

WORKERS

SOLIDARITY

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FREE THE CHATTANOOGA 8!

On May 13, 1993, eight protesters led by the Concerned Citizens for Justice were illegally arrested by cops at a "police memorial" in Chattanooga, Tennessee. They were: Lorenzo Komboa Ervin, Tanya Miles, Steven B. Hunter, John Edward Johnson, Rhonda Robinson, Clifford Eberhardt, Keith Melvin and Charlotte Williams. This was two days after the racist report issued by the Hamilton County Grand Jury that refused to prosecute eight white police officers for the murder of African American truck driver Larry Powell, who was stopped for DWI on February 5 while driving through town. The police officers choked him to death at the scene. Over 23 persons are known to have died in the custody of the Chattanooga police since 1978. There has never been a prosecution for any of these murders.

The protests on May 13 were part of an entire week of protests against police brutality, and it was felt that this "police memorial" was a deliberate slap in the face of the local Black community. It was an occasion for the police to congratulate their fellow officers for escaping prosecution in the Powell case. Concerned Citizens for Justice felt that the counter demonstration was required to combat the arrogance of

the police. They bravely marched into the midst of over 400 armed cops, held up picket signs and chanted "Stop Killer Cops, Justice for Larry Powell." They were immediately arrested and hauled off to jail. The eight arrested protesters face 7 months in jail for "disturbing the peace" and "interfering in a public meeting". All have been freed on \$1000 bond each.

The irony of all this is not lost on the community. Now the police even want to keep us from talking about

their murders, and these eight protesters are the ones on trial, not the eight cops who murdered Larry Powell. The Chattanooga Eight deserve the support of all those who believe in justice and oppose police brutality. We must demand that all criminal charges be dropped against the demonstrators, that all literature seized from them at the time of their arrest be returned, and that they also be financially compensated for legal expenses and the humiliation of arrest. We must also



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continue to demand the prosecution of all the cops in the case of Larry Powell and other victims of police brutality.

Lorenzo Komboa Ervin is famed for authoring the pamphlet **Anarchism and the Black Revolution**. In the 1960s he was a member of the Black Panther Party and the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee. In the midst of the state-sponsored COINTELPRO assault on the Panther's, he hijacked a plane for Cuba. Eventually captured by the government, he was imprisoned between 1969 and 1983. Since then he has been heavily involved in community organizing in Chattanooga.

Here's how you can help:

1. Write a letter to:

Gary Gerbitz, State's DA Office, Hamilton County Justice Bldg., 600 Market St., Suite 310, Chattanooga, TN 37402.

Or call: (615) 757-2170. Demand that all charges be dropped against the 8 and Gary Taylor (a Black motorist pulled over for a busted taillight, who was then beaten and arrested).

2. Make a donation for the legal expenses of those arrested. Send to:

Chattanooga 8 Defense campaign, c/o Concerned Citizens for Justice, POB 1066, Federal Courthouse & Post Office, Chattanooga, TN 37401.

3. Reprint this story and tell your friends.

A.E. STALEY WORKERS LOCKED OUT

In the last two issues of WS we have been reporting on the continuing guerilla war between members of Allied Industrial Workers Local 837 (AIW) and the giant corn processing company A.E. Staley (Which is owned by the British multinational Tate & Lyle, owners of Domino Sugar).

After months of working-to-rule, massive community rallies (joined by UAW members, who are locked in their own ongoing fight with Caterpillar) and other campaigns in and out of the plant, on June 27 the company locked out the nearly 800 production workers. Staley officials accused the workers of engaging in sabotage, which was their excuse for the lock-out.

In early June Staley management attempted to fire and discipline several workers for engaging in concerted activities. When word spread throughout the plant about the discharge the workers walked out and shut down the plant for two days, claiming that the plant was too unsafe to work in. When the discharged worker was reinstated the AIW members marched back into the plant singing "Solidarity Forever".

The workers say they are not on strike and report to work every day. But management will not let them in.

