

ment with the Marxist Left on certain aspects of revolutionary praxis.

In this context, under the influence of what appears to be a new social situation, the *Grupos Anarquistas Revolucionarios* (GAR, Anarchist Revolutionary Groups) and the *Juventudes Anarquistas* ('Anarchist Youth') have been started up in Buenos Aires. There are also various groups linked to different faculties and secondary schools. At present they are at a stage where it is very difficult to predict future possibilities or the extent of the implicit ideological differences. There are also some groups in La Plata, Córdoba and Rosario, which can be classified along two general lines: those who

operate within the *Federaciones Universitarias*, which are inclined more to liberalism, and those which are organized as independent groups and which in some places (La Plata, Córdoba) have formed direct-action groups together with revolutionary Marxists along the lines of the French 22nd of March Movement. These groups are reluctant to maintain formal contacts with the 'traditional' anarchist groups, and informal relations show certain generic lines of divergence.

The future, however, remains open, and, as Breton said, '*En matière de révolte nul n'a besoin d'ancêtres.*'



The current situation in Argentina see's an easing of the tight military control which characterised so much of the 60's and 70's. Worker unrest has increased to the point of open defiance of the State and the present union hierarchy. Autonomous action and a new independent unionism is blossoming. The FORA itself, though still very small, is re-organising itself; new locals have sprung up and their press is now appearing once again.



For further information they can be contacted at: c/o Coronel Salvadores 1200, Buenos Aires, Argentina

SYNDICALISM IN PRACTICE

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

REBEL WORKER

AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL
 ANARCHO-SYNDICALIST PAPER

2. ARGENTINA: The F.O.R.A.



In the last edition of 'Rebel Worker' we issued a special supplement on Spanish anarcho-syndicalism, focusing on the CNT. This, the second of the special supplements looks at the history of the FORA (Argentinian Regional Workers' Federation)-after the CNT, the second largest anarcho-syndicalist union center in the world. The period, under discussion in this article, is the rise of the FORA in the 1900's to the 1920's and its decline, due to the rise of the communist party and Peronism from the 1930's to the 1960's. Written by Eduardo Columbo, this article was originally published in a special issue on Anarchism of the journal 'Government and Opposition' in 1970.

THE EARLY ANARCHIST MOVEMENT IN ARGENTINA

The origins of the first socialist organizations in Buenos Aires are rather obscure. Max Nettlau dates the foundation of the Buenos Aires section of the International in 1872; he describes this as ideologically 'good socialism, rather general, neither anarchist, nor [...] political nor authoritarian'.⁷ José Ingenieros, in an article published in the *Almanaque Socialista de la Vanguardia* of 1899, says that the first group appeared in 1871; this was apparently a French group, and later a Spanish and an Italian group were founded. Generally speaking they were either socialists who believed in government by a workers' party, or republicans or internationalists. One group was started in Córdoba in 1874. In 1876 the Bakuninist *Centro de Propaganda Obrera* (Centre for Workers' Propaganda) was founded. An anarchist paper, *El Descamisado*, was published from 1876 onwards. Before the end of the 19th century several newspapers were published from Buenos Aires with varying degrees of success. On 13 June 1897 *La Protesta Humana* first appeared. Originally it came out weekly but in 1903 it changed its name to *La Protesta* and appeared daily from April 1904. Despite various set-backs - embargoes, closures, destruction of machinery, attacks by patriotic groups and so on - it continued to survive and, appearing intermittently, it has now reached issue no. 8,115.

The first militant workers' union - the Bakers' Union⁸ - was founded in 1887 with the aid of Malatesta who was in Argentina between 1885 and 1889. Perhaps Malatesta's presence and tact helped to minimize rivalries and to eliminate the controversy between communist and collectivist anarchists. Debate remained on a more practical level, between those who favoured organizing and those who opposed it - though these latter should not be confused with the individualists who never had much influence in Argentina. The organizers stressed the workers' organization as the natural weapon for the struggle. The *sociedades de resistencia* (resistance groups), as the FORA's organizations are now and have always been called, were in their view the principal instrument for strikes, direct action, or 'revolutionary gymnastics'. This line almost completely dominated Argentine anarchism for many years. The anti-organizers, also anarcho-communists, and the individualists claimed that within the *sociedades de resistencia* the anarchists were no longer revolutionaries since they became totally involved in reformist activities. Their pressure was very important since it 'obliged the organizers in the workers' unions to hold to their anarchist allegiance and beliefs'.⁹

