



PRESS RELEASE

Workers Solidarity Alliance
U.S. Section of the International Workers Association

339 Lafayette St., Room 202, New York, NY 10012 (212) 979-8353

PR 94-02

08 February 1994

BANGLADESH GARMENT WORKERS WAGE FIGHT, SEEK INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

Garment workers the world over are some of the most oppressed workers and in Bangladesh the situation is no different. As more and more companies shift operations to the countries of the South the garment industry in Bangladesh has become the nations largest industry. There are about 1 million garment workers in that country.

According to the independent and militant National Garment Workers Federation (of Bangladesh), there are many laws on the books which are supposed to protect the right to organize unions but the bosses simply ignore the laws. The government does not enforce the laws since this industry is the single largest source of private capital. "For this", writes the NGWF, "the government is not interested in establishing the legal or the human rights of the workers... (and) not interested in the better conditions of the garment workers..." When workers organize a union, the bosses and government work hand-in-hand to insure that the workers are defeated.

In an effort to stop this collaboration between the bosses and the government, and to organize the many unorganized garment workers, the militant NGWF has launched a grass roots, campaign, but they are in need of economic solidarity in order to insure that this campaign will reach hundreds of thousands of garment workers, their families and others. In recent correspondence to the W.S.A.-I.W.A. the NGWF wrote that "as an independent revolutionary union organization, we shall get you as a real friend" and urged us to appeal to all workers' and workers' organizations to help them in their drive to raise funds for their campaign.

The NGWF campaign will originally be focused around the issue of obtaining from the employers a "Festival Bonus". In the past, workers were paid a bonus equal to one month's salary in celebration of the main holiday Eid. This has been simply ignored in the private sector, although payment for such a holiday exists on the books. Last year the NGWF waged a successful fight over payment of May Day as a national holiday. This fight will take on some of the same characteristics.

The campaign will be a four part one. Part one will be submission of the demand to the bosses at both the factory and national level and to the various government labor agencies. Part two of the campaign will consist of mass publicity of the demand (postering, leafletting, mass worker and community meetings, etc.). Part three will see an expanding of the campaign to other segments of society such as students, youths, women activists and professional workers. The final phase of the campaign will consist of further propaganda and action, such as demonstrations, public meetings, etc.

In conjunction with this last phase, the NGWF reports that if there has not been significant implementation of the bonus demand a general strike of garment workers--organized and unorganized--may be called.

This campaign is not simply aimed at securing more money

for the garment workers, as important as this may be, but also with the aim of having garment workers "join in (our) union movement...too."

The NGWF further writes that they need "\$2,000 from our friends (in) other countries. We want your participation...Time is very short...solidarity, support and assistance is very much needed."

We ask that all workers' organization assist our sister and brother garment workers in any way they can. They are in need of whatever financial assistance that you can send.

For further information or to send a donation, please contact the NGWF as follows: Please send only International Money Orders and make all checks out to the National Garment Workers Federation.

NATIONAL GARMENT WORKERS FEDERATION
AMIRUL HAQUE AMIN
GENERAL SECRETARY
GENERAL POST OFFICE Box # 148
DHAKA, BANGLADESH

FAX 880-2-863535

Please send copies of your communication(s) to W.S.A., thank you.

Bangladesh Garment Workers Wage Fight, Seek International Solidarity

This article was supplied by the Workers Solidarity Alliance, New York.)

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**National Garment Workers Federation,
Amirul Haque Amin,
General Secretary,
General Post Office Box No. 148,
Dhaka, Bangladesh.**

Fax 880-2-863535

Please send copies to Workers Solidarity Alliance, 339 Lafayette Street, Room 202, New York, NY 10012.



P R E S S R E L E A S E

Workers Solidarity Alliance

U.S. Section of the International Workers Association

339 Lafayette St., Room 202, New York, NY 10012 (212) 979-8353

PR 94-03

18 April 1994

**BYELORUSSIAN FREE INTER-PROFESSIONAL WORKERS UNION (SMOT)
REPORTS FIVE CASES OF REPRESSION AGAINST WORKERS,
SOLIDARITY REQUESTED**

1) For participation in a wildcat strike on 12-14. January 1994 at the factory "Zenith" in Vileyka (60 km NW of the capital Minsk) the management had fourteen workers put on trial. The workers had demanded a) that the Kebich government stand down, b) that the Supreme Soviet be dissolved and early elections called, and c) that a government of the people's confidence be formed.

2) At the factory "Transistor" the President of the factory's Free Union, Nikolai Grinchik, was sacked by management. He had organized a legal one-hour warning strike demanding that the laws of the Republic of Byelorussia be observed at the enterprise, and also organized a union mass meeting on 12. January 1994 and participated in a protest meeting on 15. February 1994. The Public Prosecutor of the Republic of Byelorussia refuses to consider protests of the factory workers at the sacking. Other workers' activists have also been subject to ongoing harassment by the factory management - Vladimir Strelyenko, Mikhail Kolyesen and Vladimir Dimitrovich.

