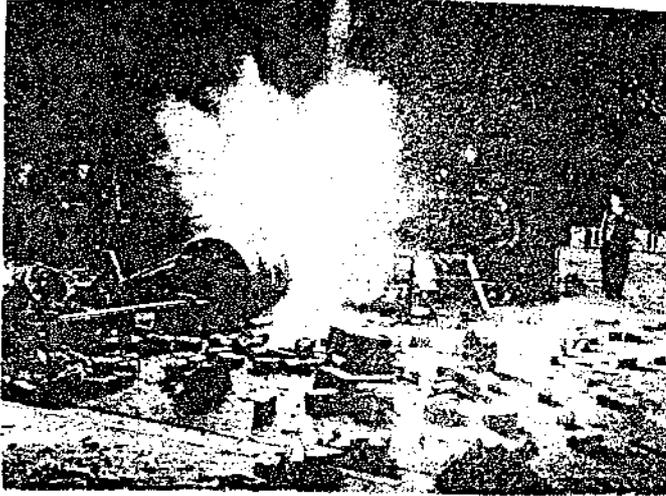


# A COMMUNIST EFFORT

MINERS

## THE DEFEAT OF THE MINERS' STRIKE.

- Workers' trade-unionism has won another battle against the possibilities for escalation in the class struggle ... but the social war goes on ...



"There's got to be a revolution...  
There's just got to be ...  
Across the world." Kent miner.

## WHAT WAS THE CONTEXT OF THE EVENTS IN RUSSIA IN 1917 ?

- Revolutionary opposition to social democracy -v- its own representation.
- The proletariat -v- Bolshevik State capitalism.

1917



V.I. Lenin's Rolls-Royce.

"...the last hope for capitalism, in view of the soviet movement (which was a movement for proletarian power which started before October and ended after it) was that a putschist party would come to power, especially seeing that Russian Tsarist political structures had not allowed this party to play the usual parliamentary role in the pre-Kerensky years..."

## WHAT WAS THE CONTEXT OF THE ANNIHILATION OF DRESDEN BY ALLIED BOMBERS IN 1945 ?

- Massive support amongst the working class for the imperialist war.
- New imperialist conflicts and new national conflicts taking place before the old ones had been decided through massive destruction of materials and proletarians.

1945

### DRESDEN

realised the slogan of the British Ministry of Information :

"For every Bill Smith there is a Wilhelm Schmidt. You must beat him. It's your personal war."

(From a poster portraying industrial workers from Germany and Britain.)

### AUSCHWITZ

realised the SS slogan :

"Your death is our obligation."

(It was also part of the necessity for German capital to resettle proletarians from Eastern Europe in concentration camp conditions.

.....The slogan "Work makes you free"

was over the gates.....)



**" REVOLUTION IS THE ONLY  
FORM OF WAR WHOSE  
FINAL VICTORY CAN  
ONLY BE ASSURED  
THROUGH A SERIES  
OF 'DEFEATS' . "**

ROSA LUXEMBURG, January 1919

Rosa Luxemburg said this in 1919, during a series of defeats where the unions and the German Social Democratic Party were successful in defending the old world, and which did not end in a "final victory" but in abject misery.

To begin with this quotation is not in order to say that everything's fine. The miners have lost a very important battle in the war, and the fault lies mainly with the lack of practical support from other sections of the proletariat and with the non-active fraction of the strikers, along with, of course, the weight of trade-unionism in the minds of the living.

This doesn't mean that the war is over, which will only be decided in the next few years, on a world scale and not just in one industry in one country. Neither does it mean that the gains of the strike are enough to ensure victory. The gains are of two kinds: experience of a real community of struggle against the defenders of the old world (notably scabs and cops), and increased awareness of the role of the Labour Party and TUC.

On P.20 there is an article by the revolutionary group WILDCAT (address on P.11) which tries to put the strike in a general and international perspective. This is followed by some criticisms of this text and by development of some of its points. There is no long article on the ins-and-outs of the strike. It should be obvious to anyone without shit for brains that combative proletarians, i.e. those of us who want to play a part in pushing things as far as they will go, do not need to be "given" "lessons". Whether we succeed in smashing whatever holds back the struggle, and whether we become strong enough on a world scale to achieve a "final victory", all of this depends on (among other things, but most noticeably) what proletarians do in the way of consciously and practically building insurgent links of communication, theorisation, expropriation, community and intervention. This has nothing to do with lefty hacks all of whom by their very attitude show that they cannot really believe that the working class can free itself. What it does imply is a conscious rejection of anything lasting being achieved by negotiations, pressure groups, protests etc. It's all too easy to be taken in by false hopes in something external to the real war, but the terrain of class combat is the opposite to one where people look for saviours, or for leaders or followers.....

## Down with democracy & dissidents.....

Present world society doesn't only maintain itself by force. It also needs to present itself as natural. This does not mean that we are always told "Present conditions can't be changed" in so many words. On the contrary, it means that all the conflicting forces which have interests in the old world have to make us think that all that matters, insofar as how we live, can be reduced to mere ways of survival under existing conditions.

All the poor would like not to have to pay for things, not to have to sell any power over the possible free construction of the world, merely in order to survive. All workers forced to do shitty jobs like mining would like not to have to work down the mines, would like to have a world where the use of technology would actually be able to abolish the need for hard work and at the same time increase people's enjoyment of life. All the poor, somewhere in them, would like to live in a world where community and passion become the roots of who they are, how they relate to each other and what they do, what they produce, how they live.

A lot of the poor are struggling against the further imposition of poverty which the crisis of profitability has made a necessity for the enemy. But the enemy's lies, which are as yet always present in all struggles and will be as long as we don't achieve total victory (because there is no mass revolutionary consciousness without mass revolutionary struggle), only very rarely limit themselves to saying: "Accept the existing world, i.e. the enemy's power, or else die."

Whole fractions of the enemy base their lies on what they say about the poor, about the working class. For example, that what we really need is a change in the bosses' policies, or a change in the law, or a change in how the State is run, or "fair and decent" practices by the enemy, which forgets, of course, that our enemy is our enemy.

The fact that many working class people are resisting attacks on them doesn't mean that we're struggling to see our rulers act "fairly". In the heat of struggle, none of us really believe that. We know it's us fighting for our interests against the enemy fighting for their interests.

Morality and "rights" don't come into it. Resistance, like all struggle, is a matter of our interests, what we need, what we want. And whenever this goes beyond individualism and respect for the law, such as in riots and violent strikes, something else appears: working class people come closer together, experience the beginnings of community, in the real war.

Then, in come another lot of liars. Seeing their own career prospects and, also, what the poor have been doing, they present a spectacle denouncing "evil" policies of the State (which explicitly means defending the existence of the State), or start saying that our class violence was "forced" on us, or even "invented" by the police, and in any case should be abolished by means of different enemy policies.

But working class people who have been actively involved in struggles (and here I don't mean such passive "involvement" as sitting at home watching the telly whilst letting the "militants" get on with it, which is what many "striking" miners did) all know that in the war against the enemy there are both offensives and defensives, both short-term tactical aims and the broader fight as a whole.

Still, many who have been the most militant in struggles get taken in by the "militant" language of those whose role is to "represent" our struggles, snger and insolence. Everybody knows there is a difference between the actual practice of organising a confrontation with the police, and being a shop steward whose essential function is to calm things down and, when it comes to the crunch, defend the unions and the system which needs them: the system of exploitation and wage-labour. But many who have confronted the police still look to the unions, which isn't going to get them anywhere.

The weight of the enemy's lies doesn't only include the Sun, Channel 4, The Times, etc. Or statements by Thatcher that combative working class people are "mindless". It also includes, on a political level, the left and the far left, whose role is to try to get us to forget the real war and to further their own bureaucratic positions, either in the unions, the State, or in the

dissident and moralist-humanist stratum which makes money out of "blaming" "unfair" enemy policies. Cf. "State of Siege". Ask a Trotskyist about Nicaragua and you'll see their line on the Necessity to suppress strikes when it's in the national interest, which is what Thatcher says. Ask them about coordinated working class violence, and they'll tell you that it can be stopped if the rulers nationalise our exploitation. Ask an anarchist about the mines, and they'll either say: Form a real union to manage them, or else: Manage them yourselves and sell the coal. But who wants to work down them? The leftists?

Read what dissidents have written about working class people imprisoned during the miners' strike. They say that it really is unfair, that the answer is to "protest" and to campaign for democracy, rights and justice. Bullshit! Those interested in escalating the struggle all know that those who organised terrorism against the scabs were right to do so; many ex-strikers would like to give McGahey the chop too, although not yet Scargill. They know that it's war, that the working class militants imprisoned should be freed because they're on our side, not because it would be "fair". Angry working class people shouldn't want to merely co-exist with the enemy forever, until we die; neither should we see our aims as anything but the total military and social overthrow of the enemy and its system of wage-labour and property, with all its defenders, unions, States, in the East, the West, and the 3rd World.

In the short-term, it is vital that the fraction of the working class which looks forward to confrontations with the enemy, which takes pleasure in trying to push them as far as they will go, organises channels of communication, to publicise, discuss and practically develop its perspectives. This means not getting conned into such traps as wanting to organise protests and petitions, or supporting the left of capitalism or anyone else who speaks "in our name", who are all part of the defence of wage-labour.

This means not forgetting the war is total. And it's not only negative. It's positive too. What can be achieved is a world without money, exploitation, property. Where, on a world scale, "world society" means the active transformation of the world according to our needs and desires.

This, insofar as what we can organise now, doesn't mean ditching politics. On the contrary, it means politicising our struggle further. The Barcelona dockers, who organise a mass revolutionary coordination which openly opposes the unions (and calls for the abolition of wage-labour and for the self-emancipation of the working class) put out a call for the total blacking of all ships entering Britain during the miners' strike. Sadly they only put this call out a few weeks before the strike ended. If it had been successful, the strike would have become openly political. In more general terms, the political side of the theory which we need to take up and develop is a part of the generalisation and coordination of the struggle. It is whatever general understanding of our tasks, enemies, history and of the development of the enemy's society, benefits our struggle.

