

ANTI EXCHANGE & MART

FREE



THE GREAT ENTERPRISE SWINDLE
IRELAND
FRAGMENTATION
DEATH TO RANK AND FILISM!

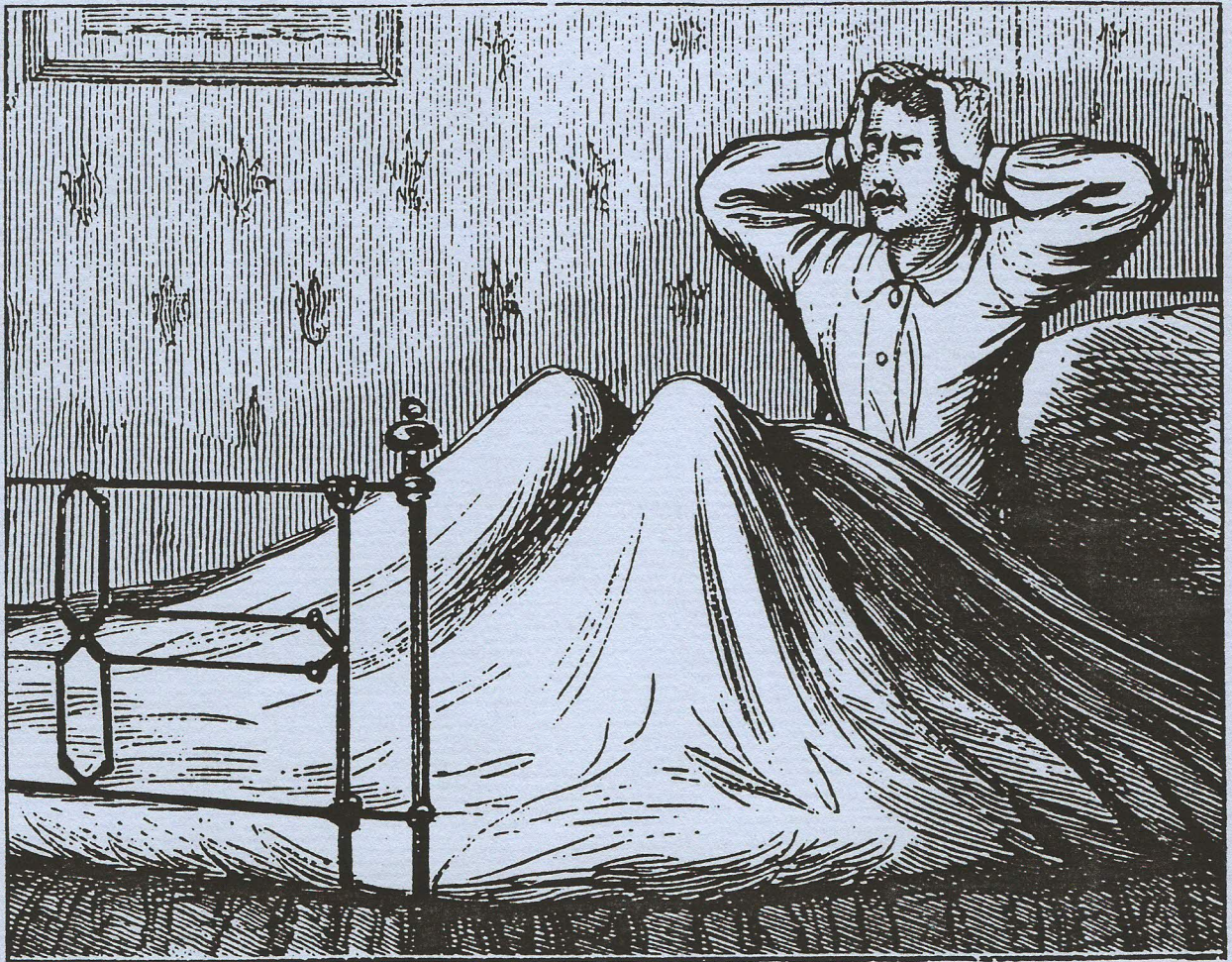
ANTI EXCHANGE AND MART HAS BEEN
PRODUCED BY FOUR PEOPLE

NONE OF US ARE AT PRESENT IN A
POLITICAL ORGANISATION, NOR ARE WE
PLANNING TO START A NEW ONE

AS WELL AS PUTTING OUT THIS
MAGAZINE WE ALSO REPRINT FREE
EDITIONS OF BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS,
AND ARE INVOLVED IN SUCH ACTIVITIES
AS WORKPLACE STRUGGLES AND THE
ANTI POLL TAX MOVEMENT

OUR BASIC POLITICS ARE ANTI
CAPITALIST AND ANTI STATE

WE WELCOME ALL CORRESPONDENCE



The full address for any correspondence is:
BM Makhno London WC1N 3XX

DEATH TO RANK AND FILISM!

This is a contribution to the debate about the rôle revolutionaries should play in the workplace. Parts of it have previously appeared in the ACF journal "ORGANISE!". This is an important and difficult debate, one that all revolutionaries need to come to grips with. We must stop repeating our mistakes, and understand the lure of reformism, and collaborationism with our enemies and the State.

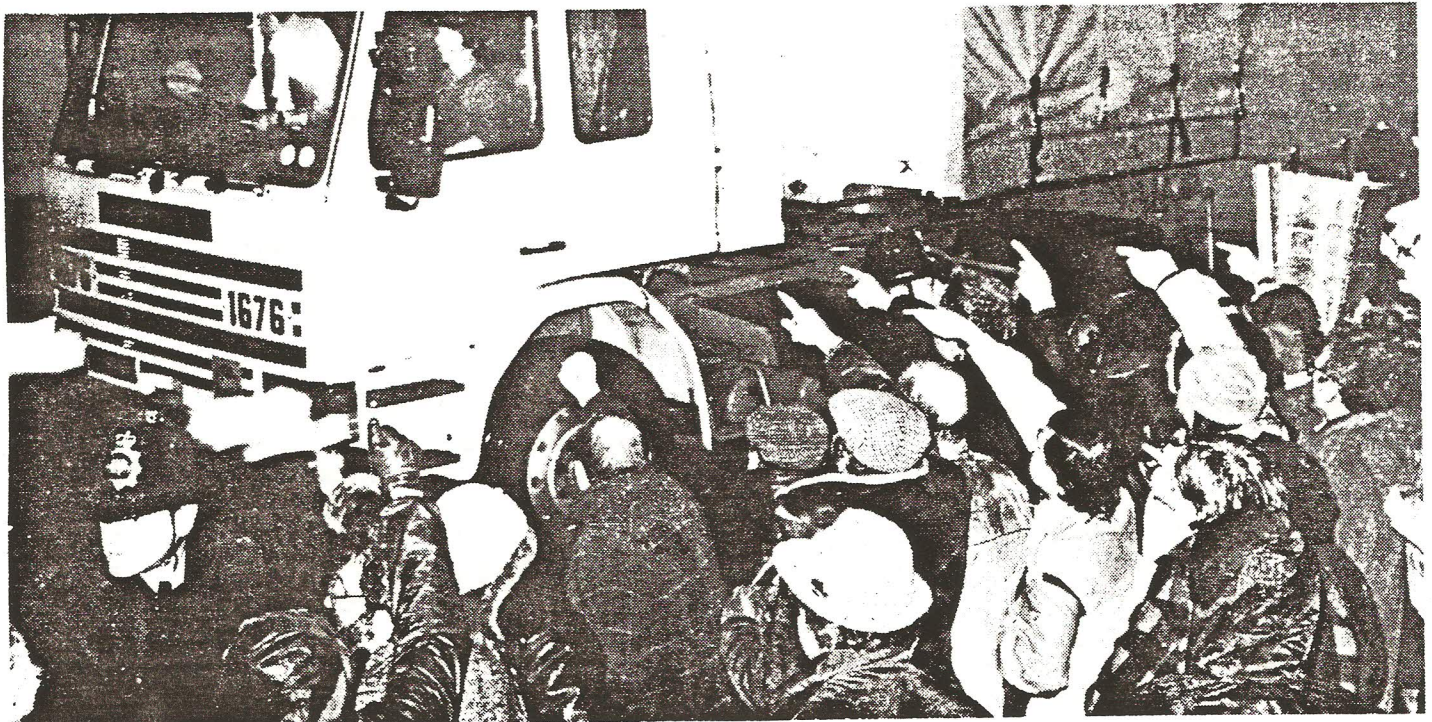
Below is a section from "Industrial Relations", 1987, a handbook for managers produced by The Industrial Society:

"Two Sides?"

