

# FREEDOMS CONTACTS PAGE

WE WELCOME News, reviews, articles, letters, cartoons...etc. Copy deadline for next issue, Monday 18<sup>th</sup> December

NEXT DESPATCHING DATE:  
Thursday 14 December 21st

## Groups

**ABERYSTWYTH.** Mike Sheehan, 2 South St, Aberystwyth

**BRISTOL City.** 4 British Road, Bristol BS3 3BW

**BRISTOL Students.** Libertarian Society, Students Union, Queen's Road, Bristol 8.

**CAMBRIDGE.** Raphael Salkie, Queen's College, Cambridge

**Cardiff Anarchist Group:** Write c/o 108 Bookshop, Salisbury Road, Cardiff.

**CORB.** Terry Phillips, 7 Cresswell Walk, Corby, Northants.

**COVENTRY:** John England, Student Union, WARWICK UNIVERSITY, Coventry.

**DERBY (and environs) Anarchists/Libertarians.** All two of us welcome collaborators. Contact Andrew Huckerby, 49 Westleigh Av, Derby DE3 3BY, tel: 368678

**EAST ANGLIAN Libertarians, Martyn Everett,** 11 Gibson Gardens, Saffron Walden, Essex

**EDINBURGH ANARCHISTS** meet on Mondays at 8pm at the First of May Bookshop. All etc... welcome.

**EXETER Anarchist Society,** Univ. of Exeter, Devonshire House, Stocker Road, Exeter

**HASTINGS.** Steve, 18a Markwick Terrace, St Leonards-on-sea, Sussex

**HIGH BENTHAM.** Ask at The Dragonfly on Market Day (Wednesday)

**HUDDERSFIELD** anarchist group: meetings every two weeks. For details phone 0484-38156 (Poly-technic students' union).

**LEAMINGTON & Warwick,** c/o 42 Bath St., Leamington Spa

**LEEDS.** Box 101 'Leeds Other Paper', 30 Blenheim Terrace, Leeds 2

**MALVERN & Worcester area.** Jock Spence, Birchwood Hall, Storridge, Malvern, Worcs.

**MANCHESTER.** See NW Federation

**NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE.** Black Jake, c/o 115 Westgate Road, Newcastle NE1 4AG

**NORWICH Anarchist Group,** c/o Mushroom, 10 Heathcote St (tel: 582506) or 15 Scotholme Av, Hyson Green (tel: 708302)

**OXFORD -** suspended during vacation

**PORTSMOUTH -** change of address pending

**READING University anarchists,** c/o Students Union, Univ. of Reading, Whiteknights, Reading, Berks.

**SHEFFIELD Autonomous Anarchists.** Write to Sheffield Libertarian Society, P.O. Box 168, Sheffield S11 8SE

The groups at the above address are: Sheffield Autonomous Anarchists, Black Cross Group, IWW, Syndicate of Initiative, John Creaghe Memorial Society

**SHREWSBURY ANARCHISTS** meet every Tuesday (except the first Tue. of each month) at 8.00 pm at the Unicorn Hotel, Wyle Cop.

Shrewsbury Written messages only to: Box A Crabapple 16 St Mary's, St Shrewsbury Shropshire.

**SWANSEA.** Don Williams, 24 Derlwyn, Dunvant, Swansea

**THAMES VALLEY Adele Dawson,** Maymeade, 6 Congress Rd, Maidenhead (tel: 062 2974)

**WESTON-super-Mare.** Martyn Redman, Flat 5, 23 Milton Rd, Weston-super-Mare, Som.

**WILTSHIRE.** Comrades in Swindon wish to start an anarchist group (as well as existing Community Arts Group). Get in touch with Mike, Groundswell Farm, Upper Stratton, Swindon, Wilts.

**FEDERATIONS**

**LONDON**

Anarchist Communist Assn, c/o 182 Upper St, Islington N.1.

Anarchy Collective, 37a Grosvenor Av. Tel: 359-4794 before 7 pm.

Freedom Collective, 84b Whitechapel High St (Angel Alley), E1 (tel: 247-9249)

Hackney Anarchists. Contact Dave on 249-7042

Kingston Anarchists, 13 Denmark Road, Kingston upon Thames (tel: 549-2564)

London Workers' Group, Box W, 182 Upper St, N.1. (Tel: 249-7042)

Love v. Power, Box 779, Peace News (London office: 5 Caledonian Road)

West London Anarchists, 7 Pennard Road, W12

**KENT**

Ramsgate: Peter Ford, 22 Royal Road

Sevenoaks: Jim Endesby, 7 Bradbourne Road

**MIDLANDS**

Secretariat: c/o Andrew Huckerby, 49 Westleigh Av, Derby DE3 3BY, tel: 0332-3686 678

Groups in the Federation include Corby, Coventry, Derby, Leamington/Warwick, Nottingham Oxford, Sheffield (all separately listed), Birmingham. Also:

**LEICESTER.** Contact: Lyn Hurst, 41 Briarfield Drive, Leicester, tel: 0533-21250 (days) or 0533-414060 (nights).

Newly formed

**NORTH-EASTERN ANARCHIST FEDERATION** Secretariat: Leeds Anarchists, Box 101, 30 Blenheim Terrace, Leeds 2. Publishes mthly bulletin.

**NORTH-WEST ANARCHIST FEDERATION** c/o Grass Roots, 109 Oxford Rd, Manchester M1 Newsletter & quarterly meetings. Contacts in other areas.

**MANCHESTER SOLIDARITY** group has also recently reformed and now holds regular monthly meetings. Our members are involved in a number of local groups and activities which takes up much of our time but we intend to arrange some occasional 'readers meetings' to discuss specific 'Solidarity' politics. For further information write to: SOLIDARITY (Manchester), c/o 109 Oxford Rd, Manchester M13.

**SCOTTISH LIBERTARIAN FEDERATION** Secretary: Nina Woodcock, 17 Cheviot Cres., Flintry, Dundee.

Aberdeen: c/o A.P.P., 163 King Street

Glasgow: c/o Box G.P.P., 146 Holland Street, Glasgow G2 4NG

**ADDITIONS TO GROUPS:-**

**LEICESTER.** Anarchist group. Lyn Hurst, 41 Briarfield Drive, Leicester. Tel: 0533-21250 (days)

0533-414060 (nights)

Bookshop. Blackthorn, 76 Highcross St, Leicester. Tel: 0533-21896.

Libertarian Education. 6 Beaconsfield Rd, Leicester. Tel: 0533-552085.

**CHELLENHAM Anarchist Group.** Contact JERRY at 23093.

## Literature

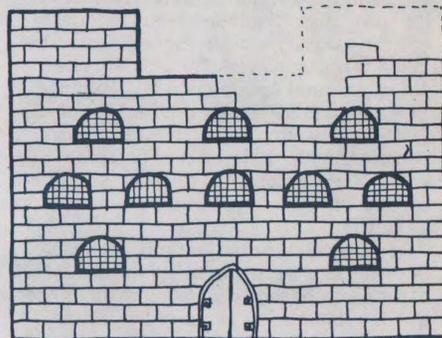
Aberdeen Libertarian Socialist Group have produced at 1p. each (minimum order 25) assorted equal numbers of six stickers. They are all black on red with an A sign, ready for that snap election. The words: 'Anarchists Warning: Governments can seriously Damage your Health': 'whoever you vote for the government always gets in': 'Don't Vote - It Only Encourages Them': 'there's no government like no government': 'Election Day: Tweedledum or Tweedledee': 'Bullshit'.

Aberdeen can be contacted c/o 163 King St, Aberdeen.

Pagan Cards are Christmas cards freed from doctrine. Each has a traditional carol restored to its folk-song original, and an African-type illustration. They are 75p. for the set of six, from Norman Iles, 381 Marine Road, Morecambe. Lancs.

## £1000 Demolish a Prison Fund

Every £5 received in donations to Persons Unknown removes one brick



**PERSONS UNKNOWN** in support of RONAN IRIS TAFF VINCE & TREV

£60 raised in the last fortnight.

Thank especially to Leeds Anarchists who raised £54 at a Benefit.

Donations to Persons Unknown (DAPP) POBox 123, 182 Upper St, London N1

### DESIRE S

W. G. WOLF of London: Would you please send your address to Freedom's subscription dept.

Due to lack of time we have been unable to produce our Contact Column in this new type face, as promised in the last issue.

\* AND MORE HELP !!

## Freedom Press

IN ANGEL ALLEY  
84b WHITECHAPEL HIGH ST.

LONDON E.1

PHONE 01 247 9249

# anarchist fortnightly Freedom

December 1978  
Vol 39 No 24  
20p

## RECONSTRUCTION



Freedom photos



## AGAINST COUNCIL VANDALISM!

AT 10 o'clock on the morning of 2 December, about 150 people descended on three roads in Ilford, East London and occupied houses which had been bought up and vandalised by the Council.

It was an extremely well-organised move, with trucks of timber, gathered together over several months, tools, paint and placards to mount outside the occupied houses.

The object of the exercise is to reconstruct houses and offer them to people who have been waiting patiently - too patiently - on the housing list of the infamous Redbridge Council, which has some grandiose plans for 'redeveloping' the site at some unspecified time in the future.

The three roads are Lockwood Road, Pyrmont Road and Queens Road, just off the High Street, where less than 20 families are now left living among the Council-made squalor.

About ten years ago the Council scheme for the area failed to satisfy a public enquiry. The usual commercial mixture met strong objections from the local people, who saw it only as something that was going to deprive the area of much-needed housing. The Council went ahead buying up the properties - by compulsory purchase where necessary, and proceeded to create the sort of blight which then appears to justify their plan.

To prevent squatting and ensure the houses stayed empty, Council workmen smashed floors, stairways and plumbing in their usual fashion, creating health and safety hazards for the remaining inhabitants. In one house, where the gas had been cut off, a gaspipe had been plugged with a plug only finger-tight, allowing a small but dangerous escape of gas.

Many of the occupiers - grouped under the name 'Housing Action Services' - are veterans of the Committee of 100 and of many squatting campaigns, and in the efficiency and completeness of the organisation, it shows: They still need plenty of help, however. Tradespeople (with materials!) are particularly useful, but helpers of all kinds will find themselves welcome at the Office in Queens Road.

