PRISON RIOTS ERUPT

THE LAST FEW weeks have seen a great upsurge in working class revolt, not just on the streets of Britain during the anti-poll tax demonstrations and riots, but also inside the cells of Her Majesty’s prisons.

As soon as prisoners took over the wings of Strangeways in Manchester, burnt and demolished their cells and other parts of the prison, the state and press were ready with stories of bodies strewn around the prison as violent prisoner attacked sex offender. Just what you’d expect from the uncontrollable elements in our society, so they said. We now know this to be completely untrue.

Media attempts to remove any public support for the institutions: Bedford, Bristol, Brixton, Cardiff, Dartmoor, Durham, Glen Parva, Humberstone Everthorpe, Hull, Leeds, Lindholme, Long Larlin, Rantonville, Pert, Shepton Mynes, Shotts, Stoke Heath, Wandsworth, to name a but a few.

A riot gear attempted to regain control by force, and blasted the prisoner on the roof with loud music speakers and fireworkrockers, whenever it looked like they might be getting the facts across.

The Strangeways riots inspired similar unrest in many other prisons and youth institutions: Bedford, Bristol, Brixton, Cardiff, Dartmoor, Durham, Glen Parva, Humberstone Everthorpe, Hull, Leeds, Lindholme, Long Larlin, Rantonville, Pert, Shepton Mynes, Shotts, Stoke Heath, Wandsworth. To name but a few.

Whilst the mainstream press have been spreading lies, the left press have been falling over themselves calling for better, nicer prisons and fewer screws to ‘take care’ of them, so that it won’t happen again.

An incredible 1 in 1000 people of Britain’s population are in prison at any one time, mostly working class people, the liberal prison reformers trying to tell us all that prisoners want to clean cells, longer exercise periods, and one to one attention from a personal screw.

Of course, some people (like rapists) will need to be reckoned with even in an anarchist society. But prisons are just the front end of the state which locks away people it can’t control. We support as equals in the class struggle, prisoners fighting the state in the the only way left open to them. And they’ll need all the support they can get. As we go to press, the outcome of the Strangeways occupation is uncertain, but the prisoners still on the roof must know they face either life sentences in isolation, or worse if the government gets tired of waiting.

ORGANISE!
for class struggle anarchism
AN ERUPTION OF CLASS ANGER

THE POLL TAX RIOTS * STRIKING STRATEGIES
MANDELA * ECOLOGY AND CLASS * PRISONS

Magazine of the Anarchist Communist Federation
New ACF pamphlet: Beating the poll tax

Published in mid-February, with the arrival of poll tax bills in England and Wales just a few weeks away, this new ACF pamphlet outlines the kind of collective class action that can crush the Community Charge.

It examines the strength of poll tax resistance in Scotland so far - and exposes the failings in the Labour Party in trying to put down this revolt. It explains the objectives that lie behind the poll tax, and the cynical way whole sections of the Left have tried to move on, and suffocate, the growing opposition to it.

This is a brand-new pamphlet, completely revised and updated.

Available from: ACF, c/o 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1.

Please send me copies of Beating the poll tax at 60p each, I enclose ... (Cheques made payable to the ACF)

Name: 

Address

ANARCHIST COMMUNIST FEDERATION

THE ANARCHIST COMMUNIST Federation is an organisation of class-struggle anarchists. Its structure is based on membership of area and interest groups and individuals. We have members in the following areas:

- Birmingham
- Blackpool
- Chesterfield
- Coventry
- Co Durham
- Essex
- Glasgow
- Halifaxes
- Kent

As regular readers will have seen, we've been forced to increase the cover price of Organise! from 30p to 40p with this issue. This first increase in over two years, has been forced on us by increases in printing and postage costs.

This 40p is still not enough to cover all those costs. If we're to keep the cover price from rising again, we desperately need a regular flow of cash into the Press Fund to help make up the shortfall.

We've added four pages to this issue (at even more expense) to allow us to include all the material on the Trafalgar Square riot and the poll tax struggle that we needed to.

This issue's appeal has brought in less than £100 - well short of our regular £250 target. Many thanks to go everyone who contributed.

If you can help us reach our next £250 target, please send donations, by June 17, to:

ACF Press Fund, Box 1, Hiziki, 15 Goosegate, Nottingham.

ORGANISE! IS THE NATIONAL magazine of the Anarchist Communist Federation (ACF). Organise! is a quarterly-theoretical journal published in order to develop anarchist communist ideas. It aims to give a clear anarchist viewpoint on contemporary issues, and initiate debate on areas not normally covered by agitational journals.

All articles in the magazine are by ACF members unless signed. Some reflects ACF policy and others open up debate in undisputed areas, helping us develop our ideas further. Please feel welcome to contribute articles to Organise! - as long as they don't conflict with our Aims and Principles. We will endeavour to publish them.