To think that theory is only for "intellectuals" is to give ground to the enemy, of which academics, for example, are a part. Combative working class people have nothing to lose but their chains, and those who don't fight can't win, but the revolution won't win without knowing what it's up against, which is not a policy but a society.

Down with rights !

Down with dissidents!

Down with the State !

Down with daily pseudo-life !

For channels of working class communication today ...

... for the armed destruction of the old world tomorrow !

All power to mass working class assemblies!

Power ! Power !

**— let's cultivate community & communication ....**

# Russia 1917

(Originally a contribution to the conference held by "Wildcat" on the Russian revolution and its implications today).

## (1) IN DEFENCE OF COUNCIL COMMUNISM.

There are so many ideological views conflicting about Russia 1917-1985 that revolutionaries should almost be able to see the nature of modern ideology and non-dialectical critique without even considering what actually happened! But this is not, of course, the case. How much more useful it is if revolutionaries analyse historically what did happen, and at the same time try to understand the social function of all the lies about it ...

In recent years, left-Leninists have attempted to put the boot in against council communism, in order to try to demarcate and strengthen their ideology, and in order to try to assimilate the publicity of partisans of authentic communist revolution with a swamp where it is most difficult to sweep through all the lies of the counterrevolution.

By saying this, in no way do I associate myself with everybody who the left-Leninists lump together in this "swamp". Far from it. Left-Leninist methods are a variation of the Stalinist "amalgam technique", where the fundamentals of communist theory and practice (including anti-Bolshevism) are "amalgamated with" and supposedly "disproved by" anything from the self-managementism of "Solidarity" to the factoryism of Rühle, from the illuminism of the post-1945 Pannskoek to the ideology of "commodity abundance" so dear to pro-situs, from libertarianism to Mattick's crisis theory, from modernism a la Camatte to modernism a la Castoriadis, ... To make it clear from the beginning, I write this from a communist perspective, and am in favour neither of "self-management" nor factoryism, nor libertarianism, nor federalism, nor the anti-interventionist ideology of orthodox councilism, nor individualism, nor "autonomism" (cultural or marginalist).

The most ridiculous allegations (if they can be called by such a "serious" word) are that communists' opposition to Bolshevism depends on (1) Lenin being a "patriarch" (!); (2) the ideas of the Bolsheviks, seen as in themselves the motor of counterrevolution; or (3) "one sentence" in "What is to be done?" (about the "inability" of proletarians to become revolutionarily conscious be themselves) (!!), seen by left-Leninists as "taken out of context" (!!)

No doubt some idiot will soon say that our opposition to Bolshevism and all its inheritors depends on Lenin's acceptance of German gold, or on the so-called "escapes" of the Tsarevich and Anastasia! Revolutionaries, though, have nothing but contempt for such bourgeois views of history, based on "evil Machiavellian geniuses". This is one aspect which I develop below in part 2.

The movement for communism has always been at war with its own representation (for example, one-third of the Communist Manifesto is about opposing recuperation). This is not surprising seeing that the dominant ideas are the ideas of the dominant class, and seeing that ideas about the proletariat are necessary to capitalism, as long as they rest on the lie that its needs can be achieved within existing conditions. Those who do not understand this ought to wise up about the last sixty years and ought to understand that it's not just a question of having "bureaucratic leaders".

\* \* \*

It's impossible to see Russia 1917 in isolation. In particular, it has to be seen:

1. in light of the class struggle elsewhere, of which the most advanced arena was Germany.
2. in light of the generalised conflict between social democracy and the proletariat.
3. in light of the First World War, some aspects of which are still, 70 years later, waiting to be intelligently analysed by revolutionaries. 1.

It is necessary to see that in Russia and the rest of the old world, the movement for the power of workers' councils in the first quarter of this century did not prove strong enough to defeat the strengths of the counterrevolution. It is necessary to see what worked in favour of the power of authentically revolutionary soviets, and what didn't.

- REALITY and REPRESENTATION.

All revolutionaries - and all but the least sophisticated pseudo-revolutionaries - think that some of those who split away from the orthodox social-democratic parties before and during the First World War were able to play a vigorous part in the development of the revolutionary movement towards communism. What I aim to show below is that (1) there was a tendency everywhere for a representation of opposition to social democracy to crop up, which was still essentially social-democratic and which was fought by a revolutionary opposition to social-democracy, which was founded on an entirely different basis : proletarian autonomy.

(2) Orthodox Bolshevism (from Lenin to the "Comintern") was founded on the Russian equivalent of Kautskyism which took on different political forms from the USPD up to a point, owing to the differences between German conditions and Russian conditions; whereas dissident Bolshevism (the Russian "Left Communists", Democratic Centralists, Workers' Opposition,...) merely consisted of policy recommendations for Russian capitalism (styles of management; foreign policy; democracy; accountability; relations between unions and State; ...).

1.

All who consider it important to stress that some Russian cities were quite extensively industrialised when war broke out should remember that Russian capital started to lose the war from the very day on which it was declared by Germany. A map of the progression of the Eastern front from 1914 to 1917 shows the front line edging Eastwards continuously through Russian Poland. Tsarist troops were only fleetingly able, throughout the whole of the war, to achieve a foothold in a small part of North-East Germany, from which they were forced to retreat completely by February 1915. 2.

2.

The revolutionary wave of February 1917 was sparked off by women proletarians in Petrograd who had taken to the streets in defiance of the Tsarist State and of a Bolshevik directive, to wait until the official May Day demonstration. Essentially the main workers' demands and hopes centred around an end to the slaughter of the war, and a beginning to some sort of workers' power, which was seen from various different angles : from accountable management through to workers' power over their wage-slavery, to a representation of workers' power by centralist or federalist bureaucrats - and no doubt many workers looked for a real and total workers' power ... This wave reached a preliminary peak in July, after the Russian bourgeoisie began to send more proletarians to the battlefield, which was a necessary Entente strategy because the intensifying atrocities on the Western front were beginning to incite discontent. The Bolsheviks held back this wave of proletarian struggle; Tomsky was to say "The regiments which have come out have acted in an uncomradely manner, not having invited the Central Committee of our party to consider the question of a demonstration."

3.

The Bolshevik party, in the few months leading up to October, was able - under pressure from its boss - Lenin - to throw off mere "centrist" tactics resting on a critical support for Kerensky, and was able to envisage the realisation of the task for which the Bolsheviks had groomed themselves since they split the Russian social-democratic party in 1903 : seizure of power over the proletariat.

4.

E. Mav's entire text (The Russian Revolution and the Permanent Need for the Soviets, October 1984) is written from the viewpoint of seeing the capitalist counterrevolution in Russia as a process of a degeneration of the State formed in October 1917. The change in Bolshevik policy is seen as equivalent to the counterrevolution, caused by external isolation and by social-democratic "remnants" of which the Bolsheviks never exorcised themselves. This forgets that nothing can ever be revolutionary in the anti-capitalist sense except that which tends towards conscious

and total proletarian power : i.e. the dictatorship of the whole class.

5.

E. May sees all the tendencies of the Zimmerwald left (Luxemburg, Lenin, Pannekoek, Rühle, Gorter,...) as communist because they all supported the slogan "Turn the imperialist war into a civil war". Fortunately, there are abundant facts through which we can test this hypothesis.

For the International Socialists of Germany (ISD, mainly based in Bremen, Berlin and Brunswick, and opposed to Luxemburg's ideas before the German Revolution of "reconquering" the SPD), this slogan meant the same as "Turn the imperialist war between States into a revolutionary international class war". We shall see the difference between the Bolsheviks and the German communists. It wasn't long before they conflicted in practice.

Whatever Luxemburg's mistakes during the war (e.g. "The worst workers' party is better than none" (!)), there is no doubt that she took part in the revolutionary class war in Berlin 1919, and had by then gone over to a position of total hostility to the SPD. What we must now look at is the theoretical (and therefore practical) differences between the German-Dutch communist left and Bolshevism, beginning before the war.

6.

The difference between communist opposition to social-democracy and Bolshevik "opposition to social democracy" had one of its first and clearest expressions before the outbreak of imperialist war.

In 1912, Pannekoek wrote what was to be one of the most thoroughgoing attacks on social democracy in the history of the revolutionary movement: "Mass Action and Revolution". 3. His critique was remarkable for what it didn't say as well as for what it said. In no way did he blame social democracy on "the treachery of leaders", or on "renegades", as Lenin was later to do. (Incidentally, the fundamental basis of Lenin's "critique" of orthodox social democracy is that it "proved inadequate" on August 4, 1914. This was not the date on which war broke out, but the date on which the SPD parliamentary party unanimously approved the war budget of German imperialism. Liebknecht later voted against it, to be followed in March 1915 by Rühle. The point is that Lenin in no way opposed the pre-1914 situation of social democracy: submission of the point of view of proletarian revolution to capital, even if this capital was not yet decadent on a world scale.)

In a word, Pannekoek saw a reformist working class, and then saw that revolution depended on the consciousness and organisation of the masses in struggle. He appropriated and developed Rosa Luxemburg's anti-programmatic view of revolution.

"The proletariat's organisation - its most important source of strength - must not be confused with the present-day form of its organisations and associations, where it is shaped by conditions within the framework of the still vigorous bourgeois order. The nature of this organisation is something spiritual [geist?] - no less than the whole transformation of the proletarian mentality."

(Quoted in S. Bricianer's "Pannekoek and the workers' councils".)

This emphasis on proletarian consciousness and mass organisations formed in the process of struggle is already the opposite of blaming the domination of the proletariat by reformism on reformist leaders. The "controversy" between Kautsky and Pannekoek in 1912-1913 must be seen in light of Kautsky's denial that "mass action" could be anything more than "unorganised mob violence", and in light of Pannekoek's position as an open partisan neither of labour aristocracy nor of mob disorganisation, but of a "third possibility": "an extra-parliamentary political intervention by organised workers ... acting directly at the political level instead of leaving this completely to their delegates." Bricianer mentions that Lenin, in his copy of Pannekoek's text, wrote the word "Neverno!", meaning "Untrue!", against the piece underlined above.

