

Bulletin of the Anarchist Black Cross

Vol. I. No. 9.

September 1970

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THE RULE BOOK OF THE CONFEDERACION DEL TRABAJO

Spanish anarcho-syndicalist union (National Confederation of Labour)

The majority union with 1,800,000 members. Its constitution was printed in the membership card, set out in full here.

* * *

The emancipation of the workers must be the work of the workers themselves.

Anarcho-syndicalism and anarchism recognise the validity of majority decisions.

The militant has a right to his own point of view and to defend it, but he is obliged to comply with majority decisions, even when they are against his own feeling.

A membership card, without the corresponding confederal seal, is no longer valid. The confederal seal is the only means of income that the Regional and National Committees have. Not to keep it paid is to sabotage the work that has been recommended to those committees, for they are unable to carry out decisions without the economic means to do so.

We recognise the sovereignty of the individual, but we accept and agree to carry out the collective mandate taken by majority decision, Without this there is no organisation.

We must never lack the mental clarity to see danger and to act with rapidity. To lose time in talking in meetings by holding philosophic discussions, is anti-revolutionary. The adversary does not discuss, he acts.

The most fundamental principle of federalism is the right of the members to examine the role of the militants and to have control of their delegates, no matter what the circumstances or what position they have given them.

We must allow a margin of confidence to our delegates. But we must also retain the right to replace them if necessary.

To criticise in public those comrades given places of confidence in our organisation is to devalue the organisation. No conscientious comrade criticises the committees in public, because this only favours the adversary.

The choice of delegates is discussed internally and it is essential that this takes place. But one should remain silent in public. Think as you wish, but as a worker you need the Syndicate, because it is there to protect your interests.

Comrade: This membership card is the safeguard of your working life. It has no price, but you will prize it above everything. And you will be ready to defend the card of the CNT wherever you see it attacked. UNITY IS STRENGTH.

Workers: The syndicate is your means of solidarity. Only in it are you able to form a united proletarian movement that will go forward to emancipation.

THE BULLETIN OF THE
ANARCHIST BLACK CROSS

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NATIONALISM - the blind alley

Because of its work against Franco and in favour of Spanish prisoners, the Black Cross finds itself - against its will - listed by 'progressive' organisations in lists of 'peace and progress' groups, and deluged as a result with pseudo left propaganda.

Such propaganda, in accordance with the beliefs of the "new left" keeps quiet about socialism. This is perhaps wise, for when one gets a glimpse of the socialism in which it believes, one finds it hard to tell where the right wing ends and the left begins. The constitution of North Vietnam is not as enterprising as that of the Bow Group; it faithfully echoes the Moscow line, however, in foreign policy.

The Trots follow the well-worn path of Trotskyism as the "loyal opposition" to Stalinism; and Maoism is determined to outdo Moscow in its nationalistic appeals. Hence from all sides come the hysterical demands for national independence, the national struggle, and a sort of international nationalist socialism. This constitutes the bulk

of leftwing and sometimes so-called libertarian activity. When a cause is found that is not nationalist, it is rarely revolutionary. It is liberal.

What is Liberalism? Liberalism is a demand for social betterment within the capitalist (or socialist) state; and a plea for greater liberty within the state. Political liberalism in this country stinks because of its identification with illiberalism; but it was reborn with "CND and all that".

Subsequent New Left causes, from one end of the spectrum to the other, have all been Liberal or Nationalist. Some think that it is abusive if they are called 'liberals' (though the same folk will use the word readily enough on their own, identifying themselves with 'liberal opinion' &c.) But they are satisfied, even so, with 'libertarian', a term which now almost exclusively means 'liberal' (how to fit concepts of freedom to living inside the State; not how to overcome the State, which is anarchistic).

For Anarchism. We are for anarchism now. We are not under the illusion that we can introduce an anarchist society tomorrow or that we can live freely while the state exists. For us the name has still a clearcut ring. An anarchist is somebody not only opposed to all government but who is taking steps to work towards a stateless society.