LA PROTESTA

PRECIO DE VENTA SUPLEMENTO SEMANAL



ISSUED BY F.O.R.A. - 1924

The social-democratic workers took the first steps towards a confederation. A commission was first created to carry out the wishes of the Paris Socialist Conference (June 1889) and from it derived the *Centro Internacional Obrero* (International Workers' Centre) which convened a meeting for 1 May 1890. The foundations were then laid for the *Federación Obrera* (Workers' Federation) which was created in 1891 with half a dozen unions. Its mouthpiece was the Marxist *El Obrero* ("The Worker"), which harshly attacked anarchism. The *Federación Argentina de Trabajadores* (FAO, Argentine Workers' Federation) was formed in 1901, and in 1902, at its second congress, a socialist minority broke off (the groups which stayed within the Federation had 7,630 members, those which left 1,780).¹⁰ The dissident unions formed themselves into the legalistic and reformist *Union General de Trabajadores* (UGT, General Workers' Union) in 1903.

In 1902 there were lengthy strikes by the bakers, dockers and others. 15,000 men belonging to the Cart and Coach-drivers' Federation joined the FAO. The following figures give some idea of the development of the workers' revolutionary organization: 'From 15 April to 15 July 1903, the 42 associate societies received 15,212 subscriptions and over the same period in the following year the figure rose to 32,893 subscriptions and the number of societies to 66', according to a report of the Administrative Commission of the fourth congress held in 1904. At this congress the Federation changed its name to the *Federación Obrera Regional Argentina* (Argentinian Regional Workers' Federation) or FORA, as it is still known today, and the *Pacto de Solidaridad* (Solidarity Pact) was agreed. At the following congress – the fifth – the 'finalist' declaration was approved. "The fifth Argentine Workers' Regional Conference, in accordance with the philosophical principles which provide the reason for the existence of the organization of workers' federations, declares: "That it advises and recommends the widest possible study and propaganda to all its adherents with the object of teaching the workers the economic and philosophical principles of anarchist communism. This education, by preventing them from concentrating merely on achieving the eight-hour day, will emancipate them completely and consequently lead to the hoped-for social evolution."

This fifth congress declaration became the basic policy for many years, and the movement, orientated as it was towards anarchist ends, opposed any other concept of trade unionism. Revolutionary syndicalism was criticized for wanting to maintain the class structure beyond the revolution. 'We must not forget that a union is merely an economic by-product of the capitalist system, born from the needs of this epoch. To preserve it after the revolution would imply preserving the system which gave rise to it. The so-called doctrine of revolutionary syndicalism is a fiction. We, as anarchists, accept the unions as weapons in the struggle and we try to ensure that they should approximate as closely as possible to our revolutionary ideals. [...] That is to say, we do not intend to be mentally dominated by the unions; we intend to dominate them. In other words, to make the unions serve the propagation, the defence and the affirmation of our ideas among the proletariat.'¹¹

Most of the Argentine anarchist movement was similarly opposed to a specific organization of anarchism on a national scale, that is to say, to an anarchist federation. They accepted 'affinity' groups, *ateneos*, working with the unions or in the districts, and peoples' libraries, but they felt that a stable party type of organization would lead to the degeneration of anarchism into authoritarianism. Internationally, this 'forist' conception of anarchism was attacked by Malatesta among others. Nevertheless it lasted as long as anarchism remained the principal mass movement among the proletariat.

From the beginning the FORA organized itself outside any sort of legal legitimization, and in any work conflicts it demanded direct negotiations with the owners. It used the strike, the boycott, sabotage and the general strike. The fifth congress advised the workers 'not to let themselves be taken prisoner without justification' and urged them to defend themselves with any kind of violence.

