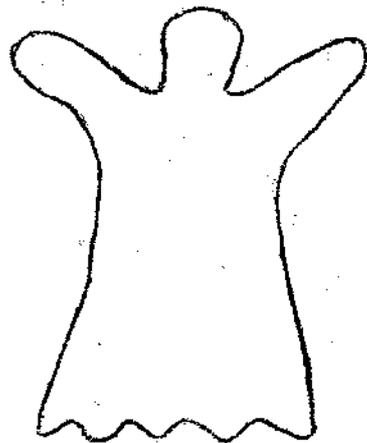


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## WHY THIS ?

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To recognise and denounce the "left" as the left of capitalism is necessary but certainly not sufficient to guarantee a coherent communist critique and intervention. For leaving aside the pseudo-different brands of the left and "far left of capitalism, there are also very many forms of recuperation which pretend to possess a critique of recuperation. For instance, the pseudo-opposition within trade-union bureaucracy. This is because recuperation is fundamentally dynamic — chameleon-like, it tones down its radicality whenever it thinks it is gaining the upper hand, and of course it tones it up whenever it is beginning to be surpassed by the real movement. This is just one of the reasons why a static critique, and in particular one that doesn't learn lessons from its own practice, is only a mere caricature of a living critique. Similarly, differences between the conceptions of authentically revolutionary individuals and groups, providing the will is there, should be able to resolve themselves in practice, in the joint organisation, and understanding of the effects of, revolutionary tasks. This is not an advocacy of a sort of alienated "daily-life"-ism which pretentiously claims to update itself continuously, only in reality to lack any effective, global critique of this period. Intervention must be strategic — angry and self-conscious — and we must be able to know, and to know how to relativise, what we are doing.

The motivation for this "review", which will prove useless unless provokes an effective discussion, is a wish for a coherent intervention, which does not eternally contemplate its own navel, but which must also learn from its own successes and failures.

All of this is certainly not in favour of a kind of more exotic localism, whether of time or space. It is however, not for us to say ridiculous things such as "April 1985 is the date", even though it is true that the accelerating crisis of capital is becoming more and more out of control for the ruling class, and the conditions of the next few years will bring the alternative war-or-revolution increasingly to the fore. In other words, that old revolutionary slogan, revolution or death. Revolutionary theory — more than ever unenvisagable without concrete practice — must ~~attempt~~ attempt to understand the period (crisis) and various trends within it (e.g. economic-military strategies of the ruling class, including preparations for civil war) as well as the weaknesses (e.g. positions submissive to religion and negotiation in Poland) or to pseudo-oppositions within trade-union bureaucracy in England) and the strengths (e.g. the tendency of the riots in early July 1981 to spread, or of the decision of striking miners in South Wales in early 1983 to send their own delegations to other pits around the country) of recent manifestations of the communist movement.

There is no substitute for the real autonomous movements of proletarians towards organising themselves in mass class combat : those proletarians who are revolutionary now, who are a product of course of the whole movement just like forms of mass self-organisation like Workers' Councils, must know how to intervene in this. NOT as "bearers of the ultimate truth", NOT as anti-theory/anti-organisational elitists/followists/"daily-life"-ists, NOT as "introducers of consciousness from the outside" (this Leninist-Kautskyist — also anarchist — ideology is obviously, like all ideologies, an enemy of the process by which autonomous class struggle becomes conscious of itself and its aims), NOT as substitutionists at all — whether partyists or pseudo-anti-party clique-ists a la Bakunin — , BUT as those who want to organise an effective intervention, anti-sectarian and anti-elitist, a communist intervention, which must always attempt to state the whole of the matter and to site itself in the perspective of the generalisation of the class struggle in all senses — theorisation, becoming more bitter, superseding localism and chauvinisms, organising and arming itself, .....

"All social life is essentially practical. All mysteries which lead theory to mysticism find their rational solution in human practice and in the comprehension of this practice."

(Marx, 8th. thesis on Feuerbach.).

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HARROD'S AND NATIONALIST PROPAGANDA .

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(From Bologna to Brompton Road.)

After the bomb at Harrod's, priests, politicians, trade-union leaders and the press bombarded us with torrents of propaganda for national unity "against being killed on the street". One of the biggest overt police operations ever seen in London was put into operation. (At the same time, there was also the biggest army operation ever seen on Irish soil, with 2000 troops engaged just below the border.)

In recent years, we have seen a multitude of bombs in public places. It is no coincidence that the biggest of these have nearly always been let off at the most opportune time for the State under whose legitimacy they exploded. Thirty-six years after the Reichstag was burnt down, there was the Piazza Fontana massacre in Italy 1969, in which fascists and several misty arms of the regime were involved. It enabled the Italian bourgeoisie to bring an end to the Hot Autumn of 1968-9 by means of a huge campaign for national unity which naturally encompassed trade-unions, right-wing politicians and mafiosa of the Christian Democrat Party, Stalinists, etc.,... Thus the movement of wildcat strikes was curbed, which obviously had not reached the point of refusing to be duped by such an enemy attack. A lot was said about the "defence of the nation against fascism" which of course obscures the fact that fascism and bourgeois ~~xxxxx~~ democracy are both defences of the nation, namely of the interests of the national capitalist class.

Which is not to say that all bombs have been planted by arms of the State. (!) Organisations such as the "red" brigades, RAF, etc., coming from Stalinism and/or Leninism but collecting snippets of other ideologies along the way (especially the RAF : anarchism, Castroism, Maoism,...) were probably not formed by States in the first place !! But for the reason that they were all born not out of revolutionary fervour but out of demoralisation (in the vein "The proletariat is going to do nothing by itself") and out of the classically substitutionist and professional modes of organisation which have been handed down from the counterrevolution, and which rely on the basis of an internal leadership which is clandestine even with regard to the lower levels of the organisation, it would be reasonable to assume that (1) the ruling class would like to infiltrate and manipulate them as one weapon in their social war against the proletariat (as a prop for nationalist propaganda and to try to divert those proletarians authentically looking for a ~~xxx~~ revolutionary praxis and an escalation in class war away from this and into a sort of delusion with momentary pseudo-victories); (2) that this would be possible; (3) that it has already happened.

The IRA on the other hand, which is equally opposed to the development of the proletarian side in the social war, urges "national liberation struggle", and remains on this ground even if certain of its generals state that this phase is surpassed. To quote from the IRA's paper "An Phoblacht" 14-April-1983 p.3 — "The North Armagh Brigade IRA have warned that they will not tolerate the activities of criminal elements in Armagh City who have been involved in a spate of hijackings and robberies of shops and pubs recently, while falsely using the name IRA". Whether or not these particular "criminal activities" were done by someone using the name IRA, it is obvious that the IRA (which almost certainly receives some or all of the profits from these pubs) is just another capitalist gang in a period of capitalism where there is a ~~general~~ general tendency for all capitalist organisations to become gangs ..... However, those revolutionaries who are not in direct contact with anyone in Ireland should be able to see that there is much difficulty in getting hold of any reliable information and it is to me unclear whether proletarians in Ireland are in any way reappropriating their own real revolutionary anger from the counterrevolutionary terrain where the IRA has diverted it. One can imagine the deadweight of "national liberationism" exerting itself on proletarians in Ireland seeking revolutionary praxis. And at the beginning (in childhood) it must seem to some of them that, because the British Army is their obvious enemy then the nationalist I.R. Army must be their

friend. But truly authentic revolution cannot respect any facet of existing legitimacy, just as it cannot respect any forms of pseudo-alternative capitalist legitimacy such as the IRA. So the IRA does have a base amongst proletarians, but one of the conditions for the development of class war in Ireland is that the proletariat there must recognise that the IRA will oppose, definitely including in a military sense, any tentative towards self-organised revolutionary violence, just as the imperialist Security Forces have done for decades. In fact, British capital is increasingly toying with the idea that it might be more beneficial for it to have the same geographical positioning of national borders as is desired by the IRA.

The fact that the IRA Army Council can say that the bomb at Harrod's was carried out by one of its subsidiary cells but without its knowledge, is revealing. If true, it shows the ease with which British State troops or appendages could infiltrate the IRA and carry out bombings, ... at opportune moments. If false, it can only show the collaboration (on the level of propaganda) between the IRA and the British State in trying to cement two national unities: why else would the IRA Army Council deny what a base cell has done -- if it considered it to have a positive propaganda value, then surely the top would admit "responsibility" as well as the base. Of course there is the possibility that a non-IRA pseudo-revolutionary group did it "anonymously", but the following points speak for a direct State involvement:—

1/ If Harrod's is the number one shop in London where the bourgeoisie go shopping — or send their servants —, it is clear that the shitty advertising of Harrod's is also aimed at proletarians, for example "Enter the rich world" or "Harrod's: for more than money can buy". Thus on the Saturday before Christmas, probably the biggest shopping day of the year, individual bourgeois would not have been legion at most Harrod's departments, because of the presence of thousands of proletarians still eager for spectacular consumption. Who could see the Thatchers or the Benns pushing their way through hordes of proletarians? Therefore a bomb on that particular day would probably not have killed any bourgeois: it didn't go off in the Stock Exchange, the Athenaeum or the Houses of Parliament !!

