

Upcoming public discussion evenings

The Wellington and Christchurch branches of AWSM are organising monthly discussion evenings on the first Wednesday of every month. The next meetings will be on April 7th.

The details of the topics to be discussed, time and location of the discussion groups can be found on our website, <http://www.awsm.org.nz>.

In Wellington, the March 3rd meeting discussed unemployment and the concept of dole autonomy, looking at the relationship between employed and unemployed workers, resistance to attacks on beneficiaries and more.

In Christchurch, the March 3 meeting, co-organised with Beyond Resistance (<http://beyondresistance.wordpress.com>), watched and discussed the video of a talk given by veteran British anarchist Barry Pateman in Wellington in 2009. Topics raised included the relationship of anarchists to the wider communities we are a part of, and the importance of class struggle to revolutionaries.

What is AWSM?

The Aotearoa Workers Solidarity Movement (AWSM) is an organisation working towards a classless, stateless society: anarchist-communism.

We are made up of revolutionary class-struggle anarchists from across Aotearoa / New Zealand. For now, we are a small organisation with local branches in Auckland and Wellington and members in a few other centres.

As class struggle anarchists our priority is active involvement in workplace struggles and industrial action as well as community based campaigns in our neighbourhoods. We are currently involved in the struggles against residential water metering in Wellington, the 90 Day "Hire & Fire" Act nationally, strike support and more.

We publish a monthly newsheet (which you're reading right now!) and a less frequent but more in-depth theoretical magazine as well.

To be a member of AWSM, you must agree with our Aims & Principles (available on our website, <http://www.awsm.org.nz>), and be involved in the life and activity of the group. If you're interested in joining or just finding out a bit more about us, email or write to us via the contact details at the bottom of this page.



Subscriptions

If you want to make sure you don't miss an issue of Solidarity, you can subscribe to either the print or electronic version.

To subscribe to the AWSM announcements list, put your email address in the form on the top right of each page on our website, <http://www.awsm.org.nz>.

Subscribers will be sent .pdf copies of Solidarity each month, along with other publications produced by AWSM and occasional information - we promise we won't spam you with a ton of useless stuff though! The electronic copy is identical to the print version.

Or, you can subscribe to the print edition to receive a copy of Solidarity in the post. \$8 for 12 issues. Mail a cheque to our PO Box listed below, or contact us to organise an alternative method of payment.

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SOLIDARITY

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Newsheet of the Aotearoa Workers Solidarity Movement



Politicians Pay Poverty Wages

On 17th February, 2010, members of the Aotearoa Workers Solidarity Movement attended a rally of striking cleaners at Parliament in Wellington organized by the Service and Food Workers Union (SFWU). The rally was part of the SFWU's clean start campaign demanding an hourly wage increase from \$12.55 to \$14.62 for cleaners employed at Parliament and the police college in Porirua, in line with a recent pay increase for hospital cleaners and directly-employed school cleaners.

For many cleaners their job is hard enough even without the poverty wages as it demands working late into the night, which makes it difficult to remain functioning members of their families and communities. SFWU member Allan Gaylard pointed out "I clean Parliament from mid-night to dawn, and I think a lot of these MPs do not know we exist. It is OK for John Key and Members of Parliament to say they will not get a pay rise this year, but they earn more than \$130,000 with John Key earning \$400,000, whereas I earn \$12.55 an hour!"

The protest was a reasonably noisy affair, with the cleaners disrupting business as usual at Parliament by banging their placards with wooden spoons for around 20-30 minutes,

Contempt for rank and file control couldn't have been more striking.

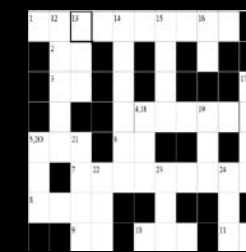
followed by speeches from Union representatives, rank and file cleaners and Labour and Green Party politicians. The snug relationship between the unions and the Labour party was plain for all to see, with one Union rep claiming 'everything will be alright once our friends are back in power'. Contempt for rank and file control couldn't have been more striking.

But the irony of a system where the Prime Minister earns 10 times the hourly pay of the person forced to clean his office was also lost on no one, with John Key's own personal cleaner suggesting he should 'clean his own bloody office'. Of course those who have been forced to work late into the night cleaning up the mess of politicians who clearly couldn't care less about them deserve far more than the miserable \$2.07 increase being demanded by their union, ultimately they deserve control over their lives and their communities - nothing short of full emancipation.



ACC Rally

IN THIS ISSUE



Crossword



Taranaki DHB

Taranaki's council and DHB bosses earn over \$300,000

The Taranaki Daily News has reported over the last couple of days on horrendous top-end salaries of Regional Council and District Health Board (DHB) CEOs. Taranaki District Health Board chief executive Tony Foulkes earns more than \$350,000 while Regional Council CEO Basil Chamberlain earns \$310,000 per year.

Health Board chairman John Young is quoted in relation to the horrendous salaries that "we need to have good quality staff and remuneration is something that has to be taken into account." This is the core belief of this rotten economic system called capitalism and there

is no difference if it is managers of multinational corporations, financial institutions or the local council. The idea that the person who manages a District Health Board gets paid more than 10 times the wage of the person who cleans his toilet, flips his burgers or delivers his mail is simply revolting!

The DHB paid 103 staff more than \$100,000. 15 of those were managers with four earning over \$300,000 while the remaining 88 are clinicians.

