



IWA BULLETIN

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Editorial

Since the last bulletin was published in October 2014, the Sections of the IWA have been involved with various struggles. In Spain, the CNTE took part in strikes in the month of December at Madrid Rio park complex and Extracciones Levante. The situation in these conflicts are still not resolved. The ZSP also organized a strike in the Belchatow hospital which ended in victory for the workers. A few other conflicts ended successfully. The comrade from CNT in Truck and Wheel company was reinstated to his job after being dismissed for his union activity. The comrades in SolFed have been continuing successful campaigns and actions against wage theft in the hospitality sector.

2015 started with a number of calls for international solidarity in the first month of the year. In the bulletin you can read about a couple of them such as the days of action for workers at Orange, working through Arvato-Qualytel. The ZSP started the first union at the newly opened Amazon centers in Poland and has been fighting for correct payments and better working conditions; solidarity actions were held to support the workers.

In this bulletin, we can also find a look back at some of the struggles of the past year. We hope that the upcoming year will be even better.

Long live anarchosyndicalism and the IWA!

IWA Secretariat

Poland: Strike Action Leads to Victory



The cleaners and food servers at Belchatow won an important strike, regaining employment for dismissed workers and earning work contracts for most of the staff.

The situation as not been easy for them. A couple of years ago, the women, who had been employed directly by the hospital on fixed work contracts had their jobs outsourced to an external firm. In 2014, around 60 people who refused to work on trash contracts (with lower salary and no benefits) lost their jobs and spent months occupying the hospital until the cleaning service firm was changed and they were rehired on normal contracts.

A few months later, problems started at the hospital. On November 3, ZSP called for an indefinite strike in response to a number of serious issues at the hospital. The first issue was that around 30 people lost their job. The level of employment at the hospital was cut drastically, forcing many workers to take extra shifts and work much more intensively. Members of the ZSP union at the hospital decided to take action.

The main demand was that these people be reinstated in their jobs and employment be raised. Last year around 170 people were employed. The cleaning and food service work is provided by an outside company and this company has changed 3 times in the past year. Each time more and more people lose their jobs or get put on worse contracts.

The workers demanded a meeting with the boss and he arrived from Warsaw to try to get them back to work. Instead, hours of negotiations took place. The hospital would have been evacuated if no agreement was reached. In the end, the boss agreed to have 160 workers. The workers demanded that their colleagues be reinstated and that there would be no firings related to the action. This was a major victory for the workers.

There were also a number of violations of health and safety regulations and a lack of information about pay, social security payments, etc. The boss promised that these would also be taken care of.

130 workers took part in the action. This includes all the cleaners and food servers and part of the workers who had just lost their jobs.

After this, more regular contracts were given to move of the workers. This means several concrete improvements such as a guaranteed minimum wage, holidays and sick pay and other protection. The contracts last the entire length of the contract, which is only two years. Therefore the union continues to demand that employment is directly with the hospital as this would offer more guarantees.

More about the conflict in the hospital can be found in previous IWA bulletins and on the ZSP web page:

zsp.net.pl

Against Discrimination, Mobbing and Sexual Harrassment at Citibank Poland

ZSP is protesting patterns of discrimination and harrassment, including sexual harrassment, in Citibank. The union is organizing and supporting other workers who have had trouble in the bank.

There are currently three lawsuits against the corporate giant: one relates to the sexual harrassment, another to pay discrimination, where an employee earned about half of other people on the same position and the third related to discrimination suffered by an employee after taking paternity leave and his dismissal for standing up for his rights. These examples are just the tip of the iceberg.



The union is hoping to make a breakthrough on such issues, which are usually not dealt with properly. Victims of sexual harrassment and rape are often blamed. Companies deny discrimination exists and they also can pressure employees not to take paternity leave, re-enforcing the sexist ideas and punishing workers for having a life. The workers from Citibank are courageously fighting for their rights and dignity.

Workers from other unions have sent protests to the bank and the CNT from Spain and FORA have made solidarity actions.

ZSP Challenges Bad Law for all Workers

We have no illusions: our fight will be won by direct action from below, not from making changes from above, through the intermediaries of the state. However bad laws can often make it very easy for bosses to treat workers like disposable items and very difficult for working people to have decent, stable employment, free of the employer's abuse. For that reason, we have put a case into the Supreme Court of Poland and plan to go to the European Court of Justice, to try to eliminate some elements of discrimination against workers on fixed-term contracts, in contradiction to the EU Directive on Fixed-Term Contracts.

Around one third of workers in Poland are on fixed-term instead of indefinite contracts and the main reason is to allow the employer to fire people more easily. Although some countries already have thought about ways to allow employees fired through expiration of the contract to claim unfair dismissal, Polish courts will not accept such claims, always arguing that expiration of the contract is never equal to dismissal. In this way, certain categories of workers enjoy less protection if they are on a fixed-term contract and this includes unionists and pregnant women. It is very common that unionists are fired by non-renewal of a contract and there have been many documented cases. The problem is especially bad in supermarkets and hypermarkets, where the use of fixed-term contracts is abused.

ZSP hopes to win something that will benefit not only our members, but also all workers. The union is collecting money for these cases. If anybody would like to support, please contact: info@zsp.net.pl

International Actions against Amazon and Manpower

In the week of January 26-31, a number of actions were held at Amazon and Manpower in solidarity with workers at Amazon Poland, some of whom are employed through the Manpower agency. The conditions are extremely tough at Amazon but also there have been a number of irregularities, like late pay or lack of payments for some elements of their salary. The ZSP union in Amazon is fighting to regulate payments and to improve the overall working conditions.

On Monday morning, the first actions of the week were held in Poland. Before Manpower opened at 8AM, workers from Amazon in Sady went to the Manpower office in Poznan. The workers employed through Manpower went up to the office while the rest protested outside, handing out leaflets. Many passersby were familiar with the bad working conditions at Amazon and expressed their support.

