

A COMMUNIST EFFORT 2

The fight of the strike against its own representations may not be mentioned in any bourgeois paper from THE TIMES to "DIRECT ACTION" to "'SOCIALIST' WORKER", but nevertheless it's real.

We have to be represented as merely capable of defending ourselves against State violence instead of attacking, as merely able to request our rulers to rule us "better" or "more efficiently", as innocent miners officially incapable of thinking and acting for ourselves except when spontaneously cheering Scargill - that bogeyman of the press of the right of capitalism, and the darling of its left, who put all his efforts into preventing a strike, said the overtime ban was "of devastating effect", joined with the Stalinist McGahey to prevent the first wildcat strikes from escalating, and now has the guts to say "Next time I tell you something will happen, remember to follow the leadership's call".

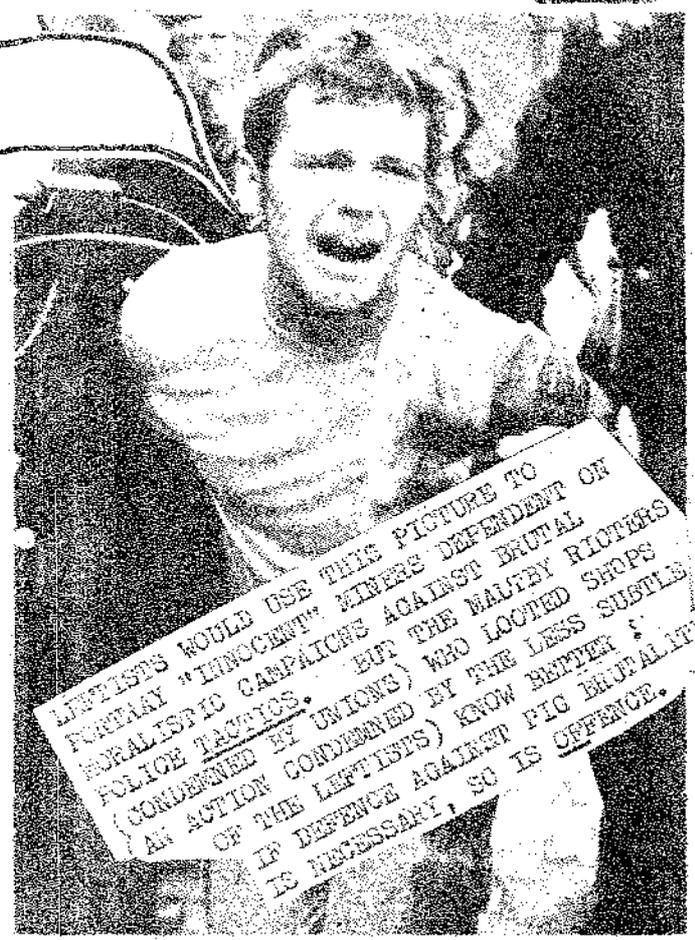
But all the pronouncements and crap of bureaucrats can't stop us if we take the struggle into our own hands and escalate and generalise it to a world scale, both theoretically and practically, in a class war which will bring down the bosses East and West, and all their lackeys whether on the far right, right, centre, left, or far left of capitalism, to open the way for a world human community, conscious history, communism, which presently exists nowhere.

Peaceful steward-controlled marches ?
 Set-piece picketting where violence is only permitted if we're attacked ?
 Token actions ? **BOLLOCKS !**

Who cares if the NUM negotiate, call a ballot, don't call a ballot,...? Were the Maitby rioters calling for a "better management" of the capitalist economy ? Proletarians are capable of being their own reference point, of no longer defining their self-consciousness and action according to their own representations, according to those who - whether officially negotiating or not - exist to **MEDIATE**, to be a safety-valve.

For revolutionary workers' groups!
 For anti-union strike committees !
 For proletarian mass assemblies, workers' councils, coordinating with each other and concentrating all power in themselves !

Long live revolutionary civil war !
ALL POWER TO THE WORKERS' COUNCILS !

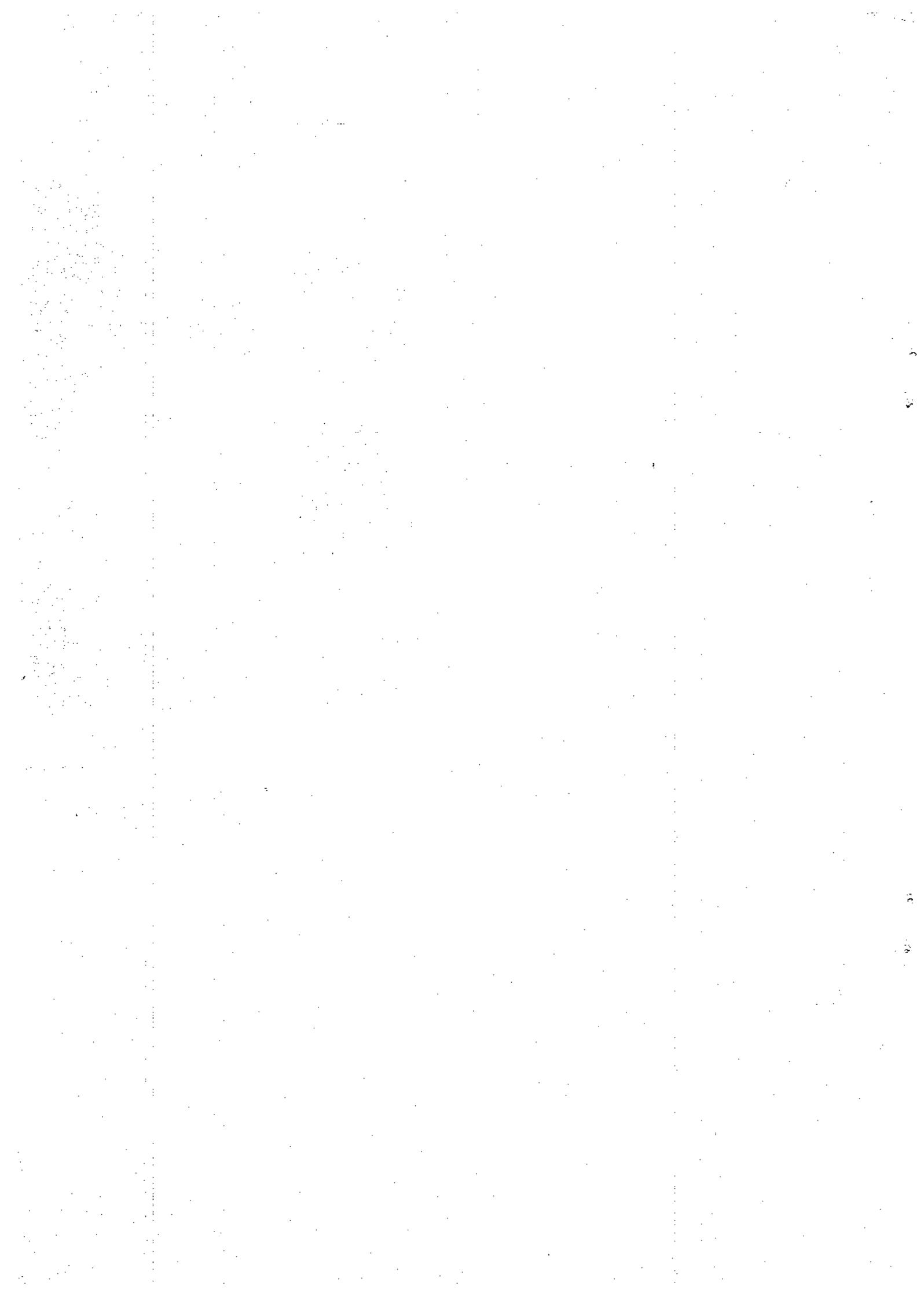


Scargill :

Workers' self-escalated strike action ? That would be my end for a start. I must tell the proles that what's wrong with McGregor, Bill Sirs, and the Tory Government is NOT that they are a boss, a bureaucrat, and a Government, but that they are an American boss, an **OPENLY** scab bureaucrat, and a right-wing Government, instead of an Anglo-Saxon boss, a Government by the left or far left of capitalism, and a bureaucrat who's willing to verbally play along with a strike so long as it's kept under control.

The proles must know that the real solution is a great British boss running the NCB - British posts for British bosses ! (Like the NF I'm for nationalistic capital rather than the capital of multinationals,...)

For a "good, fair, efficient management of the national commodity economy !



DOWN WITH IDEOLOGUES even when they claim to have a critique of the left of capital !

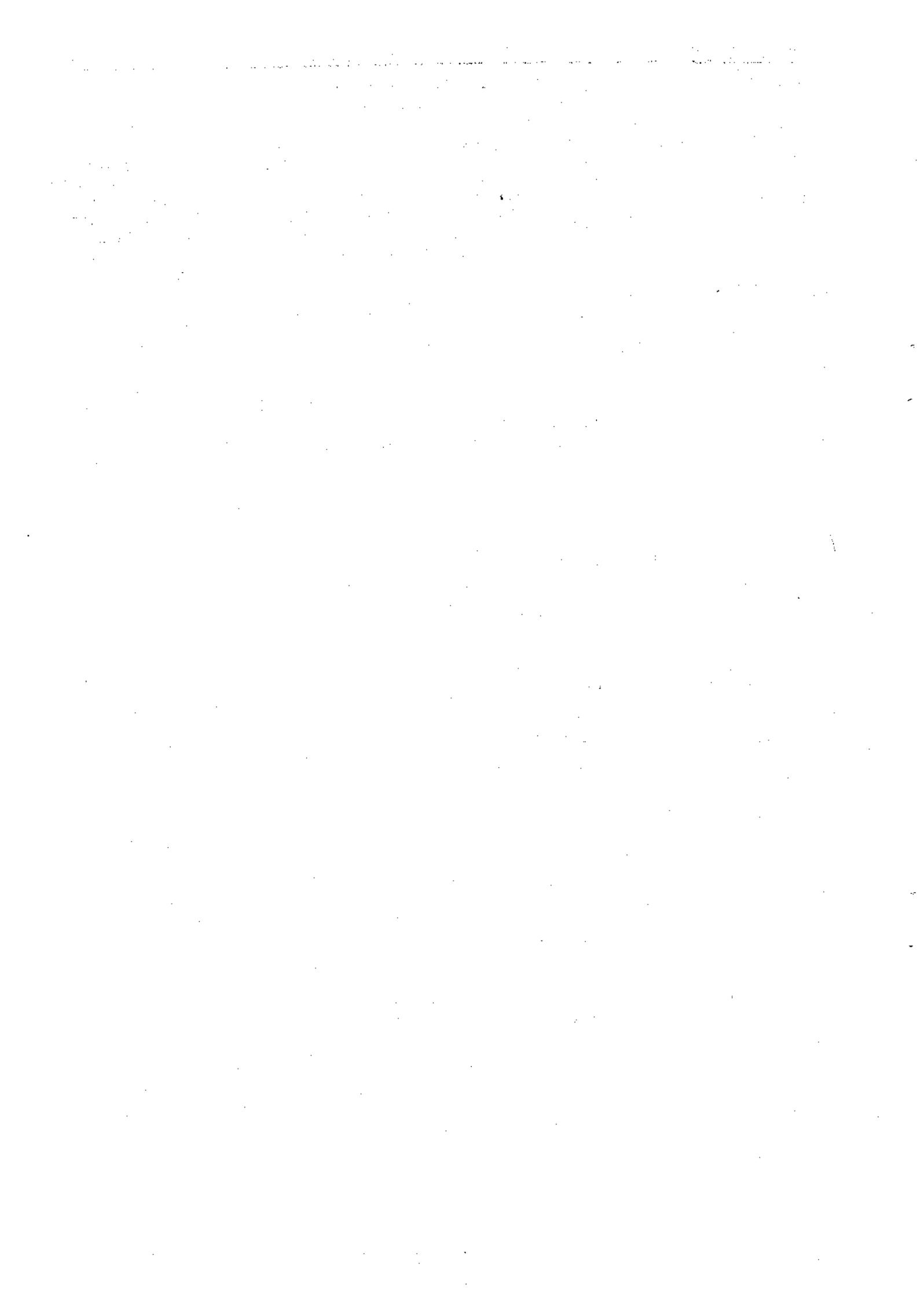
Anybody who has - from a revolutionary point of view - read the papers and leaflets of the left and far left of capital about the miners' strike is faced with the need to try to understand the counterrevolutionary role played by these fractions IN TIMES OF STRUGGLE. To do this, of course, has nothing to do with the niche of playing the same role with regard to the leftists as the leftists do with regard to the liberal-left! For communists, the important and positive aspects of struggles are of course those where there is a combative and autonomous proletarian practice. The radicalisation of this practice has as its corollary, though not as an ultra-deterministically linked property, the realisation of the capitalist nature of the unions. The desire to act in fashions not permitted by the unions is in fact freely admitted by many miners in the present strike - and often put into practice - even if many don't yet see it in explicitly anti-union terms, and even if the unions are subtle enough to be able to recuperate passive illegality openly and to try to silently "excuse" certain acts of active illegality which have been carried out outside of the unions. However, it is not suggested that there could be a revolutionary rejection of the left wing of capitalism and of the unions without a rejection of capitalist society as a whole, i.e. without a revolutionary moment. Present struggles are showing the clear contradiction between the necessary development of proletarian combativity and self-activity on the one hand, and the FLUID IDEOLOGY of trade-unionism on the other. It is clear that recuperation and ideology are in no way static, but ALIVE and fighting, namely fighting against the possible progression of the old mole towards social revolution. This contradiction often manifests itself as a split between clearly anti-union activities (sabotage, workers' riots,...) and their own trade-unionist self-conceptions.

