

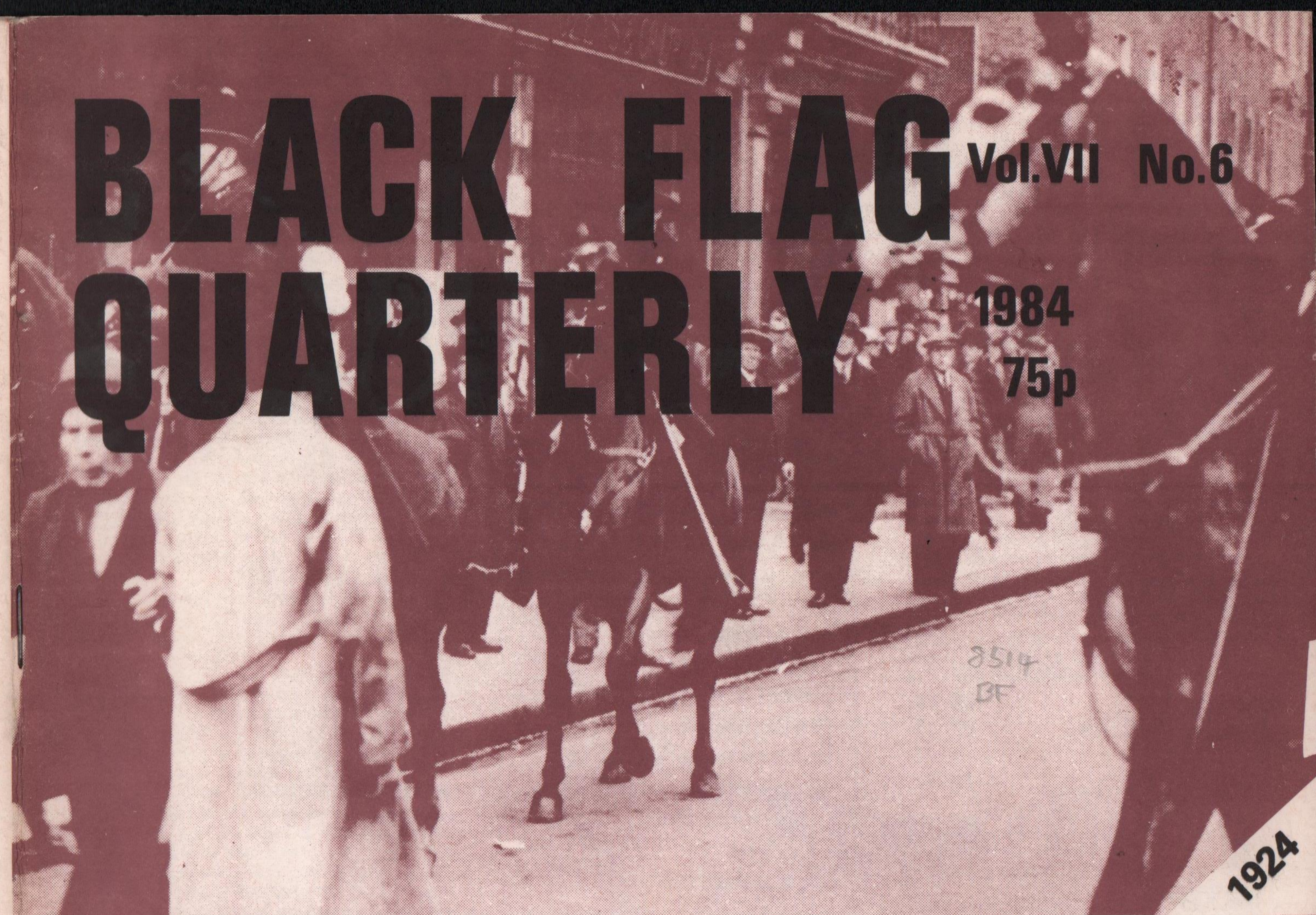
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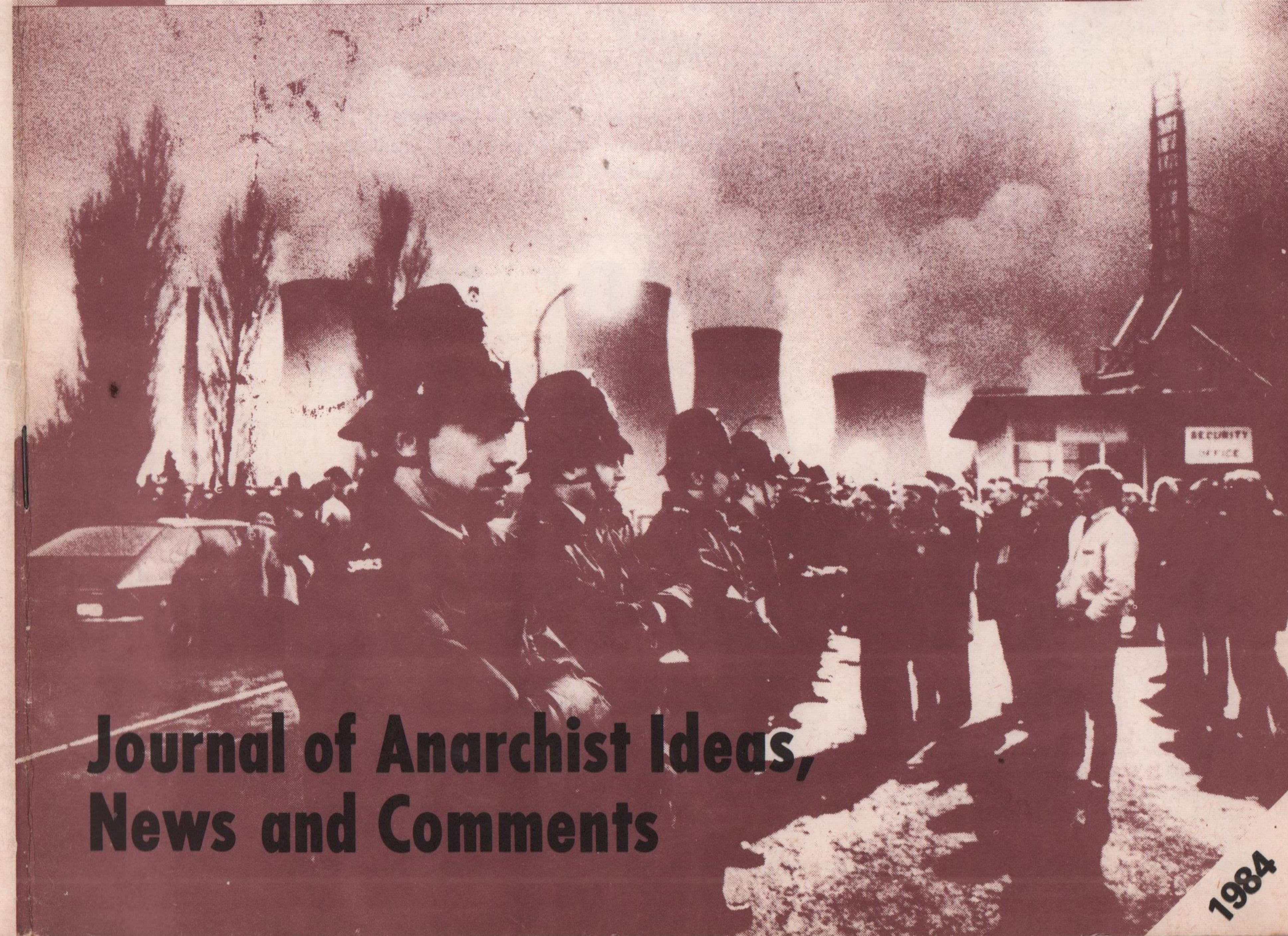
# BLACK FLAG QUARTERLY

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### STATE OF PLAY

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"All they think about is money..."

\* London As £150; Doncaster As £5;  
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Crewe RW £11.50; also ACW £1.50;  
GA £15; AR £10; JT £10; M £34  
Total £345

£1700 odd is a large slide to be carrying forward in the hope that one day our ship will come in. A good job we all earn our living elsewhere! However, despite the heavy deficit, the amount we actually lose — which seems to have stabilised at £800 odd a quarter — isn't totally insurmountable. Our entire deficit would vanish with a couple of hundred new subs. A large number of new subs came in with our *Stateman* advert — paid for by a sympathiser — and, who knows, some more subscribers may come from people who like to have an anarchist journal once a fortnight and have previously thought they could do without us.

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during WWII and much more...

## ANARCHO QUIZ

1. In 1942 the Germans were planning a coup d'etat in Spain aiming to instal Foreign Minister Serrano Suner (who was Franco's brother in law) as Chief of State. What foiled them?
2. A famous pianist became President of his country because it lacked sufficient famous politicians, who was he, and what caused his death?
3. For what reason would a reader at the British Museum need to call upon three trustees — one of them having to be the Archbishop of Canterbury?
4. Juan Lechin is today leader of the Bolivian miners, an Anarchist occupying a trade union position which is the centre of a revolutionary struggle for the takeover of the mines. How did the mining company come to employ so notable a rebel in the first place?
5. Someone who has been commemorated in Israel as a Jewish fighter for freedom because of involvement in a conspiracy to kill Hitler had in fact no ties with any religious or nationalist body and was an independent socialist who worked entirely with anarchists. Who?

Answers on Page 38

## EDITORIAL

### TYRANNY BY CONSENT

'The Media' has become a flip phrase to cover the brainwashing which all governments need in order to remain the ruling power. Tyranny by repression is the most expensive way of going about a job that can be better carried out by persuasion. Even if a State need to bring out the tanks in order to reinforce its arguments, it still needs to persuade at least part of the population — if only the military — and may as well rule, if it can, directly by persuasion.

Tyranny by persuasion is at work in all democratic countries, relying on exciting false emotions by false emphasis, formulating prejudices, hatreds, attachments, dislikes, attitudes, ambitions and above all trying to identify State with the nation and nation with people.

No democratic safeguards have yet withstood mass conditioning; it is a condition for social change that the conditioning programme be smashed.

Of what use is it that people in Russia genuinely believe in peace, when the Russians have been conditioned to believe that peace simply means the absence of war against Russia, while the Russian State's going to war with whomever it chooses is merely defence?

What difference does it make that in the democratic countries we have the vote, when all we can elect is a tyranny only modifiable in its personnel?

Governments want us settled, loyal, obedient and impressed with the need to obey by the 'soft police' of the media or, if we are not, forced to do so by the 'hard politicking' of the military or police authorities, with this behaviour being regarded as anti-social.

When one looks at the immense problems of confronting an entrenched ruling class, a strong State not in military defeat, and a government which may or may not be strong in political issues but is invariably so on matters of security (especially against its 'own' people), the wonder is that anyone tries to establish a revolutionary movement. Yet this has been done successfully, to be frustrated by the fact that the State then uses its own antidote. This was done at one time by fascism simulating anti-capitalist movements in order to bring the working class back to slavery. It is done in our time by the university. Basing itself on the premise of marxism that the workers must be led by an 'educated' class, learned and not-so-learned professors pre-empt us with slogans and theses and invent socialist theories affording alternative ways of entrusting themselves with leadership, or at the very least, to trim working class ideologies into respectability.

Marxism introduced a new theme into 'revolution' — domination by a so-called educated vanguard. Though in Russia this has degenerated into military rule and a centralised leadership of ageing officials, keeping alive the Great Scholar's memory, we see its effect at its most typical in Libya, where — with not the slightest effect on the way of life of a country that has gone from feudalism through fascist rule to 'socialism' — we see Gaddafi's distortion of 'assemblyism'.

The students are the revolutionary leadership, but what are they supposed to be revolting against — except the heretics from Islam — is hard to see. The fantasy of 'workers councils' in Libya which means that great crowds of people are gathered together to scream at each other and denounce the very bureaucracy they are working to keep, while

the Leader oks on beaming at this very democratic way of going about things which does not affect his autocracy in the slightest, is copied from China where Mao had the bright idea of being both Stalin and Trotsky in his own cultural revolution, and leading both government and opposition, his own administrators obligingly enacting the part of stage villains in return for starring parts.

If as Anarchists our struggle against the main tendencies of the day seems hopeless, we have at least achieved a Pyrrhic victory in that, while social conditions are ruled by sheer weight of profit and privilege, and working lives by more stringent dictatorship than ever (reinforced by the threat of a non-working life if we disobey), many have managed to conquer leisure time living. Yes, we can be weekend Anarchists, especially if we express it by way of exuberance, music or dress! This alternative to anarchism is at least halfacceptable to the State, provided it keeps within prescribed limits, especially if it adopts a pacifist restraint, particularly if it succeeds in dividing the younger from the older, the unemployed from those still working, the adventurous from those with

commitments, above all, anarchists by knowledge away from the anarchists by instinct. If these conditions can be maintained cynicism and apathy are bred into which much of what passed a few years ago for the 'Anarchist' movement (the new, the 're-invented', the 'non-violent') has fallen. 'Why Work?' has been followed by 'Why struggle', 'why do anything'; above all, why carry on a seemingly hopeless battle by sacrificing time, leisure, money — in hard times, liberty, even life??

These questions are forced upon us by contemporary values, yet — though they may induce many to give up in despair or find an illusory harbour in power politics — the people everywhere are prepared to accept anarchist values and to reject authoritarian ones, in mainstream life no less than in leisure.

What prevents the breakthrough? Those adhering to the values consistently put forward in *Black Flag* and its allied publications have always maintained that the responsibility is in no way less due to those who perpetuate the fascist misrepresentation of anarchism — as criminal of itself — than of those who have wanted to cash in on the name of anarchism without commitment to the revolutionary idea of anarchism, or its means of achievement, or of the firm possibility of its reality once the will is there.



### SOLIDARITY FUNDS

#### Anarchist Black Cross

Mutual aid fund i/h £163.78; Guam SS £59.40. Redistributed to Spanish veterans of civil war in France and Spain, eight amounts of £25 — £200. Balance £23.18.

CNT prisoners Liverpool As £6; Sheffield RB £6; Surrey LD £10; Ulster JB £12; Cambridge PN £10; Orlando Black Cross £1 — Balance £45.

In hand for Vancouver 5 — £10.

We were able to send a number of veterans their end-of-year donation; hopefully we can do more of this in future. Veterans of the revolution are in their seventies and eighties, working as shoeblacks or car park attendants if they're lucky. Maybe it's only a drop in the ocean but it's appreciated.

### CNT PRISONERS FUND

Many thanks to all comrades who sent us donations for the CNT Prisoners Fund. We managed to pass on £55 in January 1984 when a comrade visited the CNT/IWA in Madrid. We shall have also passed on another £53 by the end of April 1984 when some of us attend the IWA Congress (again in Madrid). The fund is still open and more donations are very welcome. All donations received go to the Comité Pro-Presos CNT-AIT (IWA) — (The CNT's Prisoners Support Committee).

Thanks again,  
Black Flag Collective.

Here's a list of donations received so far:  
PN (Cambridge) £5; LAG (Liverpool) £5; RB (Manchester) £6; Steve (Reading) £5; Ballymena Anarchist Group £13; LFD (Surrey) £10; Black Flag Collective £14; TH (London) £10; SB (Cosham) £5; RM (London NW6) £5; MP (London SW1) £2; Anarchist Prisoners Benefit £17.

Total: £108



# TRADE UNIONISM & THE STATE

## GCHQ Dispute in context

The challenge that the government issued to the GCHQ (Government Communications Headquarters) staff in particular, and to the trade union movement generally, was primarily concerned with the right to trade union membership. But there was also a secondary issue: namely, that of one's loyalty to trade unionism in opposition to the loyalty demanded by the state, and of the subsequent conflict thus presented.

Almost at the outset of the dispute the SCPS - followed almost immediately by the TUC leadership - made the initial mistake of choosing to fight the government on the governments' own terms by trying to compete and be seen as being 'more loyal than thou'. The trade union leaders thus proclaimed loudly and vigorously their complete loyalty to the State and their unquestioning support for GCHQ and all it stood for.

Understandably none of the union leaders wished to say or do anything that would damage their negotiating position. But their conciliatory approach was their downfall. Within days they had compromised the GCHQ staff by offering a no-strike agreement and it was clear that their prime objective was to ensure a continuation of a form of trade unionism - even if that trade unionism was but merely a near imitation of the toothless staff association so preferred by the government - whatever the cost to the labour movement as a whole.

To thus compromise themselves and go, cap in hand, must have indeed provided the government with the courage to go the whole hog and make their victory complete. And as soon as the government had a wiff of the sweet smell of success - handed to them on a plate - there was little holding them.

Under the circumstances the TUC leadership thus had little choice but to suggest, not propose (that would lead to legal repercussions), that there be solidarity action. But this was more a case of the rank and file leading the way to fight the governments union busting attempts, with the union leaders lamely following on and giving their unofficial backing to autonomous acts of support. Not well known for anything too imaginative, the TUC leaders put the idea around of a half day - not even a full day - strike, called at such short notice that response was bound to be limited. It was significant to note at the time that it was the Right of the TUC leadership that was prominent in taking up the GCHQ employees cause. But this is not surprising; after all, most of the GCHQ employees are white-collar civil servants employed in the type of job that no self-respecting statist, never mind right-wing trade unionist, would ever dream of questioning.

The protest took place and support was encouraging. But it was clear that the impetus for fighting against de-unionisation had by then long passed. The show of strength, in the form of a series of wildcat nationwide strikes, should have come much earlier on in the dispute before the negotiations, not at the eleventh hour when all was lost. By the time the half

day of action took place the government had already succeeded in scoring a psychological victory as the last few GCHQ employees capitulated to the blatant coercion.

As so often with many other industrial disputes, where sympathetic action is deliberately held back (for supposedly tactical reasons) in reserve as a final ploy, far too much emphasis ends up being placed on negotiating strategy in the initial stages and not enough on direct action as a weapon to be used at every available opportunity. In this particular instance direct action could have included a withdrawal of support and back-up services from GCHQ by Crown employees in other government establishments; the disconnection of telecommunication links to GCHQ by Telecom workers; and the occupation of the offices of the Intelligence Services (MI5 and MI6) - who both work closely with GCHQ - by workers generally.

Such actions alone could not hope to gain any victory for trade unionism: the government has a proven track record of intransigence and GCHQ would probably be able to boast sufficient loyal staff to combine with any 'contingency force' and suitably meet any challenge of enforced isolation the trade union movement could impose. As it was there was uncertainty as to whether the GCHQ staff themselves had the will to fight a protracted struggle. Furthermore the fact that the TUC went out of its way to contain the dispute and prevent it from escalating further seems to suggest that they may have been worried that other Crown employees would come next in line for deunionisation.

GCHQ now has a staff association in place of a trade union and pay awards and improvements are settled internally, with no recourse to strike action at the employees disposal if things don't go their way. The TUC is fully aware that such staff associations are by no means few and far between. In many industries staff associations are imposed and this trend is significantly increasing. It is deunionisation by stealth. And little is being done to prevent this trend.

Many of the staff associations are being set up with the assistance of paid consultants who specialise in this activity. And it is not just a phenomenon of the new Japanese takeovers. Exploiting the unemployment situation many new companies, especially those who have a controlling interest abroad, demand that employees sign a non-union agreement as part of their condition of employment. The staff associations provide no job protection for employees whatsoever. Companies have found that it is easier to pay off the (small) fines for dismissal infringements. Again management consultants are providing the best strategies for management to effectively deal with any disputes that may arise with the associations. Collective bargaining is, of course, prohibited and employees end up finding themselves up against not just management but a near army of legal advisors.

The philosophy behind the staff association is exactly the same as that propounded by the

government in the GCHQ dispute: what is good for the company is good for the staff, what is good for the State is right for all. This is corporatism in industry and in society. In both cases we are asked - or rather coerced - to accept that the needs of the State and the needs of management naturally coincide with all needs.

As a result of the governments' victory at GCHQ we are now faced with a situation whereby trade unionism in Britain is no longer permissible within a certain sector of employment. In previous Black Flag reports we hypothesised that the government would look for other State departments to deunionise. Perhaps the Ministry of Defence? The Royal Ordnance Factories (which are soon to be privatised) or the private defence establishments? With the conversion of defence industries into socially useful industries high on the priority list of some trade unionists, it may be in the State's interest to guarantee loyalties while they are still able. The no-strike agreement would be an obvious avenue the government may decide to explore in securing the protection of the defence industries from any encroachment.

The enforcement of loyalty to the State - which is what occurred at GCHQ - is, when it comes down to it, but a form of Berufsverbote. In Germany this policy covers all State industries, not just those concerning national security. Thus a precedent, or model, on a far grander scale to that initiated by the British State, is available should any British politician wish to study measures to strengthen the loyalty of those employed in the civil service, the municipal authorities and essential industries.

Taken in context, therefore, the government has not only managed to score a victory against trade unionism but has also helped to create conditions for the resurgence of a neo-McCarthyism.

As part of this growing climate of oppression it is not too unfeasible to suggest that government critics (eg, CND supporters, etc) who possess political sympathies contrary to the prevailing government in power could be subjected to scrutiny and possible dismissal from employment. If this sounds a bit exaggerated one only has to look across to the other side of the Atlantic and note what happens every time there is a change in Administration. In the USA the protection against employees who side with the Opposition works two ways, but it would be doubtful if Labour, here, would have the guts to apply such a policy in their favour if the Tories initiated it.

In one Black Flag article, published well before the revelations in The Guardian newspaper, we predicted that the current government paranoia over moles and dissidents would be extended to go well beyond their preoccupation with trade union rights and that, in fact, counter-disaffection measures (or a form of political vetting) would eventually be applied to all mainstream government, civil service and Forces personnel, beginning with those who work in the most 'sensitive' departments in the Ministry of Defence. We were partly right in our predictions in that it was later announced that political vetting was to be stepped up for Service personnel.

As a result of these announcements we then posed the question whether the governments paranoia would extend even further to include the possibility of disaffection within the Armed Forces. The political vetting of civil

servants would be insufficient to meet the present governments needs - a neutralised Civil Service would need to be developed in tandem with a politically disarmed (ie, loyal) Military. As it turned out it wasn't long - a matter of a week - before new regulations were introduced discouraging members of the Armed Forces from becoming a member of any political or dissident group. Attendance of a demonstration by Service personnel could mean the instigation of disciplinary measures. In addition Service personnel are now under an obligation to ensure that they are not subject to any form of incitement. The question we could ask here is have the government any grounds to be concerned that disaffection will become an issue of prominence?

Which brings us back to the original question of loyalty and loyalty to whom. Bluntly, is it not time for trade unionists and non-trade unionists alike to recognise that loyalty to the State and loyalty to trade unionism are never complementary (whichever government is in power) but are diametrically opposed concepts? And that the more workers end up compromising themselves in this respect the more the trade union movement will end up moving towards the Right, and the country to a one party state?

Labour organisations have no business operating within State-sponsored institutions and commissions, or of giving credence to legislation that merely limits their capacity to fight injustice. Industrial tribunals, arbitration committees, 'job-creation' schemes: all are but means of containing labour resistance. So long as the TUC continues to recognise the legitimacy of the anti-labour laws, we are left with no other choice but to recognise that as an umbrella organisation, more and more orientated to white-collar aspirations and offering little hope for the jobless and lower paid, the TUC is itself gradually being transformed into a gigantic staff association (in all but name) that bears no relevance whatsoever to working-class needs.

Inevitably there will come a time when the more militant unions will need to disengage from this crumbling dinosaur and in its place form a separate fighting body - a federation of both workers and jobless - whose loyalty is to no authority, no government, no state power, or union bureaucrat.

That time is now.

T.H.





# THE ANARCHIST MOVEMENT IN KOREA

The vitality of the Korean Anarchist Movement essentially centres around the country's profound desire for independence. This strong nationalist influence on the anarchist movement — dating back to the most pure tradition of Bakunin and Kropotkin — has caused, and still causes confusing aspects. On wanting to influence a potent nationalist movement from within, there always exists the risk of being influenced in turn by nationalism. Makhno also faced this problem and knew how to cope with it. Korean anarchists continue the struggle against pro-USA capitalist dictatorship in the South and the pro-USSR dictatorship in the North.

## Some History

Korea had its own culture and language a thousand years before Christ but quickly fell under the influence of China and then — like China itself — fell under the influence of Mongolia and Manchuria. From the end of the 16th century onwards Japan started to make its influence felt. The end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century marked the height of foreign influence in Korea and resulted in 3 wars: between China and Japan in 1894-1895; between Russia and Japan in 1904-1905 and between the USA and China, (a war twisted to look as if it was a civil war between the North and South) in 1950-1953.

## The Character of Korean Nationalism

By the 19th century 2 tendencies had arisen: a fairly clandestine intellectual build-up on one hand and a violent, anti-foreign popular explosion on the other which included peasant revolts in the countryside south of Seoul between 1863-1864 and then again between 1890-1894 during the independence movement. A little later on, two more social movements would shake the whole country in almost the same manner: in 1919 the 'Mansei' proclamation of independence, and in 1960 the countless demonstrations against President Singman Rhee.

Such natural use of direct action occurred wherever there were Koreans, and especially with the Korean emigrant population in Japan, China and Manchuria (3 neighbouring zones). Between 1907-1913 Japanese forces in Korea were continually harassed by guerillas: 1907 — 323 actions; 1908 — 1449; 1909 — 898; 1910 — 147; 1910/11 — 52; 1911/12 — 30; 1912/13 — 5. In the Chinese city of Harbin, Hirobumi

Ito (Prince and author of the Japanese Constitution and the man responsible for Japanese involvement in Korea) was assassinated by An Tchounguin in October 1909.

## The Beginning of the Anarchist Movement

Although social conditions in Korea were favourable we don't have a detailed account of the birth of anarchism. In Japan and China, anarchist movements are just starting. In 1920 there are Manchurian anarchist battalions fighting side by side with Korean nationalist groups against the Japanese Army. During a military parade they surrounded a Japanese column and wiped out more than 1,000 soldiers; while suffering losses of less than 200. It was the battle of Ch'ing — Shan-Li, waged by 'the Anarchist General' Kim-Chwa-Jin (aka Kim-Joa-Jin) in October 1920.

The Korean presence in Manchuria was so strong that Kim-Chwa-Jin (also known as the Korean Makhno) and Choung-Shin (among others) inspired the founding of libertarian communes amongst Korean refugees from March 1925 onwards, until a communist agent assassinated Kim-Chwa-Jin in January 1930.



## The Movement Up To 1945

Following the long 'Declaration of Korean Revolutionaries' (mostly concerning nationalism) the first Anarchist Organisation was founded in January 1934. On 2nd November 1928 in Pengouaong the General Confederation of Korean Anarchists was founded in clandestinity.

In April 1930 in China, the Eastern Anarchist League was re-organised and renamed the Korean Youth League of South China. Such activity was continued by the Anarchist Youth League, the

Eastern Workers Federation (both founded May 1930) and the Workers Black Flag League (June 1930) in Japan.

We don't know the exact relations between Korean nationalists and anarchists. From 1919 onwards a Republican Government existed in exile, led by President Singman Rhee in Hawaii, the Prime Minister and other ministers residing in China. As China was at civil war (between Chiang-Kai-Shek and Mao-Tse-Tung, so Korean exiles were also divided between 'liberals' and 'communists', between Kim-Kou and Kim-Won-Bong. In an attempt to secure increased support from Chiang-Kai-Shek, Kim-Kou launched a violent campaign.

On 8th January 1932, Lee-Pang-Chang (aka Yi-Bong-Tchan aka Yi-Pong-Ch'ong) threw a bomb at the Japanese Emperor's carriage. On 15th April 1932 in Shanghai, Yum-Pang-Gil (aka Yu-Bong-Kil) threw a bomb and killed Japanese General Shirakawa (commanding troops in Manchuria at the time), wounding several others including a minister and an admiral.

Leaving aside subjective interpretations, Japanese police documents provide us with precise figures of actions during 1937: 'Korean Anarchists from the Tchong-Hwa-Am group are collaborating with Chinese anarchists recently released from prison; they are preparing terrorist acts. They have already received considerable funds.

'Kim-Kou sent You-Tcha-Myong to visit Tchong-Hwa-Am, carrying a letter saying: 'Let's forget the past, overcome our theoretical differences and unite! I have money and materials. We could work together as before. Please come and see me immediately as I urgently want to talk to you.' Tchong-Hwa-Am left Chenchiang City and met Kim-Kou.

In January 1934 the Korean anarchist movement helped found a revolutionary workers union and in 1935 participated in the Japanese Anarcho-communist party. It was also active in China, through the Revolutionary Korean League.

As a result of these efforts, Korean anarchists seemed to be extremely close to their Chinese and Japanese comrades and very close to Kim-Kou's nationalists.

## The Movement After 1945

In 1945 'Liberated' Korea was going through a very tough time, the Japanese government handing over power to a puppet government, while the Chinese authorities hindered the return of

Korea's exiled government whose members returned in the middle of November. Finally, President Singman Rhee arrived, as did American Occupational forces, while the Russians plotted in the North.

It was during this dark period that the anarchists reorganised themselves. In Anwi City (South Korean) the Preparatory Committee for the Construction of a New Korea was founded by Lee Sui-Ryung and Ha Ree-Rak. The latter also being President of the Union of Free Peasants; representing them at the National Congress of Peasant Workers in October 1945, which later turned out to be manipulated by the Communist Party.

