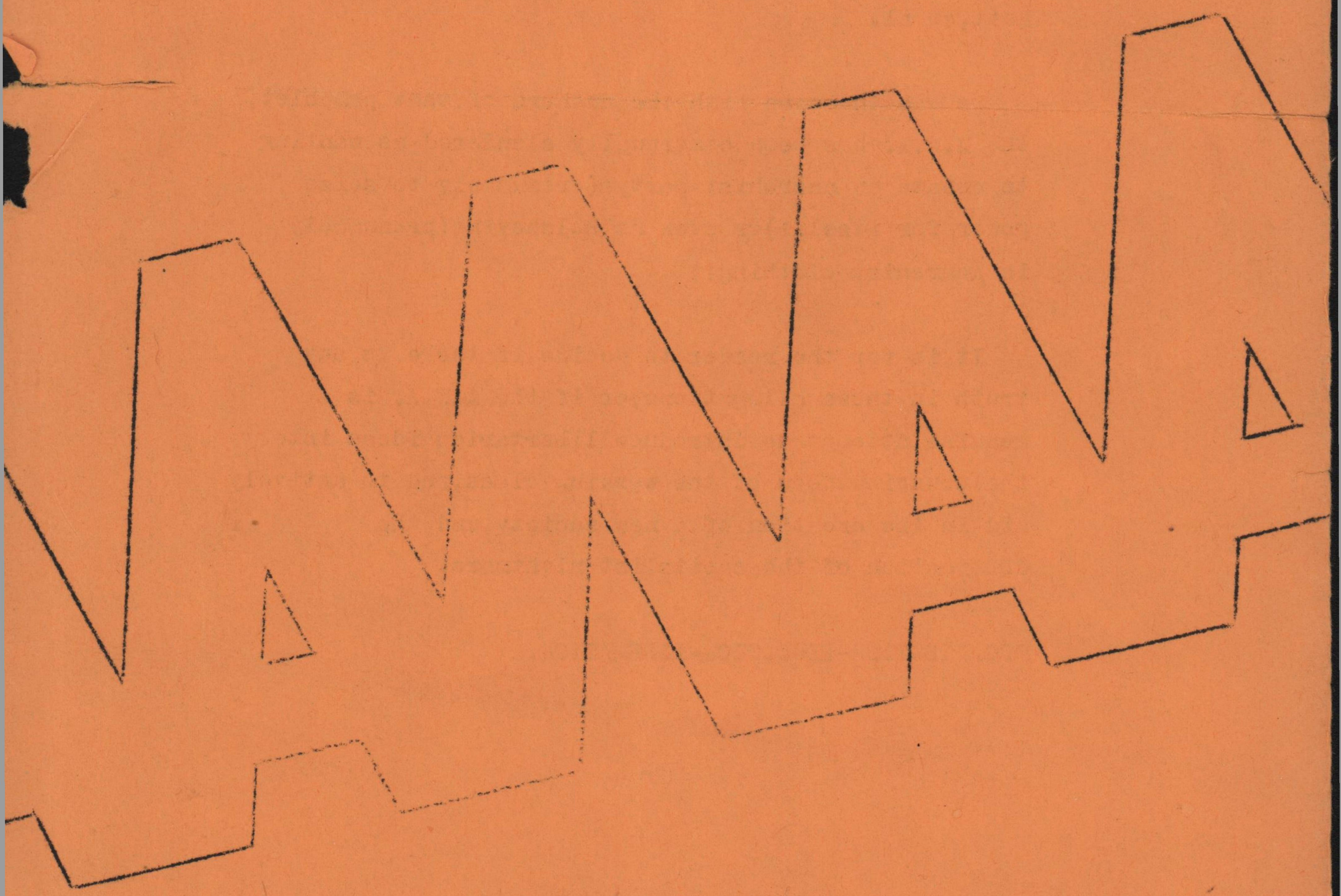


THE DOCUMENTS OF THE
ANARCHIST
WORKERS
ASSOCIATION



13 COLTMAN STREET, HULL

PREFACE

Since the founding of the Association, then called the Organisation of Revolutionary Anarchists (ORA) in 1971 a continuous and often traumatic political development has been taking place. This has been largely due to a rejection of the modern British liberal and reformist anarchist orthodoxies. The "traditionalists" submerge the fundamental class war base of Anarchism in a chaotic individualism, which results in a dismissal of effective communist organisation.

