

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Comrades,

I would be grateful if you could send me a selection of leaflets and bulletins produced by the LWG.

I would also welcome your views and criticisms of the traditional syndicalist unions (SAC), anarcho-syndicalist unions (CNT)... and in particular the Direct Action Movement (DAM).

Personally, for the last few years or so I've considered myself to be an anarcho-syndicalist (always very critical, never a traditionalist) / 'class struggle' anarchist. Although in recent months, well, the last year really, I've tended to move towards a more 'autonomous class struggle' position. Much to the dismay of certain DAM dictators in the region. (To criticise DAM up here can mean the loss of ones knee caps! Honest!)

Anyway, I look forward to your reply.

Yours fraternally, A Northern Friend.

REPLY ...Thanks for the letter and donation. I've enclosed some bulletins and an article I wrote on 'Labour Organisation'--the end of the article kind of suggests the forms which autonomous work-oriented groups could and do take. If we can sort ourselves out, maybe one of us could contribute to the present discussion in Freedom about workplace organisation.

Anyway, for the record, we are a loose, committed collective of anarchists and councilists and undecideds with strong views. Been going about five years, and about 3½ years ago helped to set up an informal federation around the country, especially with A-Syndicalists in Lancashire. This became the DAM but it took directions we could not agree with (so we withdrew). Structural: It became an individual membership/centralised organisation, rather than a federation or network of groups and individuals. Content: It became specifically anarcho-syndicalist, aiming to 'build' a 'mass' union-type organisation for unified action. We think that this is both an illusory aim, not possible in a modern social-democratic set-up, and also undesirable in that revolutionaries should not set up organisations to 'represent' people (people create such general meetings as and when they need and wish, under their control.) Also, rather than have a clear set of ideas which we go out and present people with, the relationship between revolutionaries and people, say, in workplaces, should be more open, less mechanised, recruiting. We should recognise we have much to learn also. One of our strengths is we do not respect dogma and there are discussions and disagreements about every aspect of this society and changing it without having to refer to 'our policy'.

One thing I am very strong about is that changing society doesn't just mean seizing control of the institutions and structures (such as the industrial superstructure), but dismantling and transforming society. In this respect both anarcho-syndicalist unions and also workers councils are essentially conservative institutions. Yet there is a contradiction in that opposition in the day-to-day sense will occur within the roles and institutions that do exist (i.e. as a rail worker, or within the civil service) and hence specific collective activity will inevitably

arise--the problem is to avoid institutionalising that opposition, and to reaffirm our autonomy and desires as human beings. Hence to be loyal to or identify with any ideology or structure means we become politicians or sorts trying to impose outside or simplistic solutions on peoples attempts to self-organise.

Every political group built on loyalty, ideology and membership acts to maintain discipline and control--hence your experience with the local DAM. But I'd also like to say that most people in DAM are probably acting with the best intent, but are either trapped by old forms or traditions, or just members for the contact it brings (and hence not necessarily anarcho-syndicalists.) Also, groups like us, LWG, do not necessarily have many of the answers, both in terms of theory and practice, or general attitude, but at least we are autonomous, open and not committed to a structure or rigid set of ideas.

I'll end now. If you'd like to reply, we can continue this discussion. You must have some interesting ideas and experiences of your own.

Keep well and strong and thoughtful,

In Solidarity, Dave M.

..... ONGOING

Dear Dave,

Thanks very much for your letter and enclosures I found the leaflet / statement on Workers' Autonomy excellent and the bulletins most informative and interesting. (...)

I wholeheartedly echo your criticisms of the Direct Action Movement. In actual fact I am a member of this organisation. Well in the sense that I have not officially resigned, although somewhat lapsed and disillusioned. I joined DAM in late 1979, and at the time it was great to meet other anarchists who recognised the existence of a working class and the need to organised class struggle. (...)

Since my joining of DAM I have seen the organisation become increasingly centralised and very much party-linish--'come and join us' sort of thing. Within DAM at the moment there seems to be a growing tendency towards traditional syndicalism. This suspicion was confirmed by a DAM activist recently returned from the AIT conference in Sweden. Ranting and raving about the Northern European unions, i.e. NSF (Norway), SAC (Sweden) and the FAU (Germany)--talking about the new direction for DAM, moving from the anarchist image to the more workerist image of syndicalism. The tightening up of organisation, the writing of a strict constitution and even the testing of potential members are a few new proposals floating around

(...) As an anarchist I see various areas of struggle and recognise that there are different ways to tackle the problems facing us. For example, the different interpretations of workplace organisation and struggle. I look around and see exploitation, oppression, poverty and helplessness everywhere. So in my own way I strive towards eradicating these evils by working towards the ultimate goal of a self-managed society--the only cure for the ills of nation, state and capital. I will act and work in co-operation with others according to the determined situation, and act in the best and most constructive way possible. Of all the areas of struggle I see the workplace as the most imp-

ortant. Of course this does not mean that every other area of struggle is just forgotten about--the struggle against authority is an ongoing thing. Wherever it raises its ugly head you fight against it.

The working class is the backbone and the workplace/industry is the soft underbelly of capitalism. The working class is also its own worst enemy. We ourselves ensure the state's continued existence by working for/supporting it. Act as a class and the state machinery and the capitalist system will crumble. To achieve this the working class must themselves control their own workplace, community and activity. Now I personally believe that the way to do this is to reject all unions and so-called workers organisations, that is, trades, syndicalist, anarcho-syndicalist unions, political parties and any others. And call for independent working class organisation and class struggle. Autonomous workplace groupings, councils, committees call them what you like; each one federating to one another. In the meantime, whilst working towards this goal of mass workers 'assemblies', I feel we should start by establishing a national federation/network of autonomous class struggle groupings whether their location be geographical or industrial. Each group producing their own propaganda, i.e. leaflets, posters, bulletins etc. Once established the federation could produce a national paper, totally uncentralised, content being of a theoretical/discussion/debate/analytic nature. Maybe produced on a quarterly basis with a rotating editorial collective. Or alternatively we could produce a bulletin similar to your own LWB but with wider circulation. (...)

I take it that some of the LWG are railworkers --if so, how do you come to terms with the closed shop policies enforced by the rail unions? When I'm working--I am currently unemployed--I usually join the relevant trade union, although I always contract out of paying the political levy wherever applicable. Obviously I join in the case of a closed shop to guarantee employment. See, we all must compromise with the system somewhere. My excuse is heavy economic and personal commitments. In the case of no closed shop agreements I still usually join for the following reasons. 1) To keep in the 'know'. It is always advantageous to keep track on union wheeling and dealing. 2) To avoid being ostracised by fellow workers upon commencement of a job. I also find it helps to get to know your work-mates before ploughing in with the political bit. (...)

Moving on to the question of unemployment. When unemployed, political and personal feelings tend to mix somewhat. Obviously in my case they do as I am. Yes we all know that by working we are supporting capitalism--and by fighting for the 'right to work' we are simply fighting for the right to be exploited, further delaying the agonies of this vile system. To say nothing of the ego-bolstering tactics of the popular frontist pathetic left. And yes there is only one real remedy to cure capitalistic ills--the revolutionary overthrow of that system. But in the meantime I think the initiation of some kind of campaign to alleviate the effects of unemployment--in some cases crippling--would be in order (...)

The kind of campaign I envisage is one for increased benefits and greater free social facilities for the unemployed and other

claimants. Involving maybe the setting-up of unemployed groups, independent from all political parties and unions, designed primarily to give support and solidarity; self-managed groups based on co-operation and mutual aid. I would also like these groups to become centres for political debate where those involved continually exchange ideas and experiences. Of course, these must only be looked upon as wage claims -- limited, short-term gains which are no substitute for revolutionary change and a new society.

I am particularly impressed with the remnants of the Solidarity groups--Wildcat and Subversive Grafitti. I am all in favour of their political stance. I have heard them criticised from the direction of the 'World Revolution' camp (no specific group) that they are too parochial and do not analyse events on a world scale. To simply say that all our problems will be solved by bringing down the whole system of world capital, although true in essence, is a bit silly. To use it as an argument for not getting involved in localised grassroots politics is a proper copout. You know, to some extent it is possible to revolutionise oneself completely out of existence. Local interventions and actions can be co-ordinated and linked to the same or similar struggles in other areas. Autonomous groups working in co-operation with others through a well-organised network can themselves develop an internationalist stance and link up with comrades overseas. Of course the class struggle is worldwide, but you don't just sit around doing sweet FA calling for world revolution whilst fellow workers are getting picked off daily by the state! Action and solidarity must start somewhere--so why not on a local level or in a specific workplace or industry? I am sure you will agree with me to some extent? What are your views on the former network of Solidarity groups, what they are today, and indeed my own observations? (...)

