

Bulletin of the
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Karl Max Kreuger

Amsterdam December 1946- Den Haag March 1999

For those of us who regularly attended the anarchist bookfair in London a meeting with Karl Max would undoubtedly be one of the high points of the day. This good natured and witty Dutch man was a positive mine of information regarding the international libertarian movement, especially developments in the old Soviet empire. His relaxed and undogmatic approach to our cause gained him many friends in Poland, Ukraine and Russia. Through his correspondence he also kept in regular touch with comrades in China and Latin America; no doubt they also gained greatly from the information and solidarity he provided.

As a long time activist in the Netherlands, it was only natural that he was also a founding member of the Vrije Bond (Free Union) after it split with the OVB (independent union), over it's failure to involve itself in the broader social issues beyond the workplace. He was a regular contributor to the VB paper "Buiten de Orde", one of the better anarchist journals published today. Karl Max died suddenly at his home in Den Haag - he will be sadly missed by his many friends and comrades around the world.

*Dat hart klopt ineens niet meer.
We missen je.*

New Publication

Comrades of the KSL will be glad to know that our latest pamphlet has just been produced. Entitled:

Prisoners & Partisans:

Italian Anarchists in the struggle against Fascism

It's a collection of essays on the anarchist resistance inside Italy before, during and after the Second world War, and complements the pamphlets we've already produced on the experiences of Italian anti-fascists in the Spanish Civil War.

The titles of the articles are:

Anarchists against Mussolini

Livorno: Anarchists versus fascism 1922-45

*Gino Lucetti and the attempt on Mussolini's life
Turin 1930*

Anarchist Activity in Italy 1939-1945

*Anarchists in the Renicci d'Anghiari
concentration camp
The Red Flying Column 1945-49*

This pamphlet is available from the KSL or from AK Press in Edinburgh or San Francisco

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The price is £1.50

Our other pamphlets include:

Remembering Spain, The CNT and the Russian Revolution, Ned Kelly's Ghost and Biographical details on the Spanish Anarchist Resistance: Please write for details

Pietro Gori

“This was in the early dawn of socialism, or rather, the first years when there began to be talk of socialism in my country. One day a young law student arrived in the Ardenza to make propaganda on behalf of the new ideas and he spoke with colourful eloquence and persuasive reasoning. Crowds showed up for his speeches, drawn by his soft, soothing words, fired by his oratory, even if they could scarcely fully grasp the underlying ideas or had only the vaguest grasp of them. I was seduced by Pietro Gori’s propaganda.” (Amedeo Boschi).

But who was this effective and fascinating propagandist of anarchist thinking?

REVOLUTIONARY ANARCHISM AND LEGALITARIAN SOCIALISM

Born in Messina on 14 August 1865, (his father, a one-time conspirator during the Risorgimento, was in charge of the local artillery barracks) Pietro Gori completed his schooling in Livorno and Pisa, where he graduated in law in 1889. From then on the young student joined the anarchist movement, becoming an active propagandist for it in the provinces of Livorno and Pisa, on the island of Elba and in the Maremma region of Tuscany. In 1887, Gori published his first pamphlet *Rebel Thoughts*, which resulted in his being tried and acquitted by the Pisa Assize Court.

In the lead-up to May Day 1890, anarchists, constitutional socialists and republicans in Livorno decided jointly to organise the city’s first ever general strike. The initiative was a resounding success and the strike lasted into the ensuing days. Pietro Gori, who had joined with other anarchists to throw his support firmly behind the strike, was arrested along with 27 comrades and charged with incitement to class hatred and incitement to strike. Sentenced to a year in prison, he was acquitted by the Pisa Appeal Court, but not before he had served much of the sentence. Upon his release, he was forced by persistent police harassment to move to Milan, there to be welcomed by Filippo Turati into his law practice, thereby smoothing his entry into the law.

In January 1891, Gori took part, in the Swiss city of Capolago, in the foundation congress of the Revolutionary Anarchist Socialist Party (PSAR). This was an attempt to float a libertarian organisation that recognised group autonomy, was to achieve coordination on the basis of regional federations

liaising through a number of corresponding commissions. Along with Amilcare Cipriani, Malatesta and Francesco Saverio Merlino, Gori was one of the chief backers and propagandists of this party. Returning to Milan, he joined with a number of workers, artists and students to launch *L’Amico del Popolo*, a newspaper that published 27 issues, all 27 of which were impounded by the authorities!

