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A

anarchist
black
cross



bulletin no. 1
chicago

— — — — — july-aug.
1972

HISTORY

An Anarchist Red Cross was formed in Europe between 1900 and 1905 to aid comrades imprisoned in Tsarist Russia. The Russian prisoners often lacked bare necessities, depending upon outside assistance for food, clothes and money. The specifically anarchist aid society was necessary because imprisoned anarchists were all too often denied help from more general funds, frequently administered by the Social Democrats.

In the United States, ARC's were formed in New York in 1907; Chicago, 1909; Philadelphia, 1911; and also in Detroit and Baltimore. Their major work was systematic distribution of material aid and the maintainance of regular correspondence with the tsarist prisoners.

The Anarchist Red Cross was joyfully disbanded in 1917, after assisting in the return of exiles to Russia. It was, unfortunately, a premature move. In the months immediately following the October coup, the Bolsheviks set about consolidating their grip on state power. Not surprisingly, this required suppression of criticism from the left as well as from the right. By 1919 the old tsarist prisons were filling with new victims of the now "revolutionary" state. To deal with the repression, Anarchist Black Cross groups sprang up more or less spontaneously in Moscow, Kharkov, Odessa and elsewhere.

At the end of 1921, anarchists Goldman, Berkman and Shapiro managed to leave Soviet Russia and carried Black Cross work abroad. The succeeding years saw such organizations in Europe as the Joint Committee for Defense of Revolutionists imprisoned in Russia (1921-1926) and the Relief Fund of the International Workingmen's Association.

In Chicago, an Anarchist Red Cross was reorganized in 1922, becoming the Chicago Aid Fund in 1925, which was renamed the Alexander Berkman Aid Fund in 1939. The group sent aid to Spanish prisoners beginning in 1936 and continued its efforts for the Russian comrades until contact was completely broken in 1939. During the second World War, the Alexander Berkman Aid Fund was active in assisting European, especially Jewish, comrades caught in the fascist repression. In later years they have helped Spanish, Italian and Bulgarian comrades. For an excellent history of this work, see B. Yelensky's book, In the Struggle for Equality.

The Chicago Anarchist Black Cross came together in March, 1972. We are immediately concerned with providing material aid, often desperately needed, for imprisoned anarchist comrades in all parts of the world. Obviously a vital part of defense in publicity; it is our job to let the world know that not only do anarchists still exist, they have never stopped fighting. Libertarian comrades in jail everywhere need our support. We will be working closely with European Black Cross groups.

We extend the warmest sympathy and encouragement to anarchists in other parts of the country who are considering coming together for similar purposes. Those who seek to heal society, not destroy it; Those who believe that humanity must evolve away from state power systems into more human

and humane forms of organization, spontaneous and voluntary, are everywhere vulnerable to the most vicious kinds of political repression, from threat to imprisonment, to execution, to murder in the streets and in their homes. The very word "anarchist" while it covers people with differing approaches to the problems of State power, is falsely equated by many with the most irresponsible of anti-social acts. The word "anarchist" alone is used to indict and convict individuals and groups with no reputable evidence or further inquiry into their beliefs or character, thus making any anarchist the ideal scapegoat for all kinds of private terror, emotional vandalism, and so on.

As the breach lessens between Communist and Capitalist States we can expect both systems to come down with renewed force on their 'internal enemies' - on those who dare to question and resist the claims of governmental omnipotence and of authoritarian and coercive systems in general; people for whom the term revolution means the dissolution rather than the intensification of the armed power of the State with its dismal array of prisons, police, armies, with all of its compulsive and compulsory institutions.

The protection of these dissenting voices is an immediate priority for all who regard human freedom as something more than an occasionally allowable luxury.

THE BLACK CROSS IN EUROPE

With the depression and the growth of fascism in Europe the Black Cross died out, the number of political prisoners grew so large and the amount of money people could send was so small that the Black Cross did not survive into the 30's. However when Stuart Christie was in jail in Spain the publicity brought him parcels from all over the world, these he shared with the 'commune' of prisoners. He wanted to keep it going when he came out. In Spanish prisons you work to earn, to live, hence money is cashed in prison vouchers. Prevention from work, or being put on cleaning duties etc means that you are not earning. This often happens to politicals. Aid from abroad from various CP type organizations never reaches the anarchists or libertarians.