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The ACF promotes the building of a strong and active anarchist movement in Britain and internationally, and has had contact with like-minded anarchists in other countries.

We invite you to: P.O. Box 263, Sheffield S1 3EX.

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MANDELA: (not) talking 'bout a revolution

NELSON MANDELA'S recent release from prison has been the cause of much celebration and massive media hype. However, for anarchists, his release can bring no such joy - as we see the struggle of the black working class in South Africa restrained and controlled even further by the African National Congress (ANC), in the name of a "negotiated settlement" to end apartheid.

Within hours of his release, Mandela was busy spelling out the nature of the ANC. The release of Mandela was simply necessary to provide the environment for this to take place.

The white ruling class and the ANC are not locked in a bitter battle. The ANC is willing to provide a smooth negotiated settlement in return for a larger slice of their slice of the cake.

We are willing to do business, and one which will leave alone the white ruling class over capital. That organisation is the ANC. The release of Mandela was simply necessary to provide the environment for this to take place.

We need to understand the role of the ANC. It provides for nationalisation of mines, banks, industry, because they are owned by one race only (our emphasis).

It is clear that the conflict is not that of the ruling class own the wealth and land and the class, and the ANC is a major financial and political burden for the ruling class in that country.

The intensification of the struggle which took place in the mid-eighties was something they could have well done without. Having failed to suppress this recent increase in militancy in the townships and workplaces, the ruling class now reals that another solution is necessary.

**Capital**

So, from private capital to nationalisation and back to private capital in a few short breaths - and not a hint of "anti-capitalist" politics.

**Vigilant**

Elements of the Left in Britain have not been slow to focus on the reactionary politics which Mandela espouses. They talk of the need to "keep a watchful eye" on Mandela. Predictions of a "sell-out" are already resounding.

Yet a brief look at the politics and context of the so-called Freedom Charter and the history of the African National Congress clearly indicates that a "sell-out" cannot be on the cards. Far from in the ANC's history has it had a minimum demand of "one person, one vote" (our emphasis).

The Freedom Charter states: "The mineral wealth beneath the soil, the banks and monopoly industries shall be transferred to ownership of the people as a whole". Even this classic nationalist clause was disowned by Mandela only a year later in the face of criticism of the Charter being a "socialist" programme. Mandela explained that what was meant by this was: "...non-European Bourgeoisie will have the opportunity to own in their own names and rights, mills and factories - and trade and private enterprise will boom and flourish as never before."

The problem is that the ruling class is the white. It follows that the solution is a multi-racial ruling class.

The black working class in South Africa face the continuation of a long and bitter battle, not only against the racial ruling class regime in place at the moment, but also against the ANC who are willing to do anything to reach the "armed struggle", or outrage at the recent numerous activities of the regime, are simply rhetoric in the negotiating game.

The "negotiable" nature of the ANC. During the 1976-7 and 1980 uprisings the ANC was noticeably absent. It tried to minimise the importance of the uprisings and workplace militancy, calling them leaderless, chaotic and even infantile. And although the ANC had many requests for weapons from the 'Young Comrades' they only came in a trickle and then only to loyal supporters.

**Leaders**

Whilst granting some political power to black leaders, the white ruling class hopes it can retain hold of economic power and thus stay in control of the economy, because they are owned by one race only (our emphasis).

As anarchists, part of our agenda in practising solidarity with the South African working class, must be the smashing of the Myth and in doing so, we can expose the failure of nationalism. A change of bosses means no change of exploitation - no change at all. Mass revolutionary action from the exploited, the black working class of town and country, the poor and young people, can spoil for these plans for normalisation.

**Bitter**

Whilst all this is pretty disheartening, it is important to remember that the many sections of the black working class - especially the young women and men who have grown up in the same bitter struggle against the racist State - are far from being ANC lap-dogs. Those involved in the struggles of the eighties have experienced the controlling nature of the ANC. During the 1976-7 and 1980 uprisings the ANC was conspicuously absent. It tried to minimise the importance of the uprisings and workplace militancy, calling them leaderless, chaotic and even infantile. And although the ANC had many requests for weapons from the 'Young Comrades' they only came in a trickle and then only to loyal supporters.

They were usually squandered on elite military actions. They changed their tune during the 1985-7 uprising - realising like the apartheid rulers that internal revolt was the threat to the white State. The uprising was outside the control of the ANC or any political faction. The townships became the new, no-go areas for the police and military, and collaborators received popular justice.

**We starve in rural areas**

The black working class is willing to do business, and one which will leave alone the white ruling class over capital. That organisation is the ANC. The release of Mandela was simply necessary to provide the environment for this to take place.

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**Street and township committees were set up by everyone in the insurgent communities directly controlled the struggle. This left the ANC and other groups as leaders without followers.**

With a major visual role to play they need to "appease" all sides. Many working class black South Africans are aware that they have already waited too long, and are not prepared to see the ANC take the struggle from them for the sake of a potpourri of limited political reforms.