This is where the far left of capitalism enter the stage with their ideologies : this is where their counterrevolutionary role comes into its own. The SWP are a prime example : their paper "'Socialist' Worker" (known to revolutionaries as "The social worker") is filled with pictures of miners peacefully marching, "defiantly" holding that star commodity the ready-made SWP banner, patting Scargill on the back, getting beaten up by the cops,... This state-capitalist rag is also full with attacks on the right wing of union bureaucracy and on particular tactics of particular bureaucrats, and with calls for a "democratic" trade-union,... The SWP's paper is clear that the miners have already virtually "won" (the coal ~~stock~~ stocks being about to run out (!), the Tories being "rattled" (!!), the paper sales being up,...) These social workers are triumphant about the strategy of the strike (its imminent "victory"), but are the exact opposite when it comes to tactics, where workers are supposed to be merely capable - without an enlarged SWP, one would suppose - of defending themselves against the excesses of the "police state". A facile ideology, the stock-in-trade of democrats, but at the present ~~time~~ time a potent one which is often (but not always) believed - for example whenever cops are thought of as only worth attacking when they use particular methods (brutality, arbitrary arrest of pickets,...) . A latter-day bourgeois anti-fascism to boot ! And all of this is combined with a stupid triumphalist tone designed to sell the paper and swell the ranks of the party (if the SWP congratulates the miners, it's only in the hope of their flocking to the SWP in droves) :

"Coal stocks won't last through to Christmas. ... The only way coal could be moved quickly enough would be to use troops. [wait for it ...]
But this would force even the most faint-hearted of TUC leaders to step up support for the miners".
(21/7/'84)

In fact, of course, this support for the miners is considered as a commodity, a symbol, reminiscent of the fad amongst chic politicians in past years to be seen wearing badges of various sorts (Anti-Nazi League, People's March for Jobs, Right to Work, Coal Not Dole, Keep GLC working for London,...) An SWP hack was even heard to say about a religious maniac with a sandwich-board saying "The End Is Nigh" who had come on the second NUM Day of Compensation in London, that "He's OK if he supports the miners - we'll take divine assistance if we can get it". Any symbol, any compensation, is tested for its usefulness in attempting to hide the real offensive unity which could come from a broadening of strikes etc. to a point where they are no longer just strikes, where large sections of the proletariat discover a certain community in taking the struggle against further humiliations and degradations towards a struggle against this society of wage-labour and commodity economy as a whole,...

But, these leftists aside, such stupidities have been rife in publications which claim to have a "critique" of the left of capitalism, and it is precisely the similarities between these groups which ideologically represent opposition to the left of capital, with the mainstream left, which is shown here. In fact, the ideological



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PLATF O R M .

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WORLD CAPITALISM

Capitalism is not a mode of management but a world society whose fundamental social relations are wage-labour and the commodity economy.

EASTERN CAPITALISM

Russia, China and all the so-called "socialist" or "communist" nation-States, parties, or fractions of nation-States, are capitalist : the task which confronts proletarians in State capitalist areas is the same as anywhere else - not to democratise the party, but to overthrow the capitalist class and its Party-State and other weapons.

TRADE UNIONS

Trade unions, as institutions aiming to determine the price of labour-power and to play a role at various levels in the management of capitalist exploitation, are only another obstacle in the way of proletarian revolution. The spectacle of self-managing them, or democratising them, or of building new unions (anarchosyndicalist "rank-and-file", or "independent" like Solidarnosc) is counterrevolutionary : the unification and escalation of the proletariat's class struggle means their destruction.

NATIONS

Nations have historically been merely conflicting or concurring areas of exploitation. The proletariat has no country : its interests do not lie in any sort of a "front" with any bourgeois force of any country, whether a straight national or regional unity with a fraction of the ruling class, or the same thing under the title "Workers' Front", "Popular Front", "Anti-fascist front",...

NATIONAL LIBERATION STRUGGLES

National liberation struggles are the struggles of local developing bourgeoisies to establish themselves on the world market, which means to fit in with the inter-imperialist equilibrium. The point for proletarians in the countries which the bourgeoisie calls the "third world" is the same as anywhere else : to destroy the bourgeoisie whether or not it, or a fraction of it, calls itself - or really is - anti-imperialist.

PARLIAMENT

Parliament and elections, referenda, etc., are a means by which capital feeds democratic ideology, with the State representing an illusory community : the representation of proletarians and their exploiters as being "free and equal" citizens of the nation-State, in order to mask class domination. Neither voting nor merely abstaining challenges the power of the ruling class. Communist revolution can only win by destroying parliament and parliamentarism in all its forms.

PARTIES

Parties, whether parliamentary or anti-parliamentary, whether "right", "left", "centre", "far right" or "far left", are bourgeois institutions aiming to manage national capitals, whether or not their aim is to overthrow one capitalist order in order to be the bosses of another one. The left, like the right and the centre, of capital is merely the political expression of strata with interests in certain methods of managing capitalist exploitation : the far left of capital, whether or not they "critically support" the left, are merely upholders of a more "radical" method of doing the same. Those parties who aim to "represent" or to "lead" the working class (or to "orient" it), namely to be vanguards who substitute themselves for it, are - like the others - direct enemies of proletarian self-emancipation, which can only be the act of the proletariat & itself or will not be at all.

IDEOLOGY

Ideology is thought submissive to and imposed by exploiters or would-be exploiters; if it is accepted by proletarians it only corresponds to a belief that they cannot challenge the totality of their present conditions of poverty, or that this can only be effected by relying on forces outside of themselves, to leaders, parties, churches, unions, or indeed to the representation of critical theory by those who would make it into a religion, a lie, and hence ~~outside~~ opposed to proletarian revolutionary practice and to any real - necessarily practical - critical analysis of past or present proletarian subversion.

CONSCIOUSNESS

Communist revolution demands the self-unification of proletarian class struggle, across all the divisions hewn by capital in the proletariat as a whole (chauvinisms,...) and in the heads of proletarians (corresponding both to the acceptance of ideology and to the fundamental expropriation.)

/ cont.,,....

It will only come about through a combination of theory and practice where theory does not fall from the heads of leaders but comes from proletarians' experience of daily life under capitalist power (wage-labour, unemployment, unwaged labour,...) and when the determinant motive force (discontent) escalates from struggle against further deteriorations in survival conditions given the deepening crisis towards war against the conditions of this society as a whole, by means of a theoretico-practical development including the discussion, appropriation and discovery of lessons from the development of capitalist society in all spheres and from past and present struggles.

INTERVENTION AND ORGANISATION OF REVOLUTIONARIES

Consciousness exists neither spontaneously nor homogeneously nor yet fully, for anyone. Those proletarians who already recognise themselves as revolutionaries are not leaders, not sources of "ultimate truths" - they are a ~~secretion~~ secretion of the whole movement and should organise themselves efficaciously in order to intervene in struggles, and therefore should aim to achieve an audience amongst their class, ~~one~~ who they do not claim at any time now or in the future to lead or to represent, their aim being their dissolution as separate revolutionary minorities into the revolutionary richness of a mass movement. Organisation of revolutionary minorities is primarily a tool for intervention, but a static critique which does not learn from its own practice is merely a caricature of a living and critical revolutionary critique. The fundamentals of revolutionary organisations are :

- ***** they must constantly struggle against reproducing alienated forms in their own functioning - hence they must practically reject federalism, centralism, deafness, clique mentality, zombified wooden language, any kind of localism,...
- ***** they should aim to intervene on communist political positions in struggles ; the content of their interventions should clearly attack bourgeois mystifications and ideologies, specifically including the alienated representation of class struggle and revolution by recuperators, insofar as present struggles define their own consciousness in alienated fashion. The terrain of abstractly applauding every struggle (in the arrogant vein "You can't be expected to go beyond looting yet !") or stupid ~~xxx~~ schoolmarmish chiding for not following an ideological line (in the vein "Don't loot ! It reproduces commodity fetishism !") is counterrevolutionary. All those who would be professional educators (herding the proletariat) or "possessors of the class's future consciousness which only has to be injected" must be rejected. Revolutionaries do have certain ideas about the present period of capitalism (in fact to work out a clear critique of the period is an important task) in the sense which includes trying to understand and criticise present and past proletarian struggles, and they aim at all moments to radicalise their critique ; but they are not cheerleaders ; they must try to criticise the weaknesses of struggles and to criticise their contradictions.

WORKERS' COUNCILS, PROLETARIAN GENERAL ASSEMBLIES

Experiences of class struggles this century ~~themselves~~ have posited the form of the Workers' Council, taken to mean general ~~xxx~~ assemblies of proletarians (unemployed or employed) coordinating by means of mandated revocable delegations, to be the most adequate form of proletarian power and communication. This form does not guarantee victory, but it remains the form where proletarians are confronted continuously with the practical needs of their struggle. The revolutionary realisation of these needs depends on the passionate content of their discussion, decision, execution and organisation.

REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS' GROUPS

Whilst the movement towards the suppression of existing conditions progresses by means of an escalation of discontent towards generalisation and radicalisation (certainly not without setbacks), minority revolutionary workers' groups (not necessarily based in an enterprise) can play a part in the maturation of class consciousness. They do not "prefigure" Workers' Councils, nor anti-union strike committees, nor communism. They are in now way "that which builds the ~~new~~ new society within the shell of the old" which has always been a bourgeois mystification. Their perspectives should be of intervening on political positions and of aiming practically to coordinate with each other. These veritable groups of communist workers must explicitly reject the view that they are the "nuclei" of future Workers' Councils which would supposedly come from their own organisational expansion. They are fundamentally minority interventional organisations ; no revolutionary mass self-organisation of the proletariat is envisageable outside of a revolutionary moment - it cannot be "prefigured".

Dictatorship of the Proletariat

The dictatorship of the proletariat is the destruction of all powers external to the absolute power of the proletariat over the productive forces and over everything else. This is a class dictatorship, the means by which the proletariat abolishes the social prerequisites of classes including itself. This necessitates political measures such as the destruction of the State and its organs, the armed suppression of all counterrevolutionary alliances/forces, and the extension of the revolution.