Look forward to hearing from you,

Yours in struggle and solidarity A

Dear LWG.

I would like to congratulate you all on the inclusion of the article 'Industrial Technology --would we be better off with less of it, or even without it?' in the latest bulletin.

I was impressed with the obvious depth of research that had gone into analysing the problems we face and the path we must tread to moving away from the present hi-tech, dangerously alienating 'society' that we exist in, onwards and upwards to a slower, safer and more satisfying alternative.

So often when people try to analyse this important question they make the mistake of plumping for easy targets and simplistic solutions. Or, they adopt the stance of preacher/teacher and blast the reader with arrogance and patronization.

To escape all this and still be entertained and educated was bliss indeed.

We need more of this!

Solidarity,
Sheena Easton.

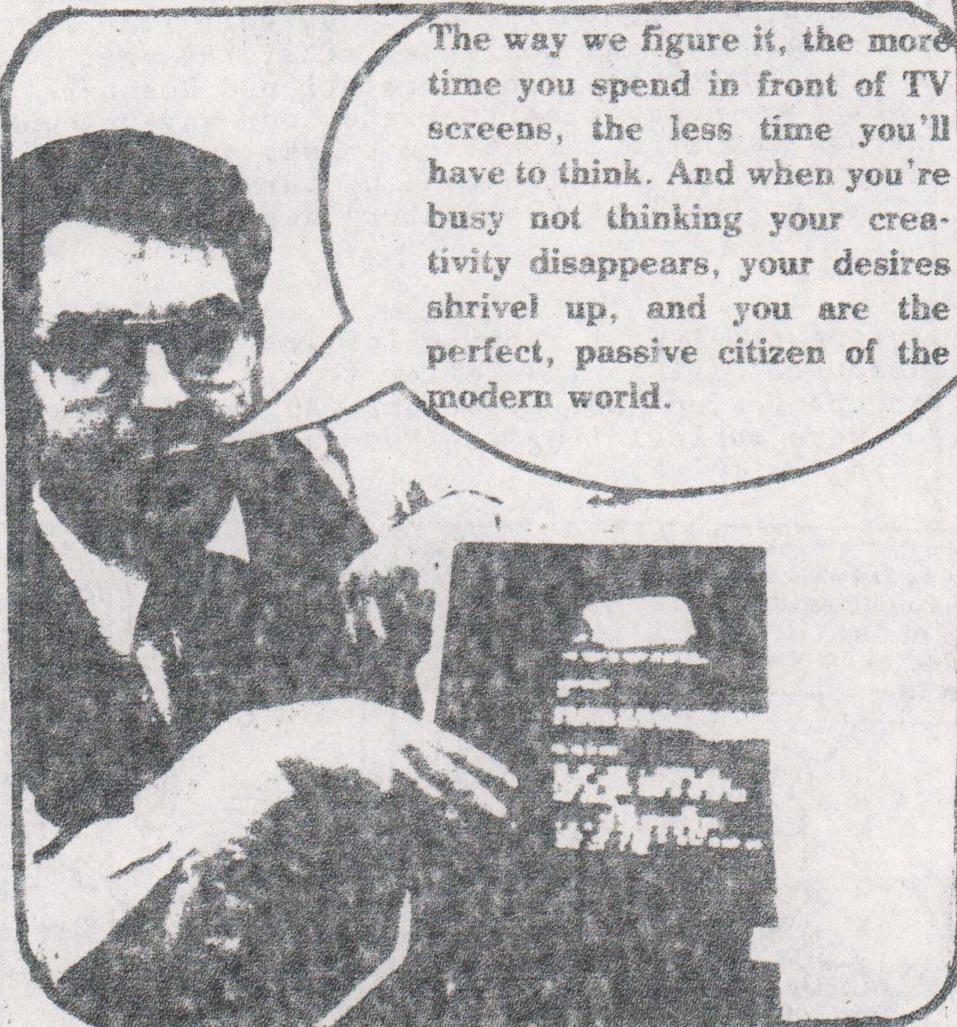
UNWAGED-THE OTHER 50 %

PART 1: DISCUSSION AND ACTIVITY

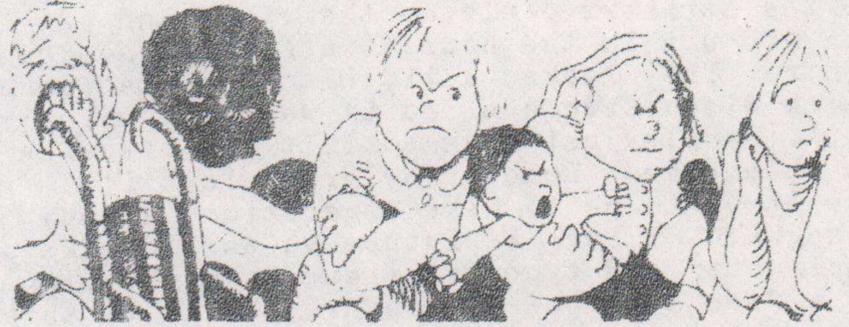
By April this year, after 6 months not employed, I'd not managed to find or create any worthwhile activity to get involved in in Tottenham where I lived. But a series of free films put on by Islington Action Group on Unemployment (IAGOU) caught my eye, and after seeing 'Rosie the Riveter', 'Blacks Britannica' and 'The Wobblies' I decided to get involved with the collective, originally aiming to set up a similar group in Tottenham (now I aim to move to Islington instead.)

Quite a few people joined (only unwaged people can) as a result of the films, and there were about a dozen of us all ages, nearly all blokes unfortunately, and mostly working class or ex-students. None were active in political parties (some had lapsed membership) as the group had been going a couple of years and had fought hard for its independence and broadly libertarian attitudes.

A CENTRE A great deal of effort has been put into getting a funded centre for the unwaged in Islington, without compromising the autonomy and activity of those involved. In fact, strenuous lobbying tactics were able to embarrass Islington Labour Council into agreeing in principle in Sept. 81 --but when they realised we were determined to refuse to have paid workers or any control by the Trades Council/Social Workers etc (in line with the 'management of unemployment' intentions of the TUC/Councils/Trotskyists)



The way we figure it, the more time you spend in front of TV screens, the less time you'll have to think. And when you're busy not thinking your creativity disappears, your desires shrivel up, and you are the perfect, passive citizen of the modern world.



they began to block the opening. The pressure continued until the number of so-called 'technicalities' dried up and we finally got the keys on August 31st.

The group received £4,000 from the GLC for centre activities, which has now been saved except for financing the free films. We're due for another few thousand for rent, alterations etc.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Due to arguments and frustration in long post office queues on dole cheque cashing days we briefly leafletted the queues and staff encouraging people to take out their anger on the system, not each other.

We also started a campaign for free (or reduce services and resources (e.g. council, sports, cinemas, fares) for all unwaged people and handed out 2,000 copies of a free paper called 'Free Time' with information and ideas--largely as a result of 'lobbying' council committees, the council has now (end of Sept.) announced a 6-month trial period of free sports facilities for all adult unwaged people (and their children.)

Over a period of 2 weeks in July we prepared and distributed 4 or 5 leaflets, a total of about 7,000 copies handed out mostly in Unemployment and DHSS offices, as well as stuck up in launderettes, community centres, parent & toddler clubs etc. They were on different aspects of the coming changes in benefit rules: -- racist checks, availability-for-work testing etc. All advertised a local public meeting to discuss these significant changes, but only 6 or 7 new faces came along.

We also helped Islington Wageless Women (IWW) distribute 1,000 leaflets encouraging women to join their newly-created group and we organised creches at their meetings. The idea was that the centre should be shared with IWW and any other local independent unwaged groups

WORKPLACE STRUGGLES

At around this time we supported the health workers picket lines at the Royal Northern and Whittington hospitals. We tried to be supportive and not manipulate the very

inexperienced picketers (unlike the left groups which only turn up to sell papers, recruit and dominate). We half-heartedly handed out the only leaflets available to passers-by (produced by the Unions and Labour Party), and I suggested the strikers could do their own and get it run off within the hour at a local resource centre. They looked a bit blank, but after a quick discussion decided it was 'the union's job'. People just have so little confidence in themselves. Some of my group felt it wasn't up to me to make suggestions anyway. I disagreed. I feel in future we should take our duplicator and typewriter etc to picket lines as a free service--our centre should be thrown open to strikers too.

