

ANARCHIST FEDERATION
OF BRITAIN

25A Amberley-road, London W.9.

3rd June, 1950

To all groups and members of the AFB.

Dear Comrades,

Members of the London Group have been dissatisfied for some time with the apparent stagnation of our movement. Since the election of the Labour Government in 1945 the AFB has not developed as we anticipated at the Glasgow Congress. Members have lapsed and have not been replaced by new blood, organised Anarchist activity in Scotland - keystone of our movement during the war - has ceased, and our propaganda elsewhere has, to a large extent, fallen on deaf ears. Our work on the international field, for the formation of a World Anarchist Federation has not borne fruit - indeed, our position was decisively rejected at the International Congress in Paris last Autumn.

Comrades know, too, that our attempts to form a section of the International Working Men's Association in this country have been unsuccessful. It is clear, moreover, that we have insufficient forces to attempt the organisation of such a section alongside the AFB - activity of members is already fully occupied with AFB work.

While the above assessment of our present position is not pleasant or encouraging, comrades will, we think, agree that it is an honest statement.

The main reason for our lack of progress is undoubtedly the continued support of the great majority of British workers for the Labour Government, coupled with our failure to attract the discontented minority by providing an alternative to the right-wing trade union leadership and the Communist Party's opportunism. This failure is not, we are convinced, due to any deficiency in our syndicalist ideas and propaganda, but to their having no organised form of expression - and to the small number of comrades who are actively engaged in industrial work.

It is clear that there is going to be an increasing number of industrial disputes during the coming months. Signs of unrest are becoming marked in a number of different industries, and these will be accentuated as the employing class makes sharper attacks on wages and working conditions. Short time - prelude to unemployment - is already being worked in a number of industries.

With our present form of organisation - as an Anarchist propaganda grouping - London comrades consider we are incapable of taking effective action in the coming situation which will, however, provide the opportunity for

successful syndicalist activity. The AFB clearly lacks the organisational form both to attract discontented workers and to give an alternative to T.U. organisation,

After lengthy discussion on the basis of the above points, the London Group has decided to submit the following proposals to provincial comrades:-

1. That the AFB should transform itself into an organisation which will concern itself solely with syndicalist propaganda and action.

2. That this organisation should aim: firstly, at carrying out industrial propaganda and forming, where possible, rank-and-file groupings in the different industries; secondly, to act as a liaison organisation between these groupings and; thirdly, to provide, by these means, the basis for a National Confederation of Labour in this country.

3. That the organisation should immediately affiliate with the International Working Men's Association.

4. That the organisation should be open to workers who want a radical change in industrial organisation and the establishment of a free society, but who may not be Anarchists in the philosophical sense.

5. That the new organisation shall take over the effects of the AFB.

6. That, with the agreement of provincial comrades to the substance of these proposals, a national Congress be held in Manchester for the inauguration of the new organisation.

We recognise that membership of the new, syndicalist organisation would, of necessity, be largely limited to the present membership of the Anarchist Federation in its early stages, but we consider a change of this kind would give us a far greater opportunity of development, particularly in the period of intensified industrial struggle which is rapidly approaching.

We therefore ask all comrades to give these proposals their full and immediate consideration, and to let us have their own views as soon as possible.

With revolutionary greetings,
Yours fraternally,

KEN HAWKES
(for National C'ttee)

FRANK ROWE
(Sec'y, London Group)