

Escalation

**Some Texts Concerning the Informal Anarchist Federation (FAI) and the
Insurrectionist Project**

Informal Anarchist Federation

August 2012

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Escalation

A new era of militancy is dawning as insurrectionary ideas spread and grow. As more and more people realise the sheer futility of any attempt at dialogue with a global system which exploits, consumes and kills all that which gets in its way, levels of social insurgence grow correspondingly.

If we really believe that freedom is worth fighting for, then we must each of us take action as we see fit. This will inevitably lead some sort of violence, which in turns leads to the inevitable debate about violence — its role, its meaning, its usefulness, its validity.

This debate is as old as one can remember, and can often end up muddying the waters — acting as a distraction at a time when clarity of thought and action are required more than ever. To this end we present these papers:

- ‘Open letter to the anarchist and anti-authoritarian movement’ by the Informal Anarchist Federation (FAI) — *Released in 2003 after a series of letter-bomb attacks against targets across the EU.*
- Chronology of the FAI.
- Internal discussion document: “Paperino” text — *From December 2006. Recorded discussion of FAI anarchists responding to criticism from parts of the movement and explaining their project.*
- ‘Some Notes on Insurrectionary Anarchism’ by Killing King Abacus — *Essential primer.*
- ‘A Letter to the FAT from Gabriel Pombo da Silva — *An anarchist prisoner held in Germany expresses his solidarity and communicates his opinions on the FAI project. Gabriel spent time in the notorious FIES isolation units of Spain, he escaped prison and was captured after a shoot-out on the German/Belgian border.*
- ‘On A Few Topical Questions Concerning Anarchists and Not Only..’ — *Anonymous text released in 2003, which has an implicit critique of the FAI and the political situation in Italy. The “Paperino” discusses some of the points made in this document.*
- ‘The Anarchist Project’ by Alfredo M. Bonanno
- ‘Why We Are Insurrectionary Anarchists’ by Alfredo M. Bonanno

We present these papers together here in order to provoke the debate, and to get the non-violence/ violence issue over and done with, out of the way, and also to provide an understanding of insurrectionary anarchist practice and theory. We call for greater auto-organised activity, at whatever level, as long as the conflict is permanent, so that all of our energies can be focused upon the matter at hand. The total destruction of market and hierarchy.

The time for talking is over, the time for actions is here...

July 2007 / Redux August 2012

Open Letter to the Anarchist and Anti-authoritarian Movement

As the consolidation of the EU is going on quickly and assuming all the wickedness of the political, economic, military-repressive choices of the various States, and as a European constitution that re-establishes and legitimates EU dominion is about to be ratified, the first Informal Anarchist Federation struggle campaign has started. We could not deny ourselves the pleasure of actively criticising the six-month's Italian presidency of the EU, which is coming to an end. We are aware that, behind any official rhetoric, the decisions that have been taken during the last months will bring about new practises of exploitation and dominion. In Fortress Europe, where not only the borders between exploiters and exploited are defended with the arms, we oppose trade agreements and the militarization of the territory with free agreements between those who struggle against dominion, as we want to demonstrate that not only is the struggle possible, but it is also an absolute necessity.

Today we have attacked the repressive apparatus that plays the democratic farce and that will bring the main characters and institutions to the new European order:

- The various police departments, which will soon be backed by a European army, besides their traditional task of internal repression, have the basic mission of filtering the huge masses of poor people who want to step into Fortress Europe. In fact, only the workforce needed by the bosses is allowed to get in, the others are sent back to be exploited in their countries of origin.
- A prison system, which is more and more crowded and widespread, is consolidating its main role into repression. It is the last bastion in defence of the system, whereas starving salaries and the last remnants of the welfare are not sufficient to stem the anger of the exploited.
- Bureaucrats and politicians are always ready to plan and promote any adjustment that serves to keep the system alive. The actions carried out today, as well as the ones that will follow, are planned so as to avoid the possibility of striking innocent people. We will carry on demonstrating our profound hatred for the State and capital and our unbounded love for a world free from the dominion of men over men and of men over nature. We are not the only ones, nor are we the last. In every street, in the day and in the night, we see that the same destructive-constructive tension for a better world is growing. We were in Genoa, we were in Saloniki, we were on the Italian roads last night, and tomorrow we will be on new roads to fight the misery of the existent.

Attack and destroy the responsible for repression and exploitation!
Attack and destroy prisons, banks, courts and police stations!
Revolt is contagious and can be reproduced!
Social war against capital and the State!

Who We Are

We have created the Informal Anarchist Federation, that is to say a federation formed either by groups of action or by single individuals, in order to go beyond the limits implied in single projects and to experiment the real potentialities of informal organisation. We strongly believe that only a chaotic and horizontal organisation, without bosses, authorities or central committees taking decision, can fulfil our need for freedom here and now. Our goal is to have an organisation reflecting the view of the anarchist society, which we struggle for. This is intended as an instrument and not as the copy of some old armed party or as an organisation looking for adepts. If it were not an instrument to be used for testing the efficiency of informal organisation and its capacity of strengthening quality and continuity of the revolutionary action, it would be absolutely useless and would certainly die out. Through widespread actions it is possible to conciliate organisation and theoretical/practical debate on the one hand, and the anonymity of groups/individuals on the other. Actions, in fact, besides bringing their specific message of destruction/construction, also propose other kinds of message, such as the ones implied in their methods and instruments. In this case the damage caused does not matter. We are aware that it will not be a well-armed minority group that will stir up revolution, and we are determined not to postpone our insurrection waiting for everybody to be ready: we are more and more convinced that a simple direct action against institutions is more effective than thousands of words.

FEDERATION because of its widespread horizontal structure, that is to say federation of groups or individuals, free and equal men and women bond together by common practises of attack against dominion and aware that mutual support and revolutionary solidarity are instruments of freedom. Relationships inside the federation are stable and flexible at the same time; they evolve continuously thanks to the ideas and practices brought in by new individuals and groups that will join. We do not want any democratic federation, as this would involve representatives, delegates, official meetings, committees, and organs implying the election of leaders, charismatic figures and the imposition of specialists of speech. In the informal federation, communication must be based on a horizontal and anonymous debate, which will come out of the practise (claims of actions) and of the widespread of theories through the means of communication of the movement. In other words, the meeting will be substituted by an anonymous and horizontal debate between groups or individuals who communicate through practise. The federation is our strength, that is to say the strength of groups or individuals that help one another through a well-defined pact of mutual support.

ANARCHIST because we want the destruction of capital and the State. We want a world where only freedom and self-organisation 'dominate', and a society where exploitation of men over men and of men over nature does not exist. We strongly oppose any Marxist cancer, which is nothing more than a fascinating and dangerous siren that claims freedom for the oppressed but actually denies the possibility of a free society and just substitutes one dominion with another.

INFORMAL because we do not believe in vanguards nor do we think that we are an enlightened active minority. We just want to live as anarchists here and now and this is why we consider the informal organisation as the only kind of organisation capable of preventing the creation of any authoritarian and bureaucratic mechanism. It allows us to keep our independence as individuals and/or groups and to resist power with continuity. The Informal Anarchist Organisation practises the armed struggle but it refuses classic monolithic organisations implying a base, regular and irregular members, columns, executive cadres, huge amounts of money and living on hiding. We think that this kind of structures is an easy target for power. In fact, an infiltrated cop or an informer is sufficient to have the whole organisation or a good part of it collapsed like a house of cards. On the contrary, as the informal organisation is formed by 1000 individuals or groups that do not know one another (as they recognize one another through the actions they carry out and the mutual support bonding them), if by some unfortunate chance infiltrators or informers should come out, this would affect a single group without spreading to the others. Furthermore, whoever takes part into the Informal organisation is a militant only when preparing and carrying out an action. The organisation, therefore, does not affect the entire life and projects of the comrades so that all kinds of armed-struggle sectarianism are avoided. Once we are well rooted, power will find it very difficult to destroy us.

The pact of mutual support is the strong point of the Anarchist Informal Organisation and it pivots on three key points based on the above mentioned anarchist revolutionary project, and that come into play when individuals or groups decide to join the Anarchist Informal Organisation:

1. Revolutionary Solidarity

Each group of action in the Anarchist Informal Organisation is engaged in showing revolutionary solidarity to comrades who are arrested or are on hiding. This solidarity will show itself mainly through armed action and the attack against men and structures responsible for the imprisonment of comrades. Solidarity will always be practised as an indispensable feature of anarchist way of life and action. Of course we do not refer to legal and technical support: bourgeois society offers a sufficient number of lawyers, social workers and priests, which means that revolutionists can be engaged in another kind of activities.

2. Revolutionary Campaigns

When a group or individual starts a revolutionary campaign through the deeds and related communiqués, other groups and individuals in the Anarchist Informal Organisation will follow according to their methods and time. Each group or individual can launch a struggle campaign on specific targets through one or more actions signed by the single group or individual and by the claim of the Federation. If a campaign is not agreed by the other groups, the critic will show itself through actions and communiqués that will contribute to correcting or discussing it.

3. Communication Between Groups or Individuals

The groups of action in the Anarchist Informal Organisation are not required to know one another. This will avoid repression to strike them and possible leaders or bureaucrat from emerging.

Communication between groups or individuals is carried out through the actions and through the channels of the movement without them to know one another directly.