2/ The fact that a few low-ranking cops were killed allows the State (and in particular police and Parliament) to more effectively dissociate itself from the bomb, and to try to rally proletarians around the capitalist class against a bomb that we are told was directed against them both (!) At the New Cross Massacre, where 13 young black proletarians were burnt to death, it was more difficult to conceal official involvement. The subsequent arrest of a black man who was at the party is typical of the State's tactics during this: the media have said ~~more~~ or less explicitly "It serves blacks ~~and~~ right who have all-night parties which keep Aryans awake." 1933 is here again !! (Those who want to misinterpret this remark will do so, but what it refers to is the increasingly gang-like nature of all State appendages.)

The British bourgeoisie has not yet reached the point of being forced to sacrifice one of its own (perhaps like Moro — who knows?), but a ~~few~~ few of its junior lackeys dying makes the official lie look more convincing.

3/ It is true that this bomb was not planted at the precise time of a huge upswing in the revolutionary movement on the scale of the Italian Hot Autumn '68-9 or Summer '77 or the riots in Britain in '81, BUT: —

(a) Warrington and the battle of Winwick Quay must have struck fear into the hearts and minds of the defenders of this society;

(b) the pending break-up of the Common Market posits a growth in the contradiction for the British capitalist class between industrial capital on the one hand (mostly nationalised or subsidised) and agricultural capital (remember — some Tory farmers raked in huge benefits from the CAP) and finance capital on the other hand (mostly private), which faces a situation where a fall in the dollar will quell the demand in the U.S. for foreign capital and it is unlikely that this chunk of the surplus value on the British national capital which flows across the Atlantic (and back again) could realistically be invested in Europe or mainland Britain. Faced with a period of increasing economic competition between capitals, particularly within blocs, capital (objectively as much as in the

bourgeoisie's consciousness) has to soften the proletariat up for attacks of increasing austerity. It is no coincidence that Kinnock, having widely plugged his "true patriotism" as soon as he was elected leader of the Labour Party, called Thatcher "wet" concerning her policies for managing the struggles of the British national capital against other European capitals in the heart of the EEC. AS always, the pseudo-justifications of the existing order have rested on making the exploited and the exploiters appear to have a common enemy (the elements, crisis, terrorism). This is the basis of all nationalism, all war-propaganda: wage-slaves and bosses are portrayed as being a single family (nation), which must narrow its ranks in order to solve the bosses' problems.

#### 4/ Harrod's and war .....

The Allies won the second world war because proletarians in their territory were convinced that it was good to butcher proletarians in Dresden, etc., but bad to commit the same atrocities in Coventry or Rotterdam. The Axis powers lost the second world war because of their failure to convince proletarians of the same thing but the other way around. Similarly, in the Spanish Civil War, it is a sad fact that many workers were more concerned with protecting the bourgeois republic against fascism than with revolting against the society which includes them both: capitalism.

So is it surprising that 3 days after the Harrod's bomb there was a 12-minute showing of a film about the Nazi concentration camps at peak TV viewing time? Was this really "newly-discovered film" ?? To ostensibly present the horrors of fascist concentration camps as ~~with~~ wildly different to the horrors of bourgeois democracy (which will also not hesitate to defend itself in the same way) is merely to defend the horrific society which includes them both, in order to make the day-to-day reality of wage-slavery seem more acceptable, in order to guard the concentration-camp of daily life. But this should not be misunderstood -- because some forms of capitalist offensive against the proletariat are more horrific than others, as everybody knows. But the range of offensives used by fascism is precisely the same as the range used by bourgeois democracy. And in the final analysis, the alternative is purely and simply war (death) or revolution. Those who petition the ruling class to manage its system without a certain kind of weapon (nuclear) are just advocating another defence of imperialist equilibrium and if imperialist war were to come they would be behind the war effort just as they were in 1914 and 1939 -- in fact they are an important part in the present war-propaganda designed for creating a national unity.

5/ The police and army made sure that everyone travelling in London on 19th December was delayed or inconvenienced, in order to make the official propaganda more effective. Everybody was supposed to have been materially affected by the events. The shutting-down of Oxford Street, at this time one of the busiest streets on Earth, supposedly because of a bomb-scare (when no bomb was found) guaranteed that hundreds of thousands, or millions, of people would be caught in traffic-jams, be made to wait hours for tubes, etc. A real negative pseudo-participation in history! Watch the television news about what you saw with your own eyes in Brompton Road or Oxford Street today !! The IRA delayed all the trains! But the British government will make the trains run on time !!!

#### 6/ Operations, networks, preparations -- of counter-subversive strategy.

The huge police operation in London started as soon as the bomb exploded. As has been said above, there was no massive upswing in proletarian anger to which it was a particular response. The NGA, the TUC, the government and the riot police had succeeded for the moment in preventing further mass confrontations at Warrington. The following is taken from a book by Brigadier Kitson (1971!) (Now C-I-C of the Army's UK Land Forces since 1-7-82 and a general) outlining strategies for his class faced with a future situation of proletarian subversion. Written 13 years ago, it concerns the preparation for civil war undertaken by the ruling class, and the use of particular opportunities for it to get in some practice. It is absolutely certain, WHETHER OR NOT THE HARROD'S BOMB WAS LAID BY AN ARM OF THE STATE, that it was such an "opportunity", psychological as well as military.

"Certainly it would be unthinkable for the British to operate teams in this way [ identity cards; a chain of localised organisations supporting the government ; tighter control ] before any violence had taken place because they could not function without legal backing, and it would be politically difficult if not impossible to pass the necessary legislation until something had happened. For this reason it is unlikely that the British Army could be persuaded to allocate much in the way of resources towards maintaining teams of this sort in advance of a requirement arising although, as already mentioned the United States Army does so. Nonetheless the British Army could well afford to study the problems involved, and have suitable men earmarked to take part in an operation of this sort. If this were to happen teams could be formed from earmarked people as soon as the threat received recognition, and they would then be ready to operate by the time it became politically possible to take the necessary action and deploy them. This situation is of course totally different from that governing the deployment of intelligence resources and psychological operations teams who should start to operate as soon as the threat is recognised. [ note : consider what has happened since 1971 ! ]

In summing up the contribution which the army can make before the onset of violence it is only necessary to point out two main ways in which it differs from other government agencies. The first of these is that it has a fund of knowledge of methods which can be employed to counter subversion and insurgency gained by study and experience. The second is that it can train and maintain individuals and units in advance of a situation arising who can move at short notice to an affected area and start working at once. The extent to which it is effective in these respects is of course dependent on the amount of effort and resources which it is prepared to expend in preparing for the task. There is no doubt at all that the outcome of a campaign of this sort depends very largely on the action taken in the early stages, and for this reason the army's ability to use its unique characteristics in this period is of immense importance. It is perhaps unnecessary to point out also that the foundations laid at this ~~stage~~ time will either promote or bedevil all that follows. It is for example much more difficult to turn an ineffective intelligence organisation into an effective one at a later stage in the campaign than it is to build up a good one in the first place."

(Brigadier (now General Sir) F. Kitson, 1971  
"Low Intensity Operations", pages 80-81.

This was written 13 years ago — after May 1968 and Watts 1966 but before the three-day-week, the struggles of 1972-4 and the riots of 1981.

The question that revolutionaries should ask themselves is NOT "Have there been any 'politically opportune' moments for operations of this sort on the part of the enemy?", BUT "When were these moments? What were the enemy's tactics, to say nothing of their strategy?" For us, revolutionaries, communists, the theoretical tasks we are faced with before a social explosion can all be summarised as a reconnaissance of the terrain which lies before us.

The formation of Neighbourhood Watch Committees is one of the recent developments in enemy strategy. When Kenneth Newman was drafted in from Ulster to be the head pig of the London Metropolitan Police Force in the months following the 1981 riots, his immediate aims were a restructuring of the police force, to make them better-armed for their purpose. The buying of plastic bullets by mainland police forces, the honing of the pigs' communications networks and switchboards, and above all the formation of Neighbourhood Watch Committees (the localised government-supporting gangs mentioned by Kitson) — a veritable enemy fifth column — are the political realisation of all this.

Neighbourhood Watch Committees, or the formalisation of informer networks (Newman : "I would hope a block leader or street leader would come forward and be a useful contact for the police"; Peter Hain : "...bringing the police into the trade-union movement could help avoid the situation where a remote and bureaucratic police force is so alienated [ !! ] from the people that it ceases to be an instrument of protection [ !!! ] and instead becomes an instrument of oppression") are accepted in principle by those forces espousing "police accountability", "better management", or "community policing", just as by the more right-wing fractions of capital. The GLC, the Committee for Racial Equality, the CRC's etc., might want better representation on Neighbourhood Watch Committees, or the same thing under a different name, but in principle they are FOR them.

The in-fighting between capitalist organisations as to whether and to ~~what~~ what extent they should be represented on police-management or police-advisory committees at various levels, does not hide the increased militarisation.

Neighbourhood Watch Committees are "community policing": the organisation of police and "prominent members of the community", i.e. shopkeepers, local State officers (e.g. D.H.S.S.), social workers, retired army officers, teachers, priests, local TU officers, local politicians, local businessmen/businesswomen,....., who can keep an ear out for things and can report on a regular and formal basis to the police as well as during particular happenings.

It is not inconceivable, but only a conjecture, that the recent manhunt in the countryside in recent months and years, and/or operations such as the one in Oxford where hundreds of claimants were arrested en masse while signing on the dole, are the same kind of preparation, of exercise. It is almost certain that the escalation of the D.H.S.S. officers' attempts to terrorise unemployed proletarians by means of prosecutions (threatened and real), cutting off their benefit, humiliating grillings, is part of this, even if not directly organised by the police.

