

Up to last year CW was only an attractive paper put out by an informal group of individuals from London and supporters in the country. I was keen to contribute to its production. It has become yet another political structure - which has no future but slow death in general indifference or violent death by repression.

This transformation is due to a limited number of persons in London who, mistaken by the quantity of paper they sell, intoxicated after seeing their names too often in the bourgeois press, and helped by the passivity of most members, have taken on «building the movement» and imagine - without admitting it publicly - that they are now at the head of the organisation that will spark, fight, and win the revolution. The federation is composed mainly of anarchists, veggies, feminists and various drop-outs bent on recruiting the working class. They dish out the old anarchist ideology - though a modernised version - and choose as targets the most immediately apparent effects of capitalism - the rich and the cops - without EVER thinking of what should be written or done to have a real action on the world and against the system.

CW isn't based on any practically applicable theory, hasn't any practice to build a theory on and these deficiencies have often been felt during the low-activity periods. But instead of discussing these gaps and ways to tackle them, the leadership - aware it has nothing to gain from such debates - prefers loud speeches and has always managed to impose its diversions: at the end of the miners' strike, during which no revolutionary critique of the NUM was published for fear of putting off the miners, the first problems cropped up: what was CW and what was it to become as it had not much left to go on about? Inspired by its nostalgia for the '81 summer, the leadership took the BTR Campaign out of the hat - a smokescreen that effectively prevented any profound discussion for over 6 months. This campaign has remarkable similarities with the spanish stalinists' strategy under Franco and both failed for the same simple reason: the proletariat doesn't give a shit for militants nor for these artificial, desperate calls for action. A group identity crisis developed in autumn '85, was forgotten for a while in the excitement of the riots which came at the right time to distract everyone's attention from the problems we were facing, but came back again more vividly around Xmas. Voices then rose to demand, at last, sensible debates. This is when the miracle happened: somebody suggested that if one got 'organised', everything would be fine. So one 'organised'. The leadership dug out a 60 year-old piece of irrelevant anarchist rhetoric, forbade any discussion of this text in London, sent it off to all the correspondants in the country - who didn't know what was going on - had it amended and adopted at the Manchester conference. During this conference there was much small talk, one created the federation, one decided to encourage others to trash cars (already preparing excuses not to get involved oneself), but as usual, there wasn't a thought for revolutionary writing or action. Thus the paper is condemned to become the federation's propaganda organ yet the federation has still nothing to say.