Five years later, in 1917, Lenin was to recognise implicitly the importance of Pannekoek's landmark text in his own "The State and Revolution". It is difficult to analyse this latter text without seeing that large parts of it were contradicted, even in Leninist terms, by later Bolshevik practice. But Lenin's message was that the Kerenskyist State should be overthrown, and the so-called "lack of precision and concreteness - not to speak of the other defects" of Pannekoek's text should be forgotten. To give Lenin his due regards, "Left-Wing Communism - An Infantile Disease" (a veritable handbook of the counterrevolution) was not long in being published, and indeed it was a more honest attack on Pannekoek's communist position. It did not take long (i.e. after 1912) for the conflict between the revolutionary opposition to social democracy on the one hand, and Bolshevism on the other, to become more and more open.

Bolshevism was non-Kautskyist in that the Bolshevik party had little or no interest after April 1917 in backing Kerensky, whereas Kautsky's party on the whole gave support to the SPD. (But there were also occasions such as in Bavaria 1919 where parts of the USPD violently opposed the SPD.) But Bolshevism was Kautskyist to the core in that it saw revolution as the act of a conspiratorial elite substituting itself for the masses, to which mass-action-for-itself would be an irrelevance. This was the Russian equivalent of all the parliamentarist "consciousness-injectors" of the USPD.

"The historical moment when Bolshevism triumphed for itself in Russia and when social democracy fought victoriously for the old world marks the inauguration of the state of affairs which is at the heart of the domination of the modern spectacle: the representation of the working class radically opposes itself to the working class."

"During twenty years of unresolved theoretical debate, the varied tendencies of Russian social democracy had examined all the conditions for the liquidation of Czarism: the weakness of the bourgeoisie, the weight of the peasant majority and the decisive role of a concentrated and combative but hardly numerous proletariat. The debate was resolved in practice by means of a factor which had not been present in the hypotheses: a revolutionary bureaucracy which directed the proletariat seized State power and gave society a new class domination. Strictly bourgeois revolution had been impossible; the "democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants" was meaningless; the proletarian power of the Soviets could not maintain itself simultaneously against the class of small landowners, against the national and international White reaction, and against its own representation externalised and alienated in the form of a workers' party /my emphasis- N/ of absolute masters of State, economy, expression, and soon of thought ..."

(G. Debord, Society of the Spectacle, paras. 101 and 103.)

8.

The process of bureaucrats substituting themselves for the power of revolutionary Workers' Councils occurred almost everywhere in the great uprisings of 1917-1921. In Russia this meant a new State; in Germany - on a national level - it meant a legalistic framework of a "National Congress of Councils" which expelled the revolutionaries (Spartakists and International Communists) and democratically elected the bourgeois murderers Ebert and Scheidemann to be "People's Commissars". This latter body was dominated by the SPD and USPD and was unequivocally denounced by the IKD and the Spartakists, for whom "All power to the soviets" presupposed mass action and mass creative consciousness. Later, Rühle was to denounce - from his own personal experience - the "show councils" in both Russia and Germany. The difference was that in Russia the right social democrats were already in government during the war (which they were losing) and the last hope for capitalism, in view of the soviet movement (which was a movement for proletarian power which started before October and ended after it), was that a putschist party would come to power, especially seeing that Russian Tsarist political structures had not allowed this party to play the usual parliamentary role in the pre-Kerensky years. 4.

After October, the immediate aim of the Bolsheviks was not revolutionary class war, but social and imperialist peace.

"The revolution has won. All power has passed to the soviets ... New laws will be proclaimed within a few days dealing with workers' problems. One of the most important will deal with workers' control of production and with the return of industry to normal conditions. Strikes and demonstrations are harmful in Petrograd. We ask you to put an end to all strikes on economic and political issues, to resume work and to carry it out in a perfectly orderly manner ... Every man to his place. The best way to support the Soviet Government these days is to go back to work."

(A proclamation by Bolshevik spokesmen at the second all-Russian soviet congress.)

In September, Lenin had written :

" Socialism is nothing other than the stage following immediately after State capitalist monopoly... State monopoly capitalism is the most complete material preparation for socialism, the antichamber of socialism".

(The Imminent Catastrophe and the Means to Bring it About).

He went on to say "When the proletariat ... has learnt to organise large-scale production on the level of the state, on the basis of state capitalism, ... the consolidation of socialism will be assured."

So much for the internal and national consolidation of capitalist social peace. The Bolsheviks did not wait long before trying to consolidate imperialist peace on a European level. On November 20, 1917 (Old Style - 4 weeks after the October events), the Bolsheviks opened preliminary armistice talks with the Central Powers - the German and Austro-Hungarian Empires. An armistice was agreed (although this is not yet the same as peace) on December 2, 1917. New talks, this time around the issue of a full peace, were opened five days later at Brest-Litovsk. As these talks dragged on throughout January and February, AND AS STRIKE WAVES BROKE OUT IN GERMANY, the tendencies in evidence were :

- Lenin (in the minority) : for immediate unconditional acceptance of German terms, especially in view of the renewed German advance which began on February 5. IMPERIALIST PEACE
- Trotsky (also in the minority) : for a continuation of the war, with Russia remaining as an Entente power. IMPERIALIST WAR
- Left Social-Revolutionaries : For a "sacred alliance" of all classes in a nationalistic war against Germany. When later to be espoused by some forces in Germany vis-à-vis France, this was called a "NATIONAL-BOLSHEVIK" position.
- Mensheviks : open continuation of the war, as before.
- Left Bolsheviks (a majority of the Bolshevik Party, who mostly ceded to Lenin's wishes for fear of a split) : for a revolutionary international civil war.

The left Bolsheviks, despite everything, were able to make a searing critique of the other tendencies in their party : they associated Lenin's position with "a refusal of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the name of peace" and Trotsky's with "a refusal of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the name of war."

Before and after the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, eventually signed in March 1918, the Bolsheviks were becoming a more and more active force in the counterrevolution. It is important to see that Germany at the time was experiencing strike waves which were of enormous historical significance - they were, along with the events leading up to the Russian October, the first mass proletarian confrontations against the social democracy and its parties - they were by their very nature as wartime strikes wildcat, and against the union-cum-boss "sacred alliance".

As far as Lenin's position on the war goes, it conveniently changed from

"revolutionary defeatism" and "transformation of the imperialist war into a civil war" (1915-16) to "democratic peace" (April 1917), to "unconditional peace" (November 1917), to "defence of the fatherland" (February 1918, "A hard but necessary lesson").

"Since 25 October 1917, we have been partisans of defence of the nation ; since this day, we have been for the defence of the fatherland. For we have proven in practice that we have broken with imperialism. We have denounced and divulged the infamous and bloody plots of the imperialisms. We have overthrown our bourgeoisie. We have given freedom to the peoples that we oppressed. [i.e. whom Russian imperialism oppressed - N] We have given land to the people and brought in workers' control... We declare a merciless war on all the revolutionary phraseology about revolutionary war."

(Lenin, February 1918.)

#### 10.

Clearly, this honest "war on revolutionary war" (and ipso facto on the communist revolution), went along with a progressive rationalisation of management. In summing up Bolshevik achievements since October, Lenin was very lucid : substitution of the party for the proletariat; land to the peasants; defence of the nation; right of self-determination; workers' control ; State ownership.

It cannot be said too often that all those who "excuse" this national policy opposed to international revolutionary war on grounds of "Pragmatism", are opposing - or they think they are opposing - the interests of the Russian revolution to the interests of the world revolution. They have stopped being internationalists, if they ever were internationalists in the first place. In practice what was being opposed to the international consolidation and extension of soviet power was the development of capitalist rationalisation in Russia.

Proletarians have no country, and in decadent capitalism all consolidation of nation-States (and anything national) is counterrevolutionary.

#### 11.

The left Bolsheviks, despite being right about the need for class war on an international level, otherwise merely differed with Lenin and the Leninist fraction over management strategies. Where Lenin was for one-man management and "the submission of the will of thousands of people to the will of a single person", they were for accountability of managers. [5.] Where Lenin was originally for partial State ownership, they were for total State ownership and for getting rid of most of the former owners. (Cf. the later glorification of so-called "War Communism" by most left Bolsheviks). Where Lenin was for "nationalisation from above", they were for "nationalisation from below" and "workers' control".

Later, the Democratic Centralists of 1919-20 were to campaign for party democracy, which, as Giliga was to point out, meant opposing "ascendant" Leninism to "decadent" Leninism. And in 1921, Kollontai's "Workers' Opposition", which supported the suppression of Kronstadt, represented the interests of union bureaucrats whilst not forgetting to call for the party to remain "the controller of the real policy of the soviets." [6.]

As most of the information in E. Mav's text shows, the burning questions amongst the Bolsheviks from 1918 onwards concerned : accountability or non-accountability of factory directors ; the mathematical make-up of boards of directors (e.g. what proportions of union bureaucrats, State bureaucrats, and old owners); what treaties to make with foreign capitalist states (ex-Alliance, ex-Entente),...

Essentially, the proletariat's resistance to capitalism was easily crushed in Russia ; the proletarian revolution which rolled along throughout 1917 without ever unifying itself for itself, and without centralising its control over the economy, left few visible traces by 1918. The Bolsheviks and their State played the largest part in defeating it, in destroying whatever tendencies there were towards the power of really revolutionary workers' councils.

#### 12.

The success of proletarian revolution depends on :

- COMMUNISATION, as opposed to mere "workers' management" (cf. Upper Clyde, Solidarity-England, LIP,...), "workers' control" (cf. Left-Bolsheviks, Russian anarcho-syndicalists,...), or "workers' participation" (the platform of nearly all political parties, from fascism through the Alternative Economic Policy to Lucas), or mere occupation of terrain (cf. May '68, Brixton,...). Communisation means the concrete supersession of wage-labour and the commodity economy, including including when these are mediated through labour-time certificates.

- Organisation of the immediate political tasks of the international extension of the dictatorship of the proletariat, through international civil war.

The counterrevolution had many arguments about the differences and relations between "economic power" and "political power", where "economic power" was considered as the management of the factories, and "political power" was considered as the State.

