

EMILY HARRIS — A LETTER

October 27, 1975

Greetings, Sisters & Brothers,

The media speak of my locked down status and my rage and my disrespect for this system of injustice as if it were unique. They ignore the thousands of angry sisters like me who *refuse* to lead butchered half-lives. I am one among many women locked down in the jails, prisons and mental hospitals for refusal to fit the mould of passive femininity. All of us mean to survive on our *own* terms, building a revolutionary peoples' culture as we fight the terror, genocide, robbery, decadence and despair of the U.S. imperialism.

Like many other sisters I see that women must provide leadership on all levels of struggle — legal and clandestine, armed and unarmed, peaceful and violent — all fitting together as part of a coordinated strategy for our total liberation as women. Sexism is rooted in the very foundations of U.S. imperialism. I can feel the brutal oppression of the whole system by looking at one small fraction — my own experience. I can see the traps that were set for me (and for every woman) at each step along the way from childhood to womanhood. I see many attempts to neutralise my aggressive tendencies, define me in terms of men, isolate me from other women. In terms of work, I was always under-employed, under-paid and expendable. I was brainwashed to have aspirations towards a monogamous

marriage in which I would provide a lifetime of unpaid labour. As a white woman I was supposed to feel honoured that I was given the ultra-fem position of being more fragile and therefore more respectable than my Third World sisters. From this position I learned the unnatural, repressive sexual attitudes that deprived me of the warmth and honesty of human emotion shared between friends and lovers alike.

As a revolutionary woman I have always been motivated by a sense of my own experience, not because I feel my own oppression, past or present, is more intense than that of other sisters and brothers; but because my true anger surfaces around things that have happened to me, not things I read or hear about. My solidarity with other oppressed people in this country and throughout the world grows from sharing a common experience — we are under the life threat of a common enemy. None of us can be free until we are all free!

Too often whites discount the messages of their own life and interpret the so-called "privilege" of white skin to mean that their experience must be solely that of oppressor rather than oppressed. It is clear that the contradictions of society are the most viciously blatant to those who are the most oppressed; however, no one is immune. If we can have the courage to look beyond the consumer flea market, beyond the network of

phoney privilege and false divisions, beyond the corrupt brainwashing of the media and our educational system; then we can begin to understand the true set of circumstances we find ourselves in where a ruling elite attempts to use the rest of us as pawns in their international power game.

As women we fight for a society where all women can be proud of their strength and independence; where women's recognition is not based on a charade of appearing weak, fragile and "not too smart"; where the pleasure of being with our children is not destroyed by the overburdening responsibility of raising them alone; where spheres of work are not restricted by a persons' sex, with women often forced on welfare because their labour is considered expendable; where women do not have to exist under the constant threat of rape and involuntary sterilisation; where love, unity and co-operation has the opportunity to develop and grow to its highest potential; where women and men are not forced into confining stereotypes based on sex that weaken and divide them one from the other; where all people can lead meaningful lives, engage in productive work and have adequate food, clothing, housing, medical care and education; where the joy we can give to each other is not destroyed by the cruel desparation of competing for survival crumbs.

I see that these aspirations will remain futile hopes and dreams

(continued on page 13)

Dear Editor,

For the information of your reviewer of the Encyclopedia Britannica entry on anarchism:

"The Delphic Review" was an anarchist literary review edited by Albert McCarthy and published in Fordingbridge Hants, during the late forties and/or early fifties. A short-lived successor to Woodcock's "Now" it numbered among its contributors the late Augustus John.

"The Libertarian" was a *printed* not duplicated, journal published by the Sydney Libertarians during the late fifties which survived for three issues. It was published concurrently with the same group's *duplicated* organ. "The Broadsheet" which is still published by them, and can hardly be described as "of very short duration" after at least seventeen years publication!

Sniping at the academics maybe good fun, but one should at least get one's facts right before opening fire.

Sincerely,

S.E. Parker.
editor Minus One.

The information is appreciated though we reject the social obligation that in criticising the academics for failing at their trade one must be able to know all. We did not know for instance, that Delphic Review was briefly published by Albert McCarthy (known to us as a anarchist and a brilliant jazz writer) in a Sussex village a third of a century ago. It's the sort of thing we like for

the Anarcho-Quiz but hardly the sectarian approach the reader expects to find in the Encyclopedia Brit. — to the exclusion of relevant information — when he seeks to inform himself on the problems of the day.

SNIPES & WOODCOCK

Dear Friends,

I too am amused at the recurrence of the "shot for clean hands" story. Your quiz traces it to Vicente Blasco Ibanez (I suspect the story is even older) but it is noteworthly that in the novel of his where it appears ("La Bodega") the workers, though in revolt, are drunk, and overawed by the middle class clubs and theatres. They are acting under an agent provocateur and don't listen to the anarchist — who, like others in Ibanez's early works, is a saintly idealist.

Some of the other 'atrocities' stories attributed to the anarchists, and especially the Spanish anarchists, as well as what you so well refer to as the "malicious and amused anecdotes about workers' control" would also be interesting to follow up. That was a wonderful hatchet job on Woodcock's atrocity mongering.

Sincerely,

J. Peters.

(Anyone able to contribute any more frequent libels (on "collar and tie" lines) which we can shoot down?)

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organ of the

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Cover by Columba Longmore

PUBLICATIONS APPEAL

With the soaring cost of raw materials, production processes, mailing and other overheads, it has now become almost impossible for small independent publishing groups such as Cienfuegos Press and Simian, (and, presumably, Freedom Press) to continue to publish anarchist literature with the ever dwindling financial resources available to us from sales turnover. The only way out of the present financial quagmire is for us to publish more books and pamphlets (and for you to make sure either you or your local library buys copies of all our publications) thereby making more money available for the numerous new titles we have lined up for future publication.

A further drawback to our publishing programme has been the recent decision by Michael Joseph not to publish Stuart Christie's autobiography "The Christie File" on legal advice for fear of possible libel actions. This has deprived us of an expected figure of £1000 in paperback rights, plus any additional sum accruing from the sale of American and foreign publishing rights.

To get round these problems we would like to appeal for the financial help of any comrades, either by means of a long-term loan or contribution, who are willing to finance two long awaited Cienfuegos Press publications: *The International Revolutionary Solidarity Movement* edited by A. Meltzer, and *The Anarchists in London 1935-55*, with a postscript on the following 20 years, also by Albert Meltzer. Both these manuscripts are ready to go to the printer and could be out within two months — all we require is the money to cover publication costs — £2000!! We believe that this sum will give us sufficient working capital to solve our present — and future — problems. In the meantime we need every penny we can lay our hands on. A record of all contributions to this fund will be published regularly in Black Flag. All cheques and p.o.s should be crossed and made out to: Cienfuegos Press, no. 2 a/c and sent to: Cienfuegos Press Ltd., Box A, 1 Exchange, Honley Huddersfield HD7 2AY.

P.S. Don't forget to order 'Man' and 'The Art of Anarchy' at your local public library.

OUT NOW!

The Wilhelmshaven Revolt by Icarus, Simian, 45p.

Black Star — Organ of the Social Revolutionary Anarchist Federation is now available from Box 90159 Milwaukee, 53202, USA (5 q).

Z Review — now available 15p from 180 Melbourne Road, Leicester.

Library Workers contact Martin Everett, 11 Gibson Gardens, Saffron Walden, Essex.

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The Industrial Unionist is available from Graham Moss, 116 Chadderton Way, Oldham, Lancs price 50p for 5 issues

Direct Action, Organ of the Syndicalist Workers Federation, c/o Grass Roots, 109 Oxford Road, Manchester M1 7DU.

Dublin Anarchists, Bob Cullen, Des Keane, Columba Longmore. Send letter and magazines to: Military Detention Centre, Curragh Camp, Co. Kildare, Eire.

APOLOGY: owing to the late arrival of two important articles the publication of The Cienfuegos Press Review of Anarchist Literature has been held over until March.

PROBLEMS PROBLEMS

It will not have escaped the notice of the attentive reader that Black Flag has had its problems recently. Not only financial. At our address in Huddersfield the Post Office decided, for some inexplicable reason, to return all letters saying the place was empty — when we'd just moved in. Our last issue was well underprinted for the present demand and many readers got their copies late, extra-late or some not at all. Then we have the problem ever with us of trying to decide which postal subscription to cancel because of non-response (we never do it just because of non-renewal but sometime we have to call a halt). However we will doubtless overcome all problems except the financial one which has become a particular burden with the raising of the postal rate. We are keeping going even though we are not coming out regularly each month. But with a bit of support we'll work wonders.

Postcards and statements of solidarity to Ralf Stein, JVA, 5 Koln, 30 Rochustr. 350 Germany. Contributions to A. McGowan, c/o BF, 10 Meltham Rd. Lockwood, Huddersfield.

Giovanni Marini Defence Committee c/o Paolo Braschi, CP 4263, 2100 Milano, Italia.

Stoke Newington Five Welfare Committee, Box 252, 240 Camden High Street, London NW1. Money is still badly needed for books and visits.

Letters and books to: John Barker, HMP Long Lartin, Worcs. Jim Greenfield, HMP Wakefield, Yorks. Anna and Hilary are both in Holloway Prison, London N7.

