

CHILE:

TEN YEARS ON



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Federation.

In order to understand the 1973 military coup in Chile it is first necessary to have a comprehensive point of reference. Politically and socially Chile has had a somewhat untypical history in Latin American terms. From its beginning the mining industry (copper provides 70% of the national income) created a strong industrial working class which, together with the rural proletariat, stood in opposition to the interests of the Chilean ruling class.

The latter, besides the modern bourgeoisie tied to international capital (the copper barons and their associates in transport etc) also included; the large land owners (0.5% of the population owned 52% of the land); the career military (about 80,000 professional soldiers) and the State bureaucracy.

Up to the coup the political stage was characterized by two main tendencies - the centre-right and the reformists - both populist in style and commanding mass support.

The existence of a not unimportant "christian left" of various tendencies (pre-marxist christian socialism, democratic reformism and even revolutionary leninism), in open opposition to the rightist politics of the Church and the Christian Democratic Party is also worth noting.

After the 1970 elections, with the leftist government (Popular Unity) led by the socialist Allende, the class struggle and the economic crisis became more acute:

- nationalization of the copper mines (controlled by 3 U.S. companies) and of the banks enrages big business.
- expropriations and land occupations in the country by the rural working class, organized in the Revolutionary Peasants' Union and supported by the far left and the anarchists, threaten the domination of the large land owners much more than the government's Agricultural Reform.

- galloping inflation erodes the economic privileges of the U.S. trained and armed military hierarchy and the middle classes.

Against the anti-worker and counter revolutionary reaction put into motion by the Christian Democrats and financed by the CIA, the Allende Government embarked on the suicidal course of compromise. It called in October '72 on the military to join the government and approved the notorious "Arms Control Law" which allowed the Army to prevent the working class arming itself. In the meantime the bourgeoisie, in the name of law and order, was arming fascist bands and in fact almost openly preparing the coup.

Even after the coup attempt of June 29th '73 (a trial run by the generals for the later successful coup in September) the government and the Communist and Socialist Party machines stifled revolutionary initiative and stopped the grass roots organizations in the neighbourhoods, factories and fields from arming for the self-defence of the working class. The Allende Government didn't even hesitate to use police against strikers and the demonstrations of the revolutionary left.

The tragic morning of September 11th 1973 found the workers and the left almost defenceless before Pinochet's armoured cars. Despite the heroic and desperate anti-fascist resistance, the Armed forces were in a short time masters of the situation. There followed a virtual massacre of militants of the workers' movement.

Allende himself payed with his life for the reformist illusion that society can be fundamentally changed without revolution.

Pinochet's gang of butchers were to remain in the saddle for one long decade. But even in the darkest hours the spirit of resistance was kept alive, and in 1983 the world would see the workers arise again.

SEPTEMBER 11th 1983

What are the political forces at work in Chile today, and to what objectives do they aspire? Let's try to answer these questions with the sole object of clarifying for comrades the intricate Chilean political situation.

It must be said straight off that at the crux of the matter is the advanced state of decomposition of the Pinochet regime, undermined by the economic crisis that is hitting most parts of the population (the real level of unemployment is over 35%). The economic collapse has even in fact led to the growth of discontent amongst many of the very people who supported the Pinochet regime up to 1980. The latter accuse the regime of having provoked the collapse of Chilean industry and the subsequent invasion of foreign products by its economic errors (each year 5-6,000 commercial enterprises are forced to close due to bankruptcy).

This dissatisfaction amongst sections of the bourgeoisie coincides with the protest of the working classes who didn't even feel the benefits of the so-called economic boom of 1975-80 (in that period unemployment was about 15%).

This said, we would like to premise a review of the parties and political line up in Chile today with an important point usually neglected by bourgeois commentators: the recent struggles in Chile weren't suddenly born in May '83 and aren't controlled by any party; after ten years of obscure daily opposition the recent mass demonstrations are based on the working class quarters where workers, housewives and unemployed have had enough of repression and poverty, and are therefore organizing themselves autonomously in local committees united operationally in their own Coordinating Committee

PRINCIPAL POLITICAL FORCES AT WORK IN CHILE TODAY

DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE Includes all the parties of the centre-right, thus excluding the more openly fascist right, left socialists, the Communist Party and the revolutionary left. The strongest party in AD (ALLEANZA DEMOCRATICA) are the Christian Democrats, thought to be the biggest party in Chile, whose leader, Valdes, is also the leader of AD. The Christian Democrats seek dialogue with the Army and extreme right, their only condition being the removal of Pinochet.

