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PAPER OF THE DAM/IWA...THE VOICE OF ANARCHO-SYNDICALISM.

still time to win

Why,with a British trade union membership of some ten millions,is the miners' strike now in its eleventh month? If ten million workers are united in unions,how is it that they cannot demonstrate that unity is strength by winning the coal dispute through solidarity action?

The answer lies in the nature of the unions in Britain.Although massive,they have little fighting spirit,which is due in the main to their partenership with the Labour Party,where the view of the politician always prevails.

TERRIFIED OF WORKERS' STRENGTH

The Labour Party is as terrified by the idea of a miners' victory as the Tories are.Such an event would show decisively where the strength of workers lies--in industrial direct action and solidarity,rather than the ritual abdication of rights at the ballot box.

The same fears are held by the TUC mandarins--even the leaderships of those unions that have aided the miners pull back from full support. For example,the NUR only called out 5,000 workers in support of the Coalville Depot railmen (victimised for blacking coal),when what's needed is unlimited strike action in the vital transport and power sectors.

KEY TO VICTORY WITHOUT BROKEN HEADS

The key to victory is still solidarity action. It is not the implementation of TUC guidelines which still allow for the transport of oil.Nor is it mass pickets which can be beaten by the superior strength of police and army,as we learnt at Grunwick,Warrington, Orgreave.Workers' power works not through hand-to-hand fighting with the mercenaries of the State,but through industrial solidarity which can paralyse production effectively and without broken heads.

ANNIVERSARY

This support can't be won through appealing to union and TUC bosses--that's been tried for eleven months.It must be acieved through arguing with the rank and file. It was agreed at the Congress for Industrial Action at Burnley that March 6th--the first anniversary of the strike --would be a good date for the start of such action.Let's work for it and win the struggle at last.

CONGRESS PLANS SOLIDARITY ACTION

On January 18th 120 trade union delegates, mainly from the NE Lancs area met for a congress to plan industrial action in support of the miners. Speaking were NUM President Peter Heathfield, Dave Douglas from Hadfield Main NUM and Tony Crowther from Manchester NUR.

It was interesting to hear the differences in opinion between Heathfield,the high-ranking official and Communist, and Douglas whose experience of the strike is that of the picket lines.

"Talks about talks" basically summarises Heathfield's approach. His speech was smoothing the way for a compromise with the NCB--that is to say,a defeat.

In contrast,Douglas threatened,"We'll screw Scargill's and Heathfield's heads off if they sell us out".He also stressed that workers do not need invitations to join miners' picket line lines.

He also criticised the role of the Left:their calls for TUC leadership in the strike and the fact that their solidarity only manifests itself in the pages of their papers.He said this compared unfavourably with the actions of syndicalists such as DAM (who were instrumental in calling the congress)and claimed that the strike could still be won through direct action, given the solidarity of other workers.

The speech from Tony Crowther(NUR) dealt with betrayals:the behaviour of Kinnock and the Labour Party,and the part played by the NUR leadership in limiting support for the victimised railwaymen of Coalville.

After the speeches the congress split into workshops to discuss organising support groups in the community and industry, and of course the need to build industrial solidarity in support of the NUM.

On the latter point the congress urged support for the February 11th Day of Action called by the Yorkshire and Humberside Regional TUC.

A motion was carried that March 6th,th anniversary of the beginning of the coal strike,would be a good date for a general strike,and it was urged that this call be taken up at the Sheffield Miners' Support Group Conference on February 9th.

SOLIDARITY

OUR BEST WEAPON

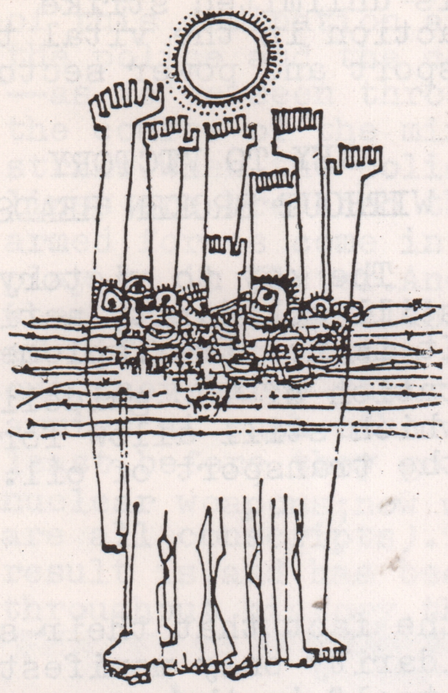
The miners' strike has shown once again the crucial importance of solidarity.Solidarity is the foundation of unionism;without it workers can be picked off group by group and be set again against each other.On this subject we can do no better than quote Rudolf Rocker's book "Anarcho-Syndicalism":

"To cherish and strengthen this natural solidarity of the workers and to give every strike movement a more profoundly social character,is one of the most important tasks which the Anarcho-Syndicalists have set themselves.For this reason the SYMPATHETIC STRIKE is one of their choicest weapons... Through it the economic battle becomes a deliberate action of the workers as a class.The sympathetic strike is the collaboration of related, but also unrelated,categories of labour,to help the battle of a particular trade to victory by extending the strike to other branches of labour, where this is necessary. In this case the workers are not satisfied with giving financial assistance to their fighting brethren,but go further, and by crippling entire industries cause a break in the whole economic life in order to make their demands effective.

