

DIRECT ACTION



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PAPER OF THE DAM/IWA...THE VOICE OF ANARCHO-SYNDICALISM.

Political levy? Yes and No

The Syndicalist concept of unionism opposes the domination by any political party of the labour movement. It calls on workers to set themselves free through economic opposition to the bosses and government rather than that they pursue the dead end of a parliamentary road to socialism.

The Labour Party since its conception has bridled the trade unions with a philosophy based on conciliation and arbitration--after all when Labour are in power they themselves constitute the ruling class--the last thing they want to encourage then is a militant workforce!

Look at the record of the Labour Party both in and out of power--they have constantly stamped on the workers, from the time the 1945 Labour Government (so lauded by the left) brought troops in to break the dockers' strike to their hostility to the miners' strike forty years on.

When in power last time round the Labour Party imposed a social contract negotiated over the heads of union memberships, which froze pay increases and cut workers' living standards. During the firemen's strike they surpassed the present government in their open use of troops as strikebreakers.

Today in France and Spain the sister organisations of the Labour Party are in power. They too remain loyal to traditional "socialist" policies towards the working class. In France the steel industry has been savaged just as steel and coal have in Britain. In Spain, the same thing has happened to shipbuilding.

All governments, by their very nature, are anti-working-class. Bearing in mind the European experience and the contempt shown for the miners by Neil Kinnock, can we doubt that if Labour had been in power, the last year would

still have seen the miners engaged in a struggle to save their industry, this time from a Socialist "Rationalisation"? Remember the policy of dismantling the Health Service was not begun by the Tories--they simply followed Labour's lead.

As part of the present government's Industrial Relations policy, we are now being asked to vote on whether or not unions should keep political funds. Obviously the Tories want the Labour Party to lose the massive finances it receives from the unions.

In the aftermath of the Labour Party betrayal of the NUM no good trade unionist should support Labour--they are Capital's policemen. Yet as syndicalists, just as we object to Labour's interference in unions, reducing them to timid, legalistic lap-dogs, we object also to the Tories legislating to the unions.

We believe unions should have their own "political" funds. Not to give Labour (or the SDP, for that matter) a leg-up at election time, but for union defence, for producing propaganda, for defending victimised workers, etc.

We believe the unions must break away from the Labour Party, not because some other party tells them to, but because workers must realise that a unionism always kowtowing to laws, parties and government cannot defend them adequately, far less carry out an offensive campaign for workers' control and liberty. Only a unionism which is democratic, decentralised and totally independent of all political parties can do that.

The government's ballot should be boycotted, but individuals can and should contract out of paying the levy and campaign for unions and their branches to disaffiliate from the Labour Party.

GC



Tragically, we supply the boots which Labour uses to kick us in the teeth - most of their finance (approximately 90%) comes from payments from 58 unions.

Make The Support Committees PERMANENT

Trade union militants in many parts of the country are realising the inadequacy of the TUC when it comes to giving solidarity in industrial disputes. For this reason, in many towns and cities throughout Britain the Miners' Support Committees are transforming themselves into general industrial dispute support committees, in the aftermath of the miners' strike.

These rank-and-file groupings, cutting across the fake divide of employed/unemployed have gained great experience of fundraising during the miners' strike, and it is they, not the regional TUCs, who know which workplaces will give solidarity to strikers. They,

not the union full-timers, have the motivation and contacts to give meaningful support to workers in struggle.

For example, in Hull the "new" disputes committee has adopted the 2-year-old Hindles Gears strike, while by no means forgetting the plight of the victimised miners. Likewise, Crewe Miners' Support Group has become Crewe Support Group and recently held a meeting attended by 600 workers. It intends to help defend workers locally at the threatened British Rail Engineering Ltd works, and also Post Office workers threatened with "reorganisation".

Such support groups are valuable in giving the solidarity trade unions are incapable of. All syndicalists should involve themselves in these ventures, pushing for their retention and development as independent working-class organisations.

GC

What is DAM?

WHAT IS D.A.M.?

In March 1979 a number of class-struggle anarchists (including members of the Syndicalist Workers' Federation) came together to form the Direct Action Movement (D.A.M.). D.A.M. is an anarcho-syndicalist organisation affiliated to the I.W.A. and has established a network of local groups.

WHAT IS ANARCHO-SYNDICALISM?

The goal of anarcho-syndicalism is the reorganisation of society on the basis of libertarian communism, which can only be achieved by the revolutionary action of the working class itself. Only the economic organisation of the workers, not political parties can reach this objective. Anarcho-syndicalism combines the daily struggle for the economic and social advancement of the working class within the limits of present-day society with the revolutionary goal of common action by all workers to control the means of production and distribution.

WHAT IS THE I.W.A.?

The I.W.A. (International Workers' Association), also known by its French and Spanish initials as the A.I.T., was founded in Berlin in December 1922. The I.W.A. is the international revolutionary syndicalist organisation, uniting workers worldwide. Today the I.W.A. has sections in 15 countries.

In the November issue of Direct Action we published an article with the historical heading "The Miners Next Step". In this article we stressed how the magnificent year long struggle of the miners, a struggle against all the forces that the state and capitalism could muster, was sustained by the solidarity of workers in other countries coming to the aid of the miners, whilst the T.U.C of this country was vacillating, and the Kinnocks were more concerned about victory in a future election than victory for the miners. During the strike, food, money, clothing even toys and sweets for the kids were sent by workers around the world, many of them miners themselves, who know from their own experience the hardship, suffering and tragedy faced by those who in order to live must daily dig in the bowels of the earth.

East and West United in Struggle

These men and women of the mining communities around the world also know what a strike entails, know what it's like to see their kids go hungry, know what it's like to feel the blows of police batons, and to see their menfolk maimed, incarcerated in prisons or even killed, therefore they responded when help was needed.

We said in the article that "once the strike was won, this international solidarity must persist in a permanent organisational form", AN INTERNATIONAL UNION OF MINERS.

After this article was published we began to receive letters from the mineworkers in other countries, saying that they also recognised this need to cross frontiers, for as the interests of capitalism crosses frontiers so also must the interests of the workers cross those frontiers. One letter from the American miners called for the calling of an International Congress of all Mineworkers, South African, South American, Eastern Bloc Countries and those of the unfree Free World.

For a Real Miners' International



these people did not fight to hand over their power to the kremlin

This letter together with other information was sent to Mr. Scargill; we are not claiming that this is why on the 25th of March he flew to Moscow to call such a conference as advocated but we are saying that it must be as a result of a growing surge of mineworkers opinion for this need to be met that he has responded to such action, and in so far that he has done we applaud his action.

Should out of such a congress an INTERNATIONAL MINERWORKERS UNION develop it could be a magnificent step forward for the whole International Working Class, a beacon to workers in other industries and a tremendous force for world

peace. BUT and alas it's a big but, MOSCOW? THE SOVIET UNION? that socialist land where they have a wage system and workers have bosses, very, very, forceful bosses, a land in which the Unions must be official and serve the interests of the state a hierarchy of privileged bureaucrats who ruthlessly use the power of the state to obliterate any who dare to oppose them, as recently witnessed in the case of Solidarity in Poland, as witnessed throughout the Bolsheviks bloody history.

