

resistance

anarchist bulletin

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NUKES AHOY

ON APRIL 26TH, 2 armed British Nuclear Fuels (BNFL) freighters left Barrow-in-Furness, northern England en route for Takahama, Japan. Their mission? To transport enough plutonium-uranium oxide (MOX) back to Sellafield to build 50 nuclear bombs: each bomb vastly more devastating than the 2 dropped on the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki over 50 years before.

But the date, April 26th is also a significant one. It was then, 16 years ago, that the worst disaster in the history of the nuclear industry occurred at Chernobyl, Russia. When the nuclear reactor on the site blew, more than 100 emergency workers suffered radiation sickness and 41 died. Since then, there has been a dramatic increase in childhood thyroid cancer in the area, normally a very rare disease. According to Greenpeace International Nuclear Campaigner Shaun Burnie "they could not have chosen a more fitting date to remind the international community of the arrogance and dangerous risk-taking of the nuclear industry".

But this is not the first time this particular cargo of nuclear material has been on the high seas. Back in 1999, it was shipped as fuel to Japan, only for the Japanese to discover that BNFL, the manufacturer, had falsified critical quality control data during its production. Japan has been sitting on the load ever since, but now wants BNFL to take it back. Under international law the shipment couldn't go ahead unless authorised by the US. The US duly gave its approval on the basis that the plutonium was to be recovered and returned to Japan in the form of fresh MOX fuel assemblies. Yet the UK Government has told Parliament that the faulty MOX is to be imported and stored at Sellafield while BNFL decides what to do with it. Not only that but the UK has promised the Irish Government and the International Law of the Sea (ITLOS), that there would be no transports associated with the operation of the Sellafield MOX plant



before October 2002. So, the import must be in breach either of the US authorisation or the undertakings given to ITLOS. "The industry is creating a floating terrorist target and a dangerous hazard simply in order for BNFL to be able to get new contracts with its Japanese customers. This would result in yet more shipments of plutonium fuel, perhaps as many as 80 over the next decade," Mr Burnie said.

There are also serious concerns about the safety of the shipment, which should also have prevented the BNFL vessel leaving back in April. The cask in which the plutonium is being transported has not yet been licensed by the Japanese authorities. An earlier licence was revoked when it was discovered that levels of the single largest source of radioactivity in the cask, the radioisotope Plutonium-241, will be up to twice as high as originally estimated.

However, the two vessels, the Pacific Pintail and the Pacific Teal, one acting as an armed escort, the other carrying the plutonium, are currently facing a barrage of international opposition as they make their return journey back from Japan via the Pacific-Tasman Sea-South Africa route. "The nuclear shipping nations of Japan, UK and France arrogantly view the Pacific as the route of least resistance," said Greenpeace Pacific Nuclear Campaigner Ang Heffernan. "There is no justification for this rejected plutonium MOX shipment. It is only occurring because BNFL, which originally shipped this material from the UK through the Pacific

to Japan in 1999, deliberately falsified vital quality control safety data during its manufacture." At the moment, the ships are still in the South Pacific, and face opposition from all the governments in the area including Fiji and the Federated States of Micronesia.

A more direct approach has come from the 'Nuclear Free Seas' flotilla movement (nuclearfreeflotilla.org) against plutonium transports which was launched last year in the South Pacific with protests in the Tasman Sea between New Zealand and Australia, as well as in Fiji. This year it has now spread to South America's Cape Horn, and the Irish Sea. On July 7th the Greenpeace yacht, the Tiama, joined the Nuclear Free Pacific Flotilla as yachts left Australia and New Zealand to protest against the shipment of plutonium through the Pacific and Tasman Sea. They will join the seven ships from New Zealand and two from Vanuatu, and will gather in the northern Tasman Sea to wait for the two ships carrying the reject plutonium mixed oxide (MOX).

While we in the AF support the use of direct action tactics in all our struggles against capital, we don't think the struggle against the MOX project should be the preserve of those fortunate enough to own a boat. What about the rest of us land-lovers? What we need is a long campaign of committed and consistent direct action with enough longevity to last until the MOX plant and Sellafield are closed down for good. Irish activists are planning a protest at Barrow-on-Furness (BNFL's home port). Contact Barry O'Donovan at: fgod@hotpop.com or at: 087-232-0437

DUNDALK MEET

The AFI will be holding a public meet in the Imperial Hotel, Dundalk, on Friday August 16th at 7.30 pm. Topics include Anarchism and the Environment. All welcome.



“Our army that now remains in Vietnam is in a state approaching collapse, with individual units avoiding or having refused combat, murdering their officers and non-commissioned officers...” - a U.S. Marine Colonel in 1971.

G.I. Resistance during the later stages of the Vietnam war took a number of forms:

Firstly, what was known in military jargon as “combat refusal” or in soldier’s slang “search and avoid” this was straight forward mutiny, usually achieved by secretive means.

Secondly, “fragging” – the assassination of glory hunting officers, which reached the stage that bounties were put on the heads of the most unpopular officers. Most famously on the Lieutenant Colonel who ordered the bloody attack on “Hamburger Hill” in mid-69, and had a bounty of \$10,000 placed on him in response. The money was collected through whip rounds.