Are there two sides of industry? This is a old chestnut and it is as well to get it out of the way.

In the sense that they have different roles to play and different functions to per-

form management and unions do form two sides. In the sense that they have a common interest in the prosperity of industry, there are not two sides. Although it is in the interests of both management and unions that industry should develop and grow, when it comes to deciding how the benefits of growth and development should be shared, their interests are not the same, nor will they necessarily agree about the best method of promoting growth and prosperity. Essentially the role of the unions is to look after the interests of their members (in the long-term as well as the short-term), while management has to judge what is in the best interest of shareholders and customers as well as employees. The fact that their interests are bound to clash when it comes to deciding who gets what share of the cake, all too often obscures the point that management and unions need to



cooperate together to increase the total size of the cake and must cooperate if the economic objectives of the company and all the people in it are to be achieved."

The Union

The traditional form of workplace organisation is the union. Unions evolved in order to defend workers' interests in the here and now. All unions aspire to legality, or recognition, because this makes their day-to-day job possible.

Unions die if they are not accepted to a certain extent by the bosses and the State. If they don't disappear they tend to turn into political organisations. Recognition is accepted by the bosses when the workforce becomes too unmanageable without it.

The union must fulfil a management role by its very nature and at all levels. The bosses will only negotiate with a union if they are pretty sure the membership will follow the union. That is, the union has to be able to control the membership in order to make deals with management. Having accepted the "legality" of capitalism (in return for capitalism's recognition of their legality) the union largely helps keep workers in line and basically argues for a "better" management of the workforce. Differences of opinion between management and union over work practices will usually end up in terms of efficiency. The union will argue that management has its sums wrong, is forgetting larger issues, or eventually if they carry on in such a manner then the discontent they'll face will make their

plans inviable anyway. (This discontent would be hard for the union to control, and the union will use this fact as another bargaining tool with management.)

The unions' only purpose on a day-to-day basis (apart from legal aid, insurance, etc) is as negotiators between workers and managements, their long term aim may be to prove that they are better managers of the economy than the old bosses. In both instances the whole existence of the union depends on the existence of a capitalist economy.

Unions have never tended to become revolutionary, they have always gone the other way - incorporation into the State. This goes for all unions, even anarcho-syndicalist ones. Unions become part of the array of ideological forces used by the State against workers. Unions in any circumstances would rather see struggles lost than for them to get beyond the control of the unions. For all the above reasons, unions can never support the destruction of capitalism.

Rank and Filism

Revolutionaries must abandon once and for all their misty-eyed view of the potential of union organisation and the part unions have had to play in working class history. This also means abandoning rank and filism.

Rank and file groups, or movements, aim to create radical organisations which may or may not be revolutionary. For the "revolutionary", rank and filism in practice means one or more of the following things: putting pressure on the union; linking up the

rank and file of all unions; "democratising" them; and turning the unions, or resulting new unions, into "vehicles for revolutionary change". The rank and file group may claim only to want to put a certain politics on the agenda amongst the membership, but what this means in practice is trying to seize key union posts, if not the leadership itself.

Without a clear awareness of the reformist nature of all permanent economic

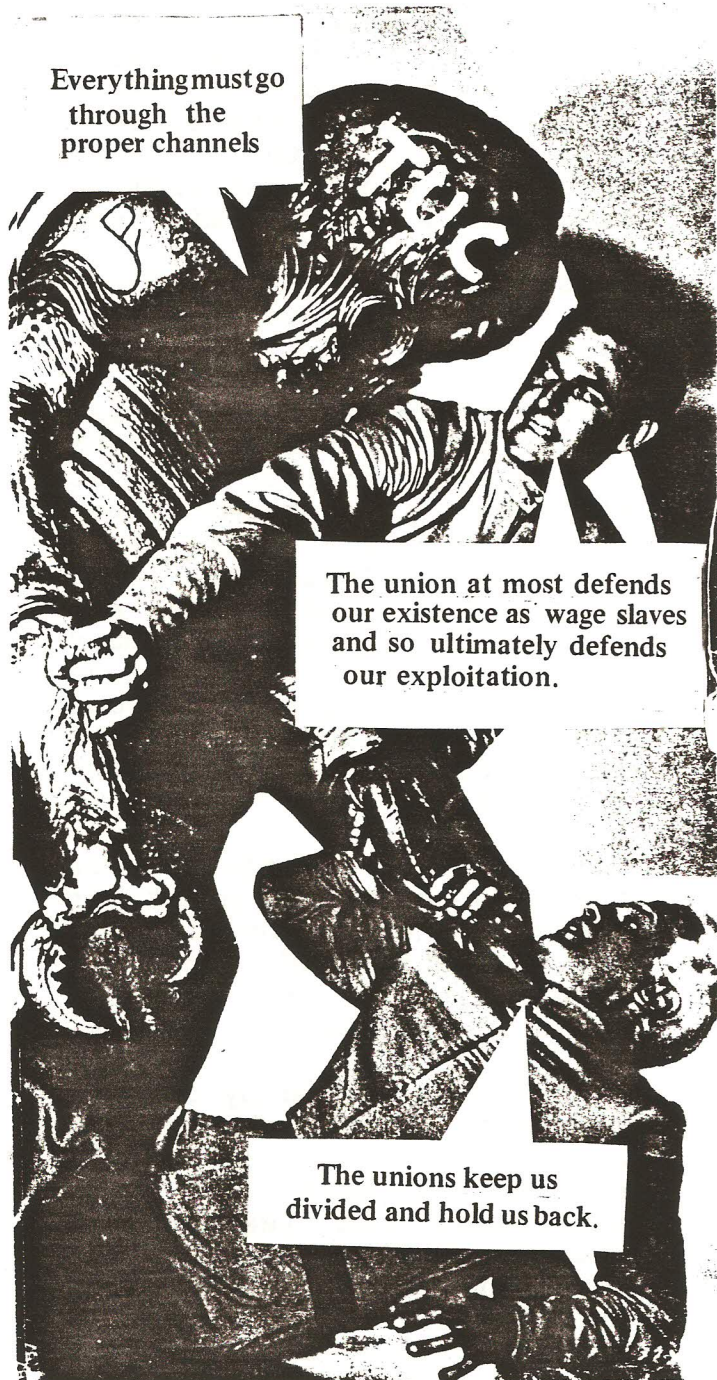
(economic struggles) workplace organisation (i.e. union) revolutionaries will inevitably find themselves up the non-revolutionary alley of rank and file unionism).†

Communication Worker Group

The CWG was set up by members of the Direct Action Movement (DAM) and was a rank and file postal workers group. The DAM promotes anarcho-syndicalism as a means of working class organisation. Anarcho-syndicalists want to organise unions democratically and imbue them with anarchist politics. Such unions, imbued with anarchist methods and ideals, anarcho-syndicalists argue, will be revolutionary.

CWG never got to the stage where the DAM members pushed for it to become a union. CWG, through its bulletin Communication Worker (CW), aimed to inform and radicalise postal workers, to give them more confidence in struggle and to emphasise that active solidarity across trade, industry and union divides was essential if victories were to be won. In the tradition of rank and file groups CWG was open to all militant workers, including low-level union officials, i.e. shop stewards.

For most of the time CWG worked on the basis of an agreement between the various political tendencies. These ranged from anarchist communist to anti-state communist to trotskyist, as well as the original anarcho-syndicalist. As time went by these divisions became more pronounced. Eventually we had to re-emphasise the groups broader rank and file nature by drawing up a basic aims and principles. Due to the variance of views within the or-



ganisation these common denominators had to be very low; thus the aims and principles were virtually meaningless as soon as we had written them.

