



ANOTHER FUTURE FOR HEALTH

*Revolution through health,
health through Revolution*

Digest of international information from health and care workers, from an anarchosyndicalist perspective #2 – second semester 2020

When we produced the first issue of this digest, in Summer 2020, we were only at the start of the Covid 19 pandemic, after the end of the first lockdown. We were already presenting that we were living historic times, with dramatic consequences for millions of people on earth, but we did not imagine that the situation would continue and even worsen 6 months later.

Workers in the health and care sector are on the front lines in fighting the disease. The State has asked them to make superhuman efforts, and it continues. A new world is emerging on the horizon, which we fear will be more authoritarian than ever, and that in the name of health. More than ever, it seems important to us that health workers in different countries can inform each other about their respective situation, because in a globalized world we are all interdependent. Beyond analyzes of the situation, examples of resistance implemented in a self-organized way by the workers themselves can also inspire us and encourage us in our struggles

This digest is made by health workers from CNT-AIT France. We are the section in France of the AIT (International Workers' Association, IWA). The CNT-AIT brings together workers who identify with the principles, tactics and goals of anarchosyndicalism. With this bulletin we want to contribute to a work of collective critical reflection, beyond borders. We have chosen and collected texts produced by different groups around the world, which are active in the health and care sector. Some of these groups are, for the most part, members or friends of AIT, others do not belong to our international, but with all of them we maintain fraternal and reciprocal contacts.

It emerges from these articles that overall the situation is the same everywhere: lack of resources, lack of training, personnel sacrificed by the lack of preparation of the health services which have been destroyed for several years in the name of managerial efficiency and financial profitability. . We can see today the effectiveness of these restructurings ... This disorganization and this chaos itself are not the fruits of chance, they are not due to anarchists, they are the result of the combined action of the State and of Capitalism.

To save humanity, we have no choice but to organize ourselves collectively to end the state and capitalism.

If you wish to continue receiving this newsletter, contact us at contact@cnt-ait.info

**"Anarchy is the highest expression of Order. »(E RECLUS)
Let's finish with the Chaos of State and Capitalism!**

✎ SUMMARY ✎

[FRANCE] PARIS, HEALTH WORKERS DEMONSTRATION, JUNE 16, 2020	2
[FRANCE] ANOTHER FUTURE FOR THE PUBLIC HEALTH.....	3
CLAUDE BERNARD, BACHELARD AND FEYERABEND: THREE SCIENTISTS AGAINST SCIENTISM.....	6
[FRANCE] IN HEALTH SERVICES AS EVERYWHERE: WORK AND DIE.....	8
HISTORY: HOW DID SPANISH ANARCHOSYNDICALISTS MANAGEDS THE PUBLIC HEALTH DURING THE 36'S REVOLUTION? (AN EXAMPLE OF LIBERTARIAN COMMUNISM APPLIED IN ACUTE HEALTH CRISIS TIME)	9
NURSING HOMES, HOSPITALS: TO EXHAUST AT WORK FOR A WAGE OF MISERY? (STICKER)	12
FREE MASKS FOR ALL ![STICKER].....	12

[SPAIN] PUBLIC HEALTH PRIVATIZATION, THE SPANISH HEALTH NIGHTMARE ...	12
[SPAIN] AGAINST WAGE INSECURITY IN RETIREMENT HOMES AND NURSING HOMES!	13
[SPAIN] AT THE "L'ARBOC" NURSING HOME, THE MANAGEMENT REFUSES TO RECOGNIZE THE CNT-AIT SECTION	14
[UKRAINE] WORTHY SALARY FOR THE NURSES!	15
[BULGARIA] THE PANDEMIC AS A CLASS WAR AGAINST WORKERS	16
[BULGARIA] CRACKDOWN ON STRIKING HEALTH WORKERS	18
[BULGARIA/AUSTRIA] SOLIDARITY WITH THE STRUGGLE OF BULGARIAN NURSES	19
[BULGARIA/AUSTRIA] SARS-COV-2 AID DELIVERY HAS ARRIVED IN BULGARIA!	20
[AUSTRIA] POLITICAL DISCRIMINATION AT THE RED CROSS	21
[GERMANY] PROTEST MARCH AGAINST HEALTH CARE CRISIS IN COLOGNE	23
[IRAN] DEMONSTRATION OF THE MEDICAL STUDENTS OF TABRIZ	24
[BANGLADESH] DISTRIBUTION OF WASHABLE MASKS TO TEA WORKERS	24
[UK] REDUCED LIFE = REDUCED WORK (THE WORK/LIFE BALANCE)	25
[UK] THE ALARMING RISE OF BRANSON'S VIRGIN CARE AND THE THREAT TO THE NHS	25
[UK] WORLD SUICIDE PREVENTION DAY- BREAKING THE TABOO IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY.	27
[SERBIA] DRAMATIC SITUATION IN HOSPITALS	28
[POLAND] WOMEN'S HELL	29
[POLAND] A LOOK BACK AT A SUCCESSFUL STRIKE OF HOUSEKEEPERS AND KITCHEN STAFF AT THE BELCHATOW HOSPITAL	30

[France] PARIS, HEALTH WORKERS DEMONSTRATION, June 16, 2020



Less cops,
More health workers

The nurse Farida has been arrested
during the health workers demonstration at Paris, 16th of June



Capitalism =
5 cops to for one demonstrator
1 nurse for 30 patients

[France] ANOTHER FUTURE FOR THE PUBLIC HEALTH

September 2020, CNT-AIT France, info sheet of CNT-AIT health branch workers



Un autre futur pour la santé !

Revolution through health, health through Revolution!
Info sheet of Anarchosindicalist Health Workers

contact@cnt-ait.info <http://cnt-ait.info>

"LET'S GO" TOWARD TOTAL PRIVATISATION OF PUBLIC HEALTH

The Covid crisis has highlighted the dilapidated state of our public health system in France, and particularly in hospitals. This is no coincidence: it is a deliberate policy, followed for decades by all governments, without exception, no matter they were right or left wing. All of them have closed tens of thousands of hospital beds, President Macron only continued the dismantling policies implemented before him by Hollande, Sarkozy Chirac and even Mitterrand. Their goal is to put an end to the French health system, which certainly has flaws but above all has the great advantage of being universal and based on solidarity. Under the pretext of "Social Security deficit", it is a rampant privatization that the politicians are preparing, for the greater benefit of the private insurers.

The financiers hope to take advantage of the Covid crisis to give the final kick that will collapse the public health system in France. Their campaign to influence public opinion is in full swing. This summer, they paid a full page in the number one mainstream newspaper, *Le Monde*, to promote the health privatization scheme. On TV sets, pseudo experts follow one another to spread their venom in favour of the "liberalization" of public health...

But there is one country that has already implemented the privatization they dream of: Spain. Today, Spain is the country in Europe where the Covid situation is most catastrophic, with thousands of people who died at home or in seniors' residences for lack of space in hospitals. Public health systems and caregivers are on the verge of collapse, for lack of resources, beds, and staff workers. We reproduce after a text from our companions of the CNT-AIT health union in Barcelona, who explain the nightmare of the situation of the Spanish health system.

In Spain, hospital staff trusted the traditional unions to try to slow down this fatal development. They voted for them in the union elections, they listened to union officials telling them to be reasonable, to just walk from one day of action to another day of action 6 month later, without mixing their struggle with that of other industries. Healthcare workers have been spectators at all round tables, rounds of negotiations and other "bailout deals", leaving union officials to speak for them. In short, the legitimate revolt of the staff was numbed by the institutionalised Unions with fine words and short-lived electoral promises. This is what is likely to happen to us in France also...

The hospital staff of Paris hospitals (AP-HP,) who have not counted their hours, can no longer stand it! We are not superheroes nor sacrificed soldiers! In addition to the looming burnout, some services have been severely affected by the Covid, department heads have also resigned. THESE FACTS ARE SERIOUS. WHY THIS COMPLICE SILENCE FROM TRADE UNIONS?

It is time for that to change! Let's go for General Assemblies of Struggles!



Suppressed because of privatization

¹ « Let's go », « En marche » in French, is the name of the President Macron's political party.

[France] THE "SEGUR" AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE STATE AND THE TRADE UNIONS: INDIGNITY, IMPOSTURE AND TREASON

16 June 2020, CNT-AIT France, leaflet

Health workers have not been increased in salary for 10 years in France. The dissatisfaction of these workers was already great before the Covid crisis. After the first wave of Covid, the government felt that discontent could turn into anger, especially since the population stood in solidarity with health workers. To avoid a social explosion, the government cleared the situation with the help of the Unions, by pretending to negotiate a wage increase agreement with them. The Unions – even the so called “struggle unions” like CGT or SUD - prevented any self-organization of the workers, they made sure that no grassroots initiative took place, they confiscated the workers' voice. The final agreement - known as “the Segur agreement”, provides for an increase of 183 euros per month that is to say exactly the amount of 10 years of inflation for an average salary. But it is not given immediately: half will be given 3 months after the agreement signature, the other half 6 months later. In addition, not all employees will receive this increase of salary. But above all, the agreement provides that the closures of public hospitals will continue, and so under the pretext of “better organization of the hospital system” privatization can continue...

The Ségur agreement was therefore signed. An increase of € 183 per month for all, after 10 years of wage freezes ... Remember that since 2010 cumulative inflation has been + 11.64% (source INSEE). Example for a NET salary of around 1,500 Euros in 2010, he would have to earn NET 1,674 Euros today to have the same purchasing power. This means that with 183 euro the real increase is ... 9 EUROS! IT DESERVES APPLAUSE! In addition, the 183 € announced you will not see them right away, but only partially from JANUARY then MARCH 2021, whereas Vèran had promised that the increase would be effective from July 1st 2020!!!

At this level, this agreement is above all an INSULT TO OUR DIGNITY!

CFDT, UNSA and FO are the accomplices of this “middle finger” to health workers. But that “middle finger” will not be criticized by the mainstream medias, unlike that of Nurse Farida [who has been arrested by the police during demo and accusing of assault against policemen which is false].... CFDT, UNSA, not surprisingly; we know they lie in front of managers, even when those don't ask them to do so. But let us dwell on the case of FO, which is more demanding. FO dares to declare in its leaflet “*Negotiations VICTORY*”. Fortunately for FO, ridicule does not kill ... Let's see what victory it is:

A victory for wages? Not really ...

We have already seen that the revaluation will not even be enough to make up for the freeze on wages since 10 years. In addition, why wait until 2021 to implement the revaluation? The state did not wait to release 3 billion directly to Air France. Is health less important than airplanes? It seems the State is waving that carrot under the noses of health workers in order to assure that they would continue to sacrifice themselves in case a second wave should happen in the fall.

Moreover, this revaluation is not clear and sharp. The agreement does not provide for an increase in the index point or in the salary but an “*additional index salary up to (sic) 49 points representing 183 euros net per month*”. Basically it's like a bonus: a supplement can be cancelled overnight, without notice, because it is not permanently integrated into the salary. With the looming crisis, we might as well say that this revaluation is likely to fizzle out... And what means “*up to*”? Does it mean it will be a maximum that can be reached, but without guarantee? Because the spirit of this text is to leave the negotiations on indemnities and bonuses to the local management. The Agreement will be implemented on the basis of local agreements signed with local trade unions. Management's ass lickens, the future is smiling to you!

Finally, this “agreement” provides for “simplifying” the payslips by merging all the allowances: “*The parties to this agreement agree that a renovation of the allowance system for public hospital staff will be undertaken [on] the following principle: the new compensation plan is intended to merge all the existing compensation plans.*” Concretely, this means that in the long term the compensation supplement of 183 euros would absorb all the current indemnities, such as for example the hardship allowance for a Class 3 caregiver, which is 165 euros per month and who had was acquired by a fight in 1991. A great victory for SÉGUR indeed to suppress the victories of our previous struggles!

