

LISTINGS

Video / Discussion Evening

"Matawan" - About American Miners (West Virginia) in the 1920s and their struggle to organise their pits.

Tuesday 4th February
7.30pm
Edinburgh Unemployed
Workers' Centre,
103 Broughton Street.

Independent BookFair

Independent radical bookfair. Anarchist bookstalls. Book launches. Video screenings. Disabled access. Creche.

Saturday 14th March
10am-6pm
Evening Social (Food + Bar)
£2 waged/£1 unwaged
7pm-11pm
Pierce Institute
840 Govan Road
Glasgow

CONTACTS

Scottish DAM

Edinburgh DAM
P.O. Box 516
S.W.D.O.
Edinburgh EH10

Glasgow DAM
P.O. Box 266
Glasgow G1 5RX

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 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 workers alone control industry and the community without dictates of politicians, bureaucrats, bosses and so-called experts.

SYNDICALIST
CLASS NOT
COLOUR!

AHMED SHEIKH

Ahmed Sheikh was murdered on January 16th 1989 by racists. The march and rally today is to commemorate his death and to challenge the continuing institutionalised racism of the state.



The recent rise in activity of the neo-Nazi British National Party (BNP) in Scotland has put fascism back into the headlines. Black people and those anarchists and parts of the left in touch with working class reality know it never went away. However, the BNP have had a hard time of it since they first crawled out of their holes. Everytime they try to organise a large scale event, the resistance to them has stopped them and flung them into disarray.

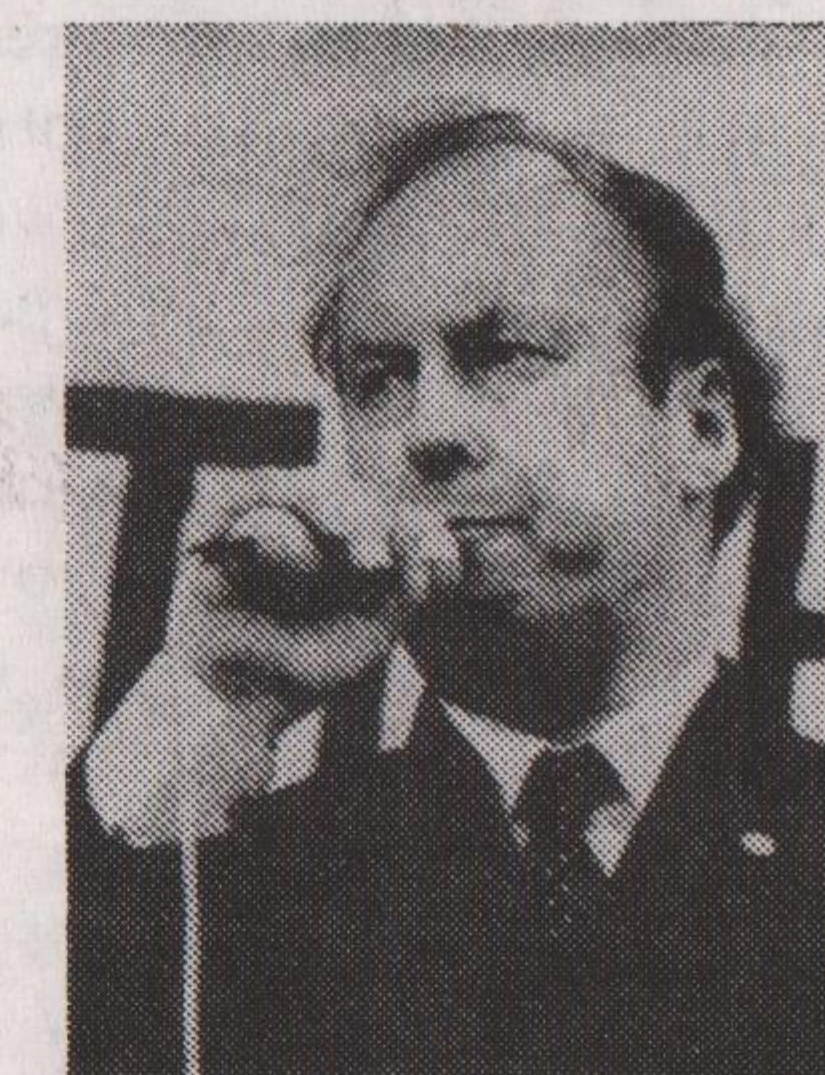
The latest in this long series of defeats for the BNP occurred on Sunday 1st December in Glasgow. On that day they tried to hold a major national rally. They were stopped. The BNP leadership were holed up in their "secret" meeting place, the Gallery Bar, Glasgow. For several hours the BNP and their "Furher", John Tyndall, cowered behind the pub doors and their police protectors, in fear of the 200 strong group of anti-fascists who had surrounded the pub. While Tyndall and

his cronies escaped down a tunnel under Central Station, many of his local braindead followers were being physically confronted on the streets. It was made clear to both the local and imported Nazi's that they and their sick "ideas" will not be tolerated and will be resisted. Hopefully, some of the BNP's younger followers learned their lesson and will think twice before they get involved with the Nazi's again.

