

# Living with Guerrilla Warfare Lucio Castellano

Lucio Castellano, a member of *Metropoli*, was arrested in June, 1979.

Last year an interesting study was published in England: a number of statisticians classified various professions on the basis of the life expectancy of the people practicing them. The results show that miners have the shortest life expectancy — on a scale that goes from manual labor to intellectual pursuits — while those with the longest life expectancy are professors, lawyers and politicians. It is an observation, in part banal, which should be brought to the attention of the recent glorifiers of manual labor, and which has wrongly been kept out of the ongoing debate on democracy, on violence and death, on the body and on personal daily needs. It could be caustically stated in this manner: the probability that Colletti will live longer than a large majority of his students is well grounded. It gives one much to reflect upon.

It is however best to analyze the problem from the beginning, from the first conditions through which it presented itself.

1977 saw the overwhelming emergence of a central category — physically, the body, personal needs, desires: in other words, the emergence of the individual — and with it, diversities and private life, both of which seek to define their place within a collective process of liberation. The *critique of politics* — understood as

## THE EXPLOITED POLITICAL SUBJECT

Behind it there is still the re-evaluation of the concreteness of daily life in contrast to the totalitarian abstraction of the "great ideals"; the refusal to subordinate the present to the future; the vindication of the materiality of one's own existence; hatred of sacrifice, of heroism and of rhetoric. It is not important at this time to trace the genealogy of this *immediatism*: there is the worker's stamp, radical and egalitarian of the "all now", and the crucial role of the women's movement; essential — in this discourse — is the break, not the continuity, the fact that for the first time this thematic block has become the point of aggregation, the moment of identification of an articulate and powerful political subject.

These are the terms of the question which profoundly innovate the debate on the State and politics, on revolution and war, on the process of liberation and personal needs. In order to understand how much re-exhumed banality and tediousness, how much haughty Catholicism has had the opportunity to come forward from such a rich base, from such eversive premises, there is a knot which must be understood beforehand: the reason is that in the span of several months a mysterious distance has created, from this conglomeration of thematic, the ground for the foundation of a heretofore unknown culture of emancipation, of a language limited to a small group, repetitive, petulant and baroque, the language of those who have made a profession of faith of "exclusion". Initially there was a displacement which must be accounted for: it is not true that between the movement of '77 and the letters to *Lotta Continua* there exists a simple and direct thread of continuity: there is, on the contrary, a selection process, a precise and determining political filter. The '77 Movement was not, socially, a movement of marginals — in the limited sense — nor was it one of "non guaranteed" individuals: within it there were relevant sections of service laborers, of technicians and office workers, of young workers of small factories and students; there were also sections of part-time workers and of the unemployed. It also had a close relationship, thematic and political, to the women's movement. The Movement was a social subject united in large part by its being on the outside of the mechanisms of co-optation of the system of parties and by its being bearer of extremely advanced demands. It was, however, well within the processes of production and reproduction of social well-being, strongly interrelated with the whole of the social fiber, it was something which could not be isolated and was socially powerful because it was a holder of knowledge and of information by its being an internal part at the very heart of the reproductive mechanisms. It was not a ghetto rebellion, but the emergence of processes of profound modifications which have gone through the whole of the social and class fiber in our country in the past few years: the fact that this political subject is external to the system of parties is not to be interpreted as its emargination, but as a profound weakness of the political and institutional assets of the "Italy ring".

## AGAINST THE FALSE CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE MARGINALS

The thematics of emargination has not been a *natural* identity for this Movement; it has been the toilsome product of a political administration that has reduced the radicalness of the difficult problems which had been posed into an easy identity within the structure of old ideologies. It has in essence split the Movement by isolating one of its components and has eliminated the problem of its identity as a political subject through the social identification of a part of it.

In this way, the political critique has lost the depth which would have permitted it to be a *practical critique of power and of the State* and has reduced itself to the practice of *exclusion from both*; the emergence of the individual and of the commoner within the collective process of liberation has been driven back into the secure guarantee ghetto of "let us live" and has been sent in search of marginal spaces, while the problem of political "legitimation" or of the radicalness of behaviour and forms of action has found the most traditional and poor foundation

and private interest is evaluated on the basis of the laws that govern peace. The arm- ing of the State guarantees the disarming of society; the fact that one part of society — the repressive apparatus — erects itself as a separate body and functions according to the laws of "war", guarantees that the rest of society live in "peace". "Peace" means only that "war" has become the private matter of a few men who thrive on it (the police and the military), or of those private men who take command over all others, demonstrating through fact that they — being the guarantors of the peace of all — also govern it by being a ruling part of it. War guarantees peace, the threat of war conserves peace, within States and in the relationships between different States. The concept of State in Western political culture seems to be founded on the distinction between peace and war.

**VIOLENCE DOMINATES SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS**

This distinction between peace and war forces the definition of violence in categorical terms and, by making a private matter of a group of private men, it truncates the links with other forms of social communication; 'violence' is presented not for what it is — a feature of every human activity within the relationship of capital, present in every form of expression within the relationship of capital, present in every form of expression and of communication, where it carries the sign of the relationship of power, but appears as an activity alongside all others, yet specialized and monstrous and which blackmails the rest.

Every relationship of power has its military aspect and every human relationship is primarily a relationship of power: for this reason the war machine sinks its roots into relationships of peace, and the violence which dominates them is given its general representation in the "infinite destructive power" of the modern State. The repressive apparatus, with its war specialists, is a synthesis of the violence which dominates social relationships, and it is the armed guarantee of their reproductions: in order that salaried labor not be uncovered as violence, violence is presented as a labor equal to all others; in order that the laborer not discover that he is immersed in daily violence, it is presented to him as the profession of another "laborer", the policeman. Placing on its feet "this world that is upside down" means revealing the violence that is hidden in daily life and confronting it for what it is, without giving in to the extortion of terror, attacking the machine in order to sabotage it: it means learning to use violence, so as not to have to delegate it, so as not to be blackmailed; it means learning to recognize it or live with it.



positions: exclusion, desperation and anger. Desperation as a collective identity, as a sign of recognition and along with it, impotence. It is a reassuring identity, both for itself and for others: "I'm an angered marginal, the harm he is capable of is small, he harms himself above all". It is at this point that the letters to Lotte Espresso. Emargination and desperation undoubtedly exist, but this is not the point; here we are dealing with something else, with a culture, with a language, with a profession: we are dealing with a large ideological filter through which everything wishing to remain "within the Movement" must pass; it is an obligatory form of expression, a language which gives legitimacy and which com- pels mimicry. This language has its cultivators and administrators the sacred teachers, inflexible and authoritarian in dictating the rules of the game, the one who have suffered from the 'shake-up' and the ex-singers of the praises of the service orders, the experts of "human relationships" and the feminist profes- sionals.

**CRITIQUE OF THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN PEACE AND WAR**

The debate on violence seems to be the first victim of this unhappy situation. It has an important point of departure: the vindication of the right to life, the rejection of sacrifice, of heroism and of bellicose rhetoric. Political critique is also a critique of war; it is the rejection of destruction in the name of a future ideal, the rejection of the subordination of oneself to the "greater interest of all": it is a rejection of that aspect of the emergence in which a woman behaves like a man, and everyone behaves like a soldier, where there is no room for playing, for celebrating, where the rights of daily life do not exist, and all of the destructive forces of society are concentrated in order to "build a better future". The discourse, however, cannot end here, otherwise it becomes a natal rhetoric. This is because the critique of war is also the critique of peace, which war produces and reproduces internally, and it is critique of that part of society which is always armed in order to guarantee peace.

Here too there is a central problem, a problem of the displacement of the subject and of our history, both collective and personal. If we in fact look at it with the eye of the militant and of the ideologist, the '77 Movement was the field of battle of fierce organizations of diverse natures — some militant, others pacifist: within this view, organizations of diverse natures — some created for war, others for peace — disputed the political space among themselves.

If we, however, view the phenomenon from its external aspects (in other words, if we look at the face it has shown of itself), or, if we look beyond the class, at the cohabitation of tendencies of diverse natures and at the biographies of the com-rades, we see, beyond the voices and categorical prescriptions, that they slip from one pole to another, that they combine and have histories normally incom- patible and we then realize that the Movement of the last few years, in Italy as well as in the rest of Europe, has intimately interwoven, in a continuous and systematic way, legal and illegal initiatives, both violent and non-violent, of masses and of small groups, and has based its actions at one time on the laws of a state of peace, at another on a state of war: this fact is not lived within a single organization, but has crossed them all, overpowering them and forcing cohabita- tion of different organized groups within the same social subject.

This characteristic, this capacity to mix peace and war, to produce offensive ini- tiatives without producing soldiers, has not only constituted the strength of the Movement, but this is an element central to its being a communist and eversive movement.

To erode the distinction between peace and war means placing oneself on the ter- rain of critique of the State, it means doubting the principles of legitimization of political power, which affirms a distinction between 'State' and 'society', 'public'

categories which are the foundation of the struggle between democracy and communism, between democratic power and communist liberation. The rest is destination, entanglements *ad usum delphini*.

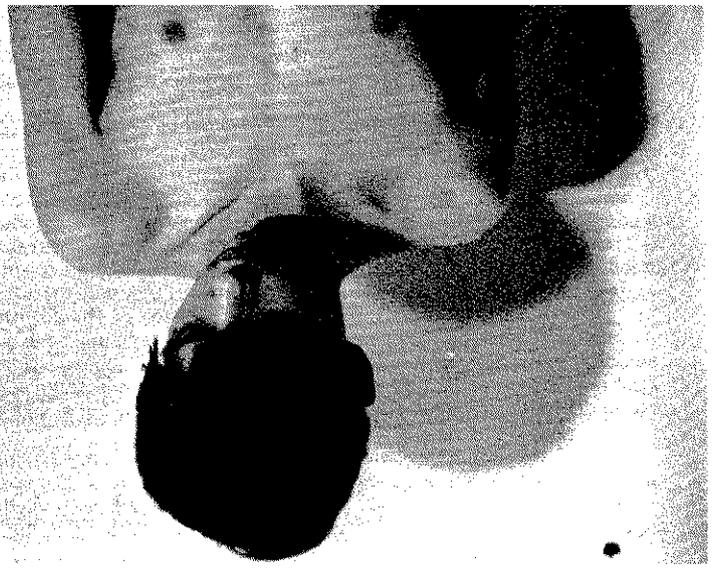
In a democratic State it is obligatory to "fight for the majority", because without a majority nothing can be accomplished, not even the production of a pin, or the playing of a clarinet. Everything can be asked of the State, but without the State nothing can be done, and the relationship of power is presented as the universal language through which everyone condenses or translates himself. The struggle for the majority is obligatory, whatever majority it might be; and the majority of a small group defers to the majority of a larger group, while the parliamentary institutions develop throughout the social fabric, and growing armies of delegates learn the mystery of the maximum divisibility of power with

maximum concentration. With the majority all is possible, without the majority nothing is possible: the only recognized social action is the struggle for the majority ("it is the dictatorship of the layers over American society" as was written by a journalist many years ago with regard to the U.S. Congress); the only social relationship recognized is the one of assemblage, of majority and of minority. Maximum concentration of power, its best administration. Capitalism concentrates the means of production and of social wealth while democracy administers them according to a code, the code of the relationship between the majority and the minority: it's the best code, but it belongs to the world of capitalism.

We do not know of another code to "legitimize" political power: the socialist State moves within this same horizon. This means that we are fighting against political power, against the State-form, against democracy, against the universe of capitalist relationships of production, for *communism*.

*Translated by Felicia Czinn*

1/1-2 Tim Guest Photos: D. Cortez



The Movement of the last few years has not been insurrectionalist or militaristic because it has not been pacifist, because it has not respected the succession of peace which prepares war or its apparatus (its ordered army) nor has it respected the succession of war which prepares new peace: because it has not seen violence concentrated in the Nth hour of the rendering of accounts — the blind, inhuman and abstract violence of armies — but has seen it unfolded and apprehended along the entire arc of the political struggle for liberation.

Two are the roads (and the "pacifists" are always demonstrating it) which can be taken: a) political struggle excludes the use of violence in its horizon and consequently respects the existing military apparatus, or else it hastens to organize one that is an alternative and an equivalent to the existing one, eventually passing on to a phase of war, open or "legitimate", army against army, State against State (it is a story which we already know, and like parrots have learned to ask the question: who will dissolve the Red Army? who will fight against the State when the working class has become the State?); b) the process of liberation is not first "political" and then "military"; it learns the use of arms throughout its course; it frees the army to carry out the thousand functions of political struggle; it mixes in the life of everyone, the civilian with the fighter; it forces everyone to learn the art of war or peace.

One cannot claim to live the process of communist liberation and to have the same relationship to violence, the same idea of beauty and of good and right, or desirable, the same idea of normalcy, the same habits of a middle-aged bank clerk from Turin: living with earthquakes is living always with terrorism and in order not to have an "heroic" idea of war one must first of all avoid a beggarly idea of peace.

Pacifists such as Lama enlist policemen, while those "most to the left" ask for the legitimization of "violence of the masses", of the "armed proletariat". The actual Movement was more realistic and less bellicose, more human and heroic: it put peace up for debate because it criticized war and it shattered the criterion of delegation and of legitimization because it rejected the army; it has done this with errors and inaccurate approximations, with terrible deviations, by cultivating absurd myths, all within a history. It has been contradictory, but it has learned and has improved a process that has modified reality more than an insurrection.

Consequently, a critique of politics is also a critique of the warpeace distinction. The peace to which we refer is the peace of democracy and the violence which it uses is "legitimate violence", which the majority has delegated to the institutions of the State: to criticize that violence means to criticize the most developed principle of political legitimization, democracy. That is because the problem of legitimization is the problem of the majority, and the problem of the State: the State expresses itself, in other words, through the institutions through which it legitimizes itself, and "majority" and "minority" belong to the universe of political thought, they divide their hold over the "common interest", they live through the separation of "public" and "private", of State and society, immersing their roots into the relationship of dominion which alone forces men to see themselves in terms of quantity. The majority constitutes itself in order to administer power: the more power is concentrated, the more the majority can do, and the less each individual can do; the more the "public" is well off, which is the interest of everyone, so much the more is the "private" poor, expropriated; the more dispossessed, destitute of expression, is the individual interest. Democracy is both the maximum development of State power, the maximum concentration of political power, and the seat of the uncontested command of the majority: the point is not that in the modern State there is little democracy, that the minorities are not safeguarded; but — on the contrary — that there is a fight to the death against all that is not expressed in terms of majority or minority, which is not expressed in terms of power and of administration. It is for this reason that the communist movement for liberation is outlawed everywhere, because it places itself outside of the democratic code, and this code defines the universe of politics in an exclusive manner. The radical Marxist criticism of democracy individualizes the

England is very different from the existing regime in Germany, France or Italy. But stepping back, one can see that a certain kind of totalitarianism is being set up which goes along very well with traditional divisions. The machines of production, formation, and reproduction of the work force imply an immense machinery of State power, and then all kinds of cogwheels in politics, unions, education, sports, etc.... In this regard I believe the Italian experience to be the most exemplary, for there we can see the lines of flight and the road that lies ahead. It doesn't lead to an alternative of the English type, or a French popular front, whether on the left or on the right. It amounts to making sure that the Communist Party, mass organizations, and unions will function at full capacity within a national consensus like the Italian political spectrum.

A kind of State regime is now being devised which won't require an October revolution or even a Chinese revolution, but will produce the same result: the people will be controlled by every available means, even if they must be conceded a measure of political and regional diversity.

Why Italy? Because the future of England, France and Germany is Italy. When I got involved with Italy the Common Program of the French left had not yet exploded, but I had already sketched out the idea that it didn't make sense, that things wouldn't happen that way. But integration is inexorable, and the Italian scheme will eventually be reproduced in France.

What I'm saying can only be understood in relation to what I have called the molecular revolution. There is a certain level of desire, violence, and revolt which has become impossible and unbearable in societies such as they have developed at both the technological and social level. Let's take the example of terrorism: throughout the history of the Worker's Movement, there have been armed actions and acts of terrorism. There have been enormous discussions throughout the communist movement to put into perspective and to situate armed action. Nowadays it's no longer a theoretical problem, but a problem of the collective sensibility as it has been shaped by the State apparatus with its audiovisual tactics: one doesn't accept any more the idea of death, the idea of violence, the idea of rupture, or even the idea of the unexpected. A general infantilisation now pervades all human relationships. If there's a strike at the National Electric Company, be careful. A code of ethics for the strike must be drawn up. Confrontation in Bologna? Be careful, a full negotiation must be made. And if one senses an aberrant factor, if there's a handful or resisters who don't accept the ethical code, during the black-out. When one can no longer see, anything—a great mass, strange fauna—can loom up out of the dark.

A certain type of brutality inherited from capitalist societies of the 19th century was symmetrical with a certain truth or desire. Some people could still free themselves. The progressive tightening up by the Marxist worker's movement has indeed anything which puts in question the framework and values of contemporary society. Now the control begins in childhood, in the nursery and in school, for everyone must be forced into the dominant redundancies of the system. The repressive societies now being established have two new characteristics: repression is softer, more diffuse, more generalized, but at the same time much more violent. For all who can submit, adapt, and be channeled in, there will be a lessening of police intervention. There will be more and more psychologists, even psychoanalysts, in the police department; there will be more community therapy available; the problems of the individual and of the couple will be talked about everywhere; repression will be more psychologically comprehensive. The work of the radio—in short, there will be a general climate of understanding acceptance. But if there are categories and individuals who escape this inclusion, if people attempt to question the general system of confinement, then they will be exterminated like the Black Panthers in the U.S., or their personalities exterminated as it happened with the Red Army Faction in Germany. Skinnerian conditioning will be used all over.

## Why Italy? Felix Guattari

Felix Guattari is the author, with Gilles Deleuze of *Anti-Oedipus*. This unpublished interview took place in France several months before the April 7, 1979 arrests.

Why Italy? The first entry is relatively contingent. A number of people responsible for a free Italian radio station in Bologna, Radio Alice, asked me to introduce a French edition of their texts. That interested me because their inspiration was at once Situationist and "deleuzoguattarian." If one can say that.

The second axis is the conjunction between the State apparatus in the traditional sense and the bureaucracies of the Worker's Movement. We have seen it at work in a spectacular manner in both the U.S.S.R. and China. The Western democratic tradition, the evolution toward Eurocommunism, and the humanism of the socialist parties made us believe that we weren't exposed to that kind of totalitarianism. It's true that the modes of subjection function differently. Yet there is an irreversible tendency pushing the State to exert its power no longer by traditional means of coercion, like the police or army, but also through every national education to the immense power of the media, particularly television. This State apparatus is highly visible but often powerless on the national level since real decisions are often taken at the international level. It is on the contrary more and more powerful in its miniaturized interventions.

If one's nose is pressed too close to national realities, the impression is that

In no way is terrorism specific to Germany and Italy. In three months France could be crawling with Red Brigades. Considering how power and the media operate, how people are cornered, prisoners in these systems of containment, it's no wonder that some become enraged, and start shooting at people's legs or wherever.

The molecular revolution, however, is produced neither on the level of political and traditional union confrontation, nor on the front of different movements like the Women's Movement, the prostitutes, the Gay Liberation Front, etc., which are often only provisional reterritorializations, even forms of compromise with the State power and the different political forces. There is a miniaturization of forms of expression and of forms of struggle, but no reason to think that one can arrange to meet or wait at a specific place for the molecular revolution to happen.

At a deeper level in contemporary history, it hardly matters anymore whether one lives in Brezhnev's regime of goulags or under Carterism or Berlinguerism, all the powers are intricately in the same bizarre formula. To be sure there will be contradictions, confrontations, handshakes, class struggles in the traditional sense, even wars, but it's actually society as a whole that is now shifting. It won't simply be another bourgeois or proletarian revolution. The gears effected by this shift are so minute that it will be impossible to determine whether it's a class confrontation or a further economic subjugation. I believe that this shift in society, which implies not only a re-arrangement of relationships among humans, but also among organs, machines, functions, signs, and flux, is an intrahuman revolution, not a simple re-ordering of explicit relationships. There have been major revolutionary debacles in history before. In the 18th century, ranks, orders, classifications of all kinds suddenly broke down. Today no one or anything seems to be able to semiotize collectively what's happening. Panic creeps in, and people fall back upon State powers more overwhelming and tentacular, ever more manipulative and mystifying. In Italy the Communist Party is often heard saying: *let's save Italy*, but the more uncertain Italy's future becomes, the more claims there are to save it.

In Italy there is no tradition of State power, no civic spirit, nothing like the French tradition of centralism and hierarchical responsibility. The situation therefore is more favorable for bringing about a number of shifts. Entire regions will be downgraded because of the restructuring of capitalism on the international scale. As for the "Italian miracle", or the French miracle, we'd better forget about it.

I am of a generation which really experienced a deadlocked society. Stalinism then was an institution, a wall blocking the horizon to infinity. I now sense an extraordinary acceleration in the decomposition of all coordinates. It's a treat just the same. All this has to crumble down, but obviously it won't come from any revolutionary organization. Otherwise you fall back on the most mechanistic utopias of the revolution, the Marxist simplifications: at the end of the road lies victory...it's not the black hole of the 19th century, lots of things have happened since, like the barbarians at the gates. Political superstructures and systems of representation will collapse or crumble down in ridicule and finally, but there are already an enormous number of things which function, and function remarkably well, whether at the level of science, esthetics, or in the inventiveness of daily life. There is an extraordinary vitality in the machinic processes.

The Italians of Radio Alice have a beautiful saying: when they are asked what has to be built, they answer that the forces capable of destroying this society surely are capable of building something else, yet *that will happen on the way*. I have no idea what the future model of society or of relationships will be. I think it's a false problem, the kind of false problem that Marx and Engels tried to avoid. We can only do one thing, and that's to acknowledge the end of a society. The revolutionary process won't stem from a rational, Hegelian, or dialectical framework. Instead it will be a generalized revolution, a conjunction of sexual, relational, aesthetic, and scientific revolutions, all making cross-overs, markings, and currents of deterritorialization.

There will be no more October revolutions.

tion, it's all finished.

On the molecular level, things function otherwise. Looking through the glasses of traditional politics, there is nothing left, for example, of the American radical movement. If one changes glasses, if one peers through the microscope, there is another picture altogether. There is a new sensibility, a new way of relating, a new sort of kindness, all very difficult to define. Historians have a hard time dealing with these objects—history of tenderness! In all sorts of complex ways, through the history of the feminist movement and the history of homosexuality, though relationships in general, this new type of sensibility is also the revolution. It revolutionary glasses don't allow us to see that, then there is no more revolution, it's all finished.

Translated by John Johnston

1/11 FC.1077232-WATCH YOUR CREDIT. INTERNATIONAL NEWS PHOTOS. SLUG. (FLAGS) RED BANNERS ON THE MARCH IN ITALY — MILAN, ITALY — THE MASSES RED BANNERS OF COMMUNIST ORGANIZATIONS ARE BORN ALONG A STREET OF MILAN AS THE COMMUNISTS MAKE A SHOW OF STRENGTH DURING FUNERAL PROCESSION FOR A SLAIN RED RIOTER. THIS LATEST "MARTYR" FOR COMMUNISM WAS KNOCKED OFF IN ONE OF THE RED-INSTIGATED RIOTS IN MILAN. ITALY IS BEING TORN WITH SUCH AFFAIRS AS POWER. THE BITTER POLITICAL RIOTING HAS BEEN GOING ON FOR SEVENTEEN DAYS, LEAVING AT LEAST TWENTY PERSONS DEAD SO FAR. (SM-11-22-47)



# On Armed Struggle

## Paolo Virno

system. The "Autonomy of the 'Political'" is, so to speak, its truest presumption. The Christian Democrats are not struck as an articulation of the system of production, as an organization legitimized by the system of production, but as a personification of power, as a Bourgeois Party and as an Electoral Machine.

