



IWA

BULLETIN

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Editorial

Over the last few months, there have been a lot of wins for workers of the IWA Sections. Hospital workers won their jobs back in Poland, a comrade is back to work at SOS Children's Village in Spain and hospitality sector workers in England are fighting and getting payments they are owed. We are proud to bring you the story of these successes.

But there are still struggles to be won. Some of our comrades are fighting for their jobs back or for money they are owed. 16 comrades who went on strike against their long-term temporary status were fired by the company. We present these stories to and remind that an injury to one is an injury to all. The IWA will be taking international action in a few of these cases.

Firings are not the only type of reprisal workers face. In Argentina, a group of workers were imprisoned after disturbances during strike actions and comrades from that country and around the world keep agitating for their freedom.

With all this going on, we see a need to coordinate action better on a global level, to find new comrades, to struggle together. In order to go do this, we also need to focus on spreading our ideas and action. **So please pass this bulletin on to people who may be interested.**

If you would like to learn more about the IWA or start an organization in your location, please contact us at: secretariado@iwa-ait.org

Victory in Bełchatów! Hospital Workers get Contracts!



Members of the ZSP union in Belchatow Hospital are back at work, after 3 months of struggle. The hospital had outsourced the jobs of cleaners and meal servers and when a new company took over the service contract, it did not take on about 60 workers, many who had worked there for decades. The women decided to fight for their jobs back. They occupied the hospital, occupied the Voivodship office and protests at the hospital, at the service providers and in the capital. In the end, after much negotiation, there was a new public tender and a new service provider, which hired the women on regular work contracts.

This is the first time in Poland that such workers who had lost their jobs, got rehired. This landmark victory was thanks to the determination and solidarity of the women who decided to fight, even though the odds were against them.

The situation of the workers was unfortunately common in Poland. Many hospitals outsource different jobs in order to avoid employment responsibilities. What happens next varies. Some people, especially cooks and cleaners, find themselves with more worse working conditions than before. Some of the contractors pay people a subminimum wage on civil contracts, offering absolutely no benefits. Others squeeze out part of the workforce; often these are formerly unionized people. The mainstream unions sometimes don't do anything in these situations, considering it a lost cause. In the case of the Belchatow women, some of them had belonged to a union in the hospital, which did nothing at all to help them and considered the whole struggle to be useless. But it turned out that useless are these types of unions. Now the workers decide things themselves,

without union bosses condescending to them and telling them what to do. So far, so good.

This is now the third hospital in which ZSP is organized. In one hospital, workers have successfully fought against outsourcing. But in the other, it looks as if the cleaners will be outsourced... to the very same firm that screwed the workers in Belchatow. We will see if the workers can manage to do something against this and be assured that they will know how to defend themselves if the bosses try their tricks.

Dino Supermarkets Make Overtime Payments



Since the beginning of 2014, ZSP has been fighting Dino Supermarket chain, which dismissed unionists and other workers for complaining about working conditions and trying to organize. A number of pickets were held in towns around Poland, calling for a boycott of the chain. Legal cases were also brought against the company.

As a result of the campaign and of controls of the State Labour Inspectorate, Dino has been forced to clean up their act a bit and are making overtime payments. They also admitted to not paying overtime in the past and made some compensation.

Besides the overtime issue, we are fighting for the reinstatement of our comrade, who was a representative of another union at the time. That union has shamelessly screwed over and ignored 11 of the 12 union members who were fired.

Besides the improvement in overtime, the campaign against the markets have brought some other results, such as improvements in health and safety. Several other cases are still pending in the courts, including for unfair dismissal and discrimination.

Victory for Hotel Workers: Direct Action Pays

A group of almost 250 waitstaff, cooks and kitchen helpers were finally paid after a few workers decided to take action. The people worked at a Double-Tree by Hilton Hotel in Warsaw and were hired through an agency, AG+. There was a dispute between the agency and the hotel and the workers did not receive their pay, even though they had worked very hard. Some had worked as long as 20-hour shifts at the hotel.

When a few workers decided to do something, the first steps were an article in the press, on the ZSP website and a visit to the hotel with leaflets. We managed to gather about 50 of the workers and were planning an action campaign. But the hotel reacted immediately and within 2 hours of the first visit, they expressed the desire to meet and to resolve the conflict.

The fast win was impressive, especially since most of the workers did not believe they would get this money. This was the largest sum of money won by direct action that ZSP had ever had and an unheard result for Poland.

At the workers' meeting we found that there were other issues, such as people not having evidence of their hours or issues with the agency. Members of ZSP advised the workers on how to deal with this situation and how to avoid some typical problems that agency workers have. It was decided to run some workshops on these problems in the future for other agency workers and also to take more initiatives among workers in the hospitality sector.