In February 1905 martial law was imposed after an abortive military *coup*, and was used as an excuse to shut down *La Protesta*, ransack workers' centres and send various militants to Ushuaia.¹²

Towards the end of the first decade of the century a certain Colonel Falcón was appointed Chief of Police and distinguished himself in the persecution of anarchists and the workers' movement. At the 1909 First of May demonstration organized by the FORA in the Plaza Loren in the centre of Buenos Aires, the police opened fire on the demonstrators, several of whom were killed. A general strike

was declared; the workers' centres were shut down and there were some 2,000 arrests. The strike lasted nine days and was one of the most spontaneously unanimous movements. The Chief of Police was widely blamed, and on 13 November of the same year a young anarchist, Simon Radowsky, threw a bomb at his car and killed him and his secretary outright. 'After the initial general confusion an unprecedented repression set in: *La Protesta* was raided, its machinery destroyed, workers' centres underwent the same fate; within 48 hours thousands had been arrested; many were sent to Tierra del Fuego; others, the foreigners, were deported after many tortures.'¹³ Martial law was declared and lasted until January 1910.

The repression seemed, however, to rejuvenate the anarchist movement. *La Protesta* reappeared in January, as soon as martial law had been lifted and its editorial and administrative group had been freed from their painful imprisonment on board the warship *Guardia Nacional*. In March a new anarchist daily evening paper, *La Batalla*, began to appear.

Next came the violent *Centenario* repression. A few months after *La Batalla* began to come out, the centenary of the revolution of May 1810 was celebrated – the anniversary of the colonies' independence from Spain. Since worker and anarchist agitation was on the increase, martial law was reimposed and a new, extremely vicious repression began, followed by another general strike, arrests, deportations, closures, assassinations and tortures. And so it went on. Simon Radowsky could not be condemned to death since he was a minor, but he was sentenced to life in Ushuaia jail. Constant agitation was kept up on his behalf, since he was always regarded as one of the anarchist heroes, and eventually, after several failures, he was rescued in the 1930s with help from outside.

Anarchist activity was very intensive in the two decades between the 'centenary' repression and the *coup d'état* of General Uriburu. It had a powerful workers' centre, and often a majority following in spite of the efforts of the parliamentary socialists to fuse with or control the workers' movement; and it also had an extensive press: two dailies and dozens of union papers; *La Antorcha*, which took a violent incendiary line; the 'supplement' of *La Protesta* which appeared weekly for several years and later fortnightly, and in which Malatesta, Fabbri, Nettlau, etc., all wrote and which took an inquiring and receptive intellectual line.

In 1919 there occurred the 'tragic week' in which the police killed a number of workers during a strike; a general strike was proclaimed and fiercely suppressed. In 1920–1 strikers in Patagonia were 'pacified' by forces under Colonel Varela. When, however, details of Varela's methods became known, *La Antorcha* and *La Protesta* launched a campaign against the 'killer of Patagonia' which culminated in the assassination of Varela by an anarchist worker, Kurt Wilckens, on 27 January 1923.¹⁴

On 6 September 1931 the era of military governments began in Argentina. It was accompanied by the most unveiled repression, which was a great blow to the anarchists: persecutions, closures, deportations, executions. On 11 September, Penina, a distributor of *La Protesta*, was shot in Rosario; shortly afterwards Di Giovanni and Scarfo met the same fate. All three died shouting 'Long live anarchy!' The FORA went underground. Three working-class drivers, arrested while distributing *La Protesta* and *La Voz del Chauffeur* ('The Driver's Voice'), were condemned to death by a military court, though the sentence was later commuted to life imprisonment. Since it had become impossible to distribute *La Protesta*, the editorial group decided to bring out an underground paper called *Rebelión*. Martial law was lifted in 1932 and the weekly, *La Antorcha*, and the daily, *La Protesta*, in collaboration with *Ideas*, *Rebelión*, FORA and the local workers' unions of Santa Fé and Rosario, brought out a joint manifesto called 'Eighteen Months of Military Terror' informing the people about the politico-social situation.

