

DIRECT ACTION



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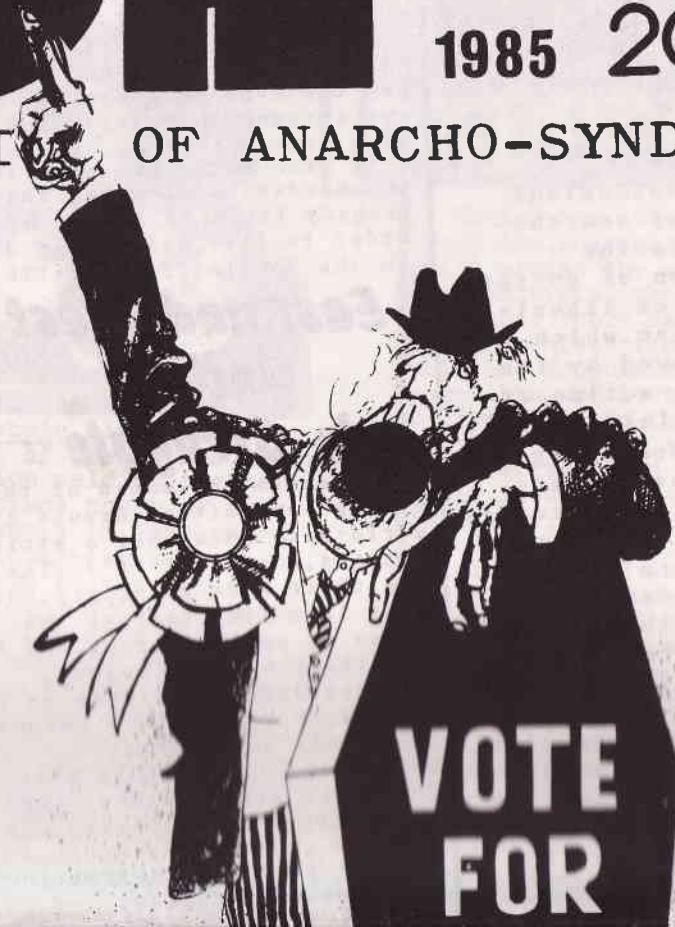
PAPER OF THE DAM/IWA...THE VOICE OF ANARCHO-SYNDICALISM.

Political levy? Yes and No

The Syndicalist concept of unionism opposes the domination by any political party of the labour movement. It calls on workers to set themselves free through economic opposition to the bosses and government rather than that they pursue the

still have seen the miners engaged in a struggle to save their industry, this time from a Socialist "Rationalisation"? Remember the policy of dismantling the Health Service was not begun by the Tories--they simply followed Labour's lead.

As part of the present



VOTE
FOR

economic opposition to the bosses and government rather than that they pursue the dead end of a parliamentary road to socialism.

The Labour Party since its conception has bridled the trade unions with a philosophy based on conciliation and arbitration--after all when Labour are in power they themselves constitute the ruling class--the last thing they want to encourage then is a militant workforce!

Look at the record of the Labour Party both in and out of power--they have constantly stamped on the workers, from the time the 1945 Labour Government (so lauded by the left) brought troops in to break the dockers' strike to their hostility to the miners' strike forty years on.

When in power last time round the Labour Party imposed a social contract negotiated over the heads of union memberships, which froze pay increases and cut workers' living standards. During the firemen's strike they surpassed the present government in their open use of troops as strikebreakers.

Today in France and Spain the sister organisations of the Labour Party are in power. They too remain loyal to traditional "socialist" policies towards the working class. In France the steel industry has been savaged just as steel and coal have in Britain. In Spain, the same thing has happened to shipbuilding.

All governments, by their very nature, are anti-working-class. Bearing in mind the European experience and the contempt shown for the miners by Neil Kinnock, can we doubt that if Labour had been in power, the last year would

simply followed Labour's lead. As part of the present government's Industrial Relations policy, we are now being asked to vote on whether or not unions should keep political funds. Obviously the Tories want the Labour Party to lose the massive finances it receives from the unions.