For those who regard themselves as being in "the anarchist movement" and who clearly understand that this is not just a general synonym for "the libertarian movement" or even the more militant of the liberal or nationalist movements, the Black Cross offers specifically anarchist causes. It was not solely our solidarity with the Spanish Resistance that led us to identify ourselves with this in our first major battle. It was also because we felt that a battle on the lines of this solidarity would have valuable repercussions inside Spain and here too. For the revolutionary spirit is indivisible.

So far as nationalism is concerned, it is a blind alley. It may well be parallel with the class struggle when the rulers belong to one nation and the ruled to another. But this lasts no longer than it takes the ruled to appoint their own government.

THE POLICE POGROM IN MILAN

12th December 1969

Between 4 and 5 p.m. a bomb exploded in the main hall of the BANK OF AGRICULTURE in the piazza Fontana (in the centre of Milan). At that time most banks are closed and this is the only one open because of the vegetable market on Fridays in the piazza Fontana. This bank, therefore, closes at 4.30 where others close at 4.

The result of the explosion: 16 dead (12 immediately, 4 after some days) and many seriously injured.

Another unexploded bomb was found in the Commercial Bank.

The Situation prior to 12th Dec.

THE MILAN FAIR BOMBS

On 25th April two bombs had exploded in Milan Fair, causing some injured. The right-wing press blamed the anarchists, and the police went along with this claim. Seven young anarchists were arrested (among them Corradini and Eliane Vineileone). Corradini and Vinneileone were released in November, but the others are still in jail. The anarchist press has protested, and even some of the left-wing papers have joined in the protest, since five of these seven are still kept in jail (awaiting trial).

They face a demand for at least 15 years apiece, and are charged with more than 15 explosions.

July 1969

The right-wing democratic socialists left the Italian Socialist Party (PSI) and form the PSU (United Socialist Party) - unofficially supported by American funds and unofficially directed by President Saragat of Italy.

August 1969

Bombs explode on the Italian trains and the so-called "Indipendenti" says "these may be anarchist bombs". (The old journalistic story: the identity of the people placing them is not known, but their political convictions are common knowledge).

"Hot Autumn" 1969

The "hot autumn" is a bourgeois nickname for the period when conditions are at their worst in slum areas, and conceals a basic fear of the people. There were many strikes in this period, some directed by the big three trade unions and others spontaneous (wildcat). The class struggle is intensified and there are many riots.

Tolin, working publisher of the extreme-left review "Potere Operaio" is thrown into jail for almost two years, charged with "subversion".

A student is killed by the police in Pisa, during an anti-fascist demonstration against the Greek regime.

A policeman was killed during the riots following the General Strike in Milan. In fact, he died in a crash between two police jeeps, but as the jeeps were tearing the streets to suppress the workers, the "independent" press announces that all the left is guilty.

Italian fascist organisations organise huge funeral processions for the policeman and threaten heavy reprisals. The President of the Republic, Saragat, speaks on television and says that all the leftists will be severely repressed.

The strikes continue to hit the bourgeoisie hard. The press works up a scare sensation.

12th December 1969 - Milan's Explosion. One hour

after the explosion of the bomb in the piazza Fontana, the police began

(Cont. over).

(From Overleaf).

to arrest the leftists. 150 were arrested in Milan, mostly anarchists. The police say the enquiry will be "objective" but it is easy to understand whom they think is guilty. Foreign newspapermen report that official circles say they are going to clamp down on those they think responsible - "the anarchists and all these workers control people".

THE PINELLI CASE Only an hour and a half after the explosion in Milan, the head of the Milan political police, Dr Calabresi and other policemen arrested our comrade Pinelli, of the Black Cross, and Sergio Ardaù, both anarchists, in the anarchist "Circolo di via Scaldasolo".

Calabresi says to Pinelli: "I know you are not guilty, but there is some lunatic among you anarchists who could have done this terrible massacre. For instance, Pietro Valpreda." Then Calabresi and the other policemen took Ardaù to the Central Police Office. At that stage they did not take Pinelli. But he went on - travelling by his own motorbike.

