

The International Revolutionary Solidarity Movement

**A study of the origins and development of the revolutionary anarchist
movement in Europe 1945–73 with particular reference to the First of May
Group**

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1900–1939

Once again in history Anarchism is singled out by every reactionary force as its main enemy. World Governments, moving closer together against the common threat of the common people, fear a socialism unfettered by government ties, a class struggle without the limitations imposed by the parliamentary game, a working class without a leadership that aims at imposing authority either by a new dictatorship or by bourgeois parliamentarianism.

Before the First World War the main impetus to social revolution came from the anarchist and revolutionary syndicalist movements. However, following the defeat of the Russian Revolution with the triumph of authoritarian communism, world capitalism tended to concentrate its energies on destroying this apparent danger to its continued existence, thus giving the impression that the libertarian movement and its ideas were superfluous, or, at best, a side issue to the main struggle, so far as the organised working class was concerned. Only in a minority of countries did anarchism take the lead, elsewhere the very idea of freedom went into decline.

Capitalism, using the dictatorial methods of state communism wherever necessary, forced a situation where the apparent alternatives seemed to be (state) communism or fascism.

This did not prevent the anarchist movement from maintaining the intensity of the class struggle throughout the 1920s. It was the anarcho-syndicalist movement in Spain (the CNT) which carried the whole weight of labour organisation throughout the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera (when the socialist leaders took office in order to try to boost the socialist UGT union at its expense) and during the equally perfidious republic which followed. In Italy, individual and collective libertarian attacks against Mussolini and his regime formed the main anti-fascist resistance. In France, anarchists fought a losing battle to keep the unions to their original syndicalist basis, while in the USA the IWW as the legatee to all that was libertarian and syndicalist in both the European and American traditions, fought a valiant battle against reaction. In the Argentine and Uruguay there were murderous assaults against the anarchist movement which fought on to maintain working class solidarity against the selfishness of the ruling class. In China, where the communist party sold out the proletarian revolution to follow the successful bourgeois revolutionists under Chiang Kai Shek, anarchists continued the struggle for workers' councils on the same lines as those of the first German revolution in 1918 and the factory occupations in Italy. In Russia, the struggle was passing from the battlefields and the factories into the prison camps. In Britain, anarchists were prominent in the shop stewards' movement and especially the unemployed workers' movement.

All this maintained a movement that had reached a high point of international struggle before the first world war; but it was nevertheless true that the whole trend of the post-world war I era appeared to be 'communism v. fascism'. As fascism triumphed in the 'have not' imperialist countries most threatened by state communism, it steadily began to menace the 'have' imperialist countries stable enough to resist that pressure, and so the situation of 'democracy v. fascism' developed. The ruling-class throughout the world had threatened to take away democratic liberties and substitute fascism if their domination was threatened, but gradually fascism became

associated with the aggressive 'have not' imperialism against the defensive empires. It began to seem to many that there was some identity of interests between capitalist and worker; and with the defence of the Soviet Union in mind, the Communist Party began to reiterate this theme incessantly.

This period ended with the Spanish Civil War. There it was the anarcho-syndicalist movement which responded initially to the military coup d'état which aimed at 'restoring law and order' by opposing to it the organised force, and the spontaneous action, of the working people.

Against the rebel Army of their own country they responded with the greatest weapon in their armoury, social revolution. The combined force of feudalism and fascism hit back with the greatest force at their disposal—genocide. Because of the treachery of the Republic, which declined to defend itself and would not arm the working people who alone could prevent its overthrow, the rising of the Army, though checked, became a war. Faced with the reactionary elements within the Spanish Government (aided by the Communist Party and its foreign backers) the libertarian movement felt inclined to compromise in its social revolution by waging the civil war instead; soon it was too late to alter course, for the enemy was too vicious and to falter meant to die. But without doubt the libertarian movement was also betrayed by a leadership which manoeuvred its way to positions of authority and power under cover of the war.

In the absence of party discipline, anathema to the anarchist movement, it was possible for the 'well known' to rise to a leadership which sought participation in the Government on the grounds that only in this way could the civil war be fought. Thus the libertarian movement came to adopt at second hand the slogans and to some extent the mentality of the Popular Front in regard to 'democracy v. fascism'. At the outset it fought against fascism under social-revolutionary colours; it went down to its defeat under false democratic-capitalist ones.

Meanwhile, every single anarchist endeavour throughout Europe was concentrated on the Spanish struggle to the sacrifice of everything else. The Spanish Anarchists rejected the idea of an International Brigade (other than for refugees with nowhere else to go). They did not want to 'depopulate' the anarchist movement abroad. Every struggle that went on was to help the struggle in Spain and this altered the entire character of the militant anarchist movement throughout Europe.

1939–1945

During the Second World War, liberals and social-democrats (together with the Communists, once the Nazi-Soviet Pact was broken by Hitler) pushed the idea of a 'holy war' against fascism, since the enemy happened to be fascist, and tried to bestow a democratic aura on the Allies. After a time, Allied propagandists themselves began to use some of the anti-fascist clichés, though with diplomatic caution until the powers concerned were actually in the war. Soon there grew up the popular myth that the only reason we went to war with Germany was because it was 'Nazi'.

Two major developments took place in the anarchist movement in Europe. The Spanish Anarchists, exiled in France and treated as second-class citizens or as prisoners of war by the French Republic, were the first to take up arms after the French defeat, as a resistance movement against fascism. This movement of revolutionary defeatism spread over the Pyrenees into Spain, as an urban guerrilla movement linking up with people like Capdevila and Massana who had been operating in the mountains as rural guerrillas without a break since the victory of Franco in 1939.

The other development was in Britain, where the anarchists took advantage of the remaining freedom of expression in a country where the working class was able to resist internal suppression, to attack imperialism in every way possible, a struggle which spread even inside the armed forces.

Both these movements reached their zenith and disappeared.

The failure of the soldiers' councils to link up with workers' councils in post-war Britain, and the resultant euphoria of a Labour Government with full power, meant the loss of any revolutionary impetus. Those attracted to the idea of anarchism, particularly within the armed forces, as a prospective force in the supposedly forthcoming post-war revolution, drifted away. But the anti-war attitude of the British anarchist movement had also meant that many of purely pacifist persuasion had been attracted to the libertarian camp, and this had the effect of diluting the class struggle, or rather the libertarian participation in it, and opened the way to the liberalism of the New Left.

In Spain, more particularly among the Spanish exiles, the libertarian movement was stuck with the position of the thirties. The exiled bureaucrats were entrenched in Toulouse, and found it easier to sit back and complain that the Allies had not sent their armies into Spain to achieve the revolution for them, than to associate with the guerrilla forces that had never laid down their arms. Unwilling to involve themselves in any action that would compromise their settled existence in France, or the legality of their Organisation, they created a wedge between what passed off as the CNT in exile, and the newly emerged post-war Resistance against Franco which much more truly represented the CNT. No longer could the 'exile' leaders judge this as part of the revolutionary struggle; they could only view matter from a social democratic standpoint and echo stale war-time propaganda.

Thus the anarchist movement emerged from World War II lumbered on the one hand with the dead wood of social- democratic pseudo-libertarianism still parading the theory of the 'just' war

(as exemplified by the National Committee of the CNT in Toulouse) and this was well matched internationally by some other entrenched movements too lazy to move over to social democracy, which retained of anarchism only the label, but monopolised international connections in Europe; and on the other hand with the liberal-pacifist cult and the idealisation of non-violence as action in itself which later came, through America, to influence a whole range of new cults throughout the world in which the criterion was neither freedom nor resistance nor class struggle but solely the degree of absence of violence.

This substituted the idea of 'personal liberation' under the State for that of a free society, a purely liberal idea, and there were not so many differences between these two 'darker sides' of anarchism than appeared at first sight.

In many countries in Europe, therefore, Anarchism became once more a matter of small groups, some fighting on desperately as they did in Spain, some still retaining labour connections, as in Sweden, as well as of isolated individuals everywhere who carried on, against overwhelming odds, identified by small papers or bulletins or regular meetings, and trying to re-integrate into a new struggle.

1945–1960

With the rise of the new Left and the collapse of Stalinism from its near-monopoly position among working class militants, there was a proliferation of Marxist groups. Some of these managed to ensure that there was carried over into a new generation, though purged of the Stalinist taint, the same mistakes of the Communist Party and the same subordination to political leadership, but even more than previously they substituted the cult of Nationalism for that of any form of socialism and thus managed to avoid the most important issue, class struggle. This nationalist cult, expressed in Marxist phraseology, has characterised the new left ever since.

But despite the many struggles for national liberation which have over-clouded the issue since the 1950s, the real conflict has no longer been between state communism and fascism nor between democracy and fascism nor, as the propagandists now put it, between democracy and communism (or New Democracy and capitalism). It was between the rulers of the world with increasingly common interests and the people themselves. Because of this Anarchism has come to the fore once more, even though (ironically) just as in the thirties anarchist action was interpreted in the light of the clash between communism and fascism, now communist and nationalist (if not exactly fascist) action began to be interpreted by the media in the light of essentially anarchist struggle against world imperialism and centralised government.

This rise in anarchist activism spread far beyond the influence of the small corps of anarchist activists who had to struggle from the grip of pacifist non-resistance on the one hand, and the non-resistance of the 'dominant figures' of the Spanish libertarians in exile on the other, who tried to divert the struggle by appeals to the United Nations and invocations of old war-time slogans as well as cold war ones, in an attempt to find a 'diplomatic solution' that would enable them to regain their lost ministerial portfolios. For these people and others like them the 'justice' of the armed struggle against Franco ended, in effect, when it ceased to be legal, and from 1945 onwards the Resistance fought without their help, and often, against their wishes.

But as the Spanish activists found common cause with the new generation inside Spain, so did all the small anarchist groups throughout Europe find that they were no longer isolated and ageing groups of militants; on the contrary, while the anti-nuclear movement, based on pacifist techniques, brought in temporarily hundreds who appeared to be anarchists (but were basically liberals who found liberalism meaningless, yet who saw anarchism as merely a personal revolution, which is to say liberalism) yet of those some came right through to a revolutionary position and those who did became a majority in the movement, which overnight became completely rejuvenated and the more effective.

But as the revolutionary anarchist groups became effective, and came to integrate internationally, the Marxist movements became effective by disintegration. The Trotskyist movement broke into a dozen clearly defined sects; the pretext of 'Maoism' meant a large number of opposing doctrines, from the true 'Maoist' Stalinist anti-revisionism to the most ultrarevolutionary stands. Blanquism, though unacknowledged flourished more than it had ever done; Spartacism, and the

ideas of council communism, were once more effective. The challenge to Moscow hegemony meant the proliferation of groups and theories, all part and parcel of the New Left.

Some of the new militants, encountering not the effective anarchist groups and thinking of them as the exception to the rule when they were in fact the rule itself, saw with distaste the 'retired militancy' of the bureaucratic relics or the non-resistance of the 'new' movement, and went their own way. Either they formed new anarchist groups not in touch with the other revolutionary anarchist groups—and therefore intended sometimes to borrow slogans or package-deal attitudes from the rest of the new Left for want of having concretised their own philosophy—or they disclaimed the name altogether and preferred the more neutral 'libertarian' 'libertarian left' or even, in some countries, 'Maoist', though the Maoists explicitly disowned them, or 'Anarcho-Marxist'. Many of these groups, especially in Germany where the tradition of council-communism was strong, moved to a strongly libertarian position. Labelled 'anarchist' by the Press, they contained both Anarchists, sometimes using Marxist labels (later discarded) and New Left Marxists. This was the origin of such movements as the 'Red Army Fraction' whose development (later labelled 'Baader-Meinhoff Gang') terrified the German bourgeoisie but made apparent the class nature of German society and shattered the idyllic post-war German capitalist 'dream'.

In Spain, the urban guerrilla groups (Sabate and Facerias were already well known) sparked off a new wave of resistance in 1951 when a General Strike in Barcelona initiated a mass resistance movement following the passenger boycott of the tramway company in the city. Apart from building up sufficient capital to finance sabotage operations and 'attentats' against well known persons of the Franco regime, the aim of the libertarian action groups was to maintain a spirit of resistance to the government and in this they were successful for a time. But in spite of the intensity and heroism of their struggle, the Brigada Politico-social (Special Branch) was able to carry out a policy of extermination against the libertarian movement in Spain. It cooperated with the 'democratic' police forces beyond the Pyrenees and the fact that the Spanish libertarian movement had worked closely with Allied Intelligence during the war left it in a position to be betrayed afterwards in the interests of 'stable' government. What was worse, perhaps, was the apathy and lack of solidarity from anti-Franco forces in general. The level of conflict came to a standstill for a time, activity being confined to more sporadic and individual attacks in industrial Catalonia.

During the repression, militants of the CNT and activists of the Iberian Anarchist Federation (FAI) were murdered in the streets, or in their own homes, by the Spanish police. Hundreds of others received long prison sentences and a number are in prison to this very day. The libertarian movement had to reconsider its strategy in the light of the new repressive wave in Spain. Not only was it faced with the almost total disarticulation of the action groups of the interior, but, more discouraging still, the Franco Government was gaining by leaps and bounds in the fields of international diplomacy. In the years between 1951 and 1960 the Anarchist movement in Spain became more introverted and lethargic. It expended its energies, in exile, in a less physically dangerous but far more destructive way—engaging in polemics and mutual accusation of incompetence thrown across the Congress Halls and meeting places of the numerous committees of exile.

During this period, the 'nuclear disarmament' movement was attracting large numbers to the New left and beyond it, to an anarchist position. The new activists had already shown their willingness to participate in the struggle. The ball was at the feet of the anarchist movement, but the

revolutionary anarchist movement was too scattered and isolated to be able to kick it, and did not always appreciate what potentialities lay before it.

