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# ZERO

Anarchist/Anarca-feminist Monthly



Spain: March 27 '77, bullring San Sebastian de los Reyes

## Spanish Anarchists Reorganise

On Sunday March 27th, the anarchist National Confederation of Labour (CNT), the largest trade union in Spain until the arrival of Franco's fascist regime, held its first public meeting since the civil war. About 30,000 people packed the bullring in San Sebastian de los Reyes, 10 miles outside Madrid. Most of those present came from Madrid and the surrounding areas, which in the past has never been a stronghold of the CNT.

The meeting began late as loudspeakers announced "the main road is blocked, and we're expecting the whole of Europe to arrive". The crowd were emotional and euphoric. A few people chanting "Spain tomorrow will be republican" were drowned out by the chants of "Spain tomorrow will be Libertarian", followed by "the people united manage without parties" and "fascists, bourgeois there are only a few months left". There was a minute's silence for the victims of the repression, followed by speakers including regional delegates, a representative of the International Workers Association (AIT), and the national secretary of the CNT, Gomez Cases, who started the meeting with the declaration that "the CNT is the only organisation which guarantees the autonomy of the workers. All comrades have the same status, there are no leaders in the CNT."

The vertical trade unions, including the Communist Party controlled Workers Commissions, were the target of much anger, "nauseous and evil-smelling corpse of a crumbling situation. Genuine representative of exploiting capitalism." Before the meeting broke-up, a collection for the CNT raised about 200,000 pesetas, and messages of greetings and solidarity were read out from the I.W.W. in Chicago, the Bulgarian anarchist movement in exile,

comrades in Hong Kong, Black Cross and Centro Iberico in Britain and many others. The CNT had organised its own stewards for the meeting, and the police and Guardia Civil made no appearance.

In the weeks following this meeting, many others of CNT locals took place, including the construction syndicates in Madrid who print their own paper *Construccion*, CNT theatrical workers, and a CNT section in the multi-national I.T.T. Every province in Spain now has a regional CNT federation, with a network of local and district federations. Libertarian and CNT papers are rapidly starting up. In Barcelona, *Solidaridad Obrera* has a growing circulation of over 10,000, and in Madrid a national CNT paper has produced 2 issues.

The return of the CNT has coincided with the flourishing of a strong counter-culture movement amongst young people in Spain. Publications with emphasis on sexual freedom, rock music and drugs, but at the same time consciously anarchist, are appearing. The Spanish Communist Party (PCE) and other left groups have been making statements that the CNT is today a movement of homosexuals and hippies. It is. It is also a movement of workers, peasants, feminists, students, conscientious objectors, in fact all those who suffer oppression at the hands of authority and the state. The old CNT militants, veterans of the civil war and countless other struggles still make up a small percentage of the membership, but the strength of the CNT today, lies with the young workers and students, who were not even born when the war ended. Ninety per cent of the current membership are young people, with an average age of around 30.

Unlike the PCE (and countless others), the CNT has made no compromises with

the Suarez Government, but says instead it will stick to the time-honoured working class path towards the social revolution. Near the end of April, the principle trade unions were given permission to apply for legalization (part of the liberal facade), the CNT was the only union which refused to co-operate. The same day the applications for legality were handed in, a ban on all May Day demonstrations was announced by Suarez. The demonstrations which went ahead were ruthlessly attacked by the riot police and cavalry. Hundreds of people, adults and children, demonstrators and bystanders were injured, many seriously. So much for liberalism.

The elections being held on June 15th will be as predictable as they are corrupt and contrived. Over 150 parties have put up candidates — so far — ranging from socialists to fascists, monarchists and Carlists to separatists. The CNT will be taking no part in this circus, and can only benefit from the petty party squabbling which will no doubt be in plentiful supply.

The left parties participating in the elections, especially the PCE, are falling over themselves to show how moderate they are, and how they all believe in the cherished ideal of social democracy. The PCE has already done its best to prevent grass-roots actions from developing, and has been actively discouraging strikes and militancy by its members. The fascists and right wing in Spain are still extremely powerful. The dismantling last month of Franco's political machine, the National Movement, was merely cosmetics, attempting to provide a liberal image which is needed if Spain is to be accepted in the E.E.C. The leadership of the armed forces, the paramilitaries and the police is still solidly Francoist, (the Franco Lives brigade, even though the old bastard has

been lying in his personally designed mausoleum for 18 months), and they have made it known they are unhappy at the present course of events. The economy is depressed, unemployment is rising, and living standards falling. The need for an independent working class movement, the CNT, dedicated to fight for the interests and demands of the workers becomes obvious.

Although the recent events have been greatly encouraging they have only been small steps towards the reconstruction of the CNT and anarchist movement in Spain. Comrades in Spain will decide for themselves what course events will take, but the libertarian movement worldwide can offer practical support and solidarity. Whilst support for the communist and socialist controlled unions comes in from labour organisations abroad, the CNT receives only small contributions, i.e. — The International Libertarian Labor Fund recently sent \$1,000 directly to the CNT in Madrid. The press outside Spain lie, distort and in most cases refuse to recognise the fact that a Spanish libertarian movement exists. Money is desperately needed to finance propaganda activities. The Black Cross in London, (an anarchist prisoners-aid group) has been sending out old or unused duplicators and presses to different locals of the CNT. This is one practical, immediate way we can help. Anyone who can assist in any way, either by donating a duplicator or contributing financially, should contact Miguel Garcia, 123 Upper Tollyington, London N4. Clearly mark all letters CNT.

The first issue of the national CNT paper printed in December 1976, had a cartoon bearing the slogan, "courage grandparents, we are coming" signed CNT.

The anarchist movement in Spain has once again resurfaced. Pete Webb.



## Charter '77

Earlier this year, a group of 242 workers, intellectuals and students issued Charter '77, a human rights manifesto named after Amnesty International's designation of 1977 as the year of the political prisoner. Charter '77 doesn't see itself as replacing existing opposition groups, or even as a platform for political opposition. The signatories, having stated that it has no programme, formal membership or organisational structure, envisage it as a citizens' group aiming to pressurise the government into fulfilling its obligations in the field of human rights.

They have compiled dossiers on discrimination in education against children whose parents are critical of the regime and discrimination in employment. In preparation are dossiers on authors whose works have been banned and discrimination against the religious.

The government has responded with a vicious campaign reminiscent of the Stalinist hysteria which surrounded the Siansky Purge trials. Daily, Charter '77 is attacked in the mass media although it hasn't been published or even quoted. The Trade Union and Communist Party apparatus is being used to push anti-Charter propaganda and an attempt is being made to gather a large number of signatures of both individuals and organisations in condemnation of the Charter. Also, the characters of the signatories have been blackened and the Communist Party paper Rude Pravo has claimed that Western Powers are behind the Charter.

The campaign has not been a roaring success and attempts to persuade workers to condemn the Charter have received little response.

A number of supporters of Charter '77 have been arrested and charged with subversion of the State and with distributing copies of the Charter and Czechoslovakian books and journals published in the West. A woman student, Zina Kocova, was, while under arrest, forcibly treated for VD which she does not suffer from.

The most common form of intimidation of Charter '77 supporters has been dismissal from employment. People so dismissed include many who were journalists before 1969; Ivan Medek; Professor Milan Machovec, a philosopher; Ivan Dejmal, who served 2 years in prison for his membership of the Revolutionary Socialist Party, and Ladislav Dvorak, a writer.

Others have been downgraded at work and people who protest against the dismissal of Charter signatories have themselves been fired. 3 people have been sacked for this reason in connection with the case of Ivan Medek.

Parents who signed the Charter have been intimidated with threats of their children being refused higher (not only University but also secondary) education. Signatories have also had their driving licenses withdrawn and their telephones cut-off.

Support for Charter '77 has come from other oppositionists in Eastern Europe. A letter of solidarity came from 34 Hungarian intellectuals and similar letters were sent by the Romanian writer Paul Gorna, who was supported in his action by the exiled writers Dumitru Tsepeneag and Virgil Terase; the Soviet group of Amnesty International headed by Yuri Orlov; the Lithuanian Helsinki group and the Warsaw Workers Defence Committee. A letter came from Yugoslavia bearing 1,000 names and in Sofia 14 dissidents were detained as copies of a French reprint of the Charter began to circulate.

Charter '77 and the manner in which the campaign in support of it is being conducted reflect the political naivety of the Czech dissidents and their pathetic faith in the established institutions, both Eastern and Western. However, as detente and Western capital investment in the East proceed apace, and capitalism becomes a fully-integrated world system, these illusions will be scattered like chaff before the wind and a clear-cut split will take place between those who wish to reform the system and those who see the need to overthrow it and replace it with a bona

fide socialism.

As the riots in Poland, the protests against the expulsion of Wolf Biermann from the GDR, the formation of a human rights group in Romania, the round-up of libertarians in Bulgaria and the continued activity of dissidents in the USSR all show, there is a growing movement of opposition in Eastern Europe. A movement which eventually must come to a head. It is now the task of libertarian revolutionaries in the West to aid the activities and development of the Anti-Stalinist socialist tendencies in this movement

□ Terry Liddle.

shops and supermarkets in groups dressed-up in warpaint and feathers, to infiltrating the Universities and disrupting lectures, especially those given by Communist Party hacks. At Rome University, Luciano Lama, a prominent CP trade union official, was booed and jeered by students occupying the campus. There followed a pitched battle between them and the Party youths sent in to keep order.

Students occupying the University staged a demonstration on March 12th, and two writers from "L'Europeo" who were arrested and beaten-up described the police violence as "like something out of Clockwork Orange."

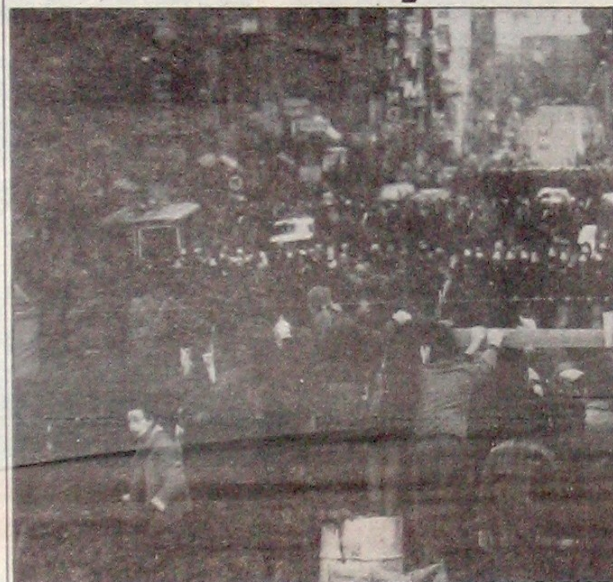
The march was characterised by unorganised violence, and the PCI, unable to control events, denounced the incidents of

action of the head of the Lawyers association. The trial, held over from May last year, can't go on until the Autumn as every member of three successive juries has sent in medical certificates excusing themselves from service, not surprisingly in view of the violence and the threatenings which have surrounded the case. On the day of the postponement hundreds of police with dogs guarded the Court and there was fighting when they dispersed a left-wing demonstration outside.

The PCI leadership, eagerly arranging the "historic compromise" (i.e. sell-out) with the Christian Democrats, is a disgrace to the Resistance to which it constantly appeals as an authentic mark of their "revolutionary" pretensions. They have asked the workers to make more sacrifices as "austerity provides an opportunity to transform Italy". The people, however, have other ideas. A recent survey among Italians aged 15-24 showed that very few of them were willing to accept hand-soiling jobs like plumbing or farm work, and almost none of them were prepared to accept trainee's pay of about £100 per month.

The Party has also glossed-over the guilt of the Christian-Democrat leadership in the Lockheed scandal and allowed the Legge Reale (the police license to kill) to get through parliament without a murmur. There is now, however, among many PCI members, a very audible murmur against their leaders □ Nino Staffa.

## Riots in Italy



Rome: Via Nazionale, just before the fighting.

Italy this year has seen almost continuous confrontation between the forces of the state and the unemployed youth, feminists, students, "autonomy groups", "metropolitan Indians", and many anarchists. The Communist Party (PCI) and the Union organisations have been firmly on the side of the police and the state.

Groups of young people known as "metropolitan Indians" have engaged in wide-ranging subversion, from raiding

March 12th as the work of neo-fascists trying to organise a coup.

In Turin, meanwhile, the trial of 52 "red brigades" members charged with kidnappings and armed robberies, was postponed on May 3rd, one week after the assassin-

## Model Germany

On the 7th May, a conference was held in London organised by the Campaign Against Repression in West Germany, — "Verboten", with the aim of informing as many people as possible about the repressive situation in Germany. The West German government has been given the image of 'the model social democratic state' — the facts show a different picture. An increasing amount of repressive legislation has been introduced over the last few years, some of which is listed below.

