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CLIMATE BREAKDOWN AND INDIGENOUS SOLIDARITY • ABOUT ANARCHO-SYNDICALISM • A NEW RUPTURE IN SPANISH ANARCHO-SYNDICALISM • BUILD FLYING SQUADS NOW: FOR WORKING-CLASS DEFENSE • A COFFEE WITH PRÁXEDIS GUERRERO • DON'T FORGET THE NEIGHBOURHOOD: ORGANIZING ANARCHIST TENANTS' UNIONS • BEING OUTRAGED TOGETHER: SOLIDARITY AGAINST STATE VIOLENCE IN GAZA • VICTORY! SACKED WORKERS RECEIVE COMPENSATION AT LAST

CONTENTS

03 Climate Breakdown and Indigenous Solidarity in Canada

By Jeff Shantz and JM

04 A New Rupture in Spanish Anarcho-Syndicalism

By Ariane Miéville and José Luis García González

06 About Anarcho-Syndicalism

By Esmeralda and JM

08 Build Flying Squads Now: For Working Class Defense

By Jeff Shantz

09 A Coffee with Práxedis Guerrero

By JM

10 Don't Forget the Neighbourhood: Organizing Anarchist Tenants' Unions

By Anonymous

12 Being Outraged Together: Solidarity against State Violence in Gaza

By Alexandra Szopinski

14 Victory! Sacked Workers Receive Compensation at Last

By Lugius

15 Kids' Corner

16 Citations and Notes

CLIMATE BREAKDOWN AND INDIGENOUS SOLIDARITY IN CANADA

By Jeff Shantz and JM



The year 2023 is officially the worst recorded fire season in so-called Canada. And was the case even before the middle of summer, when more than 8 million hectares were burned.

These wildfires have deeply impacted many communities around the world. They have most severely impacted local Indigenous communities, because their territories are northern, rural, or wilderness.

Indigenous Services Canada says that more than 21,000 people from 45 Indigenous communities have been forced to leave their homes so far in 2023. In fact, Indigenous people are more than ten times more likely to die in a fire than non-Indigenous people.

The impacts are communal and threaten the very cultures of Indigenous communities. The land scorched in wildfires sustains treaty rights, such as hunting and cultural practices. Indigenous people warn that in the absence of serious transformations in relations with nature, the land and traditional ways of life are threatened. Those that created the problem can't solve what they've caused, since they're also part of the problem.

But if somebody must do something... Who can? And how? In the USA and Canada, Indigenous communities have recently been putting their own lives at stake on the forefront of struggles against extractive capital and fossil fuel industries.

Wet'suwet'en land defenders and Wet'suwet'en hereditary chiefs have been engaged in powerful struggles for several years against the Coastal GasLink pipeline. The pipeline is

being constructed across their territories to connect shale gas sources with two liquefaction and export facilities (LNG Canada and Cedar LNG) in Kitimat on the northwest coast.

Gidimt'en is one of five clans of the Wet'suwet'en Nation. They established a checkpoint to control access to Cas Yikh House territory within the larger Gidimt'en clan territory (by the Morice River). Because of this they faced harsh repression, which led to allies in 2020 carrying out massive train blockades across Canada in solidarity with the Wet'suwet'en.

More fierce resistance comes from the Secwepemc land and water defenders who have engaged in lengthy struggles to stop the expansion of the Trans Mountain pipeline across their unceded territory. They physically blocked access to pipeline construction by building tiny houses along the pipeline route which serve as mini barricades.

So far, they have built six houses on their territory near Blue River and Moonbeam Creek. The tiny houses serve a dual purpose. In addition to providing a physical barrier or blockade, the tiny houses also provide community housing for their families.

A challenge remains for rank-and-file workers and anarchists: build solidarity with Indigenous land and water defenders, as in the recent "Shut Down Canada" blockades in support of Wet'suwet'en land defenders. Let's spread knowledge about these struggles in our local and international networks and we'll get to a point where we'll reach a local and international critical number. If we get organized with anarcho-syndicalist internationalist principles and aims, we'll be better able to act in solidarity to stop that fossil fuel addicted machine and achieve an anarchist, decolonial and sustainable world.



ABOUT

The Anarchist Union Journal is a free online and paper publication made by Canada and USA anarcho-syndicalists with the goal of creating an International Workers Association union in both countries.

This publication accepts open submissions from a wide variety of contributors. Articles represent the views of their authors, and are not necessarily indicative of the views of Anarchist Union Journal's editors or coordinating committee.

Want to contribute? Visit anarchistunionjournal.org/contact or email your submissions to anarchistunionjournal@riseup.net

Cover photo depicts anarcho-syndicalist flags in front of a memorial to the Haymarket Martyrs, Forest Park, IL. Photo assemblage from originals by Irina Hynes (2016) and Ian Mackinnon (2009).



