

MUTINY

A PAPER OF
ANARCHISTIC IDEAS
& ACTIONS

#60 JUNE/JULY 2011



ARTWORK BY BILLY-T

#Greece
#Honduras
#Budget
#BroadLeft
#PublicSector
#Capital
Against
Capitalism

{FREE
ZINE}

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Mutiny Zine Editorial.

A few weeks ago Mutiny celebrated its 5th year of publication with a launch party at Black Rose. Issue #59 of Mutiny was launched alongside a new anarchist journal The Wolves at the Door. Mutiny is encouraged by the proliferation of new anarchist and radical publications in recent times. We continue our series of interviews with such publications in this issue with an interview with Broad Left, a newsletter put out by folks from the Illawarra. Look out for a review of Wolves in the next issue of Mutiny Zine.

This issue is our longest ever. 28 pages of revo goodness! Overall, the articles are particularly concerned with what would usually be termed 'economic' issues. Grumpy Cat analyses the Budget and we publish a leaflet from the Combined University group about neoliberalism in universities, specifically focusing on developments at Sydney Uni. Lindsay Hawkins writes about the resistance so far to the NSW O'Farrell government's attack on public sector workers' pay, and Humphrey McQueen, in a review of the 'Capital' against Capitalism conference, stresses the usefulness of an investigation into changes in tertiary education, such as around the relationship between students and work. We also re-publish some statements from people involved in the Greek revolt against austerity measures and privatisation - a struggle which has begun to articulate a politics in support of direct, rather than parliamentary, democracy.

Economics is often seen as the domain of specialists - such as the people who work in the Treasury, the Stock Exchange, the IMF and the Reserve Bank, a few business commentators and maybe even financial capitalists (e.g George Soros or Warren Buffet). Considering that these 'experts' deal with issues that deeply affect peoples' lives, this is obviously profoundly undemocratic.

One reason that such specialisation has gained legitimacy is that these people deploy language that is extremely confusing and difficult to understand. Although our articles themselves deal with complex issues, and thus, perhaps necessarily, make some use of complex terms, hopefully they help readers better understand the workings (here's a hint, there is a constant tendency within capitalism to drive us to work more) of capitalism, and thus help to contest the legitimacy of this specialisation in some small way. Moreover, hopefully they indicate that 'economics' is not separate from the political realm. The Budget, for instance, puts forward the current government's attempt to grapple with problems facing Australian capitalism. As Grumpy Cat's article suggests, the Australian state thus tries to act as a manager for (local) capitalism.

Other articles include a piece by Rosie Wong on the ongoing resistance to the 2009 military coup in Honduras, and an article from Sydney's Jura Books collective in which they explain their reasons for installing a renewable energy system.

Keeping on top of everything that's been happening in radical politics both here and overseas is nigh on impossible for our small and busy collective. You'll find a shorter 'brief news' section in this edition, with some links you can check out to find out what's happening in the world. You'll also find that we have published a letter for the first time in ages. We really encourage folks to a similarly send us their thoughts about the zine!

Love and Solidarity,

Mutiny Zine Collective

We got a letter.

Dear Mutiny,

Hello and thank you for your continual free subscription to prisoners like myself. I always try to ensure that I make copies of Mutiny when I can, or share my own copy with other inmates that show some interest in it. I have always enjoyed Mutiny for what it was, but I felt that #58 Feb/March (first bimonthly) was a big step forward for the zine. Not simply because of the extra length of the zine, which was terrific (seriously it took me a good while to read it this time), but also because of the additional length of the articles which seemed to allow a more in-depth read.

I especially enjoyed the interview section. The casual and honest style of conversation that was presented with James Pollard from Melbourne Black really caught my attention and really gave it an everyday kind of human touch. I found this reassuring, because it pointed out that we are all just normal people trying our best, against all odds, to try and figure shit out- the front line is always on the perimeter, so there is no real clear correct path to direct us where to go and how to best achieve what we are all after- or indeed actually know what the hell it is that we are truly after half the time.

I think the idea for some kind of anarcho-zine publication federation is a nice idea and I hope that it meets fruition. Just one question though, does Melbourne Black have a postal address for internet restricted people such as myself? I have my own shitty zines that they might find interesting (or not)... so I'd like to post them, as James Pollard requested people do.

The article about the stall blitz in the general Sydney region was a good read too. I quite like the idea of random interaction,

confronting unknown people in the street. It is such a simple idea, but I can imagine how uncomfortable it must have felt at times, however it makes sense to do this type of thing and it seems like it was a rewarding experience. I liked the part where Jeremy describes how many people were surprised just to meet real live anarchists... and how anarchists have a rather unfortunate reputation. Once again, this type of article brings to light real human interactions, thoughts and feelings and I found it most enjoyable.

Also I thought that the Editor's notes in brackets was a nice touch too, I have felt that too often in the past Mutiny's practice of editing articles without really showing any acknowledgement to the reader that information has been removed was bad form, so I welcome this change and I hope that it continues [*Editor's note on editor's notes! Probably the main reason we've started doing this more often recently is in order to clarify things that we think might help the reader understand an article better, without risking altering the original meaning of the author. - Eds.*]

I can't help but wonder what other advancements Mutiny could make if it was extended out once more from bimonthly to quarterly?

Anyway good work Mutiny - and thanks for all the effort that you make, please know that it is appreciated.

Yours sincerely, Dan

(23/3/2011)

PS if readers would like to receive free copies of my zines *Boob Zine* (boob means prison) or *Diurnal*, please write to-

Defiant Pariah Publications
5/3 Commerce Drive
Lake Illawarra
NSW Australia 2528

IN RECENT WEEKS several comrades have faced court for participating in anti-racist and solidarity demonstrations in Sydney. On 27 June 3 comrades faced Fairfield court for occupying the roof of the immigration minister's office, in solidarity with the rooftop protests of detainees inside Villawood. Their trial (for trespass and resisting arrest charges) was delayed and will continue a month from the original date. Six comrades appeared before court at the Downing Centre in the city on July 6 and 7, facing a variety of charges, stemming from a protest against the 'say no to Burqas' mural in Newtown in January. Solidarity demonstrations were held outside the court on both mornings and leaflets handed out to those passing by. Their case will conclude on 15th August, almost 8 months from the protest date. We say: the long, drawn-out court process can only serve to further stifle and criminalise dissent. Solidarity during this time is essential- look out for further info.

ON JUNE 25 several hundred people took to the streets to protest the NT Intervention, introduced around four years ago. Paddy Gibson, a researcher with the Jumbunna Indigenous House of Learning, told the crowd at Town Hall that social breakdown had accelerated since the legislation was introduced. He argued that the politicians responsible have:

ripped the guts out of remote communities and are trying to force people into the major town centres, into the main cities and to assimilate into mainstream Australia....people are being locked up, kids are starving and people are committing suicide at higher rates...

The Stop The Intervention Collective Sydney plans to fight the introduction of income management in western Sydney. From July 1 next year, the federal government will

introduce income management to five areas around the country, including Bankstown.

Residents deemed by Centrelink to be financially "vulnerable" will have 50% to 70% of their welfare payments quarantined on a Basics Card, which restricts recipients to purchasing approved items at certain major chain stores. In the NT, the use of [this] Card has been plagued with technical problems. The protest also launched a Statement titled "Rebuilding From The Ground Up", which outlines an 11-point alternative to the NT Intervention(see <http://stoptheintervention.org/alternatives-to-the-intervention>).

[Based on an article by Annette Maguire originally written for the City Hub - <http://www.altmedia.net.au/protest-marks-4-years-of-nt-intervention/38038>]

AND IMPORTANT EVENTS ABROAD



A general strike on June 30th in the UK. For some accounts, see Libcom - <http://libcom.org/news/j30-strike-updates-accounts-29062011>



A movement, starting in Spain in May, against both major political parties, arguing that 'they don't represent us.' These indignados occupied major city squares. See <http://www.thenewsignificance.com/2011/07/06/murray-smith-the-may-15-movement-in-spain/>. A documentary about the movement is also available - <http://www.thenewsignificance.com/2011/07/09/spanishrevolution-video-documentary/>



Resistance to the Assad regime in Syria- being called the 'Syrian Spring'. For updates check out The Angry Arab - <http://angryarab.net/> The activist Tadzio Mueller has posted some fascinating correspondence with a Syrian involved in the movement on leftie e-lists (google Syria Tadzio Mueller)

Statements from the Greek Streets

For the last few years, especially since the police killing of 15-year old Alexandros Grigoropoulos in December 2008 and the series of riots and occupations that followed, Greece has been a vibrant centre of radical politics. The activity there - both in its negation of specific manifestations of capitalism (as expressed largely through riots involving property destruction and antagonism towards police) and affirmation of alternatives (seen through the formation of directly democratic popular assemblies, both during the riots and continuing on after them) has been a source of inspiration for revolutionaries all over the world. In recent months, activity has centred around opposing the harsh austerity measures and privatisation forced onto the population by the Greek government, the IMF and the EU.