The point for the revolution will be to extend a unified and total proletarian power to all corners of the globe, which is inseparable from the communisation of all social relations (production and everything else), and inseparable from revolutionary war. Thus the political side and the economic side will be unified not through any management techniques, nor on the basis of mere occupation of the factories, but on the basis of seizure and transformation of everything. This will include the necessary seizure of the means of production, and a political phase (the lower phase of communism) where aspects of the old world will still exist (i.e. bourgeois power in some areas) and will need to be suppressed. 8.

### 13.

THE PARTY : E. Mav thinks that there is a necessity for a party to "play a leading role in the revolutionary process through its historic programmatic clarity" and which "must struggle to win a clear majority in the class for its views". The idea of mass revolutionary consciousness as being related to the acceptance of the views of a "programmatically clear" party is the same as the idea of the so-called need for "possessors of the class's consciousness", whose heads are seen as a privileged place of the maturation of class consciousness. But mass consciousness is not acceptance of a programme ; it is practical or it is nothing. Mass revolutionary consciousness goes along with mass revolutionary practice ; it is what it does 1. and its reference-point is its own struggle. It needs no leaders to "win it over to the party's point of view". The emphasis on proletarian autonomy was what Pannekoek was trying to get across in 1912.

This does not in any way deny the necessity for proletarians who consider themselves revolutionary to intervene in the class struggle, i.e. in the joint maturation of its theory and its practice. They are neither leaders nor followers and it is obvious that their action will be more effective if organised internationally.

Revolutionary theory comes from the proletarian condition; it is therefore immanent (although not in a vulgar-deterministic way) in that condition. It comes from the totality of dispossession, as part of the movement for the collective total reappropriation of the planet by the dispossessed : the proletariat, whose power alone can abolish classes.

THE STATE : E. Mav defines the state as the means by which a class holding "political power" "suppresses" the other classes. Elsewhere he speaks of the state as arbitrator of "intra-class disputes". The first definition is inadequate because no power is merely political and because classes have suppressed other classes through other means than the State (e.g. trade unions). If it is assumed that the dictatorship of the proletariat is a dictatorship of the whole class and that this class will have to centralise by means of revokable delegates in order to ensure that optimum communication, distribution and production in all senses is organised on a world scale, then the second definition is meaningless because arguments will be settled by means of the authority of the majority, which is different from "arbitration". Social organisation will obviously be a means both of effecting the pleasure of individuals of a world human community and of confronting differences.

What I'm saying is that the State means something else. The best definition would be : the separation and institutionalisation of executive powers away from

decisive and deliberative powers. This social separation has nothing to do with the communist project. LLM's programme of a "state on the model of the Paris Commune" is indeed a feat of remarkable historical stagnation. (9) Marx was right to say that the Commune provided a glimpse of the "at last discovered historical form under which the emancipation of labour might be realised", but this form has been seen on a much more developed level in the revolutionary workers' councils of 1917-1921. The Commune taught Marx the necessity to smash the bourgeois State immediately (a quarter of a century beforehand, he had already called for the abolition of the State); but what have the intervening 114 years taught today's communists? That in ascendant capitalism it was possible in certain circumstances for proletarians to struggle for a national State in which to struggle for reforms, and even to engage in momentary alliances with petit-bourgeois elements (Cf. inside the Commune), whereas in the period of capitalist decadence (understood on a world scale), sooner or later it's all or nothing, and the revolution is the opposite of all fronts etc. and all compromised organisational solutions.

All States are now the enemy of what will be the necessity for any area of the power of the proletariat-for-itself (by this is meant "the proletariat acting in a way such as to abolish itself through its own power"); namely the international extension of communisation which can know no treaties, negotiations, armistices or peace with any capitalist power.

#### Footnotes.

1. E.g. the aftermath of the downfall of the Habsburg dynastic Empire in central Europe.
2. See map on p.10 of G.Sabatier's "Traité de Brest-Litovsk 1918. Coup d'arrêt à la révolution". Enquire at: Révolution Sociale, B.P. 30316, 75767 Paris cedex16.
3. Extensively quoted in S.Bricianer, "Pannekoek and the Workers' Councils".
4. I am aware of the danger of over-simplistic political comparisons between Germany and Russia, but would the SPD have retained power in January 1919 if it had replaced the monarchy at the same time as Krenskey had replaced the Tsar? No - it would have been utterly discredited. The sequence of events was as follows : after two years of growing wildcat strikes, Germany was losing the war, and the military High Command (and the de facto dictator ; Ludendorff) were forced to call off the war. This they did through shifting the blame onto a newly-created parliamentary government which they had set up for this purpose. When the High Command later changed its mind, the SPD - which had revelled in the imperialist massacres - was able to pose as a party of peacemongers and was therefore in a better position to smash the revolution. Although of course they had to murder revolutionary workers by the tens of thousands, their position as technically against the High Command meant that many workers were still submissive to them. In Russia the Kerensky government was already totally discredited by October 1917 - that's where the Bolsheviks come in as a governmental party, as the USPD might well have done had things gone differently in Germany.
5. See M.Brinton, "The Bolsheviks and Workers' Control", which is a book which equates communism with workers' management of production.
6. See "Les branches d'octobre" by L'Insecurité Sociale, B.P.243, 75564 Paris cedex12.
7. By saying this, I'm not peddling spontaneism. Consciousness (of history, tasks, enemies, capitalist development,...) cannot be separate from its use, and its development and realiation.
8. By "aspects" I mean "areas" ... I'm not suggesting for one moment that "bourgeois right" and money would exist in any way whatsoever during this "lower phase". Whether or not this was true at the time of the Critique of the Gotha Programme, it's certainly not true now.
9. LLM, in Hong Kong, publishes "International Correspondence" (P.O.Box 44 007, Shaueiwan Post Office, Hong Kong) from the perspective of academic left-Leninist ideology. The text by E.Mav mentioned is an internal text of the communist group Wildcat (C/o The Autonomy Centre, 8-10 Great Ancoats St., Manchester 4).

# FROM FUNERALS TO WAR ... ... TO SUPERMARKETS TO SOCIAL CRISIS TO ...?

Much has been written, most of it false, about the wave of revolutionary uprisings between 1917 and 1921. Analyses of these ruptures, these outbursts of the negative, is a necessity for those who are partisans of a generalised outburst of the negative in the future (and its becoming a positive world project : communisation), and who aim to lucidly intervene in the development of that negative today.

But a lot has withered since 1921 ... everything has changed. Modernist theorists have tried, in their academic and generally universitaire way, to utter simplistic pseudo-critiques of the periods twist then and now: the Depression, the War, the Restructuration, the 'Sixties Market, the Crisis. (I'm thinking particularly of the Autonomist gurus). But what about us, their enemies?

Considering precisely the problems for revolutionaries, for dialectical theory and the practice and social war associated with it, we cannot forget that bourgeois society is profoundly historical - whenever we stay in a town, wear clothes, eat, travel or get insulted by the lies of politicians, this should be obvious. Cyclical time is gone for ever. Not to understand this is not to understand the bourgeois revolutions, let alone capitalist development since "1914". Moreover, the historical terrain on which revolutionary consciousness develops in essence is the terrain of quality - which is one example of what Debord and Sanguinetti pointed out in 1971 ("The Veritable Split in the International") the qualitative development of the productive forces is the historical question par excellence.

So how does the perspective of history and quality relate to the aspect of historical theory which deals with an analysis of the development of capitalism and its enemies since 1921? Well, firstly it forbids flirtation with an Autonomist view of history, with the proletariat's quantitative struggle supposedly being the motor of all capitalist development, and especially Keynesianism. (Oh yeah? So the conditions for post-war reconstruction weren't caused by the war after all? So it was proletarian strength which forced Bretton Woods on the bourgeoisie? Don't make us laugh!) At least Tronti had the honesty, just like Bernstein in a different time, to follow where this conception leads : back to the official labour movement, in his case Stalinism in its Western form.

Sure, history is the history of class struggle, but the Autonomist understanding of this in no way caters for how wars fit in with history, and so is incapable of understanding the basis for post-1945 development, or even for what was qualitatively new about the movements for revolutionary workers' councils of 1918-21. (In what period was a revolutionary opposition to social democracy and the labour movement first expressed? When did wildcat strikes first appear and begin the train of events which led to their seeing their own potential in terms of a mass movement? During war.) Indeed, to speak of "autovalorisation" as the key to revolution smells of its place of origin ...

In fact, it was the destruction of the revolutionary proletarian movement by the early '20's which paved the way for capitalist reorganisation in the late '20's and the '30's (New Deal, Nazism, Popular Fronts, National Government, Stalinism), and for the war, which came because, even with a totally routed proletariat, competition can never be definitively ended, or even stopped from intensifying, by means of austerity or protectionism. On a world level, the chances for the communist perspective emerging from proletarian struggles before a world war (i.e. resumption of world war) were dead by 1921. The 1926 General Strike was lost not in 1926, but in 1921. This is not, of course, to dismiss the profound (but neither theorised nor unified) experiences and ruptures in Spain in 1936-37, as some Italian ultra-leftists did at the time.

After the massacres of 1939-45 and the increase in standards of living of proletarians in advanced countries (U.S., most of Europe, Japan, Germany, ...), and in some towns in "developing" ones (Brasilia, Prague), what was on the cards, and what was beginning to be understood by subversives in the early '60's, was the emergence out of the historical "muck of ages" (since 1921) of the

quality of proletarian struggle, the perspective of total social war and total revolution. I.e. the communist perspective. Of course, there is still a long way to go, and the possibilities for the development of this quality are appearing, and being set back, under different guises over the surface of the globe. The possibility for revolutionary resurgence and insurgency is part of the generalised social crisis, the crisis of capital accumulation which Luxemburg, in her time, understood so well on the economic level. (Or rather, it's part of a period of this social crisis where capital hasn't yet routed our class to the degree which would be necessary to ensure that class peace won't be disturbed enough to prevent imperialist war.) But these possibilities are what subversives are interested in, subjectively.

Secondly, the Second World War changed the world. It was the greatest motor of capitalist development since the funerals of 1921.