This was one indication of the repression that batted upon the new-born PSAR, a repression that culminated after the May Day demonstrations of 1891, when, yet again, the anarchists were very much to the fore.

Again in 1891, Gori clashed with the socialist faction led by Filippo Turati. On this occasion, Gori expressed his opposition to constitutional and parliamentary systems, availing among other things of arguments drawn from Marx’s *Communist Manifesto*. The clash with Turati was re-enacted during the Genoa Congress (1892) when the definitive falling-out between anarchists and socialists came to pass.

EXILE

Alongside his political activities, Gori was also involved in literary and professional endeavours. He published three volumes of poetry, *Prisons and Battles*, and had his socially critical plays *Without Homeland* and *Thy Neighbour* staged successfully, whilst, between 1892 and 1894, he acted a defence counsel for, among others, Paolo Schicchi, C. di Sciuillo, Luigi Galleani and Sante Caserio, in addition to fighting many criminal cases.

When Sante Caserio assassinated the French president Sadi Carnot (24 May 1894), the conservative press accused Gori of having been implicated in the killing. The campaign against Gori was part and parcel of a swingeing anti-anarchist crackdown sponsored by the Italian prime minister Crispi. Gori was obliged to flee to Lugano in Switzerland where he resumed his law practice. There too, however, he attracted unwelcome attention from the Italian police who even orchestrated an attempt on his life; two persons unknown fired two revolver shots at him, but missed their target. Following pressure from the Italian government on the Swiss authorities, Gori was arrested along with 15 comrades and expelled from Switzerland. It was on this occasion that he penned his famous verses “Farewell to Lugano”.

PIETRO GORI

Travelling through Germany and Belgium, Gori fled to London where he met Kropotkin, Louise Michel, Charles Malato and Sebastien Faure, as well as other noted anarchists who had been forced into reluctant exile. During this time he joined with Malatesta to get involved in the struggles of the workers' movement in London. Then he moved on to Holland, but, realising that he could not be of service to the anarchist movement in a country whose language he could not speak, he decided to sail to the English city of Hull; there he found a job as a plain seaman on board the SS. 'Neuland'. After a few months on the northern seas, he landed in New York to resume his political activities. In a little under a year he had held something like 400 lectures and meetings in Italian, French and English, with visits also to Canada. At the end of this wearisome propaganda tour, Gori was sent as the American trade unions' delegate to the international socialist labour congress in London (27 July - 1 August 1896) at which anarchists and socialists clashed again. Collapsing under the strain of over-work, he recovered in hospital. After a short stay he decided to return to Italy (autumn 1896) where his sentence of enforced residence was commuted to a requirement that he remain first on the island of Elba, and later in Rosignano Matittimo.

THE ANARCHIST MOVEMENT'S SECOND WIND

His health restored, Gori settled in Milan again, reopening his practice and resuming his political activities. He started to contribute to *L'Agitazione*, a paper published by Malatesta out of Ancona. These were telling months for the anarchist movement: besides the drive to reorganise following years of harsh repression, there was an attempt to re-establish links with workers' organisations. Gori put the case for the latter in the pages of Malatesta's *L'Agitazione*, denying that the anarchist movement had never shown any real interest in workers' associations and citing the activities of the 1890-1892 period.

Meanwhile the storm was approaching. At the unveiling in Milan of a monument to the "5 Days", Gori was recognised by the crowd and compelled to address them. What he said would be the basis of charges against him some months later. Early in 1898, he was defending the protagonists of the Carrara uprising and then joined Malatesta's defence team during the Ancona trial. When rioting erupted

following the escalating price of bread (in the spring of 1898), disturbances that turned into out and out popular uprisings in some areas (cries of "long live the social revolution!" became pretty much the keynote of the disturbances), Pietro Gori was forced to go into exile once more.

ACTIVITY IN SOUTH AMERICA

His flight was quite an adventure. Disguised as a British diplomat, Gori travelled on the same train as the Duke of Genoa and after countless incidents eventually reached the French frontier; there he donned the disguise first of a prince and then of a pauper in order to make it eventually as far as Marseilles and take ship for Argentina. In Buenos Aires he launched *Modern Criminology* a highly-rated review which attracted contributions from South American and European jurists and scientists. Again in Argentina, Gori was among the promoters of the anarcho-syndicalist FORA (Argentine Regional Workers' Federation). Not that his political and propaganda activities prevented him from joining with the painter Tomasi to make a long and dangerous exploration beyond Tierra del Fuego.