The issues that have led to this fight are management's demands for steep concessions in job security, working conditions, pay and benefits. These were the same conditions that led to a strike by International Longshoremen's Association Local 1814 in Brooklyn in October 1992 (see WS#5). Unfortunately that strike failed and the members went back to work under management's conditions and terms.

The Staley fight is very much under the control of the membership. They need your moral and financial support. They can be contacted at:

AIW Local 837
2882 N. Dineen
Decatur, IL 62526

STRIKING FRENCH ANARCHIST UNIONISTS NEED SUPPORT

Paris Metro cleaning workers who are employed by the contracting company COMATEC have been on strike since June 9th, 1993. These mainly immigrant workers are members of the National Confederation of Labor, French Section of the International Workers Association.

The Syndicat des Transports-CNT (Transport Workers Union) is urgently requesting financial support to help maintain the strike.

This strike is essential for these workers and for the establishment

of the CNTF in this sector. If the CNTF can win this strike they will be able to firmly establish themselves as a union to be reckoned with, which will lead to further organizing possibilities.

Please send all checks and letters of solidarity to:

Syndicat des Transports-CNT, 33 rue des Vignoles, 75020, Paris, France.

Please mention "COMATEC Strike" on your check.



NIGERIAN ANARCHIST UNIONIST NOT ALLOWED INTO SPAIN

Nigerian Awareness League National Coordinator Samuel Mbah was refused entry into Spain to attend a recent Plenary of the International Workers Association. No reason was given for this denial.

Readers of WS should now be familiar with the struggle of the anarchist unionist Awareness League. These comrades are fighting to build an anarchist unionist and libertarian socialist presence inside Nigeria. For this, four members of the AL were imprisoned and currently face legal proceedings.

Since January 1993 the WSA, in cooperation with Neither East Nor West-NYC, have been organizing a campaign for the freedom of the four Awareness League members and for the dropping of all charges against the comrades. To date our

campaign has raised more than \$1700 to help pay for legal expenses. There have been 45 articles published in 14 languages (from Hindi to Russian) calling for solidarity with the Nigerians. Petitions from around the world calling for the release of the comrades and the end to repression have gathered close to 1400 signatures. Additionally, the WSA campaign has resulted in 8 solidarity actions around the world. The campaign continues and further solidarity is needed. Information can be received from NY-NJ WSA.

If Samuel Mbah had been allowed to attend the IWA Plenary this would have been the first time in recent memory that the African continent had been represented at an IWA meeting.

Mike Harris

THE KATE SHARPLEY LIBRARY

The Kate Sharpley Library and documentation centre has been in existence for 10 years. The KSL is a British anarchist library, archive, research center and publishing house. The library includes several thousand pamphlets, books, newspapers, journals, posters, and leaflets. Material in over 20 different languages is included, covering the history of the anarchist and workers movements. The KSL also has an extensive libertarian socialist and council communist collection as well.

Recent publications include: **Dare to be Daniel-A History of Britain's Earliest Syndicalist Unions, The Unsung Struggle: Resistance to Franco 1939-51 and First Fight: The Origins of Anarcho-Syndicalism in Britain.**

Support for the KSL is always appreciated and needed, both financial assistance and the donation of materials.

The KSL can be contacted at:

Kate Sharpley Library c/o BM Hurricane, London W.C. 1 3XX, Britain

S. Africa - what the Future Holds

At a recent conference on workers rights organized by the South African Clothing & Textile Workers Union, an interesting exchange took place between unionists and a senior ANC policy maker.

Trevor Manuel, head of economic planning for the ANC, proclaimed that unions should mainly be concerned with their members interests on the shop-floor and not with the economy or the direction of society as a whole. Overall economic and social policy should be the primary role of government, he argued. Manuel conceded that unions could be allowed some input in these areas, but stressed that the coherence of these policies went beyond union concerns and was a concern of the government.

Manuel also claimed that unions represented the sectoral interests of their members, who were a privileged elite of wage earners relative to the unemployed.

Did Manuel ever hear that the unemployed are also members of the working class? For all the bravado about the "progressive" nature of the ANC, it sure sounds like an autocratic state agency in the making.