"Direct action by organised labour finds its strongest expression in the GENERAL STRIKE,in the stoppage of work in every branch of production,by the organised resistance of the proletariat,with all the consequences arising from it.It is the most powerful weapon which the workers have at their command..."

The present miners' strike is a perfect illustration of this.On the one hand we see the struggle spreading through whole sectons of the working class--the womens' food kitchens, the fundraising of the support committees,the efforts of comrades abroad to raise money and prevent the transit of coal to Britain--all are fine examples of solidarity.

But a more important lesson lies in the LACK of solidarity.Apart from the limited and essentially peripheral dock and rail strikes,the TUC and the unions have confined their help to fine words and empty promises. How long would this hard bitter strike have had to continue if workers in the transport,steel and power industries had joined it?No government could have withstood that.But in the "I'm all right,Jack" atmosphere of Thatcher's Britain,the lesson of solidarity needs learning all over again.



HAPPY NEW YEAR?

It hasn't turned out to be for 800 workers in County Cleveland who've been told they're to be laid off...

First came the announcement that 200 jobs are to go with the closure of the Teeside Bridge foundry and engineering works in Middlesbrough,which is over 100 years old.This has been followed by the announcement that 350 jobs are to go with the closure of the Rank Hovis McDougal bakery in Stockton later this year,and another 250 in Hartlepool with the closure of British Steel's plate mill. Retiring steel union leader and scabbing bastard Bill Sirs must be sad to see the demise of his home town--Hartlepool now has an unemployment rate of over 30%(County Cleveland has the worst jobless figures in the UK apart from Ulster). But never mind,his coming knighthood should cheer him up.



The lesson should be obvious to everyone but the masochist--keeping your head down won't save you:they'll kick you in the teeth just the same.Might as well stand and fight like the striking miners.

-Teesider.



ONLY DOING THEIR JOB

NUM offices at Edlington pit,Doncaster,have be been broken into and £2,000 worth of equipment stolen.The office door was smashed in and a bulky photocopier which would have required a vehicle to move it taken.This happened under the noses of the police who maintain a 24-hour presence at the pit.

POLYPIPE

Polypipe,the Doncaster-based plastic pipe and guttering manufacturers',is coasting through the recession. Despite being only five years old and selling to a rapidly declining building industry,Polypipe has cut itself a 15%+ share of the plastic pipe market. Although its rivals, including big names such as Shell and Marley,have seen their profit and sales drop,Polypipe's have gone up and up.

Polypipe's rapid appearance as a major pipe producer has been brought about by its policy of selling goods at up to 50% less than its rivals.Kevin McDonald,the owner of the firm has been able to produce things more cheaply because of greater exploitation of the workforce.In September 1983,34 workers at Polypipe joined the TGWU,in an attempt to fight against the low wages--as little as £50 for a 40-hour week --the overtime that was enforced with the threat of the sack,and the poor conditions which included no canteen and machine operators eating on the job.

McDonald responded by sacking five of the newly-unionised workers, just before the first union meeting,for allegedly intimidating a fellow union member(a charge which the "intimidated" worker refuted in a written statement).The remaining union members walked out in solidarity, which led to a long strike that was broken by employing new workers and sacking the old.

McDonald would no doubt claim to be a "self made" millionaire.In reality,like all millionaires,his wealth has been made by others.

Police inspector 'hallucinating'

DENIS Doody, a thirty year old bricklayer, was one of two men cleared of Breach of the Peace charges in the Fitzwilliam Nine trial. Magistrate Loy said he was not satisfied that the case against him had been proved.

According to police evidence, when the local people had been ushered down Railway Terrace, Denis Doody was acting as a type of 'battle commander'. He encouraged the crowd to throw stones and attack the police, they said.

Chief Inspector Reece, the man in charge of the police operation, told the court that Denis Doody was running backwards and forwards in front of the crowd, commanding his troops.

Despite four attempts to arrest him, Denis Doody evaded the police each time, the court heard. After riot police had surrounded his home later that night, Denis Doody voluntarily went to the police station the next day when he was arrested.

But the court heard defence evidence that on the night in question Denis Doody had an ankle injury and could only walk with great difficulty. He had had hospital treatment earlier in the day, and certainly couldn't run, or kick out at officers as was alleged.

