

# ANARCHY 20<sup>p</sup> or 50<sup>c</sup>



**URBAN GUERRILLA WARFARE**

**Join the amateurs.**



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NUMBER  
NINE

# ANARCHY

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ARMY FACTION WAS

HERE!



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CM  
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TUPAMAROS  
RULE

**listen, liberals:  
the sound of  
people's chemistry!**

Maybe not the spectre of revolution but certainly the sound of bombing haunts Europe, Amerika and Japan. The ever-slow and cynical 'underground' is at last beginning to realise that the Angries are with us for some time. INK, before its financial collapse, was beginning to have a debate about stances and positions on revolutionary violence. David (I'm an International Socialist with a difference) Widgery had put it about that the Angries were merely part of the lunacy of stale socks Marxism, whilst Jake Prescott correctly suggested in a prison letter that calling for a revolutionary party as an alternative to sporadic bombing was either the beginning or the end but not the meat of the debate.

The reality of the present is that bombing is here to stay - the large liberal 'it can't happen here' brigade will have to learn to live with brigades of another sort. For in every important 'Western' (this includes Japan) industrial nation there are small and large urban guerrilla movements. The establishment press has gone to great lengths to minimize their size, importance, and effect - but something is happening: mere rhetoric or blindness won't put back together the forces that are blasting pieces of society apart.

What has happened is that from 1968 there has been a massive rise in militant political deviancy. The emergence of the Weathermen in the USA, the Red Army Fraction in Germany, the Angry Brigade and the IRA in the UK, the numerous groups in Japan, France and Italy: all testify that there is an increased use of direct violence and outrage as a political tactic. The escalation of political struggle is here: guns and bombs are being used, banks robbed, diplomats kidnapped, prisoners freed (Timothy Leary and Andreas Baader) and for the moment governments and the establishment press are engaging in 'semantic holding operations' - nobody is talking.

It was Mr B. Dylan, a forces favourite of radical bombers, who argued that 'to live outside the law you must be honest' - what we must begin to do is initiate real debate on the question of revolutionary violence, when it should be used, under what conditions is it necessary, what are its objectives? Tactically there is a whole symbolic world of difference between bombing Biba's (the fashion clothes shop in Kensington) as some fool did in the UK, and bombing the women's toilets in the Pentagon so badly that thousands of gallons of water dropped through onto the American Air Force computers below, putting them completely out of action and forcing the Air Force to publicly declare that they had other computers and that thankfully they weren't totally dependent on those that were destroyed. That was a Weatherman action the other week. We on the left have to begin to talk and argue openly for armed and violent resistance to oppression. Bernadette Devlin, with all her failings, has travelled the road from left MP to

prison sentences for throwing molotovs. Shortly before the Derry murders she commented 'We'll all be outlaws soon!' Well maybe we will and maybe we won't, but whilst concentration camps (internment if you deal in euphemisms) have been used by us English in Northern Ireland, and our troops unleashed on the populace, while the trade unions are being attacked, and open debate takes place about how much censorship the BBC can take, maybe we ought to do the time that is left to do a little bit of hard thinking.

The militant mad bombers work from varying sets of ideological positions, some of them not so mad as downright sensible - if you've not got a shaky hand. Let's look at the Weathermen, who maybe are a little crazy, but then so is the States, for every crazy story you hear about the Weathermen can be matched by a more horrendous story about the ruling class. Not so well reported was the fact that during Nixon's debate with his White House aides and generals over what to do about the recent Vietcong successes, one well-known public figure was heard to mutter several times, we ought to *nuke* them. (Believed to be a reference to nuclear arms.) Right on all those who call Nixon and his ruling clique: Pigs. Off the Pig. Basically the Weathermen argue that you don't have to be a weatherman to know which way the wind blows - and it's not just polluted, it's oppressive. Capitalist democracy minus free speech equals fascism. The essence of fascism is that the ruling capitalist class can no longer rule with its old liberal ideology, thus it seeks the militarization of labour (trade union laws), the opening up of repression (any trial just beginning), and the removal of open discussion (press silence or censorship). It's in this situation that the underground has to become a reality. That some people deem it necessary to start armed retaliation. This is not a sign of hope or despair, rather it is indicative of a new international social crisis. For the first time since Hitler, universities in every major country in the 'West' have sacked and threatened lecturers. What kind of international collapse in ruling-class ideology does it take so that even sections of the ideologists employed in universities are now regarded as dangerous? Something is happening - and we must begin to analyse what it is.

This issue of Anarchy is a contribution to such an analysis, but the work and the debate is ours, people in the radical movement - it can't be left to reportage, we have to decide where we stand on bombing and guerrilla war.

For if nothing else the mere existence of heavy movements should awaken us to the fact that liberal ideology is going, polarisation occurring, and this isn't rhetoric but reality: in every major 'Western' country there are armed left groups, some two or three hundred strong as in the USA, Japan and Germany, others smaller but growing. The situation which produces this cannot be taken as CIA plots, the work of crazies, or simply demoralisation, cos they are here to stay. As the special issue of

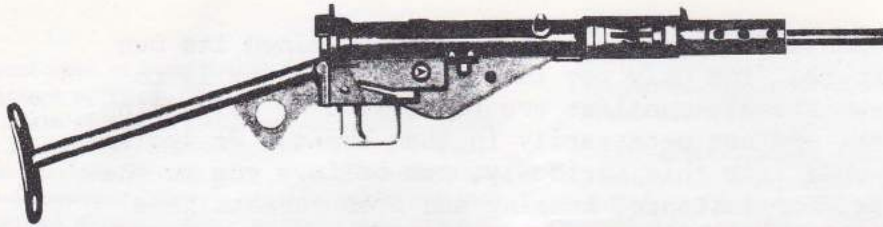
the US journal *Scanlon's Magazine* said when it examined its own uncherry pie bombers, 'the only way to bombproof society is to reform the system. The alternatives are repression or revolution, and probably both, and not necessarily in that order.' We who are revolutionaries must take this seriously, for believe you me the ruling class does. For instance, bombing and bomb threats have jumped so high in the United States that in 1970 a National Bomb Data Center was established; according to its reports, between January 1st 1969 and April 15th 1970 40 people were killed, 384 injured and 22 million dollars worth of damage was done in 4,330 reported bombings. Nixon's new crime control bill has sections which provide the death penalty for those convicted of fatal bombings.

The dangers implicit in militant radical action are obvious: the lapse into the whole 'street fighting' honky tonk man kind of image. The exhilaration of causing things to shake rattle and roll. Yet although we have to take up the question of a possible lapse into the 'military error', the glorification of all that goes bang, without regard to whether it has been understood; there is also another kind of error - the non-military argument.

It must be understood that it's an axiom of revolution that to smash the state requires criticism plus arms. The grounds for the debate must be when do we arm, who do we attack, how do we protect ourselves? Incidentally, whatever the limitations of Weatherman politics, organisationally they are superb: only three arrested and three blown up from a force of at least 200.

That the necessary debate won't be held in the press should be obvious to all. We must begin to talk as we've never really talked before. The most interesting feature of the Tupamaros' struggle is the government's censorship on terms such as guerrilla, and the refusal to call them by name. The conspiracy of silence over the bombing question must be broken by you and me: we must have position talks now. Our analysis of 'people's chemistry' can have only one purpose: namely that we learn how and when to move from the arm of criticism to criticism by arms.

*Henry Bonny*



# THE ANGRY BRIGADE

As the class-war heats up, the state increasingly turns its attention to putting down political opponents. Legal repression becomes the order of the day. The political police are given a free hand; tougher laws are passed, blatantly political charges like 'conspiracy' and 'incitement' are suddenly the rage, sentencing becomes more and more vindictive.

Singled out for special attention is 'public enemy number one' - the Angry Brigade. The state has shown it will stop at nothing to find someone guilty of belonging to it. Already they have made a victim of Jake Prescott - although acquitted of actually causing explosions he was convicted on a charge of conspiracy to cause explosions. The evidence against him was incredibly thin, consisting of his having admitted to addressing three envelopes without knowing that they were going to be used to post copies of an Angry Brigade communique. For this the judge sentenced him to a savage 15 years.

But the Prescott-Purdie trial was only a dress rehearsal for an even bigger trial. This June eight militants are due to face charges intended to reveal them as the nucleus of the AB. The Stoke Newington 8 conspiracy trial will be the biggest show trial yet.

What is the left doing about this trial? Their response to the Prescott-Purdie trial was appalling. A 'serious failing on the part of the revolutionary movement in Britain', a *Red Mole* editorial was candid enough to call it. Despite a few occasional token lines about solidarity and the need to 'attack and expose all the Old Bailey frame-ups,' the left is really sitting tight. *It seems set on repeating the same errors committed over the Prescott-Purdie trial.* What is needed is active solidarity aimed at extending the struggle beyond the courtroom. What we are getting is a half-hearted solidarity drowned in idle doubts -

What are the politics of the AB? Do the Stoke Newington 8 include any members of the AB? Are any of the Stoke Newington 8 guilty of any of the charges against them? Can the left actively defend militants who aren't registered with either a union or a left party?

Such doubts are out of place here because they should be *absolutely irrelevant* to the question of active solidarity with those facing trial. Revolutionary solidarity should embrace all victims of state persecution, whether innocent or guilty, whether bombers or not. The assault on the Stoke Newington 8 is part of a general campaign of legal repression. If the state wins in this case it will consider victory in future political trials a matter of course. If the state can effectively silence our eight, then not a single revolutionary can escape the blame. What is really on trial is the state's ability to railroad who it likes, when it likes, no matter what the evidence. In the Eight's own words, "We are the harbingers of the coming storm and the treatment we receive is the foretaste for all who stand in their way." They are up for trial because they resisted.

There's a further special reason for giving solidarity to the Eight. All of them have been active in different sections of the movement for some time; their involvement covers things as diverse as Claimants' Unions, Women's Lib, Gay Lib, tenants' and squatters' campaigns, radical student politics, experiments in communal living, international organising in defence of political prisoners.

But here, ironically, we touch on the root reason for the left disquiet about giving solidarity. The majority of the left reject AB politics as they understand them. And they recognise that both the AB and the Stoke Newington 8 identify themselves as members of the 'libertarian' left and reject traditional, orthodox or



straight socialist politics. So the left disquiet raises the whole question of what *is* the revolutionary movement in this country. It's not enough for the straight left to raise the question of solidarity for itself in terms of asking what is the AB's part in the movement. Their ideological assumptions about *the* revolutionary movement and its development make the terms far too narrow. And the orthodox left knows this. Like it or not, many recent developments have arisen quite independently of the straight left and have also been hostile in part to it - e.g. women's liberation critique of leadership and hierarchy on the left; claimants' union resistance to centralised left organisation.