We also went on local health workers marches, but got sick of it as all the lefty councillors and TU officials were on them, and Tony Benn even spoke (to a sychophantic reception) at the end of one.

Attempts to support the rail drivers were derailed when we failed to track down the Kings Cross picket line.

THE FEDERATION

All this time we had been very active in trying to strengthen the London & South-East Federation of Unemployed, Unwaged and Claimants Groups (LSEFUUCG !), which grew up 18 months ago and is still developing. Of the 70 contact addresses, maybe about 15 groups are strong, active or interested enough to attend. Our group has become known as uncompromising on the principles of autonomy--that only the unwaged should attend, that the Federation should be libertarian in structure, based on group autonomy, and that we should see ourselves as part of a movement for social change, not just make demands for reforms or jobs from the system.

But each group is of different size, ideas and experience. This diversity is exciting and challenging, and also often frustrating. Mutual respect between groups is essential if we are to gather greater strength and understanding. A big problem is isolation (and poverty too).

However the major problem of the last 6 months has been Government funding and infiltration of unwaged groups. (Centres, community and social workers, political party fronts, etc.) In particular, a 'community worker', behind our backs, applied for a full-



time job in his 'resource unit' to 'help the Federation' (and also the National Unemployed Workers Movement--an organisation fairly widely supported a year ago by groups around the country, but now just a small front for the Trotskyist Workers Socialist League.) This attacked our autonomy, and divided and disrupted the groups. Many were attracted by such a 'carrot'. After much argument, confusion and bitterness, the 'help' was rejected. Lately a £750 grant (no strings attached) from the Natwest Bank (!) has eased money problems, and we are doing a newsletter for the Federation now. We have been the treasury group and lately the acting secretarial group as well (the last secretariat group collapsed after the most active member got the aforementioned Resource Unit job--however neither she, nor any unwaged person can attend meetings unless authorised.) We offered to devolve most of our responsibilities at the last (September) meeting.

Before the August meeting (of 11 groups) the Resource Unit sent a letter to all Federation groups (except us) attacking IAGOU, implying we were manipulating the Federation. A last fling we think.



RECENTLY...

we changed our name to Islington Action Group of the Unwaged (still IAGOU) to make it clear it was poverty and oppression we are fighting, not lack of jobs, and that we are open to all unwaged people (not just UB40 holders), e.g. unwaged women, pensioners, children ...

After 3 of us went to the Federation of Claimants Unions (FCU) conference, we learned a lot about coming Social Security and Unemployment Benefit changes, and met groups from all over the country. 10 of us from IAGOU, IWW and Haringey & Islington Claimants Union (H&ICU) went together to support a demonstration on August 23rd. called by Norwich CU against the arrival of a squad of Special Claims Control Units (SCCUm, or 'Supersnoopers'). About 80 people took part, and partly due to us lot, 25 people surged into the administration section of the DHSS and demanded to meet the SCCUs, saying that this was a 'public inspection'. This was great fun, and a great feeling of power. Most of us were eventually blocked on the 3rd. floor, and after half an hour of argument/negotiations inside, we agreed to meet 2 of the SCCU and the SS manager, and chose 4 delegates.



Anyway, we resolved to organise a London demo/reception on Sept. 15th, when the SCCU squad arrived in Islington (Archway Tower). Organised by the three Islington groups, we publicised it widely, leafletted Archway claimants, did graffiti etc. On the day about 70 people came and picketed for about 5 hours. We got some photos of the SCCUm. We felt that a lot more opposition and protest was necessary, and so continued the leafletting each day up to the 11th. October, for the next demonstration there.

Out of this common activity with the H&ICU and on their initiative, a 'benefits liaison group' was called with delegates from the 3 groups invited, and all the DHSS and UBO office workers. Despite a promising response from 6 offices (mostly shop stewards), there were people sent uninvited from both Islington and Hornsey Labour Parties (both thinking of setting up 'Labour Unemployment Groups' as front organisations.) We opposed their presence and it was decided at the next (September) meeting that a vote on the subject would be taken and that we would withdraw if they stayed. Which we did, after losing the vote. We don't intend to let ourselves be used and manipulated.

We are, at the time of writing, preparing our centre, the alterations, equipment etc. in association with the IWW. However, a big argument has blown up in recent weeks over our

general attitudes to the group, activity, relations with IWW and anti-sexism, policy and constitution.

PART 2: SOME THOUGHTS

This all sounds, and is, very exciting, and involves a very high and profound level of commitment for me, and all of the group. Living in the same area (I hope to move there soon) helps. All the activity has been accompanied by long and involved discussion and of course argument, and strains in our personal relationships. Continuing problems are how to make decisions collectively and fight elitism and sexism the class and age differences, whether we are too closed or removed from most unwaged people's lives and problems.

Are we, in spite of being conscious of and generally opposed to it, becoming absorbed into leftist campaigning attitudes and activities, aiming to substitute ourselves for autonomous activity or 'represent' the unwaged? Our conflict with Islington's 'Socialist Council' has been educational and protected our autonomy, y the funding we have screwed out of the GLC is

danger and a contradiction. There are tensions in the group and differing ideas as to how the centre should be used--a campaigning or social meeting place? Open to all or to those who wish to be involved with our campaigning activities? We have decided that there will be a well-run playgroup for children in the centre. Many of the women in IWW feel it may become a male-dominated place.

MAJOR ARGUMENTS

The recent arguing has been quite intense and hopeful. We are strong enough to resolve or at least respect some of our differences--I feel that what I call 'constitutionalism' has gripped the group lately, leading to some dogmatism and coldness and political (in the worst sense) infighting. Others feel that formal structure and policies should be decided, which I think will lead to a Party-like identity.

2 people have been expelled and rightly so from our group. One, a founder member whose continuing and abusive sexism came to a confrontation. The other was a former long-standing member who'd returned after being involved in setting up a classic front organisation for the Haringey Labour Party--'Haringey Labour Unemployment Group', and using his former involvement with us to speak in our name and to con people.

The 12-year-old H&ICU help each other and others to know their 'rights', and fight the DHSS bureaucracy. They're also a supportive and libertarian collective, and occasionally campaign, mostly against DHSS changes and for a guaranteed minimum income for every individual.

We however prefer to be a campaigning/resistance/support group, and to encourage other like groups especially in Islington to form and oppose the work-and-pay society and its structures of oppression and repression. At the moment we have our feet on the ground (on tip-toes), and in some ways feel responsible and answerable to those unwaged in our area who dislike or hate their oppression and poverty--who feel solidarity with others, are sensitive to their problems and struggles, but who are as yet isolated, confused or disillusioned. If we lose this relationship we will just become another political group 'educating' or 'leading' the masses. It is this responsibility to each other that is so important to me and which has been almost destroyed by capitalism's colonisation of all lives, culture and relationships in the community, and by the Left colonising working class resistance.

We have to develop responsibility by fighting elitism, isolation and ideology as an end in itself, which is too widespread amongst some Anarchist groups and also the London Workers Group. I hope IAGOU can deal with all this.

THE FUTURE

For these reasons, and also because of the development of unwaged/unemployed activity and ideas in general, I am very much involved and committed to such struggles.

I WONDER WHAT IT WOULD BE LIKE TO LIVE THE LIFE I REALLY WANT?



Revolutionary workers groups (like the LWG) as well as ecological and antimilitarist collectives like the London Greenpeace Group are also important in contributing to the development in this part of the world of a revolutionary and libertarian current springing from peoples lives and struggles against this System. But who knows what lies buried in the hearts and minds of people? Ultimately, as the ruling class continues to increase its power over society, and its repression and destruction (maybe final) of this planet, it is the vast majority of people acting for themselves and coming out of their long sleep and fear, who will change and reshape society. We are making our contribution.

Dave.

IAGOU and IWW, Unwaged Centre, 355 Holloway Rd. N7 Tel. 607 8271/2
 H&ICU, c/o Crouch Hill Recreation Centre, Hillrise Rd., N19 Tel. 272 7569
 FCU, 296 Bethnal Green Rd, E2 Tel. 739 4173
 (We can also provide addresses of nearest known unwaged groups to anyone contacting us.)