"Chief Inspector Reece must have been hallucinating," Denis Doody told the court.

Seven of the "Fitzwilliam Nine" were convicted last month at a two-week trial which arose from incidents in the village of Fitzwilliam,near Pontefract,last July,when police ran riot.

ANARCHISM today

BY PHILIP KANE

its relevance

A short time ago,following a meeting organised by our local Trades Council,I found myself arguing with a member of the Communist Party."Anarchism",he solemnly declared,"is a dead duck".This is a fairly common view,not only on the authoritarian left.But is it true?

The success of the Bolshevik coup in 1917 was certainly a body blow to the anarchist movement in much of the world.Here was an apparently triumphant socialist revolution.The methods of the Bolshevik party--formalised as "Leninism"--soon became the norm against which most revolutionaries judged their own activities.The Bolsheviks' counter-revolutionary actions,for example their suppression of the soviets and factory committees and of the Kronstadt rising,went either unnoticed or uncriticised.The defeat of Spanish anarcho-syndicalism in the 1930s seemed to be the "coup de grace" that might finish anarchism as a social movement once and for all.

Yet in spite of this, anarchist ideas continue to attract militant workers.In Spain,the anarcho-syndicalist CNT has been revived and other anarcho-syndicalist groups and unions have emerged throughout Europe,in North and South America,in Australia and Japan.The anarchist movement has refused to lie down and expire.



Such renewed vitality and growth is perhaps not so very surprising when placed in perspective.The various forms of social democracy and Marxism, with their emphasis on creating socialism through the State,have clearly failed to deliver the goods.The capitalist system is caught in an ever-deepening crisis. The apparatus of the State increasingly pervades every aspect of our lives.Utter destruction threatens humanity in the form of nuclear weaponry and the degeneration of the planet into an ecological nightmare.

"Liberty without socialism is privilege, injustice;socialism without liberty is slavery and brutality", wrote the anarchist Mikhail Bakunin,over one hundred years ago.Freedom and socialism have always been among the foremost aspirations of the oppressed and have always been the twin ideals of the anarchist movement.The necessity of both is clearer than ever.Anarchism is not dead;it is more relevant now than at any time in its history.

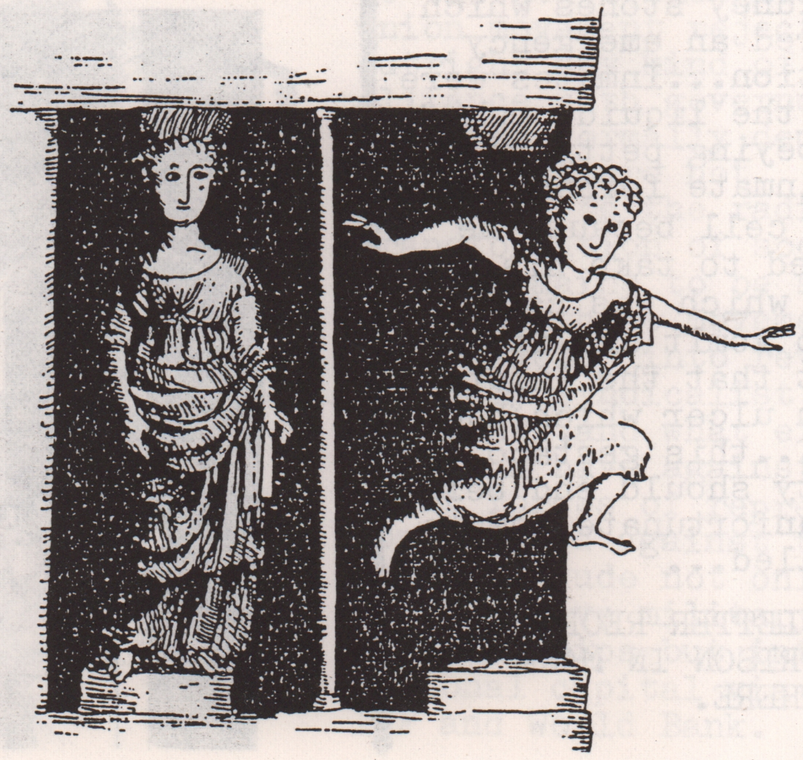
review Page 3 girls!

ANARCHISM AND FEMINISM
(Medway DAM,30p).
PORNOGRAPHY AND STATE CONTROL
(Medway DAM,50p).

A welcome to two new pamphlets from Medway DAM to accompany the now rare Hull DAM publication on women and unions.As one of them points out,"it is male chauvinist attitudes that are splitting the movement,not women demanding to have our rights considered",and criticism of DAM for taking little notice of womens' concerns is not unjustified.

The first,Anarchism and Feminism,provides a general overview of the subject,arguing that "any supposed anarchist, who does not wholeheartedly support the freedom of women and fight for it is a hypocrite and not an anarchist".