Revolutionary War

☒ Communism can only exist on a world scale : proletarian revolution may start in a particular geographical area, but it can either extend to other areas or face destruction, internally or externally. The only perspective for proletarians who may exercise power over an area is one of continuing the revolutionary class war which they will have already started. This necessitates an armed struggle against the military and social power of capital. As such, there is a transitional phase where arms and social violence will still exist, exercised between two class powers. At the moment of the proletariat's final victory, social violence will cease to exist : the absolute power of the Councils is not the end of the revolution but the beginning.

Communism

Communism is a society without money, wage-labour, State, commodity economy, exchange value, separation between productive enterprises and between productive enterprises and other forms of activity (games,...), private or State property. It is a society of "From each according to his/her ability, to each according to her/his needs", understood in material and non-material senses. It is a society of world human community, where the world is a sensuous extension of human desires and the interplay of desires (which will clearly ~~become~~ be more conscious of themselves because there will be no unnatural barriers to their realisation : it is not suggested for a moment that they all exist as well-formed desires under capitalism), where the "senses have become theoreticians in their practice" and where "nature has lost its mere utility in that its use has become human use", WHERE THE PLEASURE OF ONE IS INSEPARABLE FROM THE PLEASURE OF ALL. Communism is a society of the continuous and conscious transformation ~~of~~ of life, where individuals recognise themselves in a world they have created- a society which has abolished human prehistory and alienation and has replaced them with conscious history, the world-historical existence of individuals.

This Period of Capitalism

The period is one of an accelerating crisis of the capitalist mode of production. Since the beginning of this century, of the unification of what was already a world market, capital has been locked in a cycle of periods corresponding to war-reconstruction-crisis. The present period is one of limited wars outside of the imperialist metropolises (in Africa, Middle East, Central America,...) in relation to the contraction of internal and external markets which is experienced by all national capitals, East West and South.

The crisis has a tendency towards provoking further discontent which raises the possibility of the radicalisation and ~~general~~ generalisation of this discontent (THE END OF PROLETARIAN MISERY THROUGH SELF-ORGANISED REVOLUTION) but inversely raises the possibility of the further atomisation of proletarians which would permit the channelling of this discontent into cohesive nationalist ideologies (democracy, fascism, 'anti-fascism',...?) which in turn would be the political prerequisite for capitalism to enter humanity into a period of the third world imperialism, 'anti-fascism',...?) which in turn would social revolution, exists now, and those who are revolutionary now can an must contribute now, although there is an undeniable element of waiting - to deny this would be tantamount to substitutionism or to a view that revolutionaries can satisfy themselves within this society (!) Let revolutionary passion find a practice which is enlightened by theory and which enlightens theory !

and on

the contradictions of the real movement.

Including a critique of anarchist and so-called "Marxist" ideologies.

The real movement tending to abolish present conditions exists now ; - the deepening of the crisis makes it definite that discontent will increase, BUT (before this is called determinism) the question posed on the scale of society is : will it allow itself to be channelled into submission ? Or will the practical affirmation of proletarian social needs break through all representations and mediations ?

No restructuration but world war can provide a capitalist solution to the world capitalist crisis, because no restructuration can push back the generalised contraction of markets. In such a climate the introduction of new technology equates to the suppression of wages, thus of demand for the products of Department II, thus of demand for the products of Department I : not to introduce it makes each national capital fall further behind the rest,... It is clear that the crisis will deepen : however, the possibility of world butchery, even if it would of course escalate from a limited and probably "conventional" war, could not take place without capitalism having achieved two fundamental conditions : viable blocs, and proletarian demoralisation.

The question of whether capitalism can achieve these objectives, and conversely, whether the proletariat will escalate and generalise its combat and will destroy human prehistory in its totality, is present now : at the very least, each national capital's competitiveness in the short term is posing the need for it to achieve a cohesive ideological consolidation, where proletarians would rally en masse around "their" national capital, in mass self-sacrifice for some populist ideological ~~consolidation~~ compensation. In general, the level of class struggle is at a prolonged crossroads : the counterrevolution in the form of pseudo-socialist ideology weighs heavily on struggles and their self-consciousness, together with the corollaries : regionalism, divisions between workers of different industries, areas, and the unemployed,... whilst on the other hand discontent exists, often practically posing the escape from the unions' shackle while still influenced by unionist ideology.

Exploiters have always had to ensure an ideological consolidation before entering into war ; they now feel this need on the immediate level of survival on the world market, which is another way of saying the same thing. In fact, the spectacle of the threat of war (as manipulated by publicised summits of rulers, by anti-nuclear hacks, etc.) is part of this attempt towards a demobilisation of proletarian ~~combat~~ combativity which would be a prerequisite for war anyway.

It is when we see ideology - the terrain of submission whatever the gloss - as a living and dynamic entity, which certainly doesn't exist outside of history, that the present possibilities of the real movement and its contradictions can appear clarified. It is when we see, and attempt to make a critique of, the practical fight of ideological representations against a possible subversive radicalisation, that a critique of the present ~~period~~ period and its possible futures show themselves as a necessity in order to work out a revolutionary strategy in the present. Moreover, in order to avoid merely blase interventions, stemming from perhaps fortuitous conversations with people we bump into now and again, an unabused consideration on revolutionary organisation of intervention and on the relativisation of this intervention, is a necessity.

On a world level, capital is experiencing great difficulties in even the preliminary stages of what it must achieve in the social war : class struggles may not be exploding into the beauty of insurrection against all the defenders of the old world, but nowhere on the planet can the rulers insure themselves against this possibility as the crisis bites deeper. The French steel strikes this year, despite positive moments such as riots against buildings woned by the "Socialist" Party, did not ~~attack~~ attack their own Stalinist and regionalist representations on a large scale, even if some of the riots in Lorraine were explicitly and

physically against the CUP bureaucrats. The workers' riots in South Yorkshire too undoubtedly contained an element of contempt for the images on telly of Scargill pacifically involved in negotiating as the cops crack heads on the streets, but there has as yet been no mass break-out of the prison of routine ~~union-controlled~~ union-permitted actions in the direction of an immediate quantitative and qualitative spreading. Union leaders are quick to condemn attacks on police-stations ("perpetrated by elements hostile to the legitimate struggle, by drunken rowdy riotous uncontrolled elements" as they would say), showing a lesser degree of subtlety than in their tacit condoning of defensive violence against the "excesses" of the "police State". But did the miners of Maltby follow up their attacks on the police-station with attacks on the offices of those who had ~~condemned~~ condemned them? If they had this information would be hard to find (although perhaps the Tory press would present it as evidence of a will to return to work), but it remains very unlikely.

As communists, we oppose all theories which claim that revolution results from a gradual enlargement of minority existing organisations outside of a revolutionary period into mass organisations, or from a pre-existing mass organisation gradually or suddenly changing in content. Such conceptions separate consciousness from practice in that they implicitly hold (a) that a revolutionary consciousness can exist in pure form outside of a revolutionary moment, which is to say without a mass subversive practice; and/or (b) that the practice of organisations which supposedly "prefigure" revolution is revolutionary in the present, but without the consciousness.

The former conception is held, for example, by Leninists: taking their cue from Kautsky and the Second International and Lenin and the Third, they want to give power to "professional revolutionaries", "professional educators", often proprietors of a so-called "orthodox Marxism" or "scientific Marxism", which any practical desire to use Marx's theory can see through immediately:

"The idea of one basis for life and another for science is from the very ~~outside~~ outset a lie"

"The whole of history is a ~~pre~~ preparation, a development, for 'man' to become the object of sensuous consciousness and for the needs of 'man as man' to become sensuous needs"

(Marx, 1844 Manuscripts, "Private property and communism")

Even neo-Leninists like the I"CC who can claim to recognise "the fact that the class consciousness is essentially the fruit of experience, of the practical struggle of the class" and that "Revolutionary consciousness is the work of the workers themselves" give themselves away when they say "Politically orientating [ICC-speak for leading] the proletarian movement means acting so that the ~~entire~~ class can become conscious of the revolutionary direction that historically it ~~has~~ is committed to take". The ICC can take off their masks - they have been revealed. They say that they recognise the consciousness of the masses to be their own act, but ~~believe~~ believe that it can only be activated through a vanguard. They can therefore sing the praises of the Russian equivalent of Noske (Trotsky) when he himself praised Lenin with the words: "When Lenin brought all the problems of the revolution down to a single 'Explain patiently', this meant: to bring the consciousness of the masses into accord with the situation, to which they had been driven by the historical process." Recognise the pseudo-historical justification for vanguardism? The fact that it had already been taken up by those who butchered and recuperated the self-activity of the proletariat in 1917-21 is just another sign of the real nature of the I"CC. The attitude of these veritable left-Leninists amounting to: "Either vanguardism or the void of waiting and self-denial" (see their straw-man of "councilism"!) is calumnious and reminiscent of the Stalinist Berlinguer's famous remark "Either with the State or with the 'Red' Brigades", which corresponded practically to "Either with the State or with the State". The left-Leninists have to climb up their own arseholes by hoping to construct vanguards which don't openly admit they are leaderships but claim that the heterogeneity of consciousness, the concrete historical production of revolutionary minorities, and the need for a ~~new~~ communist intervention necessitate a partyist mediation. In ~~reality~~ reality these three indisputably present facts (need for intervention, historical production of ~~revolutionary~~ revolutionary minorities, heterogeneity of consciousness) do not posit the "need" for mediation, but for a conscious effort by those who recognise themselves as revolutionaries, as communists, to work out a strategy of intervention and of theoretical analysis: a contribution to the development of class struggle and a fortiori to the homogenisation of consciousness which however does NOT derive from

any kind of external mediation but is produced solely by proletarians' experience of daily life under capitalism and their experiences (on a theoretico-practical level) of struggles against deteriorations in proletarian conditions given the crisis. (See PLATFORM of A communist effort,)

The latter conception is held by anarchosyndicalists and amounts to the classically reactionary idea of "Building the new society in the shell of the old", which means a combination of self-management-type con-tricks with open or clandestine bureaucrats and with varying degrees of negotiation, with the whole lie mediated through the existence of a union playing the anarchist equivalent of ~~right~~ the Leninist mass party, with perhaps an elite anarchist corps playing the role of the Leninist Central Committee -- just as the anarchist bureaucrats in charge of the CNT and the FAI in 1936-7 aimed to increase their role bit by bit in ~~managing~~ managing capitalist exploitation, in or out of the government, and often as adjuncts to the old owners anyway. In Spain, the disparate and non-unified manifestations of the revolutionary movement during the civil war had as their highest points workers' outbursts where no-one, from the Stalinists of the "C" P to the anarchists, could prevent workers from dragging bosses out of their houses and shooting them, which applied to the priests and to the pro-Stalinist petit-bourgeoisie as much as to the grande bourgeoisie (Republican or Fascist). Montseny, anarchist government minister in the Popular Front, has admitted that in the My days of Barcelona there were calls from proletarians involved in the insurrection to do the same thing to the anarchist leaders, which would undoubtedly have included herself.

Some anarchosyndicalist collectives have existed in Spain continuously since the 1920's - right through the Francoist epoch - and DAM is crass enough to rejoice in this in Direct Action No.15,P.3, when really this is a perfect sign of ~~anarchosyndicalism's~~ anarchosyndicalism's complete lack of a challenge even to the present organisers of capital : this had already been proved in workers' blood in May 1937 in Barcelona.

