

BLACK FLAG

organ of the

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FREE



CARBALLO BLANCO

Fernando Carballo Blanco (21) is the longest serving political prisoner in Spain. His case deserves the active support and solidarity of all anarchists and libertarian socialists for without question he is serving his sentence only for the crime of being a Spanish worker committed to the ideas of anarcho-syndicalism.

Carballo was sentenced to 30 years in 1964, together with myself, by a Consejo de Guerra Sumarísimo under the laws relating to banditry and terrorism. I was sentenced to 20 years but served only 3½ years before being granted a "clemency" (only after the kidnapping of a Spanish diplomat in London and the machine-gunning of the American Embassy in London in 1967), but Carballo

Spain, though not of the charge of banditry and terrorism of which both Carballo and myself were accused, but all Carballo Blanco was guilty of was being a member of the C.N.T. and meeting a clandestine contact from the anarchist movement in France at a pre-arranged rendezvous in Madrid. No evidence was brought forward at our Court Martial to substantiate the Brigado Politico Social allegations that Fernando had been involved in planting explosive devices or even that he had knowledge that I would be bringing explosives with me for deposit in Madrid.

The Spanish prison authorities have been making life particularly difficult for Fernando

any one person can suffer, particularly within the repressive environment of Alicante Prison where he is the only political prisoner. We are launching a major campaign of international solidarity with this comrade in conjunction with the Comité Pro-Presos in France and we urge all comrades to make their feelings known to the Spanish Ambassador, the Director General de Prisiones in Madrid, the Director of the Prison Provincial de Alicante along with letters of solidarity to Fernando himself. Let us do everything to ensure that this year is the last Fernando Carballo Blanco remains behind bars.

Stuart Christie

1926 THE WATERSHED OF CLASS HISTORY

Celebrate 1926? It was a defeat arising from a betrayal. Celebrate what? Only the parting of the ways for the labour movement. Here it was above all the General Strike that was a decisive test for the workers' movement. Before then, with all its faults, there was a working class movement. Afterwards it disintegrated, and the name was taken over by class enemies. It was not the General Strike which caused this to happen, but it marked the process by which it happened here. It was a watershed of our class history. There were many currents within the working class movement. Not all went into the major sea of parliamentary reformism. But those that did were channelled off into minor streams.

We neglect at our peril the old syndicalist traditions which existed within the British working class movement before 1926. This is why, in "Black Flag" we have always accentuated the need to discover our old traditions and history. To the extent socialism was a working-class movement, it was libertarian — just as in other countries. It was the canalisation of socialism by the middle-classes into planned... is that caused libertarian socialism to become a backwater explored only by sectarians.

During the First World War the working-class had rejected the bureaucratic topheavy and reformist trade union leadership which had compromised itself with the State. The shop stewards' movement had developed as a decentralising shop-floor corrective. In effect, there was one vertical movement (controlled from above downwards) and one horizontal movement cutting across it (controlled from the shop floor). This existed formally in many other countries: to ensure the "vertical" movement was triumphant the full force of the State was used against the workers to whatever extent was necessary. Ever since the one gauge of democracy has been

not the extent to which society is managed by those who make it up — but the extent to which repression had to be used against the people to make them accept the fact of rule from above.

The difference between "vertical" and "horizontal" unionism was informal in this country; but it existed nevertheless. The TUC managed, after 1926, to break with the last vestiges of syndicalism and of independent action. More than ever they turned to parliamentary participation in seeking to gain the struggles they could not gain by industrial action. The establishment had a bad fright in 1926 — it took them a long time to get over it — but the TUC Central Council was even more frightened than they of the possibilities which the conflict had evoked. This is what made them lean more heavily on the Labour Party, which had been infiltrated and conquered by the middle class intellectual authoritarianism of the Fabians.

The influence of the Communist Party was from the first a treason to the whole conception of the working class movement. It made "revolution" synonymous with State dictatorship. It tried to impose its own authority — not

succeeding in Britain, it subordinated the struggle in 1926 to the leadership of the TUC General Council and thereafter to parliamentary socialism. It diverted all struggle into what were presumed to be "Left" causes but were all concerned with the defence of the Russian dictatorship.

When the working class movement became Statist it ceased to be working class. It was pushed into defensive positions in the thirties — the rear of fascism, the struggle against sub-standard housing, the battle against unemployment. These were the battles of the "Old Left" — succeeded by the "New Left", still with Statist ideas, always with the fallback of supporting the Labour Party, still supporting dictatorial movement abroad, still wanting to subordinate the working class to an intellectual middle-class leadership — now a student one.

It plays on the fear of fascism when only its ghost appears; it struggles to get into sub-standard housing, by squatting rather than get out of it; and on the subject of unemployment it is divided between those who want the "right to work" and those who want the right "never to work again".

One looks with amazement at all that is left of the conception of the movement fifty years after 1926. What has it to do with us?, we ask. The workers ask it too. What has it to do with the class struggle or with social liberation? It deals in State reforms, in liberal measures, in State participation, in national liberation, in support for tyranny everywhere provided it's labelled "Left" by Moscow. But of the elements of democracy and socialism, not even to speak of syndicalism or anarchism, not a trace — but one.

It still pays lip service to workers control from time to time, and next year it is proposed that this will become "law" ... the Old and the New Left will be at one in the Labour Party scheme for "management participation". You want workers' control? You shall have it ... we shall simply give the name to something utterly different. Just as in Russia where the name "soviet" implying something democratic and socialist — has been taken by the State and given to something utterly and completely in contrast! Just as in Germany where the name of socialism and of "volk" — the people — was given to something utterly different to socialism and opposed to the people!

So it will be here. The name of the cause that cannot be eradicated will be taken as a label for its opposite. That is the very stuff of State oppression.

In fifty years not only have we gained nothing, we have lost everything, so far as aspirations to freedom are concerned. The material benefits consequent upon the effects of civilisation as a whole — lauded as being due to the State in totalitarian countries or to the Chancellor in power for the time being in parliamentary ones — mean that, mercifully, our living conditions have improved. But as for getting the whole benefits for ourselves we have taken many paces back.

We have not lost our traditions though the Statists would

ROON'N'ABOOT

Allegations of maltreatment of patients at St. Augustine's mental hospital have been upheld by an official enquiry. There is nothing new or unknown about the unsatisfactory state of mental hospitals; nor in present circumstances is there any major way of preventing the bullying of the mentally ill or the aged save by constant vigilance. This case came to light only because of two junior nurses at the hospital publishing their own dossier of criticisms which led to the enquiry.

Needless to say, attempts were made to prevent that dossier ever reaching the public. A curious sidelight was a report that attempts had been made to "defame the character" of one of the campaigning junior nurses.

To quote the "Guardian": "Dr Brian Ankles, a chemist, who worked as a nurse for a temporary period, said, 'It was suggested that I was an anarchist and part of an international conspiracy to cause trouble at mental hospitals. Shortly after our first criticisms were published I was moved to the newest geriatric ward in the hospital. Many people saw it as an attempt to get me to resign, but I would not.'

Our old friend the international conspiracy rears his boar's head whenever officialdom is in trouble. But it was apparently agreed that once they had decided Dr. Ankles was an anarchist they decided, as a "slipper", to put him in geriatrics! Too subtle for the minds of officials to know that the senior geriatric specialist in the country is an anarchist, Dr. Alex Corcoran: we do not think it has yet been suggested he uses his talents at the service of an international conspiracy. "That's a Corcoran."

