FREE

ideological crisis which will worsen with the election of Whilst the merger of unions along industrial lines - for can only lead to unions being alienated from their a Tory government for the fourth successive term. example and RMT-ASLEF merger - would be of im- members and therefore of little value to ordinary work-These two facts are closely linked. Since Thatcher was mense benefit to workers in their fight against manage- ing people. elected in 1979 trade union membership has fallen ment, little or no thought is given to that in any of the There is a need to build workplace organisations that markedly and continues to do so. The TUC's latest recent or proposed mergers. What is now occurring is will concentrate on improving pay and conditions while annual report shows that membership has almost the formation of a number of general unions or minihalved since the Tories came to power, with only six TUC's which will accept anyone as members and inmillion now entitles to vote in union elections. deed compete with each other for members, often oppression. We will be part of that movement believing

individual union's incomes. Many unions are now in agement. debt and have been forced to borrow money to keep Coupled with this merger-madness is the move away success in terms of a balanced bank book and the going. As a result, according to TUC figures, a massive from workplace militancy to more of an American-style number of credit cards issued to members. 10% of dues goes towards the repayment of debt, in business union mentality. Unions increasingly see Consequently, we want to set up networks in every other words our hard-earned money goes straight to themselves as pressure groups who will be able to industry working towards building revolutionary bankers and their rich friends. This has forced a rash influence government by the use of professional nego- unions. Initially these networks would provide informaof amalgamations over the past few years, the latest of tiators elegantly expressing their views without the tion and support for workers in struggle. which is the merger of the AEU and the EEPTU to need for strike action. More and more they see their While rejecting the existing unions as beyond reform, form the second largest union in the country, with members as clients who pay dues in return for services we will continue to work inside them to defend working NALGO, NUPE and COHSE soon to follow to form a - hence the growing emphasis on mortgages, credit class interests. We will, however, be promoting worknew union, UNISON, of 1.5 million members. cards, insurance and even membership of BUPA in the place resistance, not standing in union elections on

We would welcome these new super-unions if their case of the old EEPTU. main aim was to increase the industrial strength of We believe that over the last 20 years the trade unions sations and not New Unions formed through amalgaworkers. However, the current amalgamations are in- have become more divorced from the point mations that the future of the working class lies. spired only by financial viability and the desire of union of workers' power - the workplace - and the move

This has also had a dramatic effect on the TUC's and trying to win single-union sweetheart deals with man- that the future lies in working class organisation based

The British trade union movement is in financial and bureaucrats to retain their power and well paid jobs. towards super unions will only increase that trend. This

on the workplace and not 'super unions' who measure

so-called 'radical' platforms. It is in workplace organi-

## PRIVATISATION SHAMBLES

The following two articles are taken from 'Transport Worker' No. 4 Spring '93

PRIVATISATION SHAMBLES

The Government's "Railway Privatisation Bill" eventually published on February 1, is an utter shambles. Not from the quickly, buyers will not come forward. point of view of a railway worker (although it will certainly mean mass redundancies, wage cuts and the scrapping of safety standards and conditions if implemented) it is a shambles because it runs counter to the Board's own strategy for privatisation and because it has failed to achieve any support from the finance capitalists of the City of London in whose interests it was originally conceived. It is clear to even the most loyal Tory propagandist in the media that MacGregor has come up with a real turkey.

It was politically important for the Tories at the last election to promise to privatise the railway. Partly for John Major to satisfy those Tories who doubted his Thatcherite credentials, and partly to maintain the flow of wealth to the City financial interests from asset stripping the industrial infrastructure, but mainly because the railway represents a body of organised labour which defeated the government in 1989, and is still capable of doing so today.

Anyone who believes that the rail unions are as impotent as our leaders pretend, or that the Tories have forgotten the co-ordinated strikes on the railway and London Underground, has fallen for the oldest trick of the boss class whenever possible bury discontent under a conspiracy of silence (the Manchester Picadilly guards, the LU company plan) - but if they are threatened with co-ordinated industrial action they will respond with a deluge of lies which would make Saddam Hussein look reasonable.