Cienfuegos Press Book Service will be pleased to obtain your books. Send us a crossed cheque payable to C.P. for the amount required and we shall try to get your book to you within 14 days.

You can help us by ordering Cienfuegos and Freedom Press publications through your local library. At most it will cost you the price of a stamp, but it will help us keep our heads above water.

Sabate: Guerrilla Extraordinary, Antonio Tellez, £2.35 (inc. p&p).

Man! An Anthology of anarchist ideas, essays, poetry and commentaries, edited by Marcus Graham, £3.25 (inc. p&p)

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SPAIN & THE WORLD

So frequently in these pages do we have to return to the question of Spain, Spain and yet again Spain, that as a paper we stand in danger of being stereotyped as being exclusively devoted to that country. Yet there is so much of direct relevance to the entire world in what is happening in the Iberian peninsula. It is not accidental and not due to some national idiosyncrasy. It solely relates to the persistence of the libertarian ideal.

The press make no mention of anarchism in Spain — though note how quick it is to ascribe "anarchist" to movements elsewhere which are not such. In the current situation, the newspaper correspondents are, of course, in touch with their normal contacts — lawyers, journalists, professors, politicians. They have the party combinations at their finger tips. They can understand a little of what the students are on about too, since their very dissent is in the main processed by the University, and classes in "Marxist-Leninism" carefully plan — on an international scale — what is and what is not the accepted lines of protest.

But when it comes to the workers, the journalists turn to the Communist Party, a well-oiled machine which will give them the answers, and all the worthy bourgeois journalists, however fascist their papers might be, are transformed into Comintern agents.

One recalls Heine's story of the old painter who could only paint red lions and was much in demand by innkeepers: however, one landlord, wanted a blue angel. "It's no use, my friend, asking me to paint a blue angel — red lions are my speciality, and if I started to paint a blue angel it would turn out a red lion just the same." It is so easy to have a journalist's "red lion" — he has the cliches to hand, the Communist Party menace, the "extremists" and the "moderates", the danger of dictatorship, the background of Moscow . . . if he started to paint the "blue angel" of direct responsibility, workers control, internationalism, federalism, it would turn out to be a

"red lion" after all

When something happens that cannot be reconciled with Moscow, they fall back on something not quite red and more or less recognisable as a big cat . . . they talk of Maoists or Catalan Nationalists as this again is something which can be understood by the Press Hispanicists who learned about the Iberian struggle at the counter at El Vino's bar in Fleet Street, (or at the tables if a lady).

That is why you won't get much reliable news of what is going on in Spain from the daily press. And perhaps it suits our rulers to see that we are kept in ignorance of that struggle. For in the creation of an anarcho-syndicalist movement over the years there is a challenge to the basic assumptions of authority and the basic principles of accepted institutions.

But it is essential to keep the struggle before the trade union movement in this country. To demand help for the Spanish workers in their struggle. Not for their sake. The amount of help that could be forthcoming from the British trade union movement is minimal and what has been done is nil. But to constantly keep before the eye of British trade unionists what a movement *could* be. We have here a movement subjecting itself to State socialism. Are we so satisfied with it that we wish to impose it on our fellow workers abroad? This is what many people in the Labour Party — as a sop to the trots, who principally benefit — are proposing. Let us compare our systems of organisation step by step with those that will re-emerge in Spain. Comparisons will be very stimulating. That is why, in Catalonia — long regarded as the bastion of anarcho-syndicalism — funds are pouring in to the Socialist UGT from abroad, and scarcely any pretence is made by the police either to prevent it or even to enforce the law banning all but the Falangist controlled unions in the case of the UGT. Someone somewhere is determined to allow the UGT a head start!

Albert Meltzer.

MARTIN SOSTRE RELEASED!

Comrade Martin Sostre, convicted and sentenced to a 30/41 year prison sentence in 1968 on a drug frame-up by Buffalo police was granted Christmas clemency by Governor Carey of New York on December 24th.

Martin's release (albeit on parole) is a direct result of the international solidarity campaign carried out by comrades and sympathisers throughout the world. Of course Martin's courageous stand against the brutality of the police and prison warders, which was constant throughout his imprisonment, is an example to us all. We offer him our warmest fraternal greetings and best wishes for the future, and feel sure that he will join us in asking our readers and comrades to re-double their efforts on behalf of ALL our comrades and their families in ALL prisons THROUGHOUT the world!

THEY ARE IN THERE FOR US — WE MUST BE OUT HERE FOR THEM!





ROON 'n' ABOUT

WITHOUT TIES

Yet another, radio comment this time on the Spanish Civil War brings up that yarn about people being shot for wearing collars and ties, "on anarchist principles." We shot that one down in flames last issue. The anarchists of Ferrer's time wore stiff collars and ties. In a picture of the late '20s I see Durruti, Ascaso and Jover — the three most 'notorious' anarchists — wearing natty cravats and straw hats; the various 1930s photos of well known militants show impeccably dressed "Valentino" types . . . so where did the story arise? Perhaps a reaction to Orwell's (and others') story that no-one wore 'bourgeois' ties . . . but after all, the Civil War did start in a Spanish July, which seems to have been overlooked. The tourist of today wants to stroll in those same towns all but naked.

Memory: I heard the late Prof. Allison Peers — an 'authority' on Spain, a Catalan scholar but very pro-Fascist — describing the workers in Barcelona in July storming the barracks "their overalls soaked in blood." I asked how it was possible that so early in the fighting they had got blood all over their clothing, unless it was their own — didn't they use guns? Was he saying that they cut the troops' throats? Were they asleep at their posts or what?

Prof. Peers was shaken, but came back with the ready quip of the practised speaker: "I'm afraid I don't know how they got their clothes soaked with blood but I presume it wasn't in the course of peaceful persuasion." Titters.

I kid you not, thirty years later in conversation with a Spanish comrade the answer dawned on me. Prof. Peers wasn't actually lying. The workers rushed to their CNT locals when they heard the Army had declared war on them. The nearest union hall to the Captaincy General was the headquarters of the Gastronomic Union. The workers in the blood-stained overalls had rushed from the abattoirs and butcher's shops.

Prof. Peers was a professional historian. Anything he wrote was regarded as proof by other historians and noted 'Peers, op. cit.' triumphantly.

SHORT MEMORIES

The DPP chose "his most eminent barrister" to act against Peter Hain in the action against Peter Hain. He is John Mathew, who (says the Daily Mail 30.12.75) "includes among his impressive record the successful 1972 prosecution of four 'Angry Brigade' anarchists who received sentences totalling 40 years."

Just in case the "Mail" has forgotten, Mr. Mathew only bagged four out of eight. And the jury asked for clemency on the four he *did* manage to get sent down. After a massive press campaign in his support.

DENUNCIATIONS

Listening to a radio memoir of the late Maurice Chevalier, one is struck by the irresponsibility of the press and radio. The British press reported not only that he "collaborated" during the war but that he was shot by the Maquis for doing so. After his "execution" they blandly suggested that if he wasn't he should be. Following a BBC report that he *had* collaborated — based on pure hearsay — he was indeed nearly shot by members of the Maquis.

The reports were fabricated as the result of the difficulty of any public performer who had to continue to work, if he or she had insufficient money to take the easy way and retire (in fact, Chevalier could have done this, but did not want to take the easy way out).

Denunciations based on gossip which result in out-of-hand death sentences of the wrong person, remind one irresistibly of present-day Belfast.

Let us not forget another long lived entertainer of the public, who also died recently — 90 year old P.G. Wodehouse, who lived long enough to get a title but who, in the war years, was also unjustly accused of collaboration by the British press which could also have resulted in his death.

Chevalier (at any rate his stage image) and Wodehouse (at any rate his writings) were much loved by the public. Yet the journalists, who would have been the first to collaborate, sought their death. Contrast this treatment with that given the odious Ross McWhirter. He is supposed to have been shot by the IRA only because he "spoke his mind". But in reality it was hardly the type of random killing for which the IRA is notorious — it was the calculated removal of a right wing terrorist who was organising a private army.

SMOOTH SAM SILKIN

It is anomalous that the Clay Cross councillors, who stood by their socialist principles, are penalised by being surcharged on the public money they are said to have squandered, but at least saved their local people in increased rents; yet Sammy Silkin, the Attorney General, squanders the same amount on a political prosecution and can charge it up to public funds.

Silkin knew perfectly well that the case of the fourteen pacifists who were charged with seducing soldiers from their duty were not a menace to the State; indeed, the whole State propaganda directed against the Irish Republicans is that they *should* adopt that type of peaceful propaganda rather than the methods they do use. How happy the Government would be if the IRA confined itself to handing out leaflets to the troops, saying they would help those who decided to leave the army!

They could not be brought in under the normal laws relating to sedition, so the catch-all charge of conspiracy had to be made, and it failed. It becomes difficult to find a jury which will obey the prejudices of the judges; that is why Sir Robert Mark would like to abolish juries.

Silkin, trying to show how tough he was in combatting the IRA without actually taking them on, authorised the expenditure; the sting is taken out of his defeat by knowing he declared war on the pacifists without having to meet the costs himself. They will never surcharge *him* for he acts within the Law.

