Situationist International

The Veritable Split in the International
Some of the publishers in London and New York who refused this book:

*Wildwood House:* "Wait a few years." Dieter Pevsner.

*Praeger:* ". . . would not be suitable for our list, and I must report that I see such a small audience for your book in the United States on account of both its style and its subject. . ." Denise Rathbun — Editor.

*Allen & Unwin:* "However, I am afraid we do not feel that we could publish it successfully. . ." Jane Williams, Sec. to Peter Leek.

*Viking Press:* "I have tried hard to read THE VERITABLE SPLIT. . ., but I haven't succeeded. . ." Gwenda David.

*Fontana:* "If only the S.I. would discuss positive lines of action, or would see action as the logical expression of their thought. . ." R. B. Woodings.

*Unicorn Bookshop:* "The trouble with it is this: it is virtually incomprehensible to anyone who is not an International Situationist." Bill Butler.

*Penguin:* "I have now had a chance to look at this and I very much regret to say that it doesn't seem a possibility for us." Neil Middleton.

*Harper & Row:* "Careful consideration was given to the work and while we recognize the merit of such, we feel that there is not sufficient market to warrant our publishing." Tadashi Akaishi — Vice President and Publisher.

*Sphere Books:* "I am afraid that it is far too specialised for any of our imprints. . ." Angus Wells — Fiction Editor.

*Socialist Reproduction:* "Sorry but we only publish our own material and only help out groups etc. with whom we have political sympathy — which does not include the Situationist Int."

*Olympia Press:* "A bad book."

*Pall Mall Press:* "Sorry it's not for us."

*Stage 1:* Richard Handyside described the book as a bad translation, which did not explain who the situationists are, and required proofs concerning "the two headed gang of Mao and Lin Piao."

*Macmillan:* " . . . we do not foresee a sufficiently large sale in our market. . ." (Miss) Ray Martin.
"One party proves itself to be victorious by the fact that it breaks up into two parties; for in that fact it shows it possesses within it the principle it combats, and consequently shows it has abolished the one-sidedness with which it formerly made its appearance. The interest which was divided between it and the other, now falls entirely within it, and forgets the other, because that interest finds lying in it alone the opposition on which its attention is directed. At the same time, however, the opposition has been lifted into the higher victorious element where it manifests itself in a clarified form. So that the schism that arises in one party, and seems a misfortune, demonstrates rather its good fortune."

Hegel, The Phenomenology of Mind.
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Theses on the Situationist International and its time
The situationist International imposed itself in a moment of universal history as the thought of the collapse of a world; collapse which has now begun before our eyes.

The Minister of the Interior in France and the federated anarchists of Italy feel the same anger about it: never had such an extremist project, declaring itself in an epoch which seemed to be so hostile to it, affirmed in such a short time its hegemony in the struggle of ideas, product of the history of class struggles. The theory, the style, the example of the S.I. are adopted today by thousands of revolutionaries in the principal advanced countries but, much more profoundly, it is the whole of modern society which seems to have convinced itself of the truth of the situationist perspectives, whether to realise them or to combat them. Books and texts of the S.I. are everywhere translated and commented upon. Its demands are plastered in the factories of Milan as in the University of Coimbra. Its principal theses, from California to Calabria, from Scotland to Spain, from Belfast to Leningrad, infiltrate in clandestinity or are proclaimed in open struggles. Submissive intellectuals who are presently at the beginning of their career see themselves obliged on their side to disguise themselves as moderate situationists or semi-situationists, only to show that they are able to understand the last moment of the system which employs them. If one can denounce everywhere the diffuse influence of the S.I., it is because the S.I. itself is only the concentrated expression of an historic subversion which is everywhere.

What are called “situationist ideas” are nothing other than the first ideas of the period of reappearance of the modern revolutionary movement. What, in them, is radically new corresponds precisely to the new characteristics of class society, to the real development of its fleeting successes, of its contradictions, of its oppression. As for all the rest, it is evidently the revolutionary thought born of the last two centuries, the thought of history, returned in the present conditions as if to its home; not “revised” from its own ancient positions bequeathed as a problem for ideologues, but transformed by present history. The S.I. succeeded simply in that it expressed “the real movement which abolishes the existing conditions” and that it knew how to express this: that is to say how to begin to make heard to the subjectively negative part of the process, to its “bad side”, its own unknown theory, which this side of social practice creates, and which at first it does not know. The S.I. itself belonged to this “bad side”. Finally, it is not therefore a question of a theory of the S.I., but of the theory of the proletariat.

Each moment of this historical process of modern society which accomplishes and abolishes the world of the commodity, and which contains also the anti-historical moment of society constituted as spectacle, has led the S.I. to be all that it could be. In what becomes social practice, in the moment which manifests itself now as a new epoch, the S.I. must always recognise its truth the more; know what it wanted and what it did, and how it did it.

The S.I. has not only seen modern proletarian subversion coming; it has come with it. It did not herald it as an exterior phenomenon, by the frozen extrapolation of scientific calculation: it had gone to meet it. We did not put our ideas “in all heads”, through some

a. “Chotard! Do you understand now that you are an imbecile and a midget of politics? (...) Will you understand that there is no theory and practice other than that of the proletariat itself; that a theory is situationist to the extent that situationists expose the moments and particulars of it? (...) Those who think that theory is a collection of concepts, their own, can only oppose themselves to the 'concepts' of others. Should their propaganda and their lie succeed over the masses, they would always ask themselves how such a phenomenon could have happened. They would never know to whom to attribute their success, nor even what this success is. (...) No-one will be astonished if the proletariat realises theory if that means for it to transform the world, and to know it. Possibly even Chotard will not be astonished in the end. But what scares him is that the proletariat will realise situationist theory and not his.”

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foreign influence, as only the bourgeois or bureaucratic-totalitarian spectacle can do, without lasting success. We said the ideas which were inevitably already in these proletarian heads, and in saying them we contributed to making such ideas active, as also to making the critique in acts more theoretician, and determined to make of time its time. What first of all is censored in the mind of people is naturally also censored by the spectacle, when this could come to express itself socially. Assuredly this censorship today still holds sway over the near totality of the revolutionary project and of the revolutionary desire in the masses. But already the theory and the critique in acts have created an unforgettable breach in the spectacular censorship. The repressed of the proletarian critique has come to light; it has acquired a memory and a language. It has undertaken the judgement of the world and, the dominant conditions having nothing to plead their cause, the sentence only poses the problem it can solve: that of its execution.

6

As had happened in general in the pre-revolutionary moments of modern times, the S.I. openly proclaimed its goals, and nearly everyone wanted to believe it was a joke. The silence maintained on this score by the specialists of social observation and the ideologues of workers' alienation during ten years — a very short period on the scale of such events —, although troubled towards the end by the resounding of various scandals, wrongly considered as peripheral and without tomorrow, had not prepared the false consciousness of the submissive intelligentsia to foresee nor to understand what exploded in France in May 1968, and which since then has only deepened and spread\textsuperscript{b}. It is then that the demonstration supplied by history, and not indeed situationist eloquence, overthrew, on this point and many others, the conditions of ignorance and artificial security maintained by the spectacular organisation of appearances. One can prove dialectically that one is right by no other means than by manifesting oneself in the moment of dialectical reason. The movement of occupations, in the same way that it immediately raised its partisans in the factories of all countries, instantly appeared to the masters of society and their intellectual executors just as incomprehensible as terrifying. The owning classes still tremble from it, but understand it better. To the obscured consciousness of the specialists of power, this revolutionary crisis straight away presented itself only in the shape of pure negation without thought. The project which it articulated, the language it held, were not translatable for them, the managers of thought without negation, impoverished to the last degree by several decades of mechanical monologue; where deficiency imposes itself upon itself as nec plus ultra; where the lie has come to the stage of believing only in itself. To him who reigns by the spectacle and in the spectacle, that is to say with the practical power of the mode of production which "has detached itself from itself, and set up an independent empire in the spectacle", the real movement which has remained outside the spectacle and which for the first time comes to interrupt it, presents itself as irreality itself, realised. But what spoke so loud in France at this moment was just this same revolutionary movement which had begun to manifest itself mutely everywhere else. The French branch of the Holy Alliance of the possessors of society saw first of all in this nightmare its imminent death; next it believed itself definitely saved; then it recovered from these two

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François Bott, "Les situationnistes et l'économie cannibale" (Les Temps Modernes, no. 229-300, June 1971).
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one discovers that the movement of occupations had
unfortunately some ideas, and that they were situationist ideas:
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from them. The exploiters still count on containing them, but
they despair of forgetting them.

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The movement of occupations was the outline of a "situationist"
revolution, but it was only the outline, both insofar as the practice
of a revolution, and as situationist consciousness of history. It is at
this moment that a generation, internationally, started to be
situationist.

8
The new epoch is profoundly revolutionary, and it knows that it
is. At all levels of world society, one can no longer and one will no
longer go on as before. Above, one can no longer peaceably
manage the course of things, because one discovers there that the
first fruits of the superession of the economy are not only ripe:
they have begun to rot. At the base, no one longer wants to suffer
what befalls, and it is the exigency of life which has at present
become a revolutionary programme. The resolution to make one's
history oneself, there is the secret of all the "savage" and
"incomprehensible" negations which flout the ancient order.

9
The world of the commodity, which was essentially uninhabitable,
has become so visibly. This knowledge is produced by two
movements which react upon each other. On the one hand the

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(and also practical) activities of a minority of insolent yet lucid challengers: the
situationist International. Now, by an apparent paradox of which history has the secret,
for ten years and more, the S.I. remained practically unknown in our country. This is
what could justify this reflexion of Hegel's: 'All the important revolutions and which
spring to view must be preceded in the spirit of the epoch by a secret revolution, which
is not visible to all, and even less noticeable to the contemporaries and which is just as
difficult to express in words as it is to understand'."


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totality of its possible realisation. On the other hand the dominant
science, the science of domination, from now on calculates with
precision the ever accelerated growth of the internal
contradictions which abolish the general conditions of survival
in the society of dispossession.

10
The symptoms of the revolutionary crisis accumulate in
thousands, and they are of such gravity that the spectacle is now
obliged to speak of its own ruin. Its false language evokes its real
enemies and its real disaster\textsuperscript{d}.

11
The language of power has become furiously reformist. It only
showed happiness everywhere in shop windows and everywhere
sold for the best price; it denounces the omnipresent failings of its
system. The owners of society have suddenly discovered that
everything is to be changed there without delay, education as well
as urbanism, the way in which work is lived as well as the
orientations of technology. In short, this world has lost the
confidence of all its governments; they propose therefore to
dissolve it and constitute another from it. They give us to observe
only that they are more qualified than the revolutionaries to
undertake an upheaval which demands so much experience and
such great means; which precisely they hold and have the use of.
Here then, hand on heart, the computer-programmers who pledge
themselves to programme the qualitative, and the managers of
pollution who undertake as first task to lead the fight against their
own pollution. But modern capitalism already presented itself
previously, in the face of the ancient failures of the revolution, as
a reformism which had succeeded. It flattered itself with having
made this freedom and this happiness of the commodity. It had to

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complete the deliverance of its wage-slaves one day, if not from wage earning, then at least from the abundant residues of deprivations and excessive inequalities inherited from its period of formation — or more exactly from those of these deprivations which it judged it had itself to recognize as such. It promises today to deliver its wage-slaves, in addition, from all the new perils and displeasures which it is precisely in the process of producing massively, as essential characteristic of the most modern commodity taken as a whole; and it is the same booming production, up to now so cracked up to be the ultimate corrective of everything, which is now going to have to correct itself, still under the exclusive control of the same bosses. The collapse of the old world appears fully in this ridiculous language of decomposed domination∗.