P.S. Any reference to the FAI Italian Transport Workers Federation [Federazione Auto-trasportatori Italiani), to the FAI Italian Anarchist Federation (Federazione Anarchica Italiana) and to the FAI Italian Fund for the Environment (Fondo Italiano per l'Ambiente) is a pure coincidence. We apologise to the people concerned.

Four Years... Dec. 2006

4 YEARS have passed since the 'Open letter to the anarchist and antiauthoritarian movement' was issued and the Informal Anarchist Federation was formed (December 2003).

4 years have passed since explosive parcels were sent to the EU and Prodi...and then some regret aroused for having had too many scruples towards some 'innocent' secretary... if we had used dynamite instead of chlorate...

4 years have passed and during these four years 6 groups have joined our initial proposal: FAI/ Armed Cells for International Solidarity, FAI/Metropolitan Cells, FAI/Revolutionary Cell Horst Fantazzini, FAI/Narodna Volja, FAI/Tremendous Anonymous Revolt and FAI/Animal Revolt

4 years have passed since we experienced the pleasure to see a real informal insurrectionist project becoming true.

During these four years we have carried out 7 revolutionary campaigns.

During these four years we have realized at least 30 incendiary and explosive attacks on things and people...

without making distinction between the two as some of the actions aimed at eliminating a bunch of labourers of repression.

How It Begun

October 1999: Explosive devices are sent to the Greek embassy and the Commercial Chamber in Madrid and to a branch of City Bank in Barcelona in Spain. Explosive device is sent to the Greek office of Tourism and to the carabinieri barracks in Milan. All these actions are carried out by International Solidarity in support to Greek anarchist Maziotis who had been arrested following a few actions in Athens.

April 22 2000. Explosive device are sent to a journalist of Razon in Madrid in solidarity to FIES prisoners.

June 25 2000. Incendiary device are collocated in the church of Saint Ambrogio in Milan by International Solidarity in support to FIES prisoners.

June 7 2000. Two explosive devices are sent to the court of Valencia in Spain by International Solidarity in support to FIES prisoners.

December 18 2000. Dynamite at the Cathedral in Milan. Action made by International Solidarity in support to FIES prisoners.

July 2001. Incendiary and explosive devices are sent to the carabinieri (one of them was wounded) and the prefect in Genoa, to the site of TG4 news and to the Leoncavallo (a parcel full of shit of dog) in Milan, to a Benetton shop in Ponzano Veneto and to the union of police in Barcelona. A bicycle bomb is collocated for police in Bologna. All these actions were carried out by the Crafts and Fire Cooperative (Occasionally Spectacular] in protest to the G8 summit that was about to be held in Genoa.

February 25. The July 20 Brigade collocates a motorbike bomb in the surrounding of the Home Office to commemorate the death of Carlo Giuliani and of a young Rom killed by police at a roadblock.

December 10 2002. Two bombs explode in the surroundings of the police headquarters in Genoa. The action is carried out by the July 20 Brigade in memory of Carlo Giuliani and against the violence of police.

December 2000. Five explosive devices are sent to the site of Iberia, El Pais and RAI in Rome and to the site of TG5 in Milan in support to FIES prisoners. The action is carried out by the Cells against Capital, its Prisons, its Jailers and its Cells.

June 17 2003. A bomb is detonated against the Cervantes Institute in Rome by Cells against Capital, its Prisons, its Jailers and its Cells in solidarity with FIES prisoners.

October 8 2003. A bomb is detonated against the site of Iberia in Rome by the Armed Cells for International Solidarity in support to the struggle against the FIES regime.

The Informal Anarchist Federation is Formed

December 21 2003. Two bombs detonate in the surroundings of Prodi's house, who was then the president of the ELI. The pig also receives an incendiary parcel a few days later. In the following days several explosive parcels reach sites of European institutions: the European Central Bank, the Eurojust, the Head Office of the European Popular Party and the office of a member of the European Socialist Party. All these actions, which mark the creation of FAI, are addressed against the EU.

March 30 2004. Two bombs explode against the police headquarters in Sturla (Genoa). The action is carried out by the July 20 Brigade.

April 2 2004. FAI/Armed Cells for International Solidarity send explosive parcels to a few managers of the DAP.

October 29 2004. A bomb detonates against a site of Manpower in Milan. The action is carried out by FAI Metropolitan Cells.

December 10/11 2004. FAI/Armed Cells for International Solidarity send two explosive devices to the site of SAPPE (police union) and to the National Association of carabinieri in Rome.

2004. Explosive action against a battery of furred animals carried out in Cremona by FAI/Animal Revolt.

March 3 2005. Explosive attacks against the carabinieri barracks in Pra and Voltri (Genoa) and in Monti in Milan, threatening calls to the Sanremo Festival. The actions are carried out by FAI/July 20 Brigade and by FAI/Crafts and Fire Cooperative (Occasionally Spectacular) against prisons and in memory of Marcello Lonzi, killed by his jailers.

March 6 2005. Bomb against the court of Ostia in Rome. The action is carried out by FAI/Revolutionary Nucleus Horst Fantazzini.

May 2005. Three explosive devices are sent to the manager of the CPT in Modena, to the police headquarters in Lecce and to the Fire Brigade in Turin. The action is carried out by FAI/Narodna Voja in the context of the campaign in support to migrants.

October 2005. Two bombs are sent to the RIS in Parma and to the mayor of Bologna Cofferati. The actions are carried out by FAI/Crafts and Fire Cooperative (Occasionally Spectacular).

June 2 2006. Two bombs are sent to the training school of carabinieri in Fossano. The action is carried out by FAI/Tremendous Anonymous Revolt.

July 2006. FAI/Tremendous Anonymous Revolt send three explosive parcels to Beppe Fossati, the director of Torino Cronaca, to Coerna company, which is working to the enlargement of the CPT in Turin, and to Chiamparino, the mayor of Turin.

– During these four years, in spite of lack of technical and communication means, we have managed to spread a clear message through the media: who anarchists are and what they fight against. In this way we have increased the possibility to communicate with social strata that are otherwise difficult to reach.

– During these years no group has been identified and destroyed by the enemy.

– During these four years we didn't to grow up nor did we manage [but we hope we are wrong] to find our way in the heart of young people who have just joined the anarchist idea and who are clenched between old organisations that have only kept their structure and new arsonists who only talk and threaten with their revolutionary rhetoric.

– During these years we didn't manage to bring our project outside the Italian language movement.

Here are a few considerations. We are going to start from here to improve ourselves and open new roads... those who live will see!

Christmas 2006, in the House of Paperino

Some of the comrades who belong to the original groups of the FAI Informal Anarchist Federation have decided to discuss a few points and to make the transcription of the discussion known. There are some omissions due to security reasons, but in the whole the transcription reflects the direct and informal tone of the conversation, which avoids all formalisms just as we do in our life...

These groups take part in the discussion: Crafts and Fire Cooperative, July 20 Brigade, Cells against Capital, its Prisons, its Jailers and its Cells, and International Solidarity.

QUI: I like Pippo's idea to record and write down our conversation, Quo and Qua like it too. We think it is worthwhile even if we risk to be caught (touching wood). What counts is that Pippo takes off what doesn't have to be written and destroys the recording.

PIPPPO: My idea was to make some points known, points that normally we have never clarified and that make us angry sometimes... yes, when we hear or read comments about us... in other words we need to show to this fucking movement that we are not ghosts coming from nothing (laughers...'hey, did you see you?'). We need to show to them that we think it very carefully before carrying out an action and that we leave very little to chance. Our actions are not indiscriminate, on the contrary they are so controlled that we haven't managed to do what we really want yet...(laughers). Then there's nothing obscure or clandestine in our way of life, most of us come from the movement, live inside it and know that reality. Some even come from shit situations, let me tell you that Paperino, I don't know how you can do...

PAPERINO: Forget it, it's a long story...

PIPPPO: Alright, I explain better. Sometimes it happens that I read or hear very horrible comments on our activity, for example that we are 'provocateurs' or 'secret services' not to mention their partial and blind general vision of what we do and say. If we write down the content of this encounter we might make some of our dynamics clearer...this is also for the comrades of other FAI groups that we don't know.

NONNA PAPERINA: I'm not sure about writing down this discussion. Maybe a self-interview would be better: each group answers questions decided by everybody. In this way we avoid a transcription that would be incorrect for security reasons.

PAPERINA: I don't think so. The meeting written on paper is more spontaneous and clarifying. We will make some corrections, pass it to the other groups and then it will be ready to be spread in a couple of weeks. Paperino and I will print and send it, you know, we've got a new PC ...

QUI: Let's see which points we need to discuss. This might help us to understand better and then I'm willing to communicate with the groups that followed us in the FAI. We can reach them in this way and they can communicate with the same method.

ARCHIMEDE: I think that a very good point of this experience is experimentation, that is to say I put in practice things that I only talked about before, yes, to join thought and action and to avoid that schizophrenic dualism between what is said and what is done. Then there exists

another form of schizophrenia, a deeper alienation: the fact that you can't talk openly to the comrades who surround you and who are not part of our groups, you can't say what you really think or you risk exposing yourself and putting the comrades in danger. In other words, this caution, the fact that I can't shout what I would like, is killing me.