The formation of an International Mineworkers Union would be readily welcomed by the Communist Party, they would readily assist in its development, but not because they see in it a tool of emancipation for the working class but because they would see it as a possible weapon to manipulate to further the interests of their Kremlin masters, be under no illusion about that. Even so, bearing this in mind, it does not detract from what the value of an International Mineworkers Union could be IF BUILT IN SUCH A WAY THAT CONTROL OF SUCH A UNION IS ABSOLUTELY VESTED IN THE HANDS OF ITS RANK AND FILE, this means the incorporation of such principles as decentralised federalism, delegation subject to recall, and above all not under any party control.

If this is to be the miners next step then let him take it with great caution and now if he sees the pitfalls ahead he is not going to make the mistake of building a powerful machine which can become a Frankenstein monster, control must remain firmly in his own hands. THIS POSSIBILITY OF AN INTERNATIONAL MINERWORKERS UNION IS A KEY WHICH CAN OPEN A DOOR MAKE SURE IT IS A DOOR OF OPPORTUNITY NOT THAT OF A LUBIANKA CELL.

UNION NEWS

Pillars of the Establishment

MASSIVE RIP OFF OF NHS

Private medicine has cheated the NHS out of about £60 million a year--and that's the official version. The Auditor General has complained of "serious and persistent failures" by Health Authorities to collect income due from patients using private pay beds in Health Service hospitals--in other words consultants have been carrying out frauds resulting in the NHS subsidising their private patients.

No wonder they can afford it--the take-home pay of an SEN is around £67 per week, and a ward sister with five years' experience may earn only £89 weekly (compared with a London policeman under 19 who grosses £170 or so). This years pay rise will say the government be limited to 3% or less.

NO JOB--NO HOME

The government is considering hitting unemployed home owners, in an attempt to save £170million. Unemployed people who are entitled to supplementary benefit have their mortgage interest paid by the DHSS, but government ministers are considering proposals that will halt this payment for the long-term unemployed.

Since 1979 when the Tories came to power the number of jobless home owners has risen from 98,000 to 235,000. The idea of ending their mortgage interest payments has led to opposition from the building societies, who point out that any such move would cause a dramatic increase in the number of repossessions of houses from unemployed people. Whatever happened to the Tory philosophy of everyone a home-owner?

DONCASTER DAM

The role of the unions in providing actual support for the structures of capitalism is nowhere better illustrated than through the vast financial reserves held in the form of union pension funds and the like. Britain's newest Trade Union financial institution, the Unity Trust is yet another demonstration of the unwillingness of union leaders to place the radical use of union wealth on the agenda.

UT has so far attracted £12million in deposits and with current union assets totalling around £500million (not counting sequestrations) there is plenty of room for growth.

Alas the UT is being run solely on commercial, non-political lines, and supports the whole range of capitalism's accumulated injustices. So what could be used as a major financial means towards workers' self-determination becomes no more than a pillar of the establishment.

HUDDERSFIELD DAM.

WOMEN — the case for syndicalism

real working women

By women workers I don't mean solicitors, MPs and executives, whose main worry is how to climb to the top of the tree against unfair male competition, but those women workers who take orders, not give them; whose jobs are an economic necessity and not a status symbol. No-one has a burning vocation to spend forty years behind the till in a supermarket, night-cleaning offices or packing fish-fingers. This is the kind of work where women have real problems yet it is practically ignored by the trendy, Guardian-reading feminists. Of course a lot of problems are faced by all women, regardless of social class—but who is really oppressed and exploited: the bored middle-class housewife frustrated because she's at home all day with the kids while her husband has expense-account lunches—or the woman whose young children are at nursery five days a week because she has no alternative but to work full-time to support them, not in a challenging career-type job but doing boring, poorly-paid shit-work?

we'll only go and start a family



Working women face a whole range of problems unshared by men that better-off women can frequently buy their way out of. Our education rarely assumes that we will do anything more skilled than office-work; the only apprenticeships girls are encouraged to take up seem to be in hair-dressing (notorious for low wages). We're conditioned to accept that we'll only get low pay because we aren't worth training when we'll only go and start a family—even though lots of mothers need to take jobs precisely because of their families. We accept for the most part without question that where a married couple both have jobs the wife will be the one who does all the cooking, cleaning, housework, etc—not just unpaid, but without the least recognition that what she has done is in fact WORK (And that work not only benefits her husband but indirectly his employer, since working long hours for inadequate wages is far more acceptable to a worker who is waited on hand and foot at the end of the day.) Women with small children have the same problems even worse. Even if you choose to stay at home to care for them what you do is never seen to be work, or rewarded as such, although rearing the next generation of workers is surely the most productive activity of all, even in capitalist terms. The list of ways in which women lose out



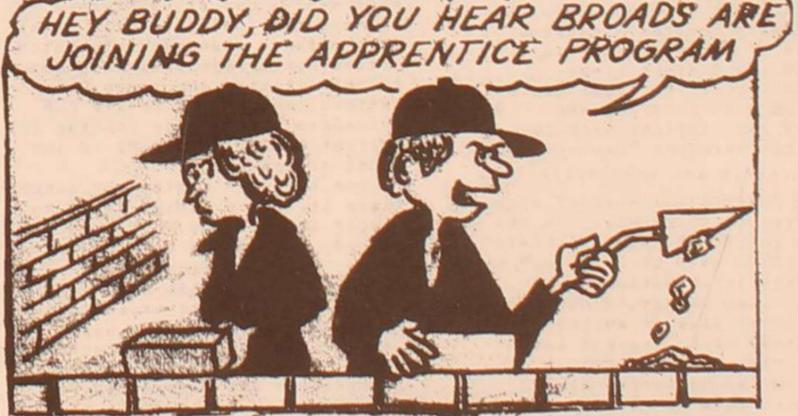
could go on for ever—the constantly-present threat of rape or battering, the unjust pension and social security rules, discrimination against part-time workers, unfair immigration laws, sexual harassment... they all bite sharpest on women, women that is without wealth and privilege, not Shirley Williams or Margaret Thatcher.

divisive, exploitative and hierarchical

Women seek various ways of fighting back against this state of affairs. Some join single-issue campaigns (like the National Abortion Campaign, Womens' Aid, Women Against Violence Against Women, etc) but these are not enough, for the root of the problem is that our whole society is divisive, exploitative and hierarchical. You can change little bits of it but while production takes place for profit, not for need you can forget about taking control of your own life. The same applies to the Unions—they're worth joining by all means and can help to improve wages and conditions or defend jobs, but eventually they sell people out because they are committed to maintaining the system as it is, not to overturning it.