Language School Regulates Contracts and Benefits

After talks with the management of one Warsaw language school, workers have new contracts and started to receive social security benefits. The school began to change its practices in the spring semester and now in the fall semester, workers have new contracts.

The Education Workers of ZSP Warsaw started to draw attention to the precarious working conditions of teachers at foreign language schools

in the city last year. Many of them work without proper contracts. The schools sometimes force them to be self-employed entrepreneurs, „authors”, or invent different job descriptions in trash contracts. One of the most common problems with this is that they don't make payments for social security or health care. Now the teachers in at one school have this problem resolved. However this is only the tip of the iceberg.

Action against Impuls and Subminimum Wage

On July 26, ZSP organized an informational action at the Palace of Culture in Warsaw to protest the situation of the workers from Impuls agency and the fact that the city awarded a contract to the firm which is known to notoriously violate workers' rights. At the end of last year, after many protests at that firm, clients, including the city started to terminate contracts with the agency after finding out that they did not pay workers on time or at all. We made a special effort to contact the municipal authorities about the situation as they also worked in municipal offices. But it seems that they are still getting contracts at publically funded institutions and places run by the city.

The workers at the Palace of Culture haven't been paid for 4 months already.

Impuls is one company that simply needs to be shut down. It has never been a problem of occasional late payments with them. Not paying workers is their modus operandi. They expect most workers not to fight and take the loss. But Impuls workers from ZSP have fought and got at least their back pay. They also are fighting for unpaid benefits.

Impuls does not pay people the legal minimum wage because they use trash contracts. This means wages about 1/3 of the minimum wage.

ZSP will be campaigning this starting this fall to make working conditions a criteria for awarding public tenders. Currently, the main criteria is price, which means that if some company wants to pay a sub-minimum wage, they are at an advantage in public tenders. This should not be supported with public money. All the more so because it supports the destruction of stable jobs in favour of paying subminimum wages (or nothing at all).

End of Conflict with Santander Bank, ISBAN and Panel Sistemas... but the struggle continues

For the past year, the our comrades from the CNT have been in conflict with the above companies which outsource IT workers to avoid direct contracting for Santander Bank and some other firms. ISBAN is owned by Santander Bank and is used to avoid direct hiring. In this way, about 10,000 workers are forced to work in more precarious conditions. Our comrade from the IT Workers Union in Madrid was fired after calling attention to the problems and trying to organize.



The CNT organized actions around Spain and the IWA around the world. A few other organizations and comrades also took part in solidarity actions that were held in 15 countries.

We understand that the solidarity actions did a lot to help! We have been informed that a resolution has been reached in the case of the individual comrade and that the economic compensation is much greater than normal. We are sure that this is a result of the solidarity campaign.

After more than one year, our comrade has already moved on to another city and other things. Therefore, he decided he would not like to return to his old job.

We can consider this to be a personal victory for the worker, but the larger problem in the company remains. Our comrade IT workers in Spain are fighting in general against these types of working conditions and we wish them the best in their struggles.

Our comrade points out that he is very happy that the results achieved were due to direct action and international pressure. He hopes that this conflict can serve as an example of our way of working, which is based on solidarity and show that the IWA is an effective tool for workers who want to fight against multinational corporations.

We thank all the comrades who have shown solidarity in this case.

IWA Secretariat

Victory in the conflict against SOS Children's Village and Creation of Union

On February 7, 2014, our comrade from CNT in Spain was dismissed from his job as educator at an SOS Children's Village in Catalonia. He had begun to observe various violations of workers rights including unpaid overtime, not being able to use vacation time, some health and safety violations, etc. etc. He tried to get the employer to comply with norms and also informed the work inspection of these violations. A few days later he was fired. The CNT and the IWA consider that the dismissal was retaliation for the worker insisting that the employer comply with regulations. Action were held on the national level on Spain and solidarity was shown internationally by the IWA Sections. We are pleased to inform that recently this comrade was reinstated in his job.

According to the decision of the Barcelona Labor Court no18, our comrade's firing is considered to be void due to violation of his fundamental rights and the NGO was ordered to reinstate him to his workplace, with the same functions and conditions, giving him back pay from the date of the firing and an additional €6,000 compensation.

For now, the reinstatement has been made effective, as has the back pay payment, although the amounts don't seem quite right and are being double checked by our comrade. SOS Children's Village has decided to appeal the sentence so the compensation is blocked in the courts.