## COMMITTAL HEARINGS - A WEEK OF ACTION

THE WEEK OF ACTION around the committal hearing for our comrades in the conspiracy case has been planned as follows.

Every day from Monday, 11 December to Friday, 15 December all five prisons in London will be picketed and leaflets distributed. On Thursday, 14 December at Drill Hall, Action Space, Chancery St, London WC1, from 7.30 - 10 pm. a public meeting will include speakers on the conspiracy laws, the Prevention of

Terrorism Acts, and prison conditions as well on the general issues of the 'Persons Unknown' campaign. This is to be followed on Saturday, 16 December by a Day of Action, assembly point Trafalgar Square at 12 am. Leaflets will then be distributed and pickets held at selected locations. The court will also be picketed on the morning of the committal hearing (date for this yet to be fixed). For more details, ring the London support group at (01) 359-3785.

Continued overleaf

In the meantime, to remind readers of the charges facing our comrades: all are charged with 'conspiracy to rob'. Iris Mills and Ronan Bennett are both additionally charged with 'dishonestly handling stolen goods' and with possession of a firearm ('viz, a .22 BSA single shot target rifle') and (a new charge) 'knowingly having in their possession a certain explosive substance namely sodium chlorate weed killer of the non-fire depressed type'.

Dafydd Ladd is charged with 'dishonestly handling stolen goods' and possession of a firearm (single shot target rifle).

Vincent Stevenson and Trevor Dawton are charged with 'dishonestly handling stolen goods' and with possession of a quantity of firearms and also with possession of a quantity of ammunition.

Stewart Carr, who has since disassociated himself from the other defendants and thus from the support groups, is charged with six counts of armed robbery.

## RONAN

RONAN BENNETT was again refused bail on Thursday, 23 November, the 27th time our comrades have appeared on remand at Lambeth Magistrates Court. Because Ronan faces exactly the same charges as Iris Mills, and has a settled relationship with her, arguments put forward by the magistrate against granting him bail seem especially unconvincing.

As the 'Persons Unknown' press release points out: "The magistrate was obsessed with Ronan's sporadic work record and made much of the fact that Ronan would be signing on the dole if released on bail. It costs £100 p.w. to keep someone in prison as against £15 p.w. on the dole; also the other two now on bail were released without offers of jobs, to sign on SS but no issue was made of this."

"Obviously it's very difficult to expect a prospective employer to offer a job in the 'terrorist' climate that was deliberately built up around the case. Considering the chronic unemployment figures (1½ million out of work, which is especially bad among young people... it is unrealistic and unreasonable for a magistrate to insist on a job to go to and upon a previous steady work record..."

"The magistrate was prejudiced against Ronan's Northern Ireland background. Ronan's mother, who lives and works in Nth Ireland, though willing to put up her house as surety was not able to do so as the Bail Act does not apply to that part of the UK! Instead she is forced to put up the actual cash - a very difficult thing for someone of little means."

The magistrate also made an issue of Ronan's 'lack of community ties', although he has been in England for several years and in that time made many friends.

STEWART CARR has disassociated himself from the five other conspiracy case defendants, and thus from the 'Persons Unknown' support campaign, owing to political differences.

A letter from Stewart Carr

# A HOT WINTER!

Hi comrades

I am writing to thank you for the review in this week's copy (vol.39 no. 22), 'The Resistance of Everyday Life'. It is really refreshing to see something up to date; I am not saying that our past is useless, but I do feel it is now and the future we must think about and the article was very good. There is a lot in it that could and does really imply the way things are in this country, the part about infighting in the left, there is too much going on like that in this country.

If the left and anarchists here could work together for a few years even, it would be amazing how far we could get; as the article says, not everyone's star should be painted with the same brush, as an anarchist I want to see us working towards an anarchist way of life; though everyone is not an anarchist I feel this should not stop us working together. We do have one thing in common, the destruction of the capitalist state, and I feel that while we are fighting together side by side, we can express our ideas. In its broadest basis communism is not that far away from anarchism; also I feel that revolution cannot depend on long range politics; of course things will take time, but for our brothers and sisters who are dying today and tomorrow (that's what it is all about, thinking of the people) I say there is no set time - start the revolution today, as anarchists say but seem to never put into practice. Let's have a long HOT winter, get out onto the streets, show the people the repression they live under. Another thing the article shows us is the meeting - 30,000 people (Reference to TUNIX meeting in Berlin - eds.). Has anything happened like that in this country. NO WAY, too much infighting. Let's see a meeting coming together of all the left and anarchists, working out something together, embarking on the one thing we do have in common - to smash this capitalist repressive state we live in, and not just talk about it, talk and act.

The state and the far right are getting stronger every day, while anarchists and the left are still as weak as ever, because of this infighting. I have felt this infighting and it is bad to feel. I am no political philosopher, I can't quote the works of Marx, Proudhon, Kropotkin; I know people live under a repressive state, I know it must be smashed.

When I was out we used to talk about how to help prisoners (all). Now I am back inside I see the only way to help us is when we see the places of power burning from our windows. I feel we can rip the bars away and smash the walls down.

Our struggle is world wide. So I feel we must support all anarchist and left groups who are fighting against repressive states. I feel it is all part of the complete revolution, complete to me, an anarchist way of life, total freedom, total equality. Comrades say we should not support PFLP because they are nationalistic. OK yes, they want their own state, but no-one can tell me there is no anarchist in their midst, fighting but talking about anarchism, we only hear from the comrades who are in the front line, not from the fighters who are dying.

As the article says, we shouldn't ignore one another if we really want to advance. We should be working together for total resistance, and it must start here and now. Because, comrades, you can see how heavy the state is getting. Comrades say to me it is the wrong way to bring repression on the people. Well, if you think we are not living in a repressive state, ok. I would agree with you the repression is here and getting stronger, but I feel we must threaten the state, cause it to panic and make serious tactical mistakes, such as resorting to mass (more) repression which radicalises the workers against them, and at the moment the way to do this is by armed struggle. There are many ways in which to demoralise the state and capitalists who support the state, we have the means to this end. The problem I feel is to develop acceptance to their use. Which in this country is very lacking. Even to talk about armed struggle in this country is not the accepted thing. It is alright for our comrades abroad to fight and yes die for what they believe in, but mention armed struggle over here and you find the time is not right, we got to get our minds together first. In order for the state to continue, all we've got to say is the time is not right. The time is right. It was right the day the state started.

I look forward to the next review on armed struggle in Italy, Keep looking at today and the future.

Take care, be uptight against the state.

Love, freedom and revolution  
Stew

# THE LAST ANTI-NUCLEAR FESTIVAL

DECEMBER 27-JANUARY 12  
THE ALMOST FREE THEATRE-9RUPERT ST W1-485 6224



Non-violent Direct Action at Torness. Members of the Torness Alliance occupy a bulldozer and obstruct another to prevent them starting work on the SSEB's proposed new Nuclear Power Station, on Monday, 13th Nov. 1976.

'OUR Expanding Atomic Stupidity' was the prophetic title of a pamphlet published by The Kingston Clinic in Edinburgh in the late forties. (does any reader still have a copy)? After the shock of Hiroshima and Nagasaki humanity set about solving his conscience by turning the weapon into a ploughshare. This particular ploughshare shares the same unpleasant hazards as the weapon. The financiers, technologists and governments, particularly those short on oil, saw it as their salvation. They had just spent 5 years burning it with reckless abandon in war, and now by the inefficiencies of a mad transport system.

The problems of atomic energy are all ready well known to readers of this paper, but the British public, compared with our continental neighbours, are so apathetic about the question that, it is with much pleasure that we welcome 'THE LAST ANTI-NUCLEAR FESTIVAL' at The Almost Free Theatre.

The programme should do much to correct the misconceptions of our economic, financial and technological experts such as Lord Rothchilds, such experts should be chary of sneering at people who want to stand in the way of the onward march of this economic and social madhouse in view of the antics of many of them.

The problem of atomic energy for the anarchist, is that it destroys absolutely the ability to choose. One can choose not to do many things that Rothchild describes as hazardous, but once the die is cast for atomic energy you create an irreversible biological hazard from which nobody can escape.

The other problem of concern, is the creation of Special policemen with special powers to deal with this technology. We are already well on the way to 1984. Hitler had his Special policemen for particularly sinister roles. Now all governments have to police the increasingly elephantine economic and financial body that requires the use of dangerous atomic power to feed it.

The programme The Almost Free Theatre is putting on is the most comprehensive one yet in this country. Abroad people are more concerned; in Spain and Portugal the anarchist movement is particularly active in this field. Perhaps this is the beginning and hopefully not the Last Nuclear festival

will put Britain on the map once again, starting with Torness.

The Father Xmas Union, as the group who are putting on this

programme call themselves, are producing a comprehensive range of activities, drama, photographs, films, street theatre, music, some original documentaries of action abroad and I hope the effort will be rewarded by much support.

Detailed programme is obtainable from 3XU 15 Wilkin Street London NW5 3MG phone (01) 485 6224 25p

Alan Albon

## News from Newcastle

Newcastle Anarchists: A report

THE Newcastle Anarchists' main concern at the moment is Region 1, the regional seat of government. We have discussed what we could or should do about its whereabouts and uses. Last weekend we helped to distribute some leaflets concerning the regional seat of government. Also, full details are being published in this week's edition of Durham Street Press (28/11).

On Monday, 20 November, Albert Meltzer addressed us at length on the history, role and prospects of the Spanish CNT. The meeting (open) was well attended and the talk most illuminating. An informal discussion ensued.

One of us travelled down to London for

the Direct Action Movement conference on 11/12 November. The main impression we got was that the DAM was disunited and unorganised, arguing at length about the definition of a worker, whether students were parasites and hearing various highly individual personal testimonies. Some

things emerged, however. For the moment, DAM intends to work within the trade unions and will charge a registration fee for its next conference. Black Jake has been made the official contact for DAM in the north-east of England.

On Saturday, 16 December we are holding an all-day event in the Bridge Hotel, High Level Bridge, Newcastle. Attractions include Clapperclaw, a feminist theatre group.