UNEMPLOYED/ UNWAGED GROUPS

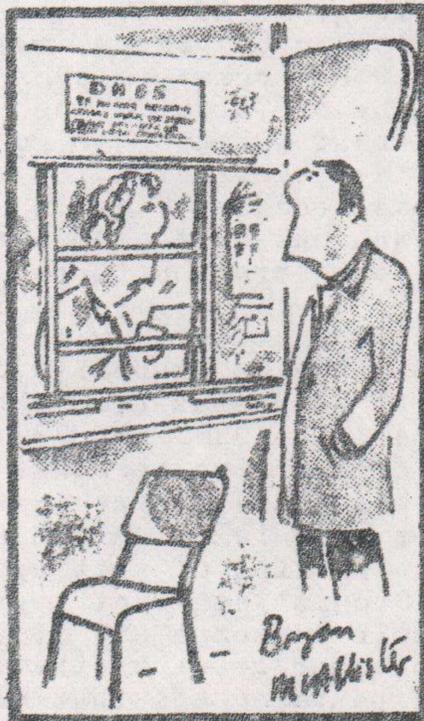
FOLLOWING ON FROM THE ABOVE:

Between 16th-20th October I displayed the above article in the unwaged centre so that anyone who had been involved in the activities and discussions mentioned could make comments (but no-one did), with a guarantee of publication--as I suggested and all agreed at the previous IAGOU meeting.

The next Thursday I wasn't able to go to the meeting as I was busy moving house. The following week (Oct 29th) I turned up at the weekly general meeting. Only about 5 of the group were there, but I was told that the previous week they had discussed me in secret, and decided to expel me from the group. I knew that the group had been going barmy lately, but this left me incredulous. I was given 'reasons', and when I said I'd reply at the end, I was told that this wasn't a discussion but a 'collective statement'. After hearing it, I said it was a load of old rubbish but that I didn't wish to stay in a group who didn't want me--so I left.

They also aim to ban me from the centre, which means they now consider it their property. It isn't, as we'd always agreed it belonged to active unwaged people and groups in the area--so I don't accept their ban.

Later that day there was due to be a joint meeting between IAGOU, IWW and H&ICU. The first Claimants Union member to arrive (previously involved in IAGOU until he got a wage, and also an anti-authoritarian) was told he also was expelled, permanently, from IAGOU (despite no longer being in it!) and 'banned' from the centre. When he asked why, he was told 'we don't have to give reasons'. When the rest of the CU arrived they refused to go in, and since have decided not to be involved with the centre unless and until the situation there changes.



"I'm sorry, but according to Government statistics you've got a job."

AUTHORITARIAN It seems that what I had written before, above, was sadly accurate in seeing the growing authoritarianism of the group, although I underestimated both the speed and the strength of the degeneration.

The 'reasons' given for getting rid of me were (with no examples given and no discussion allowed): 'divisive', 'always acted against group', 'no intention of collective work', 'total disagreement with group', 'denied existence of constitution', 'don't agree with the collectively decided constitution' (the wording of which

had never been discussed by the collective, and when it was originally mentioned it was said to be needed 'only to satisfy the various bureaucracies funding us'), I 'had not tried to act in an anti-sexist way', and lastly I was 'only in the group because it "will do for now".'

Anyone reading the above article can judge for themselves the accuracy or absurdity of these accusations.

OUTSIDE PRESSURES

I think there are a number of reasons for the 2 of us being expelled, and for the group's turn for the worse. In general, the structures of Authority on society, are also inside each individual and group of people. The struggle to change society means constant awareness of that and a commitment to fight it.

When a group is funded and acquires property, the pressures to conform (from legal and institutional sources) increase, and affect the internal relationships too. There are also increased pressures to integrate with the Left -- to become a 'representative' body. Left-wing campaigning, protests and attempts to 'mobilise' people, and having a credible 'image', take over from more fundamental and direct political activity and ideas. Anti-payment, anti-work and anti-repression struggles are gradually dropped, ignored or opposed in favour of negotiations with and appeals to trade union and political party and group representatives. The constant need for solidarity and direct discussion with interested unwaged people (and in workplaces) becomes less and less important.

In this atmosphere, middle-class members (often with degrees) increasingly become the organisers, and the group begins to identify more and more with political groups, officials and institutions. Unwaged people become a 'constituency' to be 'led' and 'educated'. (In a way, LWG has this problem partly--in the last 2 or 3 years we have tended to drift away from our original intentions of contact and involvement with people and struggles in workplaces. Most of our contacts are with political groups and individuals. However we are generally opposed to the politics and methods of Left-wing groups, and aware of the dangers of elitism and ideology.) But we should not underestimate the difficulties and contradictions of being an autonomous and principled group with strong ideas, who inevitably have the problem of isolation.

ACCOUNTABLE

A group of people acting amongst a community (whether a local area, or in an industry etc.) must in some ways be accountable or answerable to that community in order to keep its feet on the ground. The main defences against elitism and isolation are the many and diverse horizontal contacts and direct involvements with other people. The development of formal structures and rigid ideology can only make more barriers.

As a group's identity gets stronger, its competitiveness with other groups increases. IAGOU, in October, began to get paranoid about other unwaged groups nearby (such as H & ICU, Camden Unemployed Group) although its relationship with IWW continues to be very close. Will the resources in the centre eventually be available to others as well?

The two previous expulsions, which were necessary, as some of us feared at the time created a sort of precedent. Independent groups

SOMEDAY



THERE'LL BE
A WORLD
WITHOUT
AUTHORITY



WITHOUT
BUREAU-
CRACY



WITHOUT
RULES



WHERE
THERE'LL
BE
FREEDOM



AND
SHARING



AND
LOVE.



AND I
STILL
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ALB
TAYLOR

certainly need to protect themselves from manipulation and authoritarianism (e.g. sexism). But to adopt constitutions and ideologies causes more problems, and eventually are used to suppress initiative and free discussion.

Some of the discussions of 'the last days' were over libertarian or authoritarian ways of opposing sexism, over whether we should employ the Direct Labour Dept. of the council to do the work on the centre on principle, or building workers more accountable to us (i.e. a co-op), over whether we should encourage and trust each other to take initiatives or only to act with official sanction.

SUPPRESSION For some reason IAGOU decided to suppress such open discussion. Nowhere was this clearer than at my final meeting--a tribunal worthy of a totalitarian state. The people in the group, while giving excuses for an expulsion, were unable to see the hypocrisy of their divisive, manipulative, even anti-constitutional (the summary expulsion is totally unconstitutional) attitudes. (In the last week or so, I've heard that some people in IAGOU are now saying we were got rid of for our clear anarchist ideas, and that they now feel the group is 'strengthened' by the purge.)

MY FEELINGS SINCE The strongest feeling at first was one of great sadness and confusion that such a promising group of people should have turned so sour. And that the opportunity for a resource centre for unwaged groups should end up in the hands of an elite.

Neither of us felt bitter, preferring to concentrate on more important things such as continuing effective activity (for example in the claimants union.) However, the more I thought the whole thing over, the more angry I felt that all my sincere efforts and commitment to build up the group and centre could be slagged off in such a way. These are the same type of self-appointed 'guardians' of the people' and of 'truth' who always try to speak for and take over peoples' struggles and ideas. It is this sort of 'politics' which is rightly so despised by all sensitive people the world over.

So what now? Many people have suggested I should have refused to be kicked out, should fight for my principles and express my anger. However, the most constructive use for such anger is to strengthen my resolve to continue the struggle against all forms of oppression, rather than pointless in-fighting. IAGOU is not the only fish in the sea. A lot was achieved in the time I was involved, but there is much more to be done.

In many ways they still have contributions to make if they don't allow themselves to become controlled by the council or the Left. No group can be perfect and I wish them well.

Since leaving IAGOU I have continued my involvement with H&ICU which despite spending much of its time on welfare rights is quite a down-to-earth group. But unwaged people need to be more active in opposing poverty and oppression at their roots. I have also gone along to Harringey Unemployed Group (now independent of the Labour Party)-- a fragile and small collective, yet with possibilities to grow. Rather than move to Islington, I think I shall now stay in Tottenham, the land of my parents, and see what can be done.