Mike Harris

Public Workers Network Statement of Purpose

The PWN is an independent nationwide organization of workers employed in the public and semi-public sector, except those employed in education. PWN members include those working as municipal, county, state and federal employees. We are also those who work for agencies or companies who are either subsidized by or provide services to agencies or governments.

We are as diverse as the fields we work in. We are healthcare workers, postal workers, social workers, maintenance workers, clerical workers and so on. We are blue collar, white collar and pink collar workers. Despite our diversity of backgrounds, skills and occupations we come together because we all share similar problems and concerns as public workers. We further come together in our efforts to build a united national organization of public workers.

The PWN believes that there must be fundamental change not only in our conditions of employment, but also in the way public services are provided. And in the way society itself is organized. We believe that those who do the work and provide the services know best how to decide and manage these things, not layers of bureaucracy and countless administrators. In short, we believe in workers control.

Some PWN members belong to AFL-CIO unions or staff associations. Others belong to neither. The PWN serves to unite public workers regardless of union affiliation or lack of affiliation. We come together determined to create a network that will lay the basis for the creation of a national organization of public workers, one that is completely run by the members themselves.

It is woefully clear to us that without the creation of a united, independent and militant network of public workers, life will go on "as usual." Public services will continue to decline, workers rights will continue to be eroded, and in those areas where AFL-CIO or independent staff associations exist, they will continue to fight among each other for your dues dollars rather than fighting the boss. They will also continue to rely on political action rather than direct action. Furthermore, they will continue to try and win favors from politicians rather than take on the boss. And they will continue to maintain their cozy after hours "back room" relations with employers.

The PWN seeks to radically change this. If you believe in building an organization of public workers dedicated to independent, militant action and workers control, then the PWN is right for you.

For further information and a copy of the PWN newsletter "The Uncivil Servant." (please send 1 first class stamp) write to:

PWN c/o
339 Lafayette St. Rm 202
New York, NY 10012



AROUND WSA

Indiana

During 1991 WSA member Nick Keirn wrote an article for **Ideas & Action** describing the contortions of several large business unions in their attempts to organize Indiana state employees. Before his death in October, 1991, his own worksite within the Indiana Department of Public Welfare joined AFSCME. On behalf of its members, AFSCME helped to organize a class action lawsuit against the State of Indiana for unpaid wages to state employees who worked overtime and performed weekend "on-call" duties. In May of 1993 the lawsuit was settled out of court. The workers won! 260 Indiana State employees will share the \$2.5 million settlement. Nick's wife and children will receive his portion of the settlement, minus federal, state and local taxes, and FICA payment.

Alabama

Poultry Workers Organize

For nearly a year now workers at Golden Poultry in Russellville have been attempting to gain union recognition. In February 1992, just prior to an NLRB election, many workers withdrew their support and the election had to be cancelled. This came as the result of a very slick anti-union campaign by the company that included closed meetings, video showings and veiled threats.

Since that time the U.S. Border Patrol and local sheriff's department has raided the night shift at

Golden Poultry, taking into custody 66 immigrant workers. The detainees were charged with entering the U.S. illegally. That same night, six other immigrant workers were arrested in what the sheriff's department called a "routine traffic stop". The president of Golden Poultry was quick to fire off an editorial to the local newspaper commending the police for the "fine job" they had done and denying any wrong-doing on the part of the company.

Despite two years of anti-union efforts on the part of management, police raids and other harassment, workers finally won union recognition in March of 1993. Given the terrible health and working conditions in the poultry industry, the struggle at Golden has just begun.

California

Education Workers Invade New College of California

Members of the Education Workers Network, WSA, the IWW and the Anarcho-Syndicalist Federation of Australia rallied on May 4th to protest the opening of the Holt Labor Archives at New College of Califor-

nia in San Francisco. Participants distributed flyers outside the building and then entered the facility and disrupted the reception.

