

DIRECT ACTION

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The Voice of Anarcho-Syndicalism

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30p

ANOTHER TURKEY FOR CHRISTMAS



Direct Action Movement — International Workers Association

ANTI-WAR NEWS

ANTI GULF WAR NEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Bangladesh - At least 50 people were injured in Dhaka on 3 September when police fought demonstrators protesting the despatch of 1200 troops to the Gulf. The clash occurred during an 8 hour general strike.

France - The departure of French ground forces for Saudi Arabia was delayed when seafarers on a car ferry requisitioned from Corsica to carry troops demanded danger money before agreeing to sail. The ferry was delayed a further 12 hours on 21 September by dockers in Toulon who are opposed to the war. On 18 September 2000 marched in Paris against the war.

USA - By 24 September there had already been over 200 local actions in the US against the war including a demonstration of 2000 people in New York and 1700 in Berkeley, California. US Marine Jeff Patterson is facing court marshall for refusing to fight for "American profits and cheap oil". Write to the **Committee to Defend Jeff Patterson c/o Eric Seitz, 820 Miliani, Suite 714, Honolulu, HA, USA** for more information on him and other reservists who have refused to fight. ("I'd like some of those Congressmen come out here with all that patriotism, to feel the heat in the desert. It doesn't seem right to me. I'd rather folks paid more for their oil than pay for their oil with my life." - US soldier in Saudi Arabia.)

Australia - Terry Jones, a sailor, is on trial for going AWOL from a war ship destined for the Gulf. He said he was not prepared to die "to protect US oil lines".

Greece - There have been at least two major demonstrations against Greek involvement in the Gulf war. One had 3 - 4000 people on it, the other about 1500.

Spain - 2000 people marched in Madrid in mid September against the deployment of Spanish warships to the Gulf. In Barcelona 3000 took part in a demonstration called by parents of conscripts being sent to the Gulf.

Japan - A shipment of supplies to US troops was delayed in early September when seafarers refused to leave port without an additional 30% wage rise to compensate for the military nature of the journey.

Britain - On 6 October 350 people marched in Edinburgh against the war as did another 350 in Manchester. There were also smaller demonstrations in Norwich and Sheffield. On 21 September **No War But the Class War** picketed the London headquarters of BP. Their leaflet said "We won't die for oil profits - Class War not Oil War" and supported strikers on the North Sea oil rigs whilst opposing war in the Middle East oilfields.

Contact **No War But the Class War at BM 8884, London WC1N 3XX.**

Baghdad APTU

The Government has announced that British hostages held in Iraq should not be



A flight to Baghdad, please.

expected to pay the Poll Tax for that period!

So forget organising reception committees for the bailiffs and getting workplace anti-poll tax groups together, all you need do is hop on the next international flight and get yourself taken hostage by a hostile foreign government.

As this was announced in the week of Thatcher's resignation, should we take this as a special farewell gesture of charity from our once great leader? We think we should be told.



Washington Bullets

The radio station for US forces in the Gulf apparently uses 'Rock the Casbah' by The Clash as its signature tune. Quite ironic, since the song is about the overthrow of the Shah of Iran, a former US puppet in the Middle East.

Funnily enough, when the Marines had General Noriega (another US prodigy) holed up in Panama they blasted another Clash classic, 'I Fought the Law' into the Vatican Embassy compound so old Pineapple Face couldn't get any sleep.

So it would seem that



someone in the US Army knows a good tune when they hear one, though the lyrics and sentiments of the songs are obviously way over their head. We'd suggest another old Clash song called 'The Call Up' for the grunts sweating in the Arabian Desert. It goes like this:

"It's up to you not to heed the Call Up,
'n you must not act the way you were brought up.
Who gives you work and why should you do it?
at 55 minutes past eleven.."

We say: Hup, two, three, four, fuck the Marine Corps!

'CAN PAY MUST PAY'

TORY STROLL

On Tuesday 7 November the Tories in Scotland organised a National Demonstration For the Poll Tax with slogans like 'Can Pay Must Pay' and 'What Do We Want? Warrent Sales'!

A certain amount of anticipation prevailed all around. At last we were going to see the enemy face to face. The 'National' demonstration started at the mound where between 20 and 30 tories assembled and listened to speeches by prospective parliamentary candidates, which was drowned out by about 125 anti-poll tax activists chanting!

The tories then marched to the Regional Council, a three minute stroll, accompanied by anti-poll tax banners and a large police presence. Once there, they had to be protected by

guards to get through the crowd.

The anger directed at these people often turned to derision on that day for the pathetic arguments they used

and the sight of petty prejudiced middle classes in full swing. Needless to say, none of the so called tory leaders dared to show their faces.

Edinburgh DAM



'Searchlight' Bans Black Anti-Fascists

Members of Newham Monitoring Project and other black groups were denied entry to a public meeting on rising anti-semitism in Britain held at Ilford Federation Synagogue on 24 October. This meeting was organised by the Jewish Awareness Group and advertised in "Searchlight" magazine. Newham Monitoring Project has always supported anti-racist meetings and demonstrations and went along in solidarity with this latest initiative, hoping to build links with all genuine anti-racists.

POLICE CALLED

To our surprise and horror, three of us were banned from the meeting by security guards under orders from the organisers and Gerry Gable of "Searchlight". The police were called to remove us from synagogue property.

Various "justifications" were given for the ban, ranging from individuals' stand on Palestine to unknown "personal reasons".

The rest of us who were

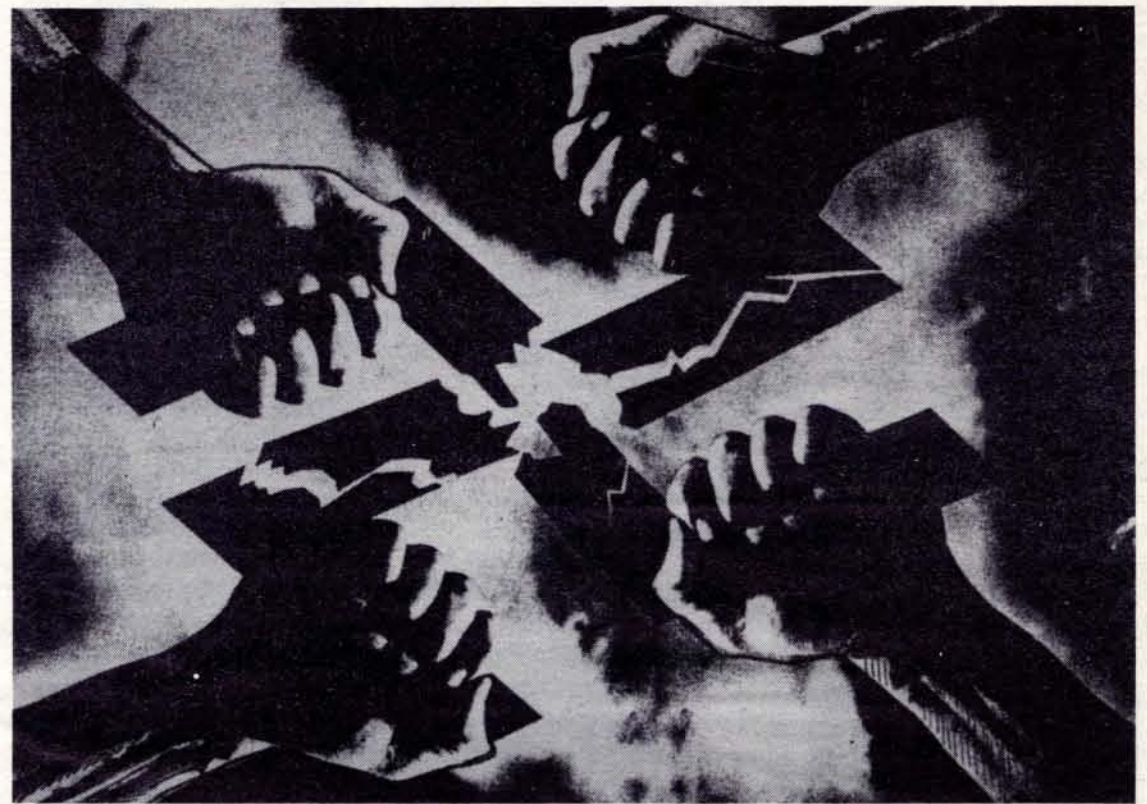
allowed into the meeting were thoroughly searched and questioned by security guards. Jasbir Singh, the Secretary of the NMP was forced spread-eagled against a wall and body searched. Not a single white person was subjected to such humiliating treatment.

SECURITY GUARDS

When we sat down at the back of the hall, we were surrounded by security guards who watched our every move. It was obvious that the organisers felt that members of the black community constituted a threat to the meeting.