In parallel to theoretical development, has been the evolution of an organisational structure designed to maintain libertarian principles while creating a base from which militants can operate. In this task the organisation has drawn heavily on "The Platform of the Libertarian Communists" produced by Arshinov, Makhno, Mett, et al.

As was the case with the authors of that pamphlet, the A.W.A. has been continually slandered as wanting to create an anarchist party! (presumably to seize power for itself!) or even as Bolsheviks (presumably in Anarchist clothing!)

It is for the reader to decide if there is any truth in these allegations; or if the A.W.A. is a genuine attempt to introduce libertarian ideas into the consciousness of the working class, and to actively aid in the creation of a new society, and the destruction of the capitalist nightmare.

ORGANISATION-EDUCATION-LIBERATION.

AIMS & PRINCIPLES

- 1) Capitalism is a class society.
- 2) The basic irreconcilable contradiction within it is between the class which owns and controls the means of production, distribution and exchange, the bourgeoisie, and the class who produce the agricultural wealth, the working class.
- 3) The social enslavement and exploitation of the working class forms the basis on which modern society stands, without which capitalism could not exist.
- 4) The state is the instrument of the ruling class. To destroy the power of the bourgeoisie, we must destroy the power of the state.
- 5) Russia and China are class societies in each of which a ruling class of administrators collectively owns and controls the means of production, distribution and exchange, and in which a working class, the sole producer of all wealth, is exploited by that class. These states we define as corporate state capitalist in that the ruling class is totally integrated with the state as is the trade union structure.
- 6) The class nature of society is reflected in all the dominant philosophies; class, race, sexual, social and personal relationships. The class relationships are expressed through all social relationships and generate attitudes such as sexism and racism.
- 7) The conflict of interest between the two classes generates the class struggle. In the history of society the class struggle has been the primary factor in the determination of the form and structure of society.
- 8) The day to day struggles of the working class reflect the class struggle. The position of the working class as the collective producer of society's wealth makes it the only force capable of replacing capitalism by a classless society. The existing defensive organisations thrown up by the working class, such as the trade unions, whose bureaucracy is increasingly incorporated into capitalism, are not adequate for the smashing of the capitalist system, and the building of a free classless society. However, the working class rank and file organisations such as democratically controlled shop steward committees, factory committees, strike committees are developing through the place of work. These organisations are the forerunners of workers' councils which are the expression of working class power. Outside of work, the working class has developed other forms of organisation that are potentially revolutionary, such as tenants' action committees, rent strike committees, and tenant-worker joint action committees.
- 9) Dual power exists before the power of the bourgeoisie is smashed. If the working class are successful then the organisation of the needs of society will be firmly based in working class hands. This is the collective working class in power, in which the working class destroys all remnants of bourgeois society such as racial hatred, the family and hierarchies. This is the period of transition between capitalism and libertarian communism.
- 10) From our analysis of society we reach the inevitable conclusion that capitalism cannot be reformed in any fundamental way and that the only meaningful transformation of society is through the development of working class organisations and by means of a violent social revolution. Violence becomes inevitable for the working class to defend themselves against the onslaughts of the dispossessed ruling class.

THE ROLE OF THE A.W.A.

