financial Crisis of 2008 in numerous countries and associated movements such as the Estalliso Social in Chile, the gilets jaunes in France, the Arab Spring, Podemos in Spain, George Floyd Uprising amongst many others he argues these struggles have emerged largely eccentric to production and industry. Despite the author squandering a large chunk of the book from page 81 to 128 on an arcane discussion of value in Marxist Economic theory, with Part 2 of the book entitled 'The Test of Communism,' he neglects to analyse the development of the crucial 'corporate unionism' phenomena. Together with other strategies of Agencies of ruling classes in various countries to counter the radical upsurge of the 'long 1960's'.

The emergence of 'Corporate Unionism' in Australia was associated with the ALP/ACTU Prices (Australian Labor Party/Australian Council of Trade Unions) and Wages Accord and then the subsequent 'un-Official Accord' years associated with 'enterprise bargaining' and the implementation of the Neo Liberal agenda. With the Previous reformist/bureaucratic unions becoming integrated at the top levels in the Corporate set up through a myriad of connections with the Corporate set up and the

**alleged rigging of union elections and enterprise agreements ballots via ALP networks in the AEC (Australian Electoral Commission). Established in 1984 by the Hawke ALP Govt. as an 'unofficial' part of the Accord.**

Many leftist parties and some attracted to Red and Black color schemes and A in the Circle which have taken a rightward shift in the years of the 'unofficial Accord' are also involved in facilitating the 'smoke and mirrors' performances of the corporate union bosses associated with enterprise bargaining. Particularly with usually ineffectual or halfhearted 'community' picket lines and industrial campaigns set up to fail. The corporate union bosses often engage in highly sophisticated manipulation techniques much superior to the previous bureaucratic reformist union officials, emphasising their close connections with the corporate media and likely CIA training via the Harvard Trade Union Officials Training Course. (3)

### **Deep State/Corporate Agency 'Identity Politics' Strategy**

**Another strategy has been the promotion of the divisive and dangerous 'identity' politics particularly the so called 'women's movement'. It was part of the CIA's 'Operation Chaos,' parallel to the FBI's COINTELPRO to disrupt New Left groups in the wake of 1968 which were playing an important role in the USA facilitating a wildcat strike movement and industrial insurgencies. Together with the corporate media/bourgeois educational and cultural system promotion of identity politics which continues up to today.**

The CIA has also been exposed by researchers as playing a key role in

disrupting New Left groups and encouraging the hippy phenomena with the production and distribution of LSD in the 60's and 70's. This 'social engineering' was also facilitated by the Deep State created pop groups such as the Beatles manufactured by the Deep State connected UK based 'Tavistock Institute' particularly with the group's 'psychedelic and mystical' phases. (4)

**The author is clear about the need for future uprisings to spread across both communities and industry with the launching of soviets/workers councils. However he presents no realistic strategy for the industrial front. He just talks about the need for 'Workers' Inquiries' analyses, support for 'Base Unions' and work place committees. If he means 'base unions' which have formed in the UK such as the IWW-WIES (Industrial Workers of the World - Wales, Ireland, England & Scotland), it has been drawn into the orbit of the corporate unions. As it's registered with the UK Industrial Relations system as a union and so restricted from waging direct action due to heavy fines.**

It also supports regional nationalism which is in breach of the key syndicalist principle of internationalism. Lately it seems to have lost much of the initial dynamism of its earlier days. While a 'base union' which did defy the industrial relations system would face a major State attack and isolation and sabotage from the corporate unions and a hostile corporate media. Unless it developed in the context of a strike/direct action wave movement across industry with associated major syndicalist union break aways from the corporate unions. (5)

**In conclusion, the author's discussion of these mass/general**

**strikes, uprisings, near revolutions and revolutions over emphasises spontaneity in line with his 'council communist' viewpoint. He neglects to adequately discuss the importance of building mass experienced anarcho-syndicalist style unions prior to these upheavals. Failing to adequately analyse the reasons for the failure of mass anarcho-syndicalist unionism during the Spanish Revolution/Civil War.**

He largely ignores the role of key corporate agencies strategies such as 'Corporate Unionism' to stymie revolutionary pushes particularly during and after the Long 1960's. He fails to present a realistic strategy on the key industrial front for today to build self managed workers' economic combative organisations and organs of revolutionary power. Wasting a huge amount of his book on arcane Marxist economic theory discussion. M.

