Fernando Carballo Blanco (75) is the longest-serving political prisoner in Spain. His case deserves the active support and solidarity of all anarchists and libertarian socialists. The question of his release has become a matter of principle. He has been in prison for 30 years, serving a sentence for the crime of being a Spanish worker committed to the ideals of anarcho-syndicalism.

Carballo was sentenced to 30 years in 1966, together with myself, by a Consejo de Guerra (War Council) under the laws relating to banditry and terrorism. I was sentenced to 20 years but served only 30 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 has never been released.

Spain, though not of the charge of banditry and terrorism of which both Carballo and myself were accused, has pursued a policy of repression and harassment directed against all left-wing dissidents and activists. The Spanish prison authorities have been making life particularly difficult for Fernando Carballo Blanco.

We are launching a major campaign of international solidarity with this comrade in conjunction with the Comité Pro-Presas in Spain, and we urge all comrades to make their feelings known to the Spanish Embassy in London, the Director of the Prison Provincial de Alicante, and to the Spanish Ambassador in Madrid, the Director General of the Ministry of the Interior.

Let us do everything we can to ensure that this year is the last that Fernando Carballo Blanco remains behind bars.

Stuart Christie
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 canalsation of socialism by the middle-classes into plans that caused libertarian socialism to become a backwater explored only by sectarians.

During the First World War the working class had rejected the bureaucratic top-heavy 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 important to 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 ceased to parliamentary participation in seeking to gain the struggles they could not gain by industrial action. The establishment had been laid in 1920 — it took them a long time to get over it — but the TUC 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 Stalinist it ceased to be working class. It was pushed into defensive positions in the thirties — the fear 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 repressives, in liberal measures, in State participation, in national liberation, in support for tyranny everywhere provided its labelled "Left" by Moscow. But of the elements of democracy and socialism, not even to speak of socialism 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 "soviets" 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 "falk" — 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 efforts of enslavement as a whole landed as being due to the State in totalitarian countries or to the Chancellor in power for the time being in parliamentary ones — mean that, inevitably, our living conditions have improved. But as for getting the whole benefits for ourselves we have taken many pains back.

We have not lost our traditions though the Stasiants would tell you that
ROON 'N' ABOOT

Allusions of maltreatment of patients at St. Augustine's mental hospital have been upheld by an official inquiry. This is nothing new or unknown about the unsatisfactory state of mental hospitals in the country, but the fact that there are major ways of avoiding the bullpen of the mentally ill on the aged and in the consultation room. This case came to light only because of two workers in the hospital, who wrote to the Department of Health, and their visits to the hospital were made to protest that conditions were not improving.

To quote the "Guardian": "Dr. Brian Ancerson, a doctor, who works as a nurse for a temporary period, said. 'It was suggested that I was a nuisance and part of an international conspiracy to improve the working conditions. Shortly after our first criticisms were published I was removed to the worst part of the hospital. Many people say this is an attempt to get me to resign, but I would not."

Our old friend the international conspiracy rears its head whenever British-born in trouble. But it was appropriate that once they are not to be attacked by Ancerson at an amendment they desired, as a friend, to put him in penitentiary. The battle for the minds of a British audience for years to know that the second-rate specialist in the country is an anarchist. Dr. Alex Cameron: we do not think it has yet been suggested that he has talents at the service of an international conspiracy. "That's a comfort."

It is now pretty obvious that no deliberate attempt was made by South African business interests to smooth the liberal Party. This has been an embarrassment. They lend a respectable leverage in matters of this sort, and I cannot see any way to disassociate myself. That is the background to the Thorne affair, which was referred to the Human Rights Commission.

While condemning the South African businessmen, pause to consider how many times agents of their leaders and of Governments too have employed the same type of tactics. In the main these have been effective, and the Anarchists more often than not have been the victims of such tactics. Can the Thorne affair, so well written in Thorne's book, "Black Robber," be accepted as a book that the book and pamphlet, were used against the Socialist movement? We would not say yes for a moment. Can the Thorne affair be embarrassing and difficult as it has been for him, stand up against the anti-Marrakech campaign of vilification? How many times have official police launched false accusations against Anarchists?