Anti-Working Class

Fascism is a ruling class attack on the working class. Fascists encourage working class people to blame other working class people for the effects of capitalism. They use the artificial divisions in our class caused by the bosses, the state and the media, try to deepen them and so weaken our ability to fight back against the ruling class and their system. The fascists deflect anger about social problems away from their real causes (capitalism and the state) and onto scapegoats (ethnic and culturally distinct communities). They offer false solutions to real problems. The only people who profit from fascism is the ruling class. Fascists are anti-working class scum - arselickers of the ruling class.

To those who argue that the fascists are small in numbers and, therefore, irrelevant, we point to the racist violence being suffered at this moment by black working class people; we point to the electoral success of Le Pen and the national Front in France; and we point to the rapid growth of the fascist movement in the 1970s. Now is the time to organise and fight them. Now is the time to kick them off our streets and out of our communities.



BNP leader Tyndall

Newsletter of
Scottish Direct Action
Movement

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CLASS NOT COLOUR! SMASH FASCISM! SMASH RACISM!

Class Struggle

Fascists and racists must be confronted both physically and theoretically wherever and whenever they organise. So must state racism. As anarcho-syndicalists, we in the Direct Action movement (DAM) do not separate the struggle against fascism or racism from the class struggle. Fascism is not an aberration within capitalism, neither is racism (or sexism). Capitalism needs to keep the working class divided and racism and sexism fit the bill. An exploited class fighting amongst itself will not be in the position to fight the ruling class effectively. Capitalism, by its very nature, is violent. Fascism is simply its most violent face. It was created to save capitalism from social revolution. It is no coincidence that fascism started in 1920s Italy where the working class had occupied their workplaces, under the anarcho-syndicalist influence of the Italian union, the USI (the Italian branch of the International Workers' Association), and created a network of workers councils to run them.

Understanding this, we in the DAM, although we fight alongside other groups and individuals, do not support the broad or popular front approach which relies on alliances involving our pro-capitalist enemies in the fight against fascism like the Anti Nazi League. Similarly, the carnival-type politics of SOS Racisme in France (and of Rock Against Racism in the late 1970s here in Britain) are at best misguided.

Fascism, due to its nature can only be solved by the working class, by its own efforts and organisations. The support that fascism and racism can receive from the white working class is due to the failure of the labour and revolutionary movements. It is an indictment of the left and demonstrates the desperate



need for working class politics instead of left-wing posturing. The reformist trade unions and the Labour Party are part of the problem, as are all the "revolutionary" parties, since they are all dominated, either directly or indirectly, by middle-class elements or bureaucrats.

Anarcho-syndicalism

What is needed is the development of a real working class movement, controlled by its members and organised in the workplace and community based on the politics of class struggle - direct action, class solidarity and anti-statism. In other words, anarcho-syndicalism. Fascism can only be defeated by a strong and united working class movement. However, as anarcho-syndicalists we recognise the necessity for groups within the working class to organise autonomously. We support the organisations of those sections of our class which are singled out by fascists - black people, women, gay men, lesbians, Jews or Irish people. The presence of such organisations can only strengthen our class. We are not a "revolutionary vanguard" - we do not seek to infiltrate organisations and take them over. We work in and alongside autonomously organised groups in mutual solidarity and as equals, not as "leaders" trying to control the "line".

Fascism and racism are used by capitalism to keep the working class down and divided. They can only be really ended by the destruction of that system, by social

revolution - the self-organisation of working class people. For revolutionary ideas and organisations to spread, fascism and all other reactionary ideas must be rooted out of our class now, by organising and fighting against them in our communities and workplaces. One aspect of this is Anti-Fascist Action (AFA), which played a key role in stopping the BNP in Glasgow in the last couple of months, particularly on the 1st of December 1991.