From the old elitist "Populism" (an anti-theoretical pose by would-be "specialists in practice"), to 'gradualist' illusions of the existence of "islands of libertarian communism" consisting of self-managed farms, ~~from~~ from the heroic spectacle of commanders like Durruti (friend of Oliver and partisan of differential rations in his own hierarchy); from the participation of scum like Montseny in the management of the State and tacitly in the butchery of proletarians, from the recuperation by anarchism of some of the most revolutionary desires of the Spanish proletariat (the abolition of money was represented by a contrivance by the union that workers should be paid their wages by the bosses in goods instead of in paper money; the abolition of marriage was ~~represented~~ represented by union bureaucrats as pieces of paper signifying a "revokable contract" which the local union chief promised to tear up if either partner requested him to do so, but it made it clear to the husband that he'd get a kick in the balls if he dared ~~to~~ to waste the time of his hierachical superior with such a request), from State-subsidised rural or industrial self-managed collectives amounting to State capitalism, to the latter-day witch-hunts and bluffs of the ~~CNT~~ new CNT, the deadweight of anarchist and/or syndicalist ideology has shown in practice its irreformably counterrevolutionary role, just as have the illusions of a so-called "scientific 'Marxism' in the possession of professionals", which has ~~it~~ always been opposed to any of the ramifications of Marx's analyses and method, closely linked of course to the real movement. The practice and theory of revolutionary Marxists like Luxemburg, Pannekoek,... (who were not idol worshippers of either the orthodox - i.e. bourgeois - representations of Marx's theory by ~~capitalist~~ capitalist forces like Social Democracy or Bolshevism, or even idol worshippers of Marx's theory itself) showed that they understood that the SOURCE and THE ONLY TERRAIN OF COMMUNIST USE of Marxism is in REVOLUTIONARY PROLETARIAN PRAXIS. Luxemburg in 1904 (by which time she had already said, "The discipline that Lenin has in mind is inculcated in the proletariat ... by all the mechanisms of the centralised bourgeois State", and was defending the self-discipline of the proletariat through "destroying, to the last root, all the old habits of obedience and servility") showed that she knew where theory came from, and what it is : -

"The agile acrobat doesn't even perceive the fact that the sole 'subject' to which the role of leader falls today is the collective 'I' of the whole working class, which claims resolutely the right to make its own mistakes and to learn for itself the dialectic of history. And finally, let us say it without fuss : THE MISTAKES COMMITTED BY A REALLY REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS' MOVEMENT ARE ~~THE~~ HISTORICALLY INFINITELY MORE USEFUL THAN ~~THE~~ THE INFALLIBILITY OF THE VERY BEST 'CENTRAL COMMITTEE' ".

To oppose the two competing bourgeois views of revolution attacked above, it's all too easy to forget to criticise the trap of ~~me~~ limiting ~~x~~ one's activity to an exchange of information with one's comrades (!), or of denigrating intervention as an elitist "concept", of being an ~~xxx~~ introverted clique-ist instead of an extroverted one, never able to test ideas in the fire of practice or to criticise anything which the proletariat does autonomously (e.g. spontaneous cheering of Scargill), because ~~x~~ that might make one ~~it~~ into a bureaucrat, a professional, an elitist,...

This third conception is not exactly bourgeois, but certainly contains an invariably patronising content, more or less secretly saying: "I possess the truth but I'll keep it to myself otherwise the proles might turn me into a bureaucrat" ...!!!...

On the contrary, revolutionaries do not "possess the truth"; they are a ~~secretion~~ secretion of the whole movement and they do not hide their desire for an escalation of it (which they cannot "programmatisise") which will organically take care of the dissolution of separate revolutionary minorities into its insurgent richness.

Those presently aware of being anti-ideological revolutionaries can have reached this stage of development through various means: most often through an attraction to pseudo-revolutionary ideas/practices/groups and then consequent realisation of their practical counter-revolutionary nature. Few of us knew our ~~closest~~ closest present comrades before any of were explicitly revolutionary: thus, for most of us, the origins of our collective activities did not lie in the mutual experience of particular struggles.

At present, therefore, a distinction is drawn between such groups of revolutionaries (hereafter called revolutionary groups, which is lazy shorthand and is not supposed to mean that autonomous workers' groups are not revolutionary: the opposite is the case) and groups ~~m~~ of revolutionaries whose original formation related, at the very beginning, to experiences in a particular struggle (hereafter called autonomous workers' groups). Such autonomous workers' groups are also a secretion of the whole movement, and even the term "workers" in this instance is lazy because it is possible that they will also be formed outside of enterprises. (See PLATFORM of A communist effort).

In view of the fact that no autonomous workers' groups exist in Britain with explicitly communist positions, few of us (at this conference [this text originally contributed to a conference held by the group Wildcat in Manchester]) will have had direct knowledge of them. It is clear that they must oppose any "syndicalist" conceptions, or any theories which hold that they are the "nuclei" of the future Workers' Councils who need only opportunistically expand to ensure (prefigure) the future formation of Workers' Councils - such is a bourgeois conception and has been opposed above.

The text "Autonomia Obrera", translated from an ~~xxxxxxx~~ article by a French comrade, shortly to appear in A communist effort 2, outlines some of the characteristics and contradictions of autonomous workers' groups in Spain. Briefly, with the appearance of proletarian general assemblies after the death of Franco and with the involution of the fascist unions, a very ~~xxxx~~ heterogeneous movement was born with many ~~contradictions~~ contradictions. The form and often the practices of these assemblies went clearly beyond and against the Stalinists' opportunistic ventures now that the fascist unions (in which they held positions) were becoming outdated. In 1976, the assembly of Barcelona dockworkers gave their revokable delegates' committee the task of elaborating an organisational proposal which, based on their estimation of the strike's functioning so far, could perhaps strengthen the struggle ~~xx~~ in future. Whilst defining themselves on a clearly communist councilist ~~position~~ ~~xxxx~~ basis ("All power to the proletarian assemblies"), the delegates produced a report clearly outlining what ~~xxxx~~ everybody knew: the unions, including the CNT, were an obstacle in the way of ~~xx~~ proletarian class struggle, along with all the capitalist parties, including those on the left like the PSOE, P"CE,...

In 1979 the dockers' assemblies across the country formed a coordinating ~~xxxxxx~~ organisation "in terms of the reality of the base which inspires it", and later, after the formation of autonomous workers' groups in ~~xxx~~ several industries, and after the continuation of fraternal links formed during the struggle of the dockworkers against redundancies, a paper was and is published on an industry-wide, country-wide level, called "TODOS A UNA" (ALL TOGETHER), in batches of ten thousand copies, as a forum for all autonomous workers' groups.

The existence of such groups (which are a small minority and are indeed not devoid from bourgeois-democratic content in some instances, such as support for reformist campaigns, definition of "corrupt" or "excessive" bosses as being the main problem, compensations for poverty such as sport,...) does not mean that revolution is imminent in Spain, or even that resistance to austerity on the average has been fiercer than elsewhere, but the existence of autonomous workers' groups - in the places where they exist - has partially gone along with a stemming of the demoralisation under the austerity measures, redundancies, and anti-proletarian nature of the unions. It is confirmation that the movement will secrete such autonomous organisations, whose tasks are indeed the same as other revolutionary groups : to intervene on political positions, to elaborate a platform, to oppose erroneous conceptions of organisation, to coordinate with each other, and to wage war on the unions as capitalist machines,...

In fact, one would envisage their close working together with the revolutionary groups, although one cannot make ~~general~~ general pronouncements such as "Revolutionaries must aim to fuse with autonomous workers' groups", or "They should not fuse with them", or "Dual membership should be shunned", or "Dual membership should always be pursued as desirable",... Suffice it to say that both are secretions of the whole movement, that revolutionaries should encourage the formation of autonomous workers' groups and should try to criticise the weaknesses of existing ones and to oppose any "democratic" illusions, that autonomous workers' groups should do the same vis-a-vis revolutionary groups,...

And finally, to grasp, in however limited or partial a way, the present moment of struggle, is not the same as messianically believing that the contradictions of present struggles could all be resolved in a flash if only they organised "democratically" if the miners' strike organised its present content - even into assemblies, even if assemblies at any stage provide the possibility for supersession of alienated content) democratically, for example, they would still be dominated, with their own consent, by bureaucrats and representers, and these particular entities would be merely another mystification, another ideological victory of democracy over the proletariat. Workers' Councils/ Proletarian General Assemblies in the real sense are necessary for the realisation of the communist project, but they are not a guarantee. Without ~~returning~~ returning into prophets, revolutionaries should try to outline what they think are possible futures for the period - based of course on critiques of the past and the present and on their own past and present. Mere democratic verbiage, or mere warnings against being "sold out", hide the social reality that present struggles won't automatically turn into more combative struggles just by organising democratically, and that workers are never simply "sold out" (whatever the manipulative capacity of the recuperative rackets), but ~~xxx~~ collaborate in selling themselves out and (importantly) the most combative workers often demoralise themselves by scapegoating the "apathy" of their workmates. To place "blame" on the unions' techniques of counterrevolutionary practice (this is what the far left of capitalism do vis-a-vis most present top union bureaucrats - or even all of them - because they hope to replace them with their own party ~~xxxx~~ cadres or union models) is to forget that the key to destroying the unions and all other capitalist organisations lies through the road of proletarian autonomy, of a self-consciousness in struggle which escalates to a theoretico-practical level of war where it can't be sold out, where it is irrelevant to it whether still-existing bureaucrats or would-be bureaucrats are, for instance, calling for a ballot or no ballot. In the present miners' strike, all those who have called for a ballot or no ballot have implicitly accepted the bourgeois aim of "pressurising the union bosses" - and this includes the miners who have occupied the offices of right-wing union leaders, even if these actions have been more or less ~~xx~~ self-controlled and at least an encouraging sign of (partial) opposition to the unions in a base-controlled manner.

By ~~xxx~~ what means can Workers' Councils appear ?

The first revolutionary wave, or rather its defeat, gave birth to an alienated representation of the proletariat which is not only the direct enemy of the proletariat (whose emancipation has never had any other possibility of existing other than as ITS OWN ACT) but which has integrated itself into most aspects of social life, and certainly not only ~~xxxxxxx~~ politically.

The second revolutionary wave, therefore, cannot even get off the ground without attacking these representations, without - to whatever initial fragmentary extent - clearly basing itself on its own practice and theory, its position within society and a period of that society, and its self-consciousness coming from those material conditions and historically posing ~~its~~ their supersession.

The riots of 1981 were an explosive moment, which even if they did not go as far as attacking capitalist production (see PLATFORM of A communist effort, on looting), still contained in themselves a rudimentary critique of (some) recuperation: Claire Doyle of the "Militant" Tendency was shouted down in Toxteth when she tried to call the riots "Understandable but inexcusable". If in the riots encounters were made and tactics discussed between groups of proletarians who had come together in the heat of the struggle, these encounters (such as the ~~xxxx~~ organisation of looting in Clapham with the use of CB radio, or the attacks on Midlands police stations) did not go beyond the immediate, beyond looting what one could get before the police came over the barricades or reinforcements came from another area: even if some attacks on police stations or on expensive houses of bourgeois were exceptions. There was not much desire to link up practically what was going on on a scale of anything more than a mile ~~xx~~ or two: the acts of migration weren't often acts of ~~a~~ solidarity.

Such movements in general are clearly heterogeneous on the level of aims: - the most radical participants are in a minority, can't make the revolution by themselves, can't "prefigure" it organisationally, and often end up getting pissed off with the relative apathy of their fellow-participants. So, if they desire a revolutionary practice in the present, they will find it - AMONG OTHER WAYS - in intervening in struggles on a theoretico-practical level, in directly communicating their views to as many other proletarians as ~~xx~~ possible. Of course revolutionaries cannot find total satisfaction in this society (that is precisely what defines ~~xxxxxx~~ them: to be "totally satisfied" merely by dint of ~~an~~ minority intervention would amount to ~~xxx~~ what has been criticised as "militantism" - an inexact word, of course -, whereas to claim to be pained whilst intervening - beyond the frustration and unrealisation of even partially-formed desires prior to revolution - amounts to a masochistic "saviour" image). Revolutionary consciousness comes ~~xxx~~ from the experiences of daily proletarianised life and combat against them ("through the experience of today's struggles workers will learn the necessity for communism" - Wildcat) - it is IMMANENT in the proletarian condition and therefore is not in the possession of ~~a~~ minorities, but nevertheless these minorities of revolutionaries cannot deny themselves: if they are not "introducers of consciousness", or of a divine "Idea" (cf. the stupidities of individualist anarchism), they should attempt to be conscious enough of themselves in order to allow their passion to intelligently find a relativised practice, whilst not denying the aspect of waiting.