It is now pretty obvious that a deliberate attempt was made by South African business interests to smash the Liberal Party which has been an embarrassment. They lend a respectable frugality to anti-apartheid activities, and prove at any rate a troubleshooter gaily. That is the background to the Thorpe affair and to the Hair affair.

Whilst contumelying the South African businessmen, pause to consider how many "line agents" of big business and of Government too have employed the same type of trick: in the main these ladies have been used against the Anarchist movement. Can the Hair affair, troublesome as it was to Peter Hair to be accused of a bank theft and acquitted, stand up against the Naomi Vassalli case? He would not say so for a moment. Can the Thorpe affair, embarrassing and difficult as it has been for him, stand up against the anti-Makino campaign of vilification? How many times have official police launched false accusations against Anarchists?

A further reflection on the Hair case is the utter and sickening hypocrisy of the press. Hair was acquitted by a majority verdict; all the press join in to say, as is true, that the case should never have been brought. But a couple of hours the other way and the headlines would all have been screaming *The Hidden Life of Peter Hair* and vilifying the "bank robber who masqueraded as a Liberal Party activist".

A question to the snotty Young Liberals who told Mr. Thorpe that he ought to have ignored the statement of the unbalanced Norman Scott-Yosifoff who at every turn in his life humes Jeremy Thorpe whom he says "seduced" and (shades of ... "Peggy" paper) "initially discarded him". They said Mr. Thorpe should have met the statement with a blunt statement that his sex life was nobody's business but his own. A bit much to expect from a politician, especially one with the political West Country on his back! Should Mr. Hair equally have said that all capitalism is robbery while making no statement either way as to his alleged involvement?

Is there any doctrine more generally discredited than the one which says we have not only the right, but the duty, to declare war on a neighbouring nation merely because we disagree with its institutions?

What Member of Parliament will say that we ought to declare war on Russia immediately to mark our disapproval of State Communism? On yester war is declared — as in

the case of Hitler's Germany — will they declare that disapproval of its institutions is what the war is all about.

Yet the theory of a war of disapproval — condemnation if a "reversible peace" — is Edmund Burke's no less than the theor that M.P.s are "representatives" of their constituents and not "delegates". Burke took, by definition, no heed of his constituents' views when he aired his theory. He obtained no confirmation of it by law. Yet every M.P. quotes it as if it were constitutional law and one which every citizen had taken an oath to observe!

It is convenient for them, because having got themselves elected, they can then cheerfully ignore anything their constituents want; and moreover hold it undemocratic and even criminal for them to try and pressurise them.

The recent bad light thrown at the selection of Labour Party candidates as a result of Trotskyist infiltration in the ward en battuees shows how undemocratically they have been chosen; and how they scream when those rules are used against them! Once chosen, what is the electorate expected to do? It has the choice between a few candidates chosen by a few people. The only intelligent course would be to abstain totally; and this every propaganda medium encourages.

BEST OF TWO ALTERNATIVES

The busted marriage of Princess Margaret has brought the limelight on young Ruddy Heddle, the very well-heeled young man with whom she has been coexisting ... in a "commune" that he belongs to, and in a West Indian island. Moving between the Caribbean paradise and the commune, Her Gracious Highness has been dropping out amongst the weekend hippies at a farm supplying macrobiotic foods to a communal restaurant ... as far as the Duke of Beaufort's place, one can always change clothes and go over for the fox hunting.

The group of well-heeled young socialites who joined together to buy a "commune" are by no means unusual. One knows from one's own experience of rich young ladies and gentlemen who live on squats. They could buy up the whole terrace if they wanted to. But they have "dropped out". Don't talk about class war it's so dreary!

While one appreciates that the rich who form communes and live "free, liberated" lives are no worse than the rich who buy detached houses in leafy suburbs, they are no better either; and at least the latter are the open enemy. Our society is becoming like that in the later stages of the French Revolution ... the *mauvais riche* still had plenty of money, but they didn't flaunt it; they were somewhat ashamed to show it, but they held on to it and flaunted their simple tastes. All of which cost just as much money ...

When one sees TV writers, doctors, producers, journalists, all living in squats ... and usually picking the best ... one tends to smile at the blow on the shin for the wealthy developers. But there is another side to it. One appreciates hippies have every right to take over a house and smoke the day away peacefully. But are they entitled to prevent working families getting into the only homes they can get, for which they are — maybe stupidly, but patiently — waiting, while they hold up housing projects and call plaintively on the "vanguard" to come and protect them, Big Brothers to replace the State from which they "have dropped out"?

ROME RECALLED

According to *Le Monde* (March 6th) "the CNT, the old anarchist trade union confederation, all-powerful at the beginning of the Civil War, and which was thought to be dead is returning from the Catacombs." Not, however, from the grave (as a misquotation from *Le Monde* has it). There is a big difference: in the catacombs the Resistance went on to the bloodthirsty Caesars.

Declares a advert for a lecture on "sexism": "We are not born men and women. This happens later because of the attitudes of society." Is it sexist to say that (with a few dubious exceptions) this is untrue?

Workers Audit

"Open the books" is a demand that is increasingly being heard from what passes as the revolutionary left in Britain. Such a "demand" reveals a rather touching display of faith in the bosses : hoping that they'll comply with the request, and can be trusted not to cook the books before they're opened. It also exposes a complete lack of genuine revolutionary thought.

Anybody who reads Lloyds Bank Review (and naturally anyone who is anybody at all reads Lloyds Bank Review) will know that there is more than one way to measure profit (i.e. Historic cost or Replacement Cost) and each method can be used to demonstrate an opposite principle from the same figures. Using 'Replacement Cost' methods it is possible to prove that the final crisis of capitalism so often predicted by the Trots is well and truly here - now. Yet it is these sputtering revolutionaries, the Trotskyites themselves who seem to be at the point of disintegration, with declining membership, collapsing papers and splits which make nuclear fission look like child's play.

Demands to open the books are not subversive - stealing the books and publishing the contents is; and it is on an issue such as this that the differences between anarchists and the authoritarian left are most obvious. Revolutionaries who ask to be allowed to make the revolution reveal nothing but their own weaknesses.

Anarchism has always been a movement which has drawn its theory from the practice of the working class: sabotage; the general work strike; the general strike and above all direct action

but then anarchism is working class socialism, not the statist variety propounded by middle class intellectuals. Working people have never needed to have the books opened before they knew they were exploited. In Russia, China, South Africa, USA and in Britain we know we are oppressed (although in different ways) because we feel it every day of our lives.

It is true that there is a crisis developing, but "opening the books" won't make it more apparent, because it's not an economic crisis, but a crisis of authority. Britain's economic problems are just one result of this crisis of authority which manifests itself in absenteeism, squatting, 'etimo', and a general decline in social institutions such as the church, political parties and the family. The decline of the 'revolutionary' left is part of this overall tendency, as people refuse to accept any authority, even revolutionary authority.

"Why don't they fight?" remains a headline in Workers Action: referring to the Yes-man attitude of the trade union leaders not realising that there is more revolutionary content in being deliberately and consistently five minutes late for work every day than in all the resolutions passed by the TUC in the past 20 years. Direct Action by working men and women has changed the face of history and is every day determining the nature and course of the class struggle, and here are the tools of revolution, and as the struggle increases in intensity we won't be asking anyone to lead it, we won't be asking anyone to "open the books" - we will take them and burn them - without permission.

M.E.

