



# AGITATOR

## Free Valpreda

If you would like more information about the FREE VALPREDA CAMPAIGN; contact your local group of the Organisation of Revolutionary Anarchists. Or write to ORA, 68 Chingford Road, Walthamstow, London E.17.

All over Europe workers and oppressed sections of minorities are realising that, as the struggle for a truly democratic society intensifies, their traditional weapons are proving inadequate. The struggle of the liberation movements, especially in South East Asia, has wrecked the US economy which in turn has caused crises throughout the capitalist world. In the face of appeals by governments to "safeguard the national interest" the parties and trade unions of the working class has consistently sold out. The days of trusting union leaders, procedural haggling, token strikes and go-home strikes are numbered. Workers are rejecting reformist action and are discovering new ways of fighting to put management, union leaders, foremen, work-study experts, party bureaucrats and governments where they belong.

In Italy, as in Britain, the aim of the capitalist establishment has been to plan development of industry in that part of the nation nearest to central Europe. This way maximum profit can be extracted and the rest of the nation is left underdeveloped, maintaining levels of poverty and unemployment to force people to emigrate to industrial areas as a cheap, mobile and, in theory, docile labour force to be broken on production lines speeding up day by day. In Italy the great areas of under-development are in the South and North-East. In Britain the whole of Ireland, Scotland, the North and South-West supply this same demand.

Since '68 the Italian working class has been on the offensive. Whole sections have been taking political action outside the trade union and parliamentary structure. Capitalist-created divisions between workers, students and intellectuals have been broken. The shop-floor battle against productivity deals and management tyranny has been taken on to the streets, involving the whole community. Schools have been occupied by the hundred. Workers and their families have been fighting alongside students to co-ordinate rent strikes, demands for free public transport and occupations of houses.

The struggle went far beyond the unions' programme, and in '69 wild-cat actions starting with FIAT (April '69) spread to Pirelli, Alfa Romeo, Chatillon, Fatme and Petrolchimica and many more. Most of these were started by rank and file committees formed in '68. The unions tried to regain control by calling general go-home strikes but they were unable to control these. A riot in Turin (July 3 '69) was followed by a tactical government resignation. Seeing the working-class could not be controlled through the "working class" parties and trade unions, the ruling class with the collaboration of the CIA and the Greek fascist junta (since exposed) reverted to classic strategy. They revived and financed the 20's squads of fascist thugs to attack pickets and isolated militants. With the complicity of the Milan police they created a network of infiltrators and provocateurs



in the revolutionary organisations, the aim being to spread fear in the public and provoke a reaction against the radical left.

During '68 and '69 hundreds of bombs were planted all over Italy (an average of one every three days) on trains and in public places at great risk to innocent lives. The police arrested many members of all the new left groups while refusing to investigate the increasingly active right-wing factions. The escalation of terror reached its climax on April 25 '69 with the huge bombs planted at the Milan Fair FIAT pavilion and at the Central Station Information Office. Miraculously no-one was killed, though several were seriously injured. Once again the left was blamed, this time anarchists specifically. Eight were arrested and immediately charged. After seven months in jail five were released for lack of evidence. Two years later the remainder were acquitted.

Even these bombs did nothing to stop the growth of the workers' revolutionary movement. In the autumn of '69 strike after strike broke out and thousands of militant demonstrators took to the street. In September rumours of a fascist coup d'etat were rife. During October and November terrorist attacks grew in number. Squads of fascists roamed the streets beating up militants and burning left wing offices.

An indefinite strike was declared at Pirelli. A general strike on November 19 turned into a street battle during which a policeman was killed. The Italian C.B.I. (Confindustria) released statements indicating what the ruling class planned in the face of working-class militancy -

"Workers' power is tending to take the place of parliament.... this is a subversion of the whole political system" (Nov.21)

"The parliamentary system is not suitable for Italy...What is needed is an institution above parties with a mythical faith in order" (Dec 10th).

The press prepared the public for the creation of a republic to restore "law and order" and hinted that something would happen soon.

On the 12th December four bombs went off in Rome and Milan. The first, most serious, exploded in the Banca Nazionale dell'Agricoltura in Milan in the afternoon. It being market day, the bank was crowded. 16 died and 90 were injured. The second exploded in the basement of the Banca Nazionale del Lavoro in Rome. 13 were injured. The other two explosions occurred in Rome, both planted at the Altare Della Patria (Altar of the Fatherland) in Piazza Venezia. 2 passers-by were injured. A fifth unexploded bomb was discovered in the Banca Commerciale Italiana in Milan. This vital piece of evidence was exploded by police the same evening.

Within minutes of the Rome explosions, fascists were on the streets with leaflets and posters denouncing "anarchist terrorists". The police acted quickly-588 left wing militants and anarchists were arrested and interrogated. 12 fascists were questioned and swiftly released.

By evening Inspector Calabresi, in charge of the case, told journalists that the bombings were certainly "the work of anarchists"

Pietro Valpreda was arrested on the 15th December. On the same day Giuseppe Pinelli, one of the anarchists arrested on the 12th, was thrown from Calabresi's 3rd floor interrogation room. Pinelli was murdered, a fact which was immediately exposed by the press. The police were forced to close the case as quickly as possible. The bombings they decided were the work of the March 22nd group, specifically Valpreda (Banca Naz.dell'Agricoltura in Milan), Roberto Gargamelli (Banca Naz.del Lavoro in Rome), Roberto Mander (Altare della Patria), Marto Merlino (a fascist infiltrator) and Emilio Borghese.