A victory for working conditions and the organization of services? Not really ...

The agreement text also provides that the Unions agree to the implementation of the “management of jobs and skills scheme”, with self-managed schedules by the caregivers themselves. But the text says nothing - or little - about the material resources necessary to exercise our functions under DIGNABLE conditions. On the contrary, the text even

provides for continued bed closures by "developing scheduled and outpatient hospitalizations"! (cf. Bichat Beaujon hospital 35% fewer beds...) In the absence of additional and massive material resources, in the absence of new beds, in the absence of new firm and massive staff hires, it will be above all self-management of poverty and of our own alienation. Let us remember what happened last summer: while the staff demanded MEANS in the middle of a heat wave (air conditioners, ventilators in good working order, refrigerated care stations, etc.), FO Cochin claimed a BONUS for this Heat wave. However, bonuses do not prevent the deterioration of working conditions.

The text also opens the Pandora's box of calling into question the "35 hours" (even if we know that it was never the real "35 hours working per week"): "It will be proceeded after consultation, to regulatory changes, in particular *Decree No. 2002-9 of January 4, 2002 relating to the organization and reduction of working time in the public hospital service*, in order to implement the provisions aimed at improving the organization of work without calling into question the framework legal."

The reminder of the legal framework should not be misled: the legal framework is not the "35-hours week" but "the annualization of working time" - provided for in the so-called "35-hour's law". With the SÉGUR agreement, "within the framework of local agreements", the Management will be able to change your time schedule, your holidays plan, to plan 12 hours shift everywhere "on a voluntary basis" ... and my ass on the dresser ... Look what happened in the respiratory medicine unit in the name of COVID, they all had been forced to switch to 12 hours shifts without any Union organization saying anything against it... It must be said that Union officials were exempt from "volunteering" (imposed *de facto*): 12 hours is good, but for workers, not for their "Union representatives"...

It is necessary to underline the ruse introduced by this agreement: under the guise of organizational autonomy: as the questioning of the mode of organization of the work being done at the local level, structure by structure, each one that would possibly engage in struggle will do it in an isolated manner, but without being a generalized movement. This is the good old "divide and conquer" strategy. We know that the struggle in an isolated structure will have less weight, and therefore less chance of success, than a general strike of the entire hospital sector. However, popular support for hospitals following the COVID crisis put us in a favourable balance of power vis-à-vis the State and the hospital management. But the Unions didn't take advantage of this massive support and instead, by agreeing to participate in the negotiations, the Unions have disarmed us and sabotaged our favourable balance of power.

In the end, the only victorious are the unionists who "shepherd" our anger...

What is truly incredible is that trade unionists signed this text which is a surrender in open field even before having started any struggle!!! But in fact, this text fits totally with their conception of unionism, a unionism of service, of support, of consultation and discussion, which provides unionists with advantages (permanent union staff paid by State and company, material advantages like offices, subsidies, etc.) in exchange for their docility. (see the article in *Le Canard Enchaîné* this week which confirms our analysis)

That SUD or the CGT did not sign the agreement should not fool us: they do not need to sign, since the others Unions do it for them. This allows them to play the role of the rebels, but basically they don't act that much differently from other unions. (By the way, did these so-called "fighting unions" call for struggling assemblies while they were negotiating? No! It shows although neither of them really wanted to engage in fighting with the State). And above all, they do not spit on the advantages that their status as a "representative union" confers on them. If they were really "fighting unions", they would refuse the advantages granted by the State, so as to be truly free and independent.

This agreement is an INSULT against our dignity.

The objective of the agreement is not to increase the salaries of health workers, but to make us work even more, in material conditions which will always be as degraded, with the unions in the role of wardens. Unions will ensure that the agreements they have "negotiated" is well implemented by health workers. And the unions will obtain concrete benefits from this class Collaboration, under the form of subsidies. Under the guise of managerial autonomy, the agreement will in fact mainly serve to increase the pressure on staff, by forcing them to self-manage their own misery.

Macron told us at the start of the epidemic, "*Health is priceless. The government is mobilizing all the necessary financial means, whatever the cost.*" «This Ségur agreement shows that once again, MACRON LIES: ultimately the accounting logic prevails over health considerations ...

Today we are at the time of choices. Not to denounce this agreement is to be complicit. If there are any sincere Unionists left in FO or elsewhere, if they don't tear up their cards, they are covering up this betrayal. This pseudo-deal is a coup directed against us, those who sacrificed themselves without counting during the crisis. Capitalism carries with it war and misery, and does not care about our health or our living conditions. Only a social revolution will make it possible to put an end to the widespread exploitation of both the planet and humans.



But until then let's reclaim:

- The immediate withdrawal of this humbug of the Ségur agreement;
- Respect by Macron of his word "*health before the economy, whatever the cost*" and a single salary for all caregivers, on the basis of the salary of a Regional Hospital Manager (after all, we do not have less merit than them during the COVID crisis);
- Massive creation of additional beds;
- Massive hiring of at least 300,000 staff in the hospital sector and nursing homes.

To defend our interests, let us not expect anything from the official Unions. Let us organize ourselves, refusal of representation, for direct action, let us create our assemblies of struggle, to free speech and initiatives and bring our demands to fruition.

For a real union activism without union discharges, against permanent union staff for life!

For a universal, socialized, united health system.

Long live the social Revolution!

Some anarchosyndicalist Hospital workers

Claude Bernard, Bachelard and Feyerabend: three scientists against scientism

September - October 2020, CNT-AIT France, Editorial of the magazine Anarchosyndicalisme ! n ° 169,

A divided scientific community, government lies legitimized by a scientific council, contradictory health injunctions, systematically false forecasts, a prescription right of doctors flouted by the Surgeon Council of the Order ... As in the worst hours of the Chernobyl disaster, the assessment is clear, it is clear that a certain science is slavishly placed at the service of the State.

This monstrous coupling signs the persistence of a political project as old as it is perverse, consisting in the implementation of a policy rooted in dogmas aimed at denying the freedom of individuals in favour of a frozen social and economic order and therefore with no prospect of change. This project is perfectly explained by an Anti-Enlightenment figure, Ernest Renan. In "*The Future of Science*" published in 1890, he called for "*a scientific government, in which competent and special men would treat governmental questions as scientific questions and would rationally seek their solution.*" «

Recall that at that time the dictatorship of Porfirio Diaz, which was going to be swept away by the Mexican Revolution in 1911, had taken this model by relying on "*los Científicos*", that is to say a conglomerate of extremely rich characters using technocracy and statistics to exploit a population reduced to misery.

Such a scientist ideology very quickly collided with modern scientific thought, from 1865, Claude Bernard wrote a first warning vis-à-vis the emergence of statistical studies in the medical field and especially their tendency to transform probabilities into certainties and these certainties in fantasies.

"As for statistics, it is given a big role in medicine, and therefore it constitutes a medical question which must be examined here. The first condition for using statistics is that the facts to which it is applied be observed exactly so that they can be brought down to units comparable to each other. However, this is not most often found in medicine. Anyone familiar with hospitals knows the causes of gross errors in the determinations that serve as the basis for statistics. Very often the names of the diseases have been given at random, either because the diagnosis was obscure, or because the cause of death was entered without attaching any scientific importance to it, by a student who had not seen the patient, or by a person from the administration foreign to medicine. In this respect, there could be no valid pathological statistic except that which is made with results collected by the statistician himself. But even in

this case, no two patients are exactly alike; age, sex, temperament, and a host of other circumstances will always make differences, hence the average or ratio deduced from comparing facts will always be open to dispute. But, even by hypothesis, I could not admit that the facts can never be absolutely identical and comparable in the statistics, they must necessarily differ by some point, because without that the statistics would lead to an absolute scientific result, while it can only give a probability, but never a certainty”(In “Introduction to experimental medicine”).



This passage, which is still relevant, is perhaps destined to be forgotten as it is obvious that it can only displease a system based on the accumulation of data for the benefit of digital manufacturers. At worst, it will be easy for them to debunk Claude Bernard, founder of experimental medicine, on the grounds that he widely practiced vivisection. But the fact remains that by affirming this fundamental truth that “no two patients are exactly alike”, he is already calling into question a medicine based on big data and defending for each patient as a unique being the right not to be

treated like a number. This is why medicine thought of as knowledge of humans always begins with a unique and direct dialogue between practitioner and patient.

This critique of mathematical reductionism would broaden a century later. First under the blows of Bachelard, who in his book “*the rationalist commitment*” denounces the scientific superstition of formalists and logicians, spouting out a dialectic which “*may perhaps lead to general morality and policy*” But absolutely not “*to a daily exercise of freedoms of mind,*” against this narrow and bourgeois rationalism which “*then as the bad taste of painful elementary school lesson, is cheerful as a prison door, and welcoming as a tradition.*” Bachelard writes that “*in order to think, we would first have to unlearn so much!*” He offers what he calls a super-rationalist approach:

“The risk of reason must be total. It is its specific character to be total. All or nothing. If the experience is successful, I know it will change my mind completely. It is because a physics experiment can change my mind that I am willing to make it. What is the interest, in fact, in making one more experiment that would confirm what I already know and therefore what I am? Any real discovery determines a new method, it must destroy a previous method. In other words, in the realm of thought, recklessness is a method. It is only recklessness that can be successful. We must go as quickly as possible to the regions of intellectual recklessness. Knowledge accumulated for a long time, patiently juxtaposed, avariciously preserved, is suspect. They bear the bad sign of prudence, of conformism.”

In 1975, this discourse against a fixed method that politicians would like hegemonic was amplified by Feyerabend who wrote his essay “*Against the method*” with the subtitle “*Outline of an anarchist theory of knowledge*”.

For Feyerabend, it is above all about pointing out what he calls scientific chauvinism, that is to say a body of knowledge based on an *ad-hoc* method and the proliferation of which the state promotes. For him, it is necessary to separate science from the State, as one separated the State from religion, so that each individual is able to freely choose what to think. In any case, we more often see the renewal of knowledge than its overcoming in the etymological sense of the term. Thus Copernicus renews Aristarchus, and the physics of the twentieth century renews the intuition of the Greek atomists. The scientist claim to return past knowledge to the dustbin of history and to despise extra-Western knowledge is harmful to the imagination necessary for the renewal of scientific thought and therefore for its progress.

What has been called the health crisis highlighted this centuries-old battle between knowledge serving the dominant system and free and open science. Modern version of Auguste Comte's positivist crusade for whom science should be at the service of bourgeois order against the spirit of the Encyclopaedists responsible in his eyes for the troubles of the French Revolution. Let us never forget, however, that contrary to what Shakespeare wrote, power is never afraid of a time when “*madmen lead the blind*”.

Doctor X., Toulouse CNT-AIT Local Union

[France] IN HEALTH SERVICES AS EVERYWHERE: WORK AND DIE

December 2020, CNT-AIT France,

We are very unfair to this government! We all believe his catastrophic handling of the COVID crisis is due to his inability to anticipate and prepare. This is completely wrong and the government shows us every day that it is quite capable of planning and organizing itself, when it wants to do so.

Already in March 2020, we did not have a stock of masks because the government had not ordered them. On the other hand, he did not forget in November 2019 and then again in April 2020 to order several million euros of tear gas, rubber bullets and other police drones. This government has a sense of priorities and urgencies!

In health services it is the same. As the second wave is here, hospital beds are full but the iceberg of all the other "postponed" conditions reappears, what do you think the government is doing? Let's not talk about this agreement of shame, the infamous Segur agreement... It is an agreement of treason, signed by the reformist unions and against which the so-called protest unions have not organized any serious resistance (did they call for workers' General assemblies in your unit?) when public opinion was very favourable to us. The 183 euros will not even cover the inflation of the last ten years with a blocked salary index point!

