

BLACK FLAG anarchist black cross

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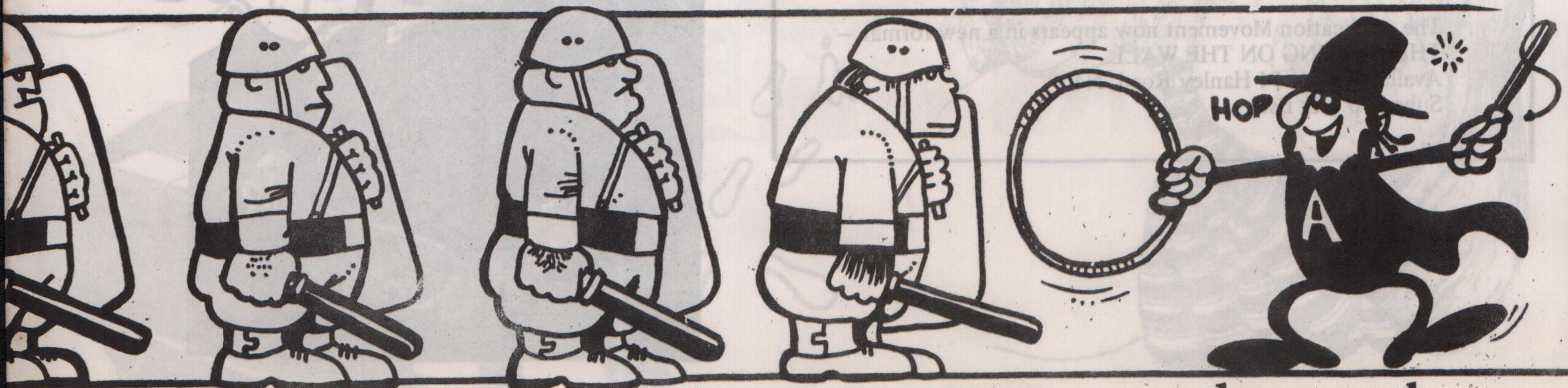


JULY '73 Vol.III No 4

10 p

Come on Big H!
we're ready for
Amhurst Road

'Tis a far better thing to do than
I have ever done. 'Tis a far
better place to go than I have ever
known.



**BLACK FLAG: Organ of the Anarchist Black Cross and the Black Cross Group.
AN ANARCHIST BULLETIN DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF WORKING
CLASS REVOLUTION**

Vol. 111 No. 4

JULY 1973

10p

NOTE CHANGE OF ADDRESS

We regret our new address did not appear more clearly in the June issue.

It is **BLACK FLAG**, 83a Haverstock Hill, London NW3 (entrance in Steele's Road)
Telephone (01) 586-2038

Regrettably we are leaving 10 Gilbert Place, London WC1. We gave up our offices there some three years ago and have squatted since without paying rent. Due to the taking of offices in the building by a private detective agency, we have decided to take our custom elsewhere.

PLEASE SEND ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO: BLACK FLAG
83a Haverstock Hill,
London NW3

CHEQUES & POs may be made payable to
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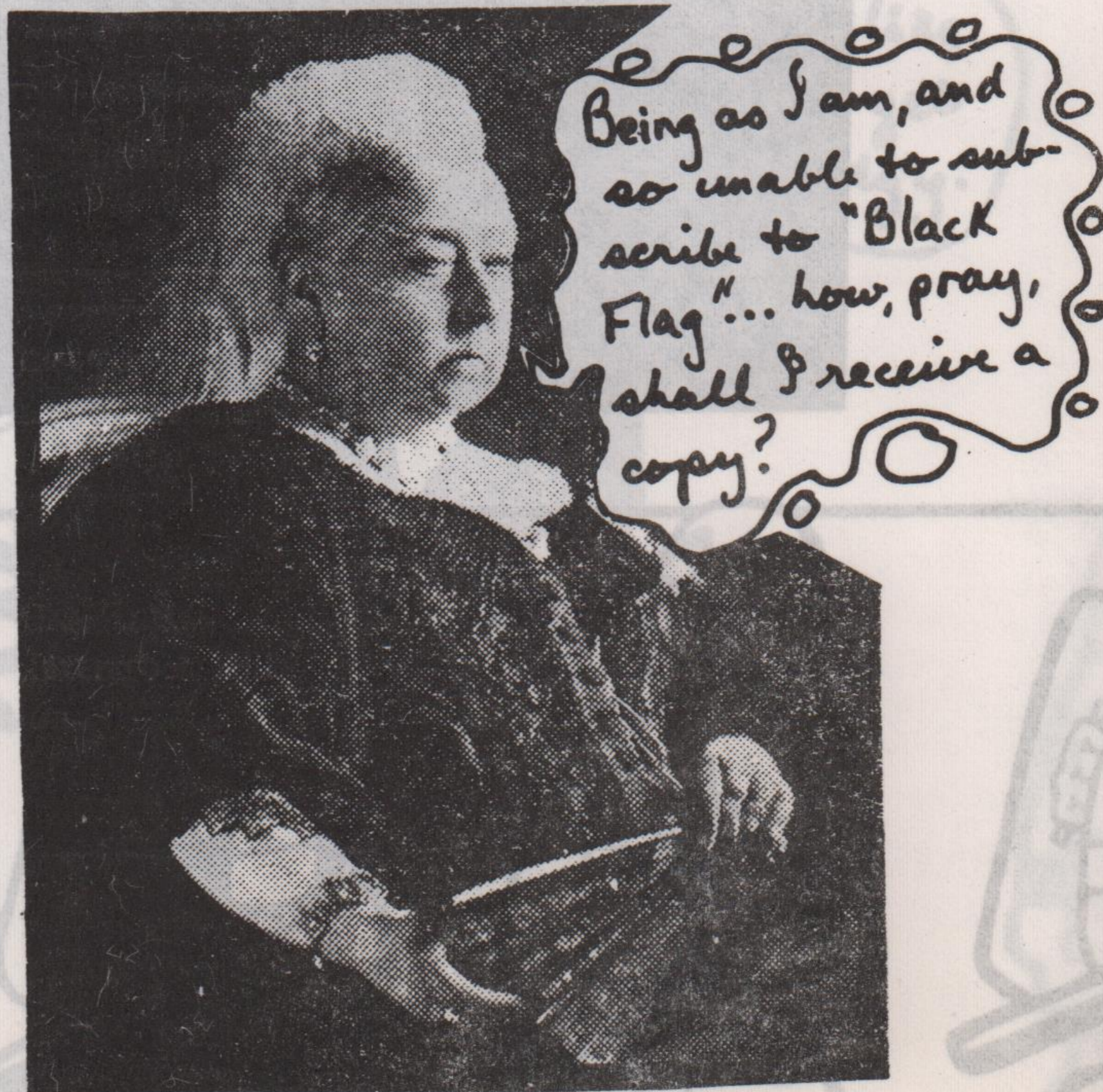
123 Upper Tollington Park · London N4

CANADA

A new Black Cross Group has been formed in Edmonton, Alberta.

Contact PO Box 2827
Station A,
Edmonton, Alberta

The publication Movement now appears in a new format -
THE WRITING ON THE WALL.
Available from 14 Hanley Road, N4.
Subs 85p - six issues.



England, whose England?

MAUDLING PRIZE FOR IDIOT OF THE MONTH

Amid the delighted squeals of the press at being able to report the sexual misdemeanours of Ministers, and sound fearless for once, little was heard of Mr David Anderson's escapade. Mr Anderson QC, Chief Reporter to the Scottish Office, was convicted of behaving in a disorderly manner and fined £50. Previously he had been Solicitor-General in the Scottish Office and asked to resign, after only a few days, in unexplained circumstances. We normally would not bother about the sexual exploits of Ministers - if that were only all one could lay at their account they could do it all day long in the park and home to bed at night so far as we are concerned. But we *are* interested to note what Mr Anderson said on conviction. We take the report from Paul Foot in the 'Socialist Worker' - the only paper we noticed to expose Mr Anderson, who does a good job of it himself. *He said it was highly likely he had been impersonated by subversives who wanted to discredit men in public life.* Quite conceivably anarchists might do it? But the two girls who gave evidence against him were only 14 years old. Just the type who might well be recruited. 'There are in this country', he said pompously, 'highly organised bodies with the intent of destroying public confidence and discrediting the government. We have had official warning of this kind of exercise taking place against public men. I have had a letter from the Prime Minister warning men in public life of this as a serious possibility.' (Instructions to the heavy mob: dress up as Heath, go into the park to get buggered and so destroy capitalism).

Poor weak Davie. He cannot stand up to his convictions, he cannot even stand up to his stand. But this paranoid statement - almost word for word the sort of thing that might be said by Angus Maude in the Sunday Express - carries its own consolation. He gets the Maudling Prize for Idiot of the Month: a flybutton.

NORTHCLIFFE AWARD FOR PRESS PARANOIA

We mentioned that there was a film in the pipeline of BBC TV on anarchism. It was to have been shown in May, but was held up by legal considerations pending the Stoke Newington Four appeal against sentence.

Originally it was intended to do an exposure of the wicked anarchists. But in shooting it, the producer realised that this was a grossly untrue angle. He tried to show the scene like it is. Advance rushes indicated it wasn't too bad. But the BBC has had its hands on it. Wait for it in July - the producer's ethics may be left on the cutting table.

THE AVENGER BROTHERS - PICKET-BUSTERS UNLIMITED

So dramatises Malcolm Stuart in the Daily Mail June 23 on the two thugs John and David Walker, who are acting as strong arm goons against the Chrysler picketeers. With a record for violence that includes a five year stretch for GBH, John Walker announces 'These men are ruining the country and it's time people stood up to them I think there's a future in this strike-breaking - the money's good and as a Conservative I'm all for it.'

Thus the Mail, through prostitute journalist Malcolm Stuart, glamourises the use of violence on behalf of the ruling-class against the workers. How about the use of violence against the ruling class? That could not possibly

be glamourised by the press: when used by the Angry Brigade, no such epithets as 'Avenger Brothers and Sisters' or 'State-Busters Unlimited' were used Before conviction it was 'Public Enemy No 1'; after conviction it was 'Immature', 'Wicked', 'Irresponsible': the former conviction of Jake Prescott was made the most of. But it was then condoning the violence of the 'Brolly Brigade' - the attacks by suburban commuters on railwaymen because of the go-slow.

This clearly illustrates the 'non-violence' preached by the press, and the hypocrisy of journalists when dealing with violence used by or for the ruling class, and violence used against it.

THE BONDS OF LOVE?

In London, with a mere twelve black cops, the police reckon they could do with more. It would after all help in showing black you that the lice were no prejudiced against them on colour grounds if some of those pushing them around were of the same hue. And many a high-ranking police commissioner thinks with nostalgia of the days when he commanded his askaris ('Jolly fine fellas too') and strode like the imperial sahib he was among his turbaned guard. Pity that the Ugandan Asians are so solidly middle-class - plenty there with police experience against the blacks, but they are not likely to want to go back to the ranks after their own taste of command.

For those concerned with aspect of civil rights which is basically that of sharing in power, they order these things differently in New York, where black cops are no novelty and they have now got round to homosexual cops. Not that these never existed in England among the lavatory patrols, but the idea that declared 'gays' can volunteer 'against the crime rate ... and to show there is no discrimination' is a refinement of liberalism. In Brooklyn Heights two declared gays have been serving as auxiliary police since January, 'functioning as normal policemen' (pardon the phrase) but not carrying pistols. And on February 22nd a meeting between gay groups and police produced the pledge that there would be 'no discrimination against a known gay applicant for the full time police force providing he passed the physical.'

It may be the pressure by anti-discrimination gay groups. It may equally be due to the fact that for some time the secret police force has found them exceptionally useful.

Man Alive (BBC/TV) on June 13 showed the struggle of the people of Canvey Island against the monster oil companies threatening to engulf their little island, pollute and destroy its atmosphere for ever and leave them sitting on a volcano with the ever-present threat of being blown sky-high (now when their long struggle against the threat of being drowned in the night has at last been successful).

The islanders, all of them, were shown as displaying militancy - all the more commendable as it was new-found. One man said, bewildered, 'I never reckoned on taking part in this sort of demonstration. I thought it was just for long-haired gits and roundabouts. I've changed my way of thinking.'

The TV commentator sharply asked just what good was demonstrating with a lot of wooden crosses. He wanted to know how that would stop the oil companies. If the islanders *had* resorted to violence, they would have been asked why they could not have demonstrated peaceably - say with a lot of wooden crosses.