A NEW RUPTURE IN SPANISH ANARCHO-SYNDICALISM

By Ariane Miéville and José Luis García González

[Translator's note: in the following article the International Workers Association is "IWA" but also "AIT", which stands for Asociación Internacional de les Trabajadores in Spanish. Therefore in Spain, the IWA affiliate is called CNT-AIT]

Spanish anarcho-syndicalism has experienced a new rupture. The crisis had been brewing for a long time. It came to an end between 2015 and 2017. The CNT-AIT and CNT-CIT (or CNT©¹) are now two distinct organizations. In the international libertarian movement, this conflict is little known, or it is observed with irony and condescension: a ridiculous battle over the CNT acronyms, when there are many other more urgent battles to be fought...

It's not that simple. CNT-CIT, which registered the CNT acronym as a trademark (hence the ©), is engaged in a legal battle of rare violence against CNT-AIT. At the time of writing, the CNT© is taking eighteen CNT-AIT unions to court, claiming damages of 50,000 euros each for the use of the CNT acronym; the premises and other resources of these unions could be seized (even if they change their name) as « property » of the CNT; several CNT-AIT members could be imprisoned as a result of these lawsuits.

The venture to capture the CNT-AIT's heritage is the result of long-standing maneuvers, to which we'll have occasion to return. What we need to know at the outset is that the operation has taken on an international dimension with the process that led to the creation of the International Confederation of Labor (ICL) [TN: or Confederación Internacional del Trabajo, "CIT", in Spanish. Hence "CNT-CIT"] founded in Parma (Italy) in May 2018.

Let's go back a bit. In December 2015, in Zaragoza, at the CNT Congress (known as the Congress of Empty Chairs, because many delegates didn't attend), the men and women who were to head the future CNT© put forward the idea that the IWA should be overhauled. What they didn't like about the IWA was the excessive number of small sections, particularly those from the former Eastern bloc.

Because of the International's federalism: one organization = one vote, they felt that the Spanish section was at a disadvantage. In their eyes, the CNT, which paid a membership fee for several thousand members, should have had more weight and power than sections with only a few dozen members. Without a mandate from its unions, the Confederal Committee of the Spanish CNT stopped paying its dues to the IWA (even though every member, by paying his or her dues to the organization, pays a share to the International) and took the initiative of creating another international on its own terms with sections sympathetic to

it, such as the German FAU and the Italian USI, as well as a few other organizations.

At the time, the Spanish promoters of the future CIT were convinced that they could wipe out the IWA simply by ceasing to contribute financially to it. Their calculation was as follows: in photocopies alone, the IWA secretariat spent at least €1,000 a year; the Spanish CNT would deprive it of some €30,000; if to this were added the withdrawal of the FAU and USI, the International would be deprived of 90% of its contributors. Thus, with no sources of funding for its propaganda and activities "will turn the IWA into a purely testimonial and completely inoperative organization"². By the way, that was already what they were accusing it of.

This tyranny of numbers is a constant among CNT-CIT promoters. In Spain, they had already excluded unions from their own organization that didn't "commune" with them. One of the criteria for these purges was group size. For example, two Andalusian unions were expelled for organizing joint actions with other CNT unions that had previously been excluded. In fact, four unions had committed this "fault", but only the two smallest were expelled. Getting rid of malcontents: yes, but without losing too many contributors.

From December 2nd to 4th 2016, the twenty-sixth congress of the IWA was held in Warsaw. On this occasion, the congressmen decided to disaffiliate the Spanish, German and Italian sections (CNT, FAU and USI) due to non-compliance with the statutes and refusal to pay their dues. In its final declaration, the IWA congress also noted that it had received declarations of support from Spain from some forty local unions (members or former members of the CNT), and that several members of these unions had attended the congress as observers.

At that time, two meetings took place in Spain. The first in November 2016 and the second in April 2017. This was a "CNT-AIT restructuring congress" carried out in two stages, bringing together unions that had left the CNT, others that had been expelled from it and still others that were still part of it, albeit with a critical point of view.

Participants in these sessions denounced scandalous situations: a breakdown in federalism; a lack of solidarity; a absence of transparency – in connection with a theft of 20,000 euros committed by a national secretary – but also authoritarianism on the part of committees and even assaults. The delegates noted that this drift had weakened the organization. The absence of militants justified the remuneration of permanent staff. In their sights was a law

firm (also called technico-confederal) set up by the leaders – in place of the occasional recourse to lawyers – which was absorbing the bulk of resources: not only the sums that should have been paid to the IWA, but also the share of "pro-pesos" dues due to imprisoned comrades paid by the CNT.

The delegates drew up new statutes, deleting articles that allowed authoritarian practices, and decided to rejoin the IWA, with an internationalist perspective rather than the "colonialist" one (in the service of the Spanish CNT) favored by those who had provoked the split.

A repeat of the process that gave birth to the CGT?