- 1) The task of the A.W.A. is to aid the preparation of the working class for their seizure of power. The establishment of an anarchist society is something that has to be consciously fought for by the working class. The A.W.A. is a conscious organised expression of libertarian communist ideas. Through the shared experience, information and knowledge of the class struggle, A.W.A. must be able to analyse and disseminate the nature of the problems facing the working class and apply these lessons in the class struggle.
- 2) The A.W.A. aims to offer a lead within the working class movement by example and explanation; and to build into the movement a high level of political consciousness so that it is capable of defeating capitalism and fighting the creation of a new ruling class. Fundamental to this is the contradiction between the organisation as a tendency within the class and its being in ideological advance of it. This contradiction can only be resolved with the establishment of a libertarian communist society. During the period of transition the potential basis for the emergence of a new ruling class is progressively removed so that the need for a separately organised libertarianism will decrease.
- 3) The A.W.A. seeks to develop and support working class organisations which are the forerunners of workers' councils and to develop in them revolutionary consciousness. The A.W.A. does not seek independent power for itself but seeks to work through the working class organisation.
- 4) The A.W.A. seeks to establish international links with libertarian revolutionary organisations and groups with an aim at establishing an international libertarian communist movement.
- 5) The A.W.A. seeks to combat attitudes of sexism, racism and national chauvinism as attitudes that help maintain class society.

The form our organisation takes is a realisation of libertarian perspectives in the current situation. We recognise that it is not a social model of a free society and must itself develop in interaction with the developing liberation of society.

(i) We are a membership organisation.

(ii) Membership is open to those who agree with our analysis of society and its transformation and who work towards this end.

(iii) The main policy-making body is the National Conference. Between National Conferences there will be held bi-monthly Delegate Conferences to co-ordinate and carry out National Conference decisions, to decide interim policy and to initiate activity. Delegates are mandatable and rotated. Delegate Conference decisions can be revoked by National Conference.

(iv) We seek to establish A.W.A. groups in all areas, not only geographical but also industrial, educational, etc. Groups interpret National Conference and Delegate Conference decisions to relate tactics to their local experience.

As agreed at A.W.A. National Conference in London, 31st August- 1st September 1974

THE CONSTITUTION

The Constitution shall consist of:

- A - The name of the organisation;
- B - The membership;
- C - The finance;
- D - The national officers;
- E - The national conference;
- F - The delegate conference;
- G - The groups;
- H - Minority Rights;
- I - Libertarian Struggle;
- J - Libertarian Communist Review;
- K - The internal bulletin;
- Appendix 1 - Definitions of national officers' duties;
- Appendix 2 - Standing Orders of national conference;
- Appendix 3 - Standing Orders of delegate conference.

A) The name of the organisation shall be the Anarchist Workers Association.

B) MEMBERSHIP

1. The AWA is a membership organisation.
2. A member is defined as a person who accepts the Aims & Principles and the constitution of AWA.
3. Members shall pay the full yearly contribution as defined in section C.
4. Members shall engage actively in the propagation of AWA's policies, and play an active role in the functioning of the organisation.
5. All meetings of the AWA are open to any members of the organisation. If not a group delegate, a member will have only observer status at delegate conference.
6. The membership list shall not be made public.
7. New members of AWA shall be given candidate membership linked to the nearest group which should not be less than six weeks. During this period they shall receive the IB and shall participate as far as possible in group work. The group shall decide if and when a candidate should be given full membership.
8. Membership fees shall be 1% of annual income with a minimum of £3. There shall also be a contribution of £2.50 p.a. to the Libertarian Struggle press fund.

C) FINANCE

1. Membership fees shall be paid to the Treasurer/Membership Secretary.
2. The membership fee covers the member for nine months after the last day of the quarter in which s/he joined, ie if one joined in January, February or March then the following 1st January is covered by the membership fee, after which date membership lapses.
3. No-one shall rejoin until all back subscriptions are paid. The only exception is when a previous member who has sent a letter of resignation to the organisation applies to rejoin, and/or it is considered unreasonable to expect back payment.

D) NATIONAL OFFICERS

1. The national conference shall elect four office bearers: a national secretary, a treasurer/membership secretary, and two international secretaries. These four posts are defined in Appendix 1.
2. No national officer shall maintain the same position for more than two years.
3. All national officers are subject to recall, and are considered to have resigned if national or delegate conference do determine. The delegate conference in such a case would appoint a provisional officer until next national conference could confirm the appointment.