Ways of life improve. The meaning of words participates in this. Everywhere the respect for alienation has been lost. Young people, workers, coloured people, homosexuals, women and children, take it into their heads to want everything that was forbidden them; at the same time as they refuse the major part of the miserable results that the old organisation of class society permitted them to obtain and to bear. They want no more leaders, no more family, no more State. They criticise architecture and they learn to speak to each other. And in rising up against a hundred particular oppressions, they in fact challenge alienated labour. What comes to be the order of the day now, is the abolition of wage labour.

∗ "What strikes me in advertising today, is how far the language it uses is superseded. It dates from before the great crack which since 1968, more or less disseminated beneath the trials and troubles of life, traverses society in a zig-zag. (...) Advertising must integrate the problems of civilisation if it wants to be really profitable, that is to say not be content to sell in the short term, but, in the mid and long term, to fortify the consumer. (...) Motivation enquiries — I was the first to introduce them into France — have given us the means for a solid knowledge of the consumer; but they are only utilised in general to construct a dialogue which is still one way. The advertising of tomorrow will be obliged to embark on the course of true communication, where each of the two speakers receives the influence of the other and takes note of it, in a dialogue on as far as possible equal terms."

Marcel Bleustein-Blanchet (Le Monde, 9th December 1971).

Each area of a social space which is moulded more and more by alienated production and its planners thus becomes a new field of struggle, from primary school to public transport, up to mental hospitals and prisons. All the Churches are decomposing. On the old tragedy of the expropriation of working class revolutions by the bureaucratic class, which has been replaying for the last twenty years as a simple exotic comedy, the curtain falls amid a burst of general laughter. The buffoons take their leave in their style. Castro has become a reformist in Chile, just as he stages at home the parody of the Moscow trials, after having condemned the movement of occupations and the Mexican revolt in 1968, but having highly approved the action of Russian tanks in Prague; the burlesque two headed gang of Mao and Lin Piao, just at the moment when its last faithful western spectators, bourgeois and leftists, finally reported the perfecting of its triumph in the long struggle which divides the exploiters of China, falls back into the terrorist disorder of this bureaucracy broken into pieces (it was not at all a matter of dealing or refusing to deal with the United States, but only a matter of knowing who would receive Nixon and his assistants in Peking). If humanity can thus separate itself joyously from its past, it is because the serious has returned to the world with history itself, which reunites it in its truth. Without doubt the crisis of the totalitarian bureaucracy, as part of the general crisis of capitalism, takes on characteristics which are specific to it, partly through the particular socio-juridical means of appropriation of society by the bureaucracy constituted as a class as also by reason of its evident delay in the development of the production of commodities. The bureaucracy has its place in the crisis of modern society principally from the fact that it is equally the proletariat which is going to strike it down. The menace of proletarian revolution, which has for the past three years

f "It is indeed the War Lords who reappear beneath the uniform of independent 'communist' generals, dealing directly with the central power, and conducting their own politics, particularly in the peripheral regions. (...) It is the world-wide dislocation of the bureaucratic International which reproduces itself at this moment on the Chinese scale, in the fragmentation of power in independent provinces. (...) The Mandate from proletarian Heaven is exhausted."

Internationale Situationniste no. 11 (October 1967).
complete the deliverance of its wage-slaves one day, if not from wage earning, then at least from the abundant residues of deprivations and excessive inequalities inherited from its period of formation — or more exactly from those of these deprivations which it judged it had itself to recognize as such. It promises today to deliver its wage-slaves, in addition, from all the new perils and displeasures which it is precisely in the process of producing massively, as essential characteristic of the most modern commodity taken as a whole; and it is the same booming production, up to now so cracked up to be the ultimate corrective of everything, which is now going to have to correct itself, still under the exclusive control of the same bosses. The collapse of the old world appears fully in this ridiculous language of decomposed domination.  

12  
Ways of life improve. The meaning of words participates in this. Everywhere the respect for alienation has been lost. Young people, workers, coloured people, homosexuals, women and children, take it into their heads to want everything that was forbidden; at the same time as they refuse the major part of the miserable results that the old organisation of class society permitted them to obtain and to bear. They want no more leaders, no more family, no more State. They criticise architecture and they learn to speak to each other. And in rising up against a hundred particular oppressions, they in fact challenge alienated labour. What comes to be the order of the day now, is the abolition of wage labour.

e. "What strikes me in advertising today, is how far the language it uses is superseded. It dates from before the great crack which since 1968, more or less dissipated beneath the trials and troubles of life, traverses society in a zig-zag. (...) Advertising must integrate the problems of civilisation if it wants to be really profitable, that is to say not be content to sell in the short term, but, in the mid and long term, to fortify the consumer. (...) Motivation enquiries — I was the first to introduce them into France — have given us the means for a solid knowledge of the consumer; but they are only utilised in general to construct a dialogue which is still one way. The advertising of tomorrow will be obliged to embark on the course of true communication, where each of the two speakers receives the influence of the other and takes note of it, in a dialogue on as far as possible equal terms."
Marcel Bleustein-Blanchet (Le Monde, 9th December 1971).

Each area of a social space which is moulded more and more by alienated production and its planners thus becomes a new field of struggle, from primary school to public transport, up to mental hospitals and prisons. All the Churches are decomposing. On the old tragedy of the expropriation of working class revolutions by the bureaucratic class, which has been replaying for the last twenty years as a simple exotic comedy, the curtain falls amid a burst of general laughter. The buffoons take their leave in their style. Castro has become a reformist in Chile, just as he stages at home the parody of the Moscow trials, after having condemned the movement of occupations and the Mexican revolt in 1968, but having largely approved the action of Russian tanks in Prague; the burlesque two headed gang of Mao and Lin Piao, just at the moment when its last faithful western spectators, bourgeois and leftists, finally reported the perfecting of its triumph in the long struggle which divides the exploiters of China, falls back into the terrorist disorder of this bureaucracy broken into pieces (it was not at all a matter of dealing or refusing to deal with the United States, but only a matter of knowing who would receive Nixon and his assistants in Peking). If humanity can thus separate itself joyously from its past, it is because the serious has returned to the world with history itself, which reunites it in its truth. Without doubt the crisis of the totalitarian bureaucracy, as part of the general crisis of capitalism, takes on characteristics which are specific to it, partly through the particular socio-juridical means of appropriation of society by the bureaucracy constituted as a class as also by reason of its evident delay in the development of the production of commodities. The bureaucracy has its place in the crisis of modern society principally from the fact that it is equally the proletariat which is going to strike it down. The menace of proletarian revolution, which has for the past three years

f. "It is indeed the War Lords who reap back the uniform of independent 'communist' generals, dealing directly with the central power, and conducting their own politics, particularly in the peripheral regions. (...) It is the world-wide dislocation of the bureaucratic International which reproduces itself at this moment on the Chinese scale, in the fragmentation of power in independent provinces. (...) The Mandate from proletarian Heaven is exhausted."

Internationale Situationniste no. 11 (October 1967).
dominated all the politics of the bourgeoisie and of stalinism in Italy, and brings about the open association of their common interests, weighs at the same time on the so-called soviet bureaucracy; to postpone the hour of uprising of the workers of Russia is the only true care of its world strategy — which feared everything from the Czech process and nothing from the independence of the Rumanian bureaucracy —, as of its policemen and psychiatrists. Already, along the Baltic coast, the sailors and the dockers have started to communicate their experience and their project again. In Poland, through the insurrectionary strike of December 1970, the workers have succeeded in shaking the bureaucracy and reducing even further the margin for manoeuvre of its economists: the price increases have been withdrawn, wages have risen, the government has fallen, agitation has remained. But American society is decomposing just as much, even down to its army in Vietnam, become the “drug army”, which must be withdrawn because its soldiers no longer want to fight; and they will fight in the United States. Wildcat strikes move across Europe, from Sweden to Spain, and now it is the bosses of industry or their newspapers who drill the workers to try to persuade them of the usefulness of trade unionism. In these “bacchanalia of truth where no-one remains sober”, the British proletarian revolution will not miss the rendezvous this time: it will be able to slake its thirst at the spring of civil war which from now on marks the return of the Irish question.

Comrades, just one remark. I hope that comrade Gierek announces something really new to us. In this case we must support him. How? By speaking. For our only weapon is to tell the truth. Lies get us nowhere. We must continue to orientate the discussion in this direction. The workers know well that two currents have formed in our ruling classes. Both of them pitch into each other. If the current which directed the old policy regains ground, well then, we who have been on strike, we will all go in the nick.”

“Look why you would like to reply to comrade Gierek when he says we must economise money, that money is precious here. We are conscious of it. It is our blood which is in there. But we can take money from those who live too well. Comrades, I will say straight out: our society is divided into classes.”


With the exploiters, and with many of their victims who have definitely renounced their own life in acquiescing neurotically in the reigning order, the decline and fall of this order are felt with anguish and fury. These emotions are translated in the first place by a fear and a hatred of youth, which pushed to such a degree, have no precedent. But fundamentally, they are only afraid of revolution. It is not youth, as a passing state, which threatens the social order; it is the modern revolutionary critique, in acts and in theory, which amplifies itself each year, starting from an historical point of departure which we have just lived. It begins in the youth of a moment, but it will not grow old. The phenomenon is in no way cyclical; it is cumulative. Recently youth scared nobody, when its agitations seemed still limited to the student milieu; and it is there in effect that the neo-bureaucratic leftist, which is nothing but the nursery of the old world, recruits, where one disguises oneself with the panoply of a few hero-fathers, who in fact count among the founders of the existing society. Youth became formidable when it was found that subversion had gained the mass of young workers; and that the hierarchical ideology of leftist would not recuperate it. It is this youth which is put in prison; and which revolts in the prisons. It is a fact that youth, although there remains much for it to learn and invent, and although it preserves, above all among the different kinds of professional-revolutionary apprentices, a number of backwardnesses, has never been so intelligent, nor so resolute to destroy the established society (the poetry which is in the S.I. can now be read by a young girl of fourteen, on this point Lautreamont’s wish is gratified to the full). Those who repress youth want in reality to defend themselves against proletarian subversion with which it identifies itself largely, and with which they identify it even more; and those very ones who make this amalgam feel how far it condemns them. The panic before youth, which one would like to mask beneath so many inept analyses and pompous exhortations, is founded on this simple calculation: in only twelve or fifteen years from now, the young will be adults, the adults will be old, the old will be dead. The responsible of the class in power thus need absolutely to reverse in a few years the
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tendency of their rate of control over society to drop; and they all have reason to believe that they will not reverse it.