A further collection on the Thorne case is the letter and picketing by the police. Thorne was acquitted of a charge which was not present, and all the press groups in town, as a rule, that the case should never have been brought, but a couple of months later the same wire was still being sent. The Thorne papers and the Thorne friend, with all the newspapers, all the newspapers, were used against the Thorne papers and the Thorne friend. "Black Robber," which was referred to the Human Rights Commission.

A question to the sturdy Young Liberals who hold Mr. Thorne that he ought to have never been the subject of the unhallowed Norman Scott favours which are very much in his life is this: Jeremy Thorne whom he says "industrious," and (of the "Peek" paper) "mentally descended." They said Mr. Thorne should have made the statement with a blunt statement that his life was somebody's business but his own. A bit more was expected from a syndicate, especially one with the well-remembered Worth Country in his back. Should Mr. Thorne, who has said all his life that his capacity is robbery while making no statement, any way to disassociate himself from his allegiances?

Is there any decline more generally disgraced than the one which says we have not only the right, but the duty, to declare war on neighboring nations merely because we disagree with its intransigence?

What Member of Parliament will say that we ought to declare war on Russia immediately to make our disapproval of Stare Communism? Only a war is declared, as is in the case of Hitler's Germany — will they declare that disapproval of its institutions is what they are all about.

Yet the theory of a war of disapproval — condemnation if a pre-emptive move is Edmund Burke's no less than the theory that M.P.'s are representatives of their constituents and not "delegates." Burke took, by definition, no heed of his constituents' views when he signed his treaty. He obtained an extension of time of in case. Yet every M.P. who signs it as if it were a constitutional law and one which every citizen had to take an oath to observe!

It is convenient for them, because having got themselves elected, they can color their opinions in anything their constituents want, and moreover, hold up a name and an argument for them to try and persuade them.

The recent land bill thrown at the selection of Labour Party candidates is an example. If they fail to get that bill passed, it is true, they can still claim the support of the country. The same thing happened to the Orange Free State in the war on which Mr. Groote has been in South Africa. But I think the country has done that, and how they reason, when these 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 vote for somebody, and this every propaganda medium cautious.

BEST OF TWO ALTERNATIVES

The busting of the new star of Princess Margaret has brought the headlines on young Rodney Reddaway, the very well-heeled young man with whom she has been grooming. In the "commune" that he belongs to, in the West Indies. Moving between the Caribbean parties and the commune, her Gracious Highness has been dropping amongst the occasional holiday at a farm supplying sanguine foods to a communal restaurant in the north, and as far from 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 gathered together to buy a "commune" are by no means minimal. 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 "dumbed out." Don't talk about class war like this any more.

While one understands that the rich who have come over to live in "free," "literate," lives are no worse than the rich who buy detailed hopes in lovely suburbs, they are no better either; at least the latter are the open enemy of the revolution. Our one way is becoming like that in the later stages of the French Revolution — the manuactus reactus still has plenty of money, but they didn't think it; they were somewhat ashamed to show it, but they held on to it and flaunted their simple taste. All of them cost much money.

Wartime cost; TV writers, doctors, producers, journalists, all living in squats, and usually with a wife or two, tends to smile at the bow on the stairs for the wealthy intellectuals. But there is another side to it. One appreciates the obliging every right to take over a house and smite the day away peacefully. But are they entitled to prevent working families getting into the only homes they can get for, which are not — maybe aptly, but perhaps — waiting, while they hold up housing projects and call pianists on the "commune" to come and protect them, the Big Brothers to replace the State from which they have dropped out?

ROMA RECALLED

According to LA MONDE (March 6th) the G.N.R. the old men and women union Confederation is powerful at the beginning of the Civil War, and which was thought to be dead is returning from America, and has made a Grand Army of some 20,000 men in the grave (as a translation from LA MONDE has in it). There is a big difference: in the countyside the Resistance went on in the bloodthirsty Guerillas.