OPPORTUNISTS KNOCK

Europe never regarded its citizens residing abroad as criminals or anyone emigrating to America as a traitor.

Not so in our country, (Russia). The individual at home ever oppressed and neglected has never made as much as an attempt to get a hearing. Free expression of opinion at home was always regarded as an insolence; independence as sedition. The individual was absorbed in the state, was dissolved in the commune. The revolution effected by Peter I replaced the antiquated landlord rule of Russia by the European bureaucratic system.

The European forms of administration and of the judiciary, military and civil organisation have developed into a monstrous, hopeless despotism . . .

Committed by the complete absence of resistance, power went on occasions to outrageous lengths, unparalleled in the history of any other country.

Every act of power, every relation of a superior to a subordinate is a flagrant exhibition of gross insolence, of the humiliating certainty that the individual will stand for anything . . . the government at home is more self-assured and unrestrained that it is in Turkey or in Persia. There is nothing to restrict it, no traditions of the past, for it has disowned its own past, and has no concern for that of Europe. It has no respect for its people, knows nothing of the general culture of mankind, and battles against the present. Hitherto, at least, the government was ashamed of its neighbours. Now it sets itself up as an example to all oppressors and aspires to be their mentor . . .

We grew up under terror, under the black wings of the secret police, and were mutilated by hopeless oppression. We have barely survived. But is that not too little? Has the time not come to loosen our hands and tongue for activity which would serve as an example. Has the time not come to awaken the slumbering consciousness of the peoples? And surely it is impossible to awaken it by whispering, or remote allusions, when shouting and blunt words are barely audible? Open frank acts are required . . .

This forthright statement about oppression in Russia, though opposite and highly relevant to the present situation, was made in 1850, by Alexander Herzen ("From Other Shores"). It shows how Russian despotism flows in unbroken sequence from the Tsars. Marxism, by its belief in conquering the State, allowed itself to become intertwined with it.

The remarks of Alexander Herzen may be compared with those of Solzhenitsyn. The latter is having a ball running down tyranny in Russia, but to what purpose? He is implicitly opposed to revolution, but what other hope is there in Russia? The people with whom he is running do not want revolution in Russia either, all they want is a 'go' at socialism in the West, and Solzhenitsyn, like a good showbiz man, gives his public what they want. He not only attacks the tyranny of his native State but suggests that this is what comes of departing from the established order everywhere. He does not suggest how it can be altered. He leaves the possibility that maybe it can be done by war. But they have no intention of going to war to add another capitalist

ULSTER

A clarion,

This letter is written in response to a very informed journalistic article called "Ulster will Fight" (Black Flag, Vol. IV, No. 71) by a few people of differing "leftist" views (incl. Anarchist) who have found enough in common to reply.

You seem to be sadly misinformed on the true nature of the struggle in Ireland. The lesser division in the Irish working class is not due to the rantings or ravings of official Sinn Fein (or any other crass imperialist and hence anti-British source), but due to the native bourgeoisie (Unionists) who successfully implement the orders of the capitalist game divide and conquer. Aided by British finance and emigration, sectarianism flourishes, making the plea for solidarity by all and any of the forces on the left an uphill struggle. (Incidentally the power of propagandised sectarianism appears to permeate not only the UDA, and those British who can find it in their hearts to differentiate between a Proli and a Taois, but even, it would appear - Black Flag! You claim that the fascist paramilitaries of the Protestants are merely at a response to the IRA, when in fact many of the leading initiatives are taken by them e.g. UVF can claim a "first" with anti-personnel bombings. As such you attribute to the IRA the at least to shoot "20 workers" whilst UDA shoot "20 Catholics" - presumably the Catholic leaders don't work!).

"Your day of hope is the closer and more intimate community co-operation" . . . Perhaps in future issues of Black Flag you could explain this to us, as the physical and mental structures of capitalism appear remarkably resilient.

The British army, native co-ercive agents, courts, media etc. all work under the protection of an imposed institutional framework effectively designed to thwart this intimate community co-operation. The polarisation of the working-class has been the desired result, aided, of course, by the grass-roots sections of the workers themselves, though Black Flag seems to see this as a sign of "experiences of power", e.g. the "pre-social general strike", was more of a lock-out than a strike, the strategy of an intimidating few who had vested interests to protect, though needed social forces i.e. workers, to do all the dirt for them. Far from scaring the Governments of Europe, it demonstrated to them a working strategy paralleled on Germany 1933, though with the necessary amendments!

Black Flag's solutions to our problems wavers between realism and a call for ideological purity: Realist because the answer seems to be - if the kill the stop, then the two communities given their experiences in power, can come together. However the killings are a product of a lack of co-operation, not its cause. Ideological purity each fits a

GARY TYLER

Even in New Orleans, it would be difficult today to frame a black kid just because he was black, in the manner of the Old South.

But just thirty miles upriver, it is a different story. They are not living in this generation. They are in some ways in the wrong century. In St. Charles Parish, Gary Tyler faces death.

It began on October 7th 1974. There was a racial disturbance at the High School in Deshaie and a white student was shot and killed. There were hundreds around; the majority of the white students were enraged in such violence and chasing black kids out of the school, when the fatal shot was fired.

The police had to find a black suspect quickly. The next day they picked up 17 year old Gary Tyler, who happened to be on a bus leaving the school with a crowd of others.

shooting of the generals - in fact leading members of protestant para-militaries, forces of the left, and police are periodically shot at or shot dead: T. Herron, S. Finn, Joe McElroy, J. Bryson, B. McMaster, J. Taylor, L. Coo, G. Fitt to name but a few.

Try to look beyond the Daily Express for your facts, perhaps your analysis might differ.

In this le moss,

M., R., L., G., M.

Belfast

Our anonymous correspondents ask us to "look beyond the Daily Express" but utter its platitudes - there is no real hope for Northern Ireland while "the troubles" persist. It is due to "sectarianism" - not by any chance religious patriotism. They add to these platitudes the usual leftist ones - bemoaning that "Bally" (no class divisions here) and "native bourgeoisie" (Unionists) - a political division of road from the bus capitulators. What these have to come after dividing, that can't be obtained under the harp and tricolour, remains unstated.

The two communities CAN come together - nowhere in the world do such anachronisms continue to have power as they do in Ulster, or to a lesser degree, the ghettos in its shadow in some British cities.

The use of violence "paramilitary" or police repression are in themselves, except rhetorically, insurmountable. They can co-exist with protest. What constitutes fascism is the use of such, or other, methods to smash the workers organisations. If the workers' organisations exist, fascism generally understands, but not conquered. Those who justify such attacks are fascists wherever they call themselves. Failure to understand this leads to frustration.

Many Irish comrades have expressed strong sympathy with the article in question precisely because of the insistence that there IS a change of attitudes, a silent revolution, a shift in community co-operation (within the separate communities, not between them). Where else in the United Kingdom, or the world for that matter, could a working-class community get its own way, right or wrong? Who else could it reject the Establishment plan in, sternly?

*If we define democracy as the determination by the people to get what they currently want - as distinct from the rule-by-persuasion which means they *want* what the - Ulster is the only democratic part of the offshore area of Europe and perhaps of all Europe. That is the source of unrest as distinct from civil obedience. Clearly the faults of democracy and democracy in this sense is just not enough. But that is why every step in the direction of local co-operation at street level is more significant than anywhere else.*

The police had to find a black suspect quickly. They say the Ku Klux Klan held a rally and started reprisal, police then picked up Gary Tyler, who happened to be a bus leaving the school with a crowd of others.