While the world of the commodity is disputed by proletarians to a degree of depth which their critique had never reached before, and which is precisely the only one which suited their ends — a critique of the totality — the functioning of the economic system has itself embarked, of its own movement, on a course of self-destruction. The crisis of the economy, that is to say of the whole of the economic phenomenon, crisis more and more patent in recent decades, has just crossed a qualitative threshold. Even the old form of the simple economic crisis, which the system had succeeded in overcoming, one knows how, during the same period, reappears as a possibility of the near future. This is the effect of a dual process. On the one hand proletarians, not only in Poland, but just as much in England or in Italy, in the shape of the workers who escape the union framework, impose wage claims and working conditions which already gravely disturb the forecasts and the decisions of the state economists who manage the smooth running of concentrated capitalism. The refusal of the present organisation of work in the factory is already a direct refusal of the society which bases itself on this organisation, and to this effect some Italian strikes have broken out the very morning after the day on which the bosses had accepted all of the preceding demands. But the simple wage claim, when it is renewed frequently enough and each time it fixes a sufficiently high percentage increase, shows clearly that the workers gain consciousness of their misery and their alienation throughout the whole of their social existence, that no salary will ever be able to compensate. For example, capitalism having of its own accord ordered the extra-urban habitat of the workers, these will soon be driven to demand that their arduous hours of daily travel be paid for in what fact they are: a veritable time of work. In all these struggles which still recognise wage-earning, trade-unionism must itself be still accepted in its principle; however it is only accepted as an apparently ill-adapted, and perpetually outflanked form. But the unions cannot last indefinitely in such a socio-political conjuncture; and they feel that they are wearing out. In the speeches of bourgeois ministers and of stalinist bureaucrats, the same fear rediscovers the same words: "I pose the question: are we going to start anew as in 1968? I reply: no, this must not start again." (Declaration of Georges Marchais in Strasbourg, 25th February 1972). On the other hand, the proletarians of the commodity-abundant society, in the shape of consumers disgusted with the poor "semi-durable goods" with which they have long been saturated, create menacing difficulties for the flow of production. In such a way that the sole avowed aim of the present development of the economy, and which is effectively the sole condition of the survival of all in the framework of the system resting on the labour-commodity, the creation of new jobs, comes down to this enterprise of creating jobs which the workers no longer want to assume; in order to produce this growing part of the goods they no longer want to buy. But it is at a much deeper level that one must understand that the commodity economy, with this precise technology of which the development is inseparable from its own, has entered into agony. The recent apparition in the spectacle of a torrent of moralising speeches and promises of detailed remedies with regard to what the governments and their mass-media call pollution, at one and the same time want to dissimulate and must reveal this evidence: capitalism has at last furnished the proof that it cannot develop the productive forces further. It is not quantitatively, as many had thought they must understand it, that it will have

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shown itself incapable of pursuing this development, but rather qualitatively. However quality here is in no way an aesthetic or philosophical requirement: it is an historical question par excellence, that of the very possibilities of the continuation of the life of the species. Marx's phrase: "The proletariat is revolutionary or is nothing", finds at this moment its final meaning; and the proletariat which arrives before this concrete alternative is truly the class which realises the dissolution of all classes. "Thus things have now come to such a pass that the individuals must appropriate the existing totality of productive forces, not only to achieve self-activity, but also, merely, to safeguard their very existence." (German Ideology.)

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The society which has all the technical means to alter the biological bases of existence over the whole of the Earth is equally the society which, by the same separate technico-scientific development, disposes of all the means of control and mathematically unquestionable forecasting to measure exactly in advance to what decomposition of the human milieu — and towards what dates, according to an optimal prolongation or not — the growth of alienated productive forces of class society can lead. Whether it is a question of the chemical pollution of the breathable air or of the adulteration of foodstuffs, of the irreversible accumulation of radio-activity by the industrial use of nuclear energy or of the deterioration of the cycle of water from the underground water levels to the oceans, of the urbanistic leprosy which spreads ever further in place of what were town and country or of the "demographic explosion", of the progression of suicide and mental illnesses or of the threshold reached by the harmfulness of noise — everywhere, partial knowledge of the impossibility, more or less urgent and more or less deadly as the case may be, of going further, constitutes as specialised scientific conclusions which remain simply juxtaposed, a table of the general degradation and the general impotence. This lamentable survey of the map of the territory of alienation, shortly before its engulfment, is naturally effected in the same manner as this territory itself was constructed: by separate sectors. Without doubt this knowledge of the fragmentary is henceforth forced to know, by the unfortunate agreement of all its observations, that each effective and profitable modification in the short term on a determined point has its repercussions on the totality of the forces in play, and can consequently lead to a more decisive loss. However such a science, servant of the mode of production and of the aporias of the thought which it has produced, cannot conceive of a real reversal of the course of things. It does not know how to think strategically, which besides no-one asks of it; and more than this it is not in possession of the practical means of intervening in this course. Thus it can talk only of the day of reckoning, and of the best palliatives which, if they were applied firmly, would put back this day. This science thus shows, to the most caricatural degree, the uselessness of knowledge without employ and the nothingness of undialectical thought in an epoch carried off by the movement of historical time. Thus the old slogan, "revolution or death", is no longer the lyrical expression of consciousness in revolt, it is the last word of the scientific thought of our century. But this word can only be spoken by others; and not by this old scientific thought of the commodity, which reveals the insufficiently rational bases of its development at the moment when all its applications deploy themselves in the power of fully irrational social practice. It is the thought of separation, which has only been able to increase our material mastery by the methodological means of separation, and which in the end finds this separation accomplished in the society of the spectacle and its self-destruction.

I. "In twenty years (1950-1970), the annual declarations of disablement resulting from mental disorders have quadrupled for the whole of France; at the present time, and in the region of Paris, a quarter (24%) of all disablements are motivated by these complaints. ( . . .) Such an increase, established in analogous proportions in all the so-called industrialised countries, can from the evidence only be the effect of some rapid hereditary degeneration of their citizens. It is not due either, as is the case in other sectors of pathology, to a notable progress in the means of tracking down mental disorders. ( . . .) The role of psychiatrists is to warn of or to treat mental disturbances. It is not to remedy for better or for worse these collective distresses, from the moment that their number expresses not the individual disorder but the inadequacy of the social structures to the temperament of the majority of men."

Dr. Escoffier-Lambiotte (Le Monde, 9th February 1972).
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The class which monopolises economic profit, having no other aim than to preserve the dictatorship of the independent economy over society, up to now has had to consider and direct the incessant multiplication of the productivity of industrial labour as if it were still a matter of the agrarian mode of production. It has constantly pursued the maximum of purely quantitative production, in the manner of ancient societies which, effectively incapable of ever pushing back the limits of real penury, had to harvest each season all that could be harvested. This identification with the agrarian model translates itself in the pseudo-cyclical model of abundant commodity production in which wear and tear have knowingly been integrated into the objects produced as well as their spectacular images, to maintain artificially the seasonal character of consumption, which justifies the incessant resumption of the productive effort and maintains the proximity of penury. But the cumulative reality of this production indifferent to usefulness or harmfulness, indifferent in fact to its own power which it wishes to ignore, has not let itself be forgotten and returns in the form of pollution. Pollution is thus a calamity of bourgeois thought; which the totalitarian bureaucracy can only imitate poorly. It is the supreme stage of ideology materialised, the effectively poisoned abundance of the commodity, and the real miserable fall-out of the illusory splendour of spectacular society.

Pollution and the proletariat are today the two concrete sides of the critique of political economy. The universal development of the commodity has been verified entirely as the accomplishment of political economy, that is to say as the "renunciation of life". At the moment when everything has entered the sphere of economic goods, even the water of springs and the air of towns, everything has become economic evil. The simple immediate sensation of the "nuisances" and the dangers, more oppressing each quarter, which attack first of all and principally the great majority, that is to say the poor, constitutes already an immense factor of revolt, a vital exigency of the exploited, just as materialist as was the struggle of the workers in the nineteenth century for the possibility of eating. Already the remedies for the ensemble of ills which production creates, at this stage of its commodity wealth, are too expensive for it. Production relations and productive forces have at last reached a point of radical incompatibility, for the existing social system has bound its fate to the pursuit of a literally insupportable deterioration of all the conditions of life.

With the new epoch, looms this admirable coincidence: the revolution is wanted in a total form just at the moment when it can only be accomplished in a total form, and when the totality of the functioning of society becomes absurd and impossible outside this accomplishment. The fundamental fact is not so much that all the material means exist for the construction of the free life of a society without classes; it is much rather that the blind under-use of those means by class society can neither interrupt itself nor go further. Never has such a conjunction existed in the history of the world.

The greatest productive force is the revolutionary class itself. The greatest development of the productive forces actually possible is quite simply the use which the historical class of consciousness can put these to, in the production of history as field of human development, giving itself the practical means of this consciousness: the future revolutionary councils in which the totality of proletarians will have to decide everything. The necessary and sufficient definition of the modern Council – to
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The Society of the Spectacle.

Of political economy, that is to say as the "renunciation of life". At the moment when everything has entered the sphere of economic goods, even the water of springs and the air of towns, everything has become economic evil. The simple immediate sensation of the "nuisances" and the dangers, more oppressing each quarter, which attack first of all and principally the great majority, is to say the poor, constitutes already an immense factor of revolt, a vital exigency of the exploited, just as materialist as was the struggle of the workers in the nineteenth century for the possibility of eating. Already the remedies for the ensemble of ills which production creates, at this stage of its commodity wealth, are too expensive for it. Production relations and productive forces have at last reached a point of radical incompatibility, for the existing social system has bound its fate to the pursuit of a literally insupportable deterioration of all the conditions of life.

With the new epoch, looms this admirable coincidence: the revolution is wanted in a total form just at the moment when it can only be accomplished in a total form, and when the totality of the functioning of society becomes absurd and impossible outside this accomplishment. The fundamental fact is not so much that all the material means exist for the construction of the free life of a society without classes; it is much rather that the blind under-use of those means by class society can neither interrupt itself nor go further. Never has such a conjunction existed in the history of the world.

The greatest productive force is the revolutionary class itself. The greatest development of the productive forces actually possible is quite simply the use which the historical class of consciousness can put these to, in the production of history as field of human development, giving itself the practical means of this consciousness: the future revolutionary councils in which the totality of proletarians will have to decide everything. The necessary and sufficient definition of the modern Council — to
differentiate it from its weak primitive attempts always crushed before being able to follow the logic of their own power, and thus to know it — is the accomplishment of its minimum tasks; these minimum tasks are nothing less than the definitive practical settlement of all the problems that class society is actually incapable of resolving. The brutal fall of prehistoric production, as only the social revolution of which we speak can obtain it, is the necessary and sufficient condition for the beginning of an era of great historical production; the indispensable and urgent resumption of the production of man by himself. The wide range of the present tasks of the proletarian revolution expresses itself exactly in the difficulty that it meets with in conquering the first means of formulation and communication of its project: to organise itself in an autonomous manner, and, by this well-defined organisation, to understand and to formulate explicitly the totality of its project in the struggles which it leads already. It is that, on this central point, which will fall the last, of the spectacular monopoly of social dialogue and social explanation, the entire world resembles Poland: when the workers can gather freely and without intermediaries to discuss their real problems, the State begins to dissolve. One can also decipher the force of the proletarian subversion which grows everywhere since four years ago in this negative fact: it remains well beneath the explicit demands which some proletarian movements that did not go so far were able to assert in former times; and which thought they knew their programmes, but knew them as lesser programmes. The proletariat is in no way inclined to be the “class of consciousness” by some intellectualist talent or some ethical vocation, nor for the pleasure of realising philosophy, but simply because in the last resort it has no other solution than to seize history itself in the epoch where men find themselves “compelled to face with sober senses their real conditions of life and their relations with their kind” (Communist Manifesto). What is going to render the workers dialecticians is nothing other than the revolution that, this time, they are going to have to lead themselves.

k. “This theory does not expect miracles from the working class. It envisages the new formulation and the realisation of proletarian demands as a long and exacting task”.