E) NATIONAL CONFERENCE

1. The national conference shall be held at least once a year.
2. The national conference is the organ of AWA which deals with the Aims & Principles, the constitution and Appendices, the election of national officers, and the election of all delegate groups. On occasion the national conference may be called to decide upon specific topics if it is thought necessary by delegate conference.
3. National conference may change decisions made by the delegate conference. Delegate conference may not change national conference decisions.

4. National conference has the right to expel any member who behaves in a manner calculated to sabotage the organisation.
5. National conference shall function in accordance with Standing Orders in App.2.
6. Conference shall elect a delegate as conference secretary who shall: a) be responsible for organising the next conference, b) notify all members of time, date and venue of the conference, c) instruct all members to attend, d) invite all observers to attend, e) arrange the minuting of conference, f) be subject to recall by delegate conference, who shall appoint a new conference secretary, and g) be responsible for organising a provisional agenda.

F) DELEGATE CONFERENCE

1. Delegate conference shall meet at least two-monthly.
2. The conference is open to delegates from groupings as defined in section G. A delegate must represent a minimum of three members, including him/herself.
3. All delegates shall be mandated on all general concepts which are advertised for discussion at conference. The agenda for conference shall be published in the Internal Bulletin at least three weeks before conference.
4. A system of rotation of delegates shall be evolved by the individual groups.
5. The delegate conference is the organ of A.W.A. which deals with all policy decisions, all tactical decisions, and the general maintenance of the organisation.
6. The delegate conference shall be subject to all decisions of national conference.
7. Conference shall function in accordance with standing orders in Appendix 3.

G) GROUPS

1. A group is defined as three or more members in a geographical location.
2. The responsibilities of a group are a) to provide a base for the distribution of propaganda, b) to co-ordinate the activities of its individual members, c) to implement conference decisions, d) to send delegates to delegate conference, and e) to send a monthly report to the internal bulletin.
3. The group is entitled to suspend the membership of any of its members if the member is behaving in an irresponsible manner. The national secretary must be informed immediately. Suspension for longer than three months must be confirmed by a delegate conference. Appeals against suspension of membership can be made to delegate and/or national conference.

H) MINORITY RIGHTS AND MINORITY TENDENCIES

1. Any member has the right to dispute any policy or tactic which the organisation has adopted, while accepting the Aims and Principles and the Constitution of the organisation.
2. A minority tendency shall be defined as a minimum of three members who declare their disagreement with the organisation's policy and/or tactics. This declaration must detail the basis of their opposition, and not contravene the Aims and Principles or the Constitution.
3. All minority views for inclusion in the A.W.A.'s theoretical journal shall be placed before the editorial meeting, and shall be subject to normal selection. No individual member or members have an automatic right to have their material published. No comrade shall have his opinions suppressed on political grounds.
4. Minority tendencies have no right to send delegates to the delegate conference. Their ideas can be expressed through their individual group delegates.

I) LIBERTARIAN STRUGGLE

- a) 1. The name of the monthly paper shall be Libertarian Struggle.
2. The paper shall be edited by a board composed of delegates from groups.
3. Each group shall elect one delegate for this purpose, and shall decide on its own system of rotation.
4. The delegate is responsible for collecting material for the paper from his/her own group and area.
5. The editorial board shall (i) edit the material presented, and be responsible for the editorial, (ii) select articles for publication, (iii) shall edit articles sent to Prodcoll unless it is clearly stated that it must appear intact, if it is selected, (iv) make sure that

any minority view is clearly stated not to be A.W.A. policy, (v) be responsible for a general layout for presentation to Prodcoll.

6. Adverts may be accepted by the editorial board if it does not contravene editorial policy. The standard length is one column inch.
- b) National conference shall elect a group as Production Collective. This group
 1. shall be responsible for specific layout and production of paper
 2. shall be responsible for the distribution of the paper
 3. shall be subject to recall by delegate conference, who shall delegate a new group to carry out Prodcoll's national conference mandate.
- c) The paper shall be ready for selling by the first week of every calendar month.