Declares a dictat for a lecture on 'Saxons'. "We are not born men and women. This happens later because of the absence of society. It is not to say that (with a few doubtful exceptions) this is not entire!"
"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 will 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 the Lloyds Bank Review (and naturally anyone who is anybody at all reads the Lloyds Bank Review) will know that there is more than one way to measure profit: (i.e. cost of capital or replacement cost) and each method can be used to demonstrate an opposing principle from the same figures. Using the Replacement Cost method: it is possible to prove that the final crisis of capitalism is often predicted by the Trends are well and truly here now. Yet it is these trends, essentially the Trotskyites who do not seem to be at the point of disintegration, with declining membership, collapsing chapters, and splits which make nuclear fusion look like child's play.

Demands to open the books are not subversive — stealing the banks and murdering the customers is, and it is on an issue such as this that the differences between anarchists and revolutionaries are most obvious. Revolutionaries who ask to be allowed to see the books reveal nothing about their own weaknesses.

Anarchism has always been a movement which has drawn its theory from the practice of the working class: sabotage, the general strike, and above all direct action. But then anarchism is working class socialism, not the activist variety propounded by middle class intellectuals. Working class people have never needed to have the books opened before they knew they were exploiting. In Russia, China, South Africa, USA and 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 isn't an economic crisis, but a crisis of authority. Britain's economic problems are just a result of this crisis of authority which manifests itself in absenteeism, squatting, 'ostracism', and a general decline in the institutions such as the church, political parties, and the family. The decline of the 'revolutionary' left is part of this crisis of authority, as people refuse to accept any authority, even revolutionary authority.

"Why don't they fight?" demands a headline in Workers' Action: referring to the 'sweat-shop' attitude of the trade union leaders not realising that there is more revolutionary content in being deliberately and incautiously 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 shape and course of the class struggle. But there are the roots of revolution, and as the struggle increases in intensity we won't be asking anyone to load it, we won't be asking anyone to "open the books" we will take them and burn them — without permission.

M.R.

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 who is oppressed and neglected has never made as much an attempt to get a hearing. The power of opinion at home was always regarded as an insubordination: independence an excess. The individual was absorbed in the state, he was dissolved in the commune. The revolution of 1917, however, did replace the antithetical power of the state by the European bureaucratic system.

The European stress on administration and of the judiciary, militaristic and civil organisation have developed into a monstrous, hopeless despotism.

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

Every act of power, every violation of a superior to a subordinate is a rampant exhibition of gross insolence. From the humiliating tyranny that the individual can be anything... the government at home is more self-styled, and unrestrained, and that is in Turkey or in Peron. There is nothing to restrict it, no traditions of the past, for it has dissolved its own past and has no concern for that of Europe. It has no respect for its people. It shows nothing of the general culture of mankind, and is an anti-Catholic. All the professions... Aristotle, at least, the government was dismissed of its neighbours. Now it sets itself up as an example to all oppressors and aspirers to be their mentor...
ULSTER

A Clara,

This letter is written in response to a new communist journalistic article called "Ulster in Action" (Dublin: Typo, Vol. IV, No. 31). We are a few of the leading members of the checkout operators' movement, who are fighting for a better society. This letter is addressed to the Anarchist who wrote the previous one in common with all.

Yours sincerely,

A. H. T. B.
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 951, Manhasset Station, NY 11030, "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 organizations of the class in the advanced epochs - unskilled workers, partisans - have been integrated into capitalism and serve as obstacles to the proletarian struggle.

The bourgeoisie has engaged in massive 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 forms and forces 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 suppress 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 palliation which has 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 in this kind of exploitation and brutalisation which capital in the more industrialized countries dares to resort to only in moments of profound crisis.

The reality of working class existence in the Third World has relocated 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 capitalism 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 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 inevitably, the national liberation front extends 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 setting up a shaky national capital on the world market, and of serving as a basis for popular and "socialist" 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, military labour production, the complete integration of the "worker" organisations into the state.