There is no agreement yet on the vacation time owed, as we believe our comrade has a right to enjoy all of it while the organization thinks it only owes the time accrued from the day of the reinstatement. Negotiations are ongoing so that this won't escalate. The worker's contract has changed from temporary to permanent, which we see as a great improvement.

After talking to other workers on the day of the reinstatement, some superficial improvement of work conditions is apparent; these have occurred thanks to the conflict initiated after our comrade's complaints and specially the direct actions taken. There's still a lot to do though, that's why the CNT is creating a union section there.

Call for Actions against Truck and Wheel and BMW



In August, the CNT delegate in the company Truck and Wheel in Guadalajara, was fired. The comrade was given a bullshit disciplinary dismissal but the CNT and the IWA consider the real reason to be the fact that all year he had been conducting intense syndical activity. This included demands for a new collective agreement that would reduce overtime, cases in the labor tribunal regarding union freedom and some pickets at the front gate.

Since the dismissal, the CNT in Guadalajara have been protesting and there have been solidarity actions in Spain. Now the IWA is organizing an international week of action Oct.13-19. Truck and Wheel is only present in a few places outside Spain but we will also target BMW/Mini because the Truck and Wheel branch where the comrade worked was the main warehouse for BMW/Mini in Spain.



MetLife doesn't Pay

Our comrade from the CNT-AIT Gijon was owed money for commission from the insurance company MetLife. When he reminded the company that he was owed this money, he was fired.

The comrade is still owed close to 2000 euros. He brought a legal case against the company for other abuses of contract. He had been contracted as a freelancer and then was forced to work as an ordinary worker, which meant a big difference in

his compensation. The case is due in court in November.

The CNT has been picketing MetLife in Spain and the IWA will be putting pressure on the company in the period immediately before this. We criticize the greed and bad practices of the insurance giant towards its workers and call on them to immediately pay the money owed and to stop its shady contracting policies.

Tinamenor Fires Striking Workers

In the last issue of the bulletin, we made a small note about a strike which had started in Spain. On May 27, 2014, the CNT union in Tinamenor, located in Pesués (Santander), made up of 16 workers who select fish, started an indefinite strike. The purpose was to force the company to meet its demand for a fixed contract and recognition of their seniority.

The workers had been employed by a temporary work agency for more than 12 years, exceeding the period of 3 years which is stipulated in the law. They should have been contracted directly by Tinamenor after that.

The women were fired by the company during the strike. The CNT has been fighting to reverse the situation. They have targetted not only Tinamenor, but also Nortempo, the temporary work agency the women were contracted through. There are also cases in court.

At the end of September, the workers marched through the streets of Torrelavega to remind people of their situation and the strike-breaking actions of Tinamenor.



Victory against Portinox – Teka

The CNT-AIT Granada announces the end of the conflict with the metal company Portinox, from the Teka group. The past Wednesday, July 16, a court decision was handed down from the hearing of the 14th. The dismissal was voided and our comrade Pablo, the CNT union delegate in this company, returned to work on July 21. The company was ordered to pay his back salary and reinstate him immediately.

Our comrades in the company know that they have to be careful. There are people who will throw up their hands when they see our delegate in the factory working along with the others. Now a new work period starts in Portinox. This is the end of a concrete conflict, but not the end of the needs of the workers in the factory. There were 12 more people dismissed, four of which had an agreement, but 7 or 8, almost all from CCOO who had wanted to fight for reinstatement but had to settle for compensation. It would have been better

if they could chose whether to return to work or get the compensation.

Many of the unions of the CNT or sections of the IWA (Madrid, Guadalajara, Santander, Valladolid, Zaragoza, Russia, Norway, Slovakia, Poland, Portugal...) showed us solidarity during the conflict, denouncing the situation. This was noticed by the Teka Group. We would like to thank everybody who supported the campaign.

We know that Portinox-Teka have taken this victory very hard. We should make an example and show workers the effects of fighting for their rights and the strategy of the CNT. If they do nothing, sooner or later they can be effected or dismissed themselves and it is very difficult if they haven't prepared for this previously. If the workers organize together, they can do more than campaigns and boycotts, like strike, which would completely destroy Portinox if it were well organized.

Dominos Pizza Gives In

Our comrade from the CNT in Vigo Spain came to a satisfactory agreement for compensation after some months of protesting. Emilio, a long-term employee with no previous problems, had worked in the Dominos for 9 years but the company decided that the unionist must go and dismissed him , using a made-up reason. The CNT union considers that this was a pretext to avoid eventual compensation they would have to pay for unfair dismissal.

The case was due to come to court in July and the comrade asked for international actions to support his case.