3) At the Dzerzhinsky factory of the industrial complex "Integral" in Minsk, Igor Azarko, President of the factory's Free Union and member of SMOT-Byelorussia's Council of Representatives, was severely reprimanded for organizing a union meeting at work (participation around 400) and for distributing leaflets, the paper "Basta!" and a model collective agreement drafted by SMOT. Management is also conducting an active campaign of intimidation against other workers who are members of the free union - Sergei Skameyko, Vladimir Khokhlov and Nikolai Kazakievich.

The sharp increase in repression against members of SMOT by management at the industrial complex "Integral" is due mainly to the management of the constituent factories aiming to set up a joint venture with German firms, in particular with Bosch-Siemens. Representatives of Western capital have set the management a range of conditions to be fulfilled at "Integral" before implementation of the project. One of these is that the complex is to be free of unions by the time the Joint Venture starts operation, i.e. free of all unions, but in particular of any like SMOT - a workers' organization which has constantly and consistently fought for decent wages.

4) On 28. February 1994 at the industrial complex "Belvar" in Minsk the worker Valentin Vayev was detained by police and interrogated for active participation in setting up a strike committee and handing out the strike committee's appeal and the SMOT paper "Basta!"

.../...

The "Belvar" management finally managed to bring to fruition its more than eight-year efforts to sack the worker Anatoly Matveyenko, President of the factory's Free Union and Coordinator of SMOT-Bylorussia. The new General Director Nikolai Yerokhov is actively continuing the campaign of repressing workers' civilized forms of struggle as we fight for our rights: Anatoly Matveyenko was ordered sacked for his participation as a union rep in a demonstration and mass protest meeting in Minsk on 15. February, and also for organizing and conducting strikes at the enterprise in December 1993 and January 1994 demanding decent wages. Signatures are being collected at "Belvar" for a petition in support of Matveyenko.

5) The Public Prosecutor in the city of Mogilyov (170 km East of Minsk) has brought charges against two workers for organizing mass meetings and demonstrations in January and February 1994. Under prosecution are the President of the local Workers' Committee, Vladimir Sharapov, and an activist of the Free Union of Byelorussia, Sergei Obodovsky.

Addresses for sending protests:

Respublika Belarus'
220049 Minsk
ul. Internatsionalnaya 22
Public Prosecutor, Vasily Shalodonov
Ph. +70172-264166

Respublika Belarus'
220600 Minsk
pl. Kazintsa
NPO "Integral"
General Director, Viktor Yemelyanov
Fax. +70172-787980

Respublika Belarus'
220600 Minsk
pr. F. Skaryny 50
PNO "Belwar"
General Director, Nikolai Yerokhov
Fax. +70172-310689

Please send copies of protest letters to:

Respublika Belarus'
220049 Minsk
pr. Rokossovskogo 12-1-550
Anatoly Matveyenko
Ph./Fax. +70172-481781

Workers Solidarity Alliance-IWA
339 Lafayette Street, Room 202
New York, New York 10012, U.S.A.

APPEAL BY SMOT-BYELORUSSIA TO THE WORKERS OF THE WORLD
AND ALL GOOD PEOPLE OF GOOD WILL IN THE WEST

At the present time, where a pro-Communist parliamentary majority (96%) has elected the Chief of Police Mecheslav Grib as its Speaker, the government of our Republic is making great efforts to put down the free union and independent workers' movement in Byelorussia. The recent wave of repression against the small number of workers' activists is just the beginning of the pro-Communist government's plans to destroy workers' opposition. Both the Byelorussian and Russian rulers are hoping to strengthen their power and maintain the current, brutal methods of production in the waning economy with the help of Western capital. There are many examples of Western industrialists and politicians going for cooperation with the governments of the ex-USSR in order to secure super-profits and preserve their own monopoly of power, and thus helping the Communists rub us out. Therefore SMOT-Byelorussia issues the following appeal, not to the governments of Western states, but to the workers and all people of good will living on the other side of the border:

"Friends, we ask you to do all you can to publicize the known cases of repression against our workers fighting for their human rights and a decent life. Do all in your power to prevent your countries aiding the pro-Communist regimes of the ex-Soviet republics. Don't let your governments spend your tax-payers' money to prop up the anti-environmental and inhuman regimes in power in the CIS. Stop the creation of joint ventures between Western firms and enterprises of the ex-USSR whose managements' hands are stained with extensive repression of the workers. The implementation of such joint ventures to create mixed production will only bring joint rightlessness and destitution to the workers in different countries - and unlimited power to the multinationals and neo-Bolsheviks."