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

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

But bourgeois admirers of these regimes are never able to see that, despite these mystifications, the working class is integrated anywhere, and that the class struggle continues unabated in the most "progressive" of Third World regimes. The recent rail strike in China, which had to be broken by special CCP units, is eloquent testimony to this. Always behind the socialist verbiage of "voluntary" sacrifice lurks the ever-present threat of military-police repression thus to his definition of freedom the FRELIMO boss said that there will be no room for strikers in the new social order in Mozambique.

Party Police

In the 19th century the bourgeoisie revolution almost gave the workers the right to organise themselves, but there are now no more decisive proof of the impossibility of bourgeois revolution today than the political character of "national liberation" regimes. These are inevitably organised with the explicit purpose of preventing, and if necessary suppressing, any sign of autonomous working class struggle. Many of them are shabby party police states which press the right to strike. Their prisons are full of dissidents.

Many of them have a distinguished record of putting down working class uprisings in blood; we have mentioned告诉他 valuable contribution to the smashing of the Sino-German Communist; we should also recall Mao's dispatching of the Peoples Liberation Army to "restore order" after workers' strikes, anti-revolutionary, and similar "ultra-left" adventures provoked by the so-called Cultural Revolution. Then we should remember the striking miners shot by Allende's or by the "progressive" military junta in Peru. The list...
Research have also faced poorly under the terror assaults 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, terrorize them, use them, mobilize them as cannon fodder. The panicky flight of peasants in the face of the Viet Cong 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 H.H. Mahn's collectivizations in 1956 were crushed by the regime, while in China, peasants who are mobilized for the construction of dams, bridges etc., are subjected to the most acute intensification of exploitation by the state. The enforced desolation of the peasantry in the Third World reciprocates in a particularly violent fashion what lasts 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 Democratist Stalinist-Frontist government of Ceylon deprives the Tamils of all civil rights while ruthlessly exploiting them on the tea estates. And the Polish bourgeoisie—despite Lom's professions—continues to persecute Jews whom the regime has not already kicked out.

Indeed, the programme of most national liberation movements often only puts the lie to 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 nationalistic, they cannot serve to eliminate the basis of national oppression, which is none other than capitalism itself.

But to return to the specific situation of the workers under such regimes, we may say that the greatest assault that the national liberation front can mount on the working class is precisely the national liberation war itself. Because of global imperialism's rivalries and the chronic nature of the historic crisis in the Third World, the bourgeoisie of these countries is continually pushed into imperialist quarrels with and adventures against their local rivals. Since 1914 there has hardly been a moment in 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 imperfections 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 capitalist forces the weaker capitals to try to assemble ahead of each other to carve out niches in the world market. But for the working class, these wars bring ever greater rates of exploitation, more explicit militarization, 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 impose the saturation of communist consciousness. And since the unity of overall movement of capitalism in decay is towards world imperialist domination 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 decaying epoch of capitalism, communists must unambiguously declare that all forms of nationalism are reactionary to the core. What few would deny the reactionary nature of the traditional nationalism of the big imperialists and the Stalinist-type "national liberation" 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 former-hence, it is in the interest of national liberation and anti-imperialist rallying cries that the workers of these countries are mobilized 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, national or national lines is counter-revolutionary, no matter how much it talks of socialism, liberation or revolution.

If imperialism in crisis succeeds in imposing its solution of world war on the working class it will simultaneously crush 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 old form.

The Construction of the World Human Community

There can be no more truth in the workers' movement of any right to national self-determination unless before, during or after the victory of the proletarian revolution. The extension of the revolution means the socialist transformation of the state, the dissolution of the police and armed forces, and the transformation of the workers' councils over wider and wider areas of the world. 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 realizable 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 unity 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 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 materialized, capitalism must be definitely 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-egalitarian world market.

It also applies to libertarian and anarchists who favor "self-management in one country." The extension of the nation-state means national frontiers, international exchange, international competition—i.e. short, capital.