Many readers will find the impression given of the womens' movement a little over-optimistic--its frequent insularity,cliquishness and self-indulgence are glossed over in favour of a stress on its opposition to hierarchy,the benefits of CR,and the potential of feminists for a recognition of wider struggles,against all forms of authority.



The fact that feminism cuts across class divisions is not discussed. And some people will find the dismissal of womens' achievements in the Spanish revolution contentious to say the least.

But it contains plenty to discuss,and a useful feature is the brief glossary clarifying the political terms used, although oddly enough it does not mention the term "anarcho-feminist".

The second pamphlet, from the same source,is a thorough look at the question of pornography, not before time.The author examines the two most common reactions to porn--the Liberal(defending the right of men to make and use porn) and the Statist-Moralist(all sexually explicit matter to be made illegal),and explains what is wrong with both.Straightforward sections deal with definitions of porn,its connections with the family, violence,fascism,etc. ily,violence,fascism,etc.

There is little dodging of issues here:personally I would quibble with two aspects of what is said:the section on the family might do better to be more specific about the "fluid structure" that might replace the present arrangements(there is evident disapproval of"sex divorced from loving relationships" and the "casual fuck");the discussion of "Art",while good as far as it goes,needs filling out.It seems a peculiar irony to condemn Henry Miller by quoting the equally vile Norman Mailer,and the lightning dismissal of DH Lawrence is simplistic.Perhaps the point could be made that in a healthy society individuals would have more sharply-developed critical instincts which might mean they cope quite differently with the pornographic implications of some serious art.

By pointing out that "pornography restricts freedom.It limits the ways in which people can relate sexually ...we would welcome the sexually explicit if it were truthful and not loaded with male-supremacist values" the author should convince anyone that thinks porn somehow liberates human sexuality,while her proposals for combatting it go beyond the destructive but limited tactics such as graffitti or paint-throwing to a realisation that "the pornographer is a big businessman...workers produce pornographic packaging etc"and need to organise for a society where their labour will be used not to incite and police sexual hatred and repression,but for the good of all.

A.R.

HOW MUCH IS THAT BABY

Surrogate mothers are now supplying infertile couples with babies.The State is so anxious about who are "suitable parents" that they have pounced on the first such baby born to a British woman,and made her a ward of court,while they ascertain whether the foreign(dreaded word!) father should be allowed his child.He has no rights because his daughter is "illegitimate".The concept of legitimacy of children seems crazy in the 1980s but the State still uses legal marriage as and when it chooses,to define the rights of individuals.

There are four people involved in this drama whose rights would seem to overlap.The baby probably only wants to be loved and cared for,and wouldn't mind whether her "family" is black, gay,old,a couple or rich,providing she is respected as a human being and given the freedom to grow into an individual.Almost certainly,her interests are not served by being put into "care" by the Court.

The father's wife thinks she can "buy" a daughter to fill her need for someone to care for, rather than opening her home to one of the many needy children looking for parenting.She,no doubt, doesn't want a child who fails to fit the media image--beautiful,white, able-bodied,middle-class. In her case,she is presumably unable to bear her own child,but how long will it be before middle-class women would rather "rent a womb" than leave their jobs or lose their figures?

The father has no rights,as I said above, though he could legally adopt his daughter,after being vetted by the State.It is only because he can spare £13,000 that he is in this position.What hope for working-class people who want a child when it is money that talks?Here I agree with those who say that you should not be able to buy human life. The punter buys prostitutes,the capitalist buys workers,the State buys soldiers.NO-ONE should ever be bought and sold,and it is the ruling class who must be made to understand that we will not sit back and accept it.



The surrogate mother went through nine months of pregnancy,and labour, for the sum of £6,500,a paltry sum considering the inconvenience and risk. (Some surrogate mothers are required not to drink or smoke and to keep to a strict diet during the pregnancy to avoid putting the unborn child at risk--the same attitude to a woman's right to control over her own body as SPUC and the anti-abotionists) Working-class women with little hope of employment could well be tempted to "earn" money this way, leading to very real suffering on their part. Imagine:Mr and Mrs Oppressor want a baby Oppressor to take over from them when they are old.They hire Ms Worker to have their child for them,to save Mrs Oppressor unpleasantness,and Ms Worker gives birth to a series of baby Oppressors, undermining her health and living to see them grow up and exploit her and her class.With child-bearing the role of mainly working-class women,we need not expect to see much improvement in maternity services, except of course,as they would directly affect newborn infants.

Not only should we have a gut revulsion to the idea of buying babies but we must also examine how it would influence the future population.The State,and the ability to pay would ensure that most babies would be white.Enforced sterilisation of blacks will no doubt continue to be part of "aid" packages to developing countries. White supremacy is intent on black genocide.When the ability to select the sex of babies is also acieved,there will be an imbalance in favour of boys,but that is the subject of another article...