J) LIBERTARIAN COMMUNIST REVIEW

1. The organisation shall produce a theoretical journal named 'The Libertarian Communist Review.'
2. It will be produced every two months.
3. The journal will be edited by an editorial board, which will be elected by the National Conference.

K) INTERNAL BULLETIN

1. National conference shall delegate a group to produce the IB.
2. The IB shall be produced in the first week of each month.
3. It shall be sent to members and candidate members, and at the discretion of the international secretaries to contacts.
4. No editing shall take place providing material is sent on the correct duplicating stencil. Members having access to duplicators must send sufficient copies for distribution of all pieces of over 1,000 words.
5. As the IB is the most important single organ of the organisation, all groups delegates and members shall regularly contribute reports of activities and discussions, relevant posters and leaflets, and observations on all aspects of A.W.A. and its work.
6. All contributions shall reach the delegate group at least seven days before the publication date, advertised in the previous IB.

APPENDIX 1

The National Conference shall elect four members to act as:

1. TREASURER/MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

This delegate shall:

- (a) maintain a record and account of all funds.
- (b) circulate once a quarter via the Internal Bulletin a record of all income and expenditure in the organisation, and indications regarding membership trends.
- (c) keep the International secretary continually informed of membership and financial transactions.
- (d) be responsible for recording of membership dues, and on receipt of monies and completed application form, shall send the membership card via local group. No cards shall be sent direct to new members.
- (e) be informed by the responsible groups, after each issue of the Internal Bulletin, Libertarian Struggle, of the financial position regarding these publications.

2. NATIONAL SECRETARY

This delegate shall:

- (a) deal with all internal and external correspondence.
- (b) be responsible for the organising of any national conference in an emergency. The secretary must receive the instructions from a Delegate Conference.
- (c) be empowered to co-opt members in the fulfilment of these tasks.
- (d) circulate via the Internal Bulletin a monthly report upon the overall functioning of the organisation, and upon developments in his/her work.

3. INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIES

- (a) These delegates shall make and maintain contact with fraternal organisations and sympathetic individuals abroad.
- (b) Send our publications and news of A.W.A. activity to people above mentioned.
- (c) Make regular reports to the IB.
- (d) Organise the translation from foreign papers, and the writing of articles for

foreign papers.

- (e) Be responsible for authorising delegates abroad from the organisation, and for notifying the organisation about international conferences.

APPENDIX 2

Standing Orders of the National Conference

The conference secretary should distribute copies of the standing orders with the conference discussion documents.

- (1) A standing order can be suspended or implemented at any time throughout conference by a simple majority vote of members.
- (2) a) The general method of voting shall be by show of hands of the members, and motions, and amendments shall be passed by a simple majority. In a vote, tellers may be requested to count votes.
b) Members unable to attend conference, and wishing to vote by proxy can notify the conference secretary of their position on the published motions.
- (3) a) Conference shall elect a delegate to chair each session of the meeting. The chair shall not voice an opinion on the matter under discussion except with the agreement of conference.
b) A delegate shall minute the conference. The conference secretary is responsible for the minuting, and supplying the Internal Bulletin with the same, for distribution purposes.
- (4) The procedure regarding motions is as follows:
 - a) The mover of a proposition is allowed ten minutes (max) and each succeeding speaker five minutes (max); the mover of the motion only having the right to reply to the whole discussion. Such a reply must not occupy more than ten minutes, and shall not introduce new matter.
 - b) No member shall be allowed to speak more than once on the same subject, unless by permission of the meeting. If a member does not accept the ruling of the chair, business shall be suspended until the members have dealt, by vote, with the issue.
 - c) All motions must have a seconder. If a motion is carried, it shall be called the resolution.
 - d) Any motion seeking to alter the Constitution, Aims and Principles, or Standing Orders shall be considered to be an amendment. In that case, the 'status quo' is the motion. A mover of such a motion does not, because it is an amendment, have the right of reply to debate.
 - e) A motion should be positive; not a 'question for debate' or a pious motion and should commence with the word 'that'.
 - f) Motion to conference must be submitted by the proposer to the conference secretary, in writing, for minuting.
- (5) The procedure regarding amendments is as follows:
 - a) An amendment is a proposal seeking to improve a motion, not merely to improve the wording, but to propose a better course of action. Amendments must not be negative nor merely destructive. Anyone wishing to can simply vote against the motion. The moving of an amendment is the same as the moving of a motion, except that the mover of an amendment has no right of reply to the discussion. An amendment must be relevant to the terms of the original motion, offering a concrete alternative proposal.
 - b) Starting with the first proposed, one amendment at a time shall be discussed. Each discussion shall be answered by the mover of the original motion (max 5 mins.) then a vote for or against the amendment. The motion shall not be posed against the amendment. If all the amendments are defeated the motion is discussed, and voted on. If an amendment is carried, the motion disappears, and the amended motion is termed the substantive motion. Amendments to the substantive motion may then be accepted as described in the above procedure.
 - c) After all amendments have been voted on, the motion, as it then stands, is put to the conference.