When Christie got out of jail he got together with Albert Meltzer (who had been involved in an Asian Committee for political prisoners), and together they re-started the Black Cross, with specific relation to Spain. Because of the publicity they got for various prisoners they were released. (Miguel Garcia's book FRANCO'S PRISONER.....soon available from Solidarity bookstore....gives details).

From this small beginning in London, a Black Cross sprang up in Milan (Pinelli as sec) which grew after Garcia visited Italy. Then in Germany, there are now quite a number of independent groups around

CHICAGO LOCAL BLACK CROSS ACTIVITIES:

The Chicago Black Cross held a series of May Week activities, most successful of which was a speak out on political repression in Italy, Spain, Ireland and Greece. \$23 was raised for the Valpreda Defence Committee. There was also picketing at the Spanish and Italian Tourist offices, and a benefit dance at the IWW Hall.

The group has been sending \$10 to each of two Spanish prisoners on a monthly basis, and hopes to be able to continue doing so. Two parcels were also sent containing clothes and medicine. Donations for the Spanish prisoners will be welcome. Besides money, used clothing in good condition, including womens and childrens clothing is useful. However considering the cost of postage, it is not worth sending clothes unless they are of good and lasting quality. Also welcome are medicines (in Spain these are hard to come by) such as asprins and vitamins. Hard candies and other non-perishable foods can be sent. Everything must go through Spanish customs.

A film series is being discussed as a money raising activity, in conjunction with the Chicago Branch of the I.W.W. It should be held sometime this summer at the I.W.W. Hall in Chicago.

So far most of our activities have been directed towards European comrades. We would particularly like to broaden our activities to include the Western hemisphere. We have been informed that it is possible to send aid to imprisoned Cuban anarchists and are in the process of gathering more specific information about their situation. We would also like to know more about the current position of anarcho-syndicalism in South America. If you can help, let us know.

* * * * *

ITALY

The following speech given by the anarchist Pietro Valpreda was taped in an Italian prison in late April, 1972. He is awaiting trial in Milan for bombings which killed 16 persons and injured many more on December 14, 1969. These bombings took place during extensive struggles between workers and the Italian government. Labor contracts in Italy are negotiated between the labor unions and the government and 1969 was the year for new contracts. Workers staged massive wildcat strikes which brought hundreds of thousands of them into the streets to protest. The bombs were planted by the Italian fascists with the help of the CIA to shock public opinion and to swing it against the workers.

Valpreda's case cannot be separated from that of Guiseppe Pinelli, also a militant anarchist, who committed "suicide" by jumping out of the office window of the police chief of Milan on December 15, 1969. Pinelli had been charged with the bombings and, so the story goes, became so depressed at being caught he decided to kill himself. Pinelli, 41 years old and father of two, had participated in armed struggle against the Nazi's from 1943-45 as well as being politically active since World War II with different anarchist groups. He was certainly not the type to give way to a fit of depression. The revolutionary left held a mock trial of Luigi Calabresi (the police chief of Milan and from whose window Pinelli was thrown).

Because of the obvious lies, and the ensuing public outcry, the District Attorney of Milan was forced to press charges. Calabresi was charged with third degree murder - manslaughter. Since then Calabresi was shot and killed as he was leaving police headquarters. The gunman spat at the body. It is not known who the attacker was and no arrests have been made.

Valpreda has been in prison ever since his arrest in 1969. Because of the explosive nature of the material, the state refuses to bring Valpreda to trial. It prefers to have Valpreda and the other anarchists arrested to linger in jail. Valpreda is running for the Italian Parliament on the ballot of "Il Manifesto", an Italian revolutionary group. He has been denied his right to broadcast over the radio, a right provided to all those running for Parliament. Instead his speech was taped in prison and then broadcast throughout Italy.

Repression of the left has increased tremendously in Italy with the increased militancy of the Italian workers. Valpreda's speech calls for unity among the Italian Left, while stating his political differences with "Il Manifesto" and explains why he, an anarchist, has chosen to run in a bourgeois election. Included in parenthesis are the portions which were censored out.

SMASH THE CONSPIRACY OF SILENCE ABOUT THE STATE'S MASSACRE!

SMASH THE MASQUERADE BY THE BOURGEOISIE!

FREE VALPREDAL VOTE MANIFESTO!