The group also went to the Adecco office where Adecco workers spoke about money owed to them. In contrast with Manpower, Adecco reacted quite quickly, wiring money that was owed within a couple of hours of the picket. Manpower is still consulting with its legal department.

Later in the day, our comrades from Manchester Solidarity Federation also went to Manpower office with a picket. The management of the office were upset by the picket. The comrades handed out leaflets describing the situation and expressing their support of the workers who are organizing and fighting for their pay.

On Tuesday the 27, the CNT-AIT from Salamanca went to a Manpower office in their city. Unionists from Salamanca are fighting for direct employment of workers at the Orange call center who are hired through Adecco and Randstad, so we have some common issues in Spain and Poland. They spread information about the struggle and sent their solidarity to workers in Amazon.



On Wednesday ZSP was back at the Manpower headquarters in Warsaw trying to make headway with the claims. The management is stubborn and does not want to make payments for planned working time when the employees did not get any work, although workers received payments from other companies from between 12-21 days. Manpower was claiming that this work was not scheduled, but we brought them new documents that makes this more difficult to deny. They said that they would take 14 days to decide. We'll be back at Manpower to let them know they cannot just keep putting people off. The workers at Amazon are not yuppies who can afford to wait for months for their pay while corporate executives think of ways to avoid paying.

The comrades of NSF in Norway also handed out leaflets in support of the Amazon workers in Oslo, where workers were on a general strike.

On Thursday, the Solidarity Federation participated in a communications blockade of two offices, calling and sending emails in support of the workers. Priama akcia visited the Slovak headquarters of Amazon on the same day. They went at lunch hour, which was good because a lot of the Amazon employees were going in and out of the building. Many stopped and spoke with the comrades and there were feelings of solidarity expressed towards the workers at the Polish fulfillment centers.



The comrades from Solis and MSS visited a Manpower office in the Czech Republic on the same day.

On Saturday, comrades from the CNT-AIT went to the Amazon center in an industrial area in Madrid. They picketed in front of the gates, handed out leaflets and expressed their support for the struggle.

In Brazil, the comrades of COB went to the streets and informed people of the struggle in Amazon Poland.

There may have been a couple of more actions that we have not received reports of yet, so please forgive any omissions! Lots of people have been sending protest emails and faxes and some have declared they would make some sort of solidarity action in the upcoming weeks.

Besides the possible future actions, there was also a solidarity action some time before this week. On January 16, the comrades from the IWW in Milwaukee went to Manpower Corporate Headquarters in the US. There they spoke to a representative of the HR department and forwarded the workers' demands.

What We have Won So Far

Despite the outstanding issues with Manpower and Amazon, more than 30 workers have received

all sorts of payments for different things. Over a dozen people received payments for breaks in the work schedule, from 12-21 days pay. Overdue salaries were paid, statutory interest for late payments, money for laundry/uniform equivalent, money for sick days that the company did not want to recognize, money for time at training sessions, some overtime payments, some payments for incorrect calculation of wages, some money for unused vacation days, etc. etc. For some people this equalled even one month's salary.

Another thing is that we found out that many workers have a paid break, although some did not, or at least were not allowed to use it. This matter should be straightened out now.

This article is a shortened version of:

<http://zsp.net.pl/international-actions-against-amazon-and-manpower>

For more photos, see the ZSP website.

Recent Activities of Priama Akcia

Conflict about unpaid wages in Řízkárna restaurant (MSS). Priama Akcia supported MSS in another conflict in September. This time it was against a restaurant in Prague which did not pay wages to former worker. Besides a website article we also created an e-form for protest letters again.

<http://www.priamaakcia.sk/Podpor-Mostecku-solidarnu-siet-v-boji-za-vyplatenie-dlznej-mzdy-ex-zamestnankyni-restauracie.html>

Truck & Wheel/ BMW-MINI conflict (CNT). As part of the international call by CNT and the IWA for actions in support of the reinstatement of CNT-Guadalajara member we visited the BMW branch in Bratislava on 17th October. We gave a protest letter to the company receptionist. During the days of action in October as well as before the trial in November we sent protest faxes and e-mails to Guadalajara and to BMW Slovakia.

<http://www.priamaakcia.sk/spravy/Proti-praktikam-T-W-BMW-MINI-akcia-za-znovuzamestnanie-preusteneho-clena-CNT.html>



MetLife conflict (CNT-E). At the beginning of November we supported CNT-Gijón in their struggle for payment of wages to their member. We sent a fax to MetLife Amslico in Slovakia and tried to send a fax to Spain. Unfortunately, the numbers did not work.

Atento conflict (CNT-E). Protest faxes were also sent in December in support of a CNT-Madrid member demanding reinstatement. Again, the numbers did not work.

Arvato-Qualyfel conflict (CNT-E). In January 2015 we sent protest e-mails and fax in support of a CNT-Salamanca. Their fired members demand readmission.

Citibank conflict (ZSP). We sent protest e-mails in support of ZSP comrades fighting against sexual harassment and other problems in the company.

Medzinárodná konferencia

PROBLÉMY V PRÁCI?

sobota 11. október Začiatok 13:30
Komunitné centrum ZORA, Okružná 1 (Ružinov)

VIAČ INFO: priamaakcia.sk problemyvpraci.priamaakcia.sk fb.com/problemyvpraci

Konferencia sa zameriava na úspešné príklady riešenia problémov s nevyplatenou mzdrou, netegálnym prepustením a ďalšími problémami na pracoviskách bez spolehania sa na klasické odborové organizácie alebo zdľavé a drahé súdne spory. Konferencie sa zúčastnia pracujúci z organizácií v Británii, Poľsku, Rakúsku, Českej republike a na Slovensku. Vstup voľný.