In Argentina, Gori published (among other things) the pamphlet *Our Utopia*, one of his most important essays. Jettisoning his rather positivistic belief in the inevitability of the Revolution, Gori argued that the need was for day to day struggle in order to build anarchist communism which naturally meant a struggle well outside parliamentary institutions. As he saw it, the State was not merely institutionalised violence but a definite brake upon the development of society. Still attentive to relations with the labour movement, Gori saw the organisation of the struggle as a prefiguring of the society to come and he was especially interested in the examples of the French chambers of labour and *Bourses du travail*.

LATTER YEARS

In 1902, availing of an amnesty, Gori returned to Italy. One of the first things he did was to launch, with Luigi Fabbri, the review *Il Pensiero*. The years 1902-1906 saw Gori at his most mature, politically. His writings from that time show him recognising the importance of the will and class organisation, whilst the proletariat was singled out as the essential factor in the revolution. Gori was involved in heated debates about trade unions with reformists as well as with revolutionary syndicalists.

continues page 8

PORTUGAL

ONE OF THE features of Capitalism's superstructure is how quickly it can bury any act of substantial rebellion. Revolutionary potential ebbs and flows and sometimes the periods when we take control of our everyday lives appear to be a dream. The Portuguese Revolution fits into this category. It's a reflection of Capitalism's strength and Anarchism's lack of coherence and consistency that this happens. We can learn from our history, from our defeats as well as well as our small victories. It's about time we stopped reinventing the wheel!

We reproduce the thoughts of a Portuguese anarchist on the Portuguese Revolution of 1974/1975. They are thoughtful and telling comments on anarchist organisation and social change. For further information look at:

'Portugal, the Impossible Revolution' by Phil Mailer (Solidarity, 1977) and

'Orgasms of History' to be co-published by KSL and AK Press.

Interview With A Portuguese Militant

An interview was conducted by Our Generation recently with M. Lucas, a Portuguese anarchist who is now living in Canada. The interview is in two parts. One part was conducted before she returned to Portugal for a three week visit between December and January 1976, and the other part after her return. The purpose of the interview is to give some background on the libertarian movement. We want to improve our knowledge of what is happening in that country, and of the anarchist movement, as well as improve communications with Portuguese militants.

Question: Can you give us a rough history of the libertarian movement in Portugal?

Answer: Anarchism really surfaced in Portugal as an organised expression of the working class after 1910 when the country became a republic. It was a movement rooted mainly in the trade unions. There was a succession of governments administering the State. The country was in chaos and economic misery was widespread. Under these conditions the syndicates played a leading and aggressive role with one strike following another. In an atmosphere of

widespread anti government feeling, anarcho-syndicalism was gaining ground. In 1928 unfortunately Salazar instituted his dictatorship; Nevertheless social upheavals continued as before. Salazar set out to crush the syndicates, especially the militant anarcho-syndicalist groups. His strategy unfolded over a period of time because of the strength of syndicalism in the country. At the height of State attacks, the trade-unions went on a wholesale counter-attack in the form of a general strike in January 1931, in which clearly the anarchists played a leading role. The militants were armed, and with explosives. Nevertheless, for many of the same reasons that the social revolution failed in Spain several years later, the general strike was crushed. The Moscow communists, in our judgement, played a leading role in sabotaging the general strike.

A heavy repression followed our defeat, with massive arrests sending many militants into exile. Many anarchists were sent into exile on the island of Tallafal, which is off the coast of Angola. Between 1931 and 1974 the anarchist movement in Portugal was underground but was active both at home and abroad. You bear in mind that survival was extremely difficult as we are never supported in any way by any State powers, as is the case with other revolutionary groups. In spite of these hardships our anarcho-syndicalist newspaper, *A Batalha*, and other periodicals continued to be published with as much regularity as possible, with news as to what was happening inside and outside Portugal, and continuing the educational task so vital to anarchism and to the development of revolutionary consciousness. The movement during this entire period was mostly carried on by the veterans of the twenties and thirties who were not rotting in jails or in exile.

Question: How did an interest in anarchism commence anew? There is obviously a great popularity of anarchist ideas among the young workers, students, and young military today in Portugal.

Answer: Young people whatever their social function in our society became interested in anarchism. To them it represented first and foremost a revolt against authority, all authority. This was an extremely important reaction, and particularly understandable after such a long period of dictatorship. This revolt was enriched by a generational revolt in social relations, especially

PORTUGAL

within families, which undoubtedly was a spill-over from what was happening earlier in many parts of the world.