For their part, CNT-CIT craftsmen claimed at the same time (end of 2016) that their split had nothing to do with the one that took place between 1979 and 1983 and gave birth to the Spanish CGT. Here's their explanation: "CGT was betting on a model that renounced anarcho-syndicalism, while now it is a situation of paralysis that prevents the practical development at the international level of a model of implementation and growth truly anarcho-syndicalist. The problem is not one of ideological differences, but of attitude and mood."³

Should we believe them? Unlike the CGT, the CNT©, like the CNT-AIT, does not take part in union elections. However, it's easy to imagine that the CNT© has embarked on a path towards reformism and integration. Why else would there be talk of unity and probable unification of the CNT© with the CGT and the Solidaridad Obrera (SO)⁴ union? In the communiqué announcing this convergence, released at a press conference on April 10, 2023, the CNT©, CGT and SO present themselves as "three organizations that recognize ourselves as heirs of the workers' tradition of anarcho-syndicalism."⁵

So the CGT, which was not anarcho-syndicalist in 2016, would become (again) so in 2023! Now that's surprising...

An element that goes in the same direction is the current media interest in the CNT-CIT, obviously presented as "CNT" for short, and the invisibilization of the CNT-AIT in the media. In a January 2022 article published by the newspaper Publico on trade unionism in Spain⁶, the space devoted to the CNT© is as large as that devoted to the majority unions CCOO and UGT, each of which claims nearly a million members, or that allocated to the CGT, which claims to have over 100,000 members. Why give so much space to an organization that claims... 8,000 members? Why

give it so much publicity? As for the expert consulted by Publico: Beltrán Roca (professor at the University of Cadiz) is a member or ex-member of the CNT©. One is never so well served...

Here's another clue: the arguments used by CNT-CIT spokespersons to denigrate CNT-AIT and IWA activists bear a striking resemblance to those used at the time of the birth of the CGT. They are accused of being "ideological purists", with no "union realization of their own", their existence "virtual" due to their rejection of the "new strategic approach to union action [of the CNT-CIT]"⁷. On the one hand, there would be the "immobilists": the CNT-AIT, and on the other, the promoters of a "new syndicalism"⁸: the CNT-CIT. Let's not forget that, before becoming the CGT, this organization was called "CNT-renewed" –

what a coincidence! A comparison with what happened forty years ago is worth making.

At the time, to defend the CNT-AIT, we were called "ayatollahs" and "inquisitors!"⁹ But despite all the anathemas, uncompromising anarcho-syndicalism refuses to disappear, and even seems to be rising from the ashes on several continents!



ABOUT ANARCHO-SYNDICALISM

By Esmeralda and JM

What is anarchism?

Freedom is only possible in a free society without oppressive social institutions, such as the state and capitalism. For most anarchists, this free society needs to be a libertarian communist one.

But why are there so many tendencies within anarchism? For example there are the anarcho-syndicalists, the neoplatformists/especifismo, the individualists, the insurrectionists, the post-anarchists, the anti-specists, etc. Anarchism might look pretty messy or even contradictory sometimes!

What's behind anarchism's various labels?

Those various anarchist labels are mostly explained by their different narratives and organizing.

What is the narrative? Just ask "What are the causes of inequities and oppressions?"

What is the organizing? Just ask "What tactics and organizations are to be used, or not used and built, or not built, in order to achieve a free society?"

What is anarcho-syndicalism's narrative?

Anarcho-syndicalism's narrative is that exploitation and oppression have various faces and levels. The more important are structural to the societal level. The inequities and oppressions will remain as long as our society remains in those structural power relations and hierarchies. The most powerful groups in society gain their power from capitalism and the State, because these are the strongest institutions that maintain the power structures and status quo.

What is anarcho-syndicalism's organizing?

Anarcho-syndicalism's organizing is about getting involved in an anarcho-syndicalist union or building one if none is near. These organizations are class-based, which means open to all workers, but operate on anarcho-syndicalist principles. The anarcho-syndicalist federation is made of both working-class communities groups and workplaces unions.

You may answer that this is "syndicalism" then.

Indeed, some people use the words "syndicalism" and



ARDFERN, BILBAO, JUL 2005

"anarcho-syndicalism" as if they were the same. We think they aren't today.

What is syndicalism?

The word "syndicalism" comes from French "syndicat", which simply means "union." It was adopted in the anglo countries out of inspiration from the French "Confédération Générale du Travail". Indeed the CGT (a union) was famous for its "revolutionary syndicalism" in its glorious days around 1900. At that time, direct action unionism was based on the Charter of Amiens in which anarchists compromised their politics with socialists.

Following that charter, the unions were associated with each other by industry. The industrial union will be the structure that will replace capitalism. The charter says that political parties are legitimate, but have to keep their influence outside of the union.

At that time, both socialists and anarchists could be "syndicalists". So-called "communists" (aka Bolsheviks) were also syndicalists. Today's syndicalism is still a mixture of Marxism and anarchism as it was in 1905- a political, working-class struggle, direct action, working-class autonomy and federalism- with a blurred revolutionary project.



JONATHAN MCINTOSH, WASHINGTON DC, 20 JAN 2005

What's anarcho-syndicalism?