QUA: Well, I feel the same but I don't suffer out of that. To come back to the document... how are we going to spread it? There's not much anarchist press and those who are willing to publish certain documents are very few... and then it is not fair to turn the comrades into targets for repression, as it often happens. Not to mention those who faint as soon as they read certain things or run to the cops ... Internet is a problem for us, we are not IT experts. And then, after the Indymedia server was searched because they published our claim of the bombs to the EU, it is very difficult that someone wants to publish our writing...

PAPERINA: And what about the free democratic expression, internet for everybody? (laughs)...

QUA: Forgetting the jokes, I think communication and censorship are fundamental problems. One of the most valid critiques they make to us concerns the means that we use to widespread our messages and the possibility that the latter can be manipulated by power. In other words, given our informal way and the fact that we choose not to communicate directly with new groups may damage on the level of communication and lead to false claims and actions.

PAPERINA: I don't think this problem exists; it's pure politics fiction. Either they censor us and decide not to publish our claims in the press (and this is unlikely, given the fact that journalists take everything) or we manage to place our communiqués somewhere into the meshes of the system.

QUI: I agree with part of what Qua said: to communicate in the right way is very important. The potentiality of some actions was limited by the fact that claims of the latter were not widespread enough. For examples, we hardly heard about some actions, especially those done by new groups or done in the suburbs (laughs)...Please, don't laugh, sometimes it's easier that actions are censored on a local level before they reach the circuit of national communication. Even if we don't have rules, we were wrong at the beginning because we gave too little importance to communication. For instance, we have neutralized the effect of our 'motorbike bomb' at the home office by underestimating quite superficially the right moment to make the claim. We need to invent something new, we need to make our actions as spectacular as possible so that the media cannot ignore them. Then we need to learn how to use the IT system. Considering how stupid investigators are, we can't rely only on the papers of the movement to spread our ideas. As concerns possible provocations made using our name, it is up to us to make these provocations inoffensive with the clarity of our actions. So far, however, we haven't run into this problem.

PIPPPO: It's the usual bullshit of infiltrators and provocateurs, bullshit that I heard not only from our homonymous [reference to the formal FAI] (laughs...'look, they get offended'...) but also from people who, at least in theory, are supposed to understand certain mechanisms. That moderate people cry (laughs) is normal to me, it has always been like that...I don't understand, however, why certain thinkers ('what do you mean?')...yes, certain thinkers who have a little brain with nothing inside but a couple of fundamental concepts such as 'Anarchists don't do that' ...for them the only thing anarchists can do is wanks...(laughs).. Anyway I was very upset when I saw comrades dissociating themselves from the struggle even if they claim they are radical. Since we started doing our actions and repression got stronger, strange phenomena have happened. Even the word 'insurrectionism' has become taboo since the press started using it...

PAPERINO: We can't expect that everybody agrees with our actions, I don't even care about that. What counts is that they don't slander us with their critical attacks.

PAPERINA: Be careful when you talk about 'infamous people', I think the latter are only those who make people arrested, not those who have a different opinion.

PIPPPO: What about when different opinions are used to point at people?

PAPERINA: This hasn't occurred yet, as far as I know, and if it happens we'll know what to do. What sounds strange to me is 'we can't expect that everybody agrees with our actions'. As I do actions not for my personal pleasure but because I think it's part of a struggle, I'd like that most comrades agreed and did the same, otherwise we'd be in a movement of spectators...

PAPERINO: As International Solidarity, we have always had the priority to communicate through the deeds, to make propaganda through the deeds. We decided to amplify intermediate struggles such as that against the FIES in Spain and to express solidarity to anarchists in Greece and elsewhere. Paperina, other comrades of our group and I have often asked ourselves if what we did really affected positively the struggles carried out by prisoners. We all reached the same conclusion: a concrete action of attack is always worthwhile even if it fails on a technical level. It's not so much important to make damages as to get the message through. Unfortunately some of our technical failures (we are not experts after all, even if we worked hard to create our instruments) thwarted certain actions that otherwise would have been much more powerful. You were better on a technical level later on.

ARCHIMEDE PITAGORICO: It's difficult and risky if you don't learn some basic technical notions. By the way I would like to share with you some tricks when the meeting ends. I think it's important to talk about that and to show how it's easy to find instruments and reproduce the actions.

QUO: Okay, but let's still talk about 'theory', especially as what we are saying is going to be spread around. I'd like to make clear why we consider armed propaganda as a useful means to spread anarchist ideas in the semi-pacified western world of the XXI century. I think that too many comrades, scared by the fact that the movement has lost in these last years, keep on stressing on the 'social' initiatives and afford the 'few' struggles that arouse spontaneously with extreme care sticking on programs that are often laughable. I do believe that it's not useful for any revolutionary project that we moderate our language and our actions. We need to be honest and consequently say and show openly and practically what we are struggling for. It is then up to single individuals to decide if they want to stay on the side of power or try to struggle for a free life. This is not enough for revolution, of course, but it's a very important and efficient way of fighting the existent.

PIPPPO: Our task is, at least we try, to continuously throw petrol on the little fires of revolt that break out here and there. Let me quote something: 'A parcel bomb sent to a carabinieri and to a journalist servant of power or a bomb that provokes a simple crack in the wall of a prison are basically useful as in one moment they show how dominion is vulnerable and point out at the enemy and at the variety of means that can be used to fight the latter. Most importantly, they make everybody consider the possibility to directly intervene against the oppressors!' ('AMEN'...big noise, mess).

PAPERINO: Unfortunately there's still exists someone who thinks that social conflict can be triggered through the paper, using incendiary words or, worst than ever, making charitable work...we will end up in catholic associations...(laughter)...I don't think that revolution will be

made by an armed vanguard ('but where is this vanguard?'). Can you see what a low level the so-called struggle in the social has produced?

ARCHIMEDE PITAGORICO: I'd like to come back to what Pippo said. I was also bothered by certain critiques, especially those coming from areas of anarchism that are not extraneous to violent action in some cases, at least in theory (laughers). But at the end of the day they are a bit ignorant and superficial. Why on earth do they care about the safety of a postman or a secretary every time a parcel bomb is sent? First of all they must have seen that no innocent people was hurt so far. On the contrary, by being cautious (assessment of time, places, ways and doses) we saved even the guilty. It is obvious that a parcel bomb that doesn't detonate is not due to chance but to the precise will not to hurt a secretary. Of course we hope that the fear the latter felt makes her open her eyes...once the smoke has vanished [laughers]...on the institution she works for, and maybe she will want to change job.

QUA: Those who belittle our actions with false superiority and maybe believe in the bullshit published in the press really make me angry. They don't even imagine that if two explosive devices are hidden into a skip outside a prison or a police headquarters and are detonated in two different moments it's not to make cleaners crazy but to hit some servants of the state. I want to point out that if these actions have failed it's only because we had too many scruples towards passersby.

PAPERINA: Then it must be pointed out that even if an action fails as concerns its main target it makes damage to power. Every time we approach them and put something under their arse we ridicule the whole repressive apparatus and the system of control they boast they have. For example, the two bombs close to the offices of the RIS in Parma were not at all a joke for them, shame that the second bomb didn't work...these actions compel power to increase its system of control...never mind, there will always be some new rebel who will succeed in overcoming them.

NONNA PAPERINA: This is also true as concerns a parcel bomb that doesn't detonate: it makes the jailers live under fear, compels them to have an escort and shows to everybody the infamy of their job. Giovanardi, for example [the manager of the CPT in Modena], has been having an escort since he received a beautiful present from our comrades of FAI/Narodnaja Volja.

PIPPPO: I like the campaign against the CPT in Turin carried out by FAI/RAT. These comrades have understood very well our strategy, that is to say carrying out an intermediate struggle through radical actions.

PAPERINA: On the contrary I have to say that I'm a bit disappointed by the results so far reached. We did touch the anarchist movement, but relatively, and I see a state of lethargy everywhere, not only among anarchists. Years ago, when Paperino, other comrades and I formed International Solidarity, I expected we would grow in number. On the contrary I've seen many comrades staying behind and sticking themselves into institutional or social issues.

ARCHIMEDE PITAGORICO: I don't think numbers are important. When you want to work in a social sphere, in front of millions of people, it doesn't matter if you are 300 or 3000...what counts is the quality of the actions.

PAPERINO: I think that the quality of the actions depends on the number of the comrades involved. If you are alone you can do beautiful things but you end up with hitting your head against the wall, you really risk hurting yourself. We need more comrades to be involved in the actions, that's the point.

PAPERINA: Many people will be angry for what you are saying, even inside our group. I think that the level of the actions has to be lowered and diversified. Now we are all trying to get

rid of some servant of the state...this is fair enough...but if we stay stuck to this some anarchists, those who are not with us, will be frightened and disorientated. Either they will boast about infiltrators and provocateurs or they will engage in abstruse struggle losing the ability to understand the reality they live in. Look what happened in Vai di Susa, the struggle against the TAV: a vast range of people got involved, from unions to catholics, from fascists to anarchists...they all agreed...and a smoke bomb was enough to make all of them shocked (including the anarchists).

ARCHIMEDE PITAGORICO: I think the problem is the opposite. We need to show that we are serious, that we don't hide behind tortuous reasoning and that we don't have any problem to attack even at risk of our life!

PAPERINA: What a fucking rhetoric!

ARCHIMEDE PITAGORICO: Let me finish. The problem is that we have too many scruples and that we never go further. We need to be more efficient, more audacious with explosives and we don't have to think that we can hurt a secretary if the target is her boss.