In 1973 there were no anarchist books in Portugal in our language. And the anarchist periodicals and newspapers had a limited circulation under the dictatorship. Nevertheless a select number of people had anarchist books in French (which is a second language in our country), in Spanish and English. These books went from hand to hand within a small circle. Speaking personally I revolted against authority but what was the alternative? This was of concern to all of us at the time. In revolting against authority, however, I and others concluded simply that if people were conscious enough to respect the liberty of others, then authority, government, the State was not necessary. This deeper understanding of freedom was the beginning of the anarchist idea in us. At that time I and others began to read. Some of these foreign language texts fell into our hands. On April 25, 1974, when the dictatorship fell, I heard of the Movimento Libertario Portuguese (MLP) for the first time, and immediately offered my help.

Question: What is the MLP today?

Answer: It is a small federation of anarchist affinity groups. There are comrades working as individuals, others in groups, others in federations of groups with a co-ordinating committee. A generational conflict emerged in the libertarian movement, however, as it did in other countries, and as has happened in virtually all left-wing movements during these years, and especially in movements emerging from under the conditions ours lived under for so many years. There are about ten groups working through the MLP, and these consist mostly of the older militants and veterans.

At a mass meeting organised by anarchists in June 1974 in Lisbon we found that people exposed to these ideas for perhaps the first time were very receptive to them.

The younger anarchist groups work through the Associao de Grupos Autônomos Anarquista (AOAA) This association is against having any alliances with other left-wing groups.

Question: What kind of activities are anarchists involved in at the present time?

Answer: One successful event was the mass meeting of June 1974. That showed some degree of

sentiment in favour of libertarian ideas, just a few months after the fall of the dictatorship. The work of the militants involves (1) propaganda and educational work, e.g. pamphlets, wall posters consisting of commentaries on the events of the times, making people vigilant against all forms of authoritarianism, (2) organising at the workplace, (3) organising demonstrations on issues, e.g. we had an important demonstration in solidarity with the arrested Spanish comrades, (4) and maintaining contacts with active individuals and groups in the country.

My affinity group for instance, which consisted of about 20 people. (I was the only student in the group) works closely with the LUAR and PRP-BR (two revolutionary organisations). To us the question of arms is very important. Our activities consist of study and discussions, workplace organising which is very important, translation of materials from other languages, and developing close personal contact with the rank-in-file of other revolutionary organisations like LUAR and PRP-BR.

Our movement was naturally opposed to INTERSYNDICAL which was one big union imposed on the Portuguese working-class by the State and whose leadership was given to the Communist Party. Our anarcho-syndicalist militants nevertheless are active in the ranks pushing libertarian ideas and structures. *A Batalha* had many articles against INTERSYNDICAL. By the way, the newspaper is to be found in many kiosks in Lisbon and also in the provinces.

Finally an extremely important area where we are active is the Conselhos Revolucionarios de Trabalhadores, Soldades E Marinheiros (CRTSM). This is the association of the many workers councils, neighbourhood councils and military barracks committees. They had their founding congress on the 20 April 1975, and their second congress August 1975. The CRTSM, in fact, groups most of the social revolutionary potential in Portugal. The major influence in it at the present time is the PRP-BR.

Question: What is your assessment of the situation at the present time in Portugal?

Answer: There are two dimensions to our analysis. One is an objective analysis of what is, and connected with this is the second dimension, of what must be done. There are important splits within the Armed Forces Movement. This has its good and bad implications. Good because it demonstrates the fact

PORTUGAL

that the State has not consolidated, bad from the point of view that international reaction exploits this situation in favour of the old order. The problems with the economy, without considering the implications of a full blockade and judging the problems the country has been facing in the actual situation, we observe that the people are generally frightened. The various left-wing sects frighten people even more with their demagoguery, because people feel, and correctly of course, that these sects in the end want power to be placed in their hands.

Anarchists not only in Portugal, but with the solidarity needed from comrades all over the world, need to develop further the revolutionary and libertarian consciousness of the people and teach them about the enemies of freedom. We must push further the formation of revolutionary soviets and popular assemblies. The CRTSM is a development in this direction, but the leadership being Marxist stresses and works towards the "dictatorship of the proletariat" which is completely unacceptable to us, of course. We have to teach people how the present State must be dissolved and replaced with other social forms, many of which are in existence now in Portugal or can spring into formation with further opportunity [or] encouragement. Nevertheless we are working very hard, under both exciting conditions, and extremely difficult circumstances.