Whilst Mandela calls for a "pacification" of the struggle in order to facilitate negotiation, black workers have been calling for a strengthening of the struggle, for increased strike action, for mass rent boycotts - for more militancy.

The black working class in South Africa face the continuation of a long and bitter battle, not only against the racist ruling class regime in place at the moment, but also against the ANC who are willing to do anything to reach the "armed struggle", or outrage at the recent numerous activities of the regime, are simply rhetoric in the negotiating game.

We want Johannesburg to remain the beautiful and thriving city that it is now. Therefore, we are willing to maintain separate living until there are enough new employment opportunities and new homes to allow blacks to move into Johannesburg with dignity," says Mandela.

The refusal to renounce the armed struggle by the ANC is a bargaining chip with the Apartheid State. It is a distraction from the backdoor negotiations with the ruling class. Already the ANC has turned their minimum demand of 'one person, one vote' into a maximum demand which Mandela has described as "negotiable".

The black working class in South Africa face the continuation of a long and bitter battle, not only against the racist ruling class regime in place at the moment, but also against the ANC who are willing to do anything to reach the "armed struggle", or outrage at the recent numerous activities of the regime, are simply rhetoric in the negotiating game.

**So, from private capital to nationalisation and back to private capital in a few short breaths - and not a hint of "anti-capitalist" politics.**

**Grovelling for a better deal, and pleading with the ruling class in South Africa and abroad, for a lesser version of exploitation and oppression.**

The Freedom Charter states: "the mineral wealth beneath the soil, the banks and monopoly industries shall be transferred to ownership of the people as a whole". Even this classic nationalist clause was disowned by Mandela only a year later in the face of criticism of the Charter being a "socialist" programme. Mandela explained that what was meant by this was: "...non-European Bourgeoisie will have the opportunity to own in their own names and rights, mills and factories - and trade and private enterprise will boom and flourish as never before". 
A RIOTER’S ACCOUNT
sent anonymously to Organise
EVERYONE WHO FULLY participated in the events of March 31 will agree that they were uplifting.

The sight of tailed up police being given a good thrashing, and the sense of liberation and joy from being in control of the streets was almost euphoric.

The police provoked the whole incident by allowing the march to pass off peacefully, they used a combination of arrogance, naco threatening and arbitrary arrests to stir up an already angry crowd of people. That the police were unable to judge the dire consequences of that aggression must mean severe admonitions behind the closed doors of Scotland Yard. They also calculated and miscalculated badly.

Opportunity

The demonstrators seized the opportunity, and in very often creative ways took control of the situation. The police’s tried and tested methods of crowd control were found wanting. That many of the street fighters were young, poor and very determined in their anger proved to be the police’s undoing. We would not be pushed around, indeed in huge numbers we surrounded the police in Trafalgar Square and brought our revenge for years of Thatcherite hostility. Organise and Rapine were avenged.

Psychologically, after the first reverses of the riot, the police, the demonstrators were unstoppable. Perhaps the single most important factor was the psychological one – a combination of anger, determination and lack of fear.

The police use of temporary fences was turned against them – Demonstrators utilised them as barricades or as means of hemming in the police, allowing them to use a combination of missiles.

At a later stage, when the events moved to their highly mobile stage, London police cars were used by the ‘squaddies’ to assist in controlling the police who were constantly re-grouped in battle groups. Also, the mounted police officers were highly mobile and could, according to one report over 50% of them sustained injuries. They were an easy target. The mobile demonstrators were hardly affected by the mounted police, with a ready supply of missiles and shop doorways to dive into, the cavalry charges were almost laugh off. As for the dogs, they proved totally ineffective. Big handlers never got near enough to be able to use them.

Of course, with their vans, the police were highly mobile. However, they were also highly vulnerable to ambush – on several occasions mobile police vans were surrounded and stoned. The mobility of the crowds were in the initial stages at least, the learnt effect of the police clearing Trafalgar Square. With the police tied down in pitched battles, the streets were safer to be looted well in advance of the arrival of the riot squads. Later, as the police pursued them, the crowds fanned out to loot affluent London know what the poor and oppressed think. The stinging of Stingfield LCC night-club brought forth squalls of delight as neon lights crashed to the ground. Mobility must be seen as one of the greatest strengths of the day and resulted in a host of lightening attacks and victories.

The use of arson was more questionable. Whilst the firing of the portacabins in the Square was quite spectacular, it did allow the police to use fire engines to move the crowd away from the scene of previous pitched battles. Also, that part of the Square became unsafe as the whole unit could have collapsed on us. The mobbing of the South African Embassy, however, was a delight to behold. It is interesting to note that the windows were a false facade. The whole Embassy is constructed as a fort. As regards the upturning and burning of cars, it did provide the danger of explosions, and several small family cars were gutted – which is something to be criticised. But, our true enemies – the rich - felt our fury to its fullest.