PLUS CA CHANGE

"The Incas chewed it (cocaine) and looked on it as a divine drug, while the conquering Spanish spread it through the Sierra once they realised the numbing effect it had on the Indian population . . . it was a cheap and successful means of political control."

Observer colour supplement (11. Jan. 76).

"CATHOLIC" WORKERS?

The press reports that "Catholic Workers", using church halls, have been on strike — together with members of the Communist-Catholic alliance "Workers Commissions" . . . and it is cited a sign of "liberalisation" they have not been molested by the police when making their demands for, amongst other things, "A single democratic trade union". The Spanish Government is learning English hypocrisy-democracy so fast that one suspects someone from here is over there handling matters for them. You can bet your last centavo that the "single democratic trade union" will **not** be the majority trade union preferred by the Spanish workers!

LAW & DISORDER

"This used to be such a nice neighbourhood and now look at it" The cry from street to street and the winding sheet of our town life heralds the breakdown in living and recognised norms of behaviour, the growth of vandalism and purposeless violence. It is the constant theme of conversation in high-rise buildings, council estates, tenements and slums. It is the alternate demagoguery to socialism for the right wing: "Hang them, flog them" "I blame the parents . . . , the immigrants . . . , the do-gooders" . . . "the police ought to have more powers." The left wing is never at its best in this type of situation but stutters that it is due to poverty, frustration, alienation.

The fact is that our society is rotten to the core with an over-reliance on the State. It is as lost to know how to defend itself against any outbreak unless it can telephone the police as the Britons were to defend themselves when the Roman garrisons left. There is a soft enervation in society which results from too much state control, and the breakdown in living comes precisely in those societies which have for too long suffered too much government.

It goes through and through our society which is helpless in the face of a few children rioting at a football match and wants to know why the police aren't handy. It is seen when a few Hell's Angels band together and a handful of youths can terrorise a crowd running into thousands. There will be no solidarity in the crowd: they will only consist of terrified individuals asking each other what the police think they're paid for.

There is nothing to take the place of reliance on authority.

There are no moral standards for today's society because all yesterday's were bound up with religious and superstitious authority in which nobody any longer — not even the Church — can possibly believe. They were inadequate enough and caused more problems than they solved but they served as a kind of supplementary and invisible police force so long as people believed in the credibility of these sanctions. Nobody does any longer, and nothing has replaced them. The commercial ethic says that anything is good provided you enrich yourself and the last remaining commandment is the eleventh — *thou shalt not be found out.*

The morally beaten and frustrated in society can only cry out for more or tougher laws; somebody to protect them, to re-erect the barriers between them and the harsher forms of reality. (This takes different forms, right or left, but come from the same disease of over-statism. On the one hand we have the people who think that for crimes against the person to vanish all that is needed are tougher laws against those muggers who actually get caught; on the other hand such solutions to an undoubted social problem as wives being dependent on niggardly or brutal husbands are answered by others bringing in the fairy godmother of the State in the shape of wages for housewives. Don't let them be dependent on their men any more, let them be dependent on the State instead! This is echoed in the fanciful slogan of the hippy libertarian left — "never work again" — claim all you can from the State that way you can be personally liberated!

Between the wars the great panacea for all problems was State intervention, and all the so-called advanced political programmes depend on the idea of centralised power. The great issue was not whether there *should* be centralised power — that was taken for granted — but solely how far democratic rights were to be sacrificed in the meantime, or whether the central power should be controlled by the left or the right. Now all pretence at seeking economic solutions is abandoned: it is too "sterile", too "arid" a subject for today's rebels to worry over except as a means of demagoguery. But all the social problems are to depend on State intervention too.

The only thing is that it doesn't happen to work. We are relying on laws to make people like each other. We are relying on the force of law to solve problems of living. The great impersonal State is to take over every field of human relationships and vast growth industries in sociology and psycho-analysis sprout around it as the priests of the new dispensation. The anarchist solutions have been rejected as utopian for the whole of this century which has been an only occasionally interrupted march to slavery in the new form. The authoritarians keep harping on the fact that there is too much anarchy about when the problem is there isn't any. There is too much damned tyranny about. We must not only smash it, we must learn to live without it.



OBJECTIONS TO ANARCHISM

THEY KILLED THE RUSSIAN TSAR...
...THE PRIME MINISTER OF SPAIN...
THE EMPRESS OF AUSTRIA...
THEY EVEN TRIED TO KILL OUR BELOVED...



THE FASCIST OBJECTION TO ANARCHISM

The fascist objection to Anarchism is, curiously enough, more honest than that of the Marxist, the Liberal or the Social Democrat — which we have discussed in this series. Most of these will say (if pressed) that Anarchism is an ideal, perhaps imperfectly understood, but either impossible of achievement or possible only in a distant future. The Fascist, on the contrary, admits its possibility; what is denied is its desirability.

The right wing authoritarian (which term includes many beyond those naming themselves fascists) worships the very things which are anathema to Anarchists, especially the State. Though the conception of the State is idealised in fascist theory, it is not denied that one could do without it. But the "first duty of the citizen is to defend the State" and it is high treason to oppose it or advocate its abolition.

Sometimes the State is disguised as "the corporate people" or "the nation" giving a mystic idea of the State beyond the mere bureaucratic apparatus of rule. The forces of militarism and oppression are idealised (after the German Emperor who said that universal peace was "only a dream — and not even a good dream.") Running throughout right wing patriotism is a mystical feeling about "the country", but though Nazis in particular sometimes have recourse to an idealisation of "the people" (this has more of a racial than a popular connotation in German) — it is really the *actual soil* which seems to be held sacred, thus taking the State myth to a logical conclusion. For the Anarchist this is, of course, nonsense. The nonsense can be seen in its starkest form with the followers of Franco who having killed off so many Spaniards, hanker for the barren rock of Gibraltar; especially in General Millan de Astray who wanted to kill off "bad Spaniards" and eradicate Catalans and Basques — in the name of unitary Spain (thus, as Unamuno pointed out making Spain "one-armed and one-eyed" as the notorious General was himself).

Anarchism is seen clearly by Fascists as a direct menace and not a purely philosophic one. It is not merely the direct action of Anarchists but the thing itself which represents the evil (the media is just getting round to picking up these strands in fascist thinking, ironing them out nicely, and presenting them in the "news" stories). Hitler regarded the authoritarian state he had built as millennial (the thousand-year state) but he knew it could be dismembered and rejected. His constant theme was the danger of this, and while he concentrated (for political reasons) attacks on a totalitarian rival, State communism (since Russia presented a military menace), his attacks on "cosmopolitanism" have the reiterated theme of anti-anarchism.

"Cosmopolitanism" was one of the "crimes" with which he associated the Jews (as indeed does the totalitarian communism of Russia), though plainly since his day large numbers of them have reverted to nationalism and a strong state. The theme of "Jewish domination" goes hand in hand with "anarchistic destruction of authority, morals and discipline", since for him personal

freedom was bad in itself. (Only national freedom is permissible). Insofar as one can make sense of his speeches (which are sometimes deceptive since he follows different strands of thought according to the way he could sway an audience) he believes "plunging into anarchy" of a country (abolition of State restraints) will lead to chaos, which will make it possible for a dictatorship other than one in the people's interests to succeed.

This Nazi propaganda is echoed by the media today — "plunging the country into anarchy" to be followed by a Communist or extreme right-wing dictatorship" is taken from a current newspaper leader.

Hitler did not confuse state communism with anarchism (as Franco did deliberately, for propaganda purposes, to try to eradicate anarchism from history). He equates communism with "Jewish domination" and the case against the Jews is (in original Nazi thinking) that they are a racially pure people who will gain world conquest over helots like the Germans if a "Master Race" does not control the Germans and keep the rival domination out. In a condition of freedom the German "helots" would revert to anarchy, just as the "racially inferior" Celts of France threw out the "Norman" Nordic overlords (the Houston Chamberlain version of the French Revolution). Later, of course, when Nazism became a mass party it was expedient to amend this to saying the Germans were the Master Race, but that was not the original Nazi philosophy not was it privately accepted by Nazi leaders ("the German people were not worthy of me.")

To sum up the Fascist objection to Anarchism: it is not denied the abolition of the State can come about, but if so given economic, social and political freedom, the "helots" — who are "naturally inclined" to accept subjection from superior races — will seek for masters. They will have a nostalgia for "strong rule" and fear decisions. In Nazi thinking, strong rule can only come from a racially pure "Master Race" (something a little more than a class and less than a people) which can be constructive masters, or from a race which has had no contact with "the soil", which will be thus destructive. (This identification of the Jews would have to be completely revised in light of present-day Israel).

In other types of Fascist thinking, given freedom, the people will throw off all patriotic and nationalistic allegiances and so "the country" will cease to be great. This is the basis of Mussolini's fascism, and of course, it is perfectly true, bearing in mind that "the country" is his synonym for the State and his only conception of greatness is militaristic. The frankest of all is the Spanish type of fascism which seeks to impose class domination of the most brutal kind and makes it plain that its opposition to anarchism is precisely in order to keep the working class down; if necessary, the working class may be decimated in order to crush anarchism.