I am Pietro Valpreda. I speak to you from the jail of Regina Coeli. What you hear is my voice recorded on tape. It is as if I had written a letter which the head of the prison has censored. Although it is my right as a candidate for the election on the ballot of "Il Manifesto" to broadcast by radio. I address myself to you not only to ask you to vote for me and for your help to free my comrades Berghese and Gargamelli, but first of all I also want to explain to you the situation of myself and my comrades. To be in jail is hard for all, but it is a thousand times harder for those who are innocent and not allowed to prove their innocence. It is 3 years that I have waited for the trial to begin. And 3 years that we have not obtained it. Today they can tell us nothing about what the court will try us and when the trial will begin. Two things are absolutely clear at this point: that the inquest against us has no foundation and that our freedom is far away. But what type of social system is this? How is it possible for a mechanism to be so ferocious?

When one becomes a victim of an unjust legal system similar to ours one is not able to get out of it. How many still doubt our innocence? How many still believe that anarchists took part in the slaughter of Piazza Fontana? (There is no longer a shadow of a doubt that they want to keep us rotting or dying in jail.) We are anarchists and we believe in freedom. We are not fascists and murderers. But our freedom is denied us (they have even denied us the right to be judged.)

We want to have it finished, friends and comrades. We say this to everyone, also to those who are neither friends nor comrades, but only just men. I know that many do not agree with me because I have accepted to run in the elections. But even my lawyers told me they could not assure me that the trial would begin. To those of you who do not want to vote at all, I must say that it is easy when one is not in jail to say that those of us inside jail are innocent.

I say this in all frankness to everyone, comrades and friends, who protest against repression but then leave others to bear it and do not fight with all the available means against it. I want to make clear to everyone that I do not only ask you to free me. My having accepted to run in the elections is not only to obtain the freedom to which I have a right. It is also to hasten the date of my trial, and to free my comrades. If I could, I would not use the parliamentary immunity. But I would like to take into Parliament the protests of us all (against the massacre by the state), against repression, against the prison system (which is the mirror of the bourgeoisie state and the injustices against the poor). This is the political value and not the personal value of my election. It is painful that many do not understand these political implications.

Comrades and friends, anyone who will listen to me. I am an anarchist. I do not pretend to be a banner nor a political guide to anyone. I do not belong to "Il Manifesto" and the comrades have not pressured me in any way but have left me free to decide what to do. If I have chosen to run for the election under the ballot of Manifesto, and if they have proposed this to me, it is because I am now, in this year, in this hour, the principle target of the repression that is hitting all the vanguard. It is because this vote can unite - and it is in this spirit that I ask it - all the left, all the forces which do not believe in the bourgeoisie institutions, and also those who have different political beliefs, but want to fight against injustice. My name is Valpreda, my comrades names are Borghese and Gargamelli, neither I nor they will ever be called Sacco and Vanzetti. We ask of you to open the doors of the prison.

What I would like is that I and my comrades could speak to you, not on tape, comrades, but face to face, outside these walls as free men among free men.

VIVA IL COMUNISMO ANARCHICO!

[The above information on the Valpreda case, including the text of his speech was taken from Europe America Communication Service. 5/31/72
The following paragraphs are from Freedom, 5/20/72.]

ITALY - A DANGEROUS PLACE FOR ANARCHISTS

Valpreda was No. 1 candidate in Milan for "Il Manifesto", the group which broke away from the Italian Communist Party at the end of 1968. According to the proportional representation system, if a quorum of 5% of votes cast had been reached in any one constituency, not only Valpreda but several other candidates, among whom were five Manifesto members who had been elected as Communists in May, 1968, would have been elected to parliament. Valpreda would thus have been released from prison, as a member of parliament can only be imprisoned if he has actually been convicted of a crime. Valpreda had made clear from the outset that he remained an anarchist and did not share the Manifesto political line. The Manifesto group accepted this, hoping that popular sympathy for Valpreda would have given them a 5% vote in

Milan, at least, and thus have got other candidates elected under his wing, as it were. But the Feltrinelli case, and the violent attacks by the Communist Party (which of course stood to lose votes to its left), and the presence of candidates from other left groups, meant that the Manifesto candidates got 0.8% of votes in Milan and 0.7% nationally; Nowhere did they get more than 1.1%. Thus Valpreda remains in prison, and won't be tried until the autumn at the earliest.