13.03.94 SMOT Byelorussia

Address: Respublika Belarus', 220049 Minsk, pr. Rokossovskogo 12-1-550, Anatoly Matveyenko, Ph./Fax. +70172-481781.



Workers Solidarity Alliance

U.S Section of the International Workers Association

East European Working Group

339 Lafayette St., Rm 202, New York, NY 10012 (212) 979-8353

Workers Solidarity Alliance

U.S Section of the International Workers Association

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23 December 1994

339 Lafayette St., Rm 202, New York, NY 10012 (212) 979-8353

UKRAINIAN ANARCHISTS AND ANARCHO-SYNDICALISTS UNITE !

On 14-16 October 1994 in Donetsk the founding conference of the Revolutionary Confederation of Anarcho-Syndicalists (RKAS) was held. The conference was attended by delegates from Nikolayev, Donetsk (and region), Dnepropetrovsk and Kharkov. A number of interested observers were also present. Statutes were elaborated and a draft programme was discussed. A number of resolutions were also passed.

The "Declaration of the Founding Conference of RKAS" states that the anarchist movement in the ex-USSR is in a state of crisis, both at a local level and in its supra-regional groups (KAS, ADA). Attempts at overcoming the crisis through the foundation of "organizations based on old principles, e.g. FRAN", have not brought about any changes. Many anarchists have now realized that adherence to the old principles of individual self-proclaimed membership, having no mechanisms for exclusion of members, and the lack of desire to fulfil even voluntarily responsibilities, create a adverse situation. Things happen under the flag of anarchism which have nothing at all in common with anarchism, and anarchist groups are full of people who exercise a demoralizing influence.

In order to overcome these problems the RKAS has adopted the following structures: a system of fixed membership so as to have the possibility of excluding members who discredit the organization or are inactive in the long-term; the binding nature of decisions once taken (with the right of those not in agreement to not fulfil them though not to hinder their fulfilment by the others); a clear concept and division of the concrete tasks to be performed within the organization (editorial work on the paper, putting out the internal bulletin, organizing seminars, doing environmental work, etc).

The main thrust of RKAS' work is to be the broadly-based propaganda of anarchist ideas among the workers, in contrast to the prevailing general direction in anarchist propaganda to date which has been aimed at ideological anarchists and at creating an intellectual elit. RKAS intends to publish a central organ "ANARKHIA" intended for ordinary people. The RKAS will also publish an information bulletin "Anarcho-Syndicalist".

In ideological terms the RKAS is in favour of "classical" anarchism and rejects trendy developments such as "autonomism", "anarcho-maoism" etc. The goal of the RKAS is to transcend the existing system by revolutionary means, there will be a transition to a federation of free regions, i.e to stateless socialism. In

organizational and tactical questions the RKAS stresses its differences with KAS, ADA, FRAN etc. Its strategy is anarcho-syndicalism, i.e. the organization of the working masses for the struggle against the state and exploiters.

RESOLUTION OF THE FOUNDING CONFERENCE OF RKAS ON RELATIONS WITH IWA

"The RKAS declares itself an unconditional supporter of the IWA and aims to become the IWA's Ukrainian section. The RKAS sees the consolidation of anarcho-syndicalist forces on an international level as one of its goals.

Nevertheless, in view of the hullabaloo in the lead-up to the next IWA Congress, we feel compelled to declare the following: an analysis of the situation in the Ukraine shows that the creation of a mass anarcho-syndicalist union by 1996 is rather unlikely. In our opinion only powerful organizations should join the IWA, thus there can be no mention of us joining the IWA at the coming Congress. Forcing these developments and creating fake unions for us is no alternative, as it contradicts both common sense and anarchist ethics.

Today the work is under way of consolidating anarchist forces in the Ukraine and putting anarcho-syndicalist propaganda on a solid footing. The founding of the RKAS is also the first step towards there later being an Ukrainian section of the International. This will be in the interest of the IWA and in our own interest. The future section must be a massive, truly functional force created by the workers themselves with our active assistance. When such an organization exists we can talk about joining the IWA.

For the time being let us affirm our ideological and comradely bonds to the IWA and invest all our strength so as to be worthy of coalescing with it in future."