When we realised that our friends were not going to be allowed in, we walked out with an explanation to the meeting. Gable's response was "just get out of here". Adding insult to injury, a member of the Jewish Awareness Group told the meeting that we were members of a "Trotskyist group".

Meanwhile, other local black people arrived and were also told they were not welcome



at the meeting.

As we were about to leave the area, a car containing members of the British National Party drove by. In spite of the racist behaviour of the organisers, we stayed in the area to lend our support in case of

a fascist attack.

That black people who have fought racism and fascism in Britain are excluded from a public meeting on anti-semitism and treated like criminals is outrageous and must be condemned. That "Searchlight" played an

integral part in this banning of black people is an indictment of the magazine itself and all it purports to stand for.

For more information contact: **Newham Monitoring Project, 382 Katherine Road, Forest Gate, London E7 8NW.**

FIGHTING THE NAZIS

Once more fascism is rearing its ugly face on the streets of London. Due to the failures of the "left" to offer any true "socialist" alternative to the working class, the fascists, principally in the British National Party, are forming a basis of support around the Bethnal Green area.

HOLOCAUST

In the last local by-election they collected 270 votes, 12% of the poll. In the Stamford Hill area too, there has been a noticeable rise in racist attacks upon the Jewish population, with anti-semitic leaflets containing the usual garbage of "world Zionist conspiracies" and "the hoax of the holocaust", being touted around. This rise in organised fascism comes within the context of racially motivated attacks running at an estimated 20,000 a year in the Metropolitan area alone.

British fascism has always used a broad racist position in its propaganda to gain support from the white working class. But the fascists must be exposed for what their policy of "racial



'THEY SHALL NOT PASS'

purity" really means to people.

THE STATE

To the fascist, everyone must be controlled by the State, under the banner of nationalism. Fascism and the State go hand in hand, each feeding off the other. Therefore fascism will never be totally defeated until the State is finally removed. The D.A.M. is committed to fighting fascism unceasingly in all its forms.

The D.A.M. are involved within London in the Anti-Fascist Action organisation which was relaunched at the beginning of the year as a broad front grouping committed to anti-fascism and class struggle.

A.F.A. realises the necessity of confronting the fascists on the streets as

well as building and supporting local groups. The long term defeat of the fascists will only happen through local communities rejecting the fascists' poisonous propaganda - realising that racism is not in the short or long term interests of their class.

London Region DAM

Fascists Brick It

Fascists have been selling their newspapers every Sunday morning at Brick Lane, East London for ages. That was until Sunday 14th October 1990. On that particular day about 60 anti-fascists, including a DAM contingent, arrived early and occupied their normal pitch, giving out anti-fascist leaflets.

Various fascists arrived in dribs and drabs, and scarpered as soon as they saw us lot. The local residents and Sunday shoppers were in general very pleased to see that we were there and not the fascists for a change.

After about an hour, 10-20 fascists grouped up round

the corner and charged down the road at us shouting and hollering. They obviously expected us to run away. Instead, we stood our ground and fascists in the front row got severe shocks to the system, and the rest of them retreated at top speed.

The police, parked up the road, took this opportunity to jump out and arrest more anti-fascists than fascists, even though we had been just peacefully giving out leaflets.

Anyway, we held the pitch for the rest of the morning so the psychological (and physical) victory was ours.

A.B.

Anti-Fascists Jailed

Just recently three anti-fascist militants were sent down for a total of 11 years (4,4,3), one of whom had no previous record.

They were arrested after this year's "Bloody Sunday" march for an attack on Nicky Crane, a well known racist and nazi. Despite what **Searchlight** reported, he did not lead an attack on the

march, he was spotted in the area and dealt with. His previous history, and convictions for racist violence are reason enough.

There will be no bleeding-heart liberal campaign protesting their "innocence" for we believe fighting fascism is no crime. There is a fund being set up called the "Anti-Fascist Defence Fund" and money will be greatly appreciated.

Those who make the decision to fight these scum must be prepared for the risks involved. We send our best wishes to those convicted.

For more info on the prisoners, the Fund and AFA, write to: AFA, BM 1734, London WC1N 3XX.

WE'RE IN HERE FOR YOU



YOU'RE OUT THERE FOR US

RE - MATCH

The violent suppression and criminalisation of protest in Britain is proceeding apace. On Saturday 20th October in Brixton, the Metropolitan Police had a rematch for the kicking they got in Trafalgar Square on March 31st. The rematch, however, was on the terms they had sought in March.

THUGS

Back in Whitehall in March, the police launched a premeditated attack on a peaceful section of a crowd of 250,000 people demonstrating support for mass non-payment of the Poll Tax. Since that section of the crowd was undertaking a sitdown protest the police

the fact that people know that the police will justify injuries by charging victims with assault or similar, and therefore many will seek treatment well away from the scene of injury, and not say how they sustained their injuries. In Hackney on 8th March this year, the police arrived at the Homerton Hospital **before** Hackney Community Defence Association - the choice is nasty scars or a fit-up.

PREPARATION

Unlike March 31st, the preparation was good, not because the All-Britain (or in this case, London) Anti-Poll Tax Federation has learned any lessons, but

was quoted as attributing the violence to "police provocation", rather than offering to grass people up this time, they are playing into the police's hands.

The police commander was careful to praise the "main" demo, and therefore Militant, as peaceful and orderly. They lapped it up - leaving the implications about the hated "splitters" to be read by all. In the issue of **Militant** published immediately after the demo they criticised TSDC as incapable of organising an orderly demo (forget that it was orderly until attacked).

Claims were also made that

those who forced them to organise separate events by reducing the entire campaign against the Poll Tax to the "no politics, please, we're non-payers" level they can handle. Those who are really being divisive and weakening the movement are the "official" bodies controlled by Militant.

WORKPLACE

Merely whingeing about Militant will get us nowhere. We have to broaden and build the movement despite them. The violent suppression of protest, and the Public Order Act, were initially aimed at effective picketing and industrial disputes which had a class content. Warrington, Orgreave, Wapping ...Trafalgar.

This should be a key part of getting trades union and workplace support for the anti-Poll Tax movement, and bringing in a wider, class perspective. Broadening out demos is a vital objective. If the work is done, we will at best prevent police attacks by deterrence, at worst considerably raise the political (and physical) cost to the police of attacking legitimate protests and pickets.

CLASS WARFARE

In Brixton on the 20th the police broke glasses outside the George IV pub to leave the impression of a hail of

missiles at the scene of **their** crime. They also threw people, both demonstrators and locals sheltering from the violence, out of the Atlantic at truncheon point, in a move reminiscent of some of the more naked acts of class warfare during the 1984-5 Miners' Strike. We have to get our act together.

Legal defence was magnificent in Brixton and the organisers and volunteers deserve the highest praise. **Physical** defence needs to be improved (although it is arguable whether much could have been done in the faces of such numbers of police), as do the possibilities of "safe" medical aid. The concept of real revolutionary organisation of the class on the streets (as well as in the workplace), needs to be promoted. The bureaucrats and poseurs of the left have been allowed their pretense too long.

For a more detailed, minute-by-minute account of the events in Brixton, the TSDC have produced a Preliminary Report on the Policing of the Anti-Poll Tax Demonstration. This is available from TSDC, Rm 205, Panther House, 38 Mount Pleasant, London WC1X 0AP. Make your donation as large as possible, and spread the truth as widely as possible. Don't let the bastards grind us down!

NR, Hornsey APT



believed that they had identified a "minority of extremists" - something they could take on and beat in isolation from the majority of protesters. A pleasant exercise for the thugs of the Territorial Support Groups, and an attempt to discredit the anti-Poll Tax movement by branding it as "violent".

The rest, as they say, is history. In October outside Brixton Prison they obviously believed that they had a whole demonstration composed of "extremists", and being only 100th the size of the March one - leaving the police outnumbering people by 7-4 - they were confident of a cheap victory they had been denied six months earlier. The result was 135 arrests, mostly for Public Order Act offences, and dozens of injuries.

The injury figures recorded are artificially depressed by

because the Trafalgar Square Defendants' Campaign was not going to leave it up to slags like Steve Nally.

Legal Liason Volunteers recorded events, and filmed much of it, and organised legal advice/debriefings for defendants on the morning of Sunday 21st. The police are in the novel position of having to justify their actions, also partly as a result of the "Battle of Trafalgar" video shown on TV a few weeks before the "rematch".