While we are exhausted, that many colleagues are in "burn out", that in certain departments colleagues have been contaminated by Covid for lack of means of protection, what is the government doing? Is he hiring more staff? Does he provide additional resources? But no, no, his eminence Macron told us on October 6, in response to an angry group of health workers: *"It is not a question of means, but of organization"*

And in terms of organization, the government is preparing for the future: it is giving the green light to privatization. Oh, he does it quietly, not openly, but step by step. It started with *Decree 2019-1593 of December 31, 2019* (adopted in the middle of the end of the year holiday season, to go unnoticed) which introduces *the provision for conventional break in the public service*. In other words, which allows civil servants to be dismissed without telling it ... And then this September 3, a new decree, *number 2020-1106, relating to support measures in the event of job cuts in the public hospital civil service*. Of course, this decree does not talk about dismissal, it just explains what will happen when public hospitals are closed. Of course, this text says that a civil servant will stay in public service, even if his structure of assignment is closed. But the text provides that the State is not obliged to find a new assignment for him ... However, if State closes structures, it is not to reopen others, nor to inflate the staff of those already existing, on the contrary it is time to "degrease the mammoth" ... If the public worker is unassigned, he has no duty to perform and so he will no longer receive any bonus related to the performance of his duties! In other words his income will be greatly reduced, so that if the worker has a family, loan to reimburse, student children to financially support, he will no longer earn enough to meet his needs ... The worker will then be pushed to negotiate his departure from the public service with the illusion that by setting up a liberal activity or joining private structures, he will be able to find a better alternative.

We understand, this text is nothing less than a text of formalized institutional harassment, to push health workers towards the exit... The State will play poker face, saying it does not privatize and that it is the civil servants who go to the private sector "at their request", but will the workers have a choice? And for the bosses of private structures it will be without any risk: article 16 allows a probationary period for the employee who can go for a full year in a private structure, on lay-off. So if "the graft" does not take, the boss can separate from his employee without risk and take another one that would fit better. Who said that the state does not think of everything and does not prepare anything?

Here again, we do not hear the unions on this real plan of privatization and institutional harassment ... So we too must be prepared to retaliate, so as not to let it happen. The Covid crisis has shown that health is a public good, and that strictly accountable management produces health catastrophe and injustice. And the future "organization", privatized, will not help! It is up to us to mobilize, health workers and patients together, to demand more beds in our hospitals, massive hiring of dignified salaries.

More beds, more staff, a decent salary,

Withdrawal of the Ségur treason agreement,

For a universal, socialized, united health system! Long live the social Revolution!

Workers in the health sector of the CNT-AIT (Anarchosindicalist)

Cochin-Broca –Hôtel-Dieu Hospital, December 2020 contact@cnt-ait.info

<http://cnt-ait.info>

HISTORY: HOW DID SPANISH ANARCHOSYNDICALISTS MANAGEDS THE PUBLIC HEALTH DURING THE 36's REVOLUTION? (An example of libertarian communism applied in acute health crisis time)

Health questions have played a very big role in the structuring of anarchist thought in Spain, since its appearance at the end of the 19th century. Health professionals, doctors, nurses, nursing assistants, pharmacists ... have played a very active role in framing the anarchist movement, from an ideological, theoretical, practical and organizational point of view.

This phenomenon is not exclusive to Spain. In all the countries where anarchist ideas have taken root, it is common to find health professionals (*sanitarios*) among its activists. It is even logical: doctors and other health workers were the direct witnesses of the effects of the industrial revolution on the living and working conditions of the proletariat. Often in their publications they propose measures to solve these health problems, which are real social epidemics. Some even consider that the only possible therapy to social diseases is the radical transformation of society.

But in Spain, the participation of "sanitarios" in the anarchist movement has known truly structuring proportions. The book *"the finality of the CNT-AIT, Libertarian Communism"*, a true reference compass of the Spanish anarcho-union movement, has been written by the doctor Isaac Puente, including Federica Montseny - future anarchist minister of health - could say: *"indisputably, Doctor Isaac Puente was the main inspirer of the collective achievements of the Spanish Revolution"*.

The specificity of the Spanish anarchist movement, particularly in the health sector, is that it tried to apply, on a large geographical scale, the anarchist principles and to confront them with reality, even if it was under the conditions appalling civil war, which made health problems even more acute (war wounded, refugees, shortages of personnel and equipment, risk of epidemics, etc.).

Witness to this intense participation of health professionals in the Spanish anarchist movement, the Spanish libertarian press, whose number of titles continues to surprise current historians and activists, has collected a large number of articles, information, readers' letters and lectures given by health professionals in athenaeums (libertarian social centres). This does not mean that all of the authors of these articles, not even the majority surely, shared the entirety of the anti-authoritarian ideas of the papers in which they wrote, but they knew that this was the most direct way to bring their ideas closer to the most active part of the proletariat. There were reciprocal influences between the anarcho-syndicalist movement and popular health movements of other obedience - socialist in particular - so much so that during the Revolution of 1936, the global vision of the organization of revolutionary health was generally shared. And orientated toward an anarchist sense, of a socialized (not necessarily state-owned), universal, secular and free health system, with an integrated health system, leaving more to health prevention.

This 2-part brochure series tries to shed light on what has driven these hundreds and thousands of activists over more than a century: mutual aid and solidarity, humanism above all. They were convinced that the best therapy in the face of a sick society is still the social and anarchist Revolution.

The objective of this work of compilation of texts, written by activists in the heat of the moment or by academics several decades after the revolutionary passion has died down, is not to indulge in the nostalgia for a lost Utopia that would never come back.

As Humanity is shaken by a health crisis, which turns into a major political and economic crisis which is said to herald a change in the organization of the world; it seems essential to us to return to this period of the Spanish Revolution, which we know was the harbinger of subsequent world upheavals.

It is fashionable among academic, academic, journalistic and political commentators to say that Anarchy is a situation of absolute disorder, and that Anarchists are at best soft dreamers, at worst dangerous thugs. The crisis we are currently experiencing with Covid 19 shows us on the contrary that the absolute disorder we are currently experiencing is not Anarchy but chaos, and that it is not the result of an anarchist policy, but the combined result of the action of Capitalism and the State.

The experience of the CNT-AIT in Spain shows us that - faced with a situation as sudden as that of Covid-19, the anarcho-syndicalist movement nevertheless managed to revive the health system almost immediately, and this when most of the health executives had fled and while they were absolutely lacking all. The difference comes from the fact that if the crisis (the Revolution) had not been foreseen by the anarchists (the triggering factor came from a fascist coup d'état which had not been announced), at least had it they predicted - and even called out - and so they had patiently organized themselves, for more than 70 years, to be ready, when the day came, to face it. This is what

Capitalism and the state lack in dealing with epidemics: the sense of History. However, we know that in the event of an epidemic, the key factors to prevent its spread are preparedness, early detection and rapid reaction. And that it is not in time of "war" that these skills are prepared. Spanish anarchosyndicalist activists have shown their ability to anticipate and prepare; and if the Spanish revolution led to a major political crisis and a Civil War, at least ones must recognize that it did not lead to a global sanitary crisis since - as long as the anarchists were responsible for the health of the population in the Republican zone, no epidemic was to be deplored, and this to the astonishment even of the best world specialists who had come to inspect the situation expecting to find an explosive health situation.

If we compare what the Spanish workers, peasants (often illiterates), and a few doctors and nurses who remained were able to accomplish in such a short time in 1936 wartime, with the facts that in 2019, to deal with COVID 19, the French army's health division, which costs millions of euros and which has a profusion of equipment and personnel, has not been able to set up a Barnum tent with 30 resuscitation beds in less than 3 weeks at the beginning of the epidemic, then we cannot prevent thinking that yes, definitely, Anarchy is the highest expression of Order, and that it would be desirable for our health and the well-being of humanity and the planet, that we take example on the Spanish revolutionaries of 1936...

The anarchist definition of health is "Total state of well-being, physical, mental and social" ". To reestablish Harmony, between humans as with the Planet, a sine qua non condition for living in full health, we must put an end to Capitalism and the State. It's urgent.

Some CNT-AIT France health workers

The 2-parts brochures (in French) can be download. Paper copy can be sent on request to contact@cnt-ait.info

LA SANTE PAR LA REVOLUTION, LA REVOLUTION PAR LA SANTE LES ANARCHOSYNDICALISTES ET LA SANTE PENDANT LA REVOLUTION ESPAGNOLE (1936-1938)



I. Un exemple de réponse anarchosyndicaliste à une crise sanitaire et politique soudaine et inédite

Volume I. An example of an anarchosyndicalist response to a sudden and unprecedented health and political crisis

Download: <http://cnt-ait.info/2020/05/11/sante-36-1/>

-INTRODUCTION: Health through Revolution, Revolution through Health

-Some precursors: anarchist critiques of medicine

-Brief historical panorama of anarchist health in Spain

a) The beginnings of the First International in Spain (1870-1900): the rational and scientific bases of Spanish anarchism

b) The contributions of neo-Malthusianism and naturism (1900-1920)

c) During the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera (1923 - 1931): maturation of previous ideological contributions

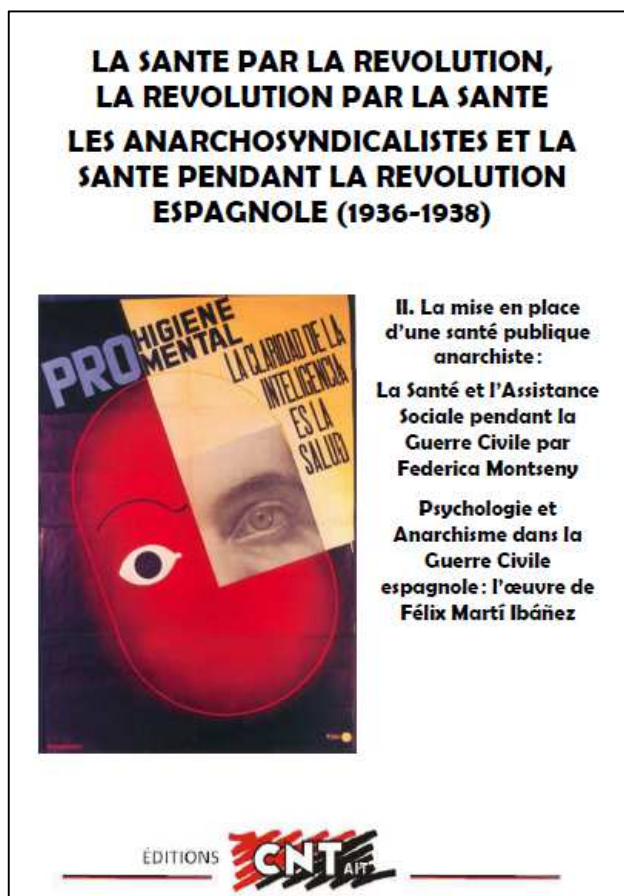
d) The Second Republic (1931-1936): affirmation of libertarian communism as the goal of anarchosyndicalism and a remedy for social diseases

e) The Social Revolution (1936-1937): putting into practice 70 years of conceptual and ideological preparation.

f) The Order against Sanitarian and Social Utopia: the Communists then the exile, internal resistance, underground (1938-1975)

- On the role of technicians in the revolutionary period (Gaston Leval)
- Anarchosyndicalism and health behind and at the front: the case of Valencia and the Iron Column in the Spanish Civil War ((1936-1937)
- "Health, performance and activity"! The Workers' Health Organization, the CNT-AIT and the collectivization of medico-health services at the start of the revolution in Barcelona

- The CNT-AIT field hospital in Villajoyosa (Alicante)
- "In the hospital ..." (text from Arbetaren, 1936)
- CNT-AIT posters in support of field hospitals, witnesses of the Revolution and the Spanish Civil War



Volume II: An attempt of implementation of an anarchist public health:

Download: <http://cnt-ait.info/2020/05/22/sante-36-2/>

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Spanish anarchism in the health debate in Spain: health, disease and medicine (1930-1939)

1. Introduction: the debate around health, sanitation and hygiene

2. The CNT and the concept of social medicine

3. The anarchist discourse on "social diseases"

4. The health problem during the civil war: the CNT and the Catalan health control

- - Towards a Definition of Anarchist Health: The National Health Congress of March 1937

Purpose: health from an anarchist point of view

Principle: The health system from an anarchist perspective

Tactics: implementation of principles to achieve goal

- Health in the Social and Libertarian Revolution of 1936 45

- Health and Social Assistance during the Civil War by Federica MONTSENY (1986)
 - Organization of the Ministry of Health
 - The League of Nations Health Committee
 - Social Assistance
 - Invitation of the League of Nations Health Committee
 - Creation of the Central Office for Evacuation and Assistance to Refugees
 - The problem of abortion; The fight against prostitution
- Psychology and Anarchism in the Spanish Civil War: the work of Félix Martí Ibáñez
 - Martí-Ibáñez and psychology before the civil war
 - The reform of psychiatry during the civil war
 - Psychoanalysis of the Civil War
 - The psychological work of an exile



NURSING HOMES, HOSPITALS: TO EXHAUST AT WORK FOR A WAGE OF MISERY? (Sticker)

Enough exploitation!