Presumably he did not want Ardaù left on his own to the tender mercies of the police. When he arrived at the Police Station on the evening of the 12th he was kept for three days. Then, on the night of the 15th or the early hours of the 16th., he "jumped" out of a window of a room on the fourth floor while the policemen were still "talking" to him.

PINELLI WAS MURDERED - The police chief Marcello Guida speaking to the press just after Pinelli's death, said:

"He is certainly guilty. His death is a clean, open confession". Who is Guida? He was a notorious fascist under Mussolini and director of prisons for "political criminals" (anti-fascists) in the island of Ventotene. **HE IS NOW AN ITALIAN REPRESENTATIVE ON INTERPOL AND "ADVISES" SCOTLAND YARD'S SPECIAL BRANCH.**

But in the teeth of the criminal Guida's remarks, Dr. Calabresi remarked to the press only a few days later that he did not understand why Pinelli killed himself. "I am sure he was innocent, and in a few hours he would have been set free".

By this time, however, nasty questions were being asked.

Who is Dr Luigi Calabresi? He writes for the right-wing social-democratic review 'Giustizia' as well as being vice-chief of the Milan Political Squad. He has done a training course with the C.I.A. in America, and following the American General Edwin Walker on his Italian visit.

Why did the Home Office not enquire into the different opinions of the two chiefs of police?

Then the police gave two or three different versions of Pinelli's death.

"Suddenly Pinelli stood up and jumped through the window and flew down. We could not do anything because he was as quick as a cat."

"Suddenly Pinelli stood up, began to run. We tried to stop him but we caught only one of his shoes. Then he jumped through the window."

But an eye-witness, a communist journalist who was in the court-yard of the police station, testified that he saw Pinelli's body on the floor immediately afterwards with **BOTH SHOES ON HIS FEET.**

Even graver signs point to murder: Pinelli had no wounds on his hands. The first thing one would naturally do in falling from a height is to put one's hands before one's body to try to save oneself.

(Continued on page 5)

Pinelli fell without a shout. Moreover, the same eye-witness thought Pinelli must have been dead during the fall, because of his unnatural position and because he fell so near the wall.

WHY DID THE POLICE CALL AN AMBULANCE AT 11.58 p.m. if only five minutes later (at three minutes past midnight) Pinelli "fell" from the window?

The young anarchist Pasquale Valitutti, who was sitting in the corridor near the room where Pinelli was, officially declared he had heard very "strange" noises in the room, and after a few seconds, he saw policemen running out of the room. This declaration was published in the left-wing "L'Astrolabio".

DETENTION OF PINELLI. He had been kept in the police station for more than three days, without any order from a judge. In Italy, it is possible to detain someone for 48 hours, but thereafter one must be set free or officially arrested by a judge.

"L'Avanti" concluded that "We think Pinelli's body had no wounds because he was struck by a karate chop". The police did not answer this.

"Lotta Continua" (left Wing) stated:

- i. The ambulance men who transferred Pinelli's body have been moved to another town.
- ii. The nurse who saw Pinelli in hospital after his death, has been dismissed and there is no knowledge of her whereabouts.

"Lotta Continua" has taken a prominent role in the campaign to clear Pinelli's memory and stating clearly:

CALABRESI IS A MURDERER
PINELLI WAS KILLED
ALL COPS ARE PIGS

It has published many cartoons against Calabresi and the Milan police. Finally Calabresi was provoked into suing Lotta Continua for libel, and the trial will take place in September.

The importance of the trial is that the central problem will be the murder of Pinelli. The official enquiry into his death had no positive result since the judge who had to examine the death said he did not find the police responsible. In this trial many facts will come out and this has been the intention of 'Lotta Continua'.

WHEN THE POLITICAL POLICE ARE
BEING NICE, BEWARE.....

Dr Calabresi has of course investigated the anarchist movement many times before. The last occasion was in December 1968.... he gave Pinelli a book as a Christmas present, signing it "very kindly" and wishing him a happy New Year.

THE BUILDING WORKERS IN GRANADA.