The text below is reprinted from the theses presented at the third conference of the AAUD, which does not imply a total agreement with that organisation, although not undervaluing its revolutionary communist contribution. It fell eventually into the trap of believing that a minority workers' organisation (which it was: in December 1920, when the first of the splits - between the AAUD and the AAUD-E - was still a year in the future, the AAUD had a fifth of a million members) could prefigure the formation of Workers' Councils. However the ~~xxx~~ text below is important in that it attacks the Tweedledum~~xxx~~ and Tweedledee of alienated and (informally or formally) bureaucratic organisational forms: centralism and federalism. Naturally any ~~xxxxxx~~ organisation which wants to be revolutionary must wage constant combat against the illusion that communism will be anything less than the complete de-alienation of all aspects of life where the world and people's transformation of it will be nothing less than a sensuous extension of the interplay of desires.

Revolutionary organisations should of course organise themselves according to the centralisation of ~~xxxxxx~~ decisions, ~~xxxxxx~~ meaning a majority decision of militants after a maximum debate amongst them all on the ~~xxx~~ scale of everybody in the ~~xx~~ organisation. They should clearly see the positive reasons for the expression of tendencies in situations where opinions differ in outlook and consequences (i.e. whenever any number of militants thinks it desirable) - in such situations the continuous expressions of tendencies is a necessity. Which is certainly not to say that there is any organisational recipe which can ensure against the taking up of an alienated content: what at a given moment can ensure against this is the revolutionary ~~desire~~ desire of each participant to contribute collectively to the movement which suppresses existing conditions, a movement of which s/he is part, which from the beginning means the practical rejection of deafness, smugness, ideology, screwed-up need to find a niche in this society (e.g. as a media-loving terrorist, as an academic professional,...), federalism, centralism, the pressure group,...

ON FEDERALISM AND CENTRALISM.

(Reprint from the A.A.U.D., December 1920.)

"The growth of organisation in this direction will leave further behind the struggle between what are called centralism and federalism. From the point of view of the A.A.U., the polemic around these two principles, these two forms of organisation, will become a quarrel of empty words. Obviously these terms should be understood according to the signification they have had until now, and no new sense should be given to them.

We understand by centralism the form which, according to the will of a few, keeps the masses on leash and enslaves them. For the A.A.U. this is a demon which must be exterminated. It is anti-social. Federalism is its antagonist, but its antagonist on the ~~bourgeois~~ basis of the same economic system. It is the sovereignty, the obstinacy of the individual (or of the enterprise, or region, or nation) taken in itself. It is also anti-social and must be fought likewise.

These two forms developed progressively in past centuries. Federalism belonged to the Middle Ages, centralism to the period of ~~the~~ advanced capitalism.

Sympathy for federalism rests ~~simply~~ simply on seeing it as the negation of centralism, thus bringing liberation and paradise. This desire for federalism leads to a caricature of autonomy (right of self-determination). To attribute to each region, each place (one might even say each person) autonomy in all domains, this is believed to be acting in a social and proletarian manner,

In fact, one would only abolish the empire to replace it with a multitude of principalities, Petty kings (functionaries) would arise everywhere, who would reign for their part in a "centralised" way over a group of adherents as if they were their property : there would follow a dislocation and general ruin.

Centralism and federalism are both bourgeois forms of expression. Centralism being more of a grande-bourgeois character, federalism petit-bourgeois. Both are anti-proletarian and prevent the purity of class struggle."

FOR A COORDINATED ANTI-LOCALIST COMMUNIST INTERVENTION
FOR AUTONOMOUS WORKERS' GROUPS
FOR THE ABSOLUTE POWER OF WORKERS' COUNCILS,
OF PROLETARIAN GENERAL ASSEMBLIES

The following article was published in the French "autonomist" ~~paper~~ paper "TOUT" (c/o Le Chaos Final, 41 rue des cinq diamants 75013, Paris) and was written by a comrade of the French group Volonte communiste (address : Revolution Sociale, BP 30316, 75767 Paris cedex 16). It is published here because it gives a good review of the developments - both positive and negative - of autonomous workers' groups in Spain in the years since the formation of the Barcelona dockers' coordination, OEFB, in 1979, whose text of that time - "Our Organisation" - was published in English in March of this year by B.M.Combustion (full address: B.M. Combustion, LONDON, WC1N 3XX)

In a general framework of stagnation of struggles ...

The time is one of disenchantment in the revolutionary milieu, faced with the difficulties of the present situation. Indeed, with the isolation of the Polish working class's experience, Capital is dominating the situation and the deepening of the crisis is only, for the moment, arousing corporatist reactions. The recent spontaneous strike of public sector workers in Belgium / in September 1983. In February and April of this year, there have also been strike movements in Belgium, although these too, despite the violent attacks on the police and party HQ's, still show corporatist orientations - ACE Note / has certainly shows that the capacity of the social movement for mobilisation and combativity remains important, but once again, after the steelworkers' struggle of Spring 1982, it has also shown the present limits of proletarian resistance : demands which remain in particular categories, divisions between the public and private sectors, regional oppositions (Walloons / Flemish),..... Certainly, faithful to their role of the defence of capitalism, the various unions have done everything to maintain, even to aggravate, this fragmentation of the working class and to prevent its unity. However, if the dynamic of the mass strike wants to get past all these obstacles, it must be the product of demands in which all the different sectors of the proletariat can recognise themselves. In this sense, in order to be unifying, economic demands against austerity can only - from the very beginning - articulate themselves around a global refusal of all the modes of political management (right or left, dictatorship or democracy). It's by rejecting all the capitalist imperatives of defence of the national economy (the calls for "sacrifices") that the affirmation of social needs will attack the foundations of exploitation : wage-labour, commodity production and State.

With France and above all Italy, Spain was the country towards which revolutionaries looked most during the '70's. Analysing the contradictions of its social situation, they expected great results. Where are they today ? Does Spain remain a separate case which isn't part of the general stagnation of struggles which certain present fashions interpret as an entry into a period of "glaciation"?

...Spain is no longer an exception...

During the 1970's the Spanish proletariat was in turmoil. It gave rise to vast movements of strikes which each time broke out of the traditional structures of enclosure, in particular the apparatus of Workers' Commissions (born out of the struggles of the '60's and recuperated as organs of transmission by the P.C.E.), and thus seemed to pose political questions in terms other than the simple replacement of Francoism with Democracy. These movements participated in the general resurgence of struggles across Europe in the follow-up to May '68. They culminated between 1976 and 1978, after the death of Franco, with the large working class Assemblies which came out of mass strikes such as at Vitoria or La Roca, to cite only the most well-known examples. In relation to the process of demoralisation under way, these social explosions appeared to offer another alternative by getting away from the various organs of the left (parties and unions, including the C.N.T.) who had as their programme the management of the national capital. When the class movements were already globally in retreat in most European countries, Spain was the model exception. But, after the Moncloa pact (accords between the Suarez government and the forces of opposition on the left in order to assure social peace), the means used by Democracy - successive elections, regionalism, anti-putschism,.....- obtained the upper hand over working class Autonomy little by little. With the deepening of the crisis, the bourgeoisie weakened and experienced political difficulties (divisions in the U.C.D., attempted putsch of 23rd. February, 1981,...). It recovered from them thanks to the crushing electoral victory of the P.S.O.E. in October 1982. Trying to restructure several sectors of the productive apparatus in order to face up to the competition on the world market, the new "socialist" government directly attacked the working class by putting plans into action which, amongst other things, led to tens of thousands of redundancies. (The unemployment rate of the active population is one of the highest in Europe). /19% - ACE Note/. Reduced to the defensive and undergoing cuts in both wages and unemployment pay, the proletariat showed its combativity in the sectors where its back is against the wall, for example at Sagunto (closure of the Mediterranean

Blast-Furnaces), at Vigo and Gijon (drastic reductions in personnel in the shipyards, steelworks and car works,...). However, just as in France, the left in power fulfils its anti-proletarian function perfectly by preventing the extension of these struggles through increasing, or at least upholding, categorial divisions, and thanks to the myth of negotiations. The "critical" gesticulations of the unions (principally the Workers' Commissions because the U.G.T. is bound to the P.S.O.E. and thus to the government), the P.C.E. (which, due to electoral failure, has not been associated with power) and of the leftist residues, are leaning on the working class discontent, but likewise aim only to break this combativity at present confined within the limits of corporatism.

In its third issue (January 1983), the review "Indolencia" (1) was right to say : "Today we are really European ! Here too, as in France and Italy,..., capital has taken over the reins of class struggle. The autonomy of the political sphere has developed in the Party System and the social contract surprises no-one. It's difficult to find in the working class of 1982 any relation with the one which was the protagonist of the general strikes such as at Vitoria or Roca. And still, despite the difference, the analysis of the relation between capital and labour shows the tie between the old and the new workers' movement. Indeed, if the working class has undergone great transformations, its disarticulation is not yet an easy task. In the Spanish State, the restructuration has only just started. "

(Cf. the beginning of this article, which is entitled "Story without end").

But this interesting statement is part of a dossier determinedly entitled "modernist": "The workers' struggle in the '80's - a useless passion". Seeking other figureheads (squatters,...) because of the "crisis of the proletarian subject", In-dolencia was led to announce that the "working class is no longer in fashion" (!). Wishing to enlarge the concept of social class, it abandoned reflection on the evolution of the proletariat in the enterprises in order to brood solely over the phenomena of marginalisation due to the crisis (increases in non-productive labour and in unemployment). Taking the moon for green cheese and the products of capitalist decadence for the new Motors of History, it theorised on its own lack of revolutionary perspectives : "Overall, everything's icy and desolate. What does it mean to still speak of the workers' struggle?"

Then, it proclaimed the "present reality of communism" through the phenomena of the rejection of work, of politics, of the desire to want to enjoy life ... which undoubtedly explained the cease of its publication

...even if the social movement has left its traces...

However, despite this negative account on a general level, Spain is one of the countries where the movements of the '70's have left the most traces and where these show the most clearly that the proletariat remains the essential force (2) around which the future social movement will develop. These traces can be seen at several levels : essentially through the critical attitude of a majority of the working class towards the organs of capital in its midst (parties and unions : besides the P.C.E.'s electoral disappointments, the rate of unionisation has fallen steeply in the last few years in industrial regions like Catalonia), but also, regarding a minority, in the resistance in workplaces around autonomous organisations. Thus in Barcelona there continue to exist several workers' collectives independent from the unions and in many sectors. Not only do they strive to intervene daily in the enterprises, but they also publish regular bulletins which give direct news and which try to find their bearings with regard to the social situation at all levels (political, economic, cultural,...). To cite some of them :

** CONDIESEL BULLETIN (Metallurgy) - informative organ of the factory committee and megaphone of free expression for the workers

**ESSENCE AND FORM (Graphic arts) - informative bulletin of the collective of workers at Gravat

**LA ESTIBA (Dockers) - bulletin of national coordination

& THE PORT - bulletin of the autonomous dockers' organisation of Barcelona (3)

**COLLECTIVE OF ST. PAUL'S HOSPITAL (Health) - megaphone of the Workers' Group

**MARXA (Banks) - bi-monthly review by the workers of Banesto, published by the Collective of Assemblyist Workers

& NOT AFFILIATED - information sheet of the C.A.W. in the factory committee of Banesto.