In analysing enemy tactics, one is obviously open to accusations that one sees everything as a "conspiracy", as coordinated consciously. To be clear, Neighbourhood Watch Committees, Special Claims Control Units, para-army bombing teams, the SAS, the SIS,....., are all separate organisations, which are not totally coordinated with each other (yet?). But the point is that the bourgeoisie (in particular its military strategic centres, local networks, and various of its networks such as the top executives of the police, the DHSS, etc.) does ~~know~~ have a strategy (to reiterate: as much objective as subjective) -- and various of its fractions, networks and lackeys are restructuring themselves in the light of various proletarians' activities -- from striking to fiddling the dole -- in the direction of a military consolidation of their terrain.

Often this is not on the surface in preparation for civil war, but the most strategically conscious of these gangs recognise its possibility, and the rest too are working out ways of, in a word, preventing social unrest. This of course includes the ~~left~~ left wing of capital too: in the ~~fifties~~ fifties there were no written instructions as to how trade-union bureaucrats could take the inertia out of wildcat strikes and if possible achieve a speedy return to work -- it was relatively easier for bureaucrats to do this because they were faced with a proletariat of less militancy. Nowadays, memoranda with this in mind drip down continuously from the union bosses.

Presented above is an attempt to understand State terrorism. Those pseudo-revolutionaries who to make a strategy out of "exemplary" pre-civil-war acts of minority armed violence, and who think that their elite is historically blessed with the role of "waking up the proletariat" as if it were a passive object whose "activity" would only be submitting to another power external to itself (i.e. another capitalism), are counterrevolutionary whether or not they are manipulated by the enemy class.

It is obvious that the communist revolution can only affirm its existence on a world scale through revolutionary class war and the dictatorship of the proletariat; this can only mean armed violence under the control of the masses against all ~~existing~~ existing regimes and legitimacies. Similarly, it is obvious that in times of pre-civil war mass physical confrontation, those proletarians who carry and use arms already against the forces of the existing order, even if outside a social explosion of geographically large scale, are among the first to realise what revolution must mean. (Cf. several confrontations in Poland, and strikes at Longwy and Poissy in France, to cite European examples). These are part of the necessary total confrontation with the forces of the existing order, and of the necessary self-escalation and self-generalisation of this confrontation.

If it is necessary for revolutionaries to denounce pseudo-revolutionaries of every variety, including armed ones and not only traditional Leninists, anarchists, etc., but also neo-Leninists or sponganeco-Leninists claiming falsely ~~to~~ to be partisans of proletarian autonomy, IT IS ALSO necessary to understand that all contestational activity is ALWAYS lied about in the spectacle. This does not change its nature, even if it faces an enemy with varying tactics and methods.

The dominant lies still call ~~revol~~ revolutionaries "terrorists" even if they use the same word to describe pseudo-revolutionaries.

(Example: the trade-union shop-stewards at Scott Lithgow circulated stories that one member of the anti-union strike committee was a member of the "red" brigades and the RAF ! )

Home Secretary Leon Brittan appeared on television on Sunday 20th. December to denounce law-breaking, "lack of respect for law and order" and to ~~praise~~ praise the "democratic process". The terms he used seemed at the time to be a kind of dual propaganda : against the workers' action at Warwick Quay, and also for the usual "democratic" shit regarding the bomb which had been laid the day before probably under the aegis of part of his class. This ~~is~~ shows that the bourgeoisie will not hesitate to assimilate real revolutionary action with its counterpart in the spectacle -- isn't this what recuperation and the official lies are all about ??

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Postscript concerning the intelligence centre (GCHQ) at Cheltenham.

The decision of the Tory Party (or most of it) to ban unions at the communications and military intelligence headquarters at Cheltenham is interesting, to say the least. It knows that, in the case of any future unrest amongst the workers there, it could count on the support of the trade-unions, who are (1) willing to actually sign a "no-strike agreement" and have been since the beginning and who (2) successfully prevented the civil service workers from hitting places like Whitehall and the Ministry of Defence, police stations, etc. etc. during the long strike a few years ago. They preferred to cut off benefits !

One might add that the workers at Cheltenham would undoubtedly have undergone a very tough examination before they were accepted to work there, and the government(s) would know that they are mostly all in favour of everything conservative. (If this sounds like a chauvinistic attack on workers who work for enemy strategic centres, IT IS NOTHING OF THE KIND, but it is a fact that no-one with even mildly "undesirable" political views would have been accepted at Cheltenham in the first place.)

Thus it is probable either that the Tory Party is acting out of a kind of maniacal fear, or that its right wing is planning a possible ~~army~~ manoeuvre by itself, as nearly happened in 1969, when Lord Mountbatten and Cecil King, amongst others, were involved in preparation for an army coup. But surely the extreme-right wing of the bourgeoisie would be able to count on the Tory Party, and, if the army increased its role, it would not go as far as a coup ??

But the most likely answer is that, in view of economic pressures such as the break-up of the EEC and Anglo-American tensions, and in view of the coming increase in austerity measures necessitated by all this, and thirdly in view of the fact that the proletariat has not been definitively stopped from all militancy -- in view of these three things, the right wing of capital is not even willing to let strikes go as far as unions have to let them go in order to recuperate them -- witness the increase in anti-strike legislation.

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## RESUME OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF CLASS STRUGGLE IN BRITAIN.

### Demoralisation ? ... Or ~~xxx~~ just temporarily subdued anger ?

It is tur to say that the British national capital, since the Winter of Discontent of 1978-9, has been able to ensure a relatively (quantitatively) lower level of social war amongst employed workers ; it is also true that all riots since July 1981 (mainly — but not exclusively — amongst the young unemployed) have failed to reach the previous qualitative level of the uprisings in Toxteth and Brixton, even if they have continued "sporadically". But the deepening of the capitalist crisis finds the ruling class faced with the immediate aim of increasing its austerity measures and this would first have to mean a huge campaign of demoralisation, which is precisely what we are being subjected to at this moment, but which has not yet definitively won, even if it seems that way because of the reduced number of strikes since 1979 and riots since 1981.

### The background .....

If since the Winter of Discontent there have not been so may strikes, there has certainly been a tendency in many recent ones for moments of bitter rupture to occur which can only have driven fear into the hearts of both the bosses themselves and the union-leaders.

Since 1981, on a background of long strikes which were mostly union-controlled and union-defeated, the Tory government and individual bosses have been very reluctant, right up until the struggles at Warrington, to utilise the Employment Acts of 1980 and 1982. The TUC may have been up to the bosses' expectations insofar as it has managed to keep strikes to begging for more wages (or "acceptable" wage-cuts), but it has not managed this without some encouraging but isolated moments where workers have been in radical rupture with the trade-union police. For example, consider the longest strike since 1926, the NHS strike of 1-2 years ago, where the TUC was exemplary in (1) driving wedges between the different categories of hospital workers; (2) resisting any call, even from the pseudo-radical wing of union bureaucracy ("S"WP, etc.) for an indefinite strike; (3) providing an apologetic fake call for "solidarity" which did not mean spreading strikes, picketing and occupations, but simply meant other workers limiting themselves to "making a sacrifice to help nurses get a 12% wage-increase" and then ~~x~~ returning to the poverty of wage-slavery after the end of the TUC's sarcastic "Day of Action" which was designed to tell evryone that "striking is futile" and which effectively brought an end to the strike. But the TUC's own surrogate Employment Act — its "code of conduct" which advocates keeping emergency services running according to management dictates, peaceful inaction, etc. — still did not prevent several instances when workers broke it on their own initiative, for example ambulance workers in Glasgow controlling emergency services according to their own specifications, or nurses in Yorkshire going directly to the pits to encourage miners to come out on strike, ...

Similarly the rail strike of the same time included some radical moments. It laid bare the (as yet) latent hatred of workers for ~~x~~ wage-labour, when media stories of train-drivers skiving off work, getting drunk, etc., undoubtedly evoked a lot of sympathy from all other proletarians. The trade-unions in question, however, were very quick to assert that "their members" were always "conscientious" wage-labourers always ready to do as they are told, etc. However, when drivers and guards at King's Cross Railway Station refused to distribute the anti-strike lies of the media, and when an attempt was made by train-drivers to sabotage the main London-Midlands railway line, the union had to put the boot in against ~~x~~ the strike immediately, and the union leaders of ASLEF saved face by saying that they had not wanted to break the strike but they were forced to break it through lack of support from the TUC's General Council.

The political tightrope walked by unions and other capitalist organisations is now more than ever likely to be resolved by the TUC leaders refusing outright to support a strike (whatever the internal bureaucratic wrangling), and then with an individual union either breaking the strike and blaming the TUC, or pretending to support it for a few days, hoping to get workers to side with one bureaucracy or

the other, and then to try to achieve an "honourable" return to the slavery of wage-labour as soon as possible.

The split within the Tory Party/CBI/Institute of Directors over their attempts to crush strikes by legislation or by "letting the unions put their own house in order" is thus closely mirrored by the split within the bosses of unions over whether to base their efforts towards the same goal on either outright TUC opposition to strikes or on waiting until the strike has continued for a few weeks before denouncing it as "futile".