So long as the left doesn't respond to these developments in a self-critical manner, the problem of solidarity with those who don't swallow their line will recur and recur. So long as the left feels it has nothing to learn from either the Angry Brigade or the Stoke Newington 8, no real debate can take place. Instead of responding with a prefabricated line on 'terrorist adventurists', the left must develop a live and concrete analysis about such groups as the AB, which must also involve the questioning of their own praxis. The left must ask itself: how far do we want to enter into a dialogue with the AB, how prepared are we for illegal structures, how much do we see our own tactics and strategy in terms of present reality. If these issues continue to be skirted, only the state will benefit.

Is there a way through? Judging from what has appeared in print, the orthodox left is only slightly less mystified by 'terror', 'armed struggle', 'urban guerrillas', 'bombers', etc. than the overground press. For most of us such terms conjure up highly sinister and specialised vocations exclusive of any other activities. Thus 'armed struggle' conjures up professional soldiers, 'bombers' conjures up people - always mad - with a stick of dynamite in their pockets, 'urban guerrillas' conjures up a highly organised military vanguard with complex hierarchy and networks. The way we use these terms is *incredibly mystified*. And by failing to subject the terms to our own analysis we just fall back on the state's perspective, thereby implicitly giving our consent to it.

#### THE AB AS TERRORISTS, URBAN GUERRILLAS, ETC

The AB has been written off as a group of *individual* terrorists. By qualifying 'terrorism' with the word 'individual', left critics can damn it automatically since individual terrorism is by definition isolated from the backbone of any revolution - the masses. But in fact it's not so simple. For a start the criticism plays very heavily on myths around 19th-century propa-

ganda-by-deed anarchists such as Ravachol, exploiting the prejudices against them to obscure not only *their* theory and practice but also that of anyone they are compared to. Second, the criticism overlooks that the arming of the revolution always has to begin somewhere and this may sometimes be with small groups of guerrillas, as was the case in the Cuban revolution. Armed groups only deserve to be condemned as individual if they fail to develop and forge links with other struggles. And whether such a development takes place or not depends in part on the whole left movement and the support (critical and/or active) it gives to violent tactics. The



London Daily Express—Pictorial  
Carrs and damaged home: 'A sad day'

vital thing is not how many people are involved in a bombing campaign but how much they are attuned to what is going on in different areas; if they are attuned then their violence can express and complement others' actions and ideas and be part of the whole. The test is not who, and how many, do a particular action, but how effectively does it fit into a general offensive? Finally, we must remember that for the left the opposite of 'individual' is 'mass', that condemning something as 'individual' is their way of promoting the politics of the mass. But this 'individual'/'mass' polarity is a false one. It is at once uncritical of the passivity of any mass, and dismissive for no good reason of other forms of collective action which are neither 'mass' nor 'individual', such as autonomous working class action or actions by claimants or gay people.

The AB is condemned for being elitist and anti-democratic; it is seen as a self-appointed band of saviours arrogating to itself the rights of decision-making in the revolutionary process without submitting its course of action to the test of approval and adoption by the masses.

Maybe there is something in this criticism, but definitely not for the standard reasons given. For these presuppose that revolutionaries are only such if they accept a single source of decision-making. This ignores that revolutionary decision-making is more creative when it is diffuse and many-centred. This at least is what follows if you think that revolution is about people getting together to take control of their own lives and learning to take decisions for themselves. And just think what the idea of 'submitting the course of action to the test of approval...by the workers' might mean in the present context, especially since all existing machineries for ascertaining working-class views are external and bureaucratic. Would there have been a major strike if the miners had asked for the approval of a majority of the rest of British workers? Such an idea in the present context would be a recipe for passivity.

Critics who are quicker with labels than with analyses have condemned the AB for their apparent secrecy, for being isolated and conspiratorial. The secrecy criticism is more often than not a red herring and a very stupid one at that. If people are still worried about being 'in the know' (who did it, what will they do next, when will they do it?) they haven't grasped the fact that revolution is illegal whether or not the tactic we employ at any given time is legal or illegal, and that at the moment anyway, activities such as bombing and sabotage must be surrounded by very tight security.

The illegality of bombing forces a certain kind of isolation on the AB, in the sense that it cannot openly work with other groups, share or co-ordinate actions. The idea that it could be inconceivable at the moment in England. That does not mean it will always be so (the IRA in Free Derry doesn't have this particular problem ...), nor that the actions of the AB have no bearing on what other people might be doing. But the responsibility for making this kind of interaction fully effective is two-way: the AB needs to make its actions expressive and back them up with as much explanation as possible; and people using other means of struggle must show some response to the tactic - whether hostile or not, but at least a recognition that the AB is part of the movement and that what it does is relevant. For without this recognition the AB will be effectively isolated (as has been the case up till now), as a person whose letters are unanswered is isolated.

To call the Angry Brigade 'conspiratorial' conjures up the picture of a group bent on imposing its own ends on people. But the AB aren't manipulative in this sense. Of course the state sees the AB as a conspiracy, but then it is

unable to tolerate the idea of a movement coming together in any other terms than those of sinister groups perversely working for their own ends ...this is how it explains every setback (e.g. Carr's talk of 'small but virulent minorities in our midst' after the miners' victory).

The AB is seen as setting itself up as a substitute for mass action. But none of their actions make sense as a substitute for mass action. Almost all of them were intended to complement mass struggles, on the industrial and other fronts. Their exemplary actions against symbolic targets were clearly meant to parallel mass actions (e.g. Carr's house was bombed on the same day as a large march against the Industrial Relations Bill) as well as to demonstrate the possibility of a new kind of collective struggle.

The AB is decried as 'adventurist.' Lying behind this charge is the view that revolutionary armed struggle in Britain is inappropriate except during the final phase of revolution, when the material preconditions are 'right'. This view is hidebound. Once you accept the need for revolutionary armed struggle at some stage (even if only in the final phase), then you must accept the need to prepare for it NOW. "Urban guerrilla warfare is based on the analysis...that when conditions will be ripe for armed struggle, it will be too late to prepare for it' (Red Army Fraction). We ask you: do you really believe that when the revolutionary offensive reaches the point when the state physically confronts it totally, armed resistance will appear out of the sky? Well, we don't, so we can't dismiss the AB on the a priori grounds that their use of revolutionary violence was premature. Maybe AB-type armed struggle was ill-chosen, maybe the AB should have spent longer preparing (the Tupamaros took nearly 7 years preparing); but we cannot condemn them for taking the idea of the revolution arming itself seriously. Whether it is right to organise armed resistance depends on whether it is possible; whether it is possible we can only find out in practice. Actions change the situations we're fighting in, the tactics we use.

In any case, we can't accept the idea of armed struggle as a self-contained phase or stage. This is one-dimensional. Armed struggle only makes sense when pursued alongside other non-military forms of struggle. Once this is grasped, then obviously there will be contexts in which armed struggle groups can't take the place of legal left organisations; single actions can't replace ongoing class struggle; bombs and other tactics of the urban guerrilla can't replace agitation/subversion/building alternative structures on the industrial front and in the communities.

AB actions are written off as counter-productive

tive on the grounds that they supplied the state with a pretext for increased repression. But we all know that the state can as easily invent as discover a pretext for escalating repression (this is what happened in Italy recently) and that its repressive response is more often than not completely out of proportion to the immediate or remote threat any action represents. As a rule, escalation of class-war repression occurs independently of what any section of the left does. The basic manoeuvres of the ruling class are dictated by the changing patterns of capitalism. Given a choice, the British ruling class would obviously prefer rule by repressive tolerance to the present unstable state of affairs. But such a luxury is excluded by the overriding needs of the system - to increase profits, raise productivity, curb industrial and community militancy, etc. The intensification of repression is inevitable as soon as the working class starts fighting back.

Looking at this criticism more closely, we need to ask what kind of repression actually resulted from the AB's practice, and who was affected? The countless raids, arrests, detentions, phonetappings and railroadings in court were almost exclusively directed against the libertarian or unaligned sections of the left (women's lib, claimants' unions, political communes, underground bookshops and the underground press). Has the effect on these areas been counter-productive? The people directly affected are the very ones who have learnt most. There is now a recognition that we are not taking struggle seriously if we are not prepared for surveillance, raids etc. It is perhaps a sad comment, but security-consciousness of the ruthlessness of our rulers and their bloodhounds only comes after reaction has started. But this reaction fortunately doesn't come as a single blow and there are clearly more blows to come. So we can learn today from yesterday's repression how to deal with what undoubtedly will be heavier repression from now on. Organising around courts and prisons is starting to take a concrete shape. We are now much more aware of how to defend ourselves as we fight, now and in the future. There is also developing a two-way process between these sections and people coming up against the law in general. Not just the class-conscious defendant, the political con, but defendants and cons everywhere. The knowledge gained is getting applied to all attempts at class self-organising.

But even if the people involved had not been able to make such use of the repression - if there had been a much more severe attack on the libertarian section of the movement as a result of the bombings, would this in itself be damning for the AB? Is the left never prepared to adopt

a tactic if it entails escalation? (And that tactic needn't be armed - e.g. civil rights at a particular moment in history.) Is it content to remain a purely reactive force, even when the state is on the verge of using its army against its own people? (How many Derrys will it take till...?)

None of these remarks are intended to excuse the AB from some criticism. We are trying to clear the way for criticism made on a realistic, unmechanical basis. The arguments above don't wash because they pose a false set of alternatives; either totally isolated individual terror or revolution a la vanguard party. But it is untrue that people are only revolutionaries if they devote themselves to building a revolutionary party. People getting themselves together, outside the embrace of mass parties, to fight oppression are also revolutionaries. Consistently applied, the orthodox left approach dismisses not only all autonomous rank-and-file action on the part of the working class, but also the efforts of so-called 'marginal' groups like women, blacks, unemployed, gays, to organise and fight around their own specific oppressions. And whether our comrades like it or not, these struggles are in the forefront at present. So we reject the idea that our revolution has to be preceded by a long process of forming a mass party according to a fixed agenda of stages. And we have no time for any vanguard or avant-garde which sees itself as having seen a light which they are duty-bound to bring down to the masses.