At the end of September 1930, two workers' organizations amalgamated; these were the USA (*Unión Sindical Argentina*, Argentine Trades Union) representing a syndicalist trend, and the COA (*Confederación Obrera Argentina*, Argentine Workers' Confederation) which was socialist. From these derived the present CGT (*Confederación General de Trabajo*, General Labour Confederation). In its first public announcement the CGT declared: 'The CGT, a body which represents the healthy elements of the workers' groups in this country, believes in the administrative renewal undertaken by the provisional government and is ready to support it. . . . This confederation is also convinced that the provisional government only maintains martial law in order to ensure public tranquillity. . . .'¹⁵

In 1932 the second Regional Anarchist Conference was held in Rosario. (The first was held in 1922, at Avellaneda, in the province of Buenos Aires.) It was the outcome of agreements and understandings reached in the Villa Devoto prison by the anarchist militants imprisoned there during the Uriburu repressions. At this second congress a majority agreed on the necessity of setting up a specifically anarchist organization on a national scale, and a regional committee for anarchist co-ordination (CRRA) was created to this end. The efforts of this committee led to the foundation of the Argentine Anarcho-Communist Federation (FACA) in 1935, which changed its name at its fourth congress in 1955 to the present one of Argentine Libertarian Federation (FLA).

FACA carried out an intense campaign on behalf of political prisoners. Anarchist activity also intensified during the Spanish civil war. FACA brought out special editions of its newspaper, *Acción Libertaria*, and the SIA (*Solidaridad Internacional Anti-Fascista*) was started. This movement spread all over the country and provided efficient aid. Various militants were sent to Spain. FORA and its associate unions organized strikes and public meetings and continued their normal programme. But now the organization was clearly weaker and its impact diminished.

In 1943 another military *coup* led to more closures and repressions and opened the way for General Perón's seizure of power.

While Peronism lasted, the whole anarchist movement went completely underground. All trade union premises, whether autonomous or associated with FORA, were closed: *La Protesta* was banned and began to come out secretly whenever it could, as did the other newspapers of the movement. In 1952, after the imprisonment and torture of several FORA dockers, and despite the ideological differences which have always split the anarchist movement, an intense information campaign was jointly carried out by all sections of the libertarian movement. A newspaper, *Agitación*, was published and commissions were set up in the capital and the inland towns.

On the fall of Perón, several FORA unions which had been operating clandestinely were reformed, as autonomous entities; these included the unions of the plumbers, bakers, drivers, dockers and the Shipbuilding Workers' Federation. The latter organized a prolonged strike for a six-hour day – a long-standing FORA demand. But the strike failed owing to managerial intransigence and the complete lack of solidarity on the part of the reformist workers' movement centred around the CGT. (This was one organization, but it comprised many factions rivalling with each other for control.) A number of papers began to reappear openly: *Acción Libertaria*, *La Protesta* (fortnightly), the old organ of FORA, *Organización Obrera*, and, intermittently, different union papers. In the post-Perón era *La Protesta* was closed down again and its executive editor imprisoned.

On various occasions anarchists formed groups within the student movement. Generally these were short-lived, and after the 1918 university reform they usually operated through the University Federation.

Gradually the once dynamic anarchist movement dwindled to inward-looking small groups of old militants with a sprinkling of young people who pass through the groups and leave without a trace. In the last ten years activities have been reduced to meetings and conferences in the groups' premises, public meetings of the FLA in commemoration of the Spanish civil war, or of the FORA for the First of May, or of the FORA committee for prisoners and deportees on the anniversary of Sacco and Vanzetti.