In the aftermath of the Labour Party betrayal of the NUM no good trade unionist should support Labour--they are Capital's policemen. Yet as syndicalists, just as we object to Labour's interference in unions, reducing them to timid, legalistic lap-dogs, we object also to the Tories legislating to the unions.

We believe unions should have their own "political" funds. Not to give Labour (or the SDP, for that matter) a leg-up at election time, but for union defence, for producing propaganda, for defending victimised workers, etc.

We believe the unions must break away from the Labour Party, not because some other party tells them to, but because workers must realise that a unionism always kowtowing to laws, parties and government cannot defend them adequately, far less carry out an offensive campaign for workers' control and liberty. Only a unionism which is democratic, decentralised and totally independent of all political parties can do that.

The government's ballot should be boycotted, but individuals can and should contract out of paying the levy and campaign for unions and their branches to disaffiliate from the Labour Party.

GC



Tragically, we supply the boots which Labour uses to kick us in the teeth - most of their finance (approximately 90%) comes from payments from 58 unions.

Make The Support Committees PERMANENT

Trade union militants in many parts of the country are realising the inadequacy of the TUC when it comes to giving solidarity in industrial disputes. For this reason, in many towns and cities throughout Britain the Miners' Support Committees are transforming themselves into general industrial dispute support committees, in the aftermath of the miners' strike.

These rank-and-file groupings, cutting across the fake divide of employed/unemployed have gained great experience of fundraising during the miners' strike, and it is they, not the regional TUCs, who know which workplaces will give solidarity to strikers. They,

not the union full-timers, have the motivation and contacts to give meaningful support to workers in struggle.

For example, in Hull the "new" disputes committee has adopted the 2-year-old Hindles Gears strike, while by no means forgetting the plight of the victimised miners. Likewise, Crewe Miners' Support Group has become Crewe Support Group and recently held a meeting attended by 600 workers. It intends to help defend workers locally at the threatened British Rail Engineering Ltd works, and also Post Office workers threatened with "reorganisation".

Such support groups are valuable in giving the solidarity trade unions are incapable of. All syndicalists should involve themselves in these ventures, pushing for their retention and development as independent working-class organisations.

GC

Industrial

What is DAM?

WHAT IS D.A.M.?

In March 1979 a number of class-struggle anarchists (including members of the Syndicalist Workers' Federation) came together to form the Direct Action Movement (D.A.M.). D.A.M. is an anarcho-syndicalist organisation affiliated to the I.W.A. and has established a network of local groups.

WHAT IS ANARCHO-SYNDICALISM?

The goal of anarcho-syndicalism is the reorganisation of society on the basis of libertarian communism, which can only be achieved by the revolutionary action of the working class itself. Only the economic organisation of the workers, not political parties can reach this objective. Anarcho-syndicalism combines the daily struggle for the economic and social advancement of the working class within the limits of present-day society with the revolutionary goal of common action by all workers to control the means of production and distrib-