However, this seemingly reactive organising has morphed into a politics that, once again, affirms direct democracy. The Greece-based blogger for *Mute Magazine* writes, that since June:

In Athens and numerous other cities and towns, too many to mention, there have been square occupations and daily demonstrations of up to hundreds of thousands of people. These were inspired by the square occupations in Spain, but have taken a different direction, one that favours direct democracy against parliamentary democracy and representation.

He notes that:

The focal point is the people's assembly at Syntagma Square in Athens - the Parliament square with all its political significance - where decisions are taken about forms of struggle and demands, and ideas and practice are developed for alternative organising and politics. Thousands gather to discuss and deal with the most urgent problem - extreme austerity, the debt, and now the impending sell-out of all the assets of the Greek state...

On June 28 and 29 there was a 48-hour general strike. The people that were in and around Syntagma Square during this period met with extreme police violence. Greek journalist, war correspondent and documentary maker Yorgos Avgeropoulos (who has covered protests in Argentina, Italy, Bolivia, and Mexico) argued that Greek cops "rightly, and by a wide margin, get[s] the prize for barbarity." Over the two days, it was "a miracle that we did not mourn any dead" (<http://www.thenewsignificance.com/2011/07/03/yorgos-avgeropoulos-flirting-with-death/>).

Despite this, people have since occupied Syntagma square again. They continue to do so as we go to print. This brief summary, written from afar, cannot do justice to this hugely important struggle. Some other material, however, may shed further light on the situation. Good online sources for information on what is happening in Greece are:

- On the 'Sovereign Debt' crisis itself: The documentary *Debtocracy* - <http://www.thenewsignificance.com/2011/06/28/debtocracy-video-documentary/>
- On the protests themselves: *Occupied London*, especially the article 'The Battle of Syntagma Square' - <http://www.occupiedlondon.org/blog/>
- *Mute Magazine* - http://www.metamute.org/en/news_and_analysis/updates_from_the_greek_squares_and_people_s_assemblies_1
- *Winter has its End* - <http://thefirecollective.org/winterends/>

We now republish two beautiful texts that originally appeared on Occupied London. The first was written after the police repression of protestors in Syntagma Square on June 28 and June 29. The second is an earlier statement by the People's Assembly of Syntagma Square in support of the 48 hour general strike on those two days.

In times like these

There are times when words lose their meaning. Strange times, when decrying *junta* cannot encapsulate quite what is happening: after all, for all their totalitarianism, the military regimes of the seventies could never have reached the sophistication nor the size of yesterday's urban control operation in Athens. What happened was not the police attacking a demonstration, it was them attacking an entire city - an *urbicide* of highest order.

We were there, in the metro station-turn-shelter for the thousands in Syntagma square, where riot police had blocked us the light of the entrance and we chanted from the inside, our rage vibrating across its underground walls. We were there, at the west end of Syntagma, where the thugs of the Delta motorcycle police swept across its narrow streets, on Ermou, on Mitropoleos... We were there, chased, beaten by the killers in uniform that were beating and grabbing people in restaurants, dragging them out, smashing anything and everything up.

In times like these, words lose their meaning – but not without some glaring exceptions. *Solidarity* is one. It was inscribed in the impromptu medical centre in Syntagma. In the faces of the cafe owners, the restaurateurs who gave us shelter. In the will of random people to help those wounded at huge personal risk. In the determination of the thousands who retook Syntagma late in the night.

In times like these, the monster of power turns cannibalistic, scooping cities, thirsting for blood.

In times like these, the monster wants us scared, wounded, crouched into the darkness of the private.

In times like these, staying on the streets becomes literally a struggle of life and death. We will stay put, and we will win this struggle – have no doubt.

Statement by the People’s Assembly of Syntagma Square: Their destiny is frustration, ours is victory! (on the June 28/29 48 hour general strike)

Their destiny is frustration, ours is victory!

Thousands of protesters have responded and participated to the call of syndicates and the “indignados” movement of the squares, for a 48 hour general strike in order to succeed in the “cancellation” of the mid term agreement (the loan agreement with the IMF, the European Central Bank and the EU which has recently been narrowly ratified in Parliament - eds) on the street.

With the air that distinguishes those who have the right on their side and with the only defensive shield our bodies and determination, we have gathered in front of the bastion of shame (the Parliament) at Syntagma square. Our voices were united with the voices of the many and decided indignados from Kalamata and all Peloponnese, Corfu and Hania.. United with those from Thessaloniki and all northern Greece, with all these, and they are many, who do not withstand the ending of their lives succumbing to the false dilemmas of the government, the Troika and the bankers.

The police’s attitude, in their role as the repressive branch of the memorandum and the mid term agreement politics - although totally expected - is totally outrageous: blistering shooting of teargas (even at the location of the first aid station of the square), protesters injuries (over 270), encirclement and threat of evacuation of our premises, gymnastic demonstrations of chemical and military fist.

In vain...

The people, all of us, bypassing and overcoming the repressive fallout and the political environmental destruction we have taken matters into our own hands!

It was about time! Playing football, dancing, playing music, creating human chains in the center of the square we took back our square forcing the police to retreat! Despite the drain of chemicals, the crowd of demonstrators insists: We will not leave unless they leave!

And a reminder!

Those who choke us with teargas, they will drown in our indignation! We continue our 48 hours on the road!

- Everyone at the concert at 19.30.
- The Memorandi fall!
- It is either US or THEM

And since right is on our side to this particular dilemma the answer is: US!
Till the victory!

GRASSROOTS ORGANISING AND THE PUBLIC SECTOR UNIONS

- LINDSAY HAWKINS
lindsay_hawkins@hotmail.com

Since the NSW state election in March, the O'Farrell Government has wasted little time in moving against workers' rights in the public sector. A new law recently passed with upper house support from the Shooters and the Christian Democrats strips the state industrial court of its powers to arbitrate in pay disputes and tightens previous Labor requirements for public sector pay rises above 2.5% p.a. to be funded via offsets such as cuts in jobs and conditions.

A campaign by public sector unions has arisen in response to the Coalition Government's attack on the public sector. A rally of 12, 000 workers in the rain outside state parliament on Wednesday 15 June surpassed expectations; union officials had earlier anticipated 5000 people.

ORGANISATION

To date the campaign from the leadership of the union movement has focused on the loss of powers of the NSW Industrial Relations Commission which they refer to as the "independent umpire". However, the idea that the court system is independent is a myth. The courts act for the most part at the behest of state and corporate power.

Instead of a political campaign that simply seeks to restore the power of the court system to mediate disputes and return to the way things were under Labor, unions should initiate an industrial campaign to fight directly for better pay and conditions by mobilising the collective power of the membership. The recent emergence of some independent grassroots industrial organising has raised this as a real possibility by posing

a challenge to the usual bureaucratic, top-down controlled union campaigning that favours the petitioning and lobbying of MPs.

Several meetings of a new cross-union rank and file group called Union Activists have recently attracted 30-40 people to discuss plans for actions that involve and engage with rank and file union members. The meetings have been convened by some progressive union activists associated with the Greens with the support of the militant Fire Brigade Employees Union and have been attended by teachers, academics, nurses and public servants among others. Union Activists is calling for a 24-hour state-wide strike of public sector workers to coincide with the next Unions NSW stop work rally in early September. It is encouraging union members to move a motion at their next union meeting to that effect.

Another grassroots group, Power to the People, originally formed to fight the privatisation of electricity in NSW, has started meeting again to organise around the public sector campaign. Both groups worked together to organise a successful Public Sector Symposium at the MUA office on 16 July that brought together rank and file activists from across the union movement.