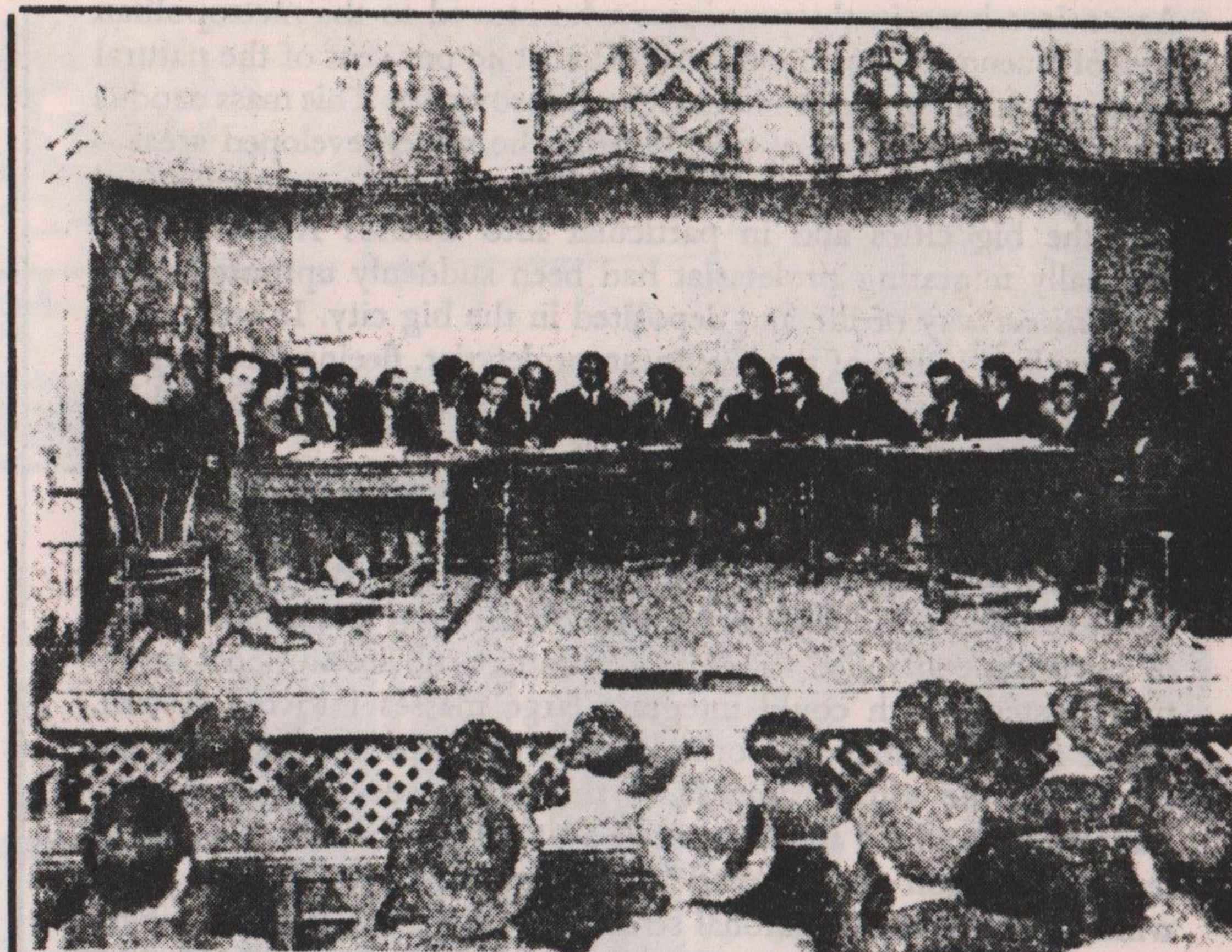
20TH-CENTURY ANARCHISM

In Argentina

Anarchism as a modern revolutionary ideology is, in the theoretical field, a pointed criticism of the established system with special reference to the system of political domination.

We are not concerned here with the Utopian aspects of the revolutionary ideal,²⁰ but with the fundamental anarchist political theory (as illustrated in the refusal to legislate on the future society) that the essence of the *revolutionary system* is its incompatibility with the *established system*²¹ and therefore: 'If the revolutionary project is what the society is *not*, if its essence is critical thought, the total negation of established society, it is clear that both the established system and the revolutionary idea form part of the same *historical continuity*.'²²

Revolution breaks this historical continuity, revolution is insurrectional action, only action can create new social conditions.²³



This is important because anarchism's fundamental stand is a total opposition to established society; it cannot accept any form of integration into the system.