Hiring and worthy salaries!

Employees, patients, residents

Solidarity for Dignity!

CNT-AIT

**Puisqu'ils sont obligatoires,
ils doivent être gratuits !**

**Masques gratuits
pour toutes et tous,
sans conditions de revenu
ou d'origine !**



cnt-AIT Anarchosyndicalisme !

<http://cnt-ait.info>

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FREE MASKS FOR ALL ![Sticker]

Since they are mandatory, they must be free!

Free masks for all,

Without conditions of income or origin!

[Spain] PUBLIC HEALTH PRIVATIZATION, THE SPANISH HEALTH NIGHTMARE ...

August 8, 2020, CNT-AIT, Barcelona, <https://www.nodo50.org/cntcatalunya>

Never before has there been so much awareness in Spain of the value of public health and of the serious deficiencies it suffers as during this Covid-19 crisis.

In Spain, in 1997 the door was opened to the privatization of public health through Law 15/97 on enabling new forms of management of the National Health System (law LGS). Approved in the Congress of Deputies, this law was a before and after. This law establishes that any health centre and health partner in the Spanish State can be managed through any type of private company. Until then, the General Health Law of 1986 prevented this type of participation

by private companies in the public health system ... but in its article 90, it says that when the public system did not provide enough, a specific activity could be arranged with private hospitals, as a measure "In extremis". But under the excuse of modernizing healthcare and being more efficient (sparing resources), private management was introduced. The result was a reduction in beds and health personnel and this produced an increase in waiting lists in public health and an increase in the contracting of private insurance policies.

The waiting lists were used to increase health spending, in conjunction with private clinics, which took advantage of section 90 of the Health System Act. The private sector has drawn up profitable pathology lists, indicating the procedures, tests and operations it agrees to perform and leaving the rest to the public, which are unprofitable. And for these profitable acts, the private sector collects the money intended for public health.

On the other hand, to avoid waiting lists, people who can afford it decide to take out private health insurance and thus have access to the private system. In doing so, they pay double contributions, that of Social Security and that of the private insurer. For those who cannot afford it, there are many who would have needed certain health services, but who have felt the effects of the budget cuts in their flesh. This abandonment of public health is evident now more than ever.

We have witnessed that, while public health was experiencing a scenario of total lack of resources, private health referred [Covid 19] patients to public hospitals and / or closed their centres. We have witnessed that, while public health workers worked endless shifts, private health workers were sent home through Job Retention Scheme. Due to the lack of PPE (Personal Protective Equipment), many patients were not admitted in health centres, they were not admitted to hospital neither, but were forced to stay at home or in retirement homes due to lack of beds in public hospitals. We have witnessed the horror of many people dying at home or in retirement homes without being treated, while in privately run hospitals financed with public money, plants or entire centres were closed. We have witnessed how the military took part in a health issue from the beginning ... We have witnessed the collapse of the public health system...

We cannot allow this. The only way to stop the dismantling of public health is to save what has been privatized and organize it into a self-managed and universal public health system.

CNT-AIT CATALUNYA

**¡CONTRA LA PRECARIEDAD
LABORAL EN LAS RESIDENCIAS
Y CENTROS DE DÍA!**

- JORNADAS EXCESIVAS
- FALTA DE PERSONAL
- FALTA DE MEDIOS DE MOVILIDAD PARA ANCIANOS
- CORRUPCIÓN DEL COMITÉ DE EMPRESA CON LA DIRECCIÓN
- VULNERACIÓN DE DERECHOS FUNDAMENTALES
- ABANDONO DE LAS OBLIGACIONES DE LA ADMINISTRACIÓN

¡BASTA!
¡ORGANIZATE Y LUCHA!

**CNT
ALBACETE**

C/ Ecuador 26 bajo
albacete@cntait.es
cntaitalbacete.es

**[Spain] AGAINST WAGE
INSECURITY IN RETIREMENT
HOMES AND NURSING HOMES!**

- Excessive working hours
- Lack of staff
- Lack of means of mobility for the seniors
- Corruption of the works council with management
- Violations of the fundamental rights of patients
- Withdrawal of the administration from its duties

ENOUGH!

Organize and fight!

CNT-AIT Albacete

[Spain] AT THE "L'ARBOC" NURSING HOME, THE MANAGEMENT REFUSES TO RECOGNIZE THE CNT-AIT SECTION

23 August 2020, CNT-AIT, Catalunya, <https://www.nodo50.org/cntcatalunya>

The union section of the CNT-AIT in the "L'Arboç" retirement home is in conflict with the management, because the latter refuses to recognize the CNT-AIT section. The management tried to buy off our activists by offering them to participate in the union elections on a list put together by the management. The CNT-AIT refused, because by principle it does not take part in the union elections. Spanish law allows union sections to act in the company, even if they do not participate in union elections. But the management of the company refuses to discuss with the union section. Below is a letter to management reminding them of the right to organize and offering them a trade union rights' course, at a fair and friendly price.

From the union section of the CNT-AIT of the "L'Arboç" retirement home

To the Direction of this company,

Barcelona, August 05, 2020

This union section is sending you this letter again following your letter dated July 25, sent to the compañera Mrs. Gillermina G. as a colleague who represents us among the workers. We provide the following details:

In connection with your aforementioned letter, given the way the company's Direction expressed itself in the said courier, we deduce that it would be useful for you to seek advice from the law firm that you mention before sending us a new letter, because we think you are confusing Union Elections with Union Sections. For your convenience, we inform you that the Confederación Nacional del Trabajo (CNT-AIT) organizes training courses in trade union rights in case you are interested; for companies, these courses are paying, but for you we are sure that we will agree to give you a fair and friendly price. Otherwise find out in the Spanish Official Bulletin among other things about the provisions that regulate the activity of Unions.

As on other occasions, we renew our request to hold a meeting with the management to discuss the issues and rights that concern us as workers of this Residence and that you do not respect, and for which you have always responded with silence. We point out that the workers were up to the task during the coronavirus pandemic situation, as the manager Mrs. Ana Morales can confirm. We express our disappointment at the zero presence in this entire health emergency situation of the manager Mr. Miguel Sánchez, whom we did not see at the Residence, while he communicated to the relatives of the residents that they were going well and even played dominoes. Thank you Mr. Miguel Sánchez for your example.

We inform you that Mrs. Isabel M., due to the excess of monthly hours, will take the Wednesdays of her long week, to compensate the hours, according to the Branch Agreement.

We also inform you that Mrs. Yovanna M. will take the Fridays of her short week for the same reasons as Mrs. Isabel.

With all that is indicated in this letter and in what was mentioned in the preceding paragraphs, we ask once again to meet with you and our union advisers to harmonize the differences that may exist. We are at your disposal.

Yours sincerely , this union section and its representatives.



[Ukraine] WORTHY SALARY FOR THE NURSES!

December 17, 2020, Чорний Стяг (Black Flag), <https://www.facebook.com/blackflagua/posts/1007699079717234>

On December 16, 2020, activists from “Black Flag” and from “Popular Action” joined nurses against the social oppression perpetrated by the neoliberal government against public health. In 2020, a real front in the fight against the pandemic opened up to all Ukrainian doctors and health workers, and, unsurprisingly, the main enemy of the descendants of Hippocrates was not the virus, but their own government. Ukrainian. Government bureaucrats and medical oligarchs, continuing the work of their predecessors, are destroying public medicine in favour of private medicine. They are doing it so cynically that soon there will be no more qualified nurses or doctors who respect their work in Ukraine.

Doctors' salaries remain disproportionate to the risks. It's hard to imagine, but the average salary of doctors does not reach the average salary in Ukraine!

According to the Ministry of Health, the average salary of a doctor is around 9,000 Ukrainian Hryvnia (around 260 euros), 7,000 Hryvnia (around 203 euros) for nurses and 5,000 Hryvnia (144 euros) for young nurses.

This is why, today, we, anarchists, cannot stay away from the struggle and we support those who defend us all and who need our solidarity! During the action, the nurses expressed their demands:

1. Funding of medicine to the tune of at least 7% of GDP.
2. Increase in wages from 01.01.2021 for medical workers to the level of 23 000 Hryvnia for doctors; 17 000 for nurses and 12 000 for junior medical staff.
3. Guarantee to receive insurance benefits against occupational diseases for health workers suffering from COVID-19 (presumption of link between illness and professional activity).
4. Publication of expenses, income and budgets of medical establishments (open accounting), collective right to choose the management of medical establishments.
5. Launch of a state program to provide housing for medical personnel.
6. Stop the destruction of the Institutions and services for contagious diseases (tuberculosis), for psychiatry and for epidemiology.
7. Transfer of nurses working in schools and preschools to staff of health care establishments of the Ministry of Health.

After the rally, the demonstrators staged a demonstration in the streets of the city.

Solidarity above all!



Lviv, December 21, 2020:
Worthy salary for the nurses

[Bulgaria] THE PANDEMIC AS A CLASS WAR AGAINST WORKERS



Медицински будилник, The medical alarm clock, nurses' newsletter

November 25, 2020, Autonomous
Confederation of Workers (ARK) -
<http://avtonomna.com/>

The government has announced a second lockdown in the country, which will start on Friday the 27th of November. This is happening against the background of a complete collapse of our health system, mainly due to the lack of nurses and paramedics, uncontrolled spread of the virus, which put Bulgaria in first place in mortality across Europe and complete insecurity among the majority of working people about their income in the short and medium term.

How did we get here?

Let's start with the collapse of our health system. The truth is that it was on the brink of precipice long before the pandemic, as medical experts have been warning for years. The pandemic only helped us take a decisive step forward. Now is the time to remember that for the past two years the nurses has been organising mass protests for adequate wages and humane working conditions to keep nurses, and our health care system, and to put an end to the rampant commercialisation in health care. They protested for months, organized tent camps and even occupied the parliament, in a desperate attempt to force the government to take measures to save Bulgarian healthcare. The government flatly refused to comply with even one of the demands of the nurses. The results are catastrophic, and today we all - both healthcare workers and patients - experience them on our backs.

Although they missed the opportunity to save the health care system from collapse, the government could at least mitigate the decline to the bottom by taking adequate measures after the start of the pandemic. Instead, since the spring, we have witnessed a criminal recklessness and the most brazen scheming that has added to the inevitable collapse of health care and a sense of despair and hopelessness. While governments across Europe rushed to increase the salaries of nurses, paramedics and doctors by leaps and bounds, Bulgaria remained the only country where, instead of salary increases, nurses received only bonuses, and not everyone. The insane measure of 1,000 Bulgarian Lev (500 Euros) in one-time bonus for first-line employees has thrown the nurses class into chaos, created tension over ambiguities - who should be considered front-line workers and who should not - and helped undermine much-needed cohesion and solidarity in times of crisis. Most of the workers never received anything. The measures planned for next year continue to dig the bottom, and the meagre increase in salaries will be TEMPORARY, only for 2021.

