

DIRECT ACTION

MONTHLY PAPER OF THE DIRECT ACTION MOVEMENT/INTERNATIONAL WORKERS ASSOCIATION...THE VOICE OF ANARCHO-SYNDICALISM SEPTEMBER 1984 NO 18 20p.

ESCALATE!

The miners strike has now dragged on six months. There's little sign of the miners giving up (despite the medias much vaunted 'drift back to work'), but neither is there any real sign of a victory in the near future. In short its stalemate, and has been for months.

The strike must spread. The scabs still working are not going to come out now. It's on the escalation of the strike through solidarity action by workers in other industries that the chance of a victory for the miners and for our class lies.

solidarity

This doesn't simply mean lobbying the TUC Congress in September. It means more importantly taking the arguments about why all workers should support the miners into the workplaces and working class communities. Into the oil refineries that have been increasing production to feed the power stations, into the power stations, into the rail depots and amongst the dockers. A great opportunity was missed when the dockers strike last month was allowed to remain a purely sectional affair. Not only was no attempt made to link the dockers' and miners' struggles, but the strike was not spread to the smaller non-registered ports (which have been handling imported scab coal throughout the miners

strike). A strike to extend the Dock Labour Scheme to these ports would strengthen the dockers organisation (& help them defend jobs and conditions on the docks), and would close the door on coal imports from countries such as the 'socialist' paradise of Poland and South Africa.

We mustn't acquiesce in the kind of sectionalism that has led the steelworkers (whom McGregor has already beaten) to turn their backs on fellow workers and aid the bosses. It's time the old slogan 'an injury to one is an injury to all' was remembered and acted upon by the trade union movement. It's time to build the General Strike Victory to the Miners! Bury Thatcher and McGregor!

We've earned these mines



a thousand times over.

WHAT SYNDICALISTS THINK

ANARCHO-SYNDICALISTS AND THE MINERS STRIKE

As Anarcho-syndicalists we are against the political preaching of various parties telling the miners what to think and what to do. We believe the direct experience of life and the power of people to think out their own ideas and actions is more valuable than blindly following some correct line or other. But because we refuse to shove our ideas down peoples throats or resort to useless criticism this doesn't mean that we have no convictions. Syndicalists (that is, those who think that the workers organisations must not only safeguard jobs and wages but also prepare for the takeover and running of industry by the workers themselves)

see class struggle, not compromise, as the basis for the labour movement which should be committed to the idea of workers' self-management; ie socialism. This is something that can never be gained through political parties; in times of revolution they act as dustbins for the frightened middle class, seeking only to maintain their own privilege. Examples of this are the Bolshevik counter-revolutionaries who smashed the Russian working-class movement in 1917-21, when faced with the takeover of industry by syndicalist factory committees; or the Communist Party in Spain in 1937 when

faced with the anarcho-syndicalist CNT's collectivisation of industry. As Syndicalists, we see creative work as one of the main facts of life. It is by work (preferably organised as if play) that a man or woman can impress themselves on reality and change the world. There is nothing shameful in human labour, it's those who exploit that labour (the Capitalist class) who should be ashamed.

The whole of the British Industrial Revolution was based on coal owned by the bosses mined by the workers. Britain has been described as a "Carboniferous Civilization". The work of millions of coal miners has helped to build the rest of industry, not just men but also women and children in the early days. The

class struggle

struggles of the miners have therefore been central to the fight of the whole class war. Throughout the whole of this century the fight for a decent wage, against the dole, against the economic exploitation by the mine owners has been kept up. As well as this there was the fight for dignity, to be treated as a human being and not like an animal. In demanding workers' self-management of industry we see oppression not just in economic terms but

continued over

also in the fact that there are order givers and order takers. We keep on hearing from radio and television that we live in a democracy but what mine, factory or office is run on a democratic basis in Britain today? Nationalisation means control by a private capitalist is replaced by state control. Who elected Ian McGregor?

The basis of the present strike is that the plan for coal gave some degree of control in the industry to the Union; this the bosses now feel strong enough to challenge. As Syndicalists, we believe that the attacks of the bosses can be defeated in the long run only by the total control of the mines and the rest of the economy by the workers themselves.

The miners, their families and supporters have everything against them. The Police, the army, the law, the courts and judges, Big Business and the capitalist controlled newspapers TV and radio. All this whilst those who should be defending them, Labour and other Union leaders look on.

ORGANIZE

Anarcho-Syndicalists are for workers' solidarity and mutual aid. A shining example of this is the Womens support groups and local food collections. All this is not done out of guilt or pity but out of basic human feeling that when someone's face is being smashed, then you step in and help. The role of many of these structures should be continued after the strike to act as permanent centres of workers resistance. Anarcho-Syndicalists support the concept of Direct Action. In the Miners Strike this has involved sabotage, hitting the bosses where it hurts, in the pocket. Other Direct Actions have included sit-ins, blockades and self-defence against police state violence. Above all, more Solidarity is needed from a grass roots level by other workers, such as the print workers' efforts to counter the lies of the capitalist press, and the help given by workers abroad. Anarcho-Syndicalists are 100% with the Miners in their fight against the dictatorship of the bosses and the police state. SUPPORT THE MINERS SWITCH ON AT 6 pm.