This total confrontation with the established system was, as they were well aware, the real situation of the urban proletariat in Buenos Aires and Montevideo at the beginning of the century. Faced with the traditional mentality of the ruling class and the appalling economic exploitation, the only legal means for change was the suffrage. But in the first quarter of the 20th century 50–70 per cent of the key politically significant electoral age-group (adult males over twenty years old) resident in the central areas (the capital and coastal provinces) were foreign-born. In electoral terms this meant that between 50 and 70 per cent of the population were disenfranchised just where voting potentially had the maximum importance.²⁴

During this period of the take-off of industrialization the embryonic capitalist system excluded the proletarian masses from any real participation in law and in fact in the management and running of the system. Various institutions existed to ensure and control their exclusion, such as social services run with the object of keeping the poor well segregated; the police; laws, such as the 1909 law against 'unhealthy' immigration, i.e. prostitutes, syphilitics and anarchists, or law no. 4,114,²⁵ the electoral law, etc.

Gradually, however, channels of integration emerged, as the economic situation improved in the next stage of economic development. The middle class increased in numbers, composed mainly of second-generation immigrants with university degrees – the university was a major route upwards for many years – and, most important, the development of a reformist trade union movement which was prepared to negotiate on the class struggle. This stage saw a great deal of labour legislation.

But winning rights does not necessarily mean any actual gain. During the French revolution Brissot said: 'The enormous harm that the anarchist doctrine has caused our armies is now obvious. Under the cover of equality of rights it seeks to establish actual universal equality; whereas the one sustains society, the other only injures it. Anarchism wants to level out talent and stupidity, virtues and vice, positions, salaries, services.'²⁶

The objective reality of economic exploitation and political domination did not change, but the influence of increased material well-being and consumption changed subjective reality. Anarchism no longer expressed the revolutionary aspirations of the new proletariat. While anarchism still called for revolution, the social situation had become increasingly conformist; while it demanded direct action, the paternalistic state was discussing labour problems with union leaders.

The change in the international ideological climate must also be taken into account. The 1914 war put an end to internationalist ideas; then came the triumph of the Russian revolution and the constitution of the Soviet state, the failure of revolution in Central Europe, the advent of fascism, and the tragic end of the Spanish revolution. The second wave of immigration began at a time when the anarchist movement was clearly declining. 'These internal migrations were very considerable; from 1936 to 1947 the proportion of

Argentines born in the provinces who moved to the metropolitan area of Buenos Aires amounted to almost 40 per cent of the natural increase of the population of these same provinces. This mass exodus brought vast numbers of people from the underdeveloped areas — people previously completely outside the country's political life — into the big cities and in particular into Buenos Aires.²⁷ This internally migrating proletariat had been suddenly uprooted from a traditional way of life and deposited in the big city. It was not as the previous influx of the European proletariat, fleeing from highly developed industrial areas. It was the industrial revolution which brought this proletariat into the cities.

In Argentina, limited participatory democracy was already in a state of crisis. The 'revolution' of 6 September 1930 marked the beginning of the period of military coups and the 'patriotic fraud' of the conservative backlash. From then on the army has, either openly or covertly, controlled the state apparatus — no institutional structure existed which could integrate large masses into the system. These masses demanded some kind of participation but were bemused by the violent impact of the secular society. Charismatic leadership provided the answer: it adapted itself to mass demands for participation and granted the masses a series of actual gains which changed the traditional structure of the country. This movement, commonly known as 'Peronism', was bitterly opposed by the ruling classes (the bourgeoisie and the traditional upper classes) because it led to an increase in popular participation. On the other hand the Left generally failed to understand the process, and when it did not gain the support of this new proletariat — unattracted by its secular ideology — it attacked Peronism as a whole and in return was violently repressed by the state's special forces.

Anarchism — like the other groups of the traditional Left, the Communist and Socialist Parties — saw only one side of the problem: the military fascist origins of the ruling group (Perón himself, and his political origins in military freemasonry and his early contacts with Nazism and fascism), and the suppression of oppositional political liberties, the persecutions, closings down of newspapers, imprisonments, police tortures, deaths, permanent states of emergency, etc. They were unable to perceive the increased participation which Peronism provided for the great masses of the people. They themselves remained isolated, unable to fulfil their promises. Their criticisms became increasingly abstract and removed from attainable reality. Peronism reinforced the drift of anarchism towards marginalism, and strengthened reformist trade unionism and the paternalist state, which reached its maximum under the charismatic leadership of Perón. Thus anarchism is suffering from what one can call a decay in 'praxis'. It became virtually impossible for anarchist groups to keep to their ideas and their practice when faced with popular withdrawal from direct-action organizations. Maintaining their ideological 'purity' now meant withdrawing increasingly from reality; but giving up 'purity' meant moving towards reformism. How could electoral abstention be advocated if only a small number of militants abstained and no one even noticed? Some of the older anarchists became conformists, abandoned the revolution, disowned insurrection, the people, and the possibility of change and withdrew into an anarchist liberalism which pined for democratic liberties. Others secluded themselves in 'sects', ritualized their ideology and periodically brought out the liturgy of the revolutionary martyrs, the Chicago martyrs or Sacco and Vanzetti.

