

Anarchist Resister Charged in Italy

anon.

1983

Resistance to the draft is happening around the world. The *Fifth Estate* recently received information from the editors of "A" *Rivista Anarchica* about Mauro Zanon, a 20-year-old anarchist who was arrested February 13, 1983 in the "Pavia" di Pesaro, Italy army barracks for his total refusal to cooperate with the military. Zanon had been scheduled to report four months earlier to fulfill the one-year military "service" required of all Italian men.

In 1972, however, the government had enacted a law allowing those who were conscientious objectors to the military to fulfill their legal requirement by a so-called "civil service". This allows the potential draftee to serve his time in a civilian institution such as a hospital or library. This status is not granted automatically and is granted by a military commission which has been refusing more and more requests for it in recent years. The term of the alternative service is two years and was created originally to muzzle the growing Italian anti-draft movement of the late '60s and early '70s.

Zanon decided not to request civil 'service since it too is under the jurisdiction of the military and at a Congress in Milano in September 1982 commemorating the death of Errico Malatesta (see photo) declared his refusal to cooperate with either "service" required by the State.

In the months between the Congress and his arrest, Zanon devoted all of his efforts to anti-military and anarchist activity. His case gathered considerable support and on February 12 at Milano's Christallo cinema, Zanon publicly ripped up his draft card in front of an anti-military meeting attended by 500 people. He again stated his reasons for refusing to cooperate with the military.

The next day Zanon was arrested at the "Pavia" barracks and imprisoned in the Peschiera del Garda in Verona. The legal process was expected to take several months and should be occurring as this is being written. It could result in a year's imprisonment for Zanon.

The Zanon case is only the most recent of a growing number of draft refusal cases in Italy, many of them who are anarchists or libertarians. Last year two Sicilian anarchists also refused either form of required service and they too destroyed their draft cards publicly. The two comrades, Orazio Valastro and Giuseppe Scarso, took their action in the public square of Comiso, Sicily the planned site of a base for U.S. cruise and Pershing missiles.

Their actions, in which anarchists are playing a significant role, are part of an intense resistance against construction of the base.

Rivista Anarchica, cas. post. 17120; 20170 Milano, Italy



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