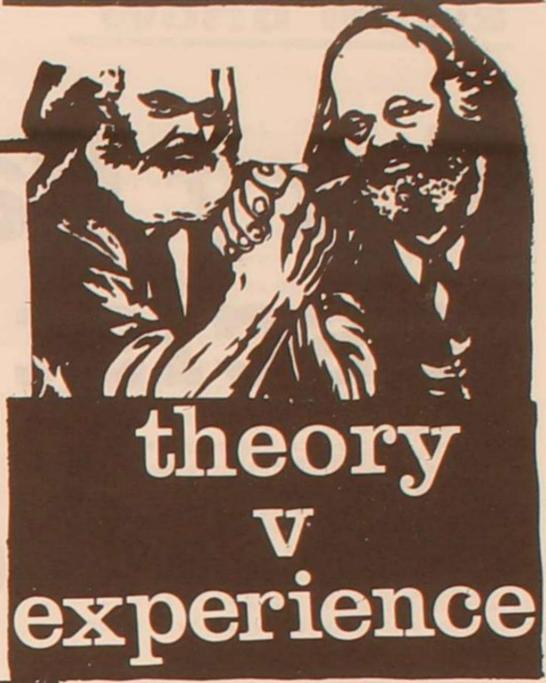
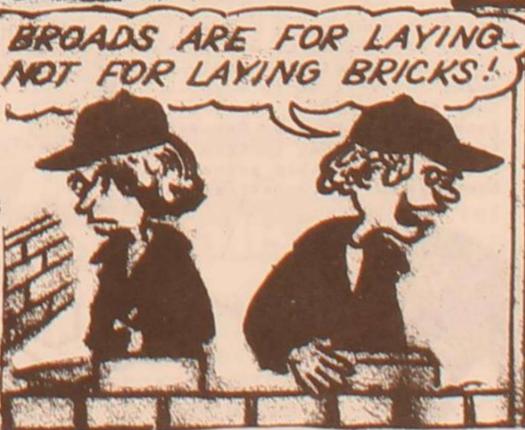
the whole class against all forms of oppression, an organisation welding together the workplace power of those presently in employment, with the community support of those for any reason without paid work, expressing the common interests of both.

At present no such organisation exists, but recent events have shown women and men in mining communities (and outside them) uniting in such a way; while at the same time the unemployed have to some extent organised, with the National Unemployed Workers' Movement demanding the right to union membership for the jobless. From fragmentary initiatives such as these could grow a movement towards a single revolutionary union, embracing all sections of our class, throughout the community, controlled only by its membership, without manipulation by political parties purporting to speak "on our behalf", or domination by greedy, power-seeking bureaucrats. Such a union would be not the best but the only means of creating a society, taking from each according to their ability and granting to each according to their need—men and women alike.



one revolutionary union

To eradicate sexism we need to attack and destroy its root causes. We have to recognise that capitalism—the present system where one class produces wealth while a smaller one consumes it—will always seek to divide the working class, pitting men against women, white against black, employed against jobless, in order to keep it weak. This is why we need an organisation uniting

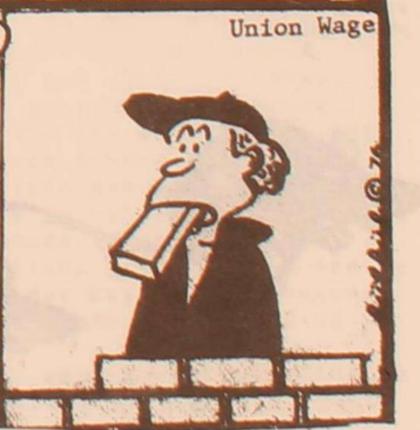


Unlike the state-socialist tradition, anarchist ideas are not built around the writings of a few individual theorists. It is true that there have been prominent anarchists (for example Bakunin and Kropotkin) whose books, pamphlets and letters have played a vital role in the development of the anarchist movement. But these writers did not develop their ideas from a position of isolation; they were constantly involved in actual social conflicts. So while anarchist theory lacks a bible substitute like "Das Kapital", it has evolved from the realities of working class struggle.

In essence anarchism is a revolutionary theory that has grown from the practice of the workers' movement. Consequently it is a view of the world—and of the fight for social liberation—as seen from the standpoint of the oppressed themselves.

Marxists have always been quick to attack anarchism on basis of its origins. Marx and Engels were first to condemn their libertarian rivals as "petit bourgeois", while Lenin described anarchist theories as "bourgeois morality turned upside-down". Yet at the same time leading Marxists—Marx and Lenin among them—have consistently seized upon anarchist theories and policies in order to gain credibility with the workers' movement. The apparent paradox is easily explained. The authoritarian socialists could never gain power without mass support; they could not build such support unless they paid lip-service to mass aspirations. Thus in 1917 Lenin could be accused of his fellow-Bolsheviks of embracing anarchism. To the present day, Marxist theory tries to absorb and defuse the demands of workers women, black people, gays... all the oppressed sections of society.

Anarchism on the other hand, is not imposed upon social struggles but arises from them. Anarchists are often criticised by opponents on the Left for not paying enough attention to political theory. But this misses the point that the roots of anarchism lie in the experience of a movement for the transformation of society. That is the greatest theoretical heritage we could possess.



Tory Party's new fascist trend

Recently the media were wallowing in reports of hooliganism at the conference of the Federation of Conservative Students at Loughborough University. Reports varied concerning the amount of damage that was actually done, ranging from £1000 to £3000. As John Selwyn-Gummer (Tory Party chairman) withdrew the party's annual £30,000 grant to the FCS and promised (yawn) an inquiry into what he called "hooliganism and sheer vandalism", the media unequivocally pointed their collective finger at the newly emerged (in Britain at least) far right "libertarian" movement as the perpetrators of this heinous crime.

It seems clear now that the real cost of the damage probably didn't exceed £100. So what were Gummer's motives in withdrawing the grant? And who are these so-called "libertarians"?

Although the new far-right element in the FCS delight in calling themselves "libertarians" and "anarcho-capitalists" only a cursory glance at their organisation, aims and beliefs is necessary to show how little they have in common with traditional libertarian thought and practice. The politics of these groups is perhaps best summed up in one of their favourite slogans--"If it moves--privatise it".

The foundation of their hideous vision of a future society lies in their belief that capitalism should be left to run on a free rein; that society should be geared to making money, and only to making money; that exploitation of those with little money by those with most money should be actively encouraged, with an end to taxation (hence another favourite slogan: "All taxation is theft").

PRIVATE POLICE

While they oppose all state intervention and state monopolies, their greatest bugbear is intervention preventing the smooth running and progression of capitalism. Their call is for the privatisation of the police, the emergency services, the health service, education, the lot; their philosophy--if you can't afford it, you don't deserve it.

This far-right element in the FCS sees South Africa as its guiding star, and although half-hearted calls for an end to apartheid have been voiced many members are to be seen proudly sporting their new "Nelson Mandela" badges. Their politics then can be seen as a mixture of extreme free-market economics and fervent anti-communism. Whereas true libertarian thought begins with the premise of mutual aid, these "libertarians" stress a basic dog-eat-dog philosophy.



Gummer, worried?