CONTEMPORARY ANARCHISM

In Argentina

One military government has succeeded another since 1955. The so-called 'Argentine revolution' put an end to this in June 1966 when the three commanders-in-chief of the armed forces formed a military junta. All political parties were banned and the constitution was subordinated to a so-called 'Statute of the Argentine Revolution'. Yet, contrary to past tradition, there was no systematic persecution of the anarchists, which is an indication of their reduced energies. At present the FORA still has several centres in Buenos Aires and a few small groups of militants inland. It has no unions, but groups of anarchists keep forist groups going within the different unions. The FORA committee for prisoners and deportees still looks after prisoners and keeps on with its other duties. FORA publishes leaflets, manifestos and its newspaper, *Organización Obrera*. For the last few years the traditional First of May rallies have been banned, and this has led to some arrests. Sporadic organizational

work goes on within the unions, but up to now this has had no great effect or continuity. The ideology remains classic forist finalism.

The *Federación Libertaria Argentina* has premises in Buenos Aires and some groups inland; conferences and meetings are held and *Acción Libertaria* is still published. The last issue to come out was in March 1970. The publishing house *Reconstruir* and the review of the same name tie in ideologically with the FLA. The FLA has reacted strongly against the Cuban revolution, Castro-Communism and Marxism in general. The leading article of the last issue of *Acción Libertaria* declared: 'Marxist-Leninism led to Stalin's insane dictatorship — which is once again being defended in the USSR — to the esoteric cult of Mao's thought, and to Fidel Castro's tropical and homicidal arbitrariness. These are all forms of dictatorship implanted in the followers of Marxism-Leninism which try to impose their domination in the name of the socialist revolution. In the circumstances it would be ridiculous to try and work out a synthesis between Marxism as we see it in operation and libertarian socialism. . . .'

The review *Reconstruir* supports a wide-ranging libertarian socialism with articles which are more philosophical and literary than political and with historical themes from classical anarchism. Some of the articles are so liberal that they cannot be fitted into even the widest definition of anarchism. It is perhaps interesting to look at a few paragraphs from two articles by D. A. de Santillán as an example of this.³⁰ 'Capitalism too can transform itself, socialize itself in a certain sense, fulfil a more social function, conciliate more interests. Capitalism *per se* does not oppose direct participation and joint management of the whole economic life of the country; all one needs is organizational capacity, initiative, audacity and enough skill to compete.'³¹ 'We should not try to destroy the apparatus

Organización Obrera
ORGANO DE LA FEDERACION OBRERA REGIONAL ARGENTINA
A. I. T. — NUEVA EPOCA
A. C. A. T.
Año 6. N° 17 — Corresponsales y Valores: Alberto J. Battaglia — C. Salvador 1200 — Buenos Aires — MAYO 1972 — Precio \$ 0.20

1886-1° de Mayo-1972 La Ley Infame la Llamaron de Asociaciones Profesionales

Reivindicamos

Nació durante el gobierno de Rosas, este ministro del Interior y ex-Comandante en jefe de las fuerzas armadas, fue el responsable de la Ley Infame, que prohibió a los obreros afiliarse a los sindicatos. Por otra parte, este gobierno, por la Ley Infame, impidió a los obreros la posibilidad de organizarse y de luchar por sus intereses. Por eso, en la Ley de Mañana, que la comunidad le dio forma, nos interesa y quiere reivindicar, es la Ley Infame, la que prohibió a los obreros afiliarse a los sindicatos. Por otra parte, este gobierno, por la Ley Infame, impidió a los obreros la posibilidad de organizarse y de luchar por sus intereses. Por eso, en la Ley de Mañana, que la comunidad le dio forma, nos interesa y quiere reivindicar, es la Ley Infame, la que prohibió a los obreros afiliarse a los sindicatos.