Na mieste bude zabezpečené vegánske občerstvenie.

Komunitné centrum ZORA (fb.com/centrumzora) sa nachádza na Okružnej 1 (IPS: 4B 146753, 17.140498). MHD: najbližšie zastávky sú Martinská centrum (397.613) alebo Slovenská (294.205).

SF ZSP MSS Priama akcia MAP

Podujatie organizuje solidárny svaz pracujúcich Priama akcia, ktorý sa sústredí na riešenie problémov na pracovisku a v bytisku, a na organizovanie solidárnych skúti za práva a podujatkovy pravomociu. Organizácia je v súčasnosti súčasťou Medzinárodnej asociácie pracujúcich (MAP), ktorá v súčasnosti administruje siedmokrát rôzne skupiny z 18 kraju sveta.

Na webstránke www.priamaakcia.sk nájdete informácie o skúsenostach zo sporov u nás aj vo svete a o možnostiach zapojenia sa do konkrétnych aktív.

PROMOTION OF PA AND IWA

International conference “Problems at Work?”. On 11th and 12th October PA organized a two-day event in Bratislava to promote direct action as a way of solving problems in the workplace. In the public part on Saturday presenters from four organizations spoke: MSS (Czech Republic; solidarita.noblogs.org), PA (IWA Slovakia; www.priamaakcia.sk), SF (IWA UK; solfed.org.uk) and ZSP (IWA Poland; www.zsp.net.pl). The internal part of the conference on Sunday was dedicated to sharing experiences from organizational work and searching ways to improve our organizations. We dealt with problems faced by anarchosyndicalist and other similar organizations. A comrade from the relatively new organization in Austria, Vienna Workers Union (WAS, Friends of the IWA) took part in the discussions as well. The agenda was composed of points related to questions like how to earn workers' trust and build the organization, how to improve internal organizational issues such as the rotation of tasks, activating new members and geographically isolated ones, problems which can occur with mainstream and other unions which want to operate in the same area, etc. We learned about different experiences from different countries and the discussion was quite long. Due to time limitations we could not cover all the questions. Afterwards, a report from the conference was published on the IWA and PA websites.

<http://iwa-ait.org/content/international-conference-bratislava>



Victory in Truck and Wheel Conflict



The CNT delegate who worked in Truck and Wheel near Guadalajara, in the warehouse for BMW and Mini cars, had been dismissed for his union activity. Solidarity actions were held during a week of international solidarity in October. The comrades received support from many places : Germany, Australia, Spain, Slovakia, Poland, Russia, Norway, Brazil... More actions were made later in November.

After three months of protest, the dismissal was declared invalid and the comrade was reinstated, with compensation. Now the CNT is agitating in the workplace against union elections and is distributing its publication, which can be downloaded here:

<http://guadalajara.cnt.es/images/biblioteca/documentos/cydenebef15.pdf>



Strikes in Spain

CNT Participates in Gardeners' Strike

Gardeners at the Madrid Rio park complex went on strike against a planned reduction of 50% of the staff – about 130 people. The indefinite strike began on December 15 and the CNT union there joined in. We have no news yet of any breakthrough.

Strike In Extracciones Levante

The CNT created a union in Extracciones Levante in Valencia this summer and was working towards demanding a new collective agreement. Two members of the CNT were fired, with the excuse of economic reasons. From December 12-15, the workers went on strike demanding their reinstatement and a new collective agreement. The union says more action is to follow.



Novocare

The CNT Pedrera organized actions against Novocare, which runs two retirement homes in its area. In one of the homes, the staff wanted to negotiate with the bosses after they changed working conditions, limiting overtime payments and payments for night shifts, among other things. The response of the boss was to fire one woman. The CNT called for a partial strike for December 16, to be supported by other CNT unions in the area. However, the day before, the boss decided to reinstate the fired comrade and sit down to negotiate with the union.

This story goes to show that solidarity and direct action are still the most powerful weapons that workers have against the bosses.

First Round of the Bout against Arvato-Qualytel

During the international week of struggles against Arvato-Qualytel with pickets and actions at Orange outlets in various countries, the first court case against Arvato-Qualytel and Adecco was to take place, but it did not happen because a favourable agreement was made with the worker.

On the morning of Monday the 19, we were in court at the aforementioned case of one of the suits made by one of the comrades of the CNT-AIT union in Arvato-Qualytel. The respondent's lawyers solicited a recess in order to come to a settlement. After various offers which the worker rejected, all admitting that the dismissal was not allowed, an agreement was reached for compensation of 132 days of salary for each year employed, which is four times more than is set out in the law.

The worker accepted this settlement due to personal reasons, but the conflict has not ended because there are other comrades fighting and two others are waiting their court cases. We think this is an important individual victory, in the sense that the compensation was much higher than normal.

But it is also a bittersweet victory. Because from the collective point of view, it is not a great agreement. We cannot change the model of employment in Arvato is the rest of the staff does not get involved. The worker got a better settlement than other workers who were dismissed because he organized and confronted the company.

In any case, it is clear that we will continue to fight for direct and stable employment in Arvato-Qualytel. For us, this agreement is an example that you can get something by fighting. We still have more lawsuits and comrades fired. We continue demanding their reinstatement and we call on the rest of the workers of Arvato-Qualytel, fired or not, to join the mobilizations.



This first step was the fruit of the campaign made by CNT-AIT Salamanca, extending the conflict to Orange, Adecco and Randstad. And especially fruit of the solidarity campaign which extended to Austria, Slovakia, England, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Czech Republic, Russia and Serbia. Also the conflict was supported in France. And, since it could not be any other way, in Spain there were dozens of actions from the unions of the CNT-AIT in Albacete, Barcelona, Compostela, Cornellá, Elx-Elche, Fuenlabrada, Granada, Iruña-Pamplona, Las Palmas, León, Lleida, Madrid, Miranda de Ebro, Premià de Mar, Vall d'Albaida, Valladolid... We positively asses the first phase of the campaign for direct and stable employment in Arvato-Qualytel. Thousands of leaflets about the conflict were distributed which informed people that there is a totally different model of syndicalism, different than the official model that the companies like.

THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES AND IS THE ONLY WAY!

**DIRECT AND STABLE EMPLOYMENT!
REINSTATE THE DISMISSED COMRADES!**



*More photos from the actions:
<http://salamanca.cnt.es/2015/01/20/primer-asalto-del-combate-contra-arvato-qualytel>*

USI on the General Strike of the 14th of November 2014



The General Strike of 14 November was proclaimed by the majority of base unions in Italy: CUB, Cobas, ADL, Slai-Cobas, USI splinter group, for the whole day and by USB for 4 hours. USI-AIT has called the strike for the whole day with an independent independent with this call: "Stop suffering layoffs! Let's fire the masters!" with the purpose to invite workers to take the ownership of those companies that are closing because of the crisis or a relocation of the business.

The main reasons for the proclamation of the strike were mostly against those laws the government is approving, in particular the Jobs Act , which is a anti-labour reform that will increase precarious work and will allow companies the utmost possibility to dismiss workers.

USI-AIT, while criticizing the way in which the strike itself was agreed, decided within the trade union secretariats rather than through an extensive comparison involving delegates and activists of all structures of base unions and beyond, has worked in a unitary path at a local level with members of base unions and the social area opposition where this was possible. Thus we took part marches in Milan, Florence, Trieste, Bari, Bologna and organized autonomous demonstrations in Parma, Modena, Cosenza, Ancona. Elsewhere our activists were integrated into local initiatives.

The strike was attended by hundreds of thousands of workers and the most evident effect was the block of public transport.

The marches were attended by thousands of workers and students who joined the protest, along with areas of social opposition, as the squats and the committees in defense of the territory.

In Milan, in addition to the parade of unions participated very basic, which we actively participated, there was a separate march followed by with a separate march of Fiom, the metalworking sector of the CGIL, that declared a last minute strike in the same day.

In Milan students were always loaded heavily by the police before Piazza Santo Stefano, near the public university, and even No Tav demonstrators were charged by the police.

It was a successful general strike, that was followed by national media that referred a positive evaluation, an important signal by workers and workers who are coming out of the torpor that so far characterized them, the accomplices state unions CGIL, CISL and UIL, going to connect with those important fights for the right to housing in neighborhoods through the practice of the occupation and defense eviction.

Surely our union is strengthened. Especially around the country is growing an atmosphere of opposition and struggle against the government of "broad consensus" (center-right and center-left united) under the leadership of the Democratic Party. Renzi and his ministers are receiving more and more pressing challenges from a social opposition ever wider, as is happening these days.



Norway: Nationwide two-hour political, general strike on January 28, 2015

The main Norwegian labour unions LO, YS and UNIO, which have 1,5 million members (in a population of 5 million) called a nationwide two-hour political strike on January 28, protesting against the Government's proposed changes in the Health and Safety and Work Act. The proposed changes will lead to increased use of temporary work, longer shifts, more compulsory overtime and more frequent work on weekends.

The political strikes are legal in Norway if they are against government policies etc. and if they are short. The strike affected industry, companies, kindergartens and schools, public transport such as busses and air travel and train services. Hospitals were also be affected, but emergency clinics were open etc. There were big demonstrations and meetings in Norway's main cities. There were for example 15-20 000 union members participating in Oslo. The leadership of the LO had prepared to arrange meetings at 20 places, but it became 200 places after local pressure of union members.

The strike comes in a situation where the oil prices have been deciling, and there is an economic crisis affecting Norway's trade partners. The ruling class is determined to attack the rights and conditions of the working class, which also is clearly shown in disputes in Norwegian ports (its for another article). The NSF-IAA made a statement called "Fight against temporary work. Support the dockers fight" which was distributed on January 28:

"Government's proposals must be fought back, but it requires a completely different mobilization than today. We are very concerned that members of trade unions are so largely pacified. They are not considered, and do not consider themselves as an independent force that can react with independent actions. The big bureaucracies in the trade union movement are terrified to be held

accountable and sued for illegal actions. Members are only mobilized in short political strikes, and nothing happens afterwards.

More important than looking at what is allowed by law and the collective agreements, is to look at what is right. Laws and binding national agreements with obligation of peace/ no actions in the period, gag the workers and pacify us in the fight for decent conditions!"

The NSF statement then says that while the workers are tightened not to take action, the employers and state have a lot of "legal" means to sabotage workers conditions:

"The national, collective agreements accepts the employers "right to lead the work", and they can change the character of work and by this change the work contracts, they can put up prices, impair the quality of what we buy, lay- off or terminate workers. The government can devalue the currency, change laws and conduct an economic policy that drives workmates into unemployment, and that makes it difficult for us to live etc."

The workers in Norway and all over the world really need free and independent and fighting unions which use solidarity and direct actions to challenge the system!

Norsk Syndikalistisk Forbund (NSF) - IAA
www.nsf-iaa.org



Brazil: Attacks against the Rights of Workers



As we have warned, the government is implementing cuts in social rights and is advancing against the people, making it more difficult to get access to unemployment benefits, subsidies, disability and sick pay and benefits to families of deceased persons. All of this comes with the full support of unions like UGT and CUT, unions allied with the bosses and an electoral springboard for union leaders, unions which were born out of fascist union legislation which have survived due to the disorganization of the workers.

The cuts in social rights, called “adjustments” by the government, represent some of the worst attacks against workers and they especially effect young people in their first jobs and those who are dependent on social security. It uses cowardly methods. Working class families that have been paying in for many years will find unemployment benefits cut and now tied with many requirements and demands, making it more difficult to obtain.