Prison is of course a dangerous place for Italian anarchists. While the whole country was thinking about nothing else, politically, than the election, a young anarchist called Franco Serantini died in prison in Pisa. His skull was fractured in two places, and there was bruising of the brain and lungs.

He was arrested on Saturday morning, was interrogated by the magistrate, and was officially pronounced dead on Sunday afternoon. The autopsy took place on Monday afternoon and the funeral was rushed through at 3:30 Tuesday afternoon.

Despite the attempt to hush it up, 3,000 comrades were present at the funeral. The Pisa Anarchist Federation distributed an announcement that yet another anarchist had been brutally murdered by the police. (Il Manifesto, 5/10/72)



BULLETIN OF THE CHICAGO ANARCHIST BLACK CROSS

Published in Chicago by the Chicago Anarchist Black Cross
c/o I.W.W.
2440 North Lincoln Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60614

July, 1972. Volume 1, Number 1.

A \$3.00 donation to the Bulletin will help us meet printing and postage costs and will put the donar on our mailing lists for the next (hopefully monthly) ten issues. Anything above this will go directly for prisoner relief, which is after all our primary purpose.

ENGLAND

In London, England, the trial of the "Stoke Newington 8" (Stuart Christie, et al.) continues at the infamous Old Bailey. The 8 are charged with conspiracy to cause explosions, and are alleged to have been involved in every major bombing shooting and explosion that has occurred in Britain over the last three years. The incidents number about 25, and include bomb attacks on 3 Tory Cabinet Ministers, the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, and various embassies.

THE ANGRY BRIGADE

The 8 are alleged to be part of an underground revolutionary terrorist group which calls itself THE ANGRY BRIGADE. Since Nov 20th 1970, the Angry Brigade has claimed responsibility for a number of bombings and similar acts through a series of communiques first to the establishment press and, after these were suppressed, through the underground press. Often compared with Weatherman in America, the Angry Brigade professes belief in "autonomous rank and file action," sabotage, organized terrorism, and an "armed revolutionary working class". They reject any external structure and the "certain kind of professional who claims to represent us.....the M.P.s, the Communist Party, the Union leaders, the Social Workers, the old-old left...." Their actions have been aimed at property, not at the destruction of lives, have been symbolic of nature (ie bombing the BBC van covering the Miss World Contest, bombing the house of an unpopular cabinet minister), and have been claimed, evaluated, and explained in their subsequent communiques.

The Stoke Newington 8, however, are charged in incidents predating the emergence of the Angry Brigade and, as might be expected, their arrests have in no way put a stop to the bombings.

THE BUSTS

Following the bombing of Minister Robert Carr's house, in January of 1970, the police began a series of raids and arrests in the radical community. Many people were detained illegally then released, and much "relevant" material (papers, documents, etc) was confiscated without warrant. The first to be charged were Jake Prescott and Ian Purdie. Subsequent raids hit the Prescott--Purdie Defense Committee, the Womens Liberation Workshop, and individuals active in various other radical groups including the Claimant's Union, Gay Liberation, and Anarchist Black Cross.

PRESCOTT AND PURDIE

Prescott and Purdie were tried first, in November of 1971, charged with conspiracy to cause explosions. Purdie was acquitted. Prescott was acquitted of actually causing any of the explosions, but was convicted of conspiracy to do so (!), inasmuch as he had admitted addressing 3 envelopes which were used to send out Angry Brigade communiques. He testified that he was unaware of what the envelopes were to be used for. For this he was sentenced to 15 years.

THE EIGHT

10 other brothers and sisters were then under arrest. 2 have since been released for lack of evidence. 8 remain, they are at present on trial at the Old Bailey, 4 men, 4 women (two of the women are on bail, the rest have been in jail without trial since August). It was expected the trial would

take 12 weeks, now it looks more like six months. Three are defending themselves. The prosecution will go on through July and maybe August. The defence can, of course, question prosecution witnesses, and already the police have been shown to have destroyed evidence or put forward absurd evidence. Many of the prosecution witnesses (called by the police) have given evidence relevant to the defence. Among the accused is Stuart Christie, one of the founders of the Anarchist Black Cross in London, and co-author of the "Floodgates of Anarchy".