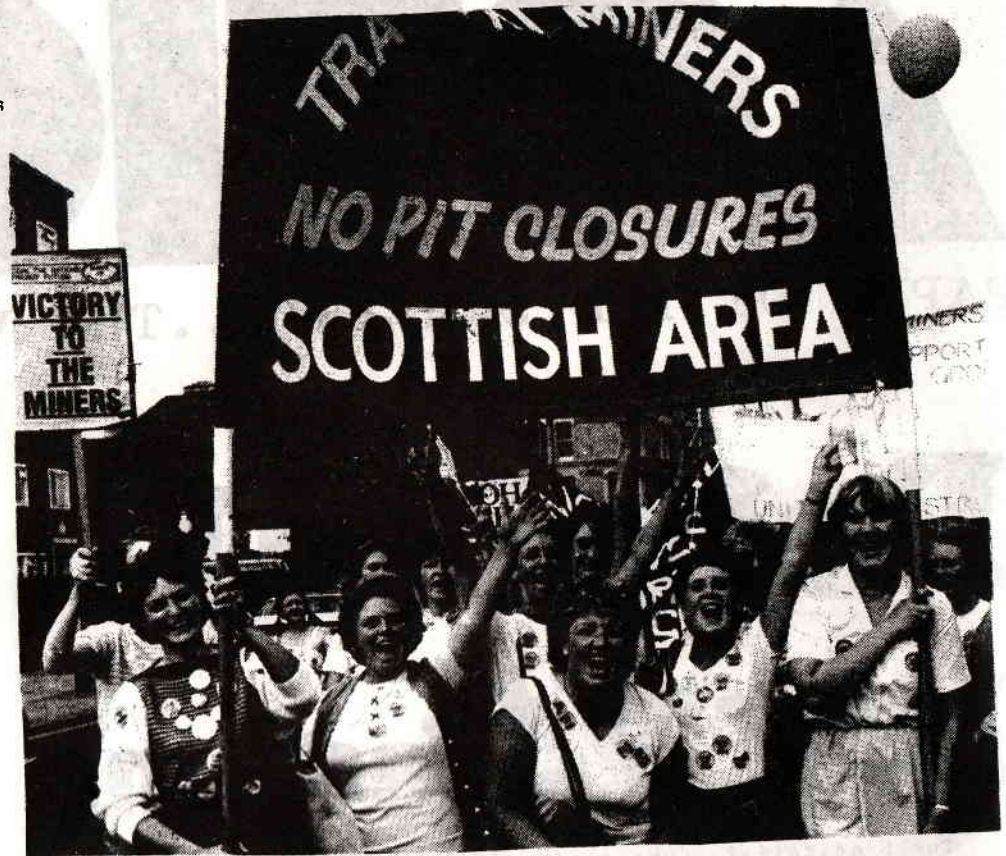
In the November issue of Direct Action we published an article with the historical heading "The Miners Next Step!" In this article we stressed how the magnificent year long struggle of the miners, a struggle against all the forces that the state and capitalism could muster, was sustained by the solidarity of workers in other countries coming to the aid of the miners, whilst the T.U.C of this country was vacillating, and the Kinnocks were more concerned about victory in a future election than victory for the miners.

During the strike, food, money, clothing even toys and sweets for the kids were sent by workers around the world, many of them miners themselves, who know from their own experience the hardship, suffering and tragedy faced by those who in order to live must daily dig in the bowels of the earth.

East and West United in Struggle

These men and women of the mining communities around the world also know what a strike entails, know what it's like to see their kids go hungry, know what it's like to feel the blows of police batons, and to see their menfolk maimed, incarcerated in prisons or even killed, therefore they responded when help was needed. We said in the article that "once the strike was won, this international solidarity must persist in a permanent organisational form", AN INTERNATIONAL

For a Real Miners' International



these people did not fight to hand over their power to the kremlin

This letter together with other information was sent to Mr. Scargill; we are not claiming that this is why on the 25th of March he flew to Moscow to call for peace. BUT and alas it's a big but, MOSCOW? THE SOVIET UNION? that socialist land where they have a wage system and workers have been very, very, forceful

production and distribution.

WHAT IS THE I.W.A.?

The I.W.A. (International Workers' Association), also known by its French and Spanish initials as the A.I.T., was founded in Berlin in December 1922. The I.W.A. is the international revolutionary syndicalist organisation, uniting workers worldwide. Today the I.W.A. has sections in 15 countries.

ational form", AN INTERNATIONAL UNION OF MINeworkERS.

After this article was published we began to receive letters from the mineworkers in other countries, saying that they also recognised this need to cross frontiers, for as the interests of capitalism crosses frontiers so also must the interests of the workers cross those frontiers. One letter from the American miners called for the calling of an International Congress of all Mineworkers, South African South American, Eastern Bloc Countries and those of the unfree Free World.

this is why on the on the 25th of March he flew to Moscow to call such a conference as advocated but we are saying that it must be as a result of a growing surge of mineworkers opinion for this need to be met that he has responded to such action, and in so far that he has done we applaud his action.