1960–1966

On January fifth, 1960, Francisco Sabate (el Quico, sometimes wrongly described as Sabater) one of the most tenacious and best known of the libertarian activists, was killed in the village of San Celoni (near Barcelona) following a gun battle with over 100 Guardia Civil the previous day, when four comrades from his group had been ambushed and killed in a Pyrenean farmhouse. Sabate, though badly wounded, managed to escape and make his way to San Celoni by hi-jacking a train, but he was recognised and brought down by the crossfire of a police patrol.

The death of this man, who symbolised for many the whole of the Spanish Resistance, helped to inspire the formation of the new resistance groups, and also helped to re-unite the scattered forms of revolutionary anarchist activism, who now realised that they must break decisively from the non-resistance wings and align themselves internationally with other revolutionary activists. The Spanish resistants in the interior realised that they could not rely on the Toulouse faction whose sole purpose was to divide them from their real allies, the international anarchist movement. Sabate's death thus marked the end of an era of introspection and apathy, and the beginning of a new internationally coordinated revolutionary activist struggle against imperialism in all its manifestations.

The reluctance of revolutionary anarchism to cut itself off from totally ossified groupings or those who, using the label 'anarchist' had no longer any libertarian or revolutionary interests, may seem curious to the outsider; but was born a long tradition within the anarchist movement to accept anyone as an anarchist who happened to call himself one (something long since impossible for socialists, or Marxists), and in the absence of a party organisation, this acceptance alone defined an anarchist movement. But it was always a dangerous tradition (it meant that someone well known for being an anarchist, though having no longer any connection with the movement, could 'speak' for something of which he was not a spokesman, one disastrous example being Peter Kropotkin, a member of no anarchist organisation at the time, apologising for World War II and causing as much harm to the revolutionary movement as if he had indeed been its delegate).

The death of Sabate, however, which was heralded in the Spanish press as the end of Spanish Anarchism, and which provoked the usual hypocritical disclaimers from Toulouse, meant that the Spanish movement of the interior decisively broke from Toulouse. Though still using the name 'CNT' to denote the type of union organisation which they wished to build up, it was clearly understood that they were not referring to the Organisation in Exile (MLE) but did not wish to confuse the workers as a whole. (And they also clung to the wish not to appear to be 'schismatic'.) However, within one month of Sabate's death the Revolutionary Directorate of Iberian Liberation (DRIL) announced its existence, and immediately obtained support from this anarchist movement of the Spanish interior as well as of other groupings. It made a number of daring attacks on the dictatorships of both Spain and Portugal, such as the hi-jacking by a commando of Spanish and Portuguese and South-American fighters on the liner Santa Maria on the high seas on January 21st 1961. The possibilities of a two-fold struggle opened up once more – the vanguard of workers' councils, now being established by the anarchist movement of the

interior—(FOI — Federacion Obrera Iberica, Workers Iberian Federation—the ‘internal’ name of the groupings ‘pro CNT’) and this rearguard of armed fighters who used such action where they could strike best.

Faced with this ‘problem’ the CNT in exile tried to reunify in 1961, giving up the attempts to reconcile revolutionary resistance with futile moves to find a ‘diplomatic solution’ to something which international capitalism and world diplomacy had solved to its own satisfaction. But it was now too late, and finally the organisation was doomed to sink into sterility, with counter-excommunications of the old guard of the bureaucracy.

Elsewhere in the world were the still somewhat isolated ‘sectarian’ groups of anarchist revolutionaries; the expanding movement that was coming via the nuclear disarmament movement, and the ‘anarcho-Marxist’ movements growing up quite independently, moving from Marxism but bringing many Marxist attitudes, especially those of ‘third world’ nationalism, with them.

Yet the coming together of the first of these sections with the Spanish activists soon surprised the world, since it apparently seemed that international anarchist activity had emerged from the blue like the kraken waking after years of sleep. Moreover, although the international activists had no connections with, and usually a strong dislike for, the ‘hippy’ and ‘new left’, nevertheless the latter did afford them a pool in which to swim. Their ideas were able to be heard for the first time by a larger audience.

Sympathy for their actions had never been lacking by a very much wider section of the public than the press ever imagined, and press distortions and hysteria notwithstanding, there was a deep underlying support for anarchist ideas in working class circles and among people of all generations. All this led to the setting up of a secret organisation the DI (Internal Defence) which brought together comrades with years of activity in every part of the world to co-ordinate their clandestine activities against tyranny—in the early spring of 1962 and within a few months surprised the world by the apparently sudden re-emergence of international revolutionary anarchist activity after years of ignorance of its existence.

But only when the ‘near miss’, on Franco’s life at San Sebastian (August 1962) took place did the international collaboration come to general notice, partly because this had also the effect of making an inroad by the libertarian movement on the Basque country. For long Basque nationalism had been reactionary, nationalist and clerical. Now it was as discredited as most of the inactive movements of the Republic in exile. The ETA was the new, dynamic Basque movement, and while it was to some extent nationalistic, it also contained many who were not, and could embrace nationalists, marxists, catholics and libertarians in a common struggle against Franco. As a result of the terror against the Basques, Franco had succeeded in uniting almost the whole Basque country against him, irrespective of whether it had nationalist aspirations or not. It also signalled a new wave of repression which swept Spain directed particularly against the miners of the Asturian coalfields and the libertarian activists. Feeling itself endangered by the rise in revolutionary consciousness and activity the Franco Government returned to the use of terror perfected in the years immediately following the Civil War.

Now, however, international action, concerted for the first time, was able to answer the repression within Spain. The Councils of War sent thirty libertarians to prison with savage sentences, and for one of them the State Prosecutor demanded the death penalty. Support for Jorge Cunill Vals, the young anarchist sentenced to death, grew throughout the world, and in Milan the Spanish Vice-consul was kidnapped by Italian anarchists (on September 29, 1962). Cardinal Montini (now Pope) intervened on behalf of the condemned Catalan Anarchist, and the rebuff he received

has caused the tension which exists between the Vatican and the Prado to this day (and is why the Church is now backing more than one side in the fight for the succession). On this occasion, however, Franco had to stay his hand and remit the sentence.

The following year Julian Grimau and the anarchists Delgado and Granados were sentenced to death but protests against the executions were so widespread that Franco's hopes of admission into the common Market were totally frustrated. Governments of the Western World were unable to flagrantly go against what were widespread sentiments by admitting Franco (the Governments of Eastern Europe had, of course, no such inhibitions, and could do trade deals whenever they wished without regard for public opinion which did not exist in their countries). However, without admitting it to the general public, and sometimes illegally, the police of Western Europe were working in close association with Franco though it was not until ten years afterwards that this was generally admitted. This police activity was excused in France by the fact that, as Franco had clamped down on the French OAS operating against De Gaulle from Madrid, they should clamp down on the Spanish Anarchists in France operating against General Franco (though it was often politically inexpedient for police who had collaborated with the Nazis to clamp down openly on libertarians who had been to the fore-front of the Resistance). In England no excuse existed, and in fact the issue of Gibraltar meant that Special Branch was in fact acting against British imperial interests by its assistance to Franco whose staged demonstrations for Gibraltar were solely destined to deflect public attention from the Resistance criticisms of his regime. Nevertheless, Scotland Yard was able to supply 'secret information to a foreign power' feeling that in time (as it did) government opinion would see that police interests against revolution were higher than such narrow nationalistic interests.

It was therefore possible for concerted police action to be taken against French, Italian and British anarchists working in conjunction with the revolutionary youth movement in Spain, demonstrating the international nature both of Anarchism and the Police. This led to the arrest of Scottish anarchist Stuart Christie in Spain, where he was taking part in an attempt to assassinate the dictator. World opinion was directed to Spanish prisons and in particular the material support which he began to receive was diverted by him to libertarian prisoners in general. For a long time the Communist Party had, under a variety of anti-fascist and democratic sounding names, been collecting aid for Spanish prisoners from all; but giving only to their 'own' — thus other prisoners came to be forgotten, with a corresponding dampener upon the resistance movement. The anarchists not only had been receiving the longest sentences and been the subject of the bitterest persecution, but the communists, who engaged only in propaganda activities extolling the glories of Russia, and advocating an alliance with the Christian-Democrats against American bases in Spain, were the only ones to receive aid in jail. Now at last that situation was reversed, irrevocably, a direct consequence of Christie's arrest. His arrest, and that of other 'foreigners', also helped to cement the international alliance that finally broke down the barrier that had been erected by the ossified and non-resistant wings of the movement.

In 1965 the Libertarian Youth Movement broke completely and finally with the main anarchist and confederal organisations in exile. The reason for this was the refusal by the National Committee of the CNT to implement the decisions agreed on in 1961 to renew the clandestine armed struggle against the Franco regime. This unwillingness to act may have been due to tiredness, fear or perhaps not wishing to compromise the steady comfortable existence they were leading in exile. However, with the break finalised the revolutionary anarchist activist movement was

now able to break free from the fetters which had bound it for so long its association with the movement in exile.

Grupo 1 de Mayo

At the end of April 1966 Mgr. Marcos Ussia, the ecclesiastical adviser to the Spanish Embassy in the Vatican, disappeared mysteriously while returning from the Embassy to his home in the suburbs of Rome. A few days later the First of May group announced its existence in Rome, while CNT militant Luis Andres Edo, in Madrid, announced simultaneously to the world press that Ussia had been kidnapped to draw attention to the plight of Franco's prisoners. The results of this action by the revolutionary anarchist movement became an issue of international importance and a central point of discussion in the Italian, French, Swiss, Spanish and Swedish press (the British press avoided it, perhaps for fear of imitative action). When the priest was released unharmed after fifteen days of intensive and fruitless searches by Italian, Swiss, and French police, it proved the efficiency of international anarchist solidarity, and disproved the 'terrorist' label put on them by Interpol.

Later, Edo was arrested in Madrid with four other comrades (men and women) accused of preparing to kidnap a high-ranking military officer in the American Army who was based there. Once again the anarchists had brought together in an international struggle the old fight against Franco and the struggle against American imperialism. Now they were re-groued under the old banners of the 'First of May', embodying the traditions of libertarian activism during eighty years of class struggle against capitalism. The struggle for workers' councils and direct workers' control, in opposition to slogans of nationalism, nationalisation and reform, had always been associated with the First of May Movement. Now that struggle was backed up by sharp, decisive actions against particular forms of class repression.

Though the 'counter-culture' and 'alternative society' coming from the youth revolution in America had really nothing to do with revolutionary anarchism, yet it contained within itself strongly revolutionary elements and the anarchist movement became transformed, as gradually new and old revolutionaries united together finding their own level. This was impelled further by the Vietnam War and its world-wide consequences of protest movements, and the rise of such groups as the Weathermen in the United States which greatly influenced the 'alternative society' movement in Europe, and especially in Greece and Turkey, where for the first time in fifty years a libertarian movement arose among the youth, divided between Anarchists and Marxist-Leninists, but struggling against the despotic regimes of those countries up to a point where the regime in Turkey was obliged to maintain a sort of permanent civil war against young workers and students, and that in Greece to use all the methods of Nazi rule learned by the police during the war.

In many countries, the growth of the vaguely 'libertarian left' inclined towards Blanquism or perhaps anarchism, with Marxist phraseology, continued—though as orthodox Maoist movements rose, the movement was impelled away from its 'Maoist' inclinations. This movement took a strong part in the fight for civil rights and for workers control, and against the tyranny of the state. To the press, inevitably far more uninformed than the public if presumed to serve, all this was the 'anarchist movement' and the revolutionary activist wing at that; a supposition encour-

aged by Tory propaganda which sought to present the anarchists as 'bogeymen' just as the Left, for that matter, tried to use the fascists for the same purpose.

In 1967 and 1968 revolutionary activism showed its hand again. Attacks were made on the offices of American civil and military centres throughout Europe and on the embassies of the Spanish, Portuguese, Greek, Bolivian and Uruguayan Governments (among others). Following these simultaneous actions in Britain, France, Germany, Holland, Switzerland and Italy, the First of May Group and the International Solidarity Movement issued a manifesto calling on all revolutionaries to practice an effective solidarity with all victims of the class struggle. The struggle began again in Turkey, with the formation of cells composed of both Anarchists and Marxists in a struggle against the military dictatorship. *L'Express* (Parisian weekly) foresaw that 'Anarchists will prepare a hot summer' and reported in March 1968 on the activities of what they described as 'extreme left wing organisations in Europe', prepared by their German and Dutch correspondents. The situationist movement, and the provo movement in Holland, were linked together with the libertarian left and the Anarchist revolutionary activists. And indeed, two months later, anarchism reappeared once more as the dynamic force it is.

The events of Paris—with the participation in it by Anarchists, Maoists, Trotskyists, Situationists and others—are well known. And the First of May Group began attacks on Iberia Airlines in defence of Spanish political prisoners. Concerted attacks affirmed international solidarity with them. While the International Solidarity Movement both directly and indirectly helped the appearance of more active groups in France, Britain, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, Turkey and Greece. Groups which more or less independently continued the activist struggle in their own country against the steady progression of the State towards dictatorship, while stepping into other countries to help that struggle attain greater intensity. There were numerous acts in all these countries, those in Britain including a bomb attack on the Home Secretary's house on the day of national protest against the Industrial Relations Bill; an attack on a Minister who had defended the idea of bourgeois attacks upon strikers during the electricity dispute, attacks on Ford's and on the mechanised dossiers of Scotland Yard at Tintagel House, on the Italian, Spanish and American embassies, on recruiting offices and military barracks, on Spanish banks, and on Government buildings, some of which incidents were labelled as (and all labelled by the police as) coming from the Angry Brigade, though this was not a specific organisation, but a manifestation of revolutionary activism through a wide circle of the libertarian movement generally.

The existence of the Anarchist activist groups encouraged a wide section of the revolutionary left, not explicitly anarchist but certainly libertarian, to step up the struggle and shake themselves free of the non-resistance elements. Though all such revolutionary attempts have been particularly scrupulous in their respect for human life during the whole of the decade, and have avoided innocent victims entirely the campaign of repression against the libertarian movement has (outside Spain) been unequalled since the days of Nazism. The activities of Nationalist groups, with which they have nothing in common, and which by their nature could not be so scrupulous, have been maliciously ascribed to them.