## UNPOPULAR CAPITALISM

The recession has made a mockery of the governments already incoherent plans to sell off the railway. Certainly, it is impossible to maintain the charade of 'popular capitalism' through a public shares issue when the public are suffering from a recessionary crisis. It is even proving diffi- modern capitalism. This is interesting because it underlines cult to interest the financial sharks and playboys (Stage- the threat that industrial organisation still creates for capi-Coach, Branson etc) who might have been expected to rush talism in the 90s. The lesson for railway workers is that we officials away from the activists. The union's financial in while wiser and wealthier predators circled impatiently must take every opportunity to move the struggle to restructure problem could be solved overnight if all union emwaiting for disaster to strike in order to snap up the bar- ture our industry onto our terrain. This means industrial ployees, including Knapp, were to receive the average gains. MacGregor claims over 50 expressions of interest in action; united with workers in the coal industry and local earning of a transport worker.

taking on a franchise, but had successfully resisted the urge government. The TUC call for a 'One Day Strike' on March prepared to make massive investments in infrastructure "how to fight and win without seeing a repeat of the TUC's CONTRACT CRAZY

The rearguard action of Bob Ried and the BRB, to resist the breaking up of the InterCity network is the most public example of their opposition to the Government's plans. BR management have their own strategy for reducing labour costs. This involves keeping intact a small national rail network, but drastically reducing the size of the workforce from 130,000 at present to about 30,000 essential staff and then contracting out the remainder of the work to outside companies. This would restructure the industry along the lines of the NHS with the emphasis on an internal market and extensive use of contracts to outside companies.

During the last year, examples of the drive towards contracting out have become more and more common, particularly affecting S & T and Per'Way departments. At present a consultation document from Network South East is being passed around, in which management propose to contract out all P. Way renewals, tamping and lining, drainage, fencing, track welding and lineside management. This would leave track maintenance, inspection/patrolling duties and ultra sonic track testing to be carried out by P. Way workers. Management on Thames/Chiltern (the line in question) are looking towards 75% of all work contracted out. This strategy is probably more dangerous than MacGregors dogmatic shambles, because it could be implemented as an extension of the O for Q management restructuring exercise, already in place.

A REVOLUTIONARY UNION What both the strategies for industry have in common, is that they are both attempts to drastically reduce the ability of railway workers to organise against the demands of

to name one. The Tories have ended up with the humilia- 17 is pathetically inadequate. The big question for workers tion of privatisation without any buyers. Unless they are trying to defend their living standards and jobs today is treacherous role in the 1980s?"

## ROT AT THE TOP

RMT funds pay for the good life

It may come as a shock to many RMT members in these days of financial restraint by the unions to find that the union does have money when it comes to ensuring that officials are kept in the lifestyle they have become accustomed to, as the following will demonstrate:

At the 1989 Labour Party Conference, Brother Knapp and half a dozen of his hangers-on, including one RMTsponsored Labour MP, had a week's hotel bill of over £8,000. More than a year's net pay for most railworkers. At the same conference, over £4,000 was spent on a free bar at a reception in a top hotel to which Labour Party and union dignitaries were invited. "Honest Sam MacCluskey" received a £75,000 pay-off to

leave the union and still retains a union mortgage.

are over 130 flats. These are currently being let to union officials and others, for the princely sum of £25 a week, which isn't bad for a flat in central London. On further investigation it was found that one seamen's official had been sub-letting his flat at full London rates for a number of years, it also emerged that John Prescott has a whole annex to himself for which he pays a princely £35 a week. It is little wonder the man can afford to run a Daimler. It gives us no joy to report the corruption, both moral and financial, which is eating into the very heart of our union. It also highlights the true nature of the financial cuts now being pursued within the union. The moves for a part-time EC and the financial strangling of the branches which is now taking place is little more than an

At Maritime House, the old seamen's head office, there

the seek by the seek of the day by a Goning in dirty de the seek of the seek o

## **REVOLUTIONARY UNIONS**

ARCHISTS, but an anarcho-syndicalist union of This structure would be totally different to any more glorious defeats. WORKERS.

We completely reject the concept of TRADE unions as being divisive and put forward INDUS-TRIAL unions as the alternative.

For us it doesn't matter if you are a cleaner, typist, canteen worker or mechanic, if you work in the same industry e.g transport, you would be in the same union - one industry, one union! The idea is to increase our strength in the fight against management and the bosses.

## STRUCTURE

An anarcho-syndicalist union is almost completely opposite in its structure and decision making process to the present day TUC unions, which are run by full-time officials (on wages that can be compared to a boss rather than a worker) who are out of touch with their members.