On June 19th, "persons unknown" made a late-night raid on New College's Valencia Street buildings. All entrances to the building were glued shut and posters were wheat-pasted to windows, doors and walls. A seminar scheduled for Sunday morning on the 20th (on a "non-materialist approach to social change" by college president Peter Gabel) was severely disrupted as attendees and organizers found it impossible to enter the building.

New York

On February 26th members of WSA, Neither East Nor West and other NYC Anarchists demonstrated in front of the Nigerian Consulate in New York City. Around 30 people attended, and this in snow and freezing cold. The consulate sent their employees home early because of the protest. A letter of protest and a packet of signed petitions was delivered to the embassy. Despite a heavy police presence, the picket was peaceful.

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FREE THE MINNESOTA EIGHT!

Eight African-American men are being held in connection with the shooting of a Minneapolis police officer. The eight are: Steve Banks, Shannon Bowles, Larry Flournoy, A.C. Ford, Mwati McKenzie, Lee Rockymore, Montary Willis and an unnamed 15 year old. Several of the accused men have already been beaten while in custody. Others are being denied adequate legal representation. All have been tried and found guilty by the police and media.

The eight, ranging in age from 15 to 35, were arrested after an uneven and abusive police investigation. The police used the killing of the police officer as an excuse to terrorize the local Black community, with particular emphasis on young Black men. They ransacked homes of community leaders, arrested and harassed attorneys attempting to counsel victims of abuse and even attempted to intimidate the media from reporting on the terror.

Bail has been set at \$3 million. The eight have been denied legal counsel of their choice. The prosecution has withheld evidence, hindering the eight in their attempt to develop a legal defense. Judges involved have expressed bias in closed conferences and in open court. Prosecutors have attempted to stop lawyers and the Committee Seeking Equal Justice for the Minnesota Eight from exposing the injustices of the proceedings.

In Minnesota, where African-Americans represent only 5% of the population, 50% of the prison population is Black. One out of every four African-American men will have some relationship with the criminal system.

What you can do to help:

1. Send a letter of support to the Committee Seeking Equal Justice for the Minnesota Eight.

2. Make a donation to help finance legal defense and public outreach (checks should be made out: The Committee Seeking Equal Justice)

The Committee can be reached at:

The Committee Seeking Equal Justice for the Minnesota Eight, POB 40355, St. Paul, MN 55104

IWW WINS BINGO STRIKE!

The Lehigh Valley IWW and the Boulevard Bingo Job Shop have won an impressive victory in their year-long battle with the Boulevard Bingo Hall in Allentown, PA. Management has capitulated on almost all the workers demands, including the reinstatement of all fired workers, a partial payment of back wages and a collective bargaining agreement.

After failing to win a delay in the ruling on charges of unfair labor practices filed by the IWW, the attorney for Boulevard owner John Havassy contacted the union with an offer of settlement. Management, also faced with almost sure defeat in Federal Court, agreed to recognize the union and pay \$25,000 in back wages.

Congratulations comrades on a clear and decisive victory!

THE FAT CATS GET FATTER

Chief executive officers of the nation's top 800 corporations received a median pay of \$1.2 million in 1992 according to Forbes Magazine. The median salary means that half the executives made more and half made less. The highest paid CEO on the Forbes 800 list for 1992 was Thomas Frist of the HCA Hospital Corporation. Frist made \$1.1 million in salary plus \$126 million in company stock dividends.



WSA HOLDS 10TH ANNUAL CONVENTION

WSA members from the Western, Northeastern and Southern Regions met in San Francisco over memorial day weekend to discuss internal organization, industrial strategy and international issues. Observers from the Free Workers Union of Germany, the Industrial Workers of the World and SEIU Members for a Democratic Union also attended.

Letters of greetings were received from the **IWA Secretariat**, **Friends of the IWA-Switzerland**, **USI-IWA** (Italian Syndicalist Union), **FAU-IWA** (Germany), **NSF-IWA** (Norwegian Syndicalist Federation), **COB-IWA** (Brazilian Workers Confederation), **CNTF-IWA** (France), **SAL-IWA** (Finnish Anarchist Federation), **VB** (The Free Union, Holland), **IWW** (Industrial Workers of the World), **WSM** (Workers Solidarity Movement, Ireland), **IREAN** (Moscow), **KAS** (Moscow), **IFA** (Italian Anarchist Federation) and the Japanese Anarchist Federation.