In reality, the "Autonomy of the 'Political'" has bearing not so much on guerrilla action as on traditional discussions of insurrection, civil war, formation of a "Red Army," and that type of power-equivalent to "might makes right" tactics—which is waiting to be seized.

Guerrilla action, on the other hand, (as exemplified also by other less frequent activities of the Red Brigades, such as the murder of the head of the Schettini homes) exercises direct power, a decentralized and diffused power, as pluralistic as the enemy's power. It does not allude to the "breaking up" of the State machine, but rather severs its terminals; these are rooted in the condition of merchandise imposed upon the labor force, and, in their togetherness and spontaneity, they also constitute the secret mechanism, delicate and irreplaceable, by which the State machine functions.

We have given as an example the action against Schettini. Very well: it is evident that that action required less organization than the Piazza Nicosia Affair, and yet it appears that the former action more clearly resembled a guerrilla action, in the pure sense.

In fact, it introduced a "scale of measurement" for the political efficacy of the armed struggle; and this is the important point which distinguishes an urban political-military operation from the type of warfare inherited from the labor movement. That unit of measurement is provided, specifically, by the strengthening of the housing movement and by the "discouragement" induced among those who suffered eviction; more generally, it is provided by the material gains—yes—material, economic and regulatory—obtained by the proletarian strata together with the help of guerrilla initiatives.

This "measurability" of the organizational process (if not reduced to the number of recruits) is a necessary condition for, among other things, discerning the military "character" even if totally weaponless, of the mass struggle.

This latter, in fact, corrodes the unity between capitalistic command and the functioning of the coordination of social production, rendering capitalistic command and oppressive character of social relations; on this basis we see that armed action turns against that functioning and those men, already destitute of any social justification, that remain standing because they are imposed by force. This emmeshment, we believe, cannot help but influence the very "form" of the armed organization, nourishing those of the Movement's roots that lie in social power, and discouraging the growth of the Movement as a self-sufficient military instrument. Viceversa, the assault on the political heaven reveals the absence of a "principle of control" on the effects provoked. The long-term disorganization of the party system does not induce in and of itself the Movement's progress. Rather, this disorganization may have the effect of dispersing the Movement because of the speed with which parties approach their goals, enclosing themselves in the circle of chalk—very "private"—of the "Autonomy of the 'Political'."

Thus we have made a preliminary evaluation of the unsteady course of guerrilla activity from Via Fani to Piazza Nicosia. It is clear that we must return to this topic. Not only because discussion leads to understanding and is therefore good but also because it is not possible to reconstruct the conditions under which Italy's new types of social behavior are manifested without intertwining with their development—whether one wishes or not—the question of "military philosophy," as posed initially by the Red Brigades.

A year after the Moro affair, the happenings of Piazza Nicosia constitute a clamorous test for the development of effective guerrilla action in our country. These events also offer a precise view of the contradictions involved in such action.

Above all, no one can rationally deny this: that the attack on the Roman branch of the political-military experience of the Red Brigades, including the Via Fani incident. What has occurred is the progression, consciously pursued, from an operative terrorist "model" to a guerrilla one. The latter model involves a high level of social cooperation, a freedom of movement in enemy territory, a capacity to cope with a multiplicity of variables in the course of action: all factors evidenced in the events of May 3.

And yet this type of guerrilla action, no longer merely alluded to but openly displayed, reveals a particular incongruence when one considers the objective to which it is applied. Rather than addressing itself strictly to the subversion of "real" work, strengthening its impact and guaranteeing its "bargaining power," this armed initiative proceeds directly toward a destabilization of the party

Paolo Virno is a member of the Editorial Committee of *Metropoli*. He was arrested in June, 1979, together with two other members of the Committee, when the first — and so far only — issue came out. This article was meant to present a document from the Red Brigades on their attack against the seat of the Christian Democrats in Piazza Nicosia, Rome, on May 3, 1979.

# On the Recognition of Armed Struggle Franco Perno Lanfranco Pace/

This letter was sent to *Lotta Continua* in June, 1979. At the time both Pace and Perno were "in hiding." It is far from certain that the proposition of amnesty formulated in this letter will ever be taken up by the Italian State. The importance of this letter, however, lies in the wide debate it generated around the political deadlock resulting from terrorist actions and State repression.

1. *Metropoli* is not on the newsstands anymore. It has been confiscated by the same judges who have devised and conducted an arbitrary and illicit operation against Autonomy. The editors of almost all newspapers, as well as the press federation itself, with that sort of "diffuse complicity" always work in these organizations, have disguised, or worse, sanctified this gesture. But the confiscation is not in consonance with judicial proceedings, and openly violates one of those fundamental liberties revered by all — though unheeded by many among those who count.

The pretext is ridiculous: an article that could have and can at most figure as a serious "unpremeditated" crime, had it been read (and transcribed) in its entirety, without the old trick of having only its title reported. This is proof of an unjustified trust in the institutions' capacity to learn from recent tragedies and to correct itself by bringing charges against those responsible for harmful illegal actions, especially public officials.

2. As if this weren't enough, Bibio, Lucio and Paolo, other editors of the review, have been arrested, with the usual hyperbolic accusations. Obviously nothing is known or will become known of the specific, differentiated respon-

## PLAYING THE PART OF "JEWS"

## THE NEGOTIATING PARTY

abilities which are attributed to them: the articles which were written or simply endorsed by them, their joint militancy in *Potere Operaio*, or the actual participation in what for Gallucci has become the March 16 procession, in Via Faniz. For the judges, the counts of the indictment are all of equal seriousness. Therefore it is not necessary to specify: it is no single one of them, but it is (a bit of) all of them. The well-troven method is that of keeping to vague terms, continually changing the "proof and presumptive" material. The result of all this is that at cell 68 of Rebibbia something like ten years of our lives is being confiscated. We declare in clear terms that, as far as we are concerned, we are willing to surrender ourselves only if the inquisitors can show with actual, concrete acts that they are retreating from the territory of arbitrariness and illegality.

3. We are certainly not consoled by the fact that this sequence of arbitrary acts alleviates our skepticism toward "democratic legality" and, in particular, toward those famous, fundamental rules called guaranteeist principles.

Written rules notwithstanding, we have long been well aware of the fact that the power structure possesses a decisive, even peremptory authority. For our part we cannot but acknowledge that at the present stage of things, the power structure works entirely against us: that is only too obvious. Everything converges to isolate us: our failure to define our position; the "ambiguous" role which we are attempting to play (an ambiguity which, by the way, we claim as the proper stance in view of the "facts" with which we deal); the discomfiting and "provocative" nature of the arguments we have set forth: all combines to create around us justifiable wariness and to make us play the part of "Jews", whether we want to or not. And so we make tempting targets for those who have the know-how and the capability to play the role of "Nazi".

We ourselves are therefore the last ones to bet on our success; and these days — let it be said with rage and fear — even on our own individual lives.

4. Thus we write this piece so that no one may exculpate himself through the claim of misunderstanding and the dubiousness of the situation. But we also write so that our position on one of the basic issues taken up by the short-lived *Metropoli* would clearly emerge. We believe that we are indirectly helping to clarify the meaning of this campaign of persecution, as well as the damage which it is destined to produce.

5. One can say that *Metropoli* took on its own distinctive features with respect to organized Autonomy precisely at the time of Moro's kidnapping. In some ways, *Metropoli's* political program was sharpened and finalized while the magazine operated within the "negotiating party", and its short existence was anything but futile in spite of the harsh defeat it suffered at the end. Actually, the "party" in question brought under discussion for the first time — with the help of Aldo Moro's enforced but nonetheless lucid cooperation — the question of political recognition for the armed party. This question is obviously quite different from pretending or imagining a civil war situation in our country; it is a question, we believe, that is destined to occupy a primary position in the social and political conflict in Italy.

6. Recognition of the armed party does not mean legal recognition of the fighting squads, nor does it mean their institutionalization. Nobody — and we least of all — proposes a Lebanese alternative for Italy: a pure and disastrous military shambles of social conflicts. This type of formal recognition has certainly been, and can still be, a judicial obsession with the Red Brigades, but it lacks any political thus, being devoid of any positive results. If by chance it would meet with success, it would only serve to freeze the present situation. In other words, a disaster.

Nor does recognition of the armed party necessarily mean accepting or taking in- account the political plans of the fighting squads. These programs, when they are set forth, are in fact either confused — and therefore the objectives pursued

We expect at this point the irony and the slightly insolent and wigar sarcasm of the press: "They ask for amnesty now that their friends are in jail." As a response, only this remark: the amnesty applies to the "communist fighters", a status which, despite what judges Calogero and Gallicci seem to believe, the comrades arrested on April 7 do not have.

11. To conclude, what must be urgently thwarted is the attempt to solve the problem of the armed struggle on the lowest level: that of public order. The armed struggle has in fact already reached, in Italy, the critical point, the point of no return. The normal solutions, through the police and the Courts, are obviously impracticable: public order is then tantamount to calling up the army, to military repression. This is a possible but not a final solution, in the sense that it implies a widening of the afflicted area beyond all bounds, and in addition an extended militarization of social life, in other words, an Argentinian solution: capable, hypothetically, of extirpating the phenomenon, but capable also of inducing dreadful transformations in all areas of society.

Translated by Peter Caravetta

1. The title of Piperov's article in *Metropoli* was: "The sooner we pay, the better."
2. Paolo Virno, Lucio Castelli, Libero Maesano.
3. The execution of Moro occurred on March 16, 1978 in via Fani.

1/11 ROM 918938 PEACE CONGRESS OPENS ROME, ITALY: The French High Commissioner for Atomic Energy Frederic Joliot-Curie (left, behind microphone) opens the Congress of the "Partisans for Peace," in Rome. Some 100 delegates of leftist organizations from 40 countries attended.



are not distinguishable — or uselessly clear, tautologically entwined by the state category of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and thus sorrowfully lacking in any identifiable and realizable objectives.

7. Instead, recognition of the armed struggle must mean dealing with the social problems that arise from the area where the struggle draws its origins and within which it finds its nourishment. From this point of view, we believe that even today the fighting squads are more significant for the questions they indirectly raise, than for the solutions they openly advance. And the questions they raise are certainly many. The armed party is born and nourished by all our unresolved problems: temptations to coup d'etat felt by various sectors; the institutional habit of practicing arbitrarily and illegally under cover of the laws; the dramatic divergence between the growth of the worker's struggles and the firmness of the modifications introduced into the power structure. We are in any event interested in a specific topic that falls within the problem of the armed struggle: we mean that topic which has been improperly labeled the youth question. We hold this territory to be the real *solid* hinterland of the fighting organizations not only for the decisiveness with which it works toward the destruction of social equilibria; but because it is the most European and Western problem, the least Italianate, we might say, among those that characterize the situation in our country.

8. We said that to speak of the youth question is incorrect. In fact, we are not talking about the eternal generational affliction, which may be exacerbated by the crisis which our country is going through. We are talking about something else. The behavior of youth is emblematically inscribed and represented in that significant area of the unemployed which in its wholeness makes up a new social subject and of which much has already been said. Now, to refuse forms of expression and survival to this area, to prevent it from having a cultural identity, and to push it back systematically into an illusory condition of non-existence — all this means to promote at the molecular level the "large-scale", wide-ranging terrorism and the entire spectrum of illegal practices from appropriation to sabotage which today render Italy not the most violent country in the world — a lie easily disproved by comparative statistics — but rather the country where social violence tends most to encroach on politics. This zone of communication in the heart of its subjective aspects — think of the channels of communication in the heart of the working class itself which the refusal of work has historically found and finds today in Italy — but because the capitalistic development itself leads to the same end, and precisely in the forms of modern investment, which are investments to save work.

9. Therefore, from the politics of the armed struggle to the social situation that nourishes it, it is possible to equip oneself for the solution of the problem. One can break into the area of legal action and, by up-setting the established order, reach that social configuration capable of assuring to the new forms of life, to the new subjects, the material conditions for living and expanding.

10. But the thematics of the new deeds and of the subjects who are their bearers cannot be faced without interrupting the craze for physical destruction which has entered many hundreds of fighters. Again, it is not a matter of sanctioning a special legal status expressly for them, but rather of showing readiness to accept a true inversion in their tendency. A tangible sign of this readiness would be, for example, an amnesty for political prisoners. It must be borne in mind that even by official estimates their number is close to a thousand: while by contrast in the Soviet Union the number of political prisoners as a result of dissent are about six thousand.

Nobody then would wish to deny the complexity of the problem. Detention in subhuman conditions acts as an insurmountable obstacle to any effort geared at bringing the struggle, which may be radical but is nonetheless a mass phenomenon, within "less costly" forms and means of strife. Thousands of prisoners constitute a counter to the "wardors" who are determined to carry out a military solution, the most realistic solution as far as they are concerned.

# Sorry, It's Exactly the Opposite

## Massimo Cacciari

Massimo Cacciari left *Potere Operaio* in 1968 to join the ICP. He is considered one of the most brilliant contemporary philosophers in Italy.

It appears to me that the proposal for amnesty for the "communist fighters," advanced by Piperino and Pace's article, does not contain at all the "turning points" that some insist on seeing in it, but it is rather one of the most equivocal and mystifying products of its authors. The misunderstanding hinges completely, with obvious "malice," on the term "recognition." Piperino holds that this means neither the institutionalization of the armed groups, nor the acceptance of their political plans, but instead the "taking up of social problems from the area where it (i.e. *the armed struggle*) draws its origins and within which it finds its nourishment." These social problems are then traced back to one great, unique question: the dramatic "increase" in the difference between the transformation of social make-up, the new subjects which are thus generated, and the Power structure and its degree of "ability to transform" itself (a concept not reducible to that of government or of formal institution). Who will deny that this question must be "taken up"? It becomes evident that the weakness of the left, which is theoretical before being political, in dealing with this question, is one of the elements that explain the result of the last elections.

But what link can there be between this necessary "taking up" and any "recognition" whatsoever of terrorism? This would be the case, if it were established that

terrorism "represents" the new demand for the development and the transformation of democracy. But exactly the opposite is true: the effects and the "theory" of the armed party block in all ways the process of democratic growth, and they are, in fact, founded upon the axiom of the total unfeasibility of this path. It is said that the hinterland of terrorism is basically produced by the failure to solve that political problem. It is obvious that the massive reversal of the whole crisis upon the new generations shapes an environment that fosters terrorist pollution. And it is obvious—or it should become so immediately—that in order to sustain the struggle against the armed party, this environment must be transformed from the ground up.

But not only is it not obvious, it is extremely mystifying to assert that the armed party owes its origin to this habit, or, moreover, that its politics represents, albeit in a "mad" fashion, the instances of the development of the forms of participation and democracy which make up the problem—certainly not illate—of our country. The armed party represents the *negation* of these instances—again, in its effects as well as in its own "theory." The "taking up" of the same problems that Piperino indicates are tantamount not to the "recognition" of the so-called "communist fighters" (and here, too, as Andrea Casalegno<sup>1</sup> has lucidly pointed out, the misunderstanding is lethal), but to the awareness that their political program (for that is what it comes down to) contrasts in the most radical manner with the very possibility of taking up seriously those problems and starting out toward a real solution of them.

When Piperino speaks of the social problems in which terrorism had its "origin," he is consciously bringing back into circulation those sociologistic interpretations that necessarily lead to the heaping together of armed party and the various exasperated, even violent, forms of youth protest. And this heaping is fruitful only to those who would like, among other things, to resolve the problems of the armed party exclusively on the grounds of the public order or of military action. Only beautiful (and fake) souls can believe that terrorism represents (again: even in its aberrant forms) the new political question nurtured in this country from 1968 to today, and that therefore a political response which would finally level with it implies the annihilation of its reason for being. Instead, terrorism can be isolated, rendered bare, choked; but above all, the *politics* of terrorism would result as the net alternative to this question and its instances. And it makes no sense at all to serve an amnesty to a politics that kills democracy. Exactly as it makes no sense to speak of an amnesty for those who have nothing to do with the armed party, or for those forms of protest that can be dealt with only politically. It is obvious, on the other hand, that the so-called "communist fighters" are praying intensely for an exclusively military-judicial response to these forms of protest: it would only strengthen the hinterland enormously. But would we then say that a political system which "uses" terrorism in order to reduce its degree of democracy, to enclose and corporativize itself, would we say that this political *decision* has its "origin" in the failure for reform in its democratic and institutional sense?

Translated by Peter Carravetta

1. Andrea Casalegno, vice-director of *La Stampa*, (considered a strong supporter of Fiat's policy) was killed by the BR.

# The Red Harvest

## Leonardo Sciascia

Leonardo Sciascia, recently elected on the Partito Radicale ticket, is a Sicilian writer. He is well-known for his studies on the Mafia and the corruption of the Italian State.

I would say immediately — abstractly evaluating the facts (note: abstractly) — that the police and the court action in attacking this ambiguous sector and in pursuing elements that have had and continue to have an ambiguous role, can, after all, be considered intelligent; but only in the sense in which Dashell Hammet speaks of a "red harvest" — that is, heterogeneous, unspecified and properly undiscriminating harvest of dead among which there will also be the *right* ones.

In a less abstract evaluation we find ourselves in an objectionable situation: we certainly do not want a given number of dead, among which there might or might not be the *right* ones; but a given number of arrests and convictions that would

In the discussions which followed Franco Piperno and Lanfranco Pace's article, published by *Lotta Continua*, 13 June, one fact was not properly accounted for: the amnesty proposal came from Piperno and Pace and not from Curcio. It was discussed, in other words, as if the proposal came from a Brigatist either dependably self-styled or indubitably identified, or still sufficiently accredited by the underground organization. Whereas it actually came from people placed in an ambiguous sector and role, and in such moments where this ambiguity brings with it, for those who have lived it, certain risks and dangers which every citizen with the least awareness of the situation cannot help but see.

surely be *right*, while enjoying all constitutional privileges.

There is a passage in Piperno and Pace's article that greatly impressed me, and I hope it will have the same effect on every law-abiding Italian who abhors violence: "We ourselves are therefore the last ones to bet on our success; and these days — let it be said with rage and fear — even on our own individual lives."

This is a passage that demands reflection and concern and, for those responsible for it, those steps aimed at avoiding the "red harvest."

Translated by William Pagnotta

# Beyond Terrorism

## Oreste Scalzone

Oreste Scalzone, one of the April 7 prisoners,  
was a leader of *Potere Operaio*.

A "sally" that struck at the root of the problematic relation between "terrorism" and institutions, between guerrilla tactics and social change, was enough to throw the intellectual leaders of the "struggle for subversion" into confusion. We are referring to the letter by comrades Franco Piperno and Lanfranco Pace published in *Lotta Continua*. The argument set forth in this letter posed a serious problem to the "legal left": above all to the *opposing left*, but also to the components of that *institution* who do not idolize the State.

The problem, it seems to me, was grossly put in these terms: having momentarily set aside their own opinions of "armed struggle," of its features, its roots and the individuals who are its agents, the authors argued that any "progressive" component followed by the State to eradicate "terrorism" leads to a vertical rise of the conflict in terms of civil war, to an inexorable and gradually irreversible barbarization of the conditions and modality of the engagement.

"Armed struggle," then, is a variable that is now firmly established in the context of social engagement existing in this country (a state of affairs which is less than pleasing to each one of us). The "legal left" is the last group that holds a few

cards able to reverse this course. Under this profile, the left has ruined itself by covering its eyes for years, giving credit to the most incredible "backward-logical" buffoonery, putting aside the problem and refusing to recognize its nature. The "get-thee-behind-me-Satan's," the pleas, the tomfoolery, the "elementary-my-dear-Watson's," the nonsense about the "right-at-the-moment-women's" and the "who-does-it-help's" are useless in terms of reversing this tendency even one step, or of forcing a single proletarian to withdraw, a single comrade who might eventually decide to enter the field of "combatant practices" by his own decision. The extra-parliamentary groups of those who survived the consecutive crises of recent years — have seen doves of comrades break away from "legal" political practice, and become "Indians" or continue to unleash powerless curses. It seems to me, then, that Piperno's central consideration on "provocation" is this: the *opposing left* (bound to a vision which we still regard as "progressive" — in the emergence of a "conflictual" and not a "unified" society) finds itself before the fact that the State, its parties, its separate bodies have embarked on the path toward a *military* solution to the problem of "terrorism."

This inevitably means the privilege of a "military" approach to the relation with the entire "critical mass" represented by social subversion, by the different forms of antagonism and radical conflict. Such a solution also points to the rigidity of the institutional framework, overwhelmed by the repercussions of the "social crisis," incapable of taking on the pressing demand for the radical modification of the quality of life within a politics of social innovation by the capitalist party, incapable of translating new social needs into standardized "requirements" which are commensurate with those needs.

For the progressive sectors, all this means accepting an unbearable dynamic. In the reorganization of the separate bodies, in the rigidity of the party system, in the frightening obstinacy of the mass media, in the deterioration of the mechanisms of the lawful State, in the self-affirmation of hybrid devices that synthesize elements of McCarthyism and the socialist Gulag — in all of this there occurs a *liquidation* of the entire patrimony bequeathed by more than a decade of emancipative struggles which have spread by lines of force form their worker and proletarian nucleus through the entire social fabric.

And at this point it does not make sense for these "progressive components" to continue to recriminate against the "terrorists."

The *opposing legal left*, then, finds itself implicated in a counter-offensive modality on the part of the State, not just because of the old story about "liberty that is indivisible," "today it is my turn but tomorrow it can be yours," in fact it will certainly be yours", but equally because in the State's militarization of the engagement lies the *overall condition* for the operation of a model of conflictual society which turns out to be compromised in a very serious way.

In fact, the dominance of a *military* logic in the State's actions means — apart from any apocalyptic representation — that the principal technique is the *reclamation* of the entire area of social subversion as a single effective anti-guerrilla mechanism.

The Dalla Chiesa-style neo-McCarthyism becomes the only winning proposal, once it has been accepted that the primary objective is the "defense of the democratic compromise against terrorism."

"Hic rhodus, hic salta," therefore: those who live completely in a situation of crisis are not so much we — this line of "Potere Operaio" (*Worker Power*) caught in the eye of the hurricane, like a kind of modern KAPD — even though the phenomenology of political defeat today seems to regard us *conspiratorily*, we who are so heavily attacked by an offensive without precedents in the post-war judiciary system of this country. In perspective it could be precisely the "in-

intermediate" sectors that constitute the area opposing progress toward a situation of unendurable destruction.

Some people with the instinct for "half-bred" politics — which today they are and want to be — have sensed the problem. The half-illibertarian, half-neo-institutional area that extends from the radicals to Lotta Continua has raised it for the first time. And this area has brutally posed it from the right (yet at least they have not dismissed it). Admitting the "secret joy" he felt at Toni Negri's arrest, Enrico Deaglio was heard singing the "de profundis," the requiem for the "new left." Since, in their opinion, the class categories proposed by Marxism (or at least their centrality) have fallen, the left must rearticulate itself with respect to a fundamental distinction: *violence or non-violence* (in the "radical case" it is an alternative between a revolutionary and *classist* logic and the *emancipatory logic* of a community in the struggle for civil rights).