### **Notes**

1. See *'The Unknown Revolution 1917-1921'* by Voline, published by Black & Red.

2. See *'Socialisme Ou Barbarie' A Revolutionary Group on Libcom.org*

3. See *'From Corporate Bureaucratic Unionism to Grass Roots Controlled Direct Action Unionism: Activity & Perspectives for Australia, Today'* in *RW Vol.41 No.3 (235) Dec.2023 to Jan. 2024 on archive section www.rebelworker.org and libcom.org*

4. See on the Internet *'Gloria Steinem, the CIA & The Women's Movement'. 'Acid Dreams: LSD, The CIA and the Sixties Rebellion. See Mike Williams's web site 'Sage of Quay' and his research into various Albums, Performances and Phases in the Careers of the Beatles.*

5. See *'Discussion on Libcom.org 'Are Anarchist Organisations in Decline?'*

### **Violence Against Women is not solely a Male Issue**

Too often the problem of gendered violence is leveled solely against men in Australia. This despite the fact that 99.9% of Aussie men do not rape anyone, kill anyone or commit domestic assault against anyone. Also

the highest incidence of domestic violence (80%) occurs among lesbian gay couples. It is also very often focused in Arabic (predominantly Moslem) and First Nations communities.

Further no one is even considering the female behavior that is often triggering or provoking these kind of responses.

Certainly no person is entitled to be violent towards another but people are only human and in the face of appalling treatment and laws that are targeted solely against men, sometimes they lash out. It would seem now that any form of terrible inter personal behavior can be justified by women and can

**See page 20**



## NEWS &amp; NOTES

Some of the most positive news on the international front lately has been workers in several countries taking direct action to oppose the supply of armaments to Israel over its offensive in Gaza. (See article page 2.) Meanwhile in Israel a general strike has been recently held to also oppose its Military's offensive in Gaza. It has been held in defiance of the HISTADRUT (Zionist corporate union confederation similar our ACTU) union bosses and covered up by much of the Corporate Media. (See article page 20.)

Some of the most important news behind the scenes in NSW has been another defeat for the Rail bosses, Union bosses and the ALP Minns Government, associated with the Rail and Union bosses backing off with another push for Driver Only Operation on NIF (New Intercity Fleet) trains associated with the recent Rail EBA (Enterprise Bargain Agreement) negotiations. Following successful agitation by militants assisted by the ASN to expose the new push via the back door of proposed EBA clauses.

In this edition, we also examine aspects of the bureaucratically run EBA industrial campaign set up to fail. It has delivered below cost of living pay rises. We look at how its clauses open the door to major job cuts and speed ups in workers' jobs. (See article page 3.)

In this edition, we look at a worsening speed up in workers' jobs in Sydney Buses and poor bus maintenance. Together with some 'Monkey Business' associated with Bus region contract renewals and bus company loss making. (See article page 7.)

Help build Rebel Worker! Your assistance with distribution is most welcome. Why not order bulk copies to sell at your local shopping centre on Saturday mornings, leave at the lunch room at work and at your local cafe, cinema or Cinema? Your help on the financial plane is also welcome.