A psychiatrist (Dr Norman Crumpton) told the British Medical Association at its Folkestone AGM that an unnamed organisation tried to get an employee certified as insane, solely because he was 'an embarrassment to the autocrats within the organisation.' The man, in Beverley (Yorks) had mild hypermania (an excitable state in which one tends to over-state one's views loudly) - a frequent condition in politics but embarrassing in business. (One can get away with shouting that all coloured persons should be deported better than one can get away with stating vehemently, in public, that pink salmon should be dyed red if that is what the customers want). As their own rules did not allow them to retire the man from their service, they put pressure on his GP to certify him as insane - and as Dr Crumpton pointed out, 'we could reach a situation like Russia where political dissenters are declared mentally ill.' This is not an unlikely situation. It is, as we have already mentioned, the message of a recent Government-sponsored film, hailed by liberal press critics; and the theme of much inspired newspaper comment.

SPGB — the Mumpsimus

For the best part of seventy years there has been an in-joke among connoisseurs of political dissent - and a source of never-failing entertainment to the now almost vanished street-corner-meeting public - the Socialist Party of Great Britain. The wry little joke about the party is encouraging the grand claim by speakers, usually somewhat under the average of general understanding, that 'socialism' will be achieved when the working class reaches the mental level of members of the party. It has taken to standing, as who may not, in local government elections, and frequently scores as much as 15 or 17 votes and congratulates itself on an advance towards its level.

The 'SPGB' is sometimes called, jokingly, 'The Monument' (from the saying 'it's not a movement but a monument', having stood with the same principles since 1905). But it would be better called the Mumpsimus. A mumpsimus is a dogma rigidly held by an ignorant priest based on a misprint. This exactly describes the Fitzgeraldite cult. Like the Mormons, its origin is from a misreading. Mormon prophet, Joe Smith, having a dime religious novel read to him, misunderstood it for revealed fact, never having heard of fiction. Socialist prophet Fitzgerald got hold of the works of Marx. But the version he read in English was from the edited translation by Karl Kautsky. Kautsky had rigidly censored Marx and Engels, to conform with the anti-Socialist laws, and also to mould Marxist Social-Democracy, as it had arisen in Germany, into a legalistic form. It was on this censored version that Fitzgerald founded his faith.

Accordingly, the fixed principles of the SPGB include a revolutionary change of society but by the unanimous decision of parliament. The idea that the capitalist class would stand by idly while they found their privileges gradually disappearing in legislation is not Marx's, but it was Kautsky's amendment, since in his case, he knew the German Social-Democratic Party did not seriously tackle such privileges anyway. The SPGB took the 'mumpsimus' seriously.

At meeting after meeting since the formation of the 'party' the economic criticisms of capitalism by Marx, and of what socialism is not, have been hammered home with more or less erudition, but faced with a demand as to how socialism works, the Fitzgeraldites have only countered with 'socialism' as an incantation. ('Not nationalisationsocialism; not

workers' control socialism').

Yet there is a darker side to the joke.

A reader asks us if Justice James has 'friends in pink shirts' after reading in the 'Socialist Standard' (Jan 73) that 'the Angry Brigade have shown themselves as vicious and power-obsessed as those they cursed and threatened.' Pure Mirror-ese. Yet typical of the SPGB which has a horror of 'illegal action' for good reasons. For years it has been a front for petty crooks who have worshipped law-and-order. Supported largely by small businessmen, it has been used as a cover for many criminal elements - eg. the Glasgow bookmakers at one time ('Society for the Protection of Glasgow Bookmakers'), the London call-girl racket at another. The hammered-home law-and-order and respectability of the SPGB has been a perfect cover. Long-firm fraudsmen, bogus charity operators and others have financed the party sometimes with the intention of pleading victimisation if caught out. They have not been criminals who have become politicised (as in the new movement now sweeping Britain's prisons). They have been businessmen, turned to illegal business, normally at home in the Conservative Party, whose own law-and-order image is a front for the small-time crook, but perhaps with a penchant for economic debate and analysis.

Long let is flourish at its present level. But no hypocrisy about 'vice' and 'power obsessions' please.

ANARCHO-QUIZ

1 When was 'God Save the Queen' a popular anti-Tory rallying cry - used by English radicals and even red republicans?

2 Which agent of the Austrian political police in the 20s, exposed by the Socialist press, went to New York on a secret service mission; and being later dismissed (possibly on account of his racial origins) became a successful Broadway impresario in the thirties?

3 Which is the 'older Left' in the British working class, the Labour party or the anarchist movement?

4 Which Englishman, imprisoned in Spain during a peaceful propaganda mission, later obtained an interview with its Prime Minister, and what was he told?

5 It is often said (both as war propaganda and as commercial publicity) that when our ally against Napoleon, Prussian Marshal Blucher, came to London, he said admiringly, of its shops: 'What a city to plunder'. But this is a mistranslation. What did he really say?

6 Under which name did former Communist Ben Francis, once Industrial Correspondent of the Daily Worker, become famous wherever the English language is spoken?

ITALY

Goliardo Fiaschi

The case of comrade Goliardo, who so far has spent 16 years in Spanish and Italian prisons, which we described in detail in the March issue of Black Flag, is hoping shortly to present his appeal to the Italian High Court. This will require a great deal of money so we hope comrades and sympathisers of the Black Cross will dig into their pockets to raise the minimum amount needed - £700!

Rather than send parcels of food or tobacco to Goliardo we would ask comrades to send as large a donation as possible to the Defence Committee:

Franco Leggio,
Via S. Francesca 238,
Ragusa, Italy.

Goliardo has been receiving cards, letters and a little money from readers. All those who have written should have received a reply within a matter of days. This is a point on which our comrade is particularly conscientious - even if he does not understand the language! If comrades do write it would be appreciated if it were in either Italian, French or Spanish - the languages Goliardo understands. In particular we would like to thank the comrade from Enniskillen who sent 14,400 lira and comrade Tomatis in New York for his donation.

Goliardo's address is: Goliardo Fiaschi,
Villa Bobo No 1,
73100, Lecce,
Italy.

Bertoli

The sequence of events in Milan will be known to readers of this column. The fascists tried to stage a revival by over-playing the response of workers to constant capitalist and police provocation, that is to say, by making violent onslaughts on people, pretending these were the same series of attacks as those made by revolutionaries on property. Thus they hoped to emerge as the 'party of law and order', the 'right wing backlash' and so on. Following the attack on the Milan co-operative bank, where numbers of people were killed, it was discovered that this, immediately denounced by the police chief Dr Calabresi (before investigation) as an 'anarchist conspiracy', had been organised by the fascists in connection with Greek Government representatives and also with the co-operation of members of the police.

The first batch of anarchists were arrested; one of them, Giuseppe Pinelli, a railwayman, and secretary of the Black Cross, immediately understood the position. He 'fell from the window' of the police station. Valpreda and others, arrested as scapegoats and being more on the fringe of the movement, being expected to cave in, stood their ground and faced years of waiting for arrest which has not yet finished - even though sections of the police not concerned in the original conspiracy have found some of the fascists responsible for the Milan explosion.

Calabresi, described even by his British colleagues as a 'nasty piece of goods who probably deserved what he got', was shot last year. On the anniversary of his death, the neo-fascist section of the police put up a monument to him. Gianfrance Bertoli, an anarchist, threw a bomb in the middle of the police who had gathered at the celebration (those concerned in the arrest of the neo-fascists were noticeably absent). One of them with presence of mind kicked the bomb into the crowd, where it exploded. (He will probably be regarded as one of the 'devotion to duty' policemen of Milan).

Controversy has raged over Bertoli's action. The press has gone out of its way to malign him, others to malign the anarchists as a whole. He has been described, especially by the 'left wing' press, as having mixed with fascists and so

on and his action bracketed with that of the fascist police at the Milan bank, against whose behaviour he was protesting. Others, especially on the right, have been on to their conspiracy theory and he has been linked with both Black September and the Stern Gang! One cannot forgive them for not including the Mafia and the CIA who also come up on such occasions. Even in the anarchist movement there has been strong criticism of Bertoli, especially as his action harmed innocent people - though this would seem less a criticism of morality than of marksmanship. (The age-old problem about the Anarchist who was about to throw a bomb at Mussolini and finally had him at his mercy but Mussolini was posing for the photographers surrounded by little children whom he was patting on the head what should he do? - in fact, and the children may have lived to regret it, he did nothing).

However, Bertoli (though stated in the press to have belonged to the Nester Makhno group in Genoa - he in fact only attended its meetings occasionally) did not belong to any organised group, nor did he involve the anarchist movement in his actions. He was an individualist and acted as such. But he was undoubtedly an anarchist.*

It is natural that collective organisations must seek to dissociate themselves from such actions, but it is also natural that they should take place. During the resistance that took place in the war there were many such instances of fascist police being shot by individuals. Neither the whole Italian people (as the Germans sometimes insisted) nor the town nor the resistance groups as such nor the Allies nor their paid agents were responsible. Such incidents had similar results. Because of the glow of legality - not actually so, but bestowed because of war-time conditions - such actions were generally accepted by the public. They understood that not every individual was prepared to stand there raising his hand like an idiot while the enemy was honoured and that every individual was not prepared to pass by knowing of the way a massacre was being excused and honoured, and take no action.

Many felt a lot encouraged when such incidents happened. We think that this still happens. The 'responsible' parties, like the collaborators in those days, must rush to dissociate themselves from such actions, and use every slander they can. It is pointless except when considering what one should do oneself to consider whether the time is 'appropriate' for such action. It will never be an appropriate time to attack the State! - even with the coming of socialism it is rumoured that it may be necessary to postpone its abolition What matters is that, so far as we can see, Bertoli decided that he felt it necessary to make a stand. It may have been a pointless sacrifice of his own life (though such matters were never considered relevant during the war). That was his decision and his alone, however. Like van der Lubbe, however, he may have felt it necessary to make a last ditch stand against the advance of fascism even though he might be murdered by his enemies and slandered by his false friends. It is as a man like van der Lubbe we will regard him.

* In some countries, following the 'Elyzbacher' classification, some have called themselves 'individualist anarchists' meaning not merely that they were not in any way revolutionary but that they were neither individualists, except sometimes in the liberal or capitalist sense, or anarchists; it is unfortunate to bracket them with individualist anarchists of the true sort such as the Bande du Bonnot, but they have only to cease using false labels to avoid the bracket.

BRITAIN

The appeal of the four comrades accused and framed by the police of belonging to the 'Angry Brigade', James Greenfield, Anna Mendelson, John Barker, and Hilary Creek, has been rejected by the Lord Chief Justice, Widgery, sitting with Judges Lawton (of Moseley's British Union of Fascists, fame) and Milmo. The comrades are considering an appeal to the House of Lords by in the meantime continue sending assistance to the Welfare Committee, care of Mike Cohen, 54 Harcombe Road, Stoke Newington, London N16.

Hilary Creek is dangerously ill but obviously this had no effect on their lordships, neither did the seriousness of Anna's medical condition sway Justice from its course.

GERMANY

The railway system has always been a challenge to the pretensions of East German 'Socialism' for railways have been nationalised since Bismarck, and State Socialism offers no alternative. Whereas the railwaymen in the capitalist West have trade unions which retain some elementary rights of bargaining, those in the 'communist' East, with not the slightest structural difference in their industry, have no rights at all. The excuse that the industry belongs to a workers' State looks particularly shallow. Imagine how it is, therefore, in Berlin, where the Reichsbahn (key mode of transport to Berliners as the tube is to Londoners) is an integral part of Berlin and belongs to the East Germans, but with local employees in the West Berlin part.

The 'communist' run enterprise has a union which has abandoned all forms of bargaining and is, like all unions under State Communism, purely for cultural activities. Reichsbahn workers in West Berlin must therefore fight against a State Communist employer, but in an open society, a unique situation which has led to an opportunity for the anarchist movement which has not been lost. A movement has grown up fighting for higher wages in the Reichsbahn, which has the long-term aim of fighting the communist bureaucracy. Already unofficial action has brought immediate increases in pay sometimes substantial.

The Anarchist Workers Association (Anarchistische Arbeitersbund) showed its strength on May Day. About 500 Anarchists marched in a procession with about 2,000 sympathisers. The rise of this organisation over the last three years may be a pattern of what will happen elsewhere.

In Berlin the traditions of the anarchist movement were dead. Repression, exile and age had removed the remnants of the older anarchist movement, even that which survived the second world war. When the events of 1968 and 1969 led to a student upsurge, anarchist ideas were re-discovered. But the student movement had considerable limitations: it was temporary in its nature - as students came and went, and in many cases passed on to middle-class jobs - and it always seemed to be imposing an intellectual leadership. This remains true today of the libertarian student movement in Berlin, which is in some cases a mixture of Anarchism and Marxism, sometimes claiming to be Council-Communist or Spartakist (though the whole point of the Council-Communist movement was that the sole base of organisation was on the factory floor), but always with a tendency to dominate. The present German ORA is a case in point, seeking to form what is in effect a party and imposing a discipline and intellectual leadership, without being in any way particularly revolutionary despite its name.