(4)

(All of these bulletins or news-sheets come out in batches of several thousand).

In order to break away from isolation in their respective enterprises and thus from the dangers of corporatism, the majority of these collectives have formed an inter-enterprise coordination. This process was facilitated thanks to the contacts made after the support given to the long struggle of the dockers in opposition to the restructuration in the ports (1980-1) and to its consequences (in particular, more than 13,000 redundancies forecast over the whole of Spanish territory). The dockers of the port of Barcelona being at the foremost of this movement, this made the discussions with collectives in other sectors become dynamic, and resulted, in January 1982, in the publication of the first issue of a communal bulletin concretising the process of coordination. Entitled "TODOS A UNA" (meaning "ALL TOGETHER") and printed in a batch of 10,000, it presented the activities of the different collectives by publishing certain of their texts, and it defined its objectives in editorials as follows :-

"When they give news on the world of labour, the means of communication - press, radio, television - speak only of the classical unions, as if the workers' movement was solely represented by them. This isn't so. There exists another form of organisation which, even if diffuse, is nonetheless real : the autonomous collectives or independent organisations of an enterprise which regroup workers who haven't wanted to be engaged in the traditional unions for various reasons, but who have the common denominator of the rejection of leadership and bureaucracy, advocating in their place the form of the assembly.

This reality which exists, even with difficulty, recognises itself in the fact that it is not interested in the management of capital, given that it doesn't control it, and it feels the need to make itself known and to express itself because the vocation of the collectives is not to stay locked up within the four walls of the enterprises where they are born.

That, and nothing else, is the principal objective of this bulletin. For this reason, we invite the collectives which exist to expose their experiences in these pages and to make themselves known by allowing us to participate in the themes which most occupy them at this moment."

(Cf. Presentation, No.1., January 1982).

"If there's an idea, a minimum which unites us, it's this : we know that the channelling of the interests of the workers through the unions doesn't interest us.

We don't want to stop without noting some communal points which are agreed to by the groups within all the enterprises with which we are in contact :

- 1) One notes a big drop in the membership of the majority and the minority unions, especially since their numbers greatly increased when they were legalised in 1977.
- 2) This situation - provoked by their extremely poor response to the expectations of the workers - has led to a certain demoralisation in the working class, including in the enterprises which were notable because of their opposition to Francoism.
- 3) This has been superseded in the places where there are independent workers' organisations - autonomous or whatever you want to call them - which have been capable of joining battle against capital, according to their possibilities, and to give an impulse to will and confidence amongst the workers in their own power and in their own capacity to organise themselves.

That's all. We hope that this presentation will motivate you to read the experiences which several comrades have related to us. Judge for yourselves and observe that your problems and the solutions they entail are not uniquely yours ; they are universal."

(Cf. editorial, No.3., 2nd. and 3rd. quarter, 1982).

... which will be surpassed by the future movement ... !

Let it be understood that we should not erect the existence of the aforementioned groups as something overwhelming, seeing that the most important element is the experience of the majority of the proletariat. And furthermore, despite their coordination, they still express a large degree of heterogeneity: (each collective doesn't represent the same degree of consciousness as the others, and the most advanced is not necessarily uncriticisable.) and they carry significant limits able to weigh upon the clarification necessary to the future

social movement. To conclude provisionally, we wish to propose a critique of the weaknesses and confusions of these autonomous organisations, whilst underlining their positive aspects. The movement to come will be able to lean on these positive aspects at the same time as being obliged - if it wants to rise to its historic tasks - to go beyond all the insufficiencies or errors of the present as well as of the past. If certain collectives prove themselves obstacles in the image of the unions, it will even be forced to fight them and destroy them !.

The two most positive aspects of the autonomous groups are : -

** they were born from the reactions of the working class against the accords between the unions, the left parties and the "centrist" movement as to how to manage the crisis by reinforcing exploitation.

** they put forward the forms of autonomous expression and organisation taken up by this movement : workers' Assemblies, self-organisation, direct action,... That explains their desire for proletarian unity and thus their tentative to put in place an inter-enterprise coordination in order to break out of their isolation and to face up to problems communally, for example by being able to supply each other with concrete support (circulation of news, direct support for strikes or happenings in several enterprises and sectors...).

Added to these two aspects, one can speak of a certain critique of waged labour ~~in~~ which can be seen not only in published articles (like the one on the analysis of "free time" and "leisure" in NO.2. of TODOS A UNA), but also through the practices of resistance - inside the enterprises - to all measures aiming to reinforce control and capitalist profitability over production (anti-hierarchy, absenteeism, upsetting the rhythm).

However, the negative sides exist by often drowning the positive sides in confusion. Principally this is bound to the situation of general stagnation of struggles. Indeed, led to join battle on the basis of defensive demands, the autonomous organisations arrive, in the name of "defending jobs", at mistaking the objective by denouncing the "bad management" of the bosses or directors. By doing this, they encourage the workers to believe that the crisis comes from the incompetence or the corruption of those who manage. And if they show themselves to be more combative on this terrain than the unions, it's solely in order to replace them on it. Thus the independent collectives spread illusion concerning the possibility of a "rank-and-file unionism (or "class" unionism), and thus on the possibility of "harnessing" capitalism thanks to an effective reform.

The logical consequence of this error is that collectives present themselves in the framework of factory elections (committees, delegates) in order to rival the traditional unions. Even if some of them do it from a tactical point of view, whilst putting forward assemblyist perspectives, this leads them to appear as "boutiques", certainly more combative and more "open" (democratic) -- hence the success that they have had, and the large majorities too, e.g. among the dockers -- but which are confined to the management of misery (sporting activities and cultural and holiday activities,...). In a period of non-struggle, all mass organisation - even autonomous - which becomes permanent submits to the pressures of the system and ends up being more or less integrated into it.

Moreover, whilst being mistrusting and critical vis-a-vis the politics of the left which has been put into effect since the P.S.O.E came to power, some collectives are adopting a waiting attitude equivalent to a sort of "critical support" of the "socialist" government and of accepting austerity measures if the "economic sacrifices" translate into "social good" : job creation, decent unemployment pay at Common Market levels, free schooling, efficient health assistance, etc... (Cf. the article "Times of change or a change of time", published in No.1. of the review "MARXA" and reproduced in NO.4 of "TODOS A UNA", 1st. quarter, 1983).

Their errors regarding the State can also be found at the regional level. Coming from their anti-colonialism, the collectives were led to develop a certain "autonomism" (publication of their texts in Castilian ... and Catalan) even if, elsewhere, they denounce the leaders of the Generalite of Catalonia / = semi-independent regional government of Catalonia - ACE Note) and make appeals for international solidarity. Likewise, they continue to carry leftist themes (democratic and anti-fascist) concerning the liberties and moralisation of politics : justice reform (penal code, prisons, torture) and reform of the army (purging of the putschists ...), rights of women (campaigns for abortion, etc.) etc. (5).

And now ?

So it isn't the present situation in Spain which is going to get the revolutionary milieu out of its disenchantment, especially since the radical currents existing apart from the autonomous workers' groups have experienced atomisation just as in other European countries. And even if they have the advantage of being linked to the combative sectors cited above, their theoretical elaboration is progressing as slowly as elsewhere.

But this account must not lead us to resignation and to taking refuge in the doomy mood of referring to an Ice Age. On the contrary, we need to be lucid enough to prepare perspectives which, due to the fact of the period of acceleration of the crisis, are nearer than appearances would make us think. Despite a relative social immobilisation, decisive class confrontations haven't been set back until the Greel Kalends [i.e. for ever]; our old friend the mole is still digging !

A comrade in the group Volonte Communiste, address : Revolution Sociale, BP 30316, 75767 Paris cedex 16, France.

(1) This review, with positions close to those of the Italian Autonomia derived from "workerism" (operaism), appeared with a No.0 in December 1981. After four issues, it ceased publication. (In-dolencia, S. Lopez calle Rech Condal 1^o-1^a, Barcelona 3, Espana).

(2) Even if its composition is evolving with the crisis and with tentatives of capitalist restructuration.

(3) Recall that the journal "Revolution Sociale" has published (in No.2) extracts from some of the texts of the OEPB. (Barcelona autonomous organisation of dockers and portworkers).

(4) All these collectives, including "TODOS A UNA", have no address, contacts being made directly with diffusers on the shop-floor. However there is a legal advisers' office which represents them in court.

(5) Themes which remain excessively utilised by the State at the present time, in order to mystify proletarians ; compare the recent anti-terrorist demos, against the assassination of military personnel by the Basque separatist organisation ETA-m.

(6) Let us note the recently-started review "Correspondencia della guerra social" (Correspondence on the social war) (Etcetera, apartado de correos 1363, Barcelona, Espana).

(contin ed from page one.)

brain-death of several of these groups has - should we be grateful? - shown itself often in clearer form. Take this drivel, from the anarchist paper "Black Flag", whose "critique" of the SWP means support for the Stalinist bureaucrat Jack Taylor :-

"Although we as anarchists have different ideas about labour organisation than the hierarchical structures of the NUM and different political principles to people like Scargill and Taylor, this is not the fight we are engaged in. There is little we can criticise these two on during this strike. Both of them have thrown themselves into the front line, both have been assaulted by the police, they like all other paid NUM officials have given up their wages [their WHAT ?- ACE Note] and during this strike have been nothing more than propaganda and symbolic figureheads." (Black Flag No.114).

Revolutionaries will remember another time and another place when anarchosyndicalists threw in their lot with the Stalinists : Barcelona 1937. No doubt Montseny and Oliver could see "nothing wrong" in the way other bureaucrats "handled" the proletariat. (This should not be taken as merely an accusation of "treachery of leaders", which is precisely the position of the more "radical" anarchists ...). (See comments on anarchism in this issue of A.C.E. in the article " Perspectives on the period").

And then again, we have in the anarchosyndicalist paper "Direct Action" ; in an article condemning the present ruling clique in Chile for using heavy repression last year "against the upsurge of resistance led by the workers' organisations" :

"George Orwell wrote in 1943 : " Whether the British ruling class are wicked or merely stupid is one of the most difficult questions of our time".

"Judging from the remarks of Tory MP Nicholas Winteron, that question is still valid". (Direct Action No.17).

Valid? Stupid ! These syndicalists' rag reads like THE SOCIAL WORKER with its democratic "critiques" of bureaucracy harmlessly allied to its support for a "free" union !! Perhaps for one of the most ridiculous articles we have to turn to Black Flag No.111., and its article "Collectivise the mines". Their ideology of a self-managed wage-labour is shown in their idea that mines could be "collectivised" one by one, whilst the Nottinghamshire miners, or at least those who are presently acting against the strike, should stay with their bosses if they wish. If nothing else, this article has the advantage of showing how corporatism is deeply engrained into pseudo-revolutionary ~~ix~~ ideology.

And then there was a leaflet from "Splat" in Cornwall, entitled "The real reasons for pit closures", which, even if it provides a critique of bourgeois democracy & of liberal attacks on police TACTICS, nevertheless falls back into liberal language (e.g. "this middle-class Government" ...!!) and liberal politics (anti-nuclear ideology). This is not to deny, though, that this leaflet at least grasps part of the truth in that the government does want to get rid of so many miners' jobs not only because of the run-down of the industry but because - whilst struggles remain locked in sectors - the withdrawal of labour-power *of miners* has overall more effect on the smooth running of the commodity economy than the withdrawal of the labour-power of, say, workers in a chocolate factory. But the leaflet fails dismally to recognise that the mere withdrawal of labour-power, and the sectoral limits on struggles, must be surpassed by the escalation of class struggle if this struggle is to go beyond demands. But, like so many other well-meaning leaflets, it doesn't even attempt to make a criticism of the weaknesses of the present strike. When it says : "The 'disarray among NUM leaders where some are supporting (initiating?) blackleg action, is yet another of the varied obstacles...", this could quite easily mean "It's all the fault of scab NUM leaders", implying that NUM leaders who "support" the strike are friends of striking workers, which is the "position" of the "S"WP and the Labour Party. In fact, the 'disarray' among NUM leaders, and amongst non-NUM union leaders (NACODS, ...) is a matter of ideological pseudo-antagonisms supposed to quieten strikes and to encourage strikers to think that "supportive" bureaucrats are their friends. After Sid Vincent, NUM bureaucrat in Lancashire, "ratified" a strike that was already under way, he said, "It's official now. We don't want any more violence". It is precisely the pseudo-oppositions between union bureaucrats which has been of considerable value to the bureaucracies in recent strikes : cf. NGA, ASLEF, and perhaps soon the TUC General Council will more clearly oppose Scargill ...