THE MILLIES

Whether or not the police lose some of their room for manoeuvre or get off scot free, depends on the strength of the political attack on their role in the suppression of political dissent. For this reason the actions of Militant, either openly or through the "official" Fed., are important. Although Nally

Nally was canned on stage (unfortunately, he was merely heckled as a grass, which he is), and **Searchlight's** 1985 vintage lie that Class War (who, through placards, had a more visible presence on the demo than Militant) worked with the National Front to attack Jewish shops during Stop the City demos. It has since been alleged that Militant's South African exile speaker was racially abused by a section of the crowd in Brockwell Park. The smear machine is back in gear. There needs to be the broadest possible movement for the right to oppose the state, with a strong radical wing setting the pace. The police were presented with a "minority" target on October 20th and reacted predictably to this opportunity.

The **responsibility** for this does not lie with the organisers of the Brixton prison picket, but with

Waste Not Want Not

19 months ago 500 tons of toxic waste arrived in Wath, South Yorkshire. The sealed drums had come from the US. The waste was found to be much more toxic than first thought and the disposal company (Wath Recycling Company) could not "dispose" of it.

The senders, Baltimore-based FMC Corporation, refused to ship back or remove the barrels containing (amongst other things!) Copper Hydroxide sludge. The two companies are now going through the US courts, proceedings which could take up to five years to complete.

In steps local MP, Hardy, and councillor, Hughes, who demand that the government do something. At first, Environment Minister

Trippier says the waste will be gone by **last christmas**. But by this November he says there is "no action he can take". MP Hardy sighs and blames "inadequate regulations".

Meanwhile, the ordinary people of Wath (naturally, a run down, polluted working class area in the unemployment blackspot of the Dearne Valley) pray that the crap doesn't leak and poison them and their children.

The sooner we have direct workers' and community control the better, so that this sort of situation need never occur. Until then, perhaps international solidarity could persuade FMC Corporation to act by dumping drums of crap on their directors' lawns?!

EDUCATION NETWORK

A year ago, as the Direct Action Movement's Industrial Strategy was finalised, a small group of DAM members in Education decided to launch an organisation in the North West of England called the North West Independent Education Network (NWIEN). From a very small base the NWIEN has consolidated itself into an anarcho-syndicalist Network, with members in four different centres in the North West and with many contacts outside the geographical area.

SOLIDARITY

The NWIEN has been set up on a firm anarcho-syndicalist footing and members see the Network as forming the future Revolutionary Union in the Education sector. The Network is open to all those who work and/or study in

Education, regardless of occupation. This, we feel, is an important step which, once again, serves to prove that anarcho-syndicalism unites rather than divides workers: united according to occupation, not split into different unions, united in solidarity and united in direct action.

As yet, we are a small organisation but one which is expanding as students and workers become tired of the tokenism, bureaucracy and lack of fight in the NUS, NATFHE, AUT, NUT etc.

As with all Trade Unions, these are too often only vaguely interested in taking

up workers' grievances and can never serve the interests of those working in Education. For instance, NATFHE has just carved part-time lecturers out of any pay machinery. They are not based on defending our interests as members, but their own as 'respectable' and 'responsible' organisations.

The NWIEN, now on a firm anarcho-syndicalist organisational and ideological footing, can begin to take on the demands that education workers are making.

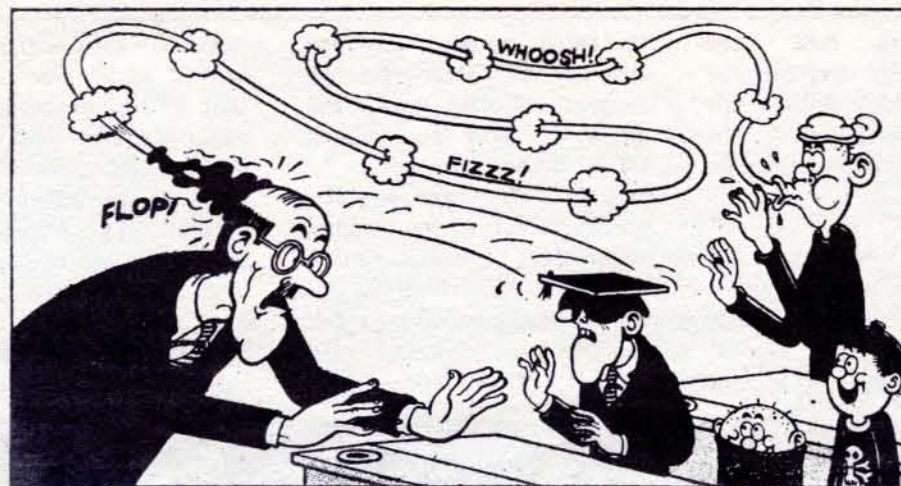
NATIONAL MEETING

In December a national meeting of all contacts in Education will take place in Manchester. With this meeting education workers and students will be co-ordinated into a national organisation, increasing our strength and activity in many parts of the country.

If you wish to know more about this meeting or about the Network please write to:

The Secretary, NWIEN, PO Box 29, SW PDO, Manchester M15 5HW.

Richard, Salford University



DIWU

I was pleased to see that DA ran an article on the Despatch Industry Workers Union (DIWU, the anarcho-syndicalist union in the despatch industry) in DA number 65. Here is some more information that readers might be interested in.

The DIWU attracts journalists like a magnet, I don't know why. Hardly a week goes by without a request for an interview. Our normal policy is, by the way, to blank them.

We have heard some classic quotes from various bosses recently. For example: "any-

hate and fear the DIWU. This could explain why we have been threatened with legal action 4 times in 18 months including a High Court injunction.

As for the workers in the despatch industry, nearly everyone has heard of us, partly because we've been involved in more industrial disputes over the last 12 months than most trade unions have in a decade. The nature of the DIWU and the bosses reaction against us really gives you the feeling that you are on the front line of the class war, something that most lefty groups only dream about.

If you would like to help the DIWU, why not organise a fund-raiser or send a donation? The Union always needs money because the dues are low in line with syndicalist tradition and to encourage membership.

Alternatively, you could distribute the DIWU newsletter "Despatches" in your lunch break or do some flyposting for us.

Better still, if you are footloose and fancy free, get a job as a courier (either by cycle, motorcycle or van) and join the Union. We need more good militants.

I am well aware that there are some people who describe themselves as anarchists but are against unions, even syndicalist ones. To those people I say that syndicalism is the industrial manifestation of anarchism. If you were a member of the DIWU you would realise that our meetings, structure and aims are very much like any other sensible anarchist organisation ie the DIWU is non-hierarchical, democratic and fosters a revolutionary spirit by means of collective direct action. What more can you want?

AJ, DIWU member

For more info contact: DIWU PO Box 574, London SE4



one who joins the union will be sacked" and "I'm against unions and against communism" and such like. These quotes and other incidents lead us to the conclusion that the bosses

To cap it all, the TGWU Couriers Branch begrudgingly admitted to the BBC that the DIWU has 10 times more members than them, even though they started with £10,000 worth of funding.

FREE



martin foran

Martin Foran, an inmate of Frankland Prison near Durham, has consistently maintained his innocence concerning two robbery convictions and sentences from trials held in 1978 and 1985. The prosecution cases largely consisted of alleged admissions produced by officers from the now disbanded West Midlands Serious Crime Squad.

The eight year sentence imposed in 1985 was extended by six years in 1987 when Foran was found guilty of false imprisonment of a prison warder, after he was denied medical treatment for a colostomy wound infection.

Martin Foran is attempting to highlight the fact that the West Yorkshire Police investigation into his complaints against the Serious Crime Squad has now been going on for a year without yielding a result.

Foran has maintained his innocence for years before the West Midlands Squad was disbanded. He would not apply for parole as he could not express remorse for crimes he did not commit. Whilst West Yorks police inquiry moves slowly, innocent people are spending more time in gaol.

For more information write to: CONVICTION PO Box 522, Sheffield S1 3FF.

How Many More Times?

Railway guards at Manchester Piccadilly spent 3 weeks on strike last month when management broke national agreements by imposing new working rosters. Management actions, however, cannot be seen in isolation. For a number of years guards have bitterly resisted a management strategy of eroding national agreements by attacking them at a local level. In the last 12 months at Piccadilly there were 2 successful ballots for strike action, the strikes only being called off after the union forced the guards to go to ACAS. An unofficial 48 hour strike this May, over rosters, culminated in last month's action. Management's decision to impose new rosters has to be seen against this background and can only be interpreted as an attempt to break what they see as a militant depot.

The action by the guards was at first unofficial when guards, following Shop Stewards' instructions, walked out after the first guard was sent home for refusing to book on to the new rosters. Though at first a small minority of guards were scabbing, this became fewer and fewer as the strike became more organised. Three days into the strike the union ordered a ballot of the guards, which took place in the bizarre situation of the guards being asked if they wanted to strike when 95% had already been on strike for several days. With the strike being made official, it became solid with only 1 non-union member scabbing.