In November 1945 anarchists organised a meeting in Seoul, with 67 comrades present, and founded the Free Social Constructors League (sic), whose aims we reproduce below:

*'We abandon our camouflage and leave clandestinity. This declaration breaks the chains of silence and proclaims our aims and principles to the world.*

*'Everybody wants to be free. Equality is the fundamental conditions for social life. Mutual Aid is the principle factor in evolution. As a result, when these factors are lacking, things are deviated and society crumbles.*

*'We have fallen into the pit of social ruin. When we lose interest in freedom and equality and favour our own interests through ignorance, we forget the aim of mutual aid and our society veers towards impotence and corruption.*

*'For four centuries, from Im Jim onwards, the poison dagger of Japanese aggression punctured our hearts and decimated our lives. The dignity of 30 million Koreans has been trampled on, and our long history of freedom is over.*

*'Only by purging all the elements of national ruin will we leave destruction, restore life to our people, and rebuild our history. We must not only rid ourselves of Japanese Imperialism, but also of our internal enemies: lack of freedom, inequality and reciprocal antagonism. In their place we must put mutual aid, around which we must build our future society based on freedom and equality. No other method, no other theory will ever guarantee happiness and prosperity to our 30 million inhabitants and their children.*

*'With the help of the people, we have begun to spread our ideas and fight for our ideals throughout the country. However, we can't fight, even with the people's support, on 3 fronts at the same time: 1. Japanese Imperialism. 2. Capitalists/feudalists/collaborators and 3. Those disgraceful revolutionaries who struggle for a dictatorship. In these conditions we make it clear that we wish to collaborate with all truly revolutionary nationalist groups.*

*'When we evoke these four centuries of struggle, we remember how many sacrifices our comrades have made. Some died facing their enemy, others on the gallows. The sweat and blood of these comrades, stained by the sadness of life behind bars, will never be forgotten. Our triple enemy still remembers its hesitation and fear in front of our bayonets. The blood shed by our martyrs*

*on the battlefield gives renewed courage to our army. On seeing comrades spread throughout the country, we confidently call on them to participate positively in the task of reconstructing a new Korea.*

*'At the same time, we wish to assume the main role. Will others really seek to control the thirst for power, and re-establish life and prosperity to people deceived by the past?*

*'The struggle continues. And even though the main enemy, Japanese Imperialism, has been cut to pieces, black heavy clouds still threaten us.'*

*'Our two-headed enemy isn't like a natural obstacle that encourages bravery. On the contrary, it promises us future bloody battles and demands prolonged effort in order to complete national reconstruction. So, for the moment, we must put ordinary matters to one side, and strengthen our solidarity in preparation for the fight. The blood of our martyrs flows in our veins. Their experience enlightens us.*

*'We raise our flag without hesitation. A new Korea completely free, completely equal and based on mutual aid will be created only through a free federation of local units throughout the country. For this new campaign we must unite ourselves with all nationalist armies on the left until confidence, independence and complete liberation has been achieved.*

### Programme:

1) We favour the collapse of all dictatorships and the creation of a new Korea.

2) We reject the market economy system and propose a decentralised society based around local units.

3) We aspire to the realisation of the ideal of 'one family throughout the world' through the principle of mutual aid.'



On 25 December 1945 a Moscow Conference of Foreign Ministers from USA, USSR, GB and China passed 2 resolutions:

1) That Korea would remain under the joint control of the 4 powers for 5 years.

2) An American-Soviet Committee would administer the North and the South.

By 27 December all of Korea's political parties had opposed these resolutions. In the South, Americans brutally suppressed the protests. In the North however, the communists approved of them. Because of the repression and their willingness to collaborate with the Japanese, the Americans became intensely disliked by a large majority of the population.

Only the Anarchists were opposed to both the Americans and the Russians. On 23 April 1946, a National Anarchist Congress was held in Anwi City, in the Kyong-Sang Nando province. Comrades returned to Korea from China, Manchuria, Japan and from prisons to attend. There were 100 delegates including Uu-Lim (aka Yu Hwa-yong), Shin-Pi-mo, brothers Lee Eul-Kya and Lee Jung-Kyu, Pak-Sok-Hong, Bang Han-Sang, Ha Chong-Chu, Lee Shi-yan, Han Ha-yan, Kim Hyan-U, Yang Il-dong, U-Han-ryong, and Choi Yong-Chun.

The most controversial point during the Congress was the idea of an anarchist political party, put forward by Yu-Lim's group. Before the 'liberation' of 1945, Yu-Lim was a leading figure in the Chinese Branch of the General League of Korean Anarchists. At the same time he had been a Cabinet Minister for the Korean Provisional Government, organised by several radical and moderate groups in Shanghai in 1919. In December 1945 he returned to Korea with the rest of the Provisional Government, of which he was still a member. The participation of anarchists in Government has always branded the anarchist movement everywhere. For Yu-Lim and his followers the situation was as follows:

*'The situation in Korea is a very special one. The Korean people have neither a free country nor a free government. Without the possibility of governing themselves — having been denied this right — Korea has fallen under the tyranny of 4 foreign powers. In such conditions anarchists must respond to the desire of the Korean people to re-construct their country and to establish their own government. Must anarchists sit back and do nothing? If this happens, Korea would certainly fall, already being in the hands of Stalinists in the North and Capitalists/Imperialists in the South (...).'*

The Congress decided to accept Yu-Lim's proposal and its consequences. There was a split between those who supported Yu-Lim and organised the Independent Workers and Peasants Party and those who supported the Lee-Kyu brothers and founded the League of Autonomous Villages and the League of Autonomous Workers.

In November 1949, just a few months before the war, V. Karin, a delegate at the International Anarchist Congress in Paris declared: 'In May 1946 a 'Workers Party' and an 'Independent Workers' movement were founded as well as a young Workers Federation and a Student Federation. The Korean Anarchist Federation has 3,000 members and 600,000 sympathisers. Two daily papers are published and one weekly magazine. The Federation has started 2 Night



Schools and two more schools in the provinces.

During the war, the situation of comrades and the Korean Anarchist Movement is not known. Contacts with the International Movement seemed to have been re-established around 1973, with Japan.

At that time the Korean people were suffering under a dictatorship of Kim-il-Sung in the North. The anarchist movement re-organised itself under the name of the 'Free Peoples Federation' whose first six aims we reproduce here:

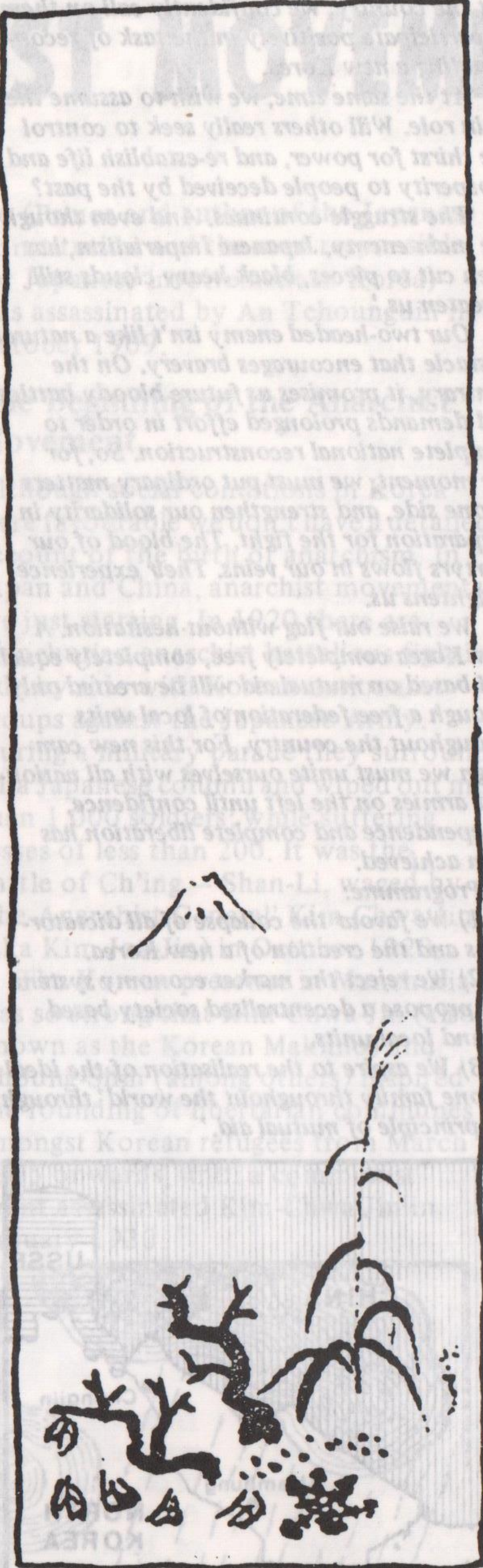
- 1) *Each of us is an individual, a free person with control over his or her actions. We aim to build a free society where free people have come together of their own free will.*
- 2) *All individuals have equal sovereignty over their own actions. No one can violate this right. We reject all political concepts which divide the people into rulers and ruled.*
- 3) *We regard as criminal anyone who, by whatever means, seizes the fruits of the labour of others without contributing his or her own labour.*
- 4) *In this free society of free men and women, economic life should be organised along the lines of 'from each according to his or her own ability, to each according to his or her need.'*
- 5) *In line with these basic principles, the free society of the future will allow the development of a variety of modes of life according to the special nature of each district and each occupation.*
- 6) *At the same time as transmitting the distinct cultural characteristics of each nation as they have been passed through the ages, we aim at the achievement of world peace through the harmonisation of those many colourful cultures.*

The Japanese comrades (see *Libero* No. 1) who published these aims have noted that martial law explained the absence of the word anarchist and the moderation of the aims, something which may surprise those who knew the old anarchist movement. One must also understand that anarchists are probably only tolerated because of their anti-communist position.

The Federation has two tendencies: Political and Co-operativist.

The political tendency has Yang-Il-dong as its president, Chong-Hwa-am as his advisor and Ha-Kee-rak as president of the Advisory Committee. Yang, as an anarchist, founded a Korean workers union in Japan in 1926 and was involved in the publication 'Black Flag' (good name! ed.) which was the Organ of Korean Anarchists in Japan, (before the war). Chong is often referred to as the 'father' of Korean Anarchism. He was an activist in Korea, China and Manchuria before the war.

The Co-operativist tendency is headed Lee-Jun-Kyu, the brother of Lee-Eul-Kyu, a well known anarchist. Known as the 'Korean Kropotkin' Lee-Eul-Kyu was president of the famous Confucian University of Sung Kum Kwan and, as a director of the Investigative Institute of Culture, he exercised a considerable influence over teachers and young people in South Korea.



Many teachers went to the countryside to organise 'autonomous villages' — in the tradition of the Russian 'Narodniks' or 'populists' — 'Correspondence', the Organ of the Movement of Autonomous Villages, is co-ordinated by Park-Seung-han, an anarchist who left his job as a geography teacher to live in the country.

With great difficulty, the Federation edited many books during 1973-74 (all with a print run of 500), including 'Anarchism' by George Woodcock, 'Modern Science and Anarchism' by Kropotkin, 'The Unknown Revolution' by Voline, a biography of Kim-Chwa-Jin (published in an official version in 1963), and the collected writing of Lee-Jung-Knyu.

Translated from the Mexican Anarchist paper *El Compita* (Jan-Feb 1982)

## ANARCHY IN SWEDEN

Anarchism in Sweden in 1983 rapidly developed. For the first time in years, national conferences were held. There were groups and individuals from all over the country. The first meeting was held in Stockholm, the Swedish capital, was attended by more than 100 people and a second meeting only two months later made 60 anarchists travel to Uppsala and find their way to a place in the middle of a forest. Most had to walk in the cold and completely dark winter night the last 9 kilometres, a good hint about the interest.

We have started a network based on an address list of groups in Sweden which is a good startingpoint for further co-operation. This means much better distribution for our papers. Our groups paper is not very spectacular, and the information we try to spread is mainly of interest to people who are already anarchists. We spread information about Sweden and the anarchist debates, as well as information on the international movement. After several years without a Swedish anarchist movement there are many groups and activities unknown to each other, giving grounds for us to think there will be a great expansion in the coming years.

The main streams of Swedish anarchism are: Anarchists in the peace movement, using civil disobedience, both to get media interest in their demands (& they do it with success) and as an example for a decent living. Anarchists have come to play an important role in the new music movement, that occurred with the punk wave. New music in the '70s was dominated by maoists, but some anarchists were included. From the punkwave there sprung a wider interest in anarchism, and many fanzines presented anarchism as well as music. Local groups spread anarchist propaganda often making local papers. These people have now seized the opportunity to work together.

Yet another path for Swedish anarks is the experiments with alternative living.

Yet another path for Swedish anarchism is the experiments with alternative everyday life. Many of the activists of the 60s and 70s have formed collectives or even small communes round farming, trying to do it in an ecological way. Together they form an alternative movement that is essentially anarchistic.

Some anarchists are involved in building an alternative bank and an economic network to support the alternative activities. The bank has no interest on its savings and loans. They spread information about the disastrous effect of interest on society. They argue against the traditional economy and cast light

on the linking between interest and inflation.

Anarcho-syndicalism is another strong tendency. The Sveriges Arbetares Centralorganisation, SAC with 15,000 members has through the years been influenced by State intervention, as an administrator of unemployment money of which 90% is provided by the State, SAC has declined to trade unionism. Still, the programme is the same, and anarchists are working to reestablish it in practice.

There are also immigrant groups such as the Uruguayan comrades who put out the paper *COMMUNIDAD* and a group of people who want to form a Swedish section of the International Workers Association.

Sweden is a country where the Social-Democratic Party after being in power for 40 years now takes a slogan from the Third Reich: *Arbeit Macht Frei/Work makes you free!*

Sweden is a country where small bourgeois communists work their asses off to recruit wage-slaves.

Sweden is a country which is characterised by the strong State. On the one hand the well developed social welfare system, on the other, a State control over the individual which has no comparison in Western Europe.

Working class independence has been neutralised by the State, and its long social democratic rule. The main trade unions are tied to the State through the Party, Swedish 'socialism', in the forms of State, Cooperative movement and the business making peoples movement, is really capitalism. Swedish 'democracy' is totalitarian.

The party election system and the internal discipline of the Party, reduces the individuals chances of influencing politics to a minimum. The situation ought to be explosive. The fact that it is not, can be explained by the high standard of living, and by the fact that the injustice of the social security and tax system creates a split among the dispossessed wage slaves and consumers.

Through the vast development of registration and data processing the authorities have the possibility to get all the information they want about an individual citizen. The authorities demand, with support in Law, that a citizen declare to the State where they live, how many rooms and toilets they have, where they work and so on. The social authorities harass single parents in order to get information about their sex life. If they have sex with the same partner too often they will be regarded as illegal users of social security.

Its not a miracle that a libertarian movement, in opposition to State socialism, has grown since the beginning of the century.

In 1898 the Youngsocialists (Ungsocialisterna) broke from the Social Democratic Party, and in a short time they had formed groups all over the country.

Several publishing houses issued books by anarchist writers, from Tolstoy and



Stirner to Kropotkin and Bakunin.

Meetings and actions were held all over the country. The war resisters movement was one of the greatest manifestations.

Ungsocialisterna also took part in the forming of the anarcho-syndicalist trade union SAC which had good success and at times organised 30,000 people being an important part in the radical movement and the main working class struggle.

The Russian Revolution and the myth of the workers Fatherland, was a bad stroke for the Swedish anarchist movement, as it laid the ground for the starting point of the Communist Party. Since then the young socialists has been perishing. The name has in the 80s been taken by a Trotskyist association which has nothing in common with the original Ungsocialister.

SAC has kept the anarchist ideas alive by publishing anarchist literature and by giving direct support to the surviving ungsocialist groups. The Anarchists got reorganised in the Anarchist Propaganda Association, but the great upswing came in the late 60s. Shadowed by many extreme communist groups, a strong but divided anti-authoritarian movement grew. Ungsocialist groups came to a new life and magazines were issued in many towns.

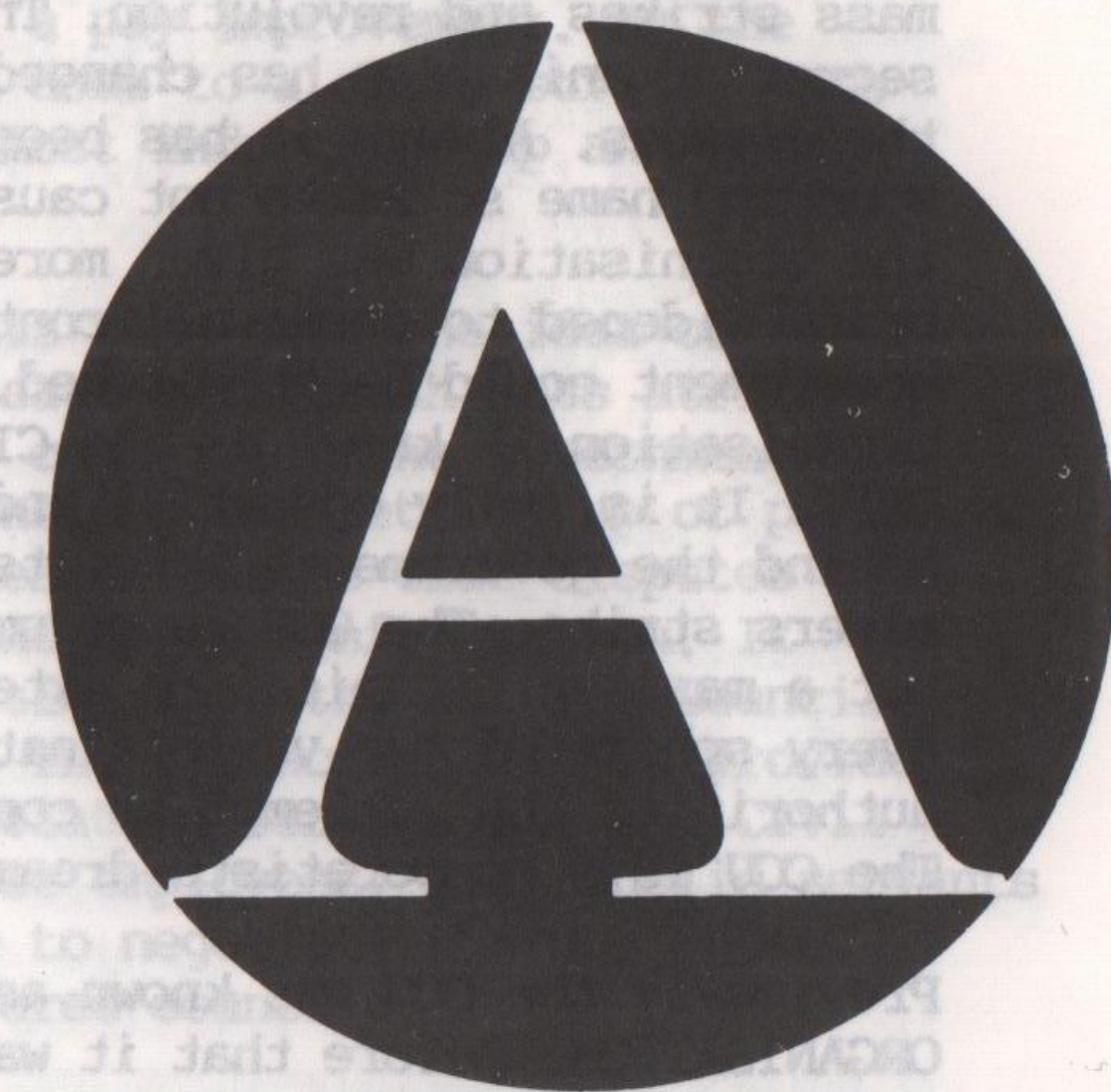
Today there is a strong anarchist tendency in peace-environmental and music movements. But no nationwide anarchist movement was formed for the 70s or 80s. Attempts in 1976-79 stranded on the differences of stand point towards the issue of violence. A wave of repression came in 1977, when the security forces arrested 200 anarchists (4 went to prison) and tried to build up a fancy picture of an anarchist "terrorist organisation". This effectively stopped further attempts at unity. In 1979 a conference decided that the publishing of *BRAND*, organ of the anarchist movement since 1898 should be ended.

The weekly magazine published by SAC is today the biggest libertarian paper in Sweden. Its title *Arbetaren* and its tendency is moderate compared with other anarchist periodicals. *Praxis April, Total, Think About* are examples from around 10 other anarchist papers.

SAC has stopped its publishing of literature due to economic problems but at least three other publishers continue. Among them the *Communidad* group originating from *Communidad de Sur i Uruguay* who in their printing shop and everyday life try to practice and advocate selfmanagement in the widest sense.

Its not possible for me to give more than a hint of the situation in which the Swedish anarchists are working. We are now in a period of building up a new, collected nationwide anarchist movement, and we as a group in Uppsala have started a new series of *Brand*.

SOURCE: *Brand*,  
Box 494  
751 KO6 Uppsala  
SWEDEN



### ANGRY BLUES

(tune of:

Which Side Are You On?)

The rich are getting richer  
they rest while we slave  
We just keep on working  
From cradle to the grave,  
Which side are you on,  
then, which side are you on?

We work to pay our rent,  
to some landlord pig  
While we live in squalor  
His profits are growing big,  
Oh, which side are you on,  
which side are you on?

Lung cancer and deafness  
Bad backs and sore knees  
All we have to remind us of work  
Is some foul new disease,  
Tellme, which side are you on,  
Which side are you on?

With one of us in prison,  
None of us are free  
If we don't work together  
No free world will we see,  
Oh, which side are you on,  
which side are you on?

I'd rather be there fighting  
the rulers all my life  
than be content and  
settle down and while away my life,  
Which side are you on,  
WHICH SIDE ARE YOU ON?



# STRIKE-BREAKING, MUTINY AND CIVIL DISORDER

## Part 1

### STRIKE BREAKING

Operating in Britain today is a relatively secret organisation, set up by successive governments, whose specific functions are to deal with and put down any outbreaks of civil or industrial revolt. This organisation has a long history, stemming back to the latter part of the First World War, when the country was threatened by large scale mutinies, riots, mass strikes and revolution. The name of this secret organisation has changed throughout the decades. Always it has been given an innocuous sounding name so as to not cause alarm. As the organisation was given more power, its brief widened to cover all contingencies where government could be threatened. Today that organisation is known as the CIVIL CONTINGENCIES UNIT. It is fully operative and is the brains behind the governments attempts to smash the miners strike. The CCU is no small committee but a massive organisation extending into every sphere of the various national and municipal authorities that attempt to control our lives. The CCU is a corporatists dream come true.

Previously the CCU was known as the EMERGENCY ORGANISATION. Before that it was known as the SUPPLY AND TRANSPORT ORGANISATION. The STO was set up specifically as the governments official strike-breaking body. It helped break the back of the General Strike and other major strikes. In the early 1920's the STO made plans to curb civil disorder and it is only now that some of those plans are being perfected, with the help of modern police technology.

The CCU is, in effect, a State within a State. It is composed of no secret army, no far-right paramilitary, no inner cabal waiting in readiness to seize power. The army already has sufficient power, the paramilitaries of the far-right are not yet needed except for window dressing, while the elite who make the laws and set the precedents are yet to be ousted from the position of power they already hold.

Linked to the Armed Forces through the Ministry of Defence, the police through the Home Office, the Welfare agencies, local authorities, municipal departments, and every public and most private industries and many voluntary associations, the CCU has a network that is formidable and frightening.

On the surface the CCU appears to have no power of its own. It is a service unit, coordinating the resources supplied by other departments. But history has shown that the CCU and its predecessors have been central in determining State policy and practice in maintaining law and order and upholding government.

This article examines the history of the CCU. It looks at how this strikebreaking organisation came about and how it has been secretly used by the governments of the day to crush both civil and industrial unrest. Strikebreaking

has always relied to a large extent on the use of troops as a means of intervention and at times the State has been clearly worried as to whether the troops could be relied upon to be used for this purpose. This article also, therefore, looks at in detail those periods in our recent history when large scale mutinies and instances of disaffection have coincided with large scale industrial action.

In particular three periods of history are examined in detail: the aftermath of World War 1 up to the General Strike, the period immediately after WW2, and 1972 - 1984. The article makes no pretence to original research: most of the information is simply reproduced from already published sources, to date never before brought together as one.

### CRISIS, WHAT CRISIS?

1918, the war was drawing to an end but the government made no attempts to demobilise. Instead the War Office made alternative arrangements to extend the war on to other fronts. The Whites in Russia had appealed for assistance against the Bolsheviks and there was a need to quell disturbances in India. Furthermore Churchill argued that it was senseless to demobilise when as victors the country should be willing to capitalise upon its military resources to the full. Churchill demanded that a standing army of a million troops be retained for duties both at home and abroad. He was also worried that swift demobilisation would lead to revolution: there was little work and what work there was was beset by near continuous industrial unrest. Churchill needed the troops to stay mobilised for strikebreaking duties and to further the war effort. But the troops had plans of their own.

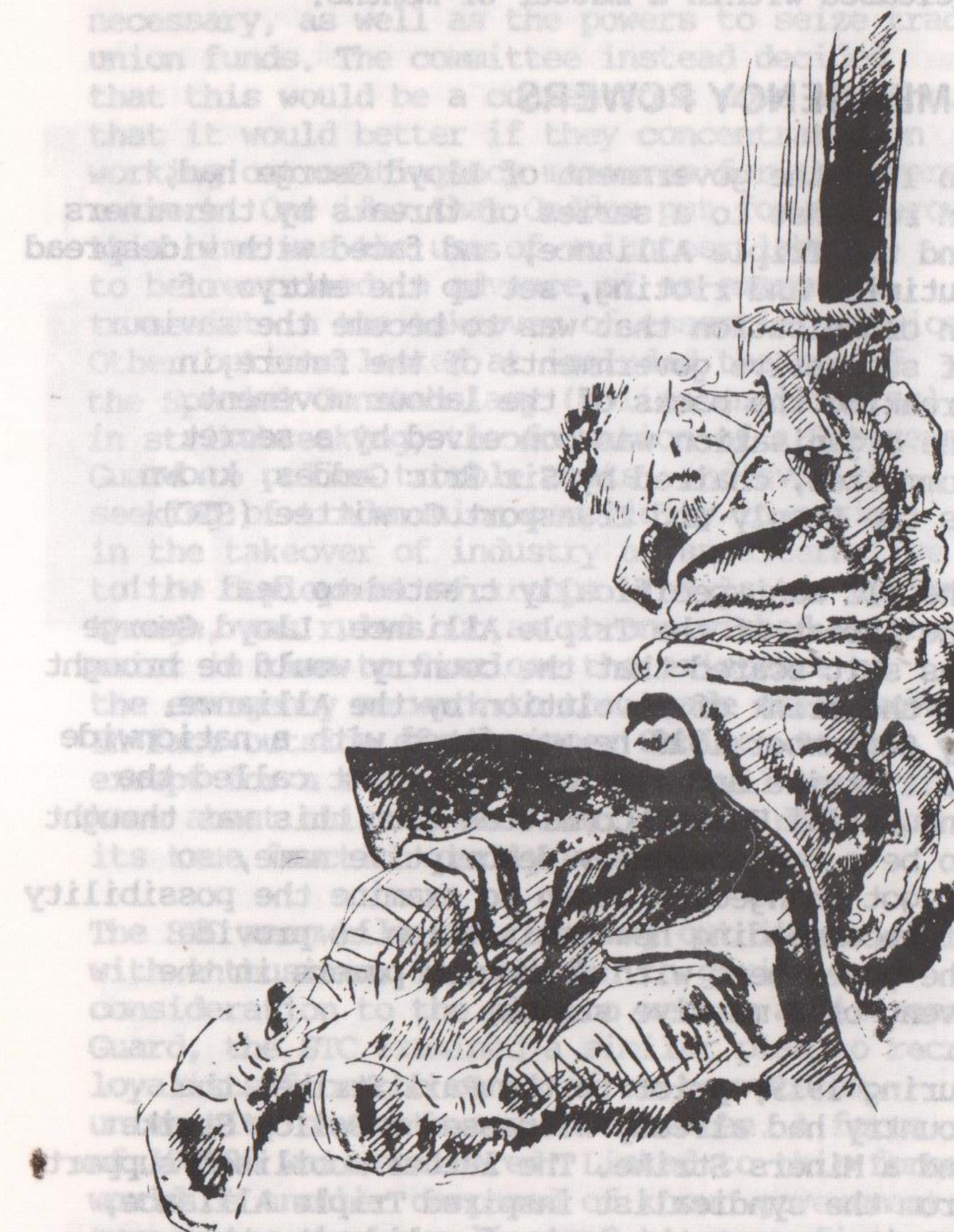
Throughout the war right up to the signing of the Armistice and for a period of around twelve months after, the country experienced mutiny on a scale never before known. Very nearly every military base in the country had its tale to tell. Many instances were hushed up for fear of other mutinies breaking out. In some cases mutinies were occurring in one part of the country, with those involved unaware that similar actions were taking place in another part. In addition there were outbreaks of mass strike action and rioting. The country was on the brink of revolution and the governments only answer was to give in to demands while at the same time trying desperately to play down the gravity of the situation.

By 1917, according to some reports, there had been over 40,000 recorded instances of mutiny: mainly individuals refusing to go 'over the top' and get shot. But 1917 was a turning point. Soon recruits began to organise and mutinies began to become a collective action. The first large scale collective mutiny of British troops that took place during WW1 was on French soil at Etaples in September 1917.

The Etaples mutiny was sparked off by an incident where a British soldier and a French woman

bystander were shot by a military policeman after a crowd had gathered to complain about the harsh conditions in the camp. As a result around 1000 troops staged a riot. The military police were forced to set up pickets and the next day the mutineers organised meetings and held a demonstration. Within a couple of days the picket lines had been broken and over 200 troops had gone AWOL. Reinforcements from the Honourable Artillery Company were sent for and they, together with a detachment from the Hussars, made many arrests. Finally the military authorities threatened the mutineers that unless order was restored then the HAC would be given licence to do whatever they wished in retaliation. The threat worked and the mutiny subsided.

Only a matter of days before the Etaples riot took place, two British companies based at Boulogne came out on strike. 27 men were shot as a result. Four days later another company went on strike and a further 19 were shot (4 died). The mutinies occurred mainly among those attached to the Labour Companies. These companies recruited mostly Chinese, Egyptians and the long-term unemployed as shit labour for the use of the other troops.