(SEE LETTERS)

J. M.

# AN ANARCHIST SOLUTION IN THE MIDDLE EAST?



THERE'S no trouble defining the Middle East problem. It's very simple. Two different groups of people feel they have claim on the same land. The problem is that in any discussion on the Middle East an anarchist can easily become mired down arguing points which from h/its outlook should be rejected from the start. I, for example, often find myself backing the creation of a Palestinian state, and since when does an anarchist support the creation of any kind of state? Hopefully in what follows I'll manage not to get caught up in the argument of the moment. I think that the problem is simple, but that finding a solution is particularly difficult and complex; enough so that most of the time I really can't suggest one which I feel will work and please me as an anarchist.

There are several arguments put forth by both sides, but particularly by the Israelis, which hardly contribute to solving the problem. It's probably a good idea to briefly discuss them here. There's the "historically it's our land" point. To whom does the land rightfully belong? Persons interested in scoring points can and do write articles ad nauseum attempting to prove that the land belongs to one group or the other. "Jews lived here two thousand years ago so it's our land". "Arabs have lived in Acre, Jaffa and Jerusalem for hundreds of years so it's our land". "During the British mandate minister X promised the land to the Jews". "No, no minister Y gave it to the Arabs". I'm sick and tired of listening to this, find it incredibly boring and a waste of time.

There are a couple of variations on this theme. One is the "we work the land so it's ours" tune. Jews are now farmers in their own country and developed the land struggling under harsh conditions; therefore the land belongs to them. Those arguing the Palestinian side point out the Arabs' deep attachment to h/its land, which s/he works to the last arable square inch. Surely the land belongs to the Palestinians.

Another variation, this one referring to the scattered Palestinian refugees, is the "in 1948 you drove us from our land - no we didn't, you left of your own free will" debate. Palestinians claim they were all driven from their homes during the '48 war. Some of them most certainly were. Israelis claim that Arab leaders encouraged the Palestinians to evacuate their homes and flee. That's true too, many did leave. If you left of your own volition, state the Israelis, you have no claim on the land. The Palestinians, all of whom were driven from their villas on the Carmel, are demanding to return.

There are, I feel, two conclusions to be drawn. Both sides feel they have legitimate claims on the land. (It's more important that they feel the claims are legitimate than their actual veracity). More important, the conflicting claims more or less cancel each other. If one wants to find a solution to the problem today one must look at the existing situation and go on from there. What are the demographic facts within Israel's borders eighty per cent of the population is Jewish. Most of the minority twenty per cent, primarily Arabs, live in a few specific areas, the result being that within Israel there are many almost entirely Jewish areas and a few small predominantly Arab regions. In the Gaza Strip and West Bank, occupied by Israel since the June '67 war, live roughly one million Arabs and a few thousand Jewish settlers. It's obvious that the Jews are not going to leave Israel, except under force, and that the Arabs are not going to leave the West Bank and Gaza. One must find a solution just to both sides.

There are two areas worth discussing before trying to propose some kind of solution: the nature of the Israeli occupation and treatment of the Arabs, and the various Palestinian liberation organisations.

Before discussing what Israel is, best to say what it isn't. Israel is not a tyranny. Its leaders and government are

not despotic. It's not a totalitarian state. Persons do not "disappear in the middle of the night never to be heard from again". The Israel government does not systematically torture persons nor use violence in subduing dissenters. I do not mean to imply that there have not been acts of violence against both Arab and Jewish dissenters or that prisoners have never been beaten or mistreated in Israeli jails. My point is simply that Israel is not Chile, Argentina, the Soviet Union, nor South Africa and Palestinian propaganda stating so is a lie.

Israel is, however, racist, exploitative, and in its denial of many liberties to the Palestinians, oppressive. I wish to clarify, before continuing, that I'm talking about Israel's treatment of and policy towards Arabs in particular and not practices affecting all persons. For example: in Israel every person, Jew, Arab, Christian, and Druze must possess an identification card issued by the Interior Ministry in which h/its address, race, religion, place of birth, relations etc. are entered. As an anarchist I don't feel that this information is any of the government's damned business. I'm not going to discuss this here.

Both American and Israeli Jews try to enlist popular support for Israel by stating that it's the only democracy in the Middle East. If Alabama was a democracy in 1920 then I suppose Israel is today. Many Israelis, I'd say a majority, suffer to some degree from a classic racist mentality. Arabs smell, they're lazy, Arabs cheat, they're thieves, all Arabs hate Jews etc. These are their personal feelings, but the net result is that the Israeli society as a whole is racist. It's not blatant racism; Arabs don't sit in the back of the bus nor use separate services. The primary areas are employment, housing and sentences handed out by the judicial system. A Jew rapes an Arab woman and is sentenced to a year; an Arab rapes a Jewish woman and gets ten years.

More important than the racism and certainly in part deriving from it, is the

exploitation of the Arabs. By exploitation I mean persons being used for purposes which are not their own, or more specifically in this case, being made by economic necessity to do work which is not of their own choosing and/or being paid so poorly that they are unable to maintain a decent existence. Attracted by the higher wages in Israel, thousands of Arabs daily stream from the occupied territories to fill its factories and fields. There isn't any purpose for me to now endlessly list cases of Israeli exploitation of the Palestinians, a few examples should suffice. According to Israeli military law those Arabs from the occupied territories who work in Israel are not permitted to remain there overnight. They must return to their homes. This, however, is physically impossible due to the distances and slow transportation. The solution? The workers 'voluntarily' allow themselves to be locked in overnight at their place of employment. I know of at least one case in which a carpentry shop burned killing all the Arab workers locked inside.

Sometimes the exploitation approaches colonialism. The Israeli operation in establishing the Jewish settlements in the Rafiah area is a perfect example. These are the settlements along the northeast Sinai coast just to the west of the Gaza Strip which are supposedly to be vacated under the Camp David agreements. The government threw the Bedouins off the land, Arabs who had for centuries been farming using their traditional methods. The Israelis moved in, plugged the Arabs' wells, burned their trees, bulldozed the area, used cheap Arab labour to build settlements luxurious by Israeli standards, and then were kind enough to allow Arabs to be their house servants and to pick their crops at what can only be described as slave wages. A television news report several months ago showed Arab children as young as eight working in Israeli fields for \$1.50 a day. These Israelis have the gall to call themselves pioneers.

Common with exploited minorities in other countries Arabs are found working primarily as unskilled labourers performing menial tasks, those that the Israelis would rather not perform. They do most of the essential and grubby tasks, those which pay the least. They're the street cleaners, dishwashers, and garbage collectors. They are heavily employed in the construction industry, fill most of the low positions in the factories, and work as field hands in the productive Israeli agriculture. They are usually paid less than Jews doing identical work. They are denied access to better paying and more interesting jobs. Their land is expropriated often without sufficient or any compensation. They do not always enjoy the labour rights which the Jews possess. It's indicative that any kind of mean, dirty and menial work is known as "Arab work". This is blasphemous in a country whose founding was partly based on the idea that a people were returning to the soil, to build their own country with their own hands. Once true, this idea is now a myth to which lip service is paid, but which survives in practice mainly in some kibbutzim, four per cent of the population. Israelis today want to be lawyers, real estate brokers, bankers and capitalists.

In addition to the racism and exploit-

ation, the Arabs are oppressed and denied many rights. I need to stress that this oppression is not total and not brutal. For the most part Arabs in Israel and the occupied territories enjoy as individuals the rights to freedom of speech and movement. An Arab on the West Bank may speak out against the Israeli military government. S/he may travel wherever s/he desires outside Israel. Students from Nablus study in Baghdad. The elected mayors of the West Bank cities, most of whom are vocal PLO supporters, are sometimes found in Europe or America pleading their case. This is not a despotism.

The military government steps in wherever anything intrudes on the broadly defined area of security, including terrorist activities. The Arab press is censored. Palestinians may be jailed under administrative detention almost indefinitely. Arabs found having contact with or siding with 'terrorists' find their houses cemented up and themselves deported or put in jail. For fear of collaboration Arabs are not allowed to hold political meetings, the mayors are allowed to meet to discuss municipal affairs only. Curfews are imposed at the slightest provocation. Sometimes the Israeli intrusion is so pervasive that it's ridiculous. The municipal council in Nablus recently needed to obtain permission to purchase a new generator unit.

As much as I dislike the Israeli occupation I can't seem to work up a great deal of enthusiasm for the Palestinian cause as it's expressed today. I recall watching a few years ago a news programme on Israeli television in which several young Palestinian Arabs were interviewed. They were emphatic in their desire for their own country, to run their own affairs. One of them said indirectly several times that his desire for his country stems partly from his desire to be a fighter pilot. And that's just it. I'll be damned if I'll support the creation of a state in order that its citizens can have their rotten bureaucracy, graft-ridden politicians, war-mongering military, cheating businessmen, state security police and puppet military rulers, in short all the miserable appurtenances of the modern centralised nation state. As much as I try, and I don't really, I also can't develop a liking for Palestinian leaders Yassir Arafat or George Habash. They seem to me to be potential dictators. The way members of the various Palestinian factions keep killing each other off I'd hate to see what would happen to a dissenter in an Arafat-ruled Palestine. And the Russians may just move in and we all know what a bunch of bastards they are. Perhaps I'm mistaken.

I'm not trying to make a case for the Israelis, simply, rather, to state my opinion. The Israelis have no business telling the Palestinians how to run their lives, nor rule over them as they do now. Usually one of two basic solutions is proposed: either a binational state of loosely confederated Jewish and Arab areas, somewhat similar to the original UN partition plan, or the creation of a separate independent Palestinian state in the Gaza Strip and West Bank. To anarchists the former is really appealing. Frankly I feel it contains the seeds of the creation of a situation such as exists in Northern Ireland, Cyprus or Lebanon; constant tension

and strife frequently breaking out into violence or all out war. The number of Jews and Arabs here in favour of such a binational state can probably be counted on the fingers of one hand. The whole business requires too much 'love' between Arabs and Jews, and I always thought correct Orwell's distrust of a society founded on love. Again, maybe I'm wrong.

Almost by default the creation of an independent Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza Strip seems best. For the most part it makes sense with the demographic facts previously mentioned. There remains the question of the half million Arabs who live within Israel's pre-1967 borders; they should be able to choose to remain in Israel or live in Palestine. Those refugees in Jordan, Lebanon etc. who wish to return, either to Israel or Palestine should not be prevented from doing so. Finally there's the question of the Jewish settlers in the occupied territories; they should also be allowed to stay although it's doubtful that any would want to live as a minority in Arab Palestine.