Donetsk, 15-16 October 1994

English summary of the special edition of the information bulletin
"Anarcho-Syndicalist" (original in Russian)

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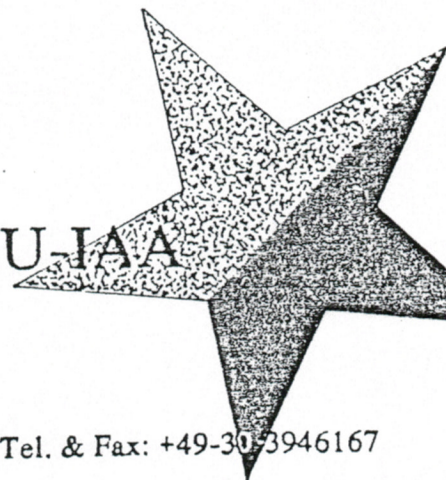
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AND

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P R E S S R E L E A S E

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PR 94-04

A CALL TO RECLAIM MAY DAY - PROTEST THE IMF AND WORLD BANK ON MAY FIRST, 1995

We see today that the main purpose of the cold war was to prevent our movements for a better life, our class and our organizations in the First World, Eastern Bloc and the Third World from coming together. Such alliances seriously threaten the existence of all exploitative institutions whether they are ruled by corporations or by the state, whether they call themselves capitalist or socialist. The end of the Cold War was the result at least in part of the refusal to accept this division by people in the First, Second and Third worlds. But the end of this form of rule has only led to the whole world coming together under the tyranny of one global system of exploitation managed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB) and backed up by the military repression of the United States, the United Nations and virtually all of the governments of the world. These institutions were consciously created at the Bretton Woods Conference in 1944 to constitute a capitalist international. The Communist and Third World nationalist bureaucracies gradually became active collaborators with the IMF/WB, using foreign debts to discipline their own working class. The IMF and WB are this year arrogantly celebrating their fiftieth anniversary. We want to ruin this party.

We at Workers Solidarity Alliance-IWA/New York-New Jersey and Neither East Nor West-New York are writing to invite you to join in organizing a day of action against the IMF and WB to be held on (or around) Monday May 1, 1995. We have chosen May Day because we wish to reclaim the tradition of worldwide working class unity. The May Day tradition (which began as a commemoration for the martyrdom of anarchist activists following a general strike for a shorter work week in the United States in 1886) has become somewhat hollow for those raised on Stalinist-bloc war parades, empty leftist marches in Europe and parts of the Third World, and Law and Order Day in the U.S. Now more than ever we need to work together independent of official borders. This is a project in which all those receiving this mailing are already active, but our hope is that worldwide coordinated actions will help expand this badly needed planetary alliance against these institutions which have done so much damage to people, communities, cultures, and the environment all over the world. In choosing this day we are also building on an older May Day tradition of celebrating the annual reawakening of the earth in spring. We are reclaiming our planet from these desecrators of the land who expropriate and exploit us.

We especially hope to bring the role of the IMF and WB to the attention of North Americans and others from western countries who are less aware of the role of these institutions even in their own countries. The IMF and WB are located in the U.S. They are funded primarily by the richest governments. The suffering of the people in First World countries is the result of IMF and WB policies no less than in other parts of the world. Throughout the world, the growth of homelessness, loss of farms and jobs, destruction of neighborhoods, slashing of social programs and education, de-capitalization of local industries, creation of artificial famines, repression of labor and other social movements has grown as a result of IMF and WB policies. We also hope that this day of action can help build autonomous contacts and networks between peoples in every part of the planet. Such contacts have until recently been limited or made difficult by the division of the world into two Cold War blocs, and by the political loyalties which have developed around this division.

Nearly every country in the world regardless of political ideology, "capitalist" or "socialist", has been devastated by structural adjustment programs, the debt crisis and development schemes organized by the IMF and WB. All over the world people are beginning to express their anger at these bureaucrats and their policies. Demonstrations and revolts against the IMF/WB have already taken place in dozens of countries ranging from Russia to Chiapas, from Melanesia to the West Bank, from Lagos to Berlin. The statist solutions of the past are being repudiated, and nearly every government has either collaborated with or surrendered to the IMF/WB and imposed austerity and repression. Only a new movement everywhere, for a world without supranational government, can free all our lives from the authoritarianism and exploitation which goes by the names of structural adjustment, privatization, liberalization, the free market, the global economy, budget austerity, "democracy". We are finally able to pay attention to the man behind the curtain. At this point we have a year's lead time to prepare for May Day 1995.

A few last words: we are not "in charge" of this - we are volunteering to act as facilitators for the communication on this proposed project. We want to start talking about the kinds of actions that the different unions, organizations and groups would like to do and what resources they have available. We would like everyone to contact us as soon as they have some ideas about what they are going to do so we can start passing on the information to others. We will do several mailings about proposed plans and will be sending out some kind of IMF/WB packet (most probably in English, but if you can help on this last, please let us know this too). We are also not dictating the kinds of actions to be taken. If you feel it would be most effective participating in some larger anti-IMF/WB action or traditional May Day in ones area do so by all means and pass the news on to us.

Please contact us to let us know what you think, so we can start preparing for May Day 1995. Send replies to Workers Solidarity Alliance and Neither East Nor West at 339 Lafayette Street, Room 202, New York, New York 10012, USA

In solidarity,

WORKERS SOLIDARITY ALLIANCE-NEW YORK/NEW JERSEY
NEITHER EAST NOR WEST-NEW YORK