By 1918 mutinies were no longer isolated events but nor confined to front line camps. In mainland Britain troops began to make demands for demobilisation. At Pirbright Camp, for example, gunners went AWOL, while others refused duty. The strike lasted for 3 days. Despite promises to the contrary the 'ringleaders' were arrested and made an example of; others were sent to the front line to be shot. Around the same time troops at Folkestone, waiting to be shipped across to France, mutinied and prevented any further ships from sailing. The mutineers stationed pickets at the docks and set up a blockade. An armed guard was sent to subdue the pickets but was forced to make a retreat. The next day over 10,000 troops occupied the town centre and at a mass rally decided to form a soldiers union. They demanded that the union be given recognition and that none of

the troops there be sent to France. Their demands were met. On hearing about what happened at Folkestone troops stationed at nearby Dover came out in solidarity. Around 4000 refused to sail for France and occupied the town. The authorities were forced to capitulate and granted extended leave, while at the same time brought forward plans for demobilisation.

When the armistice was finally secured the governments troubles had by no means ceased. Demobilisation was still moving at a slow pace and the worst of the mutinies were yet to come. Furthermore, even though there had been a full scale war on, industrial unrest continued. During the war itself, unofficial strikes became the norm (under the Defence of the Realm Act strikes were made illegal). Consequently the trade unions lost impetus and power swung to the growing Shop Stewards movement. In 1915, for example, an unofficial stoppage by engineers brought Clydeside to a standstill. In South Wales a year later over 200,000 miners walked out in demand of a pay improvement. By the time the war had come to a close strikes were taking place in most industries up and down the country.

It was around this time that the idea of an emergency organisation to crush mass strike action was first conceived. The government also began to consider the setting up of permanent arbitration bodies to ensure that disputes did not always end up in confrontation. It was around this time that the Whitley Councils were instigated. Their function was to provide a long term negotiating service for the Civil and Public Service employees. Many public servants today still have to negotiate through these government sponsored councils.

By the end of 1918 the frequency of the mutinies had reached epidemic level. Those who took part knew exactly what they were doing. They were not just demanding better conditions and the right to return home, they were challenging authority itself. Their combined acts were those of revolutionaries. The consequences of their actions could mean either long term imprisonment or death. The act of mutiny was an act of desperation; the decision to disaffected was not taken lightly. Many took part because they had had enough of the war and wanted to speed up the demobilisation process. Many wanted to do what they could to prevent another front being opened up against the communists in Russia. Others were sickened at just how the government was trying to use them as part of their strike-breaking plan. Most wanted to spread the mutinies beyond the camps and into the towns and cities and industrial centres. On at least two occasions mutineers in large numbers attempted to takeover Whitehall and disrupt the seat of government.

The following is a brief account of just some of the mutinies recorded between November 1918 and August 1919.

November 1918. After Armistice had been declared troops based at Shoreham walked out of camp and successfully forced the demobilisation of all conscripts there. Within days virtually everyone there had been sent home.

December 1918. Several depots in Le Havre were burnt down by soldiers of the Royal Artillery. They were demanding to go home. In Archangel, Russian troops were arrested by disaffected British and French troops who were stationed nearby to help the Whites. The British and French troops had no interest in helping the



Whites to subdue the Communists, so they forcibly imprisoned the White troops. The mutiny was finally quelled by a contingent of White NCO's, under the command of British officers, who mortared the barracks where the British troops were based.

January 1919. Troops and tanks were sent to Glasgow to protect the municipal halls against strikers in Clydeside who were demanding a 40 hour week. The strike leaders were arrested and two of them, Mannie Shinwell and Willie Galacher, were charged with incitement to riot. At Biggin Hill air base recruits called for a march to Whitehall over the deplorable conditions in the camp. Instead they went on strike, took over the base and formed a soldiers council. They succeeded in forcing the authorities to recognise their council and to meet all demands made. Around the same time mutinies were also taking place in Felixstowe, Edinburgh, Maidstone, Blackpool, etc. In one incident members of the Armed Service Corp seized vehicles and drove them into Whitehall in protest at the governments lethargy over demobilisation. Around 1500 troops took part in the protest. In Southampton around 20,000 troops occupied the docks and attacked a General. He later retaliated by sending in armed military and the riot police.

January 1919. In Calais 20,000 British troops were joined by French rail workers in a mutiny. Other troops were sent to quell the mutiny but these were won over by the newly formed strike committee. The committee was composed of delegates who together presented demands, many of which were met. Around this time a spectacular demonstration took place in Whitehall when 3000 troops occupied the area and refused to leave. In the end Churchill sent in armed soldiers with machine-guns and ordered them to open fire if the mutineers did not disperse.

February 1919. Around this time mutinies took place at several army camps in south London. At Rosyth in Scotland the crew of a cruiser refused to sail and stayed mid-stream for three weeks. The mutiny occurred as a result of the crew being leafleted by dockers who pointed out to them that the cruiser was destined to be sent to Russia to assist the Whites. A naval mutiny also took place at Milford Haven when the crew of a naval patrol boat refused duty and raised the red flag.

March 1919. Perhaps the most serious mutiny of all. At Kimmel Camp, North Wales, troops rioted. Five were killed, 21 injured. Some of the local civilians helped the mutineers. The riot was brought about because of extensive delays in providing ships to send the troops home (they were Canadians). Also they had received reports that on returning to Canada they would be used for strikebreaking purposes. Another rumour was that they would not be demobilised and that they were destined to be sent to Russia to fight the communists. The mutineers took over the camp completely, except for the officers billets. Some prisoners were eventually taken and an attempt was made to rescue them. As a result officers opened fire, shooting wildly and provoking retaliation. In the end there were 75 arrests and rumour has it that most were summarily executed in secret. It was later found that one of the 'leaders' of the revolt had had his stomach ripped out by bayonets when a group of officers overpowered him.

May 1919. Over 9000 reservists had been called up to deal with mass industrial unrest and

the Irish troubles. At Aldershot camp there was an attempt to begin an insurrection. Several hundred troops took part in a riot and later they marched to Parliament to demand demobilisation and work. In London the mutineers were confronted by large numbers of police and hand to hand fighting broke out.

June 1919. Canadian soldiers rioted at Whitley Camp. Also Canadians took part in a skirmish at Epsom and an attempt was made to rescue prisoners from a police station. A police sergeant was killed in the melee. Civilian telegraphists went on strike in Cairo. The military took over their positions. At the same time troops in the Royal Ordnance Corp based in Cairo went on strike and formed a soldiers council. They went on to burn down a munition dump and organise a general strike unless there was immediate demobilisation. Many were arrested.

August 1919. Two companies of marines mutinied while being stationed at Murmansk. Many were imprisoned and 90 were sent to Bodmin Prison where they kept up their protests and carried out a campaign of non-cooperation. As a result none served their full sentence and all were released within a matter of months.

## EMERGENCY POWERS

In 1919 the government of Lloyd George had, in response to a series of threats by the miners and the Triple Alliance, and faced with widespread mutinies and rioting, set up the embryo of an organisation that was to become the saviour of successive governments of the future in breaking the backs of the labour movement. The organisation was conceived by a secret committee, chaired by Sir Eric Geddes, known as the Supply and Transport Committee (STC).

The STC was specifically created to deal with the threat of the Triple Alliance. Lloyd George was shit scared that the country would be brought to the brink of revolution by the Alliance. By September 1919 he was faced with a nationwide rail strike and the STC - at first called the Industrial Unrest Committee (but this was thought to be a too obviously descriptive name, so it got changed) - began to examine the possibility of recommending new legislation to provide the government with draconian powers in the event of a massive strike.

During 1919, prior to the Rail Strike, the country had already witnessed a Police Strike and a Miners Strike. The latter mobilised support from the syndicalist inspired Triple Alliance, but it was not the lack of solidarity that broke the strike in the end, nor government intervention or management intransigence, but interference from a joint TUC/Government commission that succeeded in the end in formulating a compromise deal and splitting the miners union in two. Even so Lloyd George was afraid to the extent that he ordered over 900 naval ratings - army ratings were no longer reliable - to take over some of the pits while the strike was on.

On the eve of the Police Strike the government issued dismissal notices and in the end over 2,500 policemen were sacked as a result of taking part in the industrial action. The strike - which was over the right to retain a trade union as opposed to a no-strike staff association - brought support from the Rail Workers. Rioting and looting took place in Liverpool and the army was sent there to bring back order.



A new Police Bill was passed making police strikes illegal, as also the incitement of police to disaffect from duty.

As the former Industrial Unrest Committee the STC was first asked to look into the possibility of introducing a bill - Strikes Bill - which would provide the government with powers to criminalise strike action if this was considered necessary, as well as the powers to seize trade union funds. The committee instead decided that this would be a contentious move and thought that it would better if they concentrated on working out contingency measures for the emergency network. One idea that Geddes put forward around this time was the use of volunteer labour, to be recruited in advance of an emergency, to assist in the takeover of essential services. Other options looked at included the use of the Special Constabulary (police auxiliaries) in strikebreaking, the formation of a Citizens Guard to police trouble spots, and even the seeking of trade union complicity to assist in the takeover of industry as an alternative to the deployment of troops. The latter option, though, was ruled out as no one wished at that point in time to disclose the existence of the emergency network to the trade union movement. In fact outside of the inner Cabinet no one, except for a smattering of top civil servants, knew about this network or, if they did, what its true function really was.

The STC meanwhile was carrying out its brief with enthusiasm. In addition to giving full consideration to the plan to set up a Citizens Guard, the STC examined a similar plan to recruit loyalists from the ranks of ex-servicemen, university students and businessmen. A force of 10,000 was considered. Linked to this force would be another composed of known government supporters who were licensed to carry firearms. Other groups would be recruited from professional associations. The STC, in fact, made an approach around this time to two such associations: the Institute of Electrical Engineers and the Institute of Civil Engineers. They were both asked to submit lists of members who could be called upon in a national emergency.

It was not long before the STC had organised regional coordinating committees. There were eleven in number - just as there are eleven such committees in Britain today - and they were headed by STC appointed Civil Commissioners. The Commissioners were given powers, under the Defence of the Realm Act (which was still in force), to requisition private vehicles in large numbers should the need arise. Soon the Commissioners had succeeded in creating a total of over 92 sub-committees, known as Voluntary Service Committees (VSC's) to help

recruit scab labour. The VSC's were to be linked to the municipal authorities, but at the same time were independent of their control.

Another STC innovation was the creation of local arms dumps for use by loyalists after an emergency had been declared. These dumps were under the control of the regional Commissioners who had the authority to distribute the arms courtesy of the 1920 Firearms Act.

During 1920 the government discussed the possibility of introducing an Emergency Powers Bill. The bill would enable the government to introduce rationing, deploy troops to take over strike-bound industries, ban all public meetings and demonstrations, prohibit picketing, and sequester union strike funds. In the autumn of that year it seemed probable that the miners were gearing themselves up for another strike. In October the strike began. Almost immediately all Forces leave was cancelled, troops were moved to London to protect the Capital against insurrection, and more battalions were deployed to provincial cities in readiness.

The rail workers announced that they would provide support to the miners. As a result the STC moved into action. Armoured vehicles and tanks were sent to the north and a further contingent of troops was sent by sea (they couldn't go by rail) to strategic points around the country. Arrangements were also made for a battleship to be sent to the Mersey in case a revolt broke out. Within days an Emergency Powers Bill (based on the abandoned Strikes Bill) was passed through parliament and a State of Emergency was declared. In the end the emergency powers were not resorted to as by then the rail workers had withdrawn their support.

Around this time Lloyd George was forced to admit that the combination of widespread mutinies and strike action would break the government. He appealed therefore to the Alliance leaders for their assistance in maintaining democracy. At a secret meeting he confessed to them that in his opinion the country was at their mercy: 'The army is disaffected and cannot be relied upon...In these circumstances, if you carry out the threat and strike, then you will defeat us.' The Alliance leaders were not prepared for revolution, nor did they desire it. They therefore obliged the PM's request and so backed off from the 'abyss of anarchy'.

## THE GENERAL STRIKE

Churchill was significantly concerned about the increase in trade union militancy and the frequency of mutinies to the extent that he issued a formal memorandum to all serving CO's asking for report-backs on anything that could be learned about any subversive plans that may be in preparation and about any Soldiers Councils that were being formed. The communist Daily Worker managed to get hold of a copy of the memo and published it, much to Churchill's consternation and embarrassment. Churchill was not fully aware of it at the time but the Supply and Transport Committee was also beginning to think along similar lines: what the government needed was a more efficient intelligence gathering facility. The Civil Commissioners had only limited resources and the STO would have to be expanded if it was not to be left high and dry.

By April 1921 the STO had been sufficiently strengthened to be able to organise a defence force of over 80,000 to deal with the crisis



brought about by the lock-out in the mines. The pit owners had taken this action because of the miners refusal to take a wage cut. But the owners went too far and the rail workers once again promised to come out in solidarity. The STO decided that troops ought to be recalled from Germany, the Middle East and Ireland to deal with the strike. Tanks were deployed to strategic points and extra troops were moved to London. A Royal Fleet Reserve battalion, based at Newport, refused, however, to be used for strikebreaking. In the end the extra troops were not needed and the (armed) defence force was demobilised: a compromise deal on pay was accepted that effectively split the union and broke the back of the Triple Alliance once and for all. The government now felt so confident that the militants had been routed that the STO was wound down, although a decision was made to retain the Voluntary Service Committees and the Supply Department, of which the STO was officially a part. For the next three years or so the STC rarely met, except to assure itself that the STO network could be effectively mobilised should an emergency arise.

In 1924 Labour took power. The STC itself was reactivated and committee members included JH Thomas (the Colonial Secretary and ex-Secretary of the NUR), Harry Gosling (Minister of Transport and ex-President of the TGWU) and Sidney Webb the Fabian. Needless to say the government felt it imprudent to spill the beans on the true nature of the STO and full secrecy was maintained.

In February, however, the government decided to take the unprecedented step of inviting certain trade union leaders to help out with the planning of emergency measures. Leaders of both the NUR and TGWU were approached on this matter. The NUR leader indicated that he would be interested, while the NUR leader was not so sure. The approach was made in the middle of a nationwide dispute involving dockers, who were all members of the TGWU. At the height of the dispute the government considered invoking the 1920 Emergency Powers Act, but in the end the dispute resolved itself.

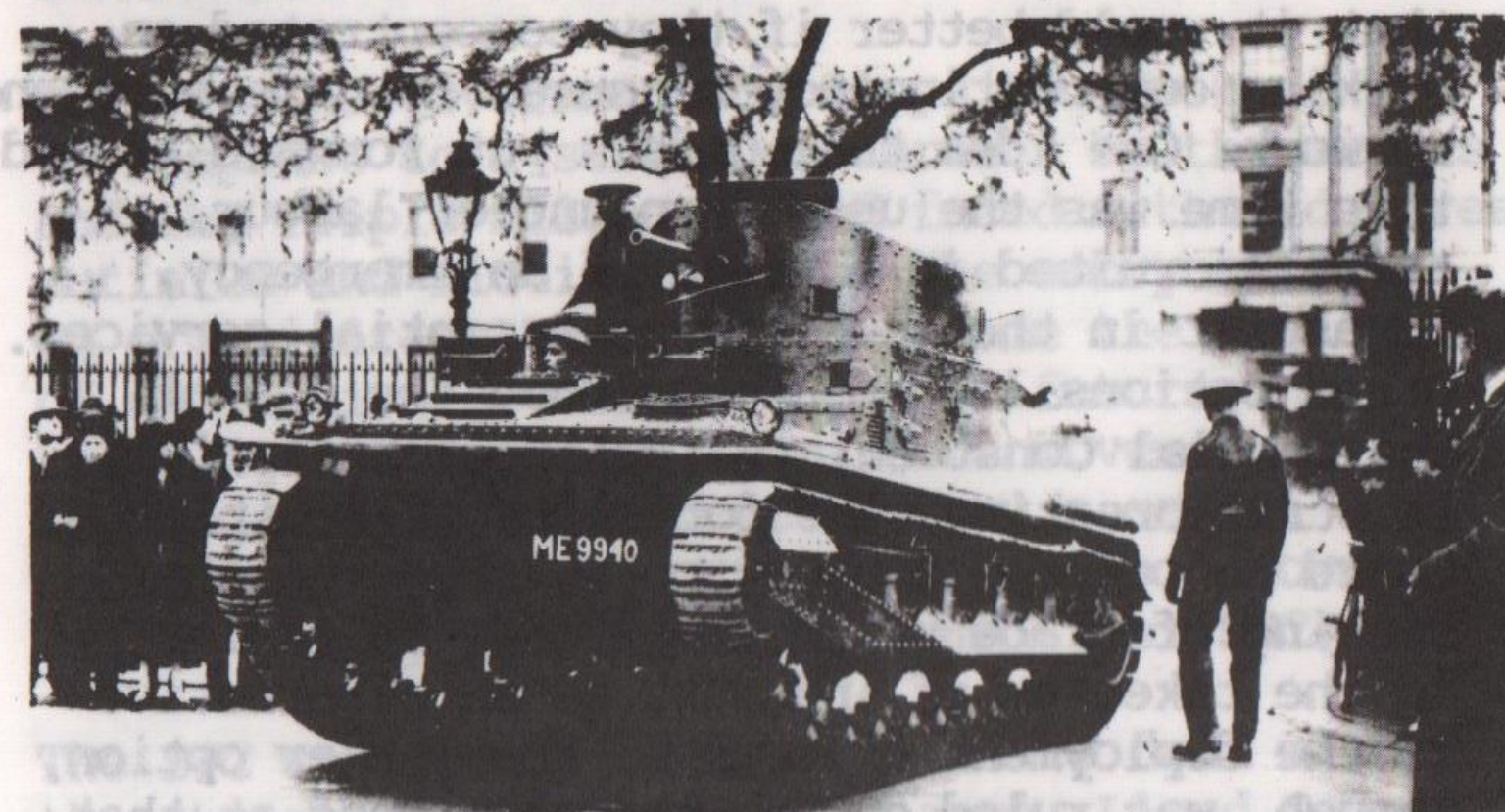
A month later the government once more considered declaring a State of Emergency. London Underground workers were threatening strike action and they managed to get support from Power Station workers. The STO as a result placed naval ratings on standby and extra Specials were enlisted. The strike commenced on March 28 and a State of Emergency was immediately declared. The declaration was not published however as the government hoped that the strike would quickly end. By the end of the day the government had secured a settlement.

By October Labour had lost support in the House and a General Election brought the Tories back with a 200 seat majority. The STO was instructed to place more emphasis on intelligence gathering using paid informers in the field. An internal report, marked highly confidential, stressed that 'When they (trade unions) are directly or indirectly involved in the apparent cause of violence and disorder, it will nearly always be found that their own authority has been usurped by irresponsible communists, anarchists or local hot-heads...' This was a theme of STO paranoia that would constantly and periodically come to surface time and time again in the dealings of the STO and its future reincarnations. The STO was instructed by the Baldwin cabinet that Intelligence Officers were to

be circumspect about who they investigated. Above all, it was told, trade union officials were to be treated with respect and Field workers should be careful about stirring up anti-government, or worse anti-state, sentiments.

One new plan that came to light about this time was the setting up of local haulage committees, chaired by local prominent transport entrepreneurs, to oversee emergency road transport requirements and to feed back contingency arrangement details to the regional Civil Commissioners.

By the summer of 1925 the STO was mobilised once again, this time to deal with another threat from the miners. The mine owners had made it clear that they intended to make a reduction in wages and at the same time cut the working day (thus lower wages all round). The owners argued that there was over-production and that there was too much fierce competition from imports being received from Poland, the USA and Germany. The miners appealed for solidarity and rail and transport workers offered to black all movement of coal. In the end the dispute was brought to a halt as a result of an intervention by the government who put forward a compromise solution of an interim state subsidy. The lock-out was withdrawn.



Once more the State had found itself at the mercy of the unions. The Triple Alliance might not have existed in theory, but in practice it was very much alive. Baldwin vowed that never again would he allow the miners and the other unions to hold the government to ransom. What really frightened him was the massive support the miners received. The government began to have doubts as to whether an emergency organisation was sufficient to cope with mass revolt. In future more emphasis would have to be placed on winning over the support of the union leaders.

Baldwin issued instructions that the STO was to be strengthened further. Coal Emergency Officers (locally recruited Coal Merchants and Suppliers) were to be appointed by the regional Commissioners. Also to be brought into the network were shipowners and harbour authorities, dairy companies, etc. As many private companies as possible. No contingency would be left to chance. The Automobile Association was approached too. The AA - was asked to draw up a list of volunteer drivers who may be prepared to help the nation in an emergency. The STC issued instructions of its own to the Chief Constables insisting that the complement of Special Constabulary be raised - it was already at 10,000.

Around this time several loyalist organisations began to spring up. One such organisation was the OMS (Organisation for the Maintenance of Supplies - a name that almost parodies the State's own emergency network). The OMS was set up by Lord Hardinge (ex-Viceroy of India)

and Lord Jellicoe (Admiral Of the Fleet). It specialised in maintaining a list of loyalists who would be prepared to help out in strike-breaking in a national emergency. The STO regarded the OMS with some embarrassment. Preferring to keep the activities of the STO low key, the more up-front OMS forced the government, for purely tactical reasons, to keep the OMS at arms length.

The OMS was not specifically anti-communist but more anti-union. Nevertheless it tended to attract subversive seekers, which in turn encouraged Communist Party members to take an offensive stance with regard to the far-right and the military around this time and some took part in attempts to incite disaffection. One such campaign involved fly-posting at Aldershot camp. The poster was entitled: 'Is sedition to be revived?' Immediately there were raids on leading CPer's and nine were arrested and charged with conspiracy to publish and utter seditious libel (thus their own question was answered in perhaps not the way they expected) and offences under the 1797 Incitement to Mutiny Act.

It was inevitable that the question of pay - postponed because of the temporary interim subsidy - for the mineworkers would come to the fore front once again until it was settled once and for all. The subsidy was due to run out, the mineowners insisted on maintaining the pay cut and the miners response was 'Not a penny off, not a second on the day'. The stage was set for confrontation. April 1926 and the STC sent troops to guard major flashpoints. A State of Emergency was declared. The OMS drew up a document requesting volunteers; their printers, however, refused to handle it and they sent a copy to the TUC, who then leaked it to the Press. May 2 and Hyde Park was taken over as a distribution point for milk supplies. Naval ratings and civilian volunteers were despatched to take over the London Power Station. The STO ordered local haulage contacts to commence recruitment of scab labour to take control of public transport. A printing firm was requisitioned for the specific purpose of producing pro-government propaganda. The VSC's were told to start recruiting volunteer labour. By May 2 the STO was at a full state of alert.

On May 4 the Unions declared the General Strike official. In the initial stages over 3 million workers came out in support. Industry throughout the country was brought to a standstill. The railways were halted, the docks closed, as were the mines. But the STO was confident: coal stocks were high, labour for transport was plentiful and troops had already been deployed in sufficient numbers to ensure that power supplies were maintained.

The VSC's did better than they expected: within a matter of days they had succeeded in recruiting over 114,000 scabs in London and the Home Counties alone. In all only 9,500 were actually deployed for strikebreaking work. Elsewhere the VSC's scored a similar rate. Many university students joined up. Cambridge undergraduates were assigned duties as Special Constables and were sent to the industrial areas to maintain order.

Battleships were sent to the Mersey, the Clyde, and to Rosyth and were put on standby. In Cardiff troops marched daily through the city streets. In Birmingham troops were sent to take over a central park area where they were billeted for the duration of the strike. In London soldiers



were assigned duties to guard arms factories, oil refineries, the City financial area, and Whitehall in case of rioting. By the time the strike had reached its height the complement of Specials had reached a total of over 226,000. The STC took over several firms so as to be able to put out a regular paper, the British Gazette. Newsprint for the paper was supplied courtesy of Bowaters, which plant was protected by a contingent of armed guards and run by civilian volunteers. The TUC in turn put out a rival, the British Worker, and there were in addition many other bulletins produced by strike committees up and down the land. The government, of course, made full use of the BBC to broadcast anti-strike propaganda.

In the middle of it all the Attorney-General presented plans for the introduction of a bill to make the strike illegal and to enable the government to restrain the use of strike funds. A decision was made that a new force - a third force - was to be created, called the Civil Constabulary Reserve. It was to be composed of members of the Territorials, recruited by the Army, but to be placed under the control of Chief Constables. Within two days over 17,000 men had joined up. But its existence was to be short lived and when the strike was called off the CCR was disbanded.

On May 7 the STO sent in troops to the London docks; they organised food convoys for the distribution of supplies. In the East End police resorted to baton charges to break up the hostile crowds that had gathered in response to the military occupation. An army camp was set up overnight in Victoria Park and remained there for the duration of the strike. On May 9 troops were called to Poplar to protect blacklegs. Elsewhere there were similar outbreaks of violence against scab labour. In Hull, for example, crowds attacked volunteers driving the city's trams.

On May 12 TUC traitors called the strike off. The STO was wound down. While the miners, whose grievance remained unsettled, bravely continued with the industrial action for a further 6 months until, broken by hunger, they gave in.



The A-G's anti-General Strike Bill was replaced by the Trades Disputes and Trade Union Bill, which was eventually passed. The Act criminalised sympathetic strike action, prevented civil servants from joining TUC-affiliated trade unions, placed restrictions on picketing and made the political levy a form of contracting in only.

For the government all the time and effort spent building up the STO had seemed all the more worthwhile now that the General Strike had been broken and the labour movement dealt a crushing blow, from which it would take years to recover. Around the notion of keeping the essential services going, for humanitarian reasons and in the 'national interest', the government had managed to divide the nation in two. Scabs were drawn from the professional classes, but many volunteers also came from the labouring class and the long term jobless. Between 1926 and the post World War 2 years the STO was hardly needed again, except to make sure that the emergency network was in a state of readiness should there be a time of major strikes or civil disorder once again. In May 1929 Labour won the general election and Macdonald became PM. Two years later he formed the National Government, which consisted of mainly Tory ministers and MP's and a smattering of right-wing Labour Party hacks. An era of corporatism was unveiled.

## Part 2

### THE 30's

Although the thirties did not witness any major strikes on the scale of the twenties, there were some instances where the question of mutiny and disaffection came up once more.

In 1931 there occurred the famous Invergordon mutiny. The government, feeling confident, attempted to force through a cut in pay for naval ratings. Ratings with the Fleet at Invergordon refused duty and the Fleet was left stranded in mid-stream. Shortly after the mutiny the managing director of the Daily Worker was tricked by a government agent into inciting an ex-Invergordon mutineer to spread disaffection. The m/d (together with another) got two years hard labour under the 1797 Act.

In 1932 Wal Hannington, head of the National Unemployed Workers Movement, made a public speech inciting the Metropolitan Police to disaffect. The speech was made in Trafalgar Square as he addressed a rally of over 150,000 jobless who had converged on the capital in protest at rising unemployment. Hannington attempted to persuade the police to show solidarity with the jobless and later he claimed to have acted in the way he did not to provoke an incident but to defuse a potentially violent situation. He was found guilty of incitement, but because of the widespread support in his favour, was sentenced to only 3 months. The 1797 Act was again used in 1937 when an 18 year old youth was given 12 months imprisonment merely for talking to a already disaffected RAF corporal about the political situation in Spain.

In 1933 four South Wales miners were convicted under the Incitement Act for conspiracy. A paid informer, who also happened to be the local district secretary of the CP (and a member of the Territorials), set them up.

Not long after the outbreak of World War 2 several members of the Peace Pledge Union were prosecuted for merely putting up pacifist posters in a public place. They were not charged with criminal damage but incitement. The court argued that it was irrelevant as to whether actual soldiers read the poster, the intention to incite was sufficient to secure conviction.

Inevitably the outbreak of world war in 1939 brought about a new emergency act - the Emergency Powers (Defence) Act - that once more enabled troops to automatically take over essential industries. The STO was thus not required: under war-time conditions the STO was made the norm. When Churchill became PM it was significant that he chose Ernest Bevin, who took such a leading part within the TUC organising the General Strike, to take the post of Labour Minister. It was a shrewd move. As an ex trade union leader Bevin was able to use every trick in the book to bring the country's labour to heel. Bevin, as Minister of Labour (and National Service) was a tyrant. But he got away with everything because many still thought of him as a union man and that he did what he did because the war required that the nation be united within a common purpose.

Bevin introduced new regulations making it compulsory for all trades disputes to be sent to arbitration. Strikes were banned. Some, however, did take place and, as during World War 1, they were organised solely at rank and file level as no trade union would make them official. During the entire war period over 5000 workers were convicted at various points in time of infringing the new regulations. In one instance over 1000 miners were convicted in a dispute at Betteshanger Colliery. Virtually all refused to pay their fines and in the end succeeded in demonstrating that the regulations were weren't worth the paper they were written on.

Bevin relied heavily on the cooperation of the trade union leaders. Their role during the war was to ensure that strikes did not occur and that any disputes were resolved by arbitration. Any wildcat strikes were therefore blamed on subversives and troublemakers. Under the Emergency Powers additional regulations were brought in to prohibit the incitement of strikes that interfered with the maintenance of essential services. The regulations also banned picketing - peaceful or otherwise.

### LABOUR AND THE DOCKERS STRIKES

After the war the STO was restored its full powers. Labour won the election and although they repealed the 1927 Trades Disputes and Trade Union Act, they cunningly retained and extended the life of some of the war-time anti-union regulations. These were incorporated within a new act - the Supplies and Services Act 1945. Thus the right to strike, without first going to arbitration, was denied workers. This right was taken away from trade unionists by the TUC itself who gave their full approval to the Supplies and Services Act.