But this is just a drop in the ocean. The thousands of doctors, nurses and paramedics who are exhausted, packed in spacesuits, giving unbearable duty to compensate for the lack of staff, were not and still are not provided with even the most basic protective equipment - gloves, masks, aprons. While billions of leva are poured into the health care system each year, workers are forced to buy their own safety equipment, dozens of hospitals survive on aid and charity campaigns, others send desperate calls for volunteers, and patients die outside hospitals due to lack of staff. The government had months from spring to today to try to prepare our health system for the coming second wave of the virus. But to save money, they didn't want to attack the business as usual in healthcare, they didn't try to change the neoliberal model of health care, and they did nothing. And now health care is collapsing on our heads.

The government's anti-epidemic measures

After seeing that the government has refused to take measures in health care, let's take a look at the other anti-epidemic measures that have been taken since the spring. From the very beginning, they had and still have a strong class character. With the entry of the coronavirus into Bulgaria in early spring, the government announced a complete lockdown, although the spread of the infection was many times lower than we saw in early autumn, when the government refused to introduce even a partial lockdown. Behind these seemingly chaotic actions of the rulers, the economic interests of their class are clearly visible. Lockdown in the spring was dictated mostly by the small business owners that wanted to be able to save the summer touristic season and limit their financial losses from the expected

ebb if the spread of the disease was limited to the end of May. And so it happened - with the start of the summer season, the spread was controlled and all bars, hotels and restaurants opened their doors, and anti-epidemic measures gave way to the business.

This, in turn, quite “unexpectedly” led to a sharp increase in the spread of the disease, which began in July, got out of control in October and continues to grow to this day. It was in October that the class character of crisis management was revealed in all its glory. At the notoriously (and comically) famous briefings of the country's Minister of Health, people like Richard Alibegov - head of the Bulgarian restaurant owners association - started appearing next to the Minister and began to give instructions to the population. This made it clear in whose interest the crisis was being managed. Accordingly, the pubs remained open, the cases continued to rise, and the price was paid and continues to be paid primarily by the families of the workers who, unlike Alibegov, actually work in his pubs.

While bosses are content with their privilege of isolating themselves and holding online board meetings, workers are the ones who have to work on site - in pubs, offices and shops every day, despite the risk of infection, in order to be able to feed themselves and their families.

But the class nature of crisis management does not end there. It is evident in each of the measures taken since the beginning of the crisis. As the state melted away with empathy for long-suffering businessmen and the reduction of their invaluable profits, it was a strict stepmother to workers and the people at large. Caressing with a feather and sacrificially discussing every whim of business, the government viciously attacked the people, accusing them of the failure of their insane measures. Because it refused to introduce real measures to deal with the health crisis so as not to harm the profits of the business, to compensate and simulate liability - the state introduced a bunch of half-hearted, meaningless or downright harmful measures against ordinary people. The people had to wear masks in the strangest places, to follow the ever-changing schedules of green corridors and paths, and all sorts of other whims of the rulers. The work of the Government's pandemic headquarters can be summarized in pointing fingers at the people and accusations of lack of discipline, stupidity and misunderstanding. Against this background, it is not surprising that many people just stopped caring about the government and the pandemic headquarters and the measures.

Social measures

The pandemic will pass, as any other similar pandemic in the history of mankind has passed. But it will have severe economic and social consequences. They began to appear from the very beginning, during the first lockdown in the spring, when thousands of workers lost their jobs or were forced into unpaid leave. The social measures of the state in this situation were not surprising having in mind the class interest it serves, as we have already seen in detail above. For the businessmen, support funds were immediately organized to cover most of their expenses for the period of the crisis, interest-free loans and a bunch of other benefits. Workers crowding in front of Labor Offices received nothing. In the current lockdown, thousands of workers face the same situation, but further aggravated by the fact that many of them have already spent their unemployment benefits during the lockdown in the spring and now remain literally without income in the middle of winter and with no prospect of easing the situation in the coming months. The government promised crisis assistance of 24 Lev (12, 25 Euros) per day for those sent on forced unpaid leave - of course not out of special concern for the workers, but mostly to help the companies to keep their staff. There is no money for the workers made redundant due to the lockdown, who are considered unnecessary for the business - and therefore unnecessary for the state!

The consequences of the class principle of distribution of the generosity of the state do not end with the social catastrophe in which the redundant workers are thrown. They destroy the very foundations of society. Today we see how the government's refusal to provide income for parents forced to leave work to care for their children while schools and kindergartens are closed leads to an ugly confrontation between parents worried about their income and teachers worried about their lives. We can see these examples in other sectors as well. Through its anti-social policy, the state is on track to do more harm to society than the pandemic.

What can we do?

Regarding the health crisis, the match is over. Whatever measures are taken from now on, it is too late to talk about dealing with the situation. What can be done is to put pressure on the government to provide at least basic protection to workers in the sector so that they can continue to save lives with dignity. The other and even more important thing

is to put strong pressure, not only from the medics, but from the whole society - the workers in the sector to be fairly compensated for their work during the pandemic, not through one-time or temporary bonuses, but through permanent and significant salary increase. This wage increase must also be the first step towards a radical reform of the sector, which will put an end to the commercialisation of healthcare and which today, more than ever, is a matter of life and death.

In terms of social measures, protests by workers in the most affected sectors have already erupted as we write this article. What needs to be done is to avoid the division of workers, which the rulers so well master and exercise whenever they have the opportunity. It must be insisted on guaranteeing the incomes of all - those on unpaid leave and redundancies, those in tourism and those in manufacturing. For the right of teachers to work remotely and the right of parents to be at home with their children without risking losing their income. Now is not the time for division by sectors, cities and professions, but the time for solidarity and unity.

evgeni5150

[Bulgaria] CRACKDOWN ON STRIKING HEALTH WORKERS

June 02, 2020, ARK, <https://www.facebook.com/avtonomnakonf/>

At the end of May 2020, the grassroots union ARK reported fear and anger in the labour dispute at Pirogov Hospital, the country's largest hospital. In the previous days, an unprecedented attack (even by Bulgarian standards...) of state repression against the "Union of Healthcare Professionals" (SBMS) had started.

Demonstrations and strikes in the health sector have been taking place there for over a year. The SBMS nurse' Union is fighting for decent wages and working conditions, and an end to the commercialization of human health that everyone suffers from.

A few months ago, the local government tried to prevent the setting up of a SBMS union group in the city hospital and initiated disciplinary proceedings against the section president, Boyka Anastasova. These are bold but desperate attempts to destroy the rebel nurses. The police also took action against the main organizers, who were summoned to the central police station in Bucharest, the capital, for questioning.

The grassroot union "Autonomous Confederation of Workers" (ARK) declares its solidarity with the SBMS in its



labour dispute, and calls for the immediate dismissal of the director responsible for the clinic, Professor Asen Baltov. All police officers who arbitrarily violated the constitution and the law during the operations should also be removed from their posts and an investigation should be opened. In addition, we urge unions in Europe and around the world to take a stand on this case of State attack on freedom of association and to protest against this suppression of healthcare professionals in Bulgaria

In the united struggle for the dignity of workers.

*Солидарност със здравните работници,
solidarity with health workers*

[Bulgaria/Austria] SOLIDARITY WITH THE STRUGGLE OF BULGARIAN NURSES

12 October 2020, WSA-AIT, Vienna,

The Vienna Workers' Union (WSA-AIT) joins the appeal of the Austria-Bulgaria Workers International Aid (*Internationalen Arbeiterhilfe Österreich-Bulgarien*) for a rally in solidarity with Bulgarian healthcare workers. We are in friendly contact in Bulgaria with the companions of the ARK base union, in which some nurses are organized, and we support their fight against dismissals and repression.

Long live international solidarity!

Call for demonstration in front of the Bulgarian Embassy: Friday, October 16, 2020, 5 p.m.

Solidarity with the Union of Bulgarian Nurses (SBMS)!

Immediate reinstatement of dismissed colleagues!

For more than a year, the Bulgarian Independent Nurses Union (SBMS) has been fighting with the grassroots union ARK against the deteriorating conditions of the health system. Privatization, corruption and austerity measures are part of a policy that sells the health of the people to the interests of the few. There is a shortage of over 30,000 nurses in Bulgaria. Each nurse does the work of three people, while she receives a salary of just over 400 Bulgarian Leva, or 200 Euros. 80% of working nurses are already retired, they are overworked and often sicker and more broken than their patients.

"Today nurses have become known to the public, before our struggle, they did not exist, only doctors were considered. The nurses continued to be pushed down. But now they have a voice, now they have risen." (a member of SBMS)

The response to the concerns and struggle of Bulgarian nurses has become so great in recent months that not only has the Minister of Health had to resign, but improvements have also been made. But precisely because the support of the population is so strong, the government and the entrepreneurs are now trying to intimidate and silence the militant nurses with repressive means. Not only the most active nurses in the movement are arrested during protests, they are also harassed and fired, as was recently the case with Boyka Anastasova, one of the most active members of the SBMS

In Austria, too, we see how the healthcare system is continually being cut and dismantled. Here too, hundreds of nurses took to the streets last year to fight for better working conditions. And right now, in the middle of the corona pandemic, attempts are being made to push through further austerity measures. By now it is becoming clear how justified and necessary the struggle of nurses is - in Bulgaria and Austria.

Immediate reinstatement of dismissed SBMS colleagues!

Solidarity with the fight of the Union of Bulgarian Nurses!

For a health system at the service of the people!

International worker aid - Bulgaria / Austria

With the support of: Antifascist Action, Vienna Workers' Union (WAS-AIT)



[Bulgaria/Austria] SARS-COV-2 AID DELIVERY HAS ARRIVED IN BULGARIA!

August 17, 2020, WAS-AIT,

In June of this year, the Vienna Workers' Union (WAS-AIT) supported the Austria-Bulgaria International Workers' Aid with donations of equipment and products.

This campaign was launched by the Bulgarian grassroots union ARK to help staff in Bulgarian hospitals who are seriously suffering from lack of protective masks, disinfectants, etc. We are happy to announce that the relief delivery packages have arrived in Bulgaria and hope that these donations will be of great help to Bulgarian colleagues!

Below we document the full article from Workers' International Aid:

Great success of Austria Bulgaria International Workers' Aid!

The Austria-Bulgaria International Workers' Assistance initiative launched in June has been a great success and an important sign of international solidarity. Our Bulgarian colleagues welcomed the aid packages as an important support and a strong symbol of the common cause of the workers!

For the first time in many decades, an initiative like this has been organized in Austria by independent and activist trade union initiatives and colleagues from different sectors. The exemplary and determined struggle of the Bulgarian nurses found a broad solidarity among the colleagues. Protective equipment and disinfectant material were collected vigorously to support their justified fight.

International worker aid not only found wide support among Austrian workers, but it was also warmly welcomed in Bulgaria as a strong sign of international solidarity. Colleagues of the Bulgarian Nurses' Union (SBMS) and the "Autonomous Association of Workers" (ARK) union received the aid with great joy! In a broadcast on social networks, the ARK writes: "Solidarity during a crisis and in the workers' struggle is the most important thing for the success of this struggle. Collectives of self-employed workers in Austria have taken the initiative to support medical personnel in Bulgaria. They campaigned for solidarity and collected a large amount of protective equipment and disinfectants to help their Bulgarian colleagues. This donation shows that not only political leaders can unite against workers, but also how we ourselves can break down national barriers and help each other. With great gratitude to the Austrian colleagues and may this example illuminate all of Europe and the whole world for common work and the unification of workers for a new and just world."