Dave November 16th '82

POSTSCRIPT No group is perfect nor ever will be. Some people in IAGOU wanted to mould the group into 'their' perfect group and perhaps our expulsions were necessary for that reason. What had previously kept us together was that we were always busy doing good things and we liked each other and felt stronger through the solidarity. Politicians are talkers rather than doers and finally-- as no 'doing' was even discussed--the talkers took control: judging each other replaced trusting each other and it was horrible. I agree with Dave's comments and I hope that once the centre is established and the doors are flung open that it will become a centre for the unwaged, rather than for a few of us, and then we can stir up a lot of shit for the establishment and a lot more solidarity for ourselves. Lots of love, Dan Nov. 16th '82

PRESS GANG-ED

I work in the despatch department of a major Fleet Street news agency. The staff is composed of ten despatch clerks, a postal clerk, and a number of clerks in outside departments (racing, telecommunications, plus staff at the House of Commons and Law Courts); three Multilith operators, about a dozen messengers and five despatch riders. The despatch department clerks divide into an admin. clerk, two three-man shifts, a night-shift, and two float-shifts. I belong to the last category, which means I can be put on any shift in despatch (including post), or in racing or telecommunications. In effect I have to know four jobs, although most of the time I work in the despatch department. Here there are three main activities. Firstly, to despatch and collect letters, packages, newspapers etc. in the London area. This

means directing the messengers (mainly OAPs) and despatch riders. Secondly, to collate copy produced by the Multilith operators. Thirdly, to mind the teleprinters which provide file copy of the news and sport messages, wired to London subscribers, to provide photocast copy to subscribers whose teleprinters have broken down, and record such breakdowns, directing the service technicians. These subscribers consist chiefly of the national press and the London offices of the provincial press, the London offices of foreign newspapers and agencies (La Stampa, TASS, AFP etc.) and to the television and radio media. A more compressed news service is provided for government departments, the main financial and industrial institutions, the major London hotels and watering-holes of the rich and powerful.

STUCK-UP BASTARDS

The despatch department is cut off from the rest of the building, indeed many employees may be only vaguely aware of its existence. This contributes perhaps to the warm atmosphere in the department, although there is not much inter-departmental rivalry which affects many jobs. There is resentment of the Telecommunications operators, because they earn so much more than we do, and of the Journalists, because many seem to be stuck-up bastards who inhabit a different world (the despatch staff remain pretty well untainted by this middle-class world of journalists etc. upstairs), but there is little of the 'team spirit' attitude which personnel officers invoke to encourage you to direct your frustration at other workers outside 'your' team.

The work itself is stultifyingly boring and the aim is always to get out of the building as quickly as possible. Quite a lot of skiving goes on, but this is mostly known and tolerated by the management. This toleration is partly due to the nature of the job: working to meet deadlines means that sometimes you are kept busy, but much of the time there is nothing to do but stare into space and scratch your arse for what seems an eternity. No-one wants to do that all day for the money we're on. Some of those who have families to keep supplement their wages with odd jobs in their spare time. So time 'stolen' from the firm helps keep us quiet, and amounts to the unstated part of the 'net income' of our terms of employment.

The boring nature of the work is to a certain extent compensated for by the really good comradeship between the staff. This is better than any other job I have done. There is quite a lot of socialising outside work, in spite of the fact that we all work different shifts and live all over London and the surrounding country. No-one amongst us falls on bad times without some form of help or solidarity from the rest. For example, when I was off work in hospital last year nearly everyone in the department visited me, some regularly.

I have a good relationship with my workmates, although I do fall under a sort of social sub-group which is impossible to escape. I am not the only worker in the department with the supposed benefits of a middle-class education, and the attitude to the others is the same. Generally where people are not actively resisting their conditions of work, and are accepting the 'benefits' of capitalism, they also accept that competition between workers is the natural order. Those who try to stand outside this competition are therefore regarded as slightly eccentric. It is generally a cause of bewilderment that I do not try harder to use my education to 'get on'. But there is a growing number of workers in the firm who a few years ago might have gone straight into the middle-class professions who are now unwilling or unable to do so because of the recession. At the moment there is still something of a tension between the older and the younger workers, but this is diminishing.

STICKING AN OAR IN

Politics is not a preferred topic of discussion at work. At first I was reticent about making any political utterances, firstly because of the attitude of the older workers 'he'll grow out of it', secondly, because once it was known that I had been at college it was (rightly) assumed that my head must be stuffed full of daft ideas. Now

I feel confident enough to stick my oar in when I feel like it. But being politically isolated, it is often difficult to sustain any argument. Sometimes it is better to drop a subject rather than appear pompous by keeping on about it--even when it comes to basic problems such as racism and sexism. People have sense enough to be impressed by actions rather than hollow words.

The department is entirely white and male. Whether this is the product of someone's conscious design, I cannot say, but it is an arrangement which seems to suit most of the staff.

Some feel that since their lives in the home are (so they say) ruled by their wives, women should play no part in their lives at work. A greater number believe that the presence of women at work would inhibit their self-expression (since women object to bad language, sloppy dress, etc.)

There would never, I think, be any question of blatant sexual harassment, but when women come down from other departments, they are treated either to old-fashioned 'courtesy' or to mild derision (expecting a giggly response) depending on age or rank. A lot of my colleagues simply think that a permanent female presence would destroy the 'matiness' which undoubtedly exists at present. But, especially for the younger, unmarried workers, this seems to perpetuate repression and alienation between the sexes.

A typical 'anti-sexist' response, quite apart from the inadequacies of feminism as a critique of society, is wholly inappropriate. The 'progressive' middle classes can afford the luxury of posing in all-womens organisations and 'non-sexist' mens groups with their 'radical' role-reversing. But when you are stuck in a world where the division of labour between the sexes is more or less a fact of daily existence all this is remote and frankly ridiculous. Sexism is a real problem, an obstacle to class unity at even a rudimentary level. But 'anti-sexist' ideology only reinforces these divisions by seeking to organise on the basis of 'oppression of women' rather than attacking the alienation between the sexes which operates throughout the class as a whole. In other words, it is one of the many traps of liberal ideology, and one we have to be aware of if we are to make a proletarian response in the workplace.

NATIONALISM AND XENOPHOBIA

Many of the older members of staff are quite openly white-supremacist, although racial attitudes operate at a whole range of different levels, prejudices are never reducible to easy formulas. Partly it is a matter of a general xenophobia mixed up with anti-intellectualism and proletarian cultural defensiveness. When a dish on the canteen menu is printed in French, this provokes the same response as (say) Paul Boateng claiming to be English: a mixture of hostility and incredulity at the pretension of these clever buggers trying to pull the wool over our eyes. On the other hand, when it comes to personal contact, attitudes are more honest than that of the average middle-class intellectual (who attempts to disguise his guilty prejudices by being self-consciously liberal every time he opens his mouth.)

Recent events, such as the riots and the Falklands War, have shown how deep-rooted racism and nationalism are in large sections of the English working class. This presents an enormous obstacle to class consciousness, and has to be combatted. But the 'anti-racist'

factions in bourgeois politics make this task very difficult. The Labour left, which loves to trumpet its anti-racism at every opportunity, is just as nauseatingly nationalist as the Tories. Divisions within the class are reinforced by 'minority rights' activists and 'black community' leaders, who do all they can to portray the struggle of black workers as solely against racial oppression and therefore separate from the struggle of white workers. My view is that if you cannot denounce this rubbish, or at least distance yourself from it, it is better to say nothing rather than add to the confusion.

THE UNION PROBLEM

Most of my colleagues couldn't give a stuff about the union one way or the other: if there is a prevailing attitude, it is that the union just robs us of a lot of money every month and gives sod all in return; as to the unions in general, the view is that, like politicians, union bureaucrats are a bunch of shits but an unfortunately necessary fact of life. They are quite capable of seeing that union manoeuvres such as the 'Day of Action' on the NHS dispute achieve

what they have rather than push their luck. Thus it seems that for the immediate future there will continue to be little shopfloor militancy, even within a narrow union chapel context. The chapel structure, whilst giving an impression of shopfloor control, will continue to keep workers divided between skilled and un- or semi-skilled and between firms; and so long as we are confined within the union apparatus, the possibility of broader action will be severely restricted. The best workers will continue to be drawn into union politics, seeing no realistic alternative, but for all those reasons they will have to choose between an increasingly cosy relationship with management, or the impotence of militantism.