Should out of such a congress an INTERNATIONAL MINeworkERS UNION develop it could be a magnificent step forward for the whole International Working Class, a beacon to workers in other industries and a tremendous force for world

that bourgeoisie have a wage system and workers have bosses, vary, vary, forceful bosses, a land in which the Unions must be official and serve the interests of the state a hierarchy of privileged bureaucrats who ruthlessly use the power of the state to obliterate any who dare to oppose them, as recently witnessed in the case of Solidarity in Poland, as witnessed throughout the Bolsheviks bloody history.

the formation of an International Mineworkers Union would be readily welcomed by the Communist Party, they would readily assist in its development, but not because they see in it a tool of emancipation for the working class but because they would see it as a possible weapon to manipulate to further the interests of their Kremlin masters, be under no illusion about that. Even so, bearing this in mind, it does not detract from what the value of an International Mineworkers Union could be IF BUILT IN SUCH A WAY THAT CONTROL OF SUCH A UNION IS ABSOLUTELY VESTED IN THE HANDS OF ITS RANK AND FILE, this means the incorporation of such principles as decentralised federalism, delegation subject to recall, and above all not under any party control.

If this is to be the miners next step then let him take it with great caution and now if he sees the pitfalls ahead he is not going to make the mistake of building a powerful machine which can become a Frankenstein monster, control must remain firmly in his own hands. THIS POSSIBILITY OF AN INTERNATIONAL MINeworkERS UNION IS A KEY WHICH CAN OPEN A DOOR MAKE SURE IT IS A DOOR OF OPPORTUNITY NOT THAT OF A LUBIANKA CELL.

UNION NEWS

Pillars of the Establishment

MASSIVE RIP OFF OF NHS

Private medicine has cheated the NHS out of about £60 million a year--and that's the official version. The Auditor General has complained of "serious and persistent failures" by Health Authorities to collect income due from patients using private pay beds in Health Service hospitals--in other words consultants have been carrying out frauds resulting in the NHS subsidising their private patients.

No wonder they can afford it--the take-home pay of an SEN is around £67 per week, and a ward sister with five years' experience may earn only £89 weekly (compared with a London policeman under 19 who grosses £170 or so). This years pay rise will say the government be limited to 3% or less.

NO JOB - NO HOME

The government is considering hitting unemployed home owners, in an attempt to save £170million. Unemployed people who are entitled to supplementary benefit have their mortgage interest paid by the DHSS, but government ministers are considering proposals that will halt this payment for the long-term unemployed.

Since 1979 when the Tories came to power the number of jobless home owners has risen from 98,000 to 235,000. The idea of ending their mortgage interest payments has led to opposition from the building societies, who point out that any such move would cause a dramatic increase in the number of repossessions of houses from unemployed people. Whatever happened to the Tory philosophy of everyone a home-owner?

DONCASTER DAM

The role of the unions in providing actual support for the structures of capitalism is nowhere better illustrated than through the vast financial reserves held in the form of union pension funds and the like. Britain's newest Trade Union financial institution, the Unity Trust is yet another demonstration of the unwillingness of union leaders to place the radical use of union wealth on the agenda.

UT has so far attracted £12million in deposits and with current union assets totalling around £500million (not counting sequestrations) there is plenty of room for growth.

Alas the UT is being run solely on commercial, non-political lines, and supports the whole range of capitalism's accumulated injustices. So what could be used as a major financial means towards workers' self-determination becomes no more than a pillar of the establishment.

Huddersfield DAM.

Tory Party's new fascist trend

Recently the media were wallowing in reports of hooliganism at the conference of the Federation of Conservative Students at Loughborough University. Reports varied concerning the amount of damage that was actually done, ranging from £1000 to £3000. As John Selwyn-Gummer (Tory Party chairman) withdrew the party's annual £30,000 grant to the FCS and promised (yawn) an inquiry into what he called "hooliganism and sheer vandalism", the media unequivocally pointed their collective finger at the newly emerged (in Britain at least) far right "libertarian" movement as the perpetrators of this heinous crime.