The only way to combat these attacks are through direct action in the workplace, avoiding attacking ourselves, through mutual aid and solidarity amongst ourselves, denouncing the false syndicalism and the left government which defends capitalism.

We always warn people that all the parties are exactly the same and they are never a means of social transformation. Nonetheless, using the argument that they are turning back the right, they have fooled large sectors of people who vote for the left. But the struggle for well-being and

liberty is fought outside of these political parties. It is an economic question, a question of organizing ourselves and becoming capable for stopping production. Only self-management of our own unions can liberate us. The cuts in rights show everything that anarchosyndicalists have been denouncing when they say that the big official unions have sold out, that they are aligned with the bosses and the only way is our own self-organization and struggle, without intermediaries.

These cuts are the payment that the government demands from us, it demands that we pay for the World Cup and for the huge loans they have taken; today we are all in debt and will pay with our social and labor rights. The threat of more flexible working schemes to benefit the rich and powerful investors looms over us. Capitalism demands and the state complies – this is how this system works.

There is no other way than to fight in the streets and the workplaces, we have to overtake the puppets of official unionism, the parties and the government, demand an end to the cuts and the attacks to our people, demand our rights.

Without countries, parties, bosses, COB will struggle against the cuts in social rights. It's time to fight!



Brighton Solfed finish 2014 with two new victories

For the past few months, the activity of the Brighton SolFed local has been really intense in terms of workplace disputes. Different cases were opened, most of them in the hospitality sector, about wage theft.

Case #1

In November, the former worker of an Italian restaurant approached us. He had to resign because the company owed him money, and because of the bullying and harassment that he faced in his workplace. Brighton SolFed's Hospitality Workers agreed to support the worker in this dispute and prepared a demand letter asking for the worker's money.

The attitude of the restaurant management was simply shameful. They refused at every instance to talk to us and were aggressive and intimidating to the worker and SolFed comrades. As usual, we gave the company the chance of agreeing to a friendly solution before making the dispute public.

During the period of negotiations, we had to endure really pathetic scenes: a notice to the worker for harassment, the assault to a comrade when he tried to hand over the demand letter (which in the end had to be sent by recorded post), and a call to the police falsely accusing SolFed members of attempting to break the windows of the shop (a ludicrous accusation; if we break shop windows, how will we know where to stand? DUH!). Fortunately, none of these episodes had serious consequences.

However, it seems that the management of this business is not completely stupid and, at the last minute, they got the message that they will not be able to stop us by threats and intimidation. They decided to pay what the worker was owed just hours after the deadline that we gave them, thus avoiding the dispute becoming public. On 17th December, the worker had the money in his account.

Solfed website: www.solfed.org.uk

Case #2

This December, a worker involved with Brighton SolFed presented to the group a case of wage theft that she was having with the agency that she was working for. Once again, the company had decided not to pay her holiday entitlement.

We supported the worker in contacting this agency, which is well known in Brighton for their bad behaviour towards their workers. We told them that they should pay the worker immediately or we would start a dispute in which we would make sure that everybody in Brighton (especially their workers) is aware of their practices.

This week, we received an email in which this agency promised to pay the worker all that they owed her and to give her P45 and payslips.

We are really happy with these two victories – both cases involved migrant workers, and we hope this money will help these two comrades during these days in a city where life is not easy for migrant workers. For us, the most important thing is the experience of solidarity and direct action that we have shared. This convinces us that we can improve our lives by staying together and that we do not need politicians, judges, or policies.

However, we are quite aware of our limits. We would like to have had the chance to publicly attack these two miserable businesses that make their profits stealing from the workers. We are afraid that they, like many others in Brighton, will go on with their practices but, at least, they have realised that sometimes people will work together and fight back. Currently we have other cases open and we are sure that next year will bring many more struggles.

We would never appreciate enough all the proofs of solidarity that we are receiving and, especially, the exemplar commitment, rebellion, and generosity of the comrades.

Stop wage theft!

Viva SolFed!

Long live anarcho-syndicalism!

Actions Against Repression

During the Operation Pandora, a comrade from CNT-AIT Sabadell was arrested. People around the world took action against the repression of anarchists in Spain.

On December 16th, in Barcelona, 11 anarchists were detained in what is known as "Operation Pandora".

Four of them were released a couple of days later with charges. The anarchists were arrested for nothing more than being organized anarchists.



Belfast

The CNT and other libertarian organizations held demonstrations around Spain and called for international actions. Sections of the IWA responded, holding some demonstrations at Spanish embassies and consulates and making some other actions.



Araxá, Brazil



The prisoners were released on January 30 pending trial with various charges. This case is just another in a series of attacks against the libertarian movement in that country.



Belgrade



Malmö, Sweden

SOLIDARITY IS OUR WEAPON!

STOP REPRESSION AGAINST ANARCHISTS!



Serbia: Protest against the Police

On February 1 2015 the Anarcho-Syndicalist Initiative (ASI) protested at the municipal police headquarters in Belgrade in response to attacks against passengers in public transport.

In late January, police detained a passenger who refused to show them travel documents and identification (the latter is not required by law) and began to beat her. Outraged citizens stood up for the victim, pelted the police with plastic bottles and forced them to retreat. In response one cop threatened reprisals. ASI urged citizens to protest.

ASI wrote:

In light of the unprecedented brutality of the municipal police against the working class which we have witnessed during the last several days and about which we learned from news reports of the ill-treatment, beatings and arrest of people who don't have the money to pay for travel on public transport, we have decided that the time has come to fight back against repression....

Come, so that together we can show that the arrogant behaviour of the municipal police is intolerable, and demand the dissolution of the police force. Police repression is unacceptable!

The protest was held using the slogan “the police are the criminals”.