We owe the word "anarcho-syndicalism" to Sam Mainwaring who lived in England in the 1890s. Not long after, in Russia in 1907, this word also appeared in the writings of Novomirsky. Back then, it wasn't used to talk about a movement but to talk about individual anarchists who engaged in unions. Anarcho-syndicalism as a movement emerged as a split in the syndicalist movement following the Bolshevik's take over of the Russian Revolution. The pro-Moscow syndicalists, who were finally absorbed into the Communist Party, despised the other syndicalists, calling them with contempt "anarcho-syndicalists". The syndicalists that were against Moscow's Red International of Labor Unions founded the 1922 International Workers Association (IWA), which still exists today.

IWA's charter, written originally by Rudolf Rocker, can be considered a fundamental text of anarcho-syndicalism. This text used the phrase "revolutionary unionism" until the 2022 IWA congress when it was voted to change it to "anarcho-syndicalism".

Another fundamental text is the "Paris Charter," which was written by the French Confédération Nationale du Travail in 1946. This Charter can be seen as an uncompromised update of "Charter of Amiens," because the unions now stand against political parties in favor of "walking toward free communism."

Bringing "anarcho" into anarcho-syndicalism

As we can read in the IWA statutes and Paris Charter,

anarcho-syndicalist groups differentiate themselves from syndicalist by:

- 1) promoting actively communist anarchism among the working class
- 2) rejecting participation in "revolutionary" transitory state, reformist and authoritarian organizations
- 3) refusing all forms of centralization
- 4) rejecting the role of unions and industry in the present and future society (Guinchard, 2014).

Building an anarcho-syndicalist movement and organization in the USA and Canada will represent an improvement of our social activism and movement. With its federalist structure, the IWA makes every union across the globe equal, because the congress is not ruled by a proportional voting system. Being part of the IWA is being in direct contact and solidarity with groups in Asia, South America and Europe. All IWA groups are interested in sharing libertarian-communist ideas and organizing. And also sharing our common resources, experience of direct action practice, and strategies. If you're curious about how to participate in building IWA affiliated unions in both the USA and Canada, you may contact the Anarchist Union Journal.



JORDI GILI, BARCELONA, SPAIN, 23 APR 2023

BUILD FLYING SQUADS NOW: FOR WORKING-CLASS DEFENSE

By Jeff Shantz



This is a period of more openly bare class warfare. From more engaged and aggressive labor action than we have seen in awhile on one side, to the growing mobilizations of fascists (and their intersections with anti-trans and misogynistic movements) on the other. From the blockades and land reclamations by Indigenous land defenders, to state attacks—including street sweeps and encampment evictions—against poor and unhoused people.

These times call for rank-and-file working class formations that can mobilize quickly and effectively, both for community and workplace self-defense, but also for building capacities for autonomous action outside, and even against conservative bureaucracies within mainstream labor organizations. One of the most straightforward and effective forms of rank-and-file organizing for direct action is the flying squad—a vital approach to contemporary anarcho-syndicalist practice. And for this, you do not need much more than conversation, a phone list, and a commitment to act.

Flying Squads in Action

Flying squads are among the best examples of rank-and-file self-organizing. Rapid response networks that can be mobilized on short notice, flying squads are useful in doing direct actions and solidarity work within unions, with workers in other workplaces, and in communities. When something comes up that needs flying squad action, simply initiate your phone tree (and any transportation plans you have).

Flying squads that I have been active in, both inside and outside of unions, have supported anti-poverty movements and Indigenous land reclamations in addition to doing picket line solidarity, putting people directly on the line and ready to act.

In Toronto, we organized an autonomous flying squad of working folks but outside union structures, to do picket support for workers on strike. At some strikes of smaller unions, we were the only ones doing regular picket support for the workers.

In certain cities, anti-police groups formed something along the lines of flying squads to respond to and document police violence in the community. The flying squad phone list, rapid response form allows people to get to scenes quickly, before cops can entirely control things and intimidate witnesses.

One very instructive example for doing so came during recent mobilizations against cross-Canada marches of far-right forces targeting trans people and gender education in schools. Members of CUPE 4600 (education workers at Carleton University in Ottawa) activated their flying squad to participate in the local counter demonstrations and encouraged other unionized workers to do so, a key part of the community self-defense.

Within unions, flying squad networks can serve to bring together, and to attract, more militant members, helping to overcome the isolation that more radically-oriented members can feel within undemocratic and exclusionary union structures, where meetings may be infrequent or oriented solely around contract issues. Flying squads give rank-and-filers a place to meet, discuss, and strategize—to organize. And to do so on a class-oriented basis, rather than a strictly workplace or contract basis. And to extend connections with movements inside and outside the union.

Maintain Autonomy

The form of flying squads is getting some support from official labor. The Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL) has been promoting the organizing of what they call Rapid Response Teams to attend counter-demonstrations and confront the hate groups. These are structured like flying squads—rapid response teams are an example of flying squads. The OFL is encouraging unionized workers to recruit Rapid Response Teams as the far-right mobilizations grow. This is an important way forward.

One thing to stress though, is that flying squads in workplaces or unions should be autonomous from, and outside the control of, union bureaucracies. Otherwise the flying squads are vulnerable to bureaucratic discipline. The Canadian Autoworkers' flying squads were shut down by union leadership when they came out in support of economic disruption, including shutting down the NAFTA superhighway between Detroit and Windsor—the centers of auto production.