Thirdly, the growth of anti-war, anti-brass, newspapers, over 300 by 1972, with names like Harass the Brass, All Hands Abandon Ship, and the Star Spangled Bummer. These were produced by discontented rank and file soldiers. Fourthly, desertion, by 1970 the U.S. Army had over 60,000 deserters.

Finally, back on the “home front” veterans organized themselves into groups such as “Vietnam Veterans Against the War” and exposed war crimes through the “Winter Solider Investigation”.

The “air wars” we have seen in the 30 years since then, were partly developed as a strategy of control directed not at the official enemy, but at avoiding a repeat of the situation where America’s rulers were faced with a mutinous army.

ON THE FRONTLINE

LAI D OFF WORKERS at the ‘Irish Glass Bottle’ recycling plant, Ringsend, Dublin, are occupying the factory in opposition to their former employer’s refusal to pay them their full redundancy.

The employers, Ardagh plc, have annual turnover of over 300 million euro, trading profit of 26 million euro last year, have just opened a new factory in Italy, and claim a massive share of the glass market, so no one can say “the company” fell on hard times.

Ardagh can cut costs and make a bigger profit by dumping 375 people on the dole queue (and there were originally over a thousand employed there), and not even paying them the proper redundancy, and



Take a hammer to capital

thus be more successful, with a bigger profit margin, and more attractive to prospective investors, with more capital for expansion and greater competitiveness on the market. We live in a society geared for redundancy. However unemployment is not the only social cost of this closure, the Ringsend plant is the only glass recycling operation in the Republic, so there is an environmental cost also.

Because of the value of the plant, machinery and site it is on the occupiers have a good chance of forcing the company to pay the full redundancy.

IN BELFAST, nearly 1000 people gathered outside Belfast International airport in support of 24 sacked airport security workers. The workers were sacked because of their part in a strike deemed ‘illegal’ by their employer ICTS over different pay scales. ICTS, who failed to contact the union after negotiations failed, declared the strike the following day illegal (with a top ATGWU official agreeing with them), and then ‘randomly’ selected workers for dismissal. A grass roots campaign has been set up to overturn the management’s decisions and fight back.

There’s also trouble brewing at Manchester airport which has been the target of a number of 2-hour walkouts over safety concerns, and Heathrow and Gatwick Baggage handlers are to strike for higher pay. This combined with the continuing continent wide air traffic controllers dispute is making life very difficult for the bosses, who’ve been using the fall out from the Sept 11 events to attack working conditions.

MEANWHILE ACROSS THE WATER council workers, nearly a million of whom were on a twenty-four strike on the 17th July, are paralysing local services in the first national strike since 1979 – the infamous ‘winter of discontent’. Schools, libraries, museums, leisure centres and council offices were closed and rubbish was left uncollected as the workers rejected the 3% pay offer and demanded a 6% rise. Many council workers are actually paid less now than in 1979!

And it is not just the council workers who are fighting back. Thousands of

London Underground drivers, station staff and signallers brought the tube to a standstill with a 24 hour stoppage, in protest at the continuing plans to forge ahead with the Public-Private Partnership (PPP). Also in transport, there are to be a series of 48-hour strikes on First Northwest trains in a pay dispute.

And what about the posties and fire-fighters? The posties are threatening one day nationwide strikes next month if Consignia’s plans to sell off the facilities department (£1 Billion) goes ahead – they’re worried that this will effect their ability to stay in the current pension plan, as well as all the other ludicrous plans management are paid to come up with. Meanwhile, the fire-fighters are also close to calling a countrywide strike in September over lack of pay upgrades for new skills - like the council workers, this would be the first such stoppage since the last Labour government .

Finally, in Glasgow, Royal Infirmary cleaners, porters and cooks are being shafted by the sinister Sodexho. They’re paid much less than fellow workers who are employed directly by the NHS and are demanding a £1000 lump sum in compensation.

Join the resistance

The **Anarchist Federation Ireland (AFI)** is an organisation of **class struggle** anarchists aiming to abolish capitalism and all oppression to create a free and equal society. This is **Anarchist Communism**. We see today’s society as being divided into two main opposing classes: **the ruling class** which controls all the power and wealth, and the **working class** which the rulers exploit to maintain this. By racism, sexism and other forms of oppression, as well as war and environmental destruction the rulers weaken and divide us. Only the **direct action** of working class people can defeat these attacks and ultimately overthrow capitalism. As the capitalist system rules the whole world, its destruction must be complete and world wide. We reject attempts to reform it, such as working through parliament and national liberation movements, as they fail to challenge capitalism itself. Unions also work as a part of the capitalist system, so although workers struggle within them they will be unable to bring about capitalism’s destruction unless they go beyond these limits.

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

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

Anarchist Federation Ireland
 PO Box 505
 Belfast BT12 6BQ
 Phone 07951 079719
 www.afireland.cjb.net
 e-mail: ireaf@yahoo.ie