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Letter: Militant or Revolutionary?

D.McC

1996

Dear Organise!

Congratulations to the ACF on reaching your tenth birthday! Doesn't time fly when you're trying to subvert the system?

I enjoyed issue 42, particularly the Anarchist Communism in Britain supplement which was very interesting as it showed that there is some historical and political continuity between the revolutionaries of the last century and those of the inter-war years right up to the present. In the history of the ACF, however, I was disappointed not to see any mention of the short-lived Anarchist Workers Group, if only because libertarians can learn lessons from even the most disastrous experiences!

I would like to comment on a couple of articles in issue 42. It's good to see the ACF open up the pages of Organise! to other groups and the Militant Eco-Action article was very welcome. However, whilst I agree with the author that the fight against environmental destruction is important to the working class (as we always suffer the worst from it after all!), I feel that the struggles against Roadbuilding etc., however militant, can only be defensive strug-

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gles and rear-guard actions at that. Without a revolutionary perspective that actually sees things in terms of a fight between two classes and talks about the need for the working class to smash the power of the ruling class and to create a free, communist society, the environmental movement is condemned to constantly having to respond to the assaults of capitalism rather than go on the offensive and actually take control of the planet out of the hands of its present owners. This tends to make the debate around violence vs. non-violence a bit irrelevant as an ultra-violent reformism is still reformism! Also, concerning the article on the Independent Working Class Association, just a few thoughts. Although the IWCA is a product of the crisis of the 'Left', the same one which has brought forth the Scargill Labour Party, the Socialist Alliances and on a different (and perhaps more positive?) level, the Revolutionary Socialist Network, it is a little harder to fathom. Without doubt Red Action are politically the prime movers and the early statements issuing from the IWCA seem to reflect their ultra-critical attitude towards the Leninist left and traditional lefty politics (ie. Trade Unionist, Labourist etc.). But there appears to be a contradiction. Whatever disagreements libertarian communists have with Red Action, they cannot be dismissed as a just another 'vanguardist tendency', akin to those others which constitute the IWCA, when they have for years been critiquing vanguardism, Leninism and Trotskyism, often with great clarity. So why have they jumped into bed with the biggest gang of unrepentant Stalinists this side of North Korea, thereby giving these Leninists credibility? Unless you are willing to believe that Red Action's anti-Leninism is totally superficial (and I don't think it is) it must mean that they believe they can carry the directionless Stalinist flotsam and jetsam behind in their wake. Why not let the bastards drown?

Anyway, that's yer lot. Keep up the good work.

Yours for libertarian communism,
D.McC
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