Many Bulgarian colleagues, particularly from rural areas where the material collected is particularly urgently needed, welcomed this action and thanked them for this strong and exemplary sign of international solidarity.

The Austria-Bulgaria International Workers Assistance Initiative is the right response to the pandemic and to the capitalist-imperialist policy of plundering and shifting the burden of the crisis onto the working class and the people!

This initiative is a living expression of internationalism and the necessary cohesion of workers. We are very happy to have made an important contribution to the development of international solidarity with this initiative and we would like to thank all those who so actively support Austria-Bulgaria Workers' International Aid! This success also shows us how necessary and urgent it is to pursue this initiative even more intensely!

Long live the international solidarity of workers! Long live the just cause of the ARK and the SBMS!

<https://arbeiterhilfe.wordpress.com/2020/08/14/groser-erffekt-der-internationalen-arbeiterhilfe/>



[Austria] POLITICAL DISCRIMINATION AT THE RED CROSS

October 24, 2020, WAS-AIT, <https://wiensyndikat.wordpress.com/2020/10/24/nicht-mit-uns-kundgebung-gegen-das-anstellungsverbot-vom-roten-kreuz/>

The winter package and the summer package...

Vienna is not just the romantic city of balls and waltzes. It is also a city with more than 10,000 poor and homeless people. Winter is harsh and freezing in the Austrian capital. To prevent the homeless from freezing to death, and to prevent them from being seen in the subways or elsewhere in public, which is not good for the city's touristic image, the Vienna Homeless Aid of the municipality of Vienna (*Wiener Wohnungslosenhilfe*) organizes each winter the campaign "winter package" (*Winterpaket*). 1,200 additional places are open for the winter season in homeless shelters.

This campaign is managed by various charities, including the Red Cross. The Red Cross is renowned for being deeply conservative, but it is even worse in Austria since it acts as a satellite organization of the ÖVP, the conservative party of Chancellor Kurz. The government now delegates to Red Cross some activities that were strictly governmental until then, as for example the administration of the civil service or the realization and the distribution of the telephone application "Stop Corona App". The Red Cross is therefore fully integrated into the State.

Each fall, the Red Cross hires seasonal social workers for the period of the "winter package" campaign. Their employment contract ends in the spring, then they are rehired the following fall. But during the summer, homeless do not disappear ... So, a small group of seasonal social workers, from various Vienna Homeless Aids' institutions, created a few years ago the "*Initiative Sommerpaket*" (Initiative summer package). This grassroots collective of workers publicly highlights the gaps in homeless care and also campaigns for better working conditions for social working with homeless people. In particular, they are fighting to be hired for a full year, so that their contracts do not end during the summer, and that accommodation for homeless people is thus available all year round, including summer.

Refusal of employment for political reasons

In early September 2020, some of these seasonal workers understood that they would not be rehired by the Red Cross unlike in previous years. While some seasonal workers had received at least 4 phone calls from the Red Cross begging them to come and work for the winter campaign, the phones of 7 colleagues from the former "NQ Apologasse" homeless shelter remained desperately silent.

Some of these colleagues are politically active in their free time, they campaign with the Sommerpaket Initiative for the improvement of the service of the Viennese homeless. Others of the not rehired colleagues have been on pickets of the Initiative Sommerpaket. Obviously this bothers the Red Cross. In order to get rid of the disturbers, they therefore chose not to rehire them, giving the following reason: "Due to incidents and events not known in detail to the management of the homeless shelter, your application was rejected by the management of the red cross"

On enquiry, they have been informed that at least 7 employees were on an internal blacklist because they were involved, according to them, in the "Sommerpaket" initiative, as well as having denounced the poor health safety standards implemented by the Red Cross in their institution at the start of the Covid-19 pandemic. One of the workers involved declared: "*In fact, we just wanted to contribute constructively in this difficult and new situation for all of us. I am really shocked by this response from the Red Cross*". It is indeed ironic that the Red Cross sanctions people for their commitment to greater security in the management of the Covid 19 pandemic! This is clearly a situation of discrimination in hiring for political reasons, and this despite the fact that the "Sommerpaket" initiative had never acted directly against the Red Cross!

For many, working during the winter campaign means a fixed source of income that has now been quickly denied to some long-time employees. "*It was confirmed to us that there was no lack of performance at work on our part. We even received a certificate of impeccable service. It was a political decision. And that is why we are now responding with political means!*" announced one of the former employees concerned.

For the companions of the WAS, this repressive measure is a deliberate attack on all attempts to organize collective resistance. In this atmosphere of intimidation, anyone who publicly advocates publicly and loudly for a social change could face serious consequences. This is why the WAS responded favourably to the request for solidarity addressed by the Sommerpaket Initiative and the workers affected by this employers' lockout. They therefore organized together, with another "Social but not stupid" initiative, a rally in front of the Vienna headquarters of the Red Cross on October 28, 2020 at 7:30 a.m., the start of the winter campaign this year.

If they hit one of us, they hit us all! Report of the rally at the Red Cross headquarters in Vienna

October 28, 2020, WAS-AIT

Motivated and punctual, at 7:30 am, we met in front of the headquarters of the Vienna Red Cross. The comrades that the Red Cross did not rehire were present, as well as many acquaintances who expressed their solidarity in their support, many of them from the social sector, or about 70 people in total. The rally was organized by the "Sommerpaket" initiative and WAS-AIT. The initiative "Social but not stupid" and KOMintern, a communist union initiative, appealed also for this rally. The *Gewerkschaftlicher Linksblock*, a socialist fraction in the system did not miss the opportunity to join this left bloc.

With banners, brochures and flags, we protested the decision of the Vienna Red Cross not to re-engage our colleagues who had previously worked in the Winterpaket campaigns. This group of colleagues who worked for this campaign to help the homeless during the winter was not rehired, as apparently the commitment to better conditions for users and better working conditions for workers did not meet the objectives of the Red Cross.

Immediately, a "friendly and smiling" delegation of three prominent Red Cross figures came out of their offices and approached the rally intending to speak, visibly in awe of what was going on. "Hello, I'm the manager, who can we talk to?" To which no one in the crowd responded. The official was accompanied by the Red Cross press officer and a secretary. Colleagues from the Summer Package Initiative told them that they would not speak to them until the rally was over, after which they told the press officer that they wanted an explanation for the refusal to rehire them.

During the rally, several speeches were made to inform participants, Red Cross headquarters workers and passers-by, of the Red Cross shenanigans and the need to organize against these structures that are monopolizing the sector of social services. We chalked up on the sidewalks our indignation against the Vienna Red Cross and those who run it. These messages were deleted as soon as the concentration ended, a clear response from the Red Cross, which shows its unease at our criticism.

It is now up to the Red Cross officials to find a solution if they want to stop our protest actions. The precariousness of working conditions in the social services sector is obvious; something with which all the comrades of the gathering agreed, as well as with the fact that only with union and solidarity can we face it.

Further action is planned if the Red Cross does not respond favourably to our requests.

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29.10.2020 06:01 | BUNDESLÄNDER > WIEN

KEINE ANSTELLUNG MEHR

Ex-Mitarbeiter protestieren vor Rotkreuz-Zentrale



Report of the action in the Krinen Zeitung newspaper

[Germany] PROTEST MARCH AGAINST HEALTH CARE CRISIS IN COLOGNE

September 06, 2020, ASN, <https://asnkoeln.blackblogs.org/2020/09/06/koeln-demo-gegen-pflegenotstand/>



Care workers of all he countries, unite!

Socialize public services instead of marketing them for profit

The “Cologne Alliance for More Personnel in Health Service” (*Kölner Bündnis für mehr Personal im Gesundheitswesen*, <http://gesundheitsbuendnisse-nrw.de/buendnisse/koeln/>) organized a protest demonstration with hundreds of participants on Saturday September 5, 2020.

Following an assembly nearby the Cathedral, the demonstration crossed St. Cunibert district headed for the “German Economic Institute”. Speeches were also given in front of the nearby residential care and nursing home St. Vincenz-Haus, against the dramatic working and living conditions (not just since the corona pandemic) in the market-driven and patriarchal healthcare system.

Many Practical and Geriatric Nurses (of different genders), as well as other occupational groups, but also solidarity-based health initiatives and concerned patients, took part in the protest which ended in a park nearby Theodor-Heuss-Ring. The motto of the demonstration was:

“Take the applause to the streets! Care rebellion now!” [<https://gesundheitsbuendnisse-nrw.de/aktuelles/pflegeaufstand-jetzt/>]. While only the first part of that has been carried out, maybe this event could be the beginning of further, urgently needed protests in an industry, which is vitally important for society. High-sounding election promises or shabby pay-offs can neither appease the angry colleagues, nor can the precarious conditions of inpatient, outpatient or private care be improved by this.

As the call for demonstration stated:

“The coronavirus has the world and our daily life under control. This danger to life is systematic! The virus spreads wider and more people get sick, because they have to work, produce and live under dangerous conditions in retirement homes (e.g. in a private geriatric residence in Cologne-Rodenkirchen, see our report [<https://anarchosyndikalismus.blackblogs.org/2020/05/01/koeln-protestaktionen-am-ersten-mai/>]), in refugees shelters (e.g. as in a migrants accommodation in Cologne-Porz), in factories (such as the meat packer Tönnies) or in cramped tenement houses.”

Everyday life is the problem! Covid-19 intensifies it!

A lot has been said about the global coronavirus epidemic: about the healthcare system and how important not only the medical staff is, but the nurses as well. There was applause for them and politicians from all parties praised them in talk shows. However, words alone do not help against blatant staff shortage, lack of protective equipment, privatization of nursing and care for sick and elderly persons, and shallow words do not rise low wages. Be it nursing assistants in inpatient care, geriatric nurses in outpatient care, hospital cleaners or nurses on shift work – not one of them received a single penny from the applause. Let alone that none of the overtime exhausted colleagues have been relieved from permanent filling in or from stressful nursing management and company bosses (...).

In health care, there is cost pressure, stagnation in investments or restructuring, inadequate equipment, horrific staff shortages, poor pay, unbelievable stress and time pressure for nurses, resulting in ethically questionable treatment of patients! We want to change this and we have to! Everyone is talking about a return to normality, but we cannot just go back to a previously bad situation. We have to make a change! Public health needs to be planned wisely and reasonable, right now. And it shall not be based on mere economic profitability. Health care needs supply facilities close to homes, based on people’s needs, with sufficient staffing and good working conditions, time for patients and relaxation. These tasks belong to the public sector and are to be socialized in the long run!”

However, there is no need to rely on State governance, as the state has been pushing for privatization of health facilities for decades, thereby denying full medical service for migrants without residence permit. There is an urgent need for a fundamental change in solidarity. Not only in health industry, but also in a wide field of care work (still predominantly female) concerning households, families, friends and neighbourhoods. And we need self-organized workplaces where social tasks are created collectively - beyond the capitalist logic of profit, overcoming heteronomy and exploitation. **Anarcho-Syndicalist Network Cologne (ASN Köln)**

[Iran] DEMONSTRATION OF THE MEDICAL STUDENTS OF TABRIZ

December 22, 2020, Information sent by Iranian Anarchists compañeros



A group of students from Tabriz University of Medical Sciences came to the building of the university and protested against the problems of education during the Covid-19 pandemic.

According to Anaj Press Agency, students studying on a paid basis also protested against the violation of their rights.

Dissatisfied students went to the conference hall at the insistence of the deputy head of the university for education, and they expressed their wishes to the deputy head of the university for education, adviser and security guards and made a number of suggestions to improve the situation with education at the university.

At the end of the talks, it was decided that a group of students on behalf of the participants of the meeting would discuss with the head of the university the implementation of the protesters' proposals.