If women want to give their babies to others to care for in private arrangements of mutual aid, then all well and good, but money must not be the motivation on either side. Just as sex should be GIVEN,not sold,so babies can be entrusted to friends but NEVER sold.

L VERRAN

ABOLISH PRISONS they don't work

Capitalist society is chaotic and disorganised,a breeding ground for the anger and frustration that build up when people are constantly exposed to degradation and insult.It isn't surprising that violence, rape,theft and addiction are rife,or that working-class people take out their tensions on each other,even though we should stick together as a class and direct our anger where it really does some good--at the ruling class who benefit from all this misery.

The ruling class and its protector the State are in fact the biggest gang of criminals,murderers and gangsters going--except that they are all LEGAL!The answer they propose for everyone else is punishment, largely in prisons.In this sense,ALL prisoners are political prisoners.

Prisons are there to inflict violence and harm and keep us all in line through fear.

The only answer to prisons is not to reform them,but to abolish the system they reflect in all its insanity,stupidity and ignorance.

Once the causes of crime have been done away with,in a classless society with new living conditions,people will develop new relationships based on mutual love and respect for the needs of all.

Certain crimes and hang-ups may persist for a while,but shall we punish,or practice more humane methods of restraint without vengeance and cruelty?This would do a lot more to protect a society offering no conditions for crime to thrive.People are quite capable of dealing with problems themselves--we don't need politicians, police,prisons or "experts"--we need freedom and equality.

I was disgusted and horrified at the primitive conditions...The food was foul...I remember on two occasions finding cockroaches in the potatoes...I broke my tooth after biting grit which was in the cabbage...They resorted to holding back my mail, tearing it up on three occasions...one member of the censor's staff said "Red fascist scum like you should be shot--Maggie is too bloody soft"...an inmate suffering from severe back pain ...could not stand it. After being refused pain killers he gashed his wrist with a half broken razor in the toilets.It later turned out that he had kidney stones which required an emergency operation...Inmates were given the liquid cosh for not obeying petty rules... ..an inmate forced to a strip cell because he refused to take his medicine which was causing him to vomit and it turned out that the inmate had an ulcer which had burst...this gestapo type cruelty should end before some unfortunate inmate is killed...

THE ABOVE EXTRACTS COME FROM A LETTER RECENTLY SENT TO D.A. FROM STRANGEWAYS PRISON IN MANCHESTER,DESCRIBING CONDITIONS THERE.



S AMERICA: moves to syndicalism?

rejecting political parties

Bolivia's COB has been a major force in the country's political life for 30 years.The class awareness and organisation of Bolivian workers is the most advanced in the region.During the COB's stormy history,its members have led an armed insurrection as well as ongoing confrontations against the country's recurring military dictatorships.Again and again it has brought the country to a standstill by declaring an indefinite general strike to force the government to respond to workers' demands.

Yet,despite the obvious differences between Brazil(Latin America's largest country,with a relatively developed economy) and tiny impoverished Bolivia,the resolutions passed by the last COB congress were similar to those passed by the CUT,the Brazilian labour confederation,founded in 1983, which declares itself independent of all political parties and embraces 11½ million urban and rural workers in 937 different union locals.The COB emphasised the need for unity among peasants and industrial workers,stressed its independence from the government and its determination to revive Bolivia's chronic economic decline.

After heated discussion,the 1,200 delegates approved a resolution that pledged the COB to defend the battered "democratic" government



of Hernan Siles Zuazo while at the same time clearly disassociating itself from the government's policies.This issue sharply divided the congress because a significant number of COB members are identified with Bolivia's Communist Party,which holds several Cabinet posts.Workers blamed the CP for the government's inability to stop the country's spiralling inflation and unemployment and consequent drop in workers' real wages.In electing the COB's new leadership workers delivered a stinging defeat to the Communists.The CP did not win a single seat on the Executive Committee,where before it had held seven.

In Latin America, traditional political alliances have been displaced by a generation of labour militants who reject the integration of the labour movement into the state apparatus. They refuse to identify with governments they suspect do not have their real interests at heart. Similar realignments appear to be occurring in Uruguay,Chile and Argentina.

This turnabout has proved to be detrimental to populist,reformist alternatives,(such as the Peronist movement in Argentina,the APRA in Peru,and the MNR in Bolivia) that have counted on the support of the South American labour movement for over half a century.

In their stead,the new union leaders are attempting to chart a course that is,to date, more clearly defined by what it opposes than by what it supports.Their exponents call for a socialism in which the workers are the key actors and peoples' individual rights are strictly upheld.But contrary to the populist formula that subordinates the unions to the state,the "new" union movement rejects outright any kind of alliance with governments that are formally democratic but are not committed to the radical transformation of society.