This tendency of successive Labour administrations to involve trade union leaders in government decision making worried civil servants and it was around this time that one senior civil servant drafted a minute for Attlee, the Prime Minister, which referred to the STO and the need to ensure that details of its true function

did not fall into the wrong hands. The minute concluded: 'There is, however, much to be said for...confining knowledge of the plans within the narrowest possible circle. The government are proposing to repeal the Trades Dispute Act,...it might be embarrassing if it became known that the government were preparing plans for defeating a general strike if one occurred'. Attlee took the hint and refrained from making the STO general knowledge. In retrospect he was glad he acted on that advice for only 3 months later he was to call the STO into full operation in order to crush a dockers strike.

The strike paralysed Merseyside and it soon spread to other ports. The union leaders condemned the action and the rank and file passed a motion of no confidence in their leadership. Within days of the commencement of the strike, Attlee had instructed the STO to send over 6000 troops to take over the docks. Meanwhile the TGWU leaders tried to moderate by blaming the strike on political agitators, particularly members of the RCP. A week later and the number of troops used for strikebreaking had doubled. Before the strike concluded - it lasted for 41 days - a total of more than 21,000 troops had been deployed by the STO. Bevin, who had survived the National Government and was now in the new Labour administration, persuaded the Cabinet not to bring the STO out into the open. He argued that it should be kept secret. Issacs, the Minister of Labour and ex-Print Workers union leader, backed up Bevin's plea for secrecy.

In June 1947 there was a road haulage drivers strike. The STO made over 3,500 troops and 1,500 vehicles available to cope with the disruption. This move only succeeded in provoking an escalation of strike action and 28,000 dockers came out in sympathy. Ex-militant Manny Shinwell, who was also a member of the new administration, requested that the STO send troops to ensure that supplies of coal were available for the power stations. Plans were prepared to requisition private vehicles and the Employment Exchanges were approached over the possibility of recruiting scabs. The government threatened to declare a State of Emergency unless the strike ended. Finally a compromise solution was found after intervention from the government.

After the drivers strike the Labour government decided to widen the powers of the STO, now controlled by the Industrial Emergencies Committee, considerably. The STO was to be made available to deal with all emergencies, not just civil or industrial disorder. Bad weather, natural hazards, etc were to be handled by the emergency network, so that any criticism about the STO, should its existence be discovered, could be deflected. The IEC was therefore renamed the less contentious sounding EMERGENCY COMMITTEE.

It was not long before the government was faced with another dockers strike. Again the same pattern. Troops were sent to Glasgow to take over the docks and further preparations were made to send over 7000 troops to take over the London docks.

Around this time many industries were being nationalised and this made it considerably easier for the government to set up consultation committees with the bosses of these industries on the question of taking action to maintain essential services during industrial disputes.

1948 saw a period of economic austerity, TUC approved wage restraint, and another dock strike. After scabs were recruited to take over the docks and the strike escalated the government declared a State of Emergency. In addition the Emergency Powers Act was amended to include a further regulation specifically prohibiting incitement and sedition.

In May 1949 the dockers came out once more - this time in sympathy with strikers in Canada. Canadian ships were blacked. In Avonmouth employers enforced a lock-out in retaliation. The TGWU, on the governments advice, tried to smash the strike by bringing in blacklegs. When this failed troops were sent in and a Ministerial broadcast was made blaming the whole thing on subversives. The strike was broken, but a month later events repeated themselves in the London docks. A State of Emergency was declared, which only served to harden attitudes. In the end the strike was called off as the dispute in Canada got resolved.

There was more to come. In December it seemed likely that an unofficial strike was to be called by London Power Station workers. The government immediately informed the workers that if they struck they would be liable to prosecution under the Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act. The strike still took place and it was crushed by the use of troops and blacklegs.



Labour survived the 51 election, but only just. Within days the administration sent in troops to break another dockers strike. By June troops were also used to break a strike by drivers in the meat wholesale trade. The Emergency Committee sent in 400 lorries and a further 1000 vehicles and 5000 troops were put on stand-by. When the strike escalated 3000 troops were deployed and the strike was finally broken as a result of TGWU intervention.

The EC, clearly worried by the dockers strikes, decided it was about time to make plans for the provision of large numbers of troops to be billeted in London for long periods of time. The Committee considered the possibility of requisitioning public buildings to house the troops. A short list of possible sites included entertainment halls, ballrooms, WW2 deep shelters and municipal facilities.

In 1953 the Tories won the General Election. By October of that year the EC was activated as a result of a strike by 3000 oil supply workers. 6000 troops were used to break the strike.

By '55 Eden had taken over from Churchill as PM and in May of that year the government faced a strike by stevedores. The strike quickly escalated and 60,000 footplatemen came out in sympathy. Rail transport ground to a virtual halt. The EC arranged for extra lorries to be seconded to the Post Office to ensure the



delivery of mail. On 31 May a State of Emergency was declared. Two weeks later the strike had been crushed.

Over the next few years the number of times the EC ended up utilising its resources was few and far between. In May 1957 Macmillan ordered troops on full standby because of a strike by London bus workers. In 1964 Douglas-Home amended the 1920 Emergency Powers Act and widened its powers.

By 1966 Labour were in power once more and they were soon faced with a Seamen's strike over pay. The government intervened to prevent any infringement of their new Prices and Incomes policy. Prime Minister Wilson accused the seamen of organising a strike 'against the State'. Roy Jenkins took personal charge of the Emergency Committee. On 23 May a State of Emergency was declared and the EC made plans for the takeover of the docks and the requisition of ships. Wilson caused a scandal by producing in the House of Commons 'irrefutable evidence by MI5' that the strike had been orchestrated by extremists to bring down the government. By the beginning of July the NUS had negotiated a compromise deal.

## THE HEATH YEARS AND AFTER

In 1970 Edward Heath took control and within a month he faced a massive dockers strike. 42,000 came out and the Tories declared a State of Emergency. Arbitration resulted in a moderate pay rise for the dockers and the strike was ended. By December Heath faced another challenge: electricity workers went on a go-slow. On December 12 another State of Emergency was declared. This time the strikers got their way and a pay rise was agreed. Four days before the State of Emergency was declared, the Ministry of Employment and Productivity was bombed by the Angry Brigade. Almost one month later exactly another bombing, claimed by the Angry Brigade, took place, this time at the home of the minister responsible for the introduction of the controversial Industrial Relations Bill, Robert Carr. Both bombings occurred against a background of massive industrial action against the bill. Other the next few months other attacks on industrial (and other) targets were carried out by the AB.

In 1972 the CCU was given the task of formulating recommendations as to how policing, in the light of massive demonstrations, widespread strikes, etc, could be improved in terms of more efficient intelligence gathering, etc. The unit proposed that policing by consensus could be achieved by placing more emphasis on developing better community links. The police were advised to take more of an interest in social work, and were recommended to liaise more with some of the welfare agencies in order that their case studies and files could present a fuller picture as to what was happening in the neighbourhoods. At the time these recommendations were not acted upon, but shelved. Ten years later, after the nationwide riots, they were taken up again by Police chief Alderson. The proposals were given a name: Community Policing (later Multi-Agency policing) and were later adopted as official policy.

1972 was also the year when Heath faced his first miners strike. The strike began with an overtime ban that lasted for around 10 weeks. Stocks were getting precariously low so Heath declared a State of Emergency. Power failures

began to occur and some firms went on a voluntary 3 day week. Flying pickets were used for the first time. At the Saltley depot 800 police were drafted in to deal with over 15,000 pickets that had converged from all over the country. Finally the government had to concede defeat and the miners won a substantial pay award.

Heath afterwards blamed Home Secretary Reginald Maudling for failing to send in the troops to break the strike and making full use of the EC. Heath ordered that the Emergency Organisation was to be tightened up and streamlined. It was renamed the CIVIL CONTINGENCIES UNIT.

Heath made sure that the CCU's facilities were sufficiently updated to be able to deal with any major emergencies and that never again would he be subjected to blackmail by the miners or any other labour union. The CCU was given a special office of its own and direct link-ups were provided to all Chief Constables and senior military personnel. In effect through the CCU every police administration in the country was in direct contact with every military administration. If need be Police Chiefs could use the CCU facility to request back-up assistance from the military in cases of national emergency.

But all this was to no avail. In the end the Heath government was, of course, brought down by the miners. Around the winter of 1973 the miners and electrical workers both put in for pay bids well beyond the governments Phase Three anti-inflation threshold limitations. At first industrial action in support of the pay claims were limited. But then ASLEF members voted to ban Sunday work and overtime in sympathy. Heath once more invoked the 1920 Act and imposed a three day working week upon the nation in order to conserve energy supplies. The power workers returned to work, but the miners stayed out. By February there was an all out strike in the mines and Heath decided to put his case to the country. It was either him or the miners. But the country decided to oust Heath and at the General Election Labour were voted in power. On taking over Labour had no choice but to give the miners the pay settlement they had demanded.

Within weeks the Labour administration had to call in the services of the Civil Contingencies Unit. By May the Ulster Workers Council had struck against power sharing between the loyalist and republican factions, and the proposed Council of Ireland. The strike mainly affected power stations in the Province. Troops were ordered to take over oil depots and petrol stations. But in the end the UWC threatened a total stoppage and as a result the NI Executive resigned and power sharing was shelved.

1974 also was the year when Pat Arrowsmith attempted to distribute leaflets informing soldiers of their right to disaffection. The trial judge, Lawton (who once stood as a election candidate on behalf of the British Union of Fascists), sentenced her to 18 months (reduced to 9 months on appeal). Later the leaflet was rewritten, expanded and addressed to 'discontented soldiers' (ie, those already discontented). 14 people were arrested for giving out this leaflet. They were charged with conspiracy. Sam Silkin as DPP brought the case forward. Over 500 people signed a statement admitting that they too conspired in the action of which the 14 were accused. The verdict on all 14 was not guilty - this was totally unexpected and came about because of the huge amount of

public support for the defence.

After the trial more leafleting took place. In Cambridge alone a total of 6000 copies of the leaflet were distributed. There were instances of public leafleting in many parts of the country. The whole campaign proved that inciting disaffection and informing soldiers of their right to secure discharge are two totally different things.

Incitement, like so many other offences, is only unlawful when the government of the day decides so. In 1914, for example, on the eve of the Home Rule Bill, Tory Unionists Carson and Bonar Law each spoke in support of officers who sided with the Ulster Volunteer Force, while other Tory MP's incited troops at the Curragh to mutiny in order that the bill would be scuppered, which it duly was. There were, of course, no prosecutions taken out. The incitement law is purposely designed to draw attention and direct blame for any disaffection on to the outside agitator. Just as governments have always sought to blame outside extremists and subversives for any large scale industrial action.

## THE EMERGENCY NETWORK TODAY

Governments have learnt their lesson from previous administrations and are less keen these days to use the 1920 Act, than they were when Heath or Attlee were in charge. Declaring a State of Emergency is, in itself, viewed by some politicians as indicative of weakness. On the whole it has been Tory 'wets' and Labourites that have been most responsible for making use of the Emergency Regulations.

Conservative administrations tended to use the emergency network as a tool - it was there and it was to be used. Labour, on the other hand, tended to harbour a more ambivalent attitude towards it. Successive Labour regimes were embarrassed by it, but at the same time wished to use it to its full potential. In the end it was left to Callaghan to perfect the CCU and turn it from a mere emergency organisation into an organisation that is involved in countering every large scale industrial and political threat that modern government tends to face in the course of its daily affairs.

During the Winter of Discontent of '78/'79 the CCU met almost every day. More emphasis was placed on information gathering and Regional Emergency Centres (REC's) were set up to coordinate matters at ground level and feed back intelligence to base. The REC's were instructed to link in directly with regional police HQ's. They were also to make full use of local authority facilities, departmental facilities and the local military set-ups. Perhaps the most significant innovation that took place, in respect of the emergency network, around this time was the marrying together of the emergency organisation with the civil defence network.

Every REC was linked directly to every corresponding RSG (Regional Seat of Government). From then onwards the governments plans to deal with a nuclear attack were matched in with the plans of the emergency organisation. For example the secret storehouses where food is stockpiled in the event of a nuclear attack are now an essential resource under joint CCU/Mod control. The implication is that these storehouses are to be used as reserve should major civil unrest break out or a protracted general strike

ensue. Likewise the Civil Defence network, which is designed to protect government and the authorities and not the population, is now at the disposal of the CCU should there arise an occasion whereby government would need to retreat to a place of safety.

Callaghan succeeded in upgrading the CCU to the point where it now functions as the State's front line emergency defence unit, whatever the emergency. For added protection the REC's have been given the facility to link in to an Emergency Telecommunication Network, via System X. The system allows for the automatic closure of the consumer (and business if necessary) network should an emergency arise, leaving only the official telephones operable. It also allows for the blanking out of telephone traffic for any street, neighbourhood, area, town, county or region should the emergency require it.

Throughout the Winter of Discontent the CCU took full advantage of the industrial crisis. The REC's fed daily reports to the CCU which, in turn was in constant contact with both the CBI and TUC chiefs. The REC's reported information as to the progress of local disputes: how many were participating in the strike, was the strike escalating, was there any conflict developing between the strikers, were there any picketing infringements, etc. The REC's became the eyes and ears of the CCU. REC staff worked closely with MI5 surveillance teams and with Special Branch. REC offices tended to keep lists of local voluntary associations (the WVS, Round Table, etc) and contacts in anti-union groups, such as the Freedom Association, the Economic League, etc. In addition the REC's maintained close contact with industry chiefs and local contractors.

Generally REC staff tend to be normal civil servants based within the regional HQ's of various ministerial departments. They know each other, but their work is not necessarily known to other civil servants. They do not





necessarily work together in the same building. REC appointees are to be found in Municipal Offices, police HQ's, Health Authority administrations, the regional offices of all the nationalised industries, etc, etc. Most have been allotted specific duties; mainly administrative. They tend to be pen-pushers, leaving the decision making to the CCU senior civil servants in Whitehall.

The CCU's equivalent in the police network is the National Reporting Centre. The two are linked by computer terminals. The NRC has a CCU liaison officer and the CCU has a NRC liaison officer. Through this liaison the CCU is fully aware of the movement of police in every part of the country. The NRC is no new set-up, but has been in existence for some time. During the (current) miners strike the NRC was responsible for the coordination of police resources and the deployment of police in large numbers to control flying pickets. But the NRC is not used solely for mass industrial actions. It was the main control centre during the 1981 nationwide riots. Thousands of police were bussed to troublespots on NRC instructions. The NRC got local reports on the progress of the riots not only from local Special Branch, but also from the REC's. On the whole though the function of the REC's during the '81 riots was to maintain a constant assessment of how things were developing and to act as a back-up unit in case the Emergency Regulations were to be brought in.

Totally transformed the CCU today is no longer just the governments official strike-breaking body, it is now the lynchpin and coordinating unit between all the government departments, the security forces, police and military intelligence, local authorities, public industry and big business, the Civil Service and the Home Defence network. In itself the CCU has no ultimate authority. It is, of course, responsible to central government and can only make recommendations, produce policy statements, plan and collate information. It is a bureaucratic machine.

But it is a machine that has been at the forefront of every major industrial dispute and civil emergency for the last 70 years or so. Its decisions have affected how successive governments have dealt with varying crises and its organisation has provided the State with a final bulwark against revolt.

**POSTSCRIPT:** The National Reporting Centre (NRC) was also used to control the deployment of police units from various parts of the country for the recent Stop The City anti-militarist demonstration in the City of London. The decision to use the NRC was taken because the demonstration took place on the same day as a mass demonstration at the other end of the capital by protestors supporting the GLC cause and mass picketing by miners in the Midlands, Nottinghamshire and in other parts of the country. On March 29 the country's police resources were nearly stretched to their limit. If rioting had broken out in some of the provincial cities, or if other workers had come out in sympathy in a national stoppage, the NRC would have been forced to ask for CCU assistance. Arrangements would immediately have been made to prepare the REC's for emergency contingency measure. The 'war' cabinet, recently referred to in the national press, is in fact the strike breaking CCU. The CCU special committee, brought in to break the miners strike includes Norman Tebbit, Tom King, Sir Michael Havers, Douglas Hurd, David Michel, Michael Ancram and Lord Trefarne. This committee represents the armed forces, the Home Office, the Attorney-General's office, Department of the Environment, Ministry of Transport, Department of Trade and Industry and the Scottish office.



*The rebels are not breathing  
The brutal war  
Their luxurious diet  
of plums from the bored  
Children building lorries  
Out of their body spares*

*The common thread  
Is the effect of piracy  
Obscured by the drama  
The hostages have blown up  
Crowds marched through the streets  
Shouting 'death to the assassins'*

*They want the right to run  
Leaders want enormous power  
Playing their games  
Chatting at the table  
Gin and tonic smiles  
Bargaining for power  
A precarious balance  
That eats the souls  
of millions*

# JOHANN MOST

*As long as I have eyes to see the horrors of this world, as long as my ears can hear the moans of the proletariat; as long as my brain is alert in my head and can reflect all the terrible impressions which are called forth by the injustices of every hour; as long as my heart has not become insensible to the sufferings of the disinherited, my mouth will not remain silent to the crimes which the rich and powerful commit against the people.*

Johann Most

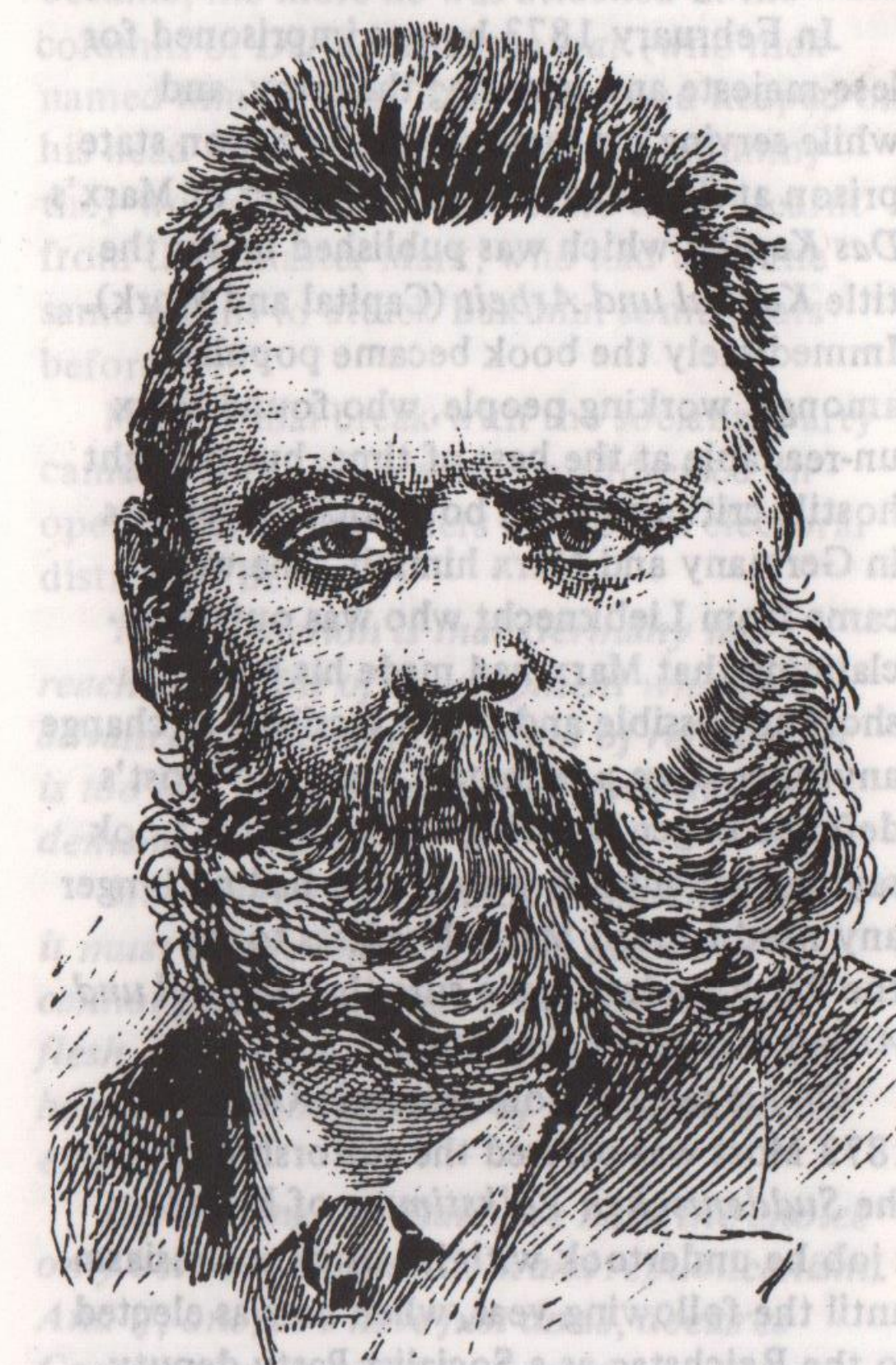
Johann Most has unfortunately become a 'neglected' figure within the anarchist movement, thanks partly to Emma Goldman's continual slander campaign against him and despite over 30 years spent as a tireless and vigorous anarchist propagandist. For more than those 30 years though, Most endured endless and unrelenting persecution in almost every country he lived, but especially in America, the so-called home of the brave and land of the free. To a lesser man this constant persecution and imprisonment would have been unbearable but Most rose again and again after each blow the state gave him and began his work again with renewed vigour and enthusiasm, even though towards the end of his life he worked almost alone.

Most did not believe that anarchism would come about one day as if by magic and free everyone without a struggle. For him the only effective way working people could defend themselves against both the brutal persecution of the state and the cruel exploitation of the capitalists was through armed self defence and propaganda by the deed. For this he has always been depicted by the bourgeois press (and some fellow anarchists as well) as a 'fanatic' and the 'personification of criminal anarchism'.

Most's life and work is now little known and his writings, for the most part, are unavailable (although translated) in English. We offer this short biography as a much needed tribute to a great anarchist.

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Johann Most was born in the Bavarian town of Augsburg February 5 1846, the son of a lawyer's copyist. Although the family lived in great poverty Most's early childhood was very happy thanks to the love and tenderness given to him by his mother, a former governess to one of the richest families in Augsburg, whose liberal ideas and free thinking dominated the Most household. When Most was only ten years old his mother died during a cholera epidemic (which also claimed the lives of his sister and grandparents) and his father remarried. From the beginning his step mother disliked Johann intensely and did all she could to make his life a misery.



Many times, things became so bad that he preferred to run away and live rough rather than submit to beatings and hard work. On top of all this, since the age of seven he had been suffering from a painful infection of the left jaw. Various so-called doctors had tried to treat him without success, and probably aggravating the infection to boot, until at the age of 13 he finally underwent an operation which resulted in the removal of 2 inches of jawbone. Although the operation no doubt saved his life it left him with a hideous facial disfigurement, as it involved an incision on the side of his face from the temple to the corner of his mouth.

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In 1858, at the age of 12, Most was apprenticed to a bookbinder after being expelled from school for organising a strike against a particularly brutal and authoritarian teacher. The apprenticeship, at first welcomed by Most, soon became a repeat of his unhappy home life. He was forced by his master, a man called Weber, to work long hours and was continually starved and generally ill-treated. During this time he also served his first prison term of 24 hours for refusing to attend compulsory church services and confessionals.

Most learned his trade well despite Weber's brutal behaviour, and at the age of 17 obtained his journeyman's papers. With these in his pocket he set out on his *Wanderschaft*, a semi compulsory wandering from town to town in search of employment that every skilled worker had to undertake under the medieval traditions of the German guild system in order to perfect their trade. Most's *Wanderschaft*, which lasted for five years, took him on foot to almost every large town and city in Germany, Austria, Switzerland and even parts of northern Italy. Finding work though was not easy. Many times he

was turned away by potential employers because of his twisted face, being told that he would frighten away customers and so on. Very often, under these conditions, he was forced to beg in order to survive. His disfigurement which he was all too aware of, until he managed to hide the worst of the scar with a beard, also tended to keep him apart from his fellow workers and he spent much of his time reading, immersing himself in the classics, history and natural sciences. Thus he made up for his lack of formal education.

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In March 1867 Most found himself working in Le Locle, in the French speaking Swiss Jura. One Sunday afternoon he walked to La Chaux de Fonds, some miles up the St. Imir Valley and by chance wandered into a meeting being held by the local section of the International Workers Association (the La Chaux de Fonds section of the International had been founded in 1865 by a local doctor, Pierre Coullery, and soon became one of the strongholds of the IWMA in the area. The membership consisted in the main part of workers engaged in watchmaking). Most was immediately filled with both amusement and enthusiasm by what he heard and when the meeting was finished he bought some brochures to take home with him. Later he recalled in his memoirs:—

*'... What I heard there I could fully endorse. It was all perfectly logical. Such thoughts had often passed through my own head, only I had not known how to put them together, how to systematize them. The speaker called this simple teaching socialism. I soon realised that, I too, was a socialist, and had been one for a long time without being aware of it. From that time I began to feel that I was a human being; there was an aim before me, which went beyond the bare struggle for existence and the satisfaction of momentary individual wants; I began to live in the realm of ideals. The cause of humanity became my cause, and each step in advance that could be recorded filled me with the greatest joy.'*

Soon Most became a regular member of the weekly meeting at La Chaux de Fonds and participated as much as he could in the discussions. At the same time he became an active member of the local German Workers Society and was soon appointed its secretary due to his restless activity. Through his propaganda work the society's membership grew from 17 to 72 in only a few months. Gradually Most began to devote more and more time to agitational work and for this was sacked by his employer.

Forced on the road once again, Most made his way to Zurich where he joined the newly found branch of the IWMA becoming good friends with its principle animator Hermann Greulich.

In the autumn of 1868 Most left Switzerland, and after spending some time on the road finally settled in Vienna. The Austrian socialist movement was in its childhood but growing fast (political liberties had only been



granted in 1866 after the Austrian defeat at the hands of the Prussians) and Most immediately became a well known and much admired figure in working class circles mainly for his direct and sarcastic way of speaking. On May 30 1869 he gave his first big speech at Fünfhaus, a suburb of Vienna, before 10,000 workers. For this he was charged with incitement and imprisoned for one month.

Towards the end of 1869 the Austrian authorities became alarmed at the rapid and successful spread of socialist ideas and in December enacted several orders in an attempt to stem its rising tide. After these anti-socialist laws had been passed over 50,000 Viennese workers protested outside the chamber of Deputies where they were addressed by several popular orators including Most, who was now referred to by the bourgeois press as the 'impudent bookbinder'. From then on the government attacked the socialist movement as hard as they could. Most himself was arrested on March 2 1870 and charged with high treason, which carried the death penalty. When he was brought to trial, the government, fearing demonstrations, deployed a whole regiment of soldiers to guard the court and limited spectators to sixty. Defending himself, he told the judge 'when you accuse me of high treason, you commit high treason. . . I confess I am a socialist. I confess, I shall always be socialist . . . Condemn me you can, if you will, if you must. . .'

He was sentenced to five years imprisonment. While in prison awaiting trial Most tried his hand at poetry. Only one of his poems from that period has survived, *Die Arbeitsmanner* (The Working Man) which was sung by several generations of German and Austrian workers, both anarchist and socialist, although socialist publishers made the practice of omitting his name as author after he became an anarchist. Although sentenced to five years Most was released from the prison of Suben after serving only 1 year due to a government amnesty. On his release Most's popularity grew by leaps and bounds due to his being singled out as a 'dangerous socialist'. Soon after he undertook a propaganda tour of provincial towns where he was always the main speaker and was received by enthusiastically large crowds. The tour over, he was about to make another through German speaking Bohemia when an alarmed government intervened and expelled him from Austria 'forever'. On May 2 1871 over 1000 workers accompanied Most to the railway station where he boarded the train for Germany. As he left he said with his usual sarcasm 'is it sure that Austria will last for ever?'

Although his stay in Austria had lasted less than three years he always retained fond memories of his days there, in an atmosphere devoid of intrigue, corruption and inter-party strife.

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Most returned to Germany, where unlike Austria, the socialist movement was torn apart by in-fighting and joined the faction led by August Bebel and Wilhelm Liebknecht settling in the Saxon industrial town of Chemnitz he took over the ailing local socialist newspaper, the *Chemnitzer Freie Presse* and within six weeks boosted its circulation from 200 to 1200. In the autumn

of 1871, he was imprisoned for some months for organising and leading a strike in Chemnitz. By now a much sought after and popular speaker and organiser, Most threw himself into propaganda work for the Social Democratic Party.

In February 1873 he was imprisoned for lese-majeste and insulting the army, and while serving his sentence in the Saxon state prison at Zwickau made an abstract of Marx's *Das Kapital* which was published under the title *Kapital und Arbeit* (Capital and Work). Immediately the book became popular amongst working people, who found Marx un-readable at the best of time, but brought hostile criticism from both socialist leaders in Germany and Marx himself. The worst came from Liebknecht who was outraged claiming that Marx had made his book as short as possible and it was sacrilege to change anything, even a comma. Coming to Most's defence Eugen Dühring welcomed the book saying that anyone who read it had no longer any need to read Marx. Needless to say the Party leaders made sure that *Kapital und Arbeit* was never reprinted.