Bitto has already promptly responded to Deaglio, and I am not about to repeat that Deaglio's hasty requiem, in addition to the insight into the *consequences* of a polemic, is not only that there is a second reason which presumably motivated Bitto's already positive fact — from our point of view, it is the emergence, in And the June 3rd elections, of that "invisible party" or at least four million people who are disturbing the sleep of the least obtuse and hardened members of the political and institutional order of this country.

Let us summarize a series of surveys which are now well-known:

A) The PCI lost about 3% of its vote to the left, and, in particular, something like 12 points of the youthful vote. As Cacciari realistically admitted in *Repubblica*, these votes lost by the PCI are unequivocally proletarian votes, "lost at Marghera and not in the center of Venice, in the Roman suburbs and not at Patroli," in the great worker and proletarian cities — and, in particular, in those where the PCI has held the local government in recent years. This defeat of the PCI was had at the price of a result "by 48"; in fact, even the DC lost votes.

B) There is the 3% increase in abstention, which has reached a total of 10%. These abstentions are for the most part by proletarians, young people, "reds." It is a massive plebiscite against the State, a sign of hostile estrangement from the party system and political institutions. The fact the abstention on the European question is not greater confirms the idea that it is a compact social area, remarkably homogeneous and strongly characterized by "the left."

C) A conspicuous part of the voice of the radical rolls and the "New Left Unity" is recorded in the same area that rejected the party system. This is not far from that 20% of the vote cast a year ago against the Reale law, which still included segments of the socialist electorate. As one can see, it is a *pro-letarian, red, anti-institutional* block. Thus, many are now devoted to the honorable Magri and Caffero have the impertinence to play up to it. Even Occhetto, to, even a few young members of the aristocratic entourage?

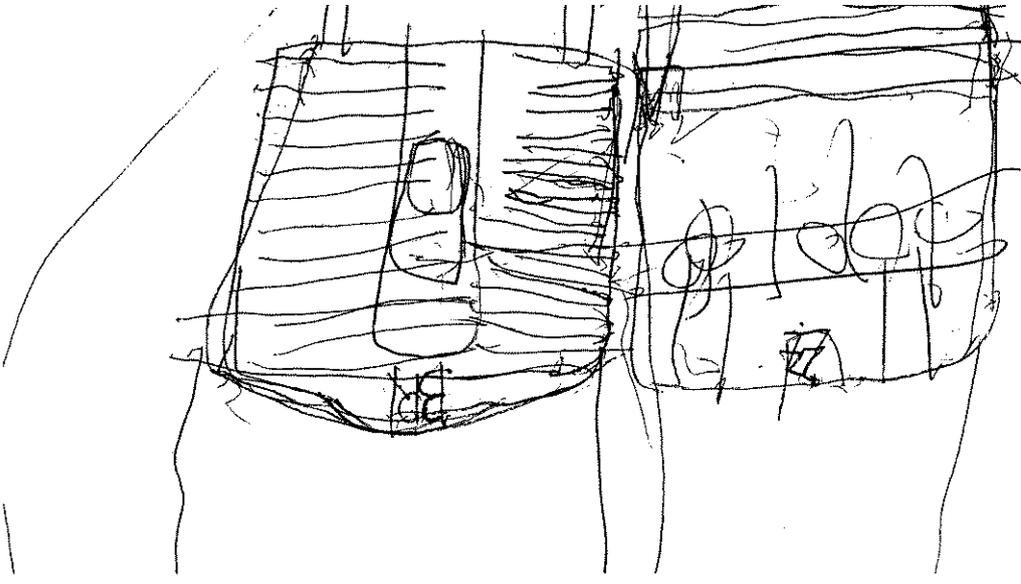
Deaglio plays it safe in this situation, on behalf of an entire political area of which he intends — in theory — to take the lion's share. With the usual distinction: the social antagonist exists as an indistinct mass, beneath its elements of internal, political, organized and militant constitution. The repudiation of violence (properly understood as "illegitimate" and "illegal" violence, because that *legal* variety is seen as a "natural phenomenon") is set as a frontier and a test, as a line of demarcation. Boato would think of it as making a peephole for someone's conscience.

It is in this logic that a discourse of "pactification" starts to circulate.

It is in this logic that — apart from every noble intention — this discourse assumes a characteristic with a unique meaning: the exhortation to desertion, to unconditional, unilateral and precautionary surrender, on the part of the individual subjects or components of the variegated archipelago of armed struggle. It may be said without malice: the dream of Boato and his comrades seems to be that of stimulating a myriad of cases like Baumann and Klein.<sup>4</sup>

In this context, it seems to me that apart from everything, the "provocation" of Piperno and Pace touches the sore spot. In fact it is said to all "progressive" sectors, to what is (or was) the "new left": let us still put aside, for the sake of argument, the entire contentious politico-theoretical debate on social subversion and armed struggle, its roots and prospects. In any case, *you forget* one small detail: you fail to take the army into consideration. You forget that almost a thousand political prisoners exist in Italy, a great part of which are and declare themselves to be "communist combatants," and are therefore destined to a long imprisonment. Some are known comrades; others are unknowns. As many come from our ranks as from *yours*, but we don't intend to deny them, or reduce them at random to carriers of the virus of political evidence that is always seen as "the individual case," one plus one plus one . . . Well, comrades, we tell you that even though (paradoxically) all the political motives for the development of the revolutionary struggle might collapse in five, ten years, this contentious one would represent a sink for thousands of comrades. You know, therefore, that any discourse against the precipitation of the frontal engagement, against the precipitation of civil war, against the barbarization and sovereign dominance — on both sides — of a linear *military* (and even "terrorist") logic must reckon with this problem of political prisoners.

This is the challenge. If your operation is not one that simply proposes self-ghettization (and not even the gilded ghetto of the U.S. Welfare State or German social democracy), defeat, unconditional surrender, and desertion, declare your stand on this: a *general amnesty*, which includes the liberation of political prisoners at the center of a much more extensive provision. (And here, it is useless to gamble on bombast and sympathy with the left by saying "everyone is a political prisoner." We are well aware of this, but we are also aware that this is often a convenient screen.) Besides, critical bourgeois thought offers decisive arguments for a radical critique of the penalties and imprisonment in such cases. At this point it is clear to



And, fraternally, I advise the comrades of "Radio Onda Rossa" that the revolution does not need so many sentinels and vests whose ideological purity is in doubt. Therefore, comrades, let us begin a debate without hysteria. Let us begin it in a less hasty, conspiratorial, and subjectivistic way than many are doing (including myself, since I am tossing off this letter in a loose and confused manner. It is three in the morning; every so often the guard opens the eephoie and observes me with a certain troubled suspicion. My cell-mates mutter in their sleep, forced to drowse with the light on. But I began writing at one because tomorrow morning I may be able to send or dictate this letter; otherwise, who knows when it may be written.)

In conclusion, we must take as our point of departure an analysis of the social crisis/institutional crisis relation, of the consequences of the "micro-indonesia politics" that the PCI has been building with their own hands in recent years.

There must be an understanding of which paths the Movement will be able to cover, now that the requiem has been sounded for the Historical Compromise which will be reorganized from the level of government to a purely institutional level.

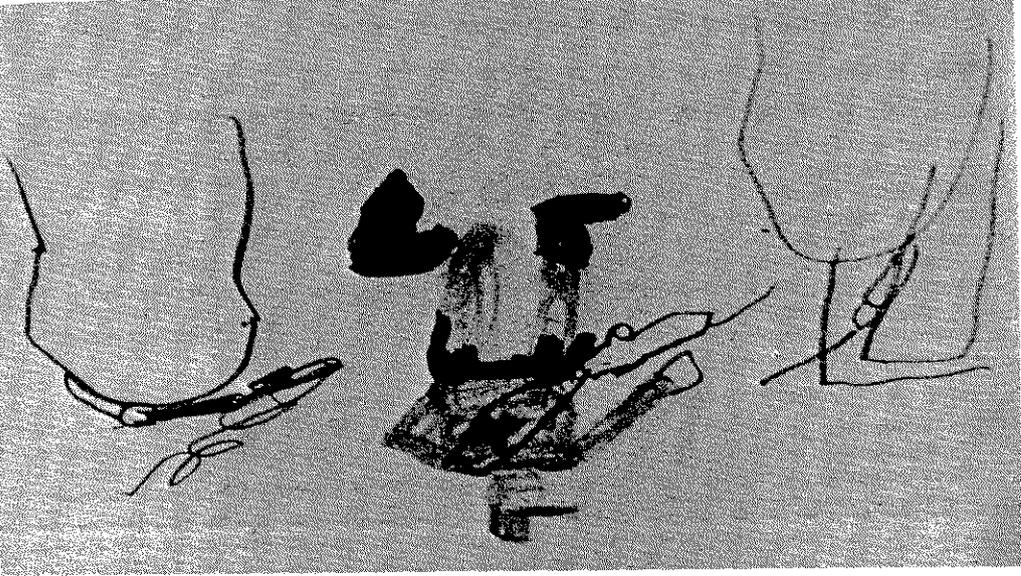
There must be an understanding of what it will mean to have before us a double problem instead of the regime of Historical Compromise as a political form of the neo-corporate State — the double problem of the neo-laissez-faire tendency toward the re-consolidation of the capitalist order and the search, on the part of the PCI, for a *monopoly of opposition* (which will probably push the party's apparatus to an even more pitiless attack on the political forms of antagonism, while it tries to recover in a deceptive way a few social reasons for the attack). An enormous tangle of problems stands before us; they give the impression of the necessity for an *epochal* leap to political maturity.

The State's very leap to the level of the counter-offensive after 7 April must be a significant signal, and must represent a valuable lesson to be absorbed and thoroughly utilized.

Translated by Lawrence Venuti

1. Enrico Deaglio is Editor-in-chief of *Lotta Continua*.
2. Achille Occhetto is a leader of the ICP.

III/1 "Jail" by unknown child artist  
 III/2 "Policeman" by Ian Rusten



everyone, except the insane bigots, that prison is a crime-causing institution, a machine that produces and reproduces deviance. Therefore, the neo-humanitarians, the neo-libertarians, the neo-civilizers must give their opinions on amnesty.

It is necessary to add, for clarity, that this is a context of *challenge*, within which intentions, aims, diverse and even contradictory analyses come into play.

On the one hand, there is a discourse of *truce*, as a congealment of relations of force, as a recognition of defeat and a decision to demobilize and choose a momentary rule by the "great ghetto" of the second society.

On the other hand, there is a radically different discourse, one that rather refuses a linearity of process by which the "language of war" assumes authority as the dominant one and — using an apocalyptic and catastrophic scenario as a point of departure — theorizes the immanence/imminence of the frontal engagement, even for a long period of time.

However one regards us, we have spoken and written about the problem precisely because we hold that this new social subject needs to grow, identify itself, strengthen itself, speak, communicate, insinuate itself in the social fabric, invent, produce: "we consider the frontal engagement a misfortune" (editorial of *Metropolis*).

For us the problem is posed in terms of the Movement's capacity to go beyond *terrorism*. For us, therefore, there is no choice of the ghetto, defeat, or desertion. And at the same time we agree to reasonableness, the primacy of the logic of social transformation, of the comprehensive processes of liberation.

And therefore we agree to the recognition that can become, in determined phases, a convergent understanding of the struggling parties to avoid a catastrophic and apocalyptic precipitation of the engagement toward its decisive, military outcome.

Of course (and we haven't been talking about it just today or for the past few months) this recognition can be of interest to the revolutionary movement, and on the basis of it one can find a convergence of the "progressive" groups interested in maintaining a vast conflictual dynamic.

It is certain, all the same, that there obviously will be no extravagant, monstrous, and juridically abnormal threats of prison, to distance us from the communist point of view, by the various Calogeros or by Gallucci and their "Special Tribunal," whose "criticism of weapons" it seems realistic to consider as one variant present in the overall practice of the movement for transformation and communist liberation.

The problem, however, is one of combating the tendencies which aim at turning this variant into an omnivorous, totalling component that wants to impose with maniacal determination the predominance of its one-dimensionality, its monodimensional nature, on a movement which is irreducible to this disastrous simplification.

If this was the spirit of Perno and Pace's letter, it finds agreement with us; if it was otherwise, we have plenty of time to polemize, clarify, rectify. We must return at all costs to the complex bond-relation between *social subversion, guerrilla practices, and revolutionary politics*.

There is one final observation that I would like to make. I frankly say that I find insufferably bigotted the scandal caused by sectors (we may even say the majority) of comrades in the area of Autonomy every time someone poses *political problems* which disturb the dark horses and break the routine of their own self-assertion.

I, Toni Negri

Eugenio Scalfari

This interview, written from Rebibia, is the first of its kind to appear in a daily newspaper. Eugenio Scalfari, director of *La Repubblica*, is a respected figure in Italian political life. Advocate of a form of enlightened capitalism, he supported the Historical Compromise as an alliance between the productive forces against the most speculative financial and industrial corporations.

Scalfari Franco Piperno proposed a sort of pacification between the Italian State and the armed party. The first sign of such a pacification should be, according to Piperno, a general amnesty for all "political" prisoners presently in jail. How do you view this proposal? Are you in favor of the idea of "pacification" and of the amnesty?

Negri Dear Scalfari, you put me in an awkward position. In what role should I actually answer? As the promoter of an unlikely insurrection, as Galliccioli would have it; or as the founder and member of the Strategic Command of the Red Brigades, as Calogero believes; or rather as the leader of the "hard" line of the Red Brigades — such is the opinion of the *Unita*, which then considers Moretti's head of the "soft" line; or, on the contrary, head of the said "soft" line, as Scialoja seems to believe? Or should I instead respond according to the illusion, which appears to flatter right through your question, whereby I am a hostage with whom to negotiate? It's up to you to decide, but bear in mind that I do not care for anybody's sticky concern to bestow upon me the role of "leader," not even to exercise a "truce."

So to answer, then, I cannot but hold on to good sense and reiterate what I have

already said to *Lotta Continua*: the proposal for an amnesty and for pacification expresses a rational concept only if conceived as an inversion of the emergency politics as administered by the heap of the last legislature; only if correlated to the demolition of the exceptional, anti-terrorist structures of the State; only, finally, as the result of a tendency that reopens the political spaces for an independent class warfare of the proletariat.

S For a "pacification" to take place, there must have been a war. But the Italian State has never accepted the idea of being involved in a war with the armed party and with the various subversive organizations that constitute it. For the Italian State, it is a matter of dealing with common citizens that commit common, though "politically" motivated, offenses. So that the idea of a possible "pacification" between the State and some of its guilty citizens is unthinkable. What is your view on this? Are we, in your opinion, in the presence of two belligerent parties between which speaking of a "pacification" has no sense at all?

N I don't think so, and I concur with the tone of the question. As concerns the amnesty, however, I think it would be difficult to distinguish political prisoners and common prisoners. However, rereading the question, I begin to fear that your question bares a formalistic presupposition that risks of confounding the terms of the debate. One can in fact say, as the Italian State says, that there aren't here in Italy any political prisoners but only citizens who commit common crimes and whose motivations are subjectively political. But this is exactly like the rigid and legal manner in which the Soviet State requires that when the politically motivated behavior of one of its citizens gets out of hand, that person be cured in a psychiatric institution. The law is always the law. The fact remains that, although the Italian State has not acknowledged to be waging war with the terrorists, the latter have actually been at war with it. In other words, by sticking to your question there is the danger of certain mystifications — which do not much interest me — and of certain consequences — of which I am rather concerned. For example, in a State in which the lowest position in the least important bank, and the ultimate financing of the least important Representative — is fiercely line that divides public and private interest is meager at best — is fiercely negotiated and nobody, from the political establishment, believes this to be a degradation of the concept of State, well, in this same country, by means of an incredible shift in perspective, the negotiations with the Red Brigades to save Aldo Moro's life are refused (private negotiation, as it seems, for they were held between the Christian Democrats and the Red Brigades, and not between the State and the Red Brigades). Can I then consider this as a consequence — to my view exorbitant — of a formalistic concept of the State?

But there is more, turning to another argument. By assuming such a rigorous concept of the State, I frankly have the impression — on the basis of the experience of the last legislature — that too much red tape is being covered up. To be clearer: can it not be that, by assuming a rigid stance towards the terrorists, one advocates an uncompromising attitude of the State towards all struggles incompatible with it? Can it not be that all "special" legislation introduced against the terrorists is in fact directed against the social forces that attempt to reopen a perspective for political transformation, and strive for a break within the corporative block imposed during the last legislature?

In other words, it would be a good thing, in this odd country of ours, not to be too enthusiastic about the formal rigor of the judicial definition of State. One can end up using the *arsena imperii* in the manner both crude and cruel in which the "historical compromise" has wielded it. This only resulted, besides the moderate losses in votes, in an haphazard shifting away of proletarians from the State and in accentuating the political crisis.

S How do you explain the fact that an exponent of *Autonomia Operata* like Piperno, who refused any connection with the Red Brigades — exactly as you do — proposes a "pacification" between the Red Brigades and the Italian State? Are the exponents of *Autonomia* then capable of speaking in lieu of the Red Brigades, or at least to make proposals held to be acceptable by the Red Brigades?



lice freedom of speech and freedom of association?

N Newspapers, including yours, speak of thousands of common prisoners with subjective political motivations. To distinguish them from the others, they are being kept like me in Rebibbia and other special jails. I must also admit that however, as certain articles of the Penal Code demonstrate — never declared unconstitutional — the Constitution also affirms that the anticapitalistic struggle is an anticonstitutional struggle. If then you have still some difficulty in acknowledging those famous pages where a Milanese nobleman declares it impossible for the plague to exist. And pray tell, in this bestial, what sort of prisoner is your own newspaperman Nicotri?

S Do you consider yourself to be a political prisoner?

N Are you joking? I'd lose your respect. It is true that I have not robbed, killed, etc., but I did have subjective political motivations that were definitely anticonstitutional. So as you can see, the circle is closed, rather in Brechtian fashion, true, but not any the less effectively: I am a "common" prisoner. What saddens me is the fact that, having been tagged with the status of "common" prisoner, no attempt is made to consider "political" prisoners people the likes of Sindona, Rovelli, Leone, etc., that is, people who have certainly acted with subjective constitutional motivations.

S If the State accepts the "pacification" principle, and therefore that of "belligerency" that precedes it, and after the eventual amnesty the Red Brigades and other subversive organizations continue their acts of terrorism — or of war, just to remain within Piperno's terminology — the State would be authorized to exert not the Penal Code anymore, but the rules of actual warfare. You are aware of the radical difference this implies, in both the relationship between the State and all common citizens. Are you aware of the fact that this State is so very little democratic that it is better to abandon all pretences and expedite its progressive decadence? In short, do you prefer an outright totalitarian and authoritarian State, so as to fight it more effectively, rather than a State like the present one, to which you are not willing to concede a democratic status?

N The choice for anticapitalist warfare in a Democratic State is the basis

N You know very well — and if you still don't know it, I'll tell you, hopefully definitely — that the comrades of *Autonomia Operaia* are neither the interpreters nor the allies, but rather the sharpest adversaries of the program, the strategy, the tactics, and the model of organization of the Red Brigades. As far as Piperno is concerned, I don't think your paper ever had any difficulty in meeting him: therefore, ask him directly. In any case, as far as I know, Piperno represents neither *Autonomia Operaia* nor the Red Brigades. He only represented the PSI (Italian Socialist Party) in the "negotiations." Still, I learned all this while in jail, for it so happens (one of the many strange things of this trial) that I have not had any political dealings with Piperno since 1973.

S Independent of the major or lesser "credibility" of Piperno, do you think that an amnesty would actually be accepted by the Red Brigades and the entire armed party, in the sense that members of these organizations would put an end to their acts of violence and terror?

N If you people grant them amnesty, I think they would be happy — that is obvious — on the basis of the unpleasant experience of being in jail. How will they employ it? I really don't know. Personally, however, I think that it would be worth-while to go all the way in this matter, to overcome this diplomatic barrier. As for me, I am horrified by the mechanical deductions of some sociologists. I am however convinced that a de-escalation of the armed struggle in Italy doesn't depend so much upon the amnesty, as on the reopening of a highly conflictual social situation. Is the Italian capitalist democracy able to withstand it? Is the Italian State capable of responding to the workers' and proletarian's struggle in any other manner than through exceptional legislation, exceptional plans, exceptional cuts in the budget, exceptional austerities, exceptional demonization of the *Autonomia*, or the hospital workers, or the temporarily recruited by the Red Brigades, but those subjectively predisposed to the proletarian use of violence — produced by the Fiat labor disputes in these days? If these questions are not answered, what your newspaper methodically does with observing efficacy, will continue: to keep on separating the editorial page from crime news and then both from the economic page. . . . Only, the crisis runs everywhere, and your scissors with not stop it.

S What credibility can be obtained by the eventual "pacification" offer on the part of the Red Brigades? As they are unknown, underground people, who would be the counter-party in this hypothetical negotiation?

N How should I know, Dr. Starched. . . I mean, Dr. Scalfari. As far as I know, it shouldn't be difficult for you upholders of the State of the Historical Compromise, to establish a contact with the Red Brigades, who are the founders of a New State based upon the real socialism (with some Catholic component). After all, the heroic furors that pervaded your newspaper in favor of the emergency and of the unanimity of the past legislature, ought to have provided you with the right equipment to handle a discussion with the strenuous and coherent upholders of the real socialism, such as the Red Brigades are. If you people never had any difficulty in reasoning and politicking with Rodano and Lombardo Radice, why should you have any difficulty in dealing with the Red Brigades? Perhaps it is only your snobism that prevents you from dealing with common delinquents, albeit with subjective political motivations. But stop and think for a moment: what difference runs between Calogero, alias Ilio Faolucce' whose articles, incidentally, display a surprising osmosis with the articles that appear on the *Unita* and any whatsoever strategist of the Red Brigades, if not the fact that — all to the latter's advantage — he doesn't cowardly pretend that his paranoia be covered up and protected by society and its institutions?

S Piperno's proposal is based upon the existence of "political" prisoners in Italian jails. Piperno speaks of several hundreds of them. Are you agreed on this definition and this figure? Who are, in your opinion, the political prisoners in a regime like ours, where there exists a Constitution that allows anybody to prac-

on the basis of false proofs which the judges know to be false: the famous phone call! A Stalinist or a McCarthyst technique? You choose.

But the matter extends beyond my immediate case. The whole investigation, for those indicted April 7, is a stack of vulgar constitutional violations: of the principle of the natural judge (Art. 25) and with what institutional bad faith and mercenary slyness has Judge Calogero himself recently declared it to be the case); of the principle of the personal nature of penal responsibility (Art. 27); of the principle of the presumed innocence of the accused (Art. 27); of the freedom of the press (Art. 21); and even of the simply human principle of the prohibition to inflict moral violence on the prisoner (Art. 13), as Bortoli's tragedy — the comrade who committed suicide in Verona — demonstrates. Is that enough for you?

But you see, to me that is not enough, because beyond what I have just said, the situation appears to be substantially unreal and fundamentally comic. You see, at times I imagine Rome just before Porta Pia (1870), with a papal Minister named Giulio who cruelly and stolidly commands by means of a group of brown noses: and the Head of the Fire Dept, that of the City Police, the organizer of the *cliccense* and the Head of the Education Office. Does this bring anything to mind? Why don't you compare this with your beautiful Republic?