N.U.M.

C. N. T.



A. I. T.

CNT SPEECH TO THE MINERS

On Saturday July 21 the Direct Action Movement participated along with comrades from the CNT and the FAU in a rally organised by the South Wales NUM at a mining area in AMMANFORD a town in West Wales.

Through the hard practical work being done by Bob Mander, a DAM member living in the Swansea valley area, on behalf of the South Wales Miners, an official invitation to a CNT member to speak in solidarity with the mine workers was issued. The reception given to all comrades who went to the Ammanford rally was tremendous and very heartening. The rally took the form of a march through Ammanford in which about a thousand people, men, women, and children took part. It was the first 'political' demonstration

at which the SWP was noticeable by its complete absence. After about an hours marching we assembled at a large open field. Despite the seriousness of the situation the people were in good spirits and determined to continue the struggle; in this fight they are going to need all the support they can get. On the platform along with the NUM was a member of NUPE in South Wales, Dick Gregory, who was the first speaker. The CNT comrade was next to speak, he spoke in Spanish, which was translated by a comrade from DAM. The words of solidarity were very well received by the people, in fact afterwards while speaking to mine workers and some of the women's support group the CNT comrades speech was reckoned to be more fresh and meaningful in comparison to some of tripe which is being spoken by some glib opportunists in the Labour Party who want to use the mine workers as a stepping stone to political power. This is one thing we must be prepared to

fight against not only now but in the future.



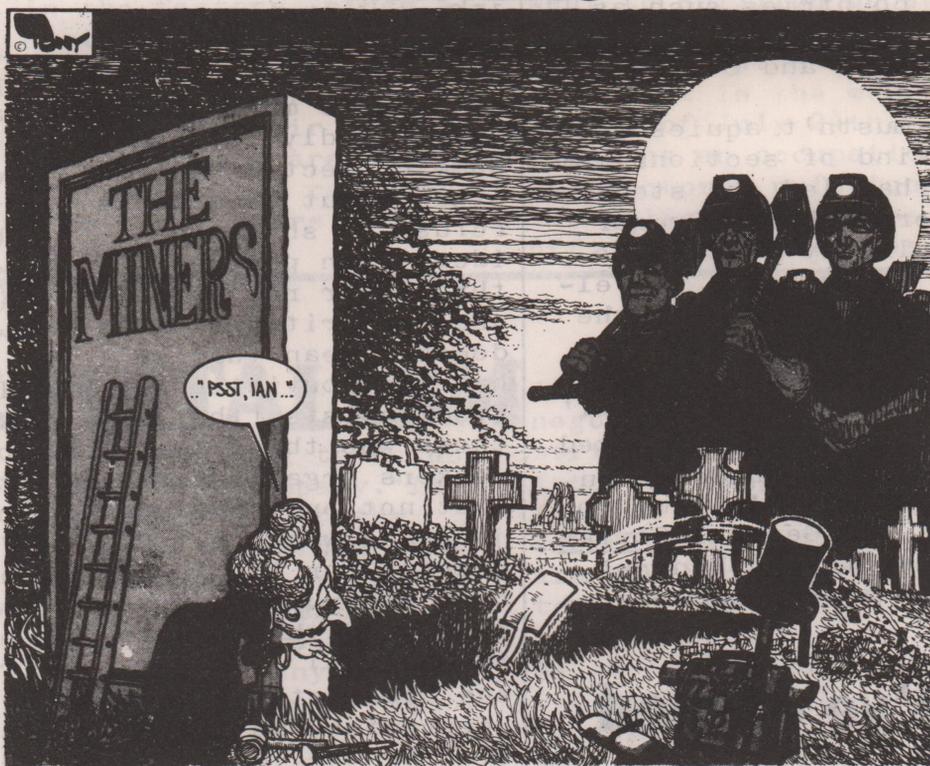
I.W.W.

As well as the CNT contribution it was also mentioned that an amount of Deutsch Marks was received from our FAU comrades, there had also been sent via comrade Mander a message of solidarity from the IWW miners local in Colorado to the South Wales Miners. The FAU comrades who gave the donations and messages of solidarity have tapped interviews with rank and file miners which they will take back to Germany with them.

Help

The Kellingley Colliery Band need money to produce a record as played at the recent funeral of picket Joe Green who worked at the pit. Cheques, PO's to Kellingley Colliery Band Record Account to Joan Ellis 45 The Crescent Altofts, Norman, WF6 2QE.

BURY THE TORIES NOT THE MINERS



SCUM

POLICE BRUTALITY. On 27th July Mrs Brenda Stout, in a wheelchair due to arthritis was attacked outside Breker stalfie colliery in Leigh Greater Manchester by two of "our wonderful police" who told her to move on. One pressed his thumbs into her neck, the other tried to turn her wheelchair around kneeling her in the back. Meanwhile, one of the few Labour MP's who are giving more than token support to the strike, Dennis Skinner has been

investigating a case in Derbyshire where police arrested the parents of two children aged 4 months and 2 and left them with no one to look after them. Dennis said "Police are behaving like animals, they seem to have abandoned all human values. Neighbours had to be called to look after the children and I alerted the emergency social services". Media accounts of Police Bravery should be seen in the light of such incidents.

victorian

values

A 19 year old pregnant wife of a striking miner was told by a social worker in Burnley to eat potato peelings and baked beans for her diet. The SS have been instructed by the Government to put the screws on the miners to get them back to work. The state not content with starving the miners even attempt to starve their unborn children. Potato peelings were all the lower classes in Manchester could afford when Engels wrote his Conditions of the working class in England, but who can afford them now on £8.00 a week. This is not a return to Victorian Values, it is a return to barbarism. Info from Burnley DAM STOP PRESS STOP PRESS STO 23.8.84. Possibility of national docks strike over scabs moving coal.