Anti-Fascist Action and Local Activities

Glasgow DAM are members of their local Anti-Fascist Action group, as are many other DAM branches around the country, which support its direct-actionist strategy and work. AFA is essentially an umbrella group for individuals and working class organisations committed to fighting fascism through physical and theoretical confrontation. We urge readers of Syndicalist Action to contact their local AFA group and join it (if there is one). However, if no AFA group is operating locally there are many other regional and community groups fighting racism and fascism. Their strategies may differ, and as anarcho-syndicalists we do not agree with diluted or reformist strategies when it comes to fascists (ie. you can't count on your local councillor or trade union official), but we believe

it is better to work in groups rather than trying to take individual actions. In Edinburgh, where no AFA group exists, there is Lothian Campaign Against Racism and Fascism, as well as Muirhouse Anti Racism Campaign. It is important to build up these groups so that the removal of fascists from our streets becomes possible and an important voice is made in the battle against state racism, such as the asylum bill.

However, AFA and other campaigns are not and cannot be the whole solution. What is essential is the creation of a strong social-economic organisation that unites black and white on the basis of class and equality, and fights, by direct action and class solidarity poverty, racism, unemployment, bad housing and lack of housing, low wages and all the other problem we face. Such an organisation, an anarcho-syndicalist union, is the only means by which lasting class solidarity can be created and fascism and bigotry finally removed from our class.

Only by fighting and organising together, on a class basis, can black and white people destroy the artificial divides in our class, root out poverty and institutionalised inequality, destroy capitalism and the state, and create a better world. Independent working class organisations and politics are essential for the intensification of the class war and the elimination of fascism and inequality. We in the DAM are trying to create such a movement. We urge you to join us in our struggle for a better world.

Anarcho-syndicalists have fought fascism since we first encountered it in Italy in 1918 and we will fight it to its death!

Contacts:

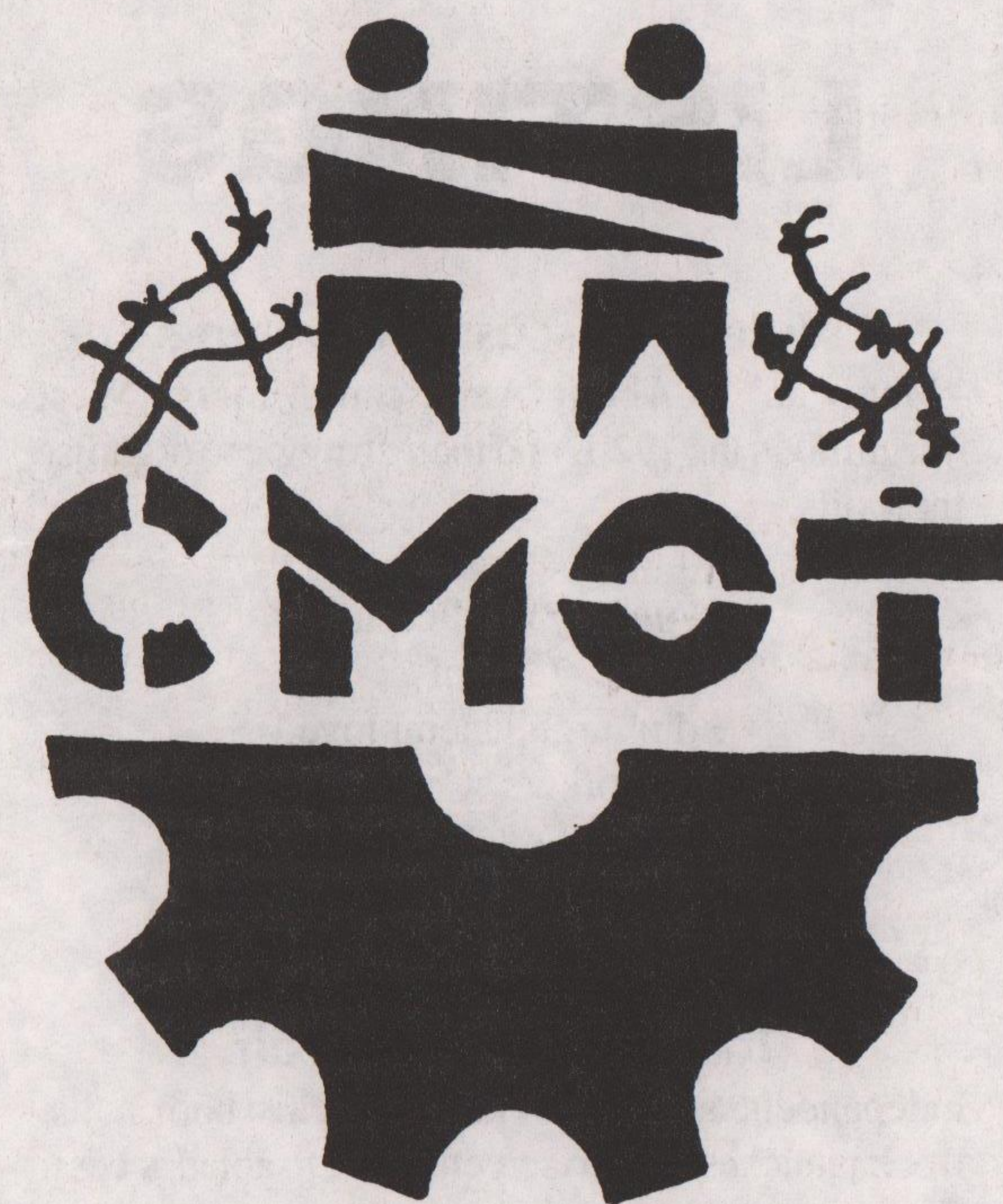
Glasgow AFA, P.O. Box 266, Glasgow G1 5RX
Lothian Campaign Against Racism and Fascism,
P.O. Box 474, Edinburgh, EH11 2TQ