On his release from prison in October 1873 Most was offered the editorship of the *Süddeutschen Volkstimme* of Mainz a job he undertook with his usual enthusiasm until the following year, when he was elected to the Reichstag as a Socialist Party deputy for Chemnitz. If Most had any illusions about the parliamentary system they were soon to be shattered into a thousand pieces. Believing that he would be able to speak on behalf of socialism and put the worker's cause, he was instead hardly given the chance to speak. In fact the only subject he was asked to speak on was that of compulsory smallpox vaccination (which he, by the way, opposed). Much later he described his first days in parliament:

*'In high spirits I travelled to Berlin at the beginning of February, and hastened after my arrival to the sacred edifice, Parliament, where the first sitting had just begun, of which in fact I perceived little, because I had not yet been initiated into the mysteries of Parliamentarism.'*

*'They were, as I learned later, electing the bureau for the coming session, but nobody seemed to take much notice of what was taking place.'*

*'Very few members were on the floor of the House, and even these did not strike me as so solemn as I had expected to find them. One wrote letters, another read a newspaper, here and there stood groups in two's and three's evidently making rotten jokes or passing inane remarks.'*

*'But outside, in the hall and especially in the Restaurant of the Reichstag, things looked busy. Booze was flowing, and the babel of voices made me think I was in the Stock Exchange. Only now and then little groups marched in to record their votes. I thought then that this manner of conducting things was unusual, but I learned later that with the exception of 'great debates' which occurred once in six weeks, things always went in the same way. The 'country cousins' who very often came from near and far to see the 'Reichstag at work' clasped their hands above their furcaps in astonishment at the way things were carried on.'*

Most's parliamentary career however was cut short when he was arrested and sentenced to

26 months imprisonment for a speech he had made on the 3rd anniversary of the Paris Commune and was confined in the notorious Plötzensee prison near Berlin (a prison not unknown to future anarchists, including Erich Muhsam who was held there by the Nazis).

While in prison, as was his habit, Most did not waste time. As he told comrades later, imprisonment was his university. *'I owe my mind to imprisonment and stored in my head things I could use later. There is sharpened many arrows for use in future battles.'* During this stretch he used his time in keeping a diary which was later published under the title *Die Bastille am Plötzensee* and exposed the Prussian penal system with its habitual abuse and ill-treatment of prisoners and corrupt mismanagement. He was also responsible for starting a clandestine postal system amongst the prisoners which remained undiscovered by the prison authorities.

Released from Plötzensee in early 1876 Most remained in Berlin where he took up the editorship of the newly founded socialist daily, the *Berliner Freie Presse*, which over the next two years increased its circulation from 2000 to 18000.

Most, by now more popular than ever, might well have risen in the ranks of the Socialist Party, but his lively and openly revolutionary articles in the *Berliner Freie Presse* were beginning to estrange him from the party leadership, especially Liebknecht who told him one day that the German socialist movement had no place for his revolutionary phraseology. In reality Liebknecht and co. feared Most's popular appeal. Apart from their rivalries there were also theoretical disputes between the two men. For some time Most had much admired Eugen Dühring, as did many Berlin workers much to the chagrin of Marx and Engels, and the columns of the *Berliner Freie Presse* carried many articles defending Dühring against attacks made on him by Engels. While in Prison, Most had written a sympathetic critique of Dühring's ideas, and on his release asked Liebknecht to publish it in the Party's main journal *Vorwärts* of which Liebknecht was editor in chief. Before publication however Liebknecht submitted the article to his master Engels who said it should not be published. Some what put out by this rejection Most published the article himself in the *Berliner Freie Presse*. Engels responded to Most's 'affrontery' by writing a diatribe entitled *Anti-Dühring* which Liebknecht began to serialise in *Vorwärts*. Only a few episodes appeared however, because at the Gotha Party Congress of 1877, Most proposed a resolution that would prevent the publication of future articles against Dühring by Engels. Most won the day, but brought on his head the everlasting hatred of Marx and Engels.

Now Most had become one of the best public speakers the party had at its disposal. Whether he was delivering a series of lectures on 'The Social Revolution and Caesarism in Ancient Rome,' or publicly debating with Pastor Stocker, the leader of the Christian socialist party and forerunner of national socialism, the hall was always packed by workers, students and even academics.

In May 1878, he was again arrested, this time for a speech he had given in Chemnitz about the recent attempt made on the life of the Kaiser by Max Hodel. Although sentenced

to only 6 weeks, on his release he was transferred to Berlin where he was tried again for some remarks he had made in his earlier writings, and was sentenced to 5 months in Plötzensee. This time the authorities made sure he suffered. He was confined in solitary for the whole time and was not allowed visitors. Whenever he had to go near other inmates he was forced to wear a mask over his face to hide his identity.

On his release in December 1878, Most found the situation in Germany had changed dramatically. Using the attempts on the life of the Kaiser as a pretext, Bismarck had dissolved the Reichstag and enacted draconian anti-socialist laws. All socialist newspapers, including Most's *Berliner Freie Presse*, were immediately suppressed, except for the mildest; and many well known socialists imprisoned or forced into exile.

Most himself was given twenty-four hours to leave Berlin. Going first to Hamburg, he met with prominent members of the party who advised him to leave the country. This advice though was not solely for his benefit. Those party leaders left alone by the police, including Liebknecht, were scared stiff that their association with Most would land them in prison. Realising, that for the time being at least, propaganda work in Germany was not possible Most decided to go into exile. Followed by more than 30 detectives he crossed the border into Belgium and on December 23 arrived in London.

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In London, Most was enthusiastically welcomed by the *Kommunistischer-Arbeiterbildungsverein* (Communist Workers' Educational Union) and was invited to edit a new newspaper expressly for the purpose of sending information and propaganda into Germany. With the finances of the Union the first issue of *Freiheit* (Freedom) appeared on January 4 1879 with the epigram under the title 'Freedom is dead — long live Freedom!' At first *Freiheit*, calling itself a Social Democratic organ, the first ever to do so, followed the party line, but soon Most began to have serious misgivings about the moderate parliamentarianism adopted by Liebknecht and co. in Germany. In a series of articles in May he asked the question: are the social democrats a revolutionary party? His conclusion was no, saying 'they are as thick skinned as an elephant and insensitive to tender touch. To make them react you have to hit them in the ribs with a chain. . .'

From the beginning *Freiheit*, written as always in simple direct language and full of sarcastic humour that Most made his own, was very popular amongst the German working class. Although distributed in Germany under very difficult conditions (the first issue was sent normally and was banned by the authorities. All subsequent issues were smuggled into Germany. The story of the smuggling of *Freiheit* and the attempt of the German police to infiltrate the group would take up a book in itself). Its readership increased between 1879 and 1886 from 1200 to 3400.

The immediate popularity of *Freiheit* alarmed both Bismarck and the socialist leaders in Germany, especially Liebknecht, who took every opportunity to attack Most. He ever made a statement in the Reichstag

saying that the socialist party respected the law irrespective of its nature. To counter-act *Freiheit* Liebknecht and co. began the publication of their own paper *Der Sozialdemokrat* from Zurich. The more radical Most became, the more he was attacked in the columns of *Der Sozialdemokrat* (who nicknamed him General Bum Bum) and heaped on his head every insult, slander and calumny they would think of; tactics no doubt learnt from their master Marx, who had used the same means to attack Bakunin some years before.

Most's final break with the socialist party came in May 1880, when he addressed an open letter to the voters of the 5th electoral district of Berlin:

*'My conviction is that Germany has reached a point of development where no advanced politician can think of reforms. It is too late for that, and the Revolution demands its rights.'*

*'Modern Society cannot be patched up, it must be overthrown. In its place one cannot put a thing that is neither fish nor flesh. Only Communism is destined to lead humanity from this vale of tears to a better existence.'*

*'Concerning the State, we have the choice only between Cossackdom and republicanism. And if, one, as I have just done, declares Communism straight away as a necessity for the development and happiness of humanity, then one understands that by republicanism I do not mean a blue, but a red republic.'*

*'Closely related to the present form of social slavery is the well-flourishing mental degradation. Who, therefore, is fighting for liberty and equality must not be afraid of fighting the priesthood. We must not spare them, we must abolish them. In place of the systematic poisoning of the minds of the people by theology, we must put atheism and materialism, if we want light in the land of the thinkers.'*

*'My motto is, therefore: "Down with the Throne, Altar and Moneybags! Long Live the Social Revolution!"'*

*'Whoever agrees with me, may vote for me in this sense.'*

This was too much for Liebknecht and other socialist leaders. In the beginning of 1881, they organised a secret congress in Zurich, and expelled Most from the party.

Most had now finally broken the vicious chain of parliamentary socialism, and had become an anarchist, a transformation helped along by long conversations with Victor Dave, a Belgian associate of Bakunin, Errico Malatesta and the many libertarian exiles from the Paris Commune, who like Most, had found refuge in London.

On March 13 1881 Sofia Perovskaya and Rissakof killed Alexander II, the czar of all the little Russians. Most applauded this act of popular justice against this most authoritarian of rulers by writing an editorial in *Freiheit* under the title *Endlich!* (At Last!). *'One of the vilest tyrants corroded through and through with corruption, is no more'* he wrote, *'The glorious bomb fell at the despot's feet, shattering his legs, ripping open his belly, and inflicting many wounds. . . Conveyed to his palace, and for an hour and a half in the greatest suffering, the autocrat meditated on his guilt. Then he died as he deserved to die like a dog. . .'*

When this article was brought to the attention of Bismarck, he put pressure on the British government to bring a prosecution against Most. Some days later the offices of *Freiheit* in Great Titchfield Street were raided by the police. All papers and documents were seized and Most was dragged off to Bow Street where he was committed for trial. Bail was refused.

On Most's arrest a defence committee was formed, made up of half a dozen English comrades whose moving spirit was by far and away Frank Kitz. Meetings were organised and a fund started, but its greatest achievement was the launching of an English language edition of *Freiheit*. The second number of *The Freiheit* contained a translation in full of the article for which Most was being prosecuted, and was sold outside the Old Bailey as his trial was going on inside. *The Freiheit* ran to several issues from April 24 to June 5, and then folded for lack of funds.

Most was tried at the Central Criminal Court on May 25 1881, charged with libel and incitement to murder. Although found guilty, the jury's recommendation for mercy was ignored by the judge, Lord Chief Justice Coleridge, who sentenced Most to 16 months' hard labour.

Most served his time in the Coldbath Fields House of Correction at Clerkenwell (now long since demolished), where he was kept in solitary confinement and forbidden to speak to anyone other than prison warders. His only contact with other prisoners was during the half hour exercise period each day. His hard labour consisted of sewing buttons and patches on uniforms.

While he was in prison, *Freiheit*, now subtitled 'An organ of the Revolutionary Socialist' continued publication under the editorship of the more than able John Neve helped by a handful of other German comrades. Despite his confinement, Most continued to contribute articles written from his cell on prison lavatory paper with ink concocted from limestone and water.

In May of the following year (1882) *Freiheit* was again raided by the police for an article that had appeared rejoicing in the assassination of Lord Cavendish and Thomas Burke in Phoenix Park, Dublin by former members of the Irish Revolutionary Brotherhood called the 'Invincibles', which was hailed as 'a heroically bold act of popular justice.' Although Neve was not in the office at the time, everything was taken by the police and two typesetters (oh no! — typesetter) arrested. Despite this Neve and the others continued for a while, but soon found it almost impossible as the authorities had decreed that anyone found writing, editing, printing or distributing *Freiheit* would be prosecuted. The London *Freiheit* finally folded in October and moved to Switzerland.

On his release from prison at the end of October, Most found no possibility of renewing the publication of *Freiheit* in London. Continually followed by the police, he now decided to take up the invitation of a lecture tour in America, extended by Justus Schwab of the New York Social-Revolutionary Club.

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Most arrived in America on December 18 1882 and was triumphantly welcomed by



thousands of German workers who packed the Copper Union Hall in New York to overflowing.

After persecution in the old world, Most came to the new with great hope and enthusiasm. '... Fortunately, no country was ever more suited for anarchist agitation than present-day America', he wrote, 'Here nobody wants to experiment further with the people's State... Whoever looks at America will see the ship is powered by stupidity, corruption and prejudice. Long has the government disgusted noble and intelligent natures; they avoid voting, and are now ready to listen to the anarchists...'

The revolutionary element within the American Labour movement at this time was dominated in the main part by German immigrants, and Most immediately embarked on a speaking tour; the first of many he would make, covering much of the east and middle west from New York to Kansas City and from Boston to Baltimore spreading propaganda in every city, which had a German speaking population.

Soon after, with the financial help of Justus Schwab, *Freiheit* re-appeared, now sub-titled an International Organ of German Speaking Anarchists, and in no time became as popular as it had been in Europe.

Now Most's main aim was to unify, as far as possible, the various revolutionary socialist groups under the wing of a revived and overtly anarchist International Workingman's Association. On Sunday October 16 1883, through the efforts of Most, these various groups met in Pittsburg. The outcome of the Pittsburg convention was as Most wished. The old International was revived under the new title of International Working Peoples Association, and a six point declaration, drawn up by Most himself, together with Albert Parsons and August Spies set out the aims of the new organisation: 'First: Restriction of the existing class rule, by all means, i.e. by energetic, relentless, revolutionary and international action. Second: Establishment of a free society based on the cooperative organisation of production. Third: Free exchange of equivalent products by and between the productive organisations commerce and profit mongery. Fourth: Organisation of education on a secular, scientific, and equal basis for both sexes. Fifth: Equal right for all without distinction of sex or race. Sixth: Regulation of all public affairs by free contracts... resting on a federalistic basis...'

The delegates also accepted a resolution from August Spies saying that Trade Unions would form the advance guard of the coming revolution.

In 1884, Most, unbeknown to his most closest comrades took a job in a munitions factory in Jersey City near New York. This secret work provided the basis for a series of articles in *Freiheit* which were later published in book form under the title *Revolutionäre Kriegswissenschaft* (Revolutionary War Science). In this 74 page handbook he set out, in simple terms, instructions for the manufacture and use of various kinds of explosives (although he advised against 'home made explosives, saying it was much safer to steal them from factories). 'In giving

dynamite to the downtrodden million of the globe' he wrote, 'science has done its best work. The dear stuff can be carried in the pocket without danger, while it is a formidable weapon against any force of militia, police or detectives that may want to stifle the cry for justice that goes forth from plundered slaves. It is something not very ornamental, but exceedingly useful. It can be used against persons or things. It is better to use against the former than against bricks and masonry. A pound of this stuff beats a bushel load of ballots all hollow - and don't you forget it...'

The book also included instructions on the preparation of invisible ink and self-inflammable liquid compounds. He also explained how you could burn down your own house, shop or workshop and claim the insurance money.

(*Freiheit* to a certain extent was financed in this way for a while until Benjamin Tucker, the gentleman anarchist, denounced Most in his newspaper *Liberty*). Most's little manual was greatly admired by Lucy and Albert Parsons, who tried to have it translated into English, without success alas. Its popularity amongst German speaking anarchists though, was immense and within three months it had gone into a third printing.

At this time also, Most wrote some of his most popular works including *Die Gottespest* (The God Pestilence), *Die Eigentumbestie* (The Beast of Property) and *Die Freie Gesellschaft* (The Free Society). All these, especially the first two, have been translated in many languages and have become minor classics.

In May 1886, Most was arrested for a speech he had made some time before in New York's Germania Gardens, where he urged a large audience of German workers to arm themselves against capitalist exploitation. 'To arm is not hard' he told them holding up a rifle, 'Buy these, steal revolvers, make bombs, and when you have enough rise and seize what is yours. Take the city by storm and the capitalists by the throat!' Sentenced to twelve months hard labour together with a fine of \$500 for 'holding an unlawful assembly' after a trial which was to say the least stage managed (the prosecuting officer told the jury that if they failed to convict Most he would shoot him himself with as little compunction as he would a rattlesnake); Most was taken to the notorious Blackwell's Island prison to serve his time, a place which he referred to as America's arsehole. In prison, Most was subjected to many indignities, including the shaving off of his beard, which made him the butt of ridicule and humiliation because of his deformity.

For some time before Most's arrest, the IWPA had been putting all its efforts into agitation for an 8 hour day, an aim incidentally that he had little enthusiasm for. For him it was a mere struggle for a 'little more butter on worker's bread.' Only the immediate armed expropriation of the capitalists was worth fighting for he believed. While he was being held by the police prior to his trial the IWPA had declared a general strike throughout the country as part of the 8 day struggle. In Chicago, thanks to the influence of the anarchists, the work stoppage was total. On May 4, a meeting as called for in the Haymarket Square to protest against police brutality. During the course of the meeting,

which was being addressed by Parsons, Spies and Samuel Fielden, a bomb was thrown into a group of policemen as they attempted to clear the square, killing seven and wounding seventy. With that the police fired into the crowd. How many workers were killed or wounded has never been ascertained. Immediately a reign of terror swept over Chicago. Homes of well known activists were raided and ransacked and themselves and their families beaten. At the end of May 31 people were indicted for the murder of the policemen of which only eight stood trial. Of these Parsons, Spies, Engels and Fischer, all active anarchists within the IWPA, were sentenced to death on concocted and purged evidence.

No sooner had the news of the Chicago massacre broken, the press began an attack against the anarchists in general, and Most in particular. The *New York Times* screamed on its front page, 'The villainous teachings of the Anarchists bore bloody fruit in Chicago tonight, and before daylight at least a dozen stalwart policemen will have laid down their lives as a tribute to the doctrine of Herr Johann Most...'. Other papers were soon to follow suit. Had he been in Chicago at the time, no doubt Most would have stood trial with the others, and lost his life with them. Many would have liked to have seen this, and attempts were made to get the government of New York to 'pardon' Most and hand him over to the state of Illinois. Luckily nothing came of this.

From then on, until his death, the capitalist press embarked on the most vicious campaign against Most accusing him of every crime and perversion possible, and others beside. Even the widely circulated boy's paper *Tom Swift* singled him out as 'Public Enemy No. 1'.



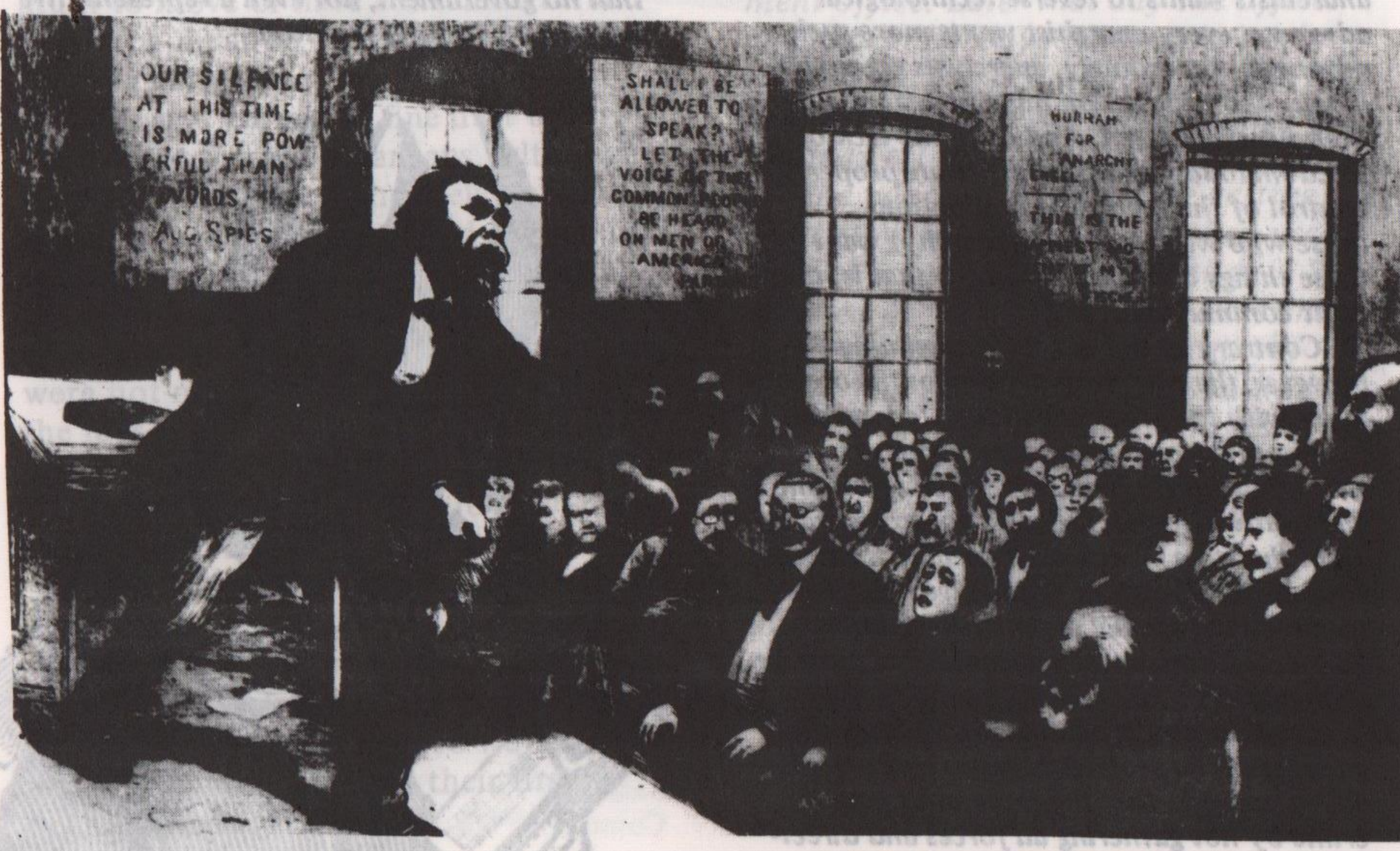
WHEN HIS SKIN IS NOT IN DANGER, AND

Most was released from Blackwell's Island in April 1887 and once again threw himself into agitational and propaganda work despite continual agitation and propaganda work, despite continual police surveillance. With this renewed enthusiasm, the circulation of *Freiheit* soon reached 8,000. In November of the same year he was again arrested for making a protest speech against

the legal murder of Spies, Parsons, Engels and Fischer who had been executed by the state of Illinois on November 11. Sentenced to another twelve months imprisonment after a farcical trial, where the judge recommended a discharge, and the jury, who after three hours were 7-5 for not guilty (this was at 11.30pm) were told that if they could not agree within half an hour they would be locked up for the night. Within ten minutes the seven had changed their minds to guilty. Most however lodged an appeal and was released on bail.

In 1890 he wrote a little pamphlet entitled *Our Position in the Labour Movement* in which he anticipated many of the ideas of anarcho-syndicalism. He wrote that it would be the role of revolutionary unions to re-organise society after the social revolution. In later years he applauded with great enthusiasm the rise of revolutionary syndicalism in France and did much to publicise its development in the columns of *Freiheit*. Just before his death it gave him much pleasure to see the forming of the IWW.

In June 1891, his appeal against imprisonment failed and he was again taken to Blackwell's Island to serve his sentence. Shortly after his arrival there he sent the following message, addressed to 'The Working People assembled in the Copper Institute, New York'. 'Friends and comrades: you have assembled to finally begin a campaign that must be no longer delayed if the enslavement of the people is to be prevented without resorting to all possible means of resistance. It behoves us, in defence of the most natural and fundamental of all rights - the right to think and communicate our thoughts to others - to take action on behalf of free speech that is in danger. The tools of the robber and murder classes that by cunning and force have transformed these United States into their private property, and the masses of the people into vassals, heap shame upon shame and crime upon crime. The best representatives of the oppressed they choke to death on the gallows or take their lives by means of the club, revolver, or bayonet. They drag strikers and boycotters to the dungeon. They use their power to transform this so-called republic into a huge



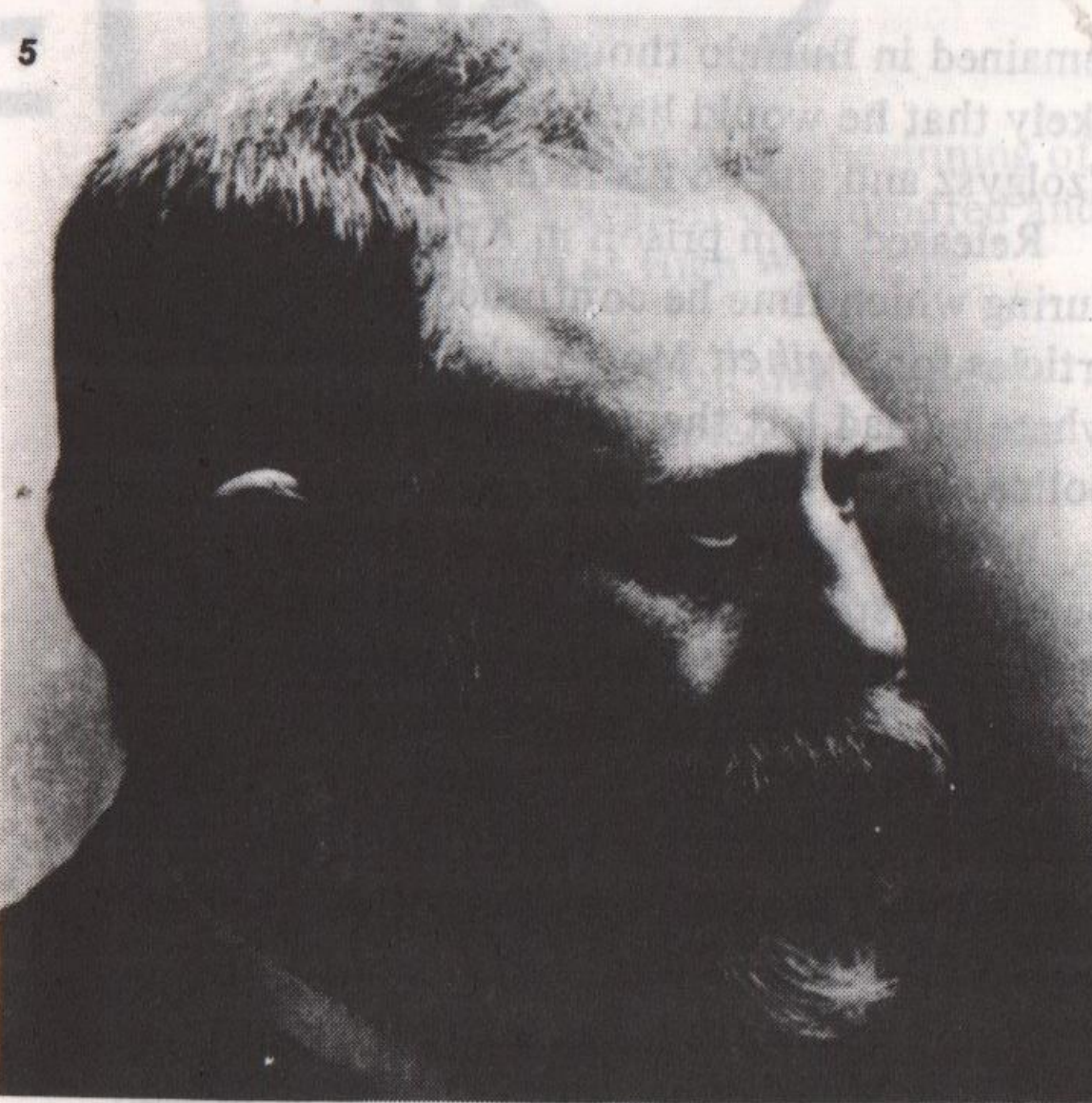
penitentiary. Their own constitution they trample upon. Their tyranny knows no bounds.

'My own case is only a symptom in the development of infamy, but it nevertheless shows vividly to what degree the infamies of these capitalistic bandits have progressed. The end, as it appears, to create in the thinking portion of the working population, that hatred of courage, energy, and enthusiasm that are essential to successfully operate against the ruling mob and bandits.

'This consciousness makes it easy for me to bear with pride the injustices I have been subjected to at present. It is with enthusiasm that I shall later on put myself in your ranks again, to give truth its due with all my power, and relentlessly to participate in the warfare against all that enslaves us, against the political scoundrels and social exploiters, against Church and State, and for perfect Liberty and Communism.

'Comrades, forward against the enemy with vehemence! Yes, it is time to check the capitalistic conspirators! Act before it is too late! Hurray for the Social Revolution!' On his release from prison in April 1892 Most continued his work on *Freiheit* despite a falling readership.

Since he was a child Most had a great ambition to become an actor but unfortunately his facial disfigurement put pay to this. In 1894, however, his childhood dream was realised when he founded the *Free Stage* theatre group in New York. With this group he began to produce, direct and act in stage plays including Hauptmann's *The Weavers* and Ibsen's *Pillars of Society*. He even played himself in a play called *Strike*. Later he produced a repertoire of anti-capitalist plays that played to packed theatres. In 1895, in an attempt to boost *Freiheit*'s circulation, Most changed its format radically. Gothic script was replaced with Latin, the size was reduced and the number of pages reduced from 8 to 4. This, though did little to remedy the situation and in 1896, forced with the sheer impossibility of making a living, Most was forced to move to Buffalo where he became the editor of the German daily *Buffaloer Arbeiter Zeitung* (Buffalo Workers Newspaper) with *Freiheit* appearing as a week-



ly supplement to the daily. No doubt, the German trade union that launched the *Arbeiter Zeitung*, thought they would increase their membership, if their paper was edited by the famous Johann Most, but Most could not get along with his employers, who continually demanded that he 'moderate his tone'. After two years he left Buffalo and returned to New York.

Now *Freiheit* was in serious financial difficulties, but still Most continued. 'If *Freiheit* dies' he said, 'The cause is lost... A newspaper that has often vexed emperors and kings; a sheet that innumerable beadles have pursued, various governments banned, and many legislatures debated; an organ that has been attacked as much as any in any language; a journal that a hundred demagogues and envious persons have tried to slander and with competing publications drive out of business - in short, *Freiheit*... will continue until its mission is accomplished: the making of the social revolution!'

In 1899, in an attempt to raise money and publicise *Freiheit*, Most embarked on his biggest and longest speaking tour covering not only the north east and middle west but also the west coast from San Francisco to Washington DC. During this tour he shared platforms with the British anarchists Charles W. Mowbray and John Turner (until the latter's deportation by American officials) and Lucy Parsons. Slowly *Freiheit* was revived and its circulation gradually increased even though Most himself wrote most of the copy single-handed.

In September 1901 Most, by sheer chance, reprinted an article by Karl Heinzen, written almost fifty years before called *Mord contra Mord* (Murder against Murder). This had been used as a filler many times before by both *Freiheit* and other radical German-American papers, and was a passionate cry for tyrannicide. It finished, 'Let murder be our study. We say murder the murderers! Save humanity by blood, iron, poison and dynamite!'