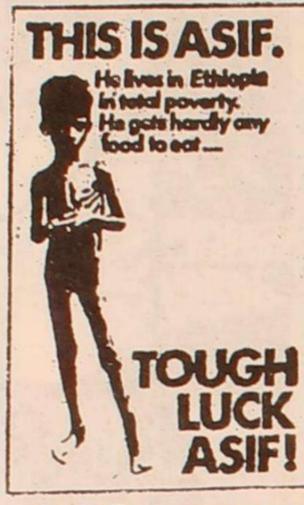
What is the real strength of these fanatical capitalists? The answer is disturbing and perhaps surprising. Here in Britain they are organised from the Adam Smith Institute, a think-tank independent of any political party, run by the "godfather" of the far right, Madson Pirie. The Adam Smith Institute is a propaganda organisation producing a constant stream of "libertarian" publications, ranging from journals of current anarcho-capitalist ideas, to books and pamphlets on the strategy of infiltration, something we are all too familiar with, though we would usually associate it with Trotskyites in somewhat different organisations. This strategy is hard-hitting and aggressive but above all it is successful. The extremist take-over of the FCS was widely publicised but less well-known are the major coups in many Scottish, and East Midlands Young Conservative groups, as well as the Greater London YCs, the latter a major embarrassment to the Conservative Party itself.

Left Monitored

Equally disturbing are the contacts the far right have made abroad. The movement's leaders have attended dinners at the South African Embassy, and they make no secret of their contacts with right-wing guerilla groups, among them the Nicaraguan contras, the Unita forces of Jonas Savimbi in Angola, and South-African-backed forces in Mozambique. But perhaps most worrying are recent associations with the American movement "Western Goals".

The British anarcho-capitalist paper "Capitalist Worker" recently reported on their visit to the US as guests of "Western Goals". Founded in 1979 by Larry McDonald, this organisation aims, among other things, to develop a computer file on anybody and everybody with vaguely left tendencies--reminiscent of McCarthyism. On their return the activists in FCS proposed at their next conference a "Student Monitoring Project".

In view of their widespread foreign contacts it hardly seems far-fetched to suppose that this movement receives funds from abroad, so Gummer's temporary refusal to fund the FCS will inevitably prove ineffectual in combatting them.



F.C.S humour

Why did the Conservative Party encourage him to take this unprecedented action? It certainly wasn't in response to the vandalism. Two motives seem most obvious. Firstly it is undeniable that the right-wing libertarian philosophy is a natural, if extreme, extension of Thatcherite free-market policies. Is this, perhaps, a case of too much, too soon? Are these extremists giving the game away? Of course this is pure supposition, but it should not be rejected out of hand. The Conservative Party is being seen to do something, but just how much remains to be seen. Secondly, and this is fact, the moderate members of the FCS are becoming increasingly afraid of their own movement and are steadily defecting to the SDP --not a prospect the Conservatives view lightly!

Fascists in the Commons

How seriously should we take these extremists? Very seriously. The big names in the FCS are the Tory MPs and industrialists (whose interests they represent) of tomorrow. Sixty-one of the current Tory MPs were Conservative students. It could of course be argued that student politics have always been radical, and that students do tend to mellow their views as they get older. But traditionally it has been left-wing student organisations that have been political embarrassments to their elders, not those on the right. To what extent can we trust these far-right extremists to moderate? We can at least take it for granted that they will remain more extreme than current Thatcherites. Apart from their success in infiltrating the Young Conservatives, many of the active FCS extremists are already working for current Conservative MPs in the House of Commons.

One thing is certain. We cannot leave it to the Labour Party to combat this menace. They have already proved how utterly ineffectual they are faced with existing Thatcherite policies. It is, therefore, up to us, as individuals and movements, to warn people of this obscene progression and to combat these "libertarians" in whatever way we see fit. We cannot sit back and allow these people to abuse the name of liberty, and we must act now, not wait for these sick individuals to gain yet more footholds.

RW

Steal Or Starve

After two years on the dole debts had accumulated for Ian Honeyford, of Rochdale. He used up all the grant of his recently started Polytechnic course paying them off, and dropped out.

Though he was penniless, the Rochdale DHSS would give him and his family nothing. So he left home thinking that at least his wife and children would not be allowed to starve.

How he misjudged the times in which we live--times in which bankruptcies flourish and charging orders fill the County Courts. A beano for debt collectors collectors and solicitors. All the Rochdale DHSS gave his wife was advice on how to claim maintenance from her husband in the Magistrates' court--they can get water out of stones.

Even in despair Ian is a practical man; it was not in his nature to go shoplifting for chocolates and other romantic frivolities to cheer his wife and kids up. No, Ian decided a side of beef was more suitable to the needs of the moment and duly caved in a butcher's shop window to get one.

But Ian had reckoned without the weight of the plate glass in the window, which falling all but amputated his hand. Later, while it was stitched back, the police accused him of burglary.

Yet still at the time of writing (almost one month after the offence) Rochdale DHSS are refusing to pay his family a penny.

You do not have to believe in a system of state welfare, and the degradation the system inflicts inflicts on claimants and functionaries alike, to question a state of affairs which gives people the option to steal or starve. Nor need we politely accept the bad manners of the twentieth century Fagins who run the DHSS with such tight-fisted aplomb that can only serve to cultivate the current crime wave.

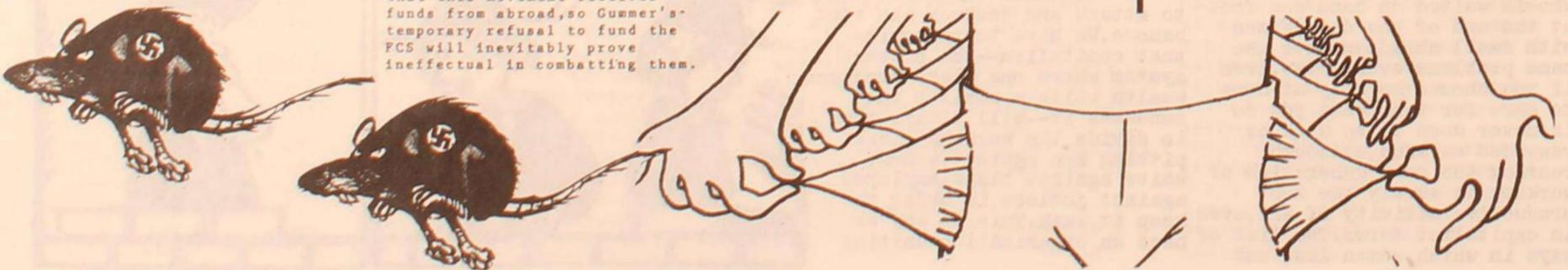
BB ROCHDALE DAM.

D.H.S.S.

After the nine month strike by DHSS computer staff in Newcastle, which cost over £200million to break, the government is radically reshaping the computerisation of social security benefits to guard against the effectiveness of similar industrial action in the future.

There are now likely to be seven computer centres, rather than the previously planned three. Along with increased decentralisation of computer centres, there are to be enlarged training programmes to ensure that there are back-up staff available to scab on any industrial action, and the introduction of more simplified operating procedures, to allow computer operators to learn and adapt more easily.

DONCASTER DAM.



Solidarity Lives!

MAY DAY witnessed large demonstrations by Solidarity in Poland, despite the claims of the Polish media and the lack of news coverage in the western press. The union is as active as ever, its militants keeping shop-floor organisation together and printing literally thousands of bulletins. The situation is hotting up in Poland, with workers showing their hostility to the latest round of price rises.