In 1914, capitalism was leaving its "ascendant" period proper, entering "decadence" on a world scale, and entering such contradictions which could only, in coming decades, be offset by mass destruction. It was proletarian combativity, the immature development of weaponry, and the scope for capitalist accumulation, particularly in Russia (through terrorism against the proletariat and the kulaks), which stopped 1939 from happening in 1919.

1939-45 was the crunch. After smashing the revolutionary movement by 1921 (whose last manifestations were in the country where it had been the most advanced, Germany), capitalism in 1939 could show what it was made of — historically, it could destroy as much as it wanted to, to offset the deepening of its subterranean crisis: decadence. The late '60's, the definitive end of the epoch of so-called "commodity abundance" in the North, were the entering into crisis of the greatest reprieve for an alienated society which this world has ever seen, which started in 1921 and ended four or five decades later.

What would be necessary for capital to counteract its social crisis this time round is a destruction which would make 1939-45 look mild; what is necessary for us is a development of proletarian class struggle (in theory and practice, quantity and quality) which would make the executions carried out by Max Hölz and his comrades, the hanging of political policemen in 1956 in Budapest, and the dispatching of black collaborators with the South African White State by poor blacks, look like half-measures.

The '90's or the first decade of the millennium will see total war, either one way or the other.

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The article below sets out some of the economic, political and military facts about the Second World War and its context. A further article will deal with other aspects of the war, especially the strengths and weaknesses of the class struggle, and another one will deal with the period from 1944-45 until the late '60's and May '68.

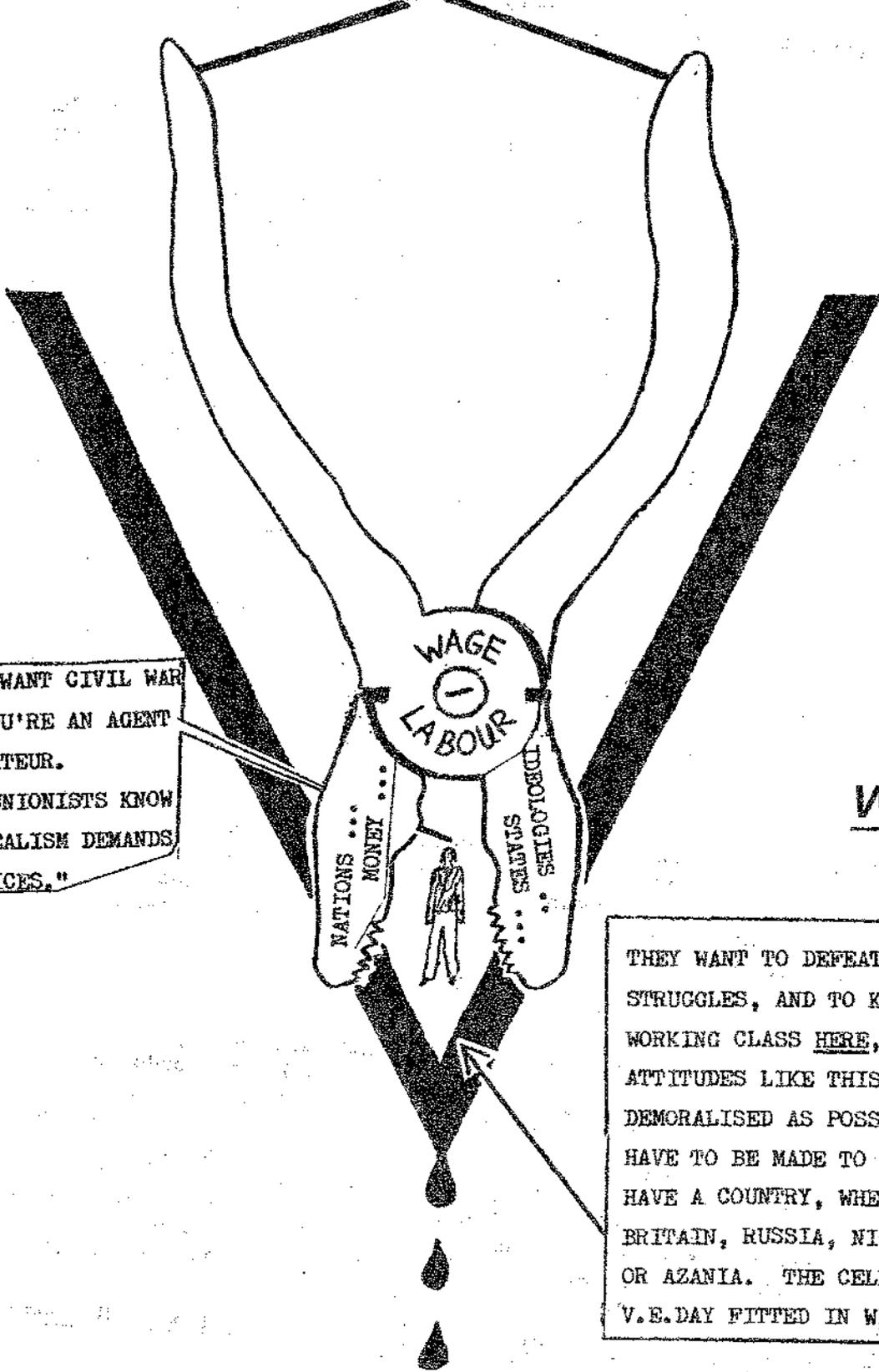
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As an attack against the celebrations of the fortieth anniversary of the victory of the Allies in the Second World War, some revolutionaries in London came together to publish a leaflet (4 sides A3) called "VICTORY IN EUROPE - DEFEAT FOR THE WORKING CLASS". Includes articles on: why the celebrations are happening, what the present peace is all about, the ideology of war and its offshoots ("excitement", "community", "nostalgia", "humour"), Zionism, facts about the war and its causes and effects, the false alternative between fascism and democracy, the tensions which cause all bourgeois wars, peace and its defenders (pacifists,...), the Gulf War and resistance to it, and our war, a war of total annihilation against wage-labour.

This is available from Some Anti-Patriotic Proletarians, C/o B.M. - CRL, LONDON WC1N 3XX. (full address), for 15p. plus stamped addressed envelopes.

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WAR PEACE

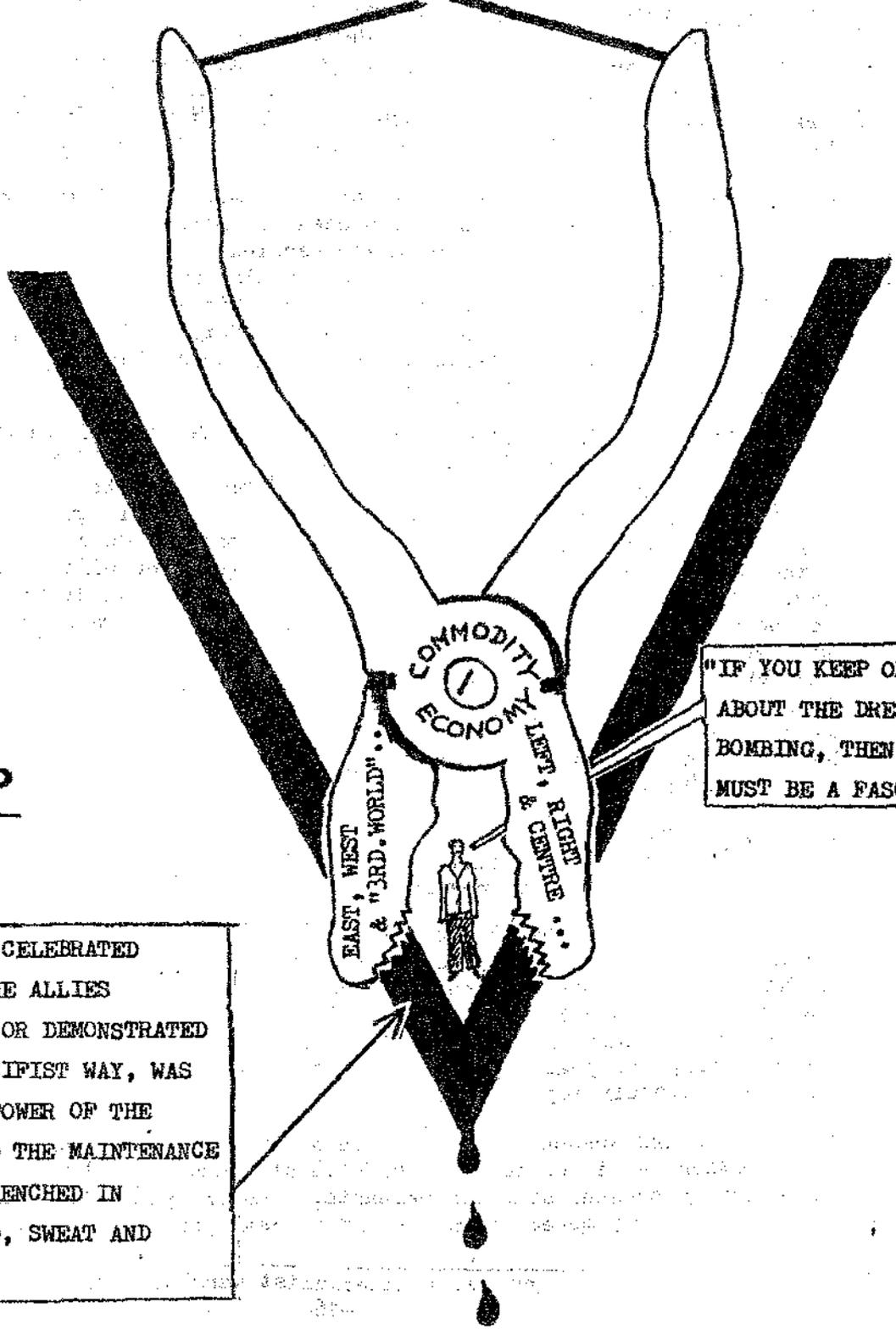


"IF YOU WANT CIVIL WAR  
THEN YOU'RE AN AGENT  
PROVOCATEUR.  
TRADE-UNIONISTS KNOW  
THAT REALISM DEMANDS  
SACRIFICES."