The decision to make the strike official was to be the only support the strikers were to get from the union. Almost from the start, strikers at their mass meetings called for a national ballot of all guards as the flexible rostering agreement was fundamental to all guards and was a national agreement which should be fought for on a national basis.

The other issue essential to the success of the strike was money, and again from the start requests were made for the £1 a day strike pay to be raised, which is allowed for in the rules as they were locked out. These requests were to fall on deaf ears with the union

resorting to ever more sickening manoeuvres, desperate to avoid the strike spreading with the prospect of the union losing control.

The union throughout the dispute lived in constant fear of the law courts, a move was not made without the blessing of the

to raise money. Leaflets were put out calling for the support of other guards and contacts were made with other depots in attempts to prepare the ground for guards to spread the strike themselves. Again these efforts were undermined by the RMT who even went so far as condemn even a mild leaflet calling for support

demanding at a meeting, set up to agree new rosters, that a "failure to agree" be registered by the union, which would have enabled them to re-institute the strike. To their total amazement and disgust full-time union officials, acting under instructions from the highest level of the union, informed the stewards that

meeting called to discuss re-instating the strike. He produced an irrelevant SWP leaflet, and proceeding to use classic Red Menace tactics, claimed that the Shop Stewards were politically motivated and were manipulating the union for their own ends. As the dust settled it became clear to many involved in the strike that the union had worked together with management to undermine what they saw as a strong and militant depot which had for a number of years caused them both problems.

Since the strike finished Knapp has ordered a full investigation into the union branch the guards belong to and seems determined to shut it down. It is hard to underestimate the bitterness of guards who had worked so hard and sacrificed so much to defend national agreements, only to end up being witch-hunted by the union they thought they were defending.

Readers of DA will know our stance towards reformist unions. The above only underlines their corrupt nature. With a militant and aggressive workforce ready to take strike action on their own behalf, the unions step in take control and undermine the dispute. That is the role of reformist unions, and that is the service they offer to capitalism. With the end of Thatcher and the moves towards European integration it is a role the unions will increasingly play. Not quite beer and sandwiches at number ten, but the return of some form of good old corporatism.



solicitors. They made it quite clear that calling a national ballot might be seen as secondary action, and increasing the strike pay could be viewed by the courts as incitement to take industrial action.

As the strike progressed the failure of the union to support the strike in any way led to increasing bitterness among the strikers. The question was constantly raised, who runs the union? the members or the union solicitors.

STRIKE PAY?

Strikers could also not see the point of paying union dues all these years and having union assets of £20 million, when it came to taking strike action with money being desperately needed to support strikers and their families, the union was too afraid to pay out. Needless to say, even the derisory £1 a day strike pay wasn't paid out till after the strike was over.

If the strikers had relied on the union, doubtless it would have collapsed through lack of financial support. However, from day one delegations to factories and other depots were organised

circulated by the strikers.

After 3 weeks of tremendous solidarity, talks initiated by the BRB took place at ACAS with the guards voting to accept a deal which, although not meeting all their demands, was still a major victory under the circumstances. However, with the return to work it soon became clear that management had no intention of keeping their promises. Furious Shop Stewards

no matter what management put forward there would be no formal "failure to agree". This meant that the guards would have to still work to a management imposed roster, only this time with the agreement of the union.

Mass meetings were called and a bitter and angry workforce demanded the strike be re-instated by the national executive. These moves were stopped in their tracks when Knapp personally intervened at the NEC

Pope-Bashing

Comrades in Poland are having a busy time fighting against the strengthening of the Catholic Church, with new laws introducing religious lessons in kindergartens and schools. Anti-abortion laws are also being discussed in Parliament.

In September there were various anti-clerical demonstrations throughout Poland which attracted a lot of national press coverage especially, we assume, a demonstration in Cracow which involved a brawl with a priest! Anarchist and



Better dead than blessed

feminist groups together protested outside Parliament against the outlawing of abortion.

Also, on 23 September there was a meeting in Gliwice of Bulgarian, East German and Polish anarchists, attended by about 60 people. We wish our comrades in Eastern Europe well, and hope such meetings are a step toward better cooperation and solidarity between anarchists in more and more countries!

From the "Black Alliance Group"

Tonypandy is a small mining village in South Wales, which in November 1910 found itself at the centre of British politics when a 'riot' left one miner dead and many injured.

It also meant that the Cambrian Combine Dispute became national news, and was to prove the launching pad for a wave of militancy in which syndicalists were to play the leading role.

UNOFFICIAL

The dispute had begun over the question of 'abnormal places'. Essentially, the miners were paid a system of allowances to offset difficulties in certain areas of the mine where the coal was harder to extract and required longer hours. When a new seam was opened at the Ely Pit the employers were insisting on a cutting rate of 1s 7d per ton and the workers 2s 6d. This basic demand was soon superseded and, by the end of the dispute, the whole question of a minimum wage for the industry, as well as who should actually control the mines, was being discussed.

The strike action spread from the Ely Pit throughout the whole combine and by the end of November over 30,000 were on strike. There was a general air of militancy and soon the strike was being run by an unofficial joint lodge committee, three members of which were committed syndicalists and these had support throughout the Combine.



LEADERSHIP

One reason for the militancy was the frustration that had built up over the years with the miners leadership. The principle union official was William Abraham known as Mabon. At the beginning of the strike he came down to see the miners and appealed to them to go back to work in the interest of the coalowner.

"My friend, D.A.Thomas," he said, "has been suffering from poor health; and I feel sure that on his holiday in France he will not benefit if he was to hear of such a strike as this". W.H. Mainwaring, syndicalist and spokesman for the Cambrian Combine Lodge replied: "Mr D.A.Thomas may be your friend, he is not our friend."

Syndicalist Revolt 1910-12



DISCIPLINED

The coalminers felt confident of victory and planned to import large numbers of strikebreakers, while the authorities intended to enforce law and order. They thought they could beat the miners into submission and allow Mabon and the moderates to regain control.

But they had misjudged completely the mood of the miners, whose leadership came from men like Noah Ablett, Noah Rees, W.F.Hay and Mainwaring. These were syndicalist miners who believed in industrial democracy, with all decisions being taken by mass meetings and, once a decision was reached, it was expected that everyone would carry it through in a disciplined manner.

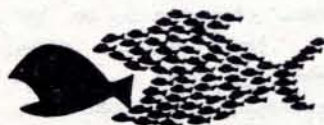
Great solidarity was generated, and the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, alarmed at the events and fearful of the example spreading, adopted an attitude of nominally supporting the strike. They hoped to gain popularity with the strikers by sending money and, with Mabon & Co. totally discredited, they tried to use their influence to secure a settlement.

RED RIOT

But when two of the national officials, W.E.Harvey and Thomas Ashton visited South Wales they were met in the streets of Tonypandy by shouts of: "No ballot",

"Keep you money", "Go back to England", "Give us the twentieth rule". The twentieth rule being the one that empowered the MFCB to call a general strike. On their way back to the railway station they were further abused by the general crowd, leading Harvey to talk of "anarchy and red riot in Tonypandy".

Sympathetic strike action and the degree of social conflict that occurred mark out this strike from those that had gone previously. This reflected the determination of the miners to win the dispute. Mass picketing was used against blackleg labour and trains bringing strikebreakers were turned around. As for the few local blacklegs, they were harangued and ostracised, even attacked on the street. The letters 'B', 'BL' and 'SCAB' were daubed on doors and teams of women and children were organised to break windows. This treatment also applied to anyone who cooked for the police sent in to guard the pits.



EXPLOSIVES

At Tonypandy the strikers were attempting to stop the colliery pumps, and this resulted in pitched battles between them and the police. The so-called riot was not the mindless rampage of destruction that the government made it out to be. The targets were carefully picked, with

certain shops singled out and mine owners' housing attacked. In one incident a serious attempt was made to blow up a manager's house with explosives.

The authorities telegraphed for military reinforcements, which were promptly despatched by Churchill, then Home Secretary, along with a contingent of Metropolitan Police. These sought any excuse to attack the strikers.

CHURCHILL

The most serious incident happened at Llanelli where a train was being stopped by strikers. Troops fired on the crowd and left two dead. One of these men was a railway worker, which only emphasised the solidarity action that was being taken. The authorities claimed that warning shots were fired but this was later disproved.

The ferocity of the troops and police left a bitter feeling in the area for years to come. Even during the second world war whenever cinema newsreels showed Churchill there would be whistling and booing until they were taken off the screen. The people of Tonypandy never forgave him for his part.