[Bangladesh] DISTRIBUTION OF WASHABLE MASKS TO TEA WORKERS

September 18, 2020, BASF-AIT, <https://www.bangladeshasf.org>

Bangladesh Anarcho-Syndicalist Federation-BASF has started distribution of red and black washable face masks among poor tea plantation workers today, September 16, 2020 under the "Mutual Aid" program to prevent covid-19. Since the outbreak of Covid-19 from month of March in Bangladesh, the organization has been conducting health education to creating awareness among the people in all BASF branches, distributing 'soap' for washing hands and distributing face masks. Now it has started

distributing 'washable face masks' that can be used several times instead of one time masks. At this stage it will be distributed among 3000 people. Later its number will be further increased and cover more people.

The BASF believes that health care initiative is a very useful and fundamental human right. It is not possible to solve it permanently in isolated approach. So it is necessary to build such a self-regulated, truly democratic, participatory society. All activities including health issues for the society will be managed and controlled by the society. Only a society free from the influence of capitalism and the stateism can solve all problems sustainably.]

[UK] REDUCED LIFE = REDUCED WORK (THE WORK/LIFE BALANCE)

17/05/2020, SolFed-AIT, <http://www.solfed.org.uk/edinburgh/reduced-life-reduced-work-the-worklife-balance>



Applause is lauded at NHS workers; ideas for re-compensation; a daily service supplement; an increased hourly rate; even a medal for working during the pandemic. Many of us in the NHS work shifts - day and night - throughout the year. It is not just a virus that killing us, our shift work is too. The World Health Organisation declared in 2007 that shift work is probably carcinogenic (Straif et al 2007 #1). Studies such as Gu et al (2015 #2) have shown us that shift work, especially nights increases our risks of cardio vascular disease, mental health issues, lower immunity, cancer and ultimately our mortality.

Rather than working our life away for minimal financial compensation would we not rather have our life given back? Striking a better work / life balance: a reduced working week without being financially penalised.

Retention of staff is consistently an issue with the NHS. Allowing us more of our life back could help alleviate this. To cover an already under staffed NHS we can provide those unemployed with jobs and training in the many different areas.

The NHS was already at a crisis point before the covid-19 pandemic. Our capacity to provide services not meeting the demand of our society and our patient's needs. We need to invest in our healthcare workforce as well as our healthcare infrastructure. These improvements should be for everyone and available to everyone. This provides stimulus for our economy and purpose / employment. Jobs are available to many: ambulance services, engineers, porters, chefs, scientists, support workers, technicians, specialists, doctors, nurses, mental health practitioners, cleaners, receptionists, pharmacists, administrators, drivers, procurement, builders, maintenance, innovators, programmers to name but a few. Healthcare affects every arena of life (personal, work, housing, education, food). We should aspire to create the best healthcare system we can. We should base this healthcare on mutual aid and cooperation between NHS services and between different countries.

We are living and working through unprecedented times. The risks are high now, but they were high before the pandemic. Do not negotiate with our lives and let us work less without compromise.

- Straif, Kurt, Robert Baan, Yann Grosse, Béatrice Secretan, Fatiha El Ghissassi, Véronique Bouvard, Andrea Altieri, Lamia Benbrahim-Tallaa, Vincent Coglian, and WHO International Agency For Research on Cancer Monograph Working Group. 2007. "Carcinogenicity of Shift-Work, Painting, and Fire-Fighting." *Lancet Oncology*, the 8 (12): 1065-1066.
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[UK] THE ALARMING RISE OF BRANSON'S VIRGIN CARE AND THE THREAT TO THE NHS

11/01/2018, SolFed-AIT, <http://www.solfed.org.uk/manchester/the-alarming-rise-of-bransons-virgin-care-and-the-threat-to-the-nhs>

Good old Sir Richard Branson has once again managed to get himself to the front of the queue for state handouts. Having spent years channelling public money into massive profits at Virgin Rail, he is now turning his attention to milking the NHS. Figures released in January 2018 show that his company, Virgin Care, won a record £1bn worth of NHS contracts in 2017. Added to already existing contracts, this means that Virgin Care now has over 400 separate NHS contracts. Funny how these arch free market capitalists, such as Branson, seem to be able to swallow their anti-state principles when it comes to claiming state subsidies. Good old Sir Richard even took this to the extent of suing

the NHS in 2017 when Virgin Care lost an £82m contract. In the process he won an undisclosed sum that otherwise would have been wasted on treating sick people.

However, try not worry, capitalist pin up boy Branson's love of the state does not extend to paying UK taxes. All his companies come under a single parent company, Virgin Group Holdings, based in the Virgin Islands, which just happens to be a tax haven. He has moved on since being prosecuted for tax evasion in 1971, learning quickly that it is ok not to pay taxes in the UK just as long as you are wealthy enough and well enough connected.

Perhaps we are being a bit too cynical here; after all, when it was first disclosed that good old Sir Richard pays no UK taxes, he explained that he lived on his private Caribbean island, Necker Island, for health rather than tax reasons. No doubt he will bring this concern for health the NHS to ensure that Virgin Care runs its contracts in the same way Virgin Rail runs trains. The difference, however, is that the “customers” will pay the cost, not in terms of overcrowded and continually late trains, but rather in terms of damage to their health.

Nor should we run away with the idea that Branson's failings are limited to Virgin trains. Behind the winning smile and easy manner, the country's favourite entrepreneur has a long history of failed businesses. Virgin Cola, hailed by Branson in 1994 as the inevitable successor to Coca-Cola, has practically disappeared. Virgin Clothes, launched on the stock exchange in 1996, folded with losses to shareholders. Virgin Money was launched with a glitzy advertisement featuring Branson emerging naked from the sea, but did not deliver the expected big financial rewards. Then came Virgin Vie, Virgin Vision, Virgin Vodka, Virgin Wine, Virgin Jeans, Virgin Brides, Virgin Cosmetics and Virgin Cars, none of them fulfilling their creator's inflated dreams.

Virgin Express, an airline based in Brussels, was intended to rival EasyJet, but the original investors on the stock market lost their money. Similarly, the McCarthy brothers, who invested over £30m in V2, Branson's second music company, lost all their money and faced personal bankruptcy. Australians who invested in the 2003 flotation of Virgin Blue, a no-frills airline, rewarded Branson with over £200m for a stake of his original investment. Initially the airline was successful, but soon after Branson pocketed the money, shareholders watched the share price fall. Similarly, plans in which GPs would be paid or, more accurately bribed for referring NHS patients to private Virgin services were abandoned in June 2008. The BMA warned that the plan would “damage clinical objectivity”, as there would be a financial incentive for GPs to push patients toward the Virgin services.

Nor is the problem limited to the fact that the only way good old Sir Richard seems able to make companies successful is by ripping off either the taxpayer or the investors. Over the years he has been involved some “underhanded business practices” – we can never use the term “criminal activities” when discussing what rich people get up to. For example, in 2006 competition authorities in both the UK and US investigated price-fixing activities by Virgin Atlantic and British Airways. British Airways was fined £271 million over the allegations while good old Sir Richard received no fine, which the Office of Fair Trading defended as being in the “public interest”, as Virgin Atlantic had cooperated in helping to prosecute British Airways.

Given good old Sir Richard's dodgy record, you might be wondering why the Tories are handing over NHS contracts to Virgin. Well, there is a bit of a problem here. The Tories, for ideological reasons, hate the NHS; in fact they hate just about any human activity not motivated by greed and narrow self-interest. But they face a British electorate that steadfastly refuses to accept the free market orthodoxy that the level of health care received should be determined by the size of a person's purse. Knowing that outright privatisation would result in electoral suicide, the Tories have embarked on a two stage privatisation. They are running the NHS into the ground by starving it of funds while, at the same time, slowly selling off the NHS a piece at a time.

The first part of the strategy is well underway with the NHS in a state of almost permanent crisis. At the time of writing, we are in the middle of the annual “winter crisis”. The aim of this state of permanent crisis is to slowly erode confidence in the NHS until a point where people feel there is little choice but wholesale privatisation. We are now constantly being told that the nation can no longer afford the NHS. The second part of the strategy is also beginning to pick up a pace. The figures for 2017 show that £3.1bn of NHS contracts were won by private sector companies, which represents more than two fifths (43%) of a total of £7.2bn in contracts tendered by the NHS, and outstrips the £2.55bn (35%) of tenders won by NHS trusts. Meanwhile, that other privatisation Trojan horse, the “not-for-profit” sector, won £1.53bn (21%) of contracts. Given this scale of privatisation, it is only a question of time before the NHS becomes a minority provider of health services.

In going about privatisation, the Tories have learnt a trick or two from that close friend of good old Sir Richard, good old Tony Blair, by keeping services free at the point of use while slowly privatising the service providers. The problem is that these privatised service providers often make a complete hash of things. There are numerous examples to choose from: Serco ended its contract to provide out of hours GPs after staff falsified data about its performance while Coperforma's £63.5m takeover of non-urgent patient transport to hospital ended shambolically after patients

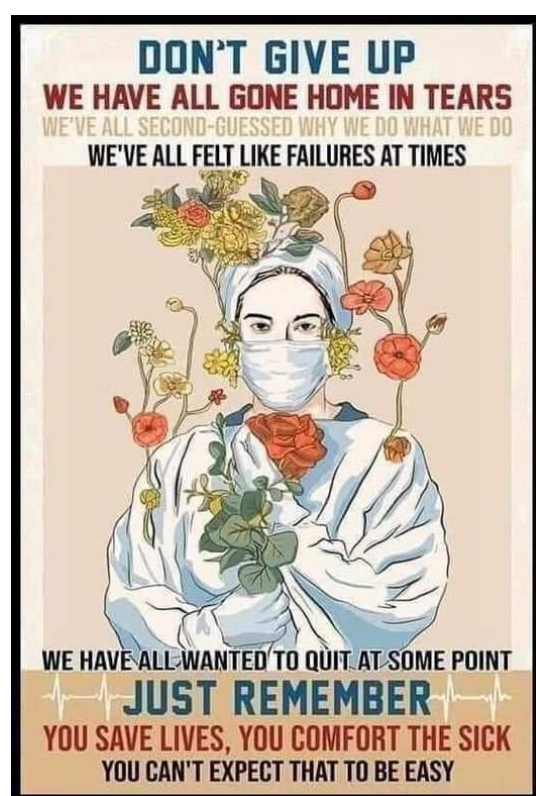
awaiting dialysis and chemotherapy missed vital appointments. The point here is that, if the Tories' privatisation plans are to work, you cannot have companies that take over NHS services continually fucking things up.

Enter man of the people and all round Mr Nice Guy, good old Sir Richard. Though his reputation may have been tarnished of late, the one thing Branson is good at, apart from making money, is public relations. A few well placed, well publicised donations to the right causes, along with the backing of the media, and it is not hard to see him regain his status as a national treasure, a national treasure at the head of an increasingly monolithic private health provider kept afloat by public subsidies and capable of challenging the dominance of the NHS. This, in other words, is a Tory wet dream, which might explain why Virgin Care won just under a third of the total number of NHS contracts awarded to the private sector in 2017.

As anarcho-syndicalists, we have many criticisms of the way the NHS works, not least its totally undemocratic structures. Though we favour a community controlled and run health service, we find the prospect of people's health being handed over to the tender loving care of the likes of Branson utterly appalling. So be aware, if privatisation is not stopped and you are unfortunate enough to get ill, you may be faced with having to look at giant pictures of the smiling face of good old Sir Richard in the ambulance, in the hospital, in the operating theatre and, well, just about everywhere. Some might think death would be more preferable. Let's hope for better luck next time good old Sir Richard crashes his hot air balloon!!!

[UK] WORLD SUICIDE PREVENTION DAY- BREAKING THE TABOO IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY.

September 10, 2020, Bristol Care Workers Network, <https://bristolcareworkersnetwork.org>



Today is World Suicide Prevention Day. Just over a week ago, the Guardian reported that the male suicide rate in the UK was the highest it had been for two decades, with an overall increase in suicides across all genders.