The Society of the Spectacle.

Richard Gombin, in Les Origines du gauchisme (The Origins of Leftism), states that the “former marginal sects of not long ago are taking on the shape of a social movement”, which has already in any case shown that “organised marxism-leninism” is no longer the revolutionary movement. In what Gombin designates under the term, very ill-suited, of “leftism”, he thus refuses legitimately to count the neo-bureaucratic repetitions, from the numerous Trotskyisms to the different Maoisms. Although he shows himself as benevolent as possible to the various semi-critiques which are stammered out for an instant in the submissive intelligentsia of the last thirty years, essentially, in the origin of the new revolutionary movement, with the exception of the return of the pannekoekist tradition of council communism, Gombin finds hardly anyone but the situationist International. Although “its immense ambitions already merit that one speak of it”, the present subversion is evidently not certain, according to Gombin, of making itself master of world society. He considers that the contrary could also happen, namely the absolute improvement of the “era of management”, so that this subversion might not appear again historiically except as the last upsurge of vain revolt against “a universe which tends to the rational organisation of all the aspects of life”. But as it is easy to verify, everywhere else than in

i. “But they do not claim in any way that this is the only true interpretation of Marx: in reality, they ‘supersede’ Marx and, in the current sense of the word, they are not marxists. (...) The radical nature of this conception is clearly apparent: the breach which it effects from the position of the entire left-wing movement of the past half century gives it a millenarian and heretical colouring. (...) As early as the middle sixties, if not before, the situationists forecast and announced the ‘second proletarian assault against class society’. (...) The style elaborated by them and which has reached a remarkable cohesion takes up some of the proceedings of Hegel and of the young Marx like the inversion of the genitive arms of the critique, critique of arms), to dadaism (rapid verbal delivery, words employed in a different meaning from the classical meaning, etc.). But above all it is a style which is penetrated by irony. (...) On the eve of the month of May 1968 the situationists believed that the decisive historic moment was near. (...) During the ‘events’ of May-June 1968, the situationists have had the opportunity of applying their ideas as much in substance as in organisation, to begin with in the first committee of occupation of the Sorbonne, afterwards at the heart of the committee for the continuation of occupations (C.M.D.O.).”

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Gombin's book, that this universe, in spite of its good intentions and its deceitful justifications, has only followed the path of a galloping *irrationalisation*, which culminates in its present asphyxiation, the final alternative that this sociologist formulates has no kind of reality. One can hardly, if one is going to deal with such subjects, be more *moderate* than Gombin; and only the misfortune of the times could compel sociology to undertake the study of them. And yet Gombin manages, through blundering, to leave to his readers no other possible conclusion than an audacious assurance on the ineluctability of the victory of the revolution.

When all the conditions of social life change, the S.I., at the centre of this change, sees the conditions in which it has acted transformed faster than all the rest. None of its members could ignore it, nor thought of denying it, but in fact many of them *did not want to lay a hand on the S.I.* It is not even past situationist activity that they made themselves the guardians of, but of its *image*.

An inevitable part of the historical success of the S.I. led it in turn to be contemplated, and in such a contemplation the critique without concessions of all that exists came to be *appreciated positively* by an ever more extended sector of impotence itself become pro-revolutionary. The force of the negative brought into play against the spectacle also came to be admired servilely by spectators. The past conduct of the S.I. had been entirely dominated by the necessity of acting in an epoch which, at first, *did not want to hear about it*. Surrounded by silence, the S.I. had no support, and a great many elements of its work were, one by one, constantly *recovered* against it. It had to wait for the moment when it could be judged, not on the superficially scandalous aspects of certain manifestations by which it appeared, but "on its essentially scandalous central truth" (I.S. no. 11, October 1967). The tranquil affirmation of the *most general* extremism, as the numerous exclusions of ineffectual or indulgent situationists, were the arms of the S.I. for *this* combat, and not so as to become an authority or a power. Thus, the trenchant tone of pride, employed often enough in various forms of situationist expression, was legitimate; both from the fact of the immensity of the task, and above all because it fulfilled its function on that score in permitting the pursuit and success of this task. But it ceased to be suitable from the moment the S.I. was able to make itself recognised by an epoch which no longer considers its project at all as an improbability"; and it is just because the S.I. had succeeded in this that its tone had become, for us if not for the spectators, *outmoded*. Without doubt, the victory of the S.I. is apparently just as arguable as can be that which the proletarian movement has already attained through the sole fact that it has recommenced class war — the visible part of the crisis which emerges in the spectacle is without common measure to its depth — and like this victory as well, it will always be *in abeyance* until prehistoric times have come to an end; but, for him who can "hear the grass grow", it is also *beyond argument*. The theory of the S.I. has passed into the masses. It can no longer be liquidated in its primitive solitude. It is certain that it can still be falsified, but in very different conditions. No historical thought can dream of guaranteeing itself in advance against all incomprehension or falsification. As already it does not claim to bring to bear a definitively coherent and accomplished system, so even less could it hope to present itself for what it is in a manner so perfectly rigorous that idiocy and bad faith would find themselves forbidden to each of those who would have anything to do with it; and in such a way that a true reading of it would be universally imposed. Such an idealistic pretension only supports itself by a dogmatism, always doomed to fail; and dogmatism is already the inaugural defeat of such thought. Historical struggles, which correct and improve all theory of this kind, are equally the terrain of errors of restrictive interpretation as, frequently, the self-interested refusals to admit the most unambiguous meaning. Here the truth can only impose itself in becoming practical force.

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Now that the revolutionary movement is everywhere alone in undertaking to talk seriously of society, it is in itself that it must find the war which previously it led, unilaterally, on the far off periphery of social life, in appearing to begin with as completely foreign to all the ideas that this society could then pronounce on what it believed it was. When subversion invades society, and spreads its shadow in the spectacle, the spectacular forces of the present also manifest themselves within our party—"party in the eminently historical sense of the word"—because it has had in effect to take charge of the totality of the existing world, including its deficiencies, its ignorance and its alienations. It inherits all the misery, including the intellectual misery, which the old world has produced; for finally misery is its true cause, though it had to assert such a cause with grandeur.

24

Our party enters into the spectacle as enemy, but as enemy now known. The old opposition between critical theory and the apologetic spectacle "has been lifted into the higher victorious element where it manifests itself in a clarified form". Those who only contemplate the revolutionary ideas and tasks of today, and in particular the S.I., with the fanatacism of a pure disarmed approval, reveal principally this fact that at the moment when the whole of society is forced to become revolutionary, a vast sector does not yet know how to be.

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Enthusiastic spectators of the S.I. have existed since 1960, but at first in very small number. In the last five years they have become a crowd. This process started in France, where they saw themselves ascribed with the popular appellation of "pro-situ", but this new "French disease" has reached many other countries. Their quantity does not multiply their void: all of them make it known that they approve integrally of the S.I., and do not know how to do anything else. In becoming numerous, they remain identical: he who has read one or seen one, has read them all and seen them all. They are a significant product of present history, but they do not produce it in any way in return. The pro-situ milieu apparently represents the theory of the S.I. become ideology—and the passive vogue of such an absolute and absolutely useless ideology confirms by absurdity the evidence that the role of revolutionary ideology has reached completion with the bourgeois forms of revolutions—but in reality this milieu expresses that part of the real modern contestation which had to remain still ideological, prisoner of spectacular alienation, and informed only according to its terms. The pressure of history today has grown so much that the bearers of an ideology of historical presence are forced to remain perfectly absent.

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The pro-situ milieu possesses nothing but its good intentions, and it wants straight away to consume illusorily its means, solely in the form of the pronouncement of its hollow pretensions. This pro-situ phenomenon has, in the S.I., been blamed by all, as far as it was seen, as an exterior subordinate imitation, but it was not understood by all. It must be recognised, not as a superficial and paradoxical accident, but as the manifestation of a profound alienation of the most inactive part of modern society becoming vaguely revolutionary

Our party has, therefore, actually revealed itself as a veritable infantile disorder of the advent of the new revolutionary movement; first of all because the S.I., which in no way be exterior or superior to this movement, had certainly not been able to hold itself above this kind of deficiency, and could not claim to
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escape the critique which it necessitates. Then again, if the S.I. continued imperturbably, in other circumstances, to play as before, it could have become the last spectacular ideology of revolution, and answered for such an ideology. The S.I. would thus have risked shackling the real situationist movement: the revolution.

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Contemplation of the S.I. is only a supplementary alienation of alienated society; but the sole fact that it is possible expresses inversely the fact that it constitutes at present a real party in the struggle against alienation. To understand the pro-situs, that is to say to combat them, instead of limiting oneself to despising them abstractly for their nullity and because they did not have access to the situationist aristocracy, was for the S.I. a primordial necessity. We had at the same time to understand how the image of this situationist aristocracy had been able to take shape, and what inferior stratum of the S.I. was able to satisfy itself by giving of itself, to the outside, this appearance of hierarchic worth, which only came to it from a title: this stratum had itself to be nullity enriched solely by the certificate of its belonging to the S.I. And such situationists, not only manifestly existed; but revealed in experience that they wanted nothing other than to persevere in their diplomaed insufficiency. They communed with the pro-situs, although defining themselves as hierarchically quite distinct, in this egalitarian belief according to which the S.I. could be an ideal monolith, where each one straight away thinks of everything as all the others, and acts in the same way to perfection: those who, in the S.I., neither thought nor acted, asserted such a mystical status, and it is that which the pro-situ spectators aspired to approach. All those who despised the pro-situs without understanding them — beginning with the pro-situs themselves, among whom each one wished to affirm himself grandly superior to all the others — hope simply to make believe, and make themselves believe, that they are saved by some revolutionary predestination, which would dispense them from proving their own historic effectiveness. Participation in the S.I. was their jansenism, as revolution is their “hidden God”. Thus, sheltered from historical praxis, and believing themselves rescued by one knows not what grace of the world from the misery of the pro-situs, they only saw misery in this misery, instead of also seeing there the derisory part of a deep movement which will ruin the old society.