#### THE DEED AND THE SPECTACLE

"These guerrillas are the violent activists of a revolution comprising workers, students, teachers, trade unionists, homosexuals, unemployed and women striving for liberation. They are all angry..."  
- Evening Standard editorial ("The red badge of revolution that is creeping across Britain..")

How are the Angry Brigade to be viewed then? Where have they failed, where have they succeeded?

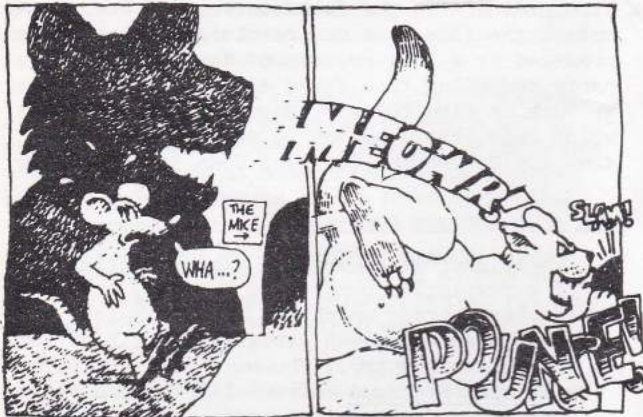
The AB didn't see its bombs as likely to win the class war by themselves. Its actions were exemplary, designed on the one hand to expose the vulnerability of the ruling class, to enter the homes of the rulers and show they have no clothes, and on the other hand to show the possibility of the revolution arming itself.

Nor were the bombs sabotage acts whose validity would lie in destroying something that would be, for example, difficult or impossible to replace. Rather, they were symbolic, and for

symbolism to work it must be clear and intelligible. Here was the main failure of the AB - its propaganda, the way it explains itself. The propaganda can be broken down into three aspects: the act itself (the target, the timing, the type of bomb etc.); the vehicle for distributing written propaganda; and the content of that propaganda.

Only in some cases were the bombings self-explanatory. For example, the choice of Robert Carr's house as a target at a time when there was large-scale opposition to his Industrial Relations Bill. The meaning of some of the other bombings was not so obvious, and consequently could be easily misunderstood or, at best, diluted in its impact by being expressed solely in supportive written propaganda.

The vehicle of distribution they chose for the communiques was, at first, the establishment press, which was of course free to suppress or edit and distort as it chose. In trying to use the press the AB might have gained in number of 'readers' but lost all control over its material;



the long tentacles of the oppressive state machine'); the attacks on other sections of the left too splenetic (I.S., for example, was equated with the C.P. and Robert Carr).

And then there is an undeniable touch of romanticism and fatalism, which distorted their own practice (they weren't in fact individual terrorists) and blinkered their conception of how to build a durable base for organised violence. Collective action was seen in very limited terms - as a series of isolated acts of heroism and self-sacrifice, i.e. things that of their nature can only be exceptional and sporadic. 'We are prepared to die for the revolution', they boasted in one communique: what might have been a realistic confrontation of the dangers reads instead as a fatalistic posturing because it resolves the confrontation by death, not by working out how to survive. Talk of death directly contradicts the AB's - and the libertarian left's - emphasis on realisation of desires as a revolutionary motivation and objective.



if (as in fact happened) the press was directed to suppress news of the bombings, it would obviously also suppress the communiques. Apart from the practicalities, there is something fundamentally wrong in turning to a medium which habitually manipulates to preserve ruling-class interests. (From August 1971 onwards, however, the communiques have been sent to underground papers and radical groups, as an attempt to escape from this contradiction.)

The communiques can also be criticised for their content. Their effect was badly limited by an oblique, didactic, assertive style. The bravado was too sheer ('we are slowly destroying

#### BEATING LEGALITY-FETISHISM

"...A moment of terror. Also it flashed through your mind that all those supporters of Ian and Jake and indignant hippies might have a point after all.."

-Account in recent I.S. paper *Rebel* of Special Branch raid on one of 60 addresses after the Aldershot bombing)

The left must urgently revise its attitude towards legality and illegality. Our respect for the law should never be more than a tactical consideration, for to endorse legality in any

other way is to endorse everyday injustice, everyday repression, everyday exploitation (not only in the workplace, but in the S.S. office, the school, the family, etc.) Legality is a question of power and the Rule of Law is the cornerstone of capitalist domination. After all, the law is nothing but a public code defining what the society is and how it is to be run, which is enforced on all, and, where necessary, enforced by the physical power of police, courts and prison. So respect for the law means respect for the present structure of society. Moreover, while the legal code has the backing of police etc. it is obvious that most of the time this apparatus does not have to be called into effect; most of the time it is maintained by people's consent. Consent/respect performs precisely the same function as the police. Hence the phrase 'policeman in the head.' There is no detached, neutral position. But, despite recognition of these facts on a theoretical level, the left suffers in practice from a legality fetish.

They support working-class militants when

their organisation and activities, it only takes a few raids for the pigs to learn all about them.

At the same time as the state whips up hysteria about the need to respect the Rule of Law, it increasingly employs illegalisation of resistance - i.e. thinks up a new law to outlaw previously legal activities - as a technique of class-warfare. Witness the recent moves against the railmen's work-to-rule and the dockers' blacking of containers. It is building up a counterrevolutionary apparatus of repression. It is contracting the legal space at present permitted to resisters. In these circumstances, what faith can the left have in legality, when it sees the state on the one hand hurriedly legalising its own illegalities - the bill on troop-presence in Northern Ireland rushed through Westminster in less than a day - and on the other hand brazenly abusing its own laws dealing with workers' contracts, claimants' benefits, people's rights on arrest, detention, interrogation, etc?

In the face of these attacks, to confine oneself to purely reactive NCCL-style protest can



massive pickets are mounted, but lose interest when select numbers of them pass through the courts. They offer no concrete help to the rising number of working-class kids who have no alternative but to live outside the law.

They can openly exhort workers to resist illegally, but stop short of analysing their own organisation in a similar light. When pigs start raiding their homes and offices, they restrict themselves to polite protest through legal channels. They get illegally busted on legal demonstrations, plead guilty and go quietly through the courts. Imprisoned comrades get forgotten. Since they centralise information on

at most only slow down the process. The state means business, even if the left as a whole doesn't. In respecting legality, they underestimate the apparatus of repression, and consequently cannot respond to repression by organising resistance. To rely on the state continuing to allow us the luxury of legal room to move is naive. It is idiotic to wait for illegalisation to occur as a blow of fate by the system.

This is where the Stoke Newington 8 trial and other political trials come in. What happened to Prescott, what is happening to the Stoke Newington 8, cannot be dismissed as isolated acts of repression against maverick sections of the left.

The large-scale persecution operations which have been going on for the last two years only make sense as an exercise in *containment*. They are intended as a deterrent against any sort of active resistance undertaken by people on the left, inside or outside left parties. In the process the state is also training and preparing its police and armed forces for struggles that will come if containment fails. The message is plain: left protest is all right so long as it is one step behind. As soon as it takes the initiative, as soon as protest turns into offensive, the left must reckon on the state doing all it can to jail the revolution. (At the end of the Prescott-Purdie trial, Judge Melford Stevenson defined conspiracy for the jury in these terms: 'to cause such disruption of the ordinary agencies of law as to be grievously damaging to the society in which we live.' That crime is committed every single time a militant socialist really starts to put part of what he believes in into action.)

The AB's campaign of bombings is part of an upsurge of militancy in this country. Many may continue to disagree with their particular form of militancy (bombings) but all of us must consider the general lesson their experiment has yielded. All those who undertake active resistance and struggle must expect illegalisation. And since the state can define active resistance how it likes, it's crazy to think you're immune. You don't have to look outside this country to find cases in which writing a leaflet is considered a criminal offence: Mike Tobin is presently serving a two-year sentence in Chelmsford Jail for publishing leaflets that might cause disaffection amongst the army.

The straight left has already been labelled a 'virulent minority.' Unless it retreats, it must anticipate that it too will be labelled 'criminal', even 'terrorist'. When the state is set on illegalisation, the left must begin to think about creating conditions for revolutionary struggle *outside* the legality of the state.



## REVOLUTIONARY CRIMINALITY

It is clearly no accident that over 90% of the people now in prison come from the working class. Neither is it just by chance that the vast majority of these come from specific urban ghettos where the tensions of survival inevitably create a situation of continual conflict with the agents of the ruling class.

It is not just that it is in these areas that the oppression of poverty is so great that many have no choice but to turn to crime as a means of economic survival. Neither is it only that criminal activity is a form of psychological release - and an expression of revolt against the experience of unending and extensive oppression.

Both these are clearly important, but they create a third factor: communities within which the criminal networks are most extensive evolve a way of life which has its own sense of history, its own myths, its own markets for exchange, and its own cultural dynamic which itself is based in continuing conflict with the Law. It has its diversities and complexities, and although it is far more than just a response to prevailing material conditions, it is far too widespread to have any overall coherence and sense of total organisation. It is much more of a diffuse network within which differing small groups of people develop their own specialities and usually stick to them for many years.

Although the criminal fraternity is clearly not a revolutionary force at the moment, this does not mean that it should be rejected as just an apolitical reflection of capitalist society whose experience is irrelevant to the revolution. There are within it possibilities of developing a close relationship with the revolutionary left. These possibilities stem from its basic position within the present set-up; its very existence poses a threat to, and is a denigration of, the ideology of the work (exploitation) ethic and exchange value; it is committed to an ongoing struggle with the Law and its agents, and to maintaining its refusal to play the co-operative game with a ruling class which only survives through the successful propagation of the myth that its objects have no choice but to remain passively obedient.

This is not to say that inside every criminal there lies the soul of a revolutionary. Clearly such gangster businessmen as the Krays and the Richardsons are closer in spirit to the Cabinet and its business associates. But these men are very much exceptions to the rule; they were hated

by the vast majority of 'self-respecting criminals' because they built their empires through the extortion of others' successful pullings and maintained their reign of terror only through close co-operation with 'respectable' bent coppers, politicians and businessmen.

Ignoring the distortion of the outlaw capitalist for the moment, there are clear political implications in the escalating confrontation between the state and the criminal fraternity. This confrontation has come largely as a result of the state's initiative; because it fears that 'crime' may soon threaten the whole fabric of the system, it has begun to hit out far more heavily at those it considers to be criminals. In the activities of the pigs, in the courts and in the prisons, the confrontation is beginning to take on the dimensions of a war.