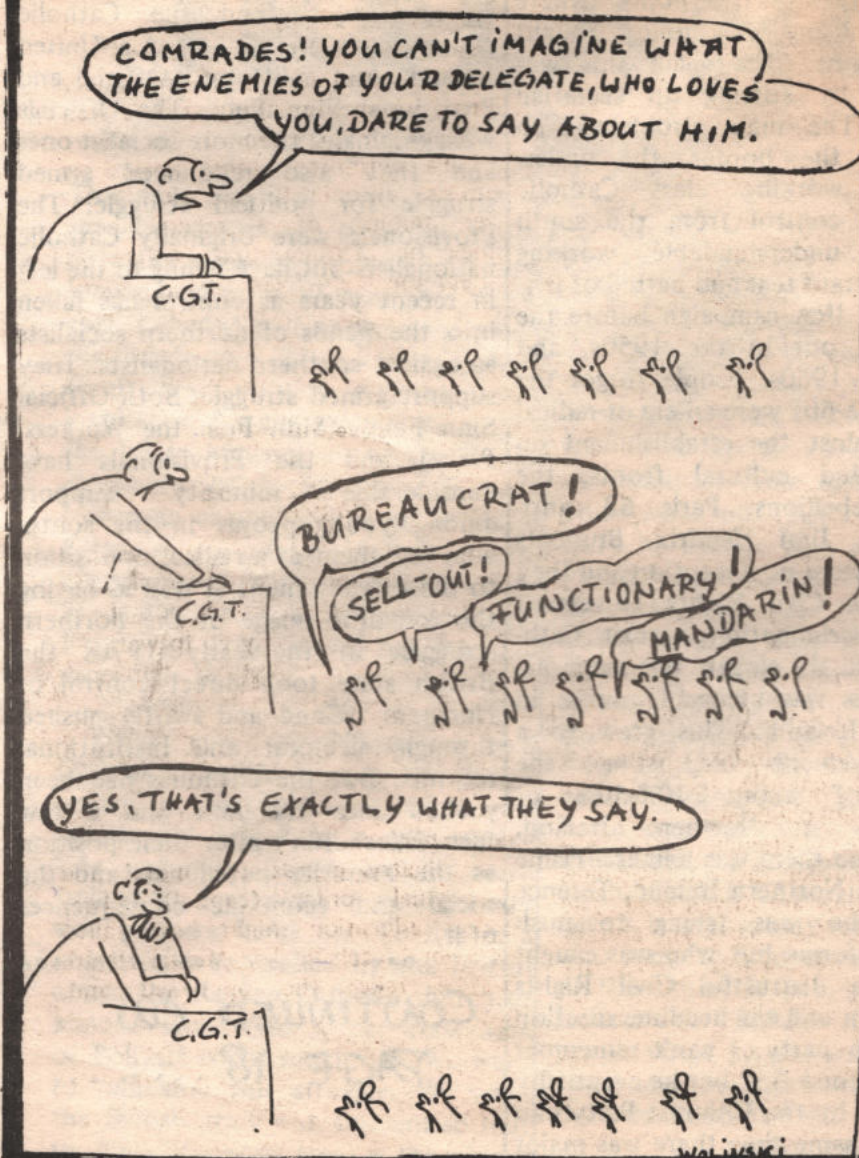
This is distressing, the more so as GB is a western democracy where the social situation is the richest in potentialities. People here put daily into practice the slogans CW can only sing, but even if it is one of the rare groups which condone the slaying of pigs, it will never catch up with a general movement to which it has no relevance or participation as an organisation (the involvement of individuals in riotous or similar situations is a different matter), and which will soon find it cumbersome.

CW isn't a group of street-fighters either: Wapping is a playground and a rehearsal stage which has been left unexploited for months; we were merely present, seizing the rare opportunities to have fun we found, but we proved unable to have any influence on the course of the dispute through dialogue with the print-workers (I admit they're not very receptive), and to carry out any effective physical intervention against the cops or Murdoch's lorries. One CW group went so far as to sneak into the local TNT depot.....in order to stick leaflets about sabotage on the windscreens of the vans!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

What is more, and perhaps the most serious of all, CW shows its inconsistency by the way it lets the right and its media, and the left with AFA, manipulate it. Few realise they will be the scapegoats when trouble flares up again; and anyway those who do have no possibility to get their opinion through. I know what I am talking about!... «We have always given interviews to everyone, we have no reason to change our policy now», was once said to me during a meeting. It is an elementary trick in the ruling class's book to blow out of proportion, then crush, any group or movement that might be dangerous in the future. Letting a professional journalist and an alleged video-maker in the meeting-room, even if they may be used now and then, is not the best way to avoid recuperation. As to the 'AFA Affair', it is a caricature: the Labour Party and anti-fascist rackets like 'Searchlight' have only had to write a few lies to a comrade's pal's chum to stop definitively any action against the nazis, to get CW fighting them on their liberal ground, and to play at will with these blind activists eager to get arrested to prove they're not fascists, as the recent expedition to Liverpool shows.

CW's main fault, and it includes all the others, is to be a political organisation as hundreds have existed in the world before, imbued with ideology, unable to look at the past and gain knowledge from it, more concerned with denouncing this society than with searching for its weaknesses and go on the offensive in a considered and coherent manner. This organisation seeks to set up a determinate political system (anarchy) which the poor in revolt (the sacro-sanct working class) are not interested in. If it survives, it has a chance of finding itself on the side of reaction when the revolution comes because it will struggle to impose its errors & to subsist, whereas the destruction of such organisations will be part of the revolution.

LONDON, JUNE 1986.