The guilt of the 8 was more or less assumed during the Prescott-Purdie trial. They are already guilty in the eyes of the state, the establishment press refers to the trial as the "Angry Brigade trial". The scene is a familiar one. The state have several "undesirables" up on it's favorite charge ...conspiracy, and it's going, so to speak, hog-wild. The conspiracy law, similar to that under which the Chicago Conspiracy was tried, allows for the admission of all sorts of "evidence" regarding the associations and personal lives of the defendants---so the state can prove motive. In any other trial such evidence would be inadmissible. The State is going to great lengths to obtain a conviction.

The Stoke Newington 8 are scapegoats. Their involvement has been denied repeatedly in Angry Brigade communiques. The evidence against them is negligible. They were arrested and charged as a result of their beliefs and their associations. Their cause is ours.

For more information, or to make a donation:

Stoke Newington 8 Defence Committee
c/o Compendium Bookshop
240 Camden High St
London NW 1
England

Or contact the Anarchist Black Cross in Chicago

c/o IWW 2440 N. Lincoln Ave
Chicago, ILL 60614

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GERMANY

THE CAPTURE OF THE RED ARMY FRACTION (alias.....THE BAADER MEINHOF GANG...)

It is just two years since the RAF declared their existence, following the liberation of Andreas Baader from the Institute of Social Research in West Berlin. He was working there under armed guard while serving a prison sentence for the bombing of a store in Frankfurt in 1968, in protest against the Vietnam war.

Ulrike Meinhof, a well known left wing journalist, was working with Baader when the armed group burst into the library and liberated him. She jumped

out of the window and fled with them. Immediately after the liberation the group went via East Berlin to Jordan, where they spent some time with Al Fatah receiving guerrilla warfare training. They returned to Germany carrying out a number of bank raids, and organizing armed resistance within West Germany and West Berlin.

Though labelled 'Anarchist' by the media, the ideological framework in which the RAF see their work is Marxist/Leninist. But while they assent the necessity of the revolutionary intervention of the avant-garde, they do not relate this on either a theoretical or practical level to the necessity of building the good old revolutionary vanguard party, which makes their Marxism/Leninism pretty unique. *

It seems that a tremendous amount of confusion has resulted, with all sorts of petty criminals jumping on the bandwagon, countless explosions and robberies have been attributed to the 'Baader/Meinhof' "gang" (as the press calls them), far too many for the small group to have been able to accomplish.

The 'Anarchist' label has precipitated the persecution and harassment of anarchists and libertarians all over West Germany. The sec of the Black Cross in Germany George Von Rauch, was shot and killed, unarmed and in cold blood in the street in Berlin just before Christmas. His name was of course linked with the 'gang!'. Von Rauch's brother was later arrested for resisting arrest...and is in jail at present. Late in March Thomas Weisbecker, also a member of the Anarchist Black Cross, was shot down and murdered in the street in an almost identical fashion to the way Von Rauch was killed. At the moment in Berlin, hundreds of students have occupied a block which they have named VON RAUCH HAUS, in solidarity with our comrade.

For two years the RAF survived the largest operation in persecution in post war Germany, the full power of the State was turned on them, at times 20,000 police were involved in the hunt. It seemed that they could not be captured.

However on the 1st of June, Andreas Baader and three others were captured by the police in a Frankfurt apartment, Baader was shot in the buttocks during the raid. Two weeks later, on the 17th of June, Ulrike Meinhof and Gerhard Mueller were captured in an apartment in Hannover. They are being accused of the recent wave of bombings in which 4 US soldiers and 36 Americans and Germans are reported to have been killed. Since the 13th of May there have been 7 bombings all claimed by the RAF.

- May 13th
 - . The officers club of the American army in Frankfurt...bombed.
 - . The police HQ in Augsburg...bombed
 - . The police HQ in Munich....bombed
 - . America House in Hamburg...bombed
- May 15th
 - . The car of Herr Buddenburg, the judge investigating the RAF, was bombed, his wife and not him was seriously injured.
- May 19th
 - . The building of the Springer newspapers in Hamburg...bombed.
- May 24th
 - . The HQ of the US army in Europe at Heidleburg...bombed.

It remains to be seen what the State will do to their prisoners. Besides

Baader and Meinhof, 14 other members of the 'gang' are reported to be in custody. It also remains to be seen whether the RAF will continue to carry out their urban guerrilla warfare, now that so many of them have been captured.