The IWA informed Dominos that it would be picketing. The pizza chain had already had some experience with the International as our comrades in the ASF in Australia also called for actions there a couple of years ago. Before the Day of Action, Dominos decided to negotiate with their former employee and they agreed on a settlement which our comrade felt was adequate.

We hope that the threat of action was something that helped the situation and we wish the comrade luck in the future.



Brighton Hospitality Workers:

A Solidarity Federation Report



Brighton Hospitality Workers (BHW) is a union initiative formed by the Brighton local of Solidarity Federation. BHW was formed in October 2013 in response to the high number of workplace issues in Brighton's hospitality sector – hotels, restaurants, cafes, bars - being brought to the attention of SolFed organisers. This coincided with several migrant Spanish workers joining Brighton SolFed, scraping a living in hospitality jobs and ideally placed to organise in the industry. Brighton is a seaside town and a popular UK holiday destination with an economy reliant on the visitor trade, both in terms of international hotel & restaurant chains and small independent businesses. As our propaganda states, Brighton's hospitality sector is notorious for low pay, poor conditions, long hours and bullying & harassment by bosses, as well as lack of recognition by existing trade unions.

At our first open meeting we agreed to focus on the hospitality sector because of its precarious conditions, which are creating an explosive situation in many workplaces, and because of the vulnerability of the industry to direct action. Additionally, the impact of such a campaign is important in a place like Brighton due to the prominence of the sector and the fact that it's a relatively small city. To this effect, we agreed a long-term strategy consisting of the following stages:

- Collecting information about the sector: statistics, legal issues, most common problems, information about the companies, etc.
- Forming as many contacts as possible with workers and people interested in supporting BHW.
- Making a strong propaganda campaign in two directions: a general campaign against the precariousness in the sector, and a campaign focused on the workers by encouraging them to organise, offering workers' rights advice and support.
- Dealing with concrete conflicts and gaining recognition in workplaces by creating our own industrial action strategy.
- If we manage to build enough strength, formation of a hospitality workers' union according to anarcho-syndicalist principles, with recognition across the entire sector in the Brighton area.

Brighton SolFed holds a weekly drop-in at a social centre that satisfies the aims of both Solidarity Federation and Brighton Hospitality Workers. We meet workers to give advice on their rights and how our industrial action strategy could achieve their demands, and we also discuss the broader aims and principles of anarcho-syndicalism. As well as coordinating a succession of hospitality conflicts, the local has gained a number of new members in this way. We hold a weekly stall in the heart of the hospitality district where we distribute propaganda and talk to workers about BHW, and on one night each week we put up BHW posters across the city. We produce a regular newsletter containing propaganda, rights advice and interviews with hospitality workers and have a sticker campaign helping to raise our profile. We also have a contact email list, presently with over 80 contacts, and send weekly updates and call outs for actions.

Our industrial action strategy has been fundamental in the seven successive conflicts we have entered in and has helped raise the BHW profile throughout the sector. This is: meet with workers to agree on their demands and the action they are prepared to take; draft a demand letter with the workers and submit to the local for a mandate; where possible, workers and BHW members deliver demand letter by hand and do not enter negotiation with management; if demands are not met by the given deadline, return to the workplace and be prepared to stage a picket if management still refuses to meet demands; after initial picket, put in place an escalation strategy including more frequent and larger pickets, informational propaganda about the conflict, use of social media and alternative press; throughout the conflict, workers together with BHW members can meet management to give them opportunity to meet demands before action is escalated. In all instances we ask workers to be involved as much as possible, from attending meetings with management and joining pickets to staying in regular contact at the very least. In some cases the workers have been harassed and threatened by the boss and might rely on BHW members to confront the boss in person.

By adapting the industrial action strategy we have had workers' demands successfully met in all seven of the conflicts entered so far, and workers have

been paid in total over £7000 in stolen wages and holiday entitlement. In some conflicts a demand letter and initial meeting with management, at which direct action was threatened, has been enough for worker's demands to be met. In others, notably our most recent conflict, it has taken over 2 months of pressure through direct action for demands to be met. Though longer conflicts require more time and effort, and the workers' demands take longer to be met, they have the added effect of raising the SolFed & BHW profile through regular street action and public attention. A short documentary film was made of our most recent conflict that has been shared on social media and screened at events, bringing significant attention.

Brighton SolFed recently held an open meeting to review the growth of BHW and it's relation to the organisation, promoting BHW as a SolFed initiative and discussing how it can move forward as an example of SolFed union organising. A handbook for the industrial strategy came out of the meeting and there was discussion and proposals about how we tackle bullying and harassment in the workplace alongside fighting for better pay and conditions.