Suicide is a uniquely complex tragedy, and the stigma, taboo and lack of understanding that surround the issue all contribute to an environment where those who need help most are often unable to get it. Suicidality is deeply personal, and yet there is a body of evidence that social factors and political intersections such as class, race, gender, sexuality and disability all contribute to a person's suicidality.

Despite the silence, the taboos and the stigma, suicidality is clearly an issue for communities as much as it is an issue that affects individuals. We are interconnected beings, and our suicidality inhabits the spaces created in our relationships with those around us. Some studies have found that losing a loved one to suicide can increase a person's own risk of suicide by up to four times, meaning that suicidality can be spread through families and peer groups almost like a contagion. Let's not see suicide as a private issue.

Mental health services can be ill-equipped to manage this. An individualised, medicalised and risk-focussed approach to suicide will struggle to engage with the social, intersectional and political factors that drive suicidality in our communities. Local mental health

providers recently reported that only 28% of individuals who completed suicide had been under mental health services. So, a new response is clearly needed.

In 2019, Bristol Care Workers Network published "*Stopping Suicides: A Guide For Everyone*". *Stopping Suicides* is a short pamphlet aimed at anyone who wants to build up their skills and confidence in helping support people through suicidality. The pamphlet covers how to spot people at risk of suicide, how to talk to them about it, and what to do to keep them safe. The idea behind *Stopping Suicides* is to empower ordinary people to help prevent suicides, to move away from a health service model for suicide prevention, and to build communities that can take a collective

approach to suicide prevention instead. Stopping Suicides is available for free download on the resources section of this site <https://bristolcareworkersnetwork.files.wordpress.com/2019/10/stopping-suicides-colour.pdf> a printable, black and white version will be available soon.

It's become a cliché for "suicide awareness" drives to urge suicidal people to "reach out" and "talk about suicide", as if that's all it takes to break the lethal taboo. Today, we are sure, we will see plenty of well-meaning individuals and organisations repeating this message, turning a well-meaning invitation to "reach out" into an impossible demand to place on the shoulders of those who are already struggling.

This message misses the point, in our view. For dozens of reasons, people experiencing suicidality often won't be able to simply "reach out" and start talking. Placing the burden on the suicidal person to "reach out" shirks the responsibility of communities and services to offer any meaningful help. Who can you reach out to when your local talking therapies service has a year-long waiting list? Who can you talk to when your friends and family will panic and call the cops at the first mention of suicide?

Instead of urging people to talk, we'd like to remind everyone to listen when others talk, and to make sure you have the skills and knowledge to respond. If you are reading this, ask yourself what you would do if a friend or loved one told you right now that they were feeling suicidal. Would you panic? Would you tell them to call the cops or the crisis line? Or would you know how to help?

Breaking the taboo is everyone's responsibility.

[Serbia] DRAMATIC SITUATION IN HOSPITALS

November 30, 2020, ASI-AIT, <https://www.facebook.com/borbenisindikat/posts/3780264315327892>

Due to the new peak of the corona virus that has hit Serbia as well, the situation is more than alarming. Hospitals are full and available beds for newly infected people, who arrive by thousands every day, are almost non-existent, as well as rested medical staff. Thanks to looting privatizations and years of systematic destruction of the public sector, our healthcare system is so devastated that it is unable to adequately cope with the crisis caused by the pandemic.

This, along with the general global uncertainty, leads to a justified growth of distrust of the population in the entire system, both in our country and in the world, but unfortunately also disbelief in the existence of the virus itself, which is very real and very dangerous for many of us.

Therefore, we consider it is sensible to repeat the demands that our organization, the Anarcho-Syndicalist Initiative, as well as the entire International Association of Workers, expressed at the beginning of the pandemic:



Queuing in hospitals in Serbia during Covid 19

- all non-essential companies should be closed immediately, since jobs have undoubtedly proven to be a key source of infection. It is necessary to provide all employees with compensation in the amount of one hundred percent of salary during the period of job closure. It is necessary to close all educational institutions to the crisis end and enable everyone to teach and learn at distance.

- To all workers in essential jobs - doctors, nurses, drivers, salesmen, etc. it is necessary to immediately raise salaries by one hundred percent due to working in life-threatening conditions. Also, all executive measures against the weakest, as evictions and the like, must be stopped immediately.

We demand from the authorities the immediate introduction of these measures! Enough playing with our lives for your profit!

[Poland] WOMEN'S HELL

October 2020, from ZSP-AIT information and mainstream medias

In Poland, under pressure from religious and conservatives, women's rights have just experienced a further decline. Indeed, at the initiative of ultra-Catholic organizations, the Constitutional Court has banned abortion in cases of foetal malformation. It was one of only three cases allowed (along with rape and incest) by Polish law, one of the most restrictive in Europe.

The ruling "Law and Justice Party" is taking advantage of the pandemic to push through this very unpopular measure, knowing that all gatherings of more than 5 people are prohibited.

But opponents have nevertheless decided to show their determination by defying the ban and increasing signs of resistance. Better than virtual networks, it is in the public space that defenders of abortion appear, showing inventiveness and originality: on their balconies. They hang posters against the anti-abortion bill, and also black umbrellas. Symbol of the Polish women's struggle for the right to abortion since major demonstrations at the end of 2016.

"The Polish government is dealing with a bill that it was forced to reject years ago because we protested," said Ola Glowicka, who lives in Warsaw. "So we show them that even if we are stranded at home, they cannot beat us. I, for example, put posters on my windows. And I also sent 276 emails to MPs telling them my opposition to the bill."

Since the court's decision was announced, thousands of protesters have been blocking the centre of major cities in Poland by occupying several downtown intersections, crippling traffic. The demonstrators held up placards with slogans such as "Women's Hell", "You have blood on your hands", "We want a choice", or "its war!" Strajk Kobiet movement calls for women's strike: *"It's really impressive. We share hundreds of photos, videos. This is the only way, we cannot negotiate with the ruling party."*

Friday, October 23, despite the rain and in defiance of the strict measures to ban gatherings in the name of the fight against the coronavirus, at least 10,000 people demonstrated in Warsaw in the evening, in order to express their anger after the quasi-delegation total abortion, decided the day before by the Constitutional Court. Gatherings were held in other provincial towns, such as Lodz, where our companions from the ZSP, the pol section took part.

October 26, 2020, ZSP-AIT, Łódź, <https://www.facebook.com/Związek-Syndykalistów-Polski-Sekcja-Łódź-100100574970656/>

On Thursday, October 22, the Constitutional Court issued a disgraceful sentence forcing women in this country to bear extremely deformed fetuses that could not survive on their own outside the mother's body.

Mass protests against the sadism of the authorities, the church and the fanatical right are sweeping through Poland.

The protesters include Activists of the Union of Syndicalists of Poland (ZSP-AIT).

We are there because it is our duty to be in solidarity with women who are barbarously deprived of the right to decide about their own body and life.



We are there because, as syndicalists, we fight for the freedom and dignity of all female workers, emphasizing that the right to abortion is one of the elements of women's emancipation.

Solidarity is our weapon!

Revolution is a woman!

Union of Syndicalists Polish Section Łódź, AIT-AIT

[Poland] A LOOK BACK AT A SUCCESSFUL STRIKE OF HOUSEKEEPERS AND KITCHEN STAFF AT THE BELCHATOW HOSPITAL



led them to victory.

It should be noted that the women of Belchatów hospital, often disabled, thanks to their uncompromising attitude in direct actions, managed to implement all their demands through an illegal strike. It was a fine example of grassroots union organization and mutual aid.

Direct action + Employee self-organization + Mutual aid = Victory

Hospital Workers Take Action to Regain their Jobs and their Dignity

June 12, 2014, ZSP-AIT, Łódź, <https://zsp.net.pl/hospital-workers-take-action-regain-their-jobs-and-their-dignity>

At the end of April, 60 women suddenly found themselves unemployed at the hospital in Belchatow. Since then, a large group of them have been fighting to get their jobs back.

The women had already been outsourced from the hospital and had been working there through a company called Cooperative for the Disabled „Naprzod”. This company is no cooperative in the normal sense, but a firm which exploits disabled people, mostly women, across Poland. The contractor at the hospital was changed to another firm called „Dozorbud” and „Naprzod” claimed that the workers had been transferred to the new company. But Dozorbud didn't take most of them to work, instead looking for new hires with no qualifications or experience. Presumably also without any work contracts and on subminimum wages.

Since then, the women have been sitting in at the hospital, demanding their jobs back.

They decided to organize and fight with ZSP-AIT's support. Other unions, including those at the hospital (!), have ignored the plight of the women simply because this is a tough case in this country where anti-worker tendencies prevail.

On June 9, direct actions were held in Lodz where the offices of the Voivodship (which is responsible for the hospital), Naprzod and Dozorbud are located. At the Voivodship, people went in to occupy the offices of the Marshall, demanding a meeting and action. The Vice Marshall met and a few things were established. There will be a new public tender. Dozorbud is out. Although eventually we would like to see the direct employment of the workers by the hospital, we demand that if there is a new contractor, that firm should take all the workers and that this should be a condition of the public tender. Negotiations with will be held in Belchatow on Monday.

Satisfied that some steps were taken towards a possible solution to the problem, the workers left the building to proceed towards the contractors. Only as it turned out, there were no offices of Dozorbud at its business address or anywhere else for that matter. This is another problem that many workers in Poland face who work through such companies that only exist to take money for a few contracts and then disappear from sight.

At the offices of Naprzod, we demanded that the company talk and the director came out. After a few seconds though, he decided to run to the parking lot, presumably to attempt to escape. However he was surrounded and confronted. He insists that the workers are no longer „his” and that they were transferred. Due to the fact that they were supposedly „transferred”, their contracts were never terminated, and, although they are unemployed, since they

have no termination or work certificate from that employer, they cannot get unemployment benefits and are not insured.

The workers demanded they be paid since they never were fired by the company.

After the action, we learned that Naprzod is a notorious firm that has been fucking over workers in a number of hospitals around Poland. In some cases they were not paying workers on time and in some cases they were paying subminimum wages. The actions against this company will have to continue and we demand that hospitals stop awarding them public tenders and be aware of future companies which might be owned by the same people and which will try to do the same thing under a different business name.

Hospital Workers Win Contracts

July 21, 2014, ZSP-AIT, Łódź, <https://zsp.net.pl/hospital-workers-win-contracts>



The women who have been fighting to return to work in Belchatow Hospital have won their jobs back! They will have work contracts through the new service provider.

We think this outcome shows that if you organize, stay in solidarity and don't give up, it is worth it. We consider this victory, which happened outside the mainstream unions, to be the most significant we know of so far this year in Poland. We thank everyone who supported this struggle.

We however note that there are still problems since the workers have not been compensated for lost time and have not been hired directly by the hospital.

The union in the hospital will continue working to improve conditions and fight for better job security.

New Results of Strike Action in Belchatow

December 04, 2014, ZSP-AIT, <https://zsp.net.pl/new-results-strike-action-belchatow>



Over 100 people have received two year work contracts as cleaners and food servers in Belchatow hospital. This work was sent to outside companies some while ago and the outside companies started downsizing and putting people on trash contracts where workers were not entitled to paid vacations, sick leave or even a legal minimum wage.

At the end of April, the new contractor who had won the tender, did not accept the transfer of all workers, although it is obligatory under the labour code. 60 people were suddenly without a job, without any notice. Instead, new workers were hired on trash contracts. Members of our union in Belchatow struggled for 3 months, occupying the hospital and organizing different protest actions. As a result, a new contractor was found and all of them were hired on normal work contracts, with all due benefits and a guaranteed minimum wage.

Problems happened again in October, when people lost their jobs and the workers were supposed to do more work to cover. At the same time, some people were forced to work 200 hours a month and the company introduced more trash contracts. Some workers

were now receiving less than half the minimum wage or even lower salaries, with absolutely no benefits or guarantees.