INDUSTRIAL SYNDICALIST

In contrast to the reception given to their own union leadership, Tom Mann, editor of the *Industrial Syndicalist*, was welcomed and made several trips during the dispute. W.F.Hay

wrote an article in the November issue of the paper explaining the miners' case. He ended it by stating that "industrial solidarity will ensure economic freedom and therefore the abolition of capitalism". Later, in the February issue, he and Noah Ablett wrote an article calling for a minimum wage for all miners.

Despite the fervour with which the miners fought, they eventually succumbed to the united might of employers and government, secretly abetted by the national officials of their own union.

MINERS NEXT STEP

Yet their ten month battle was not entirely wasted. Their example spread through the coalfields and a radicalisation occurred that became translated into the demand for a minimum wage. This was the basis for the first ever national strike in the mines in 1912.

Also, the miners who were at the forefront of the struggle formed the Unofficial Reform Committee, which was responsible for the publication of 'The Miners' Next Step' pamphlet. From this time on the notion that there was any identity of interest between employer and worker was cast aside, and class war replaced conciliation.

'The Miners' Next Step' became one of the most respected documents of syndicalism and working class struggle. In a later article we will look more closely at it, but the important fact to remember is that it was written by ordinary workers who used their experiences to build a revolutionary theory for the emancipation of their class.

DIRECT ACTION

The example set by the Cambrian Combine Dispute spread far beyond the mining industry. It showed workers that disputes could be run by those directly involved and that their own union leaders could not be trusted. That direct action, in all its forms, could be used to great effect, and that solidarity was the basis of a fighting union. It also exposed that the employers and the government would use any means necessary to protect their common interests. It heralded the beginning of the intensification of the class war that was to rage for another three years.

S.T., Manchester DAM

International

Poll Tax



Solidarity with those arrested following the March 31st non-payment demonstration in London and with the Trafalgar Square Defendants Campaign has extended around the globe.

Following an appeal from the Direct Action Movement, Australian Anarcho-syndicalists picketed the British Airways office in Melbourne and an Australian Against the Poll Tax group has been formed (there was a recent attempt by one of the Australian states to introduce a poll tax - they backed down following March

31st!). A picket of the British Consulate in Hamburg was organised by the Frei Arbeiter Union, German section of the IWA.

In addition, solidarity greetings have been sent by the CNT of Spain to the TSDC, and coverage of the work of the TSDC has been given in the papers of the CNT of France and the Italian Anarchist Federation.

Solidarity pickets have also taken place in Poland, organised by the growing anarchist movement there.



Repression Goes On

As time moves forward people often forget about events which, for a moment it seems, shake peoples lives. So seems to be the case with China.

Yet the repression of the Chinese working class continues. According to official Chinese government statistics, 6000 people were detained during the repression of the pro-democracy movement.

PRISON WORKERS

The most famous worker to have been executed is Wang Weilin, the individual in the white shirt who held up a column of tanks in Tianamen Square in June 1989. It is also reported that detained workers have been held separately from other political prisoners and have been treated more harshly.

All of the country's jails have two names: one that refers to its status within the prison system, and another for its role as a normal business enterprise.

It is further reported that prisoners can be hired out to private firms owned by foreigners. A known intermediary between the Chinese government and foreign capitalists is Charles Chi. Mr Chi will



Unofficial sources have placed the figure as high as 30,000. The independent Asia Watch has noted that particular severity has been meted out to workers and the unemployed. None of the detained workers involved in the Workers Autonomous Federation has been released; while all of the 40 reported executions have been of workers and W.A.F. unionists.

FOR HIRE

Repression and exploitation take other forms as well in China. It has been reported that a large part of China's exports are being made by prison workers. So great is the contribution of prisoners to China's economy that their output is routinely recorded in the country's Gross National Product statistics.

"lease" prisoners to any Western company that wants to open a factory in China.

Despite the continuing repression and exploitation of the Chinese working class, the network of the Autonomous Workers' Federations set up in 1989 continues to exist.

Workers Solidarity Alliance
(US Section, IWA)

The Dead Speak

REVIEW: Voices from Tiananmen Square: Beijing Spring and the Democracy Movement. Edited by Mok Chiu Yu and J. Frank Harrison. Introduction by George Woodcock. Published by Black Rose Books.

This book consists, for the most part, of statements, pamphlets and posters from the organisations and individuals who made up the Chinese "Pro-Democracy Movement".

Captured in its pages are the optimism, determination and despair of those involved, from the first actions after the death of Hu Yaobang in April to the

aftermath of the bloody crackdown in the early hours of 4 June. Those whose words have been gathered together range from students and workers to disillusioned Communist Party members and even soldiers. The views put forward are many and diverse, although all are united in a common struggle against the corrupt and dictatorial Li Peng government.

Of particular interest to anarchosyndicalists are the declarations made by the Independent Workers' Unions. The "Pro-Democracy Movement" has been portrayed by both

the Chinese and the Western media as a student movement. For the Chinese government to admit that workers were involved would lend credibility to events which they wished to blame on a handful of "counter-revolutionary" students. For the Western press to acknowledge the existence of spontaneously organised workers' groups would be to admit that workers were capable of self-organisation. If that were possible in China, then why not in Britain...?

According to its Initial Programme, the Beijing Autonomous Workers' Federation was formed by Beijing workers as an independent, autonomous and specifically working class organisation with a democratic foundation, to give the workers a political

voice. In its first public notice it stated that its objectives were to fight for democracy, bring down dictatorship and promote democratisation in alliance with the students and citizens from all walks of life.

These were more than words. As the protesters were gathered round the Monument to the Peoples' Heroes facing the army's final onslaught, a student eye-witness reports: "The members of the Independent Workers' Unions were on the outside. They stood their ground. There were 20 or 30 of them. They're all dead." Such was the "White Terror" unleashed by the Chinese state in Tiananmen Square.

* * * * *

I had the opportunity to

meet and talk with Mok Chiu Yu earlier this year, shortly after the first anniversary of the "Tiananmen Incident". He emphasised how vital it is for the Chinese people to know the truth about Western capitalism and of alternatives to it, lest they should see the emulation of Western "democracy" as their goal. It is up to those of us living in the West to provide criticisms of capitalism and suggest alternative paths. This is the intention of our anarchist comrades in Hong Kong, who are keen to translate relevant articles into Chinese.

If you have anything which you think might interest them, please send it to Colin, c/o DA Editorial Collective.

REVIEWS

TOM BROWN'S SYNDICALISM, PHOENIX PRESS, £3.95

This slim volume is a collection of pamphlets by Tom Brown, a leading figure in the Syndicalist Workers' Federation, predecessor of the DAM as British Section of the International Workers Association. In it is laid out a simple but telling critique of both capitalism and trades unionism, and one of the best attempts at putting down the principles of Anarcho-syndicalism I've ever read.

The strength of the writing comes from Brown's own experience as a working class militant, and his knowledge of the actual workings of his subjects, as experienced by himself and his readers. This beats the hell out of any intellectualised "socialist" theory, and vindicates the syndicalist belief that only the workers ourselves can truly understand and develop revolutionary ideas and organisations. Its simplicity bears this out, proving that analysis cuts through bullshit, rather than multiplying it as the so-called intellectuals and vanguards would have us believe.

Since this is a collection of pamphlets it should be read as such, rather than as a book. There is inevitable repetition, and since it was written in the 40's and 50's some of the references are unlikely to be widely understood. These along with

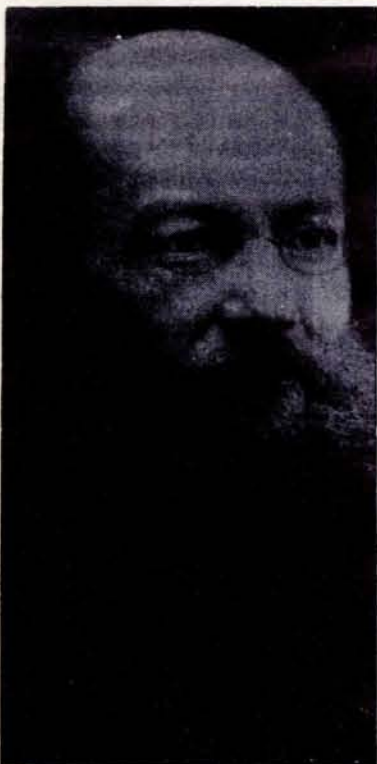
the sexist language taken for granted in those days are the pamphlet's only drawbacks. None of this clouds the message and the ideas - change the names and the prices and it could almost have been written today. No argument rests on a reference back to anything that is not explained, this is a book for the interested worker, not the cadre seeking initiation into the elitist world of "revolutionary" marxism.