The BERUFSUEBOTE: the decree on radicals excluding them from public service, i.e. teaching, local government posts etc. Extensive black-lists have been drawn up and many people have been hounded out of their employment.

WOMEN: The Womens Movement has received continual harassment from the authorities, especially over the abortion issue. Abortion in Germany is 'legal', but is left to the moral and value judgements of the doctor. Though the legal position has relatively improved over the years, it is apparent that women's demands to control their own bodies are not being met. In practice for example it turns out that even if a woman gets permission for a legal abortion, it is difficult to find a hospital which does the operation. Especially in the largely catholic C.S.U. governed Bavaria, the woman is confronted with insuperable difficulties. Consequently many women have illegal abortions or go to Holland. These possibilities however are only open to women who can afford





it. Working class women are effectively excluded.

Several women's centres have been raided by the police, and lists of sympathetic doctors confiscated. Raids have also taken place on a women's publishing co-operative and women's collectives.

**CENSORSHIP:** A recent piece of legislation introduced in Germany was the 14th Amendment, of which para. 88a forbids 'unconstitutional advocacy of violence', which has led to widespread harassment of left publishers and bookshops. Many premises have been raided, several people arrested and many books have been banned. These include Bommi Baumann's 'How things started' and a collection of letters, leaflets and statements by RAF member Holger Meins, who died during a hunger strike in 1974, called 'Holger, the struggle continues'. Other parts of the censorship laws include prosecution for 'defamation of the flag and symbols of state' - e.g. cartoons, posters, stickers etc.

**JUSTICE/PRISONS:** During political trials in Germany it has become common for defence lawyers to themselves end up facing prosecution, usually on charges of collaborating with their clients. The witch hunt against anarchists and others, and the hysterical rantings of the German press makes any political trial a foregone conclusion. The conditions inside prison for political prisoners are usually barbaric. The German state has refined the psychological torture techniques being used increasingly around the world. Since the welcomed shooting of the fascist chief prosecutor Buback in April, a 'strict custody' routine has been imposed on political prisoners. This includes total isolation, and the withdrawal of all books, radio and other contact with the outside world. There are at present over 100 hunger-strikers in West German prisons, many being forcibly fed.

**POLICE/SECURITY:** There has been a rapid growth in the repressive state apparatus and legislation for the 'maintenance of internal order'. German police have gained themselves the reputation for being trigger happy - shoot first ask later. Many people completely innocent of political activities have been murdered by these armed protectors of the law. The recent massive protests in Germany against nuclear power have been met with a predictably vicious response from the police, i.e. helicopter attacks with gas and chemicals, water cannon, tear-gas, and indiscriminate beatings.

The Campaign Against Repression in West Germany can be contacted at 35 Wellington Street, London WC2  
□ Ulrike Grundt.

## News From Red China

The Chinese State machinery, around the time of the much publicised purge on the 'Gang of Four', also arrested a group of young ultra-leftists called the Li-I-Chi. This was the name which appeared on a big character poster in China with the heading 'Concerning Socialist Democracy and the Legal System - Dedicated to Chairman Mao'. The Li-I-Chi was the collective pseudonym of a group of three ex-Red guards. The Chinese authorities identified the real name of the writer and 'leader' of this 'counter-revolutionary' group as Li Cheng-t'ien, a young man from Wuhan.

The poster was a description of what has been happening in China recently and criticised the Red Capitalists who are exploiting the mass of people in China, and use the so-called legal system to oppress every voice which dares speak out against the authorities. Li Hsien-nien, vice-premier of the State Council of Communist China, handed down his verdict that the poster was 'reactionary through and through, vicious and malicious to the extreme'. The fate of the author was thus sealed. Public security authorities in Canton put Li-I-Chi under 'temporary arrest'. Li was brought to various units and mass meetings for public criticism and humiliation. Now after five months of enquiring by friends

in Hong Kong, the Canton authorities say they have sentenced Li to Labour Reform Camps for being counter-revolutionaries.

Another young revolutionary Yang Hsi-Kuang was sentenced to 10 years hard labour in 1968 for writing a poster 'Whither China', which attacked 'Red Capitalism'. He was a 17 year old student at the time of his arrest 10 years ago, and should by now have been released. However it seems quite the opposite. Yang has disappeared and the authorities are not willing to give any information about him. A campaign by the 70's Libertarian group in Hong Kong to help the arrested comrades is under way. The 70's can be contacted at 180 Lockhart Road, 1st Floor, Wanchai, Hong Kong □ H.Y. Wong

## EGA the fight goes on



London: Elizabeth Garrett Anderson workers on their own picket.

One use of Direct Action that in the long term is threatened by the Criminal Trespass Law (see CACTL news p.5) is the work-in at Elizabeth Garrett Anderson (EGA) hospital for women, in Euston. In the short term, however its future is threatened by the Area Health Authority who have promised to move equipment out of the hospital today, as a first step to closing it down.

The reasons for the work-in are many: it is the larger of the only two hospitals in the country run by women for women. The struggle to keep it open is seen as a challenge to the National Health Service which is top heavy with men, and which so often treats the problems of women's health as neuroses or "nothing to be worried about". This is particularly true of menstrual problems, the menopause, difficulties with pregnancy, thrush, cystitis and other genital disorders. Obviously only a woman doctor can know and sympathise whereas a man can only guess. The struggle at the EGA provides a chance to focus on the whole issue of women's health, and the struggle of women to have control over their own bodies.

The EGA has steadily been run down since 1974 when there were hints that the hospital would close. At one stage, a group of workmen entered the building to "inspect the balconies". There, they hammered and hammered to "test its strength". Large chunks of it came away. The lights were smashed and then found to be "faulty". They left saying the balcony was "structurally unsound"; it was "dangerous" and "unsafe". In February 1976, Barbara Castle announced that the hospital had to move, but would be incorporated into the Whittington Hospital, Islington. There was no reason given as to why this move had to be made. Investigations into the Whittington revealed that the move could not happen without a loss of jobs, a loss of facilities, and the loss of the identity of the EGA as a caring women's hospital. It became clear that the plans for the EGA were nothing short of closure.

The response of the women within the hospital was to occupy. All the staff have seen this tactic as a final weapon to keep the hospital open. This decision is endorsed by all the unions represented:

NUPE, ASTMS, NALGO, and COHSE. Patients within the hospital support the workers and bed-ridden women are determined that they will not move (at least, not until they are well!) Women outside the hospital insist on being referred to the EGA so that there is a steady supply of patients. Support from the local community has been widespread; women's groups, squatting groups, local trade unionists and many others have been active in the 24 hour picket. The EGA support campaign has produced a very good tape and slide show which details the history of the EGA struggle, and is intended for showing to any groups of people who are willing to support the campaign. Meetings and marches have

been held on at least a weekly basis. Occasional mass pickets are not enough. Offers of support to Pam Jones or Arthur Churchly (NUPE) on 01 387 2501 □ Pete Brawne.

## Jake Prescott

Jake Prescott (serving 10 years for Angry Brigade activities), has been given permission to appeal against his sentence of two years loss of remission, and 8 months total loss of privileges, imposed by the visiting magistrates in Manchester for being involved in the riot at Hull in August '76.

Without loss of remission, Jake should have been out by October this year. However one of the charges against him has now been dropped, and six months loss of remission has gone with it. At present Jake is in the Albany prison on the Isle of Wight, and is recovering from a spell of bad health. Since the riot at Hull, the prisoners involved have been separated and sent to different prisons around the country. An independent inquiry into the brutality meted out to the prisoners after the riot takes place in London on May 28th. It has been organised by the prisoners rights group P.R.O.P. □

## Anarchist Feminist workshops

National Women's Liberation Conference; a report on the anarcho-feminist workshops.

At the Women's liberation Conference this year two workshops took place on anarcho-feminism. Over seventy women were involved. This was within a general context of concern for developing a revolutionary-feminist perspective and in the light of a growing socialist feminist movement, which we see ourselves as a part of - socialism predates Marxism!

At the Conference, particularly within the socialist feminist workshops, many women expressed dissatisfaction with traditional male left politics but simultaneously saw the need to work for a socialist alternative if we are to free ourselves as women from oppression. Very few women seemed aware of the libertarian left which is so much closer to the politics we have learnt from our experience in the women's movement.

Within the anarcho feminist workshops we discussed this, and decided that it was very important for us to establish an anarcho feminist group within the Women's movement, for our own sense of solidarity and so that we may establish and develop our own theory and practice. Many of us said how isolated we had been feeling particularly when arguing with our aligned left sisters. We all felt that it was vital to re-emphasize the structure of the women's movement (small leaderless groups, taking collective decisions, with everyone sharing responsibility; and coming together as a network organization not as a pyramid) as part of the revolutionary means itself. Some women in recent years have challenged this and advocated a tighter, centralized structure. As anarchists we have to point out the importance of using 'revolutionary means' if we wish to secure a free society where people share responsibility for running their own lives.

To these ends we have re-started the anarcho feminist network, and are bringing out a newsletter, as well as organizing a conference for May.

Other issues which we discussed were what did we feel was 'anarcho feminist' practice within the women's movement? To springboard ourselves out of reformism and stopgap measures and into a revolutionary confrontation with authoritarian politics, where should we focus? Perhaps we should ignore the state and set up abortion centres - as menstrual extraction is safe and simple.

We talked about our attitude to working with men; we decided our priority was to establish a strong current within the women's movement.

We have much to discuss - suggested



workshops for the conference so far include: the structure of the women's movement — how far is it anarchist?; our attitude to the Unions; women and kids; campaigns; working with men; feminism; sexuality; work situation; and non-violent action.  Sharon Roughan.

contact address for newsletter:  
43 Grosvenor Terrace, Bootham, York.

likely due to unprecedented international protest and its effect upon their cherished tourist trade. Noel's six-month ordeal — accompanied by perpetual artificial light — and the beatings he received during interrogation, is a form of physical and psychological torture permitted in a "democracy".

Noel is taking a Civil Action against his



Dublin: Marie Murray — heavily guarded — being escorted from court

## Free the Murrays!



Noel Murray

Marie Murray's retrial on a charge of capital murder in the very Special Criminal Court in Dublin (3 judges and no jury), ended on May 4th ... she was found guilty on a charge of ordinary murder and not capital murder. Marie was sentenced to life imprisonment. Gardaí statements during the trial admitted that the only real evidence for conviction was her statement, supposedly given 'voluntarily' during her interrogation. The statement however was only given by Marie to save the life of Noel Murray, who was being tortured in the room next to hers by the infamous Gardaí 'Heavy Gang'. Once again the Irish media gave little coverage of the trial, and none of the national and international activities of the Murray's Defence Groups. Marie has lodged an appeal against the sentence, and is at present in Limerick prison, along with other women activists — Rose Dugdale and Marion Coyle.

Noel Murray, also serving a life sentence is in the Curragh Military Camp where he has been held since 1975. The camp is justice minister Cooney's rubbish dump for 'difficult prisoners', and the inmates include anarchists, republicans and revolutionary socialists. Noel's time in the Curragh has included a six month stay in the death-cell, while the state deliberated on the legality of their own murder proposals. As it turned out, they decided against killing him though not due to a benevolent change of heart ... more

torturers, (the Action was filed in August 1976 ... it usually takes a year before it is heard in court, and a few days for it to be rejected). The third defendant Ronan Stenson was released in January, and is now active in the Dublin Murrays' Defence Group, having just returned from a speaking tour in Holland. Ronan suffered badly from the tortures he received after his arrest and it was fear of torture evidence being produced by his defence counsel in the court which led to his release.

Many of the Murrays' Defence Groups intend to carry on the fight against the bunch of thugs in Dublin — Cosgrave and his henchmen, and also try to make Marie and Noel's (hopefully short) stay in prison as varied as possible. Non-political letters, non-political paperback books and money are their most urgent, legitimate wants. Send to: Marie Murray, Limerick Womens Gaol, Limerick, S. Ireland; and to Noel Murray, Curragh Military Detention Centre, Curragh, Co. Kildare, S. Ireland.

[Free the Murrays postcards can be obtained from the London Defence Group c/o 29 Grosvenor Ave., London N5 — 5p each or 12 for 50p.]  Peter Webb.

## Squatters Conference

London Saturday/Sunday April 16/17

One month after CACTL march (see p.5) a Squatters Conference was held to discuss (amongst other things) fighting the Criminal Trespass Law, and Squatters Organisation — these two subjects being inseparable, and needing a great deal of attention.