To the **MINERS** of **BRITAIN**

● "We hope that the miners will be able to screw up the arrogant 'Iron Lady' as soon as possible" --Bordeaux CNT.

● "You can be sure of our full support". "Down with Thatcher and her government!" --Marseille CNT.

● "The struggle of the miners is a struggle of the whole working class, not only in Great Britain, but also in Europe and the whole world." IWA Northern Sub-secretariat.

● "All the militants here want to express their solidarity with the fight you are carrying on to save the pits...since repression and exploitation are more and more international, solidarity must pass over borders." Choisy-le-Roi CNT.

● "I hope that the struggle taken up by the British miners will bear fruit--I wish them good heart and good luck". --Unemployed French comrade.

● "Our union sends our solidarity from Anarcho-syndicalist militants wishing full success in the struggle to the miners of Great Britain." --Arles CNT.

● "I applaud your brave efforts. You have set a shining example to workers around the globe...There are only two nations on Earth--the nation of Workers, and the Nation of Bosses". IWW member, USA.

● "In the spirit of solidarity and internationalism, I therefore gladly send this small amount for the continuing struggle. Workers of all countries, unite!" --Railway worker, Canada.

● "To all the English miners...you are giving back confidence to the international workers' movement and showing what is meant by workers' solidarity and direct action--thank you." --Vierzon CNT.

Above are just a selection of the messages of support and solidarity for the miners sent by workers around the world via the Direct Action Movement. More and more, workers are realising that just as capitalism is international, so is the fight against it.

DUTCH, FRENCH UNIONS SUPPORT NUM

Syndicalism has always prided itself on its internationalism--an internationalism based on concrete action, not, like the Marxists, on empty rhetoric.

The OVB (Federation of Industrial Organisations), Holland's syndicalist union federation, were contacted by the Hull branch of the DAM early in the strike asking for solidarity with the miners.

In response we received a phone call telling us an OVB delegation, with 20,000 guilders--about £5,000--would be coming to Britain to meet the NUM and the DAM.

The Dutch syndicalists talked with Sam Thompson, the NUM vice-president, and met miners on the picket line at Selby and in their social club at Barnsley. The OVB comrades also presented the wives' support committee members with

bouquets of Dutch lilies. They also talked to miners about their union, the OVB: its political independence and revolutionary practice.

Since their return home, the OVB have sent a further donation of £5,000 to the NUM and has organised a tour of Holland for miners.

Our thanks to the OVB--a fighting union.

When DAM contacted the CNT (French section of the IWA) with news of the miners' strike, they responded swiftly with messages of solidarity and cash, which we have channelled to needy pits (the money to be spent on food etc). We have received money from all over France, adding up to some £400, with more coming in.

The Paris region local branch have organised a daily broadcast about the miners' strike which is transmitted by Radio

SOME SUPPORT!

Cardiff miners support Committee were recently kicked out of their office in Transport House. George Wright (Sec. of T & G Wales) was behind the move. The eviction came after George had failed to win the election to become General Secretary of the TGWU. Is it just a co-incidence that he waited until after the election to kick the support committee out. It

could have damaged his image and cost him votes if he had done it during the election. George Wright's action is yet another example of union leaders saying "I will support the miners" and doing the opposite. With supporters like George who needs enemies. Luckily the support Committee have found new premises nearby.

SOLIDARITY to the N.U.M.

The heroic struggle of the Polish workers to form a free labour union finds support amongst many British workers. Unfortunately Arthur Scargill keeps closer ranks with the Polish State's phoney communist party unions. However, his lack of solidarity has not benefitted the British miners--witness the continued import of Polish coal.

This letter, stressing the eternal need for international working-class solidarity was received from "Robotnik" (left-wing newspaper of the Inter-Factory Strike Committee, Circulation 7,000) and the anarchist Emmanuel Goldstein Group.

OPEN LETTER TO ARTHUR SCARGILL

Dear Mr. Scargill,

For months we and thousands of our union colleagues have attentively observed your union's struggle for the right to work.

We know well that at the present time your fight takes on more universal significance. This is a matter of fact for the existence of the British Trade Union movement. We have already condemned, and we maintain this condemnation with all firmness, the coal exports to Great Britain made by the Jaruzelski regime.

If Thatcher is getting along so well with Jaruzelski it is a great time to make logical conclusions. That is why we hope that in the name of workers' solidarity you will reverse your unfriendly positions towards our movement.

We want to express through you our solidarity and support for the striking miners and all British workers.

Signed,
The executive Board,
Robotnik

Robotnik Political
Group,
Emmanuel Goldstein
Group.

Libertaire, the radio station of the French Anarchist Federation, to about 100,000--150,000 listeners.