Inside the attractive cover you will find essays on the 1926 General Strike, The Principles of Syndicalism, What's wrong with the Unions?, Nationalisation and the New Boss Class, and others. Brown's Lenin and Workers' Control is not included but should be available soon from other sources.

The blurb on the back describes the collection as a "contribution to the debate on the relevance of Syndicalism today". Instead of debating with left communists, Trotskyists or others who set up aunt sally syndicalisms to destroy, Anarcho-syndicalists should be using Tom Brown's writings for their true purpose - to convince workmates, strike support activists, anti-Poll Tax activists and others that there is a real alternative to the bankrupt politics of the left and the treachery of trades unions.

NR

THE CONQUEST OF BREAD by Peter Kropotkin, Elephant Editions 216pp.



Peter Kropotkin

The Conquest of Bread is at one and the same time a masterpiece of social and scientific enquiry and a classic work of anarchist agitational propaganda. It is believed to have had a great inspirational effect on the revolutionary movements of Spain, France and Italy when first published and distributed.

Kropotkin was a Russian Prince and geographer who rejected his origins to devote his life to the struggle for libertarian communism. He wrote many anarchist classics but became unpopular after taking sides in the First World War. Nevertheless, his funeral was the last Russian anarchist demonstration to be reported in the rest of the world before 70 years of Bolshevik tyranny.

Kropotkin's glowing enthusiasm and optimism are

About Tom Brown

Tom Brown, whose writings did much to revive interest in Syndicalism and Workers' Control, was that rare phenomenon in the British libertarian movement, a theoretician whose ideas had been tested and developed by his own experience in the hard school of working-class struggle.

An able and persuasive public speaker, whether at Speakers' Corner in Hyde Park, at indoor meetings, or in the more intimate role of lecturer, he had the happy knack of relating what he said to the everyday experience of his audience. The same quality illuminated his writings, which mirrored the life and times of this lifelong revolutionary and loyal comrade.

Born and bred within sight and sound of the Tyneside shipyards, Tom served his engineering apprenticeship there and was quickly drawn into militant industrial activity. Much of his working life was spent as an active shop steward and factory floor activist.

BOLSHEVISM

Like many others he was fired with enthusiasm by the Russian Revolution, was an early member of the Communist Party and, for a time, became its industrial organiser for the North East. But the double dealing of the CP and the growing repression in Bolshevik Russia quickly brought disillusion and he left the party, though never his natural role as a shop floor militant.

Moving south during the Depression, he worked in the

motor industry of the West Midlands and, probably around this time, was attracted to Anarchist and Syndicalist ideas. In the mid-thirties he and his wife, Lily, found their way further south to London with their daughters, Ruth and Grace.

SPAIN & THE WORLD

The Spanish Revolution of 1936, with its takeover of industry and agriculture by the Syndicalist unions of the CNT in anti-fascist territory, especially Catalonia, reinforced and developed Tom's own ideas and he became a member of the grouping around the paper, *Spain and the World*, which was dedicated to supporting the Spanish workers. He spoke at meetings supporting their struggle, several times shared the platform with Emma Goldman. His Syndicalist writings appeared for the first time in *Revolt*, which followed *Spain and the World* after Franco's fascist victory in 1939.

DIRECT ACTION

During the war, as a member of the Anarchist Federation of Britain (AFB), he wrote regularly for *War Commentary for Anarchism* and produced his first two pamphlets, 'Trade Unionism or Syndicalism' and 'The British General Strike', both of which had wide sales. He remained a member of the editorial board until near the end of the war, when the AFB, of which he stayed an active member, parted company with Freedom Press in unhappy circumstances, but on points

of principle.

With others, he helped launch *Direct Action* in 1945, as the AFB's new voice and continued his close association with it for well over 20 years. Saddened by the failure of an attempt to form an international of Anarchist Federations in the late 1940s, he later supported the AFB's decision to change its name to Syndicalist Workers' Federation (SWF) and affiliate to the International Working Men's Association, of which the CNT was the strongest member, although then underground in Spain.

The SWF maintained friendly contacts with the IWW in the States and Tom visited them when he and Lily crossed the Atlantic to see their daughters, who had both married GIs in London and later emigrated. He also went to see the veteran Anarcho-syndicalist, Rudolf Rocker, in a libertarian colony near New York. Tom and Lily returned to London after a year and he resumed his SWF activity. He and Lily, who was then in poor health, returned to Tyneside in the late 1960s and his continued activity there included several lively contributions, on libertarian subjects, on local radio.

Tom Brown's activity and writings influenced and inspired many people. A latter-day Tom Mann, he sowed the seeds of a rebirth for Syndicalism in this country.

(Introduction to *Tom Brown's Syndicalism*, Phoenix Press)

a breath of fresh air in these cynical times. In *Conquest of Bread* he outlines the possibilities for a free, just and equal reorganisation of society - possibilities which were already evident before the First World War, before all the scientific and technical advances which have opened up even greater possibilities.

But Kropotkin's theories are not abstract utopianism, they are based on first hand observation of (and involvement in) the movement of the exploited as a whole. His theories are based on careful observation of the current levels of development and detailed geographical knowledge.

Reading Peter Kropotkin's

ideas on the possibilities for agriculture, industry, distribution and housing makes you aware of how terrible things were when he was writing and also how grim things are now for the working class around the world. The relevance of his writings are clear when we look out into a world and see war, starvation, pollution, homelessness and waste. To these and a thousand other problems the states and capitalists have no real solutions, only minor adjustments to ensure the continued functioning of the system.

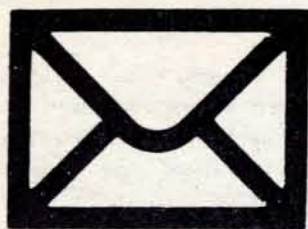
Kropotkin effectively defeats the arguments of collectivists and state socialists with simple logic. He shows remarkable foresight:

"Should an Authoritarian Socialist society ever succeed in establishing itself it could not last - general discontent would soon force it to break up, or reorganise itself on principles of liberty".

I would recommend *The Conquest of Bread* to all readers of *Direct Action* seeking a fuller idea of how anarcho-syndicalists visualise the reorganisation of society during and after a revolutionary struggle with the ruling class. It is a very positive and constructive little volume and our thanks must go to the people at Elephant for making it available once again.

P., South Yorks DMM

LETTERS



Dear DA,

It made a welcome change to see an article published (Sept.90, "Constructive Anarchism") describing a future anarchist society. Too often anarchists know what they're **against**, but not what they are in **favour** of (the mistakes made by the Russian and Spanish anarchists during their respective revolutions can be partly attributed to this), and statements such as "lets concentrate on the here and now and worry about such things when they happen" (they might happen next week) only show the worst form of short-sightedness! Obviously, we aren't interested in forming a 'blue-print' of how an anarchist society will be, but, certain things obviously will be different in the absence of government and the class system.

However, the article seemed to take very little notice of the changes in technology and production since the end of WW2 and ended up with a description of an anarchist society about as welcoming as that of Leninist Russia. It seems to take its model of a social revolution from 1917 which is hardly relevant to a modern-day advanced capitalist system!

Contrary to what the article said, anarcho-syndicalists have never said the Union will be the main form of economic organisation after the revolution (this is the old revolutionary syndicalist idea) - only that it may be, depending on what the 'workers' see as best suited to society's needs.

An anarchist society (there is no such thing as a syndicalist society - syndicalism is a means not an end), would not have its foundation based on work; rather the opposite. An anarchist society, more than likely, will be based around leisure!

When you consider all the socially useless jobs that exist now that will be eliminated in an anarchist society - military, arms production, legislative, financial, police, managerial, government administration, security,

advertising (the list is endless); added to the replacement of jobs by machinery; to the streamlining of industrial organisation (due to the end of competition); to the end of manufacturing socially useless products (ie Mickey Mouse chewing gum to name one amongst a million); along with the end of products built to self-destruct after a few years; and the introduction of inventions that have been withheld from the markets so as not to damage company profits (ie everlasting light-bulbs); then the amount of 'jobs left' will involve people working about 2 hours a day - hardly a society "whose very foundation is work".



As for such statements as "those who do not work of their own free-will shall not be a part of society" (so much for liberty!), such reactionary drivel should be found in Nationalism Today not in an anarchist text! Who is going to decide what work is anyway? For many people, growing spuds, brewing beer, acting, painting, fishing or playing sports are hobbies - for others they're work. Where do you draw the line between work and leisure once you've abolished wages - nowhere, because its impossible to do so!