Politically motivated squatters from numerous areas of London attended, but representation of squatters as a whole was poor. A split within the "Movement" (which emerged for the first time for many people) between Leninists, some of whom work around the Squatters Action Council (SAC) and libertarians, who organize themselves, but whose most coherent voice is represented by the Advisory Service for Squatters (ASS) meant that unity was not achieved, and the pressing need for a London-wide squatting organisation to stop the Criminal Trespass Law was not met. Hopefully, this will happen at another meeting planned for May 15th at which squatters will debate whether to form a Squatters Union (SAC proposal), a Federation of London Squatters (ASS

proposal), or any other idea which is thrown up by the people attending.

Perhaps the most positive and heartening aspect of the conference was the commitment of many of the groups around London to set up smaller meetings in their areas, and to discuss the ideas brought up by the conference, to reach a wider audience, and to see if there can be any agreed plan of action.

Since April 16/17th a number of local meetings have been held, and a London-wide squatting organisation discussed. On 15th May the report-back from areas to a larger all-London meeting took place. The meeting was heated, and the decision as to what sort of organisation should be formed was deferred yet again to another meeting, due to lack of time — see Agitprop for details.

Newcomers to squatting as an overtly political activity left early as their preconceived ideas about "politics" were proven by what was felt as the stupidity of many of the arguments, and the vast amount of bickering and petty squabbling that occurred.  Pete Brawne

## Open Road

In the space of just two issues a new news quarterly, *Open Road*, launched by a collective of activists in Vancouver has established itself as one of the best anarchist papers currently available. Taking the name *Open Road* from the name Emma Goldman originally chose for Mother Earth when she decided to start an anarchist periodical in 1906, and with a style reminiscent of the original *Rolling Stone*, all six thousand copies of the first (summer '76) issue sold out in a few weeks.



Replying to the 1500 or so letters received in response to the first issue delayed the second till Spring '77. That too quickly sold out although the print run had been doubled.

*Open Road* has comprehensive coverage of libertarian politics and culture, reporting not only Canadian, but American, European and third world events. Although so far, in its desire to be nonsectarian it has occasionally tended to be a little too uncritical, and also, while being refreshingly anti-sexist it is not yet expressly feminist in its content. Even so, this is an exciting new paper which should be read by everyone.

*Open Road* can be obtained direct from *Open Road*, Box 6135, Station G, Vancouver BC, Canada V6R 4R5. As there are no subscription rates send a contribution.

## More Harassment

Two comrades Iris Mills and Ronan Bennett were picked up on May 11th under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (P.T.A.), after the Special Branch raided their home in Huddersfield at 7 o'clock in the morning. Under the P.T.A. people can be held for up to seven days without being charged. Iris and Ronan are both involved with the Anarchist Black Cross, and have also been active in the Murrays Defence Campaign. After being held for six days

Iris was released on Tuesday 17th — no charges were brought against her. After Ronan's detention however, the police asked Home Secretary Rees to serve an exclusion on him, which Rees dutifully did.

Ronan came over to England last April from Ireland, and if his appeal against the exclusion order is turned down he will be forced to return to the Irish Republic. This attack by the police is the latest of a long line in which the P.T.A. has been used, especially against the Irish community. Since the P.T.A. was introduced over 2,200 people have been detained, over 100 deported and 1100 have been detained at ports of entry whilst coming from Ireland. Of all those detained less than 30 have been convicted for political offences. The Act so far has been used to terrorise the Irish community — it can be used against other groups just as easily.

At the time of going to press we don't know if Ronan has been deported, but for further information contact Black Cross, 123 Upper Tollyington Park, London N4.  Peter Webb.

## National Abortion Campaign

Safe, freely available abortion is a fundamental necessity for women's liberation. Unless we have the basic right to control our own bodies we will not be able to choose how we run the rest of our lives. At present this right does not exist, either in law or in practice. Unsurprisingly the male-dominated medical profession has not bothered to find an adequate method of contraception for women, while under the 1967 Abortion Act it is not up to a woman to decide whether or not to have a child; two doctors, usually men, have to give permission for a termination of pregnancy. Even where this is given many women are unable to get abortions without paying for them: in 1975 only 49% of abortions were performed on the National Health Service; the other women were forced to go to the charitable agencies or to profiteering private clinics. Every year thousands of women are turned away by doctors, who believe they know best how women should live their lives and are forced to bear unwanted children.

In the last few years even existing rights have been threatened, and the NAC was set up in February 1975 in response to one such attack — the James White Abortion Amendment Bill, which would have severely limited the already unsatisfactory 1967 Act. These moves show clearly the alarm felt by the establishment at the increasing self-confidence of women and the development of the women's movement. Along with massive cuts in social services — health, education, nurseries etc., the attack on abortion rights is part of the move by the ruling class to confine women to a domestic and maternal role within the patriarchal family.

Since February 1975, the NAC has drawn thousands of women into the campaign and has won wide support from the women's movement and other groups. It has organised a Tribunal on abortion rights and three large demonstrations, notably the massive one of June 21st 1975, against attacks on the 1967 Abortion Act, and for free abortion on demand. Recently, however, there have been criticisms from feminists within NAC that the campaign has been too defensive; it has watered down the primary importance of abortion in allowing women to control their own sexuality, emphasising instead less provocative issues like the dangers of back street abortions, the lack of nursery facilities or the freeing of women for work outside the home. Our opponents, like SPUC, have not ignored this issue, and behind their lamentations about the rights of the unborn child, lies their fear that abortion makes women 'promiscuous' i.e. frees them from sexual domination by men. Since these criticisms, the right of women to control their sexuality, free from the fear of pregnancy,



has been emphasised more by many NAC groups.

Though some activities of NAC have been defensive and reformist (necessarily so to some extent given that the threat has come from parliament); the response to these criticisms and the activities of local groups shows that many of the principles of the women's movement have been influential in NAC. For many women the abortion issue has been the catalyst that has led to an involvement in the women's movement for the first time; it has been a consciousness raising process and has led to a consideration of other areas of women's oppression.

NAC is now fighting a new threat in parliament: the Benvon Abortion Amendment Bill which, if passed, would destroy the charitable clinics which have filled many of the gaps in the National Health Service. Local NAC groups are busy investigating local facilities for abortion, petitioning, picketing hospitals, arranging public meetings and street theatre. A demonstration, 15,000 strong took place on May 14th and a week of action will take place June 18th-25th. If you would like to help fight for a woman's right to choose when and whether she has children, and against control of women's fertility by the male-dominated legal and medical professions, contact NAC (30, Camden Road, NW1 phone 01 485 4303) for the address of your local group

□ Ann Hughes.

## F.L.A.G

At a meeting of the Federation of London Anarchist Groups (F.L.A.G.) on April 30th it was decided to start producing a monthly information bulletin, which will be circulated to all groups in London. Several people commented on the lack of contact between anarchists in London, and the bulletin is seen as one way of overcoming this.

Anyone living in London who would like to receive the bulletin, contact South London Anarchists, c/o 3 Belmont Road, SW4. □

## Bookshops

● Blackthorn Books is a new libertarian bookshop which has just opened in Leicester. Besides a wide range of books, pamphlets and posters, there are also plans for a print workshop, meeting room and library for the use of local libertarian groups. It is hoped the shop will be self-supporting, but money is needed to help furnish the meeting room, provide shelves for the library and add to the silkscreen equipment. Cheques should be made payable to: Blackthorn Books, 74 Highcross St., Leicester.

● News from Nowhere, Liverpool's radical bookshop has moved to vastly enlarged premises, with more posters, American imports, non-sexist kids' books and political records. The shop provides a wide range of literature not available elsewhere in Liverpool - specialities being Women's Liberation, Anarchism, Labour History, Spanish Civil War, over 500 pamphlets, etc. The shop also acts informally as an information centre for radical activities in the area. The move to new premises has cost in the region of £500, which can't be found at the present turnover. So, all donations are welcomed, payable to 'News from Nowhere', 100 Whitechapel, Liverpool 1.

● Rising Free has moved to new premises at 182 Upper Street, Islington, NI. The shop is run on a voluntary basis (no wages) and more people are needed to work there - perhaps 1 or 2 days a week, more if possible □

## Summer Camp

The International Libertarian camp will be held in Renaix, Belgium, from July 15 to August 15. The contact address is: Eric Sobrie, Zonnestraat 3, 9792 Wortegem-Petegem, Belgium. Last year's International Libertarian camp took place in the south of France □



London: April 23, police struggle to separate antifascists and fascists

## National Front March

The National Front marched through North London on St. George's Day (23 April) and once again demonstrated that they can't take their racism into the streets without heavy protection. Every large-scale demonstration they've staged has been marked by violence, and they've always been outnumbered by opposition. On this occasion, a police presence in greater numbers than the Front themselves was needed to allow them to march in any safety.

The 1,000 or so NF marchers chose to march northwards from Turnpike Lane instead of going south to Stoke Newington to confront its high immigrant population. The areas they did pass through, however, contain a considerable proportion of West Indian and Jewish residents and these people came out to show that they resented the Front's presence on their streets.

A much larger counter demonstration took place, despite a last-minute ban by the local authorities, and there was sporadic fighting at various points along the route. At one point, bright-orange smoke bombs burst among the Front's already confused drummers (judging by their somewhat erratic rhythm) and eggs, fruit, flour and cans (ripped-off from shops) were thrown at the march.

The police constantly tried to stop people following the Front by blocking the way and using horses to force people into sidestreets. They also scattered a crowd by driving empty coaches through them at high speed. There were over 80 arrests, but in the general confusion

several of the "arrested" were snatched back from the police.

The Front's rally, at a school in a quiet residential area in Southgate, was effectively cut-off from the counter-demonstration by a massive and all too cleverly planned police operation which sealed-off the roads approaching the building

□ Geoff Ingarfield.

## CACTL Demo

Black flags, red and black banners, and A's in circles were in abundance today at a protest against the Criminal Trespass Law. The march, organised by the Campaign Against the Criminal Trespass Law (CACTL) is made up of people who see the introduction of this law as a dangerous threat to Direct Action.

Most of us spend most of our lives on other people's property: supermarkets, factories, schools, cafes, social security offices, buses, trains, even our homes are often legally not "ours" - lodgers, squatters, licensees etc. Usually we have permission to be in these places, but that permission can be ended verbally by the owner at any time. Once that happens we become a trespasser. For over 600 years now, trespassing has been a civil matter which has meant that the property owner has had to seek the support of courts before taking any action against the trespasser. This procedure has usually taken months. Now with the threat of the

Criminal Trespass Law - trespassing will be made a criminal offence. This means that the State is openly and actively taking the side of the property owner against the interests of the propertyless, by directing its police force to intervene and arrest trespassers and the criminal courts to fine and imprison us. This procedure could take the time it takes to make a telephone call.

At junction of Islington Park Street; Canonbury Lane, and Upper Street, confusion caused by halt in march letting traffic through. One demonstrator arrested. Large part of demonstration decides to retrace its steps and march to police station to free man. Front of march is now back, and back is front. Group police form line blocking way to station, but are few - retreat as we begin march up Upper Street. Great rush power goes through crowd. We've taken control of the street! We're deciding what to do, even police can't stop us. We feel unity's strength.

At police station are greeted by police reinforcements; thin blue line wedged evenly between us and police station. Street completely blocked.

Now surrounded by lines police all 3 sides. We face police station. Sun shines. Firemen next to station come out sit on walls/window sills - watching.

Crowd smiles, flags wave, flutes whistle. We chant for prisoner's release, for charges dropped, for squatted cells, for police strike - NOW. Negotiations being carried out. Megaphones say: move. We refuse. Above us, man in darkened room of police station takes photographs.

Disappears. Crowd shouts. On steps of police station organisers of march speak. Can't hear. Ask everyone for quiet. Quiet. Man with camera appears again, now on roof of police station, casually walks around. Pauses to aim camera downwards take photograph. Someone points: "Crowd - as one - notices, jeers loudly: "Jump!" Regular beat of drum echoes speeded up beat of our hearts.

Theatre of the streets. We begin to get intoxicated with pleasure of freedom, jokes/witty exchanges course through crowded street reflecting joy people feel this new situation. "If there'll ever be a revolution, then this'll be what it's like" says one.

Suddenly doors police station open out down steps come policemen, negotiators, original protester - beaming, one arm extended, with clenched fist. Crowd yells approval/delight; smiling loudly. We won't say some, as we march off - back to normality - to the original venue, late.

□ Pete Brawne.



