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Coup in Russia; Anarchists banned

Workers Solidarity Movement

1993

As we go to press the ‘coup’ in Moscow has just ended, although the question of whose coup it was still seems open. In any case it was no more than an argument between two equally undemocratic wings of the ruling class. It was clear that whoever won it would be the workers that lost, as the victors would use the events to clamp down on some of the democratic gains won over the last few years. Yeltsin won and sure enough he has begun the process of eroding these gains.

According to news received from Moscow Yeltsin has moved against all his opponents, whether or not they were connected with or supporting parliament. It is reported that

“On October 4th it was announced that the Ministry of Justice (sic!) declared illegal a broad variety of “pro-communist and nationalist organisations” that supported the parliament, including the fascist Russian National Unity and the social-democratic Party of Labour. The list of organisations was kind of weird since there

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was nothing about the Civic Union (the association of entrepreneurs and industrial managers) which supported parliament and declared its loyalty to Ruskoi, but the Confederation of Anarcho-Syndicalists was in the list together with “pro-communist and nationalist organisations” though it declared that it supports neither Yeltsin nor Ruskoi and instead called upon people to stop work and create popular organisations from below.”

The severe beating that Boris Kagalitsky underwent when he was arrested shows how serious such a ban could be. Kagalitsky is a social democrat well known in the West and it was probably only the rapid response of the Western left to his arrest that resulted in his quick release. The Confederation of Anarcho-Syndicalists is the largest of the Russian anarchist organisations. Its banning represents a serious threat. As of the time of writing no further reports have been received of suppression against Russian anarchists but when they are received anarchists will need to organise demonstrations and messages of protest in support of them rapidly. If you want to get involved in organising such activity write to the WSM today.