Future

In the future, we can be sure, the police will use alternative methods if they hear of any uprisings. One option would be to use CS gas – but this is indiscriminate and would affect wealthy tourists who were around the West End. Plastic bullets may be used next time, but the political costs here are high enough – like CS gas - marks a display of defeat.

People who watched the riot on TV, or from the safety of the far side of Trafalgar Square (unable to participate for whatever reason) have said the police got what they deserved. Such events give our class confidence, and we learn how to co-operate together and effectively take on the State. We don’t need anyone to organise us, anyone who had tried to take over would have been told to fuck off. We laugh when they try to point to ring leaders, just like we laugh at people who try to achieve balance with each other. CFCs which damage the ozone layer, causing global warning by the year 2000, it’s been estimated that however a reduction of 85% is necessary, in the ozone layer to repair itself, Acid Rain is being similarly ‘tackled’ - too little, too slowly and never tackling the root causes.

FEAURES

ECOLOGY AND CLASS

MANY PEOPLE ARE now aware of the massive worldwide problem of environmental pollution and destruction.

Reinforces such as Amazonia (home to native peoples and thousands of unique animal and plant species, and an important source of oxygen and absorber of carbon dioxide) are being decimated. Large areas of land are being turned into desert. There is an increasing number of ‘natural’ disasters such as droughts, floods and earthquakes affecting ever more people. Pollution is causing dangerous climatic changes such as the global warming from the Greenhouse Effect.

Acid rain, poisoning of the sea and drinking water, increasing cancers from industrial radiation, the list is endless. But what are the causes and solutions, and what is the relationship of ecology to the class struggle?

Ecology is science of living things and their relationships, when the environment is destroyed, the whole class structure is affected. A whole new order of principles have been radically undermined by the economic crisis.

People are acting in many different ways to try and green society - as consumers, dissident shareholders, in main stream politics, etc. New ideas are becoming popular. Green ideas are trendy and topical! Even companies and governments are getting in on the act. What is the effect of all this talk and action?

Governments of the industrialised countries signed a treaty in 1987, the Montreal Protocol, agreeing to halve the destruction of the ozone layer, by the year 2000. It’s been estimated that a reduction of 85% is necessary, in 20 years, little more than a subterfuge for the explosion of Nuclear Power which lessens the reliance on coal, undesirable because of the power and militancy of the miners.

Protocol

Companies are making an increasing number and ranges of ‘environmentally friendly’ and ‘healthy’ products such as bleaches and detergents, unadulterated food. These products are invariably more expensive (and so can only be afforded by the better off) and they are also often the ‘acceptable face’ of big companies who continue to make the same old junk in large quantities. Big firms such as Shell spend millions of pounds of advertising and PR, letting us know how green they are – reclaiming the land after they’ve used it, putting their pipelines underground, and giving money to green projects, yet they continue (with governments) to be the environmental terrorists.

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Organise! No19 May-July 1990

[Image 0x0 to 2905x2088]
Buying 'leisure.' Although green products are preferable they are not the answer; they're an individual solution. They're an individual solution. Power et. State level they eupperted slngle issue they Can't be taCk'ed. But if they Organise! No 19 May-July 1990

The green policies and promises of the mainstream political parties are so much populist window-dressing. Green Parties are superficially more attractive. They have some radical policies such as decentralization, federalization and opposition to leaders. But if they achieve power, they will (like the mainstream parties or Bolsheviks) be running a state, the results of which will be the root of the problem. They will also - invariably - be corrupted by power as illustrated by the German Green Party: in power at State level they supported nuclear power.

None of their central rules was that no-one could be a spokesperson for more than two years, yet this was vehemently opposed by the first generation of non

opposition to leaders. But if they however. Some green activists lack of class analysis has led them to the misanthropic conclusion that people in general are (equally) responsible for the ecological crisis. This means that the Earth would be better off without people and has led (for example) to the American direct action group 'Earth First' stating that Aids is a good thing because it kills off so many people, and to racist outrages about the detrimental effects of Third World 'overpopulation'.

What is striking about pollution and environmental destruction is the scale of it, and the fact that most of results from routine, daily practice rather than accidental, like forest fires (such as Bhorel, Sovoso, Chernobyl or the Exxon Valdez Alaskan oil spill).

To take the example of agriculture. In the developed world, in these case large-scale industrialized agribusiness. The emphasis is on growing single crops in huge fields - monoculture - an unnatural ecosystem. The plants are more vulnerable to pests, necessitating chemical pesticides. Chemical fertilizers are used to obtain (short term) high yields. In these cases, these result in the soil of nutrients and yields falling. Pesticides kill both pests and the creatures that prey on them, and poison food. There is massive government-supported overproduction leading to examples such as the famous butter mountains and wine lakes. This food is fed back to the ecosystem, destroying some economic than selling it cheaply or giving it to people who need it. Farmers are also paid to keep good land fallow.