It is important to remember that the RAF do not call themselves Anarchist, but that they and many other small groups forced into illegality, have been lumped together by the press as 'Anarchist', and that the police have used the excuse of the 'Baader/Meinhof gang' to attack the young left indiscriminately all over Germany.

* Some information here has been taken from ANARCHY mag No 9 (50c) 95 West Green Rd, London N 15, England. Available from Solidarity Bookstore 2440 N. Lincoln Ave Chicago, ILL 60614

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IRELAND

* GERMAN EMBASSY IN DUBLIN BOMBED: SAT June 10th 1972

The foreign Embassy in Dublin of the Federal German Republic was bombed at approx 20.15 hours on Sat, 10th June. In an anonymous telephone call to a Sunday newspaper, responsibility for the explosion was claimed by the Irish Section of the Baader-Meinhof Solidarity Organization. It is understood that the blast was in protest against the arrest of important members of the West German Red Army Fraction, popularly known as the Baader-Meinhof gang, by members of the German Political Police.

The Prime Minister of the Republic of Ireland has offered to pay compensation to the Government of the Federal German Republic.

In the conservative daily newspaper, the "Irish Independent", of the 12th inst, a feature article on the background to the Red Army Fraction alleges that "other groups with strange names like 'Black Aid'...joined the guerrillas".

This was a reference to the Berlin Black Aid section of the Black Cross, of which Georg Von Rauch was a member and organizer when he was shot dead by West German Political Police.

*Released for publication by the Secretary, on behalf of the Irish Council of the Black Cross International.

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SPAIN

JULIAN MILLAN HERNANDEZ

(May 1st) We learn that his sentence has been quashed. Whether this is for better or worse cannot be stated. The military court resented the world wide publicity. The foreign legal observers agreed there was no evidence. So the sentence of 23 years was annulled. But this simply means that it goes back to the court to try the case all over again and meantime Millan is still in jail

He is entering his fifth year of imprisonment. The court is well aware that it would be impossible to raise enough money, in the (unstated) time available, to send further foreign legal observers to the trial. The case needs increasing publicity. Only the irritation to the regime of seeing that it causes comment abroad has saved Millan from death.

taken from Black Flag Vol2 No 12

MORE NEWS FROM SPAIN

According to Black Flag of June, 1972, the following libertarians have been released after serving four years and some months:

Jaime Pozas de Villena

David Urbano Bermudez

Francisco Gil de Jaen

Xabier de Sebastian Palomares

All are students who were arrested during the uprising at the University.

Pedro Sanchez Perez, a worker accused of participation in the rebuilding of the C.N.F., has also been released, after serving twenty years. The period of 20 years is now the maximum that political prisoners are serving, among those released under this "favor" were Miguel Garcia Garcia (now International Secretary of the Anarchist Black Cross) and Juan Busquets, jailed since 17 years of age.

STAMPS FOR SPAIN

What possible interest can tough guerrilla fighters and illegal union men in Spain have in stamp collecting? Well, many have children or grandchildren, and foreign stamps make a cheap present from a prisoner (they also show his children he is not forgotten by the world outside.)

Supporters of Black X are asked to collect them, U.S. stamps (especially special issues and the higher values) as well as foreign. Saves throwing them away. Send them in batches.

LETTERS TO SPAIN

It is possible, at a little trouble, to arouse some interest on the part of the Spanish authorities in the fate of libertarian prisoners in Spain. By writing and demanding as a foreigner application of the Spanish laws of conditional liberty and the abolition of special punishment, we show our solidarity with the prisoners and demonstrate international concern for their cases.

You may feel a bit silly writing a letter to a dictatorship, but thousands have already been sent from England, Germany and Italy and we understand that they have indeed had an effect. So go ahead and write even if you don't think it will help. A Spanish comrade might be a bit better off because of your letter.

DRAFT LETTER TO SPAIN

The text is obviously just a suggestion but the quoted texts in Spanish are faithful extracts from official documents, and should, if included, be left intact. A rough translation of the Spanish texts follows the letter.