The hippy movement included many workers among it, but the Anarchist participation in this is comparatively small, and its main activity is squatting - in which it has

been particularly effective. The 'AA' (Anarchist Workers Association) was mostly composed of young workers, who broke away from a student leadership to find their own way to anarchism.

In Berlin, they have extended from Spandau and Neukölln, with their solid base on the Reichsbahn, and there are other groups, in Wedding and Lichtenrade, for instance, active in the schools and on the streets as well, giving out pamphlets, leaflets and so on. Their paper is 'Der Drachen'. It is no longer exclusively a youth movement, elder workers having come over to the anarchist idea.

The Communist Party has been largely superseded by the Maoist-Communist Party so far as active politics are concerned. But it has learned an old 'Communist' trick. It does not operate under its true colours but as the 'League Against Imperialism': its propaganda is entirely concerned with Vietnam and foreign policy, with the sole object of providing a happy hunting ground for members.

AMERICA

Ed Stover is doing life in San Quentin. He writes in the Chicago Black X Bulletin of the Baader-Meinhof group that he has seen 'far too many critical diatribes against them. What strikes me is the manner in which they are being disparaged. There are many other weapons besides words with which to attack the ruling class. That Baader-Meinhof chose the wrong weapons at the wrong time is a definite error. But errors such as these are not enough to put one beyond the pale of progressive struggle; or have our 'modern' anarchists forgotten the Bonnot group, or Emile Henry, or the hero of many of us - Ravachol? If you are in a position to get word to any of the group who are held in the prisons of German capitalism, tell them I send my revolutionary love and solidarity.' On conditions in San Quentin he says drily, 'the food leaves much to be desired, the decor needs changing, and we could always use a swimming pool in the lower yard. However, I think the biggest bit of penal reform that all of us in San Quentin would like to see is a prison with nobody in it.'

Drop a postcard of solidarity to -

Robert Ed Stover,

B 1 38341,

San Quentin State Prison,

Tamal, Calif. 94964, USA.

Meanwhile, Tommy Marshburn, in Dallas, has been sentenced to 500 years for attempted escape. The District Attorney asked the jury to award 5,000 years but they were apparently in a lenient mood. Comment Tommy: 'I couldn't do the 75 years I already had.' He has still to face yet another charge. Meanwhile he doesn't want to lost touch with the world. His address is -

Tommy P Marshburn,

500 Commerce Street,

Dallas, Texas, 75202, USA.

Six people have been arrested in Seattle, Iowa, San Jose and Oakland, California, in connection with the bombing of two recruitment centres in Portland, Oregon, and 63 sticks of dynamite found in a Seattle house.

Two people, Ronald James Scheller and James Wesley Akers, are being held in Seattle Jails and will be tried there on a series of related charges. Two others arrested in connection with the case, will be tried in Portland. The newly formed Seattle Black Cross is participating in the co-ordination of their defence and organising support activity in the Scheller-Akers case.

The Seattle Black Cross reports a general increase in repression and police harassment in the Seattle area. Left wingers are being expelled from the University of Washington,

for example, and a number of concessions won in the late sixties now appear under attack. Apart from the Scheller case, they have learned that the FBI is now searching for a number of former Seattle residents with indictments for their activities in Chicago some years ago during the 'days of rage'. FBI men have been visiting the houses of people and questioning them regarding their political activities, and local police thugs have been harrasing members of the local UNITED FRONT FOR POLITICAL DEFENCE since they became involved with the Scheller case.

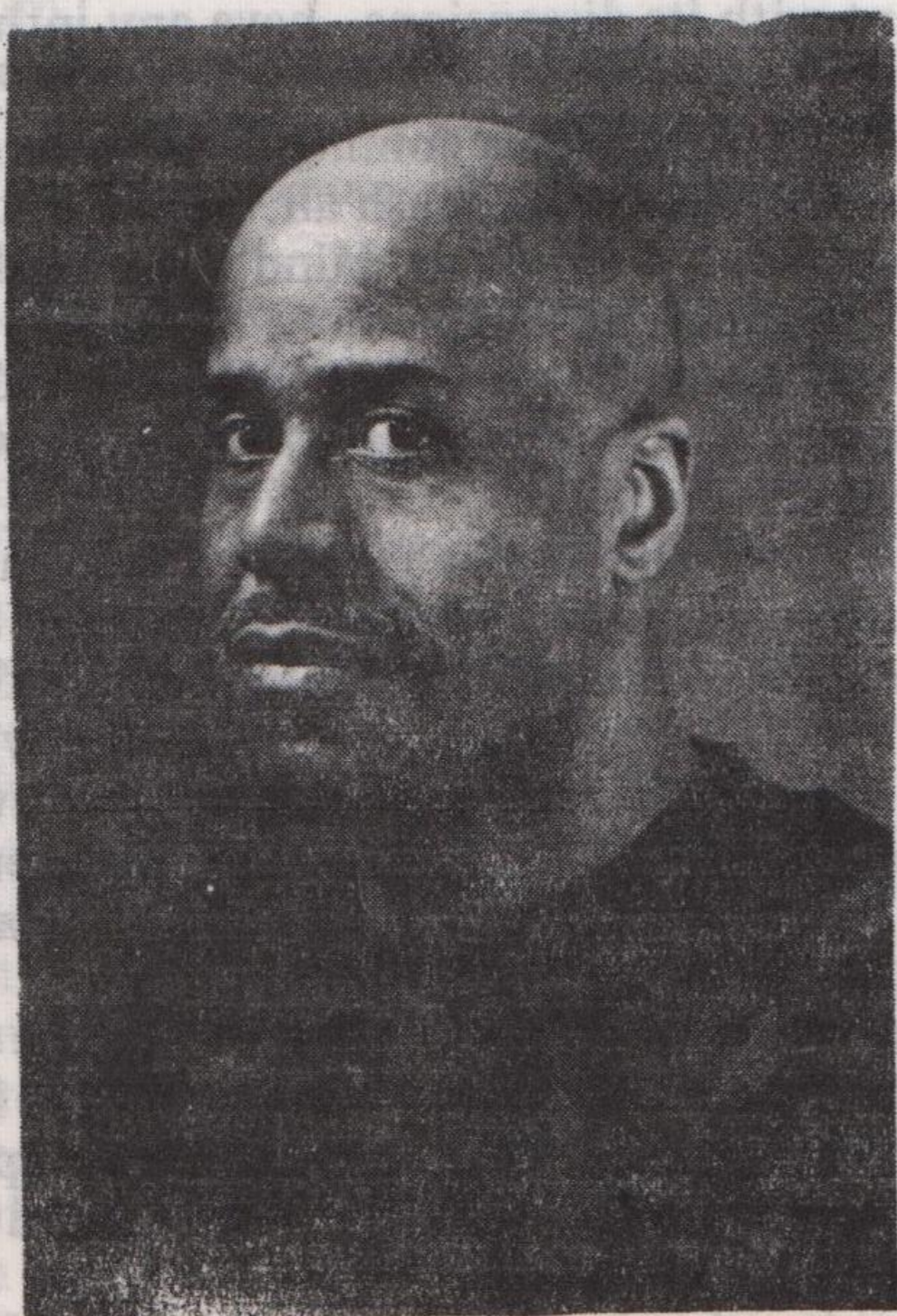
The Seattle Black Cross can be reached at 3429 - Fremont North, Seattle, Washington, 98103.

Six years ago, the black community in Buffalo, NY, was in open rebellion against the State. For three days, as the whole black community erupted against police harrasment and enforced poverty, they were in open war against Federal and local police using tear gas and bullets. Many of the fighters took refuge in the Afro-Asian Bookstore, run by Martin Sostre (now 50 years old), a black Puerto Rican who had been working in a steel mill to raise money to run the bookstore and a community centre.

On July 4th the police raided the store and arrested Anarchist Martin Sostre and his co-worker, Geraldine Robinson. Martin was charged with riot, arson, possession of narcotics and assault. Bail was fixed impossibly high, and he came to trial eight months later, the press whipped up against him in a not unfamiliar pattern even where racialism is absent and here it most certainly was not. He was sentenced to 41 years, the main evidence coming from Arto Williams (a convicted heroin addict, who has since retracted his evidence, given to save himself another jail term) and police sergeant Alvin Gristmacher (since discharged from the police for graft and drug trafficking).

Sostre has been in prison ever since. He has served six years of his sentence. In Clinton, which he describes as 'the most remote, inaccessible and harshest prison in the state' his mail has been delayed and obstructed, he has been beat up and physically abused to the point of torture. Now thanks to his defence committee he has joined suit against officials of the New York State Department for damages to himself and injunction against further assault.

Martin is asking for support from fellow-anarchists everywhere. Write to Judge John T Curtin, US Courthouse, Buffalo, New York 14201, urging that he drop all charges against Martin and order his release. Send copies (and letters for Martin) to the Martin Sostre Defence Committee, PO Box 839, Ellicott Station, Buffalo, New York 14205. USA.



JAPAN

In the morning of 26th December 1972, more than 15 of us who lived in Tokyo, Chiba, Saitama and Kanagawa, had our domiciles searched at the same time by police, for the first time since Le Libertaire started publication three years ago. It was due to the case of suspicion of infringement of penal provisions for explosives relative to the explosion which took place at the Government office of Hokkaido, in September 1971.

One of our new comrades who helped us sincerely was arrested in the middle of December as suspect of the said case and as a result we were searched. However, it was clear that we had nothing to do with the case because it was only several months ago that the comrade under suspicion by the police first showed himself at one of our meetings and the explosion had taken place nearly ten months before, 850 kilometres distance from Tokyo.

Why the visit by the police? We feared that they may be trying to frame us but as nothing has been forthcoming since that time it seems they may have been probing our potential and real influence in Japan.

On June 12th, factories all over Canton were closed as workers poured out demanding the withdrawal of the 'factory committees' acting as management on behalf of the State and drawn from the party bureaucracy. Instead they demanded elected workers' committees, a revolutionary proposal that brought heavy reinforcements of troops and police into the town.

An explosion shattered the glass doorway of the South African Consulate in Wellington (New Zealand) on May 14th. The Consul-General said it was a 'mystery'. He could not understand why 'fair minded' people like the New Zealanders should aim an explosion at a South African building. 'This is what happens when people are encouraged by inflammatory propaganda', he said. 'May I suggest we cool it. South Africa has been crucified enough.'

But does Dr Vorster see himself as Jesus - or as Caesar?



CNT & AFTER

'We cannot weep tears enough over that mistake', says Federica Montseny of the participation by 'well known names' of the libertarian movement, claiming to represent it, in the Government of the civil war. But the mistakes made by those participants in Government then and later will never be admitted by the 'Inter-Continental Secretariat', an ossified remnant of the Montseny-Isgleas faction now in Toulouse. Relying heavily on the past record of the CNT as the majority trade union body in Spain - which it claims to monopolise - and above all on an appeal to the 'great names' it claims to have, it has been worse than useless for more than a generation. It has stood in the way of the Resistance within Spain from which it is now completely isolated. Amongst the exiles, it now numbers some 5,000 members, mainly in France - mostly over the age of 50 or 60, the remnants of the emigration. Most are either retired, or in occupations outside industry (shopkeeping, etc) and could not possibly be said to represent the CNT which was a trade union organisation. Yet it pretends to be that very body and has caused considerable setbacks for the Resistance which is trying to build that body up again in Spain. When workers inside Spain form local bodies that try to revive the workers councils and commissions of the CNT, the reaction of the Toulouse faction is that they are 'forging the seals of the Organisation.' The only true credentials can come from them. But they will not recruit anyone.

One instance was Corral, of the Mulhouse local of the CNT, who some years ago, faced with eighteen young workers who came from Spain to work abroad, applied to join the CNT. 'Never. There are only three of us here. You will outnumber us and you will be the Organisation.' At a recent conference in Dusseldorf of Spanish emigrant workers - who now not only vastly outnumber the exiles (there are a million in Germany, many of whom are politicised and a large number are anarchists) but are workers, in work, who are able to form genuine syndical organisations, this same Corral denounced as traitors almost everyone active in the movement at all, as distinct from the passive Toulouse secretariat.* The committee of three in Mulhouse, unchanging for 20 years, presumed it could 'represent' the CNT yet exclude the emigrant workers from membership.

Now the Inter-Continental Secretariat, in its last throes, has engaged in an orgy of expulsions, both on the right and the left, so that there are now more even of the exile movement outside it than in. As an instance, we may take Corral's denunciation of the Paris based 'Frente Libertario' because it manages to circulate inside Spain ('this could only be because Franco allows it to do so ...' drawing a false analogy with the semi-tolerated Opposition, Comisiones Obreras &c... in fact 'F.L.' is smuggled in) it therefore 'falsifies itself as the true CNT'.