QUO: It's a matter of means, we have to be more selective: guns instead of explosives. Everybody can find guns whereas we are still stuck to minor explosives. I'm talking on behalf of my group, we discussed the matter and resolved we need to find guns and use them.

ARCHIMEDE PITAGORICO: This is not a problem, I know where guns can be found. As for me old dear dynamite is still the best means. I can manage the action, assess the time of escape and I also think it's more effective, it frightens more. And then the risk of being caught is minor. Come on, we are few as we are...

PAPERINA: Yes, but I still think that managing dynamite is quite risky because we are not experts. Even if we used all caution possible, once we risked blowing ourselves up owing to an electric circuit that was not insulated properly. I'm not joking...on that occasion I had decided to stop with bombs and to use guns...but not to kill...

ARCHIMEDE PITAGORICO: How the fuck do you want to use them, as slings?

PAPERINA: It's obvious, to hit but not to kill! Not that I wouldn't be happy with killing some pig but consider the usual old matter...In other words, repression would burst out indiscriminately.

ARCHIMEDE PITAGORICO: Repression is always indiscriminate and then anarchists must be ready to face it. I'm very sorry for the captured comrades, but it has always been like that...especially with anarchist papers, solidarity initiatives and so on.

PAPERINA: What to you mean? Better them than us? You are crazy man, if anarchist papers are stopped and comrades are hit by repression it's trouble for everybody!

PAPERINO: Yes, but it's not our fault. If anarchists do their job properly the system defends itself. Those who end up in jail the first are those who do things better in the open air.

QUI: What do you mean? If we start shooting they will arrest the whole movement? Bollocks...when the communists shot there were no raids in the movement as far as I know. They were only labelled by the media as relics of the past.

PAPERINA: Please, don't talk about relics of the past...this is rhetoric good for all leftist revolutionaries...even for us...for any little leftist intellectual that in this way can stay sound and save without any problem of conscience.

ARCHIMEDE PITAGORICO: Let me explain. When I say that repression is indiscriminate it's not out of cynicism. We with our explosions and all anarchists and rebels that hit at dominion contribute to increasing the level of repression. At the same time those who choose to make propaganda through papers and open initiatives are aware of the risk of ending up caught.

PAPERINA: Yes, but for the future I'll try to diversify my actions, even with the help of new comrades, I'll try less spectacular actions than climbing on the Duomo in Milan...less spectacular but more widespread and that can be reproduced, even if I don't like this word. Faster actions as regards both their planning and their execution...little explosive devices as a shower on the territory, cooking pans filled with petrol and gas bombs...in other words, the basic KIT for the DIY of anarchists! (laughs)

PAPERING: Yes, we decided this together with the other comrades of International Solidarity. They didn't come because we resolved never to go around more than two or three at a time...you know, in case things go wrong...I don't agree completely with what Paperina said...for example, I don't understand why a blown up dead should bring more repression than a shot dead. But I agree with the idea to amplify and diversify our actions.

ARCHIMEDE PITAGORICO: Good luck then, but bear in mind that it's quite possible to die when you play with explosives...

PIPPPO: Let's come back to our discussion and forget the theories about the best way to die...the stronger and more spectacular the actions are the more the oppressed will know about them. Our reference can't be the movement, it is too a limited context and it's not relevant. On the contrary we need to communicate with the oppressed in the wider way possible.

NONNA PAPERÀ: Remember, however, that those who make the actions come from the movement, that is to say from the comrades who consciously chose to fight the existent.

PIPPPO: I don't think it is always like that. Then, who knows, the groups that were formed in the last years can be made by oppressed who decided to revolt. And again, where is the difference? This is a discussion I would like to develop, maybe not now, but to talk about 'movement' in this sad time is nonsense.

QUI: Give it the name you like, movementpeople-society, I don't mind. For me the problem — and Paperina is right in this case — is that we are very few and we risk becoming specialists, a risk we must avoid!

QUO: I wish we were specialists... we only managed to wound a couple of cops with all our bombs and little bombs in these last years! Hooligans do more at football matches on Sundays!

QUI: The problem is not this. The point is the idea that lies behind. We need to bring about the spark that burns the field in this time of peace!

QUO: What a poet you are! It seems to me that nowadays the only things that burn by popular initiative are gypsy camps...

QUI: Don't play the shit nihilist! The episodes in the gypsy camps are driven by fascists in search of adepts, and they do that under the sight of TV cameras.

QUO: No, it's you who are wrong. The right, both the old fascists and the lega nord members, are doing a very good job in creating a public opinion that is apathetic on the one hand and full of hatred on the other. And they also use words such as health and ecology, things that didn't belong to them in the past.

QUI: I can't accept the fact that the right is rebuilding its social base whereas we, who in the past had had a real growth, are at a dead point. Do you remember the period of the G8? Many of us were in Genoa and it was a very beautiful moment and even the actions carried out in Genoa and Bologna brought very good results...

ARCHIMEDE PITAGORICO: It's again the question of the strength of our actions: things would have been different if we had used dynamite instead of gunpowder in that parcel to the carabinieri in San Fruttuoso.

QUI: Yes, tension between the cops would have been very high, but it would have been better if we had taken guns in the street besides gunpowder. In that case the recovery of the enemy would have been very difficult.

ARCHIMEDE PITAGORICO: It's a lesson we need to take into account next time.

QUI: Anyway, even the attack on the police headquarters in Genoa, the one that failed for little, also produced good results. The movement was still shocked by the brutality of repression and reaction in the society was still good. Personally I heard positive comments even by those who are now criticizing us.

QUO: Look, today it is exactly as it was then: first everybody is happy with the bomb under the cop's arse; then the claim arrives and they turn their nose up to us. They fear the revenge of repression on the movement and they conceal it behind an ideological refuse of the claim...because they think that an action that is not claimed can be reproduced, it's the product of social rebels, whereas the action claimed by a name is the product of a vanguard...but these are plays of words...

PIPPPO: Yes, but it's not like that for everybody. Six new groups were formed in these years, many things were done and the message got through...not to mention the not claimed actions that are still been carried out.

PAPERINA: And then even the communists are doing their job in the last months. I read about various actions, one in Livorno and one in Milan if I'm not wrong.

QUO: Paperina, I'm pessimistic too sometimes, but the alternative is even worse. I don't feel like joining some collective attended by dusty brains, I no longer want to take part in demos that looks like funerals of ideas dead before their time has come, I don't want to become a social worker for the oppressed nor do I want to become the manager of some alternative bar. Given that I'm oppressed myself I have no other choice than acting...it's very simple.

QUI: You know, it's what we are doing but you also know that in some areas of the movement they think badly of what we do.

QUO: I don't mind about spectators more or less satisfied. And then I know even too well how false certain areas are, where they do benefit for prisoners, or rather for prisoners' lawyers, and then attack any action that breaks the dominant schemes.

PIPPPO: Before saying that you should also think of positive things. There has been some growth, even if very small. At first there was a great debate about the utility of our actions in the movement, on the papers and on the internet. The elderly don't always succeed in preventing young comrades from asking themselves questions. And don't forget that many youths have joined us following the G8 in Genoa. The actions carried out in Genoa were very different from those of pacifists or formal-FAI members.

ARCHIMEDE PITAGORICO: It's impossible that such organisations can do anything useful. What we are experiencing is unthinkable for those who use anarchism as a hobby or something to do in their spare time. To risk one's freedom for one's actions gives a deepness and easiness in one's 'political' activity that any formal FAI or intellectual can never imagine.

PIPPPO: I close this lyric moment about free bodies and souls, which I agree with (cheers), to make you notice a few weak points of the system...The first is that the campaigns proposed by groups that were not in the 4 original groups of the informal FAI have never been supported by the latter. For example FAI/Animal Revolt has never received any answer, as far as I know, and not even FAI/Metropolitan Cells with their attacks on the work agencies in Milan, even if they acted simultaneously to International Solidarity's attack on prisons.

PAPERINA: It was a coincidence, well, a very pleasant one.

PAPERING: It's again a problem of communication. We didn't hear in time about the animal action because the official media didn't talk about that, and when we learned about it we were already engaged in other stories.

PAPERINA: Information and communication are no doubt our weak points but at the same time they are our strength, our way of being unpredictable. If we don't know one other, apart from those who are here today, and don't know how many others are doing actions, imagine how little repressors know.

QUI: If the media censor us it can be considered a victory for us. It demonstrates that freedom of information is bollocks, and this is true also as concerns certain alternative ways of communicating.

PIPPPO: But if they don't publish our claims and manipulate the strength of our actions they make big troubles to us. We can't rely on the papers of the movement because they have a limited circulation and then repression strikes at them quite easily. It's a bit better with internet but the websites of the movement are not so much visited either.

ARCHIMEDE PITAGORICO: We have to insist on spectacular actions whose visibility must be at its maximum. If fireworks are powerful everybody hears and sees them! It's enough to make people understand that fireworks are not so difficult to prepare...

PAPERINA: I keep on thinking of the mechanisms of repression and I would like to start a campaign for arrested anarchists, a classical one I mean.

ARCHIMEDE PITAGORICO: We can talk about that later on. Now I'd like to make a last consideration. It seems to me that International Solidarity, QUI QUO QUA and I are willing to carry on. Some of us didn't speak much, maybe they will add corrections later, and for tonight it's enough Let's toast to REVOLT AND ANARCHY!!!