Bulgaria: Protests against Restructurization of the Railways

The Autonomous Workers' Union of Bulgaria has been holding protests to protest the privatization and restructurization of Bulgarian railways, which will affect both workers and passengers. Pickets have been held in Varna and Sofia.

On January 31, for the third Saturday in a row, they organized pickets at the railway stations of Bulgaria's two largest cities.

The comrades demonstrated their opposition to plans for the secret privatization of the railways. The protesters explain that the privatization will first transfer the most profitable lines. Then funds will be transferred to municipalities, which will distribute them among private companies.

They blamed the top officials of the railway administration for the deplorable state of the railways, emphasizing that ordinary workers do not bear any responsibility for this, in spite of propaganda claiming the opposite.

The anarchosyndicalists demand a complete reorganization of the railway system. The workers should decide how the railways are run and unions should be under control of the workers themselves by means of “direct democracy”.

Protest at Sofia railway station demanding workers self-management of the railways.



Meet the Örestad LS

In this issue of the bulletin, we would like to present something about not only the Sections of the IWA, but also about Friends. The IWA has a few affiliates known as „Friends of the IWA”. The newest is the OLS from Sweden. Starting out as a local group, we can see that it is expanding. We asked the comrades to write a little about themselves and their activity.

We welcome the comrades and wish them luck!

2014 was a busy year for us with a lot of negotiations and workplace struggles. Most of our cases could quickly be settled with negotiation, but a few cases took a long time. We also had to sue a company that was using immigrant workers in a most terrible way. However our members stood firm and eventually the company had to pay.

We also won a struggle against the University of Lund, Sociologiska institutionen where one of our members was harassed. By the time we won the case our member there had already changed workplace within the University so in fact the result has been that members of other unions have got the benefit of our struggle. It felt good to take the fight though because the big unions said it was a waste of time to do it.

At a regular basis LS holds classes in unionwork, negotiations tactics, law and so on and our aim is that we all shall have the same knowledge and competence.

Apart from strictly unionwork LS has attended events organized by anarchist black cross in Malmö and attended demonstrations in solidarity with Kobane, several against swedish fascists, against police violence etc. We invited anarchists from South Africa (SOS) to Malmö and they spent a week with us in May and attended the first of May demonstration with us. We also did a small solidarity action against the Swedish church who was/is in conflict with FAU. And we are of course clicktivists. LS use internet for a lot of protests and solidarity actions. Then at the end of the year we attended the IWA congress in Porto and we became Friends of the IWA. That made us so happy that we immediately went to Madrid where we talked about



Swedish anarchism at a meeting organised by a union of CNT Madrid.

And 2015 has started with more negotiations and with some solidarity work for our imprisoned Spanish comrades and of course for our Polish comrades in their struggle against Amazon and Manpower. And within a few weeks we have hopefully started a local branch in Copenhagen in our neighbouring country. We will meet Danish comrades soon and if everything goes as planned they will join Örestad LS and then it will be interesting.

We are small but we keep on growing and people in the rest of Sweden have recently started to be more interested in what we are doing so hopefully we will not be alone as anarchosyndicalists, in a few years time.

Keep on fighting!
Örestad LS



IWA Extraordinary Congress in Porto

On December 6-7, 2014, an Extraordinary Congress of the IWA took place in Porto, Portugal. On the Agenda were unfinished items of business from the XXV Congress of 2013, plus new motions and initiatives. 80 delegates and observers from 13 Sections and one Friend organization took part.

We welcome the OLS from Sweden as new Friends of the IWA. We were all pleased to hear about their work and success in a few work conflicts and look forward to fruitful cooperation in the future.

A number of new initiatives were passed, including the creation of a media group, a historical project and the go-ahead for broad centenary celebrations in 2022.

Saturday Night Open Meeting

In addition to the Congress, an open meeting was held on Saturday night. The STSI of Madrid, SOV from Porto, OLS, SolFed, ZSP, COB, CNT-AIT France and ASI spoke about different work conflicts and struggles in their countries.

What we could see from this meeting was that the IWA is a dynamic international with Sections participating in a diverse range of activity. Although the Secretariat tries to bring readers of this bulletin news from around the world, we can see that we are still only getting part of the story. Many organizations of the IWA are involved in different social struggles which confront capitalism and the state in its various forms.

Unfortunately time ran out before everybody could speak. Nevertheless, it was very interesting and uplifting to listen to, reinforcing our mutual struggles, goals and tactics and increasing solidarity and morale.

We thank the comrades of AIT-SP for organizing the event and for excellent preparation of the Congress!

We hope that in the upcoming year our new initiatives will start to develop and the Sections will continue to fight their local struggles and improve international coordination.



IWA in 2014 and 2015

Inspired by the fact that our Sections were involved in so many interesting struggles in 2014, the Secretariat decided to write an article with the year in review, which you can see in this bulletin. More photos are published with this article on the internet. But even here, we could not describe them all. Nor did we get into a lot of the other struggles or projects our Sections are involved with. For example, we know that many members of ASI were involved in a long struggle and occupation at the University of Belgrade, members of ZSP have blocked many evictions, COB has played a vital part in social protests in Brazil, FORA has been struggling for the release of imprisoned workers, etc. etc. All of this is important as part of our larger struggle.

In 2014, we also had the opportunity to organize and participate in a number of fruitful international events. We could see how sharing experiences can give us new ideas and new experiences. In 2015 we hope to meet with more people and increase the sharing and exchange between the Sections. We also hope that the media project will help to bring news about some struggles to a wider audience. We call on the Sections to help realize these plans and thank interested comrades from around the world for sharing the news.

General Secretary IWA

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Struggles and Victories of the IWA, 2014

The past year saw the Sections of the IWA organizing more workplace struggles, more solidarity campaigns and more social protests than at any time since the decimation of the anarcho-syndicalist movement in the 1930s and 40s. We are not able to make a comprehensive account of all the actions but the IWA Secretariat would like to make a summary of international actions and local activities of the Sections.