NEWS FROM BIELORUSSIA

Repression in Bielorrussia continues. Serguei Andriouchin, member of the independent union the SMOT, has been dismissed for his active participation of a free independent union in the MPO-Lenin firm, Biellar, Minsk.

The story of the conflict runs thus: following a strike movement in Spring last year, the Republic's authorities allowed workers to draw up proposals for a collective contract with the administration, whereby workers could make their demands on working conditions known. Union control over production, hiring and firing of the workforce are included in this collective contract. However, after the putsch, the MPO-Lenin administration refused to study the collective contract proposed by the SMOT, but instead ratified its own contract, without collective agreement, which included a stipulation that the independent union has no right of existence. Workers are thus deprived of a number of their demands. In response Andriouchin and other activists hung their demands up in the workshops and distributed the SMOT's demands. Management then sacked Andriouchin and the telephone lines of SMOT activists in Bielorrussia were cut. The SMOT is now calling for our support. Protest letters against this repression should be sent to:

Bielarus, Minsk 220 050
Leninski prospekt, dom 58
MPO-Lenin, Biellar
General Director Mamai
President of State Union, Maslouskaia Nina



INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

It has been levelled at us by opponents of anarcho-syndicalism that we are proposing ourselves as an alternative to the TUC. Let us hope our pamphlet 'Winning the Class War', which outlines the DAM's industrial strategy, ends this myth. Much as we do want to see alternatives to flabby reformist bureaucracy, we do not claim to be an alternative. But we do believe we have a strategy to germinate one.

The response of the left to the problems of organising in the labour movement has been weak. When the left has looked at organising workers (an idea so logical to us that it barely seems to need stating), it has led them to taking militant workers out of the workplace, where they are strongest. The rank and file groups of the 60's and 70's failed because the principles they were based on were social democratic and

never went further than militant unionism. Plus, they were dominated by political parties with their axes to grind, which led to infighting and collapse.

The 80's version of rank and file groups, the "Broad Left", is even more of a failure. It operates by encouraging militant union activists into putting energy into unrepresentative branch meetings, attempting to have radical motions passed - never to be acted upon - and supporting this or that left bureaucracy in union elections. Time is spent talking to other activists at the exclusion of organising with other fellow workers on the shop floor. As anarcho-syndicalists we have no interest in encouraging workers in the illusion of trade unions being reformable or in believing that union leaders will take up the fight on the workers' behalf. All 'don't them off the hook' has been is

a substitute for building action constructively with other workers.

Nevertheless, anarcho-syndicalists are active in unions, both as shop stewards and in local branches, since we believe in collective action and will pursue it at every opportunity. But still we recognise the contradictions in being in a trade union which supposedly defends our rights but is tied to capitalism.

Critics of 'syndicalism' portray it thus: "since believing that capitalism has to be fought on the shop floor ... in practice this meant supporting strike activity but shunning political strategy". Since we believe that economic and political struggles should not be separated, anarcho-syndicalists, far from lacking politics above 'trade unions consciousness', and their

tactics are aimed at taking politics were bread and butter issues are fought, alongside solidarity. This presents the widest possible scenario for revolutionary politics. Where the workers are, not in political parties, or in the Broad Left, putting pressure upwards through the union instead of making the necessary links across to workers.

Against this posturing we substitute real action. By this, we mean building the confidence of workers who want to fight back, and developing ways of organising that suit those workers, and are open and participatory. Our aim is not to be the mould through which workers must pass before they meet the criteria of true revolutionaries, but to be a catalyst that spurs them on to organise themselves. Our industrial networks are a means to do this.