

# FREEDOM

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PAGES

# STEEL-WORKS?

IN SPRING '75 when Mr. Benn was still Industry Secretary (and his hobby setting up workers cooperatives) the papers were full of the personality clashes between him and Sir Monty Finneston (Chairman of the British Steel Corporation). Sir Monty was also in the unique position of being chairman of a nationalised industry and a constant critic of government interference in the running of nationalised industries. Rather like asking a capitalist not to interfere in running his own company.

Although agreement then was reached on economy measures no long term agreement between unions and management was reached; the main problem then as now being the abolition of the guaranteed week. This is not surprising, considering even in Lord Melchett's time, it was known that major plant decisions were often reversed within weeks of being made. Consequently figures of £89 million profit in March 1975 are reduced to a forecast of a £340 million loss in March 1976, and can be taken as the expected thing. From these agreements 28,300 jobs

were lost and £50 million was "saved" only to be lost elsewhere.

One always has to be sceptical of figures in cases of nationalised industries, partly because compensation is still being paid to former owners but mostly because the Government often tends to wipe the slate clean and start again. A little matter of getting the figures to march up.

Agreement this year has naturally been much harder to come by considering the decline in living standards, particularly the value of "real" earnings and rising unemployment. A rather vague plan already signed by Bob Scholey (Chief Executive and favourite to replace Sir Monty) on behalf of B.S.C. is to be reviewed again, after failing to agree the first time, this Thursday, 22nd January by the 17 steel unions involved. It is remarkable in what it leaves out.

Everyone seems to agree that a reduction of jobs is needed, although there is no mention of it in the 4-page document. The Corporation was insis-

ting on a reduction of 44,000 although it seems it is prepared to give way a little on this point, if the unions will agree to the abolition of premium payments and the guaranteed working week agreement. Hardly surprising since 28,300 "volunteered" to go last year and equally non surprising is the fact that this year no-one is likely to volunteer for redundancy. The government intends to implement this policy anyway even if the Unions don't sign. The alternative for the Unions is to give way and "mop up" the unofficial strikes or to go all out for a national strike. One of the reasons why the Corporation (i.e. Government) is able to dictate in this way is because of the profusion of steel unions, and different unions in a steel works. They are very rarely united on any point, always maintaining pay differentials etc., which serve only management interests. All steelworkers face the same problems and are involved in the same process, i.e., production of steel, whether they are technicians or floor sweepers. One union embracing all steel workers is essential, which must lead at once to a General Strike if the loss of jobs is to be combatted.

It is a sad fact that in some areas, particularly South Wales, premium payments (for Saturday and Sunday work) amount to as much as £15 extra in their pay packets. It is sad that workers have come to rely on a 7-day working week to earn a miserable standard of living.

With the notorious irrationality of the  
cont. on P.2

# SPAIN: Light at end of the Tunnel

WE ARE now seeing mass industrial action by the Spanish working class. After the end of 36 years of Franco fascist rule, working people are once again in struggle for economic demands and for their freedom.

Of course strikes are nothing new in Spain. Even under Franco, the working class still fought back using a whole armoury of direct action methods to fight the oppressive fascist state and their state/employer controlled unions.

As in 1970 it was the Madrid Metro workers who took action first. This time however the government only threatened military conscription, but unlike 1970 when only the construction workers came out, engineering, banks, telephone postmen as well as the construction workers have taken action.

Strikes have not only occurred in Madrid. In Barcelona, San Sebastian, Santander, Toledo, Guipuzcoa, Pamplona and Bilbao strikes and demonstrations have taken place. Spain's new so-called 'Liberal' government has reacted with some conciliation when disputes have remained purely economic. But when workers have taken to the streets and churches, the police have usually resorted to their cruel and harsh reprisals. Tear gas and baton charges have been used against Chrysler workers when they marched from their factory



to a church in the working-class district of Carabanchel. Police also evicted those who had occupied the church. The same thing happened at Getafe, twelve miles outside Madrid. Strikers used Sunday to stage demonstrations both in the centre of Madrid, where the traditional Sunday fleamarket was the scene of baton swinging police overturning stalls in their efforts at dispersing demonstrators. Similar scenes occurred at Villaverde, and after a football match between Madrid's two top sides.

The government reacted to the postmen's strike by placing them under mil-

itary service and threatening instant court martial for any who remained on strike. This harsh technique worked, but brought out other workers in sympathy.

The newly formed government of King Juan Carlos faces a challenge. They obviously want to stem the tide of industrial unrest, but although many of the old guard Falangists would like to see harsher methods used now, others fear a general uprising of discontent. Strike leaders are still being arrested in the small hours for questioning, but a lot are being released. One such worker is reported as saying: "There is no question that their attitude has changed. They are behaving much better than they used to."

So far the police have not been ordered into the factories to break up strikes. These illegal strikes have gone unchecked except when the strikers take to the streets and call mass meetings of other workers. Such meetings only have to exceed nineteen people to become illegal gatherings. That is why churches have been used for mass meetings. But even the Catholic Action workers brotherhood has been under attack from the police. A meeting at their headquarters was raided by the police and 143 people arrested.

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Although most of the strikers demands centre around higher wages, other demands are being raised. The right to form their own unions, re-instatement of sacked workers, cancellation of all fines, freedom for political prisoners and freedom of speech and assembly. Such demands are only reforms but it is doubtful whether the new 'Liberal' government can concede them. But it is the reforms that cannot be conceded that make for a revolutionary situation. The government, like all governments, has blamed inflation onto increased wage levels. However, if we take Chryslers we find that the Spanish workers employed there are badly paid and work under poor conditions. Following a lost dispute in 1972 tea breaks were abolished, the track speed doubled, many lost their jobs while the remainder were forced to work overtime. While Chrysler cries out that it can't make a profit in Britain, in Spain they have the highest productivity rate for the lowest wage bill.

The Prime Minister, Arias Navarro, has said that Spain will be a functioning democracy in two years with four or five political parties. However that remains to be seen, since there are still a lot of powerful old Falangists, the police and the military who will not want this to happen. Already such people have started to use the Italian fascist method of bombings during industrial dispute to cause damage and possible loss of life to ensure that the government returns to the full weight of fascist 'law and order'.

Under Franco's rule the Communist Party has succeeded in building for itself strong support in the illegal Workers' Commissions. They have obviously had strong backing from Moscow. However, years of underground struggle and exile have placed the anarcho-syndicalist unions of the CNT in a weak position against those of the political parties. We've had no vast sums of money to help us reorganise. But it is happening. Latest reports say that young workers are responding to CNT propaganda. Rebuilding the CNT will be a tough task against not only the forces of the State but also those of the communists and socialists.

P. T.

ANARCHISM IN SPAIN - see pp. 6 and Review Section.

## FRANCE

THE SITUATION remains tense in France, especially with the steep rise in unemployed, the increasing number of redundancies, and severe repression.

As for the soldiers (imprisoned for "demoralisation of the army") the law has not been able to produce a serious argument to justify imprisonment! The lawyers themselves have rebelled against this (anti-constitutional) institution, the "Cour de Sureté de l'Etat". --FAF Group Emma Goldman.

# STEEL-WORKS?

cont. from P.1

steel works as regards planning and production, the abolition of the guaranteed week is most alarming. Under this agreement men are allocated five shifts a week and are guaranteed 80% of their average earnings even if there is no work for them. Abolition of this would mean workers having to report daily for work and being sent home, without pay, when there is no work; thus harking back to the had old days of private steel works. The Unions want decisions on these issues left to plant discussion level, but the B. S. C. demands that this is the prerogative of management only. The most noticeable growth since nationalisation is the increase in middle-management at plant level, in other words a non-productive bureaucracy, at a level which would positively alarm anyone in private industry.

Naturally those areas most likely to be affected by implementation of such policies - South Wales, the Midlands, etc. - are on unofficial strike and are resisting such at present. At Llanwern refusal of blast furnacement to operate the new plant is costing B. S. C. dearly. The Corporation had to import steel worth £90 million from Japan last year, a special steel needed for North Sea oilfields. Investment in the Steel

Industry is not enough and as a parallel this Government is now prepared to spend some £130 million on unemployment benefit (sheer wastage) and invest £160 million in Chrysler which is recognised to be a three year (at most) stop gap.

In their insatiable demand to be competitive with Japan and West Germany, the B. S. C. decided on open hearth furnaces which were obsolete and wasteful no sooner had they finished them. Japan prefers Bessemer convertor processes and has a "better" productivity rate than European producers. Proposed U.S. import controls basically aimed against specialised steel sound ominous for European steel producers.

It is my contention that a nationalised steel industry, as well as that useless car industry, cannot ever be "efficient". A coordinated but federated, plant-based industry is the only way to plan for any future of the steel industry. For example, if a Blast Furnace is allowed to go "cold" for any reason, it takes up to 6 months to repair and is a very expensive business.

Constant economies of the scale planned at present can have only one result -- the reduction to a size almost meaningless in terms of steel production. Soon we won't be talking of a steel industry but steel works and then which ones.

Francis A. Wright.

## LAND NOTES

# Ma Hubbard's Cupboard

WHEN COBBETT plodded round the countryside almost 200 years ago there were farmers producing two tons to the acre. Last year the average was 38cwt to the acre and that was above the average, which is generally about 34 cwt. In Cobbett's day there were no artificial fertilizers and no pesticides, etc.

Since Cobbett's day the population has increased manyfold. In the last few years land banks (areas purposefully left out of cultivation) have been used; in the U.S. there is no idle land to fall back upon, and the total reserve food in the world is only 31 days. In 1965, a mere ten years ago, the reserve was 91 days and in addition there were in the U.S. great tracts of purposely idled land. The truth is we are living dangerously from hand to mouth in spite of the fact that many millions are receiving less than the agreed minimum of 2,500 daily calories. Last year we were saved by a good rice harvest. The odds are that a bad combination of agricultural events may easily occur within the next decade.

We only have to hear the talk of Common Market politicians and bureaucrats on the subject of agriculture to know that huddandry has gone out of fashion and the politicians, accountants and bureaucrats have taken over as they did in post-revolutionary Russia and the results will eventually be similar. Farmers in the old days avoided living from hand to mouth. They could support all the stock on the farms and

have behind them stocks of hay and straw and granaries of wheat, which buttressed them and us against hard times. Now in spring the barns are empty and agriculture is totally and dangerously dependent on outside imported supplies of food, fertilizers and feedstuffs to operate.

A similar picture operates in the fishing industry; the lesson of the hering depletion of the Dogger Bank is not learned as we fight with the Icelanders for the right to plunder the Northern Seas. Huge fishing fleets dredge the sea of fish for meal to feed animals to feed humans, an extravagant and destructive process. The depletion of the sea shows that it needs to be farmed and shared if it is to continue to be a valuable resource amenable to sensible and rational management.

The revelation that we live in a finite world is widely and extensively discussed. Yet the politicians still talk in terms of finance and industrial growth as though the world still has infinite resources. The effects of such revelations are rarely spelt out in the mass media, and the mass of working people are hardly aware of the real changes necessary to deal with the situation.

Ecological matters are discussed in schools and they have subjects described as social studies. Like many other educational subjects, they are completely unrelated to the consumer orientated society with its pressures on



Francesco's article on the Italian radicals (FREEDOM 10 Jan) raises some good points and a few questions. A relatively liberal regime paying some attention to so-called "civil rights" hardly provides a greater obstacle to the development of "freedom in the real sense of the word" than a regime that does not. And given that anarchism nowhere yet is very strong and effective, either in countries with "civil rights" or without them, how is one to deal with immediate human and social problems in their absence?

As it is, the radicals have shown the serious weakness of anarchists in dealing with social matters on which people are demanding urgent action - abortion for instance. A woman who badly needs the opening or reopening of good cheap clinics will not turn to anarchists for help, because the anarchist position on abortion, though largely consistent, also remains largely rhetorical, while the radicals are able to offer an immediate plan of action. (Before the radicals' clinic was forcibly shut down in Florence I know where,

## LAND NOTES

consumption in which young people find themselves out of school hours. The recent antics of the stock exchanges, which seem to be related to the level of unemployment and the realisation of the so-called assets of the North Sea, show how utterly irrelevant our financial, political and economic institutions are to the real problems of mankind.

A recent book called An Inquiry into the Human Prospect by Robert Heilbroner, an economist, contends that we are beginning to witness the collapse of our industrial society:

"Two reasons seem to me to define the life span of our present system or of its politicised successor, State dominated capitalism. First, we are leaving an historic epoch in which the expansive drive of capitalism could be accommodated by a rich and vast environment and entering an epoch in which that drive must be blunted and ultimately stopped by the intractable obstacles of nature."