International Solidarity Campaigns

The IWA supported a number of solidarity appeals this year, mostly to demand the reinstatement of dismissed workers. All such campaigns ended positively this year, with either the reinstatement of the comrades or agreements for monetary compensation.

At the beginning of the year, we held solidarity actions for a comrade dismissed from **OHL**, one of the companies that cleans the streets of Madrid. Comrades in the east, where OHL is present (Poland, Slovakia and Russia) took part in the campaign. The conflict ended with an agreement between the company and dismissed employee.



At the beginning of March, solidarity actions took place in 13 countries against the practice of outsourcing at **Santander Bank** and for the reinstatement of the fired CNT delegate. The Sections organized actions in Poland, Argentina, Brazil, Germany, UK, Portugal, Norway and France



and sent protests in other locations where there were no targets. Comrades from other countries like Uruguay and the US also took part. Another day of action took place in June – in total three days of action were organized in for this struggle. At the end, the company paid a settlement to the comrade, who had already moved to another city. The settlement was much higher than usual and the comrade believes it is because of the actions. To show his mutual aid, he and his union decided to send some of the money to other IWA comrades in struggle.

In March there were also solidarity actions for the freedom of the imprisoned **oil workers of Las Heras**, Argentina. Solidarity pickets took place at embassies in Belgrade, Warsaw and Oslo and a picket took place in Newcastle, where the comrades targeted HBSC for complicity. Later there were actions in Spain as well.



In April, several sections supported the case of a comrade from Spain against **TNS**, the international polling company. The comrade was fired after years in the company for trying to do something against the worsening conditions at the firm. ZSP, KRAS, NSF and ASI organized actions. In the end, the company recognized the illegal dismissal of the comrade and paid him a high compensation.

In May and June, a number of Sections send protest letters supporting workers from ZSP in **Belchatow Hospital** who were struggling to get their jobs back. The comrades in Slovakia also made a picket at the Polish Embassy. The workers were rehired after 3 months of occupation and action!

In June, some Sections made actions at **Portinox/Teka** company, to support the dismissal of the union delegate from CNT Granada. Solidarity came from Portugal, Poland, Norway and Slovakia. The comrade later was reinstated to his job!

In October, we took action against the firing of the union delegate from CNT Guadalajara from **Truck and Wheel** company, at the warehouse for BMW-Mini in Spain. Solidarity actions were made in Australia, Slovakia, Poland, Russia, Norway, Brazil and Germany. The comrade was reinstated to his job in the company!

Strikes

Dresden

The workers of the **Trotzdem Bar** in Dresden went on strike after some of them were fired. They interpreted this as anti-union activity. The workers set up protests outside the bar for many days. Although in the end they did not win, they fought for their dignity and set an example for many.

Belchatow

Workers from ZSP union at **Belchatow Hospital** won their jobs back after 3 months of struggle. Unfortunately, a few months later, the service provider who employed the workers started to lay off people, both in and outside the union, and increase the workloads of the others.



At the beginning of November, the union decided to call an indefinite strike. Most of the other workers from this service company (cleaners and food servers) joined the strike, which was victorious after one day. In the end, more than 100 workers received normal work contracts with all benefits for the duration of the service contract.

Italy

Members of USI-AIT's various unions joined in the **nationwide general strike** on November 14. The main reasons for the proclamation of the strike were mostly against those laws the government is approving, in particular the Jobs Act, which is a anti-labour reform that will increase precarious work and will allow companies the utmost possibility to dismiss workers.

Pesués

At the end of May, the workers from CNT in **Tinamenor factory** went on strike to demand fixed employment. They had been on temporary contracts for many years, although this is not allowed and they should have already been given fixed contracts. The employer responded by firing the workers. The CNT has not stopped fighting and the conflict continues.



Barcelona



In February, the CNT in **WFS** airport services went on strike for two days. There have been ongoing struggles in this company over the last couple of years. The union is struggling for the reinstatement of three comrades.

Barcelona

On July 1, CNT participated in a **taxis drivers' strike** in Barcelona, against companies like UBER or BLABLA car.

Pilar de la Horadada

The CNT union in **STV Management** called a 24-hour strike in September. As far as we know, the workers' struggle is still going on.

Valencia



In the middle of December, CNT in **Extracciones Levante** called a three-day strike. The strike was motivated by some dismissals and the CNT would like a new collective agreement. We do not have any information of any results of the strike and assume the struggle in the workplace is pending.

Barcelona

The CNT participated in the strike of workers from **Ambulancias Domingo**, an ambulance company for three days at the end of December.

Madrid

The CNT also is taking part in the strike of garden workers from the **Madrid Rio** park. There is a plan to lay off 50% of the staff, so the workers went on strike. The strike is ongoing.

Other

We know that some CNT unions have participated in other strikes this year. Unfortunately we do not have enough information about this. There are lots of strikes in Spain and often the CNT takes part with the other unions.



ASI Education Union also took part in mass strikes in Serbia this December.

Workplace and Social Struggle around the Globe

It is difficult to get a grasp of all the workplace struggles the Sections have been involved in. Sometimes, our Sections work to provide solidarity to groups of workers, such as the **Gestamp** or **Ceramicas Neuquen** workers in Argentina. Other times, our unions take part in protest movements of workers from various unions, such as the **protests of teachers and scientific workers in Moscow**, which the KRAS Education and Technical workers union took part in, or protests of health care workers in Italy

which members of USI-Sanita took part in. Any attempt to make a short list of struggles will inevitably leave some of them out. But a few worth noting.

In the UK, comrades from **SolFed** have had success this year with organizing workers and actions against wage theft.