Work, leisure, labour, jobs, workers, producers and non-producers are terms that belong to a capitalist society - not to a society which is a whole, without division between activities and people - ie an anarchist society.

Not even the capitalists of the Western World advocate letting non-producers starve to death; so lets not read such reactionary ideas in anarchist publications. The article failed miserably to live up to its title and sounded more like a rehash of the authoritarian ideas found in Leninism and Fascism in places!

If we want to attract more people to the anarchist movement (instead of remaining an insignificant minority) and to fight for a better society, we need to paint a more realistic and rosier picture of what we're aiming for, otherwise nobody will want to change society!

D.F., Bordeaux

Dear Comrades,

In your "Reader's Soapbox" section of the October Direct Action, Workers Power is lumped together with the SWP as a group which is inclined to "conveniently forget lesbian and gay rights when there is no march or recruiting to be done."

Worse, the comrade who wrote this piece churns out lies about us that appeared in a leaflet from 3 ex-members of Workers Power. The comrade really should have checked his sources before repeating these lies.

He claims that Workers Power "can't even defend gays from harassment in their own organisation and yet expel others for not towing the party line on sexual politics."

For your readers' information we just want to

make clear that there has been no harassment of lesbians or gays within our organisation. If any instances of such harassment ever did come to our attention we would certainly be capable of defending our lesbian and gay comrades and dealing with the offenders.

As for having expelled people for not towing the line on sexual politics, this is pure nonsense. The 3 ex-members were expelled because they refused to abide by democratic decisions on matters that had nothing to do with sexual politics.

As for the idea that we only raise the issue of lesbian and gay rights when there is some recruiting to be done or marches to go on, this is a cheap and sectarian jibe which he cannot prove. If he wants to discuss our views on the lesbian and gay question he can get a copy

of our pamphlet. It explicitly criticises the idea that homosexuality will have to be "cured after the revolution". Moreover, the systematic work done inside the working class by all of our comrades on this question and the struggles our lesbian and gay comrades have had as a result of coming out at work were not prompted by a narrow sectarian desire to recruit. We have a proud record on this and it stands comparison with anything the DAM, or most other organisations, have done.

Yours fraternally,
Mark Harrison (Workers Power)

NOTE: This letter has been cut due to space considerations. The Ed's of DA are not willing to use the pages of Direct Action to host an argument over the internal politics of Workers Power.

CROSSWORD

CLUES ACROSS

1. (& 5A) The weapon of the working class. (6,6)
9. If we don't do this we will be crushed. (6)
10. I imagine he would be amused at media reports of how many Eastern Europeans idolise him more than his soundalike! (8)
11. The so-called internationalism of the reformist Socialists ended up sending the workers to these in 1914. (8)
13. Rulers in waiting idolised by the left and pop stars! (1,1,1)
15. Mass murderer, demagogue and still an idol for some Maoists! (6)
17. Usually found selling papers in the town centre with staring eyes. Just say 16d! (5)
19. Cartoonist (not high!). (3)
21. Fred Astaire, wedding guests and assorted toffs wear these hats. (3)
23. Anarchist writer/activist. Male jeweller? (7)
24. Not a mod, but author of "Anarcho-Syndicalism" and syndicalist activist. (6)
26. 23a was nicknamed "--- Emma". (3)
27. First name of Chomsky, American writer with anarcho syndicalist tendencies. (4)
28. (& 31) 'Britain's Most Unruly Tabloid' - or just, the struggle. (5,3)
33. The workers hardly ever get this about major decisions. (5)
34. Doesn't mean what it used to in Poland. (10)

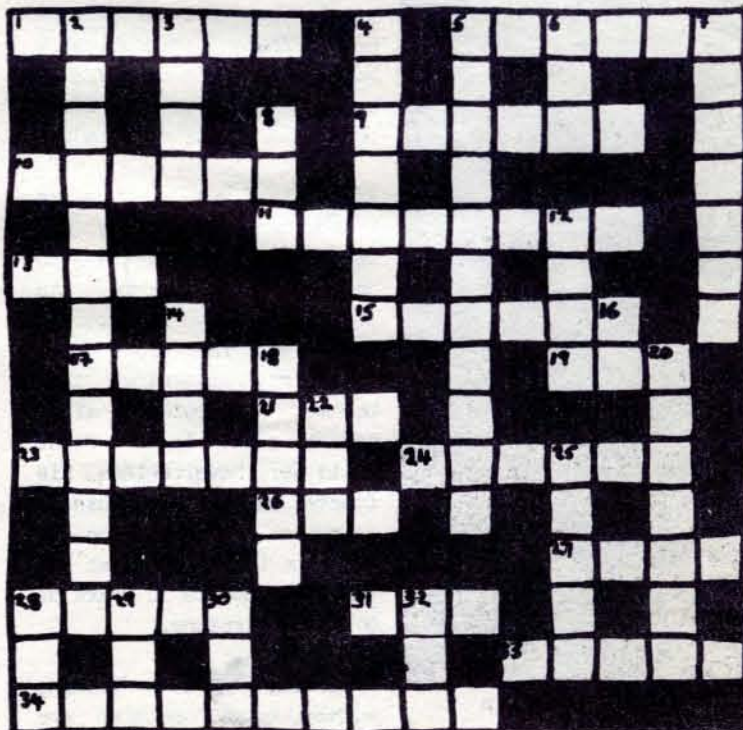
CLUES DOWN

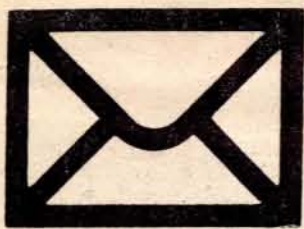
2. (& 4,5d) Unites anarcho-syndicalists around the world. (13,7,11)
3. Don't get mad, get ---! (4)
6. Crappy paper of Really Crap Party! (initials 1,1,1)
7. (& 20d) Generals and strategists plan for this insanity. (7,7)
8. Spanish IWA section. (1,1,1)
12. Religious explanation for the effects of capitalism, stupidity, ignorance and mental illness. (4)
14. What happens to labour under capitalism (cheaply!). (4)
16. Just say this! (2)
18. Quite a lot just get removed from buildings. (5)
22. --- Big Union - aim of

the american IWW (Wobblies). (3)

25. The revolution will see to these parasites! (5)
28. Riot squad in Paris, 1968. (1,1,1)
29. 1970's anti-fascist organisation (1,1,1)
30. If you see him, tell him to stuff privatisation - we want workers' control! (3)
32. Initials of 2,4,5d in French and Spanish. (1,1,1)

The first three correctly completed crosswords received by us by Jan 10th will receive a copy of the book **Sabotage**, by Geoff Brown. This out of print classic has a lot about the syndicalist concept and practice of workers' sabotage. Send to: DA, PO Box 106, Rotherham, S.Yorks S60 1NW.





Dear Comrades,

Fortress Europe 1992

One issue in Alex's useful article on European Community in the last **Direct Action** needs expanding. That is the effect of the removal of national border controls on black people. The

'Fortress Europe' policy increasingly being adopted will lead to a single, EC-wide immigration policy, set at the lowest common denominator (the harshest policy) and allowing people to try to enter the EC at one place only. So you can no longer try a more 'liberal' country to enter if your first attempt fails.

Secondly, the external controls will be replaced with internal controls. And how will, for instance, the British police check people to see if they are "illegal

immigrants"? By the colour of their skin. Thus with less frontier checks on people arriving from EC states, the harassment of black workers in Britain and elsewhere will increase - on the streets, in workplace raids, when starting a new job, etc.

As internationalists, we must oppose all immigration controls. There are concrete ways we can have some effect now - through the unions (where members of NALGO and NUJ, for example, have achieved a relatively high

awareness and policy); through anti-deportation campaigns; and above all by linking up with organisations of migrant workers in Britain and across the EC. FASTI in France have already established good links in this country. The effects of 1992 and the internal market and going to be felt heavily by all workers. It is our task to ensure that anti-racist aspects of opposition to the bosses' single market are not sidelined.

K.F., Lewisham

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If you take out a Supporters Sub now you will receive a copy of the book, **A Year of Our Lives**, the story of the Miners Strike in a Doncaster pit village.

Anarchist 1991 Yearbook.
Price: £1.50 from Phoenix Press, P O Box 824, London N1 9DL. Contains anarchist contacts, publishers and magazines.

Copy Deadline Jan 12th

CONTACTS

DAM National Secretary:
c/o Manchester DAM.

DAM International Secretary:
c/o Edinburgh DAM.