He goes on to point out briefly that industrial growth is like a snowball, requiring greater and greater resources and spewing out more and more waste. In a finite world, he goes on, the struggle for resources will not only be between the rich capitalist countries and poor countries, but also between so-called rich socialist countries and poor ones.

In such a situation the pressures towards more totalitarian set ups will be great in the absence of widespread consciousness of the need to turn to small and more easily controlled social and economic units. The situation presents both a challenge and an opportunity to anarchists. There can be no human face to institutions unless there is direct universal human control and understanding.

Alan Albon.

## LETTERS

as an Italian, I should have gone!) This raises two points, firstly, how can anarchists resolve this problem; secondly, should they? In my view the radicals till now (whatever happens in the future) have played a useful role in giving practical help and guidance to people - soldiers, COs, pregnant women, prostitutes, homosexuals etc - in trouble now. But while anarchists could and, I think, should, work towards opening their own centres and services (without, of course, lobbying parliament) their main role, propagating revolutionary, essentially long-term solutions, is so different from that of a reformist pressure group, that it would be surprising if radicals really hindered the development of Italian anarchism any more than the NCCL is a real obstacle to the British anarchist movement.

Juliane.

Francesco replies: Point taken. However, the Radicals are interested in advancing the "Left-wing" parliamentary parties. They showed this by breaking away from a couple of anti-militarist marches as soon as the anarchists turned up. Apparently only parliamentary communists and socialists are suitable bedfellows.

## TALKING TO THE POLICE

David Wieck (January 10) makes the good point that I had an opportunity "to explain to policemen what anarchism really is". I should be happy to take advantage of such an opportunity with individual policemen (or prison warders or civil servants or soldiers) in informal discussions on a face-to-face basis, and indeed I have done so on the rare occasions that I have had such encounters. But I should be unhappy to do so in such an artificial environment as a formal lecture at a police college, and in fact doubt whether I could explain anarchism either politely or effectively in the circumstances. There are certain anarchists who can manage such occasions, but I think that I would probably do more harm than good, as well as losing a lot of time for a little money, and losing my temper for nothing too.

Nicolas Walter.

## BACKING THE REVOLUTION

As a revolutionary anarchist and a worker I protest most strongly about the piece by Jack Robinson about the Ladbroke strike!

Of course we don't support all strikes, i.e. racist ones, ones to maintain wage differentials, strikes engineered by fascists against revolution (Chile lorry drivers) or reform (Ulster workers' council strike) and of course we should realise the nature of Ladbroke and all other bookmakers. At the same time, we must show solidarity with workers fighting for better pay and conditions; I was disgusted at Jack Robinson's appearing in an anarchist paper! P'raps we'll see a condemnation of occupations of car factories in FREEDOM yet -

and for precisely the same reasons!

Well if that happens, I'll stop buying FREEDOM, but continue buying other anarchist papers, the ones that do support workers in struggle.

Please think in future I won't be able to show this copy to my workmates, and I do try hard to get anarchist ideas over to them and whoever else I come in contact with.

Fraternally

Jim Lesk

J.R. replies: I do not feel we should support strikes regardless of their significance. If the workers concerned had been rent collectors for Rachman or making armaments for South Africa would the comrade be inclined to support them? My personal view (and I signed the piece) is that the bookmaking fraternity is exploiting the workers and perpetuating values which are useless in a free society and harmful in this. I believe that an individual should have some responsibility for the work he does now, else why not have anarchist policemen, soldiers and hangmen - until the revolution!

## PORTUGAL

## HANDS OFF PEOPLE'S BELLY!

LAST SUNDAY, 18 January, thousands of housewives were lured by leaflets circulating in the Portuguese capital to Lisbon's Camp das Ceboulas (Onion Field) under the promise that food and vegetables would be cheaply available in a sort of people's market, under a revolutionary scheme of food distribution direct from the Collective farms of the Alentejo region, to find that practically no food was available (the food available was sold in less than one hour) as the big cooperative farms controlled by the Portuguese Communist Party via the IRA (Instituto da Reforma Agraria - Institute of Agrarian Reform) decided at the last moment and under pressure from the PCP to boycott this positive initiative taken by extreme-Left parties.

As disappointed crowds of women were being harangued by professional politicians of the Left, a woman expressing the feeling of many disillusioned housewives, sharply commented, "I came here to buy food not to listen to their propaganda!"

Mounting unemployment, soaring prices and scarcity of food and milk is in effect creating an explosive situation that the extreme left and the fascists will not fail to exploit for their own political ends.

An eventual devaluation of the Portuguese escudo will further increase the price of imported food from France, Germany and Argentina. This abnormal situation for an essentially agricultural country reflects the state of the Portuguese economy and in order to deflect the anger felt by working and unemployed people alike against the successive "socialist" govern-



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## HANDS OFF PEOPLE'S BELLY !

ments' inability to tackle the economic and political crisis, the Military Authorities (the A.F.M.) are calling for a General Election to be held next April, precisely two years after the 25 April 1974 Revolution.

By so doing, the Army of National Liberation, as the AFM likes to call itself, hopes again to divert the Portuguese workers' revolutionary drive into electoral politics and ease the social tensions caused by scarcity of food, unemployment, bad housing, decaying schools, inexistent welfare medicine and apprehension for the future.

The Portuguese Trade Unions (Sindicatos) which, as the anarcho-syndicalists state and aim, should be an autonomous power base permitting the workers to launch NOW before it is too late a revolutionary counter attack against the Right turn of events since the aborted putsch of the 25 November, are in reality powerless political battlegrounds between Communists, Maoists, Trotskyists and Socialists, all fighting a ruthless, demagogic and sectarian race which has as its first prize the political control of the INTERSINDICAL (the officially recognised Federation of Portuguese Trade Unions) at the moment in the hands of the P.C.P.

But the score between oppressed and oppressors is far from being settled in Portugal. The situation is very tense and before the summer violent political disturbances, possibly food riots, could take place and shake the social foundations of this otherwise beautiful country.

Social revolutionaries should be duly prepared for these occurrences. Unless the struggle for emancipation, freedom and social equality of the Portuguese people is rapidly linked with today's struggles of the Spanish people, the dangers are that the Right will again, as in 1926, emerge victorious and impose ruthless decades of neo-fascist dictatorship in Portugal.

It is a fallacy to believe that fascism, Bolshevism or even social democratic capitalism will ever solve the almost endemic poverty and oppression of the Portuguese workers and peasants. - Only a SOCIAL REVOLUTION as proclaimed by anarchists and libertarians will release the necessary human will and energy to eradicate the injustices and abuses found in the Portuguese society. - But first the STATE and its parasitic hangers-on of the fascist, Bolshevik or democratic type will have to go. Let's hope the Portuguese anarchists are seriously working towards that end.

Claude.

VINOBA BHAVE, former white hope of Indian liberals, broke his self-imposed silence to support Mrs. Indira Gandhi in her imposition of 'discipline' on the unruly Indians.

# CHINA & THE FUTURE

YOUTH is a time for hope and optimism. We seek for signs of a new society, something to pin our faith to. Wordsworth, writing of the French Revolution, wrote, "Bliss it was that fair dawn to be alive. But to be young was very heaven." He lived to be disillusioned and chided as a 'reactionary'. The Russian Revolution was one such landmark in history. Lincoln Steffens, an American newspaperman, wrote after an early visit to the Soviet Union "We have seen the future and it works". Many of us have had ample chance since for disillusionment.

China is the modern hope on which many pin their faith. The recent death of Chou-en-Lai has activated interest in China's future. China's government, after the Cultural Revolution and the sensational attempted alleged defection of Lin Biao to the Soviet Union, has been seemingly tranquilly in power. Mao Tse Tung despite his advanced age (Peter Fleming in the 'thirties reported Mao as 'suffering from an incurable disease') still shares power and there is much speculation by Sinologists about the struggle for power around Mao. It seems that Mao and Chou have been such an unconscionable time a-dying that it is probable that the succession is already (as in Spain) well set in. The comparatively minor ceremonial connected with Chou's funeral is probably part of an effort to keep changes in a low key.

However, China is still not without its advocates for change. One writes, "The time will come when they [the Chinese people] will cast off the fetters that prevent them from advancing to genuine freedom and prosperity under socialism, and will call to account those who now try to poison their mind with Maoist raving. So it will be, for history is a stern judge." These are not the words of a right-wing Tory or a democratic socialist but the words of one 'I Alexandrov' writing in *Pravda*. According to *The Times* Alexandrov (not a Bulgarian poet) is believed to be the pseudonym used to indicate that an article has Kremlin approval.

This, following a Chinese warning to the U. S. that the Soviet Union was planning trouble and detente and the S. A. L. T. talks were useless, is another move in the Russo-Chinese feud which has split the Communist parties of the world.

It has always been advanced by Communists as an explanation of contradictions that the dialectical process substantiated the unity of opposites. Without subscribing wholly to this doctrine one can observe a phenomenon akin to this - the rivalry of similars. It was argued in 1945 that left could talk to left; that the British Labour government could deal peacefully with the Soviet government since they presumably 'understood each other'. The re-

sult was otherwise; an intensification of the cold war when Britain trailed behind America in an anti-Communist drive. Basically the trouble was that a leftish social-democratic Britain could rally to itself leftish social democratic governments in Europe which might otherwise fall into the Communist orbit. The progressive Labour Party acceptance of the Marshall Plan for a stricken Europe did not satisfy Stalin who had other progressive plans for a stricken Europe.

China, in the eyes of the Soviet Union, committed the unforgivable sin (like Yugoslavia and others) of achieving its own revolution. Russia, it will be remembered, was neutral towards Japan until the eleventh hour of the 1939-45 war, when it swooped vulture-like upon fragments of the old Russian empire seized by Japan in 1905! Even some fragments of China were seized and the Mongolian border is still a debating point.

Whatever the basic cause of the split its effects were to sabotage Chinese industrial development which was heavily dependent on Russian supplies and technicians.

This latest exchange is seriously interpreted by some as a prelude to the war which China predicted as a result of Russia's ambitions and actions.

For example, Lord Chalfont on BBC Radio Three spoke of 'direct confrontation' between Soviet Russia and China in South-East Asia as a basis for future expansion. (A certain double-think is indicated by China's fears that the West will be lulled to apathy by the Soviet Union's frequent peaceful protestations, thus China does not wish the West to decline.) Chalfont speaks of the isolation and neutralization of the United States but he was called to task by a correspondent to *The Listener* (where the talk was reprinted 18.12.75) that it was just as logical to argue that China's policy was to isolate and neutralise the Soviet Union.

Russia's intervention in Angola only called forth from the U. S. a suggestion that the S. A. L. T. talks should go on as if nothing had happened, and America has been very careful to cover up its own interventions in Angola. China has for many years been active in Africa with technicians and help in development so the possibility of communist neo-colonialism is not impossible.

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China having made her own revolution, at great cost, with many sacrifices, many mistakes and many compromises, presents an interesting case-study in Revolution.

The early days of anti-colonial revolution in China in the twenties and thirties was a text-book specimen of Trots-



kyism versus Stalinism where the Stalinists with their concessions to the bourgeois Chinese nationalist Kuomintang double-crossed the revolutionary workers, with their anarcho-syndicalist tendencies, and betrayed the Shanghai General Strike.

This marriage of convenience between the Kuomintang and the Communists lasted through many betrayals on and off until the final defeat of Chiang-Kai-Shek. In its weary course many old comrades of Mao were killed by those with whom later Mao fought the Japanese invader.

The Long March is the most heroic episode of the Chinese Communist Revolution. In its scale and scope it was a simple retreat to territory safe from the attacks of the Kuomintang. The defeat of Japan found the Chinese armies (of both factions) well armed and the final struggle found Mao the winner and Chiang-Kai-Shek exiled to Taiwan where his alternative government of China was humiliatingly repudiated by his sponsor, the United States.

The appalling McWhirter brothers published in their Guinness Book of Records an unsubstantiated claim that one of the world's greatest massacres took place in China at the time of Mao's seizure of power. Whether this is true or not we have no means of knowing, but knowing the McWhirters' right-wing bias it is unlikely that the deaths were as many as claimed.

What is certain is that there was much persecution and brain washing of intellectuals and bourgeois in order not only to convert them to communism but to use their services and talents at the same time and not to make the mistake of Soviet Russia in executing and deporting such talents.

The saddest case which concerns anarchists was that of Pa-Chin (his revolutionary name a compound from Bakunin and Kropotkin) who was a Chinese anarchist writer who made his peace with the Communists and re-wrote some of his novels to give a 'correct' Communist slant and apologised for his errors. In 1957 he joined the Maoist campaign for freedom of speech ('Let a Hundred Flowers Bloom') but in 1958 he had to apologise again; in 1962 he was again demanding freedom of expression (See *Pa Chin and His Writings* Olga Lang, Harvard Univ. Press 1967).