From capital's point of view, this is definitely not the ideal solution. Faced with a union openly claiming that "spreading strikes is impossible", strikers are likely to be forced more quickly into realising that any real spreading or escalation -- intensive or extensive -- of strikes depends solely on their own ability to organise themselves outside and against the unions, and to communicate as widely as possible and ~~xxxxx~~ as soon as possible with other proletarians whether employed or unemployed. It comes as no surprise therefore when the Institute of Directors accuses civil servants of "dragging their heels" in the drafting of new anti-strike legislation. (S.Times, 8-Jan-1984 p.4). Those concerned in the very centre of the management of the commodity economy know that it is important for them to try to prevent even the very smallest amount of proletarian combativity, even on a reformist terrain. Trade-union bureaucrats, on the other hand, even if they are irreconcilably opposed to any escalation of strike action, know the terrain better -- they know that workers are more likely to knuckle down if they are allowed a few days of totally emasculated "token" acts.

So pseudo-radical trad-union bureaucrats, apart from blaming the defeat of strikes on main-line bureaucrats ("bad management" of unions as a counterpart to the legendary "bad management" of the commodity economy!), nowadays try to blame the defeat of strikes onto lack of support from other proletarians instead of, on the obstacles workers meet when striking, notably their own resignation to management, unions, police, courts and obviously the pseudo-radical bureaucrats themselves.

The official pseudo-solidarity consisting of police-controlled marches to Hyde Park, ... , are evidently a direct enemy of any real solidarity whatsoever, which trade-unions will do everything in their power to stop because it would entail workers taking strikes into their own hands and communicating directly with other proletarians. When mineworkers in South Wales sent their own delegation directly to pits in Nottinghamshire at the beginning of 1983 (stop press: cf. the same, now), they were physically prevented by local bureaucrats from communicating directly with their comrades. If they had physically defeated the bureaucrats, and had got their comrades to come out on strike, that would have been real solidarity, .....

Pseudo-solidarity on the other hand is increasingly founded on classical bourgeois democracy, the begging for "rights" (notably the right to wage-labour) in a world dominated by our enemies. The opposite to begging for rights from our enemies is nothing other than revolution, the taking up of arms against this society's rulers and defenders.

When ex-proletarian Eric Heffer (Author of "Class struggle in Parliament" !!) can call for disciplined non-violent "law-breaking" in order to defend the trade-unions (!!!), he can model himself overtly on his reformist chums the bosses of Solidarnosc (whose tee-shirt he has sported at Labour Party conferences) -- mediators between proletariat and capitalist class. This is nothing other than his preference to have strikes broken directly by trade-unions rather than by the police and courts. But of course if the first alternative is surpassed he is an adamant supporter of the second. Is it any coincidence that in July 1981 he called for "looters and rioters to be caught and punished with all due severity"? No doubt he would say the same about the workers who took part in the ...

### ... THE BATTLE OF WINWICK QUAY.

On the night of 29th. November 1983 took place the biggest battle between strikers and cops in Britain since Grunwick 1977 and before that the struggles of 1972-4. 4500 workers fought a battle with 2000 cops, including official police, Tactical Aid Group squads, and a "paramilitary" private security gang hired personally by Edward Shah. The police -- all sections -- were very well organised

and the dispersal and combat tactics were reminiscent of those used in the 1981 riots in Moss Side and Toxteth, when squads of the Tactical Aid Group were also deployed. At one point, Landrovers chased pickets back across a rough field behind the factory whilst squads with helmets, visors, and padded jackets managed to push back several groups of pickets to the nearby M62 motorway.

The action began on Tuesday 29th. when 2000 demonstrators who had gathered in front of the print ~~works~~ works at Winwick Quay experienced a disciplined police assault. First, the police loosed up the crowd by walking amongst it in groups of four (it of course shows a weakness of the pickets that they allowed the police to do this without attacking them); secondly a large group of about 200 or 300 police in a nearby carpark formed themselves into a phalanx or "flying wedge". This wedge marched in disciplined fashion into the centre of the crowd to physically split it after having already spread it out ..... Thirdly, police from the middle of the wedge, presumably themselves in smaller wedges, further subdivided the crowd. It took the police over two hours to clear the workers from the yard in front of the factory, but they were unable to prevent them from regrouping later on the edge of the main road which led to the estate. Police then assembled in front of the entrance to the main access road to the works, and began to try to clear the road and push the pickets further back. By this time, the riot squads had arrived and formed into small combat groups behind the police line. In a psychologically well-thought-out manoeuvre, the official police then moved forward and suddenly opened up gaps in their ranks to let the riot police through to attack the pickets. Apparently the pickets then dispersed in fright; they had probably not expected a battle against riot police. However, the more radicalised of the pickets could still manage to regroup at 2a.m. and, as they were attacked by riot police, dragged blazing braziers onto the road --- probably not as a barricade in the sense of a defended position from which to attack, but as an immediately accessible way to halt the police advance without explicitly aiming to extend their own territory. Still, the pickets managed to attack the police with bricks and bottles, and 25 cops were injured, along with 18 of the workers themselves. 36 arrests were made; one worker was arrested for carrying a .45 automatic but it turned out to be only a replica .....

Let us note that at this time the leaders of the NGA were ostensibly "in support" of a mass picket, but of course for non-violence, orderly behaviour, no autonomous initiatives, no attacking the cops, etc. Joseph Wade, boss of NGA, stressed on television that what he wanted was a small semi-illegality to "protect trade-union rights under the law" in order that trade-unions could pursue their legal functions (mediation). Remember that even peaceful mass pickets, or picketing at anywhere else than one's own work-place, are now illegal. He and other bureaucrats could even blame "police provocation" and police brutality ("bad management of the police"?) as instigating the battle, thus displaying his own belief that his own bureaucrats could curb workers' anger more effectively than the police and courts. The capitalist nature of trade-unions became even more glaring when they tried to organise sit-down passivities when nearby there was a raging battle of strikers against riot police.

Significantly, Robert Maxwell, another press boss who has never shied away from sacking strikers en masse (for example the printworkers at Park Royal), was reputed to have telephoned Edward Shah to warn him to cool things down in order to forestall "disastrous" effects in Fleet Street. This surprising revelation shows the fear, and at the same time the strategic consciousness of parts of, the British bourgeoisie: it may have kept the number of strikes down since 1978-9, but it is aware that it has not yet definitively succeeded in demoralising proletarians, whether in waged work or on the dole. Just as in the economic sphere, in the political sphere too there are no more long-term plans of the rulers, even on the scale of 4 or 5 years. Just as the Russian capitalist class has had no faith in its recent 5-year-plans, so does its British counterpart increasingly play everything which concerns politico-economic plans on a year-to-year level. Note that on a military ~~level~~ counter-subversive level, though, (defence against possible proletarian assaults), the bourgeoisie, or at least its strategic centres, is capable of extremely intelligent planning for contingencies, militarily and psychologically. This is examined in the article entitled "Harrad's and nationalist propaganda".

From the Guardian 2-Dec-1984 :

"TUC GUIDE TO [policing] PICKETS STILL STANDS

A code of picketing issued by the TUC and signed by the general secretary Mr. Len Murray says that unions involved in demonstrations should not give the impression "that the object is to blockade a workplace".

The code was issued in February 1979 after the TUC's talks with the Labour Government under Mr. James Callaghan when a new concordat was forged after the "winter of discontent". The TUC emphasised last night that the code was still in force.

It says that in any situation where large numbers of people with strong feelings are involved there is a danger that things can get out of control, particularly in a confined area such as access to a factory. "It is therefore important for any such demonstrations to be conducted in a well-organised and disciplined manner", it adds.

The code goes on: "The effect of a large body of trade unionists outside a workplace demonstrates the depth of feeling that exists among strikers and also may constitute an effective appeal for solidarity. However, the police may regard a huge body of workers as obstructing entry to premises or as intimidation towards those who wish to enter. And trade unions need to be aware that it can sometimes be difficult to control a large group of pickets." On organisation, the code, which has the unanimous support of the TUC General Council, says that pickets should act in a disciplined and peaceful manner even if provoked. It helps to ensure peaceful picketing if an experienced member, preferably a union official, is in charge of the picket line. He should ensure that the number of pickets is no larger than is necessary.

According to the TUC guidelines, advice should also be given on what can be said because it is an offence to use insulting words ~~xxx~~ or behaviour. It should be made clear to any person joining the picket line that they must accept instructions from the person in charge "and undertake to behave in a lawful and disciplined manner".

The decision to mount a picket is for the union in dispute. Apart from exceptional circumstances unions should confine picketing to premises of the parties and to the dispute, or the premises of suppliers and customers of those parties.

Mr. Murray's advice is that unions should review the internal procedures and communications, their rules and agreements in the light of the guidelines."

From Edward Shah, boss of the Messenger Group, referring to the moving of newspapers, produced by scabs, out of the factory at Winwick Quay :

"THIS IS A MILITARY OPERATION !!!"

From Alan Royston, father of the NGA trade-union's chapel at the Stockport Messenger:

"SOME OF THESE PEOPLE JUST CAME ALONG FOR A PUNCH-UP WITH THE POLICE. WE ADVISE THEM 'STAY AWAY'."

From the Old Mole :

"THE VERITABLE TOTAL ESCALATION OF CLASS STRUGGLE MEANS CIVIL WAR !!!"

