

syndicalist fight



PAPER OF THE SYNDICALIST FIGHT GROUP

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OPEN LETTER TO CLASS WAR

KENT MESSENGER DISPUTE

NUMBER ONE

NOVEMBER 1985

10p

CND: THE NEXT STEP

Once again, on October 26th, thousands have gathered to demonstrate their opposition to the nuclear arms race. And those thousands represent only a small proportion of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament's support in this country. But when the marching and the speeches are over, will the fight for nuclear disarmament be any further advanced?

Since its formation in 1958 CND has advocated a number of strategies. Foremost among these have been non-violent direct action and, in recent years, the peace camps. Yet in 27 years the Campaign, for all its massive support, has not prevented the basing of a single missile nor shifted the British Government one inch in its resolve to maintain a nuclear "deterrent". Attempts to bring about change by applying moral pressure on Government, civil servants and military personnel are clearly fruitless. After all, a ruling class that has already murdered countless millions of people in its pursuit of profits cannot be expected to have moral scruples about murdering millions more.

There is a force, though, that can not only end the arms race but can bring an end to wars altogether. That force is the organised working class. It was the working class that ended the First World War in a wave of mass strikes, mutinies and revolutions. And it is the workers who build the missiles, the airbases and the launchers.

If CND is to have any hope of success then it needs a new strategy - a strategy directed at workers employed in the nuclear industry and in related branches of production. The first step must be to build links with the rank and file trade unions rather than with union officials. There is, of course, an alternative to such a strategy; another quarter century of fruitless demonstrations.

NO GOVERNMENTS
NO WARS 

RANK & FILE CONFERENCE

SHEFFIELD, 30TH NOVEMBER & 1ST DECEMBER

ORGANISED BY THE NATIONAL RANK AND FILE

MINERS MOVEMENT.

AN OPEN LETTER TO CLASS WAR

ANARCHISM TODAY



by Philip Kane

1: The Relevance of Anarchism

Dear Comrades,

Recent months have seen a resurgence of youth rebellion on a large scale. The school strikes reported by your paper, the growth of widespread opposition to the Youth Training Scheme and now the latest wave of riots have shown that many young people are rejecting a future on the scrapheap of society.

It is obvious that you see this as an important political development, as we do. We believe that an increasing number of angry young people are also turning away from the politics of the authoritarian Left as a solution to their problems. But at the moment nobody is providing a clear, coherent alternative that they can turn to. Among white youth in particular this is fast becoming a major problem as the fascist organisations move in to recruit ever more frustrated, alienated, unemployed working class kids.

The situation cries out for the building of an organised anarchist youth movement. In the past many statist organisations have recognised the potential of young people as good, dedicated activists, have channelled their anger into their own youth organisations, and have considerably increased their own size and influence. It is unlikely that the current wave of spontaneous resistance will so easily be turned into recruitment fodder for the state socialists, due to the underlying anti-authoritarian mood. Instead we have the chance to increase the size and influence of the anarchist movement. It is an opportunity that we should not miss.

Yet we cannot make the most of the opportunity without the intervention of revolutionary anarchists. While recognising that there are many real differences between our two groups, we feel that given the importance of this issue Syndicalist Fight and Class War should be working towards united activity in launching a nationwide anarchist youth movement. We hope that you will join with us in discussing such activity and look forward to your response.

Yours in solidarity,

Editorial Collective,
SYNDICALIST FIGHT.

Some 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". Now this is a fairly common view, and 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 the foremost aspirations of the oppressed and have always been the twin objectives of the anarchist movement.

The necessity of both is clearer than ever. Anarchism is not dead; it is more relevant now than at any other time in its history.