London: Direct action outside Islington police station. Insets: a police photographer who never lost an opportunity





# ANARCHISM

## Feminism

Of all oppression the most fundamental is that of patriarchy, the domination of men over women. This domination expresses itself everywhere. As women are sex-role typed from birth into a subordinate social position. We are taught passivity and domesticity — anything that will crush our real selves and turn us into wives and mothers. We are brought up to meet and marry Mr. Right, have his family and live happily ever after. This nuclear family is the economic basis for capitalism. Each isolated family having its individual house, car, Hoover, mixer, television, adds up to create the false consumption of superfluous commodities. The nuclear family doubles capitalism's main means of socialisation. We come to internalise the concept of property, not only commodities, but also children. We learn to accept the sexual division of labour 'where women cook and clean but men 'go to work'. Within this family women are the sexual property of men, and as such are subject to the exercise of absolute power to the level of physical violence and rape. Because society denies women economic independence, women cannot readily escape this situation. When women do work outside of the home, our earnings are generally less

than men's which makes it impossible for most women to support a family on our own. At the same time as the family serves as a refuge in which all otherwise outlawed emotion and affection is invested and isolated, its institutionalised roles grimly mirror the basic power structure of society: the man as master, the wife as servant and the children as property. Everywhere, too, the idea is advanced of women as sexual objects: draped over cars in motor shows, stripping in films, selling aftershave on television . . . everywhere women are objects of property, show pieces, status symbols, rather than people in our own

right. Even on becoming involved in left groups we are frequently reacted to as potential sex rather than potential activists and friends. These are the reasons why we are fighting as women. Feminism is women joining together in a shared consciousness of our oppression to struggle against the male dominated capitalist society that thrives on our exploitation. To be a feminist is to be a revolutionary, because to live freely necessitates revolution. Feminism, in fighting against patriarchy means fighting all hierarchy, all leadership, all governments and the very idea of authority itself. It sees politics as not only being out there but in our minds and relationships too. There will be no revolution without women's

liberation. There will be no women's liberation without revolution.

## Anarchism

We live out our lives subject to the triple reign of patriarchy, capital and state. This sexual, economic and political subjugation, which we experience at every moment has at its heart a common principle: authority. That is, the illegitimate exercise of power and our obedience to it. Every form of relationship of twentieth century society is characterised by this prevailing pattern of domination and submission. Living is reduced to alienation, activity to consumption, thought to contemplation. Everywhere one thing is demanded of us above all else; our submission. Everywhere we are conditioned to fear free expression, and obey. Anarchism is the construction of a free society in the face of this. Anarchism is the creation of a society where people have taken over the organisation and determination of their own lives. Anarchism is the rejection of all hierarchical and dominating forms of relationship and their replacement by cooperative forms and collective organisation. Contrary to common misconception, anarchism does not reject, but is about organisation. Anarchism is simultaneously both a critique of authoritarian forms of organisation which foster manipulation and passivity, and a theory of free organisation. Forms which are organised from below rather than above, from within rather than without. The basis of such organisation is the autonomous group formed on the basis of common locality (collective), activity (affinity group) or trade (syndicate). These groups federate with each other to form

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The article below in the February issue of the C.N.T., print

Much has been said about which human beings in society, due to the fact that they are to undergo unfulfillment, which inhibits their fulfilment. We go further into the other kind of affects women and operates no liberation, unless society: the she femininity and

What is characterised by personality is it and women both masculine elements degree, sex being. Our civilization imposed compliance. The man has to be as feminine, to 'suppress' his and fulfil in his characterised as a result of our social add, and stress consciousness to which society

The movement have arisen from reflection; and the evolution of the feminine camp "formal" disciplines areas of society women and there must be said in differences of

increasingly closing their autonomy decentralised and on the equality inequalities of

The consequence behind patriarchy the same authority submission relationship that sexual-social long as authority follows that authority. That power can never organisations that and authoritative organisation must the future.

Both anarchism same ultimate it is the anarchist intimate connection achieve a free society is organized point of divergence socialists call for form a working believe in the wherever the self one of self presents shows that unless merely transitional revolution: Russian anarchists the because where the end become anarchists revolution in which the separate meanings beginnings other history where of submission.



# Mujeres Libres (free women)

The article below has been translated from the February issue of the national paper of the C.N.T., printed in Madrid.

Much has been said about the alienation to which human beings are subject in this society, due basically to the fact of having to undergo unpleasant mechanical labour which inhibits the processes of our self-fulfilment. We have to go back much further into history to find the origin of the other kind of alienation which affects women and men in the same way and operates negatively on collective liberation, unbalancing the whole of society: the sheer differentiation between femininity and masculinity.

What is characteristic of the human personality is its mixed composition, men and women both possess feminine and masculine elements to a greater or lesser degree, sex being the one essential difference. Our civilisation however, has imposed completely defined roles on us all. The man has to emphasise virile attributes and give up every trait characterised as feminine; the woman, by contrast, has to 'suppress' her masculine components and fulfil in her personality only what is characterised as feminine. To consciousness of our social exploitation we have to add, and stress the importance of, our consciousness of the psychic exploitation to which society subjects us.

The movements for women's liberation have arisen precisely on the basis of this reflection, and the reasons why the articulation of the problem occurred in the feminine camp first are obvious: the "formal" discrimination existing in all areas of society between the rights of women and those of men. Nevertheless, it must be said in this connection that the differences of emphasis, aims and methods

of the various feminist organisations are in some cases radical. Ultimately, these groups are no more than a reflection of those existing generally in society, and their tactics for struggle and perspectives for change are a function of the ideologies around which they have formed. Within



the feminist movement, there is a group — MUJERES LIBRES — (Free Women), which in its ideological, organisational and functional characteristics differs enormously from the others.

Mujeres Libres is an autonomous libertarian organisation. It originated in 1936 and developed its activities until 1939 as a grouping dedicated to the task of promoting the emancipation of women in the framework of the general struggle to attain an anarchist society — a society "where women and men will be able to live as PEOPLE in perfect equality of rights and obligation". At present it is in the process of creating a federal structure on the peninsular level.

Mujeres Libres defines itself as anti-authoritarian, socialist and autonomous. They understand that their emancipation will not be real "as long as that of society as a whole has not been achieved, but we believe that in the meantime our struggle should focus on the following aspects:

**FORMATION:** Creating a conscious and responsible feminist force, making all women aware of our present alienation in the perfectly assumed role of obvious dependence on men and of the social customs which determine an unjust class society. The right of women to enjoy and do what she wants with her own body also implies 'full sexual information, free use and wide dissemination of contraception and free abortion'. M.L. propose to combine the process of formation with that of information, "setting up lecture tours, schools, special courses, reviews etc., tending to foster women's abilities and emancipate them from the triple slavery to which they have been and still are

subjected: the slavery of ignorance, slavery as women, and slavery as producers".

**WORK:** Struggling against the economic and social inequality of women, as the primary cause of the sexual problems of which we are the victims". The group are opposed to wage labour and capital, "but Mujeres Libres was the first organisation to demand equal pay for equal work as a means of denouncing capitalist injustice and exploitation of women.

**LEGISLATION:** "Modifying the socio-legal, labour, educational and human-relationships norm, this being just one way of moving towards our objective: changing peoples' approach, behaviour, habits and customs, social forms, standards and beliefs regarding women and men."

**POLITICS:** "Eliminating all types of leaders — political, cultural, economic etc., even if they are women, considering that hierarchy has never been a means of emancipating the individual, male as well as female." In relation to the political parties they think that "any women's section of a party, or any feminist movement whose leaders are party figures, is condemned to serve the interests of that party before those of the women for whom they claim to be struggling. For this reason we do not accept any kind of direction or manipulation on their part, nor any kind of compromise with them, Continued page 10, column 4

# W / FEMINISM

increasingly comprehensive networks without losing their autonomy. Such organisation is decentralised and non-hierarchical, being based on the equality of a network and not the inequalities of a pyramid.

The consequence of recognising that behind patriarchy, capital and the state lies the same authority principle, the power/submission relationship, is the conclusion that sexual-social revolution will not exist as long as authority persists in any form. It follows that authority cannot be destroyed by any movement which is in itself based on authority. That patriarchal, capital, and state power can never be overthrown by organisations that are themselves hierarchical and authoritarian. Instead revolutionary organisation must mirror the organisation of the future.

Both anarchists and Marxists believe in the same ultimate society, free communism. But it is the anarchist insistence that there is an intimate connection between organising to achieve a free future and the way that future society is characterised that characterises the point of divergence of the left. Whereas many socialists call for the seizure of power to form a working class government, anarchists believe in the dissolution of power, because wherever the state exists, that existence is one of self-perpetuating oppression. History shows that unless power is itself destroyed it is merely transferred to a new group, and authentic revolution becomes political revolution: Russia, China, Cuba . . . . For anarchists the means is the end not only because wherever means and end are divorced the end becomes diverted, but because for anarchists revolution is a continuous process in which the terms 'means' and 'end' lose their separate meaning. Revolution has no finite beginnings other than in every moment of history where rebellion has taken the place of submission. And no end since free society

will change and develop inexorably according to its own dynamic. Because the means of revolution is revolution, revolutionary activity consists of realising revolutionary society now. This is the basis of the anarchist insistence on living a revolutionary lifestyle, and direct action, that is, self-managed struggle.

## Anarca-feminism

"Feminism practices what anarchism preaches. One might go as far as to claim feminists are the only existing protest groups that can honestly be called practising anarchists" Lynne Farrow. Feminism as Anarchism.

The revolutionary feminist perspective is essentially anarchist. Not only because revolutionary socialism is implicit in revolutionary feminism but because feminism is anarchist in both its theory and its practice. In its rejection of authority, hierarchy and leadership, feminism follows anarchist theory. Nevertheless it is at this point that feminism transcends anarchism because feminism shows authority, hierarchy and leadership for what they really are, structures of male power.

But it is in organisation and action that women have spontaneously come closest to anarchism. "All across the country independent groups of women began functioning without the structure, leaders and other factotums of the male left, creating independently and simultaneously, organisations similar to those of anarchists of many decades and locales. No accident either" (Cathy Levine. The Tyranny of Tyranny). The emphasis on the small group as the basic organisational unit, coming together in a federal way for campaigns and conferences, the belief that decisions should be collective, the commitment to direct action, the concentration on the way we live our everyday lives, the need for groups to be supportive and develop love and trust are

all examples of the degree to which women have of their own accord arrived at an anarchist position. "Feminism has been since its inception unconsciously anarchist. We now need to be consciously aware of the connections between feminism and anarchism". (Peggy Kornegger. Anarchism the Feminist Connection). Anarca-feminism is about becoming consciously aware, expressing, and realising our anarchism within the women's movement. Anarca-feminism consists in recognising the anarchism of feminism and consciously developing it.

In spite of the fact that anarchists have in the past stressed the central importance of sexual politics, anarchist men remain little better than men elsewhere in their oppression of women. Confronted with Feminism the Marxist left have, for the most part, responded by seeking to account for women's oppression through an extension of Marxist analysis. Reproduction is seen as a form of production, defining women's oppression in terms of a traditional class analysis. In this way feminism is co-opted to the class struggle. In fact women's oppression cuts across class. In this subordination of feminism Marxism discloses its theoretical limitations and fundamental incompatibility with feminism. On the other hand feminism and anarchism are theoretical counterparts. Being a theory based on selfmanagement and direct action, anarchism has no motive to subsume feminism and respects and supports the autonomy of the women's movement. But while theoretically feminism can be seen as an extension of anarchism, practically anarchist consciousness of feminism is way behind that of the left as a whole. The contradiction is a double one. Not only have anarchists largely failed to recognise the anarchism going on all around them, revolutionary feminism, but the anarchist movement remains resiliently sexist and male dominated. Even simple fundamentals such as organising circles, sitting back at meetings and allowing women to come forward, confronting sexism in language and ensuring that women with children are free

to attend meetings are not observed in any serious way by the majority of anarchist men. How has this contradiction come about? In two critical respects the answer seems to lie in the extent to which anarchists have been able to justify their sexism by misinterpreting their own theory, rather than come to terms with it. While anarchism, being generalised has indisputably always been about the liberation of people anarchism is not feminist. Nevertheless the attitude that the implications of women's liberation can be ignored because anarchism is people's liberation is prevalent. The second way by which anarchist men have ideologically reinforced their own sexism consists in confusing political assertion with masculine assertiveness. The justification of sexist behaviour in terms of anarchist individuality and even the support of anti-feminist articles on the basis of free speech are familiar.

Anarchist practice contradicts its own theory by not being actively feminist. Anarchism must recognise in feminism a radical extension of its own politic, beyond its critique of capital and state to include patriarchal oppression, and must base all future practice on this recognition.