The response has been a gathering cohesiveness on the part of those the state is attacking. The consciousness that the police, the courts and the prisons are only corrupt agents of those who have the power, has always been there. What has been lacking until now has been an organised reply. This reply may not come until there has evolved a much closer relationship with the revolutionary left. But with the success of the numerous sit-down strikes which continue to take place in many prisons (all of which have occurred without the guidance of the organised left), it looks as though the 'criminals' are moving towards a consciousness of collective solidarity which, although focussed in the prisons at the moment, may spread back to the ghettos and give the 'war

against crime' an important political dimension.

It is because of the arrival on the scene of a prison movement, and, on the other side, the arrival from the respectable left of Angry Brigade 'criminals' and the SWP Maoist bank-robbers, that the left must urgently revise its attitude towards criminality. Until very recently its attitude has been distorted by the sweet-sided benevolence of class justice. Smooth-talking middle-class accents have usually meant that the demonstrator and the dopehead (the left's only contact with the Law) have only collected fines, suspended sentences and probation. Borstal, Detention Centre, prison are almost always reserved for the working class people who get captured by the Law.

Times are changing. The politicians and the freaks are now recognised as a 'danger to society' in their own right, and the jail sentences are rolling out. Over the past few years they have tried to work out new ways of living and working together. This has focussed in collectives, which themselves usually reject the work ethic on the basis that if we are conspiring to overthrow the state, we might as well refuse to permit the ruling class to exploit us for half our active lives. And despite the impact of the claimants' unions, the SS officers take none too kindly to this refusal, and consequently make it as difficult as possible to extract the pittance which the Warfare State is supposed to provide. The rejection of the work ethic means the acceptance of criminality as a means of survival.



"...5 pounds sulphur, 10 pounds potassium nitrate, 5, 50-foot primer fuse, 2 rolls friction tape, 4 batteries, 1 clock..."

# THE RED ARMY FACTION



It's just two years since the RAF declared their existence following the liberation of Andreas Baader from the Institute for Social Research in West Berlin, where he had been allowed to work - under armed guard - while serving a prison sentence for the burning of a store in Frankfurt in 1968, in protest against the Vietnam war. For two years, then, the RAF have survived the largest operation in persecution in post-war German history. The full power of the repressive apparatus has been turned on them - at times 20,000 pigs have been involved in the hunt. Pigs armed with machine pistols, pigs who bust into places by hacking down doors with axes, pigs who have murdered three revolutionaries in the last ten months and wounded a number of others, pigs who have set up massive road blocks halting the entire traffic in cities as large as Hamburg, pigs who have raided not just one flat in a block but the entire block. Those revolutionaries who have been captured on the basis of alleged associations with the RAF, have been hammered by the courts, either getting hit with long prison sentences on fitted up charges, or spending periods of over a year and a half in prison awaiting trial. Horst Mahler, the revolutionary lawyer who got Baader permission to work in the Institute, was tried last year for his alleged part in the prison liberation and found not guilty; now the state have quashed this judgement and are trying him again on the same charge (it's possible to try someone twice for the same charge under West German law). And this time - in the light of 'new evidence' - it looks like they'll get a conviction. Altogether there are thirty comrades in prison on charges connected with the RAF.

Nevertheless the RED ARMY FRACTION continue to exist. Who are they? It's generally considered that they consist of a hard core of about 10 people, which includes Andreas Baader, Ulrike Meinhof, and Gudrun Ensslin (who together with Baader, Thorwald 'frehdi' Proll, and Sohn-

lein burnt down the store in Frankfurt), and an unknown number of others who make up the organisational infrastructure of the RAF by providing flats, cars, false papers, and propaganda facilities. In reality nobody knows whether this picture of the RAF structure is accurate or not.

The RAF claims its prehistory as the history of the student movement in West Germany, insofar as its militant actions developed historically from the direct militant actions of the SDS. As with other student movements that developed in the sixties, the dynamic of the SDS was its opposition to the war in Vietnam and to West Germany's profit involvement in the exploitation of the Third World, and its critique of the dependence of the education system on monopoly capitalism. "From its critique of ideology the student movement seized almost all branches of state repression as expressions of imperialist exploitation...so it was clear to them and their public that what was always true for the colonialist and imperialist exploitation of Latin America, Africa, and Asia is true here as well: viz: discipline, subordination, brutality for the oppressed and for those who take up their struggle - in their protest, in their resistance, and in their anti-imperialist fight...What their self-consciousness resulted in was not developed class struggles here but the consciousness of being part of an international movement - having to deal with the same class enemy as the Vietcong, with the same paper tiger, with the same pig." (Red Army Fraction manifesto.)

But by the late sixties it became clear that the SDS had failed to break out of the university ghettos, neither succeeding in making any solid links with the organised workers' movement, nor developing militant grass roots organisations in the communities, and at this time doing little more than expressing an intellectual solidarity with the struggles going on in the Third World. It was in this climate of stagnation of activity that the store in Frankfurt was burnt down; at least some



revolutionaries had grasped the necessity to resist by direct action, and to carry out the political offensive against the state. Prior to the burning of the store both Baader and Ensslin had been active in the apprentice and borstal campaign in Frankfurt. Both of them jumped parole, allowed them through the amnesty for political prisoners of 1969, and went underground. Baader was re-arrested in West Berlin at the beginning of 1970. It was during this period that he developed a close relationship with Ulrike Meinhof, an extremely well-known left-wing journalist, who had been working around Eichenhof, a West Berlin borstal for girls. It was with her that he was working at the Institute for Social Research on a book about the borstal situation in West Germany, when, on May 14th 1970, an armed group burst into the library of the Institute and liberated Baader; Ulrike Meinhof jumped out of a window and fled with the group. Immediately after the liberation the group went via East Berlin to Jor-



Casualty in the Springer bombing.

dan, where they spent some months with Al Fatah receiving training in guerrilla warfare. They returned to Germany, carrying out a number of bank raids and organising armed resistance within West Germany and West Berlin.

The ideological framework in which the RAF see their work is marxist-leninist. They see themselves as the armed avant-garde of the anti-imperialist struggle in the West. But, while they assert the necessity of revolutionary intervention of the avant-garde, they do not relate this, on either a theoretical or a practical level, to the necessity of building the good old revolutionary vanguard party, which makes their leninism pretty unique. It follows from their marxist-leninism that they struggle on behalf of others, particularly the oppressed peoples of the Third World. Mao's 'serve the people' principle is crudely simplified in their theory, and is the basis on which they rationalise their practice, whether that practice means direct confrontation

with the West German pigs, or the rejection of criticism coming from sympathetic left groups. If it's not around your own oppression that you organise, if it's in the name of the people or the mass movement that you conceive your work then you tend to justify your actions with a high moral tone, which supports a political elitism which can mislead you into thinking that you, and you alone, are the true revolutionary forces, that self-criticism is unnecessary and that criticism from any other point of view is necessarily hostile and destructive. This is the position that the RAF now find themselves in, and they are effectively isolated from the greater part of the left movement in West Germany and West Berlin. The idea of an avant-garde armed resistance group goes hand-in-hand with the idea of urban guerrilla warfare as a specialised, mystified kind of political activity, which is itself separated from the many different types of direct action which are carried out at the grass roots level. The armed resistance of the RAF is both centralised and spectacular, and this has two very negative effects; their actions don't relate to people's everyday experience and the majority of people look at their struggle with the police as some kind of private feud in which they have no part; since it proved impossible for the members of the RAF to combine legal political work with illegal political work, and since their actions have been supplementary rather than integral to the struggles carried on by other revolutionaries, those comrades who would have liked to help in a more concrete way have been unable to do so. Most of these are working in the solidarity movement which has developed in the face of the massive repression against the RAF and the anarchist and libertarian left.

Nevertheless, the positive things that we can learn from the RAF far outweigh the negative criticisms outlined above. They have firstly demonstrated the necessity for the revolution to take up arms, and to master the technical means that the system appropriates to itself to destroy opposition. They have challenged the armed power of the police so that no policeman in West Germany can think himself safe from attack, and in so doing they have attacked the myth of the omnipotence of the state and its invulnerability. All their actions have been carefully planned and well executed - the liberation of Baader, the various bank robberies, and more recently a number of bombings, of which only the bombings can be seen as symbolic actions. Right now the RAF seem to be in the process of starting a new stage in their offensive, having demonstrated that an armed resistance group can survive everything with which the state attacks it. In the development of its infrastructure over the last two years, it has shown not only that it is necessary to build

an underground which the pigs can't penetrate, but that it is possible. They have exposed the repressive apparatus and the technology and methods that they use, and so exposed the contradiction between the theoretical liberalisation of the law through parliamentary statutes, and the actual strengthening of the repressive state apparatus. The mist of parliamentary liberalism behind which the machine pistols of the police hide has evaporated. While Brandt gets the Nobel Peace Prize for sorting out his treaties with Eastern Europe, Genscher, his Minister of Internal Affairs, equips his police force with bigger and better pistols. Even those left groups which are strongly critical of the RAF, and trot out the standard anti-terrorist arguments from entrenched ideological positions, have no illusions about what they face if their political work should ever become effective. Most people on the left can see clearly enough that the pig activity isn't aimed solely at the RAF, but is both an attempt to intimidate all other sections of the left and a preparatory training exercise, the experience which they will use when their attempts at intimidation fail. This awareness has given the left movement in West Germany a basis for solidarity which doesn't exist here. When Georg von Rauch was shot down in Berlin, unarmed and in cold blood, just before Christmas, 7,000 revolutionaries took to the streets the next day. Similarly, when Thomas Weissbecker was murdered in the middle of the street in Augsburg in March this year, demonstrations took place in all major West German cities the following day. The repression has forced a lot of revolutionaries to see that not to attack the legality of the state, means to tacitly accept the power base on which the state depends, and to accept the laws of the ruling class as the definition of the area in which 'revolutionary' activity takes place. The RAF in their organisation of an underground have shown the need for the revolutionary movement

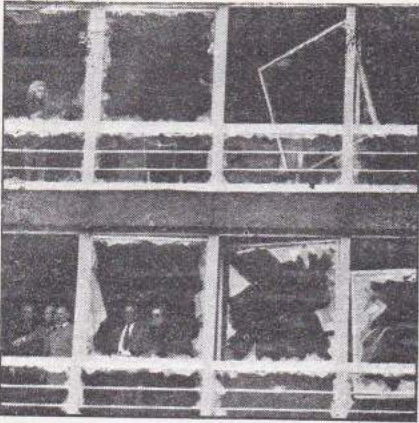
to conquer its own spatial territory as part of the process of expropriation - in this case their illegal activity is complemented by the illegal activity of squats and occupations, as for example the occupation of the disused Betanien hospital in West Berlin, now renamed the Georg von Rauch Haus and used as a youth centre.