In July the Granada construction workers went on strike for 30/- a day. Their wages are the lowest in Spain and the Franco syndicates put no pressure on employers. The armed police shot them down but 37 out of 50 police were injured in the fighting. Many of the strikers took refuge in the cathedral. They were brought out by police. This has caused some breach between the Church and the Police. More significantly, all over Spain strikes have been flared off by this reminder of the class basis of Franco's regime which won and rules only by force.

SINCE we began our campaign for the release of Spanish prisoners, great progress has been made and this should not be obscured by the fact of constant arrests. It is expected that in a totalitarian country like Spain, following strike action which has now become a regular feature of the Resistance, there will be large scale arrests; furthermore, the increasing wave of violent acts against the regime (more noticeable now that, as stated in our June issue, the main 'terrorist' wing of the Resistance operates from inside the country once more) naturally mean that there will be constant arrests and sentencing.

But the fact of bringing to the attention of the world the situation of the prisoners 'buried alive' has had practical results. From one letter received we understand that certain of our comrades are expecting an amnesty within months, and they put this down entirely to our activities on their behalf. For it must be remembered that the present aim of the military regime in Spain is to "restore tranquillity" for a peaceful post-Franco take-over. Bringing the situation of wrongful detention (after expiry of sentence) and constant political repression home to world opinion is NO LONGER a dead letter.

At present the supporters of the regime want to maintain that all "even the Opposition" have certain interests in common for the Spain of the future - and this is true if by "the Opposition" they mean the Christian Democrats and their new-found Communist allies (who together dominate the so-called Comisiones Obreras) as well as the right-wing Opus Dei and dissident Falangists. The middle class and even the reactionary clergy have moved into "the Opposition" - which is to say, the alternative government to direct military rule. **IT DOES NOT APPLY, HOWEVER, TO THE RESISTANCE.** And acts of support to the Resistance, as well as to the prisoners who are in its front line, prove conclusively that the Resistance is not, and never has been, dead. It suffered

many blows, some from the regime and some from false friends. But the Resistance still exists, and is becoming stronger. It consists of the anarcho-syndicalist movement; which is working-class; the student movement, most of which is Maoist and some of which is anarchist, and this in Spain is middle-class; and the E.T.A., the Basque movement which includes workers, middle-class and professional people, even some priests.

Despite the financial support given by British trade unions to the U.G.T. in exile, it does not exist in Spain and trade unionists are being "taken for a ride". Pro-Stalinists are also trying to raise money for the Comisiones though the plain fact is that these represent the type of trade unionism to which the TUC is opposed in this country, but finances abroad.

THE POLICE ARE INTERNATIONAL

We have already observed how the police will complain that immigrants judge the police by standards operating in other countries; yet those other countries are colleagues either in Interpol or in general repressive measures.

The representations of the Spanish police caused the Italian police to launch its murder campaign in Milan. Now, Italian pressure has pushed Scotland Yard into acting here, though it must be granted without serious consequences. But would these consequences have been averted if we did not draw attention to them?

In an article published in **FREEDOM** since our last issue appeared, we drew attention to the raids upon the Black Cross and apparently all surrounding them. There is a social-democratic theory that if one is a revolutionary, one should not complain about police raids: "after all, you say yourself that this is class justice so what else can you expect?" But it is precisely for us to raise as much hell as we can at any infringement of civil liberty. There are others who are not in a position to do so. The

(Continued on page 7).

revolutionary, particularly if he is well dug in at work through industrial activity, has less consequences to feel if the police raid him there. But if he does not protest at this blatant infringing of civil liberty, who will? Some poor devil who is trying to obey the rules, once "went wrong" and is "going straight"? Liberalism is not liberty, it is defining the limits of liberty. The trouble with modern liberals (like Mary Canipa, who writes some cross remarks in Freedom about our having the audacity to be raided by the police) they do not know their own silly business and we have to do it for them.