We believe that real union democracy means that all decisions are taken at the base first, in the workplace branch meeting, which is open to all members. That is where election of delegates and any office holders takes place. Any and all such delegates/office holders are subject to immediate recall and are always accountable to the member-

An anarcho-syndicalist union has no permanent full-time paid officials. If, as has been known at various times, the workload is so great, a wage may be agreed but only at the holders previous wage and for a limited term. Also, the rotation of delegates and post-holders (i.e. secretary) after a fixed term ensures that any encroaching bureaucratic tendencies are curtailed.

The workplace branch would link with others in the same industry at local, area/region and national level. This is to co-ordinate action and solidarity. Each branch would retain its AUTONOMY, meaning it is in control of its own affairs.

The unions of DIFFERENT industries would then come together also, in the local federation, the regional federation etc. The 'local', perhaps cen- FIGHTING TO WIN tred in a building, would also be open to other With this vitality must be the commitment to representative organisations like tenants associ- FIGHT. Structure and workers participation is not ations for instance. This would help create both in itself enough to win even a wage rise.

## **BUS STRATEGY**

A STRATEGY FOR BUS WORKERS is now available from us should you not have seen a copy or would like more. It is a look at the bus industry, trade unions and our working lives by bus wokers themselves and proposes a strategy for tackling the basic problems facing us - low pay, long hours, poor working conditions, a lack of organisation in small companies and increasing competition leaving us the losers every time.

We strongly recommend all busworkers read this and get copies around their depot.

Transport Workers Network, PO Box 73, Norwich, NR1 2EB.

ties. The 'locals' would form the backbone of the miners, the P&O seafarers and the News Interna-The first thing to say about an anarcho-syndicalist union. Together with the industrial federations this tional printers, holding out month after month was union is that it is NOT a trade union of AN- would form the (national) Confederated union.

reformist or existing working class organisation, There are classic examples of effective action, from

AGITATE

however the difference of structure is in ITSELF not enough. The activity and involvement of the union members is still the most important part of any anarcho-syndicalist union. The difference between anarcho-syndicalist and present unions is this basic point: The structure of an anarcho-syndicalist union with its power and decision making at the base, its system of federation and networking mean that it can fully utilise what is actually the real power of any working class organisation - vitality and initiative and the day today involvement of its members. In other words an organisation that is LIVING.

cross-union solidarity AND community bases and We are not saying that workers should wait for an anarcho-syndicalist union to be formed before we should take direct action, only that direct action is a fundamental part of anarcho-syndicalism.

We have to use our experience and imaginations to do whatever is necessary to win. To allow our imaginations to flourish, workers must be in control of our own destinies, not pawns in some union leader's power game.

How often have we heard the irrelevant cries from the 'left' to ask the TUC to call a general strike whenever a group of workers is in struggle. And conversely, how pathetic is the TUC in its tokenistic posturing, calling for 15 minutes 'dignified' stoppages, days of action, birthday parties for the NHS and so on.

People taking industrial action know what is best for their workplace. But lessons must be learned. Faced with a hostile government prepared to spend a fortune to win industrial disputes, the all-out and stay out approach is as archaic as the reformist trade union movement itself. As shown by the

no substitute for class solidarity. We don't need any

work to rules to go-slows, sabotage, selective and all-out strikes to occupations. During the 1989 local government workers' strike there were instances of computers being sabotaged and essential files being locked away to stop any scabs doing the work. French railway workers sabotaging tracks, ambulance workers occupying stations, miners blocking motorways; solidarity actions where, for instance, miners supported nurses, railway workers refused to carry scab coal, and so it

The best methods are those suited to the prevailing situation, and no-one knows that better than the workers involved. Direct Action gets results, but more than that it EMPOWERS workers.

We totally reject collaboration with the exploiting class. What they design to give us, they may take back. What we take is ours, and we will not allow them to steal from us again!

## WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

In advocating the building of industrial networks and revolutionary, or anarchosyndicalist unions, we ARE advocating a complete break from the influence of the TUC/Labour Party straight-jacket.

We want politics in the real sense, not just putting a cross on a ballot paper every 4 or 5 years, or marching to Hyde Park, placard in hand, shouting slogans.

When we say we want workers control of industry it is not purely to prove that we could do it, just to replace management for profit with SELF-management for need. We would like to see a radical change in the whole structure of industry, as part of IMPROVING our lives and our environment.