We want nothing less than complete freedom — sexual-social revolution. The creative destruction of the triple domination of patriarchy, State and capital. As of this minute anarchism has no choice but to become consciously and actively feminist — just as anarca-feminism consists in consciously anarchist feminism — or cease to exist. "What we ask is nothing less than total revolution, revolution whose forms invent a future untainted by inequality, domination or disrespect for individual variation — in short, feminist-anarchist revolution. I believe that women have known all along how to move in the direction of human liberation; we only need to shake off lingering male political forms and dictums and focus on our own anarchistic female analysis." (Peggy Kornegger. Anarchism the Feminist Connection)  Zero Collective.



"the emancipation of the workers is the affair of the workers themselves"

## CNT Militants Interview

A few months ago the Belgian Agence Presse Liberation (APLB) interviewed two National Confederation of Labour (CNT) militants, Rafael and Emmanuel, in Madrid.

**APLB:** The CNT, founded in 1910, was severely repressed at the end of the civil war and we stopped hearing about it. How has it re-emerged and what are its present roots?

**Rafael:** The CNT is in fact one of the organisations which received the harshest repression, so that many Spaniards, as well as international public opinion, believed it to have disappeared. For example it is estimated that 19 national committees disappeared inside Franco's prisons. But in fact the CNT never ceased to have an active presence among workers. Finally, over the last ten years it has carried out a process of reconstruction on bases which go beyond the differences of opinion which appeared in exile over the different courses of action adopted during the civil war. It is only 4 or 5 years since the CNT reorganised. Today, above all, it is represented by militant workers and young people from almost every trade and every corner of Spain. I can't remember the exact number of regional groups there are at the moment, but the CNT is present in worker's and peasant's cells in the local areas, and even villages, of Valencia, the Central Region, the Asturias, Galicia, Euskadi, Andalusia, Catalonia and Barcelona. The first full assembly of regional groups will be held very soon.

**Emmanuel:** I should like to point out how the characteristics of the historic roots of the CNT are repeating themselves since together with the central region, the two present regional groups which are strongest are Catalonia and Valencia.

**Rafael:** Yes, Barcelona is a good example of the CNT's re-emergence. Over the last few months several thousand people throughout the whole area, including the smallest villages. What is occurring now is not unlike the ending of de Rivera's dictatorship (1923-1930) when the CNT, after a long period underground, which led to belief in its disappearance, became in two years the most important central union in the country. This is partly because it has existed for so long and partly because people are increasingly taking to self-management and direct action as they lose their illusions about party politics and political groups who are workers for their own political ends.

**APLB:** What are the key ideas of the CNT?

**Rafael:** Direct action, Federalism, anti-parliamentarism and 'anti-politicism'. Direct action is the application of the idea of the First International, that 'the emancipation of the workers is the affair of the workers themselves', no more, no less. In the factories, in the fields, and wherever they live, workers must look for the solutions to their problems without intermediaries of any sort, neither political nor bureaucratic. Difficulties can only be resolved by those who directly experience them. As soon as there is an intermediary between a worker and his or her problem the solution is prevented. Federalism we understand as the decentralisation and coordination of the capabilities of different regions, with complete equality. Anti-parliamentarism is itself a practical consequence of direct action which goes against all politics which consist in giving oneself new monsters, whether they call themselves ministers, councillors, rulers or leaders. For in fact the vote resolves nothing. To vote is to name people removed from our reality to resolve our problems for us for fixed periods of time. And then we are surprised as these people who we choose become our lords and masters, benefit themselves, organise our environment, our health, our work

situations, and our wages as they see fit and even, in certain cases, executing class comrades. It is equally necessary to see 'anti-politicism' as a logical development of these principles. You don't have to see in it a refusal of politics itself. The CNT is not apolitical, it merely rejects politics in its classical sense. We defend POLITICS spelt in capitals, which consists not of having new masters but acting directly.

**Emmanuel:** I must add to these basic ideas the ethic which all revolutionary struggle must have and which has been central to CNT practice both in the past and now: that of making no distinction between aims and forms of struggle. To apply on every occasion, and as far as possible, guidelines consistent with the objectives for which one is struggling.

**Rafael:** Yes, for us the end never justifies the means.

**APLB:** How is this link between means and ends reflected with the CNT?

**Rafael:** We do not make, in practice, any distinction between before and after the revolution. For if the revolution is not to come as from now, it will never happen. Thus Federalism is both a fundamental aim of the CNT and part of its day to day working. The worker, the core of the organisation is federated naturally in a trade union and the local federation. The latter form area federations, and in turn regional and inter-regional federations leading ultimately to a revolutionary union on an international scale, since the CNT does not recognise frontiers imposed by states. Federalism is organised in such a way that activity at the lowest level (for want of a better word), which is at all times autonomous in all that concerns it, cannot be controlled from above. All agreements are made from below upwards. Bureaucracy is equally absent from federal organisation. There are no 'professionals', no permanent salaries, only militants elected by the whole organisation for purposes of coordination, who successively replace each other, and after limited periods of time return to their local unions, from which they were never really detached anyway. Direct action and self-management are equally elements of the way in which the CNT functions and of what it proposes unceasingly in the struggle against Capital and the State. The assembly is the sovereign organ in the taking of decisions and of the conduct of the struggle at each moment.

**APLB:** How then do you see the future organisation of society?

**Rafael:** The organisation of future society will be an expression of direct action, federalism and decentralisation characterised by the absence of leaders, of authority and the state. These ideas will realise themselves throughout all areas of human activity, through federations of industrial collectives, and moreover through federations of the communes of each district.

**Emmanuel:** The CNT does not conceive of future society conforming to a set of exact conditions. The future builds itself continuously. You cannot call this society which we pursue utopian for this aim also results from its historic realisation: the society brought about by libertarian collectives in Spain between 1937 and 1939.

**APLB:** Then you more or less reject the distinction between short term and long term, or does it still exist in specific circumstances, at least from the point of view of strategy.

**Rafael:** We do not attach much importance to strategy and tactics. In already living the ideas of the CNT, we are already building the society of tomorrow. Thus we do not determine, like other organisations, what is suitable for today and what is unsuitable, or needs to be postponed.

Often in the long run this becomes opportunism.

**APLB:** To come back to the present, how does the CNT see the break with the current regime coming about?

**Rafael:** The term "break with the system", use of which is widespread among the regime's opponents at the moment seems to us misused, in so far as it suggests that they have no part in the system. Whereas in fact, the organisations that use the term most readily have, at given moments, been most involved with the system. The CNT does not have to break with anything for it has never participated.

**APLB:** The CNT does not involve itself in a united trade union front. What is your opinion of unity? How is it achieved in your view?

**Rafael:** The CNT certainly wants unity among workers, but also knows that it is not something that can be achieved just like that. The attainment of effective and authentic working class unity is dependant on passing through a period of clarification of all political and trade union positions, both majority and minority, current in the area of labour. Freedom is therefore a prerequisite. Unlike other

organisations, the CNT does not set out to pre-empt this situation. We have often agitated against the danger of using fascism to artificially unite worker's groups. This time is over and it is necessary to begin a period of clarification so that workers can choose from full knowledge of the alternative proposals. In any event the demand that workers integrate themselves into a single union regardless of its aims is unrealistic. That would be to try and create a new type of hierarchic, vertical union similar to those we are about to make disappear.

**APLB:** What are the CNT's plans for the coming months?

**Rafael:** We will certainly take every advantage of the liberalisation of the regime to organise, because we are fighting while Spanish workers do not have freedom, are exploited, and lose their lives in subhuman working conditions. But we do not have a strategy to show because strategies seem to us things which come out of planning cabinets for struggle in accordance with political interests. Our plans will be established from daily practise in accordance with our ideas.  APLB. Translation Pat Melville.

## May Days in Ulster

"Liberty, to the political republican, is an empty word, it is the liberty of a willing slave, a devoted victim of the state. Being always ready to sacrifice the liberty of others. Political republicanism, therefore necessarily leads to despotism."

— Bakunin 1867

Ireland is the breeding ground for republicanism: from reactionary Catholic nationalists to equally reactionary Protestant loyalists each wanting to create a strong and unified State, though differing as to size (32 counties or just 6) and to ideological content. What do anarchists make of it all? Clearly confusion abounds, with some justifying and supporting the latest government puppet — the Peace People, whilst others confuse paramilitary violence with fighting for freedom. Such confusion however, is excusable given the media coverage of the problems facing Ireland, the press and television have a long history of merely repeating what the government representatives say, and with hard-man Mason as the new secretary of State, the "official" version of events is composed almost entirely of army press hand-outs.

How then are we to see the 'struggle' and in particular the military struggle of the provisional I.R.A. The Provo's activities are based on one simple dictum — 'Brits Out!' — This ultimate aim justifies their means — 'Active Service Units' in Britain, daily bombing "economic targets", assassinations of "traitors to Ireland". However, such militaristic purity is somewhat blurred in practice — widespread bombing has led to countless blunders and senseless killings. The continuing saga of sectarian murders are often the result of private vendettas. Frequently, the real reason for the selection of an "economic target" is the failure of certain businesses to pay their protection money.

The ultimate aim is a British withdrawal — militarily, politically and economically — but to be replaced with what? The political alternative the Provos offer is Eire Nua, simple-minded, two-word republicanism — Nationalism and Nationalisation. This nationalism is frequently confused with 'anti-imperialism'... that it's only British capital which is capable of being exploitative and oppressive! The nationalisation is not intended to be extensive, and does not include Irish capitalists. (Irish exploiters and oppressors are acceptable.) In fact, the Provisionals have adopted this 'acceptable face of capitalism' themselves with the accumulation of capital in the shape of hotels, shops etc. They see no contradiction in this — even to the extent of forcing local fruit and vegetable stall-holders to close, so as not to hinder the profits of their own shops. Such is the theory and practice of the militant republicanism of the Provisional I.R.A. Is it an acceptable alternative to British government rule?

Acceptable or not, the role of the British government must go. They have shown their true nature (and that of all

governments) in their treatment of the Irish people by the "uniformed custodians of law and order". Torture, contrary to any paper-guarantees by Silkin, is a daily practice at Castlereagh Barracks, Belfast. Every time detection statistics rise, it can be taken for granted that the level of torture has too; the more torture, the more people are "convicted on the evidence of their own statements" (army rhetoric for a torture-induced confession and a savage prison sentence.) The laws and courts are in complete agreement with such tactics; the means to attain "order" is quickly enshrined into a protective "law". As an example of this, the "security (!) forces" have the right to detain and question people for two days, which can in special cases be extended to seven — in reality two days is seldom sufficient for the army or the R.U.C. to "break" the innocent, and if they don't crack within seven it can be safely assumed that they won't crack it at all.

Clearly the Irish "left", particularly the Troops Out Movement (TOM) have a valid point when they campaign, in their diverse styles, for "Brits Out!". What will replace them is not so clear-cut: the left, predictably enough, see the vanguard party as the saviour of the oppressed people, the Provos' strategy, outlined above, will change the nationality of oppression, but they have no desire to abolish it; whilst the T.O.M., in campaigning for national self-determination, merely seeks to perpetuate the myth that all the enemies of the working people of Ireland live outside set geographical borders. Therefore: control by a marxist/nationalist party... an enlarged (and MORE effective) government, 32 counties instead of 6... national self-determination which would mean a division of the spoils of exploitation amongst the strongest claimants. Are these the only alternatives to the present military statism?

The anti-Brit elements have committed a major error — they see everything in terms of economics. The Provos, with their confused socialism ultimately subordinated to nationalism, believe that the attack on economic targets will eventually drive the evil British capitalists out, hence the need to continue the military struggle. Other parties of the left believe that it is imperialist capital which keeps the British here, hence the need to build the vanguard party to defeat imperialism. However, the truth of the matter is that the BRITS DO WANT OUT — the State has never made a net financial gain in twentieth century Ireland, and capital is best employed where owners and controllers are not shot, and factories destroyed. Why then don't they withdraw? They surely don't give a damn about the possibility of a right-wing loyalist take-over, as any government has yet to show a real humanitarian interest in the lives of its "subjects". One reason is that the army hierarchy is quite content with the invaluable training for its raw





Marie Louise Berneri was the first anarchist I ever met. The first convinced, dedicated, working-for-the-movement anarchist, I mean. For she it was who opened the door when I rang the bell of the Freedom Press office one day in 1943, when I set out to discover what anarchism was and who the anarchists were.

The anarchist movement turned out to be the place for me, but by no stretch of the imagination could I ever pretend that all anarchists were like Marie Louise Berneri. She was quite exceptional — as a friend, as a comrade, as a militant revolutionary and as a thinker.

When I first met her she was 25, and had already been affected by revolutionary activity for about 20 of those years. Her father was Camillo Berneri, a brilliant anarchist writer and a leading theoretician of the Italian anarchist movement. He was also an activist, and so subject to continual attacks by Mussolini's fascists that eventually he, his wife Giovanna and two daughters Marie Louise and Gilliane, went into exile in France.