This has been the case in Italy, Germany, Turkey and Greece and even in Great Britain where forms of restraint over the police are believed to exist.

The Anarchist Black Cross, as offering a legitimate means of expression for the anarchist revolutionary activists, has been particularly the object of attack. In Milan, Giuseppe Pinelli, militant anarchist, ex-member of the wartime Resistance and secretary of the Italian ABC, was arrested following a Fascist bomb in Milan and thrown from a police station window during interroga-

tion; in Germany, a policy of extermination carried out by the German police against the Red Army Fraction, composed of Marxists and 'Anarcho-Marxists', was extended to shoot down in the street members of the Black Cross, including Georg von Rauch and Thomas Weis-becker. Then Stuart Christie, secretary and co-founder, was arrested in London charged with the activities of the Angry Brigade together with a number of comrades, men and Women, who represented a wide section of the libertarian left and a wide variety of interests (all being describe by press and prosecution as Anarchists, though this only applied to some). This led to the longest and most costly trial in recent judicial history in England, ending in ten years each for four of the accused, with four being acquitted (and preceded by 15 years under another, but notoriously reactionary judge, and an acquittal).

In Scotland, savage sentences were passed on members of the Scottish Workers Party, a Maoist organisation. These examples are only the more spectacular testimonies of bourgeois, social democratic and fascist repression against revolutionary anarchist, libertarian activism and revolutionary forms of Marxism too, but such persecution has not and will not achieve its object because the idea of international solidarity is growing by leaps and bounds. Even in Turkey, where the most obscene forms of torture are being used against the young revolutionaries, and in Spain, where torture and death are commonplace, the idea of workers councils and the affirmation that the fight for the occupation of the places of work will be backed by activist groups continues to flourish.

The struggle is not on the other side of the world. It exists in the countries dominated by State capitalism and State Communism as well as in the capitalist and fascist countries. It is not only in the 'third world' or the undeveloped part of the world. The call for revolution has gone through Europe. Never again will it lie down before the attacks of fascists, vigilantes or secret police. It is not even confined to one revolutionary ideology. It is not a conspiracy. It is a movement that may prove to be irresistible.

Some Documents

To All Revolutionary Movements and Organisations in the World

The '1st of May Group' has, for several years now, come to support, in practice, the necessity of carrying out the struggle against dictatorship by means of revolutionary violence as the only possible way of answering the repressive violence of the regime of General Franco and of reconquering freedom for the Spanish people in accordance with the strategy drawn up by the Iberian Federation of Libertarian Youth (FIJL).

Being aware of the backing given to various dictatorships and national oligarchies, by reactionary imperialist governments which enables them to maintain their oppression of the people—we address ourselves to revolutionary movements throughout the world who fight for the freedom and independence of all people. Fully convinced, also, of the sterility of the so-called 'legal and pacifist' struggles, as a means of ending the oppression and forcing Imperialism and its lackeys to end warlike aggression and military interventions, we have come to the following conclusions:

1.

We believe that the present struggles for freedom (eg. the revolutionary struggles of the guerrillas in Latin America, the blacks in the United States) have provoked a crisis of conscience, and forced a reaction against the reformist line, from authentic revolutionaries of various brands—these have finally understood that the only sure and dignified way to make Imperialism and its lackeys retreat, and clear the path to Revolution, is an armed struggle against the forces of fascist oppression (the main props of capitalist society and Imperialism).

1.

We believe that the serious divergencies and divisions existing between various revolutionary movements, in each country are the result of absurd and negative ideological sectarianism (with which, until now, the different revolutionary ideologies have expressed and applied themselves) and have contributed to the division of the international proletariat and facilitated the increasing depoliticisation of the masses who cannot logically be attracted by a revolutionary praxis divided by contradictions and confrontations resulting from anti-revolutionary dogmatism which have been the cause of all revolutionary schisms and ideological internecine quarrels.

1.

Together with the Latin American groupings and their most well known exponents, we believe that 'the Revolution' is not the inheritance of any single Party, but of all who decide to fight for it with guns in their hands, that the struggle against oppression, and for the freedom of the people, theoretically and historically belongs to, and is assumed by, the people and classes who suffer the oppression and decide to fight against it. Parties and ideologies are only transitory tactical instruments—particularly interpretations of this struggle, whose object is the Revolution—and they must therefore be subordinated to the true essence of social history.

1.

We believe that international revolutionary solidarity will only be effective between those movements which do not maintain contact, nor involve themselves in compromises, with Imperialism, and who do not give support to the politics of 'peaceful co-existence' which enable Imperialism to carry out its massacres and spoliations with impunity which will continue as long as there is no coherent response to military interventions whose purpose is to stifle fights for freedom, and revolutionary outbreaks throughout the world.

1.

We believe that the real revolutionary objective is the achievement of freedom for the masses and for each individual, and that neither private capitalism nor state capitalism can be conducive to the freedom of man nor to an authentic free society. Private capitalism pretends to give freedom while maintaining the exploitation of man by man—state capitalism pretends to end exploitation by suppressing freedom; each of them has their roots in economic and political alienation and therefore cannot even offer the hope of gradual evolution towards liberation. For the authentic revolutionary the achievement of freedom and the ending of exploitation are inseparable and complimentary aspirations.

1.

We believe that all revolutionaries who truly wish to see the Revolution triumph must, and can, admit the unavoidable necessity of an ideological restatement which will resolve more effectively the problems of freedom and social justice—in other words: means and ends, tactics and objectives, revolutionary strategy and the ethic of revolution—in order to end the damaging differences and doctrinal antagonisms which have hindered until now the union of all revolutionaries against the common enemy. The important thing is that they should now recognise that Imperialism and Capitalism, of any variety, are the real enemies, and revolutionaries can only confront them by uniting their forces, or at least to support each other by effective revolutionary solidarity, national and international, thus preventing the enemy from taking advantage of everlasting contradictions and divisions.

1.

We believe that the time has come for revolutionaries to put aside their ideological divergencies, sectarianisms and various 'objective conditions' of constitution and location — all revolutionary movements should unite and co-ordinate their efforts through a vast Movement of Revolutionary Solidarity in order to oppose coherently imperialist aggression and the cronies of dictatorship, and to back with deeds the revolutionary struggles of the people and so make the way to revolution secure. We can testify to this Revolutionary Solidarity by—

-

acts of propaganda and solidarity in favour of all peoples who are fighting against fascism and imperialism;

-

acts of violence against the diplomatic and military corps, imperialism and dictatorships, as effective reprisals against their outrages.

REVOLUTIONARIES OF ALL COUNTRIES UNITE FOR AN EFFECTIVE REVOLUTIONARY SOLIDARITY TO PREVENT THE EXTERMINATION OF THOSE WHO FIGHT FOR THE REVOLUTION IN ANY PART OF THE WORLD!

LONG LIVE INTERNATIONAL REVOLUTIONARY SOLIDARITY!

August 1967

1st of May Group/FIJL (Iberian Federation of Libertarian Youth)

Anarchist International

Towards the Creation of an Anarchist International

On the basis of our recent experiences, and an analysis derived from our particular situation as anarchists (organised or not) within the International politico-social context, we have arrived at the following conclusions which we consider both useful and necessary to be put before all militants who believe it still possible to adopt an efficient revolutionary position.

1.

The modern states (totalitarian or democratic), private and state capitalism, all variations of political and religious ideology, trade-unionism (whether reformist or state-run), in general, all social groups which are part of the present productive society, have established as a fact, a co-existence that tends, at any cost, to ensure the present status quo for all forms of privilege, exploitation and authority.

More and more the fundamental contradictions of the System (or the different systems and societies, as well as those between the different races and nationalities) tend to intensify (but not resolve) themselves through negotiations and compromises which do not imperil the survival of the system (or systems) as such, nor of the groups, castes or classes that at present enjoy privileged positions. From this stems the prevailing political confusion and moral degradation, the repugnant dealing between regimes pretending to irreconcilable enmity (Russia and the USA, Cuba and Spain, China and Portugal) the 'peoples' democracies and the capitalist democracies, etc.

The old ruling castes and the new bureaucratic castes, whatever their colour, race or religion, have lost their former prejudices and hidden scruples. Today within international organisations and through official exchanges they hobnob and entertain one another on the backs of the common people who sustain them, and are subjected to them. And within this mesh of agreements and interests we must also place the well-integrated 'leadership' and trade-union bureaucratic caste.

1.

From this it follows that, today, doctrinal declarations and re-affirmations of ideological principles have no meaning beyond demagoguery—a habit that clings. One no longer fights for democracy, socialism, communism, or revolution, but merely for the recognition of the defeat of power, by this or that group, in a particular place, and for 'national independence' (the certificate of guarantee which covers and justifies all types of despotism) and in order to forget the debts owing to international revolutionary solidarity. So, in Vietnam, Korea, Hungary and Cuba, after the triumph of one or another gang, one no longer fights for or against 'communism' but simply in order to guarantee 'national independence', the Geneva agreements, the UNO agreements, territorial integrity and the survival of the government of Saigon or Hanoi, Tel Aviv or Cairo. In the meantime, Barrientos and the Latin American oligarchies, assisted by American 'Green Berets', smash revolutionary guerrillas and assassinate Che Guevara, and the USSR and the 'Peoples'

Democracies' continue to do business, maintain diplomatic relations and extend credit to these same governments that the Marxist revolutionaries of Latin America are fighting against.

Throughout the world one finds the same ugly wheeling and dealing. Soviet commercial, cultural, and sports missions confer with their counterparts in Franco's Spain; and throughout the Vietnamese tragedy American and Maoist diplomats in Warsaw maintain relations. The decolonisation of the Asiatic and black peoples proceeds, but only to allow the indigenous bourgeoisie to take power extensively assisted by Russia and/or the USA.

In practice ideology is shelved, becoming no more than a function of patriotism, 'national independence', 'legality', 'public order', 'peace', and 'development'—and as it is in the East, so it is in the West.

All over the world parties and organisations witness their own sacrifice of ideology to the simple struggle for power.

1.

Unfortunately this phenomenon of the abandonment of ideological coherence has also invaded international anarchist circles, which did not know how to resist or fight against the process of revolutionary demobilisation.

For anarchism, organisational or not, revolutionary demobilisation, this rupture between ideological conception and its practical outcome is of great importance, considering that anarchism does not aspire to the conquest of political or economic power. If it abandons its only possible vocation: its combativeness in the struggle for revolution, if it is content to reminisce about the past or to vegetate into bureaucracy, it will lack a final objective and, as it lacks mystical roots, it could not survive as a sect—it would be of no practical use to any social grouping be their needs material or spiritual.

If anarchism is to exist in reality, it is to draw the people and justify itself as a practical revolutionary ideology without being demagogic, it must not only re-affirm its antistatism as a determining condition for the triumph of freedom, but must accompany this criticism of authoritarianism with the practice of permanent rebellion; without this it is useless except as a means of ridiculing and contributing a little more to the extension of the present confusion, pointing out the dangers, contradictions and damaging results of authoritarian society. But it is all useless if we content ourselves with vegetating as others do. It is obvious that the persecution of dissidents, the fighting of real or imaginary deviations, will not save us from a collective decadence if we do not react beforehand against the reigning apathy, stagnation, routine, and revolutionary demobilisation of the whole, whether as individuals, groups, or movements.

1.

However, as we have said before—the fundamental contradictions of capitalist and 'socialist' society continue to flourish and in many cases their consequences are even more serious than before; the integration of workers into capitalist society, and the growth of 'consumer' society have lulled the proletariat. However, the class struggle has not disappeared, nor the inevitable confrontations through which each class defends its sectional interests. Neither has 'peaceful co-existence' stopped armed conflicts, it has only limited them geographically—Vietnam, the Middle East, Africa

Racial discrimination, the exploitation of the working masses, the abuses of the ruling classes, the absence of essential freedoms (of thought, expression and assembly), political crimes and resulting repression and terror are common currency in our civilised world. In Franco's Spain, Salazar's Portugal, the Greece of the 'Colonels', as in the Soviet Union and the 'Peoples' Democra-

cies', workers and even liberal academics are condemned when they protest or attempt to exercise their freedom of assembly. And in the United States the blacks rebel against racial discrimination, while in China there is a brutal confounding of the will of the masses with the deification of Maoism.

So, for anarchists throughout the world there is no lack of motives for action, nor of practical possibilities to declare their presence and to show the way.

In Europe, either hypocritically indifferent or accessory to crimes committed within its borders (Spain, Greece, Portugal), and in other continents dominated by economic and political imperialism, there exist many possibilities of demonstrating through these obvious examples where reason, justice and freedom lie without having to play at suicide, gratuitous heroism or compulsive activism. But simply and modestly, aware of the risks that go with such an attitude it is possible to keep the rebel conscience alive and to mobilise, by means of concrete action, all revolutionary agitations that manifest themselves throughout the world, transcending the absurd dogmatisms and tracing a way of effective rebellion before the collective submission of the supposedly revolutionary parties and organisations.

1.

To summarise: we think that the time has come to define and set in motion a line of action that will be consistent with the revolutionary ethic and realisable in practice; such as form of organisation that, avoiding the ominous consequences of bureaucracy, takes into account our numbers and real possibilities while being capable of projecting the anarchist presence effectively, if modestly, in the international politico-social context. We must take advantage of all the opportunities of the historic moment, and in particular of the crisis in Marxism in whose heart has arisen the inescapable problem of direct action and revolutionary solidarity. We do not believe in miraculous solutions, nor in the mere educative value of example—we believe in the effectiveness of action when it responds to certain conditions which give it meaning, and a consistent ideological and tactical line.

We have arrived at these conclusions after a number of experiences which have demonstrated to us that, in spite of the fact that we are a minority practically without means, we can make our presence felt, gain sympathy, and be taken into consideration by international public opinion.

So, our objective is not only to present conclusions drawn from our own experience, but rather to offer our solidarity and collaboration to all those who believe in the possibility of working effectively towards rebellion and international solidarity.