We want revolutionary change, but not the false idea of some mythical homogenous mass rising to fulfil its historical destiny. This is pure fatalism of the kind that destroys any chance of a genuinely CREATIVE force capable of destroying capitalism once and for all. We seek and desire a revolution of the individual and community in harmony, where every member of society feels a part of that society and so plays an active part in it, rather than being a mere cog in a vast machine outside of their control. Capitalism needs to be totally eradicated. To allow ourselves to be accommodated within it as the likes of Smith and Willis would have is to destroy our humanity and lose all social responsibility.

## Education

Taken from The General Assembly, Spring 1993 Bulletin of the Education Workers Network.

John from Merseyside EWN looks at the future for staff and students in the Further Education sector

On April 1st this year virtually all F.E. colleges will be removed form local authority control and placed under the control of the F.E. Funding Council. This is far more than a bureaucratic re-organisation - the implications are extremely important for staff and students alike.

## WHO WILL CONTROL THE COLLEGES?

Colleges have never been run on a democratic basis. Most are controlled by local councils who have shown only limited interest in them. They have a long record of complacency and mis-management. The day to day running of the colleges is undertaken almost exclusively by principles who are only nominally controlled by boards of mainly unelected governors. Under incorporation the colleges will become self managing rather like the NHS Trust hospitals. This will make the college management even more powerful. A central body called The F.E. Funding Council will ensure that colleges that don't fit in with government plans will have their budgets cu or cancelled. So from April onwards there will not even be the pretence that the colleges are subject to democratic

## THREAT TO STAFF

The implications for staff are immense. Their present conditions of service and pay can be altered by the management providing the management go through a process of "consult ation" first. Most college principles have joined a sinister organisation called the College Employers Forum (annual subs £7,000). The leader of this organisation, Robert Ward, is a particularly nasty piece of work. He is demanding that there are massive changes in staff conditions e.g. teaching hours to increase by at least 50%; holidays halved; and no pay increases this year for any staff who do not accept these new conditions. If these proposals are accepted then the demand for teaching staff will be reduced and the quality of service will suffer greatly. There will be no more national negotiations. Pay and conditions will be negotiated at local level. The

staff in some colleges may be able to protect themselves for a while but in colleges with weak union organisation the staff can look forward to a very rough ride in the near future.

INDUSTRIAL SUPPLEMENT

## RECOGNITION FOR SCABS

The Employers Forum are insisting that the scab unions be given recognition and equal status to the T.U.C. unions. This is despite the fact that the scab outfits are tiny and hardly capable of organising anything. The T.U.C unions aren't much better and are only now beginning to wake up to the threats coming from the employers. Although I suspect they are more worried about their own jobs than those of their

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## ATTACKS ON STUDENTS AND COURSES

Students will almost certainly suffer in that courses will have to operate on a profit making basis. This means that you will have to pay enormous fees or enrol on courses that the government selects for you. There will be strong emphasis on low level training courses, which experience shows are pretty useless in actually getting students jobs and at best qualify you for the most boring and poorly paid jobs.

## WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

The situation is serious but not hopeless. We need to get organising now. All staff and students should prepare themselves for any an all eventualities. It is likely that changes will be introduced at different places throughout the country with existing staff and students remaining relatively unaffected for a while. It will be new staff and courses that will be hit first. We need to liaise nationally and be ready to react when colleges and staff are picked off. The official unions don't have a good fighting record but we will be able to use them to communicate with fellow workers and students. The coming fight in F.E. will without doubt test us and the unions.

## INTERNATIONAL WORKERS ASSOCIATION

While we call for workers solidarity we see no reason for it or South African street cleaners that we have with any British to be restricted to Britain or any other country. As capitalism, boss or politician. must we REKINDLE the spirit of internationalism amongst end of WWII it had over 5 million affiliates around the world,

workers. Thatcher's policy of free-market capitalism went hand in hand with rabid nationalism and jingoism. Anyone who opposed her policies were condemned as traitors, the 'enemy within'. Along with everything else, the Labour Party and the TUC capitulated and ended up using similar slogans. "British" this and "British" that, almost trying to outdo the Tories in patriotism.