In practice this grouping constitutes those "democrats" who for years were a party to the fascist hangmen or, at the very least, placed themselves in a position of "splendid isolation". Today these gentlemen articulate the dissatisfaction of the bourgeoisie and are pushing for the creation of a "controlled democracy" (desired also by the more opportunist elements in the Armed Forces), seeking to control the struggles of the Chilean working classes through institutionalized unions close to themselves politically. The most well-known exponent of the latter is Rodolfo Seguel the copper miners' leader, who is himself close to the Christian Democrats.

THE CHURCH Has the same political line as AD. The Church hierarchy, amongst it the Archbishop of Santiago -Fresno Larrain- who at the time of the coup didn't hide his own sympathy for the generals, wants a quiet change to the creation of a credible State, in order to preserve social peace.

As in other countries, the parish churches in Chile are often centres of the opposition.

PRODEN Is to the right of AD, but is formed of members of the same parties that belong to AD. Its activities are today tolerated by the regime. Leon Villarin, leader of the truck-owners at the time of the '73 coup belongs to this grouping.

SOCIALISTS Divided into a multitude of groups, some belonging to AD, others to the MDP.

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POPULAR DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT Recently constituted, the MDP incorporates the Communist Party, socialist groups, the christian left, the MIR and the MAPU (a christian party of leninist and revolutionary inspiration!).

COMMUNIST PARTY Rigidly pro-Soviet, and seemingly able to count on strong support amongst the masses. Refusing any dialogue with Pinochet and his government, the CP's declared aim is the substitution of the dictatorship with a provisional government (composed of all the opposition) which will prepare the elections for a constituent Assembly. Has its own armed formations and there exist operational agreements with the MIR for armed struggle against the regime.

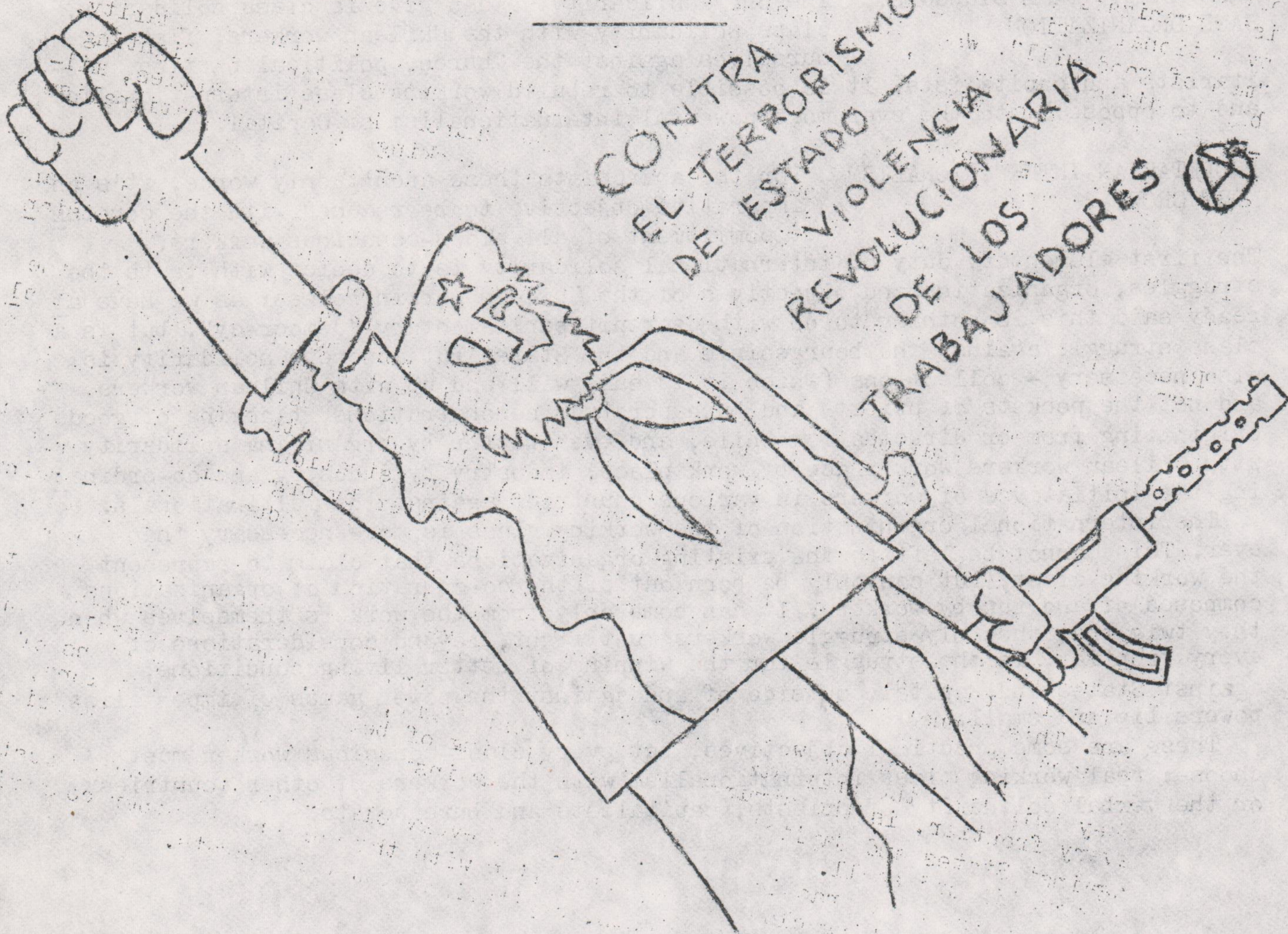
MIR Grouping of the revolutionary left born in 1964 from a break with the trotskyists of the revolutionary marxist Vanguard Movement. During the Allende Government (to which the MIR's attitude was one of critical support) it struck roots amongst the urban masses in the factories and neighbourhoods, where it fostered and supported grass roots organizations (local committees known as "cordones", peoples courts etc.). Has its own armed bands which don't lack for sympathy amongst the people.