Heinzen's article appeared in *Freiheit* on the very day that President McKinley was assassinated by Leon Czolgosz in Buffalo. Most was immediately arrested by the authorities in the testicular aftermath of the shooting and accused him with complicity even though Heinzen's article could not at all be responsible of Czolgosz's act. Sentenced to yet another year's imprisonment, despite many months of futile appeals, during which he was released on bail, Most was sent to spend a third term on Blackwell's Island. Had he



remained in Buffalo though it is highly likely that he would have stood trial with Czolgysz and shared his fate.

Released from prison in April 1903, during which time he continued to write articles for *Freiheit*. Most picked things up where he had left them off, amid increasing police harassment.

In 1905, he embarked on what was to be his last speaking tour. After enthusiastic crowds had filled the halls in McKeesport and Pittsburg, he made his way to Philadelphia where a large meeting in honour of his 60th birthday, organised by Voltairine de Cleyne was forcibly broken up by the police. Thrown out of Pittsburg he went to Cincinnati, the next stop on his tour, but arrived there running a very high temperature. Comrades called a doctor who diagnosed malignant erysipalis (St Anthony's fire). Some days later, on March 17 1906, still insisted that he should go on with his tour Johann Most died.

Paul Albert

## From 'Anarchy' by Johann Most

Anarchy is said to be general confusion, wild turmoil, which every civilization scorns. Since this conditions renders both government and law unthinkable, anarchy means the atomization of society into isolated individuals, who with impunity attack others, until the strong subject the weak in a slavery more terrible than the world has ever seen. Abominable and absurd, the goal of the anarchist! Foul the means by which it is to be attained, namely theft, murder, arson, and all kinds of destruction! Anarchy is therefore a mixture of idiocy and crime. Against it society must defend with all power - legally so far as possible, violently when necessary. At all events, every lover of order is obliged to nip anarchy in the bud as well as eradicate anarchists root and branch from the face of the earth. . .

Now if people would only think . . . they would see: anarchy (autonomy or freedom) really means, not the criminal chaos just referred to, but the absence of the criminal chaos that archy (subjugation or government) has brought to mankind. Archy springs from the desire of the strong to oppress the weak; and up to the present day, whatever its form, oppression has been its goal. Archy, always the tool of the propertied, has forever put the screws to the unpropertied. The more barbaric the society, the harsher and more flagrant the archy. The higher the civilisation, the more refined the cleverness of the archists in hiding the usurpation of power - without weakening the exercise of power. . .

If archy in all forms has brought people grief, it follows that the remedy is repudiation. The repudiation of archy is anarchy. Anarchy is therefore the goal of freedom-seeking people. Whoever seeks freedom, advances anarchy. If, among freedom-seekers, a multitude want no part of anarchy (having a false notion of it), that fact does not demean anarchy. The multitude simply do not know that regardless of the route taken in the

search for the rights of people, every route leads to anarchy. It cannot be otherwise; for either one accept archy or one fights it and advances its opposite, anarchy. Something in between is unthinkable. . .

The truth that government (archy) is instituted to exploit the poor is a truth the opponents of anarchy blink at; and, counting on the ignorance they have created in the masses, they adduce a hundred bagatelles in archy's favour. They emphasize crime. Were government and law abolished, they say, unpunished crime would peril life and property until chaos rendered existence disagreeable at best.

These sorcerers! In broad daylight they ascribe to anarchy aberrations of their society, when the basis of anarchy is the absence of such aberrations. All crimes - except misbehaviour of madmen, which, by definition, is the symptom of illness - all crimes are notoriously the offspring of the system of private property, archy's reason for being. This system mandates a struggle for existence, by all, against all. Greed and the lust for power flourished in the propertied and goad the propertied to crimes that as a rule go unpunished because archy enforces its laws against another kind of 'crime': those deeds done out of necessity and in response to brutality. Turn the pages of the so-called civil law: the topic is 'yours and mine'; the civil is the natural result of a society of individuals who want to cheat as much as possible because cheating is the only way to power and wealth. Today's society considers such behaviour normal.

Freedom and equality, the conditions of anarchy, would end this ruinous struggle for existence. . . Law, purposeless, would no longer be needed, nor government. . . and they would disappear.

More important than the arguments of the archists are the arguments from a side that should have the least to oppose anarchy. Unconscious anarchists, particularly those called socialists, expend untold time and effort attacking anarchy, even though their goals are freedom and equality (anarchy). . . These people maintain: anarchy is opposite to socialism. In truth, anarchy is socialism perfected. Because anarchists seek freedom for the individual - the greatest human happiness - other socialists say the anarchists contradict the solidarity of everyone. As if the solidarity of people did not presuppose the freedom of the individual! . . .

This wrongheadedness goes so far as to claim that the anarchists ignore technology and favour cottage industry. . . But . . . no anarchists want to reverse technological advances; every anarchist wants more such advances. Accordingly, anarchists recognise, labour and production must be organised, their powers united. And since the lack of freedom today results from private property's control of the factors of production. . . those who want freedom (anarchy) want these things owned in common; that is, they want communism. . .

Contrary to the old-style communists, however, the anarchists declare for the organisation with the greatest validity, federalism. . . From it, 'over-and-under' structure - that is, authority concentrated in economic and political hierarchies, and power centralised in the state - would be excluded. Instead, voluntary association would give rise to thousands of special organisations, interconnected horizontally according to purpose or necessity. . .

Organisation is paramount. Indeed, the enemies of the proletariat are so well organised, so unified, that the proletariat commit crime by not gathering all forces and directing them at once at the destruction of the

status quo by all possible means. For whether the propertied and ruling classes call themselves conservative or liberal, clerical or free-thinking, protectionist or free-trade, aristocrat or democrat, imperialist or republican - their differences hinder them not from seeing themselves as the propertied against the unpropertied. . . Nor should be overlooked the monstrous police, military, and legal apparatus that stands at the disposal of the bourgeoisie. Nor should be forgotten the machinations of the black constabulary of priests and the reactionary press; the bourgeoisie can turn them to its purpose, too. . .

If the rich stick together, why can't the poor stick together? Unfortunately, the cause of discord among those who should be of one heart and a single mind, and who need the profoundest of unity to achieve victory, is nothing but fear of the word anarchy. Yet all that a socialist has to get rid of, to be an anarchist, is the idea of the political state, to which socialists who are terrified hold fast even though Marx and Engels taught that in a truly free society, the state would wither away.

What is the supreme joy of people? It is the greatest freedom possible, i.e. the opportunity to realize intellectual and physical potential. Of course, such freedom must not go beyond the point at which it hurts someone, for then a domination of some by others occurs. At the same time, in a civilized society, many goals are not attainable by individuals; they can be reached only by associations with a common purpose. But is that to say: a system must exist in which an individual has by dictate to exist tucked away in the bureau of a centralized state, put there by a high power and told what to do from birth to death? . . .

What is needed to produce a system in which the freedom of one and all is guaranteed is simply an agreement for a free society! No need for a Providence directing from above; it is only necessary that things are handled correctly from below. . .

What is the issue? It is not whether besides society a state is needed? The answer, you see, is simpler than many think. We need only imagine what the state has been hitherto. Is it natural, an eternal verity? It is a creature of circumstance, used by a clique to dominate the masses. Let us therefore smash the state to bits. . . Nothing less must be the climax of the Revolution. . .

We do not stand alone. The really great minds have long been sure that, without freedom, no perfect society is possible, and that no government, not even a representative government insures freedom.



# BUNKER OCCUPIED No. 2

## No. 1

In the early hours of Friday March 2nd a group of eleven anarchists and anti-militarists entered the RAF strike command High Wycombe.

Breaching the much vaunted security and eluding the MOD police we split up to occupy the bunker and strategic equipment.

Two men and a woman descended the bunker to physically stop the proposed work in that area. Three men and two women occupied the two heavy-duty, bunker-side cranes, and two men and a woman climbed the two 160 ft tower cranes to take over their control cabins.

All work, other than sweeping up etc was halted, greatly upsetting the MOD squad and Taylor Woodrow site agents.

The bunker and cranes were sprayed and painted with @ and anti-militarist slogans. Banners proclaiming 'NO TO NATO WARHOLES' and 'NO BOLT-HOLES FOR GENOCIDAL GENERALS' were hung from the cranes.

Shortly after dawn the threats and intimidation started. The evictions came later, with excessive violence! A crazed Taylor Woodrow worker, under the supervision of the MOD, climbed down the gear shaft into one of the heavy duty cranes wielding a small axe with which he severed the straps which secured the doors from the inside. The people inside were later forced out.

In the other bunker-side crane the door was ripped from its hinges by a workman. The occupants were pushed around and had their possessions thrown in the mud. Two people left the cabin but a third refused to comply, trying to explain the nature of the action for the non-unionised Taylor Woodrow workforce until a MOD cop dragged him out by the throat.

Down the bunker a heroic resistance was taking place. The troglodytes after refusing to move were given an ultimatum to move or have a machine turned on which must be operated only when wearing ear protection. A compressed air hose sent clouds of fine dust billowing toward the subterraneans. Although they tried to protect themselves with sleeping bags etc the dust did its damage causing sore throats and coughs which lasted several days. Suddenly the machine split into ear-splitting din but the subbies were not moving still! The cops gave up the idea of forcing them out and went down to arrest them. They were winched to the surface in cages, where they got thrown into a waiting police van.

At the end of the first day, when it became obvious that those in the tower cranes were not coming down, the cranes were locked and the occupants, feeling like the top of a reed waving in the 80mph winds, passed their first sleepless night.

The next day, Saturday 3rd of March was uneventful, but that night the two cranes were visited by MOD police who jeered and beat on the cranes with iron bars.

On Sunday morning the woman, who was ill descended the crane. The remaining two were in radio contact until late afternoon, when Taylor Woodrow site manager and another man beat up and forced to the ground one of the crane occupiers. They kicked in the door of the cabin, punched the man's head, kneed and kicked him in the side, stomach and legs, and threw him out of the cabin, where he managed to grab hold, or he might have fallen 160ft down the open ladder well.

The man in the other crane called down to two cops who were watching the incident but they merely turned their backs.

Two hours later, after being given the impression that he would be beaten up during the night, the remaining man decided to come down. The police told him not to move without light as it was very dangerous in the dark. He disregarded this advice and started his decent. One third of the way down he met a worker built like the incredible Hulk coming up. Ten minutes later the police used their lights. Fortunately the workman had been in an inferior position on the ladder to profitably use the time he had been given.

In the end the only charges brought were, criminal damage, theft and obstruction, although people were subjected to hours of interrogation and vaginal and anal searches. We have proved the effectiveness of direct action using small numbers. And is was only the first assault of what one headline called a 'Peace Offensive'. PS. In Brighton on Thursday 8th March after the women's day march, a group of about 20 occupied the navy recruitment office. Later that day the office and a local Barclays Bank were bricked. The navy office was boarded up and out of business until the following Tuesday afternoon.

The police in Brighton are getting some stick for the transport they used to take people to gaol when they arrested us for blocking the roads and bringing Brighton to a standstill yet again. The police hijacked a Southdown bus. Bill Morris of TGWU whose statement was quoted in the Guardian 14 March said 'This kind of action is unprecedented in my experience. Has Britain now been put on a war footing? I understand that passengers were ordered off the bus and the driver ordered to drive to the police station'. Insurrection can be fun.

Monday 26 March 1984, saw the beginning of a week of court cases against one hundred and fifteen peace activists at High Wycombe Magistrates Court.

At about three o'clock on that Monday morning, nine people occupied the, partially built, bunker of the 'UK Air Primary Strike War HQ' at Naphill, High Wycombe. This was done as an action of solidarity with two of our comrades who were in court that day, charged with criminal damage and theft, following our previous occupation of the bunker and cranes at Naphill at the beginning of March.

As on previous occasions we found it very easy to enter and occupy the site of the proposed 'Chief European War HQ'. From the perimeter fence only two uniformed MOD police officers were in evidence. Five of us acted as decoys to draw attention away from the main assault. At another section of the fence we encountered what appeared to be a workman, however he later identified himself as a MOD police officer. We proceeded to unpick several sections of the fence, leaving large gaps. The officer made no definite attempt to prevent this, but he warned that we would get hurt if we attempted to enter the base. Once the main group had successfully entered the bunker all three MOD police concentrated on our activities at the fence. At this point we decided that our actions had had the desired effect so we left without being stopped.



The mixed group of nine who had entered the base had only to contend with one very irate, police officer. He had told the group to stop, and when they did not, he started shouting for assistance, to no avail. In frustration he threw his torch at one of the group, it missed and broke.

Once inside the base the group headed for the bunker unhindered. They climbed down scaffolding to the lowest level. The bunker is half completed, a warren of small rooms some with roofs. There were several large reinforced steel doors with ring locks, the whole area was flood lit. The group discovered, and promptly destroyed, detailed plans of specific parts of the bunker. One of the occupiers left the bunker after having a good look around. He walked out of the base unchallenged, whilst many newly arrived MOD police ran around in confusion. At one time there were over sixty police officers on the base.



By four fortyfive the eight remaining people had set up camp four storeys down with a few days supply of food and alcohol. An hour later they were visited by two MOD police who cautioned them with a charge of criminal damage for the fence. These two officers tried to forcibly remove one of the women, but gave up their attempt after a few minutes struggle.

At ground level the workmen were beginning to arrive. We gave out leaflets, explaining our reasons for the occupation, as the workmen entered the main gate. Over half of the workforce accepted these and appeared amused and sympathetic. Two of the workmen went down the bunker and removed the light bulbs from the occupied room, leaving our comrades in complete darkness.

An hour later the police returned the bulbs, no explanation was given for either action. At eleven o'clock the attempt to remove our friends began in earnest, as they were confronted by approx a dozen MOD police. One of the officers said 'if you do not move in five minutes you will be charged with obstruction as well as your original charge of criminal damage and we will get you out by force if you do not co-operate!' The

intimidating nature of the police encouraged six people to cooperate and they were led away. The remaining man and woman were forcibly evicted from the room. All eight were lifted out of the bunker in cages worked by the cranes.

Once out of the bunker they were questioned by MOD CID individually, each interview lasting about one hour. The CID had photographs from a previous action at USAF Upper Heyford and they obviously recognised certain members of our group.

The first person questioned was put into a police van, on the base at about one o'clock. He stayed in the van for five and a half hours being joined at regular intervals by the other seven. During this time no one was allowed to smoke, doors were left open despite the cold day and baggage added to the already cramped conditions in the van. Repeated requests to leave baggage outside was ignored. This was an extremely unpleasant experience and the police were acting very hostile during the whole time. Eventually the group were taken to High Wycombe Police Station where the charges of criminal damage were processed. The mixed group were detained in one small room for three and a half hours. Every-

one was eventually released at nine thirty that night.

Throughout the day the peace activists in court had received minimal fines and sentences. The two members of our group pleaded not guilty and their case was adjourned until the 18 April. The charge of theft was dropped to prevent the case going to Crown Court, where they would have been able to give evidence before a jury. The occupation of the bunker at this time encouraged and strengthened the resolve of all of the peace activists who had to attend court.

Even though we only managed to occupy the bunker for half a day we were gratified to see the dramatic effect that this action had upon the MOD police. We have proven yet again how inadequate the security of this site is by showing that we can enter Naphill at will and halt work on the bunker.

*NB. This was the first occasion that we have seen operatives wearing leather bomber jackets and berets, suspected by one of our number of being nuclear police.*

strikes without warning in the 'public services'.  
**22nd February** — General strike and big demo in Rome, though not all sectors take action. Union leaders express concern at presence of Autonomia Operai (Workers Autonomy) in the demo. Also strikes in some other cities and towns. The CGIL-CISL-UIL United Federation of Transport Unions issues a statement that the strikes in the railways must be conducted according to the trade unions' own 'code of conduct', e.g. giving plenty of warning of strikes and other measures to render strikes ineffective.

**24th February** — General strikes in Ragusa, Sicily and Florence where 80,000 demonstrate.

**25th February** — The daily paper *La Repubblica* (a bit like the *Guardian*) reports strong calls from the workplaces for a general strike.

**27th February** — Meeting of the Milan Factory Councils. Some want a national general strike but the majority opt for the proposal of a 3 hour strike and a national demo in Rome. Therefore there's not a complete break with the Unions says the leftist daily *Il Manifesto*. Lama distances himself from the most militant tendencies in the strike movement.

**28th February** — General strike in Bari. Lama warns that the Factory Councils must not come into conflict with the trade union organisations.

**1st March** — Strikes and demos at Pisa and Sienna.

**6th March** — First ever national assembly of Factory Councils. 6,000 reps from all over Italy, especially north and centre. Many 'metal mechanics' (car industry, etc), chemical industry and building workers, but also a fair number of state employees, e.g. hospital workers. Some of the Autonomia are present. Strong criticisms made of the authoritarian practices of the union leaders, but trade unions as such are not rejected. Document approved calling for democratic unions controlled from the base. Decided to hold national demo in Rome on 24th. Agreed to meet again on 30th March 'to decide on the way of organising a national general strike' if the Decree to cut the Scala Mobile has not been rescinded.

**7th March** — Government Minister Spadolini says that behind the strikes independently called by the Factory Councils is 'the danger of a return to a destabilising form of extremism' and that there's the risk of all forms of self-regulation of strikes disappearing. Break between CGIL and CISL/UIL grows as CGIL announce support for March 24th demo.

**8th March** — General strikes in Genoa and Turin, where the 80,000 strong demo is the biggest in the city for 30 years. The right wing daily *Resto del Carlino* says that it is better that Communist Party member Lama is taking over the leadership of the strike movement — otherwise extremist elements could become too strong. While the protest against the cutting of the Scala Mobile is mistaken, at least under Lama it is taking place in a legitimate form.

**9th March** — General strike paralyses Naples. Demo of 80,000 headed by the Bagnoli steel workers who are in struggle against redundancies. Also strikes at Pescara and Campobasso.



**12th March** — Turin Factory Councils emphasise that it was the Factory Councils who called the March 24th national demo. They stress that the struggle is being guided by the united co-ordination of CISL-CHIL-UIL delegates (i.e. by the factory councils, not by the official trade union structure).

**13th March** — Veneto Factory Council delegates decide to hold Regional General Strike and to press for improvement in all workplaces on the issues of working hours, employment, etc.

**14/15th March** — 24 hour strike by Veneto railway workers.

**15th March** — 4 hour strike by many workers in the north eastern Friuli Region. Discussions on the Government's measures continuing in Parliament.

## OTHER STRUGGLES, THE SAME STRUGGLE

While workers all over the country have been striking against the cutting of the Scala Mobile other struggles in particular areas and sectors are also being waged — fundamentally all part of the same struggle against the sacrifices the system is demanding. Some examples:

- Steel workers in Genoa and Naples are resisting massive redundancies. The Naples workers have been involved in fierce clashes with the police, such as on 13th January when the police fired tear gas and charged workers in the centre of the city. Wildcat strikes have been hitting the airport at Venice, where workers are protesting against the late and irregular payment of their wages. Proletarians in Monselice, Veneto have taken direct action to oppose the local government's closure of social facilities.

- In Sicily anger at appalling housing conditions, unemployment, threatened redundancies, and exploitation in general has twice exploded into revolts in recent months. On 21st November 5,000 people stormed, occupied and ransacked the Local Government 'Town Hall' in Gela. Clashes with the police continued from late morning to night. In Licata on 15th December a demo against the closure of a local workplace developed into large scale clashes with the police. Barricades were up in the main streets and the railway station was blockaded.

- A major cycle of struggle last autumn involving thousands of Italy's 43,000 prisoners; and some of the activities of the very varied anti-militarist movement, such as school student strikes against the Comiso Cruise missiles, are other signs that something is moving again in Italy after the last six years of very heavy state repression.

## THE ROLE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY AND THE CGIL

The greatest danger to the current strike movement doesn't come from the workers' obvious enemy, the government, or the equally transparently anti-working class CISL and UIL trade unions. As so often the biggest threat is coming from the leftist knife in the back.

The Communist Party controlled apparatus of the CGIL trade union is very determined to take control of the movement. If they succeeded a sell-out compromise will be on the way.

Lama, the GCCIL boss, has been explicit. He is quite prepared to accept cutbacks in the Scala Mobile, as long as the government's other economic measures are,



in his view, adequate compensation. (*La Repubblica* 18 February). The Italian Communist Party (PCI) and their Union hacks are not at all opposed to wage cuts in principle, they just disagree with the particular terms and methods the government is using on this occasion.

The CGIL had no objections to the wage reductions made last year. The 22 January 1983 agreement to cutback the Scala Mobile was signed by all 3 unions. This was despite massive workers' opposition to a measure that opened the way for the current attack.

Today the PCI is opposing the government's measures in Parliament and 'supporting' the strikes for its own reasons. Berlinguer and the PCI want to show Craxi and co. that they cannot govern by decree, ignoring the PCI. The PCI is saying 'Look, without us involved in government, social conflict is uncontrollable. We are the best guarantees of social peace.'

At least some government leaders obviously agree. The national demo against the wage cuts in Rome on 22 March will be massive and 'the dangers of subversive infiltration into the march' are worrying Minister of the Interior Scalfaro. Who should he turn to for aid? Comrade Lama of course. In an unprecedented visit to the CGIL Union HQ, the minister appealed for collaboration between the 'forces of law and order' and the trade unions to counter the subversive threat. The PCI paper *L'Unita* of 16 March reports that Lama was substantially in agreement with the Minister. He assured him CGIL stewards would collaborate closely with the police to stop any possible infiltrators, including 'bad intentioned' elements and guaranteeing 'the maximum security and liberty'. Reportedly, 50,000 CGIL stewards will be on duty enforcing liberty.

# ITALY: WORKERS COUNCILS

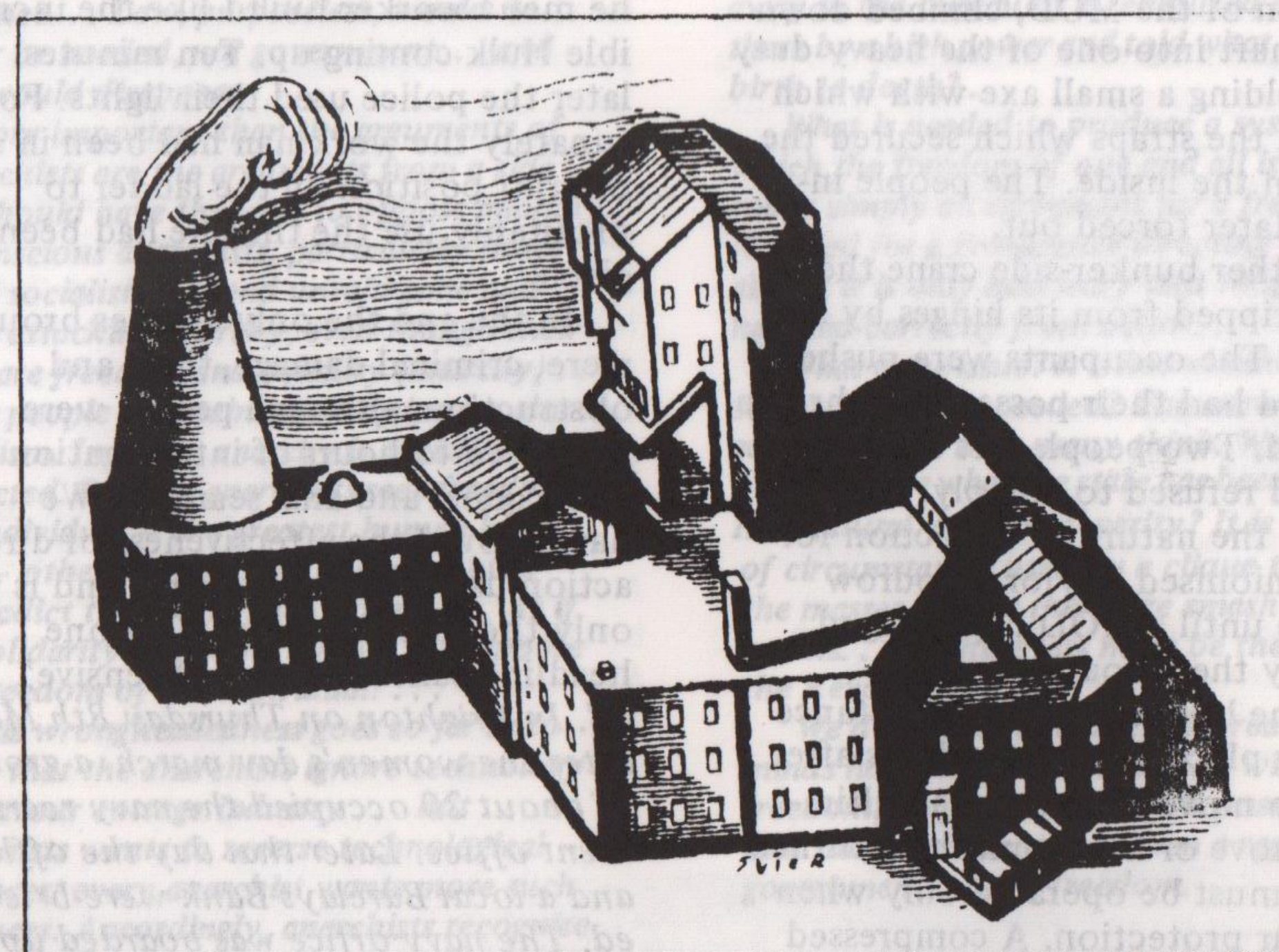
## THE NEGOTIATIONS ON 'THE COST OF LABOUR'

The five party coalition government, led by 'Socialist' Craxi with the Christian Democrats the biggest party, held lengthy negotiations with the trade union leaders to try and reach agreement on the Scala Mobile and other economic measures. The CGIL, CISL and UIL union bosses were all prepared to subordinate workers' interests to the needs of capitalism — without of course asking their members how they felt about being sacrifices.

On 8th February, while negotiations were still continuing, workers in Milan struck against the proposed wage reduction. Union leaders expressed concern at the 'anti-trade union tone' of the 30,000 strong workers' demonstration.

In mid-February the Union-Government negotiations finally broke down. The CISL and IUL leaders were agreeable to the Government's proposals. The CGIL, however, was split. The minority of Socialist Party leaders were in agreement. But the Communist Party majority among the leadership, though prepared in principle to accept a cutback in the Scala Mobile, considered the government had not offered enough in return.

The government decided to go ahead and impose the cut in the Scala Mobile anyway, by means of a 'decree'.



## THE WORKING CLASS STRIKES BACK

In response the 15th February saw hundreds of spontaneous strikes breaking out all over Italy, from Milan to Sicily. Railway lines and roads were blockaded in several places — notably Florence, where railway workers struck for 24 hours. In Pozzuoli, near Naples, workers stormed and ransacked the CISL trade union offices.

This rejection of the government's decision to cut all wages has been maintained since by a continuing series of strikes in different areas. The following account only includes some of the larger scale actions:

**16th February** — Strikes and demonstrations throughout Italy, often accompanied by blockades of roads and railway lines. Big demos in Turin, Trieste and Naples with a railway blockade at Trieste and road and motorway blockades in Naples and Turin. Twenty-four hour railway strike in Turin. In Palermo demonstrators, who included many building workers, clash with police.

**17th February** — General strikes in Brescia and Bologna, with an 80,000 strong demo in Bologna. 50,000 demonstrate in Naples. Strikes all over Italy with the railway workers prominent.

**20/21st February** — 24 hour strike by railway workers in Milan causes a paralysis of rail traffic in great part of northern Italy. As the Milan strike ends, Rome railway workers also come out for 24 hours. CGIL Union boss and Communist Party member Lama criticizes



## THE POTENTIAL OF THE MOVEMENT

The strike wave is seen as positive and important by revolutionaries in Italy, while its also emphasised that the movement needs to overcome many significant weaknesses.

In its militant rejection of the government's austerity plans the mass of the movement differs from the compromising position of the CGIL and the PCI. However a weakness of the movement could be that many workers do not fully realise the real role of the PCI and CGIL & think they actually fully support the movement.

The aims adopted by hundreds of workers assemblies, Factory Councils, and the regional and national conferences of the Councils are headed by a complete rejection of any cut in the Scala Mobile. This is linked to a defence of the social wage, a refusal of lay-offs, and demands for a general reduction of working hours with no loss of pay, a reduction in military spending and the creation of new jobs in 'socially useful' sectors.