A genuine workers movement

has got to completely reject this. If we promote SOLIDARITY we can hardly accept reaction- vious strength, there are IWA sections in more than a dozen ary attitudes, like racism and sexism, that help weaken any countries. Some are small propaganda groups at the moment, possibilities of action. Likewise, we see no place for nation- others are functioning unions. When in time, the industrial alism as far as positive change is concerned. Workers are networks federate it is hoped that organisation will replace exploited everywhere - that is our common link. We have far the DAM as the British section of the IWA. more in common with French railway workers, Polish miners

and indeed state's, are becoming increasingly internationalist The DAM is the British section of the International Workers in outlook, everlooking for new 'markets' to exploit, so too Association (IWA), which was formed in 1922. Up until the

> consisting of revolutionary and anarcho-syndicalist unions. These were workers organisations free from the influence of political parties and the state. A combination of war, fascism, state-communism and capitalism all but broke it. But not quite! With the death of Franco in Spain and the subsequent rebirth of the CNT (Confederacion Nacional Del Trabajo), the Anarhco-Syndicalist union, the IWA got a new

Although nowhere near its pre-

lease of life.

## 1st of May

The Government, not surprisingly, has announced plans to abolish the 'May Day' holiday. Whether they abolish it totally as a holiday or rename it is yet to be decided (in recent times some Tory backbenchers have suggested "Winston Churchill Day". This shouldn't come as a shock since old Winston wasn't averse to ordering the police and army to shoot workers).

Now we would argue for people to fight for the right to have a holiday (at anytime of year) but we are not going to start bleating over this, as no doubt the 'left' will - call for the TUC to call a General Strike! - and elements in the Labour Party. These people have already abandoned 'May Day' as a workers holiday, many years ago.

'May Day', the 1st of May, is that or nothing, bank holiday monday is just another concession to the bosses. Instead of trying to defend something that has been reluctantly given to us, we should be calling for the RECLAIMING of 'May Day' as OUR day, a day to remember those who died in the struggles against the capitalists, and a day to have a bloody good time!

It doesn't really matter what the Tories say or the Labour Party/TUC hacks, the First May belongs to us and we'll never give it up.

## CONTACTS

SECRETARIAT: c/o Leeds DAM-IWA: 52 Call Lane Leeds, LS2 SOUTH EAST

North London DAM-IWA: PO Box 1681 London N8 7LE East London DAM-IWA: c/o 84B Whitechapel High Street London E1 7QX

Deptford DAM-IWA: PO Box 574 London SE4 1DL South Herts DAM-IWA: PO Box 493 St Albans AL1 5TW

Norwich DAM-IWA: PO Box 73 Norwich NR1 2EB

Bristol DAM-IWA PO Box 948, Bristol, BS99 5QE Norton-Radstock DAM-IWA: PO Box 1592 Midsomer Norton BA3 3FH

Leicester DAM-IWA: c/o 70 High Street Leicester

Leeds DAM-IWA: Box DAM 52 Call Lane Leeds LS2 Middlesborough DAM-IWA: c/o Leeds South Yorks DAM-IWA: PO Box 122 Doncaster S Yorks

Manchester DAM-IWA PO Box 29 SWPDO Manchester M15 5HW Liverpool DAM-IWA: PO Box 110 Liverpool L69 8PP Preston DAM-IWA: PO Box 384 Preston PR1 6PQ Burnley DAM-IWA: c/o Preston

Edinburgh/Glasgow DAM-IWA: PO Box 516 SWDO Edinburgh

## INDUSTRIAL NETWORKS

Transport: c/o Norwich

Education: c/o Manchester Public Service: c/o Manchester & N London

## NETWORK SOLIDARITY FUND

Donations and standing order payments can be made to: Network Solidarity Fund, Acc. No 12282083 Sort Code 16-16-25 Royal Bank of Scotland, Manchester Chorlton-Cum-Hardy Branch, 44 Wilbraham Road Manchester, M21 1AR

## THIS

1 The Direct Action Movement is a working class organisa

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

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

5. We believe than the only way for the working class to 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

movement. Any and all delegates of such workers' organisa-tions 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

themselves and must unite rather than divide the workers

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 contril their own lives and

9 The Direct Action Movement is resolved to initiate,

9. The Direct Action Movement is a federation of groups and individuals who believe in the principles of anarchosyndicalism: a system where the workers alone control industry and the community without the dictates of politicians, bureaucrats, bosses and so-called experts.

## WINNING THE CLASS WAR

The DAM pamphlet 'Winning the Class War - An Anarcho-Syndicalist Strategy', which sets out the reasons for the industrial networks, is being updated and will be available in the near future. Anyone who would like a copy of the first one

FREE should send a SAE to Box DAM, 52 Call Lane, Leeds LS2 or PO Box 574 London SE4 1DL