The CNT will also be organising a speaking tour through France of striking miners, with help from DAM, and a delegate from the CNT plans to visit Britain to meet members of the NUM and DAM.

We thank the CNT/AIT of France and readers of their paper "Combat Syndicaliste" for their continuing solidarity.

SOURCE HULL DAM.

HINDLE'S

Records
Hindles Strikers in Bradford (see DA13 & 14) who have been out now for over a year have made a record. It's a double A side with 'part of the Union' c/d 'year and a bit' on it. On the Catch 22 Label. Order from your record shop or mail order c/o Stuart Firth 21 Throxenby Way, Clayton Bradford, BD14 4EU. £2.00 p&p one copy + £1.50 each additional copy. Cheques P.O.'s to Hindles Pickets TBE Fund.

USI

From the 8th to 11th December 1983 seventy workers from all over Italy participated in the first national reactivatory congress of the Italian revolutionary syndicalist union, the USI, the regional section of the International Workers Association.

There were 37 union delegates plus observers and overseas representatives from the AIT/IWA secretariat, CNT-AIT Spain, CNT France, French Anarchist Federation and Radio Libertaire Paris. Many messages of support were received from various groups and papers in Italy, France, Spain and Portugal.

The USI has demonstrated that it exists as an organisation, certainly small, but none the less an alternative organisation for workers in a struggle hegemomised by reformist unions and bureaucratic parties.

With its roots in the workers movement of the last century and following the original libertarian and federalist lines of the Ist International of 1864, the USI was formed in November 1912 with an original membership of 100,000. By 1922 when it helped the IWA to oppose the Bolshevik controlled Comintern, its membership had grown to around 500,000 and was a firmly anti-militarist and internationalist organisation. However it was suppressed by the Fascists after a 3 year struggle, holding its last pre-war congress in 1925 at Genoa.

After the war some militants tried to reactivate the union, but with little success outside Liguria and Toscana. The Allied forces had their own ideas of what sort of unions they wished to see arise in the post war Italy, and the USI was certainly not one of them.

In 1968/69 there was an increased interest in anarcho-syndicalism, but the USI was not reactivated until 1977. It is now a point of reference not only for theory but for real resistance and solidarity with the oppressed. The Italian authorities recognise this and last April the union paper LOTTA DI CLASSE was raided by armed police who beat up the comrade in the office and smashed up the office itself. During the congress various delegates were harassed by police outside the hall in Ancona.

The Congress dealt with the general situation in Italy, with special reference to immigrants; with the important sectors for intervention; union action and collective contracts; Structures and organs of the union; printing and propaganda; membership and principles, the Congress ended with election of officials.

In Italy the restructuring of capital to regain control of the workers after the gains of '68 continues. This reconquest of power exists today through the introduction of new industrial and agricultural technology, computers, robots, etc. This reduces the need for workers and permits an increase in profits and investment in further new technology. In parallel many small and medium sized producers are coming under the control of the multinationals, often based overseas with little interest in the well being of the workers. Where human workers are still necessary much of the production is shifted to "less developed" areas where labour is cheap and unorganised. Often this means the "Third World."

The resulting phenomena of unemployment, 'black' work in the home, part time employment, the division of workers into stable sectors, sectors being dismantled, the professionalisation of certain sectors, are all elements which make it impossible to now speak of a homogenous working class. Many people find that they are impoverished by the changes, others find themselves in an intermediate position, neither bourgeois nor worker. It is to all these groups that we must address ourselves. We are all victims of the state system, equally threatened by nuclear war, pollution and an increasingly rich international ruling class. It is necessary to involve all oppressed people in the struggle for a free society through the strategy of anarcho-syndicalism.

Accompanying the phenomenon of the rapid transformation in the composition of the working class can be seen the re-entry of a large number of emigrant workers in Italy. Their return has been provoked by the economic stagnation in the Northern European countries and introduces further tension in the labour market. Together with the return of 'ex-guest'

workers there is considerable immigration from the 'third world' countries especially from North Africa. These are all workers destined for exploitation and are unprotected by the main unions. The USI intends to organise these workers and defend their interests, develop international class solidarity with the workers of every nation and with the IWA against the policies of super-exploitation by multinationals.

Agriculture was chosen as an important sector of the economy for USI intervention, with the growing co-operative and commune movement offering major possibilities for organisation. However it is generally a difficult sector to organise, given the shrinking number of wage labourers because of increased technology, and the isolation of small holders and tenant farmers from the more militant part of the oppressed classes.

The action of USI in industry must be to pin point the nature of the crisis, together with the role that the bosses, political parties, reformist unions, and the state play in restructuring of capitalism.

Due to the failures of the past and the introduction of the new technology traditional methods of struggle have become in the great part, useless. The USI advocate forms of struggle given up by the reformist unions in favour of discussion and collaboration. These actions include work to rule, go-slows, unannounced (to the management) assemblies with suspension of production and various forms of civil disobedience. These 'unofficial' methods should be accompanied by grass-root structures, such as works committees. USI seek to revive such organisations in opposition to the undemocratic and collaborationist structures of the existing unions. USI reject the professionalisation of union officials, the hierarchy and bureaucracy of the reformist unions and their links with the political establishment and their parties in parliament. It reaffirms the validity of workers control over their work and the products of their labour.