The CWO and the ICC ("Communist" Workers' Organisation and International "Communist" Current), on the other hand, are better-equipped, on the face of it, to defend themselves against such a critique. On the surface, their critique of unions and unionism is thoroughgoing - they make no bones about condemning the efforts to make unions "democratic" or "rank-and-file" for what they are, namely a con-trick ; they know that self-managed negotiation or base unionism is not self-escalated proletarian class struggle. But the ICC's analysis of the unions is always asserted in ideological ~~x~~ terms : "the unions are part of the state and have been since capitalism entered its decadent phase" , for instance. Their theory of the "left in opposition" undoubtedly contains some of the truth, but mistakes in their understanding of it (and such mistakes in themselves do not make a group counterrevolutionary) unfortunately, allied to their patronising vanguardism, lead them to an ideological defence of these mistakes (which is always counterrevolutionary). If the left can keep a purer image when it's outside the government, this doesn't mean that capital's immediate need wherever the left is in government is to make sure it gets out of government as soon as possible, as the situation in Greece, France, etc. shows. For instance, with a CP as big as the one in France, the French SP's lack of a "pure" image is not that important.

The ICC is quite capable of seeing the maturation of class struggle and class consciousness in particular as being in such a relation to ideology (its mortal enemy) that ideologies are in a state of flux (the "radicalisation of the left" it is called by the ICC, by which they mean on the level of appearances, it's understood), BUT this leads them to go out and look for corroborative empirical evidence which, in order that it doesn't present a need for a more complex analysis, they have to invent !

Thus not only can one read in the pages of "World Revolution" that "the unions everywhere are part of the state", but one can also read that "the dockers' strike has only been the clearest expression of this general heating up of the situation" (WR 74) and that "the unions immediately called a national docks strike in order to pre-empt the movement and in particular to prevent the calling of strike assemblies and the sending of flying pickets". Don't they really see the difference between capitalist organisations such as unions according to the level of struggle (i.e. autonomous struggle, whatever its self-conception). Emphasising the differences between different styles of trade unionist ideology (during a strike, and when there isn't a strike, for instance) actually gets nearer the root of these mystifications. Perhaps for the ICC it sounds more radical to say that unions are everywhere part of the State, as if they are any less capitalist in the places where they are not fully integrated into the State. Not only are unions protectors of the general conditions of wage-labour and the commodity economy, and thus clearly bourgeois organisations which must be destroyed by the proletariat in its struggle for social revolution, but they have their own specific interests in certain methods of running this system, on the level of State policies, and so on. So when I see remarks in WR such as "they (the trade unions -ACE Note) ...participate enthusiastically in the rationalisation of a crisis-ridden system, selling unemployment, pay cuts, austerity and repression" (WR75), I hardly think that this understands the function of trade unions, which is to provide not only a repressive policing network which openly opposes class war, but which provides an alienated representation of class struggle, of the workers, :

The "enthusiastically" in the above extract from the ICC's paper is misleading : the NUM really would lose some of its power in the regulation of capitalism and the diversion of struggles if a large proportion of mines were closed: and besides, is it the "enthusiasm" ~~of~~ of capitalist organisations which is the problem? To artificially separate two phenomena, the unions play both the important role of policing, representing, and diverting struggles, and also - in times of relative social peace - the operational management of capital when workers are actually working. The way they play the former role is influenced not only by what they have to do and say in order to try to stop a workers' outburst, but also by their perspectives vis-a-vis their latter role, even if the peaceful maintenance of the national capital as a whole is a necessity for them, which is indeed shown by their numerous State links.

The CWO, however, are less subtle than the ICC. Whilst the CWO are plain Leninist ("there can be no eclectic fusion of dissimilar political traditions. Today's revolutionaries must base themselves firmly within the camp of the Italian left" - "Revolutionary Perspectives" 21), the ICC are not Leninist - they attempt to draw from Lenin, Trotsky, and on the other hand even Pannekoek ! In this sense, one must suppose that the CWO are technically right (though in an opposite way to the way they intended) when they say that there can be no fusion of different political traditions : capitalist (Lenin, Trotsky,...) and communist (Pannekoek,...) !!! The ICC, in fact, give themselves and the CWO away in the revealing piece in WR70 ~~xx~~, concerning what separates them from their partners in polemical jousting, the CWO :-

"What would we say about a general who sent his troops into battle without assessing the tactics and resources of the enemy? Or a teacher of boxing who told his protégé never to study his opponent's moves?" (WR70).

One would suppose that the CWO are the Generals, and the ICC are the Angelo Dundees !

The CWO occupy a position between the ICC's "anti-substitutionist vanguardism" and Bordigism, ever moving closer to the latter. The contradiction represented by "anti-substitutionist vanguardism" is fully recognised by the CWO, who know that leaderships are always substitutionist : however, far from seeing this as proof of the ICC's substitutionism, they see them as not vanguard enough ! The CWO's view of the movement which suppresses existing conditions is shown in RP21, when they make wisecracks about Luxemburg's emphasis on the supremacy of the real movement leading her to the Landwehr Canal, whilst Lenin's diametrically opposite "resolutions of the 'best' central committee" led to the storming of the Winter Palace. They dissimulate the role of the Bolsheviks (such as Antonov-Ovseenko, later to be a GPU agent in Barcelona in 1937) in actually trying to prevent proletarians who had stormed the Winter Palace from "excesses", but that's beside the point. The CWO's ideological reflexes are surely a portent

for the future, when, trying to assert the leading role of the party in the daily struggle of the class, they would necessarily come into conflict with the proletariat trying to organise itself and to take power. These ideological reflexes are perfectly shown in their assimilation of any critique of the role of trade-unionist ideology in trying to get striking miners to concentrate on getting the scabs out in Nottinghamshire, to "defending the right to scab".

One can only say that the relationship ~~between~~ and fighting between the ICC and the CWO, if it has no other purpose, helps to reveal their joint nature - as organisations both explicitly (and however "critically") seeking a heritage from the Bolsheviks of 1917-18 - as groups unable to throw off the curse of vanguardism and ideology (namely, of the counterrevolution), which they carry with them despite their critiques of parliamentarism, trade-unionism and national liberation struggles as counterrevolutionary.

Stop press: Then there is the non-syndicalist anarchist paper "Insurrection", which comes from a view of consciousness of the same ilk as Leninism; "The dominant characteristic of the whole in question (i.e. the exploited as a whole - ACE Note) is its unionist consciousness, This both regulates it and limits it. This (i.e. the specific anarchist organisation- ACE Note) becomes the basic instrument for the spreading of ideas and actions necessary for the social changes we want to bring about. We must act more directly, moving as a specific minority. (OK, but read on - ACE Note). This means taking on the task of carrying out actions that the exploited, at a certain level of the class struggle, cannot develop on their own."

In an article on the miners' strike, "Insurrection" sets out a certain critique of some of the ideological blocks on the ~~mi~~ strike ("banal blocks in front of the mines and steelworks"... "the comic opera style heroism" of set-piece confrontations ...) but, in an analysis of possible gateways to an escalation in the pitch of the struggle, says :

"For example, the miners are not being paid. That must be averted one way or another. The unions are trying to do something, and when they fail, the government must intervene (directly or indirectly) to supply the necessary funds. They cannot allow themselves really starve the workers. If that happened, they would no longer be controllable,..... Today even anarchist groups are quite happily busying themselves collecting funds to help the starving workers, while it is quite obvious that our interests cannot be the same as those of Mr. Scargill (preventing the 'degeneration of the struggle'), nor parallel² to that of Mrs. Thatcher (to control the struggle so that it doesn't go beyond the point of 'no return'.). They can permit themselves to have collections or to send money to the workers 'under the counter'. Not us. For us the radicalisation of the struggle is a positive fact. If the workers don't eat there will be two positive results / Got it, lads ? Don't eat - there'll be 2 positive results - ACE Note // : the clash will quickly come to a head, and it will immediately become obvious / dig the determinism !
-ACE Note / which side the trade union leaders are on."

Far from merely being a critique of the ideology and counterrevolutionary role of some collectors"for"the miners, "Insurrection" equates solidarity with information plus "striking the enemies of the workers in struggle", other kinds of support being thought of as automatically equivalent to "collaboration" with those in power. How those in "Insurrection" reached their high degree of so-called "consciousness" without the benefit of starvation is not explained - one can smell the whiff of the "two kinds of consciousness" theory a mile off !

Note : If the above article seems a little "negative" - criticising interventions in the miners' strike by those who style themselves as "revolutionary" without saying what revolutionaries should be doing, most copies of this issue of "A communist effort" contain a leaflet on the miners' strike (...) which was an attempt to criticise +ve & -ve aspects. If the copy you are reading has no such leaflet, then send a stamped addressed envelope to the A.C.E. address (see last page) to receive one.

Any organisation which presents a pseudo-opposition to the present state of affairs, or even a real opposition to the way capitalism is run, gives the bourgeoisie the chance of mounting a show-trial against it. This year, we have seen this possibility arise with the top ex-KOR bureaucrats in Poland, and with Professor Negri and other Autonomia intellectuals in Italy. KOR was founded in September 1976 by thirty-one intellectuals on the left of Polish State capitalism. One of its biggest stars is Jacek Kuron, who -with Modzelewski- was a revolutionary of sorts when he wrote an Open Letter to the Party, which declared that "revolution is inevitable". KOR dissolved into Solidarnosc in September 1981. In Padua, Italy, Negri and other intellectuals were mostly sent down; he himself was sentenced to 30 years in absentia. In the Polish sphere, the show-trials were called off before they happened, and the intellectuals were allowed to leave prison without a sentence - notably this happened before the U.S. started planning to withdraw its veto on Polish entry into the I.M.F.. Needless to say, there have also been hundreds of revolutionary workers in jail and on trial in both of these countries, although they have received less publicity than the show-trials of the stars.

In Poland, the show-trials were called off not only to allow Polish entry into the I.M.F., but because Solidarnosc can play its role better legally, or in a position of seeking after legality, perhaps with a cover of being "underground" rather than being at war with the present organisers of Polish capital. Such a latter situation would, ironically, lose it much of its glamour: if it ever wanted to "seize power", it would have to arm the workers, which would present the biggest danger to it, the Party and the State yet seen.

In Italy, where domestic politics have been constructed around the issue of terrorism for over a decade (which, considering the capacities and aims of secret services, makes it virtually certain that many more attentats have been carried out under State auspices than have generally been admitted), the whole colour of fragments of pseudo-opposition is different because they are armed. In light of the fact that some fractions of Autonomia are armed, the bourgeoisie could not take chances by acquitting Negri and Co., which, although it would allow sections of the left of Italian capital to claim a great victory (cf. the Radical Party, who had Negri on their electoral list!), would not be in keeping with the fact that those who represent total opposition (or its trappings: an "armed insurrection against the state") can't be seen to be amnestied. And another, more important reason is that the imprisonment or sentencing of a few professors, for the media, allows the imprisonment of wildcat workers to be obscured, although one must note that Negri personally has never been a party to this.

Both Poland and Italy have a history of nationalistic "resistance". At the moment (and this state of affairs will not last for all time), bourgeois politics in Poland uses this on two levels:

- by playing on the fear of an invasion by Russian imperialism;
- and by the image of non-violent trade-union "resistance".