Consequently we sum up our position in the following way:

FIRSTLY:

Complete identification with the anti-authoritarian concept of anarchism and its classic revolutionary line;

SECONDLY:

Complete rejection of ideological dogmatism and sectarianism, as we consider these phenomena incompatible with anarchist ethics;

THIRDLY:

Complete respect for opinions and discussions as far as the activity of each group, individual or movement is concerned;

FOURTHLY:

To be totally prepared to collaborate with groups, individuals or movements with whom one has affinity and similarly with all those who claim to follow a revolutionary ideology and who

would be prepared to fight sectarianism and elitism as well as the injustices imposed by any species of ideology;

FIFTHLY:

complete identification with the essentials of the manifesto, 'TO ALL REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENTS IN THE WORLD' (distributed by the 1st of May Group after the attack on the American Embassy in London) as a general strategic line as long as the present politico-social conditions persist throughout the world.

10th March 1968

1st of May Group

And now... what?

The 'end' of the war in Vietnam corresponds to the end period of international politics of the great powers which, during these last thirty years, has governed the destiny of the world. Beyond these apparent and immediate consequences ('end' of the most flagrant technological genocide and the practical affirmation of the principle of 'pacific co-existence between opposing political regimes') it has its probable consequences for the future which are disturbing; the consolidation of the domination of the state under all its forms and in all the four corners of the world; entente cordiale between all powers to ensure the status quo of Power and Privilege; extension of technological rationality over all the planet, with the consequent assertion of submission by alienating work and the 'advantage' of the consumer society; intensive and maximum development of the structures of authoritarian society, round the two poles of its ideological dynamic: fascism and Stalinism.

Western Society, the Third World & the Others!

In the frenzied race towards industrialisation which was established as the leitmotif of contemporary history of all peoples and of all systems, Western society has attained sufficiently high levels to render possible a radical change in the social politics of the different governments which composes it. Nevertheless, in the name of 'international competition' and 'national independence' the order of priority continues to be ruled by the economic and not by the social. And only in the case of movements demanding better wages and conditions, being able to overflow the limits of legality, and to continue their action beyond that which the system can tolerate, only then are certain reforms allowed and limited improvements made. But always with deliberate intention of ensuring the integration into the system of the exploited masses, of ensuring the continuance of the established order and of facilitating economic expansion. All to the detriment of the true humanisation of individual and collective life, of true democracy and true communism.

In the countries of the Third World, industrialisation is also changed into a supreme political objective. Despite the revolutionary assertions of the principal movements of 'national independence' and 'liberation' which in their time woke great hopes in the heart of the organised working class in Europe, the Third World (leaning, precisely on the submission of the masses to demagogic nationalism) turned to follow the path of Western Capitalist development. And, more and more, having resolved or not its ethical and religious contradictions, its integration with the other western nations became an incontestable and irreversible fact.

The others, were, in their time, Mao's China, North Viet nam and Castro's Cuba. But we have seen what economic reasoning, the strategy of dissuasion and the international collaboration with Johnson and Nixon have been able to do in these revolutionary ramparts.

Revolutionary Groupuscles

Faced with this harmony of the different authoritarian systems, and although the leftist groupuscles, the most 'politicised' did not renounce their well known slogans (to change the quality of life, society and man) nor their pretension to be the revolutionary vanguard, they retreated towards more modest, less radical, and more integrated positions. Thus perhaps without wanting it, those who considered themselves the most legitimate heirs of the whole international movement of the youth revolt, have helped in the absorption by the system of a movement which aspired to be inabsorbable. Just as repression equally lost its virulence, these groupuscles imposed a self-discipline (not to yield to 'provocation') that made them more and more respectful of legality up to the point of being happy to be the 'extreme left' of the classic left integrated by the whole range of reformist unions and parties of communist, socialist, or simply democratic persuasion.... Thus, although they continue to be called revolutionary, they have equally ceased to be, practically and potentially, the negation of the authoritarian order. Only the marginal groupuscules who have not renounced the revolutionary *raison d'être* now remain as the authentic representatives of the ideal of the negation of authority; a *raison d'être* which consisted, as had been affirmed in an exemplary fashion in May '68, of living the revolution at the present moment, and it is only they who continue to fight the system, in radicalising the struggles in different sectors of society, which the other groupuscules, parties and organisations persist in keeping within the bounds of legality.

Objectives

The Leninist conception of revolution has ceased to be a possible alternative thus giving to anarchist ideas a growing prominence and significance. In the factories, in the neighbourhoods, in the universities and in everyday life, revolutionary activism can find a thousand and one justifications and an equal number of ways of showing itself. Capitalist exploitation and State oppression are still, and much more than before the essence and everyday reality of all the authoritarian systems with their inevitable string of injustices and endless outrages, of violence and repressive barbarity, of moral misery and cultural alienation. The objectives are still revolt and liberation, in order that man can aspire and attain his most complete realisation. And, immediately, the denunciation and awakening of public opinion to the most flagrant abuses and outrages against the 'rights of man' in no matter what country of the world; in opposing the **repressive solidarity of the States** by the **solidarity of the oppressed**.

Appeal

Faced with the revolutionary demobilisation of all the sectors and States which once invoked the revolution as the supreme ideal and objective; faced with the concerted efforts of the powerful to strengthen the very foundations which renders possible and maintains their privileges, faced with the assertion of the authoritarian principles of society, in the East as in the West, to the detriment of the independence of the people and of civil liberties, we ask the revolutionary unification and mobilisation of all those who do not wish to abdicate their human dignity, of all those who refuse to live in alienation and to serve as a support for the powers that be.

We suggest to all those who have surmounted the poisonous ideological sectarianisms and who have renounced the chimera of the legal struggle, to unit their efforts with ours to foment the revolutionary activism in all its forms, finally in arousing public opinion to the struggles of peoples, minorities and individuals victimised by the oppression and repression of the State based on the premises stated in our documents prior to May 1968.

May 1st 1973
1st of May Group
International Revolutionary
Solidarity Movement

Press Communiqué

Text distributed to press agencies and periodicals.

Incomplete and erroneous accounts given by the press concerning recent events have obliged us to give a few explanations as to the objectives and characteristics of the '1st of May Group'.

During the night of the 2nd and 3rd March 1968 the 1st of May Group carried out (in various European capitals) a series of actions directed against the diplomatic and military corps of the United States and the fascist governments Greece, Spain and Portugal. Actions such as the kidnap of Mgr. Ussia in Rome, the machine-gunning of the American Embassy in London, the attacks on the embassies of Greece and Bolivia in Bonn, etc. to which the Press gave, at the time, an essentially psychological character, had two principal objectives:

- to inform the public at large, through the means of the press agencies, of the claims which motivated these actions;

- to demonstrate through these claims the palpable of the 'escalation of terror' which is at present spreading throughout the world under the patronage of the USA, oppose it by a 'counter-escalation' of rebellion in all its aspects and on all grounds.

Clearly it is not a matter of opposing to global terrorism an 'heroic' terrorism but rather to spread an offensive movement capable of breaking down the passivity which governments, using increasingly scientific methods, are attempting to create in us.

The genocide of the Vietnamese people, the subjection of Latin America, and the conflicts fomented in the Middle East by the assassins of the White House and the Pentagon are aspects of a systematic programme to encapsulate the world. In Europe too, once can observe important aspects of this programme: the fundamental support given by the USA to the dictatorships of Greece, Spain and Portugal in exchange for the guarantee of strategic bases in the Mediterranean.

As for the 'bourgeois democracies' of the west and the 'peoples' democracies' of the east, they are busy looking for new markets as they are moving in the direction of the 'super consumer' society. Financial trusts in the west and the bureaucratic party structures in the east, totally disregarding any humanitarian scruples, strengthen their ties with dictatorial regimes.

Thus private and state capitalism converge towards the same objective (while preserving their respective systems), using as justification a political plan for 'national independence', or an economic plan for 'national expansion' while the countries of the 'third world' are kept in a perpetual state of repression and misery as the main source of raw materials and cheap labour.

In the face of this reality we submit that a generalised revolutionary action against capitalism and all reigning bureaucracies (including that of China) is the only way left open to an exploited humanity wishing to regain control of its destiny.

At a time when new generations of the whole world, shattering the myths of a 'free' western world and the 'construction of socialism' (directed by an omnipotent party) crystalise their aspi-

rations towards an anarchist revolution we believe that only the international co-ordination of these movements could oppose an effective force against the global collaboration of the forces of oppression.

The struggle against dictatorships—Spanish, Greek, Portuguese, against racism in the USA and ‘apartheid’ in South Africa, against the extermination of the Vietnamese people or the enslavement of Latin America, constitute the global fight against all systems of exploitation.

March 1968

1st of May Group

Movement of Revolutionary Solidarity

Operation Durruti

Report on the Arrest and Proceedings against Five Anarchists Accused by the Spanish Police of Planning to Kidnap an American VIP in Spain.

On the 28th October 1966 the Spanish Press and the International Press Agencies announced the official police statement which confirmed the arrest of five Spanish anarchists: Luis EDO, 41 years old; Antonio CANETE, 49; Alicia MUR, 33; Jesus RODRIGUEZ, 39; and Alfredo HERRERA, 31.

The official communique published by all the Spanish press gave the following version:—

‘A group of five armed persons all members of the FIJL (Iberian Federation of Libertarian Youth, youth branch of the Spanish Libertarian Movement) which planned to kidnap an important foreign personality in Madrid, has been arrested by the SIS (Servicios de Investigacion Social). The five persons and the arms have been placed at the disposal of the Madrid Public Order Tribunal. The group was headed by Luis EDO, a former Secretary General of the FIJL in Paris and member of the group which last April kidnapped in Rome the ecclesiastical councillor of the Spanish Embassy to the Holy See, Monseigneur USSIA.

‘The FIJL had been planning for some time a subversive action which would have focussed international opinion on Spain. This mission had been entrusted to EDO’s group whose members were mobilised from France with full instructions.

‘The planned kidnap is a follow-up of the one carried out last April by the anarchist group ‘First of May’ against Mgr. Ussia in Rome. This time the anarchists plotted a similar ‘coup’ in Spain with the intention of launching a sensational campaign against Spain. The brilliant police operation began on the 25th October with the arrest of Antonio Canete travelling under a false name on the Madrid-Barcelona express. Canete, who was arrested at the Saragosse station, is well known for his record as an activist. He had taken part in several sabotage actions. In his possessions the police found a contract for a flat in Madrid—Paseo de Santa Maria de la Cabeza. This flat was the base of the group and it was there that the foreign VIP was to have been kept. The remaining members of the group were arrested soon after this in the flat mentioned.

‘According to Luis EDO’s declarations, the brain behind the operation was Octavio ALBEROLA who had remained in Paris. EDO came to Spain after the Rome kidnap with the intentions of holding a press conference about the anarchist group ‘First of May’ operation in Rome.

‘In the flat which served as headquarters of the group, the police found a ‘Sten’ machine gun, a Luger automatic, false passports, and several documents which set out in detailed instructions the follow-up of ‘operation Ussia’. Other persons connected with these activities are being actively searched for by the police.’

As soon as this statement was published, reporters began to speculate as to the possible identity of the VIP concerned. The name of American ambassador, Biddle Duke, was repeatedly mentioned, in spite of his denials.

Statement of the FIJL and the ‘1st of May’ Group

On November 1st 1966, the Agence France Presse announced in Madrid that they had received the following statement released by the FIJL:

‘In relation with the recent arrest of five of our comrades (the names follow) the Peninsular committee of the FIJL declares:

1.

Our comrades had the mission of carrying out an action to show up the false ‘liberalisation’ of the Franco regime along the lines of our campaign for the release of all the political prisoners in our country.

1.

We ratify the following statement made by the group ‘1st of May’ in a communique to the press denouncing the declarations made by Franco’s police.

‘The Spanish police is attempting to incriminate the group of anarchists arrested last week in Madrid in the kidnap of Mgr. Ussia by the ‘1st of May’ group in Rome.

‘As you will easily be able to see for yourselves by comparing the hand-writing of this note with the notes made at time by the ‘1st of May’ group, and as Mgr. Ussia himself will have to admit if he is confronted with the comrades arrested in Madrid, none of them took part in the Rome kidnap. It is thus totally false that the Spanish police have dismantled the ‘1st of May’ group.

‘We are prepared to show that the fascist regime of General Franco is lying and that the ‘1st of May’ group will not fail prove this together with its firm decision of continuing its campaign for the release of all the political prisoners in our country.’

31st October 1966

1st of May Group

1.

The Peninsular Committee of the FIJL urgently appeals to all anti-fascist organisations, groups and individuals to mobilise their protest to stop the Franco regime from committing another new crime.

Spain, 1st of November 1966

The Peninsular Committee of the FIJL

Counsel for the Defence

Soon after the announcement of the arrest of our five comrades, a news item from Madrid declared that the counsel for the defence would be assumed by Srs. Jaime CORTEZO and Alfonso SEVILLA, both members of the Madrid bar.

In an interview to the foreign correspondents of the Press Sr. CORTEZO later made public that the Tribunal of Public Order had refused to assume the responsibility of taking charge of

the files of our five comrades and had passed them on to the Military authorities. This meant that the danger existed of their being tried by a summary Court Martial which would dispatch them without any real possibilities of defence.

Press Conference in New York by Octavio Alberola

On December 8th, AFP cabled a long communique from New York of a clandestine press conference held in a Manhattan Hotel by Octavio ALBEROLA. The text of the press conference was:

‘NEW YORK, 8th December—The anarchist ‘commando’ arrested in Madrid on the 24th of October by the Spanish police did not intend to kidnap Ambassador Biddle Duke. The intended VIP was Rear-Admiral Norman G Gillette, Commandant in Chief of the American forces in Spain, who would have been kidnapped on the 25th if the police had not discovered ‘Operation Durruti’.