Mao with his self-educated background, his poetic tastes is a different type from the militarist-politicos who usually seize power. Even his rhetoric is poetical. The 'Hundred Flowers' and the contemptuous (but untrue) dismissal of the Western atomic strength as 'paper tigers' shows an imagination which could be dangerous or constructive. He was schooled in the doctrine of 'Know your enemy' and (in the twenties) with anarchism so that his avoidance of centralization (disastrous in the Great Leap Forward) and shunning of agricultural collectivization are lessons which he has thoroughly learned.

Whether his successors will have as much imagination is doubtful. All that

we know is that so much power in the hands of a State is dangerous both to people and rulers no matter how benevolent the intention and technically successful the apparatus. We have seen the future of State Communism and it doesn't work.

Jack Robinson.

## PAPAL BULL

MUCH BEWILDERMENT has been expressed lately about Monsignor Benelli's recent statement on his dubious form of "morality". It is not worth commenting in FREEDOM on the whys and wherefores of his senile stupidity.

In fact the real purpose of the document has nothing to do with the contents of the document. Readers may have noted that the Socialist Party in Italy (PSI) recently forced the Italian government to resign when they withdrew support from the coalition led by Moro. Readers may also have noticed that many reforms have been taking place in Italian life which tend towards greater freedom from the backward alliance between Church and State (e.g. divorce,



THE PAPAL BLESSING

the campaign for the abortion reform, new laws on the family).

Not only the paranoid Henry Kissinger but also the Vatican has been watching the electoral advances of the dreaded Communists (PCI) with dismay. Since, the PSI has been threatening withdrawal of support and hence the bringing about of early elections. For some time, there was a need for the necessary propaganda to be prepared.

The Pope's recent statement of his own hypocrisy can thus be seen as an attempt to polarise the political factions in Italy in anticipation of the elections. Of course, in the meantime, the mental anguish of millions of people around the world has been increased because of a purely domestic political matter.

This type of absurd situation will con-

tinue to occur until the power and privilege of the State and all its hangers-on is completely destroyed.

Much political capital is being made by the Italian right wing through the demonstrations and subsequent police reprisals which the "papal bull" has provoked. For instance, on Saturday 17th January a massive demonstration was held by feminist groups and other sympathisers outside Milan cathedral. There was an attempt to occupy the cathedral and this was heavily repressed by the "forces of order". Extra-parliamentary left-wing groups were holding a separate demonstration nearby (2,000 people - against Iranian death sentences) and they came upon the scene, which unleashed two hours of pitched street battles.

The document is deliberately provocative and is seen by Italian progressives as an attempt to put the clock back. Hence the document is achieving its intention of polarising political opinion so that further weight will be given to the Christian Democrats rather than the other fringe right-wing parties. If the document also polarises Italians to vote for the PCI, the Vatican will not be too worried since Berlinguer is quite adept at licking the Pope's arse in order to arrive at the "holy grail" of the "historic compromise".

Francesco.

## IN BRIEF

THE NATIONAL Council for Civil Liberties brought the case against birching in the Isle of Man before the European Commission in Strasbourg. The authorities in the Island resent the Commission's censures against this barbaric survival and have threatened to withdraw their associate membership of the European Economic Community. They share this feudal right with the Channel Islands, Malta and Turkey.

AN ENGINEER at Marconi who protested against his company signing an £8 million contract to supply military communications equipment to South Africa has been given 'punishment' conditions of service. These include a radical reduction in status at the Research Laboratories, a ban on broadcasting about the S. African contract or on any other subject and a ban on his continuing development of a system he had invented.

FIFTEEN women workers in a small textile factory near Dieppe, North West France, had been in occupation of the factory for a month when on Nov. 26 a group of hired heavies stormed the works. They threw the women out during a night shift and one of the workers had to be taken to hospital. The next morning, 1000 people demonstrated their support outside the factory and the women took the opportunity to go back into the factory to reoccupy it. They had originally been in occupation after a lockout following the sacking of two union representatives. --P.N.S.



# SPAIN

## AN ANARCHIST FUTURE ?

IN HIS article on Spain in WIN (see "Through the Anarchist Press", p.16) Murray Bookchin says,

"...The great unknown in Spain is the size and influence of the anarchist groups... As recently as a few weeks ago, the most pessimistic accounts I heard denied the very existence of an anarchist movement in such traditional centres of anarchism as Barcelona and Zaragoza... There is now evidence that this image is inaccurate. Recent police round-ups of scores of anarchists reveal that the size and certainly the influence of the movement has been greatly underestimated. Although I have heard enough conflicting opinions to wonder whether this movement is very large or very small. I am quite convinced from the police arrests that an indigenous substrata within Spain nourishes anarchist activity and organization. It would indeed be surprising that a CNT or at least CNT nuclei do not exist in Spanish factories and villages. Acknowledgment of CNT activity appears even in Workers' Commissions documents I have read."

Testimony to the strength of the anarchist movement in Spain has recently come from a strange quarter - De Gaulle's Minister of Culture, André Malraux. Malraux, of course, was a pilot on the Republican side in the Spanish Civil War, and thus must have had first hand knowledge of the role of the anarchist movement in the Spanish Revolution. In an interview with the French magazine, *Le Nouvel Observateur* (published on 27 October 1975), he said, in response to a question about the future turn of events in Spain:

"There can be no categorical answer. What the French people do not know is that the only real mass organization in Spain is the anarchist one..." "In Spain there is a real, non communist working class movement, an anarchist one, whether it calls itself F.A.I. or whatever. It is organized underground."

It's hard to take Malraux's assertions without a large pinch of salt. Possibly he can't believe that an organisation as strong as the anarchist movement in Spain in the Thirties could just have withered away, but he's supported in his feeling by two professional students of the Spanish scene in the latest issue of *Government and Opposition*, *A Journal of Comparative Politics* (Winter, 1976).

In his article, "After Franco, Franquismo?" J. Romero Maura (who wrote the article on Spanish Anarchism in the special issue of *Government and Opposition* which was turned into the book *Anarchism Today*) forecasts that if Juan Carlos is forced to concede a truly "democratic" form of government

"...Anarcho-syndicalism is almost

certainly bound to come back in a democratic Spain under one form or another and forcefully. The methods to which the workers' commissions are accustomed are very much akin to the traditional anarcho-syndicalist practice, and the Spanish movement has a record of efficient decentralized organization under conditions of liberal government. The lightheartedness with which prospects of a return of anarchist influence among Spanish workers are usually shrugged off is astonishing. Even if the anarchist movement has lost most of its organization in the years of Francoism, it has a bottomless mine of political capital in the form of past heroism and performance, which experience tells us will be quickly remembered if and where its record and traditions were really forgotten. The re-emergence of anarchism is likely to radicalize working-class politics, but paradoxically it is at the same time likely to have a stabilizing effect in the short term: the anarchists do not have the reputation of being infiltrators or putschists, and anyone who cares to find out knows that it is precisely because of their deep revolutionary commitment that they refuse even to attempt to seize power with Blanquiste or bolshevik methods."

The Professor in the History of Economic Doctrines at the University of Madrid, Pedro Schwartz, in his article, "Politics first - the economy after Franco", sees anarchism as the underlying ideology of the Spanish Left,

"The Left too has a tradition to draw on which may govern its automatic reactions if it comes near to power. This is not the Welfare State or Fabian version of socialism but the kind of anarcho-syndicalist shop-floor autonomy which came into force especially in Republican Spain while the fight against Franco was going on."

"The strong tradition is to be found... with the anarchist... strand, and much of one's forecasts about the economy, if the Left comes to rule, depends on this clash between modern economic calculation and a tradition of self-rule on the shop-floor, though the goal of equality is common to both. (This is not to say that the anarchists are at present important as a party - they are almost non-existent as an organization. However the tradition is there, and the importance of trade unionism in Spain today makes anarcho-syndicalism as influential as if there were a FAI in full working order.)"

The weight one gives to the strength of anarchism in Spain today depends on how much one treats the "comisiones obreras" (workers' commissions) as mere creatures of the Spanish Communist Party or as "very much akin to the traditional anarcho-syndicalist practice". The current (Nov.-Dec. 1975) issue of *Black Flag* carries a statement on its back page by an organization calling itself "Federacion Obrera Iberica", which says that it is working for the reconstruction of the CNT in Spain and rejects "all collaboration with the Comisiones Obreras (the UGT does not really exist) unless they shake off the domi-

nation by the Communist Party".

In his article Bookchin, although very critical of a tendency within the commissions to call for a unified trade union movement, which he sees as advantageous only to the Communists, says that they "are by no means controlled by the Communists" and that their illegal status has imparted to them "a democratic, nearly anarchic character", and that they "must adopt decentralized forms of organization and loose, highly democratic structures if they are to maintain the wide spread adherence they enjoy in Spain -- structures which political parties prudently avoid as too libertarian".

The commissions were certainly an autonomous creation of the working class in their strikes for better wages, in the middle of the Spanish "economic miracle" in the early 1960s. They were a reaction to the corporatist "vertical sindicatos" imposed on the workers by Franco in the shape of the CNS, to restrain strikes and wage-demands, and they came as a great shock to the Communist Party which had been pursuing a line of "using official channels" and infiltrating the CNS for many years.

They constituted, in fact, a threat to the Communist Party's Leninist labour strategy, its hegemony of "real" trade union activism. If the party was to maintain its theory of the necessary "vanguard" of middle-class intellectuals guiding the workers to political revolution, it had to take over this "spontaneist" movement, and this it proceeded to do, with most success in the Madrid area. It was greatly aided by Franco's illegalization of all opposition groups, which left the Communists (the only group to receive massive outside financing) as the strongest by far of the illegal opposition organizations, the one offering the most facilities to movements such as the commissions.

However the takeover by the Communists had a very negative effect on many of the commissions, particularly outside Madrid. In his recent book, *Catalonia: A profile*, Victor Alba writes the following:

"The workers' commissions appeared first in individual firms. A fairly loose relationship was established among the different commissions of similar industries and in the same locality. In 1965 and afterwards, these commissions were very active and led big strikes and protest demonstrations. But in Catalonia, they soon fell into disrepute because the Communists succeeded in controlling the leadership.

"It must not be forgotten that among Catalan workers the anarcho-syndicalist influence has survived. This has perhaps been more because of tradition than ideology. There are also active militants in the illegal union struggle. Any activity that has not the support of these militants is destined to fail. Therefore when the Catalan Communists succeeded in taking control of the first workers' commissions that had been formed, the latter were isolated, and the workers did not obey their orders."



In fact the workers' commissions rapidly became a battleground for the fight between the Communist Party and other ambitious Leninist "vanguards" for control of the national co-ordinating functions; and this factional squabbling for bureaucratic supremacy so disgusted some members of the commissions, that an attempt was made to set up separate, autonomous workers' commissions.

Meanwhile the Communist Party was further discrediting itself with a majority of workers by its policy of sucking up to powerful sections of the middle class. This policy was based on Carrillo's traditional Marxist analysis of Spain's path to revolution, i.e. that it must first achieve a bourgeois revolution by means of an alliance between workers and the middle class.

E. Fanelli, in an article in the Italian anarchist monthly, *A--Rivista Anarchica* (December 1975) reports that the CNT is reconstituting itself in factories and dockyards, and that,

"...some Workers' Commissions, disillusioned by the compromised, interclass policies of the national co-ordinating body controlled by the Spanish Communist Party, are incorporating themselves into the CNT..."

In fact, should a democratic break occur, it's quite possible that Carrillo's current (and normal) Leninist-Machia-vellian policies may backfire as badly in Spain as Cunhal's Stalinist line in Portugal. In his article Romero Maura sees the following as one possible scenario for the future of the Spanish Communist Party,

"...the reformist line and cadre discipline propounded by the Secretary General is bound to attract large numbers of opportunists along with genuine converts through the front door, many of whom come from the tertiary sector of the economy, while old-time revolutionary militants quietly abandon the CP through the back door to join the extra-parliamentary Marxist Left or the anarchists. If the party continues to pursue a policy of maximum infiltration in the civil service and the media, that process will be accelerated until the infiltration of the party by opportunist careerists begins seriously to sap its strength. The party's apparent ubiquitous character would then be a token of its isolation from the revolutionary working class."

As usual the Communist Party's *realpolitik* turns out to be no different in effect from the "real politics" of the oligarchic parliamentary parties dedicated to the "social democratic" maintenance of exploitation. To judge from Portugal however, people's acquiescence to the CP's claim that it intends a higher good despite its malicious tactics is rapidly disappearing. Perhaps principles are about to make a comeback: perhaps the Iberian peninsula will have an anarchist future.

D.L.M.

## IN BRIEF

IT WAS belatedly realized by the British government that the Chilean government was using torture against political suspects after the revelations of Dr. Cassidy. Meanwhile Chilean air force personnel were visiting Britain to view and train for the Hawker-Hunter combat plane with a view to possible purchase. Torture was not employed by the arms salesmen.