Question: What are the needs of the Portuguese anarchist movement?

Answer: We need to have contact with all of you in various parts of the world. We hardly know any Canadian or America comrades or groups. We need to know of your activities. We also need your solidarity and your aid. We cannot rely on this State or that, we are just coming out of a period of being smashed and repressed not only in Portugal of course, but in many countries. We need money to undertake translations and to publish books, pamphlets, periodicals. We need every resource possible in order to carry out our educational consciousness-raising work before the enemies of freedom and anarchism take it away. In this battle we can win, just look at events in the last weeks in Portugal. The State is still on the defensive. even though it is trying to tighten its hold on society and the economy. But as you know we cannot win, without your solidarity.

November 15, 1975

On January, 20, 1976. the interview continued.

Question: What observations do you come back with after your recent visit to Portugal?

Answer: Since November the situation in Portugal has deteriorated. It has done so in the economic, political and social sense. Politically, the situation took a turn for the worse with the fall of the fifth provisional government from State power. This was the government of Goncalves in which the Communist Party had considerable influence. Mark you the C.P. for eighteen months had loyally helped the generals and the admirals in their attempt to impose their stiff austerity measures on Portuguese workers. The C.P. served as the AFM's policeman in the labour movement. Nevertheless, the popular movement at the base continued to grow. At a certain point, the revolutionary left groups decided on the need for greater co-ordination of their activities, especially against this government and set up a Revolutionary Front. The C.P. joined this Front reluctantly, and when the government fell from State power, the Front took on the fight against the sixth provisional government in which the Socialist Party of Mario Soares outstripped the C.P. in influence. This government set out to gradually consolidate the power of the State and naturally the power of the "progressive" bourgeoisie.

Question: What is the background to the events of 25-26 November 1975, which the State condemned as an attempted coup d'Etat by the revolutionary left?

Answer: It was no attempt at a coup d'etat. The background includes these factors - the right-wing of the bourgeoisie, of the military, and in the government. They never stopped their work of holding on and expanding their power and influence. They were on the look-out for an opportune moment to strike back, and reduce the growing influence of the revolutionary left. They were responsible for continuously spreading rumours about a prospective coup from the left.

Meanwhile the so-called "moderates" in the government around Major Melo Antunes began a series of government moves against the revolutionary left. They removed from his posts, before the 25-26 November events, the popular commander of the Lisbon military district, and head of COPCON, (Continental operations command) General Otelo

PORTUGAL

Saraiva de Carvalho. This led to considerable unrest among the left-wing rank-and-file military.

On 24 November, pro-government supporters set up barricades on all roads leading north out of Lisbon. The people had been hearing warnings for days about plans for a right-wing coup by word of mouth, and the left were convinced that these barricades were a prelude to such a power play. The paratroopers based at Tancos military base, who had been used by the right-wing military that staged the 24 September 1974 attempted coup, and then again in the attempted coup of 11 March 1975, and more recently during the demolition of Radio Renascença's transmitter of 7 November 1975 (this was a radio station taken over by the revolutionary left for anticapitalist and anti-state propaganda, and formerly owned by the Catholic Church) did not want to be held responsible for what people in the south at least were calling the reactionary right-wing in Portugal.

On 23 November meanwhile a shipload of "Paras" (the short name for Paratroopers) arrived home from Angola, and were met at the docks by representatives of their own regiment at Tancos. [The] Tancos Paras explained they were now without officers, and it was their officers who had duped them in the Radio Renascença demolition which they now regretted, and they were now declaring themselves on the side of the people.

At this point the incoming Paras were simply interested in getting together with their families, but two days later had become convinced of the need (after the barricades of the 24 November went up) to act immediately, in a preventive move.

They moved to take over the air bases - Monteijo, Ota and Mont Real early in the morning of 25 November. The C.P. seeing a confused situation which it could exploit in its power-plays with the government sought immediately to create more confusion. Through INTERSYNDICAL it issued an order for mobilisation. Once the move by the Paras got nowhere in the sense that troops loyal to the government moved in to take back the bases, the C.P. cancelled its mobilisation order at midnight, early on the 26 November in order to protect its flanks from criticism by the government. It also took the occasion to blame the whole affair on the revolutionary left.