In Britain the boycott of dumping Waste at sea by rank and file sea-farers forced the government to abandon the policy in 1990. In Brazil, rubber tappers forged an alliance with native peoples and environmentalists to oppose massive deforestation of the Amazon rainforest by big landowners and business interests. Their success led to the murder of union activist Chico Mendes by hired assassins in December 1988, but the struggle continues.

Mass direct action by communities (occupations, sabotage and pitched battles with police) has prevented nuclear power stations and reprocessing facilities being built at Ploppof in France, and Myll and Machendorf in Germany. In Britain, communities mobilised in 1987 to end government plans to dump nuclear waste at 4 sites. In Scotland several years ago, 100,000 people rioted to destroy a 70m steel factory.

In Africa and Asia the rural population live on the poorest land. They are forced to grow cash crops for export, although their primary need is to feed themselves: 15 million children die every year from malnutrition. In Brazil the World Bankupported (World Monetary Fund) is insisting that the huge $120 billion debt is paid by reducing imports and maximizing exports. This has inevitably led to the destruction of Amazonian rainforest, through increasing the output of primary products such as minerals, meat, coffee and hardwoods.

On the worst land, these growing populations overcultivate, deforest and overuse it, making themselves more prone to natural disasters such as floods - in the long term these also the most dangerous: the poor live in shanty towns on flood-prone river basins or fore-shores, or in huts of heavy brick on steep hills. Mass pollution and environmental destruction is the inevitable consequence of a system based on dominating the rest of nature (and therefore exploiting and destroying it). This domination has it's roots in the domination of people - class society, where power and wealth is in the hands of a few, the ruling class, who oppress and exploit the working class majority, and the rest of the population. Production is for profit not need. It is the ruling class who decide what is produced and how - peasants don't choose to grow crops, individuals can't stop pollution through buying, boycotting or voting.

Technology

It is important to examine technology (the machines and tools used by society and the relations between them, the services implied by their use). Existing technology is rarely neutral - it has been developed under and by capitalism for economic control. It is therefore not just a question of control - a nuclear power station controlled by the workers and community would still be unhealthy and voluptuous. VDUs monitor whether and how fast their operators are working, production lines force people to do long and repetitive tasks at a tremendous pace (that of machines).

The ruling class is constantly modifying technology developing new machines, tools and techniques in response to working class struggles: containerisation (enabling goods to be equally transferable between ship, rail and road) was developed in response to the power and organisation of the dockers.

Technologies which are potentially more liberating are suppressed. Successive British governments have put massive funds into nuclear power, tiny amounts into research and development of renewable energy sources such as wind, solar, tidal and geothermal energy. This paltry funding has been deliberately chipped away so that re

search into each renewable energy never progressed too far.

Large scale industry necessitates large scale centralized energy production from fossil fuels (Coal, Oil and Gas) and nuclear power, with the consequent waste, acid rain, radiation and global warming. Renewable energy could equally be used.

We need to develop a technology which extends human capabilities, can be controlled by the community and is friendly to the environment as part of the struggle for a free anarchist-communist society. A genuine alternative technology, can only be developed on a significant scale in a new society.
THE POLL TAX:  
The Peasants Revolt

The British government, the Labour Party, the media and the All Britain Anti Poll Tax Federation alike, have declared themselves to be 'one of the winners one' after the demonstration in London against the poll tax on March 31.

According to them, anarchists in general are 'extremists', Trotskyists, the Class War, the Anarchist Communist Federation and the Direct Action Movement were behind the Trafalgar Square riot and the subsequent assaults on the West End.

According to us, anarchism in Britain has never had it so good. The influence that our ideas have had in the working class has always been overestimated by the State and the 'people-in-power', that our ideas have had in the years to introduce our ideas (politics, economic and working practice) into the work we do around various aspects of class struggle in all its forms. In- 

The media can produce all the pictures they want of people 'coordinating the violence', but the truth is that people can and do organise mutually and more cleverly than that. Anyone who has been involved in class violence knows how it works, and how uneconomic any 'steering committee' or self-appointed 'leadership' is.

Rioting is only one form of class anger - generally speaking only the young, unattached, underpaid, who have to look after themselves, who have no moral qualms about trashing or stealing what they need and what we have.

Certainly plenty of Trotskyists would like to be accepted by the working class as leaders, but people always tell them so fuck off and sell their papers elsewhere. We sometimes wonder if the State believes its own lies, that 'Rent-a-Mob' comes down to 'organise the violence'. The truth is that the ruling class want people to see the 'parliamentary road as the way to change, and see people opposing that as 'extremists' imposing their views on 'decent people'.