This precision was given today in New York to several newspapermen in an hotel in Manhattan by Octavio ALBEROLA, in charge of liaisons between the Peninsular Committee of the FIJL and the Exterior Delegation. Alberola, who had come from Madrid to hold this press conference—the first of its kind held by the FIJL in the USA—also revealed how the kidnap would have been carried out. An accident would have been faked on the roadway between the American airbase of TORREJON and Madrid. Rear-Admiral Gillette would have been transferred to another vehicle which would have taken him to the capital. There he would have been taken to a flat where, in the presence of several reporters he would have assisted as a ‘living symbol of North American occupation of Spain’ to the reading of a FIJL document.

Since the document had not been made public in Madrid on account of the discovery by the police, Octavio ALBEROLA read it to the press in New York shortly after having sent copies to the Secretary General of the United Nations, U Thant, and to all the delegations of the UN member countries.

In this document the FIJL denounced the ‘patriotic demagogy of Franco’s government over its claims for Gibraltar, and its complicity with the aggressive plans of the North American military forces who are using the military bases in Spain as logistic points for its bellicose plans.’

Octavio ALBEROLA also insisted on the following:

1.

That the general amnesty proclaimed by General Franco was a farce and that there existed several hundreds of political prisoners in Spanish jails.

1.

The Spanish dictatorship is not moving towards more democratic ways. Nor will the Referendum of December 14 make any fundamental difference.

1.

The FIJL considers that in spite of having been discovered by the police, ‘Operation Durruti’ has had a positive result on account of its repercussions and that it will continue actively its struggle until its immediate aims are reached: the liberation of all Spanish political prisoners and an end to police persecution with the possibilities of freedom of speech meeting and association. In this respect, Octavio ALBEROLA affirmed categorically that the FIJL would continue to carry out spectacular actions both inside and outside Spain. ‘If these acts will in some cases be violent ones’, he added, ‘nevertheless, as in the previous operations, there will be no victims.’

He finally confirmed that the five anarchists arrested in Madrid had taken no part whatsoever in the kidnap or Mgr. Ussia in Rome.'(AFP)

On the same day that the press conference was given by Octavio Alberola, all the delegates present at the General Assembly of the UN received a note from the Exterior Delegation of the FIJL together with the document found in EDO's possession by the Spanish police which would have been the basis of the 'OPERATION DURRUTI'. This document has since been sent to all the Provincial Authorities in Spain and has circulated widely among official circles as well as among the people.

Shuffles in Madrid Between Military and Public Order Tribunal

As mentioned above, the public order Tribunal had refused to take charge of our comrade's case and had passed it on to the Military Authorities. The regime seemed to be using this tactic to gain time and use it as blackmail against reprisals on the part of the FIJL. Several weeks after the Public Order Tribunal had passed the files on to the Military Tribunal, it was announced that the latter had also refused to take the case and had passed it back to the Public Order Tribunal which finally drew up the accusations. These were made public on February 9th and the Prosecutor demanded 15 years imprisonment for Luis EDO, Alicia MUR and Antonio CANETE; and 6 years for Alfredo HERRERA and Jesus RODRIGUEZ. The Prosecution accused them: illegal association (for being members of the FIJL), having intentions of carrying out a kidnap, and possessing arms (AFP 9th Feb).

International Protests

As soon as the arrests took place, there followed a wave of Protests all over Europe. Hand-bills and posters were distributed in France, Belgium, Italy, Germany, Holland, Switzerland, etc. The more important acts were the following:

Amsterdam: On Sunday 30th October strong groups of provo and anarchist demonstrators protested in front of the Spanish Embassy. Windows were smashed and an antique Pistol was thrown in symbolising the Franco terror. As a result the Dutch press carried articles about the five anarchists arrested in Madrid. In the days that followed, over 15,000 handouts and posters were distributed in Amsterdam. More demonstrations took place on the 3rd and 4th in front of the Spanish Embassy. During one of these demonstrations, an Italian comrade was interviewed by the Dutch radio. Two weeks later, during the Provo Concilium, resolutions were passed to fight the dictatorship of the Franco regime.

Milan: Thousands of handouts were distributed during the last week of October all over the city. On the 31st a protest demonstration took place in the Dome Square. On the following day, a protest march demonstrated over the city carrying a reproduction of a garrotte as a reminder to all that fascism is still alive in Europe.

Brussels: Thousands of handouts and posters were distributed at the beginning of November over the 'capital' of Europe. On Saturday 19th, a Provo Happening 'in solidarity with the five anarchists arrested in Madrid' took place in the Place Brouckere in the main centre of the town. A handout was distributed which said the Brussels Provos 'would piece together, gratis, in public and with participation of the police a scenic play in one act, the tortures which awaited the five

Spanish anarchists if Franco is allowed to do at will ... The provotariat declares war against the Franco regime. A regime which continues to live today under the Middle Ages and the Inquisition; proof of this was given not so long ago with the garrotting of two young anarchists in 1963, Delgado and Granados ...'

Paris: Over 10,000 handouts were distributed together with posters. At a meeting held in the Mutualite by several left-wing movements to protest against the Franco regime, Daniel MEYER, President of the League for the Rights of Man, talked about the situation of our five comrades. After the meeting the anarchists demonstrated in front of the Spanish Embassy smashing windows until the police dispersed them. A meeting of solidarity organised by the Spanish Syndical Alliance took place at the Alhambra Theatre.

The Franco Repression and the 'liberalisation' Farce

The arrest and forthcoming trial of our five comrades coincides with a period of agitation among workers and students in Spain, and with a hardening of the police persecution.

Luis EDO, Antonio CANETE, Alicia MUR, Jesus RODRIGUEZ, and Alfredo HERRERA were arrested and will be tried for planning to carry out an action to show that the 'demonstrations and liberalisation' of the Franco regime is mere lip service and to demand the release of all the political prisoners in the Spanish jails. Yet, at the same time, hundreds of students and workers have been arrested during the same period for simply having believed that the 'liberalisation' was a real thing. There is a certain irony in this. Nevertheless events are showing how wrong are all those who think that a fascist dictatorship can 'liberalise' itself peacefully through the mere democratic claims for the fundamental rights.

The numerous arrests of students and workers for having taken part in the peaceful demonstrations or in the so-called 'free assemblies', together with the exclusion of all those University Professors who have dared protest against police brutalities or who have talked up to the regime, shows clearly that the Franco Dictatorship continues faithful to its totalitarian nature and that it is in no way prepared to give in to the democratic aspirations of the Spanish people.

The much boasted 'reforms' approved by the mock Cortes, the political dispositions of the Penal Code, the new Press Law, and all the other 'democratic' blueprints announced by the regime, are mere paper projects and publicity stunts.

Students, workers, University professors and even priests are daily persecuted and jailed for holding unauthorised meetings, campaigning against the Referendum, editing opposition bulletins, etc. etc.

Stuart CHRISTIE, sentenced in September 1964 to 20 years jail on another false charge of terrorism, continues in Carabanchel. A recent appeal for clemency was refused and this 20 year old British militant shares the lot of many other democratic Spaniards.

Now the regime threatens to sentence the five anarchist militants to new heavy sentences.

**COMITE ESPAGNE REVOLUTIONNAIRE
FIJL LIASON COMMITTEE
Aubervilliers (France)/Brussels**

Postscript

The First of May Group has been one of the best known of the anarchist activist groups of the period under review. It represents a continuation of the work of Sabate and the post-war Spanish resistance, and a bridge-head into the next period when revolutionary activism in many countries (Germany, USA, Italy, and South America) consisted of many strands some of which were authoritarian Marxist—usually Maoist, sometimes Council-Communist, occasionally Trotskyist others were Anarchist. In many cases the Press seized on the name ‘Anarchist’ and inflated the actual participation of the Anarchists (since anarchism now is the same bogey for Right Wing extremists that fascism is for left Wing extremists) so that in Turkey, for instance, where it is a much smaller grouping than any other (though decidedly militant) it appears that all activists are anarchists and all anarchists are activists, which is by no means the case.

The First of May Group is entirely anarchist, though it too has been less sharply differentiated from other revolutionary factions than is normally the case with anarchist movements, feeling that the major task was the achievement of the revolutionary situation, and endeavouring to make the revolutionary organisations as libertarian as possible. This lack of sharp differentiation is reflected in its communiqués.

The difference between activism of the anarchist variety, and the terrorism of Nationalist or other groupings, may be seen if one compares the chronology of ‘May the First’ attacks with—for instance—the record of events in Northern Ireland, or that of the Palestine guerrillas, let alone with the facts of governmental terrorism in almost any country—pick at will. The struggle is not, for the anarchist, an attack on peoples, whereas by definition the Nationalist struggle is. Marxism, though denouncing the activism of Anarchists, excuses the terrorism of Nationalists with appropriate phraseology.

For Governments, of course, terrorism must be wholesale (and legal) and not ‘retail’ (and illegal). Wholesale murder is legal war — the struggle against tyranny is individual rebellion.

It may seem surprising to the casual reader of newspaper propaganda that the anarchists should have had consistently so ‘bad a press’. When one considers over the past fifty years the record of anarchist activism, for instance, individual attempts on Mussolini, the stand in Bolshevik Russia against tyranny, by individual attempts as well as by armed resistance in the Ukraine and other risings, the various anti-fascist struggles in Spain and elsewhere, the fight against tyranny in South America and so on — none of it would seem in any way to justify the persistent vilification of anarchism in the press except as deliberate propaganda. When one considers the mass psychopathic murders associated indelibly with fascism; the governmental wholesale slaughter both in war and in internal oppression perpetrated by powers, capitalist and state communist alike, and the wholesale brutalities in suppressing opposition, (especially of a national character) even by nations democratic within themselves, but oppressive to minorities or subject peoples, one wonders where the journalists got the idea that they could treat the Anarchists as if they were automatically the worst of all possible villains.

But of course the sycophantic nature of journalism makes it see attacks upon authority, and upon persons in authority, however tyrannical, as a far greater menace than the genocide of peoples or the imposition of injustice.

Of late years this has been helped by the nature of totalitarian Gandhi-ism, which chooses to describe itself as non-violent and goes on to describe all who do not share its views as violent. The violentists, of course, from a pacifist point of view are every single person except themselves; but the small anarcho-pacifist cult in England and America describing themselves as being non-violent anarchists with the corollary that others are violent anarchists have been at least a contributory cause of the confusion of anarchist activism with any form, or if one wishes to put it that way, any other form, of terrorism. People like Sabate or Durruti did not believe in violence; had they believed in violence they could have joined the Falange or the Requete and had their fill; they believed in resistance to those who were imposing their violence upon the people. It was this resistance which led to their activism taking a violent turn. It was their belief in the libertarian humanities that made this violent activism so much nearer and so much an integral part of the people than the struggles of the Third World, let alone the wars of the Great Powers.

INTERNATIONALIST

Chronology

This chronology should not be considered exhaustive, nor definitive. It will, however, give the reader a rough outline of the development of revolutionary anarchist activism in Europe over the last fourteen years. Little mention has been made in this chronology of the activities of the Italian groups. As a result of fascist provocations in Italy it would be virtually impossible to prepare a reasonable chronology of groups such as The Red Brigade and The Partisan Action Group — GAP, as we have been able to do with the Angry Brigade, Red Army Fraction, the 1st of May Group and the Autonomous Combat Groups of the Iberian Liberation Movement.

1960

January

In the early hours of January 3/4th a battle took place between a 100 strong Civil Guard unit and an anarchist guerrilla group which had just crossed the Pyrenees heading for Barcelona. Four members of the group were killed as was one Civil Guard Lieutenant. The leader of the group, Francisco Sabate Llopart, Franco's Public Enemy No. 1, was wounded but managed to escape the security net thrown around the area. He was killed the following day in the Catalan village of San Celoni by the cross-fire of fascist militia men and the Civil Guard.

February

The Revolutionary Directorate of Iberian Liberation (DRIL) announces its formation by a series of attacks on key government buildings throughout Spain and Portugal.

June 27/28/29

Another series of concerted bomb attacks begin in the Iberian Peninsula directed against buildings and installations of both fascist regimes.

1961

January

On the night of 21/22nd a DRIL commando group, led by the Portuguese captain, Henrique Galvao, took control of the Portuguese liner Santa Maria on the high seas to demonstrate to the world active resistance to the Dictatorships of Franco and Salazar. The commando group consisted of Spanish, Portuguese and South American activists.

July

Spanish police discovered a sabotage attempt on the railway line leading into San Sebastian shortly before a train load of fascist ex-combatants passed. They were headed for the yearly fascist victory celebrations in the capital of Guipuzcoa on the 18th. This was the first action in which the Basque activist movement ETA participated as an organisation.

August

A guerrilla action in the Catalan Pyrenees took place between a libertarian action group and the Civil Guard. One Guard was killed and another seriously injured.

1962

April 7

Miners from the 'Nicolas de Mieres' coalmine in the Asturias call a strike in demand for a minimum daily wage of 140 pesetas (70p), the right to strike and free Trade Unions. (Since the beginning of the century approximately 50% of all coal extracted from the Spanish coal fields came from the 11,600 kilometres of the Asturias. All raw materials indispensable to industrial development and the growth of Capitalism, Coal, Steel, Manganese, Mercury, etc. were to be found here in abundance.

In the early 19th Century a large number of displaced farm labourers moved to the Asturias from Castille and the South. They quickly assimilated with the native Asturians early accepting their traditions and customs, and within a short period lost all traces of their origins.

Each industrial centre, however, developed its own political leanings; Socialism in Mieres, communism in Sama and anarchism in Felguera and Gijon. The revolutionary tradition in the Asturias was very strong. It was the Asturian miners in 1930 who precipitated the downfall of the Monarchy and prepared the way for the ill-fated Republic. Four years later the same miners and industrial workers rebelled against the bourgeois Republic which had failed them and occupied the Provincial capital, Oviedo, declaring the social revolution. The Asturian Commune, as it came to be known, lasted from October 5th until the 19th when it was bloodily suppressed by Moorish soldiers and Legionaries on the orders of the Republic's most prized general — Francisco Franco.)