CENTRAL REGION:

Nottingham DAM, PO Box 12, Carlton, Notts NG4 3SW.
South Yorkshire DAM, PO Box 106, Rotherham S60 1NW.
Leicester DAM, c/o Notts DAM.
for contacts in Corby & Scunthorpe write to Central Region Secretary c/o Notts DAM

NORTHEAST REGION:

Leeds DAM, Box DAM, 52 Call Lane, Leeds LS2.
Middlesbrough DAM, c/o Leeds DAM.
for contacts in Bradford and Huddersfield write to NE Secretary c/o Leeds DAM

NORTHWEST REGION:

Burnley DAM, 12 Kingsland Grove, Burnley, Lancs BB11 3PY.
Liverpool DAM, PO Box 110, Liverpool L69 8DP.
Manchester DAM, PO Box 29, SW PDO, Manchester M15.
Preston DAM, PO Box 172, Preston, Lancs PR1.
for contacts in Cumbria, Lancaster, Salford and Stockport write to NW Secretary c/o Burnley DAM

SCOTLAND:

Edinburgh DAM, PO Box 516, Southwest DO, Edinburgh EH10.
Glasgow DAM, PO Box 239, Glasgow G3 6RA

SOUTHEAST:

Norwich DAM, PO Box 73, Norwich NR1 2EB.
South Hertfordshire DAM, PO Box 245, St Albans, Herts.
Deptford DAM, PO Box 574, London SE4 1DL.
East London DAM, 84b Whitechapel High St, London E1 7QX.
North London DAM, c/o 187 High Rd, London N22.
South London DAM, PO Box 761, Camberwell SDO, London N22.
for contacts in Kent and Reading write to SE Region Secretary c/o North London DAM

SOUTHWEST:

Bristol DAM, c/o National Secretary.
for contacts in Somerset and Plymouth write to Bristol DAM

INDUSTRIAL:

DAM Council Workers c/o N. London or Manchester DAM.
DAM Despatch Workers c/o Deptford DAM.
DAM Railway Workers c/o Manchester DAM

OTHER CONTACTS:

Despatch Industry Workers Union, PO Box 574, London SE4.
Anti Nuclear Network, Box 30, 187 High Rd, London N22.
ASP (anarchist publishers), BCM Box 3714, London WC1N 3XX.
Black Flag (anarchist monthly), BM Hurricane, London WC1N 3XX.
Organise (anarchosyndicalists), 7 Winetavern St, Belfast 1.
North West Independent Education Network, PO Box 29, SW PDO, Manchester M15 5HW.

AIMS AND PRINCIPLES

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

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DIRECT ACTION

SICK JOKE

According to the leaders of Hackney council's Tory and LibDem groups, sick workers are costing the Poll Tax payers of Hackney - yes, there are a few - £27 each this year. These claims are based on the Audit Commission figures that employees of the East London borough have an average of 21.3 days off sick each year - three times the national average of seven.

According to Tory Joe Lobenstein, we all "play bingo or go down the pub". LibDem leader, Colin Beadle, who survived a scandal in May over his nomination papers being signed by a known nazi, blames workers for going sick due to demoralisation with the "maladministration of the bureaucracy". Closer to the truth, but don't be fooled.

Beadle also claims that the council is run not for local people but for council workers - a cheap way of trying to get votes by playing off working class people who use services against those who provide them. For an example of how the LibDem's view "good" administration it is necessary only to look south to Tower Hamlets, where people are being denied access to services unless they can prove that they have paid the Poll Tax.

Anarcho-syndicalists have always supported workers' right to "sick strike", a tactic which can be useful when losing pay is out of the question, or where an open strike is certain to lead to victimisation. For isolated individuals or small groups of workers it is particularly useful, and co-ordinated mass sickness can be devastating and get the message across loud and clear.

The real point, however, is that the majority of sickness is genuine. The average figures are undoubtedly pushed up by senior management, who take the piss with their own sick leave since they haven't got anyone breathing down their

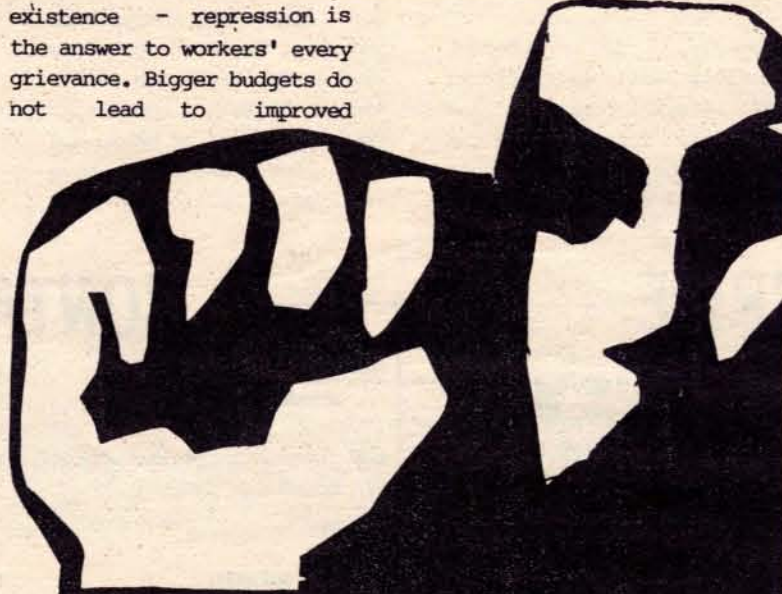
necks about it. High sickness levels are caused by unhealthy working conditions, and the only way to get them down is by vigorous enforcement of health and safety standards by workers' direct action. Years of government cuts have given senior management in Hackney the excuse they want to ignore all health and safety problems that aren't actually going to produce embarrassing corpses (this is a Labour council, after all). Most council workers are stuck in badly-lit, poorly ventilated buildings riddled with asbestos. Routine maintenance frequently gets missed because of jobs not filled to save money. This kind of environment saps your resistance, so if you work at an open counter you get every germ that walks in through the door.

Added to this and gaining Hackney top-of-the-sick-league is stress. The media likes to project an image of stress being something executives suffer from - poor sod only gets 50 grand a year plus expenses, company car, three hour liquid lunch, but making all those important decisions is killing him!

None of the politicians are interested in helping workers eliminate high sickness. They are only interested in advancing the interests of the classes they represent. The Tories represent big business-rate and taxpayers, they want smaller budgets for bigger profits. The LibDems are trying to gain votes by wooing business-rate and Poll Tax payers who are sick of council services not delivered. Their answer is to make workers pay for services with their pay and conditions.

Labour represents senior management, and maintain a working class vote on the evils of the opposition. They want bigger budgets for bigger empires, salaries and perks for senior management. Control, particularly of budgets, is how the mandarins justify their

existence - repression is the answer to workers' every grievance. Bigger budgets do not lead to improved



services because the people who provide services, and their fellow workers who use them, have no say in priorities decided by senior management and rubber-stamped by the Labour leadership.

The real causes of stress are lack of control over your working environment; lack of job security and uncertainty about the future; taking the blame for everything that goes wrong despite having no real say; low pay and bad housing. All the things council workers - not their (or any) bosses - suffer from. The only cure for this is self-management, something you aren't going to see this side of a social revolution.

This is the real sickness problem, but the Labour-controlled council is treating it as a disciplinary problem - just what the opposition are clamouring for. Every six months each worker with six or more days sick gets a "counselling" (read "harassment") interview. This can result in you being sent to the council's doctors, and if they don't find anything wrong with you management have a blank cheque for victimisation. If they do find anything wrong with you, you get medically retired! The same logic used to deal with "witches" thrown into ponds!

The only way the working class is going to get our interests looked after - whether you use the services or provide them - is to take control of the services we need, and to ditch the parasites. This requires radically different forms of

General Strike December 25th Santa exempt

Labour Party.

We also think that each local industrial federation should be confederated with all the other local workers' federations, and unwaged groups, into one local organisation of the working class. Here the workers who provide public services can meet those who use them, and a basis for the identification of local needs, and the organisation of their satisfaction will exist.

Only bureaucrats need bureaucracy, without it real problems can be openly discussed, and with control over resources they can be resolved. By organising as a

organisation from those we have now. As things stand, tenants, manual and "white collar" workers are all divided into separate organisations, representing only our sectional, not our common class, interests.

Anarcho-syndicalists think that workers should be organised on the job - manual and "white collar" in the same department organised together, and federated into one Union of Council Workers, controlled by the workers, not by bureaucrats allied to the

class we can prove this, and make the best argument for a social revolution - Anarcho-syndicalism's goal. When workers control our own environment, the resources to improve it, and the knowledge to maintain it, we will have no trouble providing public services to our class. The Direct Action Movement is working to build the industrial networks, and the local centres, which are the nucleus of such a revolutionary organisation.

Rebel Council Worker