Anarchists throughout the world have been, and are, active in opposition to all dictatorial whether Fascist, Bolshevist, Monarchist or Bourgeois-democratic. But in any situation, not least Trafalgar Square (or the fight against the poll tax in general) if we tried to impose any kind of Leaders- ship or manipulate people like the Left does, we would be told to fuck off, and quite rightly so.

The Left often accuses us of being sectarian because we aim to expose the destructive role they play in struggles. We do this to stop them disorganising the class so that struggles like the one against the poll tax stand a better chance of succeeding.

The Left are always on about 'unity', but they engage in working class struggles for political gains to their own organisations, and so they end up fighting over irrelevant issues to 'prove' their point.

Anarchists are not part of the Left. We oppose class collaboration, so-called 'revolutionary vanguard' and those who pretend we can 'vote away' the ruling class. We are the enemies of any State leadership. This is why most of the rest of the working class have a healthy mistrust of political parties.

The majority of people fighting the poll tax are ordinary people. The Left use the police as hired guns, to do their dirty work.
Polish anarchists begin to organise

The POLISH ANARCHIST Federation (AFP) was founded in 1989. It consists of about 19 local groups, in 13 towns which, for a newly emerged movement, is a considerable success. Nearly all the groups publish magazines or papers.

On January 12, anarchists shouting "Down with capitalism", "You can't force price rises" and "Turn Krona into soup" (Krona - a former "disident" - now Minster for Labour in the new Polish government) interrupted a session of the Senate (Polish Parliament) in Warsaw for fifteen minutes.

The AFP is widely regarded as the main revolutionary force opposing both the "official" anarchists and the Solidarity advocates of austerity measures.

Evidence for this can be found in the following interview with Josef Pintor: a leading member of the Polish Socialist Party-Democratic Revolution (PSP-DR) - which has been translated from a French journal and re-edited.

How do you explain the evolution of Solidarity?

I don't think it is possible to talk about the evolution of Solidarity as if it were a single unit, unitary single programme. On the contrary, Solidarity is today deeply divided.

On one side, we have a new bureaucratic leadership. This leadership, which is trying to turn Solidarity into a classic reformist union. We are to 'tighten our belts' to meet the costs of economic reform. I am surprised that the Polish government, which reigns throughout the Bloc countries, does not accept this nonsense. They are actually pauperising the population. If you look at the workers of Poland, most of them are poor, they do not accept this. We are to 'tighten our belts', but the workers are to suffer. I think this is the point.

On the other hand, there is the Solidarity made up of the rank and file, trying to turn Solidarity into a classic reformist union. We are to 'tighten our belts', but the workers are to suffer. I think this is the point.

Can you give a brief sketch of the present Polish opposition and its different tendencies?

Starting off with Rank and File Solidarity, the factory committees, where a process of re-evaluation is going on. The leaders of these committees are to be seen in the new structures that are directly political and in new thought that is explicitly left-wing. It is the same for the anarchist groupings which have been organised, and which are becoming an important element on the Polish political landscape. There is the People's Movement in Solidarity - a movement which has been going on for years, but which has been given a new twist by the violence that has characterized the last year. And finally, there is the "anti-authoritarian current" which has been developing for some time, the "anti-authoritarian current" which has been developing for some time.

Young people are a very important element outside the unions. Growing up under the State of Emergency, they've experienced tear gas and tanks on the streets. And now they see no future for themselves. Fighting for the right to find housing or well-paid work - they have no future other than hunger.

This generation is clearly opposed to the lack of leadership, to the lack of direction. They have been deeply affected by the violence that has characterized the last year. And now they see no future for themselves. Fighting for the right to find housing or well-paid work - they have no future other than hunger.
Creating a Hungarian anarchist movement

AFTER POLAND, a second anarchist movement has developed in Eastern Europe: in Hungary. In 1986, the idea of creating an anarchist group was raised during a meeting. But, if the interest in anarchist ideas was already important, there was as yet no feeling for the need to organize this "movement" properly.

At this time, some anarchist ideas were being expressed through the underground press, which was often called "Autonómia" ("between the Cardinals' Points"). In 1988, twenty people met in Budapest, to form an anarchist group, calling it Autonómia. Three other groups were formed: Eger, Nyíregyháza, and Szakszervezér. Autonómia holds weekly meetings, devoted to both theory and practice. It is an active part within the Hungarian opposition. Several of its members were among founders of Hungarian Solidarity ("Munkasszolidaritas - Workers' Solidarity") which participated in the giant demo of March 15 1989, when between 90,000 and 100,000 people turned out in Budapest. It gave full support to the struggle against the totalitarian system there is felt that a more structured organisation was necessary. The Szdsz (Federation of Independent Democrats) united the great majority of well-known personalities of the intelligentsia. It is a fairly influential group, but its influence is limited to 3,000 people amongst the intelligentsia, nearly all in Budapest.