## Notes on the climate and the period ...

In recent strikes, most notably in the struggles of the miners in Staffordshire (note: this was written in February; the next issue will contain an article on the miners' struggles), the unions, media and management have tried to publicise the "real alternative" as being EITHER participating in an overtly emasculated "token" overtime ban (February: the miners' overtime ban was achieving nothing except more profits for the NCB and less wages for the wage-slaves and even then Scargill called it a "victory for the miners"; for months there has been a desire of many miners for an all-out strike), "token" occupations, etc., for which the encouraged motive is a sort of liberal-democratic guilt at having to go even this far, OR scabbing! This basic technique of recuperation, which is at the heart of all pseudo-supportive brands of strike-breaking and has been since the origins of social democracy, is now more than ever linked to capitalist restructuration. From here on, every form of anti-strike propaganda, from management, media, government or unions (even if they claim to be for limited semi-strikes) is postfaced with reasons such as "for the benefit of the company", "for the benefit of the industry", "to get British industry moving", "to be more competitive on the world market", "to beat the Jap", ..... The TUC and all union bureaucracies, whether or not in a particular sector or at a particular time they are officially "engaging in talks" with the ~~xxxx~~ Tory Party, the CBI or individual bosses, have never failed, and never will, to site themselves on this same ground:-- everything must be for the greater good of the national capital (...-ist class). It is not surprising that in January 1984 the TUC has issued a document (internally) which urges recognition that "strikes hurt the community and they hurt workers" and urges the bureaucratic machine to model itself on its collaboration with Churchill's National Government in World War 2, when health and safety regulations at work were suspended, workers were not allowed to change their place of wage-labour without permission, overtime was forced and the wages earned thereby had to be lent to the government, and strikes were effectively made illegal and punishable for "sedition". The arguments for and against nationalisation/privatisation from this point, beneath the different "democratic" glosses, do not even try to hide their nature as different survival strategies for the national capital, for which workers are supposed either to work harder, go on the dole, accept real wage-cuts, sacrifice conditions, etc., or to accept draconian benefit cuts. Of course those capitalist organisations on the left of capital which declare their means for capitalist survival to be "job creation" are no exception -- they usually accept "some jobs must go", the management "has no money in the kitty", ...; the more "leftist" who do not say this still pose "the problem" as bad management of capital, e.g. "progressive" bosses are supposedly friends of the workers.

Since the end of the period of commodity abundance (which pro-situs have never understood), we are no longer being told on such a scale "Appear as something 'different' every day in order to hide the general passivity"; we are increasingly being told that knuckling down to present-austerity measures is marginally better than simply dying in a nuclear war or a concentration camp, therefore we must knuckle down ... This is why in Chile, North-West Europe, Poland, etc. (but not France) the governments in the main do not even claim to be the bringers of reform -- they are openly conservative -- the reformists in most States now play their counterrevolutionary role from outside the government, although they are evidently well-equipped reserve-teams to run the State part of the national capital if it ever becomes a political (or even an economic) necessity. But it is precisely this knuckling down along the lines of "if I don't collaborate with my national capital then I will die of starvation or in war" which would have to exist everywhere before capital on a world scale could regiment workers into a third world butchery. But the possibilities of a radicalised social eruption could be nearer than we think: demoralisation has not yet been victorious; the crisis is becoming more and more out of control for each ruling class; and nowhere on Earth has a national capital managed to cohesively rally all proletarians around itself (or a part of itself) by means of any poulist ideology, whether fascist, bourgeois democratic or Stalinist (or Leninist, or autogestionist, or ...). Capital in fact is in a period where its short-term survival (as distinct from solving its crisis) depends on generalisation of this demoralisation. Its social strategy whether by means of conscious political propaganda or by the dictates of economic competition, or both, is clearly designed in this perspective.

But ultra-optimism is as mistaken as ultra-pessimism. Few recent strikes have shown a tendency to move from defensives against the encroaches of capitalist restructuring towards offensives against the ruling class and their defenders as a whole. (Stop press; still, even defensively, there have been moments of violent rupture out of the union-defined peacefulness). But crisis management cannot, especially as the pace of the crisis accelerates, allow itself to be hindered by even a minimum of proletarian discontent. This is at the root of the nationalist propaganda campaigns such as the one around the Harrod's bombing. We are being told that if we do anything apart from submitting to the dictates of our masters, then we are likely to be killed. In fact, this age-old counterrevolutionary lie is becoming even more ridiculous now that, if there is no revolution, death by imperialist war in the medium or long term would be a certainty. In the present time, it is the level of discontent which is veritably at a "medium" level, at what could be called a watershed. It is not yet globally conscious of what it must become, but it exists at a quantitative level which is enough to cause capital to experience more problems in its management of its crisis than would otherwise have been the case. Naturally the threat of war is being used everywhere by the defenders of this society (the political left, right and centre of capital) to cement national unities, which in fact is the precondition which would have to be satisfied before each national capital could consolidate with others into veritable blocs (which would not necessarily be the East and the West, although the U.S. would probably be in a different bloc to the U."S"."S".R).

The riots, which even if they included a substantial portion of employed workers, still did not in any way breach the gap between so-called "marginalised" proletarians and the struggles of wage-slaves, were not recuperated... they died down because of a surmountable retreat (yes, demoralisation! & inseparable from lack of theorisation!!!), which is a truism, but submission to their caricatures within the spectacle -- reformist comedians, the left of capital,... -- was not the motor of this. Several things since 1981 have been able to maintain the atomisation of proletarians since the riots, and the fear of a very well-equipped police force is not the least of these. The Falklands war was a partial success as a bourgeois propaganda campaign (it made the catchword of national unity be "we" on a scale not seen since the invasion of Suez); reformist comedians and pop-music may be fairly effective post-riot safety-valves; but the Battle of Winwick Quay -- where several unemployed people were arrested -- is a glorious sign that capital has not yet achieved a totally submissive proletariat which would carry out its every wish for the great reward of being promised a "Reich of a 1000 years", state capitalism in one country, "democratic" pseudo-antifascism, or other supposed "benefits" that the proletariat would supposedly achieve, according to the lies of politicians, unions, sociologists, ..., from a consolidation of the national capital.

With increased austerity on the cards and with capital without a cohesive corporate poulist ideology (i.e. with a proletariat not totally uncombative), an eruption is still a very real possibility.

The perspective in which revolutionaries should sit themselves is in short the total generalisation of the attacks of the proletariat against this society's rulers and defenders, the global move from defences against an increase in oppression to attacks against capital and the social relations of its society -- wage-labour, the commodity economy, money,... Of course this movement can only come to fruition through the action of the class as a whole: no minority, even "anti-substitutionist", can create it artificially. But to affirm our existence -- that is a task which confronts all revolutionaries. To organise an intervention, to communicate between ourselves on as wide a scale as possible (discussion, pooling of information), to understand our enemies,... -- these are tasks which we cannot put off until the indefinite future. In this, the theory of anti-militantism is a mystification in the quasi-elitist vein "wait until the rest of the proletariat agree with us; until then do nothing". If it is true that to be a revolutionary, a communist, now does contain an element of waiting, it is also true that it implies a certain concrete effort towards clarification (theoretico-practical), an affirmation, a self-consciousness, an analysis of this period of capitalist domination and a concrete activity in relation to this analysis.

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THE PROGRESSION OF THE MOVEMENT

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What can we know now about the communist mode of production in the future? This question — amongst others — was touched on in 3 of the articles in Intercom 4 : in "Socialism and money" by LR and in "Meditations on the question of organisation" and "Why I am not a socialist" (!??) by RE.

All of these to some extent offered valid critiques of various lies, for example : S. AND M. XX — critique of the lie that there can be socialism plus commodities; Meditations... — critique of the lie that post-capitalist relations could exist within capitalism ; Why I ... — critique of the social-democratic nature of an attempted "democratisation" of commodities.

First I want to address the differences between LR's articles and RE's critiques of it. LR comes straight out with a tentative suggestion for a model of possible production and distribution mechanisms in a fully-fledged communism; RE does not attempt to be as "precise", considers any voucher system to be based on value and to lead to a blackmarket, and would prefer lotteries to decide on the distribution of extremely rare goods. In the second part of this text I shall try to deal with the misconceptions of all 3 of these texts regarding the communist mode of production (and in particular the evasion of mention of severable foreseeable pitfalls), but in the first part I shall say something about the progression of the movement beginning now (when its practical manifestations are still only negative), and about the part revolutionary minorities can play now.

1) TOWARDS CIVIL WAR.

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It is true that the dynamic definition of communism, as long as capitalism remains unchallenged by even the beginnings of insurrections on a global scale, remains negative — this is its motive force ... = the destruction of all forms of capitalist domination, which themselves can be analysed as far as present possibilities allow us to gather information, think about them and discuss them, etc. Positive descriptions remain imprecise or abstract, such as the realisation of (in the dialectical sense of becoming real and gaining consciousness of) all our passions and desires, of our very being, or the supersession of art and philosophy (which has never been a definition, but only one way of describing communism). Particularities are hard to pin down, if one leaves aside the rubbish of pseudo-revolutionaries who would have us believe that a "new society" means "cheap fares" or "small is beautiful" or "a Bolshevik party in power implementing its 'historical' program". But if there is no revolution in the next month, and even more so if there is, I am still in favour of talking about precisely what we mean by communism, what each of us thinks certain aspects of it will be like. All communist revolutionaries have some ideas about it — to deny this would be a perfect example of overly pretentious objectivism, or even "followism" in the mould "Waiting is the only important thing we can do".