USI is organised from a base of single workers, nuclei and works sections, coordinated by sector and on a local



NUM in SPAIN

A delegation of British striking miners from the Doncaster area have gone to the mining regions of Spain on a visit organised by the DAM and the Spanish anarcho-syndicalist union, the CNT-AIT.

The NUM members have addressed a number of public meetings and have been interviewed on radio and television, they have also received a fair amount of attention in the Spanish press. One hack journalist, who had been working in this country would no doubt be employed by the SUN, reported; that the NUM delegation were the same miners who started the strike in Britain and had come to Spain to start a general strike. A local pit manager on reading this article, gave orders that the British miners should not be allowed to visit his pit to address the workers.

The miners who are accompanied by a DAM interpreter shall finish their visit in Barcelona before returning to Britain.

The local unions coordinated on a regional and then a national level. Each sector if large enough and well coordinated can have its own executive. The federation of local unions form the regional federations of the USI.

The USI is coordinated by an executive committee with members responsible for financial affairs, international relations, press/propaganda, and organisational affairs. There is a general secretary and a committee of delegates from the various existing sectors and local unions. The USI general congress must be held every two years, or in emergencies a extra-ordinary congress can be called by the membership.

F. Richardson
(USI, agriculture)

POLAND

A picket was held outside the Polish Embassy in London to protest against the continuing supply of coal coming from Poland during the Miners strike. The picket which was organised by the South East Region of the DAM-IWA was well attended and over a thousand leaflets were given out on the day of the picket and during the 'London Day of Action' march in support of the Miners, the leaflets condemned the Polish government for attempting to break the Miners strike and exposed the companies that were behind the importation of the Polish coal.

The picket also served a dual purpose in bringing to the attention of the public the case of our comrade Jacky Challot who was arrested by the Polish police while working for the Solidarnosc Support Network. Challot is a 28 year old French syndicalist who is now facing the prospect of a long prison sentence for his involvement with the workers underground.

Letters of protest about the importation of Polish coal during the Miners strike and the arrest of Comrade Challot should be sent to the:

Ambassador
Polish Embassy
47 Portland Place
London W.1

Meanwhile in Glasgow we hear reports of an attack on the Polish Consulate. Apparently lumps of coal were thrown through the windows of the Consulate, at this stage we are unable to say if it was Polish or British coal. But we are sure they got the message.

Police raid 121

On Tuesday August 14th, the anarchist bookshop in Brixton South London was raided by armed police. Using sledgehammers the police literally smashed down the front door, and for the next three hours they searched the entire building using specially trained 'sniffer dogs' which were brought along by the Bomb Squad.

While this was going on a group of local comrades mounted a picket outside the building, informing passers by as to what the police were up to. One of the plain clothes policemen who was sent to stand guard outside the bookshop was wearing a 'Support the Miners' sticker, he also informed a comrade who had taken photographs of the raid and subsequent events that he would 'do him over' if he did not stop taking pictures.

TURKEY

A regional secretary of the Turkish public services trade union the TOB-DER, Nazif Kaleli who was arrested in 1980 when martial law was imposed in Turkey is now reported to be gravely ill in Diyarbakir Military Prison. Kaleli who was very heavily tortured by being given electric shock treatment and beaten unconscious repeatedly was taken to the Ankara Gulhane Military Hospital in a coma. He has since been returned to prison to complete his 15 years sentence. It is reported that he has severe back injuries and is now partly paralysed.



121 BOOKSHOP

121 RAILTON ROAD
LONDON SE24

SPECIALISING IN BOOKS
ON ANARCHISM, FEMINISM
AND SOCIALISM.

The 121 Bookshop is the base of the South London DAM group and was until quite recently the address for the anarchist fortnightly BLACK FLAG. The bookshop has been there for the past three years and has never had a visit from the police quite like this one, needless to say nothing was found. The local Labour Party leader in the borough, Ted Knight described the raid as 'outrageous' in an interview with the SOUTH LONDON PRESS, this has of course been treated by the local anarchists as another example of Labour Party hypocrisy, as at the present moment the Bookshop is under threat of eviction by the same Labour controlled borough council.

While the raid was taking place at the Bookshop another four houses occupied by people who had helped in the Bookshop were also raided. Three people were taken away for questioning, and in one case an address book was taken.

STATEMENT OF THE DAM

At a general publication meeting of the DAM held in Manchester in August concern was expressed that a growing number of people believed that the newsbulletin SINEWS was a publication of the DAM and that the DAM was connected with the so-called SPANISH INFORMATION NETWORK.

It was agreed therefore to issue a statement to all sections of the IWA and to the libertarian press in general to the effect that neither SINEWS or the SIN were in anyway connected with the DAM, and that we wished to assure our comrades in the IWA that the DAM fully supported the CNT-AIT, as agreed by the 17th Congress of the IWA in Madrid and ratified by the 1984



Hands off Religion

Two Sudanese youths had their hands chopped off before a crowd of 3,000 in Kober Prison, Khartoum. The prisoners aged 21 and 22 were charged with the crime of theft for which the penalty in Sudan is now amputation.

The officials who carried out this outrage were given four days training in a surgical theatre at Khartoum Hospital.