Valpreda has been left to rot for over 2 years, his crippling Burghers' Disease untreated in the hope that he will either die before the trial, or appear completely crippled, which will "prove" the testimony of Rolandi - the taxidriver who claimed to have driven Valpreda 200 yards and seen him plant the bomb. Rolandi was an embarrassingly unreliable witness (the reward he received for his information was equivalent to £35,000), he is now dead. 10 other witnesses, defence and unreliable prosecution witnesses, have died in a variety of circumstances in the last two years - some 'accidents', others more obviously nothing of the sort.

If the trial takes place, the Italian Establishment will suffer acute embarrassment, to say the least. No-one will be surprised if Valpreda is dead before it starts; rumours are already circulating about his impending 'suicide'. We must make it clear to the Italian representatives in Britain that we are aware of their responsibility for the bombings, for the rise of neo-fascism, for the murder of Pinelli (who 'fell' out of a window at the Milan Police H.Q.), for the false charges laid against Valpreda and the others, for the strange deaths of so many witnesses. And while supporting the Italian revolutionary workers' movements we must make sure to learn the lesson of their recent experiences.

Already there are some striking similarities. Remember that last year a secret committee was set up, with representatives of the Army, Police, and Home Office, to plan for 'civil disturbances' in this country. We have seen the use of troops and torture in Ulster. Are all the bombs planted by the IRA? (It is an admitted fact that the SAS - special air services - used terrorism, such as murders and bombings, in Aden to try and disrupt the Independence movement. The SAS is now in Ulster.) The Territorial Reserve now trains in 'anti-riot' tactics.

The linking factor is that the more desperate those in power become the more 'unthinkable' their tactics. CS Gas is now being used "in restricted circumstances", how long before the next step is taken and its used against demonstrations? Dozens of miners have been arrested during the recent strike for a living wage, are the Police really impartial guardians of all? Or are some citizens' rights greater than others? (Such as Landlords, bosses, civil servants etc.)

As the working class takes on this Tory government (and the Wilson Tory government which will succeed it in the near future) by resisting the attempts to make the workers pay for the economic crisis - is caused by the instability of capitalism itself, how do we expect the bosses and their servants to react? As more factories are occupied to fight redundancies, as more sections of workers strike to prevent their standard of living falling back to what it was in the 30's we can expect more and more to see the emergence of backward looking 'law n' order' groups given increasing coverage in the tory press - an example of this is the Festival of Light (whose demonstration was stewarded by the National Front - the main fascist group in this country).

As young people with no opportunities get together and organise with unemployed workers to form Unemployed Workers Unions, and Claimants Unions. As they fight not only for decent social service provisions (paid for by the daily exploitation of workers) but extend their campaigns to asking employed workers to ban overtime, to demanding that bosses who want to close their factories be kicked out and the factories run by the workers. How do we expect the bosses and their Tory and Labour front men to react?



The system is so shaky that every strike, every act of resistance, threatens to plunge the whole thing into chaos. In times of 'prosperity' the Labour party 'reformers' can carry on their trade of begging crumbs, of minor reforms that do not threaten the power and the wealth of the ruling class. This is no longer possible, the crumbs are not there. This puts the Labour Party gentlemen and the 'responsible' Trade Union careerists on the spot. Their whole existence is built around the crumbs. When, instead of concessions the bosses are demanding 'sacrifices in the national (our) interests' ie. school milk cuts, social security restrictions, 'fair (double) rents' etc, who do these representatives of the workers side with? How much real help did the Labour Party or the TUC give to the Postal Workers, or the Miners? The Postal workers lost - they got sympathy and nothing else. The Miners won, not because of the 'might' of the TUC, but because ordinary workers in the railways, power stations, transport, engineering had, as usual, more guts and foresight than their 'leaders'. They knew that the defeat of the miners meant the defeat of all workers. So they acted. The Tories had thought they could sit the strike out but the action of thousands of workers in support of the miners defeated them. They know this. Do we think they will not learn from it?

Already there is a very strong campaign of repression directed at militant blacks, at small revolutionary groups just starting to be of help in the class war, at young people with 'minority' ideas or appearance. The Industrial Relations Bill, pushed aside by the miners and their supporters, will give the government great power to deal with 'troublemakers' in industry.

Already we have explosions in this country. No-one is hurt. The press immediately announces that it's the work of 'anarchists'. The police raid and disrupt the homes and offices of the most un-violent people - the factor which identifies them is their opposition to the ruling class.

It doesn't need much sense to be able to make a few suggestions of what we are likely to see happen in the near future. The TUC will not fight the increasing attacks on living standards - and the demands made upon working people will get heavier as we try to enter the Common Market in a 'competitive condition' i.e. able to screw a great deal more profit out of a decreasing labour force. Sections of workers will strike and increasingly they will be helped workers in totally different industries. The TUC will obstruct, oppose and finally denounce this. The Labour Party will condemn the 'extremists'. The harassing and repression of revolutionary groups, black groups, even liberal reforming groups will increase. There will be more bombs. No ruling class in history has ever given up its power without a struggle. The British ruling class is one of the oldest, and previously most secure, in the world. For this reason it will increasingly lose its head and react in a most 'unbritish' way as it undergoes a totally new experience, a direct challenge to its power - the beginning of the revolution in Britain.

FREE VALPREDA !

FREE ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS !

SEIZE THE TIME?.....ORGANISE !!