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Somerset Solidarity Federation

Letter: A syndicalist explains

1998

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Organise! comrades,

We are not sure if the screw-ups in the letter published in *Organise!* 48 were the result of cack-handed typing, poor proof-reading or mischievous fun on the part of the editor. Typing shouldn't have been necessary because the comments were sent on disc. However, in the interests of accuracy we would appreciate a little of your letters space in issue 49 to make a couple of corrections and to add a brief comment on the latest critique of anarcho-syndicalism.

We did not quote L.Kombo Ervin as saying that anarcho-syndicalists believe "...that somehow unions are progressive, and what's more the unions are some kind of force that can not be revolutionised" as the addition of "not" makes nonsense of Ervin's (admittedly strange) view of anarcho-syndicalism and our criticism. Likewise it was not said that "...it is this horizontal co-ordination that names the workers' union" but that such horizontal co-ordination "makes" the workers' union (in the sense that nothing more is required than workers' solidarity and horizontal co-ordination by workers to create a revolutionary union. That's how we see it.)

With regard to the latest analysis (issue 48), everything you say that a revolutionary organisation should be doing is currently being done by the Solidarity Federation, as you know from contacts and reading the material. Anarcho-syndicalists do not cease to be involved in the wider struggle once they leave the workplace (assuming they have a job in the first place). You may well prefer it to be otherwise but the fact is that the SF is not a 'one dimensional' organisation and its members are very much rooted in the myriad struggles of the real world. We could discuss the factory committees in Russia and the failures arising from lack of structured co-ordination in other revolutionary periods for page after page but that's best left for another time.

We are confident that you will publish this as written in the interests of anarchist solidarity.

R.E. (Somerset Solidarity)