Here is an interview with activists of the Ursus factory, reprinted from VOICE OF SOLIDARITY #4.

WHAT WILL THE NEXT STRIKE BE LIKE?

TM: The TKK has stated that the the Union may call for a strike when the third stage of the price rises is introduced.

B: It must do this. In 1980, price rises were introduced in July. Ursus went on strike first then. In winter, people are afraid to strike.

C: It's the workers who will decide when to strike. We can provide the inspiration, but they must also be convinced inside. They've never before complained so bitterly about how difficult it is to make ends meet.

B: There's still time for all TKZ (Clandestine Factory Commissions) to be consulted. In February, we were presented by the TKK with an accomplished fact, though in the past, we'd always been asked for our advice. The strike call should be given much earlier, since news of it is slow to reach the people; two weeks before the 28th, many people didn't even know about the strike. And another thing: 15 minutes is no strike.

A: But people are so bloody afraid to strike. A 15-minute strike can be successful. However, it's best to commence in the morning, since if a worker is intimidated by the manager for two hours after coming to work, the strike may well not come off at noon.

B: But 15 minutes is no strike! It just makes the Security Service laugh to see everyone rushing off to the toilet, or to the queue in front of the kiosk. Perhaps the strike shouldn't be given a specific time period. Then, somewhere it may last for

a day or two; soon, others will join in, and 1980 will be repeated. Surely that's what we're aiming for.

TM: What do you think is wiser: a 15 minute strike, or a rally as proposed by the TKK for 1 April?

B: I think a rally. In a crowd, people are more anonymous, more courageous.

A: Although an action of this nature is more risky for activists. During a short strike which has been called for earlier, the activists just stops work like everybody else; during a rally, he must be active. He must think of something that will stop people before the gates, like we did on 28 February by broadcasting a Radio 'Solidarnosc' programme.



WILL WE GIVE IN ON WORKING HOURS?

TM: Your management is already making use of the new decree on working hours. How have people reacted?

A: Before the end of the shift on 13 February, the manager announced that we were to have two days off because of shortage of gas. Some said they would work normally in any case. There were disputes with the manager - he said: "It's not my decision", or: "You're here to work, I'm here to govern." This was really all the protest there was.

C: That isn't the best example. There was an exceptional freeze, and the workshops were cold. At first, many people - who weren't by any means stupid - were downright pleased. It wasn't until they had to make up those free days on the Saturday that the curses came.

B: Also, in the case of Ursus, where, for example, in the Ferguson Department and the forge there is no work for weeks, those two days won't help the management.

A: In time, people are bound to get more restless, but they must first feel the results of the new regulations on their own

skins. Soon, the summer period will come, when people plan their weekends - they won't agree so readily then to have their free Saturdays taken away. This also ought to be exploited when the timing of the next protest actions is being considered.

THE 'SOLIDARNOSC' FACTORY COMMISSIONS

A: There is routine activity. We collect (Union) dues - over 1,000 people pay them. About 10 allowances a month are paid out. In the past, not everyone applied for these, saying that since the Union didn't have much money, they would manage on their own. Today, things are so hard, that nobody refuses and even those who once did are now applying for overdue allowances. We help (political) prisoners' families, of course. There is distribution (of underground press). While we're on the subject - we have difficulties with 'Tygodnik Mazowsze'. We should receive 1,000 copies, but unfortunately, often get less. We organise meetings: most recently there was one with Jacek Kuron and Henryk Wujec (Adam Michnik was also to have attended.) On the anniversary of March 1968, there was an interesting meeting with Jan Jozef Lipski on the subject of anti-Semitism.

TM: Are you managing to get anywhere with the management in regard to working matters?

C: Things aren't so good on that score. Sometimes something is achieved at departmental level, but in the factory as a whole, not much. There was, for example, much resentment at the new pay system, but it proved impossible to get together three people from every factory in order to go to the management. People are afraid.

'Tygodnik Mazowsze', No.121
14 March 1985



Since January 1985 the Solidarnosc Information Office has been producing a new monthly publication VOICE OF SOLIDARITY, which extends the coverage of their previous excellent monthly bulletin to cover news of workers' struggles in other Soviet bloc countries besides Poland. An annual subscription is £12 from Solidarnosc Information Office, 215 Balham High Road, London SW17 7BN.

FREIE ARBEITER-UNION



IS A REPORT ON THE RECENT ACTIVITIES OF THE F.A.U. (FREE WORKERS' UNION) SISTER ORGANISATION OF THE D.A.M. IN WEST GERMANY.

1984 saw West German workers threatened with mass unemployment and new technology. The number of unemployed rose, officially, to 2.8 million but these figures only take into account those who receive financial aid from the labour exchanges. Politicians estimate that the number will rise to 4 million, but the unions talk of over 5 million jobless.



Although the conservative government talk of training schemes to ease the problem they have as yet done nothing. We continue to struggle for a 35-hour week, but this will not bring an end to unemployment, nor to the capitalists' bad working conditions, only alleviate them.

Last year's strike of metal-workers for a 35-hour working week, was a significant demonstration of workers' dissatisfaction with a treacherous trade union leadership unopposed to the free-enterprise economy. The leaders' ineffectual approach resulted in a hesitant response to the strike call, the most militant strikers being among print and metal workers. The compromise result of a 38.5-hour week tells its own tale. The uncompromising attitude of the FAU drew attention to the organisation and resulted in metal workers in one town affiliating to it.

Our activities also included organising solidarity for the British striking miners. Local groups managed to raise 198,000 marks for the NUM. The local group in Koln (Cologne) deserve special mention for inviting twenty children of striking miners to Germany for a two-week holiday as an act of solidarity. As a result organisers from the FAU were invited to speak on radio and the regional television about our movement.

Many comrades were angered by the refusal of solidarity by the DGB (German TUC). This feeling was expressed at a meeting in Duisburg, where an NUM representative was present.

FAU members and other unionists. The speakers emphasised the need for direct solidarity based on spontaneous strike action and denounced German union leaders as traitors to their own class. A speaker from the Communist Party was the only one to be booed. Never before has the DGB received such sharp criticism.

We continue to show solidarity for the imprisoned miners and their families.

It goes without saying that the FAU also takes part in peace demonstrations. Our pamphlets ask all workers to refuse to collaborate with the armaments industry.

Initial preparations are now under way for a congress to look into the future of work.

Our magazine Direkte Aktion is now the best-selling libertarian paper in Germany.

ELEMENTY REFORMY GOSPODARCEW



I. DYSZYPLINA

DISCIPLINE

II. BODZEC

ELEMENTS OF ECONOMIC REFORM

INCENTIVE

III. WYDAJNOŚĆ

PRODUCTIVITY

In The Tradition

The First MayDay

The roots of May Day lie without doubt in the traditional pagan spring festivals of the European peasantry. Up to the Industrial Age it was a festival of the people in celebration of spring and fertility. With the Industrial Age it eventually developed into INTERNATIONAL WORKERS' DAY.

The origins of May Day as a day of international working class mobilisation lie in the struggle for shorter working hours by American workers at the end of the last century. At a labour movement congress in Chicago in 1884 it was proposed that the eight-hour day should be imposed by direct action from May 1st 1886. The proposal was taken up by the American labour movement and was supported by the revolutionaries.