The first day of the convention was taken up by debates and discussion of internal matters and officer's reports. Structural change was discussed, including combining two official positions and the idea of establishing a regional secretariat (which would include all national officers in one location).

The accomplishments of the past year were included in the National Secretaries report. This included the continued publication of the this newsletter, an increase in membership in the midwest and northeast, a dramatic increase in workplace activity and the successful coordination of an international campaign in support of our Nigerian comrades. At the same time, all this intense activity had rattled WSA internal organization, creating problems in two key offices. After much discussion and heated debate, possible solutions to the problems facing WSA in 1994 were put forth.

The second day of the convention included a discussion of industrial strategy. Reports were given on independent organizing projects initiated by WSA members. Given the fact that these projects were begun by WSA members and utilize WSA resources, there had been some confusion as to their status in relation to the organization. Some individuals believed that by joining a particular network, they were joining WSA. It was decided at the con-

vention that the role of WSA and the industrial networks should be made more clear: WSA will offer strong support to the network projects, and WSA members will be encouraged to participate and initiate further activity, but the projects themselves will be clearly independent syndicalist structures, unaffiliated to WSA or the IWA at this time. WSA organizers and militants will endeavor to infuse these projects with the spirit of revolutionary syndicalism, but the ultimate future of the networks will be up the majority of their participants.

The strategy of building independent syndicalist formations (such as the Education Workers Network, the Temp Workers Union and the Public Workers Network), as the possible components of a future labor alliance was seen as the best use of WSA resources at this time. Like many other IWA Sections (the FAU, DAM, NSF, ASF and COB for example), WSA has functioned as a propaganda group since its founding. The need to re-establish a syndicalist workplace presence and an effective syndicalist voice in the labor movement has prompted IWA propaganda groups to take the initiative in forming industrial networks. The networks are intended as pre-union formations capable of gathering information on a specific work sector and linking workers in that sector on a national, regional or local level.

Focus areas for WSA study and discussion were also on the agenda. The ongoing racial divisions among U.S. workers was seen as an area where concentration is needed. The desire of a number of members to devote time and energy to developing a practical position in this area was seen as a positive step. It was agreed that the historic failure of the workers movement to consistently link the struggle for workers power with the fight against racism requires immediate attention, par-

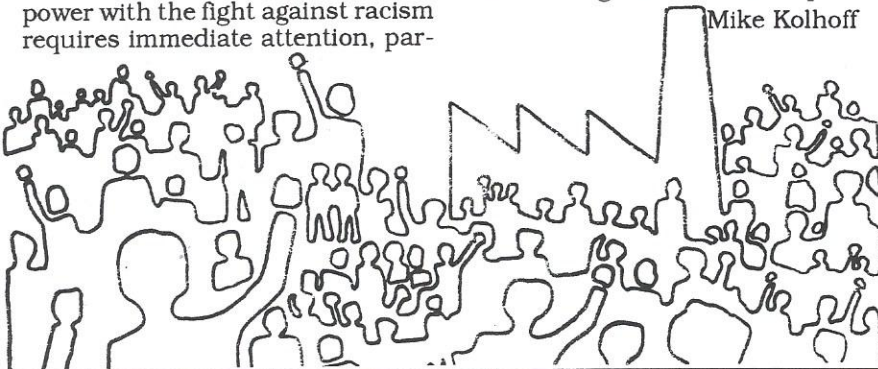
ticularly during this period of degenerating capitalism, when "reflexive" racism is growing in epidemic proportions.

International issues included a renewed interest in the Latin American Solidarity Working Group. Building contacts with Anarchist and Anarcho-Syndicalist groups in Latin America, an ongoing effort, was given new impetus. The possibility of publishing an IWA Latin American Newsletter was discussed, with this seen as a possible focus for future activity.