For workers' solidarity and self-organisation!
Brighton Solidarity Federation

solfed.org.uk

Video about Dispute with Cafe

Brighton Hospitality Workers have made a video about the dispute they had with one cafe. The comrades say that the dispute was the longest one they had, lasting over two months. In the end, the workers got paid, thanks to the direct actions carried out in front of the restaurant.

The film called „Pay Slip Shut Down” can be found on You Tube. It is a good example of how simple solidarity can be an effective tool for workers who have been cheated.

This film documents a
 Solidarity Federation campaign
 to recover workers' unpaid
 wages from a cafe, as part of a
 broader campaign for workers in
 Brighton's hospitality sector.



Pay Slip Shut Down. Brighton SolFed

New Solidarity Actions in Argentina

Activists of the FORA continue to organize solidarity actions with repressed workers and workers in struggle in their country.

The comrades have been supporting workers from the Ceramic Factory in Neuquén. They wrote:

On Tuesday, July 8, an action was held in front of the factory where the ceramic workers invited those who support the struggle and the community in general to communicate that the machines would be started up again, this time by the workers on strike.

Approximately 100 people participated. ... The workers thanked people for the support that they received during the 11c0 days of struggle and started on this new stage because of the necessity of producing so that each worker can get an income. In this sense, it is not definitive that they run the factory, it might be the case that there is a negotiation with the boss to come back. ...

...

Afterwards we could get to know the factory from the inside, see how the comrades have put the machines back to work and to speak with them about their expectations. There is little material that was left and some lines of production have yet to be restarted.

On July 9, FORA held an action to support the imprisoned oil workers of Las Heras. Another was held on September 10.



The group of workers were arrested after disturbances that happened during a strike in which a policeman was killed; during the investigation torture was used. Despite the fact that there was no convincing evidence against the workers, there were sentenced to prison.

During the new solidarity day, members of FORA made informational pickets, to tell people about the real situation and calling for support of the campaign to immediately release those convicted.

In San Martín, other solidarity actions were held. The local resistance society of FORA is running a solidarity campaign with the workers of the Sabelcort, who are struggling against precarization and outsourcing, to defend their jobs.

Also FORA supported the solidarity campaign with the workers of the Donnelly factory which closed down. They began by collecting food and other necessary items for the families.



On July 25, members of the CNT-AIT in Spain held a solidarity rally in front of the Argentine Consulate in Barcelona.

In the spring of 2014, similar protests were held in several countries in response to the call from FORA.

International Presentations in Hongkong and Tapei

In the first weeks of August, a series of presentations and discussions on anarchosyndicalism took place in Asia. Many IWA Sections presented topics and took part in meetings and round table discussions with a wide-range of activists from Hong Kong and Taipei.

The meetings were a great chance to meet with people, learn about local movements and learn from each others' experiences. We got to hear about different local social movements, such as actions of street vendors, migrant workers, anti-gentrification movements, etc. And comrades from the IWA from many countries also told about current movements in their countries.

Three comrades from the IWA took part in person. There was of course a presentation and discussions on the principles and practice of anarchosyndicalism; many of the IWA Sections also explained how they work. Seven Sections took part. There were plenty of examples of successful direct actions, accompanied by videos. Some comrades explained how their organizations choose to carry out certain campaigns. Although mostly we focused on labour campaigns, there was also information about of social protests or activities the Sections have been engaged in, ranging from mass protests in Brazil to



cooperatives in Spain to tenants movements in Poland.

The events generated lots of discussion and exchange. The comrades who took part in organizing the events assessed them positively and would like to continue dialogues and produce some more basic texts geared towards people in that region.

All the participants from the IWA assessed the event positively and hope that in the future there will be occasions to act together. We were also pleased to see that video conferencing could be used to increase the participation of people from around the globe. We hope we will have the opportunity to meet more comrades throughout the world in such ways in the future.



Support the Release of a New Documentary Video Project!

Living Memory



The CNT Living Memory video is about to premiere at a film festival in Spain. Soon the video should be translated in other languages too.

The project Living Memory was born in 2009 with the tribute to Spanish exile and the victims of Nazi death camp of Mathausen because of the 70 anniversary of the end of the Spanish Civil War.

The aim was to film so many testimonies as possible linked to workers movement of CNT-AIT, recovering some voices which would be lost otherwise. The comrades filmed over 300 hours of video and made interviews with 80 people. The 2-hour final video will premier at an international film festival in Spain this month.

Now the CNT is fundraising to help with the dissemination of the video, making translations and copies. See here for information or to make a contribution: goteo.org/project/memoria-viva-el-documental