When, after a year, Gary came to trial there were three witnesses against him. All contradicted each other. One had been under psychiatric care, the other was vulnerable to police pressure from previous brushes with the law. Ult a third witness, Natalie Blanks, said she actually saw Gary Tyler fire the gun.

The police women officers made her undress and search her before she could get dressed again, the male officers were in, forcing her to make a statement, which she later recanted, saying it was given under intimidation.

But on that evidence, Gary Tyler faces the electric chair. Only worldwide publicity can save him, as it did Jimmie Little.

WRITE NOW COMRADES TO THE U.S. EMBASSY BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE.

If the terrorists want war, they will have it, with all the consequences that follow.

Manuel Fraga Iribarne
But they apparently did want it, they declared war on 18th July 1936. The consequences follow today; it has

THE
MYTH
OF THE

National Liberation Struggles

The following article is abridged and re-published from *Fifth Estate*. It originally appeared in a longer version in "Internationalism" (vol. 7) under the title "Nation or Class": Communists and the National Question," by C.D. Ward. We republish it here with the intention of widening the discussion on the myth of "National Liberation struggles". ("Internationalism", P.O. Box 961, Manhattanville Station, NY, NY 10027; "Fifth Estate", 4403 Second Avenue, Detroit, MI 48201).

The bourgeoisie has maintained its class rule this century by engaging in a permanent counter-revolution, an unending attack on the working class. All the mass organisations of the class in the ascendant epoch - unions, parties etc. - have been integrated into capitalism and serve as obstacles to the proletarian struggle.

The bourgeoisie has engaged in grandiose projects of mystification to hold back the development of class consciousness, from television and the tabloid press in the West to mass rallies and propaganda campaigns in the East. When the working class has resisted these attacks, the bourgeoisie has flung at the class all the forces and forms of repression in its arsenal: riot police, bomber squads, specialists in torture, forced labour camps. And whenever the permanent crisis of capital has appeared like an open wound at the heart of the system, the bourgeoisie has sacrificed millions of proletarians in imperialist wars.

The bourgeoisie's attacks on the working class become more and more vicious wherever and whenever the crisis is at its most intense. Then the capitalists have no choice except to increase exploitation at the point of production, physically repress the resistance of the class, and if they can, march off to war.

In the backward regions of capitalism the permanent crisis has, throughout this epoch, been less amenable to the palliatives which have allowed the bourgeoisie in the advanced capitals to moderate its attack on the working class. In these regions the proletariat has suffered almost without any let-up the kind of exploitation and brutalisation which capital in the more industrialised countries dares to resort to only in moments of profound crisis.

The reality of working class existence in the Third World has refuted Lenin's idea that the national liberation movements would provide a framework for the establishment of "bourgeois democratic" regimes which would allow the working class to organise its own independent movement. Nowhere in this epoch can capital permit the working class to organise an independent movement, and least of all in the countries of the so-called "national democratic revolutions."

The economic weakness of the backward countries gives the bourgeoisie there no choice but to attempt to extract the maximum of surplus value from the working class (and with the low organic composition of capital in such regions this usually takes its "absolute" form). As soon as the "national liberation" forces come to power, their energies are transferred from the battlefield to the "battle for production". Almost invariably, the national liberation front extend the tendencies towards state capitalism which are already deeply entrenched in their economies.

Piece Work

The instigation of wide scale nationalisations has the dual purpose of shoring up a shaky national capital on the world market, and of serving as a basis for populist and "socialistic" rhetoric with which the new regime may hope to persuade the workers to work themselves into the ground for "the national economy. In fact, these regimes can offer the working class little more than ideological consolations of this kind.

As the leader of FRELIMO cautioned the Mozambique

working class shortly after FRELIMO came to power: "freedom means work and an end to laziness." From the factories of North Korea to the sugar plantations of Cuba the message is the same. The ideology of "building socialism" is used to mask the most ferocious, primitive forms of capitalist exploitation, forms pioneered decades ago in Stalinist Russia: piece work, obligatory overtime, militarisation of production, the complete integration of the "workers" organisations into the state.

As long as there are Third Worldists, liberals and leftists there will be those who enthuse about the "heroic spirit of self-sacrifice" in the "socialist" countries of the Third World.

The admiration many bourgeois scribblers and politicians have for these regimes is essentially a class admiration for the ability for mystifications such as Maoism, Castroism, Nyerere's "African Socialism" to help convince workers to identify with their exploiters. The bourgeoisie of the advanced countries is in a desperate need of some equivalent ideology today.

But bourgeois admirers of these regimes are never able to see that, despite these mystifications, the working class is not integrated anywhere, and that the class struggle continues unabated in the most "progressive" of Third World régimes. The recent rail strike in China, which had to be broken by special CCP scabs, is eloquent testimony to this. Always behind the socialist verbiage of "voluntary" sacrifice there lurks the ever-present threat of military-police repression. Thus to his definition of freedom the FRELIMO boss adds that there will be no room for strikes in the new socialist order in Mozambique.

Party Police

In the 1940s century the bourgeois revolution almost invariably gave the workers the right to organise themselves. There is no more decisive proof of the impossibility of bourgeois revolution today than the political character of "national liberation" régimes. They are inevitably organised with the explicit purpose of preventing, and if necessary smashing, any signs of autonomous working class struggle. Most of them are single party police states which prohibit the right to strike. Their prisons are full of dissenters.

Many of them have a distinguished record of putting down working class uprisings in blood; we have mentioned Ho's valuable contribution to the smashing of the Saigon workers' Commune; we should also recall Mao's dispatching of the People's Liberation Army to "restore order" after worker strikes, semi-insurrections, and similar "ultra-left" adventures provoked by the so-called Cultural Revolution. Then we should remember the striking miners shot by Allende in Chile or by the "progressive" military junta in Peru. The list is

Peasants have also fared poorly under the leader auspices of these regimes. Even before the cities have fallen to them, the "national liberation armies" impose their rule on the peasants of the rural districts, terrorise them, tax them, mobilise them as cannon fodder. The panic-stricken flight of peasants in the face of the Vietcong advances in March 1975 long after the Americans had stopped bombing Vietnam-controlled regions, shows how empty is the promise of the Third Worldists that "national liberation" brings true happiness to the peasants.

After the seizure of the government by the national liberation forces, peasants have continued to suffer. The peasants who revolted against Ho Chi Minh's collectivisations in 1956 were crushed by the regime; while in China, peasants who are mobilised for the construction of dams, bridges etc., are subjected to the most acute intensification of exploitation by the state. (The enforced destruction of the peasantry in the Third World recapitulates in a particularly violent fashion what has taken place more gradually in the metropoles).

Oppressed Minorities

Most of these national liberation regimes also continue to perpetrate oppression against national minorities. In independent black African regimes Asian minorities are oppressed. In Sudan, a leftist Arab regime oppresses the blacks. The Social Democratic Stalinist-Trotskyist government of Ceylon deprives the Tamils of all civil rights while ruthlessly exploiting them on the tea estates. And the Polish bourgeoisie — despite Lenin's prescriptions — continues to persecute those Jews whom the regime has not already kicked out.

Indeed, the programme of most national liberation fronts often carry the intention of replacing one form of national oppression with another. The Zionist programme implicitly or explicitly provided for the expulsion of the Palestinian Arabs, while the programme of the Palestinian national movement, by demanding a State where Muslims, Jews and Christians can live in harmony as 'religious' groups, indirectly announced its intention to suppress Israeli-Jewish nationality and replace it with a Palestinian Arab state. Similarly in Ireland, the programme of the IRA can only transform the Protestants into an oppressed national-religious minority.