Obviously, this compromise could not last long. Some of us felt we needed to make deeper and clearer criticisms of unions and rank and filism (i.e. reformism at the workplace). We all saw the potential for a group like CWG to eventually replace the union - in small ways, over certain areas, or totally. To some this was highly desirable of course, but others had misgivings. We realised that we could only replace the existing postal workers union (UCW) with another union, and if CWG expanded and became more successful this is eventually what the group would become.

The questions became: how to work in a rank and file workers group, clearly and consistently attacking the union, without letting the group turn itself into a reformist organisation or union. We liked to see ourselves as a revolutionary group, but what would happen if we were flooded with militant, but reformist-minded workers?; what if these workers wanted the group to articulate reformist demands?; what if we gained more support in a workplace than the existing union, would we then participate in a day to day dialogue with the employers, would we help make deals, would we accept the "legality" of exploitation as long as it was a "fairer" exploitation - i.e. one we had actively agreed to? Would we behave in just the same way as the old union once we had become the workers organisation?

The first problem we tried to tackle was the old one about

being swamped by different-minded individuals.

There was no formal way of preventing people from entering the group, we just hoped that if we didn't like someones politics then the rest of the group would agree and that person wouldn't be let in. Obviously this was not very satisfactory. Some thought we shouldn't let SWP members in, for example, because they were actively pro-statist/authoritarian and they might try to hijack the group. Others thought we should let them in as long as they didn't stray out of line too much or try to push their politics down our throats, thus causing interminable political arguments. Others thought we should let them in since they were militant workers. (None of us considered the politics of the SWP to be revolutionary, by-the-way.)

This problem was never satisfactorily resolved, the reason being that it lies at the crux of the argument over whether a rank and file group can be revolutionary. That is, whether a group that attracts an increasing number of non-revolutionaries (i.e. reformist-minded workers) can remain revolutionary in all its publications and interventions.

Our temporary resolution of the problem was to print our basic aims and principles in the bulletin and hope the "wrong sort" of people wouldn't want to join anyway!

It has been argued by revolutionaries that we should set up groups, encourage people to join and hopefully their experience and learning in the group will turn them into revolutionaries. This might be alright if you have a hierarchical Party of thousands and are recruiting one

or two people a month. But if a drastically smaller group (a few people), with egalitarian methods, recruited that many people as members then they would soon find themselves outweighed by the new recruits and unable to brainwash them fast enough to keep the group on its original lines!

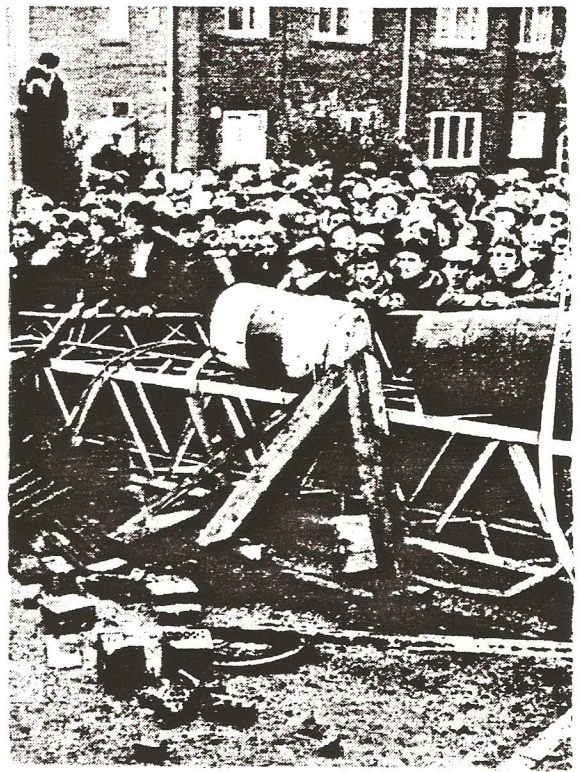
We have enough reformist organisations around already, we don't want to inadvertently create any more.

However, CWG did not need to recruit many more members for it to fall apart over its own internal contradictions. Fortunately the trotskyist tendency went first, and the group retained its fragile stability for a while.

We already had UCW shop stewards in our group, this irked the anti-union tendency of course, but we thought we could work with them, as long as they realised the dangers of their position. However, it meant having disagreements, for example, over who we should target with our propaganda. For instance, there was a plan to leaflet a UCW conference and make interventions at meetings. I argued that it was pointless to argue with the UCW when the ordinary membership weren't there to hear us. Also, I didn't want to recruit any more shop stewards into the group. I lost the argument, but no one went in the end anyway. The question never arose at subsequent conference times.

Don't be a Shop Steward!

Many radicals see the post of shop steward as a key one for gaining influence over their fellow workers and the working class in general. They see the steward as being too low in the union hierarchy to



be overly "corrupted" by it, and it is a post by which people can wield an "official" influence over fellow workers. It is also a post from which you can influence other stewards and union officials, at Conferences for example. People who advocate becoming shop stewards for "revolutionary" purposes obviously believe the lie that union organisation can, if managed correctly, work in favour of a revolutionary working class.

Shop stewards are negotiators, and in spite of their best instincts have to play a similar role, albeit on a much lower key, as top union officials. The philosophy of unionism is one that accepts capitalism, accepts the justice of there being workers and bosses and even at its most extreme only argues for a left-wing implementation of capitalism. A shop steward has to actively work within this philosophy. If not at the instruction of the union and the bosses then at the behest of the members.

A steward who goes wild in

the managers office, threatening to slit their throats every time they act "unfairly" is no use to the people s\he is representing on the shop floor. Management will only listen to a steward if they think s\he can rely on the back-up of the workforce. A shopfloor will only want a steward who they think can defend them in everyday injustices.

A steward who is a revolutionary cannot last, either they will be drawn into the union apparatus through the day-to-day accommodation with management that they have to negotiate for - or they will "go too far" for the members and lose the ability to do a good job as a steward.

CWG Dissolved

Gradually the anti-union tendency realised the impossibility of keeping, or rather making, this rank and file group revolutionary. By no means did this mean we had fully developed our ideas but we did know that we no longer wanted to make the compromises towards unionism that were necessary in working with anarcho-syndicalists. As it happens, the anarcho-syndicalists in the group were thinking that we should go our separate ways also.

The CW bulletin had been very popular among postal workers and had a big print run each issue; during the national strike in 1988 we even had our logo stolen by the Broad Left (a Militant front) and used on their own pathetic leaflets! Anyway, it transpired that CWG dissolved itself one Sunday lunchtime in a pub in central London. Later there was some confusion as to whether the anarcho-syndicalists would carry on producing bulletins under the banner Communica-

tion Worker, but nothing ever came of it and no more CW's were produced.

The Postal Workers Coordination Committee

The anti-union tendency regrouped with the aim of setting up a non-rank and filist revolutionary postal workers group. We gave ourselves the cumbersome title of Postal Workers Coordination Committee (PWCC). Our first, and only, leaflet made obvious that this new group had not, in fact, managed to break out of rank and filism. It aimed to set up a permanent economic workplace group that aimed for rapid growth and it encouraged shop stewards to join. Basically it recreated the old rank and file group, but this time without the anarcho-syndicalists.

We had all rushed to set up the group without enough thought. Anyway, the group did not survive long. Some people, including myself, left the Post Office. In the ashes of the PWCC Class War Postal Workers emerged. At the time of writing this group still exists. The bulletin is very "Class War-ish" and it's hard to tell if it has made any steps forward organisationally or politically.

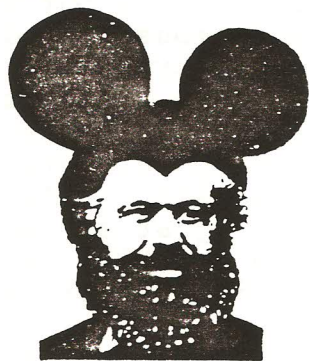
The Action Group For Workers Unity

While the splits in CWG were widening another influence made itself felt in the group. We had contact with the Action Group for Workers Unity (AGWU). This was essentially a front for the dogmatic marxist International Communist Current (ICC). The ICC use the label "counter-revolutionary" for working class activists and groups more freely than air. They are a slanderous

bunch.