The construction of socialism or 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 socialization 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.
Letter to Comrades

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

This is unfortunate for a number of reasons. Firstly, because there are still many veterans of the old councilised movement still alive and active. Likewise there are some localised working class councils in a nascent state. Yet they are oppressed by the clout of the intellectuals. Secondly, because we are forced to conclude that these non-worker councils — ranging from left-Bolsheviks to anarchists-communists — are here to stay, tolerating the natural law of history. Thirdly, because these petty bourgeoisie (who often style themselves "the proletariat") bear a vindictive hatred of not only revolutionary (and anarcho-) syndicalism, but the other great working-class movement also. It's as if the fact can be squarely faced, to the working class itself: Who is the first delinquent?

It is a basic tenet of this new councilism that syndicalism is reactionary in all its manifestations. They attempt to regale syndicalism to the level of the AFL-CIO and SIU. And where they are confronted by the record of the IWW and CNT, they falsify history. Either writing it out (like Jeremy Brecher in Strike!), or inventing the whole affair (like Lawrence and E.H. Egan). The councilists contend that all working-class struggles 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 1919. Yet, what of the rising against fascism by the Catalonian workers in 1936...? Which was a syndicalist rising and mass-labor organization carried out by CNT unionized workers. What of the IWW-led 1919 General Strike in Chile, the 1922 miners revolt in the United States, the 1919-20 strikers who crossed the line in the United States? All these were arrested by the power of the state. As was FORA in Argentina, the IWW in Chile, the NSD in Norway (which seized control of the city of Hamarfest 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. These were the bitter IWW years which led to the 1919 upsurge, and to the 1933-34 mass strike wave.

But what the non-worker councils delight in is to pick out certain failures or failings and in turn blow them all out of proportion. Concluding: "this is syndicalism: counter-revolution..." Perhaps the best example is the so-called "mass strikes" in 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 councils in towns they controlled, and the previously mentioned worker-solidarity committees in 1919. Likewise the councilist style collaboration of CNT and left-UGT unions on a large scale like the Asturian MIR.

Most of all, however, the non-worker councils downplay the working class (although often affecting a great irony and due). Like the Bolsheviks, they see them capable of no more than "trade unionism". They smeared for the destruction of all unions... And this is to include the United Farm Workers in the US, the Quebec CNTU, the Swedish SAC, the CNT underground in Spain, etc.

What these petty-bourgeois councils seek is BARRACudas for the World to reduce to Ground Zero (so beloved of the Bolsheviks). They seek the destruction of all existing weapons of working class defence. Not only the revolutionary, but the independence in the. Only that will these councils prosper, feeding off the increased misery of the working class. Like Stalin, they feel: 'Flatt the bastards, the UK.'

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

These workers — both councilists and syndicalists — are not us. We are not afraid of the strike and the mass strike of workers. The IWW's 1919 General Strike was not a failure, it was a success. Communists and socialists have been defeated, but not destroyed. Yet our predecessors were, too, 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, Fascist reactions) — is heavy and frightening. The great majority of our contacts and our people seem to be in a panic. One must always be the voice of reality. That is our task. That is our duty.

Number 2: Despite many organizational differences, we have some areas of almost identical method. This is especially true at the grass-roots level of the movement, at the local or area level. But the national level, and to some extent the international level, and to some extent the international level, is quite different. And few of us are there.

That being the case, it is absolutely absurd for us to engage in fraternal polemics and falling; otherwise we are not able to foster a federative level. We can then — it is necessary — split up all along the board. But for the moment, in a period of not only transformation, but an actual fighting of syndicalists and councilists, we must be forged. Based upon the primary goal of working class Mutual Aid.

A concept term in revolutionary syndicalists and workers councilists. Of revolutionary anarchists and free socialists. We stand together in the dirt of history. We can only be us together.

Fraternally,

C. Jewett
(Secretary IWW Defense Local 2)
Toronto.
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 one case afterwards, two of the young revolutionaries have hanged themselves in Fuldabrude Prison (Hamburg). In a letter of this year, in protest against the bad state of political activists, Hans Rohrmann and Heinrich Krieger, vomitted 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 treatment of the prison authorities.