In the letter from Mary Canipa criticising us (the reply to which was not published, since Freedom gives revolutionary anarchists a hearing, but feels the liberal should have his fair share of the bowling) complains that if we were not active the police would not bother us. This applies all the more to, say, the old Committee of 100 which was even more bothered. Miss Canipa objects to 'violence' also to 'non-violence'; in fact, to any form of action. She thinks it is pacifism when it is in fact old-fashioned social-democracy. Do nothing but fold papers and all will be well, runs her comforting creed. In a current issue of Freedom, the complaint is made that apart from Freedom Press, there is no activity in London! (Perhaps Freedom should warn the good folk in the Wimpey Bar next door of their activity, since Miss Canipa complains that we did not tell our neighbours, hardly realising that the Special Branch would make idiots of themselves in that way).

IBERIA AIRWAYS

It subsequently proved that the police activity was over the bombing of the various Iberia airplanes. Since then, a further incident has happened. On this the nation's press has gone to town. On another page we print a libel upon the Evening Standard and will be interested to know if they take action upon it. It says neither more nor less than the Standard have been hinting and humming about us. We provided a copy of this issue before

publication to the Standard to allow them to act upon it. They have been hinting about "anarchist leaders" which shows what idiots they are - what geniuses these atheistic clergymen or white blackbirds can be is shown by the fact that they apparently manipulate the entire demonstration world - according to Angus Maude MP in the Sunday Express. The anarchist movement manipulates the Catholics, the Maoists, the students, the Trots, possibly the Labour Party, the anti-apartheiders, only not the Paisleyites since they belong to Mr. Maude's own party (revelations from one of the Elders: we run the Tory Party too).

Obviously anarchists had nothing to do with the bomb in the cinema and Scotland Yard know this. Their utterances make it very plain. The fact that they have done nothing about it makes us wonder just a little if our libel has any substance of truth in it.

It would have seemed to us plain that the bomb in the Iberia Airways line was meant to draw attention to the goings-on in Spain, not those in Ireland. But trained journalists apparently think otherwise.

The "Standard" speaks of anarchists who might have "a grudge against Spain". The low level of the ponces of Fleet Street is incredible. We know the anarchist movement somewhat better than they, who can't tell Tariq Ali from the IRA from an anarchist. A grudge against Spain! We have known people who spent ten, twenty, thirty, forty years working for the liberation of Spain from a monstrous tyranny - people who have spent years in Franco's jails and gone on working for Spanish freedom. The contemptible little idiot, John Stevens, who wrote this might like to read up a little on what selfless and dedicated activity anarchists have undertaken for a free Spain. It may not prevent him from writing what his masters tell him. It will prevent him making a bigger fool of himself in public than nature intended.

THE SPANISH LIBERATION FUND is
for help to the Resistance Groups
operating inside Spain. c/o A.B.C.

T H E
W O R L D
L A R G E *****

The trial opens in Paris during September of our Spanish comrades charged with the attempted kidnapping of senor Garrigues, Spanish U.N. ambassador. Many figures of the Resistance will testify.

The demand for access to files is one of the most revolutionary made by student movements. Many workers have failed to appreciate it. "Are they ashamed of their opinions?" they ask. But the keeping of documents is one of the most potent means of repression. In the Times of 18th July we read of a married man aged 22 denied a passage to Australia because of an "offence" committed when he was nine. At Staines, publicity stopped the council keeping files with details of court appearances of tenants.

And it is notorious that the French police handed its files intact to the Gestapo, and that the British police have never been prepared to give an undertaking that in like circumstances they would not do the same.

Dr. George Habash, Marxist nationalist leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, said: "We will make this area another Vietnam and no force - Arab or international - can stop it." Another Vietnam? That's good?

"The battle of Britain may assume a new importance in history as a result of a book now being prepared by an eminent American historian, Prof. Alfred Gollin," writes the Evening Standard. Dr. Gollin says he finds his students are against all wars but when he lectures on the Battle of Britain they acquire a "new appreciation". We seem to remember this "new appreciation" from the time. They called it propaganda in those days, though.