d) All amendments must have a seconder.

e) All drafting amendments must be submitted in writing to the chair.

(6) Points of order shall be in the form of a query to the chair, in order to avoid personality clashes, individual arguments etc.

i) as to whether the conference is being conducted properly.

ii) to clarify a point in dispute.

iii) to impart information (point of information)

(7) Contained within this clause are the only procedural motion in order.

a) Next Business

If next business is moved by a member who has not contributed to the discussion in progress, a vote shall proceed. If carried, conference abandons the motion or subject under discussion, and moves on to next business. If lost, the discussion carries on as before the interruption.

b) Discussion Cease

If it is moved that discussion cease by a member, who has not contributed to the discussion in progress, a vote shall proceed. If carried, the conference moves straight to a vote on the motion. If lost, the discussion carries on as before the interruption. Although conference moves straight to the vote when the motion for ceasing discussion is carried, the mover of the motion conference was discussing has the right of reply before the question is put.

N.B. Both motions are to be treated as amendments to the main motion under discussion, and take precedence over all other amendments.

(8) Conference shall determine the duration of the meeting in consultation with the conference secretary, who organises the venue.

(9) Any amendment to the Constitution, Aims and Principles, or Standing Orders must be circulated to all members at least fourteen days before conference. If this is not carried out, a quorum of at least 25% of the total membership must be present before the matter can be decided.

APPENDIX 3

Standing Orders of the Delegate Conference (in preparation)

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NOW
READ
ON.....



at

BLACK FLAG BOOKSHOP
1 Wilne Street, Leicester

Key To Flow-Chart Of The Anarchist Workers Association

- (A) The A.W.A. membership, and all organs, and delegates of the A.W.A., contributing reports, and taking part in the discussions within the Internal Bulletin.
- (B) Minutes and report to the Internal Bulletin.
- (C) The distribution of the Internal Bulletin to members, and candidate members only.
- (D) All members are eligible to attend the National Conference.
- (E) The election of the Libertarian Communist Review editorial board, from members at the National Conference.
- (F) Election of the two International Secretaries.
- (G) Election of the National Secretary.
- (H) Election of the Treasurer/Membership Secretary.
- (I) Election of the Libertarian Struggle Collective.

Note The National Conference delegates the group/individual to produce the Internal Bulletin.

- (J) The membership is formed into Groups. (a minimum of three members in a geographical area.)
- (K) Each group sends delegates to the Delegate Conference. (1 delegate per 3 members)
- (L) Each group sends one delegate to edit Libertarian Struggle. (meeting open to observers)
- (M) The editorial board sends to the Prod/Coll the paper, ready for layout.

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"Anarchism is generally humanitarian only in the sense that the ideas of the masses tend to improve the lives of all men, and that the fate of today's or tomorrow's humanity is inseparable from that of exploited labour. If the working masses are victorious, all humanity will be reborn; if they are not, violence, exploitation, slavery and oppression will reign as before in the world."

The Organisational Platform Of The Libertarian Communists

Flow-chart of the Anarchist Workers Association (Jan. 1975)