Dear Sir / Madam

It has come to my notice that the political prisoners in Spain are not being granted the benefits of Conditional Liberty, since senor Gonzales del Yerro does not consider he can trust them to be reformed. May I be allowed to remind you that in the survey "Delitos, penas y presidios de Espana", published by the Ministerio de Justicia in 1963, the text quotes in this respect:

"La concesion de este beneficio se funda en la presuncion de que el recluso se encuentra reformado por la aplicacion del tratamiento penitenciario y por ello carece de finalidad la continuacion de la reclusion y debe ser puesto en libertad...como dice el profesor Cuello Colon, si hubiera medios humanos para comprobar sin temor a error su presunta correccion, se concediria la libertad definitiva, mas como puede ser aparente o simulada por el penado para conseguir la liberacion, se otorga tan solo a titulo provisional y a condicion de que el penado durante un periodo observe buena conducta. El beneficio de la Libertad Condicional no puede considerarse una gracia, es mas bien un derecho, al que se hacen acreedores los reclusos que reunen las condiciones legalmente determinadas."(pag. 105 y 106)

One must dismiss the interpretation given to this right of conditional liberty by certain officials and government bodies, according to which it is a favor, an administrative decision, conceded by the prison administration and afterwards approved by the Consejo de Ministros as a pure formality. This is a glaring misrepresentation of the law.

We allow ourselves to remind you of the text of the code which guarantees the application of this law dating from 1870 and re-validated on 23rd July 1914:

"La Libertad Condicional es un derecho que queda establecido por el art. 98 delCodigo Penal que define el caracter de derecho subjetivo del preso, que beneficio tiene, infiriendo a su aplicacion una concesion automatica. Hay que hacer notar que la ley del 23.7.1914 establece claramente, respecto a la cuarta condicion del art. 98 delCodigo Penal que es la propia situacion de la libertad condicional, vigilada, un medio de prueba y que por otro lado la comision de delito durante este periodo lleva aparejada la penalidad definida del art. 99 del citadoCodigo. Es decir, esta penalidad del articulo 99 no puede aplicarse a priori, sino solo en case de que aparezca prueba de haber sido quebrantada la formula legal.

The on-
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sent

LETTER TO SPAIN CONTINUED:

with these arguments have been rejected by the Direccion General de Prisioneros which for more than four years now has been denying the application of these benefits to political prisoners. These prisoners, having exhausted all legal channels to obtain its application, had recourse to hunger strikes which resulted in severe damage to their health. It is difficult to accept that such a situation can nowadays be tolerated.

Confident that you will do what is necessary to re-establish the correct procedure in the granting of benefits due to the prisoners,

Signature.

The above letter can be sent to the Minister of Justice, the Direccion General de Prisioneros, the local Embassy or Consulate, and other appropriate places. As well as the Embassy, there are four immediately relevant addresses:

H.E. Senor don Jose Maria Oriols
Ministerio de Justicia, Madrid, Spain

H.E. Senor don Carrero Blanco
Vice-Presidencia del Gobierno, Madrid, Spain

H.E. Madam Carmen Polo de Franco
Palacio del Prado, Madrid, Spain

Senor don Lopez Bravo
Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, Madrid, Spain

The two passages in Spanish are roughly translated as follows:

a. The granting of this privilege is based on the assumption that the detained has been rehabilitated by the treatment received in prison and that consequently his custody is no longer necessary and he must be set free...as Prof. Cuello Colon says: If there were human means of proving, without fear of possible error, his presumed rehabilitation, one would grant unconditional liberty; but as it may be just appearances or even simulation on the part of the prisoner in order to obtain his release, it is granted only as a provisional measure and on condition that the accused be of good behaviour for a specific period of time. The granting of Conditional Liberty must not be considered a favor, but a right, to which prisoners are entitled having satisfied the legal requirements stated.(pp 105 + 106).

b. Conditional Liberty is a right established by article 98 of the Penal Code which defines the rights of a prisoner in custody, what privileges he is entitled to, and which is inferred the automatic granting of such privileges. One must note that the law of 23.7.1914 establishes clearly, regarding the fourth condition of article 98 of the Penal Code what the actual position is on Conditional Liberty,

SPANISH LETTER CONTINUED

that it is supervised and is a means of testing (the rehabilitation), and that committing any crime during the "probationary" period brings with it the penalty as detailed in art. 99 of the above code. That is to say, this penalty referred to in art. 99 cannot be applied a priori ---but only in cases where there is proof of the breaking of the law.