It is true of all political philosophies and blatant with the fascist one that its relationship to anarchism throws a clear light upon itself.

SEXISM

In the last issue we allowed ourselves the luxury of a joke in the quiz which involved the use of the word "pansy", to which some readers have objected strongly. The joke about Mrs. Thatcher's being surrounded by "more faggots than Joan of Arc" was a pun on bundles of wood and the slang term for "sycophants".

This has also been interpreted as "anti-gay" as the word "faggot" has a homosexual connotation in America. (The complaints however come from British leftists, for whom American culture is all). We did not wish to imply that the Tory leaders were all homosexuals! That they are sycophants few could deny.

We are divided amongst ourselves how to reply between those who think we should apologise, since some people clearly were offended, and those who think no one has any right to take the name "gay" if they can't see a joke. But it is not the gays themselves, at any rate as such, who took offence; but the people who are sold on the New Left package deal which makes a big political issue of homosexuality and thinks in terms of national liberation. One even says we "must get off the backs of gays"!

As the issue has arisen, it is worth examining the attitudes uncovered. Our friends of "Rising Free" have demonstrated it most pointedly. We were sent a whole issue of Black Flag defaced with the words STOP THIS FASCIST SHIT, every word to a page (it was coincidental that the word FASCIST happened to fall right over an article on El Catala!)

How is it that they feel so strongly that they will denounce as "fascist" anyone whom they think is 'anti-gay' on the score of two jokes (and one only an ambiguity) yet presumably must regard as libertarian or something half the Nazi leaders? Can they be unaware of what goes on in militarist, authoritarian, Boy Scout, church and right-wing circles? The answer gives us a deep insight into some of the many blank cheques accepted in the "package deal" of the ultra-left. This is one of the shortcomings of an "unsectarian" approach which tends to be an uncritical acceptance of attitudes which percolate from university circles.

There is a deep hangover from Christianity which affects our society. The ancient Greeks (who needed to curtail their number) justified homosexuality; the Jews (who needed to expand their numbers) attacked it as unholy.

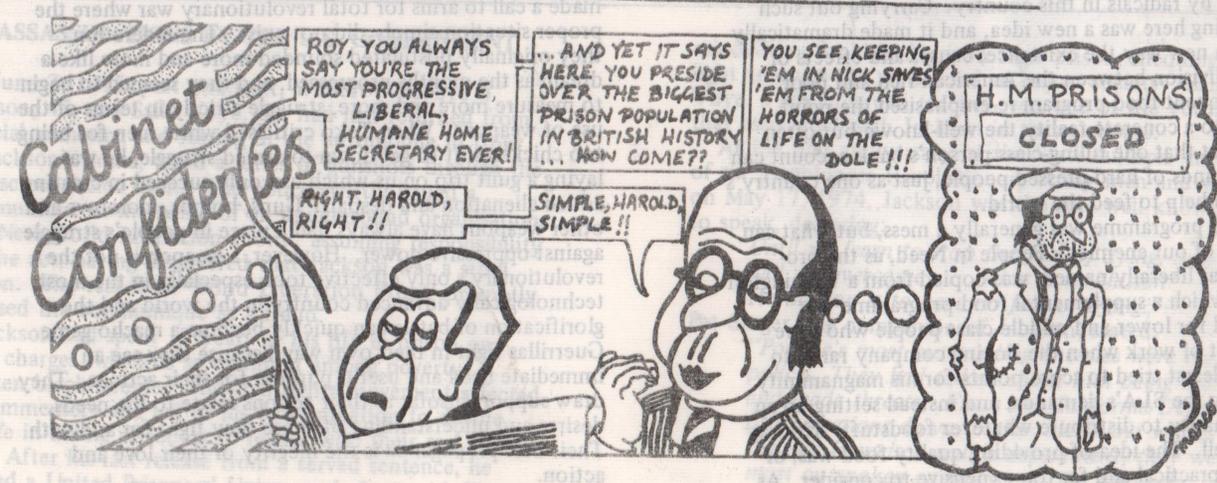
From this accident it came to Christianity; all sexual feeling in Christian dominated circles can never admittedly be for pleasure, either it is sinful or it is a duty. Only recently has this attitude been altered and this has not penetrated the puritanism of the "movement".

The truth is there are no more homosexuals in one nation or one trend of thought or one generation than in any other. But in some it is able to be expressed, and in others it is repressed. In the German nationalism of the 20s and 30s it flourished (seizing on the Jewish origins of Christian morality and justifying their Greek aestheticism form military reasons. (These concepts had to be publicly abandoned only when considerations of power made it necessary to glorify Woman, for breeding purposes though they still underly the contempt for women only good for "church, kitchen and children."))

In the ultra-left of today a different version of this is given: gays and women too are an oppressed people struggling to be free. The old morality is a form of economic exploitation and so on. Someone even ingeniously presented to us a great advance, the forming of a gay trade union group as if, like women, they had different economic interests from other men.

The ultra-right now feels it must jump publicly on the bandwagon of morality (as part of the law-and-order image). It calls for new laws — but it was always the case that authoritarianism did that, it doesn't make the gays an oppressed class if it happens. The same cross-section will exist in those who make the laws and those who don't. (The Church is the supreme example). And the needs of power will make laws against free heterosexual activity too.

But the majority of today's declared gays — those who call themselves such — are not to be confused with this highly politicised but politically naive ultra-left or ultra-right. They accept the logic that sex is a pleasure even more than any other group does. One cannot bamboozle them easily into thinking it is for the Fatherland, or it is a blow for freedom or it is a landmark in the struggle against economic oppression... however many left academics are on to a good racket in churning out books on the latter subject. Whatever they may say, sex, homosexual, heterosexual or autosexual is for enjoyment. But that, in their eyes is a condemnation.



SOME THOUGHTS ON THE S.L.A.

The following article was issued by The Bay Area Research Collective, a group formed in the Spring of 1974 largely as a response to the SLA and reactions to it by police, the media both movement and straight, the left and the populace, to "... try to give popular support and constructive criticism of clandestine groups and actions..." Their... "general aim is the demystification/disalienation of 'illegal' resistance and of the people who practice it." They... "need money and welcome support, encouragement, analyses, opinion, money..."

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE SLA:

The SLA first surfaced with the assassination of Marcus Foster, superintendent of the Oakland public school system. This action was a response to an LEAA school ID programme* which elements of the Oakland community had been fighting for some time. Two weeks after Foster was killed the ID programme was killed, later to be resurrected in a watered-down version.

The SLA acted from their analysis of the community's need and mood. However the action took the community totally by surprise. In a communique explaining their action, issued shortly afterwards, the SLA condemned Foster and his sidekick Blackburn in general terms as members of the ruling class educational establishment, and in specific terms as implementers of the school programme. In theoretical terms Foster was in fact a good target for people's opposition; the ID programme was repressive and degrading and clearly opened the way for more repression in the name of "security". However, Foster's role in the programme's formation was not generally visible, and he was not apparently generally regarded as a major enemy by those people in Oakland who had reason to know who he was. The result of his assassination, then, was two-sided: the ID programme was stopped in its tracks, and the SLA began its history among the people in a somewhat alienated way. It appears to us, though, that Fahizah's later elaborations on the Foster action indicated that the SLA was sensitive to the possibility that their explanation should have been more thorough.

The next target of the SLA was better chosen, we feel, and therefore more successful; in fact, brilliantly so. Political kidnappings of the wealthy have long been readily accepted by many people in other parts of the world and by radicals in this country. Carrying out such a kidnapping here was a new idea, and it made dramatically visible in a new way the existence, causes and effects of the huge division between the American rich and poor. The subsequent food program re-emphasised the point, making into a concrete reality the well-known but often ignored fact that one ruling-class person's bank account can feed thousands of hard-pressed people, just as one country's wealth can help to feed the world.

The food programme was generally a mess, but what can we expect of our enemies? People in Need, as the programme was liberally named, was copied from a Washington model in which a supplemental food programme was established for lower and middle-class people who were thrown out of work when the Boeing company ran into trouble. Hearst tried to score points for his magnanimity by ignoring the SLA's demands, and instead setting up an ongoing charity to distribute whatever foodstuffs Safeway couldn't sell. The idea of providing quality food was, of course, impractical and far too expensive to consider. As

Tania herself said, the food being distributed was not what the Hearsts were used to eating. Clearly the Hearsts were not going to co-operate with a programme which made the political point that hungry people could be fed in this country if our resources were more fairly distributed.

The reluctance and ambivalence of some parts of the radical community with respect to the food programme seemed to have several causes. One of them was liberalism, manifested in an unwillingness to take guerrillas as seriously when they appear right in their own back yard as they can when they appear in Africa or Latin America. Other reasons were fear that overt support could cause police reprisals and genuine ideological splits in the SLA. The lack of unity in the left around the SLA cannot be easily defined or pinned down. We feel that it is symptomatic of the strength of the enemy and lack of clarity on the part of those of us who wish to fight the struggle about how to go about it. We don't believe that it is symptomatic of the poverty of the SLA's politics as the straight media would have us believe. We are sorry that some of the "movement heavies" let themselves be used for the Hearst press's purposes.