S You always stated that your theories and your analysis on proletarian violence, on "sabotage", on the "wiletamization", and overall on the right duty of the proletariat to overthrow the dominion of the Capital, even by force, is nothing other than the legitimate analysis of a social condition actually existing. It so happens, however, that you are an "organic intellectual" of the Movement and more specifically of that sector of the Movement that defines itself with the name of *Autonomia Operaia*; and it so happens that this sector recognizes you as one of its leaders and finally, it turns out that this sector systematically realized the theories you propounded: don't you think that at this point your legitimate opinions have become, objectively, specific "instructions" of concrete behavior, arousing in the investigators the conviction that they are faced with a case whose nature is totally different than that of a pure and simple "crime of opinion?"

N As an answer, I should like to submit three points: 1) "The sabotage." When in 1971-72 we pointed out that capital's restructuring implied a strategy to destroy the mass-worker, we identified the genesis of that formidable transformation of the proletariat's composition — over which the entire left today sheds tears. We were then considered (and have been until June 4 of this year) to be subversive fools, parasitist delinquents. After June 4 the left, if not yet totally

itself of the Marxist theory of workerism (*operaismo*), I prefer therefore the Democratic State because in it I can more effectively fight against capitalism. But I also know, as historical experience teaches, that middle-class capitalism has very often preferred the Totalitarian State to the Democratic State. This because the Democratic State, not succeeding, for example, in maintaining a high level of administration and politics in general, within which democracy is worn out; but note, not so much in its most spectacular and liturgic forms, as in its judicial, guaranteeist and negotiating mechanisms that make it up.

And do not accuse me of any Togliattian and communist ambiguity, really; for in the first place, this democracy is not *octroyed*, that is, granted under certain conditions by some regal bourgeoisie, rather it was first snatched and then defended in 1960 against "Fambroni"; in 1969 against the State's massacre party, in other words, at any moment of the proletariat's struggle against the bourgeoisie or its non-irrelevant stratifications. Secondly, as a sensible communist, I do not accept the Berlinguerian "Chilean blackmail": we collaborate in destroying democracy to prevent it from being destroyed by the bourgeoisie, we accept the conditions of development imposed by capital otherwise there is a collapse!

At this point you can very well bring me to consider the power relationship among the classes, the international overdeterminations, etc., and I am more than willing to follow you in this area of discussion. But please, I don't believe that in this territory the attitude of vestal of democracy is any more suited to you than it is to me.

S You said recently that guaranteeism is none other than the formalization of the power relationship among the classes. But on the basis of this thesis of yours, a strong State should therefore have the right to keep you in jail even unjustly. How do you resolve this obvious contradiction in your thought?

N I think I said something very banal, certainly not worthy of such a scandal. Because, you see, any person, whether Marxist or not but who professes political realism, believes the same. Try asking Prof. N. Bobbio<sup>10</sup>. Insofar as constitutional guaranteeism is concerned, which cannot be confused with the liberal, continental concept of the Law State, it is both a genetical and historical form of power relationship among the classes. And I'll add: any attempt to detach guaranteeism from its material base is a tacit invitation to conceive totalitarian forms, utopias more or less Rousseauian or Jacobin, where the contempt for freedom is at least equal to my contempt for utopias.

As concerns the fact that the State is holding me unjustly in jail, this is proof of an obvious contradiction in your thought and not in mine. And I would also like to point out (something which in the famous supper the begone Alessandro<sup>11</sup> carried out to me) that the technique of intervention by "great examples" pointed out by the various attorneys of the Republic, corresponds to the attempt, on the part of the Prosecutors, to adopt a political substitution to the downfall of the State and consequently to stabilize, through a repressive strategy, the power relationship among the classes and modify their dynamics. Here the Reason of Law becomes Reason of State, coherently with the capitalistic ends of the Italian democracy.

S The judicial investigation sanctioned against you has provoked, even in those sectors of public opinion basically critical of your views and activities, many reserves for the way in which it was carried out, for the uncertainties that had begun in other places and with other judges. Would you explain what is your position with regard to the continuing interrogations and which of your rights are violated by what is happening?

N This investigation is just an *infamy*. By accusing me of being a leader of the Red Brigades it attempts to expropriate my real identity, built by years of intellectual and political toil, as the whole movement knows. And all this, inevitably,



event I do think that today, perhaps for the first time since 1956-59, one can realistically reopen the space for a communist renovation of the worker's movement and of the proletariat. In short, in the course of these years we have only sown, but the seed has taken well into the ground.

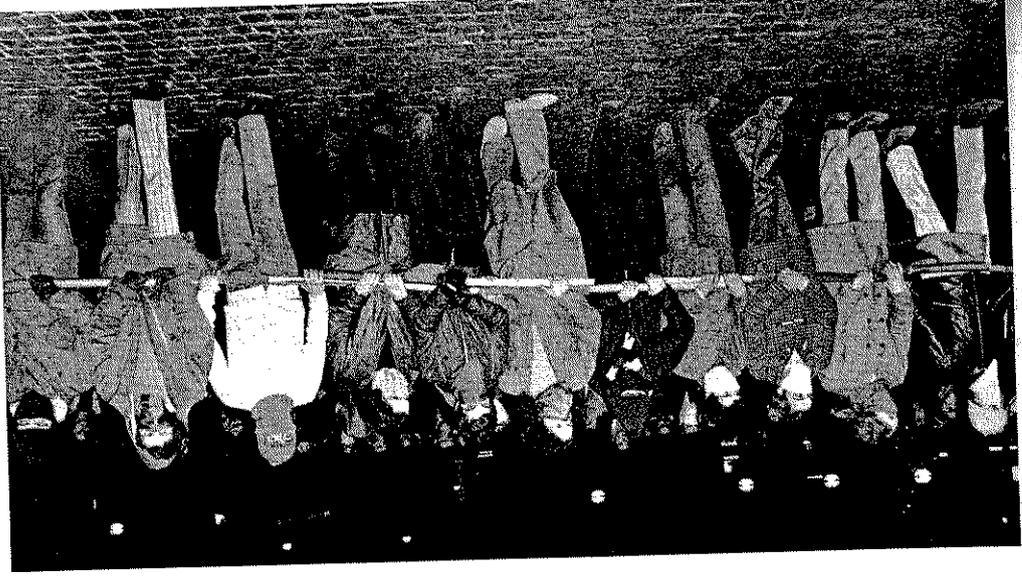
Translated by Peter Caravatta

1. Achille Gallicci, General Prosecutor.
2. Prosecutor Calogero from Padua. He initiated the April 7 arrests.
3. Moretti, probably the most wanted man in Italy, is the (mythical?) head of the BR.
4. Judge Sica is one of the Roman prosecutors.
5. Franco Rodano is a prominent intellectual of the ICP. Lombardo Radice, a Marxist philosopher close to the ICP.
6. Ilio Paoletti is a correspondent of *L'Unita*, organ of the ICP. He covered the April 7 prosecution started in Padua.
7. Giuseppe Nicotri, a journalist from *Espresso*, was accused of being the telephonist of the Red Brigades during the Moro affair. He was freed on July 7 for lack of evidence after 3 months in jail.
8. Michele Sindona, a member of the CD, was involved in financial scandals before disappearing mysteriously. Presently wanted by Interpol. Nino Rovelli, President of the Italian Society of Finance (SIF), also involved in financial malversations, Giovanni Leone, former President of the Italian Republic, involved in the Lockheed scandals, he had to resign from his functions.
9. Tamborini, member of the CD, in the 60s, he headed a government whose conservative policy led to violent popular protest and a confrontation with the police which resulted in numerous deaths.

IL1 ROP042502 ROOFTOP VIGIL GENOVA ITALY: Rioting prison inmates, some of them wearing masks, sit on the roof of the Marassi prison facing police stationed on a prison wall (foreground) here April 25th. The inmates seized control of three prison wings April 24th, burning bedding, flooding corridors and smashing windows. The riot ended April 25th when the Justice Ministry promised action on prison reforms. 4/25/74

II1Z SOP092502-9/25/73-SANT'AGO: Chilean military junta leader General Augusto Pinochet (second left) walks with Enrique Urrutia Manzano (civilian clothes), President of Chile's Supreme Court after courtesy visit on the court 9/25. With him are other junta members General Cesar Mendoza (left), leader of National police force, and Admiral Jose Toribio Merino (right), Commander-in-Chief of the Chilean Navy. (UPI)

II/3 FK1229101 SHOUTER TO SHOUTER ROME: An unruly mob? These "leftist" demonstrators are far from that during a recent clash with Rome police. They maintain a united front even though the air is filled with tear gas. Demonstrators used rocks, sticks and gasoline bombs in battles with police. 12/29/72



emasculated, must begin to face the social worker, the refusal to work, sabotage. And its plausible alternatives are extremely clear: either disappear as a great historical force — and survive only as a definitive corporate force for privileged strata of a class (like the American Unions or the French Communist Party); or it can renovate itself, without any useless tactics, at the contact with this new class composition (and I am sorry for all the well-thinkers: a working class and a proletariat that are made up of what has always constituted the proletariat: proletarian misery and revolutionary riches). 2) "Organic intellectual." "My dear Scalfari, you too have read too much of Gramsci and Co.: why don't you bring yourself up to date? You had to come to me just to reinvent obsolete categories? Personally it is since 1968 that I do not speak in a Movement assembly: I'd be booted off the stage. I have instead written books, articles, pamphlets which have sold: my report is organic with the market. 3) "Legitimate opinions which become institutions." You'd like that, wouldn't you? The subjective responsibility becomes objective. On this connection, see Solzenitsyn's *Cancer Ward*. However, having said this, let's be clear on another point. I am fond of what I think, I'd stay in jail twenty years not to abjure but one of my thoughts (even if I criticized or surpassed it). I am proud to have succeeded in stealing so much knowledge from the working class and set it back in circulation in the proletariat, taking advantage of my instruments as an intellectual. If this work of mine had been instrumental in building an autonomous organization, I'd be extremely happy. If it were a weapon that the proletariat could wield in order to destroy the Capital, I could consider myself satisfied.

S You have often lamented that there is a total incomprehension and myopia towards the Movement on the part of large sectors of the press and of public opinion. This would push certain areas of the Movement to a growing radicalization and to "desperate acts" from which it would then be impossible to retreat. Don't you think that the Movement too has demonstrated and proves still a total incomprehension and narrowness towards the entire society and towards the Republic's institutions, causing in its interlocutors-adversaries the same kind of radicalization?

N It appears to me that with your question you are doing nothing more than describing a factual situation in which incomprehension is total, on both sides. But one must at least avoid being irritated to such a point that the Movement is accused of the Piazza Navona's crime! In any case all this goes beyond your opinion and mine and is being expressed on a political plane by means of a fracture characterized at this moment by the invisible army of about 4 to 5 million voters.

Now, you see, I don't think this happened because of contingent reasons, like a major or lesser understanding of the institutions, of the party system, or of the press. I think instead that it is structural, that is, I think that the reproduction of the capitalistic system, in Italy and in the Western world, involves the necessary exclusion of millions of proletarians from political life (that is, from a progressive bargaining on the redistribution of profits). It's a problem, I know, especially for those in your generation whose hopes for reforms have been squelched at least twice in this heavily disappointing post WWII period.

Personally I think instead that, by taking off exactly from the radical nature of this crisis, it can be possible to reopen an anticapitalistic battle in which the autonomy of great proletarian masses can impose, with the communist transformation of society, the needed gratification for a free production, and for a happy reproduction of social wealth. As you know, *Autonomy* does not promise violence, but undergoes it. It promises instead wealth and freedom.

S Re-examining today what you have done in the past 11 years, from 1968 onwards, do you have any self-criticisms to make, besides the criticism of others?

N The most important self-criticism concerns the state of the organization. Not so much of *Autonomy*, as of the worker's movement (*Movimento Operaio*). But the situation is too long and complex for me to take up and examine here. In any

# Unpublished Interview with Piperno

Franco Piperno, professor of physics in Cosenza, is one of the historical leaders of *Potere Operaio*. Wanted by police since April 7, he was "in hiding" at the time of this interview.

This interview, which we received in August in the mail, took place somewhere in France in late July. Franco Piperno was finally arrested in Paris on September 18 while drinking a soda at a coffee house in the Place de la Madeleine.

**Question** I read in *Le Monde* of July 10, 1979, an article by Sole which raised the issue of your proposition in favor of social "truce," or amnesty. But the article gives no information about the debate that followed in Italy: can you briefly recall your proposition and the tenor of the reactions to it?

**Piperno** In the letter to Lotta Continua, neither I nor Lanfranco Pace ever spoke of "social truce,"—or any such silliness. And we didn't for a number of reasons: because it is not in the interest of the Movement in Italy, because at any rate no one would think of proposing—and even less of negotiating or guaranteeing—anything of the sort; because we do not assume for ourselves any right to propose or even talk of social truce. All this is obvious, but evidently not for M. Sole.

The problem we have posed for ourselves pertains rather to the forms of conflict that have occurred in the Italian situation. More precisely, you know well how in Italy the conflict is largely characterized not only by the practice of armed formations, but also by the possibility of "war" alluded to by that which manifests itself as a great organizational power. Think for example of the kidnapping of Aldo Moro and the role that the image of organizational power of the BR played; think

of those 55 days in which all of the active power of the State could not win out against the offensive of the brigades.

Many prefer to ignore this situation, and to limit themselves to deprecating it, to rejecting it in the name of a humanism which might have a thousand reasons, but which neither modifies the form of armed struggle nor its capacity of resilience and hegemony over a considerable part of the Movement, nor the social motivations that underlie and sustain it. Thus, while no one can ignore the solidity of the phenomenon of armed struggle in Italy, we ask ourselves what may be the interest of the Movement in the practice of armed struggle—and what in going beyond it. Obviously, the latter option must not be understood in the sense of the transformation of Italy into a larger-country with thousands of political prisoners, but rather 1. in the broad sense of a critique of "armed ideology" by the Movement itself capable of capturing and interpreting the high levels of conflictuality (*confittualita*) expressed by armed formations, and 2. in the sense of a concrete initiative that the country's institutions can and must assume and which would go in the direction of recognition—certainly not of the armed formations themselves—but of the social motivations that underlie their political choice, their "war." Such, then, is the sense of the proposition of amnesty.

**Q** Can you clarify the possible function of such a critique?

**P** When we spoke of amnesty we were thinking of a political measure apt to disentangle the situation and to permit partial disclosure of the substance of the problem: in fact, we forget all too often that, in Europe, Italy is the only country that apportions no employment compensation at a time when the number of unemployed workers continues to rise and is close to two million—a situation which, nevertheless, does not prevent it from having the highest rate of economic growth after Germany.

We need not emphasize the fact that this political measure does not contain any possibility of resolution of the fundamental problems of the social conflict. But it is all the same extravagant that a proposition of amnesty should appear scandalous, since the question has always been present in the tradition of revolutionary movements.

All in all, however, the real problem is not that of amnesty. It would be rather that of the effects produced or possible, of the roots, the growth, the image of death—and power, of terrorism. The violence of the repressive apparatus weighs not only upon "communist fighters," but also and above all upon the emergence of certain behaviors that express either the refusal of misery (in every possible sense of the term) or the effective possibility of freedom from it.

**Q** Among the "Autonomists" in Italy, it has been said that the limits of your proposition reside in the arbitrary amalgamation of the situation of the comrades arrested April 7 and that of the "communist fighters" imprisoned on account of a completely different ideology and practice. In this respect you would be playing into the hands of the Italian judiciary which is trying to prove that between organized Autonomy and Red Brigades there is a "division of labor" and not real opposition . . . . .

**P** To begin with, I would like to underline one thing: in our letter to *Lotta Continua* we did not speak of amnesty for the comrades arrested April 7. These comrades, and we have written it, must be freed because the reasons for which they have been indicted are altogether invalid. But having said this, since we are talking at a juridical level, let us play on this ground: let us claim at least the respect of constitutional pledges. But beyond this Judge Catogero's initiative, as Leonardo Sciascia has said, makes one think of what Dashell Hammitt calls "the Red Harvest": to arrest a hundred in order to capture one that may be "guilty." This situation, while decreeing the end of the Law State, reduces the phenomenon of armed struggle from its social roots, from the force of attraction that such a phenomenon exercises over the young.

The real problem is to make possible an overcoming of the form the social conflict in Italy seems to present as ineluctable. We must attempt to elaborate richer forms of organization of the Movement.

Q But Sole presents your position as that of an isolated individual. It is not easy to see your possible impact in view of the elaboration of these richer forms.

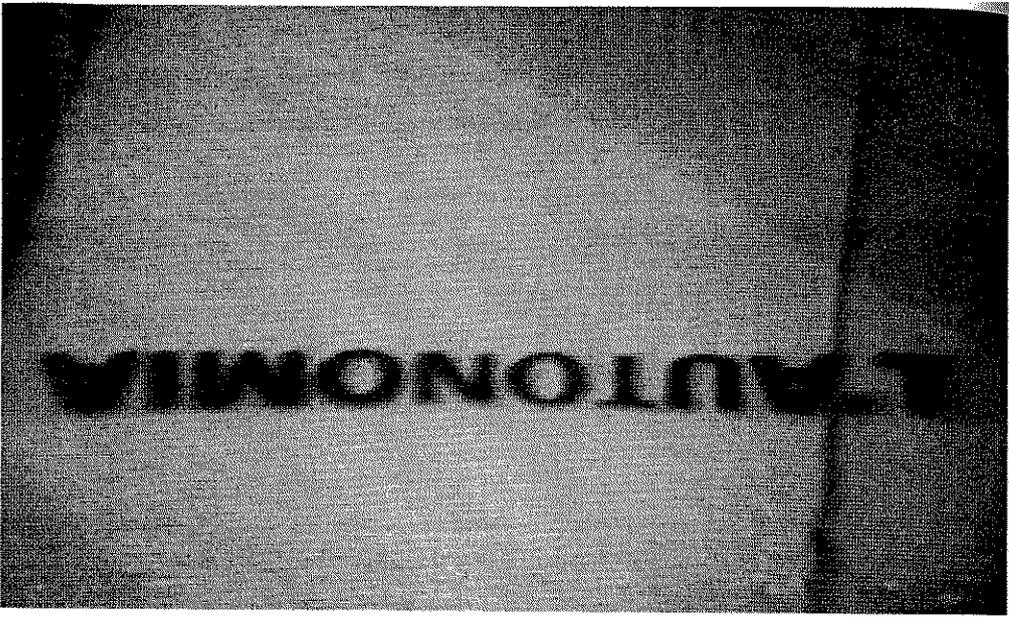
P Listen, let's drop the stupidities about isolation of a Sole. I am somewhat isolated, today, because evidently, as you can imagine, I'm having some difficulty in going to my favorite cafe or to the movies. But for the rest, I think I am in good company. In fact, last year a number of comrades of diverse cultural and political origins achieved a consensus on a project that could be defined generically by that is to go beyond the current form of the Movement, the existing Autonomy; that is to say, by the will to go beyond a certain type of organizationed rigidity, of runaway militarization. . . . A project, a working hypothesis capable of freeing the "social Autonomy" whose emergence is blocked by ossified ideological forms. Therefore, we speak of Possible Autonomy, an Autonomy that, I think, is much larger, even in quantitative terms, than that which recognizes itself in existing organizations and in their strictly ideological extremism.

Q Behind the term "Possible Autonomy" are there already concrete projects?

P "Possible Autonomy" is also the subtitle of our magazine *Metropoli* whose first issue has been seized by order of the judiciary under absurd pretexts. Moreover, they have taken advantage of the requisition to arrest or incriminate four other editors of *Metropoli*—Paolo Virno, Lanfranco Pace, Lucio Castellano, and Bibo Maesano (Scalzone and Lauso Zagato had already been arrested April 7). But in spite of such incidents along the way, the magazine continues to be published. There is already a second number and we are now working on projects for the Fall, to give the magazine an even more open character, capable of proposing a debate that would not be limited to registering the level of existing conflictuality. This thematic overture will correspond to a broadening of editorial participation that will make it no longer just Italian. . . .

*Translated by Peter Caravetta*

11/1 Photo: Seth Tillet







ceived of their war as a sort of agrarian revolution whose objective was the topological conquest of their own sub-soil, and they succeeded in appropriating increasingly more vast areas underground for the purposes of life. By making this pioneer adventure their primary social practice they could disappear completely from their territory and thus finally save it.

Already, however, these forms of struggle seem outdated by what is newly and redoubtably implied by the world-wide resistance of the Palestinian people for their civil rights. Heretofore the defense of a group has been identified with the defense of its legal place or habitation. Whether in areas of agricultural production or in great industrial cities, the "arms of the people" were only common tools and places transformed from ordinary usage. For example: hatchets, sickles, rickades, the shut-down of machinery, and the strike in urban terrain. Under these conditions, it is clear that for the civilian populations every territorial loss also represents the loss of their transformed armament and of their legal identity. Deprived of their arsenal of production, they cease in effect to be economic partners with certain privileges in the pact of military semi-colonisation.

The principal end of all truly popular resistance then is to oppose the establishment of a social status founded uniquely through the illegality of an armed force and which amounts to that of a *movable slave*, which is to say a *commodity*. This domestic condition is hardly better than that of a collection of animals, and in fact the proletarianization of the military and worker class has only had the effect of reproducing this progressive reduction of the deterritorialized countryman to the condition of *movable or immovable*. The trade unions were not deceived, however, for they ordered the workers to maintain carefully their tools of production, as if in their spirits the tools were the last representation of their original situation, guarantee and mainstay of their whole legal existence. . . .

At this moment in history the case of the Palestinians has a prospective character for populations: we now find them at a further stage, a stage which anticipates the work-house and the Nazi deportation camps, since here is a *nation having become entirely movable*, violently uprooted from its land and thrown into transit camps. For its instigators, the defense of the Palestinian people can only be a reflection on a national dislocation, a spatial schizophrenia which will soon replace the temporal schizophrenia of permanent migrants. Here we must expect unprecedented forms of survival, since the legal terrain, the political territory, has completely disappeared in order to become the very stakes of the struggle, a combat not to defend the frontiers of an area of life but to succeed in drawing bound-

pratal rupture of the social status-quo between civilians and the military and replaces the thousand-year-old pact of semi-colonization with a tendency toward total colonization, the *ostkolonisation* asserted by the German National-Socialists. But this total war was conducted on both sides, and the Allies also had a wealth of experience in the domain of economic-physiological violence, a past heavy with ethnocide, deportation, slavery, and colonization. From then on popular defense lost its military character as it dissolved into a state of precarious survival in a devastated habitat and became more a physiological defense than a measure of insurrection. Much later the people of Vietnam had recourse to this defensive procedure, but already new realities were emerging, in particular the political and military limits of the ecological defense of populations before the onslaught of the destructive systems brought forward by the military-industrial powers.

But here again, we must step back in order to discover the general tendency. In the nineteenth century the Spanish popular resistance waged against Napoleon's military assault already brought together certain characteristics of modern popular war. The *absolute shapelessness* of the Spanish defense created conditions in which the heavy French war machine succumbed to "something fluid and vaporous which condensed *nowhere* into a solid body" (Clausewitz), the compact defense of an armed body giving way to and succeeded by a resistance without body. This Clausewitzian *nowhere* is essential, for beyond a resistance without body one already imagines a *resistance without territory* on a land rendered *uninhabitable* by the military predator. It is the end of on the spot civil defense, since the mechanical power of the new armies of the State have forced the Spanish combatant to withdraw provisionally from the soil he is supposed to protect. The unity of time and space is shattered, for popular war is now only a war *of time*, a war of timely encounter. While the Spanish combatant is no longer master of the terrain, he is still in effect master of the hour, the speed and facility in any desperate combat, to harass, surprise, and finally conquer Napoleon's army, a "gigantic automaton" slowed up by its heavy logistics in an inhospitable country.