We mention all this regretfully not because we too wish to engage in denunciations. Contrary to what seems to be a general impression, we normally avoid personalities in sectarian polemics in 'Black Flag', except by way of reply. But without such an explanation it is impossible to understand the revolutionary movement in Spain at the present time.

The present anarcho-syndicalist movement in Spain wants to designate itself as the 'CNT' but there is a lingering belief in the - as it were - 'apostolic succession' of the Toulouse Secretariat. It is partly this which explains the growth of the 'F.O.I.' which has bewildered many observers of the Spanish scene. In fact, the *Federacion Obrera Iberica* (Workers Federation of Iberia) with a name similar to the old FAI (Anarchist Federation) is nothing more nor less than the groups of workers committees whose aims are identical with the old CNT. To avoid this type of fruitless argument over 'forgery' they have simply, within Spain, designated themselves afresh. (It is somewhat ironic to us, since this is in fact the genuine CNT and the Toulouse Secretariat is nothing but the rump of the compromisers. However, that's how it is).

Some commentators, not recognising the FOI, and knowing the attraction of the initials CNT for the anarchist movement, have been attributing some of their actions, such as the recent construction workers' strike, or the recent occupations in Asturias, to 'Maoists'. Maoists exist; but not in the FOI. It is understandable that some journalists have been confused by yet another set of initials.

There is of course another even more impelling reason for the new name, which is that the initials 'CNT' act as a red rag to a bull so far as the police are concerned. Whereas the CP-led *comisiones Obreras* are tacitly tolerated for their Christian-Democrat connections, the mere mention of CNT leads to shootings, arrests, long imprisonments. The case of Julio Millan Hernandez is typical; his years of torture and detention came merely as a result of his returning to Spain to organise under the banner of the old CNT.

We asked a worker recently visiting us from Spain (whom we will call Pedro) how it could be expected that the mere change of initials would alleviate this type of persecution. His answer was simple: 'in the long run it won't'. The police will soon know that the FOI is the old, genuine, CNT, and the activist one into the bargain.

'But it is one thing for the Brigada Social y politico (Special Branch) to know and act; another for it to percolate down to every ignorant police agent. Unless the police mention the fact publicly and openly and make a massive press denunciation - which will be fantastic publicity for us - we will be getting away with talking about the FOI on a local level for months.'

'Months only? Well, that is all we need to re-create the basic structure of the unions with their regional committees.'

'Do you seriously envisage that within months you will have a structure comparable to the pre-civil war CNT?'

'Within a year or so, yes, certainly, I think we will be back to the strength we have at any rate during the Primo de Rivera dictatorship.'

'At that time the UGT was in the Government, to strengthen itself as a socialist breakaway trade union against the anarchist one. Will this repeat itself?'

Pedro: 'The UGT is dead except as a foreign-based propagandist body. But, yes, I think the Comisiones Obreras will try and get into an official position. That is why they advocated voting in the 'sindicatos oficiales' (Falangist unions). Only that way could they get seats in Parliament. But it would be too early to say they would join the Government; only to seek recognition as part of the union structure.'

'You are seriously saying that the Communist backed body would negotiate with Franco that way?'

'Not with Franco, no, but with his successor, certainly. They too have only a short time to build up. If the situation erupts into violence they will be lost. If the present power structure maintains itself, then the Communist Party will be well able to find itself controlling the labour movement under a post-Franco government.'

'Does the immigrant workers movement - as opposed to the exile movement with its dissensions - have any influence in Spain?'

'Undoubtedly. Workers are coming backwards and forwards into Spain, it's like a breath of fresh air. Abroad, they can discuss and talk about their plans. Mind you, this little talk of ours would be expensive if it leaked out at home - ten years for illegal association would be given just to go and talk to the do-nothings of the Secretariat! I hate to think how much a talk with you would be worth.'

With another comrade (Pablo) who has been in prison, we asked what knowledge he had of the FOI, since in Spain prisons are the place where all the political life in the country is known. 'The FOI is the CNT, purely and simply. It's just that they don't want to advertise a schism. But it would be true to say too that the FOI is that part of the libertarian movement of the Interior most influenced by the activists, such as the First of May and others.'

'Of course that is nothing new in a way - Sabate also helped organise a similar industrial organisation alongside his activist campaign. And the Regional Committees inside Spain ever since 1939 have relied on activist squads to defend them from the police and help raise funds.'

Pablo: 'The situation is slightly different since I think now there is no direct connection between one and the other. The libertarians are not mixing industrial organisation and activism. The first depends on a certain degree of mixing with other people, openness in one's dealings; the second on pure clandestinity.'

'You were in jail for organising industrially, and are now engaged in building workers councils. Would you condemn the activists?'

'What an absurd suggestion! It's only those who have carried on the fight against the enemy right into his own quarters who have given the workers the courage to associate once more. Spain has for a long time been a land of frightened people. But it has not yielded to fascism. The workers do not want to be convinced that fascism is wrong nor that they ought to take over. They want to know the enemy is on the run, or at the least, not still advancing yet further. Revolutionary anarchism is more than trade union actions and propaganda, I know that.'

'How do you view the work of the Black Cross?'

'Fantastic. One of our comrades was in a very poor situation in jail and had hardly a shirt to his back. His wife had to go back to her parents who were poor themselves and treated her very badly because her husband had left a good job in Germany to come back and agitate. Well, when you circulated her name, she got so much in from England and from some IWW comrades in the USA that she could leave them and send money to him, it came to nearly as much as she could earn in a year. Look at him now, he's a different man. That's what I call solidarity.'

'Well, you know, some of our critics in the Spanish exiles have said this should be done through official channels, meaning themselves.'

'Shit. They do nothing but like to show themselves as great men.'

'It must be admitted that the reaction of their committee in London to this particular case was that this comrade was getting too much and donations should go through them.'

'What hypocrisy. Listen, our comrades in jail aren't winos or down and outs, they are all responsible people, that's why they're there. They can handle money sent direct as much as any committee. That's the great thing about the Black Cross, cutting out middlemen and putting people directly in touch. Not one of our prisoners would think of eating himself if there was someone else without. They all share. They share with the other prisoners too, political or not. But naturally they have to look after their families outside, especially when you get a woman with young children and her man inside, that's natural.'

'There are some other criticisms of the Black Cross. For instance, it is constantly suggested that we are only a front organisation for the activist groups, that money sent to Spain is often used for arms instead of helping prisoners.'

'Police propaganda. It should be obvious that money sent direct to prisoners is needed. Anyone doubting that should go and have a look. How could a man in jail send money out to buy arms? Rubbish. But of course that action takes financial strain off the resistance groups, both the industrial ones and the activist ones. For years so much of what we've done in Spain is passing the hat round in bars for 'friends away'. Let's be honest, it does help the activists in the resistance not to have to do this.'

'And so far from draining activity abroad it actually helps to build it up.'

Our third interview was with a student, a girl, whom we will call 'Maria'. She said: 'I am a member of an FOI group, I was one of the acrata movement in the Universities. Latterly we joined the FOI.'

The acratista movement came to prominence during the students risings in Madrid, which preceded those in Paris. It came to anarchism on its own way, not as the result of anarchist traditions or propaganda. The FOI however was distinctly a creation of groups of workers in the factories. We asked Maria how she came to be a member.

'The acratistas feel there should be no distinction between workers and students, not now, not in the future. All should work, all should study. This difference was just one which could be bought. But we don't agree with it. The young workers and the students have always united. The students have tried to help the workers in their apprenticeships; the workers have tried to show the students how to be independent of their parents. I think it is a healthier attitude than I see in many countries. Anyway, as soon as the FOI branch of chemical workers was formed they invited me to join because I was studying in that field. A lot of anarchist workers are impressed by the old CNT traditions of being the best workers on the job because he is the one who can be the most independent of the boss. They can't sack him for his views so easily. And when it comes to negotiating with an illegal body, the employers will only do it if they know they're dealing with the people who know the job inside out. They take a certain risk

in acknowledging the unacknowledgeable. But where can the young workers get further training in their jobs? Only by our offering them the facilities of the universities. It's that which the police hate more than anything. They don't understand it and they fear it.'

How about the availability of books and newspapers in Spain today? 'Books - we can buy anything we want. Publishers bring out all the classics of Anarchism and Marxism. But nothing too tendentious about the civil war, for instance. Even there, different publishers find it profitable to slip in or smuggle some political books just as they do with pornographic books. When the demand is there they will do anything to outwit the censorship. The police understand this. What they object to is our smuggling in illegal newspapers. But they are still coming in, and of course they are appearing in Spain as well.'

'As a Basque, how do you see the nationalist movement?'

'The hell with nationalism, that is fascism too in its way. But you know, the Basque movement does not consist of nationalities alone any longer. The old national leaders don't mean a thing. It is not the Basque nationalist who are fighting Franco. It is the whole Basque people, except for a few quislings. We too.'

Miguel Garcia comments:

One cannot get away from the fact that 34 years waiting are too much. The Spanish Anarchists who took refuge in France in the year 1939 were some eighty thousand, approximately; at the present time, it is possible that there are no more than ten thousand. The 'official' representation of the so-called CNT with its base in Toulouse, under the name of 'Inter-Continental Secretariat', has probably some five thousand members. There are probably another five or six thousand outside the Secretariat, who have either voluntarily stayed outside or have been expelled for one reason or another. The latter include names with considerable prestige, such as Jose Peirats, Cipriano Mera, Diego Abad de Santillan, Jose Garcia Pradas, Gomez Pelaez, etc.

Santillan has made a very important publishing centre for the libertarian movement in Buenos Aires; Peirats is well known for his complete dedication to the anarchist ideal; Gomez Pelaez, with Cipriano Mera and others, publishes Frente Libertario, a monthly publication with some 5,000 circulation - half of which goes into the interior of Spain and passes from hand to hand and is read from start to finish - and many others similar who have been expelled making work no less important to the anarchist movement.

What is certain is that most of the delegations who come from Spain, particularly the younger generation, who want to get in touch with the so-called Libertarian Spanish Movement (MLE) in exile, find that they can mix much more freely and advantageously for work in Spain with those who have been 'expelled' than with the 'official' representatives of the movement - in itself a proof that the prestige of the former is greater than that of the latter. Moreover, the Libertarian Youth, the section from which the movement has continually received fresh blood, has also been 'expelled' by the 'Inter-continental Secretariat', though it must be confessed that the Libertarian Youth have never taken it particularly seriously; particularly in these last years with its complete lack of dynamism and its ossification (especially in the matter of the perpetual retention of office, in flagrant violation of the basic tenets of anarcho-syndicalism).

This state of affairs has had repercussions in the Interior, especially in the case of Catalonia, where the CNT was in process of re-birth, but where there were recently three completely separate regional committees, each one claiming to be the 'genuine' representative of the Confederation. While this, of course, shows the latent support of the Spanish proletariat for the CNT, it also shows the complete lack of unity of action in the forces for rebirth of the libertarian movement in Spain.

Undoubtedly because of the severe repression inside Spain the movement in exile, with its greater freedom of action, has been able to influence the Interior so that the personality cults and clashes have been reflected there too, thus causing the chaotic situation where people do not know whom to believe or whom to support. The exile movement bears a heavy responsibility for this added burden that the movement in the Interior has had to carry.