Some of us may have hang-ups about the left of capital, including a fear of changing into programists or bureaucrats, or ..., but doesn't our very activity, our intervention NOW, have any relation to our views on how the movement will progress, on what will be "generalisation" and what will be "setbacks", on what will be "radicalisation", etc.? Doesn't any kind of analysis of present manifestations of the movement rest on an understanding of what it will become, on possible futures for it, on the characteristics which are still deficient and on those which are possible gateways to escalation? More globally, oughtn't we to be confronting our ideas on possible futures for the movement on a planetary level which would be part of what some comrades have called "an analysis of the period"? As revolutionaries, that is as people who want the generalisation of all the proletarian assaults on capital in every way and area, and as people who fundamentally feel the necessity for something which has a name (communism), why should we shy away from thinking about what some aspects of the progression of the movement towards it will be like?

The conditions where this becomes more and more possible will be and are being created by the movement itself and are the same as the conditions for victory. Note that I am certainly not saying that the minority of the proletariat which is presently revolutionary (subjectively) has only to think out everything in its head and all will be portentous of imminent victory. But the movement, the Old Mole, has already created a specifically and consciously communist milieu — which has never been totally empty in the last 150-odd years — and it has created possibilities for us to have a certain practical weight. (Those who want to misinterpret this remark will do so.)

It is surprising how little is spoken of what each of us thinks about how the movement will progress, namely about what is a gateway and what is a dead-end. It is not enough to say for example "negotiation is a dead-end" and "anti-union workers' assemblies are a gateway" -- TRUE, certainly, and also NECESSARY, but not enough.

Let's imagine a situation of a wildcat general strike which has been set in motion by masses of proletarians in progressively more lucid opposition to their enemies and their enemies' lackeys (unions,...) and which is developing towards insurrection and civil war by means of :--

- +++ occupations which unemployed proletarians as well as wage-slaves are beginning to rally to;
- +++ attacks on the strategico-ideologico-military centres of enemy power such as police-stations, barracks, party-halls, etc.;
- +++ requisition and subversive use of
  - (1) present products, such as arms to fight troops, big meeting-rooms for discussion, communications networks for a global call-to-arms and rapid link-up, etc.;
  - and (2) the productive forces themselves, in order to produce such products (notably food and arms) as are required by the power of the nascent Workers' Councils.

(That is, imagine that a movement goes just beyond what were the highest highest point of class struggle in the last decade-and-a-half.)

If this came to pass, proletarians at this time would have to make some pretty crucial organisational decisions, including how to link up, how those who have not been delegated to conferences of delegates from their own base assemblies could be in possession of all information regarding these conferences preferably while they were in ~~progress~~ progress, how the armed side of class war can be won when all the proletarian side's strategies in the military sense would probably be easily known to the enemy, .....

The immediate stop to the functioning of the official commodity economy -- wage-labour, buying from shopkeepers, etc. -- would be a fairly automatic result of the seizure of an area. But the problems would still exist of how to prevent an "unofficial" commodity economy -- black market, wide boys -- from thriving; and of how to develop the first stages of a property-less, money-less, commodity-less society given that its enemies would still exist, would be armed, and would be trying to drown it in blood. Similarly, partisans of self-managed wage-slavery would still be trying to pervert the movement into committing suicide by means of introducing another official commodity economy through sundry bureaucrats. LR does not touch on these problems from this angle, and the "host of other questions to do with production and distribution in a socialist society" are legion, in particular -- but not only -- concerning the beginnings of communist society, which will occur when the military problems faced in class war will make themselves faced at every level.

As I see it, it is useful to have a look at these problems, insofar as they can be partially seen now. LR and RE, who both do this partially (all analysis, this included, is partial -- I refer to the unchallenged gaps), do not talk of the concrete nature of what will be "the mightiest civil war humanity has ever seen" (Rosa Luxemburg), despite RE's mention of wreckage and rubble.

Whether we know it or not, our views on the content of intervention and on theoretical analysis of class struggles are INEXTRICABLY BOUND UP with how we think they might progress, on what we think are their weak points which might lead to defeats, and what we think are their strong points which might lead to intensification of struggle (radicalisation, arming itself, spreading,...).

The moments of self-organisation of struggle, especially in the form of standing general assemblies which have appeared intermittently in embryo form in dozens of areas (Spain, Poland,...) are the highest moments of class struggle in recent years. Revolutionaries should declare themselves in support of these, even if their surmountable shortcomings must be criticised, and should openly declare that the generalisation of this form, the Workers' Council, in all senses, is part of the gateway to victory in civil war and revolution.

## ORGANISATION .

The text "Meditations on the question of Organisation" is very confused in slamming all organisation whatsoever as "only able to be stretched out in terms of the functional relationships which hold the semi-equilibrium which we like to call capitalism in place" and as "at heart, capitalist". I would agree absolutely if this meant that (1) all effective revolutionary self-organisation of the proletariat en masse, as long as capitalism exists, can only be at war with it; and (2) those revolutionaries who attempt to organise an intervention must aim for the dissolution of this organisation into the revolutionary richness of a mass movement. In other words, any organisation which aims to establish itself within this society, is at heart reactionary, just like substitutionist (Leninist, syndicalist,...) or reformist organisations. But if RE holds that all organisation is "at heart, capitalist", then what about the peripatetic armed workers' bands in Poland? What about the First International? What about Intercom ??? What about all the authentic workers' councils in history, even if they have not always recognised their own significance and have often been less than critical ~~towards~~ about their own caricatures? For example, take the armed workers of the Ruhr in 1920 — was it because they took on the task of ~~organising~~ organising themselves that they were defeated? Or was it rather because they didn't grasp the significance of what ~~the~~ they themselves had already done in the way of this organisation?

RE rightly attacks the partyist and crypto-partyist conceptions handed down from the counterrevolution, but does not seem to distinguish between :

- +++ (1) outright partyist/elitist/substitutionist pseudo-revolution in the form of Bolshevism, anarchosyndicalism,...;
- +++ (2) the formalisation (read: conscious and structured) of self-organisation of proletarians en masse;
- +++ (3) the organisation of theoretic-practical tasks by those ~~who~~ revolutionaries who want to intervene in mass struggles NOT as "bringers of consciousness" (!), but as those who are not afraid to say that they want all proletarians' struggles on Earth to progress, unify and radicalise and come to victory, and who try to combat their own image in the spectacle and do not shy away from certain assertions because of a patronising and defeatist "we might be misunderstood" or a psychologically screwed-up and equally defeatist "we might become bureaucrats against our will" (!!!)
- +++ (4) various misconceptions on all of these by those revolutionaries who were mistaken on some points (or indeed even misled by counterrevolution to a degree) but who cannot be classified as "at heart, capitalist". Examples: AAUD, AAUD-E, KAPD,... (But obviously the ideological defence of the weakness of these must be fought).

RE then goes on to say :

"We all wish that the Bolsheviks had been truly revolutionary, that the Russian and world revolution had been successful, and that we were now reaping its benefits. This does not get round the fact that we're not  
(cont.)

and that political parties will generate bureaucracies even if they are called national organisations or organisations of revolutionaries."

On the face of it, this is true of course, but it implies that all "organisations of revolutionaries" are closet parties, which is not true. I would agree however with his denunciation not only of parties but also of the confusionists and bureaucrats called anarchists or in his nomenclature "ultra-left" if this is taken to include Cardanists, "new-style" anarchists, Bordigists, left-Leninists like "CW"O or I"C"C, spontaneous-Leninists claiming falsely to be partisans of proletarian autonomy, those who glorify Lenin but call themselves non-Leninists (GCI in Belgium, CBG, ...), etc. etc. I do not agree if it lumps together with these all those wanting an organised intervention explicitly aiming for its own dissolution into a mass proletarian insurrectionary movement. As for the KAPD and Gorter, the AAUD, the AAUD-E and Ruhle, who were all mistaken in some ways on the organisation question but who were far more lucid and advanced on other points and on this point than their contemporaries, surely they deserve to be distinguished from Bolshevik state capitalism and the "Third International" ! The former lot, especially in decline, were wrong concerning "spiritual directors" because class consciousness is not something which starts with "spiritual directors" and ends up in the masses' heads, but dynamically exists with individual proletarians collectively facing up to the task of their self-liberation. If this at first only means a minority, they cannot aspire to be spiritual (or other) directors of the rest, but have tasks such as self-clarification and intervention even if they are isolated.

## (2) AFTER CIVIL WAR .

Social relations under capitalism, from wage-labour to the social lie, hinge on the fact that everything is alien to the vastest part of the world's population, the proletariat. Most proletarians are herded into forced labour where they are allowed to touch, use and reproduce the productive forces (including their own existence and in a wider sense present social relations, as well as machines, etc.) according to the needs of whichever capital it is which accumulates the surplus value that the exploitation of their labour-power sets in motion, i.e. brings into existence for future realisation or reinvestment if possible. Other proletarians are forced into the same thing but purely in the terrain of reproduction of the physical existence of that major productive force -- the proletariat itself. Domestic unwaged labourers come into this category, as do nurses, roadsweepers, etc. Still others are not even allowed near the productive forces, but are maintained at whatever subsistence level the "period" of capitalism prefers, given the bank-balance of whichever State it is, or whether there is any ~~xxx~~ possibility that they will be herded into wage-labour at a later date (less and less likely), politico-economic considerations, etc.

This poses the question -- the concrete historical question -- of what is the opposite to alienation? What can we know about it now, even in descriptive terms? Isn't it true that we will feel qualitatively different emotions in communism? Isn't communism more than just a quantitative variation on capitalism?