## A.S.N. Directory

ASN Sydney Local  
PO Box 92  
Broadway 2007 NSW

ASN Newcastle  
PO Box 106  
Kotara 2289 NSW

ASN Melbourne  
J.Dixon  
trwin@gmail.com

Anarchist Media  
Institute  
PO Box 20  
Parkville Vic. 3052

SPARKS  
(Anarcho-Syndicalist  
Transport Workers' Paper)  
PO Box 92  
Broadway NSW 2007  
www.sparksworld.org

MEMBERS' VOICE  
Grassroots NSW Public  
Transport Workers'  
Organisation  
Email :  
Membersvoice2010@yahoo.com

Rank & File First  
Grassroots NSW Public  
Transport Workers  
Organisation  
Rankandfilefirst@outlook.com

STOP  
Sydney Transport-Users  
Opposing Privatisation  
PO Box 703  
Leichhardt 2040  
Facebook STOPPrivatisation  
@STOPPrivatisation

## 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.

Name.....

Address.....

General Secretary

PO Box 106 Kotara 2289 NSW.

REBEL WORKER  
Web Site:

[www.rebelworker.org](http://www.rebelworker.org)

**If undeliverable return to  
PO Box 92 Broadway NSW 2007**

### **Continued from page 18**

dismiss men's feelings entirely. If women are really serious about slowing down or even stopping entirely violence against them then they need to look at their own behavior and start to question the validity of the thinking spoon fed to them by fourth wave feminism. Because for the most part it denigrates men entirely with basically anything feminists disagree with labeled "Toxic Masculinity" and "Rape Culture". Men trying to help women is denigrated as "man splaining". Indeed such attacks on any form of male behavior are fueling the violence

against women, because currently Aussie men are made to feel like anything they say or do that comes naturally to them is somehow wrong. Its simple: if you keep putting men and everything they say and do down and making them the enemy, then treat them appallingly like that then is somehow ok, then this is a perfect storm for the type of lashing out in anger that leads to these problems. Treat men with respect and acknowledge that they are entitled to their own modes of thinking and the problem will virtually go away. This is a female problem and women can solve

it, particularly if they stop championing laws (or just saying nothing) that make men feel like second class Citizens.

As a society women need to better examine the way they treat men and affect their feelings. Instead of treating men poorly being the social standard (as current), women need to stop justifying appalling behavior and acknowledge the distress and anger it causes in men.

There is the solution for you I will leave it with you.

S.

## **GENERAL STRIKE IN ISRAEL AGAINST WAR IN GAZA**

**A general strike against the ongoing war in Gaza took place in Israel on August 17. Hundreds of thousands of people took to the streets and protesters blocked roads across the country. Despite the official refusal of the Histadrut trade union to support the strike, many businesses, local government offices, universities, tech companies, restaurants, theaters and other organizations remained closed. -**

Protests against the war and the government leading it take place every Sunday in Israel. But this time the scale was truly enormous. To the sound of drums and horns, demonstrators poured out onto the streets in droves on the morning of a nationwide general strike called by two organizations, including the October Council, which unites relatives of hostages held by Hamas, relatives of those killed in the October 7 massacre and survivors. In dozens of cities across the country,



people demanded an end to the war in Gaza and the return of all hostages held by terrorist groups in Gaza.

**"Every bullet, every blow could end their lives. End the war and end the suffering," the demonstrators chanted. Police arrested nearly 40 protesters who blocked traffic on the roads and, in some cases, clashed with the forces protecting the capitalist order who were trying to lift the blockade. In the suburbs of Jerusalem, police used water cannons to disperse demonstrators who had sat down in a tunnel on**

**Route 16 leading to the city. In Tel Aviv, 11 protesters were arrested and charged with "disturbing public order and significantly impeding freedom of movement."**

Throughout the morning, protesters blocked parts of Route 1, the main thoroughfare linking Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, Begin Boulevard in Jerusalem, Kaplan Street and Ayalon Highway in Tel Aviv, Route 4 at the Ra'anana Junction, Routes 65, 75 and 89 in northern Israel, and Routes 443, 40 and 44 in the center of the country. Burning barricades made of tires appeared on the roads. On Ayalon Highway, they tried to break through, but were pushed back by police, who also confiscated the protesters' equipment. According to the Hostages and Missing Families Forum, which organized the strike, protesters handed out yellow ribbons, a symbol of the hostages, at highway intersections.