NEO-LIBERALISM

It is a cornerstone of neo-liberal ideology to attack the public sector and promote privatisation, lay-offs and cuts to social spending. The major parties share the same agenda in this regard, though they are now reluctant to admit this, fearful of the backlash from a public that wants a functioning social infrastructure and does not like to see people sacked en masse.

Howard's defeat in 2007 was due in significant measure to the union movement's slick advertising and PR campaign that struck a chord with the Australian public. Earlier that year NSW Liberal leader Peter

Debnam came unstuck after threatening to sack 29,000 public sector workers in the lead up to the state election. For their part Labor planned to cut 10,000 public sector jobs but the unions bargained them down to 5000 job cuts and considered it a victory. Following Labor's re-election in 2007 those jobs were quickly eliminated.

DEMOCRACY

Anarchists and other anti-statists might reasonably ask why we should bother campaigning to defend government control over the economy at all. Does it really matter whether production is under corporate or state control? Is there even any meaningful distinction between the two any more?

Ultimately we need to fight for our total liberation and for an end to all exploitation and oppression, but liberation doesn't happen instantly, it comes from building a culture of solidarity and resistance by working together. If we can block moves that further erode our quality of life, we lay the groundwork for more progressive, and one day hopefully, revolutionary social change.

Public sector jobs are typically higher paid, with better conditions and often with less work intensity than those in the private sector. The average rate of union membership is considerably higher because delegates and agitators are not illegally sacked with the same level of impunity as in the private sector.

Although state run services are also subject to market pressures there is not the

same profit motive at work plus there is a popular expectation of quality services to the public so services are generally better resourced and cheaper by comparison with the private sector. Privatisation and cutbacks should be resisted and decent wages defended while we continue to organise for more permanent and far-reaching social change.

The NSW Government is the biggest employer in the country and this battle is being watched closely by capitalists at home and abroad. If successful these changes will



establish a pattern for ongoing attacks on workers by employers across the workforce and are a likely precursor to the kind of austerity measures that have set Europe on fire.

Partly in response to the recent 12 000 strong union rally and because of simultaneous riots and a general strike in Greece, a headline in the Sydney Morning Herald the following day read "Markets gripped by fear" which commented that "Investors get spooked when they see headlines, photos and footage of tens of thousands of protestors standing up to the painful austerity measures that have been imposed on Greece" as \$25b was wiped from the Australian stock market in a "horror day" of trading.

It remains to be seen whether the increased level of organising at the base level in unions will continue to grow sufficiently to help build a new movement for mass democracy and workers' control in Australia but there are some promising early signs.

OF DUTCH DISEASES,
BOOMS AND LABOUR
SHORTAGES: THE BUDGET,
AUSTRALIAN CAPITALISM,
AND THE INTENSIFICATION OF
WORK.

- GRUMPY CAT

For those interested a longer version is available on <http://assemblyfordignity.wordpress.com>. The long quotes in the piece are taken from government papers written around the Budget. If any readers doubt the truthfulness of these quotations, the online version is referenced! -Eds.

On 10th May Federal Treasurer Wayne Swan presented the government's budget for 2011-12. Simply put the budget is how the Federal Government plans to spend its revenue over the next financial year. It does this through a reading of the general economic situation and attempts to create policy which it believes will help that economic situation. As such the presentation of the budget is normally a main event in the circus of Australian politics and is the target of a whole flurry of commentary, speculation and critique. Most often the discussion focuses on what kind of underlying ideology the budget is based on (does it conform to neo-classical or post-Keynesian economic thought etc), how much money is going to who and the veracity of the economic modelling that it uses. Since the budget details where the government is spending its money it has a direct relevance to many peoples' lives: how much funding goes where, if the state is in surplus or deficit. This translates into funding levels for health, education and infrastructure, grants to NGOs, pay and conditions for public servants, money

for public-private partnerships. Now this all comes down to daily bread and butter issues for many people, as well as the broader issue around how the government is attempting to steer the ship of state.

However these debates, even the Left ones, are largely debates within capitalism. They are debates about what kind of capitalist society we should have seen through the prism of the roles we have under capitalism. Thus we should not just read the budget to argue over who gets what, but rather more critically, to understand what the budget says about the current conditions of Australian capitalism, and how the state understands the challenges and antagonisms in society.

THINGS GO BOOM TWICE

The budget is framed within the exceptional conditions of the Australian economy. Unlike the vast majority of developed nations Australia is undergoing continual strong growth. This is driven mainly by the "Mining Boom Mark II". *"Australia is facing the largest mining investment boom in its history driven by ongoing strong demand for Australia's non-rural commodities from emerging Asia... This will lead to forecasted GDP growth of a "strong 4 per cent in 2011-12 and 3 3/4 per cent in 2012-13"*. What does this mean? Whilst much of the world is recovering slowly from the recent economic crisis (and the crisis as the street fighting in Greece shows is neither closed nor over) there are still considerable rates of growth in China and India as capital flows into these countries. *"The continuing economic re-emergence of Asia has lifted global economic growth and is leading to a shift in the world's economic activity from west to east. Together, China and India accounted*

for less than a tenth of world gross domestic product (GDP) in 1990 and almost a fifth in 2010. In 2020 they are projected to account for more than a quarter of the world GDP – which will be equivalent to the combined share of US, Japan and ASEAN-5”. This growth is reflected in that a constantly increasing share of Australia’s exports is destined for India and China. What is being exported?

“Sustained high prices for Australia’s key non-rural commodity exports are driving record investment intentions in the mining sector and strong forecast growth in commodity exports.... The surge in investment will expand the economy’s capacity over time, with previous investment in mine and transport infrastructure underpinning a forecast increase in the volume of non-rural commodity exports of over 20 per cent over the next two years”.

There is a profound shift going on in the shape of global capitalism. Increasingly capital is moving towards India and East Asia from Europe and the US. This is creating vast expansion in the Indian and Chinese economies, especially large urban development. This requires large amounts of mineral and energy resources. This demand for resources means that the price of these commodities, which are relatively rare, is increasing and thus capital in Australia is flowing into mining from other sectors of the economy hoping to reap these profits. There is a limited time frame to this. Just as capital is flowing to mining in Australia the same is happening globally. New mines are being opened (such as in Africa). *“The medium-term outlook is for Australia’s terms of trade to decline as the global supply of iron ore and coal increases”.* As more mines open the value of mineral resources may fall.

Thus there is a small window of opportunity for Australian capitalism to benefit off the high value of these resources. This is based on the belief that there will not be, in the short term, another serious economic crisis that will slow or derail the growth in India and China. And this is changing the shape of capitalism in Australia and poses two challenges which the Australian state is attempting to address: the Dutch Disease and the Labour shortage.

THE DUTCH DISEASE.

The Dutch Disease (unsurprisingly based on the experience of The Netherlands) is the concern that in an economy doing well off resource extraction, other sectors, particularly manufacturing will suffer. Simply put the concern is that in a period where economies are exporting high value resources the rising value of their currency will negatively affect other export orientated industries – the higher the dollar rises the more expensive products made in Australia will be overseas. (This is the very reason that the Chinese government under-values their currency and the US is trying to cheapen theirs through “Quantitative Easing” [printing more money] – making products they export cheaper on the world market.)

The added concern is that after such a boom the other sectors of the economy don’t recover and thus the boom will “negatively affect long-term growth” . The Treasury wants to stress that they don’t believe this will happen. They argue: “Resource sectors in advanced economies tend to be highly skilled and generate their own spillovers – stimulating other industries as well as driving opportunities for long term economic growth” . Yet the

Treasurer in his Budget Speech was forced to concede that “our patchwork economy grows unevenly across the nation.” Whilst part of this is due to natural disasters it is also as “The high dollar hurts our tourism and many manufacturing industries, especially small businesses.” A high dollar which is, in part, being driven up by the mining industry. Thus what the state is hoping to do with this budget is to maximise the accumulation possible from this boom and then position the economy in a way that it can smoothly transition towards “a knowledge-based, diversified and service-orientated economy” that can benefit from a predicted rise in consumption for an “increasingly wealthy and upwardly mobile middle class” based in China and India.