Some hundred years later the resistance of the Vietnamese people to the American technological assault is still a war of time, but it can no longer be a war of military encounters. This time the military prejudice towards aggression can only result in total destruction, and the entire social body, in order to survive, is constrained to flee and disappear in a new underground population. This form of defense reveals the new and tragic impotence of civilian populations. Entrenched in the sub-soil, they must somehow manage to re-surface and re-populate their territory in order to attempt a victorious military conclusion, as was still the case in May of 1954 with Dien Bien Phu. In fact, the Vietnamese success then was founded only on the *duration* of their population's physiological resistance, on the degree to which they had become acclimatized to an environment suddenly made unknown and deadly, where more than being heroic, they had to deploy great ingenuity and patience daily. Paradoxically, it was the American people, living comfortably without menace or material want, who gave in first. However that may be, it was necessary to return to classic methods of warfare in order to terminate the conflict and through stages to bring about a difficult agreement. The apparent political victory of the people was in reality only the most cruel of its military defeats: after several unfruitful attempts, it was clear that the popular defense was no longer succeeding in a final assault of the masses on the "field of honor," and the last, decisive assault was henceforth reserved for the military elite alone, with their mechanized vehicles, as was revealed by those last filmed images of the fall of Saigon in which a North Vietnamese tank broke through the gates of the government palace, long since deserted.

Although exploited and over-exploited by strategists since antiquity, popular defense thus asserted its authority again in Vietnam as a non-military entity with specifically civilian and non-violent goals and methods. . . . The civilians had con-

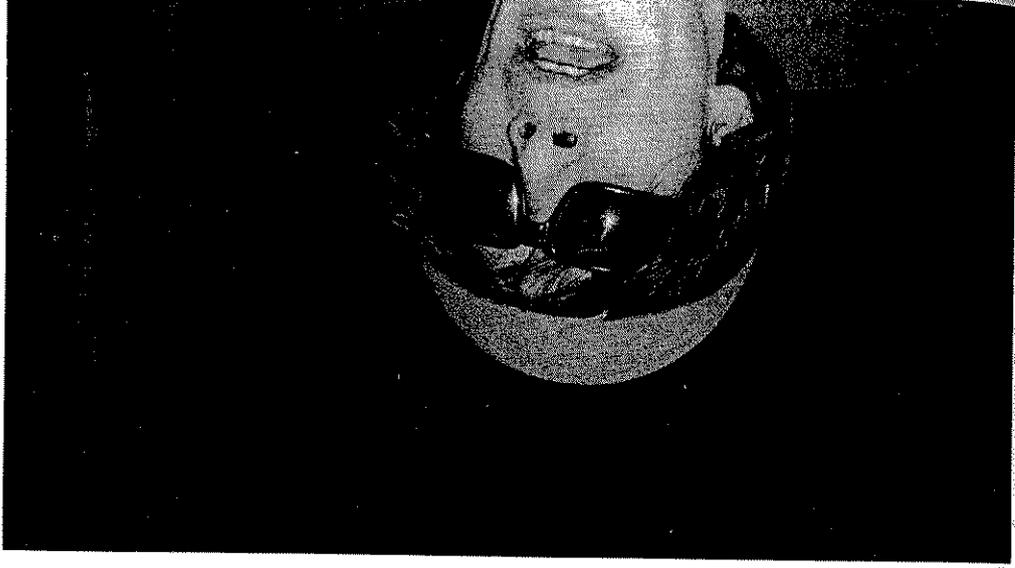
Information blitz can be used. The abundance of surrounding dangers, formerly posed by the belligerents armed with explosives, projectiles, gas, etc., can henceforth be created at home, simply by manipulating the audio-visual enclosure. While in at home, behind alarm systems and secured doors, the citizen is still never safe from a televised aggression which composes, condenses, and reproduces at will a cataclysm, or murder, or kidnapping, thus installing stereophonically the decor of distant disaster and foreign wars in the foyers of peace. . . .

If at the right time civilians could have resisted the assault of the war machine through the creation of a *defense without body*, condensed nowhere, it seems likely that today they would not be conscious of submitting in turn before a technological advancement over this sort of popular defense. No more need for an armed body to attack civilians, provided the latter are trained to turn the but-tons on their radio or to plug in their television set; no more need for solid bodies difficult to move when one can project their spectral image anywhere simultaneously. From now on, it is the military assault which is deformed in time and space. The absolutely vaporous and organic adhesion of populations is now only an irrational adhesion to a techno-logicistic supra-nationality, the last stage of civil dislocation and thus of servitude. . . .

The new *ideology of security* is detained to fill the vacuum created by the disappearance of their juridical-political identity: it is equivalent to putting the whole of civil society under a regime of military security, that is to say, under a regime of so-called military justice. . . .

Just as military justice was a matter of transferring fear of the enemy to the part-ner in order to bring about discipline, so it is a matter now of transferring fear of confrontations from the outside to the inside, a fear still more formidable than the fear of a declared enemy, friend or suspicious parent. In fact, the doctrine of security extends the strategy along the whole azimuth to the ensemble of civil ob-jects. Truly beyond politics, it cleverly completes the nuclear dissuasion with a perverted popular dissuasion. . . .

Thus, when Curcio speaks of terrorism as a machine of destruction, he doesn't know what he's talking about: the exterminating angel is only the exterminating engine which henceforth escapes everyone's control. At this level terrorism is only a final stimulation of the revolutionary loading of the masses into the machine of internal warfare, a survival technique comparable to the nostalgic taste which pushes more and more people in the age of supersonic jets to use old prop-driven



daries around some part of it, while in Damascus and Beirut we see one Palesti- nian defeat after another in their struggle for a place. Where is the enemy? Who is the enemy? For the Palestinian, he is not national, he is *world-wide*. . . . Those who claim that the Palestinian combat is not a popular "defense" are right, *it is a popular assault become suicidal*. Because they have not had any choice, after their geographic disappearance, the last objective of the Palestinian people is still possess a specific territory: that of the media. In the air and by rail, on the roads, in the press and on television, they could not loose this last advantage: the carriers could no longer remain neutral. If in the nineteenth century Ratzel had already claimed that "war consists in extending one's frontiers across the bound-aries of others," one can now say that the Palestinians have extended the form of information across the entire world. Whether they horrify or seem ex-empary, henceforth the Palestinians are masters of an audio-visual empire; they exist somewhere, with a precarious and phantasmal identity, in the back of the memory of 4 to 500 million television viewers. They hope that at the end of this conquest they will succeed in recovering at the negotiating table the right to a legal defense, that is to say, to existence at the political level. But it's possible to think that they are fooling themselves and will only succeed, like the Tupamaros in Uruguay some time ago, in hastening the development in Europe and in the world of the *doctrine of security*, which is nothing but a procedure for the political disappearance of people and nations. . . .

The deterritorialisation and bewildered flight of civilian populations in the "ter- ritories" of the media, this facility with which they pass from robbery to aerial hi- jacking or to the political debauchery of kidnapping — all these final and depar- ted forms of a *popular opposition which is no longer situated anywhere* draw us ir- resistably away from the loss of the ancient right to armed resistance of a place, to the annihilation of the contemporary right to a judicial defense, in other words, to the definitive reduction of peoples to silence. This is what President Giscard d'Estaing called to mind in December 1977 at the Brussels Conference when he suggested the creation of a *European judicial space*. This new *Leben-raum* that a German chancellor himself could not decently propose to his part-ners can be considered as the outline of the MINIMUM POLITICAL TERRITORY of Europe. What frontiers, in effect, will the dissident be able to reach, what refuge will there be for social or union opposition, since the project tends, as we have seen with the extradition of Crossant, to suppress the last juridical asylum? The suppression of national frontiers, the hyper-communicability of the world, does not enlarge the space of liberty but on the contrary signals its collapse and disap-pearance before the expansion of a very tangible totalitarian power, an always more rapid and refined technical control of civil society. Thus, the project elaborated in 1973 by OTAN and its "Committee on the Circulation of Modern Society," which aims at the *universal planification of the circulation of persons as commodities*, is by stages being realized. In March of 1978 this same OTAN in-tervened directly in the Aldo Moro affair. Appearing simultaneously, the scan- dalous exhibition of prisoners in Turin? chained in a cage during their trial are not the results of chance; they visibly restore in the twentieth century the military image of *commodity-man*, degraded and reduced to impotence by the military master. . . .

Pure warfare, perennial feature of the military effort, transformed the ancient metaphysical vision of the warrior into a terrifying re-ordering of the world. Renato Curcio, "historic leader of the Red Brigades" but also ancient neofascist of the New Order, does not call for anything else when he declares that "in this society the only thing that one can construct is a machine to destroy." "As if we were lacking any!

But today, in order to create a *totalitarian Lebensraum*, it is no longer necessary to resort to an extraordinary invasion with motorized vehicles, the tanks and the stukas of lightning warfare, since the *ordinary penetration* of the news media, the

planes, old model cars, steam-driven trains, even to buy ineffective railroad stations in order to rebuild the old transportation system of the voyeur-voyager and restore the illusion of a certain individual power over the conception and control of vehicles slower and less sophisticated. The instantaneity of the explosions and the rapid deflagration of criminal attempts appear to this individual as a paradoxism of the speed permitted but left unpaid for by the hierarchy of media, as the shattering of the mirror of travel. But are intimacies among criminals the last representation of the family? With the disappearance of territorial strategy, it is logical to see indissoluble couples reforming, as the last forms of the original tactical unity, the little commando family, "linked by love and by hate," the minister Streibel will say at the burial of Gudrun Ensslin and Andreas Bader, before their bodies were buried in the same grave at the request of the young man's father, the minister Ensslin who did not want them separated.

*Translated by John Johnston*

1. Klaus Croissant: Defense lawyer of the Red Army Fraktion. He was in turn accused of terrorism and extradited from France to Germany.  
2. The first trial of the BR took place in Turin. The political prisoners appeared chained in a glass cage.

III/1 Shrapnel and Legs McNeil, 1978 Photo: D. Cortez  
III/2-3 Legs McNeil, 1978 Photos: D. Cortez



# A Brigadist Speaks

## Valerio Morucci

Valerio Morucci was arrested at the end of May, 1979. The interview took place at the GB wing of the Rebibbia prison in Rome during the exercise hours. Giuseppe Nicotri is a journalist from *Espresso*, also imprisoned for allegedly participating in the Moro's kidnap-ping (and subsequently released for lack of evidence).

**NICOTRI** During your interrogation by Judge Caselli you introduced new techniques of "non-collaboration" such as paradox and sarcasm. You actually ended by saying: "Now I have to go. They're waiting for me in the court-yard to play volleyball!". This attitude could be said to confirm the much talked about hypothesis: that is, your break with the Red Brigades; is there any truth in that?

**MORUCCI** I don't see anything sensational in the fact that I, not wanting to acknowledge the status of antagonist of that mediocre aspirant to the role of Commissioner of Justice, chose that kind of behavior. Having said that, it's obvious that inside the sphere of armed struggle there exist very different languages and "cultures". And also various options. However, I don't think this is the place to reconstruct the progress and organizational histories inside the revolutionary movement.

**N** In your Memorial you state that "this movement is mature enough to impose communism through the strength of warfare and arms". A statement which remains to be proved, but exactly what does it mean?

**M** We mean that for us, and, I believe, for the majority of the revolutionary movement, the theme of "transition to socialism" is absolutely surpassed and in-

adequate at the level of the quality of proletarian struggles. Real socialism, in all its variants, has proved to be a social model which is anything but desirable for the proletariat.

**N** In what sense?

**M** Economic science studies how to meet "unlimited needs with limited resources". Well, today resources are no longer "scarce"; therefore it becomes possible to go beyond economy, that is to say, communism becomes possible. And socialism is then an old instrument politically and practically surpassed.

**N** It has been written that the contents of your Memorial reflect the "armed" which are typical of "Autonomia Operaia" of which you are said to be the "armed body". . . .

**M** Our distance from comrades in the historical groups of organized "Autonomia Operaia" is undoubtedly profound on the level of certain contents, and more so, on the level of the theory of the organization. We consider the "Autonomia" to be a phenomenon in the stage of irreversible decline, now confined to the ghetto of vindictive extremism, and, in some of its components, actually leaning toward "institutionalism". We could say that they are "comrades who are mistaken". We want other things: we want to join the armed initiative to the communist tendency that is present in the various expressions of the class movement. It is not a question of rediscovering a kind of "theory of needs with a P.38", but rather of confronting the problem of the combating praxis by starting precisely with a criticism of that theory. Working on that hypothesis, armed struggle is put in the direction of revolutionary war: it is something that does not at all remain confined to a simple military and destructive connotation, but is instead the deliverer of energies and lays the foundation of a new social power.

**N** If, as you say, various differentiations exist, what do you think is represented by the operation of April 7; that is my arrest, and that of Negri, Scatzone and other comrades?

**M** A damned mess. The history of the left, the official left as well as the revolutionary left, is a history of divisions and of distinctions. The judges, instead, threw together, to their own advantage, a mass of very conflicting facts. In their reconstruction, typical of police mentality, all differences, logical, historical, and temporal distances do not count. No differences are made between comrades who declare themselves to be communist combatants and those who claim, even with hunger strikes, due process (and who therefore recognize the authority of the State). The only thing that holds up that accusatory castle is indeed its indefinite character. Take, for example, the story of the "take dissolution" or "potere operaio" at the Rosolina meeting. Applying the same mental scheme, one could say that the break of "Contrappiano" between Toni, Cacchari and Asor Rosa on one side and Negri on the other, was equally simulated. Or, going back farther, we could consider the spill of "Classe operaia" a fiction; and, even before that, that of "Quaderri Rossi". We were formed on Toni's books before, then on those of Toni Negri.

**N** Various inferences concerning your arrest have appeared in newspapers. Your arrest was put in relation to alleged divergences and splits inside the armed party. . . .

**M** It's real infamy. Those who write such things only reveal their propensity to use treason and delation as instruments of warfare. Those who think that political struggle between revolutionaries can arrive at the point of erasing the prejudicial solidarity between communists against the class enemy have had their heads rotted by a stalinistic and gangsteristic logic.

**LABOR DOCUMENT  
FROM THE  
DISSENTING  
BRIGADISTS**

In the early '70s, after the powerful cycle of workers' struggles and their illegal outcome, the problem of how to connect this underground aftermath to a "legal" initiative was hotly debated at the highest levels of the revolutionary movement. Put in these terms, the connection between armed struggle and legal action couldn't be established. The transition to armed struggle had to be acknowledged in its specificity and in its political and organizational implications.

In this framework, to put it simply, the initial intervention of the O. confused the terms of this problem by asserting that it is the autonomy of the working class that has to be organized around the armed struggle, and not the reverse.

The major instrument, in that phase, was the Armed Propaganda which attempted to demonstrate the practicability of the Armed Struggle.

In the last two years, the situation has evolved in such a way as to affect a reversal of the situation of the early '70s. At that time, the specific form or armed spontaneity constituted a restraint to the qualitative expansion of the "proletarian struggle"; today, the organizational and political rigidity of the model that was necessary to provoke that rupture is becoming an impediment to the quantitative expansion of the "armed proletarian struggle."

The O. does not realize that the phase of the single "strategic" direction stifling spontaneity has ended. The MPRO requires party cadres, elements capable of organizing and directing the armed struggle—and not professors debating abstract contradictions between "partiality" and "strategy".

Therefore there is no one more legalistic and opportunistic than he who continues to assert the permanent necessity of an avant-garde role which constitutes, through its own directions, a lighthouse in the nocturnal darkness of the proletarian "unconscious".

**THE STORY OF O.**

Significantly, in September 1976, the Front organizing action within the masses was definitively broken up. The O. identified the enemy as the Multinational Imperialist State (MIS). The contradictions within the MIS made it such that the existence of a "specific" front for political action was no longer justified. The consequences of this "vertical linearity", imposed from above, struck mainly those sectors of "recent" political intervention in the masses, especially those who had demonstrated a capacity for independent analysis most likely to counter the tendency toward abstraction inherent to this kind of choice.

This point of view was limited historically by its strict emphasis on the economic re-structuring of big industry. This disregard for level social related "partiality" and the new quality of the workers' struggle to the underbrush of "partiality" and "secondary" contradictions. Unable to integrate into its program the political enrichment derived from these struggles, the O. mechanically reassessed the hegemony of industrial labor, issued from an antiquated, and by now obsolete, conception of "productive" work.

**IF IT DOESN'T  
CONCERN THE  
FACTORY, IT IS  
SECONDARY**

**THE DISMISSAL OF  
MASS INITIATIVE**

The O. is constantly forced to reduce the State's initiative to political forces (the "Command") and ultimately to a single political force, the Christian Democrats. Such an analysis, imposed from above, was found to render their attack against these forces inefficient and misplaced.

The actual dismissal of mass initiative was a decisive act. It made it impossible for the O. to intervene from within the real class contradictions.

On the contrary, the total political dependence of the Brigades on the "central" directives coming from the Counter-revolutionary forces, and mediated by the direction of the Column, was, as a reaction, indirectly enhanced. It is from the

This document, attributed to Valerio Morucci and Adriana Faranda (both in prison since May, 1979), was sent to *Lotia Continua* in July, 1978. It is the first public recognition of dissension within the Red Brigades. In order to fully understand this document, it is necessary to keep in mind the nature of the BR's internal organization as well as their specific position within the revolutionary movement in general.

The BR are organized in autonomous columns which communicate only at their summit. It is through the Strategic Direction. The five columns of the organization correspond to the five main Italian cities (there is none in the South). Each column is divided in independent cells. Gravitating around the clandestine organization proper, a wider zone of militants take care of all the logistic work (propaganda, communication, etc.). These are the MPRO (Proletarian Movement for Offensive Resistance).

Although the most powerful organization, and the only one to actually operate at the national level, the BR are not by far the only antagonism in order to overcome the increasing isolation of the communist fighters.

The "Dissenting Brigadists" document addresses in priority all the combatant network. It deals with the specific problems of armed action. It could not, therefore, be too explicit nor easily accessible. After several attempts at a faithful translation (by Dan Scanlon and Wayne Storey), we decided rather to clarify and greatly emendate this allusive, repetitive and highly rhetorical text in order to give the reader a chance to grasp the nature of the dissension declared within the BR as well as the indications given to the various armed groups. In short: the authors violently accuse the Stalinist line adopted by the "Strategic Direction" of the Organization (O). They advocate a return to grass-root actions and a closer adherence to the dynamics of social antagonism in order to overcome the increasing isolation of the communist fighters.

The mystifications circulated by the press concerning the "case of the 7 deserters" from the Red Brigades, along with an outline of death sentences and insinuations of informants, have persuaded us that the revolutionary movement needs to know the political terms of the question. The labor document we are sending you clearly shows the existence of a "struggle between two lines," which however bitter has nothing to do with the rules of mafia and gangster feuds. These deliberate distortions alarm us. We are seriously concerned for the physical safety of imprisoned comrades—Gallucci's carbons might well be feeding the voices of "death sentences."

We invite the Movement to keep a close watch. We warn whoever takes part in this infamous misrepresentation of the internal struggle as "mafiosa" and "gangsterish" that we will use every means of action to block what is last becoming a concentrated campaign of misinformation about the Movement and provocation in respect to imprisoned communists.

**TO THE EDITORIAL STAFF  
OF LOTIA CONTINUA  
Comrades:**

**Dissenting  
Brigadists**

E O. LEADERS  
MPLAIN ABOUT  
E BRIGADES

DO MORO

WATER THE  
ATH TOLL

E IMPRISONED  
MRADES

political organization of the Column that the Brigades received the "strategic" in-

This could only lead to a total failure, but the O. still is unable to understand the reasons for this bankruptcy. In fact, the O. complained bitterly over the years of the lack of positions emanating from the Brigades. They were deprived of any possibility to discuss internally problems concerning specific situations; they were given "strategic" indications on targets to strike, based on inadequate "general analysis" of the enemy; they were constantly warned about the uselessness and danger of their participating in mass organizations of the Movement; they were constantly warned of the "danger" entailed by a line aimed at partial objectives. And yet they were supposed to come up with propositions!

Another tragic aspect of this choice is that it magnified the defensive character of the O., which had come to merely "mirror" the initiative and the structures of the enemy. Here arises this aspect of a "negative" copy of the State that will ultimately prove devastating.

The Moro operation constitutes a quantum leap in the Red Brigades' attack against the State. This battle represents the apex of the strategic line of the armed struggle. It provides the highest example of the levels of power that the proletariat can achieve through the principal instrument of its struggle: organization. It was essential, after this display of power, to look backwards so that this "concentrate", this "school" of power be reappropriated by the proletarian movement as a whole.

It is one thing for a group to demonstrate how far proletarian counter-power can reach and it is another to believe that this example is the actual counter-power of the proletariat. Everybody should see the abyss that separates these "experimental" from the rest of the revolutionary movement. Everybody should perceive the lack of connection between the offensive level reached by the O. and the scattered character of the attack assumed on the horizontal level by the MPRO.

Something could have been done with the enormous power displayed in Via Fani and in the following battle. It should either have been conserved, or converted into actions—whatever the death toll—capable of reintroducing that power into the daily struggle of the proletariat (e.g. the destruction of an electronic control system spying on the workers of a big factory). It should have been preserved as a powerful reference, and not used as a launching pad towards an adventurist leap into warfare.

Success goes to one's head: the "strategical" tendency has been reinforced by the Moro affair. It appears unlikely that, already launched on this dangerous track, the vehicle can be stopped. Eager to "denounce" the counter-revolutionary nature of the MIS, the O.—consciously or not—limited its goal to accelerating the pace of war and repression in order to "show" the proletariat how "ferocious" the enemy is. It totally neglected the fact that prematurely restricting democratic spaces could only weaken the proletarian organization.

It is, paradoxically, the imprisoned avant-gardes who better understood the danger of a "strategical" deformation. The physical separation from the field of action did not result in alienating the imprisoned comrades from reality. On the contrary, it allowed them the political detachment required for thorough reflection at this most delicate juncture. Unfortunately it is this thoroughness of reflection that the leaders on the outside lack most.

Communism doesn't amount simply to overcoming the crisis. Let's address the meaning of the statement of the Strategic Directive number 3.

As a consequence of its instrumental and defensive use, the O. remains on purely formal grounds. It keeps reasserting that the main problem is to attack and

COMMUNISM  
WOULD  
BE POSSIBLE IF

WE NEED A  
PROGRAM

MESSENGRERS OF  
DEATH

destroy the MIS. It defines communism as a "form", a "system", "applicable" after this stage only.

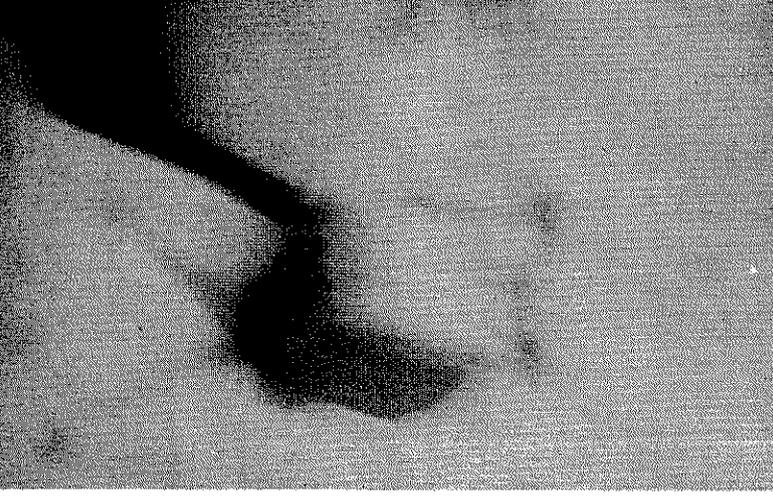
Contrary to what the O. theorizes, communism will not be achieved by one or two five-year plans: "communism is the real movement which destroys the present status quo." (Marx).