"Anarchist currents" organised by dissidents have existed in Budapest. This mutated in Autumn 1988 into a "trend" largely dominated by right-wingers. Within it there are several tendencies - liberal, conservative and populist. This Hungarian Democratic Forum (HDF) group 15,000 people together, and is more influential than the Szdsz with its solid network of local committees.

**Parties**

The Party of Smallholders has also re-formed. Before the 'Communist' takeover, this party was important in a Hungary that was essentially rural. But now with massive industrialisation this Party has no future, unless it breaks with its exclusively peasant role.

Other groups that have emerged include the Hungarian National-Socialist Party - led by some old-timers of Hungarian fascism, who control a hundred skinheads who regularly attack Jews and Gypsies. They are a tiny minority, but a recent poll showed that 80% were in favour of a Hungarian 'freedom' of its 150,000 Jews and 100,000 Gypsies.

The Trotskyists are working within the Group for an Alternative Left. Their ideas, and their rhetoric of 'workers' councils', could have some influence amongst Hungarians - but are hindered by a language little different from that of the 'Communists' rulers. They are developing international contacts, and plan to create a Revolutionary Workers' Party of Hungary. Finally, the Hungarian Socialist Democratic Party wants a Swedish-style set-up. It was created by old Social-Democrat militants who were meeting together to campaign for the 'rehabilitation' of some of their comrades, shot by the 'Communists'. There is a fairly strong current amongst the young which supports this group, and it could become the second force of opposition behind the KPP, if not the first.

But the opposition is not limited to political parties. Some intellectuals are grouped within the Union of Scientific Workers (TDSz). The Independent union Munkasszolidaritas (Workers' Solidarity) is more important. It was born at a meeting of Szdsz for the workers. It is more than an opposition committee, several hundred strong. But it could be an important force if the economic situation becomes more and more extreme

"Regimes" have taken place in the mines and in industry. The 'Communist' bureaucrats, terrified by the spectre of 1956 and the Polish strikes in August 1980, gave in to the demands the ecologist movement is relatively strong in Hungary, concentrating on the struggle against the hydro-electric dam in the Danube. But it has failed to take up the struggle against nuclear power.

In May 1989, the tensions within the ruling party came to a head, when a group of four was placed at the head of the political bureau. These were among the most well-known 'reformers' within the Hungarian movement. There were also two reformers led to the dissolving of the party, and the establishment of a new party - the Hungarian Socialist Party. It pledged to defend the country from communist and democracy, and rejecting all alliances to communism, and democratic centralism within the party.

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performed badly, with many leading party figures suffering humiliating losses. In the second round, on April 8, the ‘centre-right’ Democratic Forum fared best—winning 165 of the 386 assembly seats. The Forum announced plans to form a ‘grand coalition’, probably including the rightist Alliance of Free Democrats and the Smallholders Party. Socialists Party candidates won only 33 seats, with the hardline Socialist Workers Party being all but obliterated. The Socialist Party is in a very weak position to scrabble for a place in the coalition.

The Journa’s headquarters. The movement is blown up a munitions dump. A group of哈尔・布蒂安尼 (born 1877) — later to be known as Ervin Batthyany — is an important figure in the movement. After having spent a long time in Forradalorm appears, advancing anarchist legends. They start to harass the Paty — how they are fooled, exploited and beaten by the landlords, and their servants, the police and foremen. They deal with the horrific conditions of life in the Tobacco, and build slowly and excruciatingly to a revolutionary climax. These books are filled with scenes of brutality; and revolutionaries in their turn inflict brutality on the bosses. Traven raises his voice against the bosses again and again, against the obscure set-up... It was no fault of the rebels that they were burned alive. It was not of the rebels that they were expelled, dragged off to work on the Cotton-Pickers. They made contact with Torockoi and with P.M. — a student who had set up an anarchist group supported by the ‘Communists’. They start to harass the Nazi and Fascist military, adopting the legendary red-belt of Korsakin. They refuse unity of action with ‘Communists’, who denounce them to the Germans — who arrest 67 militants including P.M. His group splits, and two thirds go over to the ‘Communists’. Korsakin’s group — wearing red belts — attack and destroy the units of the Russian navy. The following night, Christ’s group — S.F. (‘Libertarian Youth’) blow up munitions depot. A group followed, and the movement is continuing attacks up to the Battle of Budapest, which claims 200,000 lives. The movement demands a new government for the political struggle to come after the expulsion of the fascists.

October 1945 - The movement regroups. Three tendencies emerge: P.M.’s group wants a working arrangement with the ‘Communists’ against the ruling class. Torockoi’s group wants to continue the armed struggle against the State and the Russian troops. Torockoi’s views gain majority. A printshop is set up, and propaganda distributed. The movement has 500 militants, and its influence spreads.