THE BOOKSHOP of *Le Monde Libertaire* in Paris was bombed on 23 Dec. by some Spanish fascists, following a meeting organised by a French Anarchist Federation group for "L'Espagne Libertaire". The French CNT had also been bombed several days earlier.

SEATTLE psychologists who examined practitioners of transcendental meditation discovered that nearly all of them spend half their meditation time in snoozing. A Massachusetts man said, "I spent \$125. I meditated for six months and do you know what happened? I fell asleep every time."

ACCORDING to *The Guardian*, International Socialists expelled eighteen members, including some of long standing and formerly on the executive. The six-man executive committee expelled about 100 members during the last year. This, said the *Guardian*, "marks the end of I.S.'s reputation as probably the most open and least factious of the revolutionary socialist parties". Membership has fallen by 600 to under

3,000 and the print order for the party's weekly *Socialist Worker* has been halved from the 1974 record level of 50,000. These expulsions follow criticism of the Central Committee for becoming autocratic and intolerant. I.S. had been planning to launch a new 'mass' party called the 'Socialist Workers' Party'. Arguments within I.S. were that their analysis was 'absurdly optimistic', failing to come to grips with the continued reformism of the trade unions.

A NEW group called the International Communist League has been formed, consisting of members of Workers' Power (formerly Left Alternative); Workers' Fight, and dissident members of the W.R.P. Will they never learn?

*Soviet News* prints an article complaining that the BBC and French television showed a picture 'allegedly of a Soviet labour camp'. It is not denied by *Soviet News* (in either of its articles) that it was a correctional labour camp, a construction site attached to a prison at Riga, Latvia. The barbed wire, sentry tower and guards (presumably armed) are not unusual 'as long as men serving prison sentences have to be guarded'. Even on a construction site? ...In fact, it is later stated it was a demolition site. Then there is the curious case of the number plates. The *Literaturnaya Gazeta* investigated the number plate LAG (denoting a prison camp) shown on the film and found that it was a common number plate in Latvia. In fact the film is described as showing the letters LAG on the sides of the lorries. However Soviet sources deny there are any political prisoners in the camp. But we know that the definition of 'political' crimes in the USSR is as broad as their definition of insanity, which includes 'reformism'.

Sancho Panza

## F.B.

BOOKSHOP open Tues.-Fri. 2 - 6 pm  
(Thursdays until 8 pm)  
Saturdays 10 am-4 pm

Any book not in stock but in print can be supplied. If ordering by mail please add postage as in brackets.

*Black Rose* a journal of contemporary anarchism (USA) 60p (14p)  
*The Kronstadt Uprising*, Ida Mett. 75p (14p)  
*The Wilhelmshaven Revolt*, "Icarus" 45p (9p)  
*Les Anarchistes Russes et les Soviets*, Alexandre Skirda (ed.), 90p (11p)  
*Anarchisme et Marxisme dans la Revolution Russe*, 90p (14p)  
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*A Primer of Libertarian Education*, Joel Spring, £ 2.00 (19p)  
*Insurgent Mexico*, John Reed £ 1.00 (21p)

*The Labor Wars : From the Molly Maguires to the Sitdowners.* £ 2.10 (21p)

*The Story of Utopia*, Lewis Mumford £ 1.75 (26p)

*The Defense of Gracchus Babeuf*, transl. by John A. Scott, £ 1.50 (16p)

## F.P.

PUBLICATIONS

COLLECTIVES IN THE SPANISH REVOLUTION  
Gaston Leval, 368pp. Cloth £ 4 (48p) \$10  
Paper £ 2 (42p) \$5  
LESSONS OF THE SPANISH REVOLUTION  
Vernon Richards 240pp. Cl. £ 1.50 (48p) \$4  
Paper £ 0.75 (42p) \$2  
ABC OF ANARCHISM, Alexander Berkman 32pp 25p (11p) 75c  
ABOUT ANARCHISM, Nicolas Walter 32pp 15p (6p) 40c  
ANARCHISM AND ANARCHO-SYNDICALISM, Rudolf Rocker. 48pp 20p (9p) 65c  
ANARCHY, Errico Malatesta, 54pp 25p (9p) 75c  
BAKUNIN & NECHAEV, Paul Avrich, 32pp 20p (9p) 65c  
THE STATE, ITS HISTORIC ROLE, Peter Kropotkin, 56pp. 20p (11p) 65c  
NEITHER EAST NOR WEST, sel. writings 1939-48 M. L. Berneri 192pp. 35p (16p) \$1



## MEETINGS

EAST LONDON Libertarians Group next meeting will be on Wednesday Jan. 28 at 7.30 at 115 Stamford Rd., East Ham, E.6.

LONDON Sat. 7 Feb. AWA Open Day School, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, 10 am-6pm. Creche provided. 30p in advance, 40p at door.

BOLTON. N.W. Anarchists: The Meeting at The Balmoral, Bradshaw Gate, opp. Studio One. 7 Feb., 7pm-11 pm. Details tel. Bolton 387510. (Anarchism Lancastrium)

OLDHAM. N.W. Workers Meeting. Speaker Frank Stansfield on Shop Floor Organisation in Engineering, at Bath Hotel, Union St., Oldham, on Thurs. Jan 29 at 8 pm

GLASGOW. Spain: The Struggle in Spain, Speakers Miguel Garcia and Albert Meltzer Feb 10 7.30 pm at McLellan Galleries, Sauchiehall St., Glasgow

NEW YORK: Bakunin Centennial 1876-1976 1976.

Sam Dolgoff: Bakunin & Marx: The First International

Olga Lang: Bakunin and Asia

Paul Avrich: Bakunin and America.

Friday, March 5, 7 pm at Workmen's Circle Center, 369 8th Ave., N.Y.C. (SW crnr 29 St.) Free admission, refreshments, Questions, Discussion. Libertarian Book Club, G.P.O. 842, New York 10001.

WE WELCOME news, reviews, letters, articles Latest date for receipt of copy for inclusion in next review section is Monday 26 January; news/features/letters/announcements Monday 2 February.

# CONTACT

\*NEXT DESPATCHING date of FREEDOM is Thursday 5 February. You are welcome each Thursday afternoon to early evening for informal get-together & folding session.

SAN FRANCISCO: A meeting will be held in near future to set up a Bay Area organization to carry out libertarian socialist (council communist/anarchist collectivist) perspectives. Independent collectives & interested individuals with anti-Statist, anti-electoral views invited to participate. Write or call us to discuss and for copies of proposals. L.S.F. P.O. Box 1587, S.F. Cal. 94101. S.F. 552-3762. Oak. 893-6872

W.GERMANY. 9-11 April. Film review on Spanish Civil War at Schwäbisch Hall. The communal cinema "Kino im Schafstall" will show documentary films. Augustin Souchy will speak on "The Social Revolution in Spain". More details from Paul Zimmermann, 717 Schwäbisch Hall, Johanniterstr. 17.

LONDON, Hyde Park, Speakers Corner. Anarchist Forum alternate Sundays 1 pm Speakers, listeners & hecklers welcomed

## GROUPS

BATH anarchist & non-violent activists contact Banana, c/o Students Union, The University, Claverton Down, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM anarchists contact Bob Prew, 40C, Trafalgar Rd., Moseley, B'ham 13.

BOLTON anarchists contact 6 Stockley Ave. Harwood, Bolton (tel. 387516).

Anyone interested in the Syndicalist Workers Federation in Bolton area contact or write SWF at this address

CORBY anarchists write 7 Cresswell Walk, Corby, Northants NN1 211

COVENTRY. Peter Corne, c/o Union of Students, Univ. of Warwick, Coventry.

DUNDEE. Alistair Dempster, c/o Students Union, Airlie Place, Dundee

EAST LONDON Libertarians write c/o Ken Weller, 123 Lathom Rd. East Ham, E.6.

GLASGOW now has a centre at 17 Bute Gdns Hillhead, Glasgow.

EDINBURGH, Bob Gibson, 7 Union Road, Edinburgh

HARROW. Write Chris Rosner, 20 Trescoe Gdns, Rayners Lane, Harrow HA2 9TB

IRELAND. Libertarian Communists contact Alan Mac Simoin, 4 Ard Lui Park, Blackrock, Co. Dublin

LEEDS anarchists contact Cahal McLaughlin, 15 Brudenell Grove, Leeds

LEICESTER Anarchist Group, contact Pete and Joan Miller, 41 Norman St.. Tel. 549652.

LEICESTER Libertarian Circle meets Thursdays at Black Flag Bookshop, 1 Wilne Street.

OXFORD anarchist group c/o Jude, 38 Hurst Street.

PORTSMOUTH, Rob Atkinson, 21 Haverstock Road, Southsea, Portsmouth, Hants.

SIDCUP & BEXLEY. Will any anarchists contact 29 Halfway St., Sidcup, Kent.

NEW ZEALAND. Steve Hey, 34 Buchanans Rd., Christchurch 4. (tel. 496 793

## PEOPLE/PUBLICATIONS &c.

SIMON O'D of Eire - please write again, this time including your address, to R.Y.B. C.P. Stn. Place D'Armes, Montreal, P.Q. H2Y 3E9, Canada.

CLAUDE, who from time to time writes articles for publication in FREEDOM and A BATALHA, wishes it to be known that he is not the Claude who wrote an article on Portugal in the French publication LA LANTERNE NOIRE No. 4.

PORTUGAL. The Portuguese Anarcho-Syndicalist paper A BATALHA (sales 5000 copies per fortnight) needs the support of all comrades outside Portugal. Send your donations, books, pamphlets &c. to A BATALHA, Rua Angelina Vidal, 17-2-E, LISBOA

## PRISONERS

RONNIE LEE (184051) HM Prison, The Verne, Portland, Dorset, serving a sentence for action against vivisection, etc. Postcards.

DUBLIN ANARCHISTS Bob Cullen, Des Keane, Columba Longmore, Noel Murray & Ronan Stenson. Address for letters & papers: Military Detention Centre, Curragh Camp, Co. Kildare, Eire. MARIE MURRAY is in Limerick Prison.

STOKE NEWINGTON FIVE Welfare Committee still needs funds for books &c. Box 252, Camden High St., London, NW1

RALF STEIN is still at 5 KOLN 30, Rochusstrasse 350, Germany.

GIOVANNI MARINI - up to date information awaited.

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 Federation of London Anarchist Groups  
 presents a public meeting on  
 ANARCHISM & ORGANIZATION  
 Venue: The Roebuck Public House  
 108a Tottenham Court Road  
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 Time: 7.30 p.m.  
 Date: Sunday, 25th of January.  
 Organized by Central London Anarchist  
 Group  
 All welcome.  
 F.L.A.G. Secretariat c/o Freedom  
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# 1976

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## DOLGOFF'S 'PRACTICAL ANARCHISTS' DILEMMA versus PRINCIPLES

DOLGOFF CONCLUDES his hatchet job\* on Semprun-Maura's valuable, un-academic factually-based critical analysis of the Spanish revolution with a heckler's outburst: "Unable to work out a constructive, practical approach to the universal problems raised by the Spanish Revolution, Semprun becomes an escapist: retreats into a sterile, self-defeating, narrow-minded, pedantic individualism."

One has but to re-read Dolgoff's article and this concluding sentence to realise that it consists mainly of wind and words, and is a monument to the ravages that fifty years of the so-called "constructive, practical, approach" have wrought on Sam Dolgoff.

It is rightly said that in war the first casualty is truth. It could equally be said, I think, that principles are the first casualty in revolutions. Yet no anarchist surely would deny that principled action is the most important aspect of anarchist tactics which distinguishes anarchists from the revolutionary Left in general.

Dolgoff's approach is that principles are noble and fine so long as they are not allowed to interfere with Action, not apparently realising that the "cult of action" can be as negative as inaction is, and certainly the consequences in terms of human misery and suffering and lives uselessly sacrificed (while warming the cockles of the hearts of those who measure the "importance" of a movement by the length of its martyrology and the number of bloody encounters with the forces of "law and order") have in general proved to be more harmful than beneficial to the cause. Partly because the repression that follows causes further victims and partly because the long term effects are to demoralise a whole generation. How else can one explain the Francoist regime's thirty-five years of virtually unchallenged rule?

Dolgoff and many others who think like him draw a distinction between theory and principles and since they pride themselves with being "practical anarchists" they declare "theory" an expendable luxury in critical situations but are apparently unaware that when they choose to ignore the theory they are at the same time throwing the basic principles of anarchism overboard.