IN THIS REPORT

--I have tried to highlight just a small sample of some of the problems which an isolated revolutionary has to face in the workplace, if he/she is to make any impact. Some revolutionary groups talk glibly about forming 'factory groups' or making 'interventions', but grossly underestimate the obstacles and pitfalls which abound. On the one hand, there are workerists (including vanguardists such as the CWC, the ICC; anarcho-syndicalists and some councillists) who pay no attention to the way work has changed over the past decades. We don't all work in massive car factories. Capital is still in reality growing larger and more centralised, but for many of us, enterprises have been broken up, the division of labour extended and manipulated, tasks individualised in such a way that active unity seems more elusive than ever. This is even the case in the car industry, where, particularly in Italy, firms are successfully devolving their operations. Many of us work in paternal, 'enlightened' firms: workers perceptions are not that they have nothing to lose but their chains, (whatever the reality) and this perception appears to be daily confirmed by mass unemployment.

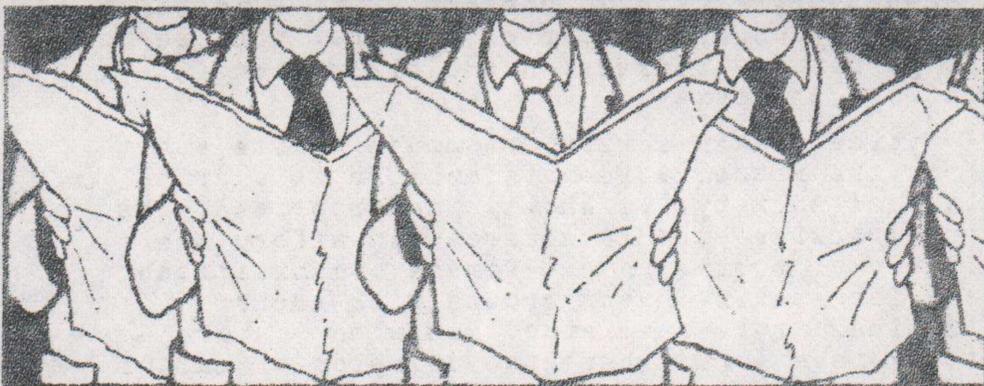
Although class unity is objectively more realisable because of deskilling, this has not yet materialised to any great extent. It has broken down the identification with craft or profession, but in spite of the recession, people still have the resources to throw their identities into various consumerist passions instead.

These factions have also shown themselves quite incapable of dealing with questions such as racism and sexism, as though they were simply capitalist ideology and had no real existence in the working class.

On the other hand, there are those who, partly because of the obvious shortcomings of workerism as well as the traditional labour movement, have been deflected from class politics. Usually this means tail-ending some variant of leftist 'liberation' politics--feminism; anti-racism; ecology; anti-nuclear; etc. It is understandable that when there is a lull in the class struggle, such as there is at the moment, peoples' attention is diverted to peripheral questions. It is also true that as revolutionaries, we are opposed to all of the shit that capitalist society throws at us. But losing sight of the central questions--the domination of our lives by Capital through wage-slavery and consumerism--only throws us into the dead-end world of democratic reformism, and we merely give a radical echo to the propaganda which is churned out daily by the capitalist media.

E.D.

WHAT THE PAPERS SAY



nothing except losing everybody a day's pay. However, those who were sympathetic to the health workers and taking any action--a small minority--were those who do have illusions in unionism. The absence of any actual experience of sustained action outside the union apparatus is, as elsewhere, the real problem.

The union chapel (SOGAT '82) is composed of workers from a very large number of departments, many of these workers doing duties virtually on their own with little supervision. Tasks are divided in such a way as to devolve responsibility upon individual workers, so that the collective nature of the work, and consequently our collective strength, is concealed. Also, the union chapel includes a sizeable number of workers who are really under-management, or close to management (secretaries, personal assistants, etc.) The management is enlightened and paternalistic, giving occasional handouts from its position of strength.

The potential strength of workers in the press agencies--if they could cut across the barriers of individual firms and 'craft' status--is enormous. The agencies are the point at which the British press is centralised, and the provincial press is wholly dependent. However, the chance of even such a minimal level of unity being realised seems extremely remote. The central importance of the agencies will continue to cushion them from the effects of the recession. Most workers recognise that this puts them in a privileged position compared with other printworkers, and seem happy to hang on to

notes
on the

ECONOMIC CRISIS

In the publicised meeting of 27.7.82., comparison was made between the present economic crisis and that of the 1930s, when after years of experiencing worsening poverty the working class actually began to 'turn the tide', as if they just came to the conclusion that enough was enough. This is a false idea of what happened. In fact the reemergence of working class militancy in the thirties was the result of a picking-up of the economy. Workers were only fighting for a bigger share of the cake, so that their interests were tied to those of the bosses, as is always the case with reformist demands.

But I suggest that the economic crisis of the eighties is quite different, because this time there is not going to be any economic upturn. The restructuring of the system presently taking place, reestablishing the existence of a large pool of impoverished unemployed labour, solves the rulers' political problem by undermining reformist working class militancy, but only leads their system deeper into economic crisis, by reducing the spending power of the mass of consumers.

The underlying cause of the present, and still deepening, world economic crisis, is the drying-up of creative and imaginative energy which the essential passivity of consumerism engenders. The economic crisis began as a crisis in marketing. Around 1970, 80% of all new products marketed in the USA had to be withdrawn due to lack of interest. Without new outlets in sufficient mass quantities for new investment to yield higher and higher rates of exploitation, the capitalist system was already doomed. The collapse could be delayed, but not avoided. Today, the principle marketing problem seems to be lack of money in peoples pockets, and this undeniable fact causes the underlying subjective crisis to be generally overlooked.

For working class self-organisation, the practical implications of this somewhat esoteric process are considerable. Nowadays, workers have more sense than to take risks and make sacrifices in reformist struggles that they know they cannot win because of the economic crisis. Most rank and file workers groups now existing are mere ginger groups within trade unions seeking to sway the mass of workers to put pressure on the union bureaucracies through heightened militancy. This conception of rank and file groups is that of revolutionary socialists, who dream of coming to power by using the trade unions, which they consider to be the 'mass organisations of the working class.'

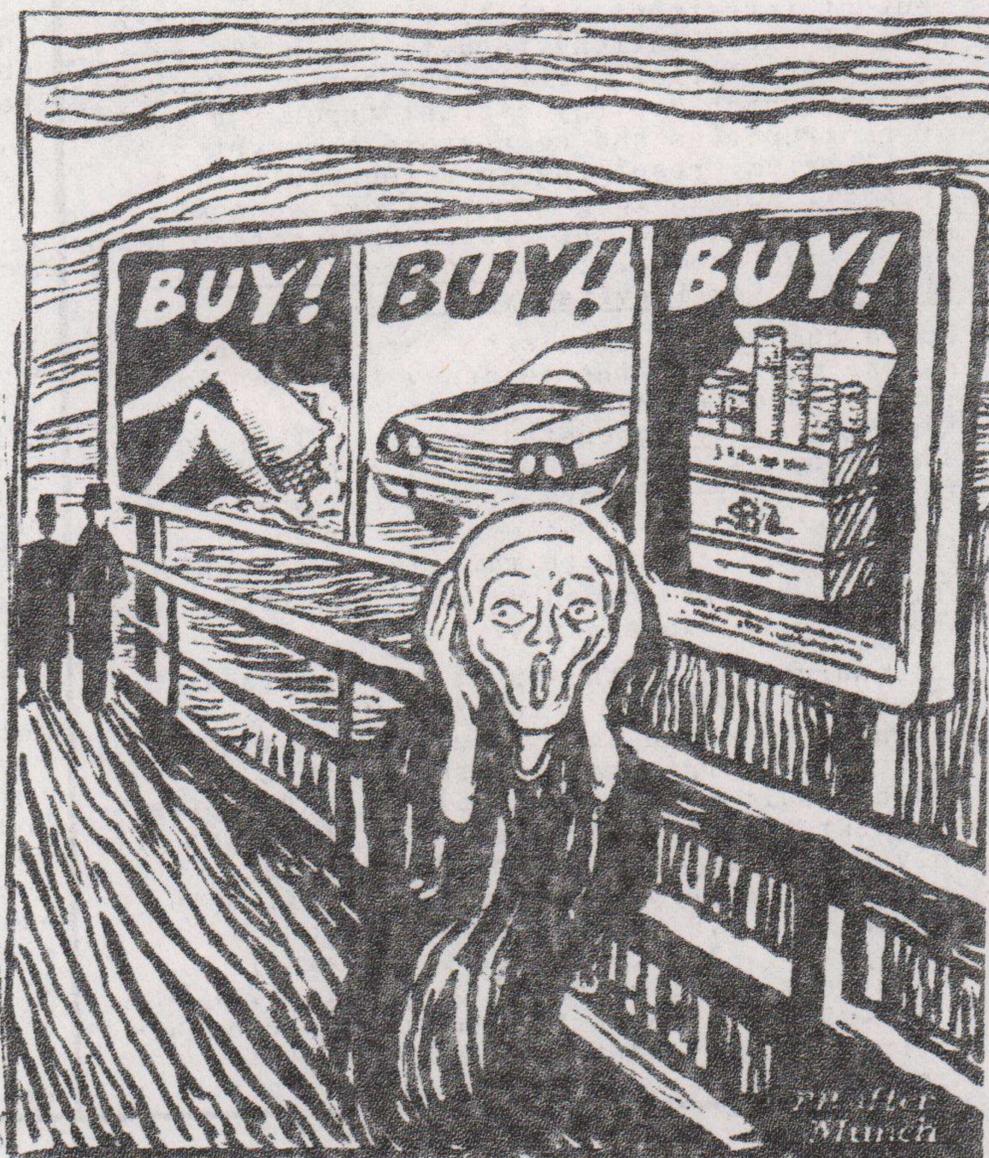
Our own conception of the trade unions, as an integral part of the capitalist system, with identical overall interests, leads us to posit the need for 'autonomous workers groups', acting quite independently of the trade unions, and antagonistic to them. In the coming period we are going to see more rank and file