It remains to be seen which of these movements will develop into revolutionary syndicalist movements,and what effect they can have against the giant forces of repression aligned against them, which include not only their native military dictatorships but international capital via the IMF and World Bank.

DEATH of the Adriatic

Until recently it seemed impossible that we could kill a whole sea.However the Adriatic has now been given two years by the most pessimistic estimates before it becomes the first uninhabitable sea.It's



not a recent problem, but it has suddenly become acute.The problem is an overabundance of nitrates and phosphates in the water, leading to a chain of events resulting in a lack of oxygen in the water.The sudden multiplication of diatoms and dinoflagellants--tiny life-forms which consume these chemicals-- was first noticed in 1975.Areas off the coast of N.E. Italy became full of these tiny creatures, which are colourful and phosphorescent at night.Then thousands of dead fish were washed up on the beaches. People in the know began to worry,because the Adriatic is an enclosed sea with a slow circulation of water,but nothing was done.

Since then the problem has become greater. With increased pollution from agriculture,industry and cities there is ever more food for the algae.When conditions are right they "bloom", turning the sea red. Just as quickly they die, falling to the sea-bed as sediment.They decompose, and this process requires oxygen.This large mass of dead matter in a small volume of water consumes almost all the oxygen,suffocating the bottom-dwelling fish. These add to the decomposing mass,consuming yet more oxygen and killing yet more fish.Inevitably many dead fish are washed up on the shore causing a stink which has been smelt as far as 15 kilometres from the coast. This has had its effect on tourism,the main industry and money-earner of Italy's Adriatic region. Yugoslavia is also affected.

The phosphates--key to the whole process--come from three sources:industry,farming and domestic detergents.In Italy they make up a high proportion of the total mass of a pack of detergent, serving as water-softener and helping to disperse the dirt.The actual phosphorus is limited to 5%,and a law is now propose to reduce this gradually to 1%. However,this will not be enough;it could be removed totally.The use of all phosphates in detergents is banned in Canada and Switzerland, states with lakes that have had this problem for many years.

In farming phosphates are widely used in chemical fertilisers.Soluble in water,they find their way into rivers and then to the sea.A conversion to organic farming could remove this problem.

Every year the process is repeated.The worst-hit area is the North Adriatic,where the River Po carries huge quantities of pollutants into the sea,but the area damaged grows yearly southwards.For example, in 1982,the sea between Goro and Rimini was devastated--940 sq km of sea-bed killed by rotting fish.

In Italy many groups have taken up the struggle to save the Adriatic,but as yet there has been little success.At least now awareness is growing of the problem.

With cleaner industry better detergents and organic farming we can save the Adriatic,but it must be done now.

WANTED URGENTLY

Comrades in the CNT of France,sister organisation to the DAM,need donations of Anarcho-Syndicalist literature in Spanish to forward to contacts in Nicaragua where they will be used for educational purposes. All books,pamphlets,etc gratefully received by DAM French Commission, c/o DIRECT ACTION PO BOX 102,HULL.

Z.Z.Z.

The Roots of SOLIDARNOSC

On the 13th December the workers of the world marked the anniversary of "Patriot" Jaruzelski's Poland which banned the free and independent Trade Union Solidarnosc.

In contrast to what is generally believed it isn't the first time that a free union has developed and been crushed by totalitarian powers in Poland. The previous union --the ZZZ--was almost crushed by Pilsudski's regime and was finally crushed by the German and Soviet occupation. The story of the ZZZ is still largely unknown.

In 1927 there were more than 7,000 political prisoners in Polish jails --anarchists, communists, Ukrainian nationalists, white Russians and conscientious objectors-- a broad spectrum of the Polish opposition. The farther away the prisons were from civilisation, the more open was the mistreatment of inmates, just as today.

Joseph Pilsudski's government, established after an army coup in May 1926, was Poland's white terror--a "Democratic Fascist" government. Political prisoners, a constantly rising level of unemployment (219,471 in April 1927) and increasing use of the police against workers' meetings were everyday realities. The true number of unemployed may have been double the official figure, and the minimal level of public assistance often led to riots in the towns. On 21st December 1926 the police shot at striking miners at Dzwinarz (in Galicia): 3 were killed, 8 wounded. The rights which workers had won earlier disappeared. The working class was dispersed into countless political parties, and as most workers were unorganised thoughts turned to the fight for daily bread and the struggle was reduced to an individual level.

The Socialist Party (PPS) had ended friendly relations with Pilsudski, which did not worry him. The KPP, the Communist Party of Poland was persecuted although they had themselves 6 members of the Sejm, the Polish parliament.

At this time there existed 3 types of union: class struggle organisations that were nearly all in the hands of the PPS; the National Unions, and the Christian Democratic one. But none had any importance due to the mass exodus from unions.