Possibly the SLA's greatest coup in terms of propaganda was Patricia Hearst's joining the SLA and becoming Tania. A lot of people must have had a lot of new thoughts as they listened to her change and realise that the SLA was making much more sense than her family was. The courage with which she acted on the conclusions she came to was beautiful. And it was clear testament to the SLA's humanity that they obviously made a clear distinction between Tania, a young woman without much power in her family, and her parents. They treated her with care and respect, and gave her room and encouragement to grow. Their honourable treatment of her was in stark contrast to the shit-hole that the two SLA soldiers were thrown into, a point which Tania made effectively.

The SLA's assault on the Hibernia bank was well-planned and well executed. Its purpose was obvious. Unfortunately the reasons for the shootings of two bystanders has never been as obvious. We assume that the SLA took the shootings as seriously as we did, but but their explanations were not clear enough to dispel all of our uneasiness. Yet we remember that by this time the SLA was being ferociously and exhaustively hunted and was under a tremendous amount of pressure.

Some of the SLA's rhetoric seemed excessive to us. They made a call to arms for total revolutionary war where the proper situation simply did not exist. The federation they originally postulated sounded more and more like a dream as the months progressed, and they seemed to begin to measure more and more, struggle strictly in terms of the use of weapons. When Teko criticised white men for being too chicken-shit to get down to armed struggle, he was laying a guilt trip on us which can only succeed in creating added alienation and despair. Guns, bombs, molotovs and other weapons have always had a place in people's struggle against oppressive power. However, a weapon is not the revolutionary's only effective tool, especially in the most technologically advanced country in the world and the glorification of battle can quickly become a macho game. Guerrillas fight in their own way because they see an immediate need and useful purpose for their actions. They draw support insofar as their actions relate to the needs, desires and understanding of those they fight for and with. Their best propaganda is the integrity of their love and action.

The extremely military tone of the SLA's communiqués led to two general feelings among us. One was a disappointment in the hollowness of their claims. There was, as far as we could tell, no large federation, no large army. The SLA was and is a tough effective guerrilla unit. They apparently weren't and aren't a revolutionary army capable of overcoming the United States government. We didn't necessarily need them to be.

We also wonder whether the SLA had an awareness of the problems inherent in creating the spectacle of an extraordinary individual leader. The portrayal of Cinque to the community in several of the communiqués was disconcerting and seemed to run counter to the lessons some of us have been learning from the women's movement and other sources. Offering people a strong leader to follow has serious limitations. If the (and it is generally men in these roles) dies, sells out, is incapacitated, or murdered, where does the movement go? In fact, the SLA's practice, both before and after Cinque's death, seemed more "collective" than their statements. We find strength in ourselves or we don't find it. To reproduce a strictly hierarchical structure is to copy part of what we want to abolish. We are sometimes led to believe that some of us, such as women, children, the old, and the disabled, are incapable of acting for themselves, and have to be fought for. History constantly exposes these prejudices as absurd.

The SLA isn't dead. There are members who survived the cold-blooded massacre in Compton, and who deserve our support and protection. Two of them, Russell Little and Joe Remiro, are currently being railroaded by a reactionary political circus in Sacramento. There are the murdered to remember, love and feed our rage. And even if the SLA as such never does another action, the example of integrity they set for us, the lessons they provided for us to learn, the strong new thoughts and feelings that they nourished in us, in fact, all the material and spiritual effects of their existence will continue to echo.

* Law Enforcement Assistance Administration — a government organisation which exists primarily to fund various new and/or experimental extensions of police power.

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ASSASSINATIONS BY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT

On June 7, 1975, past midnight, Wilbert ("Popeye") Jackson, 45, and Sally Voyer, 28, had just returned from a social gathering and resting in the automobile in front of Jackson's home, when a series of gunshots through the windscreen killed both. The police swiftly issued a communique in the name of an underground organisation, the 'New World Liberation Front', assuming responsibility for the act, having discovered that Jackson was a stool pigeon. The real 'New World Liberation Front' promptly exposed the communique as a fraud.

Jackson had spent 19 years of his life in prison on theft charges, which is so common among poverty-stricken black people. The civil rights movement affected him immensely and led to his determination to devote his life in aiding prisoners to realise who their real enemy was. After his last release from a served sentence, he formed a United Prisoners' Union, and along with liberal-

EXTRACTS FROM "THE BERKELEY BARB" 28th Sept/20th Oct. 1975.

"... The increasing amount of guerrilla activity in the Bay Area and throughout the country is proof of the existence of an active revolutionary underground movement."

"Remarks from such opportunists as Cecil Williams, Angela Davis and others do not reflect the feelings of many Bay Area leftists who have been actively supporting the SLA, Black Liberation Army, New World Liberation Front, Red Guerrilla Family, Weather Underground Organisation and many other groups engaged in armed struggle against the United States government. Over 1,000 people attended a rally in Berkeley after six SLA members were murdered in Los Angeles, to let it be known that state terrorism will be resisted. And during the trial of Russell Little and Joe Remiro in Sacramento, the media paid no attention to a support demonstration held on the courthouse steps to demand an end to the "legal lynching". Public support for the SLA has been deliberately suppressed by the media."

"In the past, we have heard very few constructive criticisms of the actions of the SLA. Clearly, many people on the left had differences with the politics of the SLA. But when these differences lead to lack of support for revolutionaries under attack, they are no longer criticisms but simply sectarianism. The question of whose purposes are served by such sectarianism must be raised."

"Guerrilla warfare is definitely a reality in America now, and the left must realise that the actions of the underground must be complimented by a strong, aboveground movement to increase their effectiveness."

"We cannot sit back passively and watch while more and more revolutionaries are murdered and imprisoned by the state. As Martin Sostre, a political prisoner, wrote in a statement to the public: "The revolutionary actions of the SLA are the correct and inevitable response to the countless kidnappings, frameups, brutalisations and murders perpetrated by the ruling class members upon registers of oppression. At long last, the individual members of this exploitive, racist, sexist system are being subjected to revolutionary justice. As Malcolm X said, 'It's a case of the chickens coming home to roost.'"

by Kathie Stroom.

mindful youths visited prison after prison, shedding new light amongst the victims of an unjust society. Sally Voyer, a kindergarten teacher, was one of the youths that associated with Jackson in these labours.

At the first anniversary of the State vultures' massacre of six Symbionese Revolutionary Army men and women on May 17, 1974, Jackson was the sole well known radical to speak, declaring:

"Until we learn to stop the fear of dying, only then will we overcome... What is revolution?"

Revolution is to have no fear of dying."

Pat Singer, the companion of Jackson, stated:

"Popeye's most outstanding enemies were the police. They had talked about him being killed, and made threats. From the California Department of Corrections down to the black and whites on the San Francisco police department, they were his most outspoken enemies, and the ones who could have benefitted from his death. We feel the killer

International Notes

TOO MUCH GOVERNMENT MEANS CHAOS

Since last writing about Angola (Black Flag Vol. IV No.3) a number of events have taken place which have brought the country into the headlines. Firstly the Portuguese left the country they had ruled for centuries without recognising any of the African factions as the legitimate government. This was because assistance from the CIA, China and South Africa had enabled the two organisations FNLA and UNITA to effectively prevent the MPLA (backed by Russia and Cuba) from establishing their rule over the country.

This did not prevent the MPLA and a combination of FNLA and UNITA both declaring themselves the government of Angola. Whilst the former is recognised as the Government by some 35 countries at the last count, the latter is only acknowledged as a force to be reckoned with (but not recognised as a Government) by the Criminal Intelligence Agency and South Africa.

The next event worthy of note has been the involvement of South African troops in Angola fighting alongside mercenaries and UNITA/FNLA forces. This invasion of a foreign country by South Africa from the country they illegally occupy - Namibia - is highly significant since it shows that the intelligence reports used by South Africa were not so good as those being received by the Soviet Union. In a word, any objective observer knows that the South Africans have picked the losers.

All this led to an attempt in the media to detract attention away from South Africa's invasion of Angola (the media having first attempted to cover up the whole exercise) to emphasise the support the MPLA was getting from the Communist countries, Russia and Cuba. China finding itself a bedfellow with South Africa decided the role of "Honorary white" in such company was too much to swallow and left the battlefield. Maoist searching of Mao's little red book for quotes to justify their role in this exercise has not been successful.

Let no one underestimate this writer's loathing for the State Communism of the Soviet Union, nor his suspicion of the motives that have led the Russians to back the MPLA. Yet even the Times admits "the MPLA is not anxious to become a puppet of the Russians" (22.12.75.) and my own information is that if you want to find the people most worried about the Soviet Union's involvement it is the MPLA itself.

CP dominated groups concerned with Southern Africa based in Britain are using the situation to demonstrate to Africans that the alliance with Communist powers is vital to what they call the "liberation" of Southern Africa. Liberation of Southern Africa is indeed the aim of any anarchist but this is not to be equated with the imposition of Communist rule. There are three enemies for the people of Angola: first and foremost the South Africans, next the Soviet Union and then the machinations of the various groups wishing to establish the rule of a bourgeois African elite.