There you have it, the core outlook of this faction in Australian capitalism: maximise the benefits of this boom, and then smoothly move to something that sounds fancy based on the idea that the global economy continues to recover and that the contradictions of growth in India and China doesn't lead to an explosion. Apart from the optimism of this outlook which sits uncomfortably with the status of global capital and the range of challenges it faces there is one major obstacle in capital's way: the labour-crisis. Dealing with this is the centre of the Budget's aim.

THE LABOUR CRISIS.

If you read the Budget carefully you can find a persistent worry about one problem – the labour-crisis. The mining boom has contributed to a continual drop in unemployment. As the Treasurer says “Over 300,000 jobs have been created in the past year and the unemployment rate is forecast to fall further”. Obviously

the Treasurer is saying this as a good thing, as the unemployment rate carries particular political weight. But the Budget also identifies a problem with the drop in unemployment for accumulation in Australia. This is a very real tension within Australian capitalism.

“Labour market constraints are likely to increase as the mining boom ramps up, with businesses not linked to the boom likely to find it relatively more difficult to attract and retain workers. Price and wage pressures are also likely to emerge in some sectors as the labour market tightens.”

What does this all mean? It is important to remember the nature of capitalist economy. Capitalism is focused not on the accumulation of wealth but the accumulation of value. If we consider wealth to be anything that has a use to it (a cake, a song, a house, etc) then its origin is the metabolism between human creativity and nature. In capitalism this wealth takes a particular form – the commodity. Creativity rather than being organised directly by society is broken up into private interests who then sell their products on the market – these commodities have an exchange-value, their price. This exchange value is an expression of their value, how much the effort that produced them is seen to be worth in relation to the efforts of society on a whole, their “socially necessary labour time” (Marx's term - eds). This is a fetishized relationship where this value is not calculated by the processes of exchange, but rather is a “social process that goes on behind the backs of the producers” (again a Marx quote - eds). Value is expressed in the form of money.

Thus production happens in capitalism not to accumulate more wealth but to accumulate more value. The capitalists

starts with money (value), which goes out into the market place and buys machinery and resources and labour-power. They then produce a commodity and sell it for a value greater than they paid. Where does this extra value, this surplus-value, come from? If we assume that the different buyers and sellers are not cheating each other and everything is bought and sold at its value how can money make more money? The capitalist buys a special commodity: our labour-power. They pay for it the value that it is worth (that is the “socially necessary labour time” that it costs to produce the bundle of goodies to maintain our lives at a given standard – a standard that is in part a product of class struggle.) But in the process of production we produce commodities with a value that is greater than the value that was paid for our labour-power and the means of production. Thus the capitalist hopes that when these commodities are taken to market they will be sold and thus will realise the value in them, make a profit and then they will reinvest again and on. This is why Marx called capitalism “self-valorising value”. Of course lots of things can and often do go wrong in this process – hence the dynamism and insanity of capital.

What happens when labour is in a short supply? A number of serious problems. The most noticeable is that there is a possibility for wages to increase. The value of labour-power can go up because capitalists are attempting to compete with each other for workers and thus (potentially) offer higher wages and better conditions. If readers care to pay attention to the business press on any given day you will see these worries writ large. Rising wages have the potential to eat into profits as the size of the surplus

value produced will drop. Thus capitalists perhaps will attempt to maintain their profits by increasing prices – thus leading to inflation which is another worry of the Treasury and the business press.

But more than this a shortage of labour-power limits what we might call the “total social working day” – that is the overall amount of labour in a society that it is possible to employ – and thus this puts a cap on the expansion of capital. How can one open a mine if there are no workers to employ – they have to be shifted from some other part of the economy, thus increasingly the unevenness of its “patchwork” nature. Capital runs up against a barrier to its ability to flow and move when there is not the labour it needs to put to work.

Importantly a labour crisis is not simply about numbers – it is not just a head count. It is about the volume of work that a population can do and is willing to do. Thus it is about skills and training and subjectivity, forms of behaviour. And it is about the intensity of work as well, how much is produced by those already at work – hence the added worry in the capitalist press that productivity has stalled.

The crisis for Australian capitalism is how in this historic window of opportunity can it make people work enough, and hard enough, and long enough, to accumulate as much value as possible. The answer that the budget makes is that despite the low unemployment there is also a large lack of participation in labour market – that is people that the government thinks are not effectively looking for work. So the answer for the state is to work out a way to squeeze these people into the workforce. Arguably the most important part of the budget is Building Australia's Future

Workforce – “a plan to help industries get the skilled workers they need, to modernise apprenticeships, and to ensure more Australians enjoy the economic and social dividends of work” .



BUILDING AUSTRALIA'S FUTURE WORKFORCE.

This package contains two elements to deal with the labour crisis: an expansion of training for skills that are required for the economy and a vast intensification of the disciplinary nature of welfare.

The first arm of this is the expansion of industry focused training. *“Our plan begins with a new approach to training. Putting industry at the heart of a \$558 million National Workforce Development Fund that will deliver 130,000 new training places over four years. Better meeting the needs of industries and regions with a \$101 million national mentoring program to help 40,000 apprentices finish training... Plus up*

to \$1.75 billion, in addition to our existing \$7 billion investment, to leverage ambitious reforms of the vocational education and training system. And funding 30,000 more places in the Language, Literacy and Numeracy Program to provide the basic skills essential for a job”.

Whilst this all sounds relatively benign (and scant on detail) it does reveal a continual and overt use of education to tailor the population towards the demands of industry. This may make sense within the confines of capital, which creates a need for those of us, who today are compelled to sell our labour-power for wages, to have access to training. But if education is meant to be for human enrichment and social need then we have to assert different priorities.

The budget has also targeted sections of the population as the potential sources of more labour-power and plans to use welfare to compel them to work. These are “320,000 young people who are not in education employment or training”, single parents with school age children, people under the age of 35 on the Disability Support Pension (DSP) “whom have some capacity to contribute” and the “230,000 people who have been on income support and registered with employment services for two years or more”.

The budget details a carrot and stick approach. The most obvious carrot is the introduction of a Low Income Tax Offset which will mean those returning to work will be taxed less. In 2010 the Federal Government introduced legislation which allows the extension of welfare quarantining, which was part of the Northern Territory Intervention, to be extended throughout Australia. Elements of this legislation will be part of the broad

restructuring of welfare. This is the stick the state will use. *“To encourage all young people into jobs, education or training, the Government will extend ‘Earn or Learn’ requirements to those aged 21.” “The age of eligibility is being increased so that the Newstart Allowance will not be available until age 22 (up from 21).”* This means that more young people will either not be able to access welfare (Youth Allowance views most young people as being dependent on their parents and therefore not eligible for payment) and those on it will face restriction of their payment if they are not working or in education.

Single parents will get “A reformed income test (that) will increase the rewards from part-time work for single parents. The government will reduce the taper rate (the amount per dollar that is withdrawn from welfare entitlement after you start earning more than a set figure - eds) for single parents on Newstart Allowance to 40 cents ... This will allow single parents to keep up to \$3,900 extra ... from part-time work every year.” But those with children 12 and over will face tougher eligibility rules.

Those on the Disability Support Pension will face increased requirement to work. This includes “the introduction of appropriate participation requirements for DSP recipients under 35 years of age with an assessed work capacity of more than eight hours”. There are additional wage subsidies for employers who would employ those on the DSP. Employers who employ the “very long-term unemployed” – that is those who have been on benefits for two years or more will also be eligible for wage subsidies.

\$117.5 million will be spent over 5 years to extend income management

arrangements to five locations. These are Bankstown(NSW), Logan(QLD), Rockhampton (QLD), Playford(SA) and Shepparton(VIC). Within these areas those who have been referred by the Child Protection Authority, by a Centrelink Social Worker, or volunteer for income management will find 70% of their payments quarantined on a Basics Card. Thus restrictions will be placed on where and on what they can spend their payments. This is happening in a context where other changes to welfare will increase the power and severity of breaches to payments.

CONCLUSION

The real limit of Australian capitalism is how much we are prepared to work and for what. My suggestion is that the changes in welfare have little to do with those on welfare and everything to do with the working class as a whole. This needs to be seen as an attempt to use the unemployed to increase competition for jobs, to squeeze those who are parents or [who have] disabilities into positions that are left vacant as other workers turn towards opportunities in mining and related industries. The flip side to this is that it reveals that the state is having to address a power that we have, which right now we are only using latently. What would happen if we used this power consciously? And could resistance to these changes be the spark to light the fire?