Some of the Palestinian liberation organisations are fighting for the creation of just such a state, but I must criticise their terrorist tactics. They claim that they have no alternative to terrorism to further their cause. This is a bunch of hogwash. Terrorist attacks usually have the opposite effect of increasing sympathy for Israel, at least until Israel retaliates and bombs civilian targets as it did this year in Lebanon. But then this is surely one of the aims of the terrorists, to force a crushing Israeli reprisal. I wonder if the bombed villagers share this goal. Given the facts that Israel is not a totalitarian state, that many sectors of the Israeli economy are almost completely dependent on Arab labour, and that Israel is incredibly sensitive to adverse world opinion, especially from the States, I'm convinced that with a programme of general strikes and mass civil disobedience the Arabs would have their independent state in no time. What the Palestinians need is a Gandhi. Unfortunately none seems to exist, and there doesn't seem to be any solidarity or tradition among the Arabs for this type of direct action.

I'm afraid that I find myself hoping that the American government will simply force Israel out of the occupied territories. It could do this of course in two weeks simply by turning off the aid faucet, although it's doubtful if Carter has the political power to do this. Given the almost Israeli reliance on US aid even a fair sized reduction would be crippling. With the Camp David agreements it appears that events are moving in this direction. These agreements must be anathema to an anarchist because of the big power manoeuvre involved. They won't end the racism or the exploitation and it will remain to be seen how much freedom will result from the so called autonomy. I'm afraid it will only mean that the Arabs will be allowed to decide where to build their sewers. They are still an improvement, though; there are too many graveyards in Israel and Egypt filled with men killed in their twenties for them not to be.

NOAM CLERMAN

Israel

# SOUTH AFRICAN PRISONS: AZANIAN PRISONERS

## part 1 bystanders in desperation

THIS is not an easy topic to write about. There is an odour of decaying flesh and brains and an after-taste of nagging helplessness and self-guilt underlining every point. One must constantly remember that this is about simple human beings or the complex organisation and attention to legalistic detail has a numbing effect. One must remember that this is really about how 16 per cent of the south african population has organised itself, with western assistance, so that it can torture, murder, intimidate and incarcerate 83 per cent of the population.

South African prisons and their prisoners are at the heart of the illegal state apparatus. They are the reason why the system of apartheid 'works'. They are the core of the Afrikaner's regime's 'political relationship' with African society. They are the reason why South Africa attracts more western investment than any other country in Africa.

Immediately after the second world war the South African economy underwent a profound change. A partnership was forged. The newly elected Nationalist Party, committed to economic independence based on the development of a manufacturing sector, joined up with mining and agricultural interests eager to put their accumulated surplus profits into diversified investments. The 'economies of scale' required of modernised industrialisation and the small size of the 'white' consumer market meant that the private sector could not create a manufacturing base alone so that the state assistance came in handy.

The state 'assisted' in two ways. Directly it invested in local industry while forging investment deals with foreign companies. Indirectly import controls and tax incentives were initiated. On the other hand steps were taken to confirm profits with cheap labour while insuring high white salaries in order to stimulate the growth of a consumer market. These 'incentives' meant the institutionalisation of racism - Apartheid.

The instigation of apartheid came at a crucial moment in African society. Up until the end of the war the prevailing 'segregation' system had managed the role of Africans in an economy dominated

by mining and agriculture. But the continued existence of migrant labour, fixed land area and low investment in African agriculture, in the midst of increased population and consequent over-population, created a crisis in productive capacity - the child death rate, always a good indicator of social health, began to rise steeply.

The 83 per cent began to call a halt, combing to press for better wages and rural conditions. Unions were formed and political movements took shape. Apartheid was, and is, the white regime's answer to this situation.

There are two basic features of apartheid: job and living segregation of black workers from white, and the establishment of Bantustans and migrant labour. It is a calculated policy of disenfranchisement which denies educational, employment and landownership opportunities while constantly confronting individuals with a subordinate and inferior status.

Whites are outnumbered 5 to 1 in South Africa. From the outset the regime knew that the apartheid system would have to be 'backed up' by ruthless 'legal' police and prison action. As the organisation of reaction accelerated throughout the '50s, '60s and '70s the machine expanded. In doing this a 'public attitude' has been put together in such a way as to make four-fifths of the population 'criminals' at any one time. In fact life may be characterised as so many grades of imprisonment: homeland, bantustan, school, migrant labour 'hostel', squatters community, or township. They all amount to walking inside a sealed drum. And if 'freedom' is slavery actual incarceration has to be made to make slavery seem like a gift.

There are four categories under which one may 'qualify' for imprisonment: pass law offenders, 'common criminal' detainee and political prisoner.

During 1976 a total of 250,000 Africans were arrested for offences under the pass laws and influx control. These were ordinary men and women found somewhere without a 'pass' to be there. This can happen at the whim of the authorities. For example, earlier this year police decided to 'swoop' on the Hillbrow and Yoeville areas of Johannesburg to "quell an alarming crime wave". 3080 arrests were made. When the dust settled it turned out that 2933 were taken under the trespass law, Bantu (urban area) consolidation act, and the curfew regulations - bystanders condemned as criminals.

These people are kept in 'farm gaols' or 'rehabilitation centres' or 'aid centres'. The system is used to subsidise white agriculture and keep wages low. There are 22 'farm gaols'. Labourers work in teams on the 'farms' which are contract-

ed out to farmers for six month periods. Families are not told where these people are. They are dressed in sacks, their passes are taken away, and they are left to be 'disciplined' by the farmer as he pleases. There are numerous and continuing reports of malnutrition and death.

The level of crime in South Africa is one of the highest in the world. This is not surprising given the social, economic and familial conditions imposed. As might be expected violent crime is highest in the townships. During 1976/77 there were 7,246 murders, 14,537 rapes and 240,826 cases of common assault among the 'non-white' population.

Crimes of desperation are not inter-racial. "While the settler or policeman has the right the live-long day to strike the native, to insult him and to make him crawl to them, you will see the native reaching for his knife at the slightest hostile or aggressive glance cast on him by another native, for the last resort of the native is to defend his personality vis-a-vis his brother... It is as if plunging into a fraternal blood-bath allowed them to ignore the obstacle and put off till later the choice, nevertheless inevitable, which opens up the question of armed resistance to colonialism" (1). Last year there were more murders in South Africa than were reported in England and Wales between 1900 and 1949.

The South African authorities declared that there had been 94,861 'common criminals' in prison during 1975. About 5,020 of these were classed as juveniles and another 2,870 were children. 2,251 of these prisoners received, in addition to their sentences, a total of 11,938 strokes with the cane.

As another deterrent for 'common criminals' (as well as political prisoners) South Africa has one of the highest rates of judicial execution in the world. In 1975 68 people were executed in Pretoria. Multiple executions are not uncommon. Between 1967 and 1976 701 prisoners have been executed for 'political offences'.

Those who survive to enter the system of incarceration are joined by two other more conscious groups - detainees and 'political' prisoners. In fact it is about as easy to become a political prisoner as it is to be a pass law offender.

BRIAN MURPHY  
(Southern Africa)

(1) Franz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 1961; Penguin 1974, page 42

Next: Part 2. Making Everyone a Political Prisoner

## WHO IS ELITIST?

Dear comrades

Referring to Wynford Hicks' review of *The Impossibilities of Social Democracy* (28 October), I think WH should sort out the various grounds for his criticism of V. Richards' prose style. Some are more compelling than others.

I agree that foreign expressions and long clumsy sentences would be better avoided than used, because they do not fulfil the purpose of language, which is communication. I don't know what the common factor is supposed to be in the list of words showing an allegedly 'elitist' attitude: they seem to be quite a mixed bag of unnecessary pomposity (eg. 'surmise'), clichés ('unbridled' is straight out of pulp fiction) and generally accessible words (eg. 'perennial' is common in gardening catalogues and compere's patter).

Perhaps it all comes down to a sort of inverted intellectual snobbery. I don't see that a statement to the effect that 'the intelligent, politically-informed reader' will be able to update VR's references without difficulty, implies that the 'stupid and politically ignorant' should not bother with it. It simply implies that it will cause such people more difficulty if they do read it.

The idea that political ideas must, if they are to gain general interest, be expressed in common words of one syllable even when that entails distortion, is an insulting and dangerous one. The *Daily Mirror's* style is quite rightly much despised (although I took this for sarcasm, not a personal opinion of VR), because, like any capitalist paper, the *Mirror* distorts information to manufacture news. Its peculiar mode of doing this as against some other papers, is to polarise political questions and offer simple answers, as fascists do.

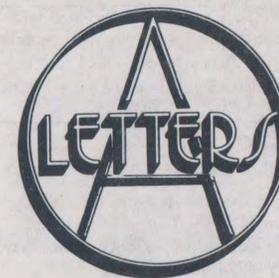
In general, I think that any idea which is clear in a writer's or speaker's mind can be expressed in words and sentences which are clear to any speaker of the language. If the idea is complex, the means of expressing it may have to be; and if disfunctions of meaning are to be conveyed then unfamiliar words may have to be used. Why is that 'elitist'?

Words obviously convey more than their bare dictionary meaning, as we all tend to 'read between the lines'. WH sees VR's attitude as unadmittedly elitist. In that case he should be more straightforward in declaring his own assumptions. Some vocabulary, used in some situations, does imply an assertion of superiority, but there are different kinds of supposed superiority. One is the assumption that a limited vocabulary means that someone is better, more down to earth, and more in touch with reality. This attitude is as deplorably authoritarian as its counterpart.

Yours sincerely  
W. Upson

Lancs.

PS. I am quite prepared to admit, or rather assert, that I am stupid (in some respects) and politically ignorant (in some respects).



## NARAYAN A MARXIST!

Dear FREEDOM

I beg to differ with GNO and his statements about Jayaprakash Narayan in the conclusion of his article 'Russia in 1984?' (FREEDOM no. 23). My sources show Narayan in a different light.