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CONGRESO CONSTITUYENTE DE LA A. C. A. T.

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capitalism has created in order to make profits; instead we should apply, widen and improve its dynamic in a social direction, for the benefit of all, since now it needs and can no longer do without the support of the entire community. [...] Reform is today's great revolution; the barricades have fulfilled their mission, that is if they ever had a mission. . . .'³²

The editorial group of *La Protesta*, which is periodically elected by militants, continues to publish the paper, but sporadically, because since 1966 it comes out semi-clandestinely with no editor's or printer's name. Apart from printing difficulties its publication has not been impeded. Within the anarcho-communist line its main themes have derived from Malatesta and Bakunin, and its defence of the revolutionary movement has recently centred on student and workers insurrectional activity following the increase in international student agitation and the 1969 popular risings in Córdoba and Rosario. Other groups also exist which carry on various types of activity outside Buenos Aires, and also other publishers, collateral to the movement, who publish the anarchist classics and contemporary works.

But a new anarchist generation has now emerged apart from the above-named 'traditional' anarchist organizations. The young maintain contacts with the old but have formed their own organizations. The relations between the two groups are flexible and changing; both seek a common language. There is, it seems, a gap in the movement, a distance to be bridged. The advent of the new groups was signalled by two events: the Paris revolution of May 1968 and the Argentine popular rebellion in Rosario and Córdoba in May-June 1969. The former generated enthusiasm and small groups of militant students and workers were formed, courses were given on the basic ideas of anarchism in the premises of the Shipbuilding Workers' Federation, leaflets were distributed in the university and contacts sought with other groups inland. In May 1969 the prestige of the military government and its liberal façade of social peace was badly shaken when, following the assassination of a student by the police, student demonstrations began in the north. Workers' demonstrations followed. A new group broke away from the reformist CGT and, calling itself *CGT de los Argentinos*, confronted the government. The murder of two more students by the police of Rosario led to a spontaneous popular mobilization, barricades were erected,

stones overcame police bullets and after several hours of struggle the army occupied the city and declared martial law. In Córdoba the struggle began with an active strike by the workers in the area's key factories. Workers and students trooped into the city, the police tried to break them up and when they failed resorted to shooting. Troops occupied the city, and sporadic shooting continued. Army units set up councils of war, curfews were imposed, etc. Agitation extended to all the universities and to several other cities. The bourgeois press blamed Havana and, as always, an international conspiracy. Their editorials stressed the damage to private property more than the workers' lives lost. Martial law once again became a normal feature of the country's life, and a new law was passed providing for the expulsion of foreigners, 'following the example', according to the executive, 'of law no. 4144 which was in operation for more than half a century'.

That vital component of the workers' revolutionary organization, direct action, had fallen out of use during the last few decades. But it was no longer a question of the six-hour day, once demanded by the FORA; the eight-hour day itself, won with such great effort, has ceased to be respected and in some places people now worked ten- or twelve-hour days.

It must not be forgotten that Argentina is a developing country, and this conditions a series of structural factors which facilitate spontaneous popular risings; but there is one serious impediment to the creation of a revolutionary movement. Though there was extensive agitation, it tended to lose itself in the political manipulations of the pressure groups. Military dictatorship makes it easier for political opposition to unite, but it masks the fundamental reality of capitalist society and therefore impedes the development of the full revolutionary dialectic, thus encouraging the development of liberal deviations. This liberal deviationism is one of the clearest dangers anarchist groups have to overcome. Only by means of action can anarchist ideals hope to be rejuvenated and the theoretical arguments necessary for contemporary anarchism be developed.

Certain aspects of the anarchist revolutionary model are being widely propagated: rejection of leadership and of legalitarian or parliamentary channels, the emphasis on direct action at the lowest level of management, and the need for non-reformist revolutionary and subversive political action. This tends to lead to a *rapproche-*