BUDGET 

Fisher Library and the logic of the Edu-Factory: money is the face of the boss

This leaflet was written by a small collective working on fighting neo-liberalism on campus at Sydney Uni (contact: combineduniversity@gmail.com). It was distributed at a 'read-in' at Fisher Library, attended by around 250 students, to protest book and staff cuts. The leaflet is an attempt to draw out the connections between library cuts and the broader neo-liberal attack on our universities as places of work and study.

Fisher Library: the books and beyond

The mass culling of books has brought to light the increasing fragility of the structures on which higher education is built. But the slow erosion of these structures has been going on for some time now. What is occurring within Fisher Library is just another expression of what is happening across the university and higher education in general: the implementation of naked neoliberal economic measures. The proposed restructuring, as well as that which is already underway, will have deep impacts upon the conditions of all staff and students.

For students, the removal of books from the library is the most visible manifestation of this agenda at the moment. Up to half of the collection of books in Fisher will be removed. This has clear implications for the quality of learning and research potential provided by the library.

But the books aren't all that's at stake. 30 library workers' jobs are to be cut. While the redundancies are initially voluntary, these job cuts and the consequent reorganisation of tasks will mean that remaining workers will be stretched thinner and forced to take

on duties that are not part of their jobs - doing more work for less pay. The proposed 24-hour unstaffed areas may offer greater access to students, but this will come at a cost to library staff who will be offered insecure work and more casual conditions.

The plan for Fisher includes a cafe in the library. This reflects a broader trend of gentrification and privatisation of space at the university, which is making meeting places exclusive and commodifying social life. All of these changes are happening in the context of the library's bankruptcy, and yet the university as a whole makes millions of dollars in profit every year.



Edu-Factory: a capital education

Today, education and knowledge are key resources and raw materials for the capitalist economy. This is expressed through the logic of 'modernising the university', which

situates the uni as a key institution within contemporary capitalism. “Modernising” means business style management and competition; it means streamlining and cost-cutting. At Sydney Uni this is evident not only in the library job cuts - general staff numbers have been cut across other sectors of the university, including Campus Infrastructure Services and the Information and Communication Technology Services. University management has also outsourced much of the labour involved in the day-to-day maintenance and running of the university such as many of the trades, building, service and hospitality work. This process means a lot more people who work at university have no direct line of connection to it as an educational institution, instead they are employed through secondary sources. The production and consumption of education and research comes to resemble a factory in one instance, and a shopping mall in the next.

Restructuring also has implications for research and education at the University. Those in academic work are experiencing the ongoing casualisation of labour as well as increased workloads for casual teaching staff and tenured academics. This business logic does not meet students’ desires for a quality education. Students need and want smaller class sizes, a wider range of courses, increased access to resources and participation in running the university.

In effect, what we are witnessing here at the University of Sydney is one expression of the materiality of neoliberal ideology: the command of money over the conditions and organisation of life, labour and learning. Education makes money, and therefore profitable universities are the objective. Neoliberalism in education is based upon, and necessarily involves, the commodification and financialisation of education, the cutting

of staff and attacks on the conditions of work: in a word, the intensification of work across the university for both staff and students, and the emergence of the university as big business.

Organising across the fragmented university

On a certain level, the casualisation and outsourcing of labour combined with the ‘students as consumers’ model appears to produce a fragmentation of experience and conditions. The specific needs of students and the needs of different sections of the staff appear to be disconnected, isolated and unbridgeable. But this fragmentation is only a convenient apparition, a ‘special effect’ of the entire restructuring process. In reality, the structure of the university draws on a common economic foundation, and this is the basis on which all students and staff, general and academic, can work and organise together.

Changes in the structures of funding in any area of the university have effects across the different sectors of the university. It is with this knowledge and upon this basis that we should aim to focus our future actions against the reorganisations of the university.

Looking at Fisher Library, we can see already this common foundation: restructuring the library impacts directly upon staff, in terms of those leaving and upon those who will pick up this extra work in the future, and also upon what the future library will be able to offer students and staff in their learning, teaching and research. The conditions of university staff and the needs of students are not opposed. As restructurings continue to occur we should aim to communicate and work together, as staff and students. Through a process of common organisation it will be possible to overcome the fragmentation of the capitalist university.

THE ON-GOING MILITARY COUP IN HONDURAS

AND WHAT IT MEANS FOR FARMERS, INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, THE LGBTI COMMUNITY, WOMEN AND TEACHERS.

- BY ROSIE WONG

Rosie went to Honduras as a Human Rights Observer in September 2009 and from December 2010 - January 2011. She has since been involved in solidarity activism. Here she writes about the consequences of the military coup in 2009 and the multiple forms of resistance to it. The article is largely based on her own personal experiences and the material put out by organisations and individuals in the resistance in Honduras.

In Honduras, there has been ongoing resistance since 28 June 2009, when the Honduran military broke into President Zelaya's home and at gunpoint, took him to the Palmerola US military base. Zelaya was put on a plane to Costa Rica. On June 28 there was due to be a non-binding vote around whether Hondurans would support a National Constituent Assembly (NCA) to reform the constitution. This process was stalled by the coup but the resistance has never stopped organising for a 'self-convoked' NCA ('self-convoked' refers to a NCA organised primarily by the people rather than the Honduran elite -eds), through which the marginalised Honduran majority would determine how to alter the constitution for the betterment of women, farmers, Indigenous peoples and others.

An article by Revistazo (an online Honduran magazine that writes about issues that are commonly censored or ignored in the mainstream media) about why an NCA is needed argues that the 1982 Constitution politically excludes the Honduran majority. It legislates for a representative 'democracy'

system, rather than a directly democratic one. Moreover, it specifically prohibits mechanisms that could lead to greater democracy, such as NCAs, provisions for revoking leadership, and citizen legislative initiatives. In fact, the 2009 coup was partly justified by the fact that NCAs are illegal in the 1982 constitution!

Several new constitutions have actually occurred in Honduran history through National Constituent Assemblies, following military coups, but this process has always been controlled by the elite. This time around, grassroots social movements, unions and other democratic organisations want to drive the process.

HOPE: THEN AND NOW

Before the military coup, there was a sense of hope. Through the Zelaya government, some progressive change seemed to be happening. This was important in a country that has historically been 'entreguista' - meaning that the few wealthy Hondurans sell the country out; they facilitate exploitation of its people and natural resources. Under Zelaya, different people argued that that this was changing. For instance, Lisa Sullivan of School of the Americas Watch [a US-based group that opposes American foreign policy in Latin America - eds.] was amazed to witness Zelaya's support for grassroots organising in support of the National Constituent Assembly. Edwin Espinal was another who thought that things were different under Zelaya. He was a young person who migrated to the US and returned to Honduras to start a small business. Edwin came back, and fell in love with a university student called Wendy Avila. The social reforms facilitated by Zelaya were not tolerated by those serving national and international elite interests, who planned the coup.

When the coup took place, Edwin and

Wendy were among the countless people who took to the streets everyday fighting to resist it. Wendy was killed in September 2009, from a respiratory failure from toxic gases shot at resistance members, as well as from the apparent negligence of the medical staff. Wendy's struggle lives on in Edwin and many others. Through gunshots, death squads, gas bombs, etcetera, one person in resistance has been killed every week since the coup, and many more have been persecuted. This continues despite the mainstream media's portrayal that 'democracy' has been restored in Honduras. Repression is not covered. The media presents the current President Lobo as democratic due to his election in a poll on November 29, 2009. However, in this election, there was a massive abstention rate and military intimidation of voters. The resistance organisations refused to participate (even international organisations such as the UN, the Carter Center and the EU refused to observe it). The mainstream media in Honduras is controlled by business interests, and it is through presenting Lobo as legitimate and democratic that business relationships can continue to flourish.

However, now there is a different sense of hope. This lies in the popular consciousness which increases everyday with the efforts of Hondurans in resistance in their different communities in the country. There is a lot of indignation and pain.