Narayan was hostile to Gandhi's views on the peasantry, and dismissed them in his book *Why Socialism* as mere 'autochthonism'. He distrusted the Satyagrah movement of Gandhi and instead planned to draw in the masses to the congress movement by 'socialising' the national struggle. In 1934 Narayan founded the congress socialist group along with other prisoners, Asoka Mehta, Achyut Patwardhan, Yusuf Mehrally, S. M. Joshi, Narendra Deva, Sri Prakasa, Sampurnandan and N. G. Ranga. These men were Marxists and opposed what they saw as the quasi-religious, paternalistic, reactionary tendencies of Gandhi.

This picture is totally different to GNO's. Narayan was not a Gandhian socialist but an Indian Marxist.

Yours

Frank Hibbert  
Coleg Prifysgol Gogledd Cymru

## FREEDOM'S TENDENCIES

Dear FREEDOM

I have been a regular reader of your magazine for many years - I remember the newspaper format with red title! Was it then the anarchist weekly? Anyway, I note there is a discussion as to the content of FREEDOM.

You publish national and international listings of anarchist groups, which is useful and necessary. However, surely

it would be nice were some of these groups actually to send you reports of their activities and plans. I think FREEDOM should become, more than it already is, a general, non-partisan, anarchist disseminator of information. Certainly, vital issues, eg. ABC trial and Torness, are covered, but, as the Nat West says, our roots are our branches.

Other anarchist publications, eg. *Minus One*, *Black Flag* and so forth, seem to represent specialised versions of anarchism. FREEDOM appears to be more general. It would be good to have something widely recognised as catering for all (is that ever possible? You know what I mean!) anarchists, a publication where we could all read about the philosophy and activities of all groups.

I am not proposing that FREEDOM be the only anarchist journal, or that periodicals with a narrower outlook are a bad idea. I am putting forward the idea that there is a need for wide coverage of local and (international) activities of all 'tendencies' in one publication. FREEDOM would seem to be about the best bet for this.

To this end, I would ask that all readers help by arranging for reports of their groups' (or their own) ideas, experiences and actions to be sent to FREEDOM. To show willing, I enclose a few details about the Newcastle Anarchist Group (associated with Black Jake).

Anarchy!  
John Morton  
Newcastle

We welcome continued comment on the role and content of FREEDOM, on which we shall be commenting, and meantime fully support John Morton's request to groups and individual readers for news of their activities. EDS.

## COMPLAIN TO CARTER?

Dear FREEDOM

I am an American political prisoner, locked in a cage because of my beliefs. My only crime is that of demanding human rights.

It is my hope that your organisation will lodge a formal complaint against the Carter administration for refusing to respect basic human rights and to stop the inhuman treatment of thousands of political prisoners.

Also I would be very interested in assisting people with similar views, to wit: that people have a right to be free and live without government control. I do not have money but I will use my free time anyway possible to assist.

Take care.  
Billy Kidwell

20879-101 7P.S.  
PO Box 34550, Memphis, Tennessee  
38134.

# FREEDOM'S BOOKSHOP NOTES

In Angel Alley, 84B Whitechapel High St, London E1.  
(Please add postage as in brackets).

## NEW FROM FREEDOM PRESS

Vernon Richards: *The Impossibilities of Social Democracy*  
£1.00 (22p)

## THE LITTLE PRESS SCENE

\* Len Fulton and Ellen Ferber (Eds): *Small Press Record of Books in Print*. Seventh Ed. 1978. £5.50 (86p).  
(Purchasers of this receive a free copy of the sixth ed. 1977 as well).

\* Len Fulton and Ellen Ferber (Eds): *Directory of Small Magazine and Press Editors and Publishers*. Ninth Ed. 1978/9 (26p)

\* Len Fulton and Ellen Ferber (Eds): *International Directory of Little Magazines and Small Presses*. 14th Ed. 1978/9. £5.50p (66p).

## FOR THE RICH ANARCHIST!

\* Paul Avrich: *An American Anarchist: The Life of Voltairine de Cleyre*. £12.95p (66p).

\* J. Roland Pennock and John W. Chapman (Eds): *Anarchism (Nomos XLK)*. Including contributions from John P. Clark, Alan Ritter, Murray Rothbard, David Wieck and April Carter. £19.50 (86p). (Reviewed in FREEDOM, vol. 39, no. 21).

## FOR THE REST OF US!

\* Paul Lafargue: *The Right to be Lazy*. £0.75p (15p)

- William Godwin: *An Enquiry Concerning Political Justice* (edited by Isaac Kramnick). £2.25p (54p).

\* Philip S. Foner: *The Case of Joe Hill*. £1.50p (19p)

- K.H.Z. Solneman: *John Henry Mackay: The Unique*  
£0.50p (10p)

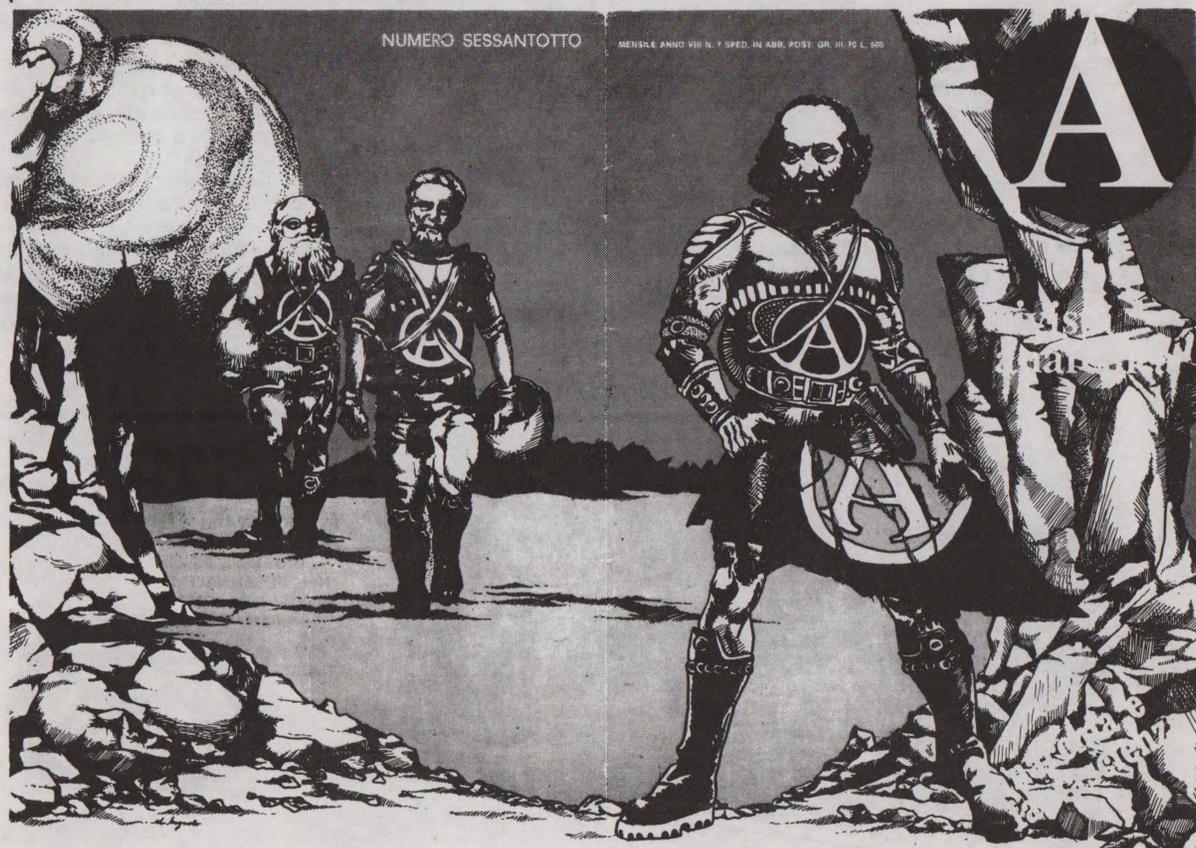
- Robert Nozick: *Anarchy, State and Utopia* £4.95p (54p)

\* Lysander Spooner: *Vices are not Crimes: A Vindication of Moral Liberty* £1.95p (15p).

- Max Nettlau: *Anarchism in England One Hundred Years Ago* (24pp). £1.50p (10p).

- *The International Journal of Alternative Communities* no. 1.  
£0.60p (12p).

(Items marked \* are published in the USA).



# Freedom

Anarchist Review

9th NOVEMBER/78  
VOL 29 No 24



## armed struggle in italy

But perhaps the most outstanding feature as regards these groups is that they did not arrive at the decision to take up armed struggle out of desperation. Indeed, as the following considerations on their ideological origins show, they did so as a result of methodical analysis of the economic, social and political situation.

### (i) THE MARXIST-LENINISTS

The ideologies which have influenced the various armed struggle groups have two fundamental components: one of which is the marxist-leninist derivation and the other is the "workerist" derivation. The most "successful", consistent and solid representatives of the marxist-leninist line are the Brigate Rosse.

The workers struggles of 1969 and 1970 had provoked a profound crisis in Italian "M-Lism", and produced a veritable haemorrhage of militants leaving these groupuscules whilst others were forced to re-examine their theories and practices. The rigid division between "economic struggle" and "political struggle" which had up until then been a basic tenet of theirs, received several severe knocks with the failure of various small "left" unions and "red currents" in the workplace, and so a different approach was called for. ▶▶▶

FROM PHOTO Police and Army at Work!

At the start of the BR trial in Milan, Curcio tries to throw himself at the judges, but is restrained by police.

This review goes with the one on the FRG (no. 22). A general analysis precedes a statement from Azione Rivoluzionaria who explain their view of guerrilla war (here equated with armed struggle - though the two are not necessarily identical) in terms of the fight for planetary survival itself. EDS.

OVER THE LAST DECADE armed struggle as a political strategy has become an increasingly influential and important part of the Italian left-wing political scene.

The armed struggle groups and organisations in Italy are not part of a national independence movement, nor are they part of a struggle by minority ethnic or racial groups. Furthermore, despite what their denigrators have said regarding the irrelevance of their struggle to the working class, several of their militants are indeed working class people, some of whom have also had a great deal of experience as union representatives and so on. Also, despite efforts by the Communist Party and its union (the CGIL) to show that the "workers" completely condemn the activities of these groups there is a great deal of "embarrassing" evidence to suggest that this is far from being the case.