To judge by a recent interview with him published in Black Rose (Somerville, Mass., Spring 1975) Dolgoff has always had an outspoken contempt for principles/theory in presenting himself as a man of action. For instance, on the question of his position in the last war he told his interviewer:

"Well, we had a big dispute. There were anarchists who said 'We're against the war and that's the end of it. We don't give a damn, it is an imperialist war.' There were others like Maximoff, Rocker and the rest, who were adamantly against World War I and went to jail about it, but who felt in World War II we should defeat the Nazis. And I was one of them. And if this be treason, all right and all that. In fact my biggest fear was that they'd make peace with the Nazis and they would get together, you know. But we took the position that we're not going to have any wage freeze during the war, and that there shouldn't be any profits made out of the war, and that all the rich should go to it too."

\*This is the third article in reply to Sam Dolgoff's "Autopsy on a Revolution" (FREEDOM No. 46-47, 1975). The two previous ones, Dolgoff's Dilemma and The New Bureaucrats appeared in FREEDOM Nos. 49 & 50. Copies are still available at 10p each (post 5p single issue, 8p for 3).

And did Sam pick up his musket and join the anti-fascist crusade? No, he stayed behind to wage the "class struggle"!

"We carried on our propaganda, we didn't fly no flag, we didn't adjourn the class struggle. We remained militant, but we also wanted to get rid of Hitler."

Federica Montseny, another "practical anarchist", in 1937 was arguing in a similar way to Dolgoff. Addressing a huge meeting in Paris shortly after the Caballero government had fallen (May 1937) and with it the four CNT-FAI ministers, including Montseny, she declared:

"Comrades the hour is not for theory: for all free consciences in the world, there exists at this moment a single enemy: fascism. We do not get lost in the domain of theory; it is too easy, in fact, to avoid the responsibilities of the hour by seeking in our literature the justification for inaction; it is too easy to seek refuge behind the affirmations of this or that theoretician in order to say 'no, we cannot act in this manner'. It is much more painful, but much more courageous to look life in the face and to act in accordance with the reality of the moment."

Because the "reality of that moment" (June 1937 - a year after the military uprising) was for anarchists that the revolution was lost and the war could not be won their principle concern then should have been to prevent further useless sacrifice of life and to call on the workers to live to fight another day. Instead they joined the chorus for militarisation, and a full scale war of fronts; military offensives, staged at the cost of thousands of young lives merely to satisfy party political ambitions, and which always ended in defeat.

But the CNT-FAI leaders had already lost any authority or prestige they may have enjoyed by showing themselves only too willing from the first days of the armed struggle to contain the revolutionary impetus of the people in arms and to contribute to the rehabilitation of the moribund governments of Barcelona and Madrid, instead of encouraging it to develop as far as the popular imagination would allow.

As I have written elsewhere\*\* such a course would have certainly shortened the struggle and could well have ended in defeat for the revolutionaries in the first few weeks. But it would have been defeat when the revolutionary expectations were still high, the people still armed and with the wherewithal for continuing the struggle by other means.

Dolgoff has obviously learned nothing from the Spanish experience, nor even presumably from that World Crusade II against Fascism which apart from the price paid in lives and destruction, saddled us with two super "fascist" powers (with a third one inching its way forward) whose sinister interventionist roles in the several struggles of the past thirty years in every corner of the globe, make "intervention" in the Spanish civil war seem almost insignificant.

Federica Montseny not only eventually recognised that governmental participation had been a mistake but it would seem

\*Umanita Nova, Sept. 17, 1966

\*\*Maiaesta -- Life and Ideas, p. 299 (out of print)



that as far as the future is concerned she believes that the well tried anarchist theories/principles should be allowed to lead to guide anarchist action. In an interview published by the Italian anarchist weekly\* nearly ten years ago she expressed the view that:

"an eventual participation by the C.N.T. in government in post-Francoist Spain, would represent the worst kind of catastrophe. The role the C.N.T. can play in the Spain of tomorrow would be rendered impossible, for one cannot be at the same time in the street and in the government. The experiences of the Labour Party in Britain and the Socialist Party in France, to quote but two examples, are unequivocal proofs of this."

Peirats in his recent, and more critical, writings\* describes the CNT-FAI luminaries as narrow-minded revolutionaries lacking imagination and "without a real anarchist-

morality" and in the circumstances they did what anybody else would do and took the easy road "opting for the least effort". But, as Peirats points out, anarchists cannot do what "everybody else would do in the circumstances". So to the question "What could the libertarian movement do?" he found himself concluding that half the question could be answered by posing another question, "What should not have been done?"

And when we start answering that question we are talking about principles, anarchist principles, forged and tempered over the years by experience and observation of human behaviour, of human potential as well as human frailty.

V. R.

\*Presencia, (No. 6, Nov/Dec. 1966) quoted in Lessons of the Spanish Revolution (Freedom Press, 1972), p. 233.

# REVENGE IS SOUR

THE RECENT killings in Northern Ireland have evoked the continuing press response that Ulster is in a state of 'anarchy', that the country is without law. Parallels are made with Chicago gangsters and the usual solution of bringing in the heavy mob (in this case the Special Air Service) is advocated.

It would be useless to try to disabuse minds so clouded with a prejudice for law and order but if there is one thing Ireland has suffered from it is too much law and order, whether they be the laws of God or the laws of man, the secular order or the divine order. As for guardians of law and order, Ireland is absolutely full of them. All to no avail and the slaughter goes on.

As to the parallel with Chicago gangsters, the foundation stone for their bloody operations was the law; a law to prohibit the consumption and distribution of alcohol. The mayhem that took place in the twenties and thirties was principally to ensure that the customer got his liquor from the right quarters.

There is a slight temptation to feel that the institution of personal vengeance is an acceptable substitute for law and order, especially when law and order have failed (as they usually do) to fulfil their purpose. But this is largely a romantic concept based upon American cowboy ideas of vigilantes and limited non-racial lynchings.

The idea of vengeance which seems to be a purely personal satisfaction is disguised in many cases as just retribution. In some supposedly savage tribes the perpetrator of a murder was allowed to replace the murdered man as father and breadwinner, a pale shadow of this is the Scandinavian penal system. Faced with the niggling question, "Why don't you think of the victims?" the 'savage' answer is more realistic than that of capital punishment or its 'lawless' substitute, random collective murder.

But the Protestant-Catholic killings in Northern Ireland have more the aspect of feuds than of an attempt to settle a geo-political argument. The feud is a social phenomenon which recurs from time to time.

In Kentucky the Hatfield-McCoy feud persisted over many years with hundreds of deaths in both families. Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet depicting the Montagu-Capulet feud was based upon real life in mediaeval Italy. The Sicilian vendetta with its Mafiosa connections is still extant. Many of these feuds were based upon disputes on questions of property but their persistence is due to habit and the accumulation of mythologies and notions of 'honour'. The whole perpetuation of feuds is a denial of reason and many survive when the reason for their existence has been forgotten or has disappeared.

These persistent feuds are mainly family affairs but national, communal and racial feuds are more highly institutionalised.

Many, indeed, are dignified by the name of war.

Combatants are generally denounced (from each side) as heretics but the basis for the greatest racial feud of history (i.e. antisemitism) is the orthodox doctrine laid down in the books in the New Testament that the Jews killed Jesus Christ who was supposedly the New Messiah of the Christian religion -- assuming that he did exist.

In the slum-streets of America, Catholic children have been known to shout 'Christ-killers' after Jewish children. The responsibility of Christianity for the persecution of the Jews is rarely followed up. But it is obvious that whether exacerbated or not the religious differences (whatever they are) between Protestant and Catholic have fuelled the fires of hatred.

For probably the first time since the crusades a civil war (in the Lebanon) is openly admitted to be between Christians and Muslims; strategically it is to the advantage of Israel that such a civil war should take place and the Christianity seems to be no more than a label.

The Christian idea of vengeance is perpetuated by the precepts of the Old Testament 'Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, I will repay'. Millennial and fanatical sects have been known to act as agents of the Lord, fulfilling in their massacres the divine will, as interpreted by them. This was perpetuated in the dictum 'an eye for an eye' which was supposedly supplanted by the teachings of the crucified leader of the Christian sect. Even so mild mannered a man as George Fox, the Quaker, wrote with smug satisfaction of a magistrate who had persecuted him, "Later I heard that he had died."

This precept of vengeance has been organised by the State into its system of law and punishment. Having been codified it is a long way from the crudity of personal vengeance.

There is something human, at least, in the sudden passion of revenge, if only it could be freed from the underlying ideas of possession, particularly as shown in the crime passionelle. "Nobody is free at the moment of action". . . but the cold anger and calculated cruelty of the vendetta, the feud and the State are far removed from human (and forgivable) emotions.

Jack Robinson.

P O R T U G A L : Libertarian Publications & Contacts  
[cont. from page 16]

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S I N T R A



# RUSSIAN ANARCHISM

WHEN THE influence of anarchism is on the rise, the mills of Soviet historiography set to work in a feverish effort to counteract it. So it was that the Spanish Revolution of the 1930s occasioned the appearance of Emelian Yaroslavsky's history of Russian anarchism, a book so full of errors and distortions that another Soviet writer has dismissed it as "an accusatory rather than a scholarly work". In recent years, by the same token, the emergence of anarchist tendencies within the New Left has provoked a spate of Soviet diatribes which lump anarchism with Trotskyism and Maoism as kindred counterrevolutionary ideologies. A case in point is B. M. Leibson's *Melkoburzhuaizny revoliutsionerizm (Ob anarkhizme, trotskizme i maoizme [Petty-Bourgeois Revolutionism: On Anarchism, Trotskyism, and Maoism]* (Moscow, 1967, 159pp.), of which an English translation was published in 1971 under the title of *Anarchism, Trotskyism, Maoism*. Similarly, the May 1968 rising in Paris was followed by a flurry of polemical tracts masquerading as scholarly analyses, among them an article in the leading Soviet historical journal, *Voprosy Istorii* (Problems of History), entitled "The Ideological Bankruptcy of Contemporary Neo-Proudhonism".

Some of the recent Soviet works on anarchism have managed to avoid the meat-cleaver approach of vintage Stalinist historiography, and a few have in fact made useful contributions to our knowledge of anarchist history and biography. In previous issues of *FREEDOM* (13 October 1973, 20 October 1973, and 29 March 1975) I have discussed several examples which relate to Bakunin and Kropotkin; and beyond these there is an extraordinary new biography of Stepniak, Evgenia Taratuta's *S. M. Stepniak-Kravchinskii: Revoliutsioner i pisatel' [S. M. Stepniak-Kravchinsky: Revolutionary and Writer]* (Moscow, 1973, 542pp.), which I hope to deal with on another occasion.

The volume under review\*, however, fails in a hybrid category, being part scholarly monograph based on intensive research and part hatchet-job in the familiar Stalinist tradition. On the one hand, S. N. Kanev has had access to Soviet state archives and to rare anarchist periodicals and pamphlets unavailable to Western specialists. This has enabled him to bring to light many interesting facts regarding anarchist publications and organizations, such as the Universalists, Biocosmists, and Neonihilists, in which the brothers Gordin were the principal figures. Especially useful are the statistical tables of anarchist groups and journals and of anarchist representation in soviets, trade unions, and factory committees. We learn, for instance, that during 1918, at the height of the movement, anarchist organizations existed in no less than 130 Russian cities and towns, and that they published 55 newspapers and magazines, some of them in large editions: the Moscow Anarchist-Communist paper *Anarkhiia* (Anarchy) was printed in 20,000 copies, and the Moscow Anarcho-Syndicalist paper *Vol'nyi Golos Truda* (The Free Voice of Labour) in 15,000.

Yet, for all its scholarly pretensions, the book remains essentially in the Stalinist mould, with none of the humanity or flexibility displayed by Valentina Tvardovskaya or Natalia Pirumova in their recent studies of Bakunin and Kropotkin.

\*S. N. Kanev, *Oktiabr'skaia Revoliutsiia i krakh anarkhizma (bor'ba partii bol'shevikov protiv anarkhizma, 1917-1922 gg.) [The October Revolution and the Fall of Anarchism: The Struggle of the Bolshevik Party Against Anarchism, 1917-1922]* (Moscow, 1974, 416pp).

Yaroslavsky's, significantly, is the only previous work on the subject of which Kanev approves, although a fuller and more balanced and up-to-date general history of Russian anarchism was published in 1969 by V. V. Komin of the Kalinin Pedagogical Institute.