Throughout this article, I will look at some of the different communities involved in resistance - farmers, Indigenous people, LGBTI activists, teachers and students - and show how the coup affects them and illustrate their part in the wider struggle. I will further show how violence has been used against the Honduran resistance, which perhaps indicates how brutally elites can react when

their power is challenged. Nevertheless, despite this kind of violence, struggles like these go on all over the world. Hopefully providing specific information about what has been happening in Honduras will give some inspiration to others campaigning around these things. Moreover, providing this information might allow people in different parts of the world to understand their own struggles as more than localised issues, but as part of a global community of resistance.

CAMPESIN@S (FARMERS)

The campesin@s of Bajo Aguan in northern Honduras are one of the most affected groups. Over 30 people have been killed in Bajo Aguan since the coup.

A brief history of the campesin@s helps one understand their contemporary situation. In 1962 agrarian reform legislation brought many landless farmers to Bajo Aguan - a previously unpopulated but very fertile region. This law bought excess idle land from large landowners and distributed it to organised communities to farm in cooperatives. It was implemented because of a combination of grave inequality in the country and a regional trend towards revolutionary uprisings. These factors pushed the elite to implement reforms in order to prevent a revolution. However, in 1992 an 'Agrarian Modernisation' law was passed to allow large landholders to regain domination over much land in order to expand palm oil plantations. Many communities began to lose their land and started to struggle and organise. They began to occupy parts of the land.

Under the Zelaya administration, decree 18-2008 was passed. This legalised small farming communities' land titles of places that they had been occupying. Zelaya also

' THE RESISTANCE
HAS NEVER STOPPED
ORGANISING . . . '

began negotiations with them to resolve the conflict. After the coup, the new regime decided to facilitate plantation expansion and stopped the negotiations. Farmers had to initiate land occupations again. When they did this, they faced the possibility of violent evictions. In April 2010, the regime started 'negotiations' again - but at the same time 5000 police and soldiers flooded the region. Currently, the area is in a state of constant militarisation.

On 15 December 2010, a children-only protest was held that blocked a highway to the Trujillo port for several minutes. They protested the killings of parents (who were farmers - eds). A month before, 5 farmers were shot at an eviction. Soon after, in January 2011, the Supreme Court ruled decree 18-2008 as unconstitutional, claiming that it violated private property rights. Campesin@s continue to fight for agrarian reform in which land is distributed equitably.

INDIGENOUS STRUGGLES

The Indigenous peoples of Honduras have been in struggle not just since the coup but since colonisation 500 years ago. With the coup, there have been ferocious attacks on Indigenous peoples. These have included attacks on communal land rights, community radio stations, on their right to be consulted and have self-determination as hydroelectric dams and other megaprojects are pushed onto their land.

In January 2011 the regime approved a particularly damaging dam project (with the Chinese company Sinohydro) on the Patuca river, the longest river in Central America. Many Indigenous communities live along this river - their way of life depends upon it. Communities have protested that the Patuca dam project will destroy their lives. One Indigenous community of 500, the Tawahks, literally faces extinction.

Indigenous organisations such as Copinh (Council of Popular and Indigenous Organisations of Honduras) have been a strong voice in the resistance. They have radical politics and have aimed to democratise the struggle. They have attempted to educate themselves. For example, in one workshop, communities gathered to study the Convention 169 on Indigenous Rights (of which Honduras is a signatory), and discussed what it offers them as a tool for struggle. They also discussed the values, knowledge, and resources of the Lenca people, and wanted to protect these from those wanting to commodify them. They wanted to be proud to be Lencas. Indigenous communities (in combination with black Honduran activists) organised their own constituent assembly in February 2011 to identify their own priorities and proposals for the new constitution. Their struggles are strong and threaten powerful interests. 2 Copinh members have been assassinated since the coup.

LGBTI RESISTANCE

When I was in Honduras, I met with members of the organisation Apuvimeh - the Association for a Better Life for people living with HIV/AIDS. Its members argued that LGBTI communities and their issues have always been invisible to Honduran governments. However, under Zelaya, negotiations began for the first time. Government supported projects for those affected by HIV/AIDS were being developed. This process was interrupted by the coup.

With the coup, there has been a tremendous increase in homophobia and hate crimes. Murders against members of this community have increased from up to 3/year, to 41/year. There were 7 separate cases in January 2011 alone. There has also been killings of LGBTI leaders who were

prominent in the resistance. For instance, Walter Trochez, the general secretary of Apuvimeh and an important resistance leader, was tortured and killed on 13 December 2009. Days later, another LGBTI resistance activist, Renan Fajardo, a 22 year old architecture student, was killed as well.

Apuvimeh forms part of the anti-coup resistance. There is homophobia within the resistance too, so they work hard to try and eradicate homophobia in the movement. They hold regular workshops led by different young members. They sit together, brainstorm and discuss topics like 'what are hate crimes? What can we do?'. They also facilitate a sense of community amongst sexually diverse people - they play soccer, have parties, and hang out.

WOMEN IN RESISTANCE

After the military coup, the two biggest impacts on women have been that the morning after pill was banned (on the 2nd day of the coup!) and that femicides (killing of women) have increased. This is from 252 in 2008, to 407 in 2010. Women have been killed for their leadership in the resistance. Many report having been subject to sexual aggression during or after protests.

The organisation Feminists in Resistance (FER) were born out of the coup and the resistance to it. It is a strong network firmly in solidarity with different parts of the struggle. At the same time it asserts the specifically feminist struggle. FER member Adelay Carias argued in her blog:

from the beginning, we understood that it was the moment to position our demands...of our feminist project... [which] with its emancipatory proposal tries to change the relation of power between the genders...we from the beginning made it very clear that our demands are not negotiable, because they are not [able to be postponed] and are

equally important to other demands...[as a consequence of the coup]

Moreover, the coup had a radicalising effect. Carias continues:

we have lost the fear...we realised that we could not wait any more, that it was the moment to struggle for everything that we believed in.

The indigenous group Copinh is amongst the organisations making an effort to have a strong feminist agenda. Copinh organised the Women's First People's Court. In this event, many Indigenous women brainstormed and denounced offences against them, whether by partners, family, business people, or the regime and its cops. They also had a men only kitchen duties roster, as a first step towards challenging entrenched, patriarchal gender relations.

STRUGGLES OF TEACHERS, STUDENTS AND PARENTS

The main impact of the coup regarding education has been an attempt to privatise it. The regime has plundered the teachers' pension and loans institution Inprema by more than US\$200 million. It has also left around 2000 teachers unpaid from all of 2010.

The privatisation law is currently called the 'Law for Strengthening Public Education and Community Participation'. Essentially, it is all about moving responsibility for providing education away from the state and onto parents, councils and even corporations (who stand to make a profit). The pressure for this comes from the World Bank and IMF, who have put conditions on loans that require the reduction of social spending.

Protests and mobilisation of teachers, students, parents, resistance members, unionists and farmers in opposition to this have been massive and national. A teachers' strike in August 2010 was massively repressed. In March 2011, there

was another teachers' strike. In addition to this, students occupied universities and high schools, and a number of highways were blockaded. However, the repression was far worse. Every protest was violently dispersed. Tear gas was thrown at teachers, and into union buildings, homes, and university halls. Dozens of protesters were detained everyday. Gunshots were used many times. One teacher, Ilse Velasquez, was shot in the head and knocked over with tear gas. Afterwards she was run over by a vehicle trying to escape the gases and was killed. Hours later, President Lobo argued that the police were not responsible for her death, but that teachers should instead return to class 'as these things happen'. Overall, 12 teachers have been killed since the coup, as well as many students and parents.