Some Notes on Insurrectionary Anarchism

Insurrectionary anarchism is not an ideological solution to all social problems, a commodity on the capitalist market of ideologies and opinions, but an on-going praxis aimed at putting an end to the domination of the state and the continuance of capitalism, which requires analysis and discussion to advance. We don't look to some ideal society or offer an image of utopia for public consumption. Throughout history, most anarchists, except those who believed that society would evolve to the point that it would leave the state behind, have been insurrectionary anarchists. Most simply, this means that the state will not merely wither away, thus anarchists must attack, for waiting is defeat; what is needed is open mutiny and the spreading of subversion among the exploited and excluded. Here we spell out some implications that we and some other insurrectionary anarchists draw from this general problem: if the state will not disappear on its own, how then do we end its existence? It is, therefore, primarily a practice, and focuses on the organization of attack. These notes are in no way a closed or finished product; we hope they are a part of an ongoing discussion, and we most certainly welcome responses (interesting responses will be printed in the next issue of Hot Tide). Much of this comes from past issues of Insurrection and pamphlets from Elephant Editions (see the Insurrection Page on our website or write us if interested).

1. The State Will Not Just Disappear; Attack

The State of capital will not "wither away," as it seems many anarchists have come to believe—not only entrenched in abstract positions of 'waiting,' but some even openly condemning the acts of those for whom the creation of the new world depends on the destruction of the old. Attack is the refusal of mediation, pacification, sacrifice, accommodation, and compromise.

It is through acting and learning to act, not propaganda, that we will open the path to insurrection, although propaganda has a role in clarifying how to act. Waiting only teaches waiting; in acting one learns to act.

The force of an insurrection is social, not military. The measure for evaluating the importance of a generalized revolt is not the armed clash, but on the contrary the amplitude of the paralysis of the economy, of normality.

2. Self-activity Versus Managed Revolt: From Insurrection to Revolution

As anarchists, the revolution is our constant point of reference, no matter what we are doing or what problem we are concerned with. But the revolution is not a myth simply to be used as a point of reference. Precisely because it is a concrete event, it must be built daily through more modest attempts which do not have all the liberating characteristics of the social revolution in

the true sense. These more modest attempts are insurrections. In them the uprising of the most exploited and excluded of society and the most politically sensitized minority opens the way to the possible involvement of increasingly wider strata of exploited on a flux of rebellion which could lead to revolution.

Struggles must be developed, both in the intermediate and long term. Clear strategies are necessary to allow different methods to be used in a coordinated and fruitful way.

Autonomous action: the self-management of struggle means that those that struggle are autonomous in their decisions and actions; this is the opposite of an organization of synthesis which always attempts to take control of struggle. Struggles that are synthesized within a single controlling organization are easily integrated into the power structure of present society. Selforganized struggles are by nature uncontrollable when they are spread across the social terrain.

3. Uncontrollability Versus Managed Revolt: The Spread of Attack

It is never possible to see the outcome of a specific struggle in advance. Even a limited struggle can have the most unexpected consequences. The passage from the various insurrections — limited and circumscribed — to revolution can never be guaranteed in advance by any method.

What the system is afraid of is not these acts of sabotage in themselves, so much as their spreading socially. Every proletarianized individual who disposes of even the most modest means can draw up his or her objectives, alone or along with others. It is materially impossible for the State and capital to police the apparatus of control that operates over the whole social territory. Anyone who really wants to contest the network of control can make their own theoretical and practical contribution. The appearance of the first broken links coincides with the spreading of acts of sabotage. The anonymous practice of social self-liberation could spread to all fields, breaking the codes of prevention put into place by power.

Small actions, therefore, easily reproducible, requiring unsophisticated means that are available to all, are by their very simplicity and spontaneity uncontrollable. They make a mockery of even the most advanced technological developments in counter-insurgency.

4. Permanent Conflictuality Versus Mediation With Institutional Forces

Conflictuality should be seen as a permanent element in the struggle against those in power. A struggle which lacks this element ends up pushing us towards mediating with the institutions, grows accustomed to the habits of delegating and believing in an illusory emancipation carried out by parliamentary decree, to the very point of actively participating in our own exploitation ourselves.

There might perhaps be individual reasons for doubting the attempt to reach one's aims with violent means. But when non-violence comes to be raised to the level of a non-violable principle, and where reality is divided into 'good' and 'bad,' then arguments cease to have value, and everything is seen in terms of submission and obedience. The officials of the anti-globalization movement, by distancing themselves and denouncing others have clarified one point in particular: that they see their principles — to which they feel duty-bound — as a claim to power over the movement as a whole.

5. Illegality; Insurrection Isn't Just Robbing Banks

Insurrectionary anarchism isn't a morality on survival: we all survive in various ways, often in compromise with capital, depending on our social position, our talents and tastes. We certainly aren't morally against the use of illegal means to free ourselves from the fetters of wage slavery in order to live and carry on our projects, yet we also don't fetishize illegalism or turn it into some kind of religion with martyrs; it is simply a means, and often a good one.

6. Informal Organization; Not Professional Revolutionaries or Activists, Not Permanent Organizations

From party/union to self-organization:

Profound differences exist within the revolutionary movement: the anarchist tendency towards quality of the struggle and its self-organization and the authoritarian tendency towards quantity and centralization.

Organization is for concrete tasks: thus we are against the party, syndicate and permanent organization, all of which act to synthesize struggle and become elements of integration for capital and the state. Their purpose comes to be their own existence, in the worst case they first build the organization then find or create the struggle. Our task is to act; organization is a means. Thus we are against the delegation of action or practice to an organization: we need generalized action that leads to insurrection, not managed struggles. Organization should not be for the defense of certain interests, but of attack on certain interests.

Informal organization is based on a number of comrades linked by a common affinity; its propulsive element is always action. The wider the range of problems these comrades face as a whole, the greater their affinity will be. It follows that the real organization, the effective capacity to act together, i.e, knowing where to find each other, the study and analysis of problems together, and the passing to action, all takes place in relation to the affinity reached and has nothing to do with programs, platforms, flags or more or less camouflaged parties. The informal anarchist organization is therefore a specific organization which gathers around a common affinity.

The anarchist minority and the exploited and excluded:

We are of the exploited and excluded, and thus our task is to act. Yet some critique all action that is not part of a large and visible social movement as "acting in the place of the proletariat." They counsel analysis and waiting, instead of acting. Supposedly, we are not exploited alongside the exploited; our desires, our rage and our weaknesses are not part of the class struggle. This is nothing but another ideological separation between the exploited and subversives.

The active anarchist minority is not slave to numbers but continues to act against power even when the class clash is at a low level within the exploited of society. Anarchist action should not therefore aim at organizing and defending the whole of the class of exploited in one vast organization to see the struggle from beginning to end, but should identify single aspects of the struggle and carry them through to their conclusion of attack. We must also move away from the stereotypical images of the great mass struggles, and the concept of the infinite growth of a movement that is to dominate and control everything.

The relationship with the multitude of exploited and excluded cannot be structured as something that must endure the passage of time, i.e. be based on growth to infinity and resistance

against the attack of the exploiters. It must have a more reduced specific dimension, one that is decidedly that of attack and not a rearguard relationship.

We can start building our struggle in such a way that conditions of revolt can emerge and latent conflict can develop and be brought to the fore. In this way a contact is established between the anarchist minority and the specific situation where the struggle can be developed.

7. The Individual and the Social: Individualism and Communism, a False Problem

We embrace what is best in individualism and what is best in communism.

Insurrection begins with the desire of individuals to break out of constrained and controlled circumstances, the desire to reappropriate the capacity to create one's own life as one sees fit. This requires that they overcome the separation between them and their conditions of existence. Where the few, the privileged, control the conditions of existence, it is not possible for most individuals to truly determine their existence on their terms. Individuality can only flourish where equality of access to the conditions of existence is the social reality. This equality of access is communism; what individuals do with that access is up to them and those around them. Thus there is no equality or identity of individuals implied in true communism. What forces us into an identity or an equality of being are the social roles laid upon us by our present system. There is no contradiction between individuality and communism.

8. We Are the Exploited, We Are the Contradiction: This is No Time for Waiting

Certainly, capitalism contains deep contradictions which push it towards procedures of adjustment and evolution aimed at avoiding the periodic crises which afflict it; but we cannot cradle ourselves in waiting for these crises. When they happen they will be welcomed if they respond to the requirements for accelerating the elements of the insurrectional process. As the exploited, however, we are the fundamental contradiction for capitalism. Thus the time is always ripe for insurrection, just as we can note that humanity could have ended the existence of the state at any time in its history. A rupture in the continual reproduction of this system of exploitation and oppression has always been possible.

Letter to the Comrades of the Informal Anarchist Federation From Gabriel Pombo da Silva

“Dear reunited comrades of “Paperopoli” in the house of “Paperino” : your letters arrived to me, (from the Grabada assembly) which I read with extreme attention for I am interested in the content of your reflections, and in addition I get along with and I identify so much with the project of the F.A.I. (obvious informal) like with all and each one of the actions that you have carried out. The reason for writing these letters is not of course “advice” of some type, for this world is full of “advisors”, “theoreticians” and “celebrities” of all color and condition... No, I only want to send from this camp of extermination words of subversive tenderness, revolutionary spirit and rebellious complicity; words as much from my companion Jose as my own...