The group which formed in Milan, previously called the "Collettivo Politico Metropolitan" and which later came to be called "Sinistra Proletaria" (Proletarian Left), attracted many student militants of "M-L" and "vanguardist" tendencies who had taken part in the struggles in 1968. They attempted to re-define "M-Lism": whilst accepting the maoist concept of the division between city and countryside they also introduced the concept of "the metropolis" as the "most advanced form of concentrated capitalist exploitation" and also attempted to arrive at an up-to-date analysis of the composition of the proletariat, albeit with great difficulty.

Both the possibility and the desirability of a reconstruction of the party were never abandoned despite these crises and the "need" for such a form of organisation was given a militaristic rationale. "The problem was put in terms of overcoming 'spontaneity' and the construction of a comprehensive working class organisation which was favoured by the apparent intention of the bourgeoisie to openly attack on a militaristic plane. And it was mainly the forced choice of this area of struggle that brought about a split in Sinistra Proletaria and the birth of the Brigade Rosse." (1)

A point which needs underlining regarding the ideology of the BR in their early stages (an ideological feature which they held in common with other organisations such as Lotta Continua and Potere Operaio) was the belief that the space for the effective implementation of reformist policies was/is getting progressively smaller, because of the deepening of the crisis and the resurgence of class struggle. In other words, this was the appropriate time to take up a much harder form of struggle.

Not only was this choice not an act of desperation but it can also be looked upon as an act of faith. This "strategy" of spreading the armed struggle like an "oil stain" and the building of the "armed party" out of the "most advanced sectors of the proletariat" presupposes that the marxist-leninist formulation of "class struggle" still holds water. After all, there seems little point in risking the loss of life and limb, not to mention long years of imprisonment, owing to the decision to take up armed struggle if at the end of the day the strategy does not succeed in bringing about the revolution.

The severe knocks which the rigid division between "economic struggle" and "political struggle" received as a result of developments in the period after 1968 brought about a strange theoretical mutation. The "political struggle" replaced "economic struggle" as the principal motor of the revolution and the classic marxist concept of class struggle between the working class and the capitalist class was replaced by the concept of class struggle between 'society' and 'the State'. Whilst this may sound like a promising development to anarchists it must be pointed out that the armed struggle groups see every initiative of the State as "an initiative of capital and every response from society as a response from the working class." (2) In other words, they have held onto the basic marxist belief that the system of private profit came before violence of the state (and not the other way round as anarchists believe - this was what the polemic between Marx and Bakunin was about).

The 'proletariat' as a clearly recognisable revolutionary force consisting mostly of industrial workers no longer exists and the marxist-leninists themselves have almost admitted this by substituting this seemingly new concept of class struggle between 'society' and 'the State' for class struggle between the 'proletariat' and 'capital'. Several questions immediately spring to mind. It has to be shown, for instance, that the various components of this 'society' struggling against the capitalist-inspired 'State' actually have enough in common to weld them together as a unitary revolutionary force. Of course, exploitation by the system of private profit seems to suggest itself as the common binding factor. The feminists have shown, however, that the process of revolution is not a simple matter of an oppressed class struggling against the oppressive class. Furthermore, the system of private profit is not the sole basis of power and it can be argued that the basis of power of the State is the control over access to services, access to commodities



(private property is now only a commodity and no longer the basis of power (3) even in Britain), the decision of what to produce and so on. In other words, it is still unclear as to who the "armed party" is going to lead and against what.

It would, nevertheless, be naive to suggest that the Brigade Rosse did not attempt to relate what they have been/are doing to life in the late 20th century.

After they had been active for a year (attacks on fascist foremen, managers, etc...) they brought out a pamphlet in September 1971 in which they explained their choice of struggle in the form of an interview (4). According to the BR the bourgeoisie, faced with the crisis of its hold on power, has only one answer, which is militarization, with the object, not of restoring the traditional form of fascism, but "Gaulist" fascism. This variant of "fascism" maintains the appearance of bourgeois democracy (sounds familiar!) and the BR bemoaned the fact that the non-reformist left was totally unprepared for the forthcoming armed attack from the neo-Gaulists.

"We were faced with two choices apart, that is, from reformism which we rejected several years ago as did the rest of the revolutionary left: we could repeat the historical experience of the labour movement along anarco-sindicalist or 'thirdinternationalist' lines, or we could come to terms with the metropolitan revolutionary experience of the era we are living in."

In 1974, after Agnelli had been made president of the Italian confederation of industry (Agnelli is mister FIAT) which led to the formation, both inside 'Confindustria' and in the Christian Democrat Party (DC), of a 'moderate' FIAT-Montedison power block, the BR brought out a pamphlet (April 1974) entitled "Against neo-Gaulism - take the attack to the heart of the State." In the pamphlet they argue that

whilst in the factories the workers autonomy groups are sufficiently well organised and strong enough to maintain a condition of constant insubordination and to consistently win a growing number of struggles, outside the factories the situation is the total opposite. It is for this reason that the forces of counter-revolution have been shifting their real sphere of activity outside the factories whilst engaging in seemingly "decisive" battles inside the factories in order to isolate the power struggle there, thus enabling them to control it and subsequently destroy it.

The BR underlined their new strategy of "attacking the heart of the State" with the kidnapping of a magistrate based in Genoa called Mario Sossi. Their actions up until that time had been marked by a 'workerist' logic and concentrated on particular struggles inside the factories. With the Sossi kidnapping they intended to take their attack directly to the State's institutions by striking it in what they regard as its weakest link, i.e. the legal institutions.

This kidnapping incidentally caused as much trouble to Italy's institutions as did the Moro kidnapping of this year (complete with appeals from the Pope to not harm their prisoner) but caused even greater embarrassment. Sossi's captors got him to reveal that the whole of Genoa's legal and police apparatus was involved in gun running for neo-fascist groups. Sossi's boss, Coco (who was later killed by the BR) tried to provoke the BR into killing Sossi as they were threatening to do (if certain comrades who had been persecuted by Coco, Sossi and company were not released) because he had obviously said too much. The BR on this occasion pulled off a brilliant publicity coup by unexpectedly releasing Sossi unharmed after he had revealed enough.

The BR eventually identified the Christian Democrat Party as the main enemy. Whilst supporting struggles against neo-fascist groups, and indeed itself carrying out attacks on members of the MSI, it identified the DC as the exponents of neo-Gaulist fascism, having labelled them early on as "fascists with a white shirt." The well-prepared Moro kidnapping (Aldo Moro was constantly referred to in their early pamphlets as a leading exponent of neo-Gaulism) was again a 'logical' development of the BR's strategy. What was disappointing about the Moro kidnapping was that surprisingly little embarrassment was caused to the State's institutions (the opposite was the case with Sossi) which suggests that perhaps the political expertise of the new BR cadres is not as well developed as was the case with the founding members. Or maybe the BR's larger organisational structure (complete with lines of command and other militaristic paraphernalia) inevitably did not allow the same sort of flexibility which the founding members had at their disposal. The Communist Party's support for the government may, of course, have provided the Christian Democrats with the sanctimonious air they so desperately needed on this occasion.

The logic of the BR's analysis is seductive and clearly has a basis both in marxism-leninism and in the power struggles of the late 20th century. However, their objective is not to destroy the power of the State as such but to replace it with another form of State power. This suggests that, despite the revolutionary rhetoric and the even more spectacular actions, their objective is only half a revolution. Half a revolution, as the comrade readers know, is not necessarily better than no revolution at all. This consideration does not, however, argue against armed struggle but it does argue against the marxist-leninist variant as a total strategy. The translated reproduction further on of a document by Azione Rivoluzionaria provides a different concept of armed struggle inspired by an anarchist outlook.

#### (ii) THE WORKERISTS

At the beginning of the 70's Italian 'workerists' (post-68 marxist groupuscules) split into two distinct sections: one part went into the PCI and formed the 'advanced' battlefield entrenchment of the hysteric compromise (these have often been described as "those who put forward the most right-wing arguments with the utmost amount of leftist rhetoric."); the other gave birth to a centralised focus of autonomous theory and practice (which later came to be known as the

'area of autonomy'). In this 'area' the armed struggle is not considered to be principal mode of struggle around which to build 'the organisation'. They consider that armed struggle is merely a complementary form of struggle to the other areas of social conflict. Not surprisingly, polemics between this 'autonomous area' and the BR have not been infrequent. The 'autonomists' refused to grant armed struggle a privileged position compared to other forms of struggle whilst the BR argued that "it is around guerrilla warfare that the resistance movement and the area of autonomy can build itself and organise and not vice versa." (5)

As the post-68 vanguard parties and groups became crisis-ridden and dissolved themselves, what were previously minority factions of these groups came to the fore and became recognisable as a consistent form of organisation (the 'area of autonomy') which kept up a constant anti-institutional struggle on many fronts.

The worsening economic situation with its accompanying austerity programme, 'political redundancies' in the northern factories, and so on, brought sections of 'the area' to broadly similar conclusions as the BR as regards areas of struggle and armed struggle. The decision was also arrived at to shift the area of struggle from the factories to the general social scene and the tendency came to the fore of adopting a 'comprehensive' approach along leninist lines. This shows just how influential 'thirdinternationalist' and 'leninist' culture had remained amongst the 'workerist' factions.

They began by repeating the early experiences of the BR by attacking factory managers on the one hand, but on the other hand they also attacked representatives of that societal right-wing which the BR had defined as 'neo-Gaulist fascists'. However, unlike the BR who eventually brought their attack to representatives of the Imperialist State (e.g. Aldo Moro's kidnapping) the 'area of autonomy' shifted its attention to the wider societal sphere by paying greater attention to neo-leninist organisation of the struggle against low-paid 'illegal' labour exploitation, the young people's movement, the feminist movement, and so on.

The moderate behaviour of the 'workers' confronted with the government's austerity programme and other aspects of the economic crisis which confronted them, caused many theoretical and practical difficulties for the anti-reformist wing of Italian workerism. The 'workerist' armed groups responded by adopting a leninist approach and the subsequent vanguardist stance as regards the various struggles mentioned above. This general recession towards leninist methods by the 'area of autonomy' has been a disappointing development which has prevented it from arriving at an up-to-date, relevant and useful analysis of the existing power structure.

Indeed, after the explosion of 1977 which is remembered more for the slogans and actions of the more genuinely creative 'metropolitan indians', the heavy leninist-oriented 'autonomists' again find themselves in a state of crisis as regards their theory and practice. Unfortunately, the 'Indians' have more or less faded away in accordance with their 'spontaneist' nature.