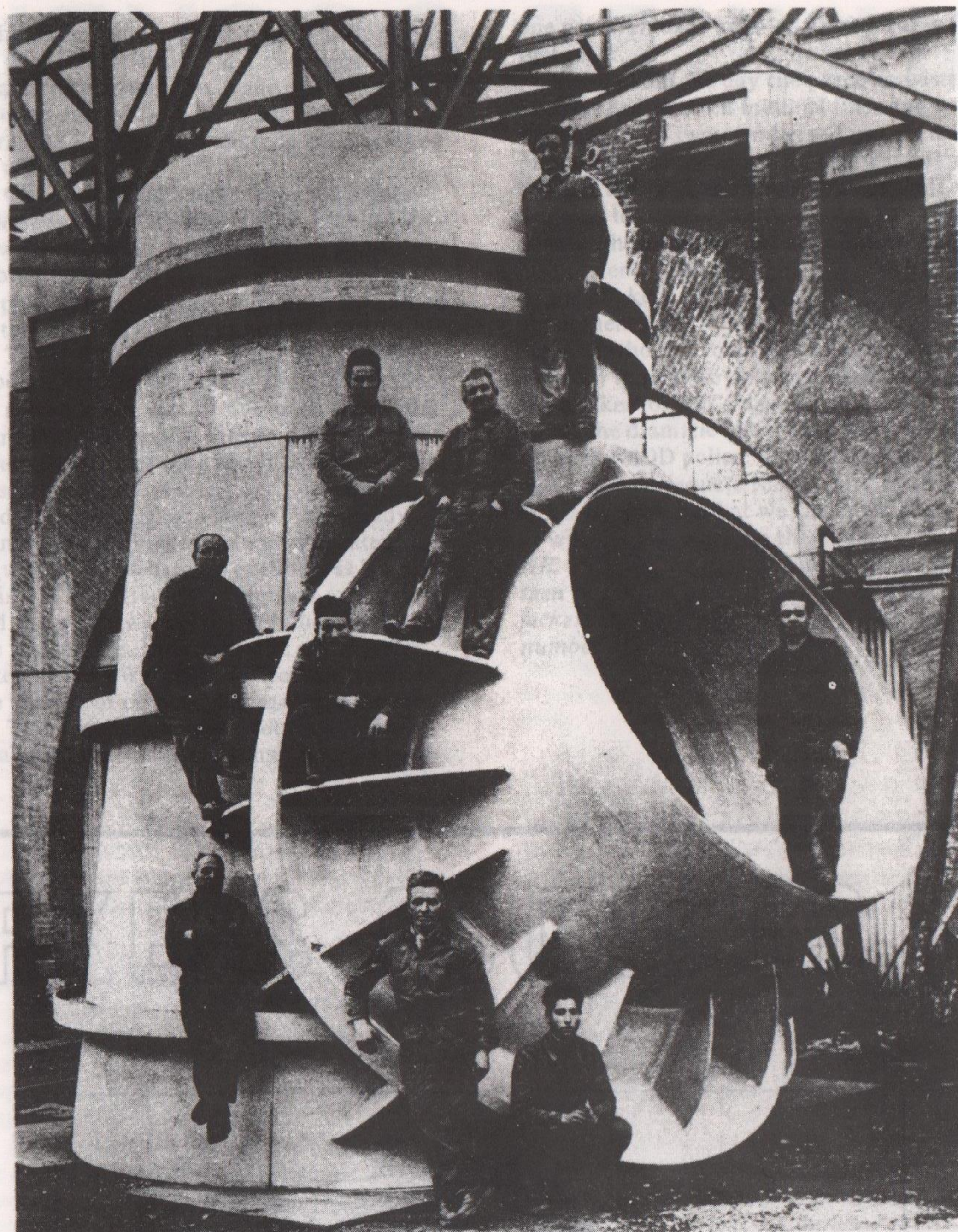
But to what extent are the workers and the Factory Councils actually breaking with the logic of the capitalist profit economy? Here evaluations differ. The autonomia group 'Centre of Communist Initiative' from Bologna consider that the workers are refusing to submit to the logic of accepting a further lowering in living standards in favour of the economic growth of the system, and are thus rejecting the entire politics followed by the CGIL/CISL/UIL Union Federations from 1977 until today.

The 'Autonomous Workers Committees' from Rome, on the other hand, consider that the movement, particularly as manifested in the Factory Councils, still has to overcome many failings. It is only criticising the union's internal regimes not their strategy. It still has a defensive outlook subordinated to the demands of 'the crisis'. And it considers itself part of the institutional set-up, not part of a strategy for change.

As to the scope of the movement, the strikes, demos and other actions have involved many sections of the proletariat in large numbers — factory, chemical industry and building workers, railway, hospital and other state employees, school and further education students, pensioners. But it seems that the unemployed and other 'precarious' workers have yet to take part on a big scale.

In the first week following the announcement of the wage cuts there were many actions that went beyond the tame and ineffective methods of union acceptable struggle. Blockades of railway lines and stations, roads and motorways. And, especially effective, the 24 hour strikes rolling through different geographical areas of the railways, taking place with little warning. These naturally disrupted other areas of industry too.

However the CGIL seem to have partially succeeded in limiting these actions.



The 4 and 8 hour stoppages of the past weeks in different areas have served to keep up the momentum — but unless the actions go much further soon, some disillusionment with their ineffectiveness will probably set in and the movement peter out.

The workers movement has largely rejected all the national Trade Union leaderships. Thousands of UIL and CISL members have been striking despite their leaders' total condemnation of the struggle. Though the CGIL leadership are 'supporting' most of the strikes, they cannot count on their members loyalty either. The workers would be striking even if the CGIL had signed the agreement to cut the Scala Mobile. And the form of the struggle is being decided and the strikes organised through the workers assemblies and factory councils — not through the official CGIL structure.

Nevertheless the often bitter denunciations of the union bosses have not yet led to a rejection of the trade unions as institutions. The call from the National Assembly of Factory Councils in Milan was for democratic trade unions controlled from the base at the workplace. There isn't yet the realisation that genuine workers control of struggles involves completely breaking with the Unions — now far too integrated into this exploitative system to be meaningfully reformed.

But are the Factory Councils and the regional and national assemblies of the Councils at least steps towards genuine workers self-organisation? Some disagreement amongst revolutionaries on this. An anarchist broadsheet from Bologna argues that the movement is one of struggle and self-organisation that contains elements of revolutionary and libertarian social transformation. Though they realise that weaknesses make it unlikely, these anarchists consider that the Council movement, with its anti-hierarchical and anti-institutional characteristics, could even be the basis for a general strike of an insurrectional nature.

And the anarchist week *Umanita Nova* thinks the national assemblies of the Factory Councils extremely positive in that for the first time the most combative part of working class is looking to a way to unite, other than through the official trade unions.

In contrast, the 'Autonomous Workers Committees' consider that though the movement is opposed to the union leaders, it only wants to replace them with 'the new bureaucracy of the Councils'. These autonomists argue that new forms of workers self-management are needed.

Nevertheless there is a general recognition that this movement is at least opening up possibilities. It's a long time

since the "central body of the working class" dared to do so much. Space has opened up for autonomous class war controlled by the workers at the grass-roots. And this also gives the revolutionary movement a chance to re-launch itself and, after the hard and difficult years of repression, break out of its situation of mere 'resistance' as an embattled minority.

## THE WAY FORWARD?

How can the movement go forward? Revolutionaries and autonomous workers groups are urging that today's defensive struggle be transformed into a movement to improve the Scala Mobile and recover lost purchasing power of wages, and to win a reduction in working hours without loss of pay. Through mounting a struggle at every workplace and at the same time uniting workers throughout the country to press the employers and the government for these improvements.

A poster jointly produced by several workplace and unemployed groups from the Veneta Region also advocates:

- A united struggle involving real action against lay-offs and against the re-structuring of entire sectors, such as the steel industry;
- genuine united struggle involving the employed and unemployed to achieve a guaranteed income for all (there is no equivalent of supplementary benefit in Italy, many — perhaps most — of the unemployed have no income at all);

- refusing to pay increases in prices and charges for State services; refusing charges for health care; resisting evictions.

And how to organise in these struggles? The anarchist *Umanita Nova* urges that the temporary coming together of the different Factory Councils be transformed into stable co-ordinating bodies for the direct and federated organisation of the workers, in opposition to the hierarchy and bureaucracy of the trade union leaders. However anarchists from Bologna argue that as the movement advances the proletariat in its entirety (ie employed and unemployed) will organise in such a way that the Councils are superseded, at least in their present form.

More fundamentally critical of the existing Councils, the Autonomous Workers Committees of Rome argue that if the choice is only between the traditional Trade Union Confederations and a Trade Union based on the Factory Councils, then the workers have already lost. They believe there's a need to develop organisation that will not leave 'political activity' to the political parties, but which will advance the struggles of not only factory workers but other sectors such as the unemployed, etc... Thus the Factory Councils could be transformed into more all embracing "Social Councils" united throughout the country.

The struggle against the cutting of the Scala Mobile and for the reduction of working hours developing into a General Strike — this is the perspective of the Autonomous Workers Committees. In such a general strike, involving everyone, the idea of LIBERATION can gather strength — liberation from war, from nuclear power, from missiles from prisons, liberation from bosses.

And, say Bologna anarchists, a general strike can enable all the social sectors in conflict with the system to find free space and freedom to express themselves — and thus in the struggle the movement can overcome the separation and division that makes the creation of liberty and the destruction of power impossible.

The following publications were used extensively in writing this article, some passages being more or less direct translations:

*UMANITA NOVA*, Viale Monza 255, 20126 Milano (anarchist weekly, UK sub. of £22 for a year worthwhile if you can read Italian)

Leaflet 'LOTTA DI CLASSE' published by Comitati Autonomi Operai, V. Volsci 6, Roma.

Leaflet published by Centro di Iniziativa Comunista, Via Avesella, 5/B - Bologna.

Leaflet 'L'ASCIAMO IL PESSIMISMO A TEMPI MIGLIORI' published by anarchists from 'Porta S. Stefano, I - Bologna.

Poster produced by six workers groups and unemployed groups in the Province of Padova, Veneto. The address is CONSELVE, PROV. DI PADOVA, VENETO, ITALY.



## Tottenham Outrage

Seventy-five years ago the 'Tottenham Outrage' took place: it was commemorated in the *Hornsey Journal* (27 Jan 1984) with a feature spread *Death Chase of the Anarchists*. It describes how two 'Latvian Anarchists' held up a bank in Tottenham and made an escape by tramcar (Jan 23 1909) saying 'it would finance arms for months to come'. The article by Ray Dudley, concludes: 'The horrifying bloodshed of that day so long ago was recounted in the files of the *Walthamstow and District Times* and the repercussions led to a tightening of the immigration laws by Parliament. Terrorists still roam our streets. Things don't change much, do they?'

Well, some things change and some don't. There are still lying journalists who will make up 'bullets' for corrupt judges to fire, when faced with libertarians. If Mr Dudley, instead of looking up the *Walthamstow District Times*, had looked up the contemporary *Tottenham Herald* (not much chance of that, it survived as a rival to the *Hornsey Journal*!) he would have found the strange fact that the reporter — also alleging the men were anarchists — had visited the local 'Russian Anarchist' club and had found them divided into two camps, some defending the hold-up mob as militant comrades — others opposing them — and the two factions of 'Anarchists' referred to themselves as Bolshevik and Menshevik respectively! It was evidently a Social-Democratic club the reporter visited — but who in 1909 realised Social-Democrats, even the 'majority section' (Bolshevik) could be gangsters?

There is even no record of the men concerned buying arms, or using them for any purpose other than bank robbery.

Yet Mr Dudley's lies will impress themselves as prejudice upon judges in future cases, of people not born, or whose parents may not have been born, when these events took place. And meanwhile, how many authoritarians have been convicted of crimes in the past seventy-five years?



## Black Papers

STUART CHRISTIE

### STEFANO DELLE CHIAIE PORTRAIT OF A BLACK TERRORIST

BLACK  
PAPERS  
No.1



Stefano Delle Chiaie –  
Portrait of a Black Terrorist  
by Stuart Christie

Black Papers No. 1 £4.95

Available from better bookshops  
and Public Libraries or direct:  
BM REFRACT, LONDON  
WC1 3XX

Bulk orders: @ DISTRIBUTION  
84b WHITECHAPEL HIGH ST.  
LONDON E1.

In this, the first (of many I hope) of the Black Papers to be published by Anarchy Refract (formerly Cienfuegos), Stuart Christie has ably documented the story of Italian Nazi Stefano Delle Chiaie and hence the history of post-war nazism in general. It's a long and complex story with its roots deep in the Third Reich and Mussolini's Italy. By producing such a precise and detailed study, complete with names, dates, places and even phone numbers, Christie has refuted all that crap about leaving such stuff to the professionals (ie. Searchlight and the police).

It really is a long story, and I won't go into details (read the book), but suffice to say it spans three decades, and a considerable chunk of the globe. It involves NATO, ODESSA, CIA, SID (Italian Secret Service), various Nazi groups, the Mafia, drugs smuggling, Latin American death squads, P2 among others, and with his finger in every pie, Delle Chiaie. He has a deserved reputation as untouchable, he has survived so much, thanks to his friends and patrons.

But the book is more than just about a single group or individual, its really

## REVIEWS

about the role of the fascist organisations and the State. The book documents the links between the State and the Nazis and shows the nazis are the dirty wing of the state. The Strategy of Tension in Italy, which led to the Piazza Fontana massacre and the death of Pinelli is shown to be part of a plan hatched by sections of the state from the end of the Second World War. In the role of 'plausibly deniable' agents of the state, the nazis work to produce an atmosphere in which a military coup is both possible and agreeable to large sections of the public. This is the role of fascist organisations, no matter what individual fascists think, this why their organisations exist.

The book leads to those conclusions and draws its lessons accordingly. This is not the sort of book to be read and forgotten, it demands that we take a look at ourselves. The Piazza Fontana incident was not an isolated one-off. State and fascist infiltration of the anarchist milieu no doubt already has taken place and will probably get worse as we get more active or the crisis gets worse. We have to be ready to counter this and this can only be done when we are organised into strong and cohesive local groups. We will learn to trust each other properly and responsibly. As we are now, disorganised, sectarian and frustrated we are ripe for infiltration a la Piazza Fontana. A few "anarchist outrages" would work wonders for the government & police.

Anyone who doubts the sincerity of the fascists would do well to read this book and ponder what it means. Some fascists might be sincere people open to reasonable debate and arguments, but there is no doubt about their organisations and methods. At Black Flag we've had approaches from the National Front which we've firmly rebuffed. But some people on the fringes of the libertarian milieu think its avant-garde or revolutionary to flirt with the fascists. In a time when confusion reigns what is vital is clarity (in whose interest is confusion?). Anarchism and fascism have got nothing in common, neither in theory nor practice.

Read this book, it's well written, complete with appendices and chronology. Learn from its conclusions, it's important. Personally, I look forward to the second of the Black Papers.

Mavros Black



## Sinews

SINEWS Issue One, 25p. Spanish  
Information Network Newsletter,  
49a South Terrace, Esh Winning, County  
Durham DH7 9PS. Published by  
'independent' translators.

Like their pamphlet *Organising an Anarchist Syndicalist Trade Union* (a 16page pamphlet about how the 'CNT' is structured 40p) the authors are clearly followers of the CNT-V 'Renovadas' who left the CNT-AIT after much disagreement over strategy and personalities. Instead of changing their organisation's title they retained CNT (dropping the affiliation with the AIT/International Workers Association the anarcho-syndicalist International and opting for contacts with 'independent' unions in other countries e.g. the SAC in Sweden). For reasons of 'patria' (i.e. the machinery, funds, offices etc. seized by the fascists at the end of the Civil war which amounts to some £10 million now) which the socialists will give up to the real CNT, they kept the CNT title. Further to this, the Socialist approved 'factory council elections' were used as a 'pragmatic' reason for becoming obedient and denying the 'purity' of anarchism i.e. no representation, all delegates revocable etc. The CNT-AIT have 40 members in prison who have no solidarity except from the CNT-AIT and AIT-IWA groups and sympathetic anarchists internationally. The case of the 'Scala' (a night-club which was firebombed and resulted in several deaths including 2 CNT-AIT waiters) which resulted in imprisonment for 5 CNT-AIT militants despite the evidence of the presence of a police provocateur, also is part of the background of the 'split'. Thus it is startling to see the smug attitude of the SINEWS whose 'independence' is clearly weighted towards the CNT-V 'renovada'. Quotes from *Accion Libertaria* (the CNT-V paper) abound which state their case for experimenting with elections, seeking to now reunify the 'two CNTs' etc. When the CNT-V split from the AIT they should have changed their title and then as 'syndicalists' whatever play about with elections, merging with independent (sic) Catholic and Nazis unions and so on. Their continued interest in attempts to disrupt the CNT-AIT much to the applause of *EL PAIS* (the *Times* of Spain) should end. Lately some 45 unions of the CNT-AIT (strange we were told they were in decline?) have said they want to participate in elections 'using all the legal mechanisms' etc. despite the CNT-AIT delegate conference which decided the opposite! They have duly been expelled and they should be happy with the Renovada family. If the CNT-AIT is reduced in numbers (always dubious as not all sections of the organisation are legal or want to give their names to employers, right and left parties, the church or state) which if you look at recent actions seems wrong, then so be it. This situation has arisen before. With the death of Franco hundreds of thousands of people joined all the left and libertarian organisations that had been illegal, within a few years most had drifted off. This did not stop the anarchist movement, let alone the CNT-AIT from its educational, cultural and organisational activities though! Before the

Civil War in the days of another dictatorship the *Treintista* left the CNT-AIT to form a syndicalist union under another name, this 'split' along with repression left the CNT-AIT with very reduced sections in industry and towns. But with the basis of anarchist comrades from the working class who educated and organised for a social revolution, the CNT-AIT began underground and emerged as a social force to be reckoned with! The comrades in the CNT-AIT today likewise do not feel dismay at the parting of the ways with other militants as a clear, different choice of tactics has led to this separation. Instead of endless debate and diplomacy the syndicalist believes in and takes direct action. The CNT-AIT want to organise how they wish not as the socialist state and bourgeoisie would like, despite the carrot of the 'patria' and the possible amnesty for the forty prisoners, they know too well the stick of the state is also raised to strike at independent workers organisation!

The SINEWS editors fail to grasp this and their confusion – conscious or deluded permeates their two publications. For all their 'good intentions' like *Freedom* (at present in declining silence) they are best silent as their 'work' needs undoing and detailed rebuttal lest to persuade people we are middle-class, pacifist, at best 'trade unionists', something which anarchism as a revolutionary movement of ideas and actions is clearly not! One wonders if they applied themselves to the current situation here with Tory Governors criminalising trade unionism and peaceful protest how they would see the working class fighting back – electoral competition with the Labour/SDP-Lib/Comms and Trots for Union leaderships perhaps? Anarcho-syndicalists reject the trade-union hierarchy of paid officials etc. be it in Spain or Britain, Poland or Cuba. Independent labour organisation is the only way to fight fascism and State communism and at the same time build the 'new world in the shell of the old'.



While SINEWS proclaim both CNTs to have 'anarchist/syndicalist goals' they very clearly have different tactics. We well know the situation, 'anarchists' whose 'action' is at best militant liberalism/permanent protest at the worst excesses of the system, a good middle class hobby (and such people are usually nicer than the Tory middle class who would hang and flog the lot of us), but hardly revolutionary. Do the CNT-V in fact reject the State as a goal as well as a practice? Only the CNT-IWA does! ML, the author of the article *The CNT in Spain Today* personally believes there is a 'brotherhood of purists who refuse to allow internal dissension' (shades of *The Bakunists at Work* by Frederick Engels – Marx's factory owner mate – which blamed Bakunin and other anarchists for the sections of the First International retaining their autonomy against the centralism of Marx and Co.), if this is so then the sections who left to form the CNT-V and those recently expelled sections who wanted to participate in elections – despite the delegates conference that decided to boycott them – should change their name and enter

into discussions with the UGT and other 'pragmatic' unions instead of trying to argue with those whom they admit are ANARCHISTS!

The assumption that 'some of those with positions of authority (sic!) in the organisations are dogmatic and manipulative' which you can 'trace back to the exile CNT' denies the fact that any such position of 'authority' that arose would be wiped out, revoked in a horizontal libertarian organisation! Any CNT exiles who have gone against the delegate consensus have been heard and then they either agree to the consensus or leave, subsequently sections who opt for 'elections' have been expelled!

Contrary to some illusions, the Spanish anarchist movement is much larger than the CNT. The anarcho-syndicalist tendency of the movement with its roots in the revolutionary section of the working class has reflected the ebb and flow of the combat against wage labour, for self management of the industrial and community battles using direct action to bring about a quick solution to social problems. The larger anarchist movement has concerns with education/publishing, anti-militarism, prisons, ecology, women's emancipation, youths freedom etc. Some of these groups overlap with CNT militants participating BUT there is an anarchist goal which the methods of getting to are not different from; that is: horizontal organisation! To participate in vertical elections is therefore only an argument when methods and goals are separated for 'populism' 'expediency' 'realism' etc. To renounce anarchism, its ideas and practice would be useful only to those social climbers/trendies/bureaucrats whose pose as 'anarchists' becomes redundant as power beckons and their rowdy origins have to be refined to be acceptable to the bourgeoisie.

We have received letters from SINEWS which they wanted us to print (even though they admit they never read our paper!). We decline, those interested should write to their address themselves.

## Insurrection

INSURRECTION Issue One, 50p.  
Elephant Edition, London WC1V 6XX  
(5 copies and over, less 40%). Cheques  
to Jean Wear, Nat Girobank Acc. No.  
50 2498 307.

The appearance of new anarchist publications is always good especially if they produce interesting news, research or ideas. *Insurrection* should stimulate all those in the movement who read it. Their wish to be 'an instrument, not just a literary exercise for a small group of people' is enthusiastic. Where they propose to judge what is 'in touch with reality' and 'actions that are both possible and comprehensible' will have to be commented upon. Within Italy, the Comiso struggle is not over and other anarchist strategies are already under way. They oppose the anarcho-syndicalist logic as one of defence not attack, yet the General Strike with a libertarian base is surely one of the finest expressions of 'insurrection' as it carries within the possibility of smashing the State as well as the education to prevent hierarchy's triumph 'after the rebellion/insurrection/revolution'.

Their own autonomous group/independence remains, yet they advocate the 'entryism' into popular struggles that smack of the Trots they despise. The contradiction of this verbiage and practice when confronted by, say the council communists and other anti-Party

Marxists, is obvious but when 'anarchists' play the role of intellectual vanguard to the masses, no matter how 'realistically', we find our suspicions aroused.

The 'Stop The City' action does not belong to any group nor does May Day – the anarchist origins in both are obvious and our presence will always dismay the Leaders and passive critics. Affinity group actions are continuous, uninterrupted by those new to the movement for self-management. The anarcho-syndicalist tendency acts for co-ordination, between streets in neighbourhoods, between workers in industry. From this basis of mutual aid and co-operation, a federal organisation emerges, meeting regularly to assess the members' situations and delegating people to extend the ideas and practice of anarchism in their communities and workplaces. Regional, national and international meetings of delegates as well as publications bring people in the movement up to date with events. This can be criticized as merely 'defensive' but numerous examples of anarcho-syndicalist militants as individuals, groups and federations reveal that we are also on the 'attack' against our old enemy – the State. We have membership and the membership have friends, this network is permanent. Besides this we are involved in 'issues' as individuals and groups particularly anti-militarism and we always seek to educate and organise those we meet in the struggle along libertarian lines because we are anarchists, we are for direct action and for the self-management of all social struggles. Our organisation reflects this, it's a horizontal 'union' of anarchists waged and unwaged, all delegates are revocable and there are no paid officials. Formal contacts exist between groups within regions, across the country and overseas. Locals are independent in publications and actions but all contribute to a national and international fund to sustain relations, pay bills, produce the national paper (which is put out on a rotated basis) and internal bulletin (also rotated etc. Dues are split, those waged pay more, those unwaged pay less. Members are usually working class and many anarchists of some experience. To simply dismiss anarcho-syndicalism without good analysis is one of the weaknesses of *Insurrection*.

It will be interesting to see if JW and AB and friends are really able to face up to 'criticism' and 'self-criticism' without 'burying heads in the sand or bristling up' as they seem to think anarchists apart from themselves do.

M.B. South London DAM





# Third Reich

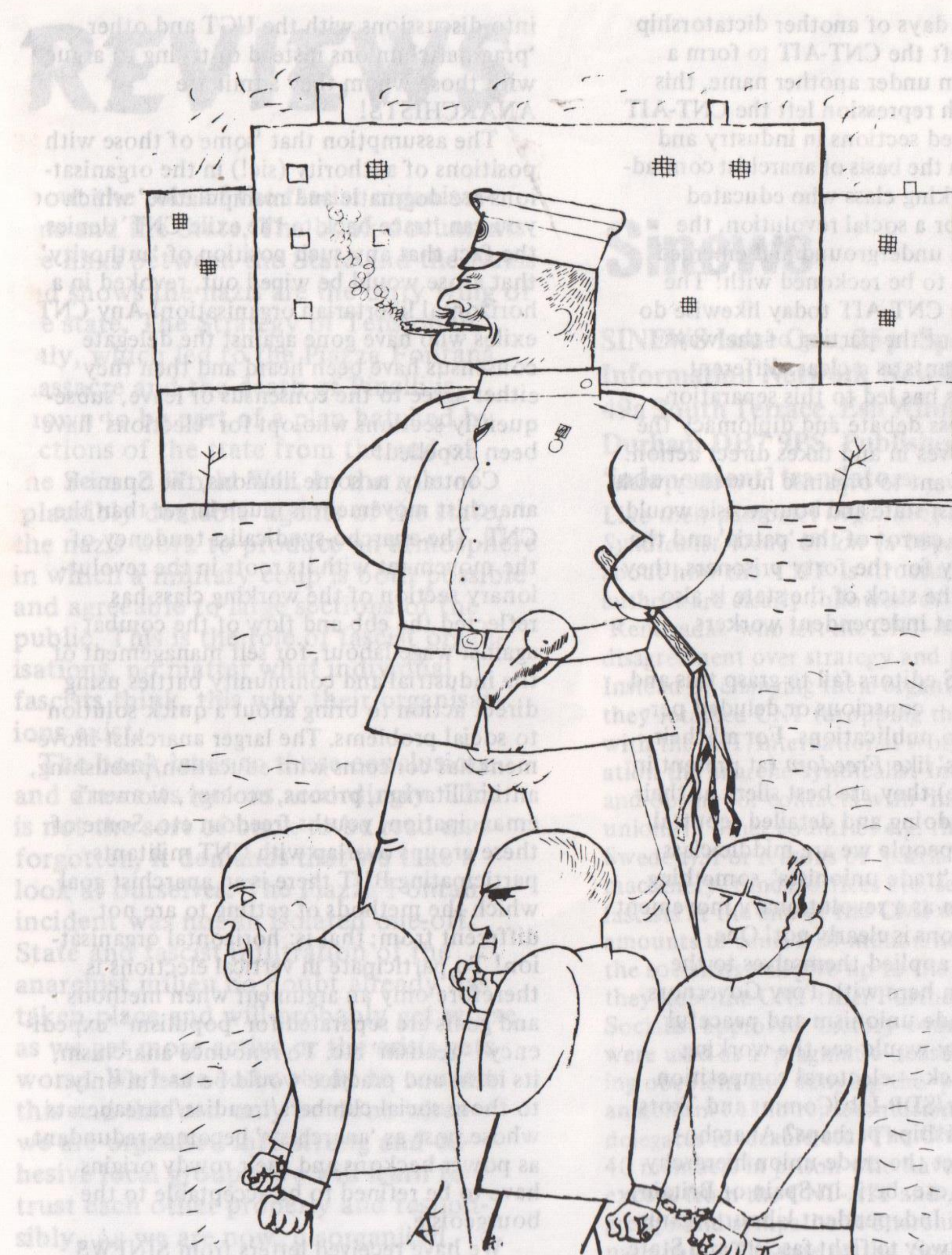
## The Face of the Third Reich by Joachim Fest (Penguin £5.95)

This book has been available for some time now, in English since 1970 and is becoming more and more relevant as our own leaders become more and more obviously inept, not to say daffy. Fest takes typical examples of people not only in the Nazi leadership, but also in the State bureaucracy, the intelligentsia of the Third Reich, in the 'ordinary' social groups and has a look at their daily lives and their personalities.

In the middle of a society which to any outsider had gone mad, the vast majority of the German people, including many of those who were face to face with the more violent and manic aspects of the regime, were convinced that everything was normal, and that they themselves were morally no different from before. Rudolph Hess, the Commandant of Auschwitz, said: *'I am completely normal. Even when I was carrying out the task of extermination I led a family life and so on.'*

Fest is careful not to give in to the hackneyed idea that a whole nation was led astray by a bunch of nutcases. He avoids the obvious examples, like the whip-bearing Julius Streicher, because, as he points out, the tiny minority in the Nazi administration who were genuinely insane tend to divert attention away from the majority who were, exactly like our own leaders today, extremely ordinary people, carrying out the daily routine of government it's a pity in a way that it's become common rant today to say things like *'Thatcher is another Hitler'*, *'Keith Joseph looks like Goebbels'* and so on, because the 'normal' majority read statements like that and dismiss them out of hand. They have been brought up to think of what happened in Germany as a barbaric aberration, engineered by a few evil men, and bearing no resemblance whatever to the present state of affairs in England. However, if you look in Fest's profiles for any portraits of evil incarnate, you won't find them. Hitler, Goebbels, Hans Frank, Von Ribbentrop, Alfred Rosenberg, Rudolf Hess, Himmler, Heydrich, and many other lesser supporters and maintainers of state power whom Fest investigates have no demonic traits. The only thing they have in common is a sense of personal inadequacy (operating at a private level, to be sure) and, in most cases, an ineffectual presence in small-scale situations (ironically enough, most of them would have looked ridiculous on television chat shows - ah in that case they have got something in common with Thatcher.).

Having looked at these personalities, Fest can find no good reason for the tremendous power they came to hold. So he then turns to the public itself, and there finds his answer. It was the willingness of eighty million people to



Perfect Democracy: George Grosz.

find 'the' solution in the policies offered them by this particular bunch.

It was the assumption by the German nation that it was the business of politicians to offer solutions to their everyday problems which invited the intrusion of the Nazi State into every aspect of their waking hours. It was due, as Fest notes, *'to Man's faulty understanding of himself'* (a pity Fest still uses the old sexist terminology). Without a doubt, if people in Germany had assumed on the contrary (in the face of economic crisis) that it was up to them to find their own solutions; if they had remembered at least that some of their time was still their own, in fact was all they had left and therefore worth disobeying the State to defend, then the Weimar Republic might well have been replaced not by an all-embracing iron regime (such as both the two main contenders, the National Socialists and the Communists, offered) but by a more fluid and federalised regime, not an end in itself by any means, but preferable at least to mass extermination and militarisation.

What most people want, naturally enough, is to be left alone. People look to leaders to guarantee them a sense of comfort and irresponsibility. People feel cosy with their leaders, that's why they're happy to grouse about them all the time and why none of them do anything about them.