Service and Food Workers Union spokesperson Alistair Duncan is questioning the number of staff

on more than \$100,000. "If the administration don't turn up to work, the organisation functions without them. If the nurses don't turn up to treat the patients or the cleaners don't turn up to clean, you've got a serious health and safety issue." He said that many kitchen and cleaning staff at the Taranaki Base Hospital earn little more than \$14 an hour and were fighting for a 3% pay increase.

We need to understand this exploitative system where the few on top live in luxury while the rest of us struggle to get by. Understanding, challenging and - to be quite frank - overthrowing it.

Report from Wellington ACC Protest

On Tuesday 16 February, about 700-1000 people marched on parliament in Wellington to protest against proposed increases in accident compensation. The march was organised by a group called the ACC Futures Coalition, a group which includes a broad range of organisations including unions, community groups, bikers, consumer groups, academics and health workers.

Proposed changes to accident compensation will increase levies on all workers' wages, privatise the Work Account and make further cuts to services, shifting the cost of injury onto the injured person. The changers

workplace health and safety is ignored by bosses so that they can make more profit. It is part of the agenda of the capitalist class - currently being carried out with vim and vigour by the National government - of passing the cost of almost everything onto workers, and to make sure we pay for the cost of their relentless speed ups.

The protest turnout was pretty disappointing, given that unions urged members to join the march. There's been lots of protest against the ACC changes from a broad variety of groups, from feminist groups opposing changes to counselling for sexual abuse survivors (incredibly degradingly, survivors now need



will pass much of the cost of treating workplace injuries on to working class people, and make it harder for many to receive ACC. Most of us are already struggling to get by on little income as it is.

There are many workplace accidents and deaths in Aotearoa, and these are increasing. Sixty-seven people died in 2008 from workplace accidents. And pretty much all of them are caused by bosses making us work harder and longer. It's pretty easy for workers to make a silly mistake when you are forced to work fast, and work long hours, and when

to be diagnosed as suffering from a mental illness to get counselling) to bikers. Bikies held a massive 'bike-oi' on parliament last year, when over 6,000 bikies biked onto parliament in the loudest protest in New Zealand history. Bikers are opposing hefty hikes in the registration costs of bikes, attempting to pass the cost of road accidents onto bikers themselves. The low turnout of the Feb 16 rally just shows how little support unions have in Aotearoa at the moment.

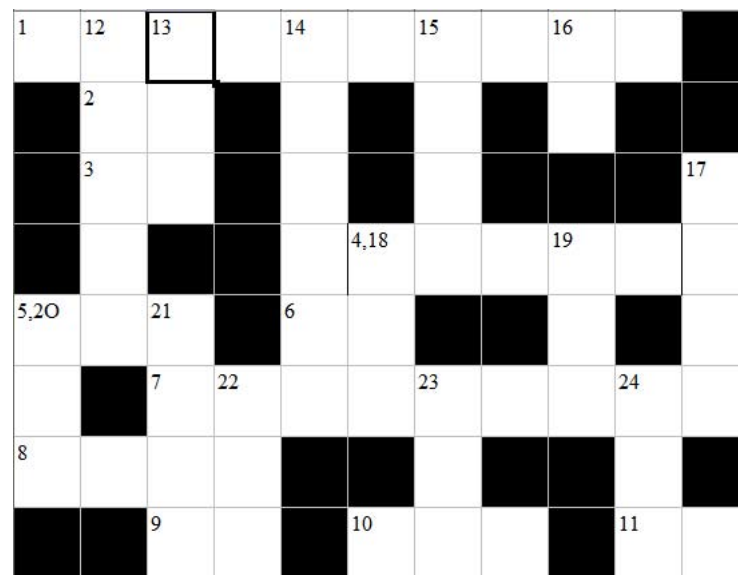
Pushing for reforms like opposing cuts to accident



compensation is necessary, but in the end we need to get rid of the system that causes these accidents and abuse in the first place. Sounds a bit corny, but getting rid of capitalism and hierarchy would mean we would be able to reorganise society and workplaces so that accidents would be minimised to the highest degree possible. For example, in workplaces there would be no drive for profit or production, no speed ups, and people would collectively work at their own pace so that they could produce the stuff people genuinely need. Health care, like everything else, would be freely available on the basis of need. To get there we need to build up working class movements against capital from below, and not in a top down manner like the vast majority of leftists suggest.



Crossword



ACROSS

- 1 It rules our lives
- 2 ... borders! ... nations!
- 3 A doctor (acronym)
- 4 Black Tuesday took place there
- 5 Radical group in the 70s in Aotearoa (acronym)
- 6 ... whawhai tonu matou, ake ake ake
- 7 The best thing ever
- 8 Not law
- 9 Supposed super fast telecommunication network, tends to break down every so often
- 10 Tuhoe leader in the early 20th century
- 11 River in Italy

DOWN

- 12 ... Brigade
- 13 ...ular
- 14 NZ's hippie centre
- 15 Cutest animal on the planet
- 16 Famous Jazz tune: ... what
- 17 Plat...
- 18 No ... but the class ...
- 19 Eastern Swiss German: Hello!
- 20 ... Pot
- 21 Economist :-)
- 22 German for 'nice' with a t missing
- 23 Union bureaucrats often end up working for the ...
- 24 NZ Stalinist party, luckily no longer exists (acronym)

For the answers to this crossword, see <http://awsm.org.nz/?p=243>