WHOSE

THEY WANT TO DEFEAT ALL PRESENT  
STRUGGLES, AND TO KEEP THE  
WORKING CLASS HERE, WITH  
ATTITUDES LIKE THIS, AND AS  
DEMORALISED AS POSSIBLE. WE  
HAVE TO BE MADE TO THINK THAT WE  
HAVE A COUNTRY, WHETHER IT'S  
BRITAIN, RUSSIA, NICARAGUA, POLAND  
OR AZANIA. THE CELEBRATIONS FOR  
V.E. DAY FITTED IN WITH THE ENEMY'S

# DEMOCRACY FASCISM



"IF YOU KEEP ON ABOUT THE DRESDEN BOMBING, THEN YOU MUST BE A FASCIST."

## VICTORY ?

NEEDS. WHOEVER CELEBRATED THE VICTORY OF THE ALLIES FORTY YEARS AGO, OR DEMONSTRATED "SORROW" IN A PACIFIST WAY, WAS CELEBRATING THE POWER OF THE RULING CLASS, AND THE MAINTENANCE OF THIS POWER, DRENCHED IN PROLETARIAN BLOOD, SWEAT AND ALIENATION.

# 1. WAR\* IS CAPITALIST ACCUMULATION CARRIED ON BY OTHER MEANS.

## Notes on the Second World Imperialist War

On the continent of Europe during the '30's the strongest powers were undoubtedly Russia and Germany. Both were faced with specific problems in the context of the decade of generalised capitalist crisis after 1929. Russian capitalism had to compress a phase of development which had taken centuries in countries like Holland and England into a few decades. And German capitalism, confined within the borders of 1918 (having less land than in 1914), was crippled by lack of markets and resources to a greater extent than the "colonial" powers. The project of finding a "breathing space" (Lebensraum) in Eastern Europe, as laid out in Mein Kampf, would have allowed Germany to seize mineral resources and to exploit new "colonies". In the meantime, German capital was faced with the necessity of pursuing ultra-protectionist policies. Hence the Nazi campaigns against external finance capital, and for State-stimulated production for the internal markets (e.g. Volkswagen, the people's car). War between Russia and Germany was an obvious long-term necessity for capitalist development.

It is true that the isolated position of German capital in Europe (it had few places to sell) made sure that it needed war more urgently than its rivals. Truly, war is capitalist accumulation carried on by other means. Each national capital needs to minimise imports and maximise profits through sale, for which it needs a market. That no capital can solve this in isolation is shown by the Nazi project, for which even the relative safety of Greater Germany (i.e. the right of national self-determination for all Aryan Germans, whether in Austria, Bohemia, Poland,...) proved insufficient.

The British and French rulers could see the necessity of a Russo-German War. This is why they agreed to the remilitarisation of the Rhineland in 1936, which was strictly against the armistice conditions which they themselves had imposed on Germany at Versailles 17 years previously. Their agreement with the expansion of Germany to include Austria and part of Czechoslovakia was part of a tactic of waiting to see what pickings would be on offer after a Russo-German War. What had changed by the time Nazism and Russian State capitalism invaded Poland was that Russia and Germany had signed a non-aggression pact. Germany was now, in the short-term, more secure, especially seeing that Rumania, Bulgaria and Hungary were all pro-German - they all had large pro-Nazi fascist parties. If war was to come against Britain and France, Germany would fight it, but expected it to be over quickly, after which it could turn on Russia. Russia, on the other hand, preferred to wait and see, just as France and England had done in the preceding days. Meanwhile, Germany could draw strength from Polish industry.

Russian and German troops met halfway across Poland at Brest-Litovsk, 3 weeks into the war. 21 years beforehand, 2 other treaties in this town had born witness to Lenin's honest "war on revolutionary war" and "defence of the nation".

The equilibrium had changed so that France and Britain had to seek war with Germany. Not yet a "total" war, but a limited expense to maintain the tension in Europe. The Nazis, on the other hand, also did not at first want a total war against Britain and France. The first 6 months of the war were known as the "phoney war"; when Chamberlain said that Hitler had missed the bus, he was already suing for peace. But when Germany invaded Scandinavia and the Low Countries, this was obviously impossible.

The British and French war effort did not yet have to mean a war of total annihilation - it could still have meant truncating the German Reich and economically pressurising its remnants, like in 1918. But, unlike in 1918, the revolutionary movement was in effect dead, and in the end the Allies could

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\* when non-revolutionary, like imperialist wars or national liberation wars.

(in 1945) bring Germany fully under their own imperialist domination, having played a part in the killing of 50 million proletarians in Europe, without the danger of fraternisation and uprisings against the war. There was no chance of the imperialist war being turned into a civil war, of the war between States being turned into a war between classes. The preceding 20 years had seen the physical crushing of practical tentatives towards communist revolution - the great revolutionary workers' uprisings in dozens of cities across Europe were mostly diverted by social democracy or Bolshevism: the minorities of revolutionaries who had called and struggled for the dictatorship of the whole proletariat had been all but wiped out. The vast majority of the working class did support the Second World War, and the after-effects are still with us. Much ruling class and "oppositional" ideology depends on it, even today.

The terrorism of the war was represented by most of capitalism and its trade unions as just another reason to work together for the war effort, to refrain from striking, to support the war. There were exceptions -- in England, the so-called "Communist" Party opposed the war for the first 2 years on grounds of support for the Hitler-Stalin Pact, and the British Union of Fascists opposed the war on pacifist grounds (e.g. couldn't Britain and Germany work together peacefully without a war?)

June 1940 saw a recreation of one of the battles of the First World War in North-East France, but with the opposite result: Germany won and British troops had to evacuate. Italy entered the war now that things were getting graver and parts of South France like Nice and Corsica might be there for the taking. Hitler saw the chance of taking France, making peace with Britain, and then attacking Russia. Now came the split between Britain and France. A fascist government was elected by the French democratic National Assembly, which then signed a separate peace with the Nazis at a time when the Northern half of France was occupied by Germany and Nazi troops were already goose-stepping up the Champs-Élysée. This government was in no way a "puppet" of the Nazis. This is only a lie by which de Gaulle's putachists tried to "legitimise" themselves, to claim to be more "patriotic" than the French fascists. This lie also serves to strengthen the lie that "fascism is the ultimate evil, therefore all fascists are the same". On the contrary, French fascism was a necessary policy of French capitalism and the same goes for Nazism in Germany as regards the needs of German capitalism. French fascism under Pétain consistently refused to join the war against England, which would, in 1940, have given the Nazis too much of a boost in North-West Europe.

Soon Russia invaded the 3 Baltic States (important because of their coastline), thus decisively altering the balance in North-Central Europe. The Nazis saw the danger, and after the Russo-Japanese non-aggression pact looked as though it would allow Russia to concentrate on its Western flank, Germany invaded Russia. The Nazis may well have been able to conquer Britain in 1941 (as in 1940), but their defence may not have been strong enough to defeat a Russia attack, so they had to attack Russia. In war, each side lays down the law to the other.

By the end of 1941, German troops were attacking Moscow, which gave Japan the chance; (seeing that Russian capitalism was involved in defending its capital city) to flex its muscles in the Pacific area by attacking Pearl Harbour. On the level of State lies (U.S. intelligence knew of Japan's attack beforehand), this provided the final "excuse" for the U.S. to enter the war, which had already started in an undeclared form in the Atlantic, but which, if declared immediately by the U.S., would not have received so much support either from the whole of the U.S. ruling class or from the proletariat.

United States ~v~ Germany ... Imperialism of finance capital and post-New Deal ventures ~v~ Imperialism of the Aryan "Lebensraum" and the pure and simple seizure of raw materials (including slave workers) by the Nazis.

The programme of Mein Kampf was now seem to be a very accurate strategic assesement of the chances of the German bourgeoisie. With one exception - it was now involved in a war on two fronts. The plan of seizing part of Europe

to realise the fascist ideal of a non-competitive capitalism with closed borders, advantages for part of the industrial working class, and superexploitation for the rest, had been superseded. The Allies had forced the war onto a higher level. It could now only be a war of total annihilation.

In the winter of 1942-3 came the turning point of the war when Russian troops retook Stalingrad. A million died in the battle, which lasted for 138 days over a city a quarter as big as London. Six million had died in the battle for Moscow a year beforehand. Germany and Italy suffered other setbacks later in 1943 when Russia retook several major cities (Kharkov, Kiev, Smolensk, Dnepropetrovsk,...) and when Britain won the North African arena.

Roosevelt, Stalin and Churchill began to discuss what to do with Europe after the war. If they won the war, as looked likely, each wanted to win the peace against the others. In 1943, after the Allies won in Tunisia and had Sicily given to them by the Mafia, the bulk of Italian capitalism changed sides. The Italian Fascist Party went through the motions of "dissolving" itself, and the Nazis were forced to invade Italy, seize Rome, and consolidate Mussolini's former holdings in the Balkans.

In the summer of 1944, the Allies invaded Normandy and retook Rome. Rome had been the subject of a race between U.S. and British troops - soon such races were to happen over many of the major cities of Europe. De Gaulle, for instance, just managed to set up a government in Paris before the U.S. troops arrived. In most countries of Europe, a major split within the Allies was taking shape: between the Stalinist parties and their more right-wing bedmates in the Anglo-American-Gaullist family, which was itself divided.

The U.S. aimed to invest and valorise its capital in Europe; Russia aimed to get some of the raw materials in Germany and central Europe; Britain aimed to seize the Ruhr and pursue interests in the Balkans, especially Greece. In this "cold" war already taking place, Russia could count on limited support from the so-called "Communist" Parties in Central Europe (which had played a big part in the defence of their respective fatherlands), and the U.S. was torn between military interests (smashing Germany) and financial interests (investing in Germany). The post-1945 imperialist colouring of the map was shaping up. But so were the contradictions within it.