Despite this they are fairly good on the role of the unions in the present day, which is why they began to make contact with us.

However, their theory is based on the idea that the unions turned against the working class in 1914, up until the first world war, they argue, "unions were genuine working class organisations which expressed and fought for the interests of the class". The ICC fail to examine the actual nature of unionism in its original state: a negotiation for a fairer form of exploitation. Unions (permanent economic workplace organisations) were destined from the start to act against a more radical or revolutionary working class - there are many instances of this to be found before 1914, in Britain and elsewhere. The ICC have merely come up with another "clever" marxist theory based on "ascendent and decadent capitalism", which in reality, bears no relation to working class experience.



MARXISM

The ICC\AGWU considered the anarcho-syndicalists in our group to be out-and-out counter-revolutionaries, but they saw potential in the rest of us. An honour indeed! (In their paper they claimed to be instrumental in the split and dissolution of CWG, this was just bollocks.)

Anyway, we did have a dia-

logue with them and the main bone of contention between us was over the question of "sectoralism" (or sectionalism): trade, skill, industry and union divisions within the working class. They argued that it was counter-revolutionary to be involved in a plain postal workers group, as it was "sectoral" and excluded the rest of the militant working class.

We argued that it was not necessary that a specific postal workers group was sectoral. Indeed CWG had consistently argued that solidarity across trade and union divisions was essential to victories. We regularly highlighted other struggles in our bulletins and showed why they needed to spread. The fact that we were postal workers aiming to recruit postal workers, who spoke the same "language" as postal workers, contributed to our popularity. Nothing would be more sure to turn ordinary militant workers off coming to meetings than endless political diatribes by the ICC or anyone else. The AGWU was, in a way, a recreation of the London Workers Group which had also tried to draw workers together from different industries. The LWG had fallen apart because it aimed to do too much at too early a stage and because there was too much talking. In the end it was composed only of the hardened politicians. The potential for a postal workers group to grow, initially fighting against union stitch-ups and sectoralism, was more modest but infinitely more practical. And there was no reason why similar groups in other industries could not work together in some way eventually.

More important than these arguments about how to fight sectoralism was the fact that both CWG and the AGWU were

rank and filist. Anti-sectoralism itself does not make one a revolutionary, first of all we had to make sure that what we were doing was not re-treading the path of reformism, and both these groups were doing just that.

The Working Class is not Revolutionary all the Time!

Reformism used to be regarded as steps towards "socialism", now it tends to be associated with the left-wing of Capital. Reformism is everywhere, it keeps many working class activists very busy, and it is fixed like a bumper around our brain, dulling our perception of the real world. There are plenty of reformist workers around, ready to demand a wage rise or abortion rights, without going further. Some revolutionaries think we have to formulate demands for workers to take up because otherwise they wouldn't think of any themselves. This is patronising rubbish, workers are constantly making demands. For us to take a lead in putting forward demands would be merely to lapse into reformism as we gave the impression that a few more crumbs off our masters' tables would appease our real class interests. Our message must be revolutionary, not reformist. We support reformist demands because they create a situation where people can begin to understand better how society operates, where the strength of the working class lies, and who its enemies are. When there is a pay dispute we try to show the way to win it but also why pay rises will never be enough. When we go back to work, whether we have won the dispute or not, it is not the revolutionaries that should negotiate with the bosses, others can do this. Some might say that it seems a bit "purist" to not

negotiate with the bosses oneself if we agree that, in the circumstances, such negotiation is inevitable.

Well, we may win the odd battle in the class war but the working class is always in defeat while there is wage-slavery - so revolutionaries should never lead workers back to work. To do such a thing is to help the bosses manage our long-term oppression - which is what reformism is all about. If we have to go back to work we go as proletarians, not as "managers".

Revolutionaries

As revolutionaries our influence lies in our message, whether it be printed or by personal intervention, and our actions. This message must be clear and honest. We want to put a revolutionary message across, and to do this we can't risk mixing it up with reformist messages.

We may support reformist demands (a wage rise, free abortions, etc.) but we argue for autonomous and effective methods of struggle, and we always argue that it is not enough; that it is always only a temporary and partial gain if we win. Reforms are illusory, just as is the lie that the working class no longer exists in Britain.

There will always be discontent while capitalism, or any form of exploitation, lasts. It is our duty to clearly identify that discontent and help turn it into a desire for revolution. Therefore we must know who and what our enemies are. And we must be implacable...

The bosses do not work with their implacable enemies and we do not work with the bosses, helping them to manage their workforces,

wage-slavery, and society in general. As workers, of course, we are constantly having to carry out their orders and instructions - but we mustn't try to help them manage us. Our humanity exists in large part in our refusing to make things easier for the bosses. Our humanity diminishes the more we accept their inhuman, alienating regime. Resistance to all forms of slavery and alienation (not slipping into the apathetic collaborationism of bourgeois individualism) is the key to a free mind and a humane life.

The Revolutionary Workplace Group

A permanent economic workplace group must always be reformist because it has to operate under the rules laid down by Capital. The rules may change slightly, we may force them to accept secondary picketing, for example, or they may make such action unlawful, but capitalism remains.

What we want throughout workplaces are groups of people who do not accept capitalism and will not negotiate with it. This means not trying to form a union! These groups will try to show the true nature of capitalism and the choices that face the working class. While portraying a life without wage-slavery, exploitation and alienation they will help show how we can take control of our struggles now.

Since we don't want our message to be diluted by reformism we must not simply open the doors to as many militant workers as we can. Our leaflets and interventions, individually or as a group, must be revolutionary. This does not mean letting people participate in the group but denying them any part in the

decision-making process or somehow forcing them to do things for which the meaning is not clear to them or they are misled as to the reason for their actions. This would definitely be a counter-revolutionary thing to do! and is, not surprisingly, the way many left-wing parties operate, such as the SWP, RCP, and Labour Party.

Like CWG the AGWU suffered from this dilemma. It aspired to go beyond the unions, but its programme was only to bring workers together, in permanent groups, on the basis of an anti-sectoral militancy. Although it set out to be revolutionary, in the end the group could only be rank and filist because if it grew as it was intended to, it would soon have more people in it who were reformist-minded, people who, although they disagreed with sectoralism, did see unionism as potentially progressive.

For this reason, if it had been successful, the AGWU would probably have laid the basis for a syndicalist union.

Only revolutionaries can be in a revolutionary group. In revolutionary times this group will swell, at other times it will remain small.

This group does not have to be a formal group with a flash name and a distinctive letraset, but the people who make it up must work and grow together during the non-revolutionary times - and must operate with a common mind in a revolutionary situation.

As revolutionaries we have tried to learn certain truths and during hectic times we must impart our knowledge all the more forcefully. We will understand the manoeuvring of the Left and Right and we will fight against the re-

placement of the old bosses with new ones.

Our workplace groups will try to expose Capital and the unions; they will inform workers of the state of struggle elsewhere in the class; they will make tangible interventions during struggle, for example, organising flying picketing, sabotage, unofficial mass assemblies, arguing for the dispute to go beyond the control of the union (in fact nearly all strikes are unofficial to begin with, the union makes them official in order to be able to control them).

If, for example, we find ourselves on an unofficial strike committee we will give up the post as soon as the struggle is over or the committee starts to try to hold back the workers or make deals with the bosses. (This may, of course, happen from the start, in which case we turn against it at that moment.) Better than forming unofficial strike committees we will form ourselves into groups to carry out specific tasks - eg. secondary picketing, leafleting, sabotage. Here also, we must be careful not to carry on these groups after the struggle as rank and file alternatives to the union; if fellow workers want to do this then we must argue against it and have no part in it. It may carry on as an informal struggle-type group but we don't try to lead it as a permanent workplace group. This may be difficult of course! But it must be done to preserve our identity as revolutionaries and our ability to tell the truth.