And of stepping to comment on some of the things on which you have reflected and debated in the assembly...

Indeed the attacks serve to demonstrate the vulnerability not only of the State but also of the idea of the State that has been composed by symbols, things and people, for they are the mediators and reformers of one and the other.

On the criticism that some comrades have spilled on to you in relation to the possibility “of hurting” or “of killing”, “innocent people”⁽¹⁾ (for example the mailman or secretary). I think that it is a question of the technical means of the explosive package, rather than the methodology (armed attack). I suppose that the one that must decide, must be each group, based on what it has decided to carry out...

It is undoubtable that if it is decided to attack a servant of the state one must study the movements, customs and places that the target frequents to save in this way disagreeable surprises.

Once being in possession of all the information only then can the attack be valued. All the valuations (Objective-subjective-moral-etc) are unique and the exclusive work of those decided companions who will carry out the action (Not in vain if someday they fall into the hands of the oppressors, for they will be themselves and only they who will undergo the weight of the laws and the consequences of their acts). Personally, in the fruit of my experiences, I am convinced that the fact to identify (or not) with the armed actions is a question of the “degree of individual conscience”, plus of the oppressed who would act the same. With this I mean that all those that are not oppressed, do not identify with my answer to answer force with force. This has always been the way and there is not an idea or movement that is going to change anything without understanding this.

And I am not a theoretician companions, but one of the oppressed, enamored with the freedom (and liberty) that infects the oppressed with the passion for a worthy life...

⁽¹⁾ On “innocent or guilty” there deserves to be written a volume for the simple-minded...

And in 22 years and six (seven) months that I have been jailed (and for that reason tortured until unimaginable limits by “oppressed” “others”). I have said that to be oppressed in fact does not bring even a radical desire to finish yet what oppresses us...

One needs to have “pride”, dignity, conscience, hatred and intelligence to wish to face the enemy and all the consequences...

I ignore that thing which is “the social thing” and doubt that the opinions of these “oppressed” “vague beings” like, “movements”, “subjects” are going to influence in some way my ideas and actions. I was asked if also they are going to “accuse” me of thinking and acting in a “vanguard” form since my hatred of class is not “reproducible” by “the oppressed” others...

Considerations aside, I want to declare that your project of informal and insurrectionary organization has demonstrated clearly:

A) That it has grown at least in quantity and not only in the Italian Peninsula (referring to the adhesion of new groups to the F.A.Informal), then it is possible to be seen clearly in the actions of other groups that the essential of the proposal (the diffused attack, the informal organization, etc) has been extended and assimilated by other companions as their own project, even though they have not made use of the acronym F.A.I.;

B) That it has demonstrated that the attack is possible and reproducible by all those that know that things have become very bad, and are tired of hoping and have decided to now shift today to the offensive, not delegating its management to “elites” and “specialists”...

Finally I mean that all projects of these characteristics require time for their development and evolution (without mentioning their social understanding)...

And of course I am in favor of the objective value (and not for fetishism) for the reach of this project to use the acronym of the F.A.I... And I want to finish these considerations (that I always consider unnecessary) with wise words of the comrade Errico Malatesta :

“Amongst the anarchists there are the revolutionaries whom think it necessary to use force, to bring down the violence that maintains the present order, to create the atmosphere in which the free evolution of individuals and the collective is possible; and then there are educationists that think that it is only possible to arrive at the social transformation after educating the people by means of propaganda. They exist in favor of nonviolence, or the passive resistance, that avoids the violence although it is for rejecting it. Well they are divided as well, with regards to this nature, and the degree of violence. In addition, there is discord with respect to the attitude of the anarchists as opposed to the union movement, and also on their own organizations, with permanent or occasional differences between the subversive anarchists and other parties. Exactly these and other similar questions are those that requires that we try to be understood; or if, according to the understanding it is not possible, it is necessary to learn tolerance, to work together when one agrees, and when not, to leave it alone without preventing another. Because, in truth, if all the factors are taken into account, nobody always is right...”

Errico Malatesta

A Warm embrace for your comrades!
For the extension of the Revolt,
For Anarchy!
Viva la F.A.I.!”

Aachen, Germany, 28.01.07.

Gabriel Pombo da Silva

Krefelder Str. 251

52070 Aachen

Germany

Gabriel is an anarchist from Spain who escaped from prison and was caught on the Belgian-German border, with fellow anarchist escapee Jose Fernandez Delgado, Belgian anarchist Bart de Geeter and Begona, his sister.

On a few old topical questions concerning anarchists, and not only..

I am certainly not a non-violent. All the same I can understand those who hate violence to the point of wanting to banish it from their life; would never kill, would never use force to make themselves felt; those who, because of their own character and aptitude, prefer not to have recourse to it. But I can only understand that if it is a question of individual choice. When nonviolence is presented as a method of struggle, a road to be followed, when individual ethics become a moral and a collective project, it seems to me absolute nonsense, only useful as a justification for lack of action and an obstacle against those who rebel, an absolute value to impose on the weak to allow the strong to forget them more comfortably. On the edge of the abyss, with the earth that is becoming more and more slippery and under the fire of the enemy, the invitation to only use good manners can only look like that. Do what you like but don't preach to me.

That said, I am not a fanatic of violence either. I don't like those who boast about their own feats in such a context, I don't justify their apology as an end in itself, I detest those who consider it the only solution possible. I consider it a necessity in the struggle against power, nothing more. Like Malatesta, I too don't believe in 'placid sunsets'. I don't believe that the reinforced concrete with which power has covered our existence will melt up with the blooming of the flower of freedom lovingly planted by the spreading of our ideas.

Precisely because I am not non-violent I cannot stand moralistic condemnation of acts of violence. The hypocrisy makes me sick. But precisely because I am not a fanatic of violence, I also cannot stand any acritical exaltation of these acts. The stupidity of that really gets on my nerves.

Recently there has been a great prominence of attack carried out by unknown comrades, first again the police station in Genoa, then against the Spanish prison regime. Taking for granted the hysterical reaction of the media, the reaction of the police is just as predictable. But what is the reaction of comrades? Apart from the usual idiots given to hindsight, the most common reaction is silence. A necessary silence, to avoid making distinctions between those in favour and those against such acts that would only turn out to be useful to the police investigations. But for too long this silence hasn't limited itself to reigning in the days following the attacks, it protracts itself much longer than that. It is no longer silence in the face of the enemy who would like to know, it is also the silence among comrades who would like to agree. One has passed from the presence of a minimal form of solidarity to the absence of any critical discussion. But why ever should action, whatever it is, not be submitted to critical reflection? Why should a hypothetical debate on such questions be seen as an obstacle, something aimed at preventing other actions? Why could it not rather be support, a way of clarifying the meaning of what one wants to do, to strengthen and improve actions? For me, taking recent events as a starting point, I have decided to write and circulate this text. Its anonymous form is not due to fear of taking responsibility for

my words, but just a way not to differentiate myself from the other comrades in the eyes of the repression.

Claim yes claim no

As far as I know, not being an expert on the subject I could be mistaken, to find the first document claiming an attack by a revolutionary organization we must go back to Russia in 1878. It was a pamphlet *Smert' za smert'* (Death for a death) circulated by the group *Naradnaja Volja* (Will of the people) after the killing of general Mezencov of the Russian secret police. Thirteen days after the murder the pamphlet claiming it was sent to a Petersburg daily and in the days that followed many copies came out in other cities and were sent to numerous civil servants. At the time the action made a great sensation — and of course the criticisms were not lacking of those who thought that such means could not take the place of the more important instrument of propaganda of ideas and rebellion of the masses.

From then this scene has repeated itself hundred of times. The details, obviously, change from time to time but the substance doesn't change. You could almost say that the experience of these revolutionaries became a kind of archetype, an original model whose future manifestations in reality are nothing but filiations or imitations. The only variation within this schema has been brought by the anarchists who have never considered it necessary to politically claim their action of attack against power. The Russian group 'People's will', in fact, although gathering 'militants', of the most diverse ideas, nevertheless placed itself as a centralized vanguard. Within this organization, as a militant was to remember in her memoirs, there was a discussion as to whether the program to be followed was to be that of 'forcing the government to allow the people to freely express their will to reconstruct political and economic life without obstacles...or whether that organization must first move to take power into its hand, to then decree a constitution from above that was favourable to the people'.

With such premises one can well see their need to claim, to communicate the reasons for their actions to the masses whom they intended to elevate and to the enemy whose counterpart they believed themselves to be. After all, that group wanted to address the people in that nearly all its members came from the more well off classes, and negotiate with constituted power in their name, to the point of sending a letter to the heir of the Tsar to advise him on what politic to follow. But when one doesn't represent anyone, nor places oneself as anyone's counterpart, why circulate communiqués? If one thinks that action of attack against power must nevertheless have as a horizon social revolution, and not be its parody in the form of armed struggle against the state, what can the aim of a specific armed organization be?