28

The pro-situs did not see in the S.I. a determined critico-practical activity explaining or advancing the social struggles of an epoch, but simply extremist ideas; and not so much extremist ideas as the idea of extremism; and in the last analysis not so much the idea of extremism as the image of extremist heroes collected together in a triumphant community. In “the work of the negative”, the pro-situs doubt the negative, and also the work. After having plebiscited the thought of history, they remain dry because they do not understand history, nor thought either. To accede to the affirmation, which tempts them strongly, of an autonomous personality, they only lack autonomy, personality, and the talent to affirm whatever it may be.

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Contemplation of the S.I. is only a supplementary alienation of alienated society; but the sole fact that it is possible expresses inversely the fact that it constitutes at present a real party in the struggle against alienation. To understand the pro-situs, that is to say to combat them, instead of limiting oneself to despising them abstractly for their nullity and because they did not have access to the situationist aristocracy, was for the S.I. a prymodal necessity. We had at the same time to understand how the image of this situationist aristocracy had been able to take shape, and what \textit{inferior stratum} of the S.I. was able to satisfy itself by giving of itself, to the outside, this appearance of hierarchic worth, which only came to it from a \textit{title}: this stratum had itself to be nullity enriched solely by the \textit{certificate} of its belonging to the S.I. And

\textit{n.} "The pro-situs regression was considered as an aberration, as the rebuff of a movement, a mundanity, and never for what it really was: the qualitative weakness of \textit{the ensemble}, a moment necessary to the global progress of the revolutionary project. \textit{Situationism} is the puberty crisis of situationist practice having attained the decisive moment of a first important extensive development, the moment where it must dominate practically the spectacle which seizes it (...) It is this comfortable installation in the positive which characterises the \textit{situ role}; and as a matter of fact, the more the objective place of the S.I. in present history became effective (and the same will go for all future revolutionary organisations), the more perilous it became for each of its members to assume its heritage. (...) May 1968 was the realisation of modern revolutionary theory, its weighty confirmation, as it was in part the realisation of the individuals who participated in the S.I., notably through the revolutionary lucidity of which they gave proof in the movement itself. But the movement of occupations has remained the conclusion for the S.I. of its long practical search, without being the supersession of it. (...) While the situationists, who served flatly as a model to the current which they aroused, were practising their own reassessments, engaging in a 'debate of orientation' which would release the superior modalities of their existence, the satellit groups, a hundred steps behind, constituted themselves only on the inadequate base of an application in practice limited to some certainties born of the previous experience of the S.I.'"


such situationists, not only manifestly existed; but revealed in experience that they wanted nothing other than to persevere in their \textit{diplomated insufficiency}. They communed with the pro-situs, although defining themselves as hierarchically quite distinct, in this egalitarian belief according to which the S.I. could be an ideal monolith, where each one straight away thinks of everything as all the others, and acts in the same way to perfection: those who, in the S.I., neither thought nor acted, asserted such a mystical status, and it is that which the pro-situ spectators aspired to approach. All those who despised the pro-situs without understanding them — beginning with the pro-situs themselves, among whom each one wished to affirm himself grandly superior to all the others — hope simply to make believe, and make themselves believe, that they are saved by some \textit{revolutionary predestination}, which would dispense them from proving their own historic effectiveness. Participation in the S.I. was their jansenism, as revolution is their "hidden God". Thus, sheltered from historical praxis, and believing themselves rescued by one knows not what grace of the world from the misery of the pro-situs, they only saw misery in this misery, instead of also seeing there the derisory part of a deep movement which will ruin the old society.

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The pro-situs did not see in the S.I. a determined critico-practical activity explaining or advancing the social struggles of an epoch, but simply extremist ideas; and not so much extremist ideas as the idea of extremism; and in the last analysis not so much the idea of extremism as the image of extremist heroes collected together in a triumphant community. In "the work of the negative", the pro-situs doubt the negative, and also the work. After having plebiscited the thought of history, they remain dry because they do not understand history, nor thought either. To accede to the affirmation, which tempts them strongly, of an autonomous personality, they only lack autonomy, personality, and the talent to affirm whatever it may be.
The pro-situs, in their mass, have learnt that revolutionary students can no longer exist, and they remain students in revolutions. The most ambitious feel the necessity of writing, and even of publishing their writings, to notify abstractly their abstract existence, believing in this way that they give it some consistency. But, in this domain, to know how to write one must have read, and to know how to read one must know how to live: this is what the proletariat will have to learn in a single operation, in the revolutionary struggle. However the pro-situ cannot critically envisage real life, for the whole of his attitude has precisely for goal to illusorily escape his afflicted life, in seeking to mask it, and in attempting vainly to mislead others on this count. He must postulate that his conduct is essentially good, because it is "radical", ontologically revolutionary. With regard to this imaginary central guarantee, he counts for nothing, a thousand circumstantial errors or comic deficiencies. He only recognises them, at best, through the result which they brought about to his detriment. He consoles himself for them and excuses himself from them in affirming that he will not commit these errors again and that, on principle, he never ceases to get better. But he is just as unprovided in the face of errors to come, that is to say before the practical necessity to understand what he does at the very instant of doing it: to evaluate conditions, to know what one wants and what one chooses, what the possible consequences will be, and how to master them best. The pro-situ will say that he wants everything because, in reality, despairing of attaining the least real goal, he wants nothing more than to make it known that he wants everything, in the hope that straight off someone will admire his assurance and his good soul. He has need of a totality which, like him, is without any content. He ignores dialectics because, refusing to see his own life, he refuses to understand time. Time frightens him because it is made of qualitative jumps, of irreversible choices, of occasions which will never return. The pro-situ disguises time to himself as a simple uniform space that he will traverse, from error to error and from insufficiency to insufficiency, while enriching himself constantly. As the pro-situ dreads always that it applies to his own case, he detests theoretical critique each time that it is mixed with concrete facts, thus each time that it has an effective existence: all examples scare him, for he knows well only his own, and it is that which he wishes to hide. The pro-situ would like to be original in reaffirming what he, at the same time as so many others, has recognised as evident from now on; he has never considered what he could do in diverse concrete situations which, each time, are original. The pro-situ, who sticks to the repetition of various generalities, calculating that his errors will be less precise and his immediate auto-critiques easier, deals by predilection with the problem of organisation, because he seeks the philosopher's stone which could operate the transmutation of his merited solitude into "revolutionary organisation" utilisable for him. As he does not know at all what it is about, the pro-situ only sees the progress of the revolution in so far as this has to do with him. In such a way that he believes generally that it is enough to say that the movement of May 1968 has "ebbed" since. But he wants all the same to repeat that the epoch is more and more revolutionary, so that one believes that he is like it. The pro-situs erect their impatience and their impotence on criteria of history and revolution; and in such a way that they see practically nothing progressing outside their tight-shut glass-house, where in reality nothing changes. In the last analysis, all the pro-situs are dazzled by the success of the S.I. which, for them, is really something spectacular, and which they envy bitterly. Evidently, all the pro-situs who attempted to approach us were so badly treated that they find themselves compelled afterwards to reveal, even subjectively, their true nature of enemies of the S.I.: but this comes down to the same thing because they remain, in this new position, just as little. These toothless mongrels would really like to discover how the S.I. was able to act, and even if the S.I. was not in some way guilty of having aroused such a passion; and they would then utilise the recipe to their advantage. The pro-situ, careerist who knows he is without means, is led to display straight off the total success of his ambitions, reached by postulation the day he dedicated himself to radicality: the sickliest squirt will affirm that he has known best, for several weeks, festival, theory, communication, debate and dialectics; he only lacks a revolution to perfect his happiness.
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Thereupon, he begins to await an admirer, who does not come. One can remark here upon the particular form of bad faith which reveals itself in the eloquence with which this vapidity puffs itself up. First of all, it is there where it is the least practical that it talks the most of revolution; there where its language is the deadest and the most leathery that it pronounces most often words like "lived" and "passionate"; there where it manifests the most infatuation and vainglorious ambition, it has all the time on its lips the word "proletariat". This comes down to saying that modern revolutionary theory, having had to make a critique of the whole of life, can only sink, with those who will want to take it up without knowing how to practise it, into a total ideology which leaves nothing true any more to any of the aspects of their miserable life.

30

Whereas the S.I. has always known how to laugh unpityingly at the hesitations, the weaknesses and the miseries of its first endeavours, in showing at each moment the hypotheses, the oppositions and the ruptures which have constituted its very history — and notably in placing before the eyes of the public in 1971 the integral re-edition of the review Internationale Situationiste, where all this process finds itself consigned — it is on the contrary as a block that the pro-situs, absolutely divided among themselves, have all constantly claimed to be able to admire the S.I. They take care not to enter into the details, everywhere readable, of the confrontations and the choices, so as to limit themselves to approving completely of what has happened. And presently, although they all have something fundamentally vaneigemist about them, all the pro-situs boldly give Vaneigem a donkey kick as he lies on the ground, while forgetting that they have never given proof of one hundredth of his former talent; and they still salivate before the force, which they do not understand any better. But the least real critique of what they are dissolves the pro-situs by explaining the nature of their absence, for they themselves have already continuously shown this absence in attempting to make themselves seen: they interested nobody. As for the situationists who were themselves only contemplative — or, for some, principally contemplative — and who could rejoice in arousing a certain interest as members of the S.I., they discovered within the hour in having to leave the S.I. the hardness of a world where they found themselves from now on forced to act personally; and nearly all rejoin, running up against identical conditions, the insignificance of the pro-situs.

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When the S.I. initially chose to put the emphasis on the collective aspect of its activity, and to present the greater part of its text in relative anonymity, it was because, really, without this collective activity, none of our project would have been able to formulate itself nor to execute itself, and because it prevented the designation among us of some personal celebrities which the spectacle would then have been able to manipulate against our common aim: this succeeded because none of those who had the means of acquiring a personal renown, at least while he was in the S.I., wanted it, and because those who were able to want it, did not have the means. But through this no doubt were laid the bases of the subsequent constitution, in the mystique of the situphiles, of the whole of the S.I. as collective star. This tactic was good however, for what it permitted us to attain had infinitely more importance than the inconveniences which it was able to encourage in the following stage. When the revolutionary perspective of the S.I. was apparently only our common project, it was necessary at first to defend its very possibilities of existence and of development. Now that it has become the common project of so many people, the needs of the new epoch will themselves rediscover, beyond the screen of unreal conceptions which cannot translate themselves into forces — and not even into phrases — the works and the precise acts that the present revolutionary struggle must appropriate and verify; and that it will supersede.

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The truest cause of the misfortune of the spectators of the S.I. does not stem from what the S.I. did or did not do; and the influence even of various simplifications, stylistic or theoretical, of situationist primitivism only plays a very weak part in this. The pro-situs and vaneigemists are much rather the product of the weakness and the general inexperience of the new revolutionary movement, of the inevitable period of sharp contrast between the amplitude of its task and the limitation of its means. The task which one gives oneself, once one has begun to really approve of the S.I., is in itself crushing. But, for the simple pro-situs, it is so absolutely; whence their immediate rout. It is the length and the hardness of this historical path which creates, in the feeblest and most pretentious part of the present pro-revolutionary generation, that which, in other words, still only knows how to think and to live according to the fundamental models of the dominant society, the mirage of a kind of touristic short cut towards its infinite goals. As compensation for his real immobility and his real suffering, the pro-situ consumes the infinite illusion of being, not only en route, but literally always on the eve of entering the Promised Land of happy reconciliation with the world and with himself, there where his insupportable mediocrity will be transformed into life, into poetry, into importance. Which comes down to saying that the spectacular consumption of ideological radicality, in his hope of distinguishing himself hierarchically from his neighbours, and in his permanent deception, is identical with the effective consumption of all spectacular commodities, and like it condemned.