Sending a WSA delegate to the Conference on Sexuality being organized by the Direct Action Movement-IWA was also discussed. A member at the convention expressed a strong interest in attending, and it is hoped that he will be able to attend this important meeting. Sexism and patriarchy were pinpointed as areas where consistent work is required by WSA.

Thanks were given for the valuable input by our comrades from the FAU (who gave a report on rightwing activities in Germany), our comrade from SEIU Members for a Democratic Union, and our comrades from the IWW (one of whom gave a report on his recent trip to Finland and his contact with the SAL-IWA). All of us face similar situations in our struggles, and the need for solidarity, both international and national, is vital. The spirit of comradeship which is evidenced at these annual conventions reminds us of what could be possible on a much broader scale. We may not always agree, but our differences should not be allowed to degenerate into petty bickering and maliciousness. If we allow disagreement to become divisiveness we are doing the work of the state's police. Solidarity does not mean lock-step unanimity, but it does require understanding and mutual respect.

Mike Kolhoff



LETTERS

IWA Conference on Sexuality

Dear Comrades,

Recently the DAM-IWA in its National Conference decided that the IWA Conference on Sexuality should go ahead over Easter 1994 in London, England.

At this point it may be useful to restate the aims of the conference. By examining the five areas that we suggested in previous circulars (sexuality, discrimination and class struggle; AIDS and HIV and the workplace; sexuality, repression and power and the role of religions; present day morality; the sex industry) we hope for a **class analysis** of the above areas within an

Anarcho-Syndicalist framework. We would see that one of the aims of the conference would be to arrive at a position paper of the IWA on sexual politics and that we could provide a position paper for the next IWA Congress.

In the meantime, we need to know as soon as possible definite commitments of Sections as to who will be coming to the Conference. We also need as much correspondence as possible on the above (and related) areas.

With Anarcho-Syndicalist greetings,

Richard, Ron & Rob

Manchester DAM-IWA
POB 29, S.W. P.D.O.
Manchester M15 5HW, Britain

Dear WSA,

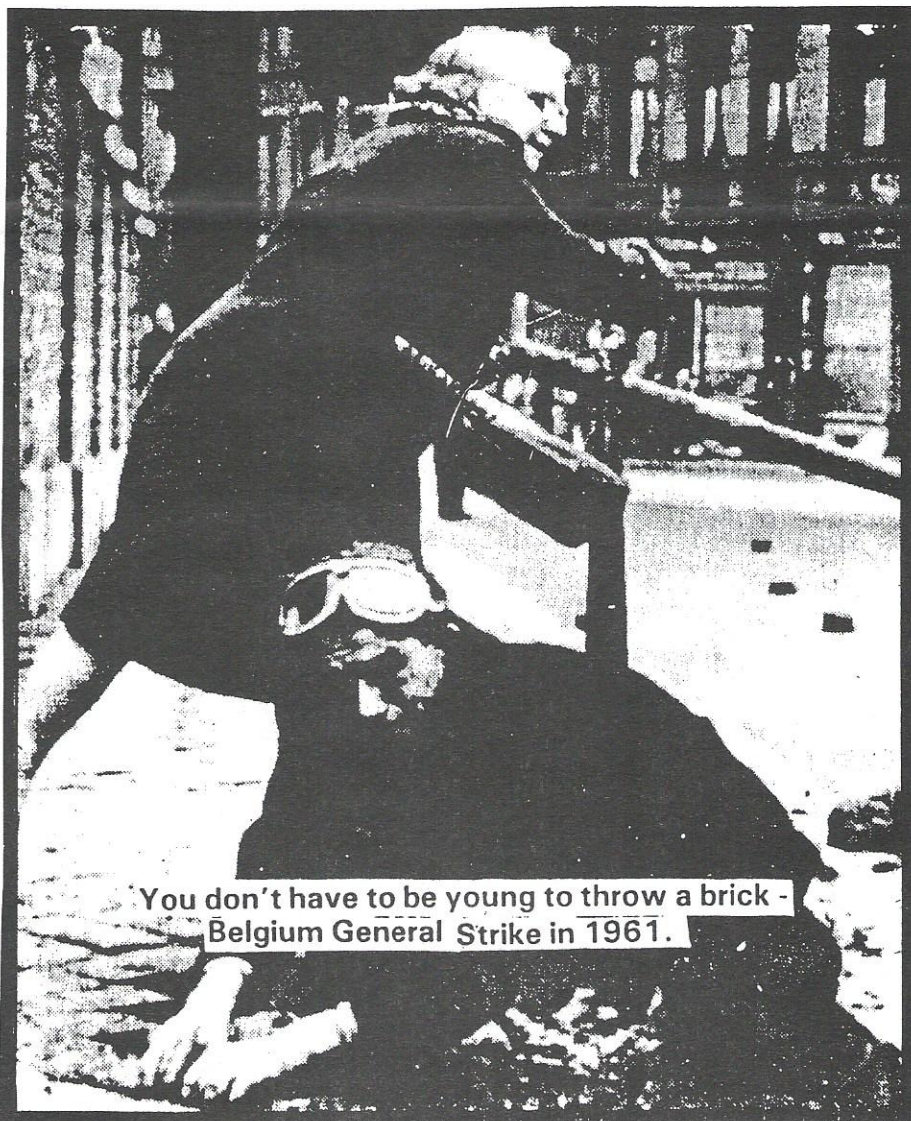
Here's a little news from the twin cities: Operation Rescue has targeted Minneapolis-St. Paul as a training center. Anarchists and other radicals are organizing to disrupt their efforts, whatever they try to do. People in the midwest interested in helping can call the @-hotline/Emma Center phone: (612) 729-5498 for info.