The mutilations are part of Islamic Shari'a law. In November last year a delegation, led by a senior judge and including a bone specialist, visited that other bastion of 'liberty', Saudi Arabia to obtain advice on mutilation procedures and 'medical skills' required in amputation.

Since Shari'a law came into force in Sudan at least six people have been sentenced to mutilation of the right hand.

Only Muslims were allowed to attend the outrages and no photographs were permitted.

ONTF

During the last congress of the French revolutionary syndicalist union, the CNT it emerged that the CNT has for too long developed syndicalist theory at the cost of practice.

Today the CNT orientates towards a praxis in accordance with the methods of union struggle, refuting overly intransigent ideological positions.

A few basic principles are sufficient to define revolutionary syndicalism; the sovereign general assembly, delegates controlled by the membership, direct action, federalism.

To develop ideology at the cost of practice means depriving ourselves of numerous effective forms of union struggle.

The revolutionary union must be able to use both the methods of struggle authorized by the system and those outside the system, both legal and otherwise.

The CNT is a union and not a specific organisation. As a union it already accepts a compromise with the existing socio-economic system.

At its Paris Congress last May, the CNT pronounced itself ready for the tactical use of the factory and workplace union section and of union delegates and representatives in the work committees, because these can be submitted to union control.

The CNT has experienced a growth period these last two to three years. It is multiplying its sections; Post and Telecommunications in Paris, Transport in Arles, Seamen and Fishermen in Sete, Health, Metal and Entertainments in Bordeaux. It is growing due to the left-wing unions paralyzed by their submission to the government.

But above all the CNT is reaping the fruits of patient and long lasting union work. Two examples illustrate this well; in Bordeaux the activity of the comrades unleashed a flood, with the outbreak of many strikes in different sectors. The struggles ended to our advantage and a hospital porters branch previously affiliated to the CGT joined the CNT.

The CNT is growing in a workers milieu which is either ignorant of, or badly versed in libertarian ideas. Ideological commitment was preceded by union commitment. Now the majority of the CNT's new members are assimilating libertarian ideas in the course of the day-to-day struggles. We are obliged to take note of this new circumstance for revolutionary syndicalism. Its growth is dependant on these conditions.

Jean-Louis Bosce

Hospital fightback

On Saturday August 11th at about 7.30 am a comrade from the south London DAM left the South London Womens hospital in Clapham after spending 15 days and nights helping out as far as possible in the occupation which had as of the 11th of August been going on for 40 days. Although the occupation is to all intents and purposes an all womens struggle some men are allowed to participate in a non authoritarian role mainly on the picket line which is maintained 24 hours a day on a 3 hour rota basis.

Run down

The last patients moved out just over two weeks ago either to home or to other hospitals in the area, staff from the in-patients departments have been transferred to other hospitals, while the out-patients department and ante-natal clinic is being rapidly run down.

Support for the hospital to be reopened has come from the local community, some ex staff, trade union groups, in fact the support has been quite widespread on the subjective level and for some of the support, ie that from the Labour Party dominated organisations, there will be in the future a very high political price to pay. This is a similiar situation to what is happening in the miners struggle at the moment, and we as anarcho-syndicalists must put the overcoming of the political opportunism of the left wing social democrats very high up on the list of our priorities.

Lie-in

On July 26th (after more than 3 years of struggle and protest by workers and others), there were no in-patients left, so there was an attempt to dismantle some beds; this led to a plea for more support, so a mass lie in was declared and on that night five wards had been filled. That day the summons against the occupation was dropped by the district Health Authority which backed down. On the 27th there was a demonstration in support of the occupation outside the hospital. Amongst

those supporters at this demonstration was Red Ted 'shite' that well known socialist leader from Lambeth Town Hall, who has not been seen since.

DAM involved

Over the next few days the number of people in actual occupation began to dwindle to an almost critical point. So over the past two weeks the actual numbers of those in occupation ranged from a peak of 25 to a low of 6. The bulk of the occupation was being concentrated on the shoulders of a few stalwarts, in fact it was not unusual for some people to be picketing and doing other work for periods of between 12 and 18 hours at a stretch. Those involved in the occupation can be (sad to say), categorised into groups with different levels of commitment:-

- 1) Those totally committed to maintaining the occupation on a 24 hour basis.
- 2) Those who put their name on the roster and stick to it.
- 3) Those who come for Party Political reasons ie: 'I've been sent from the local Labour Party to join the picket line', this implies they would not have done it themselves on their own initiative.
- 4) Inevitably, there are cranks and hangers on who know a good thing when they see it and are quite prepared to use it for their own ends.

It would be worse than patronising not to have included the last. As well as fighting to have the hospital re-opened and maintain the occupation and pickets on a 24 hour basis the other major issues are to make sure no equipment is removed from the hospital and to widen support from the public in general. For the people involved in the occupation this is a baptism of fire and very much a learning situation and for their campaign to succeed they are going to need all the actual support they can get on a non opportunist basis. Despite the influence of the Labour and Communist Parties there are people who can see beyond these opportunists. Perhaps messages of support from DAM groups and the presence of DAM people on the picket line would help to counter the pernicious influence of the 57 varieties of Marxism. August 11th 1984. Source South London DAM.

