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South African Anarchists Organise

Workers Solidarity Movement

1996

In 1989 one of the first anarchist organisations in modern African history came into existence. This was the Awareness League of Nigeria. The AL had a membership of over 1000 people at the time of its formation and, despite the severe repression in that country, it has continued to function as one of the organisations fighting the military dictatorship there.

Now a further organisation has begun to work for the objective of anarchism in Africa – this is the Workers Solidarity Federation (WSF) of South Africa. The WSF was formed in 1994 and it publishes a newspaper called *Workers Solidarity*.

The first issue of this paper contains major articles on Anarchism, the Student Struggles in South Africa, the current situation in Nigeria and the recent local elections in South Africa. In a short article on the 1994 General Election the WSF note that the election – and the formal ending of apartheid – was a massive advance for the struggle in South Africa allowing for freedom of association and speech for the right to strike and protest. Further on, however, they warn that the legacy of

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apartheid is still with us. 2.3 million South Africans suffer from malnutrition. Only 45% live in houses. Only 2 out of every 10 Africans finish school At the same time, 5% of the population own 80% of the wealth. The WSF notes that the ANC government has set itself very limited goals to redress this.

The WSF is, at this stage, a very young organisation. Yet, its very existence at this time in South Africa is proof positive that anarchist ideas are growing again as an important force on the left. Anarchists and socialists everywhere will wish them the very best.