In their manifesto the RAF say, "If you don't work out the dialectic of legality and illegality in terms of organisation you will be without protection from the heavy repression that follows offensive actions, and you will be legally arrested... If a revolutionary organisation says that it's stupid to illegalise itself... it implies that the limits that the class state sets the socialist project are sufficient to encompass all possibilities, so one has to stay on the right side of the line, and one has to retreat from the illegal acts of the state as they become legalised - legality at any price. Illegal arrests, terrorist sentences, harassment by the police, blackmail and coercion by the public prosecutors... Legality becomes a fetish when those who insist on it ignore the fact that phones get tapped legally, post gets legally controlled, neighbours get legally interrogated, informers get legally paid. The organisation of political work, if it doesn't want to be permanently laid open to the grip of the political police, has to be legal and illegal at the same time... the conditions of legality necessarily change through active resistance, and it is therefore necessary to use legality simultaneously for political struggle and for the organisation of illegality, and it is wrong to wait for illegalisation as a blow of fate by the system, because illegalisation is nothing less than being smashed by the system."

To hang onto legality, and not to see that the relation that revolutionaries have to it should never be more than a tactical one, is to dismiss all idea of resistance. Respect for the law, or rather terror of the law, reinforces the rule of



U.S. Forces Social Club after RAF bomb attack.



Gestern in München: Nach der Explosion einer größeren Sprengladung im Parkhof des Landeskriminalamtes wurden alle Scheiben des Gebäudes und der angrenzenden Häuser im Umkreis von 400 Metern von der Druckwelle zertrümmert

law and the legitimacy of the state to do what it likes. It leaves the state a free hand to define active resistance in its own terms; eventually the simple act of saying "no" will become a criminal offence. Revolutionaries have to learn to live and work outside the law - something which our education and experience has not equipped us to do. We can look at the RAF and learn this - that no sophisticated theory is going to teach us how to survive illegally, no theory is going to teach us whether this is possible or not, no marxist-leninist-chauvinist theory is going to teach us how to resist repression - we'll only learn these things in practice.

Solidarity!

Hoch die Internationale Solidarität!

#### RECENT EVENTS

In The Armed Struggle in Western Europe, published as Rotbuch 29 by the Wagenbach publishing collective, and seized a few weeks later by the pigs, the Red Army Fraction collective says: "The resources of the RAF are still limited but they are sufficient to solve the problems of the first stage. The support that the RAF gets is larger than expected - to the anger of the oppressors. The concept of urban guerrilla warfare is therefore realistic. The second stage, the stage of exemplary attacks on the apparatus of repression, will develop out of the first stage. The task of the first stage is to demonstrate through suitable actions that it is possible to build armed groups which resist the state."

After the liberation of Baader, the RAF expropriated a number of banks. They issued no communiques explaining their actions. The money that they got has been used to build their infrastructure, so for good reason they have made no public declaration about this. In the last two years they have got hold of flats and houses throughout West Germany and West Berlin; they have got hold of cars, documents, weapons and explosives. They have been patient. It looks now as if their infrastructure is strong enough to resist penetration by the police. And it's this infrastructure which gives them the autonomy necessary to carry out attacks on the apparatus of repression, it gives them the basis to continue and develop the war against the state. Judging by the events of the last two weeks, they have begun the second stage of guerrilla warfare - what this means for all of us who call ourselves revolutionaries cannot be underestimated: **ARMED RESISTANCE IS BOTH POSSIBLE AND NECESSARY IN THE ADVANCED CAPITALIST COUNTRIES.**

There have been seven attacks since May 13th, all claimed by the RAF, who now seem to be operating in at least five different commando groups. On May 13th the Officers' Club of the American Army in Frankfurt was bombed, and an American colonel killed. This action was claimed by the Petra Schelm Commandos (Petra Schelm was murdered by the pigs at a roadblock in Hamburg last July); in the communique they say the bomb was a reprisal for American air attacks in Vietnam. On the same day the police headquarters in Augsburg was bombed (Augsburg was where Tommy Weissbecker was murdered), as was the police headquarters in Munich and the Amerika Haus in Hamburg. These were simultaneous attacks on American imperialism and the repressive apparatus in West Germany. On May 15th, the car of Herr Buddenburg, the judge investigating the activities of the RAF, was bombed; his wife, and not him, was seriously injured. On the 19th May the building of the Springer newspapers in Hamburg was bombed, causing thousands of pounds worth of damage and fifteen injuries although a warning was given some time before the explosion. And now an attack on the headquarters of the United States Army in Europe at Heidelberg on May 24th, which killed another colonel and two privates. The state and its pigs seem completely confused and, for the moment at least, powerless to intervene. The head of the Federal Criminal Office even went so far as to book ten minutes of television to appeal to the public to act as detectives against the bombers. The conclusion is that it doesn't look like the Red Army Fraction - whoever they are - can be caught.

# ANTI-MASS

## collectives as a form of organisation

most pamphlets deal with content & issues. this one is about methods & organisation. don't read it & ask yourself "what are they talking about?" as far as we're concerned the means justify the means.

### 1: the difference between mass and class

Why is it important to know the difference between mass and class? The chances are there can be no conscious revolutionary practice without making this distinction. We are not playing around with words. Look. We are all living in a mass society. We didn't get that way by accident. The mass is a specific form of social organisation. The reason is clear. Consumption is organised by the corporations. Their products define the mass. The mass is not a cliché - the "masses" - but a routine which dominates your daily life. Understanding the structure of the mass market is the first step toward understanding what happened to the class struggle.

What is the mass? Most people think of the mass in terms of numbers - like a crowded street or a football stadium. But it is actually structure which determines its character. The mass is an aggregate of couples who are separate, detached and anonymous. They live in cities, physically close yet socially apart. Their lives are privatized and depraved. Coca-Cola and loneliness. The social existence of the mass - its rules and regulations, the structuring of its status roles and leadership - are organised through consumption (the mass market). They are all products of a specific social organisation. Ours.

Of course, no one sees themselves as part of the mass. It's always others who are the masses. The trouble is that it is not only the corporations which organise us into the mass. The "movement" itself behaves as a mass and its organisers reproduce the hierarchy of the mass.

Really, how do you fight fire? With water, of course. The same goes for revolution. We don't fight the mass (market) with a mass (movement). We fight mass with class. Our aim should not be to create a mass movement but a class force.

What is a class? A class is a consciously organised social force. For example, the ruling class is conscious and acts collectively to organise not only itself but also the people (mass) that it rules. The corporation is the self-conscious collective power of the ruling class. We are not saying that class relations do not exist in the rest of society. But they remain passive so long as they are shaped simply by objective conditions (i.e. work situations). What is necessary is the active (subjective) participation of the class itself. Class prejudice is not class consciousness. The class is conscious of its social existence because it seeks to organise itself. The mass is unconscious of its social existence because it is organised by Coca-Cola and IBM.

The moral of the story is: the mass is a mass because it is organised as a mass. Don't be fooled by the brand name. Mass is thinking with your ass.  
2: primacy of the collective

The small group is the coming together of people who feel the need for collectivity. Its function is often to break out of the mass - specifically from the isolation of daily life and the mass structure of the movement. The problem is that frequently the group cannot create an independent existence and an identity of its own because it continues to define itself negatively, i.e. in opposition. So long as its point of reference lies outside of it, the group's politics tend to be superimposed on it by events and crises.

The small group can be a stage in the development of the collective, if it develops a critique of the frustrations stemming from its external orientation. The formation of a collective begins when

people not only have the same politics but agree on the method of struggle.

Why should the collective be the primary form of organisation? The collective is an alternative to the existing structure of society. Changing social relations is a process rather than a product of revolution. In other words, you make the revolution by actually changing social relations. You must consciously create the contradictions in history.

Concretely, this means: organise yourselves, not somebody else. The collective is the organisational nucleus of a classless society. As a formal organisation it negates all forms of hierarchy. The answer to alienation is to make yourself the subject, not the object, of history.

One of the crucial obstacles to the formation of collectives is the transitional period - when the collective must survive side by side with a disintegrating movement and a mass society. The disintegration of the movement is not an isolated phenomenon but reflects the weakening of the major institutions in American society responsible for our alienation. Many people are demoralised by this process and find it bewildering because they actually depend subconsciously on the continued existence of these institutions. We are witnessing the break-up and transformation of an institution integral to modern society - the mass market. The mass market is a corporate structure which few people are sufficiently aware of to realise how it affects our political life. We really do depend on our "leaders", whether they be the Chicago 7 or 7 Up. Our understanding of the collective form of organisation is based on a crit-

ique of the mass and the dictatorship of the product.

These conditions make it imperative that any people who decide to create a collective know exactly who they are and what they are doing. That is why you must consider your collective as primary. Because, if you don't believe in the legitimacy of this form of organisation, you can't have a practical analysis of what is happening. Don't kid yourself. The struggle for the creation and survival of collectives at this moment of history is going to be very difficult.

The dominant issue will be how collectives can become part of history - how they can become a social force. There is no guarantee and we should promise no easy victories. The uniqueness of developing collectives is their definitive break with all hierarchic forms of organisation and the reconstructing of a classless society.

The thinking of radical organisers is frozen in the concept of a mass movement. This form of struggle, no matter how radical its demands, never threatens the basic structure - the mass itself.

Under these circumstances it takes great effort to imagine new forms of existence. Space must be created before we can think of these things and be able to establish the legitimacy of acting upon them.

The form of a collective is its practice. The collective is opposed to the mass. It contradicts the structure of the mass. The collective is anti-mass.

the form of a collective is its practice



### 3: size of the collective

The aim of any organisation is to make it as simple as possible, or as McLuhan puts it, "high in participation, low in definition". The tendency is just the opposite. Our reflex is to create administrative structures to deal with political problems.

Most people cannot discuss intelligently the subject of size. There is an unspoken feeling either that the problem should not exist or that it is beneath us to talk about it. Let's get it out into the open. Size is a question of politics and social relations, not administration. Do you wonder why the subject is shunted aside at large meetings? Because it fundamentally challenges the repressive nature of large organisations. Small groups that function as appendages to larger bodies will never really feel like small groups.