It could not be otherwise. Since all national liberation programmes are capitalist, they cannot serve to eliminate the basis of national oppression, which is none other than capitalism itself.

But to return to the specific position of the workers under such regimes, we may say that the greatest assault that the national liberation fronts can mount on the working class is precisely the national liberation war itself. Because of global imperialist rivalries and the chronic nature of the historic crisis in the Third World, the bourgeoisie of these regions is continually pushed into imperialist squabbles with and adventures against their local rivals. Since 1914 there has hardly been one moment into which at least one part of the underdeveloped world has not been plunged into war.

The Building of National Capitalism

"National Liberation" wars are a necessity for the minor imperialisms of the Third World if they are to survive on the world market; competition is especially fierce in these areas because global domination by the advanced capitals forces the weaker capitals to try to assemble ahead of each other to carve out a niche in the world market. But for the working class, these wars bring even greater rates of exploitation, more explicit militarisation, and above all, slaughter and destruction on a huge scale.

Millions of workers have been killed in these wars this century, gained nothing except an exchange of one exploiter for another. As will all national wars, national liberation struggles have served to muzzle the class struggle, divide the ranks of the proletariat, and to impede the saturation of communist consciousness. And since the only overall movement of

capitalism in decay is towards world imperialist configurations on a bigger and bigger scale, local national struggles serve as testing grounds for future world conflicts which could put an end to all possibilities of socialism.

In the decadent epoch of capitalism, communists must assert unambiguously that all forms of nationalism are reactionary to the core. While few would deny the reactionary nature of the traditional nationalism of the big imperialism — Ku Klux Klan patriotism, Jimcism, Nazism, Great Russian chauvinism etc., — the so-called "nationalism of the oppressed" is no less pernicious for the working class.

It is with this "progressive" nationalism that the bourgeoisie of the former colonies attempts to integrate the working class and to persuade it to produce more and more surplus value for the fatherland; it is in the time of national liberation and anti-imperialist rallying cries that the workers of these countries are mobilised for inter-imperialist wars.

The working class has one interest today. To unify itself on a world scale for the communist revolution. Any ideology that attempts to divide the working class along racial, sexual or national lines is counter-revolutionary, no matter how much its talk of socialism, liberation or revolution.

If capitalism in crisis succeeds in imposing its solution of world war on the working class it will undoubtedly march the working class off to a final round of barbarism under the banners of nationalism in one form or another. Nationalism thus appears today as the potential ideological vehicle for its obliteration.

The Construction of the World Human Community

There can be no more talk in the workers' movement of any right to national self-determination either before, during or after the victory of the proletarian revolution. The extension of the revolution means the speediest possible destruction of national frontiers, the establishment of the power of the workers' councils over wider and wider areas of the globe. The real creation of communist social relations can only take place on a world scale.

In the old workers' movement it was possible to have the confused idea that socialism was to some extent realisable behind national frontiers, that the world community could be created by a process of gradual fusion of socialist economies. But the experience of Russia has shown that not only is the construction of socialism difficult in one country, it is actually impossible.

As long as global capital exists, it will continue to dominate all the rhythms of production and consumption everywhere. No matter how far the workers in one country go toward the elimination of the forms of capitalist exploitation in their area, they continue to be exploited by world capital. Before communism can be definitely created, capitalism must be definitively destroyed everywhere; communism cannot be built "within" capitalism.

Today, those who use the terms [national self-determination under socialism] are advocates of the capitalist counter-revolution. This applies to the Stalinists with their socialism in one country, to the Trotskyists with their fantasy of "workers' states" happily co-existing on a near-eternal world market.

It also applies to libertarians and anarchists who favour "self-management in one country." The retention of the nation state means national frontiers, international exchange, international competition — in short, capital.

The construction of socialism-communism is nothing less than the construction of the world *human community*. It is the liberation of the productive forces from the fetters imposed by national divisions and commodity exchange; it is the world-wide socialisation of production and consumption; it is the proletariat's abolition of itself as an exploited class and the integration of all classes into a real social humanity that will appear for the first time.

COUNCILISM

Letter to Comrades

Councilism is currently an organisational form much in vogue. Unfortunately — especially in light of the truly glorious pages it once wrote in working class history — it is (with exceptions like Portugal) a resurgence almost wholly confined to petite bourgeoisie intellectuals.

This is unfortunate for a number of reasons. Firstly, because there are still many veterans of the old councilist movement still alive and active. Likewise there are some localised working class councils in a nascent state. Yet they are obscured by the clamour of the intellectuals. Secondly, because we are forced to conclude that these non-worker councilists — ranging from left-Bolsheviks to marxist-communists — are liars: total falsifiers of history. Thirdly, because these petite bourgeois (who often style themselves "THE proletariat") bear a vindictive hatred of not only revolutionary (and anarcho-) syndicalism the other great working class movement — but also, if the fact can be squarely faced, to the working class itself. Who the first despise.

It is a basic tenet of this new councilism that syndicalism is reactionary in all its manifestations. They attempt to relegate syndicalism to the level of the AFL-CIO and TU. And when they are confronted by the record of the IWW and CNT, they falsify history. Either writing it out (like Jeremy Brecher in *Strike!*), or smearing the plate with innuendo and exaggerated side issues (like the International Communist Current).

The councilists contend that all working class risings in the modern era have been councilist in nature. This is true of a great many — perhaps even a slight majority — from Petrograd 1905 to Hungary 1956. Yet, what of the rising against Fascism by the Catalonia workers in 1936...? Which was a syndicalist rising and mass-collectivisation carried out by CNT unionised workers. What of the IWW-led 1919 General Strike in Hale Montana and Toledo Ohio, and the underground IWW role in the 1919 Seattle General Strike (in all three the IWW helped form worker-soldier-sailor councils)...? Or of the earlier CNT risings, the 1932 CGT General Strike in Portugal, the 1922 IWW strike of 11,000 miners, in the Rand Goldfield, South Africa, and the 1917 wartime strike of 40,000 copper miners and 100,000 lumber workers led by the IWW...? All these were crushed only by government troops. As was FORA in Argentina, the IWW in Chile, the NSF in Norway (which seized control of the city of Hammerfest in 1921), and many others.

Moreover there were the long years of resistance waged by the CNT which laid the ground-work for July 1936. There were the bitter IWW years which led to the 1919 upsurge, and to the 1933-34 mass strike-wave.

But what the non-worker councilists' delight in is to pick out certain failures or failings and to then blow them all out of proportion, concluding: "this is syndicalism: counter-revolution!" Perhaps the best one example is their neurotic fixation on those few CNTers, including intellectual workers like Montseny, who — not representing the CNT and without any CNT union vote on the matter — entered the Popular Front war-government for a brief period. Or they complain that there were too many "bureaucrats" working at CNT HQ in Barcelona (the vast majority unionised young women working 18 hours a day during the clearing-house clerical work for a 1,000,000-plus member union, including not only the collectivised industry and agriculture of Catalonia and elsewhere, but also a worker army in the field and an international news centre).

They obscure too, the fact that the IWW formed industrial and joint councils at regional levels, neighbourhood committees in towns they controlled, and the previously mentioned worker-soldier-sailor councils in 1919. Likewise the council-style collaboration of CNT and left-UGT unions in areas like the Asturias Min.