CALIFORNIA - STOVER BEHIND BARS

Lest we be led to believe that there are not anarchist class war prisoners in the U.S., consider the case of Robert P. Stover, better known to friends and fellow workers as Ed. In 1970 he and Mike Lamm were arrested on a variety of heavy charges including arson, robbery, receiving stolen weapons, and attempted murder. The arrests occurred in a wave of anti-leftist busts and were accompanied by large headlines in the Bay Area papers with photographs of caches of literature, weapons and weapons taken from the home of known anarchists. A high speed police chase was played up. At the time Ed Stover was an organizer and had been active in the anti-war, anti-draft movements on the West Coast. He was attempting to build contacts between the union militants and the student movement.

Stover remained in prison for 16 months before he came to trial, unable to meet the excessively high bail. Mike Lamm was unable to raise his bail but depression over constant harassment of state and Federal authorities drove him to jump into San Francisco Bay, where he died. A national Stover-Lamm defence fund was started and the General Defence Committee of the IWW also raised money. But Stover was finally convicted and sentenced to a very lengthy term.

During the first months of incarceration he was held virtually incommunicado by California authorities and moved from place to place. It was six months before the General Defence Committee could find him and begin sending the five dollar per month cigarette money he is eligible for. Currently his incoming mail at San Quentin seems to be somewhat censored. Publications and books not sent from a bookshop are returned, as are "official" letters from organizations, but his personal letters, both incoming and outgoing seem to get through. Stover has been spending much time reading and studying labor and anarchist material. He has been taking special courses in National Labor Relations Board procedures. Much of the rest of his free time is spent in writing. His essays have recently appeared in the Industrial Worker and he is working on a book, Anarchist in Exile.

Stover has also been very involved in helping prepare his own appeals. He reports in his last letter that the brief has been filed for the appeal on the robbery, assault and receiving stolen weapons charges. In his own words, "the legal grounds used to justify a reversal of my conviction are excellent, and if constitutional law is still followed by the courts (which of course will be the real question), then the arguments in favor of reversal are almost unshakeable."

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Subscription information on page 6!



SOLUTION TO THE PUZZLE ON PAGE 4!

Valpreda has been in prison ever since his arrest in 1969. Because of the explosive nature of the material, the state refuses to bring Valpreda to trial. It prefers to have Valpreda and the other anarchists arrests to linger in prison. Valpreda is running for the Italian Parliament on the ballot of "Il Manifesto", an Italian revolutionary group. He has been denied his right to broadcast over the radio, a right provided to all those running for Parliament. Instead his speech was taped in prison and then broadcast throughout Italy.

Repression of the Left has increased tremendously in Italy with the increased militancy of Italian workers. Valpreda's speech calls for unity among the Italian Left while stating his political difference with "Il Manifesto" and explains why he, an anarchist, has chosen to run in a bourgeois election. Included in parenthesis are the portions which censored out of the tape.

SMASH THE CONSPIRACY OF SILENCE ABOUT THE STATE'S MASSACRE!

SMASH THE MASQUERADE BY THE BOURGEOISE!

FREE VALPREDAS! VOTE MANIFESTO!

I am Pietro Valpreda. I speak to you from the jail of Regina Coeli. What you hear is my voice recorded on tape. It is as if I had written a letter which the head of the prison has censored, although it is my right as a candidate for the election on the ballot of "Il Manifesto" to broadcast by radio. I address myself to you not only to ask you to vote for me and for your help to free my comrades Borghese and Gargamelli, but first of all I also want to explain to you the situation of myself and my comrades. To be in jail is hard for all, but it is a thousand times harder for those who are innocent and not allowed to prove their innocence. It is 3 years that I have waited for the trial to begin. (And 3 years that we have not obtained it). Today they can tell us nothing about what court will try us and when the trial will begin. Two things are absolutely clear at this point: that the inquest against us has no foundation and that our freedom is far away. But what type of social system is this? How is it possible for a mechanism to be so ferocious?

When one becomes a victim of an unjust legal system similar to ours one is not easily able to get out of it. How many still doubt our innocence? How many still believe that anarchists took part in the slaughter of Piazza Fontana? (There is no longer a shadow of doubt that they want to keep us rotting or dying in jail.) We are anarchists and we believe in freedom. We are not fascists and murderers. But our freedom is denied us (they have even denied us the right to be judged).

We want to have it finished, friends and comrades. We say this to everyone, also to those who are neither friends nor comrades, but only just men. I know that even my lawyers told me they could not assure me that the trial would begin. To those of you who do not want to vote at all, I must say that it is easy when one is not in jail to say that those of us inside jail are innocent.