Twenty-six years of fascist oppression had not broken the spirit of the Asturian working class. The torch of mass revolutionary working class opposition in Spain had been re-lit!

April 20

Virtually every coal mine in the Asturias was paralysed by strike action and many factories closed down or on reduced output due to solidarity actions.

April 22

Two companies of Civil Guards and three companies of Armed Police rushed into the coal fields in an attempt to break the strike.

May 4

Martial law declared by Presidential Decree in the Provinces of Vizcaya, Asturias and Guipuzcoa.

May 6

Solidarity strikes take place in Barcelona. Workers and students distribute thousands of leaflets in support of the miners' demands and declaring their solidarity with the Asturian workers.

May 11

Armed police occupy Barcelona University following large scale disturbances in the Catalan capital.

May 14

1200 strikers held in the four prisons of Oviedo

May 15

Silent demonstrations by women outside Security Headquarters in Madrid in solidarity with the strikers and demanding a total amnesty for all political prisoners. Police arrest eighty women.

May 26

Province Strikers

Barcelona	17000
Asturias	15000
Vascongados	10500
Salamanca	750
Leon	5200
Jaen	3000
Madrid	1100
Total	52550

June

On the 5th, 7th and 12th there were attacks on the Madrid residence of a Papal dignitary, Monterolas; the Madrid HQ of the Falange; the Banco Popular de Espana (Opus Dei) and on the Barcelona HQ of the Falange. Assassination attempt on Franco's life in San Sebastian on 18th. On the 30th further explosions took place in the Opus Dei college in Barcelona and in the Catalan Instituto de Prevision.

July

The Casas Consistoriales in Valencia was badly damaged by a powerful explosion on the 15th. This had been another assassination attempt on Franco. The bomb was intended to explode during a State visit earlier in the month, but the mechanism was faulty.

August

An explosion badly damaged the Basilica de la Santa Cruz del Valle de los Caidos outside Madrid. (This is a monument erected by Franco and built by forced prison labour to glorify the eternal memory of General Francisco Franco as a Christian gentleman). On the 19th, at a small distance from Franco's summer residence, the Palacio de Ayete, a plastic bomb exploded as Franco, his wife and Ministers passed through the gate into the palace. No one was injured.

On the same day plastic bombs exploded in the offices of right-wing papers in Madrid, 'Ya' and 'Pueblo' and Barcelona daily 'La Vanguardia'.

September

Barcelona Security HQ issued the following communique on the 18th:

'As a result of recent investigations into the acts of terrorism carried out in Spanish territory, officers of the Brigada Politico-Social have arrested a number of militants of the 'Young Libertarians' (FIJL). These are:

Jorge Cunill Vals, Marcelino Jimenez Cubas and Antonio Mur Peron. These individuals operated under instruction from foreign elements who financed their activities aimed at disturbing the social peace and tranquility of the Spanish people.' The three libertarians were tried within a few days of their arrest by summary court martial (Council of War) and for Vals the prosecutor demanded and was granted the death sentence. The execution was to be by Garrotillo (death by slow strangulation).

Sept 23

Shortly before the opening of the Vatican Council two bombs explode close to the Pope while inspecting the seating arrangements in the Basilica Saint Peter in the Vatican.

Sept 29

The Spanish Monarchist paper ABC published the following report from its Milan correspondent: 'The Spanish Vice-Consul in Milan, Sr. Elias, has been kidnapped by persons unknown according to a police statement issued tonight. Sources close to the police assume it to be the exclusive work of the Italian Communist Party.'

October

Sr. Elias, the Spanish Vice-Consul in Milan, was released by his kidnappers on October 2nd with the following statement:

'The kidnapping of the Spanish Vice-Consul was organised by a group affiliated to the INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF YOUNG LIBERTARIANS with the sole aim of drawing the attention of the world to the sad fate of three libertarians recently arrested in Barcelona and to prevent the execution of Jorge Cunill Vals. We return Sr. Elias to his family as promised to demonstrate our methods are vastly different to those employed by the Francoist regime. Sr. Elias will be able to embrace his family. How different to the fate of the political prisoners locked in the Caudillo's dungeons!'

The following day the Italian police announced they had arrested those concerned with the kidnapping of Sr. Elias and the culprits were to be tried within a matter of weeks. (Incidentally, the police were informed of the identity and whereabouts of the anarchists by an Italian communist journalist who had interviewed the Vice-Counsul in the People's Prison outside Milan where he was being held).

October 6

Julio Moreno, 28 year old electrician and militant of the Libertarian Youth Movement, is sentenced to thirty years imprisonment by a Military Council of War in Madrid accused of 'contacting an illegal organization in exile' and of 'having participated in actions against the security of the State' (Banditry and Terrorism).

October 7

A dynamite charge explodes in the residence of Cardinal Spellman in New York. These actions against the Church and Opus Dei formed part of a campaign to force these institutions to renounce their support of the Francoist dictatorship. The actions were claimed by 'La mano negro', who sent numerous letters explaining their actions to the Pope.

October 20

Eleven young Spanish workers and students, all members of the Libertarian youth Movement, sentenced by Military Council of War to sentences between six years and twelve years imprisonment.

November 17

Three militants of the Libertarian Youth Movement sentenced by Council of War in Madrid for editing and distributing 'Libertarian Youth': J. Ronco Pesina (23), 11 years imprisonment, Antonio Bayo Poblador (23), 11 years imprisonment, Rafael Ruiz Boroa (23), 3 years imprisonment.

Nov 22

The trial of the Italian libertarians accused of kidnapping Sr. Elias which had opened on the 15th, with all the defendants walking from the court in Varese free men. Sentences were nominal

as the weight of Italian public opinion made any other sentences impossible. Jorge Cunill's death sentence in Spain was commuted to life imprisonment.

Nov 29

Four militants of the anarcho-syndicalist National Confederation of Labour (CNT) are sentenced to various terms of imprisonment ranging between four, nine and eleven years by Madrid Council of War.

The charges were 'Reconstituting the CNT' and 'illegal propaganda'. On the same day at another Council of War (again in Madrid) another three members of the CNT from Valladolid each received four year prison sentences for inciting industrial unrest.

In Barcelona another militant of the CNT, Antonio Sanchez Perez (51) was sentenced to thirty years imprisonment on charges of sabotage.

Dec 2

Bomb explodes in the residence of the Military Governor of San Sebastian. The following day another exploded in the Palace of Justice in Valencia and another which badly damaged the Treasury building in Madrid. On the same day a bomb exploded in the Spanish Consulate in Amsterdam and in the administration offices of two Lisbon prisons. All these actions were claimed by the Iberian Liberation Council (CIL).

1963

March 6

Concerted plastic bomb attacks on the offices of 'Iberia' in Rome and the Ministry of Technology in Madrid'

'The Iberian Liberation Council has mounted 'Operation Warning' in its struggle for the freedom of the Iberian people. The object of this operation is to demonstrate to the international tour operators that they run a great danger in utilising airlines of the fascist regimes of Franco and Salazar (Iberia and TAP) . Until the last vestiges of Nazi-fascism have been eliminated in the Iberian Peninsula there can be no peace in Europe. Down with Dictatorship! Viva la Libertad!'

(Iberian Liberation Council – Communique March 1963).

April 16

Three young French Libertarians, Bernard Ferry, Alain Pecunia and Guy Batoux are arrested in Spain and charged with Terrorism and Banditry. The accusations made by the police were that the three anarchists participated in the anti-tourist campaign mounted by the Iberian Liberation Council and were materially responsible for explosions in the offices of 'Iberia' in Valencia, the attempted sinking of a liner in Barcelona Harbour and an attempt to blow up the American Embassy in Madrid.

June 13

Firebombs explode in the luggage compartments of Spanish and Portuguese aeroplanes on the tarmac in Frankfurt, Geneva and London airports. These actions are claimed by the Iberian Liberation Council (CIL).

July 31

Two anarchists, Joaquin Delgado and Francisco Granados, are arrested by the Spanish Special Branch and charged with the two explosions which took place two days earlier on the 29th. One was in Security HQ at the Puerta del Sol in Madrid and the other, also in Madrid, at the chamber

of Falangist Syndicates. Both these men were militants of the Liberation Youth Movement and had come to Madrid to carry out organisational activities.

August 7

Ramon Vila Capdevila (57) (Caraqumada), the last of those mountain guerrillas who had operated in the Pyrenees for over 23 years, was killed by a patrol of Civil Guard in the early hours of the morning near La Creu de Perello in Catalonia.

August 11

According to press reports two explosions took place in the Spanish Capital on July 29th of this year: one inside the offices of the General Directorate of Security, which caused light injuries, and the other in the Chamber of the Falangist Syndicates, at 17:30 hours and 24:00 hours respectively. Two days later, following a massive police mobilisation, the Francoist police arrested Joaquin Delgado and Francisco Granados. The coincidence and proximity of these two events have no relation to each other—the first people to know this are the Francoist police themselves—but every effort is being made by the regime to present the two arrested men as the material authors of the July 29th explosions. This is absolutely false. The Iberian Liberation Council has always accepted responsibility for its action and we hereby declare to national and international public opinion the following:

1.

Joaquin Delgado and Francisco Granados were in no way responsible for the events in Madrid on July 29th this year.

1.

The arms cache attributed to Francisco Granados (as many others which exist in our country for specific purposes) had been unused and remained intact until its discovery by the police (The Brigada Politico-Social discovered two Colt .45s, a machine gun with two full magazines, a radio transmitter, hand-grenades and other material in the flat of Granados's girl friend).

1.

Joaquin Delgado is completely innocent of the other charges made against him by the police.

1.

The author or authors of the events of July 29th in Madrid have not been arrested. If, in Spain, 'justice' were carried out with a minimum of legal normality then the truth of our affirmations could be easily proved in the interests of the defence of the two men. However, this is not the case. The Iberian Liberation Council holds the Francoist regime, imposed by force of arms, responsible both individually and collectively, for all victims who have fallen or may yet fall in the struggle for the freedom of the people of the Iberian Peninsula. We are the first to lament these victims, wept over with crocodile tears by the forces of reaction to justify their atrocities. Those who took part in the protest against the Falangist building and the Directorate of Security inform us that the former was carried out to expose the official Syndicates as the servants of the Bosses and the regime. The latter was a protest against the arbitrary arrest of the Asturian miners and their deportations. Also, because it was the building in which men and women are barbarically tortured for supposed political and social crimes (ie. opposing tyranny). The action group which carried out the two attacks acted on its own initiative. The Iberian Liberations Council declares its solidarity with that group and revindicates the acts as a protest of opposition to the regime.'

(Communique issued by the Iberian Liberation Council, 11th August 1963).

August 13

A Council of War of the 1st Military Region (Madrid) passes sentence of death by strangulation on Joaquin Delgado and Francisco Granados.

Aug. 18

‘...In the early hours of this morning, subject to the formalities of Penal Common Law the two terrorists Francisco Granados Gata and Joaquin Delgado Martinez were executed in accordance with the sentence passed by the Council of War of the 1st Military Region....

(Official communique 18/8/63)

‘Joaquin Delgado and Francisco Granados denied having any knowledge of the events of July 29th in Madrid. The Iberian Liberation Council states that the Franco regime was afraid to reveal the real reason for their trial because it was considered that the accused would win the sympathy of world opinion if it became known that the mission in which they participated and the material found in their possession was intended for the execution of the Assassin of the Spanish Working Class: General Francisco Franco. This was the real reason behind the farce mounted in Madrid on August 13th behind closed doors in the Calle de Reloj.’

(Communique issued by the CIL).

Sept 12

‘.....A series of police operations directed against Spanish Anarchist circles took place yesterday in Paris and the S.E. of France. A number of extremists are being interrogated and their homes searched. Thirty arrests have been made in the Paris region and the HQ of the Iberian Federation of Libertarian Youth (FIJL) in the rue Sainte Marthe have been searched. These operations seem to have been inspired by the discovery of documents in Perpignan detailing plans for aggressive actions and ‘attentats’ in Spanish territory.’

(Le Figaro).

September 21/22/23

Bombs explode in German Embassy, Moroccan Embassy and in the Church of Loyola in Madrid.

Sept. 25

Bomb explodes outside the home of American Ambassador in Madrid. A few hours later another explosion outside the home of the Chief of the Falangist Movement.

Sept. 27

Explosion at the home of Aramburu, Civil Governor and the head of the National Movement in Madrid.

Sept. 29

Bomb explodes outside the American Embassy in Madrid. (All the explosions in Madrid are claimed by ‘Colonel Montenegro’ of the IV Republican Army).

October 11

Francisco Abarca, FIJL militant, is arrested in Belgium accused of participating in the attack on an Iberian aeroplane in Geneva.

Oct. 18

Alain Pecunia, Bernard Ferry and Guy Batoux, the French Anarchist arrested on April 16th, are tried and sentenced by Madrid Council of War: Alain Pecunia (17), 24 years imprisonment. Bernard Ferry (20), 30 years imprisonment. Guy Batoux (23), 15 years imprisonment.

Oct. 20

‘The Ministry of the Interior announces that, in accordance with the Law of April 12th 1939 relating to foreign organisations, further modified by the Decree of September 1st, 1939: Art. 1.

The legality of the foreign association known as the Iberian Federation of Libertarian Youth has been nullified...'

(Extract from the 'Journal Officiel', 20th October 1963).

Oct. 25

Bomb explodes at a stand in the Spanish Fair, Mexico City. A young anarchist is arrested after being wounded by one of the explosions.

1964

May 10

Bomb explodes in the Castellano Hilton in Madrid.

May 11

Four more bombs explode in Madrid and one in Gijon. The American Embassy, the Ministry of Commerce and the Institute of Immigration; until 'Colonel Montenegro' is arrested on May 23rd, bombs continue to explode in Madrid at the number of three or four per day.

August 11

Stuart Christie and Fernando Carballo arrested and charged with Banditry and Terrorism. The mission was to have been an attempt on the life of Franco during a football match in Madrid.

October 21

Bomb attack on Spanish Embassy in Copenhagen.