If I tried to make up as true as can be their deaths will be meaningless, and that those who do so will be called "terrorists" precisely by the people whom "secularist" worship of the State's order, that is, those who are deprived of freedom to speak their minds, and that the law says that a man or a woman must be turned into a vegetable, that is, this is natural. The press, which is "assessed" on the matter, whispers up hysteria about the "Hamburger Krieger" and says that they who must be "harshened" and rendered harmless . . . systematically destroyed," but it is the State concept that needs to be summarised and destroyed.

PROTEST SUICIDES

On Monday, 16th February 1978, Hans Rohrmann and Heinrich Krieger committed suicide in the University prison (Hamburg) in protest against the intolerable conditions in prison.

The reaction of the press of Germany described the two suicides as "crazy idealists" and declared suicides by political prisoners as "assassination" and "agitation" while the representatives of justice expressed deep regret and called for a peaceful treatment of the prisoners, and that the policy of the Ministry of Justice against terrorism and the new repressive laws.

The following statement is the suicide note left by Krieger and Rohrmann 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 Fuldabrude prison Block II. We protest against:

1) The stop taken by the punishment executive administration to apply new punishment regulations retroactively.
2) Against the conduct of some prison staff, who, unauthorized, inflicted upon us intense bullying and privation, especially the following staff members: Peter, Van Essen, Anstadt, Ording, Borchers, Dannese, Pietsch, Kramer, Evertz, Luderitz, as well as the entire Security group.
3) Harassment, of political directors and Security groups for informers.
4) Food rations below normal standards, hardly enough to nourish a dog.
5) The arbitrary sentencing sentences to house punishment, up to three weeks.
6) The disregarding 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 heads, Bickert and Rottgen.
3) The removal of above mentioned staff members.
4) The enforcement of the former competence of the prison director taken away after the Assmann case.
5) Improved medical care.
6) Better conditions for the unoccupied.
7) Abolition of all class criteria.
8) Improved care by psychologists and social workers.
9) E.T.V. acts for prisoners kept in isolation.

We wish to bring to an end the manipulations of the reactionary powers in this house. Also: It is about time that the fanaticus of this house awake from their apathy and don't tolerate further deprivation of the rights granted to them in 1972.

Hans Rohrmann
Heinrich Krieger.

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

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

Herbert Reit, Anarchy & Order.

The totalitarian state of a country that runs throughout German thought, not only from Right to Left but most violent in the Centre, is the background to create in Germany. One should not make any mistake about the Germanic German bourgeoisie with its stupid image; it is not considered good manners to talk about his Nazi past but the thing for the days when young people could not behave like this is bound up with the Nazi era when State worship inflated its influence.

The young people of Germany are making a profound break with their past; all the more profound because the immediate past was the apogee of State worship. Naturally they are making mistakes and learning their way. Marxist ideologues have brought State worship into even the remotest thinking, and the student youth goes through a phase of Marxist philosopohy even while studying with every level of Marxist thought. One sees this in the use of the so-called "Red Army Fraction" which is a bow at the State principle though nothing could be less like an "Army" and a "Red" cell at that, than undisciplined guerrillas. (It was the role of the Red Army - both in the Ukraine and in Spain - to break and fight against disciplinarian guerrillas, never mind undisciplined ones).

The personality "ideal" of Krieger and Meinhof - whereby one man and one woman held conditions of degrading torture and cut off from the world, and to be responsible for the acts of rebellion of a whole generation - is part of the "ideological frenzy" of the German bourgeoisie, and an indispensable part of the "totalitarian belief in the sovereignty of the State" which is the other side of the "democratic commune" whereby workers are driven hard by the supreme needs of the State to establish itself, and their work is supplemented by bringing in inferior rates - sorry, "guest workers," now!