In view of the slow Allied campaigns in France, Italy, Germany and Czechoslovakia, it was even more unclear as to which Allied army would destroy or conquer which German city first. Churchill, who had backed De Gaulle's putschists since 1940 (not without disagreements) was well-placed to know about the splits inside Allied national liberation forces, in particular the arguments between Stalinist Parties and their right-wing allies. He knew a bit about Stalinism's possibilities in Europe. American capitalism was at this time less well-informed, and underestimated the size of the coming splits. Churchill urged the U.S. to get to Berlin before Russia did, but urged in vain. The U.S. allowed Russia to take Berlin.

Stalin was pushing forward extremely vigorously. A "human sea", including unarmed children ordered to pick up arms from the fallen, was invading Southern and Eastern Germany. Towns like Breslau became battlefields. The non-Russian Allies tried to match Stalin's vigour by means of the terrorist bombings of Dresden and Cologne.

During and after such fierce battles at the end of the war, numerous plans were bandied about. The Morgenthau Plan suggested sending the bulk of Germany back a few centuries to an autarchic and purely agrarian economy, whilst making allowances for the Ruhr to become an internationally-controlled zone. Fuller, a U.S. statesman, suggested making Germany into a "super-concentration camp".

In the end, the U.S. achieved massive capital investment in Europe; Russia achieved Stalinist regimes in central Europe and the annexation of part of Poland (which itself annexed Silesia from Germany) and a small part of the old East Prussia (including Königsberg, renamed Kaliningrad); and Britain occupied the Ruhr and sustained the Greek monarchy; France was weaker, occupying less strategic parts of Germany and Austria, and eventually losing economic control of the Saar region to Germany in 1957.

What really comes across from an analysis of post-1945 Europe is that the Allies did not solve all their problems ... As long as imperialist war leaves some territory intact and does not destroy the world, it cannot end war, but only offset it. Only capitalist war can produce capitalist peace, and vice versa. Only revolutionary class war can overthrow the society of which they are both part and to which they are both necessary at different times.

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FROM DRESDEN TO BRADFORD.

War is big news. No-one spoke of the danger of a Second Great War in the decade following 1918, even after France and Belgium invaded the Ruhr in 1923, but speculation as to a Third World War began virtually as soon as the Second one had ended, as soon as the Allies tried to ideologically justify the war by means of the show-trials of various Nazi killers at Nuremberg. Hitler was telling the truth when he said: "If we win the war we shall go down in history as the greatest statesmen of all time; if we lose, we shall go down in history as the greatest criminals of all time."

As long as the concentration-camp of wage-labour and the commodity economy exists, i.e. as long as it is not destroyed by the class which has no interest in it and therefore has no country, there will always be tendencies towards war.

These tendencies are falsified, glamorised and/or used as bogeymen by the dominant order in order to bind us around those important weapons of world capitalism: States. In the '30's, proletarians in Europe rallied around "their" ruling classes via ideologies such as fascist ideology and anti-fascist ideologies, plus the terrorism which accompanied their imposition and acceptance.

Anti-fascists are those who call for defending non-fascist kinds of capitalism against the bogeyman of fascism... It is just a sick joke, and the truth, when the French National Front leader Le Pen can call himself a "Churchillian democrat". The struggle between fascism and democracy shouldn't interest us at all. Fascism can transform itself into democracy when capitalism needs it to, and vice versa. And bourgeois democracy, even when involved in a war against fascism, such as 1936-39 (Spain) and 1943-45 (Italy) and 1973 (Chile) has always known how to crush uprisings and disarm the proletariat whenever the need arises.

From Churchill to the Trotskyists, whilst not forgetting the anti-fascist anarchists (whether inside a government like Montseny, or outside one like Durruti, whose position was to "ignore" - i.e. leave intact - the Republican State whilst calling for an all-class alliance against fascism), non-fascist capitalism is seen as something which proletarians have to pull together with unions and bosses in order to defend, and to be ready to die for and to kill other working class people for. This is how the rulers want us to remember WW2.

Today, this comes on top of moral arguments between those able to speak publicly in the spectacle: was Dresden a "legitimate" military target? ... Was the object to attack Nazi communication lines? ... Or was it "recklessness" which deserves posthumously-slapped wrists for the RAF? ..... Was it "justifiable" (i.e. glorifiable)? Or was it "unjustifiable" (i.e. deserving of an apology)?

What is essential is that proletarians were slaughtered for the interests of capital accumulation. If Auschwitz was the realisation of the SS slogan regarding the Jews which said "Your death is our obligation", Dresden was only the realisation of the slogan which said; "Time is precious ... for each Bill Smith there is a Wilhelm Schmidt. Your opposite number works fast. You must beat him. IT'S YOUR PERSONAL WAR". This slogan was part of a poster put out by the British Ministry of Information encouraging male and female industrial workers in Britain to work hard for the war effort and to revel in the slaughter of their opposite numbers in Germany.

"The murder of one person is a tragedy; the murder of a million is a statistic", said Stalin, accurately characterising the War and the part of his and other national capitalist classes in it. This also shows the precise difference between, for example, post-1945 Allied propaganda about the war, and bourgeois propaganda about such events as the murders of women by the Yorkshire Ripper, or the disappearance of proletarians at the Seveso accident or the Bradford football fire.

Given the weakness of the miners' strike - in a word, trade unionism - it was inevitable that it would be defeated without its aims - the prevention of job losses - being achieved. But despite this weakness, the real and growing gains in consciousness, among miners, miners' wives, and the rest of the working class in Britain and internationally, cannot be over-estimated. The lessons of the greatest and most violent strike in British history are maturing in the working class...

...The miners' strike's strength derived largely from the organisation of women in mining communities. This was a result of the weakness of trade-unionism among women. Without the union leaders and traditions to tell them how to behave, which have weakened the class struggle in Britain for 100 years, women simply got on with what needed to be done. Far from being the weakest section of the working class, unable to fight back against the bosses' onslaught because they are unorganised, women have shown time and again that it is their very lack of involvement in the organisations that hold men back, that enables them to organise themselves and carry out their own decisions and actions.

The violence of the State, the occupations, imprisonment, beating of innocent workers [and guilty ones - but so what if they're innocent or guilty? - ACE Note ], prevention of movement across county boundaries to go picketing, showed to thousands of workers the nature of class society. All the lying crap about civil liberties, fair play, the peaceful nature of class struggle in Britain - all this has been revealed for what it is. The law is a weapon in the hands of the ruling class - when it is insufficient, it is simply ignored or changed. The media are tools of the rulers of society - this is just as true in Britain as in Russia. Workers who were once fairly conservative, who used to respect the police, now see their true nature. These lessons will not be forgotten, not by anyone in mining areas, nor their children, nor their grandchildren. This shows how people learn in struggle. Thousands of workers have been politicised by the strike. The understanding of these points was shown in every act of class violence, against police, press and TV scum, NCB property and scabs. The hit squads, who organised paramilitary attacks on the class enemy, were supported by militant miners and all class conscious workers. The burning of scab buses and scabs' homes, NCB office blocks and pit heads, pointed the way forward to what will have to be done in the future. The community riots which swept mining communities, in which police stations were besieged, and whole villages defended themselves against the State behind burning barricades, armed with petrol bombs, pointed to the revolutionary civil war to come.

The riot is now an established form of class struggle, as it was before the cancer of Labourism took root at the beginning of the century. Numerous anti-police riots have taken place since the miners' strike.

Unfortunately, the vast majority of miners, bogged down with trade union ideas, felt they could afford to be passive throughout the strike. The strike was at its strongest when it went beyond miners themselves, to involve the whole working class community. The involvement of people from all sections of the working class in all the activities of the strike, including riots, hit squads, picketing and collecting money, showed how strikes have to be organised, and how the revolution will occur. The NUM's attempts to limit meetings to its members, dividing the class according to industry [and sex, and area, and democratically -ACE Note ], showed how unions will try to sabotage revolution.

The recreation of human community out of isolation and separation is what the class struggle leads to. In the miners' strike the workers became more aware of this than ever before. The communist revolution is the development of the struggle for community. Class consciousness is the realisation of this aim. This consciousness has clearly begun to emerge.

Miners saw the need to take the struggle to workers abroad. Against the international attack of the ruling class - the import of coal from Poland and oil from elsewhere, to feed the power stations - the workers to some extent organised international solidarity. As well as the enormous financial support

from around the world - which was very important to miners' families, and shouldn't be minimised - there was the total boycott of Australian coal (normally Britain's main exporter), solidarity from dockers around the world, the sabotage of French coal trains. Some workers saw their international interests, and put class before country. Although none of this went anything like far enough to actually prevent scab fuel from pouring in - particularly from Poland, where the workers have been too crushed by McGahey's friends in the "socialist" government to organise solidarity, and much of it was held in check by the unions - all of it shows the way forward to the international class struggle of the future.

At the end of the strike some workers began to see what we are on about when we condemn the trade unions. On the day after the strike was supposed to end, Tuesday March 5th. 1985, I was talking to Kent miners in a Yorkshire miners' club. In defiance of the National Executive, these miners had come up to try to continue the strike. They were planning to lobby Yorkshire NUM. The Yorkshire miners explained how the Yorkshire NUM had, quote, "sabotaged" the strike. Ironically, the end of the strike was not a case of NUM sabotage, as the militants said; it was a result of the drift back to work. NUM sabotage had done its demoralising work long before "Black Sunday". Although Scargill is still worshipped by the miners [i.e. by most of the striking miners - ACE Note] and even by many of their wives, trade unionism as such had been weakened. The NUM showed the nature of trade unionism as a capitalist institution when it held off the crucial picketing of Nottinghamshire in the first week of the strike, in order to "calm things down", to allow a ballot. It showed its nature when it arranged with the police for pickets to be limited at Welsh power stations and steel works. On September 1st., 1984, the Welsh NUM ordered miners who had occupied the entrance to Newport docks to surrender. They did and were arrested. It showed how it holds back the class struggle when it excluded miners' wives and supporters from meetings, and when it tried to stop supporters joining picket lines, and prevented miners from going around recruiting more passive elements into the pickets. The NUM showed its true nature when it stopped mass picketing on the grounds that it couldn't afford it, in Yorkshire and Wales. These area NUMs salted away miners' money, desperately needed by pickets and their families, in foreign bank accounts. The unofficial Lancashire strike committee showed it is possible to avoid the sequestrators by giving their money out to sympathisers, and was thus able to keep the buses running. [But this committee was still a committee of union bureaucrats - ACE Note].