The experience of CWG has taught us that reformism is a many-headed monster and that one of its heads is rank and filism. Just as we must abandon unionism we must abandon rank and filism. It is the most important task revolu-

tionaries have to face and they have had to face it all this century. It is the drawing of the line between reformism and revolution.

This essay is only a small contribution to that process.

† Footnote:

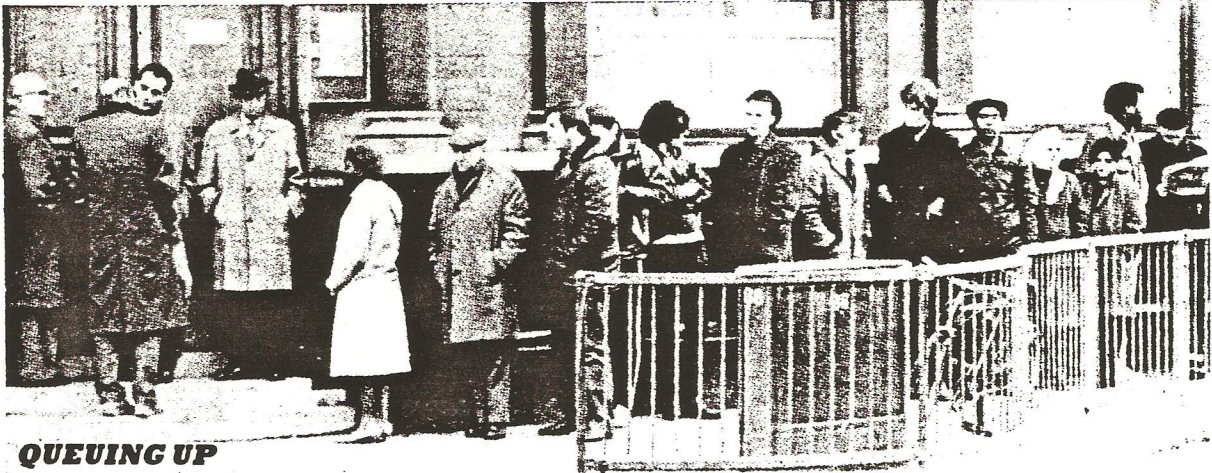
Despite being anti-union for revolutionary reasons it is probably advisable to join a union if there is one at your place of work. Being in the union enables you to attend union meetings, where you can put your point of view across and keep up with what is going on elsewhere in the union. Not joining the union straight off can also cause difficulties with your relationship with other workers; often there is an unofficial closed shop, or you may get taken for some sort of extreme right-winger. It's also probably not advisable to get into an argument with people on the first day because you aren't going to join. Another reason is that you can get things like legal expenses. Of course these are not hard and fast principles and different situations may require different responses.

What is most important is that we take no hand in the setting up of unions, for whatever reason and in whatever circumstances. We can do better than that!



Spanish workers (Groucho-Marxist) saying "You've got to be optimistic".

THE GREAT ENTERPRISE SWINDLE



QUEUING UP

CITY COMMENT

We often hear a lot about how the unemployed are being shunted onto schemes so the government can fiddle the figures. Well one particular "get off the dole" scheme that seems popular at the moment is the enterprise allowance scheme. Many unemployed (including not a small number of marginal politico subversive types) are moving onto EAS as a route of temporary escape from restart and the increasing insecurity of the dole.

The enterprise scheme is attractive as a form of promotion for dolees with pay rises from about £30 income support depending on age to £40 p.w. allowance plus legitimate perks. All you have to do is to turn a hobby into a supposed "business", make some effort at keeping accounts etc and show that at the start you technically have available £1000 in a bank account for a few days (which isn't as difficult as it sounds). After that you can either put your feet up earning some extra money when you feel like it or take it seriously slaving in some small business, counting every penny hoping one day to get rich. It all looks far too easy so, why

does the government promote this? It can't simply be a question of "fiddling the figures" and keeping the statistics down, a large proportion of those on the scheme are still effectively not working and they're getting more money than they were before! So why does the government fund all this?

SHARE PRICES

The usual criticism of those who sell out and beam up to the enterprise is that they are allowing themselves to be bought off, turned into hip capitalists, greedy little shopkeepers and traders, all eventually to become super rich Malcolm Maclaren type entrepreneurs. Now the

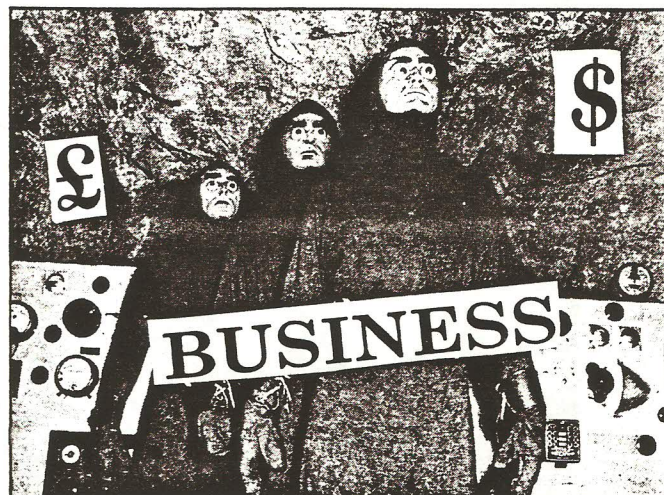
authorities are quite aware that there is a thriving underground economy which is undermining the regular economy. By dodging tax or moonlighting while still on the dole individuals can achieve some temporary independence from regular employment and the jobs market. Also some of the underground economy smells a bit socialist with people doing odd jobs and providing services to their friends and neighbours on the basis of need. Part of the function of a scheme like the

enterprise is to recuperate these different types of productive activity and feed them back into the regular market economy. Individuals with a particular skill or hobby who would usually regard it as just a hobby or odd job they can do for friends on a sharing basis are now manipulated into a situation where they start to manage that activity as an enterprise and start organising that activity along the lines of business and money. What was before a voluntary and communal activity now becomes increasingly subject to the dictates of the market system and the demands of profit. At the moment the enterprise scheme is administered in a sloppy way and it is easy to carry on a communal effort under the cover of a sham business, but there is bound to be a clampdown and tightening of the rules in the future. The enterprise scheme starts its bad work simply by turning non enterprise activities into enterprise! This is the first step.

Enterprise

The enterprise allowance scheme also has the obvious role of divide and rule. It temporarily removes the more active and assertive dole elements from the dole struggle frontline and separates several hundred thousand from the rest of the unemployed. These several hundred thousand are one minute unemployed workers regarding themselves as nothing more than workers. The next minute they are suddenly lifted up technically to the status of entrepreneurs where they are encouraged to identify their interests with those of the business sector and regard themselves as business people!!

At the same time as these individuals are being divided from the unemployed and shunted onto the scheme they are being divided from each other as, no longer standing together in the dole queue but now, being individual traders, they must



compete with each other in the market. So a whole sector of self employed individual small traders is built up who have reactionary "bourgeois" aspirations. However, although you may like to have bourgeois aspirations and dream about being bourgeois unfortunately it doesn't yet mean you are a real bourgeois. To qualify as a real bourgeois you have to have some real capital! But most of these outfits are operating on a shoe-string budget with little more than their £40 per week handout. And the actual work they perform is not necessarily any different from what they might have done if they had got a job in the service sector for instance. So they are not real capitalists. A lot of them, if they actually do their compulsory 36 hours per week, are just self employed workers with a few extra tools and maybe a small office or shop... and not serious "businesses" at all. They are their own boss only in the sense that they manage their own exploitation and they must do their own bureaucratic paperwork keeping tax records etc. But they have been fooled into thinking that they are a serious businesses. Now are all of these people going to become rich?..of course not! It is not the intention of the scheme that they all become rich.