#### SOME PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS

Armed struggle in Italy has reached probably the most advanced stage of development yet achieved by this form of struggle and its almost undisputed leading exponents are the Brigade Rosse. Several factors stand out which are impressive. Firstly, the consistent development of the strategy in terms of theoretical and practical formulations shows it to be far more than a spontaneous act of frustration. Secondly, the original intention by the founders of the BR to spread armed struggle 'like an oil stain' seems to have been partially achieved - from small beginnings with a handful of militants they have grown to an organisation involving at least a couple of thousand militants, helpers, organisers and so on. Furthermore, the number of new groups who have been influenced by their example (whether out of frustration or clear-headed political choice is not known) is also impressive. Thirdly, some of their assassinations have met

# azione rivoluzionaria

**Pisa, 30 March 1977** Alberto Mammoli, who was the prison doctor of Pisa at the time (May 1972) of the death of the young anarchist Franco Serantini in the prison and responsible, with others, for his death, was seriously wounded in the legs by a young man who fired three pistol shots at him. In a leaflet AR claimed responsibility for the action, stating, "Mammoli was not killed because there were others equally to blame, but he was still politically, morally and professionally responsible for the murder of Franco Serantini".

**Milan, 30 April 1977** Two big explosions at 5.15 am. hit the regional offices of the 'labour exchange' and Opel showroom. "During the night" it was stated in a communique put out by AR, "a group of comrades struck, for more or less demonstrative reasons, a series of targets which present 'clean labour'. The 'labour exchange', although a marginal institution as regards the capitalist labour market, represents above all the will of the bosses the reformists to 'place us' in any way in the world of exploitation". The attack on Opel was similarly an attack against the use of torture techniques and annihilation of comrades in the Federal Republic of Germany.

**Florence, 17 July 1977** A series of explosions seriously damage the prisons being built at Sollicciano. The 'Armed Nuclei of Azione Rivoluzionaria' claim responsibility.

**Livorno, 17 July 1977** At the same time this group damages the engine of a crane and huts in the building site of the prison being built at Via Padula in the Scaldiano quarter.

with quiet approval from a large number of young extra-parliamentary leftwingers (this was especially evident with the assassination of Coco - mentioned earlier). This is not surprising given the violent results of the fabrication by the State of the 'strategy of tension' based on the 'theory of opposed extremisms'.

Leaving aside tactical and political considerations, however, it is worth wondering just how far armed struggle as practised so far can be taken. The 'Imperialist State' has at its disposal the nation's armed forces and potentially the full might of NATO. In addition to the NATO forces there are the Warsaw pact forces not to mention their various well-organised secret services. A full-frontal attack on the 'Imperialist State' would seem to have very little chance of succeeding. After all, even Moro's kidnapping and execution seems to have had very little effect on Italian political life (even the highly discredited Christian Democrats gained considerable benefit from this 'present' of a 'martyr'). Surprisingly, given the 'key role' which Moro played in forming the present parliamentary political alliances, he was also considered expendable and replaceable.

Let us not forget also that the Nuclei Armati Proletari (NAP) seem to have been rendered totally ineffective with their militants either in prison or killed in action. This must represent a grim warning (apart from the fact that killing people is not very nice) to anyone who would consider entering into this sphere of activity.

The most unconvincing element common to almost all the armed struggle groups' theoretical considerations is the conviction that the space for reformist policies is constantly decreasing in size. This 'leninist' concept has been proved wrong time after time when applied to the economic sphere and there is very little evidence to suggest that we will witness an inevitable proletarianization of society as a whole and hence the revolution. The ruling class/es is/are much more resilient than the left is prepared to accredit. The choice of armed struggle is not, therefore, the only choice available in the present circumstances but it is a choice which can, if used properly be extremely effective. It must also be remembered that the power structure is not some kind of animal with supernatural powers able to withstand any kind of attack. It is indeed extremely vulnerable as regards its credibility and popular consensus (which is essential to its

## A CHRONICLE OF EVENTS IN 1977

**Cirie (Turin), 2 August 1977** Two bombs explode alongside the perimeter walls of the IPCA factory: the famous 'cancer factory' so called because many workers employed there died of cancer. The 'Armed Nuclei of Azione Rivoluzionaria' claim responsibility.

**Turin, 18 September 1977** A large amount of explosives go off at the rear of the La Stampa building (a Turin-based national daily paper owned - like many other things - by the FIAT car company). AR claim responsibility, as part of the struggle against the regime's powerful reactionary press.

**Turin, 19 September 1977** The following day, Nino Ferrero, a journalist with the communist party daily L'Unita is wounded in the legs. In a long communique AR claim responsibility for both actions. They explain that their attacks are intended to apportion responsibility for the control of news in relation to the deaths of two comrades involved in a strike on the headquarters of FIAT newspapers.

**Bologna, 25 September 1977** Attack on the electronic instruments firm 'Kalle Infotex', for which AR claim responsibility.

**Livorno, 19 October 1977** A shoot out between a 'commando unit' of three people and the police lead to the arrest of the three for the attempted kidnapping of the son of an arms trader, Neri. During the next two days two more comrades are arrested and charged for the same offence.

(SEE PAGE 13, ALSO) →



survival either in its present form or under some future mutation) and this also potentially its weakest link.

The problem is finding out what it is that the power structure cannot replace, or can only replace with great difficulty. The problem then arises of how to get rid of whatever it is.  
Carlos 'the mouse'

### References:

- 1) "Note sull'esperienza di lotta armata in Italia" from COLLEGAMENTI 3-4 May 1978
- 2) "Il marxismo del partito armato" by Mirko Roberti from RIVISTA ANARCHICA June/July 1978
- 3) See "Property was theft" in FREEDOM's Anarchist Review
- 4) Brigate Rosse, September 1971 reprinted in BRIGATE ROSSE by Soccorso Rosso
- 5) "Risoluzione della direzione strategica" April 1975 reprinted in BRIGATE ROSSE by Soccorso Rosso

## A DOCUMENT FROM :-

# azione rivoluzionaria



Debord rightly states that 'daily life is the measure of all things: of the realization or, more often, the non-realization of human relationships and of the use we make of our time.' Its plain that today the objective of the revolution must be the liberation of daily life. A revolution failing to achieve this end would be a counter-revolution. It is us who must be liberated, it is our daily lives, and not generalisations such as 'history' or 'society'. We see revolutionary liberation as a self-liberation leading to social liberation, and not as 'mass liberation' nor 'class liberation'; which an elite, a hierarchy or a State always grows from. Any revolutionary group which sincerely wishes to eliminate the power of people over their fellow human beings must denude themselves of all forms of power - hierarchies, property, fetishes - as well as bourgeois and bureaucratic traits which either consciously or unconsciously reinforce authority and hierarchy. This is not only obviously true of the official parties but it is also generally true in a wider context. The problem can only be completely resolved by the revolutionary process itself, but can also be partially resolved through a drastic rethink by the revolutionary and his/her group.

Azione Rivoluzionaria has been called an "anarchist group", with great displeasure it would seem, by the official caryatids who try to monopolise the term. What brought us together was, in actual fact an affinity in our respective cultural experiences which can be defined as anarco-communist. One of the first actions of the group - the wounding of Mammoli, the doctor responsible for the murder of the anarchist Serantini - was sweet revenge, the evening up of an old account which was weighing heavily on anarchist consciences, as did also the assassination of Pinelli. It is also a testimony of an anarchist presence in the actual struggle. But that's not all that there was to it, even if contributing to the struggle in any way has become a categorical imperative for everybody. The urgent need for an anarco-communist intervention came from our reflections on recent history, both as regards May 68 in France and the re-emergence of a revolutionary movement in Italy this year. Our attention was drawn, above all, to certain characteristics of this movement which was marked by a distinct antiauthoritarian tendency, which in any case had always been present, but also by an almost total break with the past.

The new movement has rejected both the historical monster of soviet marxism and that insipid hybrid, Italian marxism,

overflowing with slimy and hypocritical personalities, jesuit servants of any power, makers of unheeded appeals (the latest being that of Bobbio and company for the formation of a kind of SS of the Resistance against terrorism - a truly grotesque notion). It has also rejected the myth of the 'industrial proletariat as the revolutionary class' - a myth which led the movement of 1968 up a blind alley and which has today provided a good excuse for all the 'extra-parliamentary' opportunism. Proof of this lies in the fact that the groups who most faithfully tried to reflect the notion of the central importance of the working class are the very groups who have been most easily sucked back into reformist politics. Proof lies also in the space the PCI (Italian Communist Party) has given inside the party to the 'frontian faction' (1), in itself a classic action of incorporation aimed at people outside the party.

Liberation from this myth has unleashed and will unleash a number of forces. The movement of 77 is only a precursor of these.

At least three other aspects must be underlined:

1) The movement has intuitively guessed that, notwithstanding the fact that people have talked about marxist science and scientific critique of capitalist society for more than a century, critical analysis itself has made relatively little progress. Indeed this 'scientific critique' has played a regressive and oppressive role in the consciousness of the masses, enforcing total adherence to the society of capital.

The contradictions of capitalism and of its development, on which this scientific critique was based, have been neutralised along with the main contradiction, which is that between labour and capital. After spending a century bogged down in the objective contradictions of the commercial world, the movement has realised that it is necessary to shift analysis and research in the direction of the contradictions between this world and the needs, desires and dreams of the individuals who live in it, and that it is also necessary to establish a critique, not of classes but of individuals - the flesh and blood protagonists, not conceptual abstractions.

The movement is conscious of being the only contradiction of the capitalist system because it embodies those human traits still not suppressed by the process of de-humanisation, de-personalisation and massification.

2) The movement does not reject class struggle but enters into it in person. Action is always direct. No matter what the objective results are, the subjective consequences become fundamental. Direct action makes people conscious of themselves as individuals who can actually change their destiny and regain control over their own lives.