The all-pervasive nature of the totalitarian State leaves only two holes of escape - emigration or death. One was under the Kaiser, under Hitler and now. In protest against
The following statement by lawyers was published in "Tagesspiegel" and "Schaubner Volkspblatt."

"B Becker has today (4/2/78) spent five years in prison. The remainder of his sentence must be served in solitary for five years. This is unique in the Federal Republic. The law has not yet been passed that a Judge should be kept in solitary for any longer than six months. An imprisonment on command is supposed to be easier than voluntary imprisonment. Since the man/woman on trial is not guilty, he must be returned innocent until he is proven guilty. In the Federal Republic a prisoner is entitled to receive communion at least every four hours. If he refuses the soup, the judicial authorities cannot force him to it. Any patient inside a prison feels no better than a hospital patient."

"We are supporting the patient and the demands made by Steiner and Reinhart.

RALF STOEI

Ralf Stein received a total sentence of six years and seven months. Two of them, namely receiving and possessing, have been dismissed, but a new charge against him, in that of organizing a public affair. The trial date has been set for Monday, March 28th, 1978, in Cologne, at the "Langenbruch" Auge (Lachen), 2nd Floor, Room 324.

The present major attack on him by the prison authorities means that he is not permitted to write and receive only one letter per week, and that the number of newspapers allowed at him have been reduced to one.

Prisoners on demand are generally entitled to write and receive only one letter per week. During the past two weeks, Ralf Stein has been refused all mail, and the charge against him was reduced to a year's imprisonment. The prison authorities have refused to consider the sentence of 14 days before the limitation had been ordered and trade known to him.

Further witnesses are to appear at the trial, seven of whom are police officers and three additional experts.

STOP PRESS: Ralf Stein sentenced in 18 months imprisonment, but as he had already served that sentence on remand he was released from custody. Jurgen Becker, however, remains "on remand"
The hills and glens of the Highlands that now hold only sheep and deer and the peasants of tourists, once provided for the bulk of Scotland's people. This feudal, nearly aristocratic tribal society gave Scotland's monarchy, though back dependent on the Church of England in the 18th century. The economic logic that cleared the hills. And when the Duke of Sutherland surrounded the native population of Culloden to volunteer to fight under his colours in the Crimean War, a reply was eloquently provided: 'When you have nothing to eat, let sheep defend you.'

In his latest book, Soucy concludes his saga of the destruction of the Highland clans, examining the part played by the men of the clans in the 18th-century British army. The Highlanders, contrary to popular legend, were not a willing contingent. They were often recalcitrant by blood, and by the few, the standard and his dress and language. Preface documents the revolt of the Highlanders in uniform from the Black Watch mutiny at Inverness in 1773 to the revolt of starting 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, continuously revolting against the cause of Empire. In fact, the Gaelic people who, from 1800 percent of the population, provided the Crown with 65 percent of its forces, 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, were I to stand on parade nor for the rest of my life set out over a red coat.'

Preface's book tells the real history of the ordinary people, the Highlanders, who, at the time, wore the red coats of the British Army. His writing brings fire to the belly and tears to the eyes. He is objective but never impartial and, like all fine 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 a starting point from there, and treating the angry Brigade without its built-in Marxist programme but with a greater degree of organisational ability (presumably a great deal of support and luck) Antony Beevor's novel takes us to the 'brink' of revolution transferring events of Paris 1871 to present-day London in fact leaves us there, just as Paris did, with a revolution crowd to the nation by the Prime Minister. As a story, it is gripping, and the treatment of the revolutionaries - most of them immediate and closely allied with the International Revolutionary Solidarity Movement - First of May Group, is sympathetic, but in the end the men we can ask of a novelist, but it is doubtful that things could happen the way they do here; or if at least they did extolate into the manner described in the book. This is Antony Beevor's first novel, however, and if we turn 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 Melzer (384 pp., photographs and chronology) is now available from Cienfuegos Press at our new address 'Over the Water', Sanday, Orkney, Scotland, (£2.35p + 15p p+p).


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

The Wilhelmshaven Revolt, 15p post free.