In Italy, the present images of this resistance are often more violent because:

- the bourgeois anti-fascist "resistance" during the war contained a large indigenous nationalist element (especially after 1943), as well as the element of a foreign imperialist invasion. The anti-fascist element is still very strong, and has been taken up by, for example, the "red" brigades.

- the present texture of the Italian national political spectacle (in one word: democracy) was effectively built out of this "resistance".

In general, the make-up of bourgeois politics in Poland and Italy goes back to World War Two, when Poland was "freed" from German imperialism by an Allied (particularly: Russian) imperialist invasion, and Italy was "freed" predominantly by an indigenous nationalistic movement with help from American troops. KOR, therefore, could more openly base itself on the idea of Letting the Rulers and the Workers All Pull Together, as witnessed by the following passage taken from a trade-unionist organisation set up before Solidarnosc on the initiative of KOR people in 1978.

"A broad measure of democratisation is today absolutely indispensable. Society must conquer the right to democratically control its State. All strata (ACE emphasis) must obtain the right to self-organisation, and the right to create the social institutions which will make their rights a reality. Only authentic trade unions and social forms of association will be able to save the State, because a unification between the interests and desires of society and the interests and power of the State can ~~be~~ only be achieved via democratisation."

KWZZ, Constituent Committee of Free Trade Unions of the Baltic, a bureaucracy founded in 1978 in Gdansk, regrouping some of the bureaucrats who became prototype union leaders in August 1980.

In fact, the counterpart of ~~the~~ KOR in Italy could be said to be the "C"P ! (even if KOR was much smaller, of course). Autonomia as a movement is less nationalistic (despite the nationalism of some armed fractions - which call for a "non-aligned Italy" !). It is indeed more combative, despite the counterrevolutionary elements of marginalism, sub-culture, elitism, ...:(this doesn't deny the revolutionary elements!)

The projected show-trials of the ex-Kor people (whose programme for the Polish commodity economy would not look out of place inside the Yugoslav "C"P!) - just as with the Autonomia trials - serve at once as a spectacle of suppressed "radicality" in order to refurbish the gloss of pseudo-opposition, and as a stop-gap rationalisation amounting to a threat which is very real indeed in view of the arrest of hundreds of revolutionary workers, just as in Italy.

The ~~an~~ equivalent in Britain would be to imprison Scargill and to charge him not with obstruction but with something like "sedition", which would perhaps strengthen his image, but will not happen - without a reorganised Tory Party - because such show-trials aim to ideologically consolidate gains made by the ruling class : they cannot in themselves create these gains in the first place. The difference between the two show-trials (the Italian one, and the Polish one which didn't happen) lies, beyond Negri's greater sophistication, in the fact that all the biggest political forces of Italian capital - Christian Democracy, and especially the Stalinists - are in favour of the trial, whilst in Poland, of course, the ex-KOR people are close to the top of Solidarity which has far more popular support, including from the Church .

Why haven't the government imprisoned Scargill ? Wouldn't it suit their mutual purpose?

British capitalism, being a victorious imperialist power in the last war and furthermore never having been invaded by a foreign power throughout this century, needs its national political spectacle to have a different complexion from, say, Italy and Poland. If we leave aside Thatcher's remarks about the enemy within (which were only a strategic morale-booster for the police and army, and implicitly a restatement of the lie that unions can be a machine of a proletarian offensive), we see that British nationalism has neither a particularly strong 'anti-fascist' element (the replacement of one military regime in the Falklands/Malvinas with another hardly being an exception) - as its equivalent in Italy does - , nor does it have an anti-imperialist content like in Poland. It is, whilst clearly being "negative" on the level, for example, of whipped-up campaigns against Japanese goods, more "positive" - i.e. imperialist ! - than some of its counterparts, which is related of course to British capital's position on the world market. The centres of financial activity of the British ruling class (given that England had the first bourgeois revolution) handle a far greater relative proportion of world trade in finance and commodities and currency than in any other nation-State. (It is understood here that we are talking of British nationalism, not of Scottish and Welsh nationalism which undoubtedly do have a bourgeois anti-imperialist content).

Just as the British bourgeoisie let the Pentonville Five out of prison in '72 on a technicality, so have the Polish rulers called off the trial of Kuron and Co. Whilst it would be overly optimistic in either of these cases to say that the courts backed down in order to prevent an immediate storming of the prisons, ..., ~~this~~ backing-down is at least a sign that the ruling classes have not definitively achieved an ideological consolidation as they had achieved in nationalistic terms before the 1938 Moscow trials or the 1945 Nuremberg ones. And similarly, it would not be too hasty to say that future struggles are quite capable of getting beyond the strait-jackets of unionism, marginalism and nationalism : this much is obvious

faced with the fact that in none of these nation-States, nor anywhere else, have struggles been cohesively defeated (e.g. with fascist or democratic ideology); and given the deepening of the crisis no national capital can YET completely rely on this being able to be achieved in the future.

Notes

On 11th. August, the communist group "Wildcat" of Manchester was host to a conference on "Anarchism and Marxism", which was attended by Wildcat, and comrades from London, Careless Talk, CBG,...

A very rough account of this meeting is available from A communist effort; send an s.a.e. to receive one.

A communist effort and Wildcat have corresponded since April, and copies of this correspondence can be obtained from A communist effort. Please send an s.a.e. plus a contribution towards photocopying costs (50p?) - there are 14 sheets to be copied.

From this correspondence, it is clear that Wildcat are developping in a healthy direction (accepting some criticisms of their published positions), although it is clear that some differences remain between the project A communist effort and these comrades - notably on the relation between intervention and theory in the widest sense.

However it seems that some kind of a (clarificatory?) joint practice is desirable with Wildcat, and in this vein a PUBLIC MEETING will be held on September 29th. at 355, Holloway Rd., Islington, on the general subject: The Present Stage Of Class Struggle In Britain.

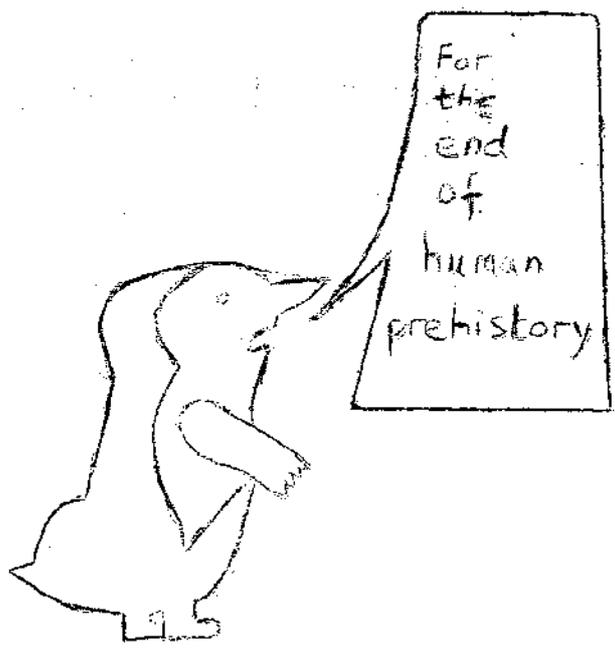
Also available : copies of a leaflet on nationalism in general and pacifism in particular : "DOWN WITH ALL NATIONS". Free - send an s.a.e. This was handed out at the big CND(...)demo on June 9th, and deals with : the different modes of pseudo-rebellious activity possible in CND; the nature of demo's ; nationalism both imperialistic and anti-imperialistic; etc.

Also free are further copies of the leaflet for the miners' strike : send an s.a.e. (although contributions welcomed).

Recommended : A pamphlet entitled "MINER CONFLICTS - MAJOR CONTRADICTIONS" dealing not only with the miners' strike but with several aspects of the class struggle in recent years ... Available from: B.M.Combustion, London, WC1N 3XX.

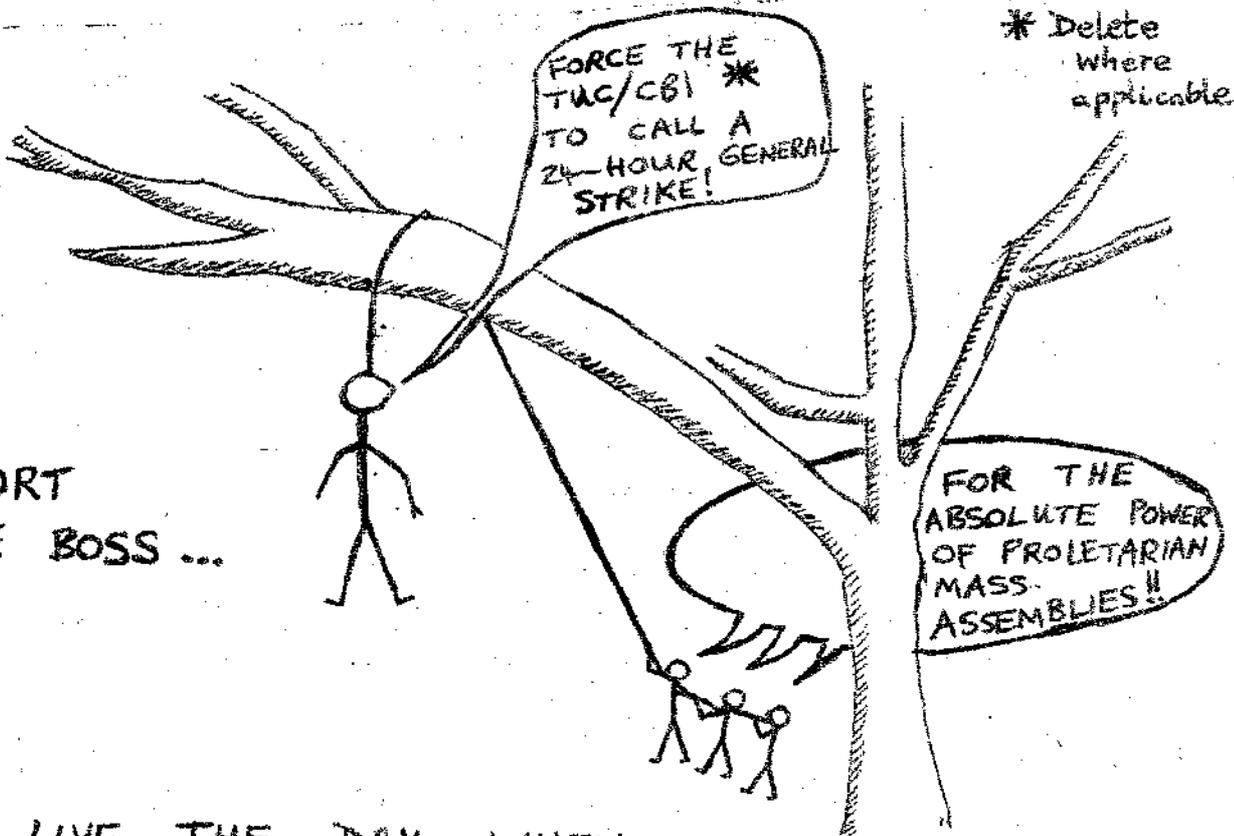
NOTE CHANGE OF ADDRESS
All contacts to made to A communist effort through writing to the following address:
BOX A.C.E.,
355, Holloway Road,
Islington,
LONDON,
N.7.,
ENGLAND.

It is likely that some mail addressed to previous addresses has gone astray: if you have written and received no reply, please write again to the address above.



NOT Arthur Scargill.

* Delete where applicable.



SUPPORT THE BOSS ...

LONG LIVE THE DAY WHEN THE
 SELF-ORGANISED CONSCIOUS PROLETARIAT
 HANGS THE LAST CAPITALIST
 WITH THE ENTRAILS OF THE LAST BUREAUCRAT

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