USSR: CLASS

STRUGGLE

With the suppression of the Anarcho-Syndicalist and other independent workers' organisations by the Bolsheviks in the 1920s, the Soviet trade unions became part of the State apparatus. Their function was not to defend and extend the interests of the working class, but to act as one-way transmission belts between the Party and the masses, to ensure that the workers remained docile producers of wealth for the parasitic bureaucratic elite. As SMOT has stated: "In our country...there is no organisation independent of the state authorities that could directly represent the workers".

For over half a century Soviet workers were deprived of their own organisations by the Bolshevik State. However, in 1977 there came together a group of workers who had been victimised and fired from their jobs for protesting against poor working conditions and management corruption. Their leading spokesperson was Vladimir Klebanov, a Ukrainian miner who had been penalised for complaining about 12-hour shifts and lack of safety in the pits. Following a press conference at which he again attacked bad conditions he was interned in a psikhushka (a psychiatric prison hospital) where he remains to this day.

Early in 1978, this group became the Association of Free Trade Unions of Workers in the USSR--ASPTSS. Some 200 strong, membership was open to any worker whose rights had been violated by

the State. The authorities attacked swiftly --within 10 days of ASPTSS being formed those who had announced its formation were behind bars. By March, 1978 it had virtually been destroyed.

However in October 1978 a new group appeared--the Free Interprofessional Association of Workers (SMOT). At its foundation it had 100 members organised into eight groups. These groups were represented on SMOT's council which proclaimed: "In most of the disputes known to us, the official trade union functionaries take a stand on the side of the management...betraying the interests of the workers and appearing to be...appendages of the State apparatus." They continued, "SMOT is not a political organisation and does not turn to governments for support. It counts on support from workers both inside and outside the country."

repression

Once again the State struck back. In March 1979 SMOT council member L. Volokhonsky was arrested in Leningrad and on June 12th that year imprisoned for "dissminating false information about the USSR". There swiftly followed the arrests of SMOT council members Vladimir Borisov and Albina Yakoreva who were eventually forced to emigrate to the West. In December 1980, miner Alexei Nikitin was arrested for speaking to Western journalists. He is currently being detained in the Talgar Special Psychiatric Hospital near



Alma-Ata on the Soviet-Chinese border, thousands of miles from his home at Donetsk in the Ukraine.

In 1979, in a test of Soviet democracy SMOT council member Ludmilla Agapova attempted to stand as a candidate in the elections to the Supreme Soviet but was not allowed to do so.

The repression continues unabated. In an interview with SMOT council member Fiodor Finkel, Moscow KGB boss Iakovlev declared war on SMOT. Recent victims of the repression are Alexander Skobov, Rostislav Evdokimov, Valery Senderov, Nikolai Ukhanov and Lev Volokhonsky. Skobov, a Leningrad Anarchist and SMOT member has been interned in a psikhushka. In a statement on the eve of arrest he said, "SMOT is a free association of mutual aid, an association of people who because of their moral convictions cannot remain silent". Volokhonsky has been sentenced to five years in prison and four years internal exile, and Evdokimov to four years. Senderov received the maximum sentence of seven years hard labour and five years in exile. In the camps he continued to resist by hunger striking and, in an unprecedented move was sentenced to a further five years. In contrast, Ukhanov, who repented, was given a suspended two-year sentence.

still growing

The opinions of Skobov on the one hand and Evdokimov on the other illustrate the wide political appeal of SMOT. Skobov is an Anarchist while Evdokimov is NTS, whose politics can best be described as Christian democratic. In view of the Stalinist lie machine's bid to depict NTS as fascist it should be noted what Skobov says about it: "I consider the members of this organisation... as my comrades".

Despite the repression SMOT continues to grow. Today there are 300 active members and 1500 supporters. 21 groups exist including new groups in Ukraine, Belorussia and on the Baltic. At first SMOT tried to operate within the framework of the Soviet constitution, but now it is underground.

Independently of SMOT another free trade union, Unity, was formed in the Ukrainian town of Vinnitsa, while calls for free trade unions have come from individuals, such as the imprisoned worker Mykola Pohyba and dissident groups such as the Ukrainian Patriotic Movement. It is impossible to say if this has affected the recent wave of worker discontent in the Ukraine. But in Kiev alone in the space of six months there were six strikes. In Ivano-Frankivsk there were mass demonstrations for independence and bread. Militia men sent in to restore order refused to do so and they and KGB troops fired shots over each others' heads.

SMOT's greatest success is the production of its samizdat Information Bulletin. Many of its pages have been devoted to Solidarnosc. Issue 19 printed Solidarnosc's message to the workers of Eastern Europe and the USSR, while an earlier issue carried the 21 demands of the Gdansk Inter-Factory Strike Committee. These were also printed in the Estonian samizdat press. Leaflets were also distributed calling for half-hour strikes every month. At least two such strikes occurred. In Georgia pro-Solidarnosc leaflets were distributed in Russian, Georgian, English and Polish. There had been large scale miners' strikes.

Issue 25 analysing the crisis-ridden Soviet economy stated: "More and more Soviet people see that the worst can be avoided only if the very nature of the socio-economic system is changed. In the USSR as in other totalitarian states, the interest of the people and the citizenry are sharply divided. This paralyses the society and creates serious grievances. Everything including the peoples patience has a limit. The people will stand no more."