It seems clear now that the real cost of the damage probably didn't exceed £100. So what were Gummer's motives in withdrawing the grant? And who are these so-called "libertarians"?

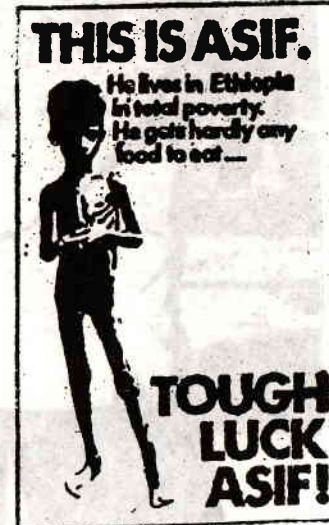
Although the new far-right element in the FCS delight in calling themselves "libertarians" and "anarcho-capitalists" only a cursory glance at their organisation, aims and beliefs is necessary to show how little they have in common with traditional libertarian thought and practice: The politics of these groups is perhaps best summed up in one of their favourite slogans--"If it moves--privatise it".

The foundation of their hideous vision of a future society lies in their belief that capitalism should be left to run on a free rein, that



Gummer, worried?

What is the real strength of these fanatical capitalists? The answer is disturbing and perhaps surprising. Here in Britain they are organised from the Adam Smith Institute, a think-tank independent of any political party, run by the "godfather" of the far right, Madson Pirie. The Adam Smith Institute is a propaganda organisation producing a constant stream of "libertarian" publications, ranging from journals of current anarcho-capitalist ideas, to books and pamphlets on the strategy of infiltration, something we are all too familiar with, though we would usually associate it with Trotskyites in somewhat different organisations. This meant-



F.C.S humour

Why did the Conservative Party encourage him to take this unprecedented action? It certainly wasn't in response to the vandalism. Two motives seem most obvious. Firstly it is undeniable that the right-wing libertarian philosophy is a natural, if extreme, extension of Thatcherite free-market policies. Is this, perhaps, a case of too much, too soon? Are these extremists giving the game away? Of course this is pure supposition, but it should not be rejected out of hand. The Conservative Party is being seen to do something, but just how much remains to be seen.

Secondly, and this is fact, the moderate members of the FCS are becoming increasingly afraid of their own movement and are steadily defecting to the SDP

--not a prospect the Conservatives view lightly!

Steal Or Starve

After two years on the dole debts had accumulated for Ian Honeyford, of Rochdale. He used up all the grant of his recently started Polytechnic course paying them off, and dropped out.

Though he was penniless, the Rochdale DHSS would give him and his family nothing. So he left home thinking that at least his wife and children would not be allowed to starve.

How he misjudged the times in which we live--times in which bankruptcies flourish and charging orders fill the County Courts. A beano for debt collectors collectors and solicitors. All the Rochdale DHSS gave his wife was advice on how to claim maintenance from her husband in the Magistrates' court--they can get water out of stones.

Even in despair Ian is a practical man; it was not in his nature to go shoplifting for chocolates and other romantic frivolities to cheer his wife and kids up. No, Ian decided a side of beef was more suitable to the needs of the moment and duly caved in a butcher's shop window to get one.

But Ian had reckoned without the weight of the plate glass in the window, which falling all but amputated his hand. Later, while it was stitched back, the police accused him of burglary.

Yet still at the time of writing (almost one month after the offence) Rochdale DHSS are refusing to pay his family a penny.

You do not have to believe in a system of state welfare, and the degradation the system inflicts inflicts on claimants and

hideous vision of a future society lies in their belief that capitalism should be left to run on a free rein; that society should be geared to making money, and only to making money; that exploitation of those with little money by those with most money should be actively encouraged, with an end to taxation (hence another favourite slogan: "All taxation is theft").