At the moment Angola demonstrates what anarchism is all about. All the Super powers, countless governments in Africa and the world, governments within Angola itself show that they only believe in the imposition of rule and the chaos, misery and death that are part of a conflict of so many is just part of the cost paid by the people who fight and die for the arrogant creatures who think the world and its peoples are but toys in their grisly nursery games.

The tragedy of the African scene is that the demonstrable case for anarchism is strong but is unknown. Anarchists are involved with international events in many lands but when it comes to Africa they are few and far between. African anarchists can probably be counted on the fingers of one hand - that is conscious anarchist - and the support groups for African liberation in overseas countries are dominated by CP reformists or raving Maoists.

It could be widely known in Africa that there is a libertarian form of communist ideas that has historically struggled with State Communism and State Socialism in all its varieties - it could have a significant effect. It is probable that such a message could only be conveyed by a working anarchism in the Iberian peninsula.

Jerry Westall

ANARCHISM IN IRAQ

The Iraqi Government put an advertisement in several British newspapers inviting Jewish businessmen who had fled from Baghdad to return. A number of indignant replies came from the Iraqi Jews and Zionist spokesmen, one of which was of particular interest. The official Zionist spokesman spoke of Zionism having been made illegal in Iraq in 1948 "along with communism and anarchism."

Intrigued by the reference to anarchism - we had not heard of anarchism in Iraq - I contacted the Iraqi Embassy to enquire if this statement were true, posing as a well-wisher. I was assured it was so, because "Zionism is the national enemy" and "communism is the enemy of the Muslim religion". But anarchism? "Like every other civilised government (sic) we make laws against anarchism." To the punch line - "Are there anarchists in Iraq?" came the significant answer: VERY FEW. "But their numbers would grow if their propaganda was allowed to continue to demoralise and disturb the youth. It is a symptom of the modern moral degeneration." How many Iraqi anarchists have suffered imprisonment in Iraq? "As many as could be found. The death sentence is also inflicted in appropriate cases."

As perhaps it might be said that in referring to "anarchists" the Iraqi official did not have a clear idea as to what we were talking about (as is sometimes the case with diplomatic officials, who are not a bright lot on the whole) I asked, "Can you in fact distinguish between Zionists, communists and anarchists?" "Obviously. We do not confuse Zionists with communists, we recognise the distinction in the ideology." Pressing "but anarchists?" "Anarchists are against all government, they represent the greatest danger. They are not only the national enemy but the religious enemy also, and their greatest threat is that they poison danger from within. They are not a foreign ideology like communism or Zionism but an internal rot."

I was unable to obtain details about the Iraqi anarchists suffering imprisonment and the death penalty. But that comrades there are suffering for their principles even to death should be an inspiration to us all.

International Notes

ANARCHISM IN PORTUGAL BEFORE SALAZAR

The origins of the Portuguese anarchist movement were virtually synonymous with the origins of the Portuguese labour movement. As early as the middle of the 19th Century the ideas of Proudhon exercised considerable influence over the first Portuguese socialist groups, and only twenty years later the Bakuninist conception of anarchism came to characterise all that was revolutionary, libertarian and anti-state in the newborn labour movement.

After a period of prevalence over the other socialist doctrines, the anarchist movement entered a long period of decline which favoured the dissemination of authoritarian socialism. The anarchist movement recovered from this situation largely because of the theoretical and propaganda work of J.A. Cardoso from 1886 onwards. The philosophy of Kropotkin directly inspired the two major publications of that time - "Revolucao Social" and "O Revoltado" - and at the same time new anarchist groups began to engage in the social struggle (including two anarcho-communist groups in Lisbon and Oporto).

Towards the end of the 19th Century, at a time of unprecedented growth within the movement, anarchism in Portugal was composed of various tendencies with differing approaches to problems such as the question of syndicalism, participation in political events and the social composition of the groups. In general terms, there were two distinct political "lines"; one being an interventionist tendency favouring a purely political struggle alongside the social-democrats, and the other being a 'non-interventionist' tendency mainly composed of working class groups which maintained that there was no difference between a republican bourgeoisie and a monarchist bourgeoisie.

These aspects distinguished the Portuguese anarchist movement during its development. First, the practice of "propaganda by deed", which was curbed neither by the growth of workers' organisations nor by the discipline of syndicalist structures; the use of bombs and guns was for a long time a daily practice for certain sectors of the movement.

Far more important was the second aspect which was a move towards a resolution of the question of syndicalism and a progressive extension of libertarian influence in the labour movement. The consequence of these factors was a growth of an anarcho-syndicalist movement which within a few years effectively caused the reformist trade-unionism to disappear from the social scene. The result of this continuing work of propaganda and anarcho-syndicalist organisation reached its peak just prior to the First World War when the C.G.T. (Confederao General do Trabalho) was composed of almost the entire Portuguese work-force, and its organ "A Batalha" was the third largest national daily paper. Meanwhile, the specifically anarchist movement formed its first national organisation with the constitution of the "Uniao Anarquista Portuguesa" in 1923. The U.A.P. held its first (and last) congress in 1926 in Lisbon.

* * *

Translated from RIVISTA ANARCHIA, no 31, by Giles Todd.

NOTES FROM PORTUGAL

A struggle is underway to ensure the establishment of peoples' control of the broadcasting system ordered closed by the Revolutionary Council.

The popular assemblies of workers and neighbourhood committees are discussing the struggle for the radio station in conjunction with the growth of reactionary forces.

The station has been taken over by its workers. Before the takeover it had been controlled by the church. The church is, of course, doing all it can to regain control of the station, but the workers are determined to hold it on behalf of the revolutionary movement against fascism and capitalism.

In November 1975 the government sent in troops to blow up the station. This act of wanton destruction was carried out simply because the government didn't know what the workers were going to do and feared the revolutionary possibilities.

The struggle for internal democracy and soldiers' rights in the army has also developed markedly. The organs so far established give little meaningful advance for the soldiers' rights to organise. In Elvas barracks the soldiers have issued a leaflet setting down why they believe that soldiers should organise on class lines as the only way to defend their rights. They say that while they fail to establish such organisations "every day the door to fascism opens a little more." They advocate "Soldiers committees elected democratically in plenaries of soldiers and composed of the more active and combative comrades." The soldiers committees must "defend the rights of private soldiers and must be united with the organs of the popular will, the neighbourhood and workers' committees."

The top ranks of the military hierarchy are seeking to stifle the revolutionary elements in the army. They have created the AMI, which consists of special armed troops trained in techniques of repression. They are also trying by discharging them, to rid the army of its most revolutionary elements, especially those thousands of soldiers who helped defeat the attempted fascist coups of September 1974 and March 1975.

In the Mirandela region some 40 villages are administered by village committees. These committees have been trying to decide in what areas and by what means they can best improve the conditions of the villages. So far the principal tasks they have tackled have been the establishment of water supply and electrification. These problems are being dealt with and solved by the village committees and by the people on their own initiative. As yet these advances are being made within a capitalist framework of society, but the experience of the achievements of collective endeavour and self reliance of the villages augurs well for future revolutionary developments.

F.H. (Contra-A-Corrente) Porto.

Book Review

Richard Gombin: *The Origins of Modern Leftism*. Pelican, 60p.

When the Paris revolt exploded in May '68 political scientists suddenly received a sharp jolt. How was it that the revolution they had all been writing-off for the past fifty years with scholarly obituaries seemed, suddenly, to be leaping from the graves into their laps? From the graffiti still remaining on the walls of Nanterre and the Sorbonne after the noise had all died down they deduced a new phenomenon. Behold the birth of "leftism"!

Beginning by describing the process of bureaucratisation the Soviet dictatorship had evolved through, and examining the various brands of "philosophical revisionism" within the communist movement (worldwide) as Marxist intellectuals were forced to explain and apologise their way out of Stalin's shadow, Gombin gradually arrives at what he calls "modern leftism" — "... an

attempt to renew the theory and practise of revolution. . . . A view of life based on the class struggle in its most developed form "... it has become a question of getting rid of all masters and all shackles that impede our liberty." Based more than any single factor, on the autonomy of the working class to decide its own fate and create its own organisations free of any form of political control or "leadership" from Leninist vanguards.

In evidence, Gombin gives us useful (and interesting) outlines of the Situationists, Spontaneists, Councilists and other assorted fractions which make up his "new left". Together with a run-down on the "orthodox left" (Marxist-Leninist, Trots and Anarchists) and very convincing it all sounds too! But what he falls down on is in not raising his head far enough above his thesis to notice that the basis for division between the Marxist-Leninists and the "modern left" is the same ground on which the socialist movement split during the First International into Marxists and Anarchists. The classical division and Gombin's are the same: Statism or Anarchism (authority v freedom).

What the new "leftist" movements represent is really an unconscious reversion to anarchism (libertarian socialism). Their attempts to find a libertarian revolutionary praxis — devoid of leaderships or bureaucracy, with workers' councils as the basic organism of society, and the aim of which is an everyday life free from all alienation and authority — is indistinguishable from anarchism in all its essential elements. Their refusal to call themselves "anarchists" is really a hang-over from their "orthodox" Marxist up-bringing mixed with the more natural mistake of outsiders-coming-in, of confusing the bureaucratic rump of a former "anarchist movement" with Anarchism.