Black Cross. When we began our fund for Spanish prisoners, it was "kicked off" by a fellow worker, who opened up with £5 and said he hoped that as a Marxist, he would spur Anarchists into action. Now we have received £8 for directly sending to prisoners, the result of a sale of valuable books given us by a fellow worker describing himself as a Paisleyite. He challenges us, jokingly, to refer to it. But we have never been under the illusion that the "Orange" worker was "fascist" and we accept his view that political Catholicism is a reactionary force.

(Some people tell us there is such a thing as a Catholic Anarchist grouping but we never heard from them with a Christian action, let alone an Anarchist one!)

TORY MARTYR The British press has gone wild on Elsie Raum, who went to prison for a week. Not like, say, Pat Arrowsmith who goes regularly in causes she gets not a bean for; nor like those wicked squatters who for no conceivable reward help to house homeless families in derelict property.

Mrs. Raum did it for the cash. She turned out a tenant by invading his flat in his absence, squatting in it by just that forcible entry the Tories deplored in the squatters, and refused to obey the law and let him back. All the nation's landlords went wild with delight. Big property companies hailed Elsie as a martyr to the Cause. All she wanted was the dough. She was not one of your long haired direct actionists.

Smaller property owners have found difficulties in the Rent Acts. But those like Mrs Raum bought houses cheap with sitting tenants and want to sell them dear by getting the tenants out. It is natural that they should do so from their own point of view. But it is purely a selfish one. Yet how the poor prostituted Press fell over itself to denigrate and harass the unfortunate tenant who had been thrown out at a moment's notice. THE VERY THING FRIGHTENED OLD LADIES IN BRIGHTON HAD BEEN TOLD THE SQUATTERS WOULD DO! But Elsie was "one of us" to the Press. She just wanted cash.

THE STRUGGLE IN FRANCO'S
JAILS (2nd part).

* * *

For years the whole burden of struggle against Fascism and Tyranny has fallen upon the working-class Resistance. Now that there is a feeling of unrest everywhere, and the beginnings of an 'Opposition' the middle-class are beginning to suffer, and will subsequently take the credit. (Already, with naivete, Peace News has mentioned that the struggle is 'no longer confined' to a few students or priests!)

Many of the liberal camp are in the position of men like Konyatta or Makarion, prior to national liberation and are serving an 'apprenticeship' for government. But among the student movement there are many who have moved, either before or since their stay in prison, to a revolutionary position far in advance of students elsewhere. The 'Acratas' are the most typical example.

Let us pause to honour our comrade Francisco Gil deJean. His parents (mixed up in the regime and doing well out of it) want nothing more to do with him. He has fought for the 'acratas' and found himself in jail in Teruel. As he is under 21, and the Directorate of Prisons has said that this prison is no longer to be used for minors, he was there 'illegally'. One of the prison guards tried to molest him, taking him to be one of the homosexual youngsters who, in Spanish prisons, are very often sent to adult prisons though under 21, for fairly obvious reasons. It may be that the authorities sought to break his spirit by mixing him up with them. However, the warden finished up nursing his jaw. DeJean was sentenced to 150 days in the solitary cells after being sentenced to rigorous punishment by the disciplinary committee - assaulting a warder. A visiting judge added the sentence of transfer to the penal centre of Ocana. The conditions here are more 'disciplined'.

Twenty seven Basques, ETA and CNT, are in prison in Burgos awaiting trial. They are held for a military tribunal and charged under the reconstructed law of 'Banditry and Terrorism'. There are, in fact, some priests among the ETA being held

as "bandits!"

Amongst those held are Ixutoxo Abrisketa Korta, of Biscay - held since April 1969. Bittor Araba Bilbao, of Bolveta - wounded in capture (though unarmed). Jose Maria Derronsoro Cedero, of Guipuzcoa, held since December. A woman comrade, Jone Dononsoro Cebeiro, of Santander - held since April 1969. A priest, Jon Etxabe Garitacelaya. Also from Guipuzcoa, Enrique Gesalaga Larreta who was wounded whilst shot in the back. Yokin Artola, of Guipuzcoa also, facing the death penalty. Xavier de la Iglesia, wounded while trying to save his wife from arrest, for whom the death penalty is asked. Xabier Martinez, held since March 1969. Gregorio Lopez Irasueguen, arrested for trying to free his companion, Miriam Odriozola, now held in prison at Alcala. Also charged with offences for which the death penalty is demanded are Mario Matxiondo and Eduardo Romero.