Most of all, however, the non-worker councilists downgrade the working class (although often affecting a great love and care). Like the Bolsheviks, they see them capable of no more than crass "trade unionism". They scream for the destruction of ALL unions... And this to include the United Farmworkers in the USA, the Quebec CNTU, the Swedish SAC, the CNT underground in Spain, etc.

What these petit-bourgeoisie seek is BARRABARISM. For the World to reduce to Ground Zero (so beloved of the Bolshevik Bukharin). They seek the destruction of all existing weapons of working class defence. Not only the reactionaries, but the independents as well. Only then will their councils prosper, feeding off the increased misery of the working class. Like Stalin, they feel: "Flat the fascists, the U.S."

Or as Murray Bookchin says: "I'd be delighted if all the unions died overnight. Then tomorrow morning they're I could talk to workers again."

Hollow workers — both councilists and syndicalists — the tasks ahead of us must, of course, be viewed in the light of very serious differences among us on matters of organisation method. But let us remember a few things, even so! Number 1: we are both organising out of the rubble of a totally defeated Libertarian movement. There is hardly a fact so plain but that the libertarian working class movement was destroyed, utterly. Communists and Socialists have been defeated, but not destroyed. Yet our predecessors were, in the worst way.

The weight of our task — that is, to rebuild the working class liberation movement (and in the teeth of Capitalist, Communist Party, and Fascist reaction) — is so heavy and so frighteningly that the great majority of our contacts and recruits from it as a plague, once they even glimpse the true reality of our situation.

Number 2: despite many organizational differences, we have nonetheless many areas of almost identical method. This is especially true at the grass-roots level of job locals,车间 units, affinity groups and block councils. Which is the level we are presently at. Differences arise in the precise method of federating these, but this is at the secondary level. And few of us are there.

That being the case, it is absolutely absurd for us to engage in fraternal polemics and raiding forays. If we ever reach the federative level, we can then — if necessary — split all along the seams. But for the moment, not only federisation, but an actual Fighting Council of syndicalists and councilists must be forged. Based upon the primary tenet of working class Mutual Aid.

A combat team of revolutionary syndicalists and worker councilists. Of revolutionary anarchists and free socialists.

We stand together in the dirt of history. We can only stand out together.

Fraternally,

G. Jewell
(Secretary IWW Defence Local 2)
Toronto.

International Notes

GERMANY

"So long as her present social structure remains intact, Germany will seek the economic and political advantages which she believes to be her right and destiny. There is only one way to prevent a third resurgence of German power, and that is the way of anarchism. It is necessary to destroy the German State as such. The German people are made up of as many diverse elements as any other people, but the great majority of them (workers included) are sustained in their fanatical beliefs by the most centralised State in Europe; and the most fanatical of all their beliefs is their belief in the sovereignty of this State. It is difficult for anyone unfamiliar with German thought, or even with the ordinary man of German people, to realise the force and philosophic strength of this belief - a belief common to all parties, from the militarists on the right to the communists on the left. Germany, in all her menace and neurotic frenzy, is obsessed by this uncritical worship of the State, and she can only be immunised and rendered harmless by the systematic destruction of that concept. This can be done in stages, first by the restoration of independence to the provinces whose union made the German State possible, and then by the devolution with these separate provinces of all economic power to trade unions and other voluntary organisations. Other measures, such as the abolition of national banks and national currency, would follow as a matter of course. The principles of anarchism would be introduced into one country in Europe and the demonstration of their pacific and civilising influence would be so effective that other countries would quickly and voluntarily hasten to follow the same path."

Herbert Read, Anarchy & Order.

The fanatical belief in the State that runs throughout Germany, not only from Right to Left but most violent in the Centre, is the background to events in Germany. One should not make any mistake about the *genuinely* German bourgeoisie with his stupid image; it is not considered good manners to talk about his Nazi past but the nostalgia for the days when "young people could not behave like this" is bound up with the Nazi era when State worship fulfilled its fantasies.

The young people of Germany are making a profound break with their past; all the more profound because the immediate past was the apotheosis of State worship. Naturally they are making mistakes and learning their way. Marxist ideology has brought State worship into even revolutionary thinking, and the student youth goes through a phase of Marxist phraseology even when breaking with every tenet of Marxist thought. One sees this in the use of the very term "Red Army Fraction" - which is a bow at the State principle though nothing could be less like an "Army" and a "Red" one at that, than undisciplined guerrillas. (It was the role of the Red Army - both in the Ukraine and in Spain - to break and fight semi-disciplined guerrillas, never mind undisciplined ones).

The personality "un-cult" of Binder and Meinhof - whereby one man and one woman held in conditions of degrading torture and cut off from the world, are held to be responsible for the acts of rebellion of a whole generation - is part of the "neurotic frenzy" of the German bourgeoisie, and an indissoluble part of the "fanatical beliefs in the sovereignty of the State" which is the other side of the "democratic economic miracle" whereby workers are driven hard by the supreme needs of the State to establish itself; and their work is supplemented by hanging in infliction rates - sorry, "guest workers" now!

The all-persuasive nature of the totalitarian State leaves only two holes of escape - emigration or death. It was so under the Kaiser, under Hitler and now. In protest against

the inhuman and degrading conditions in German prisons, where the State is trying to turn rebels into vegetables before any form of trial, and into cossacks afterwards, two of the young revolutionaries have hanged themselves in Fuhlsbüttel Prison (Hamburg). In February of this year, in protest against the inhumanity of political activists, Hans Rohrmoser and Heinz-Detlef Krieger, vindicated the dignity of human life by quitting it. They did not commit suicide because they were afraid of life. They committed suicide because they would not suffer the inhuman and degrading experiments of the prison authorities.

It is as certain as can be that their deaths will be avenged, and that those who do so will be called "terrorists" precisely by the people whose "uncritical worship of the State" makes them think that driving people to death in this way must be moral because it is law, and if the law says that a man or a woman must be turned into a vegetable, then this is natural. The press which is "obsessed" on the matter whips up hysteria about the "Bander-Meinhof gang" and says it is they who must be "immunised and rendered harmless . . . systematically destroyed" - but it is the State concept that needs to be immunised and destroyed.

PROTEST SUICIDES

On Monday 16th February 1976 Hans Rohrmoser and Heinz-Detlef Krieger committed suicide in the Lubitzstrasse prison (Hamburg) in protest against the intolerable conditions in prison.

The reactionary press of Germany described the two comrades as "crazy drug addicts" and defined suicides by political prisoners as "blackmail" and "aggression" while the representatives of justice expressed deep regret and liberals plead for the humanisation of the prison system, forgetting that liberal politicians supported the SPD Schmidt's hard policy against terrorism and the new repressive laws.

The following statement is the suicide note left by Krieger and Rohrmoser before they took their lives:

With our protest action (self-chosen death by hanging) we wish to draw attention to the bad conditions in the Fuhlsbüttel prison Block II. We protest against:

- 1) The steps taken by the punishment executive administration to apply new punishment regulation retrospectively
- 2) Against the conduct of some prison staff, who, unauthorised, inflict upon us inmates bullying and provocations, especially the following staff members: Potsch, Van Raden, Neiss, Oeding, Borgermeier, Dommerau, Piel, Kramer, Rettitzer, Ludecke as well as the entire Security group.
- 3) Favoured treatment of prison directors and Security groups for informers.
- 4) Food rations below minimal standards, hardly enough to nourish a dog.
- 5) The arbitrary sentencing inmates to house-punishment, esp. leave restrictions.
- 6) The deriding of the equality principle in regard to the handling of applications.