After this time of hard oppression no large unions existed until after 1930. But by 1928 syndicalist workers had established the General Workers' Confederation, along the lines of the French CGT as it had been originally.



The GWC produced the paper THE SYNDICALIST, and took an independent position toward political parties. Their foremost militants were Szurich, who in many years in France had become familiar with the CGT and the works of Sorel; Galuik a trade unionist who had become a syndicalist through practical work; the theoretical Prof. Zaksewski who had come to syndicalism via the study of Sorel, and the author Zeremski who had in many of his books depicted syndicalism in a favourable light.

During the confused period following the split-up of the parties, the GWC established the slogan: UNITY ON ECONOMIC AND UNION GROUNDS AGAINST THE POLITICAL PARTIES.

In 1931 the GWC joined with a number of independent unions to form the ZZZ. Its first chairman was Maraczewski who was Prime Minister at the time of the restoration of the Polish state in 1918. He had also been Pilsudski's Minister of Labour, but by 1931 declared he had had enough of political parties. Maraczewski, standing on the syndicalist wing of ZZZ, was once sentenced to 3 months jail for "syndicalist propaganda". At the outset the ZZZ was a mixture of Catholics, Pilsudskiites and radical and romantic elements as well as the syndicalists from the GWC who had a strong influence and eventually took it over.

In 1937 the ZZZ had 130,000 members, not including the unemployed, who paid no subscriptions. This compares well with the PPS-controlled union movement which numbered 400,000 including the unemployed.

The most significant sections of the ZZZ were metal workers, wood, forestry and textile workers, workers at the State cigarette factories, together with match workers and those in the communications service. Railway and postal workers, hospital employees etc were forbidden by the State to join, but in 1933, the railway workers 35,000 railway workers decided to join ZZZ. The same happened with 18,000 postal workers. The reaction of the government was to post ZZZ members to the most isolated parts of Poland.

The ZZZ's twice-monthly paper was called THE WORKERS' FRONT, with a circulation of 40,000 -80,000. The miners in Silesia had their own paper, selling 50,000 -60,000. In addition the ZZZ set up its own daily but after 3 months it was closed down by the censor.

The 1930s were hard for the Polish workers-- by 1937 there were nine million unemployed. The central figures of the ZZZ were prosecuted for high treason if they called for strike action. In May 1937 there was as attack on Jews in Brest-Litovsk, where many were murdered--a reflection of Poland's domestic problems.

But what really set the repression in motion, and caused the liquidation of Poland's organised working class, was the division of the country between Nazi Germany and Communist Russia Each took the union movement in their respective parts of the country and murdered or incarcerated workers in camps. But the government in Poland,



which clearly showed its sympathy for Fascism, met a definite resistance from the workers.

On the first of May the "national" labour leaders and the Polish government joined together to forbid the holiday. Those who took part would lose their jobs. In sheer defiance the ZZZ threatened a general strike if all those sacked were not reinstated. The bosses, government and "labour leaders" had to give in. The members of the ZZZ were also involved in the struggle against Fascism, but on another basis.

The IWA's secretary in Paris received the following letter:

"We campaigned simultaneously for us to



keep our weapons until Poland was rebuilt within the framework of a free Europe run on libertarian socialist lines. Before the outbreak of the war therefore, we demended the extension of the rights of workers' organisations, the effecting of land reforms without compensation, the taxing of private capitalism and the granting of privileges to co-operative enterprises. We opposed every proposal for a bourgeois peace which the other trade unions, including the social democratic movement, had opted for."

After the invasion began general repression and the purging above all of the Jewish labour leaders. The editor of ROBOTNIK, the main organ of the socialists, Jan Czapinsky, fell into the hands of the Russians and was transfered East. Jan Mastek, chairman of the Polish railway union, and its secretary, Antoni Baginski, went the same way and were never seen again.

Likewise Dr Henrik Ehrlich, leader of the Jewish workers. Victor Alter, leader of the Jewish unions in Rosental, and Himmelfart, chairman of the Tailors' union, also went Eastward to camps in Siberia.

Thus disappeared the ZZZ from Polish history, a history of class struggle in a hard-tested country. But history does indeed repeat itself, and Solidarnosc's activities built upon much the same ideas as the ZZZ did in its own time.



Get the other side of the story read

DIRECT Action

VOICE of ANARCHO -SYNDICALISM

Owing to a number of distribution problems, DIRECT ACTION is in serious financial straits. The DAM is an organisation of ordinary people and has no rich benefactors.