On May 1st 1886, 800,000 workers of various trades came out on strike for the eight-hour day across the USA. Feeling was particularly strong in Chicago, a stronghold of immigrant labour and the anarchists, where 300,000 workers struck and marched through the city in a massive display of power.

Before the May Day strike action began in Chicago, a bitter fight over pay had already led to strikes and 1,500 workers being locked out at the McCormick Reaper Co factory (part of the McCormick Machine Co, now International Harvester). On May 3rd pickets at the factory tried to stop police and Pinkerton gunmen from taking the blacklegs hired in their place into the factory. The police opened fire on the strikers, killing six and wounding many.

In protest at the atrocity a demonstration was called the following evening in Haymarket Square. Workers were urged to "arm yourselves and appear in full force." Speeches at the rally were given by three leading anarchists

Albert Parsons, August Spies, Samuel Fielden. The protest meeting had passed off peacefully. Rain fell as the last speaker (Fielden) wound up and the crowd began to drift away, when 200 police marched in and ordered the meeting to disperse. Fielden objected that the demonstration had been peaceful and was about to end, but the police captain insisted. At this point a bomb was thrown into the police ranks, killing one outright (others died later) and wounding many others. The police

went berserk and fired into the crowd. In the fighting which ensued 20-30 workers were killed and many wounded.

In the aftermath of the Haymarket fighting there was a systematic round-up of anarchists, including the three speakers and other well-known figures. From those rounded up eight anarchists were eventually brought to trial for the murder of the policeman. They were: Albert Parsons, August Spies, George Engel, Adolph Fischer, Louis Lingg, Samuel Fielden, Oscar Neebe, and Michael Swab. Six were German, one English and one American.

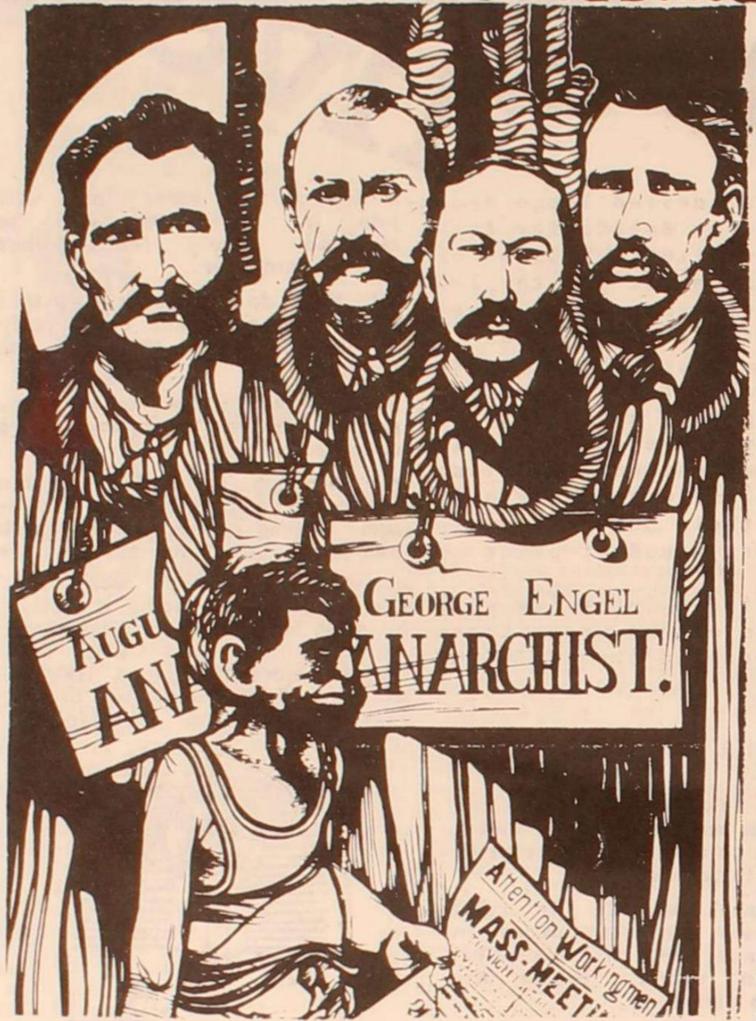
At the trial no evidence was produced to link the eight with the bomb. In fact six of them weren't even present when the bomb was thrown, yet they were all found guilty by the jury of businessmen and their clerks (and even a relative of the dead policeman). The verdict was a product of media-created public hysteria and a kangaroo court, with a trial which concentrated almost entirely upon the defendants' political beliefs. Appeals failed and the convictions were upheld.

Oscar Neebe got fifteen years and the others were sentenced to death. Michael Swab and Samuel Fielden had their sentences commuted to life imprisonment. A worldwide campaign involving not only anarchists but all socialists failed to save the condemned men. On November 11th 1887 August Spies, George Engel, Albert Parsons and Adolph Fischer were hanged, Louis Lingg having taken his own life the day before with explosive smuggled in to him by a fellow anarchist.

For many years afterwards November 11th was commemorated by anarchists and socialists around the world. The five Chicago anarchists became martyrs, and August Spies' last words were quoted many a time in their honour: "The time will come when our silence from the grave will be more powerful than the voices you strangle today!"

In 1893 the imprisoned men were pardoned by the governor of Illinois, who criticised the judge and the trial and found that the evidence had not shown that any of the eight anarchists were involved in the bombing (which may even have been the work of an agent provocateur). The five dead anarchists had been judicially murdered by the State.

In 1888 the fight for the eight-hour day was relaunched and strikes and demonstrations were called in America for May 1st 1890. This time the movement became international, and



demonstrations took place all over Europe. May Day became established as a date for international working-class solidarity. Year after year, May Day saw huge demonstrations around the world as workers took to the streets to voice their demands and remember the Chicago martyrs.

Ironically, in North America May Day was to be abandoned by the reformist unions in favour of the more placid Labour Day. In Britain things went the usual way. The first May Day in 1890 fell on a Thursday. The reformist socialists and the majority of the labour movement under their control observed it on the nearest Sunday, only the anarchists and revolutionary socialists insisting on May 1st.

In Russia, following the decay of the revolution, May Day was turned into a State occasion, and in all the "communist" countries today it is the excuse for a display of military strength and the dictatorship of the Party. Meanwhile, in the West, May Day has been absorbed as a harmless public holiday in many countries. This finally happened in Britain in 1978 with the first Monday of May becoming a Bank Holiday. The British Trade Union movement still prefers the nearest weekend.

In fact we seem to have forgotten what May Day is about altogether. For us syndicalists (revolutionary unionists) May Day isn't simply a matter of a Saturday afternoon stroll by a handful of trade unionists through the town centre, to be harangued later by some Labour Party or TUC bureaucrat. For us it's a commemoration of the many martyrs who gave their lives for our class' gains in the past, and an expression of

determination for a better life in the future.