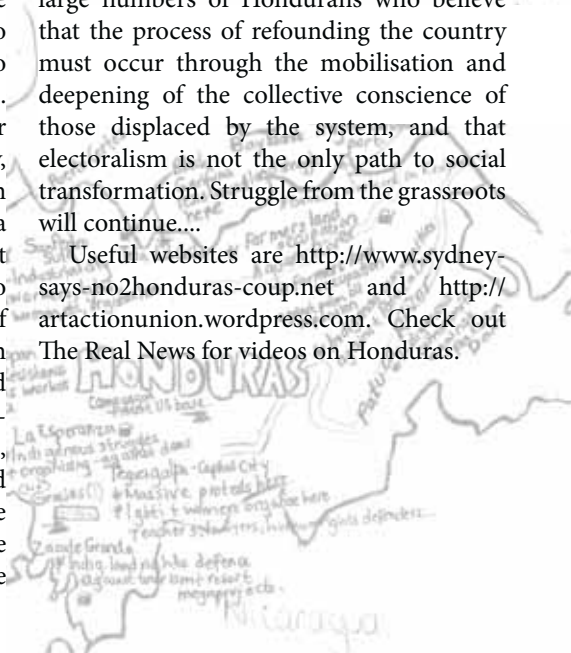
SOLIDARITY WITH HONDURAS AND THE CURRENT SITUATION

On 26 June 2011 around a hundred people gathered in Sydney Iberoamerican Plaza to mark the 2 year anniversary of the coup. We tried to use creative tactics to engage people. We put on street theatre to convey the current situation in Honduras. A Chilean group and the Solidarity Choir played resistance music. Importantly, Santiago Reyes (a Sydney-based Honduran activist) discussed the May 2011 Cartagena Agreement. This allowed former President Zelaya to return to the country, but also returned Honduras to the Organisation of American States (a regional organisation composed of all the states in North and South America - eds) This was a major setback, legalising and legitimising the regime, giving it official economic, diplomatic and military status in the region, while the resistance made comparatively laughable gains. This agreement was made possible

through the mediation of the Venezuelan and Colombian Presidents, and was accepted by Zelaya. In fact, during the protest, when the Venezuelan Ambassador spoke of Venezuela's support for the Honduran people, Sydney community activist Frank Jones challenged the ambassador by pointing out his government's responsibility for the deal. Jones and others held up a banner saying, 'Screw the Politicians Deals - Solidarity with Grassroots Organisations'.

Now more than ever, solidarity is important. It is a difficult time. Not only has the Honduran regime been legalised, but an assembly held by the resistance front (a coalition of diverse Honduran resistance organisations that have worked together since the coup - eds) on 26 June 2011 decided to convert the front into a political party. While this disappointed a number of organisations, there is no resignation. For instance, Lucy Argueta, founder of the Artists in Resistance group (a group of artists that oppose the effects of the coup - eds) has argued that there are large numbers of Hondurans who believe that the process of refounding the country must occur through the mobilisation and deepening of the collective conscience of those displaced by the system, and that electoralism is not the only path to social transformation. Struggle from the grassroots will continue....

Useful websites are <http://www.sydney-says-no2honduras-coup.net> and <http://artactionunion.wordpress.com>. Check out The Real News for videos on Honduras.



JURA BOOKS GOES SOLAR

Jura Books is now 100% solar-powered. Over the last 6 months, people from the Jura Collective and the broader anarchist community got together, planned, organised and raised funds to make this dream into a reality. Over a hundred people made donations of a few dollars up to \$1000.

Jura's system is a 2.09kW system which generates about 9.41 kilowatt hours per day of clean, renewable energy. This will save more than 3 tonnes of greenhouse pollution every year. It should more than meet the space's needs and allow Jura to put energy back into the grid for others to use. It should reduce Jura's electricity bills to zero and even generate a modest income, which we will use to help fund Jura's political activity. More importantly, Jura now has a working model of community-owned renewable energy.

Jura decided to go solar for political reasons. The Jura Collective believes that community-owned and controlled renewable energy systems are a vision of the future. Community renewables can de-carbonise, de-centralise and democratise.

Imagine a world based on the principles of sustainability and decentralised collectivism. A world where communities own their own power systems. That's the world Jura is fighting for and pre-figuring. The solar system is one step along that path. The Jura Collective knows that one solar system isn't going to fix climate change, but the hope is that this action helps to inspire others and build the climate movement. Jura has tried to use the solar project as an opportunity to involve more people in grassroots organising for justice on climate change. Jura will continue to support the climate movement and take action whenever possible.

Jura is also keen to point out that governments and capitalism are just making the climate nightmare worse. At the same time as Jura installed the renewable energy system, the State government undermined the solar power industry, and the Federal government pushed a carbon price market mechanism. These policies will just increase injustice and will fail to solve climate change. This will be a nightmare for Indigenous people whose forests will be sold for 'carbon credits', workers whose jobs will get worse, those who will pay more for the same dirty coal power, and the future inhabitants of a hellish world.



Interview with Broad Left

For the last several issues, Syzygy from Mutiny Zine has interviewed members of collectives that also distribute radical publications in Australia. We hope this will encourage discussion about the experiences, strengths and weaknesses of such publications and help increase co-operation between Mutiny and these other groups. This time Syzygy has interviewed Alexander Brown from Broad Left, a newsletter put out by folks from the Illawarra. You can check it out online at <http://broadleft.net/>

Syzygy (Syz): Why did you decide to start the publication?

Broad Left (BL): Broad Left began as a print newsletter in May 1987 and dissolved during 2002/3 for a variety of reasons, including the financial pressure of printing and distributing a print publication. In 2010 a group of people who were involved in the newsletter circulated a proposal to revive the newsletter, but this time as an online website. An editorial collective was formed and now meets once a month to put together that month's issue and make decisions about the running of the newsletter.

Syz: How difficult has it been to find the resources needed for a publication, e.g printing, writers, people to do lay-out, etc

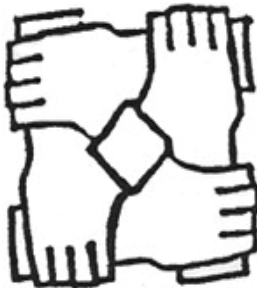
BL: The online format was deliberately chosen to avoid some of these problems. However, producing an online newsletter does require a certain amount of technical knowledge. At the moment we have plenty of contributors and we are working towards getting more people in the collective familiar with the technology to publish online.

Syz: In Mutiny it sometimes feels like articles in the zine are just what people are writing about generally, rather than having a set of criteria for content. Have you tried to prioritise publishing articles around particular themes? For what reasons?

BL: Broad Left has a very specific set of criteria. We publish short 300 word reports on local left and progressive events. We don't publish commentary or opinion pieces. The reason we chose this focus is that there was a lack of awareness in the Illawarra of just how much political activity is going on. We hope to circulate this information so that people feel empowered and part of an active, vibrant community in struggle.

Syz: Have you any thoughts on the strengths and weaknesses of the newsletter?

BL: I think the strength of the newsletter is its non-sectarian approach. The editorial collective is made up of people from a variety of political perspectives. This means that we are becoming a trusted source of news from a 'broad left' perspective. Recently, we held a public forum on democracy and local government in Wollongong which was well attended by people from many different political perspectives. I think this event's success was a testament to the non-sectarian strategy we have adopted.



I think our biggest weakness is that we are still not taking full advantage of the possibilities that the technology allows us. With more contributors, especially of photographs and video, the website would look better and be more accessible. This is a work in progress and we are starting to get more pictures and video.

Syz: Do you have any ideas about how grassroots publications can collaborate and learn from each other?

BL: I think maintaining a comradely and non-sectarian stance with other publishing initiatives is the key to a good relationship. Perhaps in the future we could hold a gathering of grassroots media organisations as a way to develop networks and share skills and experiences?

Syz: Anything else?

BL: Radical publishing is becoming increasingly important as the mainstream media seem more and more out of touch with the intense class struggles developing all over the planet. As we develop our own organs of communication we can increasingly leave the corporate media behind and create a multitude of media which facilitate our commonality while allowing us all to express our different perspectives freely.

REVIEW: 'CAPITAL' AGAINST CAPITALISM: A CONFERENCE OF NEW MARXIST RESEARCH



**Fire Brigade Employees Union,
Sydney, 25 June 2011**

'Capital' against Capitalism aimed to respond to 'contemporary politics from a range of historical materialist perspectives' through bringing together 'the theoretical discussions and debates occurring in Capital reading groups, PhD study circles, and Marxist political organisations and networks'. The organisers were activists outside of the far-left groups, and emphasised the need for 'new analyses' and 'new strategic orientations'. For more information, check out <http://capitalagainstcapitalism.blogspot.com/>

Humphrey McQueen

In memory of a life-long sparring partner
– Bob Gould

[This report does not summarise all the twenty-one papers. Instead, I reflect on three themes from the proceedings: 1. radical pedagogy; 2. Idealism versus Materialism; 3. the tertiary trained. Two other matters are vital but need a more thorough investigation than is possible here: the near absence of manual workers and the few women who came.]