When the new libertarians finally get around to seeing what anarchism is really all about perhaps they won't be so coy. Richard Gombin's book won't exactly make the horse drink, but at least it shows it the water.

Phil Ruff.

sary for this same ruling class to have Popeye murdered, just as it was necessary to kill Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, George and Jonathon Jackson, Cinque and countless other black leaders and revolutionaries."

The enemy's assassination of Jackson and Voye is no uncommon occurrence by the State's henchmen throughout the world. What is uncommon is the State's shameful attempt to sow distrust and confusion within the revolutionary ranks as in the instance of its assassination of these two people, but also by its sinister and brazen audacity of complaining that the friends of Jackson refused to co-operate with them in (?) their search for those who carried out the dastardly act!

Will those who were so ready to denounce the Symbionese Liberation Army for eliminating the police-informer-school-superintendent Foster who planned to introduce into the schools of Oakland a system that would brand the children potential criminals . . . be as ready to condemn the self-evident State's assassination of Wilbert ("Popeye") Jackson and Sally Voye, whose sole guilt was their efforts to aid the imprisoned victims of the system in realising as to who the real enemy was that they must struggle against?

Marcus Graham.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES

The numerous criticisms made of the "official" leadership of the Spanish Libertarian Movement (MLE) which purports to be the CNT in exile, has been made by Gaston Leval, an old militant (whose book on Spanish collectives was recently published in English). He states bluntly: "As much for the benefit of our Spanish comrades as for those of other countries, we published, some years ago, an article drawing attention to the special situation in which the CNT and FAI find themselves. We said then, that no progress was being made in reconstructing our faces on the other side of the Pyrenees and that where as other groups, notably the Communist Party, have been preparing for a bright political future, nothing has been planned by those at the head of the Spanish Libertarians in exile who must now shake off this inactivity.

As the years have slipped by, these people who, by the position they hold at the head of the organisation, have failed to use the great opportunities for action and propaganda they have by virtue of the greater freedom of manoeuvre they have in exile. Even worse, they have encouraged internal quarrels that have done nothing but lessen our members by the expulsion of a great number of militants whose impardonable crime was to have held views not shared by those at the head of the National Committee.

Whole groups and traditional workers locals have been expelled due to false accusations, by proceedings reminiscent of those used by the bolsheviks: groundless allegations followed by guilty verdicts carefully prearranged, etc"

In this he does no more than echo the criticism made over and over again by veterans of the Spanish movement. This dissatisfaction is no longer confined to the "irresponsibles" — by which term is implied all those who went on fighting after it ceased to be legal to do so. The shadow of Government participation has lain over those who were guilty of doing and coloured their attitude to the post-war Resistance. This created a deep division between them and the anarchist Resistance and can be well seen in their attitude to Sabate, Facerias and others right up to the present.

"The socialist UGT has rebuilt itself but the CNT has not. For a long time it has been necessary that we plan and organise new active groups, but instead we get the

usual demagogy and illusion of activity behind which the Organisation hold everything in a stifling grip," says Leval.

Yet "Toulouse" to use a handy shorthand term, is not the CNT. The CNT can only be thought of as a union movement in Spain. The MLE is at best, a grouping of veterans in exile, not a union at all; nor is it even the rearguard of the union. This is why it claims to be the "libertarian movement in exile" so as not to make extravagant claims for itself. Gaston Leval offers no positive programme, only gloomily seeks a change of heart though he says:

"An attempted reconciliation was recently made by some expelled comrades and the new national secretary (who had been chosen by a congress) set about restoring the necessary unity: the 'hierarchy' promptly forced our 'too conciliatory' comrade out of office. There can be no hopeful future if these conditions continue."

Unfortunately, so deep is the feeling among Spanish libertarians not to be guilty of "causing a schism" that they have not simply taken the name CNT and gone ahead and reorganised. They have preferred "attempted reconciliation". Times gone by, they preferred other more direct methods! Some in Spain have indeed used the name CNT as they were entitled to do — as a Spanish anarchist workers' movement and been accused by the MLE of "forging the seals of the CNT" — i.e. using the name of the organisation in the formation of regional committees based on workers' locals throughout their province! It is solely for this reason that some groupings have preferred to organise under the name of the 'Workers Federation of Iberia' (FOI) — but it is clearly high time that all these groupings were to constitute themselves, if one can borrow terminology from the Irish nationalists, into the Provisional CNT, since as Gaston Leval states:

"There now exists an elitist group who by their actions are causing the death of the Spanish Libertarian Movement as effectively as if that was their intention. The internal quarrels succeed where repression has failed. History has many such examples and it would be tragic if the same occurred now in Spain."

If the "Officials" die, the Provisionals will be "Official", if it matters.

Miguel Garcia.

EMILY HARRIS (cont.)

unless our goal becomes the revolutionary overthrow of this fascist society. Anything less would necessarily give openings to a few individuals while others are starved, locked up or shot in the back. Anything less would never root out the sexism, racism and classism which lie at the very foundation of our oppression as women.

I have worked in the underground to develop the guerrillafront because I see armed propaganda as an essential complement to mass organising in building for revolution. At this time the guerrilla front heightens contradictions as in the Hearst kidnapping where the wealth of the enemy ruling class was seen in sharp contrast to the hunger of poor people. A further objective of the guerrilla front is to heighten the tactical level of struggle whenever it becomes clear in our communities that peaceful methods

will not meet our needs, as when the BLA attacked the occupying army of police in the Black community. The long range goal of the guerrilla front is to build the well-trained nucleus of the future people's army. I see the strategy of armed struggle as the means by which we insure our victory over U.S. imperialism. The leadership of women on all levels of this struggle is the means by which women insure that our interests are fully represented and fought for at each step along the way.

I feel strongly that women cannot delay developing and supporting the guerrillas front because if we do not learn to protect and defend ourselves we will always be caught unprepared as the monster we are fighting continues to throw our sisters and brothers up against the wall. The fascist beast has already tried in vain to lock up the fighting spirit of

Marilyn Buck, Susan Saxe, Assata Shakur, Lolita Lebron, Safiya Bukhari and many other strong sisters who are defined as a threat to society because they would accept nothing short of their own freedom and self-determination. But to the beast's dismay, the beautiful reflections of these dragons is magnified a thousand times on the streets through the work of many more struggling people whose love and rage will culminate in the death of the old order and the birth of the new. Until that day, there can be no peace without freedom.

There is much more I would like to say but mostly I would like to hear from y'all.

Love and rage,
Your sister in Struggle,
Emily.

(Reprinted from Dragon (Bay Area Research Collective).



(Assassinations — cont. from p.9)

was hired. He killed Sally Voye only because she was there. He couldn't leave a witness, and whoever had been with him would have been killed."

The Bay Area Vietnam Veterans Against War/Winter Soldier Organisation pointed at the real guilty party for the two assassinated victims:

"We will continue the struggle in the spirit of Popeye Jackson. Popeye's primary enemy was the State and the ruling class it represents. Whoever murdered Popeye and Sally Voye acted as the agent of these forces."

The Red Guerrilla Family assumed responsibility for the bomb explosion of the offices of the U.S. Treasury Dept., Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, that caused 250,000 dollars worth of damage in San Francisco, and stating in a communique:

"We take this action in response to the PTG murder of Popeye Jackson. The ATF, like the FBI and CIA, is a federal agency charged with the task of intimidating and disrupting revolutionary organisations. Popeye Jackson was the leader of the United Prisoners' Union, a revolutionary organisation of prisoners . . . Popeye was a revolutionary who actively sought to expose to the people the fascism of the pigs and the necessity of an armed struggle to overthrow the ruling class. Thus it was neces-

UNKNOWN HEROES

CARAQUEMADA (Burnt Face)



The English obituarists of Franco dwelt on the fact of how he has "tricked" Hitler into not supporting him, how Hitler said he would rather go to the dentist than have another such interview. But why didn't Hitler simply use force as with other European countries reluctant to help him to the utmost!

Franco had to deal with people of whom these "unknown heroes" are an integral part. He only dared send volunteers. He could not rely on his subjects staying conquered; neither did Hitler dare to stir up the Peninsula. That was the problem. Time and again trains laden with ammunition were blown up on the Catalan run. The "specialist" in explosions of this nature was Ramon Capdevila.

Ramon Capdevila - better known as "Caraqumada" (Burnt Face) one of his many nicknames - was a member of the Berga CNT. In that region of the Pyrenees, which he knew so well, he was to become almost legendary. During the civil war he was in a CNT battalion, later to become a commissar after the militarisation of the army. Like el Catala, he felt the contradiction very keenly. Afterwards, he went to France to avoid capture, and he began a group of the Resistance together with Massana. Massana (one of the few of those surviving the immediate post-war Resistance) has said he will write his own biography. It will be a pity if he does not; he must be linked with Sabate and Facerias as one of the toughest fighters of the epoch.