As Vladimir Borisov has stated, "The Soviet authorities are very much afraid of organised workers' movements! It is the task of the workers in the West to help our Soviet comrades ensure these fears are realised.

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AIMS AND PRINCIPLES OF THE DIRECT ACTION MOVEMENT

- (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 for independent organisation in the workplace and 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 workers themselves and must unite rather than divide the workers movement. Any and all 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 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.

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DIRECT ACTION

SEPTEMBER 1984 NO 18 20p

rubber strike

The Phillips Rubber workers have been out since January 3rd over a pay and productivity dispute. The factory on Danzig St. Manchester 4, which is guarded 24 hours a day with dogs, has broken windows and is covered with graffiti. Somehow, unfortunately, the place is still running (at a loss).

The workers were getting £48 for a 40hr week, as a basic. After negotiations the boss put the basic up to about £55 but also put up the amount of work they had to do to get any bonus. They would have been working more hours for the same pay!

The only aim of the strike now is to bankrupt the boss and close the factory; most of the workers are now on the social, which they've only recently been able to claim, and are acting as secondary pickets, while most of the women who wouldn't be able to claim are still on strike pay.

The factory has been blacked by T&G lorry drivers. Scab lorries have been followed by pickets in cars to the docks and then blacked by the dockers. The bosses have even tried swapping the cargo to different lorries to lose the pickets, but to no avail. All the cargoes are still sitting in the docks, some of them have been there since January!

SOUTH AFRICA

This is of international importance; the idle shipments contain rubber soles for boots of the South African Army and police.

The factory is dependent upon supplies already in the factory, since almost nothing has got in.

The conditions in the factory are worth mentioning since their Victorian standards are one reason why the resistance from the workers has been so strong.



SICKNESS

The factory has no canteen and the toilets are almost unuseable. There is no air conditioning, workers are forced to inhale carcinogenic fumes. Many workers have suffered from skin diseases and some of the women have contracted vaginal infections.

DAM members put some local miners in contact with the Phillips workers and since then miners have been showing their solidarity. On the 13th of July, when the scab labour took part in the day of action (?), between 200 and 300 people went to Phillips to show support, many of them miners. About 80 miners took part in the morning picket of July 24th, planning an occupation of the factory, unfortunately the police were tipped off, and the idea was ab-

andoned. It is good to see people building solidarity by bringing the struggles together and showing mutual support. Since the strike began the engineers who were given a better deal and were being used as scabs have left because the boss tried to lower their pay as a kind of austerity measure, many had torn up their union cards but some are now helping the strikers. This shows that the strike is winning.

AID

Support is always welcomed at the above address. This strike has largely been ignored by the left and the media. But these workers need support as much as the miners. Source: L.D.A.G.

SAMURAI CAPITALISM

The spring wages round ended with nominal rises of between 3% (steel) & 5% (cars and electronics). Inflation this year is at 3%. In real terms rises during the last few years have been modest: after a drop to 1.6% in 1980, they were at 0.4% in 1981, 1.7% in 1982 and about 2% in 1983. After deductions of taxes, real income has fallen by 2% in the last nine years. Productivity on the other hand has increased, and was up 9% in 1983 (The Economist, 24-4).

Notwithstanding this, from Japan we hear of purification ceremonies held by various Japanese firms for their new employees. 'The Guardian' of April 6th tells us that: "On a cold night recently, 200 young people of both sexes walked up to the chest into frozen water dressed in white and holding candles. They

were preparing to enter a Japanese company." In this way - one of the managers explained - the new employees are mentally and physically purified before God". And to allay any doubts the managers enter the water first."

DEEP WATER

"The object of our purification ceremony is to wash away the refuse of the past" - explains Mr. Hosaka - "and there's a real need for it. Our employees must first of all be purified of the contagion of left wing unionism, of teaching if they've just left school; and from those coming from university must be removed the individualist tendencies they might have picked up". (This one wants sending where the water's deepest).

The union bosses falling over each other to negotiate one union, no strike agreements with Japanese companies setting up in Britain (for example with Nissan, who are building a car factory in the North East) seem to be turning a blind eye to the quaint practices of Japanese capitalism. Either that or they're all part of a Baptist conspiracy. For them all that matters is that Nissan is "giving" jobs to a few British workers. (Because the labour's cheap over here.)

We urge British workers to be on their guard against this type of company loyalism which is a particularly strong feature of Japanese capitalism. Not only because Japanese companies are expanding in Europe and seeking to introduce these ideas of work organisation, but also because "progressive" British capitalists can not praise the Japanese (and the German) example

enough.

You'd better be on your guard unless you want to have to turn up for work half an hour early to do exercises, have your life from the cradle to the grave managed by the company, and take your break in the same canteen as the boss dressed in overalls (God forbid!)

video

ONE MAN'S WORD VIDEO.

One Man's Word is a programme about the use of the Supergrass system in N. Ireland as told by those directly effected. It places the use of the Supergrass as the latest strategy in a long line of repressive measures in the North. Playback VHS; Running time - 50 mins; Price £25.00 Contact: Lower Ormeau Campaign for Justice Video Group (LOCFJ), c/o 7 Winetavern St, Belfast 1. Tel. 225426.