Do not rely on the bureaucracy for funding or resources. In some cases, you may wish to formalize your flying squad within the existing union structure (for work release perhaps). If you do, make sure it is on an autonomous, self-determining basis (as part of member mobilization). Do not give control of your flying squad list to bureaucrats.

So, meet and chat with your co-workers. Exchange contact info and make a commitment to come out if called. If you're oriented toward threats in your community, whether from fascists or cops, organize a neighborhood flying squad.

A COFFEE WITH PRÁXEDIS GUERRERO

By JM

Paperless, Práxedis* is a Mexican anarchist who has been working in Canada as a cherry picker in the Okanagan Valley in British Columbia.

After a walk within the “Solidarity with Palestine” demo in downtown Montreal, Práxedis and I ended up in a coffee shop where we spent the rest of the evening talking.

He talked about the abuses, injustices, and exploitation he and other temporary workers had to live through while working as cherry pickers. He explained to me that his coworkers were recruited under the temporary worker program of Canada. Yes, the same program that Tomoya Obokata, a UN reporter, qualified as a “breeding ground for contemporary forms of slavery”.⁽¹⁾

Our talk stretched from discussing perspectives on anarchism to labor rights. “Anarchism is stereotyped in popular minds as Black Blocks breaking stuff. Meanwhile, the labor movement is jammed by laws into collaboration with bosses and the state. Organizing workers on an anarchist basis here and now, that’s the thing. This is how I see change toward an anarchist society.”

And Práxedis practices what he preaches. While he was cherry picking, he organized a strike.

“We were living in badly maintained shelters. We didn’t always get paid. Once we even had rat feces in our crockery cabinet. Some of us realized we had to do something. We didn’t strike for a contract, we struck because we were angry.”

He has been active in labor organizing in Canada since he met with a migrant worker-rights defense group in BC. This group has been active in BC for several years now among the temporary workers. Práxedis seems to always have their labor rights leaflet with him. “Our rights are rights,” it says in Spanish.

Talking about his involvement with the workers center, he tells: “We organize parties with free food for workers and we hand out those flyers around. We also have a radio show in BC, that even temporary workers here in Quebec listen to!”

It all felt so distant to me, until he says, “Well I know some folks working on a farm in a town near here. They’re interested in defending their rights. We could go to meet with them!”

I didn’t think I’d become a temporary worker organizer by the end of that night. Where there’s a will there’s a way, I guess. Without any pretensions, that’s at least how one starts.

The rest of the story is yet to be written. But let’s hope that it ends up well for people like Práxedis, soon enough.

That night I really felt like the IWA is more than an international federation of anarcho-syndicalist unions meeting in congresses. It is also an international network of direct mutual aid between anarcho-syndicalist activists like Práxedis.

** Names have been changed for security reasons.*



DON'T FORGET THE NEIGHBOURHOOD!

ORGANIZING ANARCHIST TENANTS' UNIONS

Anonymous Submission

Overview

In this short article, we will be exploring

- The relationship between anarcho-syndicalism and tenants' union organizing
- The necessity of a focus on one-on-one relationships if anarcho-syndicalist practices are to remain relevant
- The successes and activities of the Montreal Autonomous Tenants' Union involving many active anarchists
- Some suggestions for creating a lasting tenant union with your neighbours!

Landlords Keep Your Distance!

Hundreds of tenants have been on rent strike for months in Ontario. This number increased today, September 30th, with over a hundred tenants from two North York buildings joining the struggle. In the past six years, Toronto has built up a growing tradition of rent strikes, with the Parkdale victory of 2017 (the defeat of a rent increase and a rent reduction program), the success of a subsequent 2018 strike, and tens of thousands of tenants on strike during COVID-19.

In Montreal, the tradition is more modest. The Montreal Autonomous Tenants' Union (SLAM) and Au Combat Chez Soi most closely replicate the example of unions in Toronto and the United States. Through the model of direct action, neighbour and community organizing, solidarity, and unionization drives, SLAM has helped tenants and members win thousands of dollars in repairs, direct compensation, and outstanding rent being forgiven. Evictions have been stopped or considerably delayed.

The use of the concept "union" may puzzle some traditional syndicalists who focus on the workplace. However, like students, tenants have opportunities to create the same relationships built on solidarity, regular meetings, and proximity that develop in a workplace. Tenants, like workers, have every interest in fighting for frequent changes to the conditions under which they live, and in building a place for themselves in a new world



where tenants manage their housing collectively (as 12,000 Montreal households already do through their housing co-ops) without landlords and their vicious profit-motive.

The "Autonomous" Tenants' Union

Autonomy is crucial to the ongoing effectiveness of tenants' unions. Militants should recognize a golden opportunity in our tenant movement. Unionized workplaces, which are very common in Quebec, have very rigid union structures that divide the union between paid staff and the actual workers. The union is a service organization meant to negotiate with employers, and police more militant union organizers. To quote the Rand decision, which continues to define Canadian labour relations, the model of Canadian unions is built on the goal of an "enlightened leadership" which acts in a "civilized manner" to stop its membership from any "flouting of civil order" and preserve the union's "essential function in an economy of private enterprise."