Now during the 25 November it is true that emissaries were sent out to other left-wing military units to join in: some agreed to join the Paras, but most others refused. The whole thing aborted, and one

reason was because it was not a left-wing coup. The left in the Lisbon area were at [the] time strong enough to contain the right-wing military. The Paras failed because they were not ready with a coup strategy.

What all this means is that the State was given a perfect pretext to crack down on the people, and the revolutionary left everywhere. The State keeps repeating the big lie that the events of those two days were an attempted coup d'état by the revolutionary left, and proceeds to repress the left including the arrest of many soldiers and literally disbanding many left military units. Today they arrested Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho, saying that it was he who gave the order for the attempted coup. Everyone in Lisbon knows this to be a lie because people knew his whereabouts and these had nothing to do with the coup. But I suppose it makes good propaganda for the government outside the country and a good pretext to justify their crack down on the left.

Portuguese capitalism is still in crisis however, many days and weeks of these events. The government froze wages and cancelled scheduled wage increases. In Braga, in the north, workers have not been stopped for long for they occupied the Ministry of Labour when they were told that their wages were frozen. There are massive increases in the prices of various commodities however.

In the government, the power struggle also goes on. The AFM has been dissolved, and replaced by a group called the Portuguese Armed Forces (FAP) in order to have greater discipline on the soldiers. The semi-fascist Social Democratic Center (CDS) had been banned after an abortive right-wing coup last March. It has now resurfaced. The right wing police - the GNR - is now powerful again and plays an active role of intimidation in the workers councils, and in the neighbourhood councils and meetings. But a demonstration of 20,000 people, supported by the left, was held outside a prison in Oporto to this month. Revolutionary soldiers and officers have been kept there since 25 November.

The government has fired 127 left-wing journalists, and the Republica newspaper, once taken over by a workers council has been shut down. Radio Renascença has been handed back to the Catholic bishops. The stock market, closed since the fall of fascism in April 1974 was reopened this month. 1,800,000 acres of land taken over by poor farmers were forced back, the new Co-operatives smashed and

PORTUGAL

the ownership of the land given back to the old landlords by the government.

Question: How long will this situation last?

Answer: The State will continue this situation for as long as it takes to put down the revolutionary left and its gains, and to stabilize the economy.

Question: What is the revolutionary left doing?

Answer: Its political militancy will continue. Many forces have gone underground, and work clandestinely, and they are well armed. The State has to use its repression moderately because of this. These underground forces continue to protect those institutions that have been taken over by the people.

Question: What are the prospects of the anarchists?

Answer: Very good. We continue to grow in influence. Some of our comrades along with others on the revolutionary left have managed to develop the autonomy of certain trade union groups within INTERSYNDICAL and the workers refuse as a result to be pushed around by the C.P. brass or to be used by them in their cynical power moves. In the meantime our forces have been brought together into greater co-ordination. The MLP have been dissolved into a larger Federacao Anarquista Da Regiao Portuguesa - FAI. The FAI part is important. That means we are now part of the Federacao Anarquista Iberica, the Federation that includes the Spanish comrades.

The objectives or the new FARP are to continue the war against the state and capital towards libertarian communism. The means used include direct action and organisational work, in the factories and offices, spreading our influence in the INTERSYNDICAL and through the base groups in the neighbourhoods. Our hopes are high.

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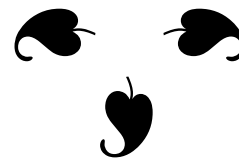
Pietro Gori, *Continued*

Gori's line was that the union had to steer clear of the socialists' parliamentary campaigns as well as of the anti-parliamentary struggles of the Sorelians and anarchists, on the basis that politics could not help but bring division into the ranks of the workers' organisations. The relevance today of this insight requires no explanation.

In 1906, a breakdown of his health forced him to withdraw to the island of Elba where he carried on supporting the workers' struggles, so much so that in 1908 he was one of the leading lights behind the strike by the miners of Capoliveri and one of the brains behind the building of the Chamber of Labour in Piombino, Elba and Maremma; it went on to affiliate to the USI.

His final years saw him gradually broken down by serious illness. He died on 8 January 1911 in Portoferraio. The train bearing his remains back to Rosignano Marittimi for burial was forced to halt at all of the stations along the way where tens of thousands of workers paid their final tribute to a man who is still a by-word in those districts as a model, disinterested revolutionary of the utmost integrity.

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