

SolFed Industrial Strategy

The Solidarity Federation seeks to create a militant opposition to the bosses and the state, controlled by the workers themselves. Its strategy can apply equally to those in the official trade unions who wish to organise independently of the union bureaucracy and those who wish to set up other types of self-organisation.

Rank and File Control

Decisions should be made collectively. This means they are made by mass meetings, not by officials in union offices. These mass meetings include all those in the workplace, regardless of union membership. It will not, however, include scabs or managers.

Anyone we elect to negotiate with management should have a mandate from the workforce that gives them clear guidance on what is and is not acceptable. Mass meetings of workers need to be able to recall all delegates.

Direct Action

Direct action at work means strikes, go-slows, working-to-rule, occupations and boycotts. We are opposed to the alternative which is 'partnership' with bosses. Workers can only win serious concessions from management when industrial action is used or when bosses fear it might be.

Solidarity

Solidarity with other workers is the key to victory. Workers should support each others' disputes despite the anti-trade union laws. We need to approach other workers directly for their support. 'Don't Cross Picket Lines!'

Control of Funds

Strike funds need to be controlled by the workers themselves. Officials will refuse to fund unlawful solidarity action. Union bureaucrats use official backing and strike pay to turn action on and off like a tap.

Unions use a large proportion of their political funds on sponsoring parliamentary candidates. Backing the Labour Party is not in the interests of workers. We should also not fall into the trap of backing so-called 'socialist' candidates. The Parliamentary system is about working class people giving up power and control, not exercising it.

Social Change

The interests of the working class lie in the destruction of capitalist society. The whole of the wealth of society is produced by the workers. However, a portion of this is converted into profits for the shareholders and business people who own the means of production. When workers make wage demands, they are simply trying to win a bigger share of what is rightfully their own.

This means that trade union organisation around traditional bread and butter issues is not enough on its own, although it is vital. As well as a structure of mass meetings and delegates there also needs to be a specifically anarcho-syndicalist presence in any workplace organisation. This will necessarily involve only a minority of workers in the present time. The role of anarcho-syndicalist militants is not to control the workplace organisation but to put forward an anarcho-syndicalist perspective in the meetings of the workplace organisation and attempt to gain broad support for our aims and principles, through propaganda work.

Preamble

Solidarity Federation's ultimate aim is a self-managed, stateless society based on the principle of from each according to their ability, to each according to their needs. It is a society where we are no longer just used as a means to an end by bosses wanting to make money from our labour.

In the medium term and as an essential forerunner to such a society, SolFed promotes and seeks to initiate anarcho-syndicalist unions. To this end, SolFed seeks to create a militant opposition to the bosses and the state, controlled by the workers themselves. Its strategy can apply equally to those in the official trade unions who wish to organise independently of the union bureaucracy and those who wish to set up other types of self-organisation.

Details of the Strategy

Mass meetings should be seen as an alternative structure to official union structures that are dominated by full-time bureaucrats. Decisions are made collectively in these assemblies. The work of these assemblies in different workplaces should be co-ordinated by delegate councils.

In the most militants workforces regular mass meetings will be held and this is obviously the ideal we are aiming at. This may not be possible in other workplaces where it will only be possible to organise such meetings when a dispute arises.

We need a three-pronged approach to the business of actually setting up an independent organisation at work:

1. In a workplace with a recognised TUC union, an SF member would join the union but promote an anarcho-syndicalist strategy. This would involve organising workplace assemblies to make collective decisions on workplace issues. However, workers will still be likely to hold union cards here to avoid splits in the workplace between union members and non-union members.
2. In a non-unionised workplace, independent unions, based on the principle of collective decision-making, should be set up wherever possible.
3. In a non-unionised workplace, that is difficult to organise due to a high turnover of staff or a large number of temps, we should just call workers assemblies when a dispute arises.

SF members will also undertake anarcho-syndicalist propaganda work in each scenario.

The principles of our industrial strategy would apply to all three approaches.