It doesn't seem to me that anarchists in the past distinguished themselves by claiming actions. The anarchists who sacrificed themselves by carrying out individual deeds like Bresci and Caserio didn't do it for obvious reasons. Neither did the comrades who had intended to undertake more continuous activity as Ravachol and Henry, nor those who united themselves with them and others in armed action: Di Giovanni didn't do it, neither did Durruti or Ascaso. And the reason must have been quite obvious. Desiring a revolution from the base, not imposed or thrown down from above, all these anarchists considered it opportune to act in the shadows keeping themselves away from everything that could take them into the limelight. They preferred the reasons for their actions to come from the base, that was the movement itself to express them,

rather than take advantage of the clamour raised to spread them from above, like the official message of those who had made a revolt to those who hadn't. The significance of an action, if it is not made clear by its social context could be found in leaflets, newspapers, reviews and within theoretical debates developed by the movement as a whole, not in the communiques explaining the reasons for it. The reasons for its gestures are clear already comprehensible. When someone claims one's responsibility it is only because one wants to put oneself on show. The attack on the Genoa police headquarters, for example, was so significant (for the choice of the objective and the moment) as to make all words superfluous. Why was a communique circulated that said nothing but banalities?

It is true that the Angry Brigade constitute a kind of exception, still being a question of anarchists claiming their own actions. Not by chance, precisely that experience seems to constitute a kind of model for many comrades who are attacking power today. Yet, unless one wants to throw oneself into attitudes of emulation, the example doesn't seem repeatable to me. On the one hand it is impossible not to bear in mind that the Angry Brigade should be inserted into the historical context within which it matured, that is in the 70s. In an era in which numerous Stalinist groups were seminating terrible ideological bricks to propagandise their own political project and were lending themselves to taking over the dimension of armed attack, it doesn't seem strange that some anarchists wanted to distinguish themselves by not running the risk of involuntarily working for others. From the choice of name to that of objectives, to the style of the communiqués, everything tended to distinguish itself from the mess around them. But once the whole Stalinist ideology had been surpassed, why characterize oneself in the anarchist sense, what is the point in continuing with this self-representation? Perhaps in countries like Spain, where all the actions, including anonymous ones, are immediately attributed to ETA, but certainly not here in Italy. In fact for years actions of attack did not produce any communiques, except sometimes something very brief and simple and that refused the use of any acronym of identification. It should be superfluous to explain the reason for this: an action can only belong to everyone if nobody attributes it to himself. As soon as it is claimed and given an identity, a kind of separation is created between those who carried it out and everybody else. Moreover, it should not even be necessary to remember the danger inherent in any claim. It is dangerous to consign it, to send it, and above all it is dangerous to write because the more one writes the more indications one gives to police (all anything but hypothetical danger, given that there exists at least one negative precedent that struck anarchist comrades). An anonymous attack does not allow anyone to emerge and does not facilitate the police repressive work.

If the reasons for anonymity have been expressed more than once, those against it haven't. For a few years now things have changed without there having been a debate on the subject. In any case it is very difficult today for an action not to be accompanied by beautiful communiqués, followed by slogans and signatures. Why? Silence...And so, carrying on like this, doesn't one end up in vanguardism? The risk is so evident that among the very authors of claims there are those who proclaim themselves to be against vanguardism, in the hope that it will be enough to say so in order to be so. But 'to excuse yourself is to accuse yourself'. It is the method itself that is vanguardist and, sometimes, also the explicit declared contexts (as demonstrated in the afflicted communiqué of the ARA following the attack on Palazzo Marino). It matters little if the slogans incite social war rather than dictatorship of the proletariat. It matters little if the signatures change continually. That just demonstrates that anarchist 'vanguards' are more elastic

than the Stalinists, but nevertheless feel the need to distinguish themselves from the rest of the movement.

It is not enough to take the Angry Brigade as a starting point to resolve the problem. I know perfectly well that the Angry Brigade affirmed: 'We are not in a position to say whether one person is or isn't a member of the Angry Brigade. All we say is: the brigade is everywhere. Without any Central Committee and no hierarchy to classify our members, we can only know strange faces as friends through their actions'. I also know that their participants did not consider themselves as an organisation or a single group 'but an expression of rage and discontent that many people, all over the country, feel against the state and its institutions. In this sense the Angry Brigade is everywhere (the man and the woman who are sitting next to you)'. But all that just shows the good faith of these comrades, their preoccupation not to present themselves as a vanguard, but it doesn't demonstrate whether they actually succeeded in their intentions. A signature that wants to be a symbol of generalized anger doesn't make sense. For everyone to be able to recognize himself or herself in it the actions and words explaining them must be understood and shared by everyone. You can't offer a general collective identity and claim that each one renounces their individuality. That can only be done if the actions realized and the words spoken remain at a level that is so low as to limit dissent as far as possible: very simple exemplary actions accompanied by maximalist slogans. All that — given that it might be worth it — can only work for a brief period, after which other factors intervene that are part of any process that makes the continuation of the experiment possible: there are those who want to move on to more powerful instruments, who want to strike more selective objectives, who want to express more precise objects... Even the ALF, who struggle for a motivation that is basically simple and univocal such as animal liberation, saw the first defections as soon as they began to expand. Some other animalist groups — tired of the confusion of the project, the minimalism of the objectives, the declarations of the spokespersons — formed. Not only, but, it is the worst aspect, all of these groups saw themselves forced to give themselves a new name to avoid being included automatically in the main cauldron. Because the instrument of claiming is a strictly political one, with all the harm that that implies, as long as one remains in anonymity one can do what one wants, without involving or exploiting others. But as soon as one emerges, they also force the others to come out so as not to be considered mere army columns. This mechanism of identification/assimilation can only be avoided through anonymity, the diversification of means and fantasy in the choice of objectives, otherwise, no matter how many precautions one may take, one could never prevent the media from putting it into act (so much more than with the communiqués that one sends precisely to them).

I repeat, with that I don't think that one can doubt the good faith of these comrades, all the same, in my opinion, they are victims of a mistake: thinking that a method can become anarchist according to who uses it. It is not like that. A specific organisation, with its own acronym and communiqués, is vanguardist beyond the individual people who make it up. What is the point of sending a claim direct to the cops? What is the point of explaining what doesn't need to be explained? Apart from revolutionary mythology, all that only means something for a vanguard that sees itself as other and better in respect to the movement as a whole.

What objectives?

The vanguard logic is rigid, as soon as one adopts it, it is applied everywhere. It is enough to think of the choice of objectives, the depressing road that throughout the years has led from anonymously slain pylon to a letter bomb sent to television. In the first case they want to sabotage an enemy, jamming the functioning of its system by putting a peripheral structure out of use. It is a question of practical action of attack, perhaps a little fastidious to bring about, but without putting anyone at risk. In the second case one just wants to be talked about, make publicity for one's own firm, and that is why they turn directly to the doors of the RAI [Italian equivalent of BBC]... It is just a symbolic action, far easier to realize, and if the risk of being wounded falls to some unfortunate postal worker or TV employer... who cares. It seems that it is not only the Jesuits who think that the end justifies the means but also some anarchists. And concerning letter bombs... I have been unfair. I said that those who send them just want to be talked about. I forgot to add that, self-gratification aside, they also want something else to be talked about. For example the prison conditions of some anarchists and rebels imprisoned in Spain. The Russian revolutionary socialists in 1878 had a similar preoccupation. In one of their famous documents they wrote: 'If the press don't defend the prisoners, we will'. Today there are groups of the 5C [one of the Informal FAI groups]. Anarchists, not revolutionary-socialists. Anarchists like May Picqueray who in 1921 sent a parcel bomb to the American ambassador in Paris to protest against the silence that weighted upon the incarceration of Sacco and Vanzetti. The action was very successful because the abuse committed by the American government finally became publicly known, launching a struggle that had had difficulty in taking off. But after taking act of the similarity between past and present, one must have blinkers on not to see the colossal differences. The Russian socialists killed the chief of the secret police following the death of their comrades: a death for a death, exactly. The French anarchist, to make public the infamy of American justice, struck the maximum representative of the American government present in France. Today the 5C send their presents not less than to the workers of the RAI or the secretaries of Spanish travel agencies. The differences should leap out at us. Of course, those materially responsible for the penitentiary regime that is being imposed on comrades are far away and probably too well protected to be reached, whereas the interests of the Spanish State are everywhere and can therefore be struck. But are these interests embodied in the employees working in travel agencies? And because one insists on making an impact on the media, how can one ignore the fact that the great means of communication only amplify the words of the rebels if they can distort them? And how not realize that such actions make their operation of distortion all too easy? By sending incendiary letters left and right one will undoubtedly make them talk about the comrades detained in Spain, everybody will talk about them, but in what terms? In the terms imposed by the media, of course, which will rush to reinforce the idea already implanted in many that, after all, if these prisoners have such unscrupulous champions, perhaps they deserve harsh regimes.