Kanev, like Yaroslavsky, pours unremitting vituperation and slander upon the noble figures of the Russian revolutionary tradition, among them Kropotkin, Voline, and Makimo, whom he brands with the old Stalinist epithets of "opportunists", "counterrevolutionaries", "bandits", and "hoorah-insurrectionists". Kanev quotes Lenin's remark that "from anarchism to counterrevolution is but a single step", and he draws a sharp line between "the scientifically based plan of the Communist Party and the utopian projects of the anarchists", which he regards as "petty bourgeois and, in the final analysis, reactionary". He maintains that the Moscow House of Anarchy became "a place for drunken orgies", and that the sailors of Kronstadt worked hand in hand with White Guard officers and foreign imperialists. (Another recent work, S. N. Semanov's *Likvidatsiia antisovetskogo kronshchadtskogo miatezha 1921 goda [The Liquidation of the Anti-Soviet Kronstadt Mutiny of 1921]*—Moscow, 1973, 231pp.), which criticizes my book on the subject and Peter Newell's article in *The Socialist Leader* of February 1971, presents a similar indictment of the rebellion, naming Trotsky as the principal villain and conspirator !)

Kanev, too, writes disparagingly of Western studies of anarchism, including the general histories by James Joll and Daniel Guérin (George Woodcock escapes without mention) as well as my own history of Russian anarchism, all of which are dismissed as worthless "bourgeois falsifications". Kanev's citations, however, are frightfully garbled and inaccurate, so that one doubts his actual ability to read the languages in question. (Among the works he cites, incidentally, is the Freedom Press/Libertarian Book Club edition of Voline's *Unknown Revolution*.) Moreover, his errors of fact and interpretation are far too numerous to list in full. Suffice it to note that he classifies the leading Anarcho-Syndicalist Novomirsky as an Anarchist-Communist, that his title for Voline's anarchist journal in Berlin is incorrect, as are his dates for the journals *Nabat* and *Pochin*, the rank of the Kronstadt officer Solovianov, the name of a well-known factory in Petrograd, and so on.

Kanev, who praises Stalin for his opposition to the anarchists, presents a totally distorted picture of the attitude of the Russian anarchists towards industrial technology and organization, claiming that Kropotkin favoured a return to "primitive instruments of labour". He makes the outlandish assertion that the Kropotkin Museum was presented as a voluntary gift to the Soviet government by Kropotkin's widow. Worse still, he insists that the anarchist movement was not forcibly liquidated by the Bolsheviks but rather expired from its own internal weaknesses. On this score, he would do well to read Solzhenitsyn's *Gulag Archipelago* on the mass arrests of anarchists and other revolutionaries during the earliest years of Soviet rule, not to mention Voline's *Goneniia na anarkhizm v Sovetskoi Rossii* (The Repressions of Anarchism in Soviet Russia), *Letters from Russian Prisons*, Alexander Berkman's *Bolshevik Myth*, Emma Goldman's *My Disillusionment in Russia*, and Gregory Maximoff's *Guillotine at Work*, all of which antedate Solzhenitsyn by several decades.

To support his claim that anarchists went largely unmolested by the authorities -- who preferred, he says, to let the movement die a natural death -- Kanev points out that the Moscow *Anarkhiia* was allowed to reopen after the Cheka raids of April 1918, failing to add, however, that it was shut down permanently later in the year. He says, too, that anarchist clubs remained active for years after the Revolution and continued to send delegates to the soviets. This, however, was true only of those groups and individuals -- Karlin, Gordin, Shatov, Sandomirsky -- who were willing to cooperate with the Bolsheviks. Only so-called "Soviet Anarchists" held seats in the soviets; the rest "sat" in Soviet prisons. And ultimately, under Stalin, even the "Soviet Anarchists" were eliminated, though not a word of this appears in Kanev's book. One must turn, rather, to *Let History Judge*, by the dissident Soviet historian Roy Medvedev, who tells us that Sandomirsky, Shatov, and others, though they "worked in Soviet economic and cultural agencies and taught in schools" and were engaged



A NEW SOVIET HISTORY OF RUSSIAN ANARCHISM in no anti-Soviet activity, were nevertheless "destroyed without open political trials; indeed their arrests were hardly mentioned in the press".

Kanev calls his final chapter "The End of Anarchism in the U.S.S.R." Yet anarchistic ideas and tendencies have survived nearly sixty years of repression, and they will continue to do so as long as Soviet citizens can read the novels of Tolstoy, the autobiography of Kropotkin (reprinted in Moscow in 1966), and other libertarian works, history as well as fiction, poetry as well as prose, including *The Master and Margarita* by Mikhail Bulgakov, in which Joshua Ha Notsri (Jesus Christ) tells Pontius Pilate that "all power is a form of violence exercised over people", and that "the time will come when there will be no rule by Caesar nor any other form of rule. Man will pass into the kingdom of truth and justice where no sort of power will be needed".

Among Soviet dissident intellectuals, moreover, there are some who have been denounced for harbouring anarchistic sympathies or beliefs. The poet Joseph Brodsky (now living in the United States) was accused, during the early 1960s, of belonging to an Individualist Anarchist group in Leningrad, and the historian Peter Yakir was charged in court with spreading the ideas of Bakunin and Kropotkin among Soviet schoolchildren and of conspiring to organize a squadron of anarchist cavalry à la Nestor Makhno! FREEDOM (12

December 1970) has reported the existence of an illegal radio station in the U.S.S.R. calling itself "ANARCHIST" and, more recently (12 October 1974), of an underground group in Leningrad that reissued *Pravda o Kronshtadte* (The Truth About Kronstadt) with full texts of the Kronstadt insurgent newspaper.

A handful of Russian anarchists have managed to survive long terms of prison and forced labour. Passing through the Gulag Archipelago, Solzhenitsyn encountered anarchists and Socialist Revolutionaries who caused him to revise his attitude towards Lenin and the Bolshevik Revolution. During prison riots after Stalin's death, the black flag, according to some reports, was raised over the notorious camps at Vorkuta and Norilsk. And a former political prisoner, now living in Israel, has said that methods of direct action recently used by inmates of Soviet penal colonies were introduced by anarchists of all ages, from young students to veteran grandmothers still alive after half a century of confinement.

When I finished Kanev's book, I told an old Russian anarchist in New York, a disciple of Bakunin and Kropotkin for more than sixty years, about the title of the last chapter, "The End of Anarchism in the U.S.S.R.". His response is worth recording: "He's got things mixed up. The end of Communism will come before the end of Anarchism. The quest for Freedom will never end."

Paul Avrich.

## Sarvodaya Conference

THE CONFERENCE on "A Movement for a Communitarian Society" held on 13th and 14th December 1975, sponsored by the London School of Non-Violence and the journal *The Ecologist* brought together an interesting collection of speakers and participants concerned with the impact of industrial capitalist technology on the total human environment, problems which have a collective impact and are only amenable to a collective solution.

Before starting its discussions on the extensive Manifesto, the conference was presented with a resolution calling on the Indian government to end its emergency powers and to free prisoners. A few years ago such a resolution would have been approved without question; here many people questioned the use of passing such resolutions to governments.

The theme of the conference, as we would be expected, was the creation of a new pattern of living based on small-scale communities having full command over their own political and economic artifacts, and "small is beautiful". Whilst there were groups who felt that salvation lay in another political party (The Ecology Party) many felt this was not the answer. The position of the organisers of the conference was set out in point 7 of the lengthy manifesto:

"We should make it clear that the principle of cooperation for different purposes between different communities, as well as districts, regions, provinces, nations or continents is not in question; we believe that many forms of such cooperation are both desirable

and necessary, but the global confusion of power which now prevails, and the dangers which attend it, compels us to reject many forms of cooperation which are now dominant. We do so because these forms are, for the most part, not the fruit of a free and considered choice from below, but ones imposed on people from above. Hence we assert that the crux of the radical challenge confronting us today is the need to devise and create forms of authority and power in each parish, village, urban precinct or similarly localised community which shall be the natural base and derivative source of all forms of authority which are exercised in human affairs throughout the world." (Emphasis in original.)

The 26 points of the Manifesto covered areas under the headings of Community Government, Family, Fellowship and Locale, Size, Work, The Land, Simplicity, Self-Sufficiency, Reverence for Life. The political ethos of the point set out in full above appeared in point 10: "There is a major current delusion that the apparent freedom people enjoy to engage in political campaigns and even to form their own political parties, is evidence that political freedom prevails. In reality the dominant political parties are themselves instruments for mass manipulation by the leaders, and party conferences are held not so much to ascertain the members' wishes as to engineer a consensus to support what the leaders want...", in point 15 "Freedom in politics means freedom to make decisions, yet the idea of electing parliamentary representatives, whose own powers are largely negated by that of party, and government administrative and executive machines, but who are nonetheless assumed to make laws governing most of the details relating to local schools, hospitals, transport and communication systems, social questions, policing and a host of other matters, has taken such deep root that even now it has scarcely begun to be questioned. It needs to be not simply questioned, but to be rejected outright."

The item on Work in the manifesto was confined to general observations that "work is the major expression of our life-energies, it is our chief contact with reality...", "machines have served us well in reducing the extent of brute toil, especially of kinds that exhaust and deaden our sensibilities" but "must cease to be regarded as axiomatic substitutes for human labour."

LAND: "No man can own the land, any more than the robin or wren can 'own' it, or the slug that crawls upon its surface. But human beings, being thinking animals, can, and must, be the trustees of the land. The farmer does not own the land - the land owns him/her, and this is as it should be..." The Frenchman, Lanza del Vasto, made a series of observations from the point of view of a man who works and lives in a community. Pointing from the ground to the mouth, he said this was the essence of real economics. The community in which he lives is also able to support people going forth to take part in such actions as the one in which the French army was deprived of a vast area of ground [Larzac].

Another speaker who had recently been to Bhutan said this was the only country with a gross national product of nil, and where the quality of life remains very high.

An interesting dialogue between Dr. Schumacher and the Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hanh showed the basic universal concern of the impact of modern technology.

A.A.

WE CAN HAVE RELATIONS OF CO-OPERATION WITH NON-ANARCHIST PARTIES SO LONG AS WE SHARE A NEED TO FIGHT A COMMON ENEMY AND ARE UNABLE TO DESTROY HIM UNAIDED; BUT AS SOON AS A PARTY TAKES POWER AND BECOMES THE GOVERNMENT, THE ONLY RELATIONS WE CAN HAVE WITH IT ARE THOSE BETWEEN ENEMIES.

E. Malatesta (1926)



# THE FLEA CIRCUS

AS EVERY reader of FREEDOM knows, there are only four carnivorous sharks that man has to fear. Carcharodon, the 33 foot long Great White, the Bronze Whaler 33 foot long, the 12 foot long Mako or Blue Pointer and Somniosus and Galeorhinus the 40 foot long Tiger Shark swimming it out for fourth place. We may fear the 50 ton 50 foot long Rhineodon Cetorhinus but he gets through his damp life on a diet of plankton, while Galeorhinus Australia after 320,000,000 years of evolution has ended up as the fish in the fish and chip bag. There was a time when these beautiful creatures were trapped and wasted, for the only use made of them was their liver that contains an excess of Vitamin A while the Chinese used the shark fin either as a Chinese version of Irish stew or as a self raising aphrodisiac but the rest of the body, before the deep freeze, was dumped back into the sea. It was the Australian catering industry who found that their local shark Galeorhinus Australia could be flaked and fried as the fried fish of the fish and chips packet and now despite Hollywood the Australian authorities are desperately trying to conserve the dwindling Gelorhinus Australia against its new enemy the Australian fish fryers. There is no recorded instance of any man, woman, child or beast being attacked by a shark in the Central London area, therefore any novel or film on or of the shark can only interest and/or amuse. There was a time, so many years ago, when we would sit in the French Coffee House in Old Compton Street and talk the dust-dimmed hours away and of that gallant company of happy failures was Billy Kay the drug pusher, the Fox, Quentin Crisp wearing his blue rinse, John Rety the editor of the Cheshire Cat, and among that goodly company Iron Foot Jack. Iron Foot Jack would sit in his corner cadging coffee and cigarettes, dressed, nay draped in his black trilby, black cloak and flowing black muffler and talk of old days, of old basement clubs and of how his foot was bitten off by an Australian shark to be replaced by an iron foot and we all knew that Iron Foot Jack was born into this disturbed world with a club foot but it was a good story well and often told and no one condemned or contradicted it, not even when it appeared in his now pulped autobiography. And Billy Kay vanished into prison and out of our lives, the Fox still sings in the London streets, Quentin Crisp has become a national treasure via the television and John Rety lives in a council flat and Iron Foot Jack is dead and he was the only man I ever met who I choose to believe was bitten by a shark. Yet the shark remains as a thing of horror and the Town and his fish finger frying frau are queuing outside at least four London cinemas for the pleasure

of screaming at director Steven Spielberg's version of Peter son of Robert Benchley's novel Jaws.