COMMISSION FOR SYNDICAL RENEWAL (CRS) Libertarian movement of anarcho-syndicalist tendency to which belong the CODEH (Committee for Human Rights), the CCR (Revolutionary Communist Organization), the "Renewal From The Base" group (dissidents from the MIR) and the libertarian socialist PAS (Socialist Thought and Action) group.

These organizations and the Chilean anarchist groups, refusing the perspective of the replacement of the fascist regime by a "democracy", work to create and develop (especially in the union field) forms of self-managed struggle that will enable the Chilean workers to confront fascism and capitalism however they are masked, by way of direct action and self-organization; putting forward libertarian communist revolution as the only alternative.

Chilean anarchism too has experience of urban guerrilla organization.

CONTRA
EL TERRORISMO
DE ESTADO —
VIOLENCIA
REVOLUCIONARIA
DE LOS
TRABAJADORES



WORKING CLASS INTERNATIONALISM!

When the class struggle bursts out into the open it puts the fear of god into the bourgeoisie and their servants: only this explains the sudden discovery on the part of governments, the Church, political parties and the official unions that there's a bloody dictatorship in Chile.

Their solidarity with the "Chilean people's fight", with the "struggle for democracy" is hypocritical - because they continue to collaborate with the military junta and to do business with the multinationals that aided the 1973 coup.

With this false solidarity our politicians cover up the connivance there's been, for example the links between right-wing parties in the West and Chile at the time of the coup, arms sales to the junta, and the "commercial exchanges" paid for with the blood of Chilean workers. Official declarations and media coverage on Chile hide the substance of the struggle in Chile - a genuine class struggle - and present it instead as a struggle for "democracy"; in reality it's the forces of the Chilean bourgeoisie that are trying to divert the struggle onto parliamentary terrain: with these lies a form of government that maintains the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie is given credibility. With calls to the United Nations, fine words and diplomatic manoeuvres, the government, political parties and the official unions seek to distract the working class from putting into practice a real internationalist solidarity.