Nov 27

Two fire bombs gut Opus Dei seminary in Rome. Bomb explodes inside the Vatican, and another in the Spanish Pontifical College, Rome.

1965

January 2

Plastic bomb explodes inside the offices of the Spanish Consulate in Naples.

Feb 19

Plastic bomb explodes in the Copenhagen office of the Spanish National Tourist Office.

April 25

Bomb wrecks Iberia office in Milan.

August 1

The Iberian Federation of Libertarian Youth (FIJL) initiates its International campaign in support of the political prisoners of Spain and Portugal.

1966

April 31

Mgr. Ussia, the Ecclesiastical Counsellor to the Spanish Embassy in the Vatican is kidnapped. The operation is announced simultaneously by Luis Edo in Madrid and the First of May Group in Rome.

May 12

Ussia is released but the 1st of May Group announce they will continue their actions in support of all political prisoners.

October 26

Five anarchists arrested in Madrid, amongst them Luis Andres Edo. They are accused of preparing a kidnap Attempt against the Commander in Chief of the American forces in Spain.

December

In New York Octavio Alberola gives a secret press conference in which he explains the intention of the kidnapping and distributes copies of the document which Edo was to publicise once the operation had been carried out successfully.

1967

April

1st May Group kidnap and hold hostage for a few hours the First Secretary and the Juridical Counsellor of the Spanish Embassy in London to demand the immediate trial of Luis Andres Edo and his comrades arrested the previous October in Madrid. At the same time this is a warning as to the possible outcome of the trial. The trial was held two months later with surprising sentences for all the accused — the maximum sentence, for Edo, was nine years — a prison sentence previously unheard of for an anarchist in Spain.

August

The private cars of two Spanish diplomats in London are riddled with machine gun fire. Shortly afterwards the American Embassy in the same city is raked with machine gun fire as a protest against American imperialism (First of May Group).

November

Simultaneous bomb attacks against the Greek, Bolivian and Spanish Embassies in Bonn and the Venezuelan Embassy in Rome. (First of May Group — in solidarity with the Latin American guerrillas and against the fascist regimes in Europe). The same day a bomb destroyed the entrance to the Spanish Tourist Office in Milan and the Spanish, Greek and American Embassies in the Hague, Holland.

Dec 26

David Urbano Bermudez arrested in Spain accused of supposed relations with the 1st May Group and the FIJL.

1968

January 3

Explosive rocket discovered facing Greek in London.

February 8

Octavio Alberola arrested in Brussels during negotiations between Spain and Belgium for the former's admission into the Common Market. Alberola was preparing a press conference to denounce this manoeuvre and raise the plight of Spanish political prisoners to the attention of the world.

February 27

The Hornsey home of Stuart Christie raided by police led by Det. Sgt. Roy Cremer with explosives warrant relating to Greek Embassy and information received that other attacks were about to take place in London.

March 3

Six bombs damage the buildings of diplomatic missions in London, the Hague and Turin. The Spanish Embassy and the American Officers Club in London; the Spanish, Greek and Portuguese Embassies in the Hague, and at the US Consulate in Turin. These actions were claimed by the 1st May Group.

March 6

Incendiary bomb with timing mechanism explodes in the Moabit Criminal Court, West Berlin.

March 18

Three major American offices in Paris are damaged by plastic bomb attacks: Chase Manhattan Bank, the Bank of America and Transworld airlines.

March 25

American Embassy in Madrid bombed.

August

International Anarchist Conference, Carrara, Italy.

September

Seven young anarchists arrested in Spain accused of conspiring with 1st May Group and of having participated in a number of actions in the Valencia region, such as that of "preparing" bank robbery. Information leading to their arrest came from the Special Branch of New Scotland Yard, London.

October 15

Imperial War Museum, London gutted by incendiary device.

Towards the end of 1968 numerous attacks are made against large capitalist enterprises in France. These are attributed to "Gauchistes" and anarchists. A woman wounded in one of these attacks is arrested and another, Eliseo Gueorguieff, is named by the police as being suspected of participating and organising the attacks.

On April 2nd and 3rd a warehouse in Frankfurt is burned down, causing more than £140,000 damage, as a protest against the war in Vietnam. Gudrun Ensslin, Andreas Baader, Thorwald Proll, Hans Sohnlein are arrested and charged. They are sentenced to three years imprisonment, but paroled under an amnesty for all political prisoners in 1969 on condition that they return to prison in 1970. While on parole Baader and Ensslin work together on the apprentice and borstal campaign in Frankfurt.

Nov 4

Dept. of Internal Affairs in West Berlin is attacked with molotov cocktails.

Dec 19

Rectorate of the Free University in West Berlin is firebombed.

1969

February 3

Unexploded dynamite charges discovered on the premises of the Bank of Bilbao and the Bank of Spain in London. FOMG.

Feb. 9

Bank of Spain in Liverpool bombed First of May Group.

March 9

J. F. Kennedy Library in West Berlin firebombed – more than £12,000 damage.

March 15

Two anarchists arrested immediately following a powerful explosion at the Bank of Bilbao in London. In their possession was a letter justifying the action on behalf of the First of May Group.

May 2

Six anarchists arrested in Italy accused of conspiring with Spanish anarchists and also being responsible for fifteen attacks on Francoist buildings in Italy. They were then charged with the attack which took place in the Milan Fair, an action which was subsequently proved to have been the work of fascists.

May 25

Bomb explodes in the Spanish Embassy in Bonn. It is claimed on behalf of the FAI in solidarity with the Spanish workers expelled from Germany on the insistence of the Spanish Embassy.

July 15

Local government office in Bamberg severely damaged. Blank identity cards stolen.

Nov-Dec.

Six bomb attacks in West Berlin.

December

On the afternoon of December 12 1969, almost at the

12

same moment, there were three explosions: one in the Bank of Agriculture, in Milan, with sixteen people dead and many wounded, and two in Rome, at the Labour Bank and at a national monument called 'Homeland Altar' with several wounded. A fourth bomb was found later, unexploded in another Milan bank: but the police blew it up, eliminating the most important evidence in the whole case. The police started to investigate immediately among the left militants: Calabresi, our CIA trained inspector, stated openly that "we have to look in that direction." He had the support of the CIA – president Saragat, who made violent anti-left speeches, and of all the media controlled by the bosses. The whole revolutionary left was attacked, in a McCarthyist way: seizures, 'questionings', arrests, searches, raids, open threats, police terror. The main targets were the anarchists, indicated by everyone as directly responsible for the bombings: entire groups of them were arrested, interrogated, and beaten in the police stations.

Dec. 15

The anarchist railway worker, Giuseppe Pinelli "fell" from the 4th floor of the Milan central police station.

Giuseppe Pinelli was 41 years old. He worked as a railway worker in the Porta Garibaldi station in Milan.

He married in 1955, Licia Rognini, a communist militant he met in an Esperanto school. They had two daughters: Silvia, 10, and Claudia, 8. Pino started to work very young, as a shopboy and as a warehouse-man – then he was hired by the railway company.

When he was 15, he participated in the armed struggle against the Nazis (1943–45), as a messenger for a people's brigade formed mainly by anarchists.

His political commitment increased, after that first activity, soon becoming his basic concern. In 1965, he started, with others, an anarchist group 'Sacco and Vanzetti' – in 1968, he participated in the students' struggle as a member of 'Bandiera Nera (Black Flag), which founded the club 'Ponte

della Ghisolfi – in 1969, he finally became responsible for the Milan area of the ‘Black Cross’, the anarchist organisation which helps mainly financially, anarchists in prison, and maintains contact with the Greek anarchists struggling against fascism and the “colonels”.

He lived with his family, in a small apartment, in the suburbs; the £8 monthly rent was low, compared to the current Milan prices. His house was a real shelter for everybody: when some comrade was passing through Milan, he was sure to find hospitality and friendship in Pino’s house. As an anarchist, Pino was first of all a very humanitarian person.

Towards the end of 1969 Swiss police discover an arms cache in Geneva and arrest three Swiss anarchists.

1970

Jan 28

Bomb attack on offices of Spanish Cultural attache in Paris.

February

Baader, Ensslin, Proll decide not to return to prison and go underground.

Feb 28

Bomb attack on Bank of Bilbao and Spanish State Railways in Paris.

March 3

ATTEMPTED KIDNAPPING OF THE SPANISH DELEGATE TO U.N.E.S.C.O.

The Kidnappers Arrested.

“Spain’s permanent delegate to UNESCO, 57 year old Sr. Emilio Garriguez has been the object of an attempted kidnapping. The kidnappers have been arrested. Sr. Garriguez had been under police protection for some time, so that when 3 men, armed with ether pads surrounded him as he left the UNESCO building in the Avenue de Suffren, they were immediately over-powered and arrested. The men responsible for the attempt have been remanded in custody in the HQ of the Police Judiciaire, Quai des Orfevres. They are due to appear in court on Thursday. They are three Spaniards: Messrs: Juan Garcia Macarena, aged 24; Jose Cabal Riera, 21; and Jose Canizares Varela, 35, and have refused to name the political organisation to which they belong.

“Our action had a solely political motive,” they said in statements, “we wanted to bring pressure to bear on the Spanish government in order to obtain the release of our comrades imprisoned in Spain.”

All three are of libertarian leaning and resident in France since last summer. They had no specific occupation. Various documents were seized at their residences and in the car they had hired, police found three guns, a flask of ether and glasses covered with sticky paper to darken them.”

(Le Monde, March 6th, 1970).

March

Germany: Mahler is convicted following a demonstration against the Springer Publishing concern. He receives six months suspended sentence.

April 4

Andreas Baader is arrested in West Berlin when stopped by police and found to be driving without a licence. He is imprisoned in West Berlin.

April 22

Belgium: Ivo della Savia arrested in Brussels under an extradition warrant to Italy asked for by Italian government. He is accused of being a member of Italian 22nd March Group (Valpreda's Group) and 1st of May Group.

May 10

Incendiary device discovered aboard Iberian Airliner shortly before take-off. At the same time in other European Capitals more devices of a similar nature are discovered on other aeroplanes belonging to Iberia. The action is a reminder that while Franco remains in power there can be no peace in Europe.

May 14

Baader is liberated from the library of the Institute for Social Research where he has obtained permission to work with Ulrike Meinhof on a book about the borstal situation in West Germany, following the intervention of his lawyer Horst Mahler. An armed group breaks into the library and frees Baader, who is under armed guard. Ulrike Meinhof flees with the group. Linke, an employee of the Institute, is wounded when he tries to intervene.

May 22

High explosive device discovered at a new police station in Paddington. This was later claimed by the prosecution in the trial of the Stoke Newington Eight to be the first action undertaken by the 'Angry Brigade.'

July 3

Simultaneous bomb attacks in Paris and London against Spanish State Tourist offices, and the Spanish & Greek Embassies.

August

Germany: Formation of the Red Army Fraction.

August 18

London offices of Iberia Airlines, Spanish State airline badly damaged by a bomb. (First of May Group).

August 30

The London home of the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, Sir John Waldron is damaged by a bomb blast. The bombing is not reported in the national press.

Sept 8

The London home of the Attorney General, Peter Rawlinson, in Chelsea, is bombed and once again the incident goes unreported.

Sept 26

Simultaneous bomb attacks against Iberia in Geneva, Frankfurt, Paris and London Airports.

Sept 29

RAF attacks three banks in West Berlin within a few minutes of each other. They get away with 217, 469.50 marks. (£26,500).

October 8

The police get a tip-off about a meeting of RAF members in West Berlin. They raid Kneesebekstrasse 8. Horst Mahler, Irene Georgens, Ingrid Schubert, Monika Berberich, Brigifte Asdonk are arrested.

October 9

Simultaneous bomb attacks in Paris, London, Manchester and Birmingham against Italian State buildings. The letters sent following the attacks were claimed on behalf of Giuseppe Pinelli the Italian Anarchist murdered by the police in 1969.

Nov 16

Germany: Town Hall at Nuestadt is broken into. Thirty- one official stamps, fifteen passports, and one identity card stolen.

Nov 20

A BBC outside broadcast van covering the Miss World Competition in London is badly damaged by an explosion.

Nov 21

Germany: Town Hall at Lang-Gons (Giessen) is broken into. 166 identity cards, official stamps, 430 marks and a bottle of cognac removed.

Dec 3

Spanish Embassy in London machine-gunned, following international protests against the trial of the Burgos Six in Spain.

Dec 8

Day of large demonstrations against the Industrial Relations Bill. In the early hours of 9th December the Ministry of Employment and Productivity in London is rocked by a powerful explosion following an unsuccessful police search of the building. ("Angry Brigade").

1971

January 12

Day of national demonstration against Industrial Relations Bill with strikes and protest marches against this blatant piece of class legislation. That night the home of the Minister responsible for the Bill, Mr. Robert Carr, is almost wrecked by two powerful explosions. The action is claimed by the 'Angry Brigade'.

January 19

Jake Prescott arrested on a cheques charge in Notting Hill and questioned by Det. Chief Supt. Habershon — the officer who was to take charge of the so-called 'Angry Brigade' investigation.

February 3

Prescott released on bail, but re-arrested 8 days later and charged with causing the explosions at the home of Robert Carr and the Miss World Contest. It was admitted in court by Chief. Supt. Habershon that he had refused the arrested man access to a lawyer for three days. During the ensuing months of the investigation the actions and activities of the police come in for a great deal of criticism from many different quarters, and numerous charges are brought against Scotland Yard for assault and harassment. These are waived aside by Supt. Habershon with the comment: "I am not concerned with legal niceties". It becomes increasingly clear that capitalism in Britain has moved into the defensive by permitting itself to be panicked into allowing the police a "free hand" in its methods of investigation. This is reflected in the political sphere with the Industrial Relations Bill laying the foundations of a corporate state.

Feb 10

Germany: Exchange of fire between Manfred Grashof, Astrid Proll and the police in Frankfurt.