Over the years the cinema has offered us all the mighty creatures of fact and fantasy from King Kong to Gerry Healy and we have shared a communal terror at the fate of Fay Wray and Vanessa Redgrave yet in the end it has been the poor tragic beast that has won our sympathy. Giant ants, creatures from the Black Lagoon and the Thing from Outer Space lack that endearing almost human weakness that in the end makes us love them and it is King Kong, Gerry Healy and Donald Duck in the final analysis who form part of our modern folk lore. But the shark even when eating a lovely small-time female bit player cannot win our affection, and Spielberg may have produced the greatest film money maker of all time for this week, but as a film and as a horror thriller it fails to have the audience climbing up the walls. The plot and characterisation is no more than that of any TV soap opera and as the audience are sensibly aware that the shark fin floating along the middle distance is plastic we just sit and wait for the close-ups of the huge killer sardine and when it finally leaps out of the small boat and to swallow Robert Shaw like a bloodied oyster it looks what it is, a studio shark's head of plastic and rubber, and there are more giggles than screams but the Universal distributors public relations officer did a good huckster job and sold the film. But there is still the fact that since 1898 420 people have died from shark attacks in Australian waters and even on well-guarded beaches four swimmers are bitten to death by sharks each year.

But one should not cavil at what, in the fullness of cinematic time, will be accepted as a fairly weak horror film that cannot stand to be compared with such films as the original Old Dark House or Frankenstein. By a curious chance Cornel Wilde's film Sharks' Treasure was released only a week or so before Jaws and in this cheap budget film there is more genuine excitement concerning shark footage than in the expensive Jaws. Cornel Wilde is an odd character who feels deeply about the destruction of our wild life and the pollution of our environment and he turns his films into moral tracts, but as Tom Milne wrote of him, "Wilde maintains his reputation for making the most likable bad movies around", and in Sharks' Treasure the hordes of swimming sharks are real sharks in close and distant shot even when the diving cage is being smashed to pieces by the sharks underwater. Wilde's film is a badly made, cheaply made effort produced by, directed by and starring Cornel Wilde but it is the better film for it is honest and exciting. There is a place for horror in the cinema, otherwise where could one send the children on a school holiday, and the closing minutes of Huston's The Man Who Would Be King offers a more horrific sight than anything in Jaws, but for pure escapism it is a film to be recommended for Huston never made a dull film and this 30-page short story by Rudyard Kipling of a Rider Haggard type of adventure in northern India (though shot in Mexico) with Michael Caine playing his usual unlovable cockney and Sean Connery as the

## Song for Sectarians

We entered the year of '76  
with Capitalism in decline,  
I decided to help it on its way,  
and sign on that dotted line.

I joined up with the IMG,  
and got into the fray,  
but there was a disagreement  
and I moved along the way.

I gave my all to the WRP,  
and held the banner high  
until we fell out on policy,  
and they purged me as a spy.

The IS were next on my left  
list,  
I sailed into their fight,  
then we hit a point of principle  
and I suddenly saw the light.

I moved over to the RSL,  
and then to the RCP,  
I even tried the YMCA,  
but none were right for me.

So I opened a small office,  
and the plaque upon the wall  
had the letters "IWRSL" and

"Soon may Capitalism fall."  
I issued an eight-page paper  
which attacked the other groups,  
then I put out a manifesto,  
and waited for my troops.

A year later there were ten of us  
and there would have been more,

but we had a factional struggle  
and expelled the other four.

But we carried on our efforts  
towards that great change  
by fighting the left-wing parties  
that came within our range.

And now the group I founded  
has purged me from its ranks,  
and for my early efforts  
never a word of thanks.

But I'll show them I'm strong,  
I'll bring about their fall.  
I'll sign with the Special Branch,  
and inform on them all.  
Jim Burns.



## THE FLEA CIRCUS

thinking man's toughy is pure School Boys' Own adventure and none the worse for that, for comrade the debate does on occasion tend to drag. What is interesting from a literary angle is Huston's ability to fill out, successfully, Kipling's 30-page short story to cover two hours on the screen. And it is a point worth making, for Stanley Kubrick has been attacked by various critics for using Thackeray's tatty novel Barry Lyndon as his film material, yet good films and great films have been tailored from bad novels, short stories and newspaper articles. Sidney Lumet used a Life magazine article of a botched up bank robbery by a homosexual seeking money to buy a sex change operation for his male 'wife', and in Dog Days we are given black comedy slipping into farce and then into tragedy as the slim pinkies finger the triggers of their guns. Lumet explores a number of relevant matters and provides entertainment but understandably no answers. A straightforward bank robbery becomes a thing of jokes, grins, leers and catcalls when it is made known that one of the two robbers is a homosexual, for in the lexicology of the rational left and the dedicated right those who would reject with contempt anyone using the noun, for instance, nigger, still accepts semitism and homosexuality as legitimate smears and sneers if disguised in the correct phrasing, and the evil of this is that those attacked must not affirm or deny, for to do this makes them part of the cruel mean game. And this Lumet demonstrates with the crowd pissing and the police grinning. Lumet's other point is to demonstrate the change in the attitude of the hostages once they no longer fear and in the end they become involved in the situation even to the point of helping their captors. Never ill treat prisoners for in your common captivity they must by the very nature of the situation become your comrades.

And so it is back to Kubrick's version of Thackeray's Barry Lyndon, and Kubrick was right to use a third rate 19th century novel to demonstrate his use of colour and the disposition of groups of players, but having praised the man for that one

must accept that the film is no more than a movie version of the coffee table book of pretty pictures. Various critics of their lack of knowledge have decided that Kubrick's colours and poses reflect Constable, Gainsborough, Hogarth and the rest of the ill-matched crew and they are all wrong, for Kubrick gives us coloured still after still of pure soft-centred Rowlandson. Long shots of soft water coloured hues with a tiny coach lost among pale green trees. Figures slumping loose limbed in gentle shadows in lazy club rooms owe nothing to Hogarth's brute pen or Gainsborough's mannered brush work and the background music of Handel, Bach, Mozart, Schubert and Vivaldi when tinkled and primped and piped out for two hours not only becomes a background bore but emphasises the limitations of the musicians and their instruments, for a surfeit of any sort of minor mastery can only sicken. Kubrick's failure is the failure of men such as Eisenstein and Carl Dreyer in that we are fed magnificently posed and photographed single shots but the 'moving' film lacks content and becomes an anticlimax. We are constantly told that Falconetti never repeated her performance as Joan in Dreyer's The Passion of Joan of Arc and the reason is that there was no performance, only a series of magnificent photographic stills and the same can be said of Eisenstein's Ivan The Terrible which lifted so much from the German film makers such as Paul Leni's 1924 Waxworks or Fritz Lang's marvellous Die Nibelungen (1922). For in The Blue Angel, The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari, M, Der Golem or Metropolis and other films the early German film makers not only created wonderful and imaginative film sets but always kept them secondary to the story line, and this is why Kubrick has failed sadly and I am afraid badly, for pretty pictures are in that old final analysis only pretty pictures.

Arthur Moyse.

\*In fact Iron Foot Jack's biography (not autobioghrapy) was written by Mark Benney (What Rough Beast? - now out of print). Jack also claimed via Benney that he lost his foot rescuing a girl from a railway line and express! J.R.

# THE FIGHT TO LIVE

THE FIGHT TO LIVE: The Claimants Union Handbook for the Unemployed. (40p)

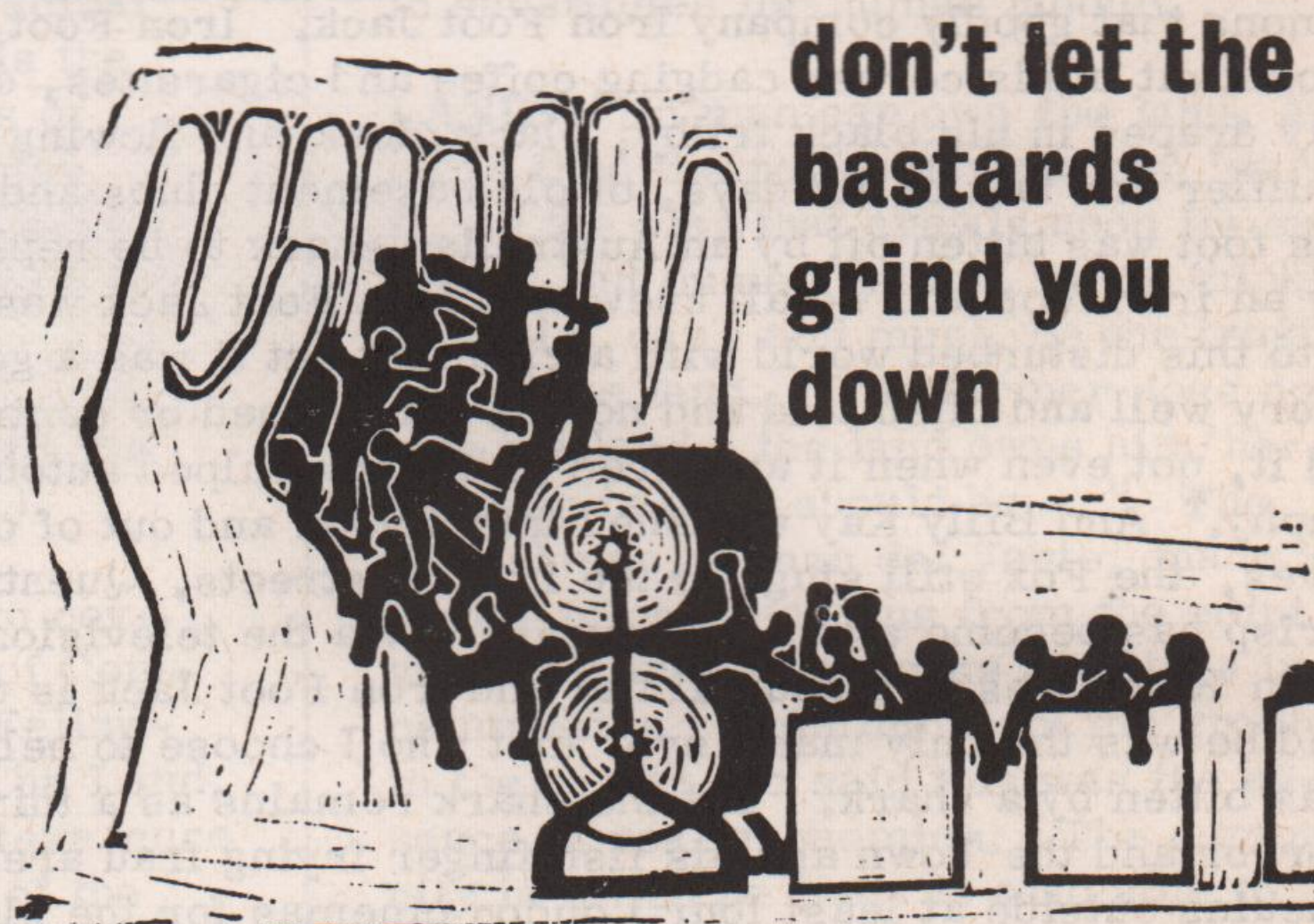
THIS PAMPHLET is the latest handbook produced by the National Federation of Claimants Unions. Previous ones included issues on Strikers, Students, Pensioners, Women & Social (also mentioned in the present pamphlet) and one on the Claimants Union reply to the Fisher Report (on alleged abuse of Social Security).

The present pamphlet can be readily divided into 2 sections: political comment on unemployment, the "right to work" demand, industrial action, and, most important, women and social security. The second part deals with information on how to go about claiming Unemployment and/or Supplementary Benefit, and where this needs elaborating, on how to appeal against the department's decisions.

Before mentioning some of the text it would be useful to explain the structure of the Claimants Union and how it works. Each individual C.U. group is composed of people on social security (S.S.) and unemployment benefit, who are organised around the four points of the Claimants Charter:

- 1) the right to an adequate income without means test for all people;
- 2) a socialist society in which all necessities are provided free and which is managed and controlled by the people;
- 3) no secrets and the right to full information;
- 4) no distinction between so-called "deserving" and "undeserving".

These local groups are affiliated in a national federation of C.U. groups with seven main co-ordinating Unions. They do not ape the structure (both centralised and bureaucratic) of the Social Security Section of the Department of Health and Social Security. They rely on local spontaneity and militancy. Here-



in lies both their strength and weakness. Fighting a government department is both frustrating and hard work, and without both hard work and co-ordination the struggle would be useless. Relying on grass roots effort gives them an advantage against a bureaucracy where an alarming number of things go "astray".

They are quick to point out that they are not unpaid social workers or "do-gooders" but a militant organisation fighting for better standards and quality of living. The co-ordination they have with workers and trade-unions, especially with the increase in the number of short strikes in the early 70s and the increase in unemployment, is evidence of their work.