One has done best up until now to get out of the 20th century' (U.S. 9). I have the conviction that the practical and theoretical distance which has been established in these past ten years between the First International and the Situationist International is the very same that it remains to establish between the Situationist International and what one must do. Does it not have the same sentiment?"  
Bartholomé Béhouër, De la conciergerie internationale des situationnistes (Paris, August 1971).

"In the image of the happy unification of society by consumption, real division is only suspended until the next non-accomplishment in the consumable."

The Society of the Spectacle.
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Those who describe the phenomenon, truly sociological, of the pro-situs as something extraordinary, which one could not even imagine before the stupefying existence of the S.I., are truly naive. Each time that extreme revolutionary ideas were recognised and taken up again by an epoch, there arose in a certain youth an enthusiastic rallying comparable on all points; notably among the declassed intellectuals or semi-intellectuals who aspire to hold a privileged social role, category of which modern education has multiplied the quantity, at the same time as lowering again the quality. Without doubt the pro-situs are more visibly insufficient and wretched, because today the demands of the revolution are more complex, and the illness of society suffered more. But the only fundamental difference with the periods when the blanquists, the social-democrats called marxists or the bolsheviks were recruited, resides in the fact that previously this kind of people were brigaded and employed by a hierarchic organisation, whereas the S.I. has left the pro-situs massively outside.

To understand the pro-situs, one must understand their social base and their social intentions. The first workers won over to situationist ideas — generally sprung from the old ultra-leftism and thus marked by the scepticism which stems from its long ineffectiveness, initially very isolated in their factories and relatively sophisticated with their knowledge which remained without use, although sometimes quite subtle, of our theories — were able to frequent, not without despising it, the infra-intellectual milieu of the pro-situs, and impregnate themselves there with many of its defects; but on the whole the workers who since then collectively discover the perspectives of the S.I., in wild-cat strikes or any other form of critique of their conditions of existence, do not in any way become pro-situs. And as for the rest, besides the workers, all those who have undertaken a concrete revolutionary task or who have effectively broken with the dominant way of life, are not pro-situs either: the pro-situs defines himself first of all by his flight before such tasks and such
a break. The pro-situs are not all students really pursuing some qualification by way of the exams of the present sub-University; and a fortiori they are not all sons of bourgeois. But all are tied to a determined social stratum, whether they propose to really acquire the status, or whether they confine themselves to consuming in advance its specific illusions. This stratum is that of cadres. Although it is certainly the most apparent in the social spectacle, it seems to remain unknown for the thinkers of left-wing routine, who have a direct interest in clinging to the impoverished résumé of the 19th century definition of classes: either they want to dissipate the existence of the bureaucratic class in power or aiming for totalitarian power, or, and often simultaneously, they want to dissipate their own conditions of existence and their own aspirations as cadres pettily privileged in production relations dominated by the present bourgeoisie.

Capitalism has continually modified the composition of classes as it transformed global social labour. It has weakened or recomposed, suppressed or even created, classes which have a secondary function in the production of the world of the commodity. Only the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, the primordial historic classes of this world, continue to sport between themselves with its destiny, in a confrontation which has essentially stayed the same. But the circumstances, the décor, the confederates, and even the spirit of the principle protagonists, have changed with the time, which has led us to the last act. The proletariat according to Lenin, whose definition in fact corrected that of Marx, was the mass of workers of big industry; the more qualified professionally finding themselves rejected in a suspect marginal situation under the notion of "workers' aristocracy". Two generations of stalinists and imbeciles, in leaning on this dogma, contested against the workers who made the Paris Commune, workers still close enough to craftsmanship or the workshops of very small industry, their full quality of proletarians. The same people can also question themselves on the being of the present proletariat, lost in the multiple hierarchic stratifications, from the "semi-skilled" worker of the production lines and the immigrant mason right up to the skilled worker and the technician or semi-technician; and one even goes so far as to research byzantine whether the train driver personally produces surplus-value. Lenin was right however in that the proletariat of Russia, between 1890 and 1917, confined itself essentially to the workers of a modern big industry which had just appeared in the same period, with the recent capitalist development imported into this country. Outside of this proletariat, there existed in Russia no other urban revolutionary force apart from the radical part of the intelligentsia, whereas everything had gone on very differently in the countries where capitalism, with the town bourgeoisie, had known its natural fruition and its original apparition. This Russian intelligentsia sought, as did everywhere else the most moderate homologous strata, to realise the political framing of the workers. Russian conditions favoured a framework directly political in nature in the enterprises: the professional unions were dominated by a sort of "workers' aristocracy" which belonged to the social-democrat party, and to its menshevik fraction more often than to the bolshevik, whereas in England for example, the equivalent stratum of trade-unionists could remain apolitical and reformist. That the pillage of the planet by capitalism in its imperialist stage permitted it to support a greater number of better paid skilled workers, there is an acknowledgement which, beneath a moralist veil, is without any bearing on the evaluation of the revolutionary politics of the proletariat. The last "semi-skilled worker" of French or German industry of today, even if he is a particularly badly treated and poverty-stricken immigrant, benefits too from the planetary exploitation of the producer of jute or copper in the under-developed countries, and is no less of a proletarian for that. The skilled workers, disposing of more time, money, education, have furnished in the history of class struggles, electors satisfied with their lot and respectful of laws, but just as often extremist revolutionaries, in the spartakists as in the F.A.I. (Iberian Anarchist Federation). To consider as "workers' aristocracy" only the partisans and employees of the reformist union leaders, was to mask in a pseudo-economic polemic the true economico-political question of the exterior framing of the workers. The workers, for their indispensable economic struggle
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Capitalism has continually modified the composition of classes as it transformed global social labour. It has weakened or recomposed, suppressed or even created, classes which have a *secondary* function in the production of the world of the commodity. Only the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, the primordial historic classes of this world, continue to sport between themselves with its destiny, in a confrontation which has essentially stayed the same. But the circumstances, the décor, the confederates, and even the spirit of the principle protagonists, have changed with the time, which has led us to the last act. The proletariat according to Lenin, whose definition in fact corrected that of Marx, was the mass of workers of big industry; the more qualified professionally finding themselves rejected in a suspect marginal situation under the notion of “workers’ aristocracy”.

Two generations of stalinists and imbeciles, in leaning on this dogma, contested against the workers who made the Paris Commune, workers still close enough to craftsmanship or the workshops of very small industry, their full quality of proletarians. The same people can also question themselves on the being of the present proletariat, lost in the multiple hierarchic stratifications, from the "semi-skilled" worker of the production lines and the immigrant mason right up to the skilled worker and the technician or semi-technician; and one even goes so far as to research byzantinely whether the train driver personally produces surplus-value. Lenin was right however in that the proletariat of *Russia*, between 1890 and 1917, confined itself essentially to the workers of a modern big industry which had just appeared in the same period, with the recent capitalist development imported into this country. Outside of this proletariat, there existed in Russia no other *urban* revolutionary force apart from the radical part of the intelligentsia, whereas everything had gone on very differently in the countries where capitalism, with the town bourgeoisie, had known its natural fruition and its original apparition. This Russian intelligentsia sought, as did everywhere else the most moderate homologous strata, to realise the political framing of the workers. Russian conditions favoured a framework directly political in nature in the enterprises: the professional unions were dominated by a sort of "workers’ aristocracy" which belonged to the social-democrat party, and to its menshevik fraction more often than to the bolshevik, whereas in England for example, the equivalent stratum of trade-unions could remain apolitical and reformist. That the pillage of the planet by capitalism in its imperialist stage permitted it to support a greater number of better paid skilled workers, there is an acknowledgement which, beneath a moralist veil, is without any bearing on the evaluation of the revolutionary politics of the proletariat. The last “semi-skilled worker’ of French or German industry of today, even if he is a particularly badly treated and poverty-stricken immigrant, benefits too from the planetary exploitation of the producer of jute or copper in the under-developed countries, and is no less of a proletarian for that. The skilled workers, disposing of more time, money, education, have furnished in the history of class struggles, electors satisfied with their lot and respectful of laws, but just as often extremist revolutionaries, in the spartakists as in the F.A.I. (Iberian Anarchist Federation). To consider as "workers’ aristocracy” only the partisans and employees of the reformist union leaders, was to mask in a pseudo-economic polemic the true economico-political question of the exterior framing of the workers. The workers, for their indispensable economic struggle
have an immediate need of *cohesion*. They begin to know how they themselves can acquire this cohesion in the great class struggles, which at the same time are always, for all the classes in conflict, political struggles. But in the daily struggles — the *primum vivere* of the class — which appear to be solely economic and professional struggles, the workers first obtained this cohesion through a bureaucratic management which, at this stage, is recruited from the class itself. The bureaucracy is an old invention of the State. In seizing the State, the bourgeoisie at first took the state bureaucracy into its service, and only later developed the bureaucratisation of industrial production by *managers*, these two bureaucratic forms being *its very own*, directly in its service. It is at a subsequent stage of its reign that the bourgeoisie comes to utilise as well the subordinate, and rival, bureaucracy which formed itself on the basis of the workers’ organisations, and even, on the scale of world-wide politics and of the maintenance of the existing equilibrium in the present division of tasks of capitalism, to utilise the totalitarian bureaucracy which possesses in its own right the economy and the State in several countries. Starting from a certain point of the general development of an advanced capitalist country, and its good-angel State, even the classes in liquidation which, being constituted of independent isolated producers, could not equip themselves with a bureaucracy, and dispatched only the most gifted of their sons into the inferior grades of the state bureaucracy, — peasants, the trading petty bourgeoisie — entrust their defence, before the general bureaucratisation and stateification of the concentrated modern economy, to various particular bureaucracies: syndicates of “young farmers”, peasant cooperatives, traders’ defence unions. However the workers of big industry, those of whom Lenin frankly rejoiced that the discipline of the factory had conditioned them, in a mechanical manner, to *military* obedience, to barracks discipline, by way of which he himself intended to make socialism triumph in his party and his country, these workers, who also learnt dialectically all the contrary, remain assuredly, without being all of the proletariat, its very centre: because well and truly they take upon themselves the essential of social production and can always interrupt it, and because more than anyone else they are driven to reconstruct it on the clean sweep of the suppression of economic alienation. Every simply *sociological* definition of the proletariat, whether it be conservative or left-wing, conceals in fact a political choice. The proletariat can only be defined historically, by what it can do and by what it can and must want. In the same way, the marxist definition of the petty-bourgeoisie, which has since seen such good service as a stupid joke, is equally in the first place a definition which rests on the position of the petty-bourgeoisie in the historical struggles of its time, but it rests, contrary to that of the proletariat, on an understanding of the petty-bourgeoisie as an oscillating and sundered class, which can want successively only contradictory goals, and does nothing but change camp with the circumstances which engulf it. Torn in its historical intentions, the petty-bourgeoisie was also, sociologically, the least definable and the least homogenous class of all: one could range in it together an artisan and a university professor, a comfortable small trader and a poor doctor, an officer without fortune and a superintendent in the post-office, the low clergy and the owners of fishing boats. But today, and certainly without all these professions being fused into a block in the industrial proletariat, the petty-bourgeoisie of the economically advanced countries has already left the stage of history for the wings where the last defenders of expelled small trade flounder. It has only a museographical existence left, as ritual maladiction which each workerist bureaucrat launches gravely at all the bureaucrats who do not mitigate in his sect.