Brighton

SolFed has been organizing workers through **Brighton Hospitality Workers** and has won a number of direct action campaigns, mostly against wage theft at restaurants and cafes in the city. It has had a long string of wins, mostly using pickets in front of the establishments.

South London, London

SolFed helped to organize a successful campaign to help a worker get money she was owed from **Green Eco Plus**. They also organized an action to defend a woman fired from a language school and, as a result, she received money and a positive recommendation.

Newcastle

Comrades helped a worker from North Tyneside receive a large settlement.

Slovakia, Australia

Comrades in Slovakia have started a **Problems at Work** campaign, to begin dealing with more workplace problems. They report good interest

and have new contacts through the campaign. Comrades in Australia have initiated a similar campaign.

Social Struggles in Brazil

Our comrades in Brazil took part in major social protests in that country. In some cities they were among various groups organized but in other places they were the only organized force which could mobilize some people in the streets.

Berlin

Two members of FAU were among workers fired in the **Swedish School** in Berlin. Some protests and solidarity actions were held, but so far, there has been no progress towards reinstatement. There were also many demonstrations and pickets demanding pay for **Mall of Berlin** workers who did not receive their salaries. This situation is still pending.

Montevideo

No, we don't have a section in Uruguay (yet) but some comrades and comrades from ASI helped stranded Serbian workers, who weren't paid and left without visas and tickets home.



Poland

Following dismissals in **Dino supermarkets**, ZSP started a campaign for reinstatement, for unpaid overtime and other improvements. The supermarket chain had to start making overtime payments and made payments for past overtime to different workers. Also several improvements to health and safety measures had to be made. The union is still fighting for reinstatement and has a discrimination case in the court.

Warsaw



The ZSP fought a number of struggles in this city. First, there was continued actions against **Impuls** work agency which brought tens of thousands of zloties in overdue pay to a number of their members. Then, in one language school, the school started to make all social security and benefit payments, which it hadn't made before. The union helped workers in one sex shop get money they were owed. Then it took action with a group of cooks and waiters from **Doubletree by Hilton** who hadn't been paid and the workers received their money very quickly afterwards. The union also started action at **Citibank**, where a comrade was fired for fighting against discrimination. There are now three lawsuits against the corporate giant. Finally, in support of the comrades from **ZSP Amazon**, there were pickets at Manpower and Adecco agencies which had to pay workers the remainders of their salaries which they had been shorted.

Spain



In Spain there are always lots of workplace conflicts and it is hard to make a list, much less say which are most important. Some were already

mentioned under international solidarity campaigns.

A few others are:

Salamanca

Struggle of **Arvato-Qualytel** workers. They do customer service for Orange, work through the company Arvato-Qualytel, but without normal contracts. They are hired as temporary workers through Adecco and Randstad. They would like to be hired directly and receive proper benefits and have stable employment. 2 members of CNT were dismissed through non-renewal of contract and a confederal campaign has been going on. An international week of action will take place starting Jan.12



Madrid

The Education workers union is fighting against precarious working conditions in the **University of Alcala**. This includes fighting against the exploitation of fellows and doctoral teaching assistants.

Barcelona

The CNT won the reinstatement of a comrade dismissed from a **EUREST** cafeteria.

Spain

The CNT has managed to organize unions in several cities in **Phone House**. There have been numerous pickets organized around Spain, demanding better working conditions for the staff.



Another campaign which takes place in various cities is against **Mercadona supermarkets**. Earlier in the year, the supermarket had to pay half a million euros in compensation to fired workers. CNT continues to organize in the supermarkets and organize pickets around Spain.

Barcelona

The CNT managed to win the reinstatement of the comrade dismissed from **SOS Childrens' Villages**.

Vigo

The CNT won a settlement with **Domino's Pizza** who dismissed a member.



Repression and Solidarity

San Carlo

USI in **San Carlo Hospital** was repressed and ordered to pay a huge fine for supposedly

insulting the bosses of the hospital. The IWA donated money to help.

Araxa

Comrades from **COB** in Araxa are being repressed. There were bogus criminal charges against one comrade, as well as charges of being in an „illegal union”. The case is ongoing.

Belgrade

In Serbia, the state is still trying to prosecute the **Belgrade 6**, whose case was appealed and re-opened after their acquittal in 2010. The state is also trying to make a few fake criminal charges against other ASI members.

Warsaw

Several bosses have tried to make criminal cases and lawsuits against ZSP members for their syndical activity. So far the none of the criminal cases have stuck and the comrades have escaped punishment through the courts.

Operation Pandora

Several IWA Sections have already protested against repressions against anarchists in Spain. Comrades from France, Serbia, Portugal and Brazil have protested and denounced the repressions and of course the CNT has taken action across Spain.





Other

The IWA organized some presentations, workshops and training this year. The first was in Holland, where there was discussion of anarchosyndicalist organization and action. The next was in Hongkong and Taiwan, which saw many discussions and exchange with local activists.

Priama akcia also organized an international conference about organizing and internal matters in Bratislava.

Some Sections have been participating in a number of other campaigns. For example, in Lisbon and in Araxa, there are ongoing campaigns for free public transportation. In Warsaw, there is huge involvement in housing struggles. In Spain there are some collective projects such as the small farm Huerta de SOV Madrid. In Belgrade, ASI has been very active in student occupations and struggles.

We wish we could list all the struggles our Sections have been involved with, or events that they organized but this task cannot be realized by the IWA Secretariat this New Year's Eve. It is time to celebrate a successful year and to look forward to a new year filled with new struggles, new successes of our comrades and hopefully new comrades from around the world who want to work in solidarity. We wish all of our comrades from the IWA, from our Friends and comrades from non-affiliated organizations a Happy New Year and good luck to us all in the nearest future.

We still hold a new world in our hearts.

Long live anarchosyndicalism and the IWA!

IWA Secretariat

Dec. 31, 2014

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