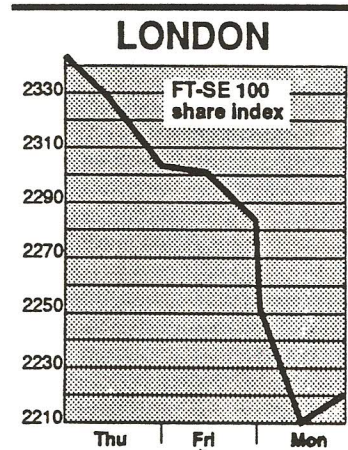
MONEY AND EXCHANGES

There are three kinds of people who go on the enterprise allowance scheme. First there are

the crafty scroungers who are after the £10 per week pay rise for twelve months and who seek temporary refuge from the clutches of the DSS and the UBO. Secondly there are the hard nosed business types who have a good business idea and know what they are doing. These are the few who may possibly succeed and these are the ones who may even prosper, but they are extremely small in number. (It is not intended that the next generation of business entrepreneurs in this country should all be born on a silly government scheme; most of them will be schooled elsewhere in the heat of the established business world, the City etc.)

market gloom

The third kind of people who go on the EAS are the ones the scheme is really there for. These are the naive dupes who think they have a good business idea and fancy themselves as business minded but will fail! They might fail immediately. Or it might take several years, after a couple of years of apparent success, for them to fail (indeed the majority of firms are still in existence after the first twelve months). But in the end, when the next periodical slump arrives (presumably it is here already) to bring an end to the "boom" then they will certainly fail. They will have put a great deal of effort, sweat and toil into their doomed beloved project, slaving and working hours no sensible wage earner would consider working only to see their dreams dashed at the end of it. Of course we shouldn't feel particularly sorry for these people; to a certain extent it serves them right for trying to climb on top of the rest of us, but the story doesn't stop there. All that effort did not exist for nothing. These enterprises will have spent their time gradually building up capital, building up a supply of stock, materials and machines for a small business, obtaining and furnishing a small



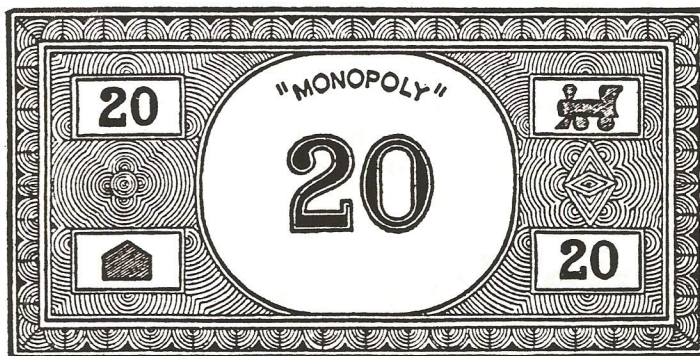
business premises, building a network of contacts, researching new markets and commodities... These things do not disappear just because a business has gone bust. No, these leftovers remain lying on the beach, tasty morsels for the greedy gannets of real business to swoop down and gobble them up at a cheap price. They provide a source of new outlets etc. for established capital that has dreams far bigger than any small trader can think up, so it can spread its wings and survive the slump while the small fry bite the dust! The reality of the enterprise scam is that it aims to exploit the energy and creativity of the unemployed and use false promises to try and trick them into providing a supply of new capital for plunder by established capital! For example the kind of premises an enterprise firm might build up could be just the sort of premises a big company that has adopted the modern approach of splitting its industrial operations into small efficient units, would take over. Likewise single small shops are constantly being taken over by bigger shops. Somebody like a self employed carpenter who has become skilled at their own expense may find themselves forced back into wage labour, selling their skills and expertise to their employer. The examples are endless. In the old days the capitalists took the risks of enterprise, if their

CAPITALISM

gamble paid off then they took the profits, of course it was always our labour which produced the profits. But nowadays not only must we do the labour we must take the risks as well... and then they carry on taking the profits!! This is the great enterprise swindle: we create new enterprise for them to gobble up!!

The system has not had it all its own way of course, the scheme is sloppily organised and full of loopholes which have been exploited by many resisting workfare and the rest of the work scams, you can even go on it more than once if you wait a bit and use your brains. However there have been murmurs of discontent from people like the Institute of Directors complaining about how the scheme is so inefficient. A

tightening up of the scheme is possible in the near future, and the allowance has been stuck at £40; the government will clamp down a bit to weed out the more obvious wastages of money. Then, when the scam has served its usefulness in making its particular contribution to this particular economic cycle it will be shut down and eradicated from memory.



IRELAND

By the end of the nineteenth century, the British empire could no longer expect to continue ruling Ireland. It was still in the interests of the protestant Irish bourgeoisie to remain part of Britain as the market for the products of Ulster's industry were sold primarily through the empire. Whilst capitalism was not under threat, the immediate interests of the protestant working class lay with their employers and therefore also with the empire. This was because the protestant bosses primarily employed protestant workers. On top of this of course were the protestants' affection for their religion and their horror at the prospect of finding themselves as a minority in a catholic country.

The industrial capacity of Ulster was important enough for the British state to desire that it remained "British". But the real impetus for the partition of Ireland was the Russian

revolution and the shockwaves it sent throughout the working class. There were workers councils and even temporary council republics set up in central Europe. Countless mutinees and strike waves broke out as far afield as Argentina and the USA. Even in Britain there were over 100 mutinees, numerous strikes including police strikes, and organisations similar to factory councils were formed. In this situation and with Ireland's recent history of insurrections and radical strikes, the British ruling class could not dare to completely withdraw from Ireland.

Although the revolutionary wave soon subsided, over the decades it remained important for Northern Ireland to remain under British "protection". In particular, world war two signalled the redundancy of the British Empire and a redivision of the world in the interests of the two biggest powers. Britain

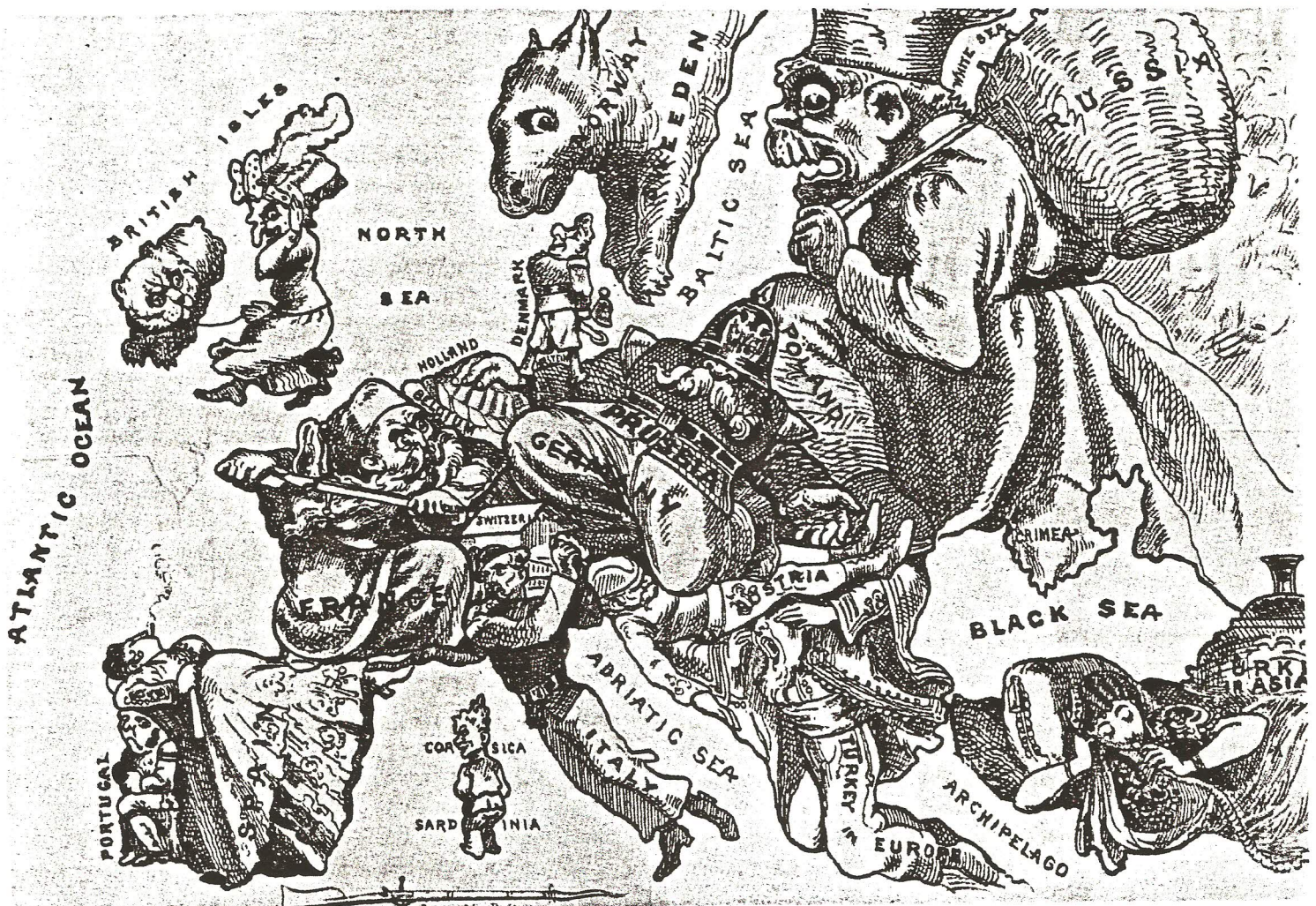
became an important member of the US led imperialist bloc, in opposition to the USSR and the countries in the economic sphere which it dominated. If Ireland had attained its political independence from Britain it might have become neutral or even become friendly towards the Russian imperialist bloc. In the period of cold war this could not be tolerated, either in terms of British security or the interests of the western bloc as a whole.