This is only a brief summary. Many of these prisoners are wounded and dying; apart from the inexorable demands of the law to straw tribunals. But the concentration of names in the Basque area is in itself an indication of the genocide now being practised in Biscay and the Basque provinces.

Following the Simian reproduction of SURREALISM AND REVOLUTION (7/6d) new edition.... a new and better-looking production of THE ORIGINS OF ANARCHISM IN CHINA (2/6d).

Also coming out next week THE ORIGINS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT IN SPAIN with a few new appendices including a hitherto unpublished interview with Durruti. (2/6)

By Miguel Garcia Garcia: Looking Back after 20 years and Spanish Political Prisoners (1/- each).

1649 O. James Duke (2/6d).

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IF ANYONE ASKS, WE WERE ONLY JOKING.....

The bomb placed in a West End cinema, timed to go off after the performance, but which was taken by a young couple who were blown up in their car, is believed to have been placed by a sensational journalist manufacturing crime stories for a London evening newspaper.

Scotland Yard have been afraid to make enquiries because the journal is a supporter of the present administration, and the matter is being handled by the political branch of the police. Although the journal is a Tory one, however, it was founded by a Canadian con man with good reason to hate the Tory establishment. It was hoped the I.R.A. would be blamed.

This is why nothing further will be heard of the matter.

PRISONERS IN CASTRO'S CUBA.

An American comrade writes us that he wishes to compile a list of Cuban prisoners "and present, with this data, a case for their release... the finished document would be the basis of an open letter to the Venceremos Brigade (American youth volunteer workers) asking them to make appeals for the anarchists in Cuban prisons."

He goes on to point out that "to critics of this plan I must point out that thousands of young socialists in America believe in the socialist myth of Cuba's Castro. There are two possibilities: first to capitalise on YS naivete and help build the anarchist movement here, OR to take a very humble approach 'cap in hand' in order to secure the release of a few poor chaps. I am sure you would advise the second course and I don't blame you. But what would THEY, the prisoners, prefer - for us to HIDE the truth under a pile of humble begging?"

This seems to us to be an important line of discussion though we do not agree with most of the assumptions. Our attitude is quite different. We do not believe as anarchists in going 'cap in hand' to the authorities. Granted that sometimes one has to, in such cases it is logical and preferable to go in one's capacity as a trade unionist, a tourist, a citizen, rather than as an anarchist. It is also true that petitions to the authorities must be couched in diplomatic language but this is to save their face. The petitions would not, in themselves, convince

Those who are in prison for organising industrial action in Cuba make nonsense, by their very existence, of any claim to workers' control in Cuba.

the authorities. All that does is consequences. But they like to be seen as giving way to petitions.

SPAIN: Here the politicals are in the forefront of the struggle. They agree we should expose and attack the regime and understand full well that they will only receive clemency when it is not in the government's interests to keep them locked up.

CHINA In repeated correspondence our Chinese comrades insist that they deny there are anarchist prisoners since if a prisoner is believed to be a "criminal" he is speedily released. An old Russian comrade points out this situation once existed in many East European countries. It is better to "confess" to banditry and be released, than be known as a "political".

Further, one gathers the Chinese anarchists do not care two hoots if the Western Left worships the "Mao of the poster" which has no relevance to any actual living person. They ask if such people support the workers especially those on strike in China. If not, "how can they be socialists?" (They don't; and they claim to be).

CASTRO: Our main criticism of Castro is not that he has kept anarchists in prison. Any form of state socialism would do that. We understand that it is easy to "justify" by appealing to the Holy Writ of Lenin, the detention of social revolutionaries and anarchists. This is the only way they can keep power. But it is the industrial struggle that lays the axe to the root of Castroite pretensions.