PRIVATE POLICE

While they oppose all state intervention and state monopolies, their greatest bugbear is intervention preventing the smooth running and progression of capitalism. Their call is for the privatisation of the police, the emergency services, the health service, education, the lot; their philosophy--if you can't afford it, you don't deserve it.

This far-right element in the FCS sees South Africa as its guiding star, and although half-hearted calls for an end to apartheid have been voiced many members are to be seen proudly sporting their new "Nelson Mandela" badges. Their politics then can be seen as a mixture of extreme free-market economics and fervent anti-communism. Whereas true libertarian thought begins with the premise of mutual aid, these "libertarians" stress a basic dog-eat-dog philosophy.

too familiar with, though we would usually associate it with Trotskyites in somewhat different organisations. This strategy is hard-hitting and aggressive but above all it is successful. The extremist take-over of the FCS was widely publicised but less well-known are the major coups in many Scottish, and East Midlands Young Conservative groups, as well as the Greater London YCs, the latter a major embarrassment to the Conservative Party itself.

Left Monitored

Equally disturbing are the contacts the far right have made abroad. The movement's leaders have attended dinners at the South African Embassy, and they make no secret of their contacts with right-wing guerilla groups, among them the Nicaraguan contras, the Unita forces of Jonas Savimbi in Angola, and South-African-backed forces in Mozambique. But perhaps most worrying are recent associations with the American movement "Western Goals". The British anarcho-capitalist paper "Capitalist Worker" recently reported on their visit to the US as guests of "Western Goals". Founded in 1979 by Larry McDonald, this organisation aims, among other things, to develop a computer file on anybody and everybody with vaguely left tendencies--reminiscent of McCarthyism. On their return the activists in FCS proposed at their next conference a "Student Monitoring Project". In view of their widespread foreign contacts it hardly seems far-fetched to suppose that this movement receives funds from abroad, so Gummer's temporary refusal to fund the FCS will inevitably prove ineffectual in combatting them.



regularly prospecting to the left --not a prospect the Conservatives view lightly!

Fascists in the Commons

How seriously should we take these extremists? Very seriously. The big names in the FCS are the Tory MPs and industrialists (whose interests they represent) of tomorrow. Sixty-one of the current Tory MPs were Conservative students. It could of course be argued that student politics have always been radical, and that students do tend to mellow their views as they get older. But traditionally it has been left-wing student organisations that have been political embarrassments to their elders, not those on the right. To what extent can we trust these far-right extremists to moderate? We can at least take it for granted that they will remain more extreme than current Thatcherites. Apart from their success in infiltrating the Young Conservatives, many of the active FCS extremists are already working for current Conservative MPs in the House of Commons.

One thing is certain. We cannot leave it to the Labour Party to combat this menace. They have already proved how utterly ineffectual they are faced with existing Thatcherite policies. It is, therefore, up to us, as individuals and movements, to warn people of this obscene progression and to combat these "libertarians" in whatever way we see fit. We cannot sit back and allow these people to abuse the name of liberty, and we must act now, not wait for these sick individuals to gain yet more footholds.

RW



You do not have to believe in a system of state welfare, and the degradation the system inflicts inflicts on claimants and functionaries alike, to question a state of affairs which gives people the option to steal or starve. Nor need we politely accept the bad manners of the twentieth century Fagins who run the DHSS with such tight-fisted aplomb that can only serve to cultivate the current crime wave.

BB ROCHDALE DAM.

D.H.S.S.

After the nine month strike by DHSS computer staff in Newcastle, which cost over £200 million to break, the government is radically reshaping the computerisation of social security benefits to guard against the effectiveness of similar industrial action in the future.

There are now likely to be seven computer centres, rather than the previously planned three. Along with increased decentralisation of computer centres, there are to be enlarged training programmes to ensure that there are back-up staff available to scab on any industrial action, and the introduction of more simplified operating procedures, to allow computer operators to learn and adapt more easily.

DONCASTER DAM.