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*Cadres are today the metamorphosis of the urban petty-bourgeoisie of independent producers, become wage-earning.* These cadres too are very diversified, but the real stratum of superior cadres, which constitutes for the others the illusory model and goal, clings in fact to the bourgeoisie by a thousand bonds, and integrates into it more often than it comes out of it. The great mass of cadres is composed of middle cadres and small cadres, whose real interests are even less distant from those of the proletariat than were those of the petty-bourgeoisie — because the cadre never possesses the instrument of his work —, but whose
have an immediate need of cohesion. They begin to know how they themselves can acquire this cohesion in the great class struggles, which at the same time are always, for all the classes in conflict, political struggles. But in the daily struggles — the primum vivere of the class — which appear to be solely economic and professional struggles, the workers first obtained this cohesion through a bureaucratic management which, at this stage, is recruited from the class itself. The bureaucracy is an old invention of the State. In seizing the State, the bourgeoisie at first took the state bureaucracy into its service, and only later developed the bureaucratisation of industrial production by managers, these two bureaucratic forms being its very own, directly in its service. It is at a subsequent stage of its reign that the bourgeoisie comes to utilise as well the subordinate, and rival, bureaucracy which formed itself on the basis of the workers' organisations, and even, on the scale of world-wide politics and of the maintenance of the existing equilibrium in the present division of tasks of capitalism, to utilise the totalitarian bureaucracy which possesses in its own right the economy and the State in several countries. Starting from a certain point of the general development of an advanced capitalist country, and its good-angel State, even the classes in liquidation which, being constituted of independent isolated producers, could not equip themselves with a bureaucracy, and dispatched only the most gifted of their sons into the inferior grades of the state bureaucracy, — peasants, the trading petty bourgeoisie — entrust their defence, before the general bureaucratisation and stateification of the concentrated modern economy, to various particular bureaucracies: syndicates of "young farmers", peasant cooperatives, traders' defence unions. However the workers of big industry, those of whom Lenin frankly rejoiced that the discipline of the factory had conditioned them, in a mechanical manner, to military obedience, to barracks discipline, by way of which he himself intended to make socialism triumph in his party and his country, these workers, who also learnt dialectically all the contrary, remain assuredly, without being all of the proletariat, its very centre: because well and truly they take upon themselves the essential of social production and can always interrupt it, and because more than anyone else they are driven to reconstruct it on the clean sweep of the suppression of economic alienation. Every simply sociological definition of the proletariat, whether it be conservative or left-wing, conceals in fact a political choice. The proletariat can only be defined historically, by what it can do and by what it can and must want. In the same way, the marxist definition of the petty-bourgeoisie, which has since seen such good service as a stupid joke, is equally in the first place a definition which rests on the position of the petty-bourgeoisie in the historical struggles of its time, but it rests, contrary to that of the proletariat, on an understanding of the petty-bourgeoisie as an oscillating and sundered class, which can want successively only contradictory goals, and does nothing but change camp with the circumstances which engulf it. Torn in its historical intentions, the petty-bourgeoisie was also, sociologically, the least definable and the least homogenous class of all: one could range in it together an artisan and a university professor, a comfortable small trader and a poor doctor, an officer without fortune and a superintendent in the post-office, the low clergy and the owners of fishing boats. But today, and certainly without all these professions being fused into a block in the industrial proletariat, the petty-bourgeoisie of the economically advanced countries has already left the stage of history for the wings where the last defenders of expelled small trade flounder. It has only a museographical existence left, as ritual maldeiction which each workerist bureaucrat launches gravely at all the bureaucrats who do not militate in his sect.

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social conceptions and reveries of promotion are tied firmly to the values and to the perspectives of the modern bourgeoisie. Their economic function is essentially linked to the tertiary sector, to services, and in particular to the wholly spectacular branch of sales, of the upkeep and the eulogy of commodities, including among these the labour-commodity itself. The image of the way of life and the tastes which society fabricates expressly for them, its model sons, largely influences the strata of poor employees or petty-bourgeois who aspire to their reconversion into cadres; and is not without effect on a part of the present middle bourgeoisie. The cadre always says "on the one hand; on the other hand", because he knows himself to be wretched as a worker, but wants to believe he is happy as a consumer. He fervently believes in consumption just because he is paid enough to consume a little more than others, but the same standardised commodities: rare are the architects who live in the backward skyscrapers that they edify, but numerous are the sales-women in imitation luxury boutiques who buy the clothes whose diffusion on the market they must serve. The representative cadre is between these two extremes; he admires the architect and is imitated by the sales-woman. The cadre is the consumer par excellence, that is to say the spectator par excellence. The cadre is thus, always uncertain and always deceived, at the centre of modern false consciousness and social alienation. Contrary to the bourgeois, the worker, the serf, the feudal lord, the cadre never feels in his place. He aspires always for more than he is and can be. He asserts, and at the same time he doubts. He is the man of malaise, never sure of himself, but dissimulating it. He is the absolutely dependent man, who believes he must claim liberty itself, idealised in his semi-abundant consumption. He is the ambitious constantly turned towards his future, for the rest miserable, while he even doubts whether he can quite hold his present position. It is not at all by chance (cf. On the poverty of student life) that the cadre is always the former student. The cadre is the man of deficiency: his drug is the ideology of the pure spectacle, of the spectacle of nothing. It is for him that today one changes the decor of towns, for his work and his leisure, from office buildings right up to the insipid cooking of restaurants where he talks loudly so that his neighbours can hear that he has educated his voice on the airport loudspeakers. He arrives late, and en masse, to everything, wanting to be unique and the first. In brief, according to the revealing new partiality for an old slang word, the cadre is at the same time the clod. In what precedes, it is of course only to keep the simplicity of the theoretical language that we have said "man". It goes without saying that the cadre is at the same time, and even in greater number, the woman who occupies the same function in the economy, and adopts the style of life which corresponds to it. The old feminine alienation, which talks of liberation with the logic and the intonations of slavery, is reinforced there by all the extreme alienation of the end of the spectacle. Whether it is a question of their occupation or their liaisons, cadres always feign to have wanted what they got, and theiranguished hidden dissatisfaction leads them, not to want better, but to have more of the same "privation become richer". Cadres being fundamentally separate people, the myth of the happy couple proliferates in this milieu although contradicted, like the rest, by the most immediately ponderous reality. The cadre essentially recommences the sad tale of the petty-bourgeois, because he is poor and would like to make believe that he is received by the rich. But the change of economic conditions differentiates them diametrically on several points which are in the forefront of their existence: the petty-bourgeois wanted to be austere, and the cadre must show that he consumes everything. The petty-bourgeois was closely associated with traditional values, and the cadre must run in pursuit of the daily pseudo-novelties of the spectacle. The contemptible stupidity of the petty-bourgeois was founded on religion and the family; that of the cadre is liquefied in the current of spectacular ideology, which never gives him any rest. He can follow fashion even up to applauding the image of revolution — many were favourable to one part of the atmosphere of the movement of occupations — and a certain number of them even believe today that they endorse the situationists.
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The behaviour of the pro-situs places itself entirely in the structures of this existence of the cadres and first of all, as for the latter, this existence is theirs much more as a recognised ideal than as a real way of life. The modern revolution, being the party of historical consciousness, finds itself in most direct conflict with these partisans and slaves of false consciousness. It must first desperate them by making their shame more shameful still! Pro-situs are in fashion, at a time when anyone at all declares himself a partisan of creating situations beyond a point of no return, and when the programme of a laughable western “socialist” party proposes blithely to “change life”. The pro-situ, as he will never fear to say, lives off passions, dialogues with transparency, radically remakes festival and love, in the same way that the cadre finds with the grower the little wine which he will himself bottle, or touches down at Katmandu. For the pro-situ as for the cadre, the present and the future are only occupied by consumption become revolutionary: here, it is a question above all of the revolution of commodities, of the recognition of an incessant series of putschs by which the prestigious commodities and their demands replace themselves; there, it is a question principally of the prestigious commodity of revolution itself. Everywhere, it is the same pretension to authenticity in a game whose very conditions, aggravated further by impotent trickery, absolutely forbid from the beginning the slightest authenticity. It is the same artificiality of dialogue, the same pseudo-culture contemplated quickly and from afar. It is the same pseudo-liberation of ways which only encounters the same escape from pleasure: on the basis of the same radical ignorance, puerile but dissimulated, takes root and institutionalises itself, for example, the perpetual tragi-comic interaction of masculine gullibility and feminine simulation. But beyond all the particular cases, general simulation is their common element. The principal characteristic of the pro-situ is that he replaces by pure ideas the trash that the accomplished cadre effectively consumes. It is the simple sound of spectacular money, that the pro-situ believes he is able to imitate more easily than this money itself; but he is encouraged in this illusion by the real fact that those commodities which present consumption feigns to admire, they too, make more noise than joy. The pro-situ would like to possess all the qualities of the horoscope: intelligence and courage, seductiveness and experience, etc., and is astounded, he who thought neither of attaining nor of making use of them, that the slightest practice still manages to overturn his fairy tale by this sad fluke that he has not even known how to simulate them. In the same way, the cadre has never been able to make believe to any bourgeois, nor to any cadre, that he was above the cadre.