"The more this contradiction develops, the more does it become evident that the growth of the forces of production can no longer be bound up with the appropriation of alien labor, but that the mass of workers must themselves appropriate their own surplus labor... The measure of wealth is then not any longer, in any way, labor time but rather disposable time." (Grundrisse, Notebooks VII).

Contrary to what the Stalinists think, communism and its mode of production, which is superior to that of capitalist productivity, is not a "system" dictated by the people's commissions. It results from a social and political process, based on a high level of development of productive forces, which affirms a "social subject" able to destroy and to replace the whole system based on the division of salaried work.

The first and most probable risk, in such a perspective, is to distinguish at the outset between the capacity for destabilization and the capacity for a prompt, continuous and comprehensive counter-position of the working class in relation to all other articulations of the capitalist State.

These messengers of misfortune and death who hope in this way to "convince" the masses of the necessity of taking up arms do not even realize that they are addressing a working class who have far more than their chains to lose and who probably will only decide to take up arms when they will have achieved a program of power commensurate to their own development and to capital's development. Only at that point will the "necessity" for war become a positive affirmation within the growing confrontation of classes.



The opening of a process of guerrilla-type armed struggle cannot be understood as a mechanical transition from the attack on people to the attack on a system. It

until now the line pursued by the O., in the armed propaganda phases, could be

seen as a fighting line "in the apparent form of terrorism," what is now proposed is a terrorist line "in the apparent form of guerrilla-armed struggle."

The distorted reading of Lenin proposed by the O. leads to the absurd affirmation of the DS3. The practice of armed struggle by the masses is thereby defined as a militarism of the minority.

It is certain that the MPRO should more and more abandon the field of nocturnal attacks (already politically surpassed by richer means of struggle) and capture a battleground apt to increase its wealth, creativity and capacity for class recom-

position.

The use of provocation was justified by the necessity to shock the avant-gardes in the "legal" area, and it had to be essentially a political provocation. Today, on the contrary, there exists various set-ups and structures of the avant-gardes organized within the MPRO—and therefore still in the field of armed struggle. If instead of strengthening these structures, one aims at destroying them, the only result that one can expect is a regression of the process of construction of the Fighting Communist Party (PCC) as well as a "reinforcement" of the "strategists"

organizations assured by the MPRO turncoat.

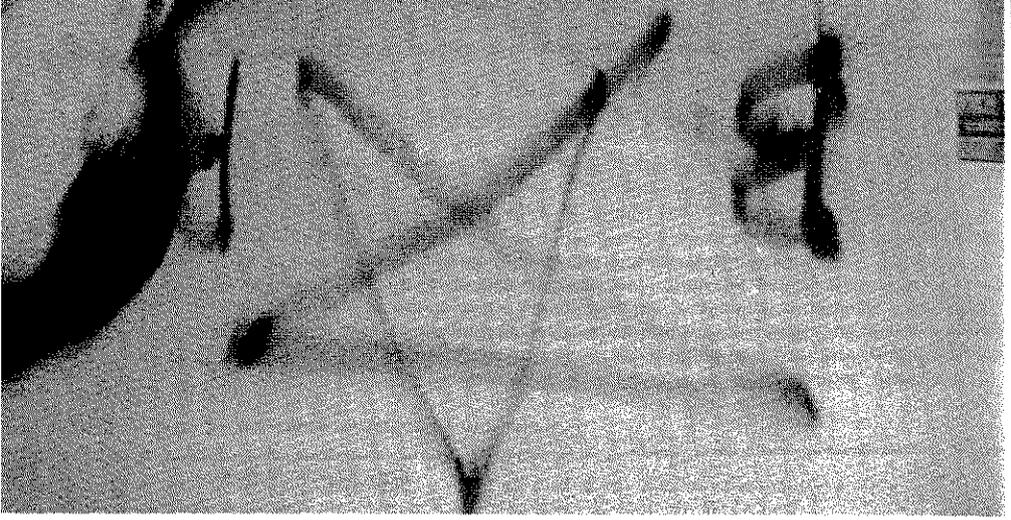
Under these conditions, the provocation isn't political anymore, it is provocation pure and simple.

This is the most difficult moment in the battle: if the one organization which had accumulated sufficient prestige and authority in order to impose and direct the construction of the PCC; if that organization turns away from this role, and in fact operates against it, a prisoner of its own ultra-strategy, it is necessary to impose modifications in the line that are indispensable to bring back within the growth of the revolutionary movement the richness of its own experience.

1/1-2 Photos: Seth Tillet

A PROVOCATION  
PURE AND SIMPLE

THE WORST  
PONTANISM



# Who is the Traitor? Renato Curcio

and within the unions by means of a highly sophisticated technique of control, absorption and recovery of revolutionary thrusts: it coopts the pacifist and legal group leaders — whether sympathizers of the Communist Party or small-time leeches of the Socialist Party — by using the appropriate mechanism for absorbing these revolutionary impulses, mechanisms disguised as "special services" of the State.

The forms of this integrating cooptation are manifold. Newspapers (like *Lotta Continua* which, as everyone knows and by its own admission, receives the needed funds from the Socialist Party (PSI); or like *Metropoli*, which seeks sustenance from the same trough, centers for advanced studies (like the CERPERE, which feeds on the funds from the *Cassa del Mezzogiorno*), universities (where would-be revolutionaries disguise themselves as barons, or viceversa), publishing houses, little-parties, etcetera.

The essential thing is that these "characters," while they are concretely introduced into the mechanisms that activate the reproduction of the modes of capitalist production, and while they are also adequately rewarded for calming down the "restlessness" of their conscience, are also placed in such positions where they may organize around themselves small clientele. Thus to the factions of bourgeois power are added those of lower middle-class intellectuals and both are ultimately a less expensive solution for the imperialist middle-class than any — at any rate impossible — integration of entire social strata.

In recent years this technique, which has been experimented widely in the United States, has been applied broadly in our country; whoever is above the magic of big words will find proof of this every day in the news. A good example is the history of a document unanimously attributed to the Red Brigades by both the regime's mass media and the coopted pseudo-newspapers — and in particular by Mr Valerio Morucci and Miss Adriana Faranda.

We do not know who these gentlemen are specifically, but by looking at their papers and bearing in mind their behavior, we can safely declare that they are neophytes of the psychological counter-guerrilla warfare, poor madmen deployed by the counter-revolution. And, frankly speaking, the attempt made by certain "counter-guerrilla advisors" like the journalists Carlo Rivoita, Mario Scialoja and Enrico Deaglio to dress these people up as Brigadists and sustain an alleged "scission," more than being hilarious, disgusts us.

We do not know if for offering their services as "advisors" Rivoita, Scialoja and Deaglio were well rewarded by their bosses, but we are sure of the fact that they have a very dim idea of the times in which they live. These are times when much more than money, the reward for certain "operations" is a good shower of bullets, as it happened to their friend-in-bad-ventures Casalegno,<sup>4</sup> is this a threat? God forbid, no, it is only a statement of fact.

If we participate in the saraband orchestrated by the "advisors" with the help of the "neophytes," and performed in the area of the "great socialist family," it is only because we have been unwarily called onto the scene, so to speak.

It is well known that the "historical leaders" — or the "muscles" of the heroic age, whichever is more appealing — always draw more attention. With great clamor yesterday we were asked to make a pronouncement on the question of amnesty. Today they demand nothing less than a supporting statement to a written statement which certainly comes from the most stupid, least informed sectors of the counter-revolution.

Com'on Gentlemen, take your wheeling and dealing more seriously.

How can you demand "an amnesty" from us?

We are at the onset of war and already you are begging for a truce?

The imperialist State deals with the crisis of representation in the "party system"

that "they are comrades who make mistakes!"

This is the topic we'd like to discuss, so that no militant can ever say about them

ed one at that.

Marcenaro's denouncement,<sup>1</sup> are our own brand of "blockheads," and a very wicked one at that.

The hunters of "maddened variables" much like the upholders of Deaglio and

revolution inevitably drags along its edges dirt and refuse of all sorts.

not the first ones to attempt this, and they will not be the last ones either. Every gang of stinging troublemakers who work for the imperialist counter-revolution, and who buzz around the zone of guerrilla warfare with the ambitious desire of consigning into the hands of the bourgeoisie the "maddened variables," They are Summer is the mosquito season. And just as annoying as mosquitoes, there is a

To the entire revolutionary movement.

Asinara, July 31, 1979

This document written from the Asinara prison and published in August, 1979, in *Panorama*, constitutes a violent response to the various attempts at putting an end to the spiral of terrorism and repression created by the Moro affair. It is a specific answer to the proposition of amnesty launched by Franco Piferino and the subsequent publication of the "Disseminating Brigadists" document, allegedly written by Valerio Morucci and Adriana Faranda. Attributed to Renato Curcio, it was signed by 16 other imprisoned founders of the BR.

We should however spend some time with the document. Now we are not doing this with any intention of "becoming dialectical" with all that ideological rubbish, with all that dislocated discourse collected here and there from the sacred texts of some university professor in search of violent "emotions": "all this is none of our business and it actually disgusts us. If to some this still sounds unconvincing, all he has to do is lead through our declarations at each trial; if they do not meet with the standards of the literary fads of the academic matras on the extreme left, they have at least the virtue of clarity. We come forth because the propaganda campaign tacked on to this document, hypocritically attributed to our organization, may spread uncertainty in those sectors of the proletarian movement's offensive resistance of recent formation.

We come forth because these positions are not, never have been, those of the Red Brigades.

We come forth to laugh at those puny unendowed brains which were capable of conceiving, even if only to hope for it, our involvement in such an infantile and wicked operation. We come forth to declare that we are not leaving any room for Mr Morucci and Miss Faranda's provocation, nor to the megalomaniacal projects of the baron Piperno and their "Saints in Paradise", that is, Mancini, Signorile and Craxi? It is they who are directing this suicidal operation since the days of the "Spring Campaign (*Campagna di Primavera*)."

These tools, these would-be *autonomi*, or liberal-gobettians<sup>8</sup> or Craxo-socialists are all (blunt) weapons against guerrilla warfare and it is high time that the movement gets rid of them with the greatest clarity and decision. It is with whisps of will all who meddle in the marshes of all "ambiguities"<sup>9</sup> with whisps of hypocrisy. The revolutionary movement must understand that its proletarian soul has the courage and strength to call shit what is shit and communist only what is communist. And then they speak of "comrades who make mistakes!"

These objections are permitted to the youngest comrades: but the bourgeoisie attacks them too and someone even ended up in jail. That's the way it is. One must bear in mind the peculiar shabbiness of the "senior" political ranks, the ones that run the party system, has not allowed the teutonic-american (*amerikano-desko*) control machinery supported by Craxi to fully unveil its ill-omened actions. It is proof once more of the extremely violent contradictions that shake the imperialist State and that wear out its initiatives, strewn them in diverse directions.

The "visions" line<sup>10</sup> charges head-first, without looking anybody in the face. The policeman-general's monocle isn't even capable of distinguishing the insidious function of a political subdivision which the "integrating coalition" line develops side by side with the movement. Or is it maybe that the Piedmontese general<sup>10</sup> is convinced, in his militaristic delirium, that guerrilla warfare can be beaten with a military campaign? It is the same "ambiguous meddler" who are the first ones to complain of it and everyone, fugitive or jailed, feels the pang, as when they implore "are we not the last dam against guerrilla warfare?"

Allow us to feel sorry for these moaning educators of yesterday who — from their tranquil desks and in their magazines — urged the imprisoned proletarians to fight the most truculent battles, and now — shy lambs — entrust the vindication of their innocence to a hunger strike.

One asks himself: old "cadres of the movement" and still innocent?

Yet one should be ashamed of this kind of virginity.

At any rate, we have something very clear to say to the innocent little boys who play at making the revolution from their little newspapers (while with much less innocence they cooperated with the counter-revolution: whoever is innocent for the bourgeoisie is definitely guilty for the proletariat!)

**ATTAINING  
HEGEMONY  
OVER THE  
WORKING CLASS**

It may sound like a slogan, but it is true nevertheless.

To conclude: if up to now there could have been some doubt on the effective situation of these ambiguous characters within the proletarian movement's offensive resistance, today they have been unmasked by their own actions: the contradiction is thus between ourselves and the enemy.

At this point we should like to say to the entire "junior" political class... let's start singing, gentlemen! The cards are uncovered, the "players are all well known," the game is clear. Whoever has been dragged in by inexperience or simple-mindedness should jump ship now.

We, militants of the Red Brigades, together with the proletarian components of the resistance movement, know how to solve these fastidious little quarrels with all the required decidedness.

And one thing is sure: we'll do it with joy!

What do our pretty gentlemen actually say in their "summa"? That the class' composition is changed and that the protection of the worker's centrality demonstrates the absolute incomprehension of the epoch in which we live; that the party was well and good at the onset of the armed struggle but that today, in order to continue with its avant-garde role, it must dissolve itself in the Movement; that proletarian power is built not in relation to the State but upon itself.

These are three vital theses over which some violent political and ideological battles are being fought today within the proletarian movement's offensive resistance. These debates cannot be underestimated since they are rooted in the complex composition of the metropolitan proletariat, that is to say, in the attempt on the part of indirectly productive — or unproductive — components to attain hegemony over the working class.

It would be a good idea not to shrug the problem off, because the question of the worker's hegemony over the proletarian movement's offensive resistance is a question which determines the victory or defeat of the proletarian revolution in the imperialist city. To support or discard the thesis of the centrality of the worker becomes thus a strategic discriminant; that explains why we opt to delve into this issue a bit.

"To concentrate on the highest levels of the class offensive means necessarily to examine much more thoroughly the analysis of class composition." This is what



There are cute little "gentlemen" who write that "in the last two years the situation has evolved to such a point that it forced an overturning of what it was in the early '70's."

According to them, party action has seen its better days and perhaps yesterday was necessary, but, under the new situation, to insist upon this road is to have the "arrogance" and presumption proper of a group and not of the proletarian avant-garde. In other words: today the proletarian avant-garde, to be such, must negate its role as avant-garde!

And then, if the strategy is already thriving in the new political make-up of the class, what's the point of party action?

"To stop the quantitative expansion of the armed proletarian struggle," say the disbanders to one another, is simple. It is not a new lesson: from the beginning the ARMED SPONTANEITY preached that the avant-garde must, so to speak, dissolve itself in the movement. The authors of *Mal piu senza fucile* ("Never again without a gun")<sup>11</sup> had told us this back in '75, leaving in that little journal a testimonial which runs more or less as follows: the Red Brigades have been a tiny motor which turned on a great motor, and that is good, but now that a fighting movement is born what need is there for a fighting party? To us instead the problem was and is articulated differently. First of all these absent-minded people should remember that from the very beginning our militancy took place on the *side* of real class movements and that means that the armed propaganda action positioned itself inside and at the highest point of the struggle which the city proletariat was building up.

It was precisely this positioning which allowed us to transform the armed propaganda action into Organization. It allowed us to verify and, when needed, rectify our fighting programs; it allowed us to resist the harshest of repressions and to grow as a political-military avant-garde; it permitted us to contribute to the maturity and consistency, is today a truly revolutionary mass movement. It was precisely this development of the objective situation caused by the crisis — and by our history within it — that put us face to face with the necessity to take a qualitative leap: skipping the party.

(To prove this, the theses of the strategic leadership are quoted. To sum up: the fighting party is part of the movement, but at the same time is different because it possesses its own military, organizational, and political autonomy).

### A QUALITATIVE LEAP



they tell us, and it is true. But it could be a banality (in the sense that, in an epoch of rapid structural transformations of the economy as a result of the process of crisis-structuring-internationalization of capital, it is taken for granted that the analysis of labor's public figures and of political behavior cannot slacken); or it could be that we are dealing with a pompous questioning of the essential theses on the centrality of the worker.

"Know the analysis thoroughly" they continue, it could lead to the discovery of a "new class composition" and therefore to avoiding "pitfalls of interpretation."

Their suggestion is, more precisely, that the communist avant-garde must "develop that power drive which today is exemplified in certain struggles (hospital workers, women, etc.) and which constitute for the proletariat an appeal for union and integration of various social personalities within a still unclear project of organizing society differently; it is to this project, which tends to be global, that the party should restore refinement and planning."

That's the game and the center of gravity shifts elsewhere. From the centrality of the worker or of directly productive labor, to the centrality of the productive or unproductive. It is an overturning that places at the center of the revolutionary process people who, though proletarians or on their way to becoming proletarians, are not at all at the center of the capitalist mode of production, nor can they be placed there with falsifications extracted from the worst bourgeois sociology.

To ditch the generality of immediately productive work: this is the dream of all petit-bourgeois ideologues who attempt to ride the true movements of the non-working components of the city proletariat, and then absolutize their relative importance.

In this effort the common places on "mature capitalism," where the boundary between productive and unproductive work should be dissolved, are wasted; the quoting of the magic *Grundrisse*, stretched like American chewing gum to the point of referring them to the entire society instead of only to the factory, as in the text, multiplies rapidly; the charges against those who stick to this keystone of Marxism become burning anathemas, and at times defaming accusations, of off the marxist-cow! which for years had masked their liberal-gobletian creed and which the first breath of wind now unmasks; the more clever ones prefer to get on line behind the chorus of laments on "the end of Marxism," coin theories on "the new revolutionary subject," on the "social laborer (*operaio sociale*)," and toll the funeral march of the mass-worker.

(The document at this point probes a class analysis on the composition of the city proletariat and concludes that the revolutionary supremacy belongs to "immediately productive workers of surplus value" and in particular to the mass-worker.)

Mature capitalism is not that of czarist Russia of the beginning of the 20th century, but this does not mean that, still today and here, it shouldn't be the directly productive workers who conceive of a strong general interest toward the destruction of the capitalist mode of production and toward the construction of the communist course. Of course, it doesn't mean either that they are the "only ones" to have this interest and so, around them, and around their GENERAL POLITICAL PROGRAM, it is possible to draw together all those people directly or indirectly opposed to the capital and who articulate and circumscribe the city proletariat.

It is the working class that must direct with its general political program the entire proletarian movement's offensive resistance: whosoever opposes this will be routed. Theses number two: the party was doing well at the beginning of the armed struggle, but today, in order to carry out an avant-garde role, it must dissolve into the movement.

It is a political — and thus not only organizational — leap because being "in-terns" of a specific class movement in this transitional conjuncture requires above all the political capacity to condense the specific necessities of this movement in an IMMEDIATE POLITICAL PROGRAM.

This Program, in any event, is not — as the spontaneists hold — the immediate expression of the most urgent interests which each proletarian sector deems necessary to solve. It rather expresses those real, strategic interests which the power positions gained allow to place on the agenda.

(To place above all the political struggle, and then the economic one: to underscore this primacy the document invokes lengthy quotations from Marx, Engels, and Lenin, and concludes with: in this sense we are absolutely Marxist.)

On this basis the leadership role undertaken by the fighting party is explained. The immediate political program, therefore, while it captures the specific traits of the essential interests of each proletarian sector, subsequently connects them, by way of Party initiative, to a strategic unitary design in a common project to erect the RED POWER, in a GENERAL POLITICAL PROGRAM.

(According to Curcio, to deny that things were exactly as he described them, his adversaries excogitated the falsification of Lenin and of the Red Brigades'

strategic resolution of February '78.) The two manipulations are closely linked, as they were both aimed at showing that within the Red Brigades the spontaneous mass tendency to fight for concrete economic and social objectives, including those involving power and restructuring, is discarded with the definition of "economist-spontaneists." This "mass tendency" is not, however, any better described; thus, by remaining geographically and historically indeterminate, can be smuggled as an omniconprehensive — economic, social, of power — tendency, in other words, a restructuring.

One could have wished for more from the man who pretends to be the paladin of the proletarian movement's offensive resistance; from the man who pretends to give the lie to the Strategic Resolution.

(Another passage follows from the Feb. '78 strategic resolution where, according to the Asinara prisoners, there is presented "a thesis completely the opposite of the one denounced by his poor readers.")

Let's turn then to the real meaning of the attack supposedly brought on the so-called "strategist tendency." It is now possible to understand that with these two words the neophytes of the psychological counter-guerrilla warfare want to refer to that correct line in the Red Brigades which has placed and places politics in the forefront!

And precisely this has been the target, the central thesis of the Red Brigades, which runs thus: "To attack the heart of the State means the following: that the communist revolutionary forces must install themselves at the head, they must organize and direct armed and proletarian mass movements and lead their attacks: in each phase against the main contradiction, and in any conjuncture against the principal aspect of this contradiction: against the heart of the State, precisely!" The strategic objective of the attack is at this point defined by its contours: the concept of Party itself, its most profound essence, its avant-garde role and its project of unification of the city proletariat with respect to the anti-imperialist civil war for the cause of communism.

That this is the actual state of things is confirmed also by the attack the detractors launch against the strategic tendency of which the "Moro operation" represents the high point. According to these people, on the one hand this operation constitutes the highest example of what levels of power, what kind of challenge to the State, and what bargaining power the proletariat can attain by utilizing its main instrument of class warfare, the Organization, on the other hand,

this "operation" would reveal the "mirror image quality of the Organization which does not revolve, as a strategy and a structural set-up around the proletarian offensive, but is reflected in the structures of the enemy."

The Red Brigades, in other words, would be "the face of the negative side of the State," that is to say, an "avant-gardist" organization whose prime occupation is to show the proletariat "how ferocious the State is." More than revolutionaries, the brigadists would then be disclaimers, and with the "Moro operation" they did nothing more than to offer the proletariat a great spectacle, a symbolic representation of what "can be done!"

Now to this the non-believers add: subject and representation would be tolerable, even though the representation involves arms and actions drawn from real life, but on the condition that the spectacle (the Moro operation) not be confused with the reality (the fighting revolutionary movement).

The great leap forward which should have been taken after the Spring campaign was to put aside "the recently shown power... and begin to teach the revolutionary movement the next step in order to reach that power." Party and Movement are here seen in a teacher-student relation and behind the apparent tension for a possible re-marrriage there lurks the "conscious and unconscious" conviction that "it is" an incurable fracture.

The conclusions to which such teachers arrive cannot amaze us anymore, not even when they despair for the danger of "a premature closing of democratic spaces" which, by reducing their possibility of calmly imparting lessons in how to make a revolution, would go "against the fighting revolutionary movement." And their mask and declare, without false modesty, not to be afraid of aligning themselves "with the virtues of opportunism that have been saying so for nine years": seeing that the prevailing wind is the "strategic tendency," they too croak that the Red Brigades are "fully in the political sphere of provocation." And since "it pains them to say so," they add... "unconsciously."

In the pamphlet *La Campagna di primavera* ("The Spring Campaign") the Red Brigades dedicated some paragraphs to the criticism of these positions developed by the weakest sectors of the Movement; we refer you to them. What interests us here is the thread of a discourse which traverses other areas of the said document, and that is the thesis that proletariat power ("potere proletario") is built upon itself and not in relation with the enemy's power, with the power of the bourgeois class. The key idea of the separation as a condition of demonstra-



tion of the proletariat's power is typical of the "immediatists-economists" to which even some members of "our" line belong.