That was 1926, and Marie Louise was learning the facts of life for a revolutionary. Ten years later Camillo Berneri left for Spain, first to fight on the Aragon front and then to edit the paper *Guerra di Classe* in Barcelona. During this time Marie Louise made several 'journeys of confidence' to Barcelona, on behalf of the comrades in Paris, and was able to see at first hand the achievements of the anarchist Spanish workers, an inspiration which was to stay with her forever, even after the brutal murder of her father by Communists during the May days of 1937.

Towards the end of 1937 she came to London to live with her friend Vero Richards, himself the son of an Italian

anarchist long exiled in London. In 1936, when the Spanish Revolution began, no anarchist paper was appearing regularly in Britain until Vero Richards began *Spain and the World* — probably the most influential anarchist paper ever to appear here. Marie Louise was heavily involved in working for the paper, rapidly learning English to add to her native Italian and acquired French and Spanish.

Franco's military victory in 1939, brought some special problems — not least the sudden appearance in London of some 160 Spanish refugees who had managed to escape at the last moment, in need of food, clothing, accommodation and support in every way. Marie Louise threw herself into this very special task of drumming up help for these weary and dispirited comrades, one of whom, Manuel Solgado, was to write later 'We were morally and physically destroyed. Within a few days a comrade came to take us to the Freedom Press premises, and it was there I first saw Marie Louise, who received us with unbounded happiness.

From the very beginning she was at our disposal and moved heaven and earth so that those of us still at the Salvation Army hostel could leave that place. All her interest was centred on our explaining in detail the ins and outs of our struggle. There was one episode about which she asked no questions and about which all of us, without previous arrangement among ourselves, kept silent. I refer to the incidents in May 1937, which were provoked by the Communists and during which the lackeys of Moscow assassinated her father, the dear comrade Camillo Berneri. We knew how painful it would be for her to speak of this period and we always avoided it, and she appreciated our silence.'

The end of the Spanish War brought an end to Spain and the World, but that same year the Germans invaded Poland and World War II began. In November 1939 War Commentary was launched, and once again Marie Louise and Vero Richards were at the centre of publishing an anarchist paper. The clarity and force of the

anarchist position against the war quickly brought support from many anti-war individuals who recognised that there was no point in opposing the economic system which engendered it — capitalism — and the institution which organised it — the state. In 1940 Marie Louise organised a series of lecture-discussions on Spain which strengthened this trend by emphasising the constructive aspects of anarchism as demonstrated by the Spanish collectives and the anarcho-syndicalist alternatives to trades unions.

In 1944 I was invited to join the Anarchist Federation, which at that time was a closed shop for obvious reasons. But once in things moved very fast, and within a year Marie Louise, Vero Richards, John Hewetson and myself found ourselves in the Dock at the Old Bailey on charges of conspiring to disaffect the Forces — offences which carried penalties of up to 14 years gaol.

That trial is another story, too long to elaborate here. Suffice to say that Marie Louise, much to her disgust, was released on the second day on a purely technical point. For the anarchist movement this was of great importance, for she was able, with co-editor George Woodcock and other comrades, to continue publishing *War Commentary*, which did not miss an issue while we were in prison, (we were lucky to get light sentences of 9 months). The war was over and we came out to find comrades working hard to build a movement in the changed circumstances of 'peace' time. The paper changed its name to *Freedom*, and expanded to a newspaper sized fortnightly. From 1946, a series of *Freedom* was produced which was, in the opinion of many anarchists, of a higher standard than ever before or since. It lasted three years. On 13 April 1949, Marie Louise Berneri died suddenly of pneumonia. She was 31. Shock ran around the anarchist world. Hundreds of letters poured in from stunned comrades everywhere, and dozens of notices appeared in anarchist and socialist journals. She had corresponded in four languages with journals, organisations or individuals with equal concern and encouragement. She would answer simple

questions with as much feeling as she would enter into an involved polemic.

For all her brilliance in every way I never heard her put anybody down or make them feel small. She was a true egalitarian, a true anarchist. Personality cults are an anathema to anarchism. Nevertheless it's not difficult to see that it's the presence or absence of personalities which makes the difference as to whether or not we have a dynamic group, an effective paper, or a growing movement. Marie Louise's personality was the inspiration of the wartime generation of anarchists in Britain.

Marie Louise realised as a propagandist that to get ideas across you have to make them relevant to those you are addressing. As we shall see, she could speak with the authority of an intellectual, but what at all times illuminated her approach was an identification with those she was either addressing or speaking about, and when she was deeply moved to anger or compassion she could write with great fire.

Her own and her family's history gave her good cause to hate the Fascist regime in Italy, but she got no satisfaction out of the fearful bombing of Italian towns by the R.A.F. and the U.S. Airforces during 1943.

'Hamburg, Milan, Genoa, Turin are covered in ruins, their streets heaped with bodies and flowing with blood... The Press boasts of the RAF's power to carry such destruction to all the cities of Germany and Central Europe: It screamed with indignation when the Germans bombed churches and hospitals, but when the smell of carnage goes up from beautiful and populated towns they find words of rejoicing. When the water mains were hit in Milan and the centre of the city flooded, they find it a subject for a joke. 'Lake Milan' the clever journalist calls it. What does it matter to him if 'the water is flowing between the ruins and the debris of bombed buildings, and people living in the district were forced to remain in the wreckage of their homes for four days until the water subsided and they could get out... 'Lake Milan' is indeed a splendid joke. But while the journalists chuckle in the Fleet Street pubs, the hospitals and rescue squads are working day and night to try and palliate some of the pain and disfigurement, the hunger and exposure of the victims.'

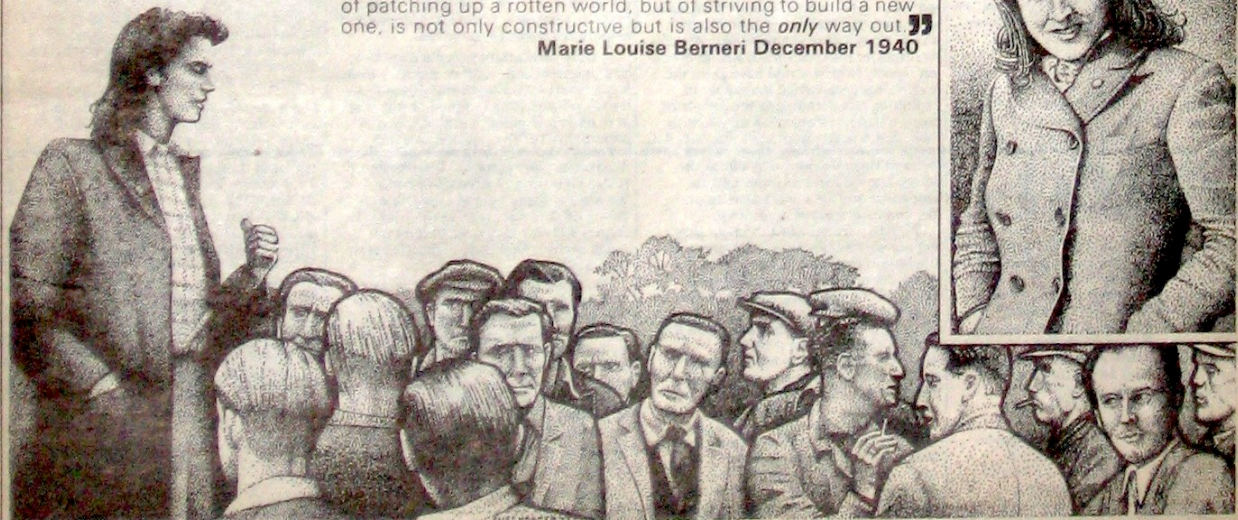
Similarly she had every reason to hate the Communists who had killed her father and sabotaged the social revolution in Spain no less than in Russia itself, but her contempt for the rulers of the Kremlin never let her forget that their first victims were the Russian people themselves.

In 1944 she produced 'Workers in Stalin's Russia', a well researched and damning account of the appalling conditions under which the vast majority

# Marie Louise BERNERI

"We cannot build until the working class gets rid of its illusions, its acceptance of bosses and faith in leaders. Our policy consists in educating it, in stimulating its class instinct and teaching methods of struggle. It is a hard and long task, but... our way of refusing to attempt the futile task of patching up a rotten world, but of striving to build a new one, is not only constructive but is also the *only* way out."

Marie Louise Berneri December 1940







With a group of Spanish refugees in Chorley 1945.

of workers in Stalin's empire toiled, suffered and died. This was written ten years before Khrushchev was to denounce him. However, while Khrushchev complained about Stalin's treatment of his fellow Bolsheviks, she exposed the true nature of the inequality between, say, the Red Army officer class and the private soldiers, the official black market, the party control of the unions, the hated Stakhanovite and forced labour systems, and the much-vaunted equality between men and women: "The Russian woman has been liberated to a great extent from the slavery of the family only to become the slave of her work. Before the revolution, she was imprisoned in her family life, submitted to the wishes of her father or husband; and now she has lost these masters only to acquire a more ruthless one, the State. The State has declared her to be the equal of men but that formula is a cynical joke when the means of achieving that equality are denied her. It is not by sweating down the mines while young men spend their time in offices, that women can achieve equality

with men." Marie Louise described the lot of the working class Russian women as being: "... submitted to a double inequality. She is not the equal of her male fellow worker because, working as many hours and as hard as he does, she earns less; nor is she the equal of the women and men belonging to the privileged class. She slaves in the factories and mines so that a whole population of bureaucrats can afford to live in idleness. She has to become a servant to rich families in order to avoid starvation. She is badly dressed and poorly fed, so that wives of technicians, officers, GPU officials, can enjoy themselves and dress smartly."



There has been a steady stream of anarchist women challenging established moralities and sexual relationships from Mary Wollstonecraft and Emma Goldman through to the present day. Inheriting this body of thought, Marie Louise was able to study and examine the whole concept of women's sexuality. At that time women's

liberation had yet to be seen as a separate struggle.

Her reading of psychology at the Sorbonne added to her revolutionary insight, and enabled her immediately to see the significance of the work of Wilhelm Reich, when the first edition of the *Function of the Orgasm* became available just after the war.

It was Marie Louise who first introduced Reich's ideas to the anarchist movement — if not Britain itself, in an article titled *Sexuality and Freedom* in the magazine *NOW*, published by George Woodcock. She opened with a quote from Reich: "The problem of sexuality permeates by its very nature every field of scientific investigation." She went on: "To reduce these problems to a question of family allowances, maternity benefits or old age pensions is ridiculous; to resolve it in terms of insurrection, of overthrow of the ruling class and the power of the State is not enough. Human nature is a whole. The worker is not merely the producer in the factory or the field; he is also the lover, the father. The problems which he faces in his home are no less important than those at his place of work. By trying to separate biological and psychological problems from the sociological ones, we not only mutilate our theories, but are bound to reach false conclusions."

Showing up the bourgeois cowardice of psychoanalysts like Freud and Jung, who backed away from the implications of sexuality in the face of shocked reaction, she discussed the social and revolutionary importance of Reich's work and his conclusion: "Sexual repression is an essential instrument in the production of economic slavery. Thus sexual repression in the infant and the adolescent is not, as psychoanalysis — in agreement with traditional and erroneous concepts of education — contends, the prerequisite of cultural development, sociality, diligence and cleanliness; it is the exact opposite."

And she finishes in her own words with: "The importance of Dr. Reich's theories are enormous. . . . To those who do not seek intellectual exercise, but means of saving mankind from the destruction it seems to be approaching, this book will

be an individual source of help and encouragement. To anarchists the fundamental belief in human nature, in complete freedom from the authority of the family, the Church and the State will be familiar, but the scientific arguments put forward to back this belief will form an indispensable addition to their theoretical knowledge."



Space restricts detailed mention of all those who, as she would have been the first to admit, influenced her development.

After her father, first among these was of course Vero Richards, who she lived with for 12 years. Only his enormous resilience and courage enabled him to carry on and finish some of the work she had left undone, for just before her death she had completed her major work, *Journey through Utopia*, a comprehensive scholarly and libertarian consideration of hundreds of writings on utopia down the ages, from Plato's *Republic* to the American hobo's *Big Rock Candy Mountains*.

Vero Richards later gathered together over 50 editorials she wrote for *War Commentary and Freedom* between 1939 and 1948. Words of wisdom in a mad world, a model of anarchist journalism, illuminated by courage and compassion and summing up in one of her own titles the anarchist attitude to all the post-war power struggles: *Neither East nor West!* Manuel Solgado wrote of her death: "It only remains for me to ask the comrades who shared with her those days of struggle. . . . To follow her example." □ Philip Sansom.

Workers in Stalin's Russia. M.L. Berneri. Freedom Press, 1944.