It is for this reason that we find some of the new generation, understandably impatient with all this, coming forward with the idea of a completely new organisation which, while maintaining the basic and fundamental principles of the old CNT, will

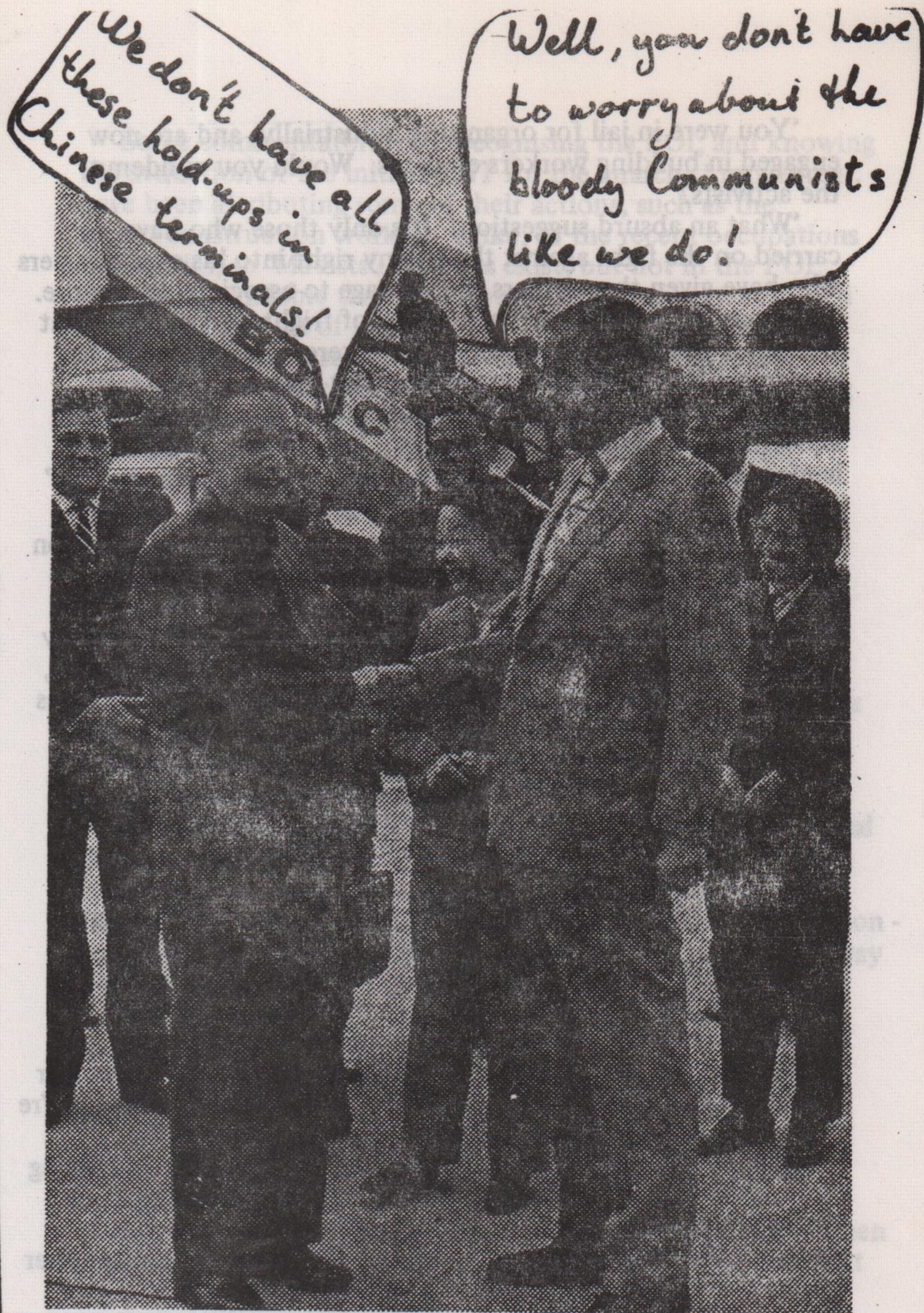
have no responsibility for present splits or past mistakes. Thus some of them have groups under the name 'Federacion Obrera Iberica', an organisation that would be a trade union in which all workers can participate, controlled horizontally, without any political tie-ups, and in which there will be no executive committees, decisions being taken on the shop floor. It is categorically stated in their principles that there should be no permanent positions and they will accept the influence of no political parties - nor even of anarchist federations.

It is not easy to know as yet if the project will obtain the necessary strength but it is evident that the young people who are bringing it into being are facing their formidable task with energy and enthusiasm.

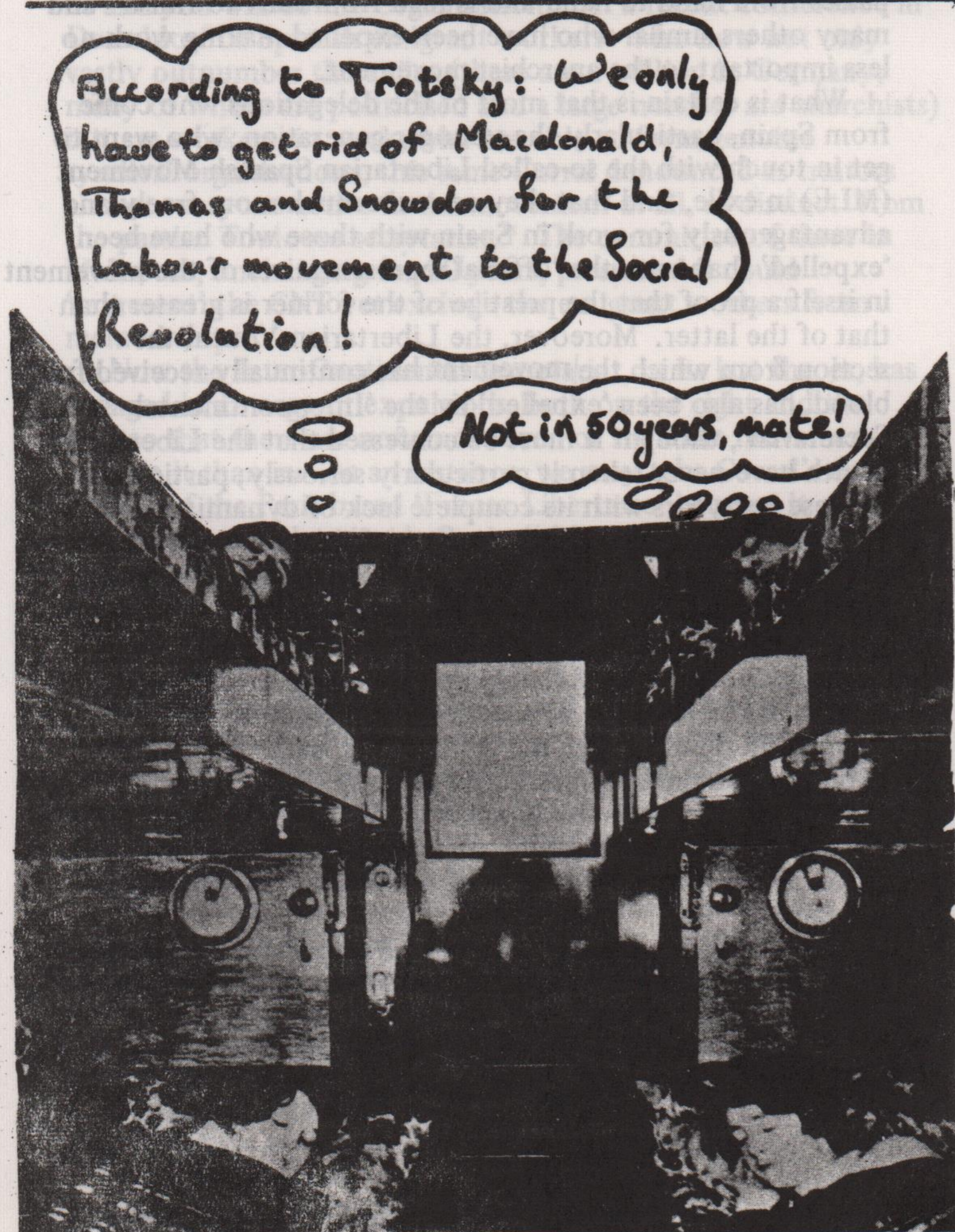
Final comment by Pedro:

'One thing I will never understand is why the trade union movement in other countries - even in a country like England where they are determined not to have the Communist Party run their own unions - spent so much time and money not in fighting Franco - they have never done that - but in helping the Communist Party get the leadership of Spanish Labour. Why should we have what they reject for themselves? There is a great deal they could do for an independent union movement like the FOI in the way of financial assistance to get it over its initial hurdles - but better they did nothing at all than helped to rivet the Communist Party's commissions on the workers. If the Russian Government wants that, at least let it pay for it themselves.'

* The Secretariat is not pacifist in the way that the takeover editors of Freedom are. But their attitude is much the same. They are 'against violence' but accept it (in theory) in a legalised situation such as the civil war or the war-time Resistance; but not in a situation where it would 'compromise their existence'. They fear to lose their legality. The Paris secretary recently told a British comrade visiting of their concern for Freedom's plight: he was sure it was the fault of 'Maoists' and said they would help. Despite the criticisms by Richards in his 'Lessons of the Spanish Revolution', almost entirely a personal attack on the Secretariat, he saw the identity of their ideas, as opposed to revolutionary activism.

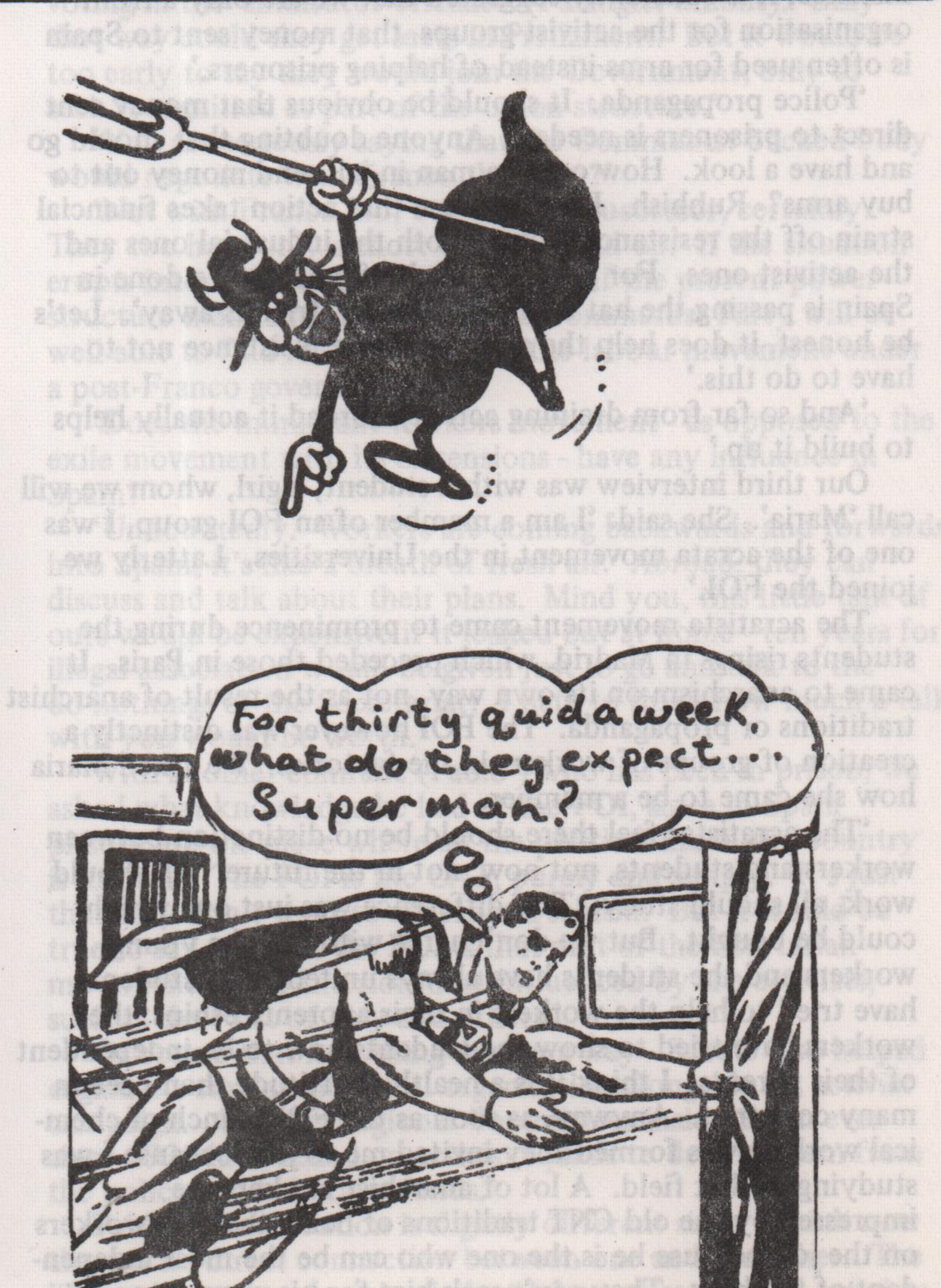


BLEEP! * * *



1928

In September 1928 a minor social revolution occurred. This was the introduction of Third Class sleepers



BOOKS

Very little authentic material has been published on anarchist activism in the present period. The post-war Spanish Resistance - with names such as Sabate and Facerias spring to mind - has been grossly neglected (especially compared with the three years of civil war that preceded it, and that has been misrepresented). Movements such as the 'RAF' in Germany, the urban guerrilla movements in Greece and Turkey, the Angry Brigade, above all, the First of May Group, have been grossly misrepresented when it was impossible to ignore the facts about them (as it was for the press to ignore and distort the facts of the Spanish Revolution).

Cienfuegos Press is publishing a number of works which will help to throw some light on the subject of activism. The first to come out under its own imprint will be 'Anarchist Activism in Europe, 1945-1973', dealing with the whole matter of post-war libertarian Resistance. Its publishing date will be around July/August (price yet to be fixed).

For a future date, Sabate (by Antonio Tellez, translated by Stuart Christie while awaiting acquittal in prison for 16 months) will be published by Davis Poynter probably in the early spring of next year. This will be one of the first detailed accounts of the Resistance fighters of Spain to appear in English - Miguel Garcia's 'Franco's Prisoner' was an introduction to the subject.