groups of the type we prefer, and the decline of the type favoured by revolutionary socialist, because the continuing economic decline will increase working class frustration and decrease the possibilities for reformist palliatives. I shall illustrate what I mean by giving one example of each type of rank and file group.

On the one hand, the Ford Combine is a largely revolutionary socialist organisation, and has always concentrated on the reformist annual wage claim (20%--Fords can afford it! etc.). Its secretary recently predicted its collapse if there is no strike over the wage claim again this year.

On the other hand, the NHS dispute is generating strike committees acting independently of the trade unions. Here, the demands for a new way of life are beginning to emerge. The capitalist values of economic restraint are being flatly ignored in favour of human values about health care. As yet, workers cross picket lines at hospitals muttering 'you won't get 12%', but occupations and extensions of insubordination against hospital hierarchies could revolutionise workers ideas as to what the struggle is about. If people become conscious of the real issues, solidarity would blossom to an extent Len Murray can only dread.

Peter Freeman.



The following contribution was written as a discussion paper for a day-long meeting of London Workers Group in Brixton on December 11th. 1982.

L.W.G. Perspectives for 1983 : The Economy

The past weighs like a dead weight on the living. To understand 1983 we have first to grapple with earlier attempts to understand the system : those of Marx and the anarchists.

Marx defined capitalism as the transformation of money into commodities in order to yield a greater quantity of money by selling them (M-C-M'), as distinct from barter (C-C) and barter mediated by money (C-M-C). Since the motive force of capitalism is profit, for the system to continue to function economic growth is essential.

Marx's famous 'tendency to a declining rate of profit' merely shows that a given development of the productive forces (plant, technology, skills, number of hands employed, etc.) can only yield a fixed surplus product. Reinvestment of profits will then reduce the rate of profit, because more investment capital is chasing the same profitable outlets in terms of the amount and nature of the commodities produced.

Marx also speaks of 'contradictory tendencies to the declining rate of profit', consisting of raising the rate of exploitation, harder work, longer hours, more sophisticated capital equipment, etc.)

So all Marx is really saying is that the secret of successful capitalism, with economic growth, full employment, and a stable return on investment, is to constantly raise productivity. This banality aside, the fundamental significance of Marx's economic theories is to show that in the long term, sustained economic growth is vital to the system, and not just a 'fortunate' by-product.

In Marx's analysis, the compulsion to reinvest (the profit motive) without adequate development of investment outlets (i.e. raising the rate of exploitation) results in an 'overproduction of capital'. This produces cyclical crises, which destroy capital through a spate of bankruptcies and so restore the system to equilibrium, resulting in a renewed period of boom. But as long as long-term economic growth continues, the system does not collapse of its own accord. It is inherently unstable without being inevitably doomed.

For a cumulative crisis to occur requires not so much that the tendency to a declining rate of profit should operate, for this tendency always operates in capitalism, even during booms. Rather, what is required is that the contradictory tendencies operate inadequately, i.e. the overall economic productivity cannot be raised sufficiently. This is what is happening now, and later I shall try to explain why.

The anarchists in the First International, of whom the principal theoretician was Bakunin, rejected Marx's authoritarian approach to organisation, saying that it would result not in the abolition of capitalism, but in a society where the state was the only capitalist. Given the disastrous twentieth century experience of Marxism in action (U.S.S.R., etc.), this critique is very potent. Yet the anarchist view of society is equally marred by ideology, i.e. a one-sided approach to reality. In concentrating on the need to abolish the state, anarchism tends to suggest that the state is

autonomous. This is quite contradictory to all historical experience, which is that successive governments find their policies frustrated by economic reality.

As for the present cumulative international crisis of capitalism and state capitalism, I have tried to explain the reasons for this in my article "Notes on the Economic Crisis". I blame it on a crisis of creativity, and I shall quote the key sentence from my article : "The underlying cause of the present, and still deepening, world economic crisis is the drying up of creative and imaginative energy which the essential passivity of consumerism engenders." Again very briefly, the consequence of this for working class politics is that reformist struggles for a bigger share of the cake are generally speaking no longer possible, because the cake itself is no longer growing, or is even shrinking. Therefore the working class can only seek to overcome its discontents by revolutionary means.

Obviously these means will comprise the desire for a more human way of life. The cuts in the welfare state have been so little resisted because they were cuts in the state, something perceived as alien and hostile by most working class people. But we will fight for adequate housing and health care, not to be killed by radiation or germ warfare or ecological suicide, not to be raped or beaten up, for enough to eat and have fun irrespective of what work we do, if any, etc. So many of these struggles have been middle class dominated up to now because the working class family and the culture beaten into us are so much more authoritarian, and because our experience of work and relative poverty tend to be more brutalising as well.

The working class will have to learn a lot about love and tenderness to make its revolution. It will not be easy.

So much for the consequences of the crisis for working class politics, but there is also an attempt to overcome this 'crisis of creativity' within capitalism: the advocacy of co-ops and small businesses. These may overcome the essential problem of alienation between worker and worker, and between worker and consumer, but they do not overcome the crisis because they are characterised by lower levels of capital intensity, which contradicts the fundamental movement of capital to raise productivity. They could only prefigure a solution.

In 1979, speaking in the context of the Italian crisis, Guy Debord pronounced, "Being for the moment the most advanced country in the slide towards proletarian revolution, Italy is also the most modern laboratory of international counter-revolution. The other governments born of the old pre-spectacular bourgeois democracy look with admiration towards the Italian government for the impassiveness it knows how to conserve at the tumultuous centre of all degradations and for the tranquil dignity with which it wallows in the mud. It is a lesson that they will have to apply at home for a long period."

Rulers have to believe they can solve the crisis; we do not.

REPORT ON LWG MEETING OF 11.12.82

The meeting started by my being asked to expand on my paper, which I did. Then a Wildcat member said I was clutching at straws. I still think reformist class struggle is a diversion, and the recession means we can say good riddance to it. Then a discussion of recent social changes:

1. The declining significance of trade unionism in the organisation of the state
2. Decline in the perceived significance of work.

I think 1. is only a function of the obvious decline in reformism already mentioned and 2, as I said at the meeting, is a phenomenon

more correctly associated with the long boom and the advent of the 'well-paid dead-end job'.

My overall impression of the discussion was that it was very out of touch with developments in working class politics. We still do not know how to think or talk about these, but...

We agreed to: 1. at Tuesday meetings, go into individuals' experiences of work and unemployment more thoroughly, and to leave untackled items on the agenda over to following weeks. 2. Develop more group projects.

Peter

Slough 12.12.82

With the Rail Strike occurring last July and the NHS dispute finishing in November, we thought it time to bring you the latest up to date and topical Bulletin. So ashamed are we that we've relegated the Aims and Principles from the inside front cover to the inside back cover. From vanguardism to behindism.