Tenants, on the other hand, are unorganized. The tenants' unions we can create for ourselves can give us and our neighbours much more power and self-determination. They can be much more combative. The Montreal Autonomous Tenants' Union, for instance, organizes through biweekly meetings open to the entirety of its membership, without paid activists or organizers. Tenants' unionizing in their building get help from fellow tenants in the larger Montreal union with experience in building organizing. However, each "tenant council" (the phrase for tenants' organized together in their building or street) is

autonomous within the union. The union only has influence insofar as it can convince tenant councils of best practices through presentations, film screenings, leaflets and one-on-ones.

In this way, anarcho-syndicalists define fighting back and building community. Direct action, solidarity, and non-hierarchy inform the practices and goals of tenant unionism or organizing. We do not want clearly defined authority-figures, such as paid activists of non-profits or political parties. We are opposed to tactics which use court action, or lobbying the government. And we take on the goal of revolutionary syndicalism, the complete overhaul of landlords- not just the reforms of rent controls, anti-eviction legislation, or more social housing.

Hello Neighbour!

Most people probably want to hear about the direct actions that tenants can take. These actions include banner drops, rent strikes, phone blasts, picket lines, and even blockades. Our union has spent a lot of time exploring how to carry out these more militant collective actions.

However, for the purpose of this article, we want to stress the need for a focus on building relationships with neighbours. Our involvement in SLAM has taught us that when we plan an event, it's not our 2,000 followers on Instagram who show up. Who turns up then? Our friends and the neighbours who we've built close relationships with!



This is consistent with the socialization theory of social networks. Friends become more similar over time and supportive of one another's ideas and activities. The power of friendship and personal connections goes so far as to be a key factor in religious conversion and changing fundamental viewpoints (see, for instance, the influential work of Lofland and Stark, or others such as Kox, Meeus, and Hart).

Our union approaches building unionization through the perspective of growing relationships between neighbours while focusing on militancy. The first actions someone should take when union organizing is door-knocking all the neighbours in their building or, if they live in a duplex, door-knocking other neighbours on their street. After gathering some contact information and first impressions, we suggest tenants find different times to sit down for a 30 to 40-minute one-on-one with the neighbours they suspect they will most hit it off with. After a one-on-one, a relationship has started that will guarantee that when a first tenants meeting is called (usually right after a few one-on-ones), it is planned or at least attended by a few new friends.

As anarcho-syndicalists our tendency is to think big because of the huge successes of past anarchist unions. However, we should not forget the patient and necessary work of building these connections with neighbours: people who are not already in our movement. For most of us, this is our best opportunity to spread anarchist tactics, perspectives, and, ultimately, an anarchist syndicalism.

BEING OUTRAGED TOGETHER: SOLIDARITY AGAINST STATE VIOLENCE IN GAZA

By Alexandra Szopinski

As anarchists, we know well that governmental or state structures are not a true representation of, nor are they interchangeable with, the individuals who reside within their borders. In response to the tragedy unfolding in Gaza, it is important that we, as activists and allies, demand accountability from the proper place: governments that, as is so common throughout history, prioritize their imperialist aims over human life. If we are distracted by rhetoric that treats any people group like a monolith, it erroneously conflates opposition to the state with opposition to that people group. There are many antisemitic tropes and ideas circulating around this issue, but as the many Jewish activists who have led initiatives, gone to protests, spoken out publicly, or even been arrested in recent weeks can attest, opposition to the Israeli state and antisemitism are by no means analogous.

Jewish-led opposition to the state of Israel is multifaceted, and has a long history. But as is often the case, the tireless efforts of these activists in the pursuit of justice and peace often go unrecognized by the mainstream media, or are even decried as traitorous. While the US media mourns Israeli civilian casualties with commensurate gravity, the plight of Palestinian civilians has not been accorded the same importance.

In the face of this discourse and the heartbreaking violence afflicting the civilians of Gaza, to which many of us bear witness in harrowing real-time via social media, it is imperative that we do not remain silent. Looking to the actions of the people who are standing up for Palestine can empower us to speak out ourselves, with sensitivity and courage.

Following the recent escalation of violence, protesters took to the streets in many cities across the US and Canada—and around the world. Many of these protests were organized and led by people of Palestinian origin, but religion and nationality were no barrier. People from all walks of life have felt compelled to show up for Palestine, and the pressure on global holders of power is measurable.

On October 13th, activists with Jewish Voice for Peace¹ led a gathering outside Senator Chuck Schumer's Brooklyn residence. "As Jews, so much of this is done in our name, and we say we refuse." Talia Baurer,² a spokesperson for JVP, told AJ+ news. "As Jews, we unequivocally call for an end to the genocide happening at this very moment in Gaza." Those arrested alongside Baurer included rabbis, descendants of Shoah survivors, and two assembly members from Queens—Zohran Mamdani and Marcela Mitaynes.