Sexuality And Freedom. M.L. Berneri. NOW no.5. Published by George Woodcock.

Journey Through Utopia. M.L. Berneri. Routledge Kegan Paul, 1950.

Marie Louise Berneri. A tribute. Freedom Press, 1949.

Neither East Nor West. Selected Writings of M.L. Berneri. Edited by Vernon Richards. Freedom Press, 1952.

recruits. Another is that the government cannot admit defeat, it must perpetuate the myth that a solution is always possible under any circumstances. To believe and act otherwise would seriously dent their raison d'être for existing. They continue to propagandise the view that dictatorial, centralised, institutionalised politics will always win in the end. That it hasn't, and will not, has not deterred their ardour in believing that it will — after all they have nothing else to cling to. That the British "solution" can never be a success is obvious — but is the republican alternative an improvement? Can freedom ever be equated with home-grown oppression? Unless the people of Ireland secure their own liberation, it will never be handed to them by "freedom fighters".

## General Strike

In May 1974, the six northern counties of Ireland experienced a general strike, organised by the U.W.C. (a conglomeration of loyalist paramilitary leaders). Passively supported by the British army, it was successful in destroying the feeble "political" solution favoured by the British government — the Sunningdale agreement. Since then, "direct rule by Westminster" has been the official terminology for three years of confused fighting between three

confused armies — the Brits, the Provisionals and the loyalists, none of which see a non-authoritarian and just society as a solution to our problems. Three years later (May '77) another general strike by the loyalists takes place. This time it is vital that the anarchist movement in Britain understands the issues at stake and does not fall into the trap of supporting ANY general strike simply because it is a general strike.

The strike, which began on May 2nd, is being organised by the U.U.A.C. (United Unionist Action Council) which includes most loyalist paramilitary organisations and most loyalist politicians. These include the U.D.A., the U.V.F., U.S.C. (Ulster Service Corps), O.F. (Orange Volunteers), Ernest Baird, rev. Ian (hell-fire) Paisley with the support of the Royal Black Preceptory and the Apprentice Boys of Derry.

The U.U.A.C. was set up almost a year ago when the forces of authority couldn't agree amongst themselves as to the best way of dominating people's lives. When Westminster rejected the loyalist convention report, (which would have given the loyalist leaders a virtual monopoly in exploiting and dominating the people of north Ireland, instead of sharing it with their "catholic counterparts"), the U.U.A.C.

pledged themselves to establish yet another authoritarian constitution. . . . the general strike represents the means to this reactionary end.

The representation within the U.U.A.C. is also important in that it includes both paramilitaries and politicians. In 1974 the politicians did not enter the public arena until the strike was well established, leading some anarchists into falsely interpreting it as a genuine and potentially revolutionary movement of the people. This time there should be no false understanding by anarchists — both the political and military leaders are united in their aim of sharing their authority over the historically misguiding and easily controlled loyalist masses. As has been the case throughout Irish history, the rhetoric of a "just cause" (a Protestant STATE for a Protestant people, majority rule etc.) will induce the people into blindly following their leaders — the means (a general strike) will involve all — the end (people's parliament or whatever) will once again institutionalise the leaders and the led.

A truly revolutionary general strike is both negative and positive: negative in that it is a reaction to the slavery and authoritarian conditioning imposed on the mass of people; it is positive in that it has the potentiality for the creation of a just,

harmonious and leaderless society, a way of ousting those in authority. THE MAY GENERAL STRIKE IN IRELAND IS NEITHER! Anarchists must not make the mistake of "seeing its good points" — opportunism we leave to Marxists. Likewise we must not see all "protestant" workers as reactionary — false propaganda we leave to Republicanism □ John Roberts

## MUJERES LIBRES cont.

apart from those of a tactical nature before a particular struggle, providing that our intervention takes place in conditions of full liberty."

CULTURE: Refusing all types of partial culture, whether feminist, male-dominated, bourgeois etc. "Finally they consider their struggle for the liberation of people as a task for everyone, given that it affects us all in our fulfilment as whole human beings. They do not see man as an enemy, but the social structures which make possible the domination of one sex over another and deform the personality of individuals by making them assume attitudes and roles which contradict their deepest and most basic tendencies Translation Fernando □

For more information on Mujeres Libres see *Solidarity Pamphlet "Women In The Spanish Revolution"* by Liz Willis.

# ZERO 1

This is the first issue of ZERO (print-run 3,500) a new anarchist/anarcho-feminist paper, which aims to become a monthly. It has been produced by a mixed collective mainly from East London, with help and advice from a wider group. We are producing the paper because as revolutionary anarchists and feminists we want to see the emergence of a new wave anarchist movement.

To this end we want ZERO to establish a means for developing anarchist politics, and establishing non-sectarian communication between anarchists. We realise there are fundamental differences between many anarchist groups, and don't wish to

pretend these do not exist: but at the same time we feel it is important to emphasise and encourage activity on the common areas of agreement.

We have started ZERO to help give expression to the strong resurgence of libertarian ideas and practice in recent years: May '68 through to Italy and Spain of '77, squatting and other forms of direct action, and particularly anarcho-feminism. For anarchism to become the viable alternative that it really is, anarchist ideas have to reach a larger audience than anarchist papers have reached in the past. This project is an ambitious one — it needs to be.

Of course everything we have said depends entirely on your support. Whether ZERO succeeds depends on your response, in the form of articles, news and information of local activities, letters, criticism, Agitprop, photography,

illustrations and graphics. Distribution is also vital for any alternative paper. We need as many people as possible to take ZERO to street-sell in their locality. It goes without saying we haven't got much money. One issue of ZERO costs us: £3.60.

There are several ways you can help us overcome this astronomical cost. By taking out a subscription, giving a donation towards publication costs, and by selling bundles of ZERO, but above all, writing. We hope to start organising regular benefits — look out for the dates in the libertarian left press. Meanwhile, collective thanks to all those friends and comrades who have already given us support, advice, money and above all encouragement □

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## READER'S MEETING

There will be an open meeting to discuss ZERO on Sunday June 26th at Covent Garden Community Centre, 7 Dials Club, Shelton Street, WC2. Covent Garden tube. 7.30pm start. Be there □

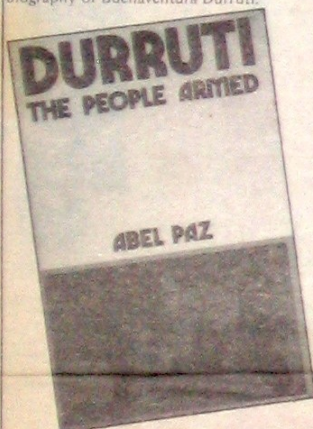
ZERO urgently needs people to help with reading and translating the many anarchist papers sent from abroad. Particularly Spanish, French, Italian and Swedish translators □



# REVIEWS

## DURRUTI: THE PEOPLE ARMED by Abel Paz. (Black Rose Books. £3/4.25)

With the publication of this book on Durruti, the English speaking world has now got a formidable array of books on the Spanish Revolution. For years Gerald Brenan's 'The Spanish Labyrinth' and Borkenau's 'The Spanish Cockpit' had to suffice with Orwell's 'Homage to Catalonia' and pamphlets by Gaston Leval. Then came Vernon Richards' 'Lessons of the Spanish Revolution', and two books which appeared in the sixties: 'The Revolution and the Civil War in Spain' by Broue and Temine, and 'The Grand Camouflage' by Burnett Bolloten. In addition in the seventies came 'The Anarchist Collectives' edited by Sam Dolgoff, and the translation of Leval's 'Collectives in the Spanish Revolution'. And now we have Nancy Macdonald's translation of Abel Paz' biography of Buenaventura Durruti.



First to be critical. The picture of Durruti is divided into three sections: The Rebel (1896-1931), The Militant (1931-1936) and The Revolutionary (1936), but seldom do we get under the skin of the subject. In fact Paz is divided between covering the political situation and the life of Durruti, this is inevitable to some extent but I think a biography of an individual requires at least a reflective chapter on the person concerned. As it is we have fleeting glimpses of a fascinating man who Broue and Temine called 'the symbol of Spanish Anarchism', yet we don't delve beneath the surface. Sadly we are not faced with moral dilemmas of anarchism because they are ignored, although Durruti did not (indeed could not) ignore them. The book cries out for a discussion of revolutionary violence, the ethics of illegal activity and the problems of anarchist leadership. The view of Durruti is uncritical - he is never wrong or weak, always the strong man of action - Paz omits to show that he made mistakes and was ambiguous on some issues of vital importance, such as robbery.

On the positive side, Abel Paz has produced a book involving an enormous amount of work - which every libertarian should read and study. Diligent searching of the letters Durruti sent, the speeches he made and the interviews he had with the press and with comrades, plus the one article he wrote - all this gives us an account of Durruti's thoughts and personality that have not been known before. He was an extraordinary man, and one of the few leading Spanish anarchists who maintained a sense of anarchism throughout the period of the war until his death.

So we have a valuable addition to the literature in English on the Spanish Revolution. That Durruti was a formidable person is even admitted by the Communists and Trotskyists. To anarchists his achievements in action put him with Makhno and Zapata in the Bakunist line

of anarchist activity. For Emma Goldman 'Durruti's secret was that he made theory and practice one'. I think his achievement was that he remained with the people as a brave and exemplary comrade.  Jerry Westall.

## WHY YOU SHOULD BE A SOCIALIST by Paul Foot. (SWP.1977. 35p)

## WHY YOU SHOULD BE A SOCIALIST by John Strachey (Gollancz. 1938)

In 1938, Victor Gollancz published John Strachey's 'Why you should be a Socialist'. It was 96 pages long, sold at two pence and billed itself a terse guide to unemployment, booms and slumps, capitalism, war and socialism.

Socialism to Strachey was the rule of an enlightened elite on behalf of the masses. He called for 'social revolution' and we were urged to 'get on with the job' of 'developing the labour movement' so that it might one day be 'capable of accomplishing the task . . . of taking power from the 4 million to exercise it on behalf of the 43 million.'

Exactly how would 'socialism' improve the workers' lot? Strachey listed 'Five solid things' about the USSR:- 1) no unemployment; 2) 7 hour working day; 3) holidays with pay; 4) free social insurance; 5) rising wages. It is easy, with hindsight, to adopt a superior attitude to Strachey's naive adulation of Stalinist Russia.

Now, forty years later, we are offered another 96 pages of 'Why you should be a Socialist', thirty-five times as expensive, and written by Paul Foot of the Socialist Workers Party. Foot's 'case for Socialism' is, like Strachey's based on economic inequality and specifically on the falling living standards of today's working class.

In presentation it follows its predecessor, but it lacks Strachey's logical unity. There is no attempt to follow the synthesis of Marxist theory with everyday economic reality, and is, by comparison, bitty and disjointed. When he comes to discuss the socialist society of the future, Foot, like Strachey, cannot think in terms of a totally new type of social organisation. True we get the general statements that are bounced around in all 'socialist' groupings:- 'society as a whole owning the means of production' - but 'ownership' is a meaningless term. In a bourgeoisie legal sense the British people 'own' the nationalised industries, as the Russians 'own' their industries. In the concrete real world this ownership means nothing.

Like Strachey, Foot has his 'top priorities of socialism':- 1) free education; 2) free transport; 3) adequate old-age pensions; 4) free health service; 5) free housing. His 'priorities' are notable for their non-revolutionary character. They are not opposed to enlightened capitalist objectives; all are, in fact, attainable under capitalism.

Foot does make tentative moves in the right direction. He calls for the replacement of parliamentary politics with direct workers' democracy, involving local workers' councils electing their delegates to a national Congress of Councils.

It is a token gesture. Foot's pamphlet is intended to present the case for the new Socialist Workers Party, but there can be no role for a party in a genuine movement for a direct-democracy society. The dichotomy of Foot's political philosophy is that he wants a rank and file communist society, but cannot renounce the vanguardist faith that has historically always and inevitably led to the creation of societies in its own image, i.e. bureaucratic class societies.

Foot's 'party philosophy' prevents his deeply challenging the existing order of things. He looks at some aspects of the state apparatus that exists to protect the interests of the ruling minority, although

he mentions neither the state, its apparatus nor its functions as such.

He criticises the army for having non-elected officers recruited from public schools. He isn't against the army as such, and presumably an army where workers could be generals would be OK. Significantly, the army is seen to function only against external enemies! In similar vein, the police, the civil service and the judiciary are criticised. Nowhere is there any suggestion that socialism would make these redundant.