MAKHNO, SCHWARZBART AND THEIR CIRCLE

When it was stated recently in the Italian press that Bertoli was connected with the 'Nestor Makhno Group' the Communist Party press seized on the occasion to vilify Makhno, though Bertoli had in fact not been a member of the group which in any case had only the same ideological convictions as Makhno. 'Makhno was a fascist, he massacred Jews in the Ukraine, etc'. The Communist Party attacks on Makhno have a grimly humorous side. The persecution of Jews in Ukraine goes on to this day by the very people who hounded Makhno out of his country. He did his best to fight anti-semitism - had he not done so, he could perhaps have united Ukraine, many of whose illiterate peasants could not reach a greater social understanding than 'send them out'. When the revolutionary army of Makhno's was defeated - after fighting both Whites and Reds - the Red Army under Trotsky marched in. Trotsky unleashed the paid liars against Makhno. For the last fifty years they have been attacking Trotsky, since his fall from grace, as well, but the lies he began about Makhno still flourish. As a final touch of irony, Makhno spent his last years in Paris, a guest of the Russian-Jewish Anarchists in their club. As he sat there, reminiscing, discussing the future, drinking - almost entirely surrounded by persons of Jewish origin - professors everywhere, taking their cue from Bolshevik 'historian' Yaroslavsky (originally inspired by Trotsky) have written that Makhno was responsible for pogroms, was an anti-semitic, etc. (Some can be persuaded to withdraw. My intervention with Dent's Everyman Encyclopedia demanding proof some years ago, forced David Footman to retract a reference of this sort).

The Paris club to which we refer here was composed of people of exceptional kindness and hospitality, which it offered not only to such people as Makhno, Alexander Berkman and so on, but also to temporary exiles from Spain such as Durruti, Ascaso and Jover, and for that matter to many British comrades just happening to be visiting; as well as invaluable help in international work. One comrade among them, particularly esteemed by all, was Sholem Schwarzbart.

His entire family had been murdered in an anti-semitic pogrom by Tsarists; the general responsible was in Paris, and Schwarzbart came to Paris to kill him. He waited for his opportunity a year. Charged with murder, he pleaded justification and - despite the judge's protests - the jury was with him. It was a bitter blow to the Ukrainian Nationalists, as it brought them into total contempt. Schwarzbart's action, and the sympathetic view of taken of it by Frenchmen, was a condemnation of the 'White' armies and their pogroms in Ukraine. Afterwards, Schwarzbart tried to go to Palestine, but, refused entry by the British, he spent the rest of his life as a watchmaker in Paris.

Pa Chin introduced, in one of his many anarchist novels, a new sign-character, the Black-Beard (Schwarz-Bart) to denote 'Jews who were never slaves' (taking his characters from those he had known at the Club) in contrast to another Chinese writer who had introduced a sign character, the Red-Shield (Roth-Schild) to denote 'Jews who were capitalists'.

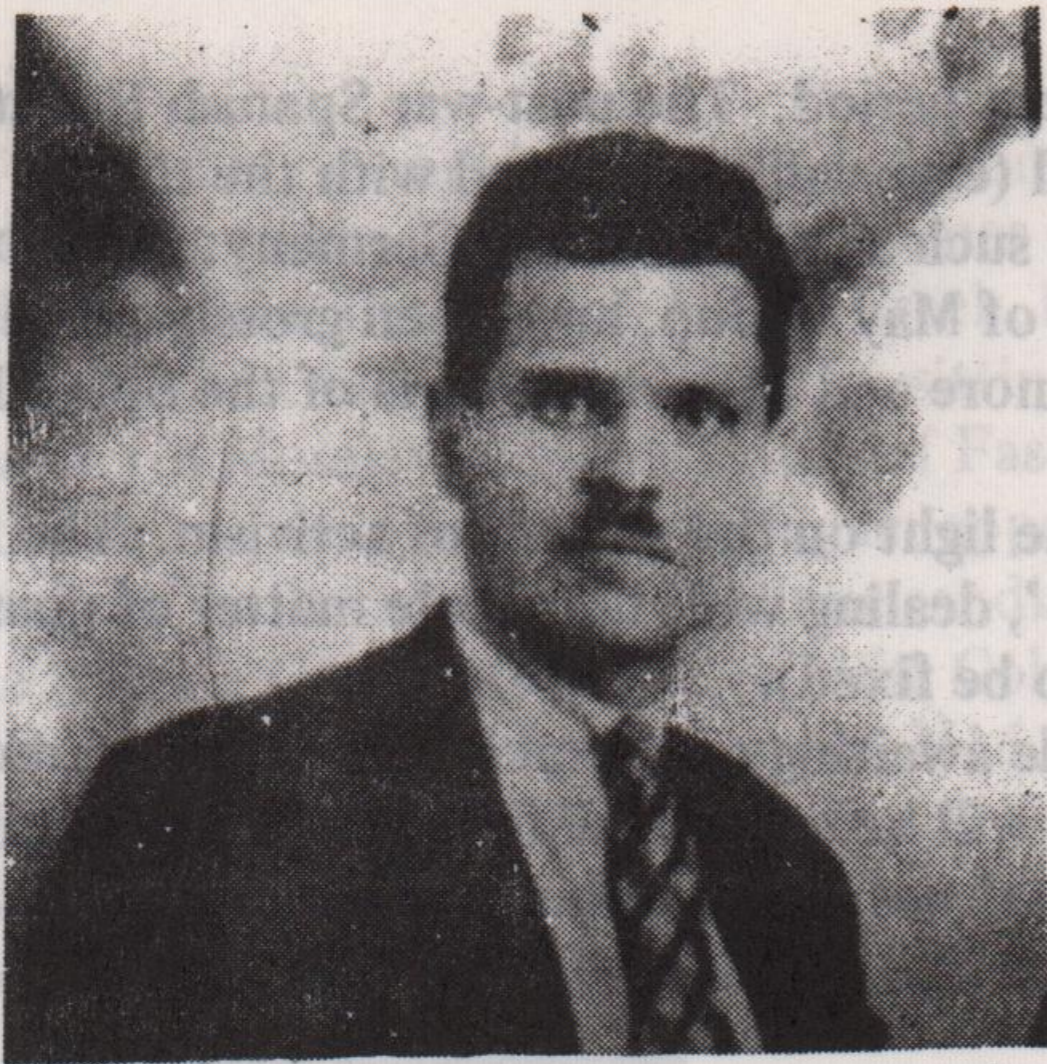
An incredible story recently appeared in 'Freedom' (now often making personal attacks against anarchists but denouncing replies as 'personal attacks') at which even the reformistic 'Freie Arbeiter Stimme' protested.

Peter Newell, who never met Schwarzbart and knew nobody in his circle, which included Emma Goldman, stated categorically and with 'real name' detail, that Schwarzbart was not an anarchist but merely a Bolshevik agent, determined to get rid of a Tsarist opponent. Immediately one smells a rat: what harm were the Tsarist generals to the Bolshevik regime? It was precisely the pretence that they represented a threat that enabled Lenin to impose the dictatorship and Stalin to maintain it. There was less opposition while their return was feared. The man who was feared, however, was Makhno, yet Schwarzbart spent a year meeting Makhno in the club regularly before the attempt and some ten years or so after, without trying to kill him. Another blow to the Makhno 'pogromist' story!

Nor did he ever receive any compensation from Russia, nor did he ever return. He must have expected to be guillotined for his action, for which he gave himself up: the jury reaction was unexpected.

Who would invent such a story? Clearly, the Ukrainian fascistic nationalists who were totally discredited because of Schwarzbart's action as the survivor of the pogrom, and who naturally wanted to show it was they whom the Bolsheviks feared, not the working-class opposition. Thus they needed to pretend Schwarzbart was not a Jewish victim of oppression but a Moscow agent. It may be asked as a curiosity why Peter Newell should retail such a story coming from such suspect stories, when at the same time he is quite prepared to write sympathetically about Makhno. The answer is implicit in the present mixture of social democratic and pacifist theory that makes up some pseudo-'anarchist' thinking. Makhno's battle was not, of course, legally recognised, but neither was anyone else in Russia at the time. To support the Makhnowist struggle is no more 'illegalist' than to support the Bolsheviks, or for that matter, the Tsarists who had been deposed by Kerensky, the only 'lawful' government, which had collapsed. But Schwarzbart was unquestionably 'illegalist'. This line of thinking is borne out in another issue of 'Freedom' in which Peter Newell returns to the attack on 'illegalist' anarchism.

The Baader-Meinhof group and the Angry Brigade are said to be 'elitist, authoritarian' and counter-productive to a free society - but he does not go on to mention, say, the First of May Group. (The pamphlet mentioned will help to clarify the relationships between these activist movements). Yet if he condemns this group too, he must go on to denounce the whole Spanish resistance. He is not prepared to do that (it would totally demolish his pseudo 'revolutionary anarchism' which sounds suspiciously social-democratic); if he does he must also condemn the whole Spanish Revolution too. But of course this was 'legal' until 1939, respectable until 1945, and only after 1945 was it, 'criminal banditry' to some - and 'elitist and authoritarian' to others!



MAKHNO

The action of Schwarzbart was repeated some years later, by another young Jew, Herschel Grynszpan, not a revolutionary in any way. He shot the German vice-consul in Paris, vom Rath*. It is interesting to note, however, how the official Jewish community denounced Grynszpan (who shot an admitted Nazi) just as they did Schwarzbart. Such actions, they claimed, imperilled their existence. They were provocative. They occasioned persecution. They brought others into danger.

Such cowardice now makes one smile, albeit grimly. The mass murders that were carried out were of peaceful, non-resisting people, precisely those who did co-operate and 'left it to those better able to make official representations' to the psychopathic State murderers.

It was not the actions of those who hit back that caused the Nazis to wipe out the Jews in Europe: it was the inaction of those who did not hit back. One can well understand the younger Jews who despised such advice and knew that they had to hit back ... unfortunately, by the time most learned the lesson it was too late - the people they hit back at were the wrong people. The toughness of the Israeli civilian army has its roots deep in the rejection of this servile advice that led to disaster and the Arabs, bewilderingly, pay the penalty.

It should not however be assumed that the servility of such advice is in any way particularly Jewish. It is merely that of a respectably ensconced minority, able to continue in the 'normal' concerns of the world, yet threatened politically ... Such advice now comes from Arab leaders to their youth ... it is something woven into the fabric of the life of the Ugandan Asians. But more, it is something the labour movement and even the left wing movement has to reckon with. Do not be provocative - do not invite persecution - do not go out of your way to cause trouble ... then the police will allow your little groups to continue, they will let us alone, they will 'never dare' to interfere with peaceful, law-abiding people such as we. And if one manages to elevate oneself into bourgeois society as well, it may even become true ... provided one is useful enough.

Internationalist.

* And how the Soviet and CP Press would have loved to say Makhno 'was killed by an anarchist.' Trotsky was later killed by a GPU agent posing as a Trotskyist.

GOD OR GNOME?

English publications used often to refer to Kropotkin as a 'saintly figure' (it was partly the white beard), as Roel van Duyn notes benignly; indeed, 'at the moment of his death his son-in-law saw a dazzling green comet with a long tail shoot across the sky - symbol of the departure of a universal revolutionary.' I have been at a few funerals of old comrades, but failed to notice such an event occurring - he was clearly god rather than saint! The advantage about making a man into a god is that one can then cheerfully ignore his message as a man, and van Duyn does a nice job of churchwork in his 'Message of a Wise Kabouter'.

The humanity of Kropotkin's writings, as a man, on mutual aid, social evolution and co-operation are finely written up. However, these conceptions are not those requiring positive action since Kropotkin's precise message is that they are inevitable, a part of human nature, impossible of total extinction by the state. But when it comes to the revolutionary applications of Kropotkin's work, on which as a man he is perfectly clear and concise, van Duyn balks. As 'to his supporters he (Roel) is more priest than politician', according to Charles Bloomberg's introduction, he can priest-like explain that the god does not mean what he says but what the priest decrees. Thus, while granting that Kropotkin did believe in revolutionary struggle, and did support the individual fight against capitalism as well, 'in actual fact ... (he) was against terrorism' which he justifies by a quotation in which Kropotkin denounces the 'organised vengeance called justice.'

As typical of the modern pacifist who likes to deny he is one, van Duyn is against revolutionary 'violence' but is all for adopting a benevolent attitude to that of the 'Third World'. He can support nationalist violence (because it is trendy) but revolutionary struggles are too much for him; which is fair enough for van Duyn but unfair to attribute to Kropotkin, who at no time made a cult of violence or non-violence.

While anarchists criticised Kropotkin (the man) for his conformist stand in 1914, it really ill becomes van Duyn to echo Stalin's 'the old fool must have lost his head completely' (the young fool after all became much more of an old chauvinist in due course) when van Duyn himself, despite his 'anarcho-pacifism', cannot resist the pressures of the package-deal alternative society to support nationalist movements.