On October 16th, roughly 2000 protesters, including activists from JVP and IfNotNow,³ linked arms and blockaded the entrance to the White House. On October 18th, they took their protest into the rotunda of a congressional building at the US capitol, calling for the US government to wield its influence and demand an immediate ceasefire in Gaza.⁴ Naomi Klein,⁵ a notable Jewish Canadian leftist author, urged her social media followers to join them, adding "Being outraged alone does nothing. Being outraged together builds possibilities." This sit-in led to over 300 arrests and was promptly covered by major American media outlets—a marked difference from just a few days earlier.

Central to this togetherness must be holding space for Palestinian voices. Across social media, there are many Gazans—from schoolchildren to physicians—bravely sharing their experiences for the world to witness, in the hope that the brutality will end. As activists, one of the most important things we can do is seek out these voices and ensure they are heard.

"This is Bisan from Gaza. I'm still alive," says filmmaker Bisan Owda⁶ at the opening of each video she posts, chronicling her daily experiences after being forced from her North Gaza home. Journalist Plestia Alaqad⁷ also recorded video diaries through the destruction of her home, continuing to film as bombs fell so close that the blast wind moved her hair. Days

later, she shared the account of Dr. Ghassan Abu Sitta, survivor of the bombing of Al-Ahli Hospital.⁸ Yara Eid, a journalist living in London, shared the news that her best friend and more than thirty members of her family—seventeen of whom were children—had been killed in the span of a few days.⁹ "I cannot imagine how I would survive the next few years without my family by my side," she said. "The sheer volume of the massacres that are being committed every single day meant that my family's massacre has not been reported on the news. And that's why I'm... trying to talk about them." Documentation like theirs is an integral part of the historical record, unable to be erased or ignored. This content, much of which is made in English for international consumption, echoes powerfully across social media, met with an outpouring of empathy and increased motivation for those abroad to act.

Labor unions have played a role as well, using social media to gain support for their campaigns.¹⁰ Palestinian workers' unions have put out an international call for all unions in relevant industries to refuse to do any work that contributes to the Israeli war machine. These labor actions have precedents throughout history, following in the footsteps of actions against South African apartheid and the Italian invasion of Ethiopia in 1935.¹¹ A petition has been circulating social media, sponsored by UFCW 3000 and signed by several other unions, to demand that the US government press Israel for an immediate ceasefire.¹² Starbucks has filed a lawsuit against Workers United because a social media account representing unionized Starbucks workers made a post condemning the genocide in Gaza.¹³ Workers United has countersued, intent on fighting the corporation. For some months, over 1000 Amazon and Google workers have been calling on their employers to terminate their contract for surveillance technology—Project Nimbus—with the Israeli government. They have been using the hashtag #notechforapartheid to spread the word, inciting people all over the world to join their call.¹⁴

On a personal level, too, international allies have used their social media to speak up for Palestine and encourage action. Conner,¹⁵ a Palestinian American critical care nurse, has

taken to social media to share his insights on the dire situation in Gaza's hospitals. "This is unimaginable violence. This is a calamity... I can't imagine anything scarier than a dark hospital without the whirr of machines," he said. "You have immense power and privilege as a citizen of the West; please use it for my people." Jewish novelist and trans anarchist activist Sim Kern¹⁶ exhorted their fans to "meet this moment with the greatest moral urgency" of their lives. "I know that speaking out can have consequences," they said, "but how can you live with yourself if you stay silent?"

Our silence is our complicity. We, with the privilege of safety in our homes, have a responsibility to those denied that privilege. The history of Palestinian oppression is long and



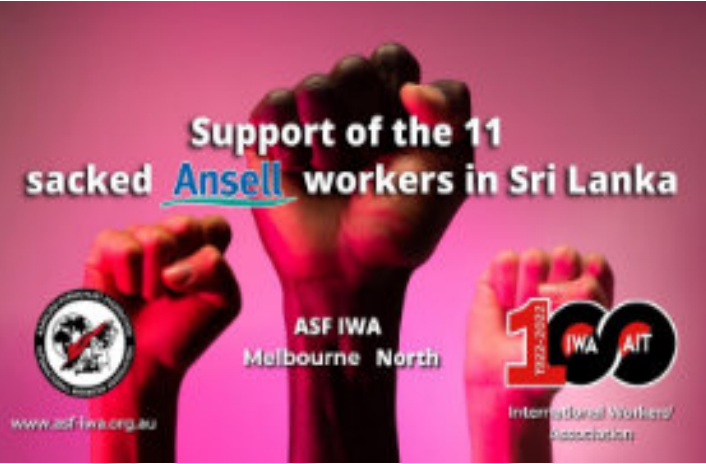
brutal, and it should not take mass murder for the Palestinian people to receive attention and support from the international community. We have a duty to learn this history, to remember the victims and honor the heroism of the civilians risking their lives on behalf of each other. We have a duty to witness these atrocities and call them what they are: war crimes under international law, ethnic cleansing and genocide, perpetrated by one state and funded by complicit states across the Western world. And as individuals living in these countries, we cannot condemn the actions of the Israeli government without also condemning the

actions of the governments under which we reside, by whom the compensation for our labor is taxed.