For Foot, there is nothing essentially wrong with leadership. Like his mentor Lenin, he holds that the workers need a 'trusted organisation' to 'show the way to a new social order'. Lenin wrote that 'the working class, exclusively by its own efforts, is able to develop only trade union

Paul Foot has learned nothing from history. Not only 1917, but also Spain 1936, Hungary 1956 and France May 1968 all showed that the workers don't need to be 'shown the way' to a new social organisation. They create it themselves, in action. They don't need 'help' or 'leadership' from without. After the workers, by their own efforts, have created the embryonic new society, the 'revolutionary parties' have invariably arrived on the scene and proceeded to destroy the new social organisation.

Ironically for Foot, the self-proclaimed Marxist, his political activity contradicts his philosophy. It is the essence of the dialectic that there is no difference between a movement and its ultimate objective. A party can never be the form of movement to a free society.  Bob Potter.

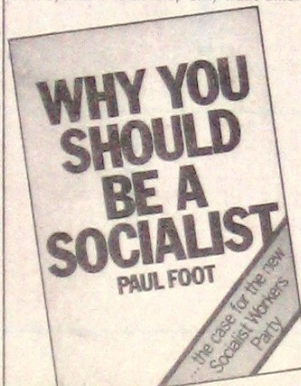
## Listing here does not rule out subsequent review:

CINFUEGOS PRESS/SIMIAN PUBLICATIONS Bargain Offer. the anarchist book publishing group, are trying to raise money to carry on with the many publishing projects they have lined-up. They are offering a £6.00 (\$12.00) Sustaining Subscription to Cinfuegos Press (Life Subscription £25.00; \$50.00) for which you will receive the following: a) a copy of every book published by Cinfuegos in 1977; b) a copy of every pamphlet published by Simian in the same period; c) a 10% discount on all books carried by or ordered through the Cinfuegos Press Bookservice. Well worth £6.00. Write to Cinfuegos Press, Over-the-Water, Sanday, Orkney, KW17 2BL, UK.

PORTUGAL - THE IMPOSSIBLE REVOLUTION? by Phil Mailer. Published by London Solidarity, 123 Latham Road, East Ham, London E6.

THE REVOLUTION IS DEAD - LONG LIVE THE REVOLUTION. Edited and Published by the 70's group. 180 Lockhart Road, 1/F, Hong Kong. China from an ultra-left perspective.

INTERROGATIONS. The latest issue (no. 10) of the international review of anarchist research contains articles on Spain: Prison Society, by Luis Andres Edo (in Spanish). News and Socialism, by Edmond Trifon (in French) an analysis of the East European Press. The Ulster Conflict, Pt.1 by Dave Mansell (in English) Bureaucratic Collectivism, by Bruno Rizzi (in Italian) with an introduction by A. Bongrovanni (Document). The New Ruling Class in Spain, by C. Moyavalgon (Spanish) Aspects of U.S. Exploitation of Mexican Labor Part 2 by NACLA (in English). All articles not in English have English summaries. £1.10 including p&p (payable N.Staffa) From BM Box 746, London WC1V 6XX.



consciousness' and that 'class political consciousness can be brought to the workers only from without, that is only from outside the economic struggle.' (Lenin's emphasis.)

Lenin also once remarked that socialists could be judged by their attitude to the Soviet Union. Chapter 6 of Foot's pamphlet gives an assessment of the Russian Revolution and its aftermath - 'a genuine socialist revolution' led by a socialist party that went wrong in the early twenties because the working classes of other European countries failed to make their revolutions. Then 'under the leadership of Stalin the Soviets lost their influence - and their democracy'.

The history of the months and years following the Bolshevik coup is the history of the systematic repression of all opposition groups and parties:- anarchists, liberals, social revolutionaries, Mensheviks, etc. Lenin's party was creating a society in its own image, a one party dictatorship. The grassroots workers' committees that had been the social revolution were destroyed, being forced into the state-organised trade unions. Peasant communes were forced into the Bolshevik 'poor peasant committees', later to be state-controlled farms and collectives.

In March 1921, the Kronstadt rebels' attempt to re-assert the demands of the revolution was crushed by the army.

No, Paul Foot! Russia is not socialism gone wrong as a result of isolation or Stalin. It is the logical consequence of party power; of leadership; of the concept so aptly opposed by Foot in relation to the Labour Party - that of 'acting for' the workers as opposed to the workers themselves taking control of their own destinies.

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# AGITPROP

## EVENTS

★ **Libertarian Student Network**, 4th National Conference, June 17/18/19th at Warwick University Students Union.

★ **'68 Club** events for June. Meets every Sunday at 8pm in the West Indian Sports and Social Club, Westwood St., Moss Side, Manchester.

**MAY 29th.** Film: Winstanley

**JUNE 5th.** Albert Meitzer speaking on past and present events in Spain.

**JUNE 12th.** Leon Rosseton - singer/songwriter.

**JUNE 19th.** Films: Tale of Two Cities, contrasting life styles in Johannesburg and Soweto; plus

There is no Crises, an interview with Tizette Mashini

**JUNE 26th.** Ted Ward - N London organiser of P.R.O.P.

★ **Social Revolution and Solidarity** (London groups) and members of the A.W.A. are jointly sponsoring a series of seminars. The meetings will take place from 2 to 5pm at the Drill Hall, Chisney St., WC1 (Goodge St. tube).

**JUNE 11th.** Revolutionaries and History. Speaker from Solidarity.

**JUNE 25th.** Marx, prophet of Anarchism. Speaker from S.R.

**JULY 9th.** Revolutionary Organisation: Why and How? Speaker from A.W.A.

★ **LONDON MURRAYS DEFENCE GROUP** now meets fortnightly. For details ring Chris or Charlotte 359-4794 (before 5pm)

★ **SCOTTISH LIBERTARIAN FEDERATION**, public meetings first & third Monday in the month at St. Bride's Centre, Rosevale St., Partick. Start 7.30pm.

★ **RIISING FREE/BREAD AND ROSES BENEFIT CONCERT** on Friday July 1st at Ladbroke House, Highbury Grove N5. Lee Koomin Band + Dire Tribe. Disco, Food, Books, Bar extension, 8-12am. 50p claimants/students, £1 others.

★ **OXFORD ANARCHISTS.** Contact Martin Harper, Keble College, Oxford.

★ **EXETER ANARCHISTS.** Contact Geoff Minshull, 129 Fore St., Exeter. Tel. Exeter 33064.

★ **NEWCASTLE ANARCHISTS.** Contact Neil Jarman, Newcastle 204013.

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★ **EAST ANGLIAN LIBERTARIANS**, c/o Mariyn Everett, 11 Gibson Gdns, Saffron Walden, Essex. Regular meetings and news letter.

★ **FEDERATION OF LONDON ANARCHIST GROUPS**, c/o 3 Belmont Rd., London SW4. Monthly meetings and bulletin.

★ **Proposed WELSH FEDERATION**. Contact Mike Sheehan, Aberystwyth Anarchist Group, 59 North Parade, Aberystwyth.

★ **Proposed YORKSHIRE ANARCHIST GROUP**, c/o Tony Kearney, 4 Ingle Row, Leeds 7, Yorkshire. Issue one of Yorks bulletin available.

★ **BIRMINGHAM LIBERTARIANS**, c/o Bob Prew, 40c Trafalgar Rd., Moseley, Birmingham B13 8BH.

★ **EAST LONDON LIBERTARIANS**, 123 Latham Rd., East Ham, E6. 562 9985 (Ken). Regular fortnightly meetings, and produce monthly newsletter.

★ **LEICESTER ANARCHISTS**. Contact Sid and Pat Shariff, 85 Queens Drive, Ederby, Leicester.

★ **LIVERPOOL ANARCHISTS**. Contact News from Nowhere, 100 Whitechapel, Liverpool 1. 051-708 7270.

★ **MANCHESTER ANARCHISTS**. Contact Al on 051-224 3028 for meetings, information etc.

★ **NEWCASTLE ANARCHISTS**. Contact Neil Jarman, Newcastle 204013.

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guide to running creches with reasons for having them at all. Functions argued from an anarchist viewpoint. 10p. From Childcare Bulletin, 112b Forest Rd., London E8.

## LIBERTARIAN PRESS

★ **ANARCHY MAGAZINE**, 29 Grosvenor Ave., London N5. - about every 6 weeks. Worth 10p of anybody's money. No.22 out now.

★ **BLACK FLAG**, Over the Water, Sanday, Orkney KW17 2BL. Every 4 to 6 weeks, price 15p. Gives excellent coverage of the International anarchist movement.

★ **FREEDOM**, 84b Whitechapel High St., London E1. Fortnightly 15p. Reliable. Bookshop & the same address.

★ **ANARCHIST WORKER**, 13 Coltman St., Hull, Humberside. Monthly 10p. Paper of the Anarchist Workers Association.

★ **SOLIDARITY**, c/o 123 Latham Rd., East Ham, London E6. Bi-monthly national paper 12p. Also print excellent series of pamphlets. (Write for full list.)

★ **SOCIAL REVOLUTION**, c/o 83 Gregory Cres., Eltham SE9. Bi-monthly 15p. Improves with every issue.

★ **SCOTTISH LIBERTARIAN**, c/o 122 Bennerly St., Glasgow. 041-336 7895. Bi-monthly paper of the S.L.F. £1 for a year's sub. including post.

★ **PEACE NEWS**, 8 Elm Ave., Nottingham. Fortnightly 15p. Well produced libertarian/pacifist magazine.

★ **LIBERTARIAN EDUCATION**, 6 Beaconsfield Road, Leicester. 5 issues £1.

★ **MUSICS**, 48 Hillborough Court, Mortimer Cres., London NW6. In depth analysis and information on the free music scene etc. Subs. £2.40 for 8 issues.

★ **DUMPTY DUMPTY**, 32 Parkholme Rd., Dalston, London E8. Radical psychology magazine. 30p. Issue 8 now out. Recommended reading... Zero?

★ **OPEN ROAD**, Box 6135, Station C, Vancouver, BC, Canada.

★ **MUNUS 7**, 180 Lockhart Rd., 1st Fl., Wanchai, Hong Kong. Bi-monthly magazine produced by the 70's liberation group.

★ **SYNDICALIST WORKERS FEDERATION**, Social General Strike, Free Broadsheet (send s.a.e.) from Manchester S.W.F., 109 Oxford Rd., Manchester 1.

★ **PEOPLES NEWS SERVICE**, c/o 182 Upper St., London N1. News and information and information paper. Fortnightly 15p. Collective has reformed and issue

195 is just out.

★ **BLACK EYE**, 30 Belmont Ave., Clifton, Manchester M27 2WL. Free. Free Manchester Anarchist paper. (send s.a.e.)

★ **BLACK JAKE**, available from Newcastle Anarchists, c/o Cradwell Books, Jesmond Rd., Jesmond V. Good occasional mag. 4p. Offers of help welcomed.

★ **ASKATASUNA**, 5 Beconsfield Terr. Rd., London W14. 15p. Paper of the Basque London Committee.

★ **BRATACH DUBH PUBLICATIONS**. Now available: pamphlet no.1 "Anarchism and National Liberation Struggles" No.2 "Syndicalism" both by Alfredo Bonanno. From Veronika and Andy McGowan, 83 Langside Terrace, Port Glasgow, Scotland.

★ **FIFTH ESTATE**, 4403 Second, Detroit, Michigan 48201. Detroit Libertarian paper.

★ **AJOBLANCO**, Ediciones S.A. Apartado 422, Barcelona, Spain. New wave anarchism. Ajo Blanco = Whitegarlic. Spanish 07?

★ **RIVISTA ANARCHICA**, Editrice A. cas.post. 3240 20100, Milano, Italy. Italian monthly.

★ **THE CHARGE OF THE FEDERAL PROSECUTION AGAINST KURT GROENWOLD as Defence Council of Red Army Faction (RAF) Prisoners**. English translation of information on, and background to the trial. From Rising Free.

★ **M.E.R.A.G.** Middle East Research & Action Group, 5 Caledonian Rd., London N1. 01-278 9308.

★ **C.A.C.T.L.**, 6 Bowden Rd., London SE11. 01-289 3877. Full list of local contacts available from this address.

★ **A.S.S.**, Advisory Service for Squatters, 2a St. Paul's Rd., London N1. 01-359 8814.

★ **I.W.W.**, Industrial Workers of the World, One Big Union Centre, 294 Middleton Rd., Oldham, Lancs.

★ **H.A.F.O.T.O.C.**, P.O. Box 10548, Amsterdam, Holland. Anarchist Prisoners Aid Organisation. Print regular bulletins in English.

★ **EAST LONDON MENS CENTRE**, 19 Redmans Rd., Whitechapel, London E1.

★ **BLACKTHORN BOOKS**, 74 Highcross St., Leicester. 0533-21896. New anarchist bookshop - pay a visit if you can.

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