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Where We Stand

Anarchist Workers Group

October 1988

UNDER CAPITALISM the workers produce the wealth of the world but neither own nor control the produce of their labour. Capitalism creates poverty, starvation, unemployment, waste, pollution, war and the threat of nuclear annihilation. Only when the working class seize control of, and plan production, for use not profit, can human needs be satisfied.

THERE IS no parliamentary road to socialism. The company directors, top civil servants, security and army chiefs and lawlords exercise real power and will prevent parliament from legislating for fundamental social change. The power of the ruling class can only be contested effectively at the point of production which is primarily where socialists must organise.

THE STATE is an instrument of class domination and cannot be used in any way to further the interests of the working class. All gains conceded by our rulers can only be defended through the class struggle. The capitalist courts, local council and industrial arbitration bodies cannot serve as a substitute for direct action by workers. The state cannot be reformed, bypassed or brought under democratic control. It must be destroyed and replaced by the power of workers councils.

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THERE CAN be no socialism in one country. Capitalist production is international and therefore social revolution must be international in order to succeed. The working class has no country; British workers have no common interests with their bosses. As internationalists we side with all oppressed peoples fighting imperialism whilst promoting the primacy of working class interests in all such struggles.

THE TRADE unions exist to defend workers' interests within the limits of capitalism: they cannot be vehicles for its revolutionary overthrow. The trade union leaders are a bureaucratic caste whose existence depends on the maintenance of their role as professional negotiators. This role fosters a conservative outlook which acts as a brake on militancy. It is necessary, therefore, that workers organise a rank-and-file movement within the existing unions across sectional divisions and independent of bureaucracy. Such a movement would act, firstly, as a political counterpoint to the reformist bureaucracy and secondly, provide, in times of struggle, the organisational framework to bypass leaders who always side with the bosses in a revolutionary crisis.

THE LIBERATION of workers must be achieved by the workers themselves. This task cannot be carried out on behalf of the workers by a vanguard party. Any attempt to usurp the role of the mass of the workers must be opposed. There can be no socialism without workers' democracy. Therefore we do not consider the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, China or Cuba to be socialist.

CAPITALISM generates systems of oppression which divide the working class. To create a unified workers' movement and a genuine communist society we must fight all forms of oppression in principle.

To this end we oppose the oppression of women. In the family women are burdened with the main responsibility for childcare and domestic labour. We stand for free abortion on demand and the socialisation of childcare and housework through free provision of 24-hour nurseries, laundries, dormitories and restaurants.

We are opposed to all forms of racial discrimination.

We are opposed to all immigration controls and support the right to physical self-defence against racist attacks.

We oppose all forms of discrimination against lesbians and gays and stand for the full decriminalisation of homosexuality.

ALTHOUGH WORKERS learn through struggle they do not spontaneously become revolutionary. Therefore we advocate a political organisation of anarchist workers which can win workers to libertarian communist ideas and intervene decisively in the class struggle. We stand for the fullest democracy and independence of all workers' organisations and defend the right of all revolutionary currents to participate within them.

We urge all those who agree with our objectives and policies to join us in building such an organisation so that Libertarian Communism can become a reality.