The collective should not be bigger than a band - no orchestras or chamber music please. The basic idea is to reproduce the collective, not expand it. The strength of a collective lies in its social organisation, not its numbers. Once you think in terms of recruiting, you might as well join the Army. The difference between expansion and reproduction is the difference between adding and multiplying. The first bases its strength on numbers and the second on relationships between people.

Why should there be a limit to size? Because we are neither supermen nor slaves. Beyond a certain point, the group becomes a meeting and before you know it you have to raise your hand to speak. The collective is a recognition of the practical limits of conversation. This simple fact is the basis for a new social experience.

Relations of inequality can be seen more clearly within a collective and dealt with more effectively. "Whatever the nature of authority in the large organisation, it is inherent in the simple organisational unit" (Chester Barnard, *The Function of the Executive*, 1938). A small group with a "leader" is the nucleus of a class society. Small size restricts the area which any single individual can dominate. This is true both internally and in relation to other groups.

Today, the mode of struggle requires a durable and resilient form of organisation which will enable us to cope both with the attrition of daily life and the likelihood of repression. Unless we can begin to solve problems at this level collectively, we are certainly not fit to create a new society. Contrary to what people are led to think, i.e. united we stand, divided we fall, it will be harder to destroy a multitude of collectives than the largest organisations with centralised control.

Size is a key to security. But its real importance lies in the fact that the collective reproduces new social relations - the advantage being that the process can begin now.

The limitation on size raises a difficult problem. What do you say to someone who asks, "Can I join your collective?" This question is ultimately at the root of much hostility (often unconscious) toward the collective form of organisation. You can't separate size from the collective because it must be small in order to exist. The collective has a right to exclude individuals because it offers them the alternative of starting a new collective, i.e. sharing the responsibility for organisation. This is the basic answer to the question above.

Of course, people will put down the collective as being exclusive. That is not the point. The size of a collective is essentially a limitation on its authority. By contrast, large organisations, while

having open membership, are exclusive in terms of who shapes the politics and actively participates in the structuring of activities. The choice is between joining the mass or creating the class. The revolutionary project is to do it yourself. Remember. Alexandra Kollontai warned in 1920, "The essence of bureaucracy is when some third person decides your fate."

the strength of a collective lies in its social organisation not its numbers

#### 4: contact between collectives

The collective does not communicate with the mass. It makes contact with other collectives. What if other collectives do not exist? Well, then it should talk to itself until they do. Yes. By all means, the collective also communicates with other people, but it never views them as a mass - as a constituency or audience. The collective communicates with individuals in order to encourage self-organisation. It assumes that people are capable of self-organisation and given that alternative they will choose it over mass participation. The collective knows that it takes time to create new forms of organisation. It simply seeks to hasten the crumbling of the mass.



Much of the problem of "communication" these days is that people think they have got to communicate all the time. You find people setting up administrative functions to deal with information flows before they have any idea what they want to say. The collective is not obsessed with "communicating" or "relating" to the movement. What concerns it is the amount of noise - incessant phone calls, form letters, announcements of meetings, etc. - that passes for communication. It is time we gave more thought to what we say and how we say it.

What exactly do we mean by contact? We want to begin by taking the bureaucracy out of communication. The idea is to begin modestly. Contact is a touching on all sides. The essential thing about it is its directness and reliability. Eyeball to eyeball.

Other forms of communication - telephone, letters, documents, etc. - should never be used as substitutes for direct contact. In fact, they should serve primarily to prepare contacts.

Why is it so important to have direct contact? Because it is the simplest form of communication. Moreover, it is physical and involves all the senses - most of all the sense of smell. For this reason it is reliable. It also takes account of the real need for security. Those who talk about repression continue to pass around sheets of paper asking for names, addresses and telephone numbers.

There are already a number of gatherings which appear to involve contact but in reality are grotesque facsimiles. The worst of these and the one most people flock to is the conference. This is a hotel of the mind which turns us all into tourists and spectators. A lower form of existence is the endless meeting - the one that is held every night. Not to mention the committees formed expressly to arrange the meetings.

The basic principle of contact between collectives is: you only meet when you have something to say to each other. This means two things. First, that you have a concrete idea of what it is you want to say. Secondly, that you must prepare it in advance. These principles help to ensure that communication does not become an administrative problem.

The new forms of contact have yet to be created. We can think of two simple examples. A member of one collective can attend the meeting of another collective or there may be a joint meeting of the groups as a whole. The first of these appears to be the most practical, however, the drawback is that not everyone is involved. There are undoubtedly other forms of contact which are likely to develop. The main thing is to invent them.

##### 5: priority of local action

The collective gives priority to local action. It rejects the mass politics of the white nationalists with their national committees, organizers and the superstars. Definitely, the collective is out of the mainstream and what's more it feels no regrets. The aim of a collective is to feel new thoughts and act new ideas - in a word to create its own space. And that, more than any program, is what is intolerable to all the xerox radicals

trying to reproduce their own images.

The collective is the hindquarters of the revolution. It makes no pretence whatsoever in regard to the role of vanguard. Expect nothing from them. They are not your leaders. Leave them alone. The collective knows it will be the last to enter the new world.

The doubts people have about local action reveal how dependent they are on the glamour of mass politics. Everyone wants to project themselves on the screen of revolution - as Yuppies or White Panthers. Having internalised the mass, they ask themselves questions whose answers seem logical in its context. How can we accomplish anything without mass action? If we don't go to meetings and demonstrations, will we be forgotten? Who will take us seriously if we don't join the rank and file?

Slowly, you realise that you have become a spectator, an object. Your politics take place on a stage and your social relations consist of sitting in an audience or marching in a crowd. The fragmentation of your everyday experience contrasts with the spectacular unity of the mass.

By contrast, the priority of local action is an attempt to unify everyday life and fragment the mass. This level of consciousness is a result of rejecting the laws of mass behaviour based on Leninism and TV ideology. It makes possible an enema of the brain which everyone so desperately needs. You will be relieved to discover that you can create a situation by localizing your struggle.

How can we prevent local action from becoming provincial? Whether or not it does so depends on our overall strategy. Provincialism is simply the



consequence of not knowing what is happening. A commune, for example, is provincial because its strategy is based on petty farming and the glorification of the extended family. What they have is astrology, not a strategy.

Local action should be based on the global structure of modern society. There can be no collective action without collectives. But the creation of a collective should not be mistaken for victory nor should it become an end in itself. The great danger the collective faces historically is that of being cut off (or cutting itself off) from the outside world. The issue ultimately will be what action to take and when. Whether collectives become a social force depends on their analysis of history and their course of action.

In fact, the "provinces" today are moving ahead of the centers in political consciousness and motivation. From Minnesota to the Mekong Delta the revolt is gaining coherence. The centers are trying to decipher what is happening, to catch up and contain it. For this purpose they must create centralised forms of organisation - or "co-ordination" as the modernists call it.

The first principle of local action is to de-nationalise your thinking. Take the country out of Salem. Get out of Marlborough country. Become conscious of how your life is managed from the national centers. Lifestyles are roles designed to give you the illusion of movement while keeping you in your place. "Style is mass chasing class, and class escaping mass."

Local action gives you the initiative by enabling you to define the situation. That is the practice of knowing you are the subject. Marat says: "The important thing is to pull yourself up by your own hair, to turn yourself inside out and see the whole world with fresh eyes." The collective turns itself inside out and sees reality.

#### 6: the dream of unity

The principle of unity is based on the proposition that everyone is a unit (a fragment). Unity means 1 multiplied by itself. We are going to say it straight - in so far as unity has suppressed real political differences - class, racial, sexual - it is a form of tyranny. The dream of unity is in reality a nightmare of compromise and suppressed desires. We are not equal and unity perpetuates inequality.

The collective will be subject constantly to pressure from outside groups demanding support in one form or another. Everyone is always in a crisis. Given these circumstances, a group can have the illusion of being permanently mobilised and active without ever having a politics of its

own. Calls for unity channel the political energies of collectives into support politics. So, as a precaution, the collective must take time to work out its own politics and plan of action. Above all, it should try to foresee crisis situations and their "rent-a-crowd" militancy.

You will be accused of factionalism. Don't waste time thinking about this age-old problem. A collective is not a faction. Responding to Pavlov's bell puts you in the position of a salivating dog. There will be no end to your hunger when who you are is determined by someone else.

You will also be accused of elitism. This is a tricky business and should not be dismissed lightly. A collective must first know what is meant by elitism. Instead of wondering whether it refers to leadership or personalities, you should first anchor the issue in a class context. Know where your ideas come from and what their relation is to the dominant ideology. You should ask the same questions about those who make the accusations. What is their class background and class interest? So far many people have reacted defensively to the charge of elitism and, thus, have avoided dealing with the issue head on. That in itself is a class reaction.

The internal is a mirror of the external. The best way to avoid behaving like an elite is to prevent the formation of elitism within the collective itself. Often when charges of elitism are true, they reflect the same class relations internally.

The ways of undermining the autonomy of a collective are many and insidious. The call for unity can no longer be responded to automatically. The time has come to question the motives and effectiveness of such actions - and to feel good (i.e. correct) in doing so. Jargon is pigeon talk and is meant to make us feel stupid and powerless. Because collective action is not organised as a mass, it does not have to rely on the call of unity in order to act.

Does "one divide into two" or "two fuse into one?" This question is a subject of debate in China and now here. This debate is a struggle between two conceptions of the world. One believes in struggle, the other in unity. The two sides have drawn a clear line between them and their arguments are diametrically opposed. Thus, you can see why one divides into two.

free translation from The Red Flag, Peking, September 21, 1964



### 7: the function of analysis

Not only can there be no revolution without revolutionary theory, there can be no strategy without an analysis. Strategy is knowing ahead of time what you are going to do. This is what analysis makes possible. When you begin, you may not know anything. The purpose of analysis is not to know everything, but to know what you do know and know it good - that is collectively. The heart of thinking analytically is to learn over and over again that the process is as important as the product. Developing an analysis requires new ways of thinking. Without new ways of thinking we are doomed to old ways of acting.

The question of what we are going to do is the hardest to answer and the one that ultimately will determine whether a collective will continue to exist. The difficulty of the question makes analysis all the more necessary. We can no longer afford to be propelled by the crudest forms of advertisement - slogans and rhetoric. The function of analysis is to reveal a plan of action.