Also, Anarchists have been organizing with the committee seeking equal justice for the Minneapolis 8. Rallies, fund raising and awareness organizing have been going quite well considering the desperate situation of the accused and fear in oppressed communities. Please send a note of support if you can.

The Emma Center is going strong with shows, meeting space and forums with speakers, such as forums on Anti-Fascism in Europe, "militarization of the inner city" (inner cities being turned into police states) and one coming up on the history of the Spanish Revolution.

And finally, I just got a job at UPS where a Love & Rage supporter is already working. We are working with the Teamsters for a Democratic Union to help push for a good contract during negotiations this summer.

Thanks, Keep up the good work
Scott Lamson



You don't have to be young to throw a brick -
Belgium General Strike in 1961.

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Workers Solidarity Alliance

WSA is an Anarcho-Syndicalist organization with groups and contacts in all regions of the United States. We seek to build working class organizations based on the principles of direct democracy and direct action, both in the workplace and in the community. We place ourselves in opposition to the bureaucratic, authoritarian structures which have come to dominate our society and our daily lives. We seek to build living organizational forms which are completely under the control of working people. WSA activists are involved in a wide variety of projects (see contact list below) involving workplace organizing, international solidarity, and addressing specific social concerns that effect us all as working people. If you are interested in joining with us in these efforts or would like more information, contact this newsletter or the WSA group nearest you.

National Secretary:

WSA - National Secretary
c/o PO Box 40400
San Francisco, CA 94140

International Secretary:

c/o WSA - International Secretary
PO Box 6607
Ithaca, NY 14851

Working Groups:

Eastern European Working Group

c/o WSA New York Area
339 Lafayette St. Rm 202
New York, NY 10012

Latin American Solidarity Working Group

c/o WSA
PO Box 1197
San Antonio, TX 78294

Workplace Contacts:

Education Workers Network

PO Box 40400
San Francisco, CA 94140

Office Workers United

PO Box 40400
San Francisco, CA 94140

Public Workers Network

339 Lafayette St. Rm 202
New York, NY 10012

Industrial Transport Research & Organizing Project

c/o PO Box 5464
Tacoma, WA 98415-0464

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112 S. 20th Street
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Knoxville, TN 37939-1838

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San Antonio, TX 78294

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Route 1. Box 137-A
Arvonnia, VA 23004

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