We demand:

- 1) A say in the choice of prisoners' representatives.
- 2) The dismissal of department leaders Ludecke and Rettitzer.
- 3) The removal of above mentioned staff members.
- 4) Re-establishment of the former competence of the prison direction taken away after the Ackerbaum case.
- 5) Improved medical care.
- 6) Benefits for the unemployed.
- 7) Abolition of letter censoring.
- 8) Improved care by psychologists and social workers.
- 9) T.V. sets for prisoners kept in isolation.

We wish to bring to an end the manipulations of the economic powers in this house. Also: it is about time the inmates of this house awake from this apathy and don't tolerate further depravation of the rights granted to them in 1972.

Heinz-Detlef Krieger
Hans Rohrmoser

A group of West Berlin doctors made the following press statement:

"We have dealt for the past two years with conditions in prison and especially with the medical treatment for prisoners.

In accordance with our experiences as medical advisers for many prisoners we are able to confirm in many cases inefficiency of medical care. For example, a prisoner with two heart attacks in Tegel did not receive the necessary medical treatment required for such cases, although he suffered from severe angina. J. Becker who has been kept in solitary for the past five years suffers from a kidney complaint and had circulation of the blood which is causing him to have hallucinations and difficulty in concentrating. Solitary confinement by these prisoners is also very likely. From a medical point of view, prolonged imprisonment is impossible." (342/76)

"Becker was examined by a specialist in April 1975 on account of increasing fits of depression and cramp. The specialist was of the opinion that he could not receive the proper medical treatment while in prison. The authorities refuse to allow treatment to take place outside the prison. Becker's urgent appeal to the prisoners' petition committee (142/75) was unsuccessful. Any patient inside prison feels threatened by:

- systematic replacement of proper treatment
 - being treated as a malingerer
 - lack of equipment for proper diagnosis
 - temporary unavailability of the prison doctor on duty.
- We therefore support the criticism and the demands made by Krieger and Rohrmoser."

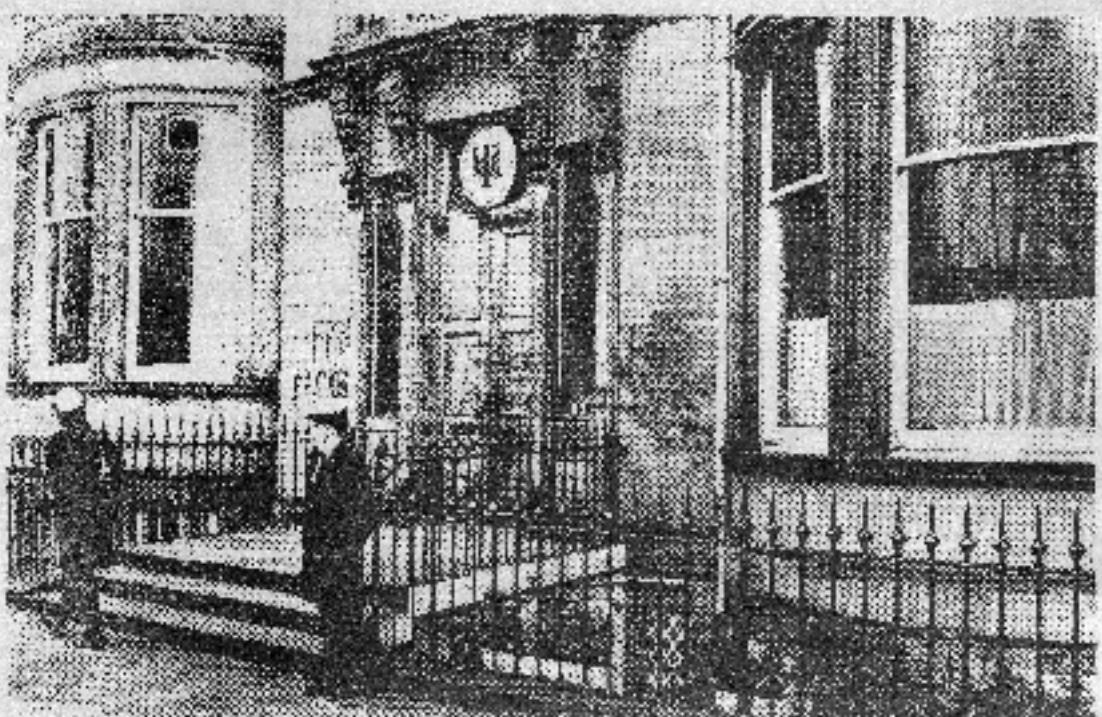
RALF STEIN

Ralf Stein received a total of nine accusations of trial charges against him. Two of them, namely "stealing and promoting theft", have been dropped but a new charge brought against him is that of organising a plot against a police station. The trial date has been set for March 20th, April 4th, 5th, 7th and 9th in Cologne at the "Langenfeld Appellationsplatz, 2nd Floor, Room 234."

Two latest attacks on him by the prison authorities mean that he is permitted to write and receive only three letters per week, and the number of newspapers allowed to him have been reduced to three.

Prisoners on remand are generally entitled to write and receive any amount of mail. During the past two weeks eight incoming letters have been confiscated and withheld from him and four written to his friends have been returned to him, with the explanation that he just overstepped the limit 14 days before the limitation had been ordered and made known to him.

However, witnesses are to appear at the trial, seven of them are police officers with three additional experts.



STOP PRESS: Ralf Stein sentenced to 18 months imprisonment, but as he had already served that sentence on remand he was released from custody. Jürgen Becker, however, remains "on remand".

The following statement made by lawyers was published in "Tagesspiegel" and "Spartaer Volksblatt".

Jürgen H. Becker has today (4/2/76) spent five years in prison at Alt-Mosabit in the remand section. The under-signed wish to draw attention to the following:

"That five years in prison on remand is unique in the Federal Republic. The law givers had in mind that, as a rule, nobody should be kept on remand any longer than six months. An imprisonment on remand is supposed to be easier than convicted imprisonment, since the man/woman awaiting trial must be regarded innocent until he/she is proven guilty. In the remand prison Moabit confinement is heavier than regular punishment on account of the amount of isolation involved which for Jürgen H. Becker means twenty-four hours daily in solitary for five years. A psychic torture that violates the rules concerning imprisonment on remand as well as the fundamental constitutional rights and the human rights convention. A proposed transfer of comrade Becker to the regular prison of Tegel was refused. We appeal to the public to intervene."

Signed by a well-known number of psychologists, professors, writers, lawyers, film-makers, publishers and priests.

But what have prisoners to say in connection with the subject of comrades Krieger and Rohrmoser?

"Anyone who believes that reforms will create "humane" conditions in jail will get nowhere. There is no such thing as a "humane jail." And those who believe a treatment, "defined as humane", as envisaged by the constitution can be brought about, will only help to incite more suicide because that is precisely the purpose of jailing people, namely to break them. We do not demand reforms (which only disguise the prison system), we demand their complete abolition."

We want to be men and are going to be men or else the world will be destroyed in our endeavour to be men.

FREEDOM FOR ALL PRISONERS!!
PRISONERS COLLECTIVE - WEST BERLIN.

German Consulate Attacked

The West German Consulate in Edinburgh was badly damaged on night of April 19th in solidarity with comrades Ralf Stein and Jürgen Becker. The cost of the damage done to the building was estimated at about £700.