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letters

Dear comrades,
As a lifelong syndicalist I would like to comment on your article "The Future Is Ours, Maybe" (DA 21). It seems to me wrong-headed to forget that the power of the working class lies at the point of production. I know that, like the rest of the working class in Britain, the Anarcho-syndicalist movement suffers from unemployment amongst its ranks. I know that the experience of this can be frustrating, but to create a theory that the unemployed ("the vital underclass") are "essential" in creating social change is mistaken. Unemployment for the working class, both with us in France and with yourselves is a disaster because it robs workers of the power to withdraw their labour--their only sanction. I do not wish to denigrate the unemployed, but it would be sad to see wishful thinking undermine the sound policies of the DAM.

I must also comment on your question whether this is the "age of Anarchism". Anarchism is important as much as it influences the labour movement. It is through labour movements inspired by libertarian ideas that mass revolutionary organisations can arise. Anarchism alone cannot attract workers in any number. Syndicalism, imbued with a libertarian morality can.

Yours fraternally,
Edouard Dubois,
Lille.

THE EDITORIAL GROUP WOULD LIKE TO ADD THAT FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE ON THIS SUBJECT, OR ANY OTHER, IS ALWAYS WELCOME.

DIRECT Action movement

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.

I would like to know more about the DAM/IWA. Please send more information. I enclose a stamped addressed envelope.
NAME.....
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.....
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TRADE UNION.....

Cut out and send to:
DAM/IWA, c/o 223 Greenwood Road, Benchill, MANCHESTER M22 7HB.

important

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DIRECT ACTION VIOLENCE?



"The State is violence, domination by violence; masked where possible, open and brutal if necessary."

Mikhail Bakunin.

There's been a lot of nonsense talked about violence during the miners' strike.And violence,by the State or by people in opposition to it,is problematic for some people,even on the Left. Anarcho-syndicalists,on the other hand,have a very clear perspective on this.

TRAITORS

During the miners' strike,traitors like Kinnock and Willis have used picket-line violence(by the strikers, mind,not the police)as the excuse to cover their betrayal of the people they claim to be representative of.Their cowardice will have sickened many strikers and their supporters,especially those who have been on the receiving end of "law and order" as meted out by the police during the strike,while Kinnock and Willis were nowhere to be seen.

SCARGILL

Although there is much in Arthur Scargill's brand of socialism with which we anarcho-syndicalists would disagree, the man has to be respected for having steadfastly refused, despite great pressure,to condemn NUM members for defending themselves as best they can,while all about traitors sneered and cowards flinched.

At the other end of bourgeois politics from Kinnock and Willis,after the Brighton bombing the Government tried to use the event to criminalize all opposition.Thus McGregor compared the bombing to what had been happening on the picket lines.

STATE VIOLENCE

The State is violence institutionalised;repression and containment of unrest on behalf of the ruling class.The apparatus of this domination are the police and the courts --as we've seen throughou the course of the miners' strike.When the police lines are breached the armed forces come into play,as in Ulster.And when the ruling classes of different states fall out they throw their armies at each other(at least,before they got nuclear weapons;now we are all conscripts).The result is,and has been throughout history,the slaughter of millions of poor people in the wars of their masters.When the State condemns political opponents for resorting to violence(as for instance in the case of the IRA)it talks with its hands dripping with the innocent blood of generations.

ETHICAL PERSPECTIVE

Having established,I hope,that the State is violence,what then should our response be to the violence of people who, for a variety of reasons, clash with the State?It cannot be a blanket condemnation of violence, since anarcho-syndicalists are neither pacifists nor opportunists like Kinnock.We recognise the legitimate right of people to defend themselves from oppression and injustice,and also to go on the offensive against their oppressors. However,as with our politics generally,we view violence with an ethical perspective.The indiscriminate bombings of various nationalist groups around the world for instance are indefensible--though even here we look at the disease,not the symptoms whether it be the British presence in Ireland,the disinherited Palestinians or whatever.



RESPONSIBILITY FOR DEATH

The killing of the taxi driver hit by a lump of concrete dropped from an overhead bridge while taking a scab to work in South Wales is a case in point.We regret the death,more sincerely than the likes of Thatcher and Kinnock.Whenever workers are set against workers it's the boss that stands to gain(and it's the boss that's set them against each other,usually).Thus we lay the responsibility for this death and the several others of strikers (which were quickly forgotten by the media) squarely at the feet of Thatcher,McGregor,and their class.And despite all their condemnations of violence on the picket lines,traitors like Kinnock and Willis bear a responsibility too, for with their betrayal they have aided the bosses and prolonged the strike.

JUDASES

Long after Willis has received his thirty pieces of gold(like his mates Lord Chapple and Lord Murray),history will condemn the real violence of the last 11 months:the threatened destruction of thousands of livelihoods and entire communities,the use of legal thugs (police)to try to batter defiant and courageous workers into submission, the use of the laws and courts of the rich to try to hamstring the miners' union organisation --by people who say they support free trade unions in Poland.

Victory to the miners!

D.Marcone.

The

Miners' Struggle

is

YOUR Struggle.

SUPPORT THEM!