The crazy thing is that the leaders of the regime which offered the greatest sense of security, the best sense of well-being, to an entire nation, were themselves deeply insecure people who had to justify their reason for being there by appealing either to the divine right of a leader to lead, or by pointing to ghastly spectres which they claimed would engulf Germany if they, the Nazis, were not given maximum power. Where would our politicians be without a Russian threat and a general belief in the rightness of strong leadership? And where would they be if their policies (affecting the lives of millions of people) were shown to be intimately connected with their own limited private personalities, as Fest has shown in the case of the Nazi leaders?

There is one more aspect of the book which makes it relevant to the present day set-up in Britain. Fest again and again points out that the great strength of national socialism was that it was all things to all people. To the working classes it was a promise of a better crack at the whip and a refreshing change from namby-pamby bourgeois leftism; it stressed the dignity of work and the privilege of the workers to contribute to the nation's well-being by not exercising his right to strike. To the bourgeoisie it offered a humble proletariat and lucrative contracts. To all it offered

greater and greater liberty while it simultaneously strengthened State power; the building of larger and larger prison camps was seen as a step in the direction of freedom; the destruction of the works of people like Thomas Mann, Bertolt Brecht, and the Bauhaus artists was shown to be the prelude to the flowering of German culture; the deportation and then extermination of Jews and Gypsies was done in the name of humanity and economic necessity. And all this time the public, all those supposedly thinking individuals, were dazzled by a carefully engineered impression of strong and confident leadership, an almost apolitical leadership standing above the pettiness of right/left politics in righteous dominance. And that is how power works: it will always offer what people want - a sense of belonging, greater freedom, and improvement in the quality of life. By it's very nature, power can only offer a sense of belonging by forcibly excluding some and then creating enemies of them; it can only guarantee freedom by the strengthening of coercion and punishment; it can only improve the quality of life by intruding into private life and dictating to it. Those lessons should have been learnt once and for all in the extremes of Nazi Germany. You only need to peer into one of the propaganda sheets currently purporting to offer news information to see that the lessons have neither been learnt nor, of course, heeded.

Sun reader.

## Blob

### THE BANKRUPTCY OF SYNDICALISM AND ANARCHISM 'Workers' for proletarian autonomy and social revolution. BM BLOB, London WC1N 3XX 20p

Written in 1979 to criticise '... nostalgia surrounding anarcho-syndicalism' which 'insurgent workers at one point felt a need for' because 'the hour of revolutionary syndicalism passed a long while ago'. Anarchism enjoys popularity amongst 'insurgent workers' and instead of 'nostalgia' there seems to be again approaching 'the hour of revolutionary syndicalism' despite the Marxist 'time keepers'. In the case of these authors whose role as 'time and motion' creeps (lurking around, spying on the skiving anarchists as they play up at work) is done in the name of the Department of Marxist Truth which they call 'proletarian autonomy' (and is in fact neither), but is publicly known as 'spontaneity'. This 'modern' council-communist-situationist-libertarian-Marxist-autonomist term is applied to themselves by themselves as they reject anarcho-syndicalism because it believes in permanent organisation of the workers and they want the workers to organise spontaneously at the very moment of the revolution. This is a con-trick designed to leave the 'revolutionary movement', so-called, in the hands of an educated class just as does the so-called revolutionary party. Yer 'ordinary workers'

are only expected to get involved when there's any fighting to be done, hence all struggles are to be pissed on as 'reformist', quoting the anti-party line 'trade unions are reactionary', 'you are being diverted', 'the only salvation is autonomy/workers councils etc' slogans of the ultra-Lefty.

BM BLOB previously put together the booklet *Wildcat Spain Encounters Democracy* which for all its radical, critical critique of revolutionary specialists ends up as the 'revolutionary' rantings of an anonymous radical clique in specialised language - one of the ironic/contradictory legacies of Situationist 'methodology' of writing, a caricature of the Hegelian-early Marx philosophical manuscripts. Theorising of this variety is left to the 'specialists' and they find some popularity amongst students and the intelligentsia, understandably many workers find these 'proletarians' a lot of posers who speak funny and smell like Trots of some sort!

A previous publication *Like a Summer With a Thousand Julys* took a comprehensive look at the 1981 riots, their background and aftermath. This was much better written and dealt with all sorts of social questions and problems, it was at least interesting. The translation of what seems to be a dismal originally Spanish article five years later, is a poor challenge to anyone's mind. Particularly with its style of quotes, rants and numerous notes. It, along with SINEWS, can be added to the library of curious critiques of anarchism and anarcho-syndicalism that with the progress of time have revealed themselves to be bankrupt.

@ peasant

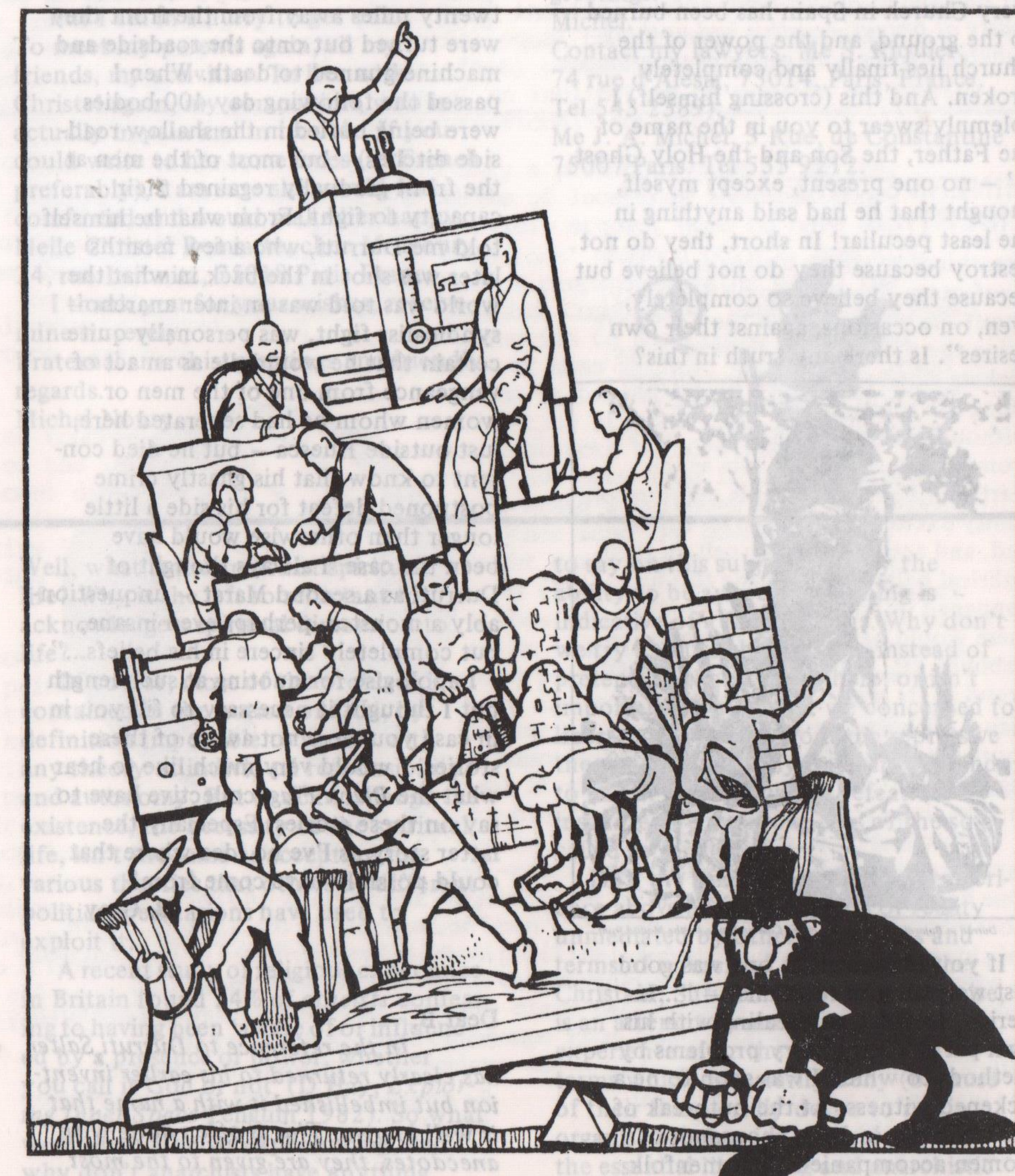
## Bulldozer

### BULLDOZER No. 7 Spring 1984 75p

This Bulldozer is the best produced anti-prison magazine around, because it does not gloss over issues which are important to those people in the anarchist movement. Issues like sexism, rape, exploitation, racism, the conditions under which people have to live, also appraising and attacking institutions which are used by the state to push people into the ground.

The articles include, an interview with one of the Vancouver 5, one on the death-fest at Marian State Prison in Illinois which is being undertaken by Leonard Peltier, Albert Garza, Robert Hugh Wilson whose American Indian name is Standing Deer. There is a good letter on rape inside and outside prison written by James W. Parker in Tennessee State Prison in Nashville. There is also a story about an attempt last October by six prisoners to escape from a Federal penitentiary at Lompac, California. The guards armed with automatic weapons opened fire and sent 130 rounds towards the six unarmed prisoners, one of whom died. The beatings meted out by the guards afterwards was indescribable. There are many subjects touched upon in this magazine but the thread running throughout is resistance or a living death.

B.M.





## Snipe & Woodcock

Dear Black Flag,

Whilst in the library today I picked up a book by one Cedric Salter, called *Northern Spain*, and looking at the pieces on Anarchism I got a surprise.

In one of the back issues of *Black Flag* (Vol IV, No. 7) there was an article about atrocity mongering called 'Snipe & Woodcock' where a reference was made to Cedric Salter. In this book Cedric Salter says the 'Anarchist Leader' quoted by S. Mais is none other than Durruti, and adds: "Perhaps a short incident from those far off days is not out of place in explaining the odd seeming mixture of piety and church burning. It occurred in August 1936, when a wild crowd, of which I was one, pressed into the Plaza de Catalunya to hear the great Anarchist Leader Buenaventura Durruti make a speech. He concluded something like this - '...and I swear to you, that I Buenaventura Durruti, will not rest until every Church in Spain has been burned to the ground, and the power of the Church lies finally and completely broken. And this (crossing himself) I solemnly swear to you in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost ...' - no one present, except myself, thought that he had said anything in the least peculiar! In short, they do not destroy because they do not believe but because they believe so completely, even, on occasions, against their own desires". Is there any truth in this?



Durruti in Bujaraloz before a part of the Column leaves for the Madrid front.

If you thought that one was good just wait till you read this! - "...In Lerida, Durruti was dealing with his own particular military problems by methods to which I was soon to be a sickened witness. At the outbreak of the Civil War in July, thousands of women accompanied their menfolk

## LETTERS

to 'the Front', and since all officers, or even discipline as we know it, had been abolished, this army of camp followers could not be stopped. In brief, without their girlfriends the men would not move. Inevitably the 'Milicianas', as they called themselves, caused fatal fights for ownership amongst the men and, in a matter of months, half the male fighting force was incapacitated with venereal disease - and this was in the days before antibiotics. Durruti knew that he could not separate them by any orders he, or the Catalan Government might give, so he commandeered all the lorries he could lay his hands on, and let it be known that these were going first to withdraw the 'Milicianas' to a leave centre well behind the lines, then to bring up the reinforcements of 'Milicianas' who, he said, were ready and waiting to take over the fight, and, finally, transport the present frontliners to rejoin their girlfriends in Lerida. He succeeded in persuading several hundred of the women to accept the idea, with the permission of their menfolk. When he got the lorry loads of cheering women some twenty miles away from the front they were turned out onto the roadside and machine-gunned to death. When I passed the following day 400 bodies were being buried in the shallow roadside ditches - but most of the men at the front gradually regained their capacity to fight. From what he himself told me Durruti, who a few months later was shot in the back in what the world was told was an inter anarcho-syndicalist fight, was personally quite certain that he would die as an act of vengeance from one of the men or women whom he had separated here, just outside Huesca - but he died content to know that his ghastly crime postponed defeat for his side a little longer than otherwise would have been the case. I always thought of Durruti as a second Marat - unquestionably a monster, perhaps even insane, but completely sincere in his beliefs..."

I apologise for quoting at such length but I thought it necessary to fill you in in case you were not aware of these stories. I would very much like to hear what the *Black Flag* collective have to say on these stories. Especially the latter story as I've no idea where that could possibly have come from!

B. Gray

Dear B,

In the reference to Durruti, Salter has clearly returned to his earlier invention but embellished it with a name that is well known. This is often done with anecdotes, they are given to the most

colourful person around. For instance: Lady Astor - as a Tory, Prohibitionist (but more particularly being a woman) was the subject of many stories during the war - eg. that she said soldiers coming back from (wherever) should be given yellow labels to show they were likely to be suffering from VD. An obviously absurd story is thus given a show of credence (oh yes, Lady Astor of course...)

The anarchists are often depicted by authoritarians either as criminals, lunatics or sometimes amiable fools.

"I swear in the name of God the Father: 'recall the many Irish jokes, One anti-Spanish-anarchist story related in many books (sometimes attributed to Durruti) 'Why did you burn the Church' - 'I thought that the Bishop was inside' - started life with the Fitzgeralds.

The story about the prostitutes is new to us but is a classical manufacture.

(a) it portrays all the women in the front line as prostitutes.

(b) it suggests no one cared about what happened to them because they were prostitutes.

(c) when did it happen, or could it possibly have happened? Why was nothing said at the time by anyone? Why did none of those concerned have relatives or friends, so that it could be overlooked?

It is like the renegade Woodcock's story about the massacre of the homosexuals (which no one ever heard but himself) - it suggests there weren't enough enemies they had to go shooting homosexuals and prostitutes..... Why combine the two? The "undoubtedly sincere" people are not from China or the other side of the moon. One can meet all the members surviving from those days of the Libertarian Youth - so often accused of these things - and there are no axemen or poisoners among 'em..... These atrocity stories depend on one NOT knowing the people concerned.

It isn't really difficult to find "where the stories come from". There were atrocities in the Civil War but one has to place them in background. Look at the English football fans going amok in Luxembourg etc and then imagine if (say) the German Jews in 1945 had then had the arms available to the Israelis subsequently, would then have done to the Nazis. But people like to add and twist stories to show how clever they are. The renegade Woodcock is a typical case in point. When asked to issue proof of his stories he indulges in personal abuse and says "it is well known....."

## Noury Prison Letters

49th week of detention

Jail of La Sante 5 January 1984

'We must overcome our rage and disgust, We must share them with others so that both our action as well as our moral principles will be elevated and enlarged'

'Rene Char'

Dear Comrades,

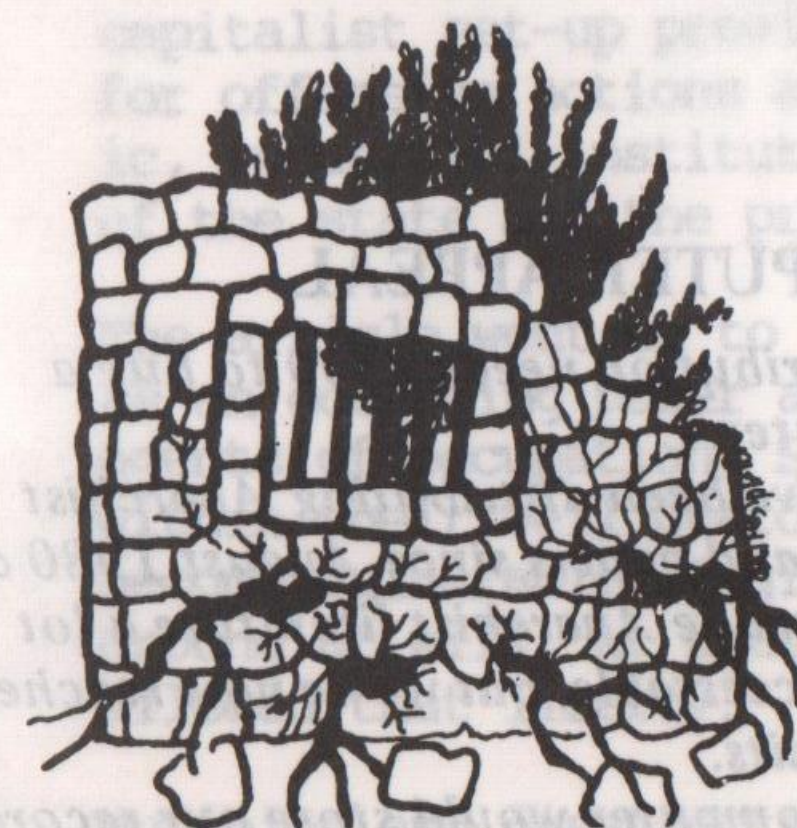
My trial took place today and I inform you that the servants of State power, the tools of repression, have condemned me to five years imprisonment - 4 have to be served.

I AM GOING TO APPEAL AGAINST THE SENTENCE. Though I have never held any illusion on 'Justice', I am not feeling down because of it!

As I have been inside for a year, I should now get out about 31 January 1987, or if I obtain conditional discharge about the final months of 1984. Spirit is high.

I thank you very much for your moral support and I offer you those two roses (see letter).

Fraternal anarchist greetings.



## Is God Necessary?

Dear Black Flag,

Pick up any anarchist magazine or book - it's full of articles about political struggle, attempts to de- or refine anarchist political theory, or news items about those who are already involved in all this. All necessary. But am I alone in thinking that it is possible for there to be an anarchist spiritual life, a theory and experience of life that is both libertarian and not anchored in the mundane world of order and control? No, I don't think this is a contradiction on terms. We've all heard of the description of the Church of England as the Tory Party at prayer.

'The one who is outraged, therefore concerned and mobilised does not scream, but reflects what s/he can do about it.'

U. Meinhof

50th Week of Detention

La Sante 17 January 1984

To friends,

Thank you so much for your sympathetic little card. It made me feel very happy. Yes, they (the damned servants of the power) have stuck me for 5 years in jail - of which 4 must be done. Luckily one year has already gone by. If I obtain some pardon (grace), which I should be able to get in theory, I could be out towards the end of 1985 in 2 years, otherwise beginning of 1987.

There may be also conditional discharge towards the end of this year.

I hope so anyway. But this is not sure and for people in power, the more an anarchist stays inside the better for them. But there is still hope regardless. One year passed quickly, the rest of the time will pass quickly too I am sure.

I received lots of visits, lots of mail (all I do is read and write letters), that I receive and send. Fantastic. I have time for nothing else, and I am not bored at all. My morale is excellent, in spite of my disappointment and sadness, it stay unshaken.

But I am in a hurry to get out... To meet my parents again, all my friends, my activities. To live with Christel again, my companion, who is actually in pain and in trouble. If you could write to her sometimes (in French preferably), I am sure she would feel comforted and would make her happy. Melle Christel Remiatte, chez Mr Noury, 24, rue Leibnitz, 75018 Paris France.

I thank you for your wishes, receive mine sincerely, Fraternal anarchist greetings and friendly regards.

Michel Noury.

Well, what is the anarchist spiritual life? Why is the left so reluctant to acknowledge a spiritual dimension to life?

Of course, most of the problem is contained in the notion of God, by definition impossible to square with any theory of individual responsibility and autonomy. But to acknowledge the existence, the necessity of the spiritual life, isn't the same as accepting the various theories that others of different political persuasions have used to exploit it.

A recent study of religious experience in Britain found 24% of atheists confessing to having been 'aware of or influenced by a presence or power, whether you call it God or not' (D Hay, *Exploring Inner Space* Penguin 1982). So what were these atheists experiencing, and why don't anarchists have anything

52nd week of detention  
La Sante 26 January 1984

Dear Friends,

As you already know on the 5 January 1984, I was condemned to five years prison (4 confirmed). I have already done one year. It seems to me a very heavy sentence in comparison to what I was charged with. But the police do not agree.

In fact, yesterday they took me out of jail to be a witness of some gendarmes and two other police sections (OCRB and 6th section) on the subject of theft with use of weapons whose responsibility they want to make me endorse and of which they accuse me of participating in.

All day (25 January, I repeated my innocence to the police on this matter. I never committed these acts, neither these nor others, and it became evident that it was because of my being an anarchist that they are trying to fix me up with something carrying more condemnation.

Justice cannot reproach me more than for what I have already been condemned. I am innocent of the accusations given by the police. This is an SOS to anarchist solidarity internationally. Thank you for your support. Receive dear comrades my fraternal greetings.

Michel.  
Contact my lawyers: Me S. Riquier: 74 rue d'Alesia, 75014, Paris, France. Tel 543 2389).  
Me J. A. Michel, 3 Rue, de Constantine 75007 Paris. Tel 555 9212.



to say on this subject? Surely the ability to be aware of anything is indicative of a faculty in us. Why don't we try and use this faculty, instead of pretending that it isn't there, or isn't important? Why aren't we concerned to liberate this ability from the repressive theology that usually contains it? And to use it, like speech, to defeat the insanities we see around us of the so-called rational life?

Isn't the spiritual or mystical experience above all an awareness of reality unmediated by others' concepts and terms of reference? Theory, whether Christain, Sufi, Hindu or anything else, is an attempt to make sense of the experience after the event, and in terms which necessarily deny (because of their this-worldly desire to retain organisational or ideological power) the essential liberating and anarchistic



nature of the experience. (What was it Blake said? 'See a world in a grain of sand/ And a Heaven in a wild flower,/ Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand,/ And Eternity in an hour.')

There are also now over 450 'new religious movements' in this country, mostly small groups of people looking to the occult, magic, eastern philosophies and religions, original teachings of Jesus, etc., for an explanation of the unexplainable nature of the spirit.

These are not positive steps away from the old spiritual authorities, they are simply attempts to establish new ones. It is the 'free market' economy all over again, this time with the spiritual entrepreneurs peddling their tawdry products: Bring your visions to us and we'll interpret them for you and make everything make sense. Of course it's all ridiculous. But hasn't anarchism thrown out the baby and the bath? We don't need these authorities but why deny the spiritual nature of men and women at the same time? Just because the capitalist food industry dominates food production in this country is no reason to starve — it's a reason for self-sufficiency. So where are our self-sufficient (syndicalist?) spiritual groups? Yours,

Michael Fears  
London NW10

*We have indeed all heard of the Church of England as having been 'the Tory party at prayer' but this had nothing whatever to do with spiritual experiences*

*and everything to do with hard capitalist reality. It is not 'the left' or 'the anarchists' who alone are 'reluctant' to engage in spiritual meditation and experience. No one concerned with political struggle and the experiences of the world is anything but materialist.*

*The origins of religious experience are also materialist and the mystical side is very much a side-issue. It is true, however, that in troubled times — such as the present in which we live under a world threat of destruction — interest in mysticism and unreality grows — and is seen around us induced by drug taking. This may be taken as an escape, not as an attempt at a solution. The new 'religious movements', where they are not induced entirely by commercial reasons or State necessity, are in the main confessions of failure — or, if you prefer the word, copping-out.*

*There is — I personally regret but find it only honest to admit — a tendency which calls itself anarchist and also drops out, not just of capitalism or Statism but of practical life. I understand the appeal it has, but it is not anarchism, which is above all a determination to take hold of life, as totalitarianism conversely is the cult of death.*

*'Where are our self-sufficient (syndicalist?) — [not quite!] spiritual groups?' They are mixed up with pacifism, quietism, drug taking, drop-out cults, and you can have them.*

Labourites what Governments normally reserve for 'dissidents', and treating them to only a taste of what they can expect from Special Branch, which is essentially the armed wing of the Conservative Party, if they step outside Shadow politics.



### THE SOLUTION

*After the Uprising on June 17th  
The Secretary of the Authors' Union  
Had leadlets distributed in the Stalinallee  
Which said that the people  
Had forfeited the government's confidence  
And could only win it back  
By redoubled labour. Wouldn't it  
Be simpler in that case if the government  
Dissolved the people and  
Elected another?*

### ANSWERS TO QUIZ

1. There had been an attempt on Suner's life by Resistance fighters and he had been admitted to hospital where it was found out he was also suffering from venereal disease and had infected his wife. In the resultant family row Franco sacked him.

2. Paderewski, pianist—President of Poland, escaped to Spain during the War. He was arrested and would have been sent back to the Gestapo but for American intervention. He went on to Poland, but the shock killed him and he died of heart failure.

3. If you want to read the unpublished works of the Marquis de Sade that's the procedure you have to go through.

4. Lechin is of mixed Syrian and Bolivian parentage and so taller than the average Bolivian — and the company reckoned he would be a natural for the mining football team.

5. Hilda Monte — involved in one of the anarchist attempts against Hitler, and executed by the Nazis.

### COMPUTER APPEAL

*A Distribution needs £500 to buy a computer.*

*We've been distributing Anarchist books and papers since August 1980 and we've made Anarchist literature a lot more accessible, but we've now reached our limits.*

*A computer would store our records; make up our invoices, statements and delivery notes and address our labels. This would give us the time we need to find new shops to sell to, and new books to sell. We'd also like to improve our advertising.*

*A computer disc drive/printer and the right software would cost us around £500. We've already been given £135 and a small amount can be raised from among the publishers, but inevitably we have to look outside for most of this money.*

*Can you contribute? A donation however small, will be helping a large number of anarchist projects; including Anarchy, Autonomy Press, Black Flag, Bratach Dubh, Cienfuegos, Freedom Press, Freedom, Insurrection, Rebel Press, Refract Publications, and Solidarity. Who knows, you may even need us yourself sometime.*

*Cheques, cash etc. to A Distribution  
84b Whitechapel High Street, London  
E1. See Anarchist Press to see how the appeal is going.*

# DISARMING THE STATE POSTSCRIPT

In the last issue of the Quarterly we published an article by 'M. Gandhi' on the issue of disarmament, which criticised the strategies and tactics of the peace movement, advocated widespread offensive actions as an alternative and gave a resume of possible military and related targets in the UK. The article went on to argue that the UK has become a satellite of the USA and that any anti-militarist action we take must be seen within the wider context of a) fighting statism, and b) fighting colonialism.

The article briefly touched upon some of the reasons why, like the CND of the '50's and early '60's, the peace movement today is doomed to failure when confronting the power of the state. The state has all the resources at its disposal to counter any protest movement, where symbolic protest can only hope to engage in a conflict of propaganda. At the same time an effective resistance movement cannot be built up overnight and therefore we all have to face the fact that any offensive actions by committed revolutionaries have to be both selective (targeted) and generalised (widespread). Furthermore a resistance movement that is unarmed cannot fight an armed state on equal terms. Activists either need to arm themselves or invent alternative means of posing an effective threat to the states' well-being. We are neither short of targets or opportunities: the military-capitalist set-up provides an ideal backdrop for offensive actions aimed at political, economic, industrial institutions that are the mainstay of the state and the propertied class.

The article went on to describe the US military as an occupying power and its personnel as the agents of occupation. Shielded as they are within their well guarded bases, they only become vulnerable if given the liberty to travel around at will. At present US troops have been allowed that liberty.

Mutinies and disaffection was also touched upon: the article detailed some of the instances, but was sceptical of any significant disaffection for the future, given that the military authorities are nowadays far more selective in the way personnel are chosen for duties of a 'sensitive nature'.

The absence of the organised labour movement in anti-militarist struggles is painfully obvious. Military hardware cannot be built without the complicity of organised labour. And the problem of what happens to those industries that are to be converted to non-military production has only be touched upon. Another point: a labour militant is not used to kow-towing to police violence and intimidation, hence the reason you don't see droves of miners sitting in front of military bases waiting to be arrested. To do so would be like saying to a boss 'please can we have higher wages' while allowing yourself to be walked all over. OK, a policy of peaceful

non-cooperation can occasionally get over a point, but what exactly have peace protesters got to bargain with? They are saying to the government, 'don't do that, otherwise we will do this' — but what is the 'this' that they are threatening: the withdrawal of their labour? the effective sabotage of the nations' defences? a massive boycott of the economy? If there is no effective threat, then it all gets reduced to being a propaganda battle, fought out in the popular press and on the TV screens.

Put it another way: how can peace protesters hope for wider solidarity from the labour movement when, in so many cases, their own practice of solidarity is limited, in the first place, to the anti-militarist struggle? Those peace protesters who spend nearly all of their time in opposition to militarism and the nuclear arms race experience a luxury few can afford to engage in. While many others have no choice but to try and earn what living they can in the constant struggle against Capital, is it not sheer arrogance for some people to define their own contribution in the resistance against authority at the expense of those who in the end support the peace protesters livelihood? This imbalance will probably only be corrected when full time activists disengage from symbolic 'actions' and, instead, are able to collectively pose a threat equal to the mass withdrawal of labour. Then, perhaps, will labour militants have more of an inclination to provide solidarity to the 'professional' activist.

In reality only a prolonged general strike, and/or a series of localised insurrections, could, the article argued, hope to have any effect on a nations' defence policy. Anything else would be of propaganda value only. The picket of Greenham Common, for example, succeeded in drawing attention to the Cruise issue and to the problem of mass protest versus the Armed Forces. But when it became clear that the Cruise convoys could not be stopped from leaving the base, rearguard attacks on more penetrable targets should have been made in order to demonstrate that the State's defences were not impervious. On the other hand the government may well have thought again about deploying the convoys a second time had, say, public transport workers, in a show of solidarity, decided to bring the country to an indefinite standstill. Perhaps the real turning point will come when we see anti-militarists in large numbers actively supporting industrial action by, for example, instigating a campaign of sabotage against troops employed in strike-breaking or against police on anti-picket duty. The nightmare of any politician is realised at that point when strikers, anti-militarists and jobless combine and fight together out of mutual support. This is the point when the State begins to experience fear and when political leaders, capitalists and all those who have spent their lives shitting on the working class desperately start to look for ways of escape from the sinking ship they find themselves in.