(The adversaries are accused of believing that it is possible to realize a proletarian power totally independent of the power of the bourgeois State by means of the struggle. In other words, it criticizes the view that the revolutionary action should proceed independently without attacking the heart of the State.)

it is by striking right at the heart of the State that the proletariat expands the horizon of its class interests, establishes ever more solidly its general political program, and reinforces and extends its autonomy.

Arm-wrestling between love and revolution, without stirring our libertarians, always requires two contenders: from Russia in 1917, to China in 1949, to Italy in the '80's... even though there is always somebody who can realize "his capacity to rejoice" even by himself!

(There follows other polemical uppercuts against the concepts expressed in the paragraph of the enemy's document entitled "Socialism and Communism." The accusation is that of being metaphysically abstract and of ulterior falsification in the reading of the strategic resolution "for the sheer desire of an anti-stalinist polemic.")

In any event, and to conclude, it appears that our "independentists," riding the crest of the subjective delirium that inspires their unreasoning, after having disbanded, so to speak, the party, land in the most nebulous of anarchist theses: one paradigmatic example is the overt refusal of the fundamental concept of "dictatorship of the proletariat." (...)

We call upon all comrades of the revolutionary movement to take a stand on the issues raised in this document.

Translated by Peter Caravetta

1. Andrea Marcenaro: a Journalist of Lotta Continua.
2. CEPET: Institute for Social and Economic Research. Founded in Padua by members of *Metropoli*.
3. Enrico Deaglio: Editor-in-Chief of *Lotta Continua*, a daily paper influential in the area of Autonomy.
4. Carlo Casalegno: Vice-Editor of *La Stampa*. Killed by the BR.
5. Giulio Andreotti: Influential leader of the DC. Berlinguer, Secretary of the ICP, Gramsci communist theoretician who died in prison. Craxi, Secretary of the Italian Socialist Party.
6. Negri: Professor of Political Science at the University of Padua. He is the author of numerous books and essays on Marxism.
7. Leaders of the ISP.
8. Piero Gobetti was a liberal political and literary figure influential in the anti-fascist movement. He was killed by the fascists.
9. In his letter, Piperno revendicates ambiguity in his efforts to mediate between the BR and the State.
10. The General Dalla Chiesa is the Head of the special anti-terrorist force in Italy.
11. *Ma! Più Senza Fucile* ("Never More Without Guns"); armed group that claimed actions in the North of Italy. Born at the time of the publication which bears that name.

1/1-3. Bronzino (Agnolo di Cosimo di Mariano)

Italian (Florentine) (1503-1572)

*Portrait of a Young Man* (Possibly Guidobaldo II, Duke of Urbino (1514-74))

The Metropolitan Museum of Art

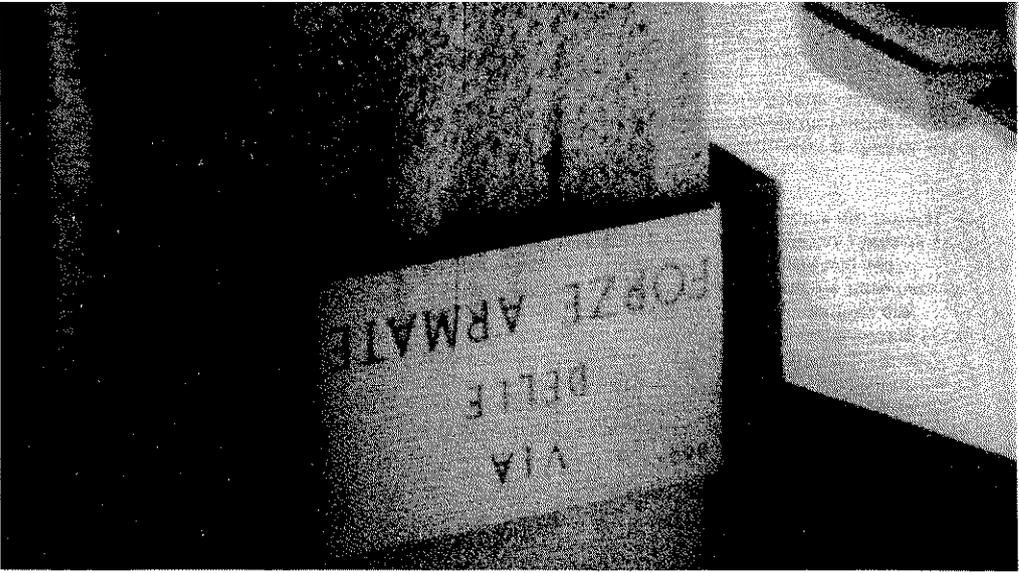
Oil on wood 37-5/8 x 29-1/2 in.

Bequest of Mrs. H.O. Havemyer, 1929

The H.O. Havemyer Collection

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1/4 Super-Bphoto: Seth Tillet



# Toni Negri

# J'Accuse

This interview, written from the Rebibbia prison in Rome, was published in *Europeo* in September, 1979 after the publication of the "Asinara document" (Renato Curcio). It indicated a possible softening of the Italian press toward the April 7 prisoners.

**Question** Do you believe, along with Minister Mancini, that Judge Calogero is crazy, or do you think that the trial has a logical and rational aim in attempting to establish a connection between the ideological roots of Autonomy and the armed struggle of the Red Brigades?

**Negri** I am not a psychiatrist and I don't get involved in the lunacy of others. I already have a hard time keeping sane in the situation I'm in. However, one thing I'm certain of: that up to now the trial of April 7 has been under the pall of a wrecked and frenzied ideology, an ideology that is opposed to the logic, the distinction, the function of judicial thought, which is that of sitting and evaluating facts. Now, facts, proofs, these are absent from the trial. Calogero says they are useless, Gallucci affirms that mere "affectio" is enough. What we have here is frantic ideology, reactionary fanaticism. If 1789 generated terror, will 1917 generate Stalin? Or yet a Jacobin fanaticism: are all popes Borgias? What's worse: according to the last statements by Calogero, all Jacobins are Borgias and all popes are Stalins.

Madness? It's not my specialty. What I know is that, if there isn't a shift of viewpoint, one will not get out of this mess. One must understand that proletarian autonomy was not invented by anybody, least of all by the former leaders of

Potop (Potere Operaio). We're in the presence of a vast socio-political phenomenon which creates a constitutional problem. Why? Because the Italian constitution has been changed by the way parties run the State. Yet workers' autonomy is not represented by the parties; what's more, most proletarian movements are no longer represented or mediated by the constitutional structure. What is the thrust of the constitutional problem created by workers' autonomy? It involves widening and redefining the basis of political participation, wage negotiations among the social classes, breaking the solidity of the present block of corporative interests preserved by the DC and PCI.

Envisaging the high cost that this involves, all sides—the conservative, the economic right, the bureaucratic left—pull back. The PCI foresees a rightist coup and a leftist plot, and any challenge to the constitution appears to it apocalyptic. But not taking up the challenge is going to cost; it's going to cost more. It is already costing more, in terms of the credibility in the institutions, keeping up a trial like the one of April 7, refusing the political responsibility of honestly facing the problem raised by the existence of workers' autonomy. One must never forget that, as all classic thinkers on constitutional thought uphold, the worst State is absolutely that left to the government of magistrates.

**Q** The PCI is leading an active campaign both against terrorism and the demonstrations of Autonomy, considering them the same phenomenon. In actuality, violence has been part and parcel of Autonomy, and has had deplorable and condemnable consequences. However, the PCI does not condemn a certain kind of violence with the same harshness: the violence that sometimes breaks out during union strikes, as for example, during the last one by the metal workers. What is your stand today in the face of these events, and what is your opinion of the Communist position?

**N** The PCI, on the left and in its left, has only one problem: the elimination of every attempt of alternative political aggregations. The problem of violence has been viewed by the PCI only from the point of what advantages could be derived from it. If violence is used to develop an alternative political strategy, the PCI is against it. But it is also opposed to nonviolence, if it serves the same purpose; this is amply demonstrated by the unfortunate (?) accusation of fascism directed to the radicals. If the acts of violence that break out during proletarian and workers' demonstrations do not immediately lead to the formation of politically alternative groups and organizations, the PCI—if the power relationships are not in its favor—can bear with them and try to "surpass" them, namely to drain their efficacy and phase them out.

When organizational interests are at stake, the PCI is either sectarian or opportunistic. During the last contract negotiations, the PCI has behaved opportunistically. However, I have the impression that, this time, opportunism does not pay, because the relationship between the working class, generally considered, and the PCI is inexorably taking on the character of a growing estrangement. In the last few years, workers' behavior has gone beyond that area of relative indifference, within which, however, a stable relationship can exist between the party and the masses. But when one starts talking about trust and consensus, one must be very careful: the line between speculation and bankruptcy is an imperceptible one, so they tell me.

**Q** Don't you think that the position of the PCI derives from the fact that, within the party, the conception of "workers' centralism" lingers on, and therefore, at least on this score, Curcio and Berlinguer's ideologies coincide? (See the Asinara papers).

**N** I have the impression that "workers' centralism" is being used in two different meanings. Let me explain: they share a similar ideological *genus* (the work-class or the big factories), but not a political, specific difference: for the Red Brigaders a big factory is always the revolutionary Pullover of the Soviet insurrection; for Berlinguer, a factory is the focus of co-management of productive labor.

What is strange is that both positions do not comprehend, from an empirical point of view, that the working class of big factories is: 1) a small minority of productive labor; 2) that the specificity of the working class in big factories is disappearing within the framework of the social organization of productive labor. Now, the only essential thing that, for those who work within Marxism, must be done is analyzing more deeply the political make-up of productive "social" work, that of the worker who, socially, produces surplus value and is therefore socially exploited.

This is, I believe, the only recognizable Pullioy of late capitalism. And it is here that all those problems arise, of organization, of the State, of transition, that are—in spite of the obseure ideology reposed by the party central committee—tees—the center of attention for the Communist militants of Autonomy. For how long do "the repression people" think they can hold out in the face of the degraded life conditions of "social" workers? How much longer do "the corporation people" think they can hold out against the pressure the "social" worker has begun to apply even within big factories?

Q What responsibility did the PCI have in the Padua trial of April 7?

N Total, it built up the case for the trial (from theory to practice, from speeches to judges, accusers, gossipmongers, slanderers, etc.; it took care of everything) and boasted about it. On April 7, while arrests were still going on, at 2:00 p.m. Padua was snowed in by handbills which announced the capture of the Strategic Committee. To be sure, this trial is a product of the degraded bureaucracy of the democratic centralism has shaped itself into a State, giving us a small example of what real socialism might be like. But in the whole situation there is also a more serious and dramatic element.

The fact is that April 7 marks the point of the reversal of the good intentions of many Communists, and in particular of that judicial group which had turned to the PCI to develop a democratic legal line, an alternative to legal formalism; not an unnatural and indiscriminate punishment, it was proposed, but prevention. With the fine result we have reached: prevention goes so far as to see in the ideas underlying this, I do not wish to express the opinion that the remedy lies in throwing away the baby with the bath water. I think that it is possible to start our journey again on the main road, by talking about the political space of Autonomy and the constitutional guarantees for the new emerging political forces.

Q Keeping in mind your past and present position, after the tragic escalation of the armed struggle, do you think that, in any way, your writings could have influenced the Red Brigaders?

N No, it has been said that we are dealing with two different cultures. It is true. But something else must be added. We are dealing with two political strategies that never crossed. The political clarification was offered, at the level of the masses, around 1973, after the occupation of Mirafiori by the "red handkerchiefs." There an alternative sprang forth which vertically split the revolutionary front on the problem of the relationship between the vanguard and the masses. (This problem, as all the militant culture of the 60s knows, is an unsolved leftover from that time of struggle.) To this ambiguous problem, which still lingers in the post-68 groups, a solution was attempted at the time. There were two ways out: one called for the glorification of the military vanguard to strike at the heart of the State, the other, pursued by Autonomy, posited the reevaluation of the concept of power itself as practiced within a mass framework; either the reproposal of the Leninist party or the revision of the concept of party itself. Outside the institutional bounds, since 1973, only these two lines exist. And at no point can they converge, because they represent two irreducible ways of conceiving power. For this reason Autonomy is far away from the Red Brigades.

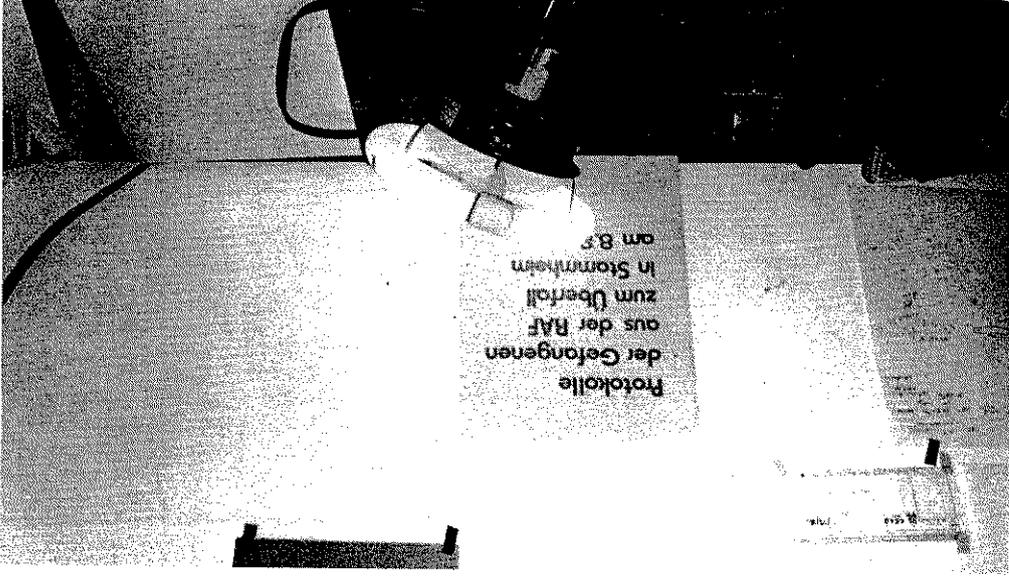
Q What do you think of the document of the Asinara 16, and what do you answer to the offensive criticism directed at you in this text?

N First of all, it lacks seriousness: culturally, it is as archeological as Valliani; what's more it has the polemic glibness worthy of Antoniolio Trombadorri. But it is above all a tragic document, suicidal on two counts: first, because it condemns itself to the most total isolation and self-destruction if only one of the threats there voiced are acted out. This document is vitiated exactly by those attitudes that lucidly the Red Brigaders seemed to have left behind: the adventurism of Mogadishu and the tragedy of Starnheim's.

Q Does the proposal by Piperno and Pace, who are calling for an amnesty for "Communist fighters," make sense to you? What are the reasons for your falling out with Piperno?

N I have no reason to contend with Piperno because we have been politically estranged since 1973. This does not exclude my feelings of friendship and liking for him. Now his proposal of amnesty is a whim for sure! It seems to me, however, that even beyond the misunderstandings caused earlier, he deserves credit for having started off a discussion on much more basic problems. That's to say, we come back again, as Federico Mancini remarked recently, to the central issue: the need to give a dynamic interpretation to the constitution as far as it applies to the power relationship among the classes, the need to shift the conflict over to a wider territory. Personally, I cannot guarantee a smooth and peaceful journey over this new territory. But watch out: we cannot forget the situation we're in, characterized by the worsening of the economic crisis, with very serious consequences for salary levels and the unemployment rate.

If there is anyone who still thinks we can act on all this simply by resorting to the rational usage of administrative mechanisms (a stable and efficient government), that person is deluding himself. Unless we go on branding as criminal "anything that moves," as the Historical Compromise has done. With what result? Italy, "the freest country in the world," is second only to the USSR as to the number of political prisoners; it is second only to Northern Ireland as to the number of special repressive forces; it is second only to East Germany as to the deployment of special laws and administrative measures to prepare for and counteract an emergency. How long will it be before the freest country in the world will be second to none?



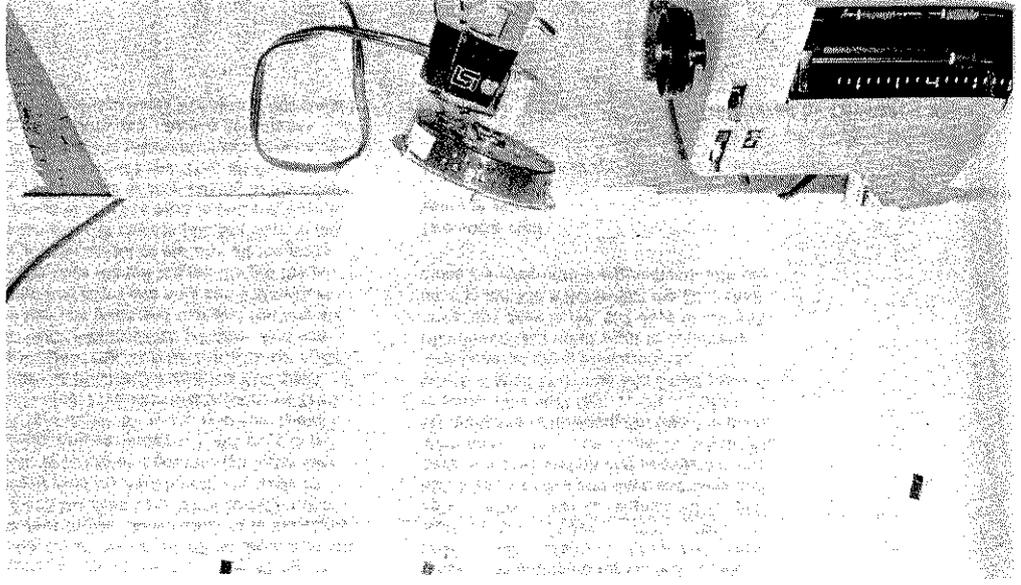
Q Are you optimistic about the outcome of the trial? What about your outlook on the Autonomy Movement in general after these events?

N It's a little hard for me to be optimistic. Yet I am more optimistic now than when I was put in prison. Why? 1) Because public opinion seems better oriented, and it will not be so easy to hurl at us again the crazy accusations and insults the magistrates threw at us in the earliest stage of the trial. 2) Because, if they hope they will be able to separate April 7 from the Movement, they're wrong. They have offered an echo chamber to the issues raised by Autonomy. Pescalino, Gallucci, it's not a coincidence, make their moves today in a disorderly fashion, but not less harshly (in this they get cooperation from the prison directors) in order to take away from us the right to speak, to defend ourselves, to fight back. They are trying again to illegally isolate us from our families and our lawyers. But they will not succeed. 3) Because I have the impression that, in spite of everything, the issue raised by Autonomy, that of finding new political space for the struggle, is asserting itself, breaking the rigidity of the political picture predating the April 7 arrests.

Translated by Vincenzo Buonocore

1. Giacomo Mancini is a senator of the Italian Socialist Party. He expressed disbelief on the accusations immediately after the April 7 arrests.  
2. Achille Gallucci, General Prosecutor.  
3. Leo Valiani, ex-partisan, is a historian and journalist of the *Corriere della Sera*. He is known for his violent right wing comments on the Italian extra-parliamentary left.  
4. Antonello Trombadori is a representative of the ICP.  
5. Plane hijacking by the Red Army Fraction and subsequent "suicide" in jail of its historical leaders.

III-2 Photo: D. Cortez





# March 16, 1978 The Aldo Moro Kidnapping B. Madaudo Melville

This comic strip of the Aldo Moro kidnapping by the Red Brigades was published in the first issue of *Metropoli*. It stresses the rigidity of both the Italian system and of the BR in exchange for the liberation of a number of imprisoned brigadisti.

It also presents the unsuccessful attempts made by the "negotiation party" to unlock the situation.

Some details, like the location of Moro's hideout, were subsequently considered "evidence" by the Italian State, of a collusion between the Editors of *Metropoli* and the BR. As a result, the magazine was seized by the police.

(Translated by Vincenzo Buonocore)



MARCH 1977 PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE ON THE LOCKHEED SCANDAL  
We cannot accept that our entire work be branded with ---



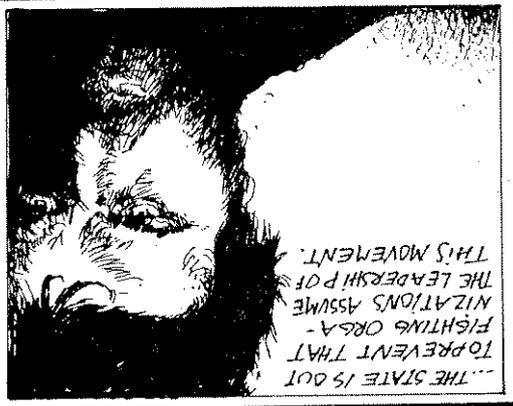
--- the mark of infamy



that we will not give up... our strength and rights going with it. WE WILL NOT BE TRIED!



To anyone trying to bring the DL to a political and moral trial we'll say



...THE STATE IS OUT  
TO PREVENT THAT  
FIGHTING ORGA-  
NIZATIONS ASSUME  
THE LEADERSHIP OF  
THIS MOVEMENT.



...BY TRYING CURIO  
AND OTHER  
COMRADES



"...IN THE LAST MONTHS THE MOVEMENT HAS BEEN HEADING TOWARDS CIVIL WAR."



"WRONG, MARCO..."



...MAYBE IT'S NOT THE RIGHT TIME. WE  
AREN'T JUST GOING TO HIT A FOREMAN  
OR A JUDGE, MORO IS INVOLVED  
HERE.