‘Communists’ then ban the movement. Torockoi dies after arrest. Four anarchist students open fire on Russian troops, and the last strike after liberation from the fascists. Thirty workers, including 24 anarchists, are subsequently executed. The movement is liquidated, P.M. Flee to Italy, Christ and Korsakin to France.

Hungary: The Past...

1917 - The Journal ‘Tarsadalom Forradaloma’ appears, advancing anarchist socialist ideas up to 1916. One of the editors is Ervin Batthyany (born 1877) who after having spent a long time in England where he met the anarchist thinker Kropotkin — devotes himself to work with agricultural workers. With other young anarchists, he breaks away from the group of Eugene Heinrich Schiött — Tolstoyan pacifist — to create a poetically libertarian organisation.

A group led by Ervin Szabo (1877-1918) opposes the collective programme, and believes that the movement should be built on the lines of French anarcho-syndicalism. 1914-1918 - Szabo organises coordination of shop stewards in key factories with anti-militarist movement initiated by Galilea Circle, composed of socialists and liberals. At his funeral in 1918, thousands turn out. As a result — and because of the Russian revolution — the Budapest Soviet is set up, but crushed by reactionary forces. Many anarchists are killed, but many also rally to the new ‘Communist’ Party, fooled by Lenin’s apparent libertarian rhetoric. Among them are Tibor Szemely, the anarcho-syndicalist Rablinska and Otto Korvin. Many of these later persist in Stalin’s purges when exiled in the US.

In the Fascist Minister sets up a regime and continues the liquidation of anarchist groups.

1944 - Anarchist groups re-emerge around the veteran Torockoi (who was 80 in 1945). The first libertarian action is against German forces, by an anarchist student group. One of them, named Christ (1) — a 15-year-old petty-trader — is captured. In prison he meets comrade Atan M of the Hungarian-Ukrainian anarchist group Bucks (‘the South’) which is a hundred strong, and is one of the most important resistance groups.

_B Traven: the voice of anger_

“My biography would not disappoint you, but it is my own particular story, not something you can keep it to yourself. I do not write this autobiography... the biography of a creative person is complex and difficult as each person cannot be recognised in his work, then he is not worth a damn, and neither is his work.”

B Traven was the author of ‘The Treasure of the Sierra Madre’ (made into a film by Humphrey Bogart) — The Death Ship — and many other novels written between 1920 and 1940.

In the sixties his books began to be reprinted, and many radicals and revolutionaries began to read his work. They found in his depictions of working people’s lives and of the great elemental forces than run through times of revolution.

The shadowy Traven appears as Otto Felix, son of a potter in 1881, born in Chicago of Scandinavian and Mexican Indian peasants. He had wished to attend the University of Chicago but was refused unity of action with the workers’ organisations. He began to bring out a journal — a magazine. The movement is liquidated, the movement regroups. Three groups want to continue the armed struggle against the bosses...

Traven’s works are available in paperback.

_Vienna, July 1990_
How can ambulance crews win?

YOUR ARTICLE ON the ambulance dispute in Organiser 18 raised some points which may be worth discussing. There are a number of issues that you mention:

1. The need to link the ambulance dispute to other struggles.
2. The importance of worker unity.
3. The role of the leadership.
4. The need for a clear strategy.
5. The potential for a general strike.
6. The necessity of solidarity with other groups.

These points are all important and deserve further discussion. However, I want to focus on one particular issue that you mentioned: the potential for an all-out ambulance strike.

I believe that an all-out ambulance strike would be a mistake. Here are some reasons why:

1. The strike would undermine support. There is a growing awareness among ambulance workers that a strike would make it more difficult to gain support for future action.
2. There is understaffing before the dispute, which was already resulting in increased workload for those who remained. This would make it difficult to maintain morale.
3. We must avoid giving the impression that we are fighting for a “better deal” for the union. This could undermine the credibility of our movement.
4. We need to focus on the larger political issues, such as the privatization of the ambulance service and the role of the government in the provision of health care.

In conclusion, I think that an all-out ambulance strike would be a mistake. We need to focus on building a broader movement that can challenge the power of the ambulance bosses and win real gains for ambulance workers.

John Smith
Ambulance Workers' Union

Aims and Principles

1. The Anarchist Communist Federation is an organization of revolutionary class struggle anarchists. We aim to unite all forces of revolutionary nationalism in the struggle for a socialist society.
2. Capitalism is based on the exploitation of the working class by the ruling class. This exploitation takes many forms, including economic, social, and political exploitation.
3. We believe that the only way to overcome capitalism is through revolution. We support the creation of a new classless society where workers control the means of production and distribution.
4. We oppose all forms of nationalism, as this only serves to divide workers and undermine the revolutionary struggle.
5. We support all forms of anti-capitalist action, including direct action, sabotage, and guerrilla warfare.

The Anarchist Communist Federation

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