Insofar as we can know anything about it now, the following will be true :

(1) +++ People will have a better, more fluid, more conscious idea of what they need, what they desire -- one of the reasons being the profoundly dialectical one that there will be no unnatural barriers to them actually getting it !

(2) +++ The new social relations will be able to be described, as they already have been, in ways such as :

\*\*\* a society where the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all.

\*\*\* the free construction of situations in all aspects of life.

\*\*\* a society where

"the eye has become a human eye, just as its object has become a social, human object, made by man for man" and where "the senses have therefore become theoreticians in their immediate praxis."

(1844 Manuscripts).

- (3) +++ People will have to be able to organise material production and distribution according to their needs (which is not simple but will need a lot of thought) and according to their conscious negation of markets and private property, which will obviously be consigned to prehistory where they belong.

RE is right to stress that in a future revolutionary society you wouldn't have to lock up your house, and if someone took something from it then you would know that they had an urgent need and your inconvenience would be made up for by people around you. But this is in no contradiction with the necessity for people to work out structured ways of producing and distributing. This should not mean of course that people ~~to~~ decide to materially produce always in the same place -- I would prefer it if I could make bread one day, cooperate in making iron, say, the next, and play chess the next, for example. Communism will be the real supersession of the separation between material production and the production of all other aspects of life, even if no precise models can be made at this point. If it is understood that here (i.e. this sentence) I am speaking abstractly about after the armed victory of the revolution (which itself could only come about given a high level of conscious self-organisation, which proletarians will be forced to undertake, one of the reasons being to avoid being massacred), then the new production mechanisms would NOT be as a safeguard against selfish greed at the expense of others, because this would not exist, but simply to ensure (1) an egalitarian way of living against the ~~effect~~ counter-effects of natural phenomena such as droughts, geographical isolation, etc.; and (2) to ensure that, in the material "sector", people are sure that they are producing what someone needs/desires, and in the right quantity.

The material "sector" would not be separate from the production of other aspects of life simply because people's relations to things will be totally and utterly defined by their relationships with themselves and with other people -- this is the meaning of Marx's remarks concerning the continuous production and transformation of a human world, sensuous activity, the sensuous appropriation of the human essence which should not be understood only in the sense ~~of~~ of direct one-sided consumption, of possession, of having, but as man's appropriation of his ~~relations~~ integral essence in an integral way, as a total man, where "all his human relations to the world -- seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, feeling, thinking, contemplating, sensing, wanting, acting, loving -- in short, all the organs of his individuality, like the organs which are directly communal in form, are in their objective approach or in their approach to the object the appropriation of that object, where the appropriation of human reality is the confirmation of human reality." (1844 Manuscripts,)

Just because people will determine their relationship to (read: production of, and use of) material things according to their realisation of their desires and the interplay of these with other people's desires, this does not mean that they will not have to know what they are doing regarding their organisation of material production: "Communism dissolves production relations and combines them with social relations" (Barrot).

In order that people will know what they are producing in the way of material things, they will have to employ a system of bookkeeping. Communism does not mean self-managed or decentralised capitalism in the classical anarchist vein (Proudhon, autogestion, ..., or syndicalism ...) where isolated groups would consume what they needed out of what they produced and would barter the rest on a sort of anarchic market for a certain defined quantity of something else -- this would clearly not go beyond the capitalist value relation. In communism, everyone will be a collective controller of the productive forces, although this will obviously pose numerous problems some of which are hard to envisage and will probably be hard to solve. A "democratised" private property relation is basically an enemy of communism, though, because I feel that I am as entitled to a share of, say, wood from "Siberia" (assuming I don't live there) as anyone else. Shocked? But I add that of course it should not be a matter of everything being decided globally, for example whether or not I paint my local library purple. However there are some things which would best be

decided globally (i.e. by all the base assemblies together), ~~xx~~ the alternative being a reversion to private property. Also, the proletariat as a whole, during the ~~xx~~ period of civil war, will not come to victory unless it decides certain questions to do with its military struggle globally -- one of the reasons being that our enemy will in important ways be coordinated globally (politico-UN-militarily). The role of the UN, past, present and future, in assuring counter-subversive collaboration between national capitals, cannot be pointed out too clearly. Witness Korea, Palestine, Congo, and perhaps soon -- if Benn's wing of the bourgeoisie had its way -- Ireland. (This does exclude the fact that UN troops have also been used in the struggles of big national capitals against little ones.) There have been numerous occasions already where national capitals at war with each other have united against a proletarian revolution to ~~x~~ varying degrees. Examples: Brest-Litovsk, Warsaw 1945, or, during the Cold War, Czechoslovakia 1968, where the US tacitly supported the Russian invasion and would also have supported Dubcek's fraction of the native capitalist class if it had won.

The only individual distribution-problem mentioned by LR and RE concerns scarcity. LR suggests a voucher system where items are given a value in points. RE suggests a lottery. We would probably all agree that these items would rarely be scarce, because obviously, if for example there were fewer pots of green paint than people wanted, then more would be made, or else, if for some reason more couldn't be made, then people would ~~at~~ decide to even out the inconvenience and each have slightly less than they initially wanted. If this happened with something which could not be evened out (e.g. if 2 people or groups of people wanted to use the only available aeroplane at 2 o'clock), and if this problem then reoccurred with something else (say the use of a building at 6 o'clock), then I would see nothing wrong with an agreement along the lines of "You have the aeroplane at 2 o'clock and we'll have the building at 6 o'clock".

This would entail a comparison of use-values, because the use of the aeroplane would be assumed to be "equal" to the use of the building. (I feel pressures on me not to talk this way because it could be likened by those who do not even want to think about a communist way of existing to scrabbling for commodities, or to a neo-market.) But if it is stressed that this kind of thing would not happen very often (food, housing and most other things, when controlled by everybody, will fulfil everybody's needs amply, and scarcities would always be able to be either evened out immediately or compensated for by an increased production of the item in question, and thirdly people on most occasions would be able to decide whose need was greatest), then I would see no objection to a "point system" for these extremely rare items. However I don't think that LR realises that items for which this would be necessary would be very rare -- if people still wanted record-players (and I don't think they will); then the needed number would be made.

I feel that RE suggests a lottery for the right reason -- to ensure an equal chance of winning! -- but he suggests a means of effecting this which is inadequate, for what would happen if someone kept winning the lottery? (This is not a trivial objection.) Would other unspoken rules then come into force? RE seems to cover over the fact that even in a communist society there will still be natural (deliberate usage!) disasters and barriers to an INFINITE pleasure. He gets over this real, undesired problem by hoping that people will desire to replace it with an artificial one, namely a lottery! Why won't people be able to rationally solve or circumvent these future problems which will still be met without recourse to artificial randomness? Is it a fact that he sees no difference between (1) those who think that communism will in some things use bookkeeping, and (2) those idiots who think that communism is only a quantitative variation on capitalism -- "democratisation" of capitalist social relations?

This criticism of RE should certainly not be seen as an uncritical defence of LR's model, because he (LR) says nothing of people being different in the future revolutionary society, and of the world as a whole (social relations, games, things,...) being a product totally of people's conscious desires, in a veritable WORLD HUMAN COMMUNITY which will not need safeguards against wickedness because

people will essentially not want to be wicked to each other. In fact, LR in his text does not bother to defend himself against being seen as an advocate of a self-managed or even party-managed "democratisation" of capitalism. Examples: "People could be issued with vouchers". ?? Doesn't he mean "People could issue vouchers to themselves"? Why doesn't he refer to people as the actual doers of anything which will be done on the scale of society? Why always use the passive mood: "Vouchers could be issued"; "Scarce products could not be accumulated" (!!); "It could also be determined";...? Isn't it important to be clear (especially in Intercom, where texts by decentralo-selfmanagement-anarho-capitalists have appeared in the past) that communist society is the opposite of various misconceptions which are had about it by advocates of self-managed wage-labour and self-managed markets? Similarly, LR's remark near the end of his text that "The choice as to whether or not to operate such a system could ~~be~~ quite safely be left to local communes or collectives to make" puts him too in the direction of this mistaken terrain. Firstly, "the choice could be left open" -- by whom?? Secondly, the remark as a whole is clearly advocating a localised private property of groups over the productive forces. If his model has not been a suggested model for one aspect of communism on a world scale, but nevertheless presents itself as a possible overview, then does LR think that relations between his "groups" should be anarchic? Does he even think that it is possible to "construct the new society within the shell of the old", a view of anarchist bureaucrats which is similar to Leninism (the ~~x~~ former says: "revolutionary" "collectives", organised no doubt ~~x~~ according to the notorious ~~fake~~ federalism, gather everybody around them according to their ideology, and lead to a sort of fourth-worldist self-managed alienation; the latter says: a "revolutionary" Bolshevik party, at first small, takes over the running of the capitalist State, and becomes a "mass party")? Hopefully not. Does he believe that there is no need for people in the future communist society to establish a WORLD human community which will certainly be nothing other than the result of people confronting their ideas and consciously working out a communitarian (read: communist) way of living, but in which people will communicate on a qualitatively and QUANTITATIVELY higher level than humans have ever done before in the history of the planet?

LR also implies -- as does RE -- that some surmountable barriers to this massive jump in communication should remain unchallenged -- this is evident in his suggested safeguards against wickedness and implied lack of attempted solutions to some of the problems posed by geographical distance on a world level.