Caraqumada, Massana and Tallaventras (Cutbelly) organised regular raids in the Pyrenees. Ramon, however was invaluable as a guide over the Pyrenees, and was in great demand to smuggle people over the border. Truth to tell, it was something of a sport for him - he enjoyed matching his great strength against the mountains, and did not seem to understand that other people got fatigued on the way. Himself, he would not have stopped to rest between Perpignan and Barcelona! But he was tolerant of those who wanted to rest every hour - though always impatient to get on. He was affectionately, though ironically called "Pasos Largos" (Long steps) by many veterans of the Resistance on account of his great strides.

During the war many Jews escaping from the Nazis,

as well as allied servicemen, came out by that backdoor from Europe, and Ramon was one of the guides most sought after. This was an embarrassment to the Franco regime in that they could not send these people back (later they took all the credit on behalf of "the Spanish people") but they did their best to keep them out - to no avail. The well-to-do paid for the guide's services; the servicemen were paid for by British Intelligence; workers, the poor, and resistance fighters went free. (Others, fled Franco the opposite way in the post-war years).

"Pasos Largos" took his charges all the way across the Pyrenees as far as Barcelona. But he never went into Barcelona. "Here's your destination", he said when they approached the city lights. "Goodbye".

Unlike others, Franquesas for instance, who went into the city to help organise the groups, he stayed out. He was a lone wolf. He would not consent to be a leader, not to be led, but was always at the service of the anarchist resistance.

In an old monastery our movement used as a base to go into Spain (after the war) he holed up, waiting to take in a raiding party, living for weeks on frozen potatoes and wild mushrooms, rather than risk capture by buying in the village. With half a bar of gelignite he would blow up two electric pylons and bring the railroad to a standstill.

Even when caught in an ambush by the Guardia Civil, his companion killed, and wounded in the mouth, he went on for over a hundred miles to the border across the snows of the High Pyrenees... not for nothing did the guerrillas who arrived in Barcelona speak of the daring of the "snowman" who took them as far as, but never into, the city.

Like many others, Ramon Capdevila eventually fell in an ambush by the Guardia Civil. He could not live under fascism. He was a man typical of anarchism in Catalonia, to whom Hitler preferred "toothache" and Franco would have preferred the pox.

Miguel Garcia.

Work on the proposed anarchist bibliography has now started, but help is still needed, especially from people living in towns with a long tradition of working-class militancy. (e.g. Manchester, Swansea, Liverpool, Newcastle etc). Anybody who would like to join in the task please contact Martyn Everett, 11 Gibson Gardens, Saffron Walden, Essex. CB10 1AW.

To commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the General Strike the Welsh Arts Council and Oriol have produced a striking red and black poster poem by Idris Davies (20" x 30") entitled "Do You Remember 1926?" The poster can be obtained either from the Welsh Arts Council in Cardiff or from the Cienfuegos Press Readers Service in Huddersfield.

Portuguese readers are asked to write to *Combate* and ask for a sample copy of their paper and a list of their publications which include: *A proposito da luta de classes na China*, Edicoes do Comunismo Anarquista, 10p; *Sindicalismo e accao directa*, Manuel Joaquim de Sousa, 20p; *Um ano um mes e um dia depois: para onde vai o 25 de abril?* 25p. For full details contact "Contra a corrente," Edicoes/Livraria, Rua do Breiner, 50, Porto, Portugal.

letters

Dear Comrades,

Just one thing marred for me the otherwise excellent current issue. As a candidate member of AWA, I resent the suggestion that I am by virtue of this fact some sort of Leninist. I am not. Not do I believe AWA to be a Leninist organisation in any sense or degree. John Booth, among others, has already gone some way towards refuting the slanders of AWA (I could hardly call any of them criticisms) currently circulating, so I feel no need to attempt the same here.

But I do object strongly to your heading John Booth's reply "Libertarian" Leninism! I would ask you to consider carefully whether snide comments of this sort should appear in 'Black Flag' without the addition of reasoned criticism. What can it do except cloud and obscure even further issues which are vital to the Anarchist movement today?

To get back to my first point, I would ask that 'Black Flag' cease to equate AWA, ORA and other organisations with Leninism of any sort. I for one bitterly resent what I see as a vicious and ill-informed slur.

Yours etc.,

Bob Gibson.

(When ORA was still influenced by its Christian Pacifist theoretician, *Libertarian Struggle*, under the "ill informed" impression that *Black Flag* stood for "the organisation" in the manner actually later adopted by ORA/AWA, it did not think it "vicious" to regard such an attitude as "Leninist". Neither do we; we would have thought Alfredo Bonnano's article in the same issue made it reasonably clear).

Dear Comrades,

It seems rather cynical to read a reply by John Booth to William Lea, about AWA controversy, with the phrase 'libertarian leninism' and then in no way justifying this allegation.

As regards comrade Bonnano's long spiel about the Italian Anarchist movement I found it both pompous and confused. He accuses our Italian comrades of being "naive" when from what I can gather from the flow of his arguments he seems to be the one who is naive - calling for terrorist acts and insurrectionism - insurrectionism outside the context of a mass rank and file movement of working people. (A mistake which Malatesta, of whom Bonnano seems fond of quoting, soon found out about).

Now, he accuses the French and British comrades of the ORA and AWA of being ideologists. But surely he's the one who is shackled by ideology i.e. his red rag to a bull reaction to the term "anti-statist dictatorship of the proletariat." Examine the content comrade, and not form! There used to be a frenzied reaction in this country among anarchists to the term 'Workers Power,' which now fortunately seems to have diminished, with an understanding of what that means.

I don't want to quibble over a term that means the same thing, not a dictatorship over the proletariat, but the working class in power. (Surely Black Flag agrees with this - the Paris Commune, the Ukraine, etc). The slogan 'the anti-statist dictatorship of the proletariat' was put forward by two mass organisations during the German revolution, two mass libertarian organisations, the AAUD (General Union of German Workers) and the AAUDE (United AAUD) and the slogan, probably much more unambiguous 'the dictatorship of the anti-statist proletariat' was coined by Italian Anarchists. What these terms mean is that the vast mass of the people take over and run society in a collective and democratic way; during the period when some elements of the ruling class as a class exist, either in libertarian counties, or countries not taken over by the revolution, it will be necessary for

working people and all those committed to revolution from other stratas and classes, to protect themselves from the attacks of the boss class.

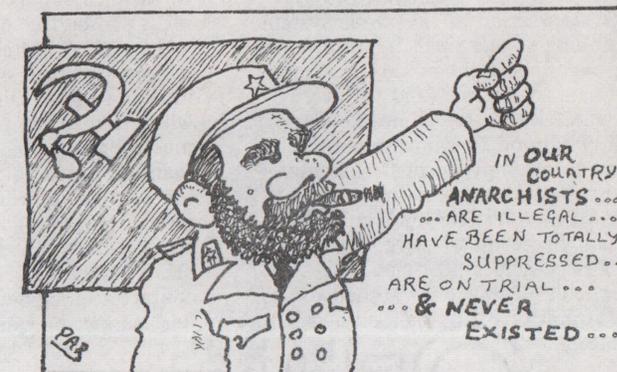
Bonnanno time and time again attacks the ORA, the AWA, and the Itaian comrades of the OCL (Organizzazione Comunista Libertaria) of being authoritarian, of revising anarchism, yet he gives no concrete examples of this. No, comrades, these organisations, are in the mainstream of anarchist thought, from Bakunin onwards. They are pledged to organised revolutionary anarchism and the working class, and their structure thoroughly libertarian.

Yours fraternally,

Nick Heath

The trouble with the term "dictatorship of the proletariat" is that it presents an alibi to the middle class conquerors of power via the party. None, for example, could deny that Leninism was a dictatorship of some sort... what a wonderful getout to say, yes but a *proletarian* dictatorship, or even an *anti-statist* dictatorship. What is wanted is a society which cannot conceivably be described as a dictatorship.

It is easy to oppose insurrection until it has mass support; but this is to back the horse after it has won the race. Fair enough, but the revolution will then have many friends; it won't get that far without some now.



ANSWERS TO ANARCHO-QUIZ

1. The West German State has issued one of Rosa Luxemburg, who was a determined fighter against almost everything that it stands for; the Irish Republic commemorates Oliver Plunkett, recently elevated to sainthood, but one who undoubtedly co-operated with the English Establishment (as did, indeed, the Roman Church generally).
2. The son of James Connolly has become chairman of the Irish Labour Party which forms part of the governing coalition with Fine Gael.
3. Scotland. The Episcopalian Anglican Church was disestablished and persecuted by the Hanover dynasty. The Presbyterian Church was established and it in turn became a persecutor.
4. Cardinal Darboy was one of the surviving senior churchmen of the Gallican heresy, and though in the Roman Catholic Church he was an embarrassment to it, and it was convenient to let the Commune shoulder the odium of removing him.
5. The Tory Party. Tories were the Irish rural gentry displaced by the Protestant settlement, who were the Catholic Provos of their day. (Presumably they came originally from the Isle of Tory). The name was adopted by the right wing in England nearly two centuries before the name Conservative Party was adopted.
6. Emile Zola is buried in the Pantheon.