

DIRECT ACTION

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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



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

fighting spirit, which is due in the main to their partnership 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

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 Heath-

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

field, 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

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

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 work-

won through appealing to union and TUC bosses--that's been tried for eleven months. It must be achieved 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.

shops 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 Humber side Regional TUC.

A motion was carried that March 6th, the 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.

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 newspaper established

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;

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

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 demanded the extension of the rights of workers' organisations, the effecting of land reforms without compensation, the taxing of private capital and the granting

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 Dzwinnarz (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

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, Pilsudskites and radical and romantic elements as well as the syndicalists from the GWC who had a strong influence and eventually took it over.

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 an 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.

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 transferred 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.

ANARCHISM today

BY PHILIP KANE

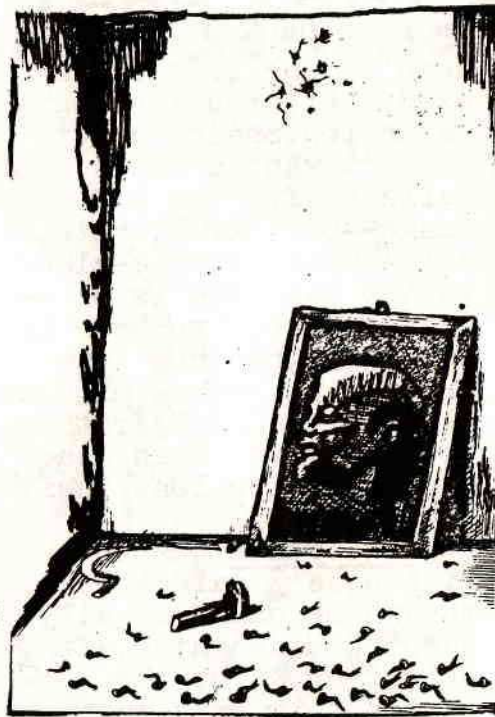
its relevance

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.

Therefore, we appeal for any cash donations, however small, that can enable us to keep the paper appearing regularly. Remember, DA is the only Anarcho-Syndicalist paper to appear nationwide in Britain today.

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contact

ist 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.

- (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.

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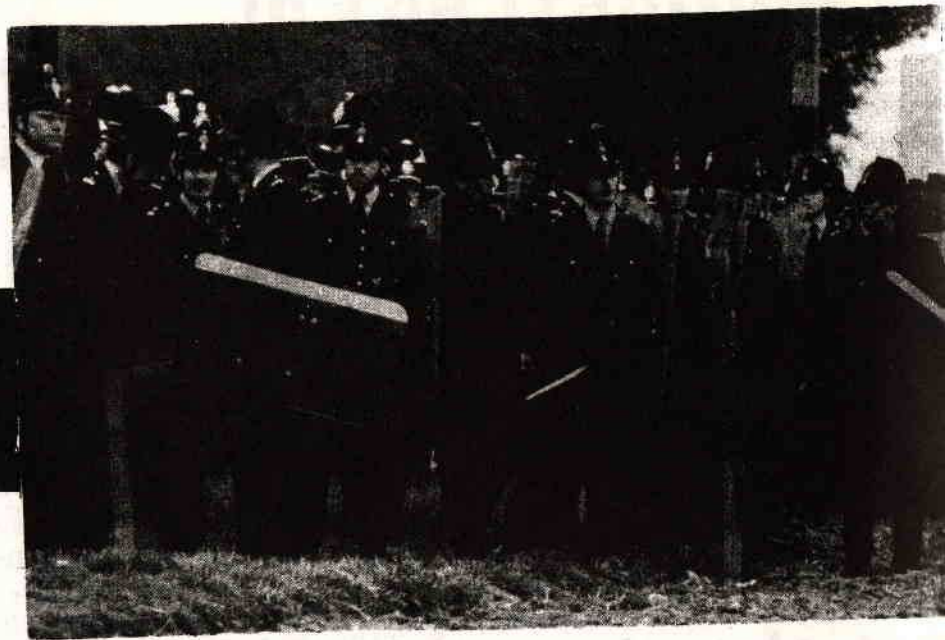
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DIRECT ACTION VIOLENCE?



"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 viol-

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

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

RESPONSIBILITY FOR DEATH

The killing of the taxi driver hit by a lorry 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). Therefore we lay the responsibility for this death and those of several others of strikes (which were quickly forgotten by the media) squarely at the feet of Thatcher, McGregor, and their class. And despite all their condemnations

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

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 throughout 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

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.

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!