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Specifically regarding Intercom, the articles by LR and RE sidestep the problem of what is the immediate practical significance, if any, of the ideas of revolutionaries about the present conditions and the future progression of the movement in a period where it is experiencing some difficulties in expressing itself and where, as always, no minority can create a raging civil war just by clicking its fingers. On this point, the Tampa comrades seem to believe that the proletariat can organise itself to a certain degree, but a party is necessary to point out the military problems and "to advocate measures which overturn the mode of capitalist production and exchange". Thus they dare to add "ifs and buts" to what is a very simple assertion: that the proletariat can emancipate itself.

For those of us who are not substitutionists or partyists but who wish for an organised, coherent communist intervention which is neither "above" nor "below" the movement as a whole, this problem is present now -- because we are not objective observers, detached from the rest of the class in a lofty superiority or the nothingness of ideological musing divorced from events and opposed to their radicalisation.

The fraction of the proletariat which has already realised the necessity for communism is part of one side in a real war. It must attempt to analyse present manifestations of the movement in rupture with the old world, must be critical of all the weaknesses of those manifestations, and must aim for a clarifying confrontation of ideas about the movement; all three of these are bound up with a revolutionary intervention which is not afraid to define itself (revolutionary positions, = anti-programme) relative to the rest of the movement.

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NOTES

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This is the "pilot issue" of a sort of review which aims to include articles which make critiques of present struggles, letters, discussions, other people's articles if interesting, ... , in the direction of the advancement of critical understanding of the movement and its tasks, and as part of a critical praxis which does not deny that it has a part to play in that movement, and which does not degenerate into either a smug, aninvolved repetition of truths without taking notice of recent events and their weaknesses and strengths, or desperado-style delusions of immediate pseudo-effectiveness.

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The time taken to actually prepare all of this for publication has in fact seen a development in two of the areas dealt with in this issue: the struggles of the miners and enemy counter-subversive preparation. These developments will be analysed in the second half of the pair of articles on class struggle in Britain, as mentioned below. For the moment, suffice it to say that there is an excellent account of the miners' struggles in the March/April issue of Workers' Playtime, but this too has been slightly upstaged by recent battles.

The article "Resume of the characteristics of class struggle in Britain" is the major part of two texts, the next being in the process of being written and dealing with the last few months.

The article "The progression of the movement" was motivated by a desire to counter the three articles in Intercom 4 mentioned in the article. It will be published in Intercom 5.

The following data from the S.Times of 15-Jan-1984 throws more light onto the assertion of the state of the right wing of European capital:

|                                   | <u>DENN'MK</u> | <u>SWEDEN</u> | <u>NORWAY</u> | <u>BELGIUM</u> | <u>HOLLAND</u>         | <u>LUXEMB'G</u> | <u>U.K.</u> |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|------------------------|-----------------|-------------|
| Population                        | 5.2 m          | 8.4m          | 4.2 m         | 9.9 m          | 14.4m                  | 0.4m            | 56 m        |
| Per capita Income                 | £6005          | £6958         | £6446         | £5745          | £4832                  | £7588           | £4414       |
| Unemployment(%)                   | 10.75%         | 3.5%          | 3.8%          | 14.8%          | <del>11.8%</del> 13.8% | 1.5%            | 11.5%       |
| Govt.spending(%GNP)               | 59.0%          | 63.3%         | 48.1%         | 56.1%          | 61.5%                  | 60.1%           | 43.3%       |
| Tax"burden"<br>(incl. state ins.) | 51.2%          | 59%           | 52.5%         | 44%            | 55.9%                  | 57.3%           | 43.4%       |
| Government                        | Right          | Left          | Right         | Right          | Right                  | Right           | Right       |
| Govt's % of seats                 | 37%            | 47.5%         | 51%           | 53%            | 54%                    | 66%             | 61%         |
| Last "socialist" govt.            | 1982           | 1976          | 1981          | 1979           | 1977                   | 1979            | 1979        |

The following is a list of groups and publications which might be found interesting:

Intercom, Box LWG, c1, Metropolitan Wharf, Wapping Wall, LONDON E.1. This is a bulletin which several revolutionary groups have contributed to, and also in the past some pseudo-revolutionary ones.

The contributors to Intercom have included: Wildcat, London Workers' Group, Tampa Workers' Affinity Group, Insecurite Sociale, L'Eveil Internationaliste, Careless Talk Collective, various anarchists, the Communist Bulletin Group, and in the past the now defunct reformist/pacifist "Subversive" Graffiti Group.

In France, there is

Le Frondeur, which puts out the Chronicles of Present Strategies (in French) and also has a Greek section. It aims to "continue to develop, and in all domains, a critical activity whose value is ~~first~~ affirmed first of all in how it shows up our contemporaries a little more, and in how it maintains against the dominant winds a point of view which does not cloak itself in any ideological, social, or moral lie." (Chroniques 1).

It is possible and indeed likely that some of these comrades' texts will be translated into English for this review.

Address (French section): B.P.105, 94402 Vitry cedex, France.

Also in France: —

The group Volonte Communiste, which, along with the Frondeur (French section) and several other comrades, is involved in the animation of a quarterly Liaison Bulletin (in French).

The address of the bulletin is Bulletin de discussion, c/a Eric Burman, Impasse du marche, 37320 Evreux sur Indre.

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Hopefully articles from this will if possible be translated and will appear here.

The group Volonte Communiste took part, along with other comrades at the time of the P.I.C., in the writing of an interesting book "Au-dela du parti" (Beyond the party) which is a historical analysis of the concept of the party and of the principal stages in its evolution which shows the anti-proletarian character of this concept which has been more accentuated every time, and exposes the most pertinent critiques of it which have already been realised: those of the German left. As on the back of the book, "the text clearly takes the position for the autonomous organisation of the proletariat (Workers' Councils) and for an organised contribution of revolutionary minorities in this process of radical struggle against capital."

The address of the g.V.C. is:  
Revolution Sociale, B.P.30316, 75767 Paris cedex 16, France.

In England, there is the Wildcat group, based in Manchester, which in the past has put out a localised bulletin but which has recently put out a much-improved pamphlet "Front line news from the class war". Also, pamphlets on the Labour Party and the "SWP".

Address: Wildcat, c/o the Autonomy Centre, 8-10, Great Ancoats Street, Manchester 4, England,

And the London Workers' Group, same address as the current one of Intercom, who put out an occasional bulletin and also Workers' Playtime which has a lot of information on present struggles. The last London Workers' Bulletin was very heterogeneous, containing a reprint of Otto Kuhle's "The revolution is not a party affair" (A landmark text of May 1920), a letter dealing in part with the history of the WG (the letter calls intervention an 'elitist concept'!), an article which was pro-Claimants' Unions, and a letter from Birmingham, supposedly "critical" of the WG, which tries to oppose the false idea "We have it all sussed" with an equally elitist "too much analysis won't be understood anyway",.....

#### Echanges et mouvement.

"Echanges" is put out periodically with brief information on groups and publications in several countries and with articles on struggles in various places. The most recent issue contained an interesting article on Poland, which describes the changes that Solidarnosc has undergone now that it has

become a traditional union. It is held that it has become more under the leadership of KOR (more "syndicalist") — an interesting assertion but I would like to see more evidence that KOR is anything but a peaceful reformist organisation (without even the syndicalist desire to have the whole of a national commodity economy run by unions), and that it has seized control of Solidarnosc. It sounds likely that KOR bureaucrats now have more say-so inside Solidarnosc, but I do not necessarily believe that Solidarnosc is totally "underground" — large sections of the Stalinist Party at all levels rallied to Solidarnosc, and Walesa still appears on Polish television! There may well be a real though unadmitted tension between Walesa and KOR, but Walesa's fraction probably still has a lot of say, even if this is the image and the reality which the capitalist class would have to ensure if it ever wanted to fully reinstate Solidarnosc.

Echanges have begun to put out a reedition in 4 parts of Anton Pannekoeck's book Workers' Councils, which makes deep insights into the domination of capital, its pseudo-oppositional weapons, its contradictions, and the movement which tends towards its destruction. Because of its theoretical rigour and precision, it disproves the mistaken view of all those who think that revolutionary theory died in 1923 only to be reborn in 1967-8 !!

Address: B.M.Box 91, LONDON, WC1V 6XX.

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Those who want to get in touch with  
A communist effort can do so at the  
address:

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\*\* Box ACE, C1 Metropolitan  
\*\* Wharf, Wapping Wall,  
\*\* LONDON, E.1.  
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\*\*\*\*\*

Temp. contact address:  
Box ACE,  
35, ALBANY ST.,  
LONDON N.W.1.

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COMING .....  
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In the next issue there will be a hotchpotch of information and conj-  
-ectures concerning the security services and in particular there prime role of counter-insurgence.

Most revolutionaries know of Kitson's book, but the information concerning the details and intricacies of enemy prepar-  
-ation is not immediately accessible, and necessitates picking one's way through government and army papers, and also through "dissident" books, if that term is taken to mean those who, like Duncan Campbell, want to "democratise" this society rather than destroying it and get-  
-ting to a communist one.

If any comrade \* wants to get in contact regarding this project, please would he/she do so by writing to the above address.

One would hope that a publication could come out of this project, which would go beyond ~~xxx~~ merely countering all the rec-  
-ently publicised lies about what "GCHQ" is really is, does, and is part of.

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