March 16

Ian Purdie arrested in London and charged, together with Jake Prescott, for the two 'Angry Brigade' bombings. Further reports in the liberal press of police excesses and Nazi-type tactics, in their investigations.

March 18

During a major strike of Ford workers in England the main offices of the Ford Motor Company at Gants Hill, Ilford, on the outskirts of London, is wrecked by a powerful explosion. A thousand word communique from the 'Angry Brigade' is delivered shortly after.

April 28

Bomb delivered to the Times newspaper with a message from 'The Vengeance Squad, the Angry Brigade, the People's Army.'

May 1

Bomb wrecks the trendy Biba boutique, in Kensington. It is followed by a communique attacking consumer capitalism and the conditions of the sales girls and seamstresses.

May 5

Spain: Bomb attacks in Barcelona on the Palace of Justice, the Falangist HQ and a Capuchin Monastery. Claimed by the Catalan Anarchist Group 'Libertad.'

May 6

Germany: Astrid Proll, one of the group which liberated Baader, is arrested.

May 18

Germany: Horst Mahler found not guilty of participating in the liberation of Baader. Ingrid Schubert receives 6 years, and Irene Georgens 4 years for participating in the liberation. Horst Mahler is held in prison under paragraph 129 — for being a member of an illegal organisation, the RAF.

May 22

Bomb attack on Scotland Yard Computer Room at Tintagel House, London. This is accompanied by simultaneous attacks by the 'Angry Brigade', the International Revolutionary Solidarity Movement and the 'Marius Jacob' group against British Rail, Rolls Royce and Rover offices in Paris.

May 28

Spain: The arrest is announced of 9 people accused of belonging to the Catalan Liberation Front. Charges include sabotage attempts on T.V. stations, State Prosecutor's offices and the right-wing newspaper 'La Vanguardia'.

June 22

During a dispute between Ford management and the militant shop steward, John Dillon, in the Ford Liverpool plant, the 'Angry Brigade' blow up the home of Ford's Managing Director, William Batty, in Essex. The same night a bomb damages a transformer at the Dagenham plant of the Ford Motor Company.

July 8

Germany: Thomas Weissbecker and Georg Von Rauch, both members of the Anarchist Black Cross, are tried for assaulting a journalist on the Springer magazine Quick. Georg is convicted and Tommy acquitted, but both police and press have confused them from the beginning of the case and, after the verdicts, they change places. Georg goes underground and Tommy has to be released.

July 15

Germany: Petra Schelm is shot dead by police following a check at a road-block in Hamburg. Werner Hoppe is arrested and accused of the attempted murder of a policeman.

July 20

Germany: Dieter Kunzelmann arrested for allegedly planting a bomb at a lawyers' ball. Charged with attempted murder.

July 24

Germany: The Socialist Patient Collective in Heidelberg (SPK) is attacked by the police on the pretext of a connection with the RAF. (The SPK, the first self-organised group of mental patients, located the cause of mental illness as capitalist society itself.) 300 police armed with machine guns forced their way into the SPK rooms and the residences of 20 patients. 11 members of the SPK are put into 10 different prisons. 6 are still detained on remand.

July 31

Despite close police protection the home of the Secretary for Trade and Industry John Davies, in London, is badly damaged by a powerful explosion. This action followed close on Davies's announcement of his intention to close 'Upper Clyde Shipbuilders', throwing thousands of men out of work. This is accompanied by the 11th communique from the 'Angry Brigade.'

August 15

Following the announcement by the British Government that it intended to introduce internment in Northern Ireland there was a powerful explosion at the Army Recruiting Office in Holloway Road, London. This was claimed by a communique signed 'The Angry Brigade: Moonlighters Cell.'

Aug. 20

House in Amhurst Road, London, raided by Special Branch and CID arresting Jim Greenfield, Anna Mendelson, John Barker and Hilary Creek. The four are taken to the HQ of the 'Bomb Squad' in Albany Street, London, where the two men are subjected to a brutal beating-up to extract a confession from them.

August 21

Stuart Christie arrested at Amhurst Road while visiting the house. One hour later Chris Bott is arrested at the same place. Both taken to join others at Albany St. Police Station. Incriminating evidence in the form of two detonators planted by police officers in Christie's car. — Both men are also 'verballed'.

Aug. 23

All are charged at Albany Street police Station with:

1.
Conspiring to cause explosions between January 1st 1968 and August 21st. 1971.
1.
Possessing explosive substances for an unlawful purpose.
1.
Possessing a pistol without a firearms certificate.
1.
Possessing eight rounds of ammunition without a firearm certificate.
1.
Possessing two machine guns without the authority of the Secretary of State.
1.
Possessing 36 rounds of ammunition without a firearm certificate.

1.
 Jim: attempting to cause an explosion in May, 1970.

1.
 Anna & Jim: attempting to cause explosion in Manchester, October 1970.

1.
 Stuart: possessing one round of ammunition without a firearm certificate. (this dated back 2 years when a bullet was taken from his flat. No charges were preferred against him at the time).

1.
 John, Jim & Stuart: Possessing explosive substances.

1.
 Jim, John & Hilary: receiving stolen vehicle.

1.
 Stuart: possessing explosive substances (the two detonators planted by police).
 All are refused bail and remanded in custody to await trial.

Sept 24
 Despite the fact that the police claim to have arrested all the Angry Brigade, the Albany Street Army barracks (near the Bomb Squad HQ) is bombed by the Angry Brigade in protest against the actions of the British Army in Northern Ireland.

Oct 20
 Bomb blasts home of Birmingham businessman (building construction) Chris Bryant, while his workers are on strike. Communique issued by the Angry Brigade.

Oct 21
 Following a confrontation between members of the RAF and the police, the policeman Norbert Schmid is killed. Margit Schiller is arrested and charged with the shooting.

Oct 30
 Post Office Tower in London is bombed.

Nov. 1
 Army Tank HQ in Everton Street, London bombed by Angry Brigade.

Nov. 6
 Attacks against Lloyds Bank in Amsterdam; in Basle against the Italian consulate; in Rome against the British Embassy; and in Barcelona against the British Embassy, in support of the 'Stoke Newington Eight' and the Italian anarchists imprisoned on trumped-up charges of 'conspiracy' and subversion.

Dec. 1
 Trial of Ian Purdie and Jake Prescott ends. Ian Purdie found not guilty on all charges and Jake Prescott guilty on charge of conspiracy — 15 years.

Dec. 4
 Georg Von Rauch, a member of the Anarchist Black Cross, is shot dead by the police in West Berlin. He is unarmed, and is shot in the head when he'd already put his hands above his head. Between 5000 and 7000 people turn out the following day for a solidarity demonstration called by the Berlin Red Help.

Dec 18
 Kate Mclean arrested and charged with Angela Weir, Chris Allen and Pauline Conroy, who had been arrested during the course of November of having conspired with the six people already arrested on conspiracy charges. Shortly before the opening of Committal proceedings against the

ten militants, the Attorney General, Sir Peter Rawlinson, the victim of one of the Angry Brigade attacks decided he could not allow a case to be made against Pauline Conroy and Chris Allen due to insufficient evidence and they were released from custody.

Dec. 22

A bank is robbed in Kaiserslautern. £16,750 is stolen. A policeman, Herbert Schoner, is killed. There is nothing to directly connect this robbery with the RAF, but the Springer concern starts a big propaganda campaign on the assumption that this was the action of the "Baader-Meinhof Group". Heinrich Boll, world-famous novelist, publicly attacks the Springer press for the hysteria it is constantly trying to whip up. Two weeks later Chancellor Brandt is forced to appeal to the West German public to remain calm. At the same time, Peter Bruckner, a radical psychologist, suspected of harbouring members of the RAF, is suspended from teaching at Hannover University. Following his suspension there is a massive demonstration of solidarity from his students.

Dec 25

Switzerland: Attack on the Central Police HQ in Zurich. Police name an anarchist whom they are unable to locate.

1972

February

Bomb attack on Italian Embassy in Brussels in solidarity with Pietro Valpreda now on trial in Italy.

March 2

Thomas Weissbecker, another member of the Anarchist Black Cross, is shot dead in the middle of a street in Augsburg, when asked to produce his identity card. Although armed he didn't draw his gun. The police had been watching the flat where he was staying, but as became clear later had no idea who it was they had shot until after the killing. Carmen Roll, who was with Tommy is arrested. Solidarity demonstrations take place in five cities the next day.

March 3

In Hamburg, the police raid a flat and open fire almost immediately on Manfred Grashof and Wolfgang Grundmann. There follows a gun battle in which Grashof is seriously wounded, and a police inspector receives wounds from which he later dies. Despite his serious injury, Buddenberg, the judge in charge of all people arrested in connection with the RAF, orders Grashof's removal from the prison hospital to a cell where he has to administer medical treatment himself. Grundmann is put in the same prison.

March 24

Bomb alert in British Embassy in Brussels.

April

The not guilty verdict on Horst Mahler is quashed after the prosecution appeals. He is now to be re-tried on all charges.

May 11

A bomb destroys the officer's club of the headquarters of the American Army in Frankfurt. An American colonel is killed and 13 other officers wounded. A Communique issued by the RAF said the attack was a response to the escalated American aggression in Vietnam.

May 12

The police headquarters in Augsburg, where Tommy Weissbecker was shot dead, and the headquarters of the Bavarian police in Munich are bombed, causing thousands of pounds worth of damage. Claimed by RAF.

May 15

A bomb explodes under the car of Wolfgang Buddenberg, the judge mentioned above. His wife normally drives him to work, but on this occasion she is alone, and is seriously injured. Claimed by the RAF.

May 19

In the publishing house of Springer's concern in Hamburg, two high-explosive bombs are detonated. Three telephone warnings are given — two to the Springer House itself, one to the police. All are ignored. 17 people are injured. 5 other bombs fail to explode. Altogether the bombs contain 80 kilos of TNT. Claimed by the RAF.

May 20

Police open fire on Madrid students seriously wounding one of them. Students reply with Molotov Cocktails.

May 24

At the HQ of the American Army in Europe at Heidelberg, two bombs explode in the car park. A captain and two sergeants are killed, five others are wounded- Claimed by the RAF.

May 26

Bomb attacks on American Consulate and American Legion in Paris. At the same time the Spanish Consulate in Stuttgart is also wrecked by an explosion.

May 30

Trial of 'Stoke Newington Eight' opens at No. 1 Court at the Old Bailey, in London. This was to be the longest trial in the history of the British Legal System.

June 1

Andreas Baader, Holger Meins, Jan Carl Raspe are arrested when 250 police with machine pistols, tear gas, and a tank, raid a flat in the suburbs of Frankfurt. A fourth person arrested with them is later released by the police. They say he was a doctor at a local hospital, but after his release he mysteriously disappeared. In a gun battle with the police before the capture, Baader is wounded.

June 7

Gudrun Ensslin is arrested in a boutique in Hamburg, after a shop assistant spots her gun.

June 9

Bernhard Braun and Brigitte Monhaupt are arrested in West Berlin. They are two of the 19 people whose photos have been posted up all over Germany as members of the RAF.

June 12

Bomb explodes in Spanish Consulate in Munich.

June 15

Ulrike Meinhoff and Gerhard Moller are arrested in a flat near Hannover. The police have received a tip-off from a 'left-wing' trade-unionist in the 'progressive' wing of the SPD, living in the same block.

July 1

Spain: 800,000 pesetas robbed from a wages office in the Calle Majorca near the centre of Barcelona. This is the first known action of the Iberian Liberation Movement. (MIL).

July 18

Bomb wrecks Spanish Tourist Office, Stockholm, on 34th anniversary of the Francoist victory.
August 14

France: Material worth over one million pesetas taken from a print-shop in the rue l'Esquille in Toulouse. (MIL)

September 9

Acting on 'information received' the French police raid an isolated farmhouse in Bessieres, near Toulouse, and discover an arms dump, printshop and a large amount of anarchist propaganda. In an official communique issued after the raid they say the place has obviously been used as an international meeting place for anarchist activists.

Sept. 13

Wage snatch fails at the Savings Bank of Igualada in Salou (Tarragona), 50kms. from Barcelona. (MIL)

Sept. 15

Armed robbery at the Savings Bank of Bellver de Cardana in Lerida netting the group over one million pesetas. (MIL)

Sept.17/18

French police halt a Renault 16 at a road block near Pau and identify two of the occupants as being responsible for the hiring of the farmhouse near Bessiere. A police raid in Toulouse later that night effects the arrest of two militants, a third managed to escape. Oriol Sole, one of the accused, is kept in custody, but his companion, Jean Claude Torres, is released for lack of evidence. (MIL)

Oct. 21

Layetana Savings Bank in the industrial city of Mataro robbed of over one million pesetas. (MIL)

Nov. 18

Savings Bank in Barcelona robbed of 200,000 pesetas; for the first time it is reported that the group is armed with Sten sub-machine guns. (MIL)

Nov. 20

Seven men, armed with sub-machine guns, rob the Central Bank of Barcelona of one million pesetas. A communique is left signed by 'Autonomous Combat Groups, Iberian Liberation Front'. (MIL)

Dec. 6

The trial of the Stoke Newington Eight ends with four sentences of guilty of conspiracy against Jim Greenfield, Anna Mendelson, Hilary Creek and John Barker. Each was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment, after a plea for clemency by the working class jury.

The four subsequently appealed against sentence but had it thrown out. The other four were found not guilty on all counts demonstrating that the jury accepted the defence allegation that most of the police case was a fabrication of 'verbals', misplaced and planted evidence — as in the case of two detonators being planted in Stuart Christie's car — to secure conviction.

Dec 13/14

The printshop stolen by the police from the farmhouse at Bessieres is removed from police custody and put to social use again. (MIL)

Dec. 29

Layetana Savings Bank in Badalona robbed of 800,000 pesetas and a communique signed by the MIL is left commemorating the death of Francisco Sabate Llopart.

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Albert Meltzer
The International Revolutionary Solidarity Movement
A study of the origins and development of the revolutionary anarchist movement in Europe
1945–73 with particular reference to the First of May Group
1976

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