The trouble is that those who think that they are further ahead, more radical than everybody else, think so for a very precise reason. This consist in the use of certain instruments: those who talk just chatter, those who attack with weapons are acting. All those who support armed struggle are in love with their instruments, they love them to the point that they cease to see them as such and see them as an end in themselves, the reason for being. They don't choose the means best suited to the end they want to achieve, they transform the means into end in itself. If I want to

kill a fly on the wall I use a rolled up newspaper, if I want to kill a mouse I use a stick, if I want to kill a man I use a revolver, if I want to demolish a building I use dynamite. According to what I want to do, I choose the means that I consider most adapt from all those that I have available. The armed-strugglist, no. He doesn't think like that. He wants to use his favourite instrument, the one that gives him most satisfaction, that makes him feel more radical, that allows him to bask in his media celebrity, and he uses it independently of the aim he has given himself: he shoots flies, machine-guns the mouse, dynamites the man and if he could, would use a nuclear bomb to blow up the building. For the armed-strugglist the radicality of the struggle does not consist of its extension and depth and its capacity to question social peace. For the armed-strugglist, radicality is only a question of firepower: a calibre 22 handgun is less radical than a 38, which is less radical than a Kalashikov, which is less radical than plastic explosives. That is why, thirsty for fame and rendered obtuse by his own technical idolatry, he sends incendiary letters to simple employees to combat the FIES prison regime. He does that because it is the only thing he knows how to do; techniques do not accompany intelligence but take the place of it, and so one doesn't even stop to ask for a second whether the means is suitable for the end one wants to attain. As far as scruples are concerned, he doesn't have any for the simple reason that in his head everything is split up into black and white, without nuances of colour. On the one side there is the State, on the other the anarchists. There is no one in the middle. If one isn't anarchist one belongs to the State, so one is an enemy. The exploited are responsible for the conditions that they put up with just as much as the exploiters who impose them on them: they are enemies, so that's their problem.

Strangely this typically militaristic logic is gaining ground among certain anarchists, among whom there are even some who support the Palestinian Kamikaze. Incredible if one thinks that such levels of abjection were far even from the Russian revolutionaries at the end of the nineteenth century: vanguardist authoritarians yes, but with a rigorous ethic, ready to kill an exploiter but without touching a hair of any of the exploited. And if the authoritarians took this care, think of the anarchists! The examples in this sense are many: even Sicchi, well known also for his heated language, was capable of going back to where he had left a bomb in order to defuse it when he realized that some passer-by might have been wounded.

But the image of the anarchist of the past, the perfect gentleman, is too goody goody, not very gratifying for some anarchists today. There are anarchists who only manage to give a sense to their lives if they feel they have been struck by public contempt. The more something is condemned, the more they are attracted. The more the newspapers and the judges depict anarchists as unscrupulous people, the more they rush to fill this role. Devoid of any prospects of their own, they let themselves be told by their enemies what they are and what they must do.

Another consequence of what is happening is the total overturning of the meaning of the term 'insurrectionalist', which today is coming to be used as a simple synonymous for 'violent'. Anarchists who put bombs are insurrectionalist, anarchist who break windows are insurrectionalist, anarchists who clash with the police are insurrectionalist, insurrectionalist are the anarchists who contest the demonstrations of the political parties and so on. Not a word about ideas. In a certain sense one is repeating exactly what happened at the beginning of the century with the adjective 'individualist'. Once there was the conviction that anyone who supported violent individual acts was an individualist, then this term came to be applied more or less everywhere and often out of place. In the frenzy of events, who stopped to clarify the confusion that was spreading? Recourse to individual violence is not at all typical characteristic of individualism, so much so that there were also pacifist individual anarchists (such as Tucker) or non-violent (like

Mackay). And again, was Galleani an individualist perhaps? Yet he was a supporter of individual actions... as Malatesta in certain circumstances. And there have also been communists in favour of individual acts. Unfortunately the equivocation became such that there were even those who declared themselves individualist even though they were not at all (as did Schicchi in the Pisa trial).

Misunderstanding, incomprehension... it is better not to add to such confusion. That the media do it is quite obvious. But why should we do it too?

Insurrection is a social event. It is not a challenge, a singular duel with the State launched by those who believe that the mass are just sheep waiting to be sheared. Recourse to violence is inevitable and necessary in an insurrectional project, just as it is before (because the social aspect of insurrection can never be carried to justify waiting). Therefore, also now. But this violence cannot separate itself from the rest of the project, it cannot take its place. It is violence that is one instrument at the service of the project, not the project that is in the service of violence. Whoever thinks that an insurrection isn't possible, having lost (or never had) faith in the possibility that the exploited will rebel, should realize the distance that separates them from any insurrectional project. If he wants to fight his private war against power, because that is what it has become, let him do so, but without passing this off as social war. If he wants to go down to history for his actions, because this is a question of pure self-gratification, then let him sit under the glare of the media, but without claiming to have the whole movement behind him. It is obvious that anybody is free to do what he or she wants. For those who think that they are above criticism and should be applauded, understood and followed without even having bothered to explain the reasons behind their methods, are a lot less.

Additional notes

For more information consult these references:

The Finger and the Moon -

The Cervantes Investigation

Elephant Editions

The Sun Still Rises

Conspiracy of Cells of Fire

Fire and Dynamite

Conspiracy of Cells of Fire

Do Not Say We Are Few

FAI / Artisans Cooperative of Fire and Similar

(occasionally spectacular) /

International Revolutionary Front

FAI / 20th July Brigade /

International Revolutionary Front

Rain and Fire

International Informal Anarchist Federation / FAI

Counter-information resource: 325.nostate.net

The Anarchist Project

We have spoken many times of the way anarchists consider armed struggle. We did this in unsuspecting times, when everyone marched ahead into the messy space of big spectacular actions that were systematically ground up by the news media for consumption by the populace.

A rejection of vertical structures, unstructured cooperation between fields of activity, control within the limits of security, the self-sufficiency of groups, the choice of minimum objectives, the accessible meaning of these objectives, continuity of intervention, progressive radicalization in social fields, self-information, propaganda activity, critical clarification, the circulation of ideas within the movement, the preparation of propaganda situations, intermediate struggles, the connection between this phase and the following insurrectional phase, the attempts and results of individual actions tied together by a logical thread devoid of incomprehensible leaps, the equality of all levels of struggle, the many-sidedness of the strictly military dimension, the bipolar aspects of organized structures, the ability to de-structure easily at any time, the critique of professionalism, the critique of superficiality, the critique of “efficiency-for-its-own-sake”, the critique of technological economism and the critique of arms.

The Insurrectional Opening

Participating together with people, with the exploited in general, in intermediate struggles: for housing, against war, against the missiles, against nuclear power stations, for jobs, for the defence of wages, for the right to health, against repression, against prison, etc.

And then using our organizational strength to gradually urge these struggles still further ahead, toward a possible insurrectional opening.

In Practice, the Development of the Real Movement is a Process of Violent Transformation of Class Struggle

It is not certain that the real movement can grow indefinitely through intermediate struggles. If the contrary were true would mean that anarcho-syndicalism would be the best solution, given that it provides for both a transposition of the structures of struggle into tomorrow's society, and its own transformation into a constituent structure of the new social order.

The important thing is that intermediate struggles must reach a violent outcome, a breaking point, an essential line beyond which recuperation would no longer be possible, except in minimal and therefore insignificant proportions. But to achieve this result, the process of violent transformation must be as widespread as possible. Not in the sense that it must inevitably start from a broad mass movement, one that is violent and denies immediate and tangible results, but in the sense that it must contain, even when it has a minimal size at the beginning, the idea and intention of developing as mass violence. Otherwise, the role of the specific movement be-

comes purely symbolic, withdrawn into itself, only capable of satisfying (up to a certain point) the components of the minority (or if you prefer, of the racket).

...Changing in Order to Advance

Therefore we need a critique. What we need are methods of involvement where we can use our experience of past struggles to good advantage. In this way, it is possible to understand the armed struggle of the future. As a project in itself, arising from a specific organization, armed struggle doesn't even retain the minimal driving possibility that the experience of its beginnings in the conditions of advanced capitalism might lead us to expect.

We must go forward. The specific organization is good. It is not an instrument that can be replaced, because it is the direct expression of the specific movement: it is what an objectivization of revolutionary consciousness succeeds in giving that can be immediately put to use. But it must be directed exclusively toward involvement. Always exactly one step ahead relative to the masses' degree of combativeness, on specific terrain where this fighting spirit appears, even in the slightest degree, and by limiting our activity to this capacity of the masses. Not advancing in all directions and thereby assuming a significance and roles that are not relevant to the specific organization.

In this sense there is still much to be done. In fact, we must struggle on two fronts. On one hand, against the militaristic mentality that cannot imagine a specific organization that well-defined and limited. On the other, against a reformist mentality that mistrusts even this small step forward, which the specific organization must accomplish, interpreting it in terms of dishonesty and vanguardism.

In an attempt to clarify these problems, we have spoken of insurrection.

— Against Amnesty, Alfredo M. Bonanno

Why we are insurrectionalist anarchists

—Because we are struggling along with the excluded to alleviate and ultimately abolish the conditions of exploitation imposed by the included.

—Because we consider it possible to contribute to the development of struggles that are appearing spontaneously everywhere, turning them into mass insurrections, that is to say, actual revolutions.

—Because we want to destroy the capitalist order of the world which, thanks to computer science restructuring, has become technologically useful to no one but the managers of class domination.

—Because we are for the immediate, destructive attack against the structures, individuals and organisations of Capital and the State.

—Because we constructively criticise all those who are in situations of compromise with power in their belief that the revolutionary struggle is impossible at the present time.

—Because rather than wait, we have decided to proceed to action, even if the time is not ripe.

—Because we want to put an end to this state of affairs right away, rather than wait until conditions make its transformation possible.

These are the reasons why we are anarchists, revolutionaries and insurrectionalists.

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Informal Anarchist Federation
Escalation
Some Texts Concerning the Informal Anarchist Federation (FAI) and the Insurrectionist Project
August 2012

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