3) The movement recognises full well the inadequacy of the old socialist project, in all its variations. All the institutions and values of a hierarchical society have outlived their "function". There is no social reason for the existence of property and classes, for monogamy and the patriarchy, for hierarchy and authority, for bureaucracy and the State. These institutions and values, together with cities and schools, etc., have reached their historical limits. The whole social universe is in deep crisis, and not just in Italy. Here several features are more acutely felt than elsewhere. But the more the crisis deepens the more instances are witnessed of the reactionary aspects of the socialist project, whether it be Maoist, Trotskyist or Stalinist, preserving as it does the concepts of hierarchy, authority and the State as a part of the post-revolutionary future, and as a consequence also hanging onto the concepts of "nationalised" property and the class of the "dictatorship of the proletariat."

Until recently attempts to resolve the contradictions created by urban development, by centralisation, and by bureaucratisation, were looked upon as a vain 'counter-tendency' to progress and a 'counter-tendency' furthermore, which could be dismissed as utopian and reactionary. Those who dared to speak of a decentralised society and of a humanitarian community in harmony with nature and with the needs of individuals were branded as 'romantic reactionaries'. Even in the recent media campaign against Azione Rivoluzionaria the regime's mercenary writers went as far as to submerge themselves entirely in hilarious interpretations of luddism which they must surely have picked up from an activist's manual published by the Rinascita group (2).

The verdict of the movement, and above all of young people has been the exact opposite. Their love of nature is a reaction against this highly artificial urban environment and its products. Their informality of dress and of behaviour is a reaction against standardisation and formality in modern institutionalised life. Their predisposition to direct action is a reaction against the bureaucratisation and centralisation of society. Their tendency to avoid work and insist on their right to be lazy, reflects a growing anger with the senseless industrial routine which is fed by the modern mass methods of production of the factory, the office and the school. Their intense individualism is, indeed, a decentralisation in fact of social life, a personal withdrawal from mass society.

The movement knows that the so-called 'romantic' or, if you prefer, anarchist conceptions of a balanced community - direct democracy, humanitarian technology, decentralised society - are not only desirable but necessary: they form the very conditions for human survival and are 'practical' projects.

Let's take the question of energy as an example. The industrial revolution has increased the quantity of energy used. Although it is certainly true that pre-industrial societies relied principally on animal and human labour, it cannot be denied that in many regions of Europe a more complex system of energy provision had developed, integrating different resources, the use of water, for instance, being combined with that of a large variety of fuels. The industrial revolution destroyed these regional models of energy provision, replacing them first with coal and then coal with oil. The regional integrated models of energy supply have disappeared and there is no need to be reminded of the role this break with regionalism has played in bringing about the pollution of air and water, the devastation of whole regions and, finally, the prospect of running out of resources. We have been left with a choice: on one hand there are the solar energy collectors, wind-powered turbines and hydroelectric resources which, if taken on singly, do not provide a solution to our energy problems but which, together, as an organic model developed on the energy potential of a region, could amply satisfy the needs of a 'de-

centralised' society and reduce to a minimum the use of harmful fuels; on the other hand, a system of energy based on radioactive materials which will lead to a widespread contamination of the environment - at first in a subtle manner, but then on a massively destructive scale.

The forces of death and destruction have been quick to back this latter solution, with the 'Berlinguerians' on their heels. Indeed, in some cases the Berlinguerians have actually been the standard bearers (at Genova (4), in order to defend 'occupational levels' the technicians of the PCI dreamed up an Ansaldo that will nuclearise the whole planet - a suicidal policy which has forced the comrades of the Brigate Rosse to put several of these people in hospital for observation). By labelling as 'romantic' that powerful anti-nuclear movement which has developed in the USA, in Germany and lately also in Italy, the Berlinguerians are trying to pose as realists. But in truth they are limiting themselves to dining wherever capital craps.

If the ideas emerging from the movement haven't yet taken on the form of a possible and constructive project, this is for various reasons. Above all, the movement has not yet shed the ideologies of the past; it is still in the process of freeing itself of them. Secondly, after a century of 'socialist realism' to venture into the realm of the possible is a psychologically arduous task. Thirdly, the perversion of the productive forces has reached such a point that the task of 'reconstruction' seems beyond human capabilities. The destruction of the natural and social environment by capitalism has already had such a deep impact that it generates an almost total acceptance of itself as an irreversible process. But there is a political reason for this, in particular: the forces of the past are well organised and experienced in the art of death and destruction. The German concentration camps still give off smoke.

There also exist other important arguments for embarking on this project. If the movement is unable to find a practical solution to the general crisis it will be swalled up in the process or, which amounts to the same thing, its ideas will end up being perverted through putrid channels. It suffices to see how the 1968 uprising was diverted into the abortive 'councils' in the neighbourhoods, factories, schools etc. (Which just goes to show that the Berlinguerians also dine where we crap). Of course our methods must not be those of the Berlinguerians, who have entrusted their medium-term projects to four or five 'super organic intellectuals' (5).

A critical and constructive presence is necessary, but must go together with a similar negative and destructive one. This, through armed struggle, is today the only means of gaining attention and credibility for any project. The movement is faced not by intermediaries, but by the forces of death and destruction, and the deeper the economic, social and political crises become, the more these tighten their ranks in preparation for the final struggle. They see the state as their last chance for self-preservation...

The social and political forces are becoming increasingly independent of the masses and increasingly dependent on the state. They have no other weapon but 'forced consensus', which is imposed with a measure of terror to counteract the growing antagonism they face. Father capital has called his faithful together. The defence of this state at any price, indeed its reinforcement through terroristic methods, is their common denominator.

Such a coalition of statist forces can only be defeated in a war of attrition, by the opening up of an internal battle front which will form a focus of opposition around which the existing forces of antagonism can gather. The Italian situation is exceptional. It cannot be compared to that of Germany for instance, because of the sheer size of the internal front, the existence of a movement which does not isolate the guerrillas but enables them, rather, to increase in numbers.

Azione Rivoluzionaria was born with one eye on the experiences of the RAF and their analysis of the processes in action in Germany, and with the other on the characteristics and forces of the movement in Italy which relate to the existing armed struggle guerrilla groups. It is a coalition of statist forces that must be defeated, and not one single force on its own. Those pistol shots fired at Ferrero (see Chronicle above: eds) were not only directed at an active agent of the psychological counter-

guerrilla movement - one of many such movements - but at the coalition as a whole and at the campaign of lies, defamation and false accusations which it wages in an attempt to isolate the guerrilla morally and politically. This campaign has, of course, been carried out by the PCI itself in Bologna and Rome, with the open support and protection of the security services!

To allow freedom of action to any one of the components of this coalition is to allow it to cover up the terrorism of the state from a left wing stance, and to carry out the recuperation of the social forces outside the party; these, because deprived of their own means of political expression, are susceptible to heavy pressure. The work of the security forces and of Pecciolini, aimed at physical elimination of the guerrillas, goes hand in hand with the appeals by Trombadori and his friends that they should be denied any kind of political identity (6). Together, these campaigns prepare the ground for the work of recuperation through the subservient unemployed workers' leagues (7), the new university movement led by Occhetto (a noted PCI hack) and the serenades of Asor Rosa, promising nothing. Such recuperators are carrying out distinct, specific tasks which, taken together, form part of a common project, the image of which can already be seen in the 'super-prisons' (supercarceri) now being built. It is therefore no accident that the big row generated by the wounding of Ferrero diverted attention from the attacks against the prison in Livorno and the superprison of Florence....

Our rejection of the myth of the industrial proletariat as the revolutionary class does not mean that we disapprove of the actions of the Brigate Rosse and Prima Linea. These have relieved the pressure which capitalism puts on the workers to preserve its domination over them. Punitive actions carried out against those who impose their discipline in the workplace or actions to slow down the process of accumulation, are essential in enabling the revolutionary minority present in

factories to obtain its freedom of action. It is, however, important that they do not become yet another contribution to the myth, a dangerous form of conditioning and adhesion to the 'workerist' point of view, with the result that the essential mechanism of the coalition is allowed to function.

To the people who turn up their noses (and there are many who do: the anarchist movement) when faced with the formation of a clandestine group, we would point out that the dangers of centralisation, bureaucratism and alienation have historically revealed themselves to be more consistent with 'open' or 'legal' forms of organisation, in which these dangers become a solid reality. As for those who still entertain illusions of non-violence, if our arguments have not been sufficient, an increasingly clear one will be provided by the state and its terroristic apparatus.

Our ideas on organisation, although still in their formative stages, tend towards a model well-known to the revolutionary movement, initially tried out in Spain in the 30s, but then obscured from view by the so-called 'collectives' and 'communes' of American radicals. By this we mean affinity groups, rather like 'families' based not on those lines traditionally associated with families but on deeply 'sympathetic' relationships marked by a great degree of reciprocal trust, intimacy and personal knowledge between the members. Whether they are formed in a particular locality or through other connections, these groups must necessarily remain small, both in order to guarantee that these characteristics are maintained and to guard against infiltration.

The affinity group tends on one hand to do away with relationships based only on efficiency and, on the other, to go against the schizophrenic division of private life from collective life - a division which lies at the base of both opportunism and the lack of clear relationships between comrades, as well as to constant uncertainties and despair.

AZIONE RIVOLUZIONARIA  
January 1978

#### Explanatory Notes

(1) Tronti was a member of an extreme left 'workerist' organisation in the late 60s. He has since joined or rejoined the Italian Communist Party and makes trendy pronouncements on the working class, interspersed with obscure quotes from Nietzsche (in German).

(2) Rinascita is the Italian Communist Party's theoretical journal, founded by Togliatti in the postwar era.

(3) The term 'Berlinguerians' here refers to the faithful followers of the line laid down by the PCI secretary, Enrico Berlinguer.

(4) Genova was/is the scene of many hard confrontations between what we might call 'moderates' in the communist-controlled union CGIL and more sensible elements who belonged to a variety of other organisations.

(5) An ironic reference to Gramsci's absurd concept of the 'organic intellectual', i.e. an 'intellectual' from the ranks of the working class (read for this working class PCI member who theoretically cannot but move in a revolutionary direction).

(6) All the people mentioned here are prominent PCI members who have constantly demanded extremely tough 'anti-terrorist' legislation, claiming that since the 'terrorists' (which includes all left-wing opponents of the regime) are against the PCI they must be fascists and hence.....

(7) The 'unemployed workers' leagues' were formed by the PCI as an attempt to offset the revolutionary momentum of the 'organised unemployed', an initiative taken by extra-parliamentary groups which had a great deal of success in cities like Naples.