It hardly needs to be stated that the situation now has completely changed. There is now no Russian bloc. The new world order seems to be coalescing into a new (less important than previously) American bloc, a Pacific bloc (centered on the economic might of Japan) and a European bloc. The European bloc is the superpower emerging from the EC, but which will also incorporate the European Free Trade Association and some or all of the European members of Comecon. We must stress here the importance of the fact that both

the UK and Eire are part of this new power. The previously important reasons of imperialist necessity for the partition of Ireland have been completely dissolved. The British troops now serve no imperialist purpose. In fact, they serve only as an embarrassment to Europe's attempt to form a consensus for a new liberal/social democratic super state.

Another major difference between present circumstances and those at the time of the partition is the economic condition of Northern Ireland. In the past its shipbuilding capability was important for the empire. Nowadays, the UK has as much of a shipbuilding industry as it has empire. The British state has progressively slimmed down the shipbuilding capacity over the last two decades. It can no longer be suggested that British troops are in Ireland to keep Haarland and Woolf in British hands.

Of course in pointing out the collapse of the main reasons



for the partition, we would not want to suggest that the British state is purely rational or liberal or far sighted. The British state would be willing to hang on to Northern Ireland if this was no trouble. When the IRA restarted its armed struggle in the early seventies the British army was expected to gain an outright victory. Frank Kitson (who fought against the Mau Mau in Kenya and who was later to become commander in chief of the United Kingdom Land Forces) wrote in his 1971 book 'Low Intensity Operations', that the situation in Ulster would be resolved by the end of the seventies due to the high level of army activity. It was probably more than a decade before the mainstream of the ruling class realised that a military solution was not feasible. It is in the Anglo Irish agreement that we can see the bourgeoisies' change of tack. The Agreement meant that Eire gained a limited sovereignty over the North for the first time (especially in terms of security). But the most significant aspect of the Agreement was its effects on the Loyalists. Previously the extreme Loyalists had been used as an arm of the British state. In fact there was (and is) a significant overlap between Loyalist paramilitaries and the Northern Ireland security forces. The Anglo Irish agreement changed dramatically the relationship between the British state and extreme Loyalism. The agreement flagrantly disregarded Loyalist desires. All the complaints of the Unionist politicians were ignored. This considerably undermined the position of these politicians. Previously their extremism could be flaunted in front of their constituencies as the most effective political stance. Suddenly, their access to high influence was closed and their former allies turned into enemies. And it seems now that their attempts to decrease Loyalist influence in the security forces, partly through recruiting more Catholics and partly through more direct

methods.

The talks between the British state and Loyalist politicians in the early part of 1990 indicate that the Anglo Irish agreement was partly intended to show the Loyalists that their relationship with the state had to change. In other words the agreement was deliberately meant as a kick up the arse for these politicians.

Taking all the above into account, we were not too surprised to hear Peter Brooke the Northern Ireland secretary announce that talks with Sinn Fein would be likely in the future. It is clear to us that British rule in Ireland is coming to an end. It has outlived any usefulness to virtually anyone. The only stumbling block, the Loyalists, have been subject to careful political manoeuvring and increasing police repression. So what will this new order in Ireland mean for the working class and the revolutionary movement?

The first point is to remind ourselves of the interlinked nature of British and Irish capitalism. The most important aspect of this is the EC of which both states are members. In the present era there can be no such thing as an independent state. In the case of western European states there can be no existence outside of the ECs orbit. Even if extreme left or right wing nationalists gained power in Ireland it could not stand alone in competition with the big economic blocs, and its economy is too weak and too integrated into Europe for it to even change its allegiance to another bloc. So if we accept that a "united and independent" Ireland will remain as it is now a junior partner in the European power, what will be the difference for the Irish domestic situation?

Obviously the most significant changes will be in the north. At present the population is split between the largely rebellious Catholics and the majority of Protestants,

whose politics largely fall into the area defined by conservatism, populism and right wing nationalism, and who are relatively sympathetic to the state. A united Ireland would turn this situation on its head. The more extreme elements in loyalism could be expected to step up their military struggle, both against the all Ireland state and against the catholic population. In this situation, the previously unruly northern catholics will tend to become supporters of the state (in what will remain as now, a situation of small scale war) The continuing protestant/ catholic conflict will of course entail high intensity policing and probably troops on the streets. And whether these troops are Irish or European, both they and the police will draw on the experience and expertise of the British security forces. (The co-operation of the British and Irish security forces through the Anglo Irish agreement may already be a preparation for this.) If this scenario is correct, we can see that a British withdrawal from Ireland will in no way benefit the Irish working class as a whole. The only working class solution to the present situation in Northern Ireland is a united working class movement. United not just in Ireland but throughout western Europe at the

very least. Without unity between catholics and protestants in Northern Ireland, any "solution" must consist of a capitalist state which plays one part of the working class off against the other. And only a movement which is both international and internationalist can hope to achieve any lasting success precisely because the ruling class is itself so highly internationalised today.