Many workers still, in 1985, are forced to work longer than eight hours a day in order to earn enough to live on. While millions who are no longer needed by capitalism are without work, those with jobs are forced to work harder than ever. The reduction of working hours remains as imperative in 1985 as it was in 1886. The only way to defeat unemployment (a tool used to intimidate and impoverish the working class) is for the demand to go up for a reduction of working hours without loss of pay. The 35-hour week would solve the "unemployment problem" (a problem for us to be sure, not for the politicians) overnight. Even just a ban on overtime would, if widely carried out, force the employers to take on hundreds of thousands of workers. What is lacking is the will and organisation to win these demands.

In the "Free World" last May Day the British miners had entered into a bitter struggle with the full force of the State ranged against them, and most of the rest of the British workers' movement left them to fight alone. In "communist" Poland workers' May Day demonstrations are usually met with tear gas and baton charges...

So, we syndicalists insist on a return to the roots of May Day. We'll observe it this year as best we can, and shall continue to observe it till the day May Day once again sees millions of workers all over the world streaming on to the streets to conquer their future.

Dino Marcone.



The IWA today, C Longmore. A short account of the I.W.A and its sections, 32 pages illustrated 50p.

Syndicalists will have eagerly awaited the publication of an account of the Syndicalist International, the I.W.A. However this pamphlet is a great disappointment on three counts, its villification of independent Syndicalist movements as opposed to Anarchist led ones, its historical inaccuracy and its tendency to exaggerate.

Many Anarchists tend to triumphalism, "why not add an extra nought to make a membership figure more impressive", thus the Norwegian Syndicalist Federation is accredited as having 20,000 members at the time of the first I.W.A congress (it has never had more than 3,000)

We are also told the fiction that the modern N.S.F distributes its paper Arbeiter Solidaritet free to all local unions of the L.O (Norwegian T.U.C). There are 16,000 such locals in Norway, Arbeiter Solidaritet's print run is less than a thousand.

Such exaggeration does not help our movement, the organization for telling lies is, on the contrary, the Communist Party.

Throughout the pamphlet the Syndicalist (called revolutionary Syndicalist here) organisations have slurs cast upon them, they are shown as ideologically backward, nationalist and as divisive within the International.

We are told that the Italian Syndicalist's Union (U.S.I) "social and political awareness of their membership was not that well developed and with the coming to power of the fascists were in no position to fight back". This is a grave insult to the dead of the U.S.I, contrast the truth

During the period of ever present fascist violence, the U.S.I fought hard at the side of the workers in defence of the rights of associative life. It had its halls burnt down and destroyed by the combined attacks of fascists, monarchists, police, and military forces which took the Italian people back to the massacres of 1898 in the Liguria, Milan, Sicily. Its best militants were arrested shot or forced into exile.

Some regional unions resisted along time Piambino lasted a long time as at Piambino Genova etc. Armed workers repulsed the Fascists on more than one attack and inflicted heavy losses. But in the end even these Bastions of the Proletariat were crushed.

Thus we see the U.S.I not beaten because their membership weren't animated by the infallible light of Anarchism but because they were militarily crushed (even so it took 4 years of fascist rule to eradicate the union from Italy).

The pamphlet claims the Workers Solidarity Alliance

of the U.S.A. as an I.W.A. section when in fact it has merely applied to the international, the success of its application still being in doubt.

We are treated to Longmore's belief that the "British working class are by nature very conservative" this just after the militancy of the year long miners strike. I suppose then that the reason the Spanish working class contains many Anarcho-Syndacilists is because they are by nature (being hot blooded latins) revolutionary! On and on the inaccuracies stumble across the pages culminating in the statement that the Labour movement is today controlled by the "Methodist Mafia?", but it is Syndicalism that Longmore really hates. The modern French C.N.T is stigmatized as having certain sections opposed to the presence of any propaganda groups within the I.W.A. "when in fact this union liased closely with D.A.M. sending thousands of pounds for the miners to its Hulf branch.

The French C.N.T's membership has been (according to Longmore) "held back from involvement in the work of the I.W.A" who by? The wicked Syndicalists?

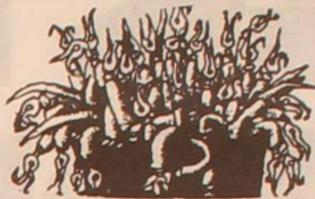
SYNDICALISM AND ANARCHISM.
We can not recommend this well produced well illustrated pamphlet to any worker wishing to understand our ideas, it states "the Syndicalist had no long term view of the reconstruction of society" Read "The Syndicalist", paper of the British Syndicalist movement at the turn of the century that disproves this idea, it is the Marxists who carp on about the lack of ideological sophistry in Syndicalism. Longmore claims that syndicalists state there is only one field to fight on, the economic "and that the Syndicalists should come out of their factories and move into the community at large".

It may be news to Mr Longmore but Syndicalists don't need Anarchist ideology to achieve this, for example, the Syndicalist Bolivian Workers Central has family membership thus bringing the union into the community. The Dutch O.V.B syndicalist union has general unions which organise the unemployed in the community. The Irish T.G.W.U, when syndicalist at the time of Jim Larkin, at the turn of the century, even bought a peoples park where union members families could enjoy leisure activities.

Syndicalists believe that the union is not a transient form of organisation but the way that the future society will be organised.

A history of the I.W.A would be a most useful addition to our propaganda, we await its future production.

AVAILABLE: a poster specially designed to commemorate the 40th anniversary of Yalta. It measures 15" X 12" and is in red and gold on glossy black. Send £1.50 plus 45p post and packing to Park House, 64-66 Wandsworth Common North Side, London SW18. Proceeds are to help with publicity in Britain and underground printing work in Poland.



LETTERS



Dear comrades,

it is good that we have opened up a discussion on the nature of power and the role of the unemployed.

As far as terminology is concerned; Syndicalism may mean little to British workers at present, but is it not the job of D.A.M. to make it a household name just as the first British Syndicalists such as Tom Mann and Guy Bowman did. Comrade Bamfords preference for the phrase "Direct Actionist" is strange. Direct Action is not a coherent theory, Syndicalism is.

Here in France Revolutionary Syndicalism is taught by our experience of work and working class life, it is Marxism which is being taught by Universities. I believe it is the same in your country.

Comrade Bamford cannot imagine any Anarchist analysis of a social relationship which has a powerless party. What is the power that the starving millions of Africa have, the old, the infirm, they have none. These people do have most to gain from a revolution but it is not they who are in a position to bring it about, it is those who produce the wealth of society those in paid employ.

I would on the remarks made by the U.S.I. comrade that all the imaginative Syndicalist tactics he mentions e.g. work to rule, are methods of withholding labour, Syndicalists will always support these methods. However I disagree with the comrade when he suggests the setting up of workers cooperatives inside Capitalism, apart from as a defence against unemployment they have no revolutionary content. We cannot have workers self-management outside of a Syndicalist society.

Best wishes,
your comrade;
Edward Dubois, Lille.