In the section on unemployment and its causes, unlike most "left" groups they do not go along with the thinking behind the slogan 'Demand the Right to Work', seeing it wisely as defeatist and conservative. It creates a sense of deprivation in the minds of the unemployed, hence the urge to "get back into a job" where the conventional argument goes that that is where the fight against the capitalist system begins. If we begin to question the very nature of work as it exists today we will probably find somewhere near 1½ million unemployed. Much more relevant to the future needs is the fact that about 12 million workers are malemployed! We won't need care producers, police or the armed forces, social workers and bureaucrats, the bloody lot! Once we get rid of this rubbish we



## THE FIGHT TO LIVE

can share out the work, probably working a four hour day, with enough for everybody who is both able and willing to contribute.

With the rise in unemployment, the Government is reluctant to inform people of the full amount they are due, preferring to keep people on the breadline and dependant on the means test. Yes, in 1975 over half a million people have to submit to a means test to obtain a breadline existence! even in a job it's not much better with the standard of living last year (1975) being the lowest for 20 years (since the introduction of statistics on the issue). Figures recently published by the Labour Research Department (a trade union organisation not connected to the Labour Party - thanks to someone!) should come as a shock to those who allege abuse of the S. S. system.

### FIGURES FOR 1975

- 1,195,000 registering as unemployed.
- 115,000 means tested to get extra money.
- 419,000 depended entirely on means tested supplementary benefit.
- 284,000 registering for work get no payment at all.

However these statistics usually ignore women (dealt with more fully in the pamphlet "Women and Social Security") where it is estimated that two-thirds of married women and one-third of unmarried women who are unemployed do not bother to "sign the book" (register as unemployed). The basic reason for this is that women are usually not entitled to benefit when they lose their jobs. Women are encouraged to pay only reduced insurance contributions, which only cover industrial injury, not Class 1 stamps (26 at least) needed for benefit. Because of the Industrial Misconduct Rule\* (which affects 80% of those registering as unemployed) they don't receive benefit for six weeks even if they are entitled to it. Because of reduced earnings in comparison to men, women can't claim earnings-related supplement. Women find it hard to claim for Supplementary Benefit because of the Cohabitation Rule which means that a woman married to or living with a man is classed as a "dependant" and therefore not entitled to claim in her own right. Moreover if the man is unemployed she is not eligible for any money whatsoever.

For those who misdirected their energies in getting Parliament to legislate the Sex Discrimination Act, they may be interested to know it affects some sectors of employment only; it does not affect social security legislation. This is disgraceful for it is here more so than in employment that women are discriminated against. Contrary to popular opinion, it is women's jobs, not men's, that are affected first by any economic slump. This is basically because women are employed in producing consumer goods such as toys, clothes and electrical goods -- the very industries hit first by cuts in consumer spending. Even in service industries such as shops or hairdressing it is the same when money becomes tighter.

On top of all this it is estimated that women who have children and go out to work as well, put in somewhere around 50 hours work at home as extra, and if a woman has children but stays at home (professional housewife) she puts in around 80 hours a week (from taking kids to school, through cooking meals to bed time). If through unemployment we only come to a reorganisation and a more equitable sharing of domestic duties/chores, then we will have gained something precious for our future needs in society.

Finally there are sections on youth and students' employment where again the S. S. make it extremely difficult for you to find out your rights. In fact reading this pamphlet assures one that they have rules for every item and section that is likely to occur, leaving nothing uncovered. What they do choose to play down is what you are entitled to; such an informative pamphlet as this one is invaluable in the fight for your rights; to join your local Claimants Union would go one better.

Francis A. Wright.

\*This states that if you leave a job voluntarily without "good cause" or you were sacked you have to wait up to six weeks before receiving benefit. Virtually the only reason for immediate payment is if you are made redundant. This rule is also a major factor in people's choosing jobs they don't really like rather than be without money. If you appeal against the decision they make you wait six weeks. That usually takes two months to come through, so you are no better off. Its abolition is also one of the main tasks and aims of the Claimants Unions.

# COMPULSORY PARTICIPATION

THERE ARE many left-wing political groups whose avowed aim is to bring about total workers control over the workplace and thus any move towards worker participation is usually loudly acclaimed. However, is any worker participation good worker participation? We believe not!

Worker participation on the board structure of European companies is right now being discussed in the European Commission in Brussels. A Green Paper has been produced called "Green Paper on Employee Participation and Company Structure" which is, so far only meant to generate discussion amongst the Eurocrats. This Green Paper, however, is intended to prepare the ground for amendments to the "Fifth Directive" submitted by the Commission to the Council of Ministers in September 1972. The Fifth Directive seeks to harmonise the Nine's company laws by imposing a common framework for "co-determination and

a single type of corporate structure".

The 1972 proposals consisted of a two-tier board (i.e. an executive committee to be controlled and even dismissed by a supervisory board) with what to them was a significant degree of worker participation on this latter controlling (or supervisory) board. The present document seeks to make this proposals more flexible the details of which we need not consider here.

Anybody with the slightest interest in the development of both private and state capitalism is aware that the multi-nationals dominate the economic scene. In fact, a detailed example of this was given in C. I. S. 's report on Unilever. Therefore, what better vehicle for convincing workers into oppressing themselves than a European-wide standard system of employee participation?

A recent proposal adopted by the EEC Council in February 1975 was a directive on collective redundancies which will require that member states oblige

employers wishing to make large-scale redundancies to consult with worker representatives. We can well imagine the scene. "Well now, Mr. Smith/Senor Diaz/Monsieur... you can keep your job if you keep quiet about our sacking 10,000 of your workmates. What do you say?"

Other items on the agenda at the same meeting may include the firm's economic policies. "Well, Mister/signor/Monsieur, if you want to keep your job, the economic situation being what it is, you'll have to let us keep these nigger savages down in our African supply depots. They've always starved in any case! A bit longer won't do them any harm!"

Many more examples can be cited of the type of ridiculous situation a worker-director can get himself into whereby not only is he cutting his own throat but, much worse, that of others too.

Of course, we have never been in favour of employee participation. What we do look forward to, and work toward is total workers' control whereby the means of production are used for the social and ecological good of all. Employee participation merely reinforces the system of power and privilege through our own illusory cooperation.

N. Staffa.



# THROUGH THE ANARCHIST PRESS

## RECENT PAMPHLETS

L'organizzazione operaia e l'anarchia (Workers' organization and anarchism) by Luigi Fabbri. Published by crescita politica editrice, c.p. 1418, Firenze, Italy (1,000 lire). This is a reprint of a 1906 essay by one of the major figures in Italian anarchism. It comes replete with two new introductions: an ideological one by "Nucleo Operai Libertari--Firenze", which defines the pamphlet's relevance to the development of the present-day Italian trade-union movement; and an historical one by Maurizio Antonioli, which puts the essay in its historical context. This is the first in a series of classics to be reprinted by crescita politica editrice, whose previous publications include Ai compagni su: Capitalismo, ristrutturazione e lotta di classe and the first volume of Leonardo Bettini's Bibliografia dell'anarchismo.

The Wilhelmshaven Revolt by Icarus. Published by Simian, Box AA, 1 Exchange, Hanley, near Huddersfield, Yorks. This was originally published pseudonymously by Freedom Press in 1944. Icarus was, in fact, Ernst Schneider, a shipyard worker who had to leave Germany in 1935 and became a refugee from Hitler in Britain. During the First World War he was a revolutionary socialist propagandist in the German Navy and played a part in the 1917 mutinies in the navy, particularly the Wilhelmshaven revolt which he narrates here. 45p + post from the above address.

L'ecole... à quoi ça sert? by militants of the Nantes group of the French Anarchist Federation, number 8 of a series entitled: "semons l'Anarchie" --available from Noël Leroux, 47bis rue H. Barbusse (A), 44400 Reze, France. A short tract on the usefulness or otherwise of institutionalised education.

Den anarkistiska Kommunismen, by Peter Kropotkin. A reprint of Kropotkin's essay, by the Swedish anarchist paper Brand of Göteborg, sent out as a 1975 New Year's greeting.

Recent Dutch Anarchist Periodicals Solidariteit No.4, January 1976. Address: Postbus 1149, Amsterdam, Netherlands. Price - 1 gulden. This is a relatively new Dutch anarchist magazine, concentrating on repression and the revolutionary movement in Europe. It's published by the International Solidarity Fund (Fonds Internationale Solidariteit) of the Dutch Federation of Free Socialists, and appears irregularly. The current issue has articles on Portugal, BWNIC, the imprisonment of the Dublin anarchists Bobby Cullen, Columba Longmore and Des Keane, on Eva Forest and the O.L.L.A. trials in Spain, on the Basque Nationalists, and on Marini, Roberto Mander, Pinelli, Serantini, Valpreda in Italy.

The other two Dutch anarchist periodicals which we receive regularly - De As (Stichting Pamflet, Postbus 1333, Groningen, Netherlands - 2 gulden per number) and De Vrije Socialist (Postbus 1329, Amsterdam, Netherlands - 1 gulden per number) both have major features on the anarchist historian and Bakunin-scholar par excellence, Arthur Lehning, in their latest issues.

In fact the whole of De As no. 18 (32 pages of A5 size - the same as the original Anarchy) is devoted to articles by, and interviews with Lehning. There's a short biographical sketch by Hans Ramaer, a bibliography of his works in Dutch, and then words by him on "libertarian marxism", Bakunin and imperialism, anarcho-syndicalism, and reformism.

The occasion for this celebration is the presentation to Lehning of an honorary doctorate (at the age of 73!) by a Dutch university. Lehning's principal work of late has been the editing of the monumental Archives Bakounine, a projected complete works of Bakunin, including much previously unpublished material. In the 1920s he was very much involved with the Dutch avant-garde in both poetry and painting, and he published a review i 10, in which Kurt Schwitters and Laszlo Moholy-Nagy appeared, amongst others.

## S P A I N

The December 18, 1975 issue of

WIN, an American non-violent action paper, has an interesting article on Spain by Murray Bookchin - "Notes on the Death of Franco". The first part of it is devoted to nailing the facts on the number of people murdered by each side in the Civil War, giving the lie to the "Red Terror" imputed by many historians to the Spanish anarchists in particular, and revealing the true horror of the Francoist executions.

The second part of the article deals with the rise of the Communist Party in Spain (as part of the history of Spanish fascism) and its present position as the strongest of the illegal opposition parties.

Despite the transformed economic conditions in Spain, to which he gives full weight, Bookchin still sees some signs of hope for a new anarchist movement in Spain. WIN's address is Box 547, Rifton, New York 12471, USA, and copies are 30cents each.

The Béziers group of the Spanish Libertarian Movement has issued a 4-page leaflet entitled: Muerto Franco, Sobrevive El Franquismo (Franco is dead, but Francoism survives). Copies are available from Freedom Press for the cost of a first or second class stamped addressed envelope.

D. L. M.

# PORTUGAL

Libertarian contacts and publications.  
see also P. 10

MOVIMENTO LIBERTÁRIO PORTUGUÊS \*  
(Portuguese Libertarian Movement)  
Rua Angelina Vidal 17-2-E  
LISBOA

A BATALHA \* (Anarcho-syndicalist publication)  
Rua Angelina Vidal 17-2-E phone 82.53.05.  
LISBOA

A IDEIA \* (Anarchist publication)  
Apartado 3122  
LISBOA 3

A VOZ ANARQUISTA \* (Anarchist publication)  
Apartado 52  
ALMADA

NÚCLEO SINDICALISTA (Syndicalist group)  
Apartado 204  
Vila Nova de Gaia  
O PORTO

A ESCARAMUÇA (Anarchist publication)  
Apartado 2419  
LISBOA 2

O PASQUIM (Libertarian publication)  
Apartado 65  
CASCAIS

GRUPO DE TEATRO ANARQUISTA  
(Anarchist Theatre Group)  
Rua Angelina Vidal 17-2-E  
LISBOA

MOVIMENTO DA LIBERTAÇÃO DA MULHER  
(Women's Lib. Movement)  
c/o M.L.P.  
Rua Angelina Vidal 17-2-E  
LISBOA

GRUPOS DE ANARQUISTAS AUTÓNOMOS  
(Groups of Autonomous Anarchists)  
c/o M.L.P.  
Rua Angelina Vidal 17-2-E  
LISBOA

O LIBERTÁRIO (Libertarian publication)  
c/o M.L.P.  
Rua Angelina Vidal 17-2-E  
LISBOA

LIBERTARIAN FILM-MAKERS  
c/o Antonio de Macedo  
Avenida Casal Ribeiro 17-8º  
LISBOA

Free copies of anarchists and libertarian publications, pamphlets, books, posters, photopgraphs, articles, etc, etc... should be sent to the above addresses.

Moneys should be sent particularly to A BATALHA, which is in serious financial difficulties due to rampant inflation and enormous increases in cost of print, wages, distribution fees, postages, etc...etc...

Thanking all in advance for your SOLIDARITY with our Portuguese comrades, I remain,  
Claude.