The NUM showed its role when Jack Taylor and other NUM leaders went on TV to condemn the riots, and when Arthur Scargill condemned attacks of scabs at a miners' rally in Stoke at which he shared a platform with Neil Kinnock. It goes without saying that we don't condemn any acts of class violence.

#### TRADE - UNIONS AGAINST THE WORKERS,

Tragedy was mixed with farce when Scargill told miners that he could deliver workers solidarity by appealing to the biggest scabs in the country, the trade union leaders. Many union leaders, such as Chapple and Sirs, never disguised their wish to see the striks defeated. Others such as NUR leader Jimmy Knapp endorsed the solidarity action their members were taking anyway, whilst working overtime to prevent it escalating. Many rail workers wanted to take strike action. When, in response to rank and file pressure, NUR leaders called Midland region out on a one-day protest strike against the victimisation of rail workers who refused to handle coal, Southern Region railmen came out unofficially in solidarity. But this was an exception. In general, militant workers were not prepared to take action without their leaders' backing. The TGWU also played a part in sabotaging the two dock strikes of the summer of '84. They confused dockers and lied to them about what the strike was about, claiming it had nothing to do with the miners. But what broke the dock strikes was the passivity of the dockers. They were largely unprepared to come out for an overtly political strike. Mass pickets of miners might have changed their minds. But miners were too busy chesring Arthur Scargill to do this.

Welsh miners showed that workers have learned a few things since 1926 when they

dangled a noose over TUC leader Norman Willis. The TUC will have to be one of the first targets of future workers' struggles.

But the crisis has not yet reached the stage where most workers have been forced to fight, let alone confront, trade unionism. In the immediate future, we can expect to see this happening. Most workers in Britain are nowhere near as confident of the trade unions as miners are, and most unions are nowhere near as flexible as the NUM. Already, the unions are blatantly sabotaging strikes by introducing compulsory ballots.

"A union is not entitled to organise mass picketing", is Mr. Justice Scott's ruling (Guardian, 11 April 1985). In other words, effective class struggle is now illegal, and most unions, in Britain at least, are notoriously legalistic. In other words, they will find it impossible to organise and thus contain the class struggle. The government's trade union laws are forcing the unions to act more like American-style industrial police than militant saboteurs like the NUM. This may prove to be their undoing.

#### ===== WORLD-WIDE CRISIS ----- WORLD-WIDE STRUGGLE. =====

The international context in which this strike took place is one of rising class struggle. More important than the number of strikes, riots and demonstrations which are blazing across the world, illuminating the darkening skies with the flames of class struggle, is the political background. In the thirties, there were also numerous strikes. But at that time, the working class had just suffered a political defeat. To give just one example, workers still thought Russia was socialist. They still followed the left. Workers today, at least in Europe, are more cynical. As the myriad leftist sects found in the miners' strike, it's not so easy to get workers to accept the moronic ideologies which defeated the workers of 50 years ago. But workers seem more open to real communist arguments today than they did then. The idea that the working class is "undefeated" is true, in the sense that it hasn't been crushed on a massive scale yet.

In addition, the biggest and most contradictory economic system in history is clearly heading for collapse. The US economy is no longer driving the world; it is eating it. The recent surge in the US economy is bombing to an end without having stimulated a world economic recovery. On the other hand, America itself is now burdened by vast trade and government spending deficits. Exports have collapsed because of the overvalued dollar. High interest rates have drained funds from industry and left agriculture as a whole in a state of near bankruptcy - leading to an epidemic of bank failures in the farming states. Whatever measures the US takes to counter these problems will plunge the world into new recession. The ruling class is already attacking the workers of the world in every conceivable way - wage-cuts, repression, carved-up social services and subsidies. The deepening crisis will leave it no option but to intensify these attacks. As each ruling class is forced to attack a large part of its population, the workers will be forced to fight back. They will be forced to see the connection between their struggles and those of their neighbours, and act accordingly.

The capitalist crisis also threatens the imperialist blocs. There will be tendencies towards unplanned wars like the Falklands and internal civil wars between disparate and desperate capitalist factions. The shifting sandbanks of their fragile alliances are shrinking islands in the swamp of their disintegrating economy. The course towards the third world war continues. All these tendencies - splits in the capitalist class, preparations for world war, rising class struggle - are happening at once and are in no sense exclusive. Any combination of them can happen at once, as history shows.....

#### ===== OVER ? NEVER ! =====

The most negative feature of the strike was scabbing. It's necessary to unconditionally support all acts of class violence against scabs, but that's not enough. The revolution won't happen if half the working class has to terrorise the other half. Miners must try to work out how to win back scabs to their class. They should distinguish between hardened scabs and people who were driven back by hardship in the last weeks of the strike. We must work out how to deal with the proven



years, major strikes are, more often than not, either going to be defeated, or else they aren't going to happen. (The case most likely to be an exception is the docks). Restructuration in print and the railways will have an easy ride. Such examples as Denmark and South Africa mustn't let us forget places like France, the fifth largest economy in the world, where the class struggle has been at a very low ebb for the last two years.

From the point of view of the increased "political consciousness" of a minority of radical proletarians, it is obvious that what would be a sign of a move forward, and what should be an integral point of revolutionary intervention, is the formation of revolutionary workers' groups, embodying the self-organisation and strategico-tactical reflection of militant proletarians. All the rest, all the so-called "solutions" and "next steps", are either phrasemongering ("extend" this, "resist" that, "generalise" the other, ...), dissidence ("fight for the right to have rights" ...) or democratic stupidity (fight for a union leadership in tune with the rank-and-file ... blah blah blah). The difficulties in communication and organisation must be seen in a general perspective. One of the central problems is for militant proletarians to overcome the demoralisation and retreat in the face of the lack of courage of their workmates (etc.), for this is the basis reason why so many radical workers look to the unions, to the left, or to democracy. Because they know that if they really say what they really mean and enjoy (the explosive and subversive community which seems possible in the struggle for victory), most other workers would hold back and shun them. What is of the essence is that proletarian combativity finds channels to communicate its reflections ... and this is only happening on a very impoverished level, as witnessed by the lack of a break with reformism made by the local miners' (and miners' support) groups which have organised themselves (though have done little else) more or less outside of the unions, but definitely not against them.

The next few years are going to be decisive. Whilst I agree with Wildcat that an increase in the pace of class struggle could very well be simultaneous with more unplanned wars (this much follows when one sees that the anarchy of the economy is everywhere), an analysis of the present possibilities for struggle shows that either defeats are going to be assured and then rubbed in by means of a positive and widely-held ideology of working class interests being achieved by submission (i.e. not only "we must knuckle down because we don't want to die", but "if we rally round our rulers, we will be positively rewarded"), or else revolution will appear as a concrete possibility ...

The course to unplanned "minor" wars is already open; the course to imperialist world war (after suitable preparation of course) and the necessary, preliminary formation of blocs, is bursting to open, and only intensification of the social war can stop it. The crisis of capital is definitely going to deepen, but on the scale of the next 10 years or so, the course to world war is in the opposite direction to the course to revolution. It's either-or.

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"There arose, therefore, an endeavour to establish maxims, rules, and even systems for the conduct of War. By this the attainment of a positive object was proposed, without taking into view the endless difficulties which the conduct of War presents in that respect. The conduct of War, as we have shown, has no definite limits in any direction, while every system has the circumscribing nature of a synthesis, from which results an irreconcilable opposition between such a theory and practice."

"But our Wars are made up of a number of great and small simultaneous or consecutive combats, and this severance of the activity into so many separate actions is owing to the great multiplicity of the relations out of which War arises with us."

"How we make good our principle of regarding the destruction of the enemy's force as the principal object, not only in the War as a whole but in each separate combat, and how that principle suits all the forms and conditions necessarily demanded by the relations out of which War springs, the sequel will show. For the present all that we desire is to uphold its general importance, and with this result we return again to the combat."

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PEACEFUL PICKETTING? LOBBYING? BEG THE UNION LEADERS TO "ACT IN OUR INTERESTS"? IT'S ALL A TRAF...OUR LIBERATION DEPENDS ON US, NOT ON ANYONE SPEAKING OR ACTING "FOR" US OR "IN OUR NAME"....

FOR A FITZWILLIAM OF THE CITIES!!!!

**Power! Power! Down with 'rights' !**

**Down with all States!**

SOME TALES OF ANGER AND  
PASSION FROM WEST YORK-  
SHIRE, 1985.

"...There've been so many ways that the NUM hasn't helped during the strike - like when they took the minibus away and had nothing to do with our communal kitchens - that it's made me see that we shouldn't ever look to the unions for help. We should organise ourselves outside them, without them, against them..." - Fitzwilliam miners' wife.

"Who wants democracy when you can have a gun?" - Fitzwilliam miner.

"I didn't mind the lefties at first. Then I realised they just wanted to manipulate us" - Fitzwilliam miners' wife.

- FOR WORKING CLASS SELF-ORGANISATION
- AGAINST THE UNIONS AND PARTIES
- AGAINST ALL MANIPULATORS AND BUREAUCRATS
- FOR THE ABSOLUTE POWER OF WORKING CLASS MASS ASSEMBLIES
- FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF WAGE LABOUR, THE COMMODITY ECONOMY AND ALL NATIONS
- DOWN WITH ALL WAYS OF MANAGING EXPLOITATION (BY LEFT, RIGHT OR CENTRE, EAST OR WEST, IMPERIALIST OR ANTI-IMPERIALIST, PRIVATE, STATE OR SELF-MANAGED)
- FOR A WORLD OF THE PASSIONATE REALISATION OF HUMAN NEEDS AND DESIRES IN ALL ASPECTS OF LIFE.....

History does nothing, it does not "possess immense riches", it does not fight battles. It is men, real living men, who do all this, who possess things and fight battles. It is not "history" which uses men as a means of achieving - as if it were an individual person - its own ends. History is nothing but the activity of men in pursuit of their ends. ' Marx.