Anarchists and Marxists agree on two things. First, that Marx's *Capital* is an essential starting place for understanding capitalism. Bakunin had hoped to translate it. Secondly, that the state should wither away. Between analysis and synthesis falls the hard bit: how to get there from here? Again, we agree on the centrality of education – but of what kind?

Anarchists have promoted democratic circles among activists. The Materialist emphasis on learning by doing has been weakened by the vacuous dichotomy of either interpreting the world or changing it. The Manifesto calls for the reintegration of schooling with work in order to interpret the world though changing both it and ourselves as individuals, as a class and as a species. These precepts indicate why we need to organise conferences at which every session is a community of critical enquiry.

Instead, only about half the eighty attendees contributed although everyone had something to say between sessions. Limiting contributions from the floor to two minutes worked as well as the structure of expert panels followed by comments can manage. Everyone kept to the timetable, a rare expression of respect for other presenters and the audience.

The concluding plenary combined the worst pedagogy with nil connections for using *Capital* against capitalism. Nicole Pepperell read the opening section of her forthcoming book (the book is *Disassembling Capital* - eds) at a hundred to the dozen. Few could catch what she was saying let alone follow her exegesis.

The day had begun with a plenary at which Rick Kuhn delivered the core arguments from his jointly authored *Labor's conflict, big business, workers and the politics of class*. After asking why were we focused on parliamentary cretinism, I identified the Kuhn-Bramble method as Idealist. Their failure to periodise the expansion of capital renders them unable to explicate how the Labor Party has serviced capital's shifting needs. Instead, their Platonic Ideal Form has the Party remaining a 'capitalist workers' party' across its 120 years.

Materialists must recognise that the emergence of monopolising capitals, as sketched in Lenin's *Imperialism*, installed 'big business', which the Labor parties were being established to prevent or nationalise, for instance, by using land taxes to break up the big estates. Lenin identified three stages in the transformation between 1870 and 1900. Once oligopolies had become foundational, lesser yet significant changes in the patterns of accumulation have to be noted, for instance, the shift from extracting monopoly profits under tariff protection to the freer-trade era since the 1970s under so-called globalisation. Far from contributing to proletarian science, the Kuhn-Bramble version glosses a squabble inside Political Science.

The conference went on to parallel workshops. One on 'Marxism and Theology' pointed out that Liberation Theology had not gone out of fashion – it had been murdered, literally in many cases. Its half-life includes the pedagogy of the oppressed which grew out of a literacy programme built on 'read the word; read the world', a Materialist epistemology grounded in work.

By contrast, a session on 'Reading Capital in our own time' spotlighted the limits on what academics can do to make Capital effective against capitalism. A presenter surveyed the literature around his doctoral topic, as if wrong ideas were the problem, not the accumulation of capital.

Mike Beggs's 'Zombie Marx and modern economics' asked whether Marxists can take in more from the marginalists than mathematical techniques and still be Marxist. In his riposte, Kuhn stressed that the divide is a political

one between a critique of exploitation and its evasion. His making this irrefragable point was marred by the finger-waving by which adherents of his cult (*Kuhn and Bramble are members of Socialist Alternative -eds*) are humiliated should their thoughts stray beyond its dogmas.

A workshop on Social Change heard John Parry offer an historically materialist explanation for the attacks on TAFE education, which is being twisted to match the short-to medium-term demands of employers. Moreover, Parry raised the class content of all pedagogies by pointing out that the old TAFE methods overcame the division of mind from hand.

The three topics listed under 'Marxism and the Law' had nothing to say about current attacks on workers through un-Fair Work Australia, the ABCC and the 'harmonisation' of OH&S rules. The absence of those topics underlined the trouble that Marxologists face in being 'against capitalism'.

Next door, three papers dealt with the here and now. Marcus Banks reported on his work in the Commonwealth bureaucracy to examine how both public servants and welfare recipients connect to the needs of capital. Investigations of this kind are needed from groups of activists in every sector of the labour market.

In reacting against the day's scholasticism, I dropped most of what I had prepared about labour-time as a concept to discuss how a radical pedagogy might be revived. Learning is most effective when it becomes active with workers educating themselves and each other. I handed around a document produced by Victorian railway workers in 1972 as an example of what might be attempted in every sector. (*It is on www.surplusvalue.org.au*) Marxist scholars can help militants to track the pathways by which the sale of their labour-power contributes to the accumulation of capital. We can also do their typing and not just turn up to flog grouplet publications.

The conference spotlighted the urgency of making such an investigation into tertiary education. For a start, what has happened so that an anti-capitalist conference calls for peer-reviewed papers? The research could

begin with a survey of the explanations that have been proposed for the student revolt of the 1960s. We need to break through the Idealist accounts of cultural rebelliousness by linking those attitudes to the new needs of capital in production and realisation of the surplus through marketing. The *Arena* (*Arena is a Melbourne-based leftist journal - eds*) thesis regarded the technologically trained as potential challengers to workplace discipline.

From there, we need to specify the current relations between tertiary students and their employment. Until the mid-1970s, most part-time students came to campus after a day at their full-time permanent jobs. The Worker-Student Alliance of the 1970s saw fulltime students take up fulltime jobs in factories. Since then, more full-timers have been in the paid workforce during semester-time. The alliance of workers and students is now embodied in each one of them. Instead of holding full-time permanent or vacation jobs, students now cobble together casual part-time temporary positions. To meet the higher costs from capital's induction of needs they have to earn enough to own i-Pads, a computer for on-line study and for socialising – not to mention rents – much of it on credit.

A study of working conditions in tertiary institutions needs to identify the causes and effects of the retreat from participatory democracy in the classroom and throughout the administration. Can that loss be traced to the managerialism and credentialism galloping throughout the economy out of the Schools of Business?

The scramble for contracts compels applicants to publish at least one peer-reviewed article each year. Did that pressure lead to the embrace of the linguistic turn which authorised the critique of existing texts rather than the expenditure of time on empirical research?

The churn of post-graduates from their short-term contracts to stacking supermarket shelves is widespread. One in four science graduates cannot get a job in their speciality. In addition, we need to examine the role of NTEU in the conflict between tenured staff and those on contracts who hew wood for them.

Historical Materialism

A number of attendees went on to a pub to talk over the prospects of holding an international conference in July 2013 associated with the London-based quarterly Historical Materialism, which co-sponsored the day. To succeed, such a conference will need institutional support in academe beyond local adherents of the Socialist Workers Party (*The Australian groups that support this British organisation are Socialist Alternative and Solidarity -eds*).

A consideration of the place of Historical Materialism in how Capital might be used against capitalism is a chance to restate the three themes of this report: Materialism against Idealism; how each kind of work now serves capital; radical pedagogy.

First, how Materialist is Historical Materialism? The majority of its articles tell people how to write historical materialist accounts – if they could ever get around to doing so.

Secondly, to what extent does Historical Materialism exist to combat capitalism or is it rather a means for aspiring academics to gain peer-reviewed points? That question provokes consideration of how the needs of capital are being served and/or challenged by the regiments of surplus labourers in the tertiary institutions.

Finally, if we must take up any of Marx's scraps on Feuerbach, let's emblazon our banners with a maxim of proletarian pedagogy: 'The educator must be educated'.



upcoming events:

Melbourne:

Anarchist Bookfair
Saturday August 13th 10-6pm
Abbotsford Convent
- amelbournebookfair.org

Mexico Solidarity Seminar
Thursday July 21st 6:30 - 9:30pm
Latrobe University
- latinlasnet.org

for Anarchist events in Melb check:
mac.anarchobase.com
loopholecommunitycentre.org

Perth:

The Rad Library (.wordpress.com)
mobile resource Every Sunday
12-5pm Hyde Park, Northside pagoda

Brisbane:

check bristyle.org.au for community
events

Australia wide:

Critical Mass bike action Last friday
of every month in your neighbourhood
- criticalmass.org.au

Sydney:

Peoples Kitchen
cooking from 4pm eat from 7pm
Every Wednesday 22 Enmore Rd Newtown

Seeds

a conference for the broad student
left, because we need a left-wing
student movement.

- seedsleftconference@gmail.com

for Anarchist events in Sydney check:
blackrosebooks.org & Jura.org.au

If you there is an event you think belongs here
send the details with the subject EVENT: to

mutineers@graffiti.net