As we speak out against this genocide and extend our support to the Palestinian people, we must not allow our condemnation to extend to the Jewish community itself, nor rely on antisemitic tropes and conspiracies as part of our opposition to the actions of the Israeli state. Culpability belongs to the governments and systems of power which command and facilitate these atrocities. Losing sight of the longstanding and systemic nature of this injustice allows those systems to grow stronger at human expense, and can undermine our ability to seek relief, justice, and equity for the Palestinian people and all others oppressed by it. As anarchists, we fight hegemonic systems of power in pursuit of the liberation of people. Underneath all the complexities of this situation lies a simple and familiar struggle—one from which we cannot afford to look away.

VICTORY!
SACKED WORKERS RECEIVE COMPENSATION AT LAST

By Lugius News from IWA



After almost ten years fighting for justice, Ansell workers in Sri Lanka who were sacked for attempting to organise their workplace have won the compensation they were seeking as justice. Here is yet another example of the power of international solidarity.

In October 2013, eleven members of the IndustriALL affiliated Free Trade Zone and General Services Employee Union (FTZGSEU) were sacked unjustly for organising their workplace at the Ansell factory in Sri Lanka. Ansell is an Australia-based multinational specializing in rubber products.

FTZGSEU union officials pursued Ansell through the courts in Sri Lanka without success. On 8 October 2015, Australian union officials from TCFUA, AMWU and CFMEU spoke at the Ansell shareholders meeting but to no avail. About 50 trade union activists in Melbourne demonstrated in support at the Ansell global HQ in Richmond, Victoria.

Although the courts in Sri Lanka found in the favour of the eleven sacked workers, the Ansell company appealed the decision and the issue continued to drag on. The eleven sacked workers resolved to continue fighting and having been abandoned by the union on whose behalf they were trying to organise, they sought help wherever they could find it. They reached out to numerous trade unions and workers organisations around the world.

In February 2021, the General Secretary of the Asia Pacific Sub-Secretariat of the International Workers Association (IWA) received communication from the eleven sacked workers explaining their situation. The General Secretary forwarded the information to ASF affiliate Melbourne North. Direct communication was opened between the eleven sacked workers and ASF Melbourne North who resolved to support the eleven sacked workers in their endeavours to achieve justice.

ASF Melbourne North organised a campaign of pickets at the global HQ of Ansell in Melbourne. IWA affiliates around the world sent protest emails to Ansell many times. ASF Melbourne North co-operated with Australia Asia Worker Links in protest actions against Ansell. The ASF Melbourne North received support from Workers Solidarity Alliance, US affiliate of the IWA and CNT-AIT France with research and reconnaissance in preparation for an international expansion of the solidarity campaign.

In December 2022, as a direct consequence of this campaign, Ansell management contacted officials of FTZGSEU seeking a resolution, who put them in touch with the eleven sacked workers. The workers reiterated their demands as outlined in the industrial court. Ansell was able to delay court proceedings by appealing decisions and Ansell indicated that they were willing to expedite the issue.

In May 2023, an agreement was reached between Ansell and the eleven sacked workers. The sacked workers abandoned their demand for re-instatement and Ansell agreed to pay the eleven sacked workers LKR 32,948,972 (approx. AUD 161,200) in compensation for lost wages. The eleven sacked workers expressed their satisfaction at the outcome.

In an increasingly globalised world, workers are set against workers by the artifice of nation-state jurisdictions. If workers in one country refuse to accept cuts in wages and reduction of conditions, the global bosses threaten to take their jobs offshore to where labour is cheaper and unions are weak. The billionaire-owned media fuel resentment against 'foreign' workers. Under these circumstances, the international solidarity of workers everywhere, that knows no borders, is our greatest strength.

The IWA is distinguished by its conviction that capitalism cannot be reformed and that the only solution to poverty, war, disease and destruction is to end capitalism forever and replace the government of people with the administration of things. The great potential of technology will be realised to abolish work and live in accordance of the principle: from each according to their ability to each according to their need.

The IWA seeks to go beyond mere craft, trade or even industrial unionism as it is no longer fit for purpose to build a global whole-of-class union to defend our interests as working-people, to advance our conditions of work in the present and build the society of the future now.

The Anarcho-Syndicalist Federation (ASF) is the Australian affiliate of the IWA. Join us. Send an email today. asfiwasec@gmail.com

KIDS' CORNER

COLORING



WORD SEARCH

Can you find:

- UNION
- FREEDOM
- JUSTICE
- EQUAL
- WORKERS
- PEACE
- ANARCHY
- ACTION
- WORLD
- BLACK
- RED

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A	C	T	I	O	N	L	W	A	R	B
D	B	P	H	E	U	N	I	O	N	A

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7. In the words of the members of the CNT© secretariat in the interview by Amor y Rabia, “ Más allá de la AIT ”, 1ª part, already cited, and 2ª part <https://noticiasayr.blogspot.com/2016/12/mas-alla-de-la-ait-2-parte.html> (visited on August 6th 2023)
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