By the magic of van Duyn, Kropotkin the anarchist is transformed into a 'wise gnome' and under that banner van Duyn seeks political power. The 'wise gnome' is the anarchist degutted of revolutionary values; what remains is a less bureaucratic reformism than normal. Shed of its hippy clothes and its whimsy, the whole 'dwarf' or 'Orange Free State' movement does not come to much more than the social liberalism Kropotkin spent his life helping to combat. 'The Department of Housing' is, for instance, part of the 'dwarf' state-within-a-state, responsible for helping homeless families; which is good enough social liberalism, but Kropotkin's message was that they should do it themselves.

The book is not about the 'anarchist-like' provo movement as it claims; it is a re-statement of the aims of the reformist-like provo movement in anarchistic terms. Van Duyn, surviving in Amsterdam as the last of the provo town councillors, brushing the petals on the weeds in the capitalist garden like a forlorn pixie left over from Arcady into the Age of Reason, unsuccessfully tries to show Kropotkin's anarchism as the motivating force of youthful reformism in Holland. It is a pity, perhaps, van Duyn did not try to stand on his own feet. He obviously has a sense of humour - as seen by the actions of the 'dwarfs' and 'gnomes' in their playful do-gooding. It is a pity he only has the one joke, but even so, he could have made a lot more of it.

Message of a Wise Kabouter Roel van Duyn
(Gerald Duckworth & Co Ltd) 75p 1972 paperbac k

A.M

A GUERRILLA IN SPAIN

There are hundreds and perhaps thousands of stories that can be picked up from the Spanish civil war and the subsequent resistance. Miguel Garcia's book 'Franco's Prisoner' hinted at many of them. They can be picked up by chance as the stories are related or as the person involved finds the facilities to bring them to public notice. Francisco Perez Lopez, for instance, was an ordinary volunteer. He was brought up in France and went over the Spain, joining the International Brigade. It is true that the Brigade has attracted more notice than the whole of the battalions of the Republic put together - partly because of Communist propaganda, partly because of the natural interest of other countries in the part played by persons of their own nationality, and also because of the presence of many highly literate and vocal volunteers.

But Perez Lopez was not one of them, and only the accident of his foreign upbringing brought him into the Brigade rather than any other unit; this way he saw little of the Communist Party domination and intrigues in the brigade and a lot of the action; his was a unit for fighting. He was captured and taken into a 'disciplinary battalion' of the Franco Army.

He went through all the humiliations suffered by the defeated Army which had fought Fascism; being taught how to salute the Fascist flag and stand and sing the Fascist anthems, lessons at which he, like a great many others, was a bad scholar. A man without strong political convictions, we was, and became, more firmly antiFascist. He escaped, in an enthralling adventure that beats the wild stories of fiction but is commonplace among those related by persons who lived through those days.

He decided to fight his way through Spain and get back to France. To do this he joined with others who managed to escape from the rounding-up of the defeated army, and formed a small guerrilla band. They went on fighting to the end of the civil war, and afterwards. His right hand man in the band was Vicente, an anarchist who had served in the Durruti Column, and with others whom they collected on the way, they fought on, some to the death, and some to cross the frontier. Perez Lopez makes no claim to knowledge of the general resistance: he gives only the enthralling episodes of his own small band. He does not indicate that many such bands fought only to the death; many were taken and re-captured, to death or prison; some went over the border, and yet more fought on to the years of 'tranquility' when Franco thought he had them all beaten. He was not political, he was not a member of what is regarded as the Resistance; but like so many others, he tried to refuse to serve Fascism as it presented itself in Spain.

His book is another pointer to the mass of stories in Spain, buried from the general world. For if an ordinary worker, without any political motivation, such as Perez Lopez, can recount so exciting a story of guerrilla battle through Spain, what fascinating stories must there be to tell of people who became legendary even within Spain Sabate, Facerias, and many others, to the present day?

Part and parcel of the stuff of the Resistance is the anarchist movement, and characters such as Vicente, who come through in the book, are still around; some are in prison to this day, some are still carrying on the struggle, some have given up, and often their sons and daughters are carrying on. Perez Lopez just happened to be a prolific writer of the sort that writes naturally despite discouraging circumstances of education; but, in Spain, one could almost say, knock on any door

A Guerrilla Diary of the Spanish Civil War *Francisco Perez Lopez* (Andre Deutsch £2.50)

'You have publicly admitted being a member of the anarchist movement', said Commander Bond to our editor.

Have you?

If so, read **BLACK FLAG**, the anarchist monthly (sub: £1.50 for 12 issues).

'Given the Italian national penchant for expressing publicly anarchistic opinions, it is perhaps paradoxical that the last few weeks have seen a further concentration of media control into the hands of the few already powerful groupings,' writes *Campaign* (adman's paper) June 29th. And given the British penchant for finding jobs for politically illiterate journalists, one need not analyse the Italian scene to find out really how many 'expressed publicly' - as if this could not happen in any open society - 'anarchistic opinions.' If more journalists read this paper, they would not make such stupid mistakes. Some are seeing the point and subscribing. They can still lie. But at least lie with an appearance of knowing what they are talking about.

ANSWERS TO QUIZ

1 Unpopular, Tory, George IV had Queen Caroline tried for adultery (of which he himself was undoubtedly guilty): her defence became a focus of anti-Establishment feeling and 'God Save the Queen' implied 'Down with the King (and the Tory Government)'. The witty, reactionary Duke of Wellington, forced to shout the 'loyal cry' by the London crowd who stopped his carriage, added, 'And may all your wives be like her.'

2 Rudolf K Kommel ('Kommel aus Czernowitz')

3 The Labour Party was founded in 1900 by a number of middle-class Fabians and Trade Union bureaucrats; the anarchist movement goes back, among British workers, to somewhere in the 1850s or 1860s and is therefore the 'older Left.'

4 George Borrow (author of 'Lavengro' and 'The Bible in Spain') was imprisoned last century at the instigation of the Catholic clergy for selling Bibles; later the liberal Prime Minister, Mendizabal, told him it was time Britons realised Spanish democracy needed rifles, not Bibles, against the Carlists. (Marxist governments: please note!)

5 He said 'Was fur Plunder' - meaning, 'what a lot of rubbish' - (frippery, trash).

6 Hank Janson, pulp writer of pseudo-American cheap novels.



LETTERS

I've been working away for a while and been out of touch. I must congratulate you on the new journal - nice to come home to!

L. D. (Surrey)

Your attack on Camacho is disgraceful. After all he is the appointed leader of the Spanish working class. In days when the Anarchists led, Communists always loyally backed them. Yet you denounce him even when he is in prison.

I. R. (London WC1)

(ED: Appointed only by Moscow. And as for 'loyal backing'...)

In Black Flag January 73 you are saying 'Le Monde Libertaire is taken over by neo-Trotskyists'. This is rubbish. I visited the group in Paris last December and they are anarchists in the orthodox meaning. The ORA group are revisionistic. I like Black Flag, it is a good paper, but instead of throwing dirt on other anarchists you should try to unite and fight together (and please don't call me a revisionist in your answer!)

Michael, Oslo

(ED: Nothing more satisfying than to see criticisms of ourselves are based on a mistake. In Jan 73 we referred to 'Le Libertaire' (founded by Louise Michel and Sebastien Faure in the 90s) which was taken over by a neo-Trotskyist group in the post-war period. The anarchists later used the name 'Le Monde Libertaire' for a successor.)

Black Flag is interesting if only to see another face of anarchism. All I ever see the anarchists in this part of the world do is read science fiction and smoke pot.

John P.

(ED: Our definitions of the word are not the same, perhaps. What do the hippy liberals do there, for instance?)

I have been very impressed by your consistent arguments and owe more than a small debt to your journal Congratulations on the new look - a lot easier to follow and should gather a much bigger audience. Must admit though that the old duplicated appearance did lend a certain aura, as if rushed off under war-time conditions - but then that's becoming an increasing feeling for many.

G. R. (N. Z.)

The new-style Black Flag looks a bit slung together but it still beats all the libertarian journals being the only one that manages to be both revolutionary and libertarian. Glad to see you have at last exploded that tired old Eltzbacher 'schools of anarchism' argument used to turn the profession of anarchism into a schools debating society. I never realised before he was a judge who wrote his book precisely to undermine anarchism by inventing 'types' of anarchism by isolating writers, like Stirner, for instance, out of context.

J. L. (London WC1)

The criticism about the Black Cross confining its activities to helping political as opposed to all prisoners seems to me misplaced. One might as well go on to say, why confine it to prisoners at all? Why not alcoholics, drug addicts, etc. and the whole thing becomes just another charity, full of good intentions but nothing to do with social revolution. Since money is bound to be limited, it seems sensible to concentrate it where it is most needed, with militant anarchists engaged in the struggle against the State, and their families.

C. C. (Bristol)

Dear Black Flag,

I was pleased to see your report (June) on the Genoa-based 'October 22nd Group', most of whom are now serving long sentences. Though I have only a superficial knowledge of the group, one or two Italian Anarchists with whom I spoke last summer were reluctant to comment on it because the 'politics' of its members were too varied. With the Stoke Newington 8 Defence Committee in mind I asked why there was no kind of defence group at all - I was told that Lorenzo Castello, whom you mention, was the only Anarchist in the group and that he would have received the support of the Italian Anarchists had he, like Stuart Christie, taken explosives into Franco's Spain.

An acquaintance of Lorenzo's told me that he drifted into the October 22nd Group from a specifically anarchist group (of which they were both members) because the Anarchist group itself was almost totally inactive and Lorenzo, always active, was frustrated with it.

I think all people in prison need our support, but feel specially inclined to support 'Enzo' whom I met by chance in July 1970. I stopped in a Genoa back street to look at some posters. Among them was the dramatic Lotta Continua poster depicting the fall of Pinelli. I peeled one of these from the wall, which attracted the attention of Enzo and one or two others. Enzo showed me great kindness after I explained my reason - he showed me round Genoa, bought me food, found me somewhere to stay for the rest of my stay and, as I had run out of resources, loaned me something to get on my way - all for a stranger he had never seen before.

You state that Enzo returned to Italy despite advice that he should seek 'political asylum'. Apart from his innocence, a factor which would weigh heavily against that would be that Enzo was very fond of Genoa. I could tell this as he showed me round the alleyways of the old city. He was a responsible and open person who would put others first, and a campaign for his release is a priority for me.

Yours sincerely,

Ian Cameron

(The disavowal of Castello by 'official' federations, to which Ian refers, is paralleled with that of Bertoli. And what did they do for Goliardo Fiasci, who *did* 'take explosives into Franco's Spain'?)