IT'S TIME TO COME OUT OF
THE NATIONALIST SHELL

Chile, Argentina, Guatamala, Uruguay, Lebanon, Poland, Afghanistan... it's always the workers who pay. Opposition to the wars caused by capitalists and States

often limits itself to a leftist variant of international power politics. Opportunist organizations, tied to this or that bloc of imperialist interests or blinded by national horizons unite in the vague chorus of solidarity in the appeals of "men of good will". What is happening in these countries is not only the fruit of bloody dictatorships, it's also the product of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie - which there does without the mask it uses in the "democracies".

SAME ENEMY, SAME STRUGGLE,
SAME ORGANIZATION

The only solidarity we can give is class solidarity, class solidarity with the Chilean workers, fighting ourselves against the Church, political parties, militarists and capitalists. It is possible to rebuild working class internationalism and to oppose it to the ever more powerful internationalism of Capital.

PROLETARIAN INTERNATIONALISM
MUST GROW!

For the anarchists these aren't only words, it's an imperative objective to be reached with the constant commitment of all class-conscious workers.

The first elementary duty of international solidarity is to depict with truth the struggles, organization and objectives of the Chilean working class: as we have al ready said this is nothing to do with decrepit parliamentary "democracy", but is a class struggle against the bourgeoisie and the State. But concrete solidarity is also necessary - collections (which it is sure will end up with Chilean workers and not the pockets of priests and bureaucrats), demonstrations, blacking of goods originating from or directed for Chile, and even better by organizing solidarity with Chilean workers work place by work place, industry by industry and co-ordinating the initiatives of workers in various countries against the multinationals.

The international organization of the working class is more necessary than ever. This cannot be left to the existing organizations that claim to represent the working class, but can only be born out of the co-operation of organizations composed of and run by workers. It can come only from the workers themselves when they twig that the only struggle workers must fight, beyond considerations of every frontier, is the struggle for the winning of better living conditions, against States and Capital, outside of and against the power games of imperialist powers big and small.

These are some practical objectives, but every class-conscious worker must choose: real working class internationalism with the workers of other countries or the verbal solidarity of priests, capitalists and bureaucrats.

AIMS & PRINCIPLES OF THE DIRECT ACTION MOVEMENT

1. The Direct Action Movement is a working class organization.
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 through independent organization in the workplace and community and federation with other workers in the same industry and locality, independent of and opposed to all political parties and trade union bureaucracies. All such workers organizations must be controlled by the workers themselves and must unite rather than divide the workers movement. Any and all delegates of such workers organizations 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 people everywhere to control their own lives and the environment.
8. 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.

The DAM is the British Section of the International Workers' Association (IWA), the anarcho-syndicalist International with sections across the world.

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Manchester 4

D A M P U B L I C A T I O N S

'DIRECT ACTION'

Paper of the DAM-IWA, published by the Leeds DAM Branch. Gives indepth coverage of industrial news at home and abroad, as well as coverage of the international workers movement, anti-militarism, the anarcho-syndicalist movement etc. £2.00 subscription for 6 issues, cheques payable to Direct Action. Box DAM, 59 Cookridge Street, Leeds LS2 3AW

Pamphlets available from Box DAM, I2I Bookshop, I2I Railton Road, London SE 24:

'ANARCHO-SYNDICALISM: HISTORY & ACTION'

What is the DAM? What is the International Workers Association? Where do the anarcho-syndicalists get their ideas from? These are just some of the questions answered in this pamphlet, first published in 1983. A short but useful introduction to our movement and its aims. 21 pages, 30 pence.

'DAM AND THE TRADE UNIONS'

How we see the trade unions today and do they still serve the working people whom they claim to represent? 10 pages, 25p

'DIRECT ACTION IN INDUSTRY'

Wildcat strikes, slowdowns, good work strikes, sabotage, sick-ins and many more methods of industrial struggle are discussed and analysed in this very useful pamphlet which draws on the experience of the CNT, IWW, Solidarity, DAM and the international labour movement. 24 pages, 50p

'WRITINGS ON ANARCHO-SYNDICALISM'

This pamphlet contains a collection of articles written over the past forty years by anarcho-syndicalists explaining what anarcho-syndicalism is, and how we hope to achieve our aims. All the articles first appeared in the anarchist press. First published in pamphlet form by the Huddersfield DAM-IWA Branch in 1982. 16 pages, 30p

'STRIKE BACK'

Duplicated local bulletin published by Middlesbrough DAM, available from:

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