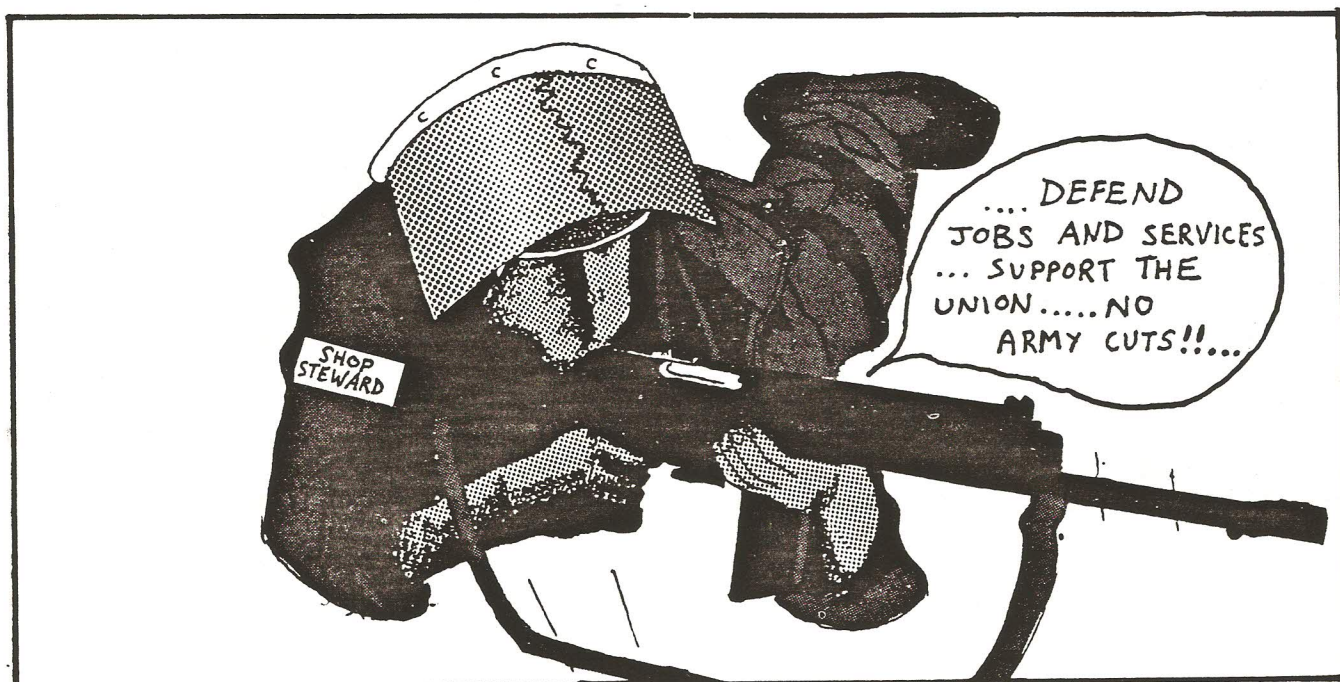
SPYCATCHER and NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE

A few words from former MI5 agent
Peter Wright...

The fundamental problem was how to remove the colonial power while ensuring that the local military forces did not fill the vacuum. How, in other words, can you create a stable local political class? The Colonial Office were well versed in complicated, academic, democratic models—a constitution here, a parliament there—very few of which stood the remotest chance of success. After the Cyprus experience I wrote a paper and submitted it to Hollis, giving my views. I said that we ought to adopt the Bolshevik model, since it was the only one to have worked successfully. Lenin understood better than anyone how to gain control of a country and, just as important, how to keep it. Lenin believed that the political class had to control the men with the guns, and the intelligence service, and by these means could ensure that neither the Army nor another political class could challenge for power.

Feliks Dzerzhinsky, the founder of the modern Russian Intelligence Service, specifically set up the CHEKA (forerunner of the KGB) with these aims in mind. He established three main directorates—the First Chief Directorate to work against those people abroad who might conspire against the government; the Second Chief Directorate to work against those inside the Soviet Union who might conspire; and the Third Chief Directorate, which penetrated the armed forces, to ensure that no military coup could be plotted.

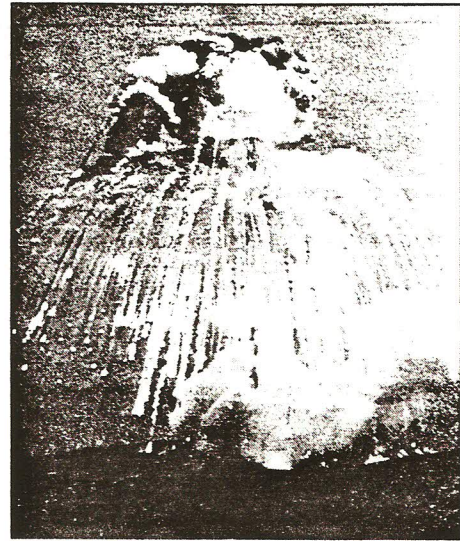
My paper was greeted with horror by Hollis and the rest of the MI5 Directors. They told me it was "cynical," and it was never even passed to the Colonial Office, but looking back over the past quarter of a century, it is only where a version of Lenin's principles has been applied in newly created countries that a military dictatorship has been avoided.



FRAGMENTATION

Capitalism's need to divide and atomise the proletariat as a whole determines even stronger attacks on certain groups of proletarians such as women, blacks, gays, the elderly and so on. And the alienation that is present for all proletarians under capitalism is felt most acutely by these "specifically oppressed" groups. These groups can clearly see themselves constantly under attack by the particular oppression that immediately affects them such as sexism, racism, homophobia etc: often however their response to this is to view their own alienation solely in terms of their immediate struggle, and to struggle in sectionalised communities based on simplified lines of interest (e.g. race, sex, age,...). As a result their struggles are often separate, isolated and weak and play into the hands of "popular front" style class collaboration. When separatist or sectional political movements like feminism or Lesbian & Gay liberation attach themselves to these struggles based on assumed political identities they take over the resistance of certain proletarians to specific oppressions and create what amounts to a new nationalism under the control of specialist "community leaders".

Because oppression is delegated down the power hierarchy through specialists, oppression itself is specialised. While we feel the need to resist the specific oppression that most directly attacks us, if we concentrate solely on our own (specialised) oppression and ignore the overall oppression we play into the hands of the specialists of power. That means we hand over control of our struggle to an elite of "community leaders", politicians and "equal opportunities."



bureaucrats. Restriction of resources has meant that those groups still existing for particular struggles, battle with each other for priority, which further isolates them. In the artificially created housing and job shortages, black/gay/womens groups find themselves forced back into complaining of their specific oppression, competing to gain better access for themselves, and finding friends in high places to take up their cause, so enforcing divisions (Fortunately not all black, gay or womens groups have accepted this isolation and redefinition of their struggle, nor have all white, male, straight workers accepted the lies that homelessness and unemployment are caused by preferential treatment for certain "loony left causes").

The revolutionary demand of equal opportunities for all has been recuperated into a reformist demand for equal opportunities under the system, in other words equal opportunity to be exploited; equal opportunity to be a wage-slave. This demand, even if reformist, might still mean a material gain for us as equality under exploitation could promote equality in struggle. However "equal opportunities" is

now being distorted to mean something quite different. Equal opportunities is now being used to mean equal opportunity to play your part in the market - equal opportunity to mutually compete/exploit/police and equal opportunity for certain proletarians to compete against, rise up over and exploit other proletarians. For example, CHE (Campaign for Homosexual Equality) backed the case of a former bombardier in the British army who was suing the government for court martialling him. He was discharged for having an affair with another man shortly before he was about to lead two sections of men to Northern Ireland. Support equal opportunities for gays? fine, so that gay soldiers can oppress proletarians, including gay proletarians in Northern Ireland! This is a clear example of how a sectional demand, under the system for one group against a specific oppression means increased oppression for others. An antihomophobic demand within the army means in practise more enforcement of homophobic laws against gays in Northern Ireland not to mention more attacks on anyone else under the control of the army!! Similar examples would be women prison officers - so they can carry out strip-searches of women prisoners! More black immigration officials - so they can enforce more discriminatory immigration laws and so on. We don't support "equal opportunities" for some to be a boss or an exploiter or an oppressor or a police officer or strike-breaker or whatever. Quite simply we don't support equal opportunities for some of us to scab on the rest of us.

SOLIDARITY

The concept of "liberation" is a difficult concept - does it mean revolution or does it just mean bourgeois liberation? Does Gay liberation for instance mean general sexual liberation as part of a social revolution or does it just mean liberation for the gay

fraction of capital, the so called Pink economy, so gay capitalists can compete in the market without restrictions. Likewise does womens liberation mean liberation for all women or does it just mean liberation for upwardly mobile business women or professional women. Here we see a parallel with national "liberation": liberation for the working class or the new emerging local capitalists and bureaucracy against the old capitalist power. And the new management will prove itself by controlling and exploiting the local proletariat more efficiently than the old bungling colonialists. In the case of sectional oppression/liberation for example gay police might be better at attacking gay people because they are more familiar with their lifestyles/movements etc than straight police. Women can be more efficient at controlling a female workforce than male bosses etc...

Fighting one oppression we must never lose sight of the fact that it is only part of the total oppression. We only support the demand for equal opportunities and liberation when that represents a progressive material gain for proletarians.