REPEAT DENIAL

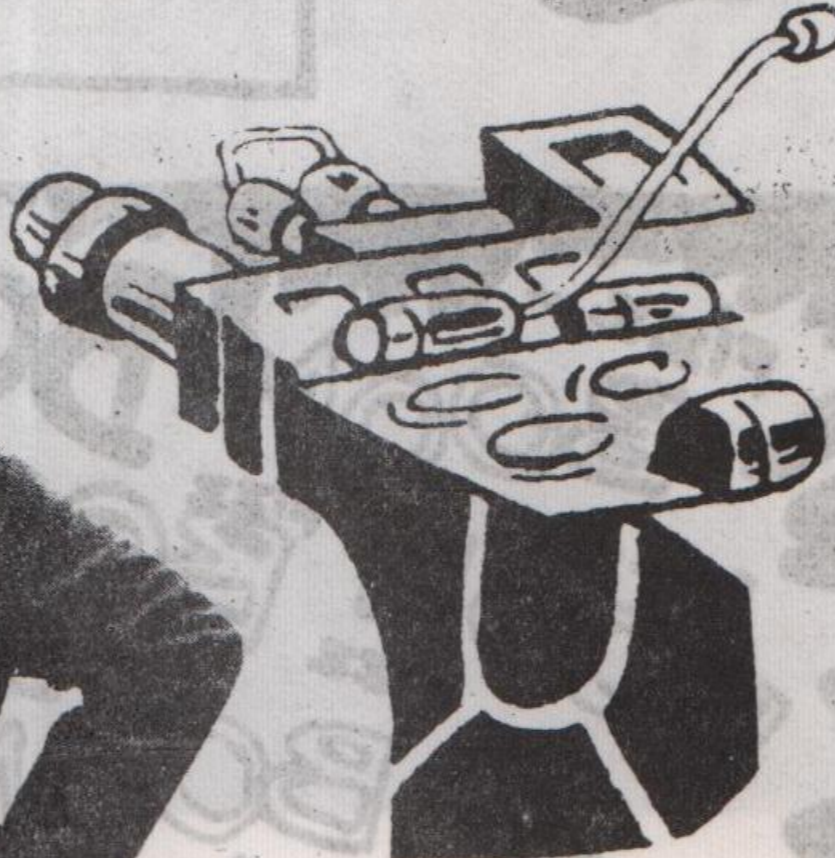
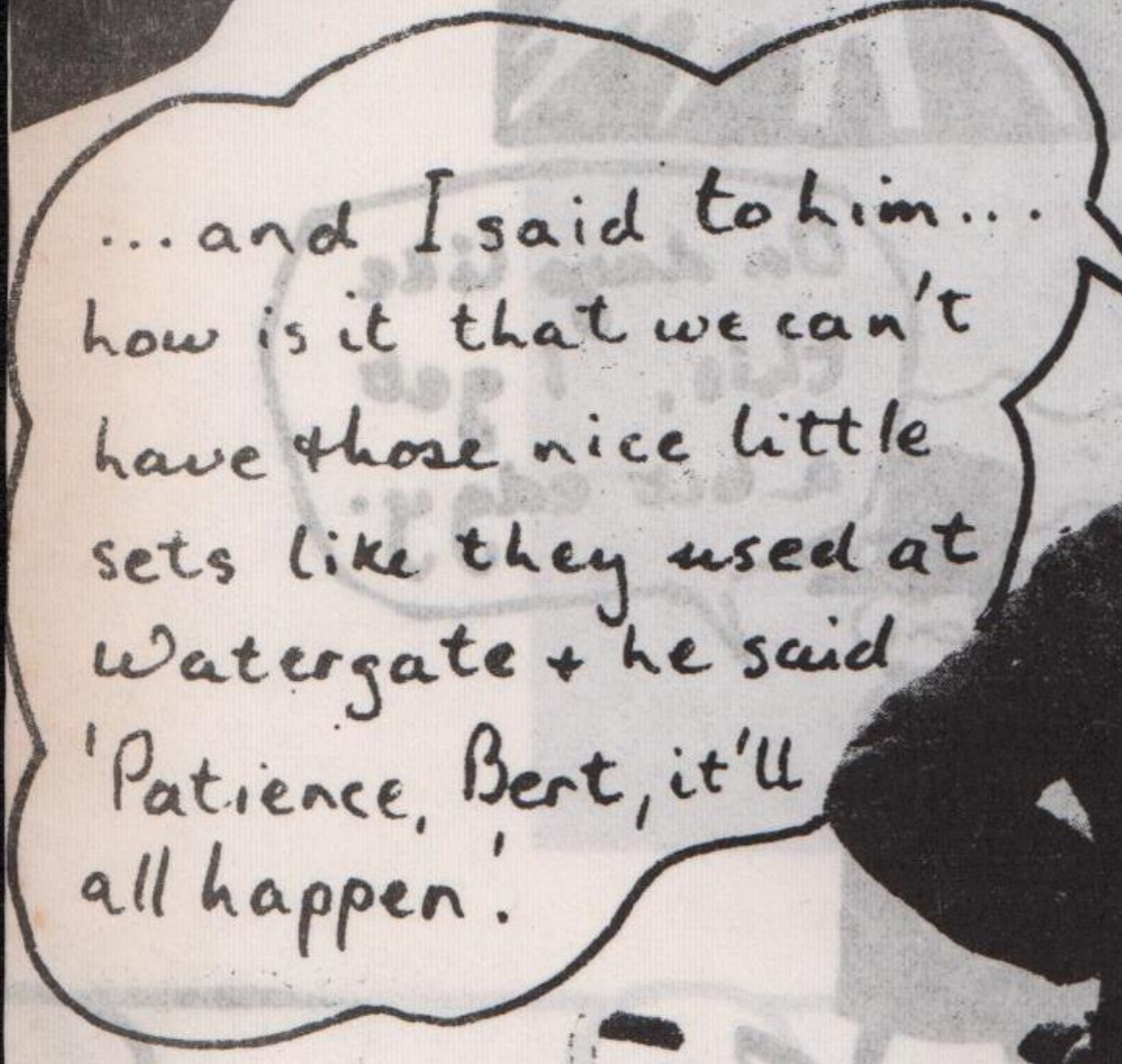
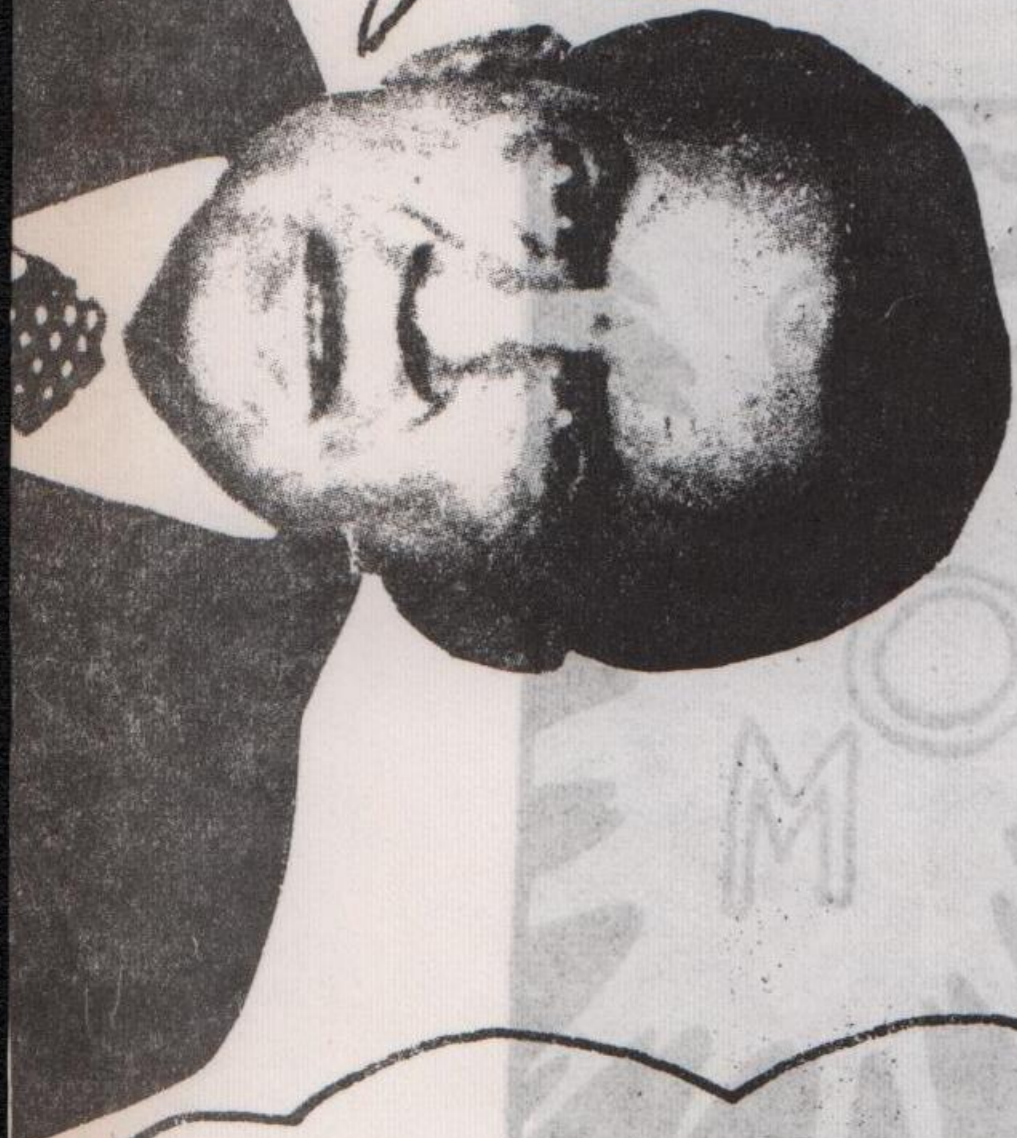
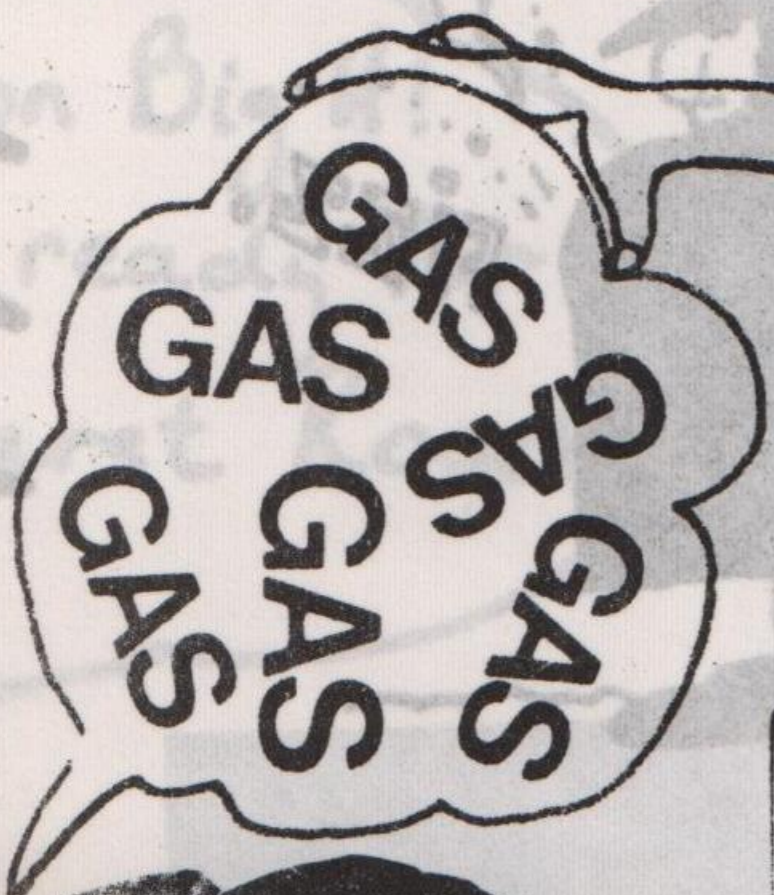
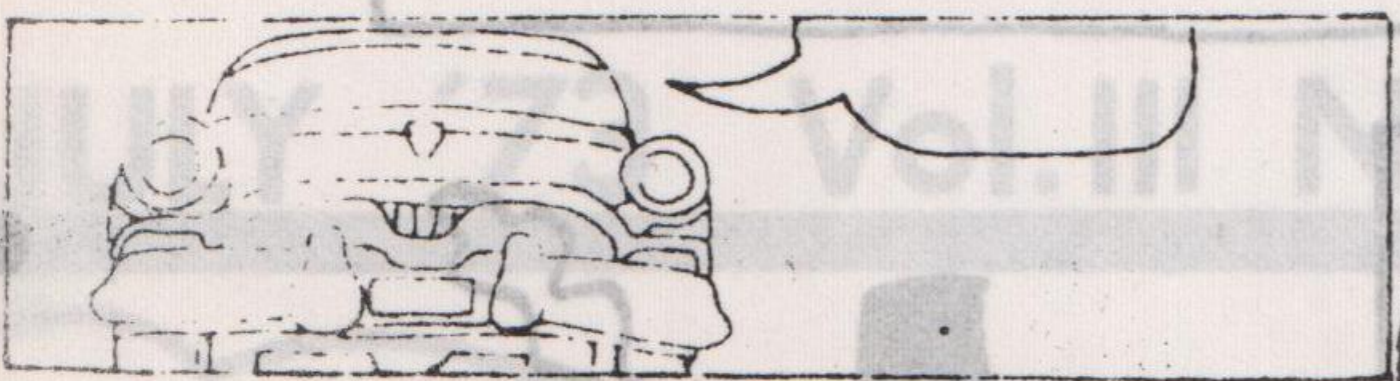
When I say that I have never been a pacifist (March Black Flag) it is not 'a mere semantic trick' but a description of fact, since I do not accept the doctrine of non-violence (and I have always differed in several ways from *Peace News*, even since it became openly anarchist in 1968).

When I say that you have misrepresented me in suggesting I have stated 'We are not part of the same movement', it is nothing 'mysterious' but again a description of fact, since the passage of the article which you are referring to (*Freedom*, 22 April 1972) was not a statement about Black Flag but a question about a Stoke Newington 8 Defence Group pamphlet.

When I say that I have not plagiarised any line in *Tribune*, it is yet against a description of a fact, since the social-democratic writings you mention are all unknown to me and the line you describe is not the one I took (the title of the article you mention was chosen not by me but by the editor of *Tribune*).

Nicolas Walter

(If A asks if B can possibly be in the same movement as he, and B and C are agreed they are in the same movement, it is not unreasonable for C to point out that they are not, and do not wish to be, in the same movement as A, even if it damages A's academic niche. To soften the blow we will say his *Tribune* line was *anticipated* by German social democrats, rather than plagiarised from them).



ANARCHICK

The Enemy of
the State