40 YEARS OF YALTA

**DIRECT
Action**
MOVEMENT

AIMS AND PRINCIPLES OF THE DIRECT ACTION MOVEMENT

- (1) The Direct Action Movement is a working class organisation.
- (2) Our aim is the creation of a free and classless society
- (3) We are fighting to abolish the state, capitalism and wage slavery in all their forms and replace them by self-managed production for need not profit.
- (4) In order to bring about the new social order, the workers must take over the means of production and distribution. We are the sworn enemies of those who would take over on behalf of the workers.
- (5) We believe that the only way for the working class to achieve this is for independent organisation in the workplace and community and federation with others in the same industry and locality, independent of, and opposed to all political parties and trade union bureaucracies. All such workers organisations must be controlled by workers themselves and must unite rather than divide the workers movement. Any and all delegates of such workers organisations must be subject to immediate recall by the workers.
- (6) We are opposed to all States and State institutions. The working class has no country. The class struggle is worldwide and recognises no artificial boundaries. The armies and police of all States do not exist to protect the workers of those States, they exist only as the repressive arm of the ruling class.
- (7) We oppose racism, sexism, militarism and all attitudes and institutions that stand in the way of equality and the right of all people everywhere to control their own lives and the environment.
- (8) The Direct Action Movement is a federation of groups and individuals who believe in the principles of anarcho-syndicalism; a system where the workers alone control industry and the community without the dictates of politicians, bureaucrats, bosses and so-called experts.

I would like to know more about the DAM/IWA. Please send more information. I enclose a stamped addressed envelope.

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ADDRESS.....
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IMPORTANT: NEXT COPY DATE
JUNE 20th

DIRECT ACTION



IWA Northern Sections Conference

40 delegates of the Northern European sections of the IWA met in London on April 6-7th at Hackney Labour and trades club. Organisations attending were the Norwegian Syndicalist Federation, Anarcho-Syndicalist Organisation (Denmark), Free Workers Union (W. Germany), D.A.M. and also participating the French National Confederation of Labour and a delegate of the O.U.B. the 15,000 member independent Dutch Syndicalist Union. The Swedish Anarcho-Syndicalists unfortunately were unable to attend the conference.

Business included reports on the Danish General Strike, on analysis of the failure of the British miners struggle. Whilst the Northern I.W.A. sections pledged their continuing support for the sacked and imprisoned miners, aid to be channelled to D.A.M.'s National Secretary through Leeds D.A.M. The F.A.U. plan a conference on new technology, and later this year there will be an I.W.A. conference on unemployment.

The acting General Secretary of the I.W.A. Carmen Lopez of the C.N.T. transport union also outlined the I.W.A.'s attempts to gain new sections. After the next conference Anarcho-Syndicalists in the C.O.B. Bolivias powerful union are likely to adhere to the I.W.A.

The Northern I.W.A. is organising a summer camp in Denmark between July 13th and 27th to which all I.W.A. comrades are invited, comrades should notify A.S.O. six weeks before this date sending a £20 deposit.

The next I.W.A. Congress will be hosted by the French C.N.T. in September in Paris.



RANK & FILE CONFERENCE



In the wake of the miners' defeat, caused by the T.U.C.'s treachery a rank and file conference was held at Kellingley colliery on the 20th April

About 100 union delegates attended including representatives of the Mineworkers Rank and File organisation and building workers Rank and File.

It was agreed that any future rank and file organisation should be made up of trade union members elected at branch level and of course unemployed group delegates. It was also agreed that a future rank and file organisation would be independent of political parties and BLOC which is geared to electing the vocally militant into the union hierarchy. A ten member steering committee was elected to organise a larger conference for the end of the year. It meets in Bradford on May 25th.

Barking Hospital Strikers Unbowed

After 13 months the strike by domestics at Barking Hospital continues with picketing fourteen hours a day. Amid rumours of secret payments Redbridge District Health Authority awarded the private cleaning company Crothalls a four-year contract. Four Tories on the DHA voted for this, one Labourite voted against, and ten abstained. Those who abstained are just as bad as those who voted for Crothalls.

In terms of cleanliness for the hospital, the decision is nonsense. No less than three independent enquiries have exposed the disgusting standards, especially in the toilets and on the wards. Infection and cockroaches are rampant. Inevitably in hospitals human waste ends up on the floor, yet Crothalls do not employ regular ward orderlies. They just wait for the complaints to build up from ward sisters, patients and visitors, then they send a team of cleaners into that area. When a DHA inspection is due Crothalls are informed and so

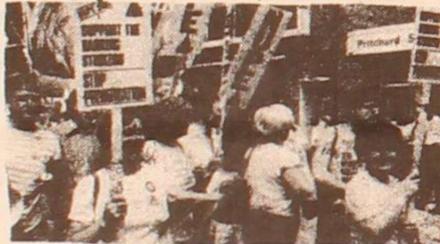
they get their scab workers to come in at 4.30am to smarten the whole hospital up.

The striking domestics have had hardly any consistent solidarity from other hospital workers at Barking or elsewhere, or from workers in other industries. Striking miners were one exception. NUPE and GMBATU bigwigs produced plenty of hot air and not much else, despite the crucial nature of the issue at stake (see DA 23). Some of the strikers feel angry that their strike has not really been taken seriously by the Labour Movement because all but one of the strikers are women.

Scab labour employed by Crothalls meant that the strikers could not sit at home and wait for the boss to come begging cap-in-hand. BY NECESSITY there was a 24-hour, 7-day picket rota, mass pickets, nationwide speaking tours, attacks on the scab bus, heckling scabs in the town centre, disruption of shareholders and DHA meetings, and formation of a support group. These initiatives had to be undertaken because traditional trade unionism had not and could not come up with the goods.

It is a pity that more direct action did not take place, such as attacks or pickets on all and any Crothalls property or managers, occupations, and appeals or demands for sympathy strikes from any other groups of workers.

The police play their normal, anti-working class role during this dispute. They ignore attacks by scabs and



managers on pickets, including one with a knife. But strikers were arrested for the most trivial incidents. Evidence has been fabricated by the police, who are now very good at that, so magistrates now impose picketing restrictions on top of fines. Police also make sure that there are no cameras



around before they get heavy-handed themselves.

Against all this is the courage, staying-power and comradeship of the strikers. Not one of the original 92 has scabbed. As the saying goes "It's better to die on your feet than live on your knees".
an
E. LONDON DAM
evil-smelling toilet that was blocked and covered in excreta which had been left in this state for five days.'



NO CRISIS FOR CAPITALISM

TEESSIDER REPORTS: ICI chairman John Harvey-Jones has been awarded a £2,230 a week pay rise (that's 68%) ICI made well over a billion pounds pre-tax profit last year, it has been announced. ICI workers are up for their annual pay rise, but it's doubtful if the company will be as generous with them. One thing's certain: the money's there--if there's a will to fight for it...

...and ICI aren't exceptional. A leading director of merchant bankers Morgan Grenfell had an annual pay rise of £37,000 (yes, about £100 a day) in 1984, while the chairman of insurance brokers Stewart Wrightson got a 37% rise of £636 per week. The list could go on and on...

...And on the same subject, it comes as no surprise to us to hear who's going to finance well-known union-basher Eddie Shah (of Warrington fame) in his attempt to launch a new all-colour national daily. The presses are to be paid for by the Hungarian State Bank--so much for workers' control and international solidarity as practiced by the Marxists!

HULL DAM