Why is there relatively little practical analysis of what is happening today? Some people refuse to analyse anything which they cannot immediately comprehend. Basically they have a feeling of inadequacy. This is partly because they have never had the opportunity to do it before and, therefore, don't know they're capable of it. On the other hand, many activists put down analysis as being "intellectual" - which is more a commentary on their own kind of thinking than anything else. Finally, there are those who feel no need to think and become very uncomfortable when somebody does want to. This often reflects their class disposition. The general constipation of the movement is a product of all these forces.

One reason for this sad state of affairs is that analysis gives so little satisfaction. This is another way of saying that it is not practical. What has happened to all thinking can best be seen in the degeneration of class analysis into stereotyped, obese definitions. There is little difference between the theory-mongers of high abstraction and the sloganeers of crude abstraction. Theory is becoming the dialect of robots, and slogans the



mass production of the mind. But just because ideas have become so mechanical does not mean we should abandon thought.

Most people are not willing to face the fact that they are living in a society that has yet to be explained. Any attempt to probe those areas which are unfamiliar is met with a general hostility or fear. People seem afraid to look at themselves analytically. Part of the problem of not knowing what to do reveals itself in our not knowing who we are. The motivation to look at yourself critically and to explain society comes from the desire to change both. The heart of the problem is that we do not concretely imagine winning, except perhaps by accident.

Analysis is the arming of the brain. We're being stifled by those who tell us analysis is intellectual when in reality it is a tool of the imagination. Just as you can't tolerate intellectualism, so you cannot act from raw anger - not if you want to win. You must teach your stomach how to think and your brain how to feel. Analysis should help us to express anger intelligently. Learning to think, i.e. analysis, is the first step toward conscious activity.

No doubt you feel yourself tightening up because you think it sounds heavy. Really, the problem is that you think much bigger than you act. Be modest. Start with what you already know and want to know more about. Analysis begins with what interests you. Political thinking should be part of everyday life, not a class privilege. To be practical analysis must give you an understanding of what to do and how to do it.

Thinking should help to distinguish between what is important and what is not. It should break down complex forces so that we can understand them. Break everything down. In the process of analysing something you will discover that there are different ways of acting which were not apparent when you began. This is the pleasure of analysis. To investigate a problem is to begin to solve it.

### 8: the need for new formats

The need for new formats grows out of the oppressiveness of print. We must learn the techniques of advertisement. They consist of short, clean, non-rhetorical statements. The ad represents a break with the college education and the diarrhoea of words. The ad is a concentrated formula for communication. Its information power has already outmoded the school system. The secret is to gain as much pleasure in creating the form as in expressing the idea.

How do we defend adopting the style of advertising when its function is so oppressive? As a medium we think that it represents a revolutionary mode of production. Rejecting it has resulted in

The short span of attention is one tell-tale symptom of instant politics. The emphasis on responding to crisis seems to contract the span of attention - in fact there is often no time dimension at all. This timelessness is experienced as the syn-copation of overcommitment. Many people say they will do things without really thinking out carefully whether they have the time to do them. Having time ultimately means defining what you really want to do. Over-commitment is when you want to do everything but end up doing nothing.

The numerous other symptoms of casual politics - lack of preparation, being late, getting bored at difficult moments, etc., are all signs of a political attitude which is destructive to the collective. The important thing is recognising the existence of these problems and knowing what causes them. They are not personal problems but historically determined attitudes.

Many people confuse the revolt against alienated labor in its specific historical form with work activity itself. This revolt is expressed in an anti-work attitude.

Attitudes toward work are shaped by our relations to production, i.e. class. Class is a product of hierarchic divisions of labor (including forms other than wage labor). There are three basic relations which can produce anti-work attitudes. The working class expresses its anti-work attitude as a rebellion against routinised labor. For the middle class, the anti-work attitude comes out of the ideology of consumer society and revolves around leisure. The stereotype of the "lazy native" or "physically weak woman" is a third anti-work attitude which is applied to those who are excluded from wage labor.

The dream of automation (i.e. no work) reinforces class prejudice. The middle class is the one that has the dream since it seeks to expand its leisure-oriented activities. To the working class, automation means a loss of their job - preoccupation with unemployment which is the opposite of leisure. For the excluded, automation doesn't mean anything because it will not be applied to their forms of work.

The automation of the working class has become the ideology of post-scarcity radicals - from the anarchists at Anarchos to SDS's new working class. Technological change has rescued them from the dilemma of a class analysis they were never able to make. With the elimination of class struggle by automation (the elimination of the working class) the radicals have become advocates of leisure society and touristic lifestyles.

This anti-work attitude leads to a utopian outlook and removes us from the realm of history. It prevents the construction of collectivity and

self-activity. The issue of how to transform work into self-activity is central to the elimination of class and the reorganisation of society.

Self-activity is the reconstruction of the consciousness (wholeness) of one's individual life activity. The collective is what makes the reconstruction possible because it defines individuality not as a private experience but as a social relation. What is important to see is that work is the creating of conscious activity within the structure of the collective.

One of the best ways to discover and correct anti-work attitudes is through self-criticism. This provides an objective framework which allows people the space to be criticised and be critical. Self-criticism is the opposite of self-consciousness because its aim is not to isolate you but to free repressed abilities. Self-criticism is a method for dealing with piggish behavior and developing consciousness.

To root out the society within us and to redefine our work relations a collective must develop a sense of its own history. One of the hardest things to do is to see the closest relations - those within the collective - in political terms. The tendency is to be sloppy, or what Mao calls "liberal," about relations between friends. Rules can no longer be the framework of discipline. It must be based on political understanding. One of the functions of analysis is that it be applied internally.

Preparation is another part of the process which creates continuity between meetings and insures that our own thinking does not become a part-time activity. It also combats the tendency to talk off the top of one's head and to pick ideas out of the air. Whenever meetings tend to be abstract and random it means the ideas put forward are not connected by thought (i.e. analysis). There is seldom serious investigation behind what is being said.

What does it mean to prepare for a meeting? It means not coming empty-handed or empty-headed. Mao says, "No investigation, no right to speak." Assuming a group has decided what it wants to do, the first step is for everyone to investigate. This means taking the time to actually look into the matter, sort out the relevant materials and be able to make them accessible to everyone in the collective. The motive underlying all preparation should be the construction of a coherent analysis. "We must substitute the sweat of self-criticism for the tears of crocodiles," according to a new Chinese proverb.

10: struggle on many levels

Struggle has many faces. But no two races look alike. Like the cubists, we must look at things

the stagnation of our minds and a crude romanticism in political culture. Those who turn up their noses at ads think in a language that is decrepit. Using the ad technique transforms the person who does it. It makes writing a pleasure for anyone because it strives for orality in print.

What we mean by the use of the ad technique is to physically use it. Most of the time we are unconscious of ads and, if we do become conscious, we still don't act upon them - don't subvert them. Ads are based on repetition. If you affect one of them, you affect them all. Know the environment of the ad. The most effective way to subvert an ad is to make the contradiction in it visible. Advertise it. The vulnerability of ads lies in the possibility of turning them against the exploiters.



Jerry Rubin says you should use the media all the time. At least he goes all the way. This is better than the toe-dipping approach that seems so common these days. Of course, there are groups that say don't use it at all and they don't. They will probably outlast Jerry since the basic technique of mass media is overexposure. That is why Jerry has already written his memoirs. The Situationists say: "The revolt is contained by overexposure. We are given it to contemplate so that we shall forget to participate."

We are not talking about the packaging of politics. Ramparts is the Playboy of the Left. On the other hand, the underground press is pornographic and redundant. Newsreel's projector is running backwards. And why in the era of Cosmopolitan magazine must we suffer the stodginess of a Leviathan? We much prefer reading Fortune - the magazine for "the men in charge of change" - for our analysis of capitalism.

There is no getting around it - we need new formats, entirely new formats. Otherwise we will never sharpen our wits. To break out of the spell

of print requires a conscious effort to think a new language. We should no longer be immobilised by other people's words. Don't wait for the news to tell you what's happening. Make your own headlines with Letraset. Cut up your favorite magazine and put it back together again. Cut big words in half and make little words out of them - like ENVIRON MENTAL CRISIS. All you need is a good pair of scissors and rubber cement. Abuse the enemy's images. Make comic strips out of great art. Don't let anything interfere with your pleasure.

Don't read any more books - at least not straight through. As G.B. Kay from Blackpool once said (quoting somebody else), "Reading rots the mind." Pamphlets are so much more fun. Read randomly, write on the margins and go back to comics. You might try the Silver Surfer for a start.

#### 9: self-activity

Bad work habits and sloppy behavior undermine any attempt to construct collectivity. Casual, sloppy behavior means that we don't care deeply about what we are doing or who we are doing it with. This may come as a surprise to a lot of people. The fact remains: we talk revolution but act reactionary at elementary levels.

There are two basic things underlying these unfortunate circumstances: 1) people's idea of how something (like revolution) will happen shapes their work habits; 2) their class background gives them a casual view of politics.

There is no doubt that the Pepsi generation is more politically alive. But this new energy is being channelled by organisers into boring meetings which reproduce the hierarchy of class society. After a while, critical thinking is eroded and people lose their curiosity. Meetings become a routine like everything else in life.

A lot of problems which collective will have can be traced to the work habits acquired in the (mass) movement. People perpetuate the passive roles they have become accustomed to in large meetings. The emphasis on mass participation means that all you have to do is show up. Rarely do people prepare themselves for a meeting, nor do they feel the need to. Often this situation does not become evident precisely because the few people who do work (those who run the meeting) create the illusion of group achievement.

Because people see themselves essentially as objects and not as subjects, political activity is defined as an event outside them and in the future. No one sees themselves making the revolution and, therefore, they don't understand how it will be accomplished.

from many sides. The problem is to find ways of creating space for ourselves. The tendency now is toward a two-sidedness which is embedded in every aspect of our lives. Our language poses questions by making us choose between opposites. The imperialist creates the anti-imperialist. Before "cool" there was hot and cold. "Cool" was the first attempt to break out of the two-sidedness. Two-sidedness always minimizes the dimensions of struggle by narrowly defining the situation. We end up with a one-dimensional view of the enemy and of ourselves.

Learn to be shrewd. Our first impulse is always to define our position. Why do we feel the need to tell them? We create space by not appearing to be what we really are.