Anyway, congratulations to those who have managed to read this far. For those gluttons for punishment we now offer you 'Workers Playtime', our latest venture into general political agitation. Hopefully it will be more regular, readable and relevant than the Bulletin. The first issue is out now. (See, we can walk and fart at the same time). Available from Box LWG, c/o Little A, C1 Metropolitan Wharf, Wapping Wall, London E1. £1 for 10 to cover cost and postage.

workers

PLAYTIME

Popular yarns of class warfare

all washed up?

FEBRUARY 10th

As we write, the reorganisation of the national waterworks' strike has not been as serious and as long as some might expect. It is not yet five years since the strike took place at all. The four companies involved passed to the state, but without the bureaucratic apparatus imposed by the state structure, and the workers themselves are not being kept down and prevented from holding their own strength to bear. For example, in 1980 RLUPE waterworkers voted on three occasions to strike, but a majority of waterworkers voted to strike, but some instances were lost to the management's tactics of the union's Joint Negotiating Committee.

This year it has not proved possible to hold back the growing militancy of the waterworkers. The main reason for this is not difficult to see. Whereas in 1975 the waterworkers had approximately £1.15 per week, whereas in 1980 they were getting £1.85 for electricity workers. (These figures are the ones published in the press, not the ones which suggest waterworkers' normal pay is well below the rate quoted.) This is partly due to the waterworkers' own complacency during negotiations and due to the fact that electricity and gas workers have been able to use modernisation programmes as a lever in pay bargaining.

The water service, on the other hand, has been a government target for strict controls and cuts in investment (since 1979 capital expenditure has been halved). The fact that the water service was close to collapse in many departments before the strike has been obscured by the fact that the government is playing the same in such the same way as it played the Health Service dispute - drain on public resources needed to maintain public health and safety. In reality, the opposite is the truth: to restructure and cut back services on its terms and at the public expense is the dismantling of the National Water Council and diffusing the political strength by conducting wage negotiations at local level.

It is true that certain clumsy interventions by the government, which has been riding high on the recent victories of the waterworkers, are

from financing the industry from tax, full cost to customers. Indeed the government is to the year to transfer the water service into a tax collector by adding charges to consumers a further 18% - which will make a profit for the Treasury. By contrast the waterworkers' full pay claim would add only 21% to

victims (over 200,000 workers) the civil servants, 1,000 workers) by and financial resources TOBY FEENEY

Once again, the strike is being used for the purpose of what attention management side is led by an official MP. The opposition will try to concentrate on the Tory intervention in the meantime, the strike will have plenty of time to conduct its own right to work. The government is clearly hoping that the workers will give up. To win their activities of the one side, and physically prevent any other workers from bombing on them.

DRAIN ON RESOURCES

The government is playing the same in such the same way as it played the Health Service dispute - drain on public resources needed to maintain public health and safety. In reality, the opposite is the truth: to restructure and cut back services on its terms and at the public expense is the dismantling of the National Water Council and diffusing the political strength by conducting wage negotiations at local level.

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LONDON WORKERS GROUP

The London Workers Group is an open group of militants working or unemployed in the London Area. We meet every Tuesday night (see details below.) All meetings are open and anyone is welcome to attend. That includes members of parties - but not party recruiters. Our aim is to establish and encourage communication between workers in different industries and workplaces in order to:

1. learn from each others experiences and develop our understanding of industry and trades unions within capitalist society.
2. encourage the establishment of autonomous workers groups within workplaces and amongst the unemployed. The purpose of these groups is to encourage solidarity and to work to spread and intensify struggles. This process implies working for a wider understanding of the need for a revolutionary approach to work and the class struggle.
3. seek out and maintain links with other revolutionaries. We encourage the formation of open regional groups of revolutionaries to complement workplace groups. The purpose of these groups is to overcome the isolation of individuals or groups of revolutionaries, in workplaces or unemployed, and thus assist them to strengthen and develop their activities as revolutionaries through practical solidarity. To this end these groups should:
4. produce propaganda including a bulletin covering industrial news, workplace reports, analyses and theoretical articles.
5. and provide support where asked for.

(cont. from front)

LATER ON, AT A MEETING ON THE SHORE.....

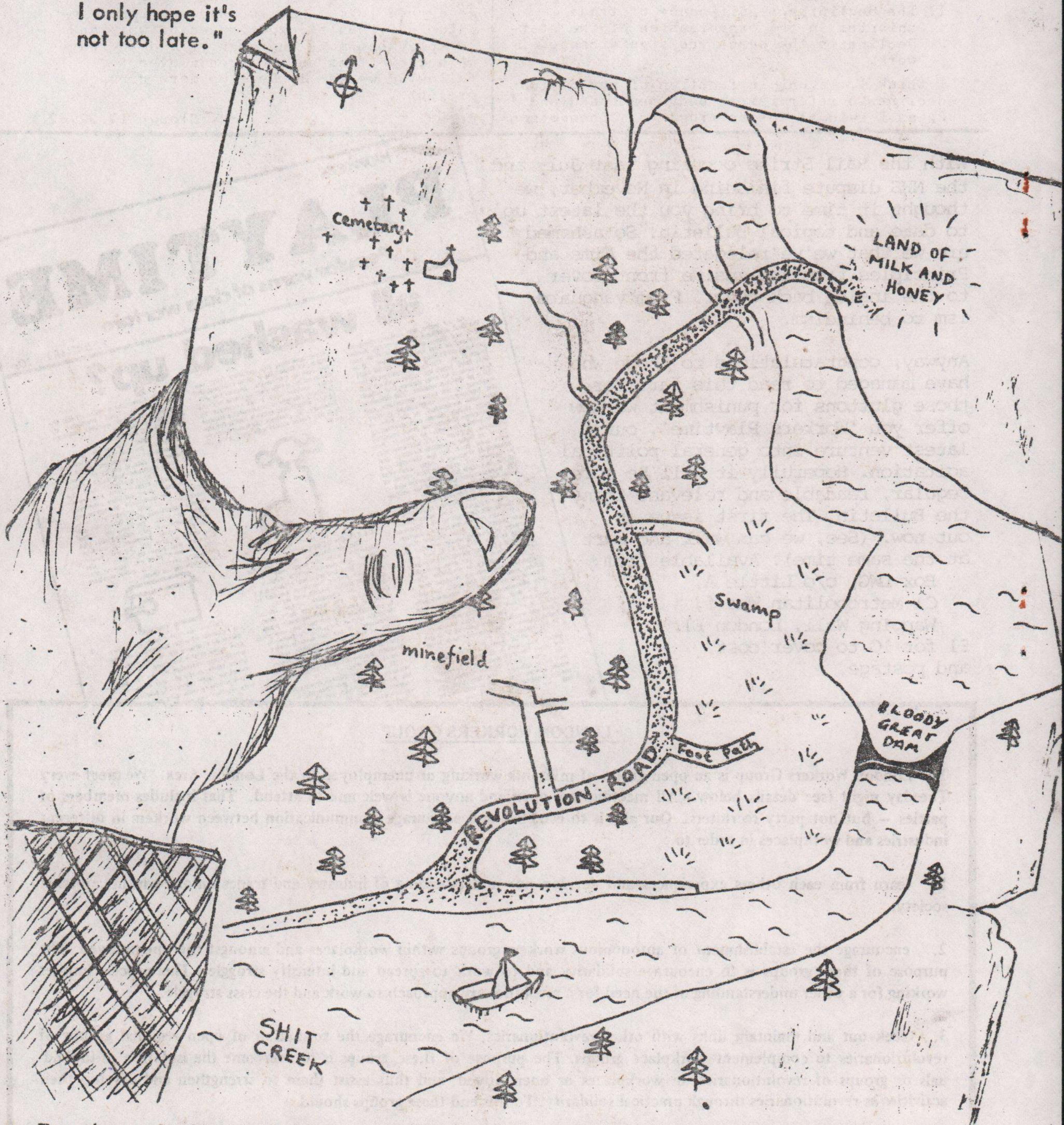
"OK - let's look at the map."

".....Fucking hell..! We've been going the wrong way. It was a DEAD END."

"Yer. The only way to get there is by..er....Revolution Road."

"Let's get on with it."

I only hope it's not too late."



For those who have only an A-Z map, the London Workers Group can be found at
The Metropolitan pub, 95 Farringdon Rd, EC1 (2 mins. from Farringdon Tube)
We meet upstairs every Tuesday at 8.30
or contact us c/o 11 Leyden St, London E1. (Correspondence only)