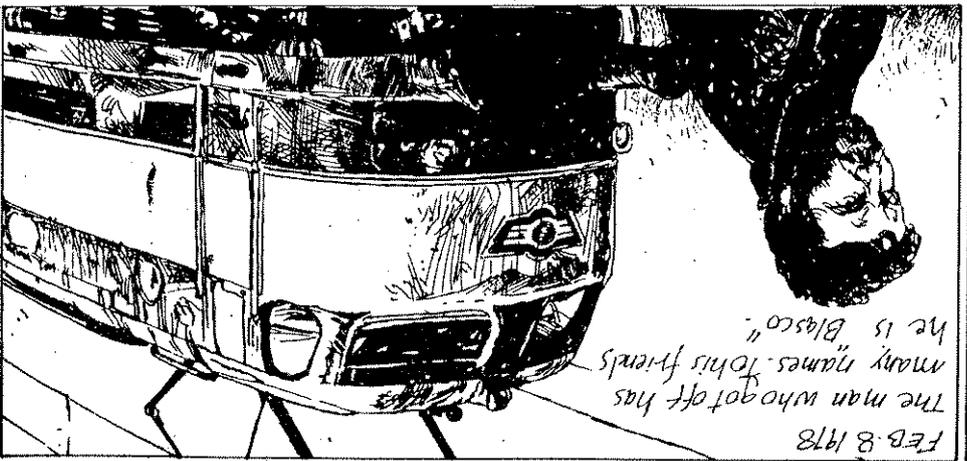


"MARCO" a chemist, just  
stopped working. He  
too has an appointment

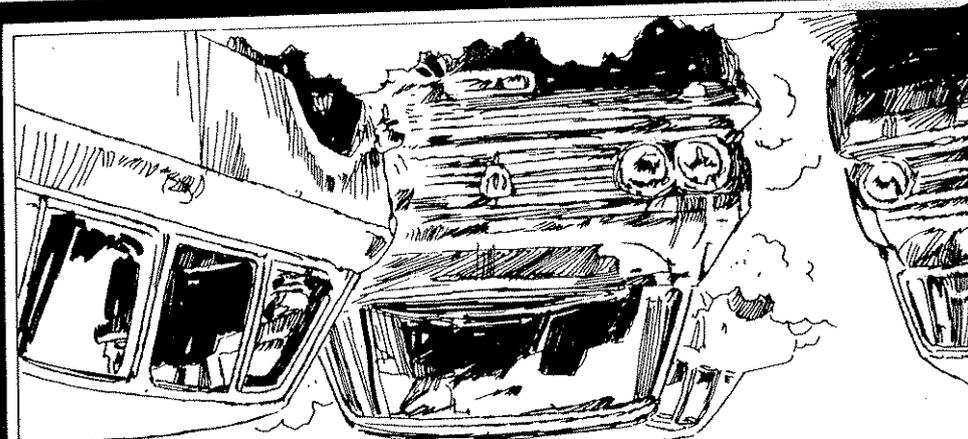
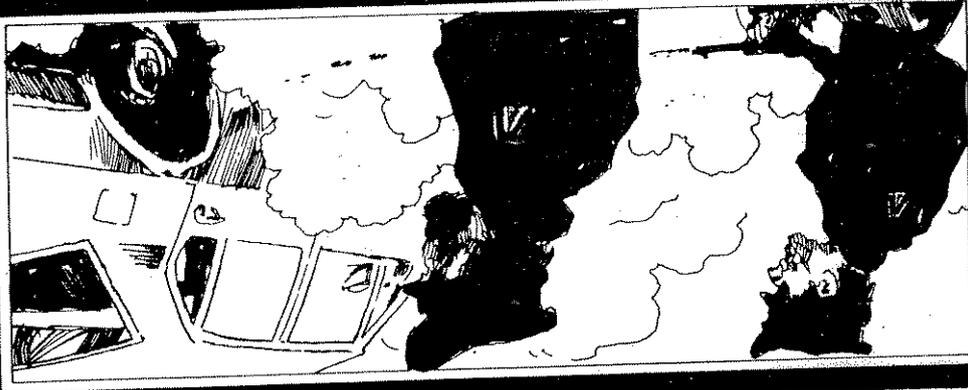


I got a school meeting.  
don't wait up!

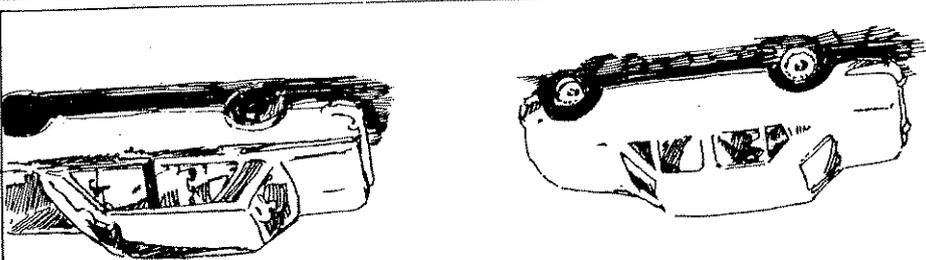
"ANNA" leads a normal life, teaches  
in a school, belongs to a party...



FEB. 8 1978  
The man who got off has  
many names. To his friends  
he is "Blasco".



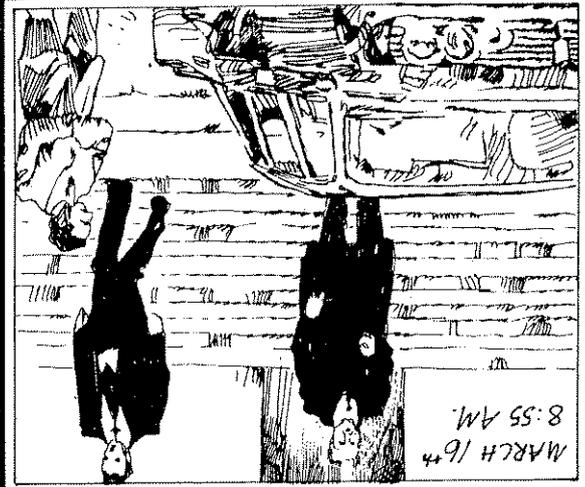
A "128" makes a short stop in front of the CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT LEADERS CAR.



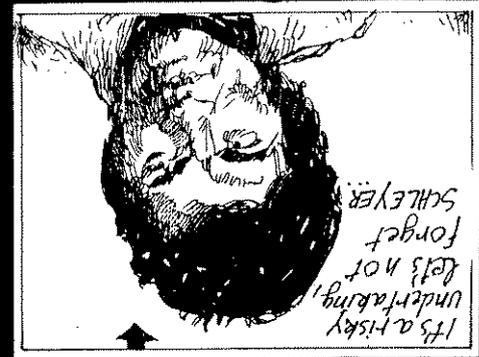
9:05 AM. Moro and his escort are driving along VIA FANI, IN ROME.



Sure, maybe they won't give in on the exchange of prisoners. Let's not fool ourselves. By kidnapping Moro we'll show the weakness of this regime... Even if they won't deal, they will have to recognize the reality of ARMED STRUGGLE.



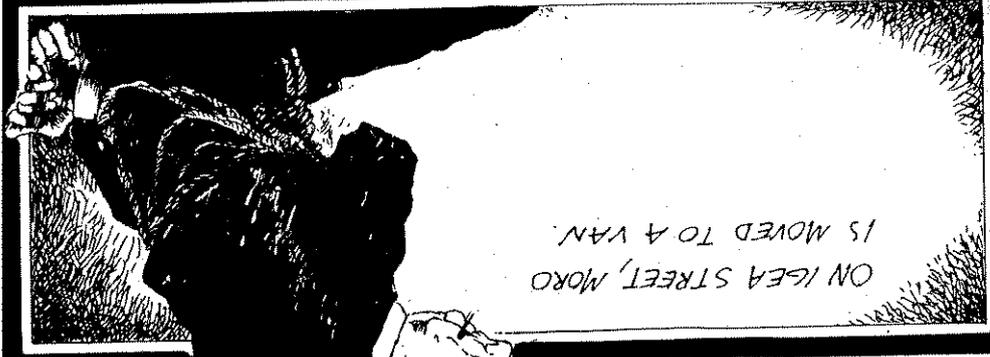
MARCH 16th  
8:55 AM.



It's a risky undertaking! Let's not forget SCALFIERI.



WE MUST GIVE them an example of the offensive power of the mass struggle.



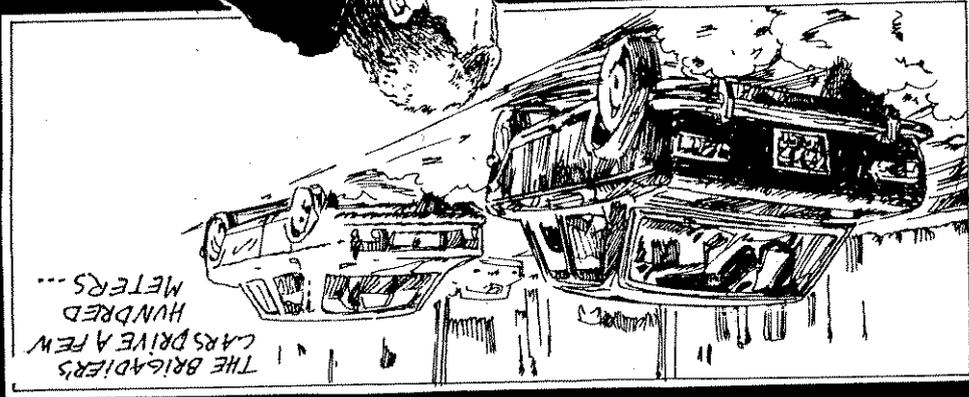
ON ICEA STREET, MORO IS MOVED TO A VAN.



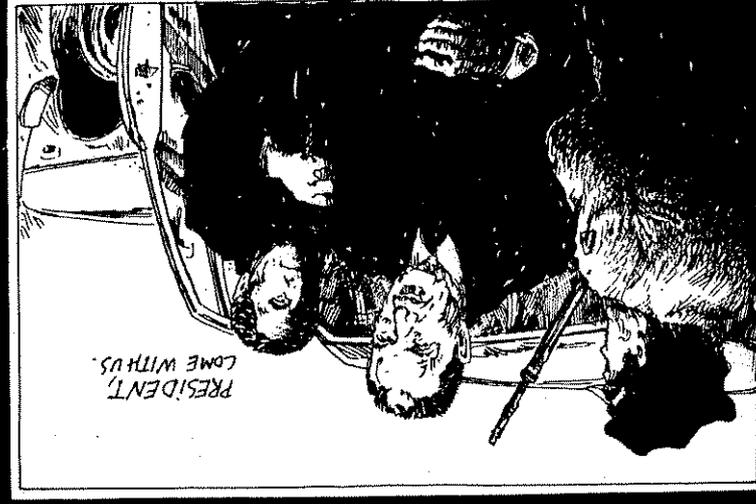
THE LINE IS OFF



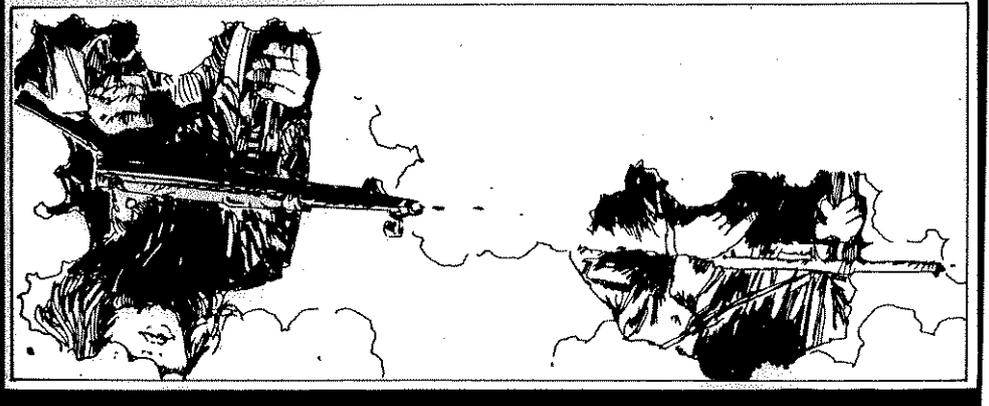
SOMEBODY... TRIES CALLING THE POLICE, IN VAN

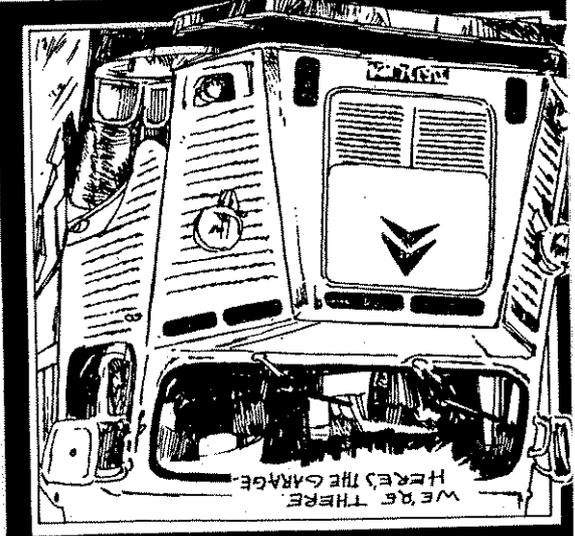
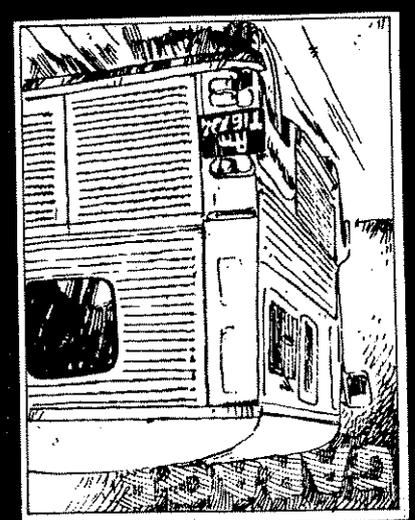
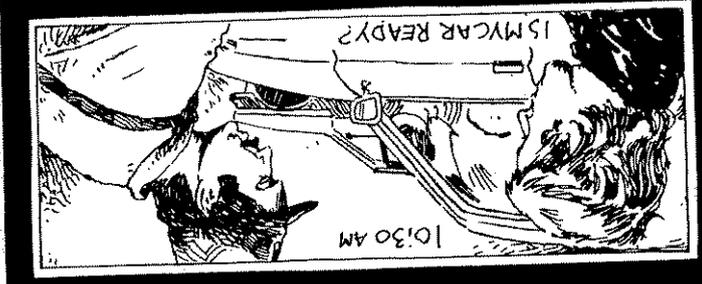
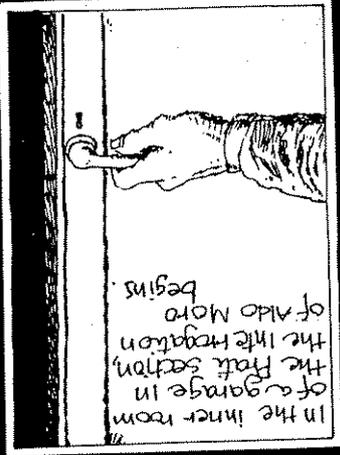
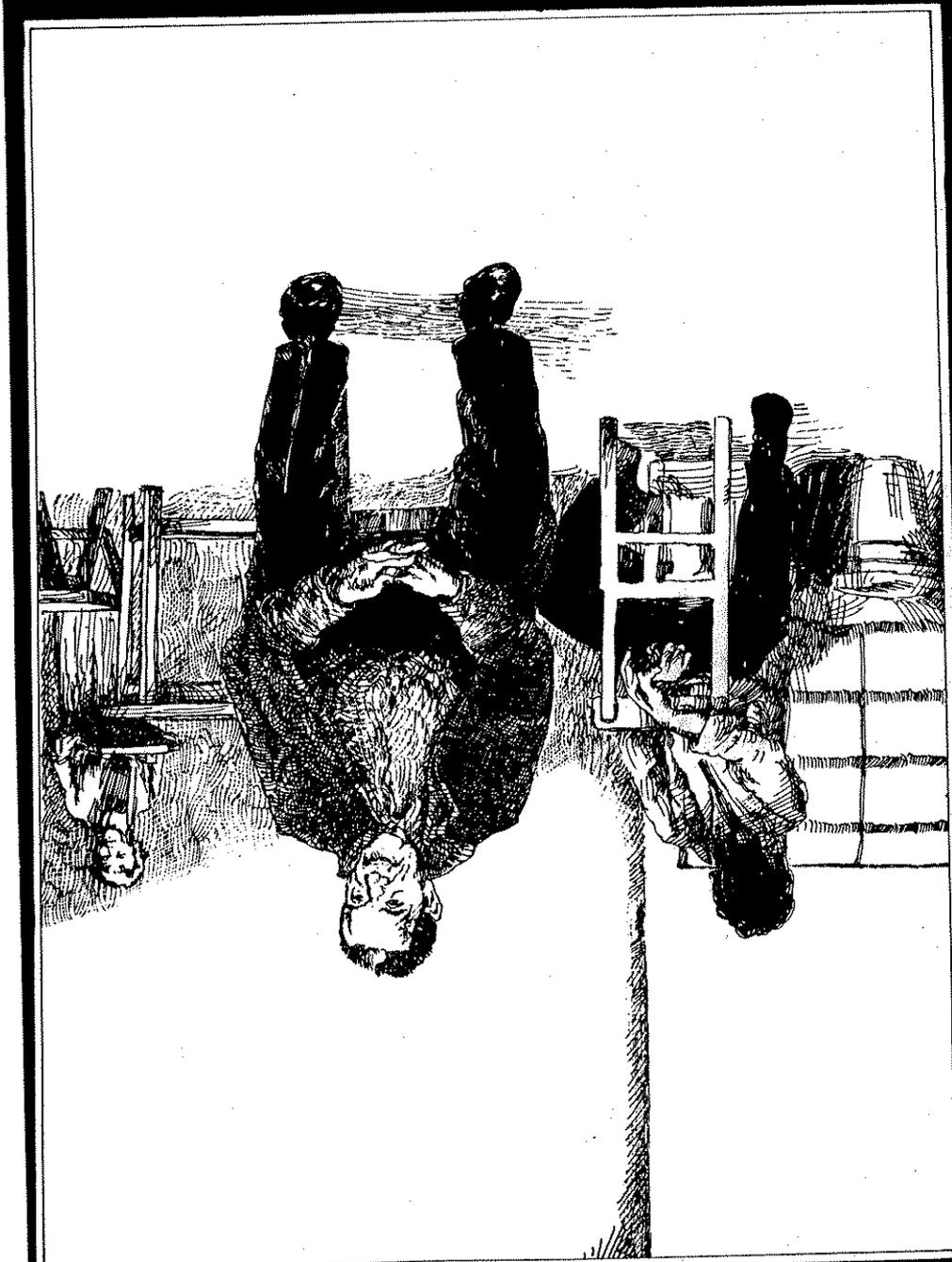


THE BRIGADIERS CARS DRIVE A FEW METERS...



PRESIDENT, COME WITH US.







ASKEER

SO, IS IT AGREED?



MORO

We gave them all the time they needed - we gave them another chance when the deadline was up. They're dragging it on to intensify the search - WE MUST EXECUTE



At the rally, Bartolomei, today, drop a hint of a hint of openness for how that's all we can do"



I agree. They're trying to trap us with their delaying tactics - Even Bartolomei, speech offers nothing NEW.



NOT TRUE. MORO's death will upset the political balance more than the exchange of prisoners -



Perhaps proof exists, but time is running out! Mr. FAVANI you should come out in the open -



The situation is difficult - My friend party directors are going along with the P.C.I. - we need proof that our openness to negotiations would be of any use -



MAY 8th 3 PM.  
You'll know the decision we reached after a long debate. Live has a more disruptive effect on the political situation. Excusing him is a mistake.

Those who dispute the authenticity of my letters fail to understand the care of the matter. An institutional compromise that does not include the political & social forces outside those in power is a puny accomplishment.



Mr. FAVANI, we have precise information within 48hrs, an important D.C. member will stand in favor of take an open negotiations.

MAY 7th It would be senseless now, cherishing a mythical of hope. The parties are fused in an aspurous union & solidarity, & are therefore deaf to any humanitarian appeal. They don't understand that my death will shatter that political pad to the ephemeral stability of which they're proud to sacrifice me. Those in favor of a humanitan more are up against the cowardice of my party. Who would favor a change of the party line -

I pictured myself  
many times how  
one dies. It's not  
so... what remains  
now is the ludd  
dismay of some-  
one who is all  
alone - I cannot  
bear the thought  
of dying. Knowing  
that I have been  
sacrificed not  
to my cause, but  
to that of all those  
who condemned  
me.



Killing is hard, too  
But these are  
the laws of war.



It's hard  
accepting  
death. Not  
only because  
of the people  
I love, but  
also when  
I think of the  
things I'd like  
to do... Against  
the inhuman  
rigidity of the parties  
Against false friends



I expected it.

...a bad turn



Resident, the situation has taken...

MAY 24 8 PM.



11:00 PM.  
MAY 24



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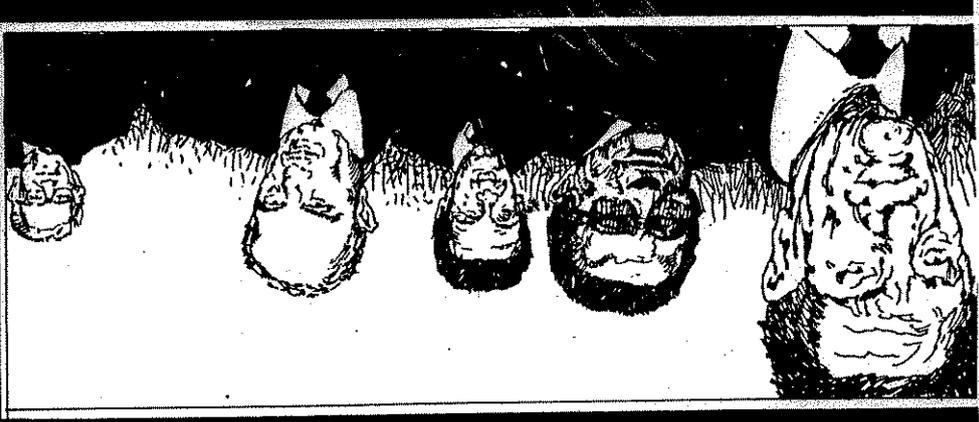
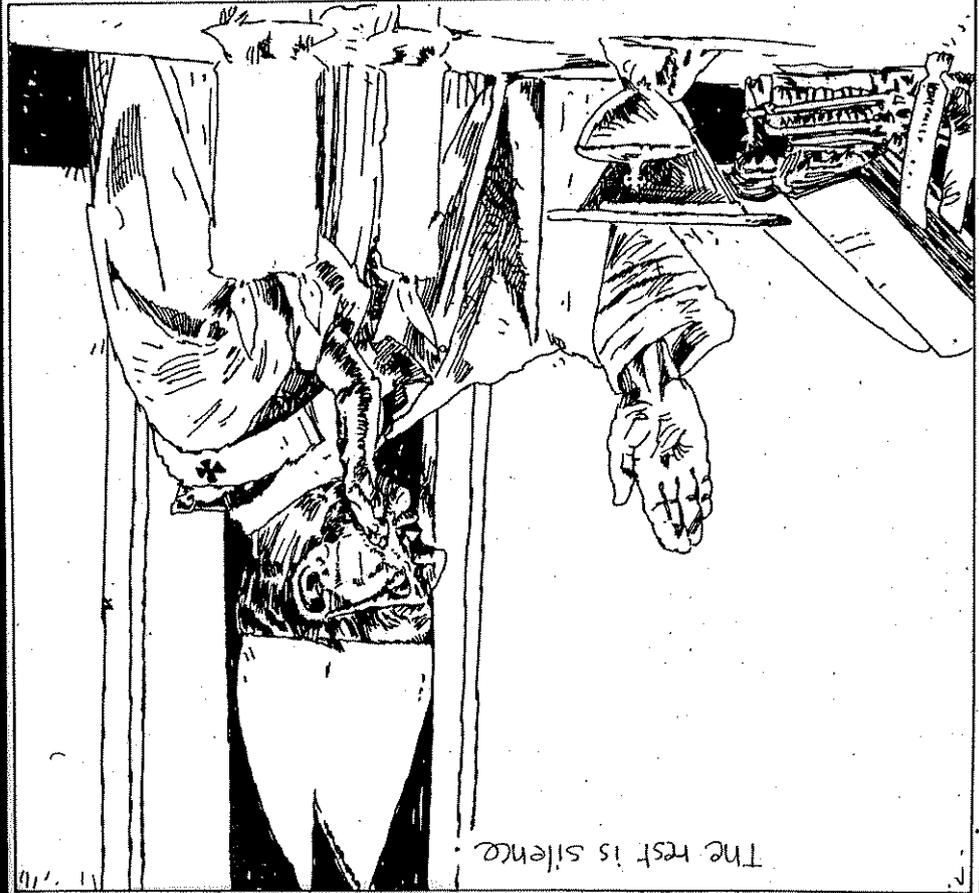
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