This article might seem to be harsh criticism of Class War, but that is not necessarily true. It is important to remember that CW have made a considerable contribution to the struggle for revolution (ie vi through their agitational paper) but this fact should not blind us to their weaknesses, nor should it stop any critiques of the group. If we are to be effective, then we have to be critical of ourselves, our ideas and our practices - we should not be in the worshipping business, we are not a church.

# BE CONFIDENT!

Too often it is all too easy to get sucked into something that you are not really prepared for. The ugly old head of 'peer group pressure' raises itself again. Your friends are going out on actions, so you feel that you have got to go out as well. You know that it has got to be done, you know how it is done and you know that people have done it and got away with it - but are you really ready for it?

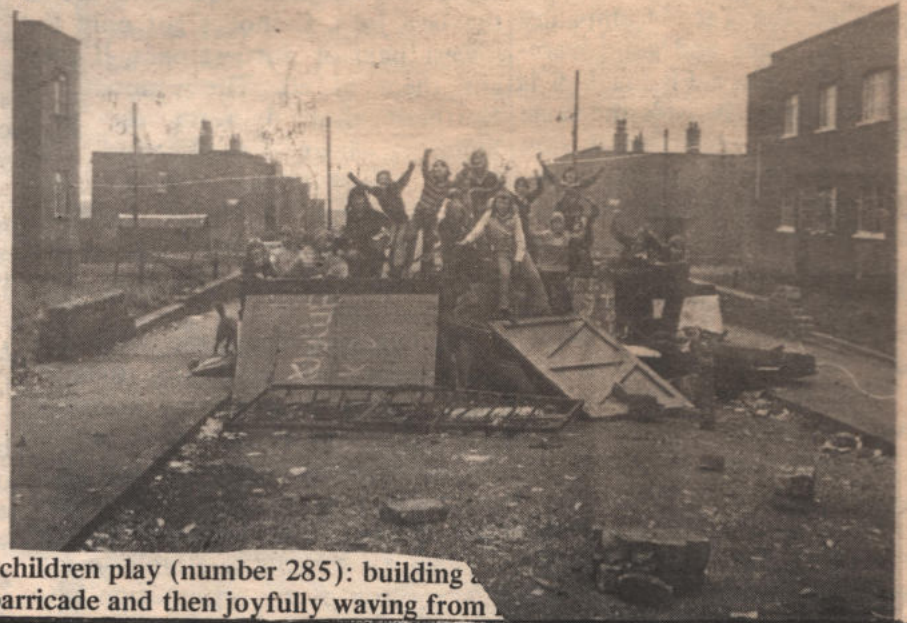
It is up to YOU and no-one else to decide if you are prepared and if you can cope with being involved, can cope with a few months inside. It probably won't be your friends who push you deliberately into direct action without you being fully prepared (and if they did, then they shouldn't be your friends). It will probably be your own feelings that are encouraged by the successful and inspiring example of others. But are you really ready for it? Can you take the consequences of your action?

Being fully prepared is tactically as well as personally good sense. If you are feeling nervous (but don't forget that everyone feels nervous before an action) and unconfident, then that will increase the chances of you making a mistake...and mistakes get you caught. You have got to be fully confident of what you are doing before you go out and start to really hurt this stinking system.

It is wise, when you are starting, to go with (if you know any) experienced people and to start gradually. The odd spot of superglue here, the hammer there, rather than blazing buildings everywhere. The best way to build up confidence is through successful but don't become too foolhardy and begin to think "I can get away with anything"...you can, but only if you are careful.

Some people are acting purely for the struggle, other people are acting purely for their own ego - in many ways, both of these approaches are wrong. The struggle is not some object that can be externalised, divorced from our own everyday lives; we are the struggle and the struggle is us. Our own emancipation from the chains of capitalism must be our own act and we cannot, with the wave of a magical wand, emancipate everyone else.

But resisting for purely egotistical reasons is foolish for it ignores the social reality that constantly surrounds us. There is certainly nothing wrong with feeling personal satisfaction at a successful action, but if that sense of satisfaction is the sole aim of the action then you are condemning yourself to an island on your own, isolated from everyone else. So, as you go out, know why you are doing it, be fully prepared and be confident. And remember that it will work and you won't get caught.



Games children play (number 285): building a street barricade and then joyfully waving from