When questioned by journalists as to the cause of the "outrage" vice-consul Mr. Heinz-Wilhelm Grünsmann, said that Stein was arrested in Cologne in connection with "alleged anarchist activities" went on to say that a slogan "Free Ralf Stein" had been painted in front of the consulate last November. He added: "We have been in operation with police about such activities." Asked if he had any

or who might be responsible, Herr Grünsmann said, "There are a few possibilities." In addition to the slogan referring to the two German comrades, a further slogan "A" could be explained by certain officials but may have something to do with the group involved in the incident (newspaper report). Note the serious Nazi symptom of the vice-consul. In theory, the people were not under arrest for "alleged anarchist activities". They were Nazis. No democratic country would hold people for alleged anarchist, socialist, democratic or other symptoms. They were lost souls held for alleged criminal activities. But of course as the vice-consul said this was just an excuse for the real reason. Black Flag received a statement from the "Easter Enraged People" on 19th April Movements claiming responsibility for the above action.

(Photo: German Vice-Consulate, Edinburgh)

REVIEWS

Glencoe (75p); Culloden (55p); The Highland Clearances (75p); John Prebble (Penguin p/b); Mutiny (£6.99p). Secker & Warburg

The hills and glens of the Highlands that now hold only sheep and deer and the tourists once provided for the bulk of Scotland's people. This feudal, fiercely militaristic tribal society gave Scotland a monarchy, threw back repeated invaders, from the Romans to the English, and in the end was destroyed by the greed of its leaders, the clan chiefs, for money and power. The hills are empty now, priviting perhaps the last solitude in our industrial society, but if their story is known there can be no peace in the experience.

The cause of the Highlander was to be independent and self-sufficient, to spurn imposed authority, and to rely on their skills against a hostile environment, to provide for their children (or cows, in the gaelic). Those qualities around which an alternative establishment has now formed, were to be exalted and the people who embodied them driven out or cut down. Over a hundred and fifty years the mountains witnessed a concerted attempt at genocide, what the Gaels called *Mi-ruan naomh Ghael*, the Lowlanders great hatred. The chiefs remain, in London and Edinburgh, but the people are gone. Their history stands and, despite the everyday super-harshnesses of our age, there are lessons still for us.

One of the earliest attempts at genocide in modern history took place by will of the Crown, in 1603. The Clan McGregor was ordered to be hunted down, destroyed like vermin without trial, their lands and possession forfeit to their killers. For two hundred years the man was hounded on the face of the earth and, in the adult lifetime of Tom Paine, Edmund Burke and William Wilberforce, the penal acts against the clan were still on the statute book.

In February 1692 there took place a barbarous and treacherous murder which marked the beginning of the destruction of the Highlanders, the Massacre of Glencoe, when the Campbells slaughtered their hosts of 12 days, the MacDonalds. This infamous episode has often been portrayed as the culmination of a tribal feud, whereas the slaughter was ordered by the new king, William of Orange, on a clan who were politically and religiously opposed to the new order. A longstanding quarrel between the Campbells and the MacDonalds provided the vehicle for murder and in the snowy pre-dawn hours of February 13th the Campbells rose from their MacLurain beds in Glencoe to cut down their hosts. There had been killing between the two clans before, but never before the cloak of friendship. If there is awe and melancholy in the glen today it is only what people have brought to it, knowing its history.

The '45 Rebellion has provided more romantic and inaccurate legend in Highland history than any other. In truth, with their bellies empty, their leaders at odds, their ground ill-chosen, the Highlanders allegiance to their Jacobite Prince, Charlie, was exploded on the moors of Culloden by the canons of the Royal Artillery. There followed months of savage and indiscriminate butchery on the Prince's supporters in the Highlands, the pacification of the hills by Butcher Cumberland, and the flight of the Prince to Skye and then France, from whence he came. The people suffered and were slaughtered in the rebellion for a cause that was never theirs.

And once the chiefs lost their powers many of them lost any parental interest in their clansmen. During the next hundred years they continued the work of Cumberlands battalions.² John Prebble, a contemporary novelist and historian has documented the desecration of the Highlands in three books, Glencoe, Culloden and the Highland Clearances, the latter an account of how the people were driven from their land by fire and bayonet to make way for a new breed of sheep, the sheep, which could live as basically as the Highlanders but which provided the chief with a greater profit. And while the chiefs became rich from meat and wool their people died of cholera and starvation or were forced to populate unknown lands. 'And when Gael left, wanting

clothes, money and food, the English were poorly protected though their bellies were full of meat.'³ The anonymous bard who wrote these bitter lines was responding to the economic logic that cleared the hills. And when the Duke of Sutherland summoned the male population of Caithness to volunteer to fight under his colours in the Crimean War a reply was eloquently provided: 'Since you have preferred sheep to men, let sheep defend you.'

In his latest book Mutiny, Prebble concludes his saga of the desecration of the Highland clans, examining the part played by the men of the glens in the 18th century British army. The Highlander, contrary to romantic legend, was not a willing conscript. He was often compelled by threat, sold by his chiefs, his pride lashed by the whip and by the lowlanders contempt of his dress and language. Prebble documents the revolt of the Highlanders in uniform, from the Black Watch mutiny at Finchley in 1743 to the revolt of starving Fencibles on Glasgow Green in 1804.

This is a subject which has been ignored by the historians who have preferred to see the Highland soldier as a fierce and romantic savage, assiduously pursuing the cause of Empire. In fact, the Gaelic people who, from three percent of the population, provided the Crown with 65 regiments, lamented, in song and poem, their forced role: 'If I were as I used to be, amongst the hills, I would not mount guard as long as I lived, nor would I stand on parade nor for the rest of my life would I ever put on a red coat.'

Prebble's books tell the vivid history of the ordinary people, the Highlanders, who at the time, were the wretched of the earth. His writing brings fire to the belly and tears to the eyes. He is objective but never impartial and, like all fine journalists and historians, his radical statements are the facts.

Ron McKay.

THE VIOLENT BRINK, Antony Beevor, John Murray £3.50.

What would have happened if the Angry Brigade or First of May Group had been more effective? Taking his starting point from there, and treating the Angry Brigade with its built-in mistakes of procedure but a greater degree of organisational ability (presupposing a great deal of support and luck) Antony Beevor's novel takes us to the "brink" of revolution

transferring events of Paris 1968 to present-day London but in fact leaves us there, just as Paris did, with a television broadcast to the nation by the Prime Minister. As a story it is gripping, and the treatment of the revolutionaries — most of them anarchist and closely allied with the International Revolutionary Solidarity Movement: First of May Group — is sympathetic, which is the most we can ask of a novelist, but it is doubtful that things could happen the way they do here; or at least if they did escalate in the manner described in the book. This is Antony Beevor's first novel, however, and if he continues along the lines he seems to be travelling we may well have a worthy successor to the late Edward Hyams.

S.C.

The International Revolutionary Solidarity Movement : First of May Group, edited by Albert Meltzer, (88pp, documents, photographs and chronology) is now available from Cienfuegos Press at our new address "Over the Water", Sanday, Orkney, Scotland, (£1.35p - 15p p+p).

The Cienfuegos Press Review of Anarchist Literature, 30p + 10p p&p.

Peter Kropotkin : His Federalist Ideas, Camillo Berneri, 30p + 10p p&p.

The Wilhelmshaven Revolt, Icarus 15p post free.