Shrewdness is not simply a defensive tactic. The essence of shrewdness is learning to take advantage of the enemy's weaknesses. Otherwise you can never win. The rule is: be honest among yourselves, but deceive the enemy.

The fear of cooptation often leads people to shun the challenge of the corporate liberals. Some of the purest revolutionaries prefer not to think about using the coopter for their own purposes. Too often the mentality of the "job" obscures the potential for subversion.

The existence of corporate liberalism demands that we not be sloppy in our own thinking and response. The strength of its position is that it forces us to acknowledge our own weaknesses - even before we engage in struggle against it. The worst mistake is to pretend that this enemy does not exist.

Urban struggle requires a subversive strategy. Concretely, working "within the system" should become for us a source of money, information and anonymity. This is what Mao means when he says, "Move at night." The routine of daily life is night-time for the enemy - when they cannot see us. The process of cooptation should become an increasingly disquieting exercise for them.



There are at least three ways of dealing with a situation. You can neutralize, activate or destroy. Neutralize is to create space. Activate is to gain support. Destroy is to win. What's more, it is essential to learn to use all three simultaneously.

Struggle on many levels begins with the activation of all the senses. We must be able to conceive of more than one mode of acting for a given situation. The response, i.e. method of struggle, should contain three elements: 1) a means of survival; 2) a method of exploiting splits within the enemy camp; 3) an underground strategy.

The fundamental tendency of corporate liberalism is to identify with social change while trying to contain it. Wouldn't it be ironic (and even a relief) if we could turn the threat of cooptation into a means of survival?

Exploiting splits within the enemy camp does not mean helping one segment defeat another. The basic aim is to maintain the splits. There are significant differences among the oppressors. These have the effect of weakening them. Under certain circumstances these splits may provide a margin of manoeuvrability which may be strategic to us. The main thing is not to view the enemy monolithically. Monolithic thinking condemns you to one way of acting.

There is a tendency to see the most degenerate forms of reaction as the primary enemy. The corporations are consciously pandering to such ideas through films like Easy Rider which also attempts to identify with young males. The function of analysis is to break down and specify the different forces within the enemy camp.

The spaces created by these splits are of crucial importance to the preparation of a long range strategy. It will be increasingly difficult to survive with the visibility that we are accustomed to. The lifestyles which declare our opposition are also the ones which make us easy targets. We must not mistake the level of appearances for new cultures. The whole point is not to make a fetish of our lifestyles. In the psychedelic atmosphere of repression, square is cool.

Always keep part of your strategy underground. Just as analysis helps to differentiate the enemy so it should provide you with different levels of attack. Mao says: "Flexibility is a concrete expression of initiative."

Going underground should not mean dropping heroically out of sight. There will be few places to hide in the electronic environment of the future. The most dangerous kind of underground will be one that is like an iceberg. The roles created to replace our identities in everyday life must become the disguise of the underground.

An underground strategy puts the impulse of

confrontation into perspective. We must fight against the planned obsolescence of confrontations which lock us into the time-span of instant revolution. Going underground means having a long range strategy - something which plans for 1985. The iceberg strategy keeps us cool. It trains us to control our reflexes and to calculate our responses.

The underground strategy is also necessary to maintain autonomy. Autonomy preserves the organisational form of the collective which is critical to the sharpening of its politics. Nothing will be achieved by submerging ourselves in a chaos of revolutionary fronts. The principal strategy of the counterfeit Left will be to smear over the differences with appeals to a class unity that no longer exists. An underground strategy without a revolutionary form of organisation can only emerge as a new class society. To destroy the system of oppression is not enough. We must create the organisation of a free society. When the underground emerges, the collectives will be that society.



*The author wishes to point out that the subjects discussed in this article are purely theoretical and have no relationship whatsoever to political intentions within the United Kingdom. There is no intention to incite anybody to commit, or to conspire to commit illegal acts, or legal acts by illegal means.*



# COUNTER-SUBVERSION

It is impossible to discuss urban guerrilla warfare without considering the attitudes, techniques and abilities of those who seek to contain it.

Urban guerrilla warfare has little or nothing to do with traditional warfare in that, although wars are waged for political reasons, the act of waging war, the military action, is not normally carried through on a political level but on a technical level. Urban guerrilla actions, on the other hand, are intensely political. A guerrilla force operates within a community with the support, active or not, of that community. Any force that attempts to do otherwise is doomed to failure. Every action has to be planned with the considerations of the community in mind, every action is propaganda.

The containment of subversion has a long and interesting history based on the continuing inability of the agents of the status quo to understand the motivation and techniques of the guerrilla. The stock military solution to armed military subversion of the state has been massive repression which results in the subversive elements receiving even greater community support than they previously enjoyed.

Unfortunately for those who employ the techniques of guerrilla warfare, a considerable amount of effort is now being applied in the field of military theory so as to arrive at effective methods of counter-subversion. The latest development has been the focus of attention on the writings of, and the actions directed by, Brigadier Frank Kitson of the British Army. In 1971 he produced a book called 'Low Intensity Operations' which is a statement of his theories of containment. His basis is that armed political subversion of the state in the form of guerrilla warfare is the greatest threat to the security of the state in the future. This is more important than it may seem as in the past neither politicians

nor soldiers were aware of this simple fact. He goes on to suggest that the development of an army (in this case, the British Army) should be towards internal security duties, political policing. Certainly within the British Army Kitson's ideas are very radical as the tradition of this army has been one of non-involvement in politics, a non-awareness of the reasons for its own existence and actions. The response to Kitson's book amongst the Left in Britain has been, characteristically, one of premature paranoia. The most constructive comment that Seven Days could manage was that they 'hoped the bastard rots.'

The school of military thinking that Kitson represents believes that it has practicable methods of dealing with urban guerrillas. These methods have been developed from experience in dealing with rural guerrillas in Kenya (the Mau-Mau) and Malaya (Malay-Chinese communists). In both these situations the motivation of the guerrillas tended to be vague nationalism and this was the main reason for their destruction. The basic individual motivation of the guerrilla is of vital importance. If, as Carlos Marighella, the Brazilian guerrilla leader, said, political analysis comes before military technique, the strength of the guerrilla unit is greatly enhanced. The individual is active because of intense political commitment and not through loyalty to a leadership. Kitson and his exponents cannot understand the resultant decentralism and impenetrability of the guerrilla organisation. The other difference between a rural and an urban situation is that in a rural situation the fire-power of the Army is fairly unlimited whereas in an urban situation it is very restricted owing to the number of non-guerrilla personnel in the area of an action, and the continuous presence of the media

The new techniques can be simplified into three basic categories. These are:

1) Intelligence. This is really a psychological war against the individual. The urban guerrilla is part of the community and has a 'cover' within the community. Once the individual is identified, he/she is 'on the run' and the resultant sense of insecurity leads to mistakes and death or capture. Information gained from informants or prisoners is the basis, plus collated snippets from observation etc. This is very effective against a centralist organisation but virtually useless against an efficient cell structure where no one individual has enough information to be a danger to the whole organisation or even a significant part of it.

2) Kitson's pet theory of 'pseudo-gangs.' This means soldiers or guerrillas who have been persuaded to change sides operating as counter-terrorist groups. These groups can have several functions. They can attempt to alienate the guerrillas from their support by taking fake actions designed to kill indiscriminately. It is believed that an example of this was the McGurk's Bar bombing in Belfast, where several people were killed by an 'IRA' bomb that the British Army suggested went off accidentally. The local people (in the catholic New Lodge Road area) are now convinced that the bomb was planted by the British Army SAS. At that time, Brigadier Frank Kitson was commanding the 39th Brigade in action in Northern Ireland. Pseudo-gangs can also operate inconspicuously in areas where normal troops would immediately come under fire. They can be used for liquidation of known guerrillas without the formalities of arrest and the resultant legalities. They can also operate as intelligence sources through observation which it would be impractical for normal Army units to undertake.

3) Superiority. A conventional army is far better trained in the rudiments of battle. It has vastly superior equipment and weaponry. If an urban guerrilla unit can be drawn out into open conflict, it can easily be contained and then destroyed. The army must concern itself with drawing the guerrillas out. An example of this kind of action could possibly be found in the actions of the British Army paratroops in Londonderry before, during and after the now infamous 'Bloody Sunday' events. If this was a deliberate, pre-planned operation then a description of its development would start with the paras hiding in derelict buildings and on their barricades until the civil rights march approached and then as a number of children threw stones at the barricades, the paras were sent in on an 'arrest' operation. Of course the protesters ran away, so the soldiers, many firing from the hip, fired 'aimed' warning shots through the backs of some of the demonstrators; they also shot several 'gunmen'

none of whom had guns. At this point enraged IRA men should have opened fire, not realising what they were doing because of the fury from seeing their mothers, sisters, fathers, brothers etc. brutally gunned down. If they had they would have exposed themselves hopelessly and a large number of them would have been captured or shot. As it happened there were no armed guerrillas in the vicinity and the Army and the ex-brigadier who was brought in to impartially investigate the deaths of thirteen people denied that there had been any 'planned' operation at all.

Of these three techniques the only real threat to urban guerrilla groupings comes from the 'pseudo-gangs' concept. The 'superiority' method fails if the self-discipline of the guerrilla is good. Also if an operation of this type fails, the result is a number of deaths which are hard to explain away and an increased hatred for any of the agents of the state, which means additional support for the subversive elements. The pseudo-gang fails when it is exposed through counter-intelligence by the guerrillas, their supporters or sympathetic sections of the media. This is precisely what happened when a number of policemen and militiamen in civilian clothes opened fire on a peaceful demonstration in Mexico City early last year. Some of them were identified by the reporters present and their action, which was intended to confuse the ordinary people and turn them against the left-wing students, failed.

There have been more successful examples of this technique in other Latin American countries, particularly Guatemala.

It can be seen, then, that successful urban guerrilla struggles depend on the politically aware and committed individual, organising in small decentralised cells with good intelligence and propaganda control and a firm, disciplined base within the urban community. Such a force is uncontainable by any opposition. Kitson's theories consist of two broad tactical concepts. That the urban guerrilla should be fought on guerrilla terms by the use of propaganda and the confusion of counter terrorism or that the urban guerrilla should be forced into entering into conventional military engagements. The former is logically impossible because the basis of good guerrilla action is to never engage the enemy on equal terms, to always have the advantage, maintained by strong discipline and superior intelligence. The latter relies for its success on bad organisation and poor discipline, a state of affairs that should not arise within a committed struggle.