The pro-situ, naturally, cannot disdain the economic benefits which the cadre disposes of, since all his daily life is orientated by the same tastes. He is revolutionary in that he wants to have them without working; or rather to have them straight away in “working” in the anti-hierarchic revolution which is going to abolish classes. Taken in by the easy diversion of meagre study grants, precisely with which the present bourgeoisie recruits its small cadres in diverse classes — easily writing off the fraction of these subsidies which serve for a time to maintain the people who will cease to go through the mill —, the pro-situ secretly comes to think that present society owes him a rich enough living, though he is without work, without money and without talent, from the sole fact that he has declared himself a pure revolutionary. And he believes besides that he should gain recognition as a revolutionary because he has declared he was one in the pure state. These illusions will soon pass: their duration is limited to the two or three years during which the pro-situs can believe that some economic miracle will save them, they know not how, as privileged. Very few will have the energy, and the capacities, thus to await the accomplishment of the revolution, which itself would not fail partially to deceive them. They will go to work. Certain ones will be cadres and most of them will be badly paid workers. Many of these will become resigned. Others will become revolutionary workers.
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At the moment when the S.I. had to criticize some aspects of its own success, which at the same time permitted and obliged it to go further, it found itself to be particularly badly composed, and little apt at autocritique. Many of its members discovered themselves incapable even of taking part personally in the simple continuation of its previous activities: they were thus more prone to find the past realisations, which were already inaccessible to them, really beautiful, rather than to assign themselves, in supersession, even more difficult tasks. It was necessary, from 1967, to occupy ourselves in priority with being present in diverse countries where the practical subversion which sought our theory, was beginning, and notably, from the autumn of 1968, we acted to make as known abroad as they were in France the experience and the principal conclusions of the movement of occupations. This period had increased the number of the members of the S.I., but in no way their quality. From 1970, the essential part of this task was luckily taken up, and greatly extended, by autonomous revolutionary elements. Partisans of the S.I. were to be found, nearly everywhere, there where autonomous and extremist workers' struggles were beginning, in the countries which are justly the most agitated. However it remained to the members of the S.I. to assume responsibility for the position of the S.I. itself; and to draw the necessary conclusions of the new epoch.

a. “The observer cannot help being struck by the rapidity with which the contagion propagated itself throughout the University and in general in the milieux of non-university youth. Thus it seems that the watch-words launched by the small minority of authentic revolutionaries stirred up I know not what indefinable in the soul of the new generation. (...) This fact must be underlined: we are witnessing the reappearance, just as fifty years ago, of groups of young people who consecrate themselves entirely to the revolutionary cause, who know how to await according to a tested technique the favourable moments to unleash or harden troubles of which they remain the masters, to return thereafter to clandestinity, to continue the work of undermining and to prepare other upheavals, sporadic or prolonged according to circumstance, so as slowly to disorganize the social edifice.”

Julien Freund, Guerres et Paix, no. 4 (1968).

Many of the members of the S.I. had in no way known that time when we said that “curious emissaries journey across Europe, and further; bearers of unbelievable instructions, they meet” (I.S., no. 5, December 1960). Now that such instructions are no longer unbelievable, but become more complex and more precise, these comrades came to grieve in nearly all the circumstances in which it was up to them to formulate or assert such instructions; and many preferred not even to risk themselves at it. Besides who, in fact, had never really entered the S.I., two or three others who had had some merit in poorer but calmer years, completely worn out by the very apparition of the epoch which they had wished for, had in fact left the S.I., but without wanting to admit it. We had to note then that many situationists did not even imagine what it could be to introduce new ideas in practice, and reciprocally to rewrite theories with the aid of facts; it was nevertheless this which the S.I. had accomplished.

That some of the first situationists had known how to think, had known how to take risks and had known how to live, or that, amongst so many who have disappeared, several have ended in suicide or psychiatric asylums, that is something which certainly could not confer hereditarily on each of the last to come, courage, originality or a sense of adventure. The more or less vaneigemist idyll — Et in Arcadia sita ego — concealed with a sort of legal formalism of abstract equality the life of those who had not proved their quality either in participation in the S.I. or in anything of their personal existence. By resuming this still bourgeois conception of revolution, they were nothing but the citizens of the S.I. They were in reality, in all the circumstances of their life, men of approbation; being in the S.I., they thought they could take refuge by placing everything under the good sign of historical negation; but this very negation, they contented themselves with approving it softly. Those who never said “I” or “you”, but always “we” and “one”, often found themselves even beneath political militantism, while the S.I. had been, from the beginning, a much vaster and more profound project than a simply
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q. “The observer cannot help being struck by the rapidity with which the contagion propagated itself throughout the University and in general in the milieux of non-university youth. Thus it seems that the watch-words launched by the small minority of authentic revolutionaries stirred up I know not what indefinable in the soul of the new generation. (...) This fact must be underlined: we are witnessing the reappearance, just as fifty years ago, of groups of young people who consecrate themselves entirely to the revolutionary cause, who know how to await according to a tested technique the favourable moments to unleash or harden troubles of which they remain the masters, to return thereafter to clandestinity, to continue the work of undermining and to prepare other upheavals, sporadic or prolonged according to circumstance, so as slowly to disorganize the social edifice.”

Julien Freund, Guerres et Paix, no. 4 (1968).

Many of the members of the S.I. had in no way known that time when we said that “curious emissaries journey across Europe, and further; bearers of unbelievable instructions, they meet” (I.S., no. 5, December 1960). Now that such instructions are no longer unbelievable, but become more complex and more precise, these comrades came to grief in nearly all the circumstances in which it was up to them to formulate or assert such instructions; and many preferred not even to risk themselves at it. Besides those who, in fact, had never really entered the S.I., two or three others who had had some merit in poorer but calmer years, completely worn out by the very apparition of the epoch which they had wished for, had in fact left the S.I., but without wanting to admit it. We had to note then that many situationists did not even imagine what it could be to introduce new ideas in practice, and reciprocally to rewrite theories with the aid of facts; it was nevertheless this which the S.I. had accomplished.

That some of the first situationists had known how to think, had known how to take risks and had known how to live, or that, amongst so many who have disappeared, several have ended in suicide or psychiatric asylums, that is something which certainly could not confer hereditarily on each of the last to come, courage, originality or a sense of adventure. The more or less vanegaminist idyll — Et in Arcadia situ ego — concealed with a sort of legal formalism of abstract equality the life of those who had not proved their quality either in participation in the S.I. or in anything of their personal existence. By resuming this still bourgeois conception of revolution, they were nothing but the citizens of the S.I. They were in reality, in all the circumstances of their life, men of approbation; being in the S.I., they thought they could take refuge by placing everything under the good sign of historical negation; but this very negation, they contented themselves with approving it softly. Those who never said “I” or “you”, but always “we” and “one”, often found themselves even beneath political militantism, while the S.I. had been, from the beginning, a much vaster and more profound project than a simply
political revolutionary movement. Two miracles coincided, which to them seemed due through the order of the world to their discreet but proud atony: the S.I. spoke and history confirmed it. The S.I. had to be everything for those who did nothing in it; and who even elsewhere did not amount to much. Thus extremely diverse, and even opposing, deficiencies, shared each other up reciprocally in the contemplative unity founded on the excellence of the S.I.; and this latter was supposed to guarantee as well the excellence of what was most apparently mediocre in the rest of their existence. The dreariest spoke of the game, the most resigned spoke of passion. Membership, even contemplative, of the S.I. had to suffice to prove all that, which otherwise nobody would have had the idea of crediting them with. Though many observers, policemen or otherwise, in denouncing the direct presence of the S.I. in a hundred ventures of agitation which develop very well all by themselves all over the world, were able to give the impression that all the members of the S.I. worked twenty hours per day to revolutionize the planet, we must underline the falseness of this image. History will record on the contrary the significant economy of forces with which the S.I. was able to do what it does. In such a way that, when we say that certain situationists really did too little of it, one must understand that these people literally did almost nothing. Let us add a notable fact, which verifies very well the dialectic existence of the S.I.: there was no kind of opposition between theoreticians and practitioners, of revolution or of anything else. The best theoreticians amongst us have always been the best in practice, and those who cut the sorriest figure as theoreticians were equally the most unprovided faced with any practical question.

r. “The excesses, admiring or subsequently hostile, of all those who speak of us from a position of unseasonably passionate spectators, must not find their response in a situ-boastfulness which, amongst us, would help to make believe that situationists are marvels all effectively possessing in their life what they have voiced, or simply admitted, as revolutionary theory and programme. (...) situationists do not have a monopoly to defend, nor a reward to anticipate. A task, which suited us, has been undertaken, maintained for better and for worse and, on the whole, correctly, with what was there.”


42 The contemplatives in the S.I. were the perfected pro-situs, for they saw their imaginary activity confirmed by the S.I. and by history. The analysis which we have made of the pro-situ, and of his social position, fully applies to them, and for the same reasons: the ideology of the S.I. is carried by all those who were not able themselves to conduct the theory and practice of the S.I. The “garnautins” excluded in 1967 represented the first case of the pro-situ phenomenon in the S.I. itself; but later it spread even further. For the envious uneasiness of the vulgar pro-situ, our contemplatives apparently substituted pacific enjoyment. But the experience of their own non-existence, entering into contradiction with the demands of historical activity which are in the S.I. — not only in its past, but multiplied by the extension of present struggles — caused their anxious dissimulation; led them to be even more ill at ease than the pro-situs outside. The hierarchic relationship which existed in the S.I. was of a new kind, inverted: those who submitted to it dissimulated it. They hoped, in fear and trembling of its end which threatened, to make it last as long as possible, through spurious oversight and pseudo-innocence, for several also believed they could feel the time coming for some historical rewards; and they did not get them.

43 We were there to combat the spectacle, not to govern it. The craftiest of the contemplatives believed no doubt that the attachment of all to the S.I., would demand that their number or, in one or two cases, their reputation be spared. There as elsewhere, they were mistaken. This “party patriotism” has no base in the real revolutionary action of the S.I. — “the situationists do not form a distinct party. (...) They have no interests separate from those of the proletariat as a whole.” Avviso al proletariato italiano sulle possibilità presenti della rivoluzione sociale, 19th November 1969 —, and the S.I. was never something which had to be spared;

s. “Theory becomes permanent knowledge of secret misery, and of the secret of misery. By itself, theory is also the end of the spectacle syndrome. (...) When it exists, theory is certain of not being wrong. It is a subject without error. Nothing deceives it. The totality is its only object. Theory knows misery as secretly public. It knows the secret publicity
political revolutionary movement. Two miracles coincided, which to them seemed due through the order of the world to their discreet but proud atony: the S.I. spoke and history confirmed it. The S.I. had to be everything for those who did nothing in it; and who even elsewhere did not amount to much. Thus extremely diverse, and even opposing, deficiencies, shared each other up reciprocally in the contemplative unity founded on the excellence of the S.I.; and this latter was supposed to guarantee as well the excellence of what was most apparently mediocre in the rest of their existence. The dreariest spoke of the game, the most resigned spoke of passion. Membership, even contemplative, of the S.I. had to suffice to prove all that, which otherwise nobody would have had the idea of crediting them with. Though many observers, policemen or otherwise, in denouncing the direct presence of the S.I. in a hundred ventures of agitation which develop very well all by themselves all over the world, were able to give the impression that all the members of the S.I. worked twenty hours per day to revolutionize the planet, we must underline the falseness of this image. History will record on the contrary the significant economy of forces with which the S.I. was able to do what it does. In such a way that, when we say that certain situationists really did too little of it, one must understand that these people literally did almost nothing. Let us add a notable fact, which verifies very well the dialectic existence of the S.I.: there was no kind of opposition between theoreticians and practitioners, of revolution or of anything else. The best theoreticians amongst us have always been the best in practice, and those who cut the sorriest figure as theoreticians were equally the most unprovided faced with any practical question.

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Guy Debord, note added to "La question de l'organisation pour l'I.S." (Internationale Situationniste, no. 12, September 1969).

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If the S.I. came to be contemplated as the revolutionary organization in itself, possessing the spectral existence of the pure idea of organisation, and becoming for many of its members an exterior entity, at once distinct from what the S.I. had effectively accomplished and distinct from their personal non-accomplishment, but covering from on high these contradictory realities, it is evidently because such contemplatives had not understood, nor wanted to know, what a revolutionary organisation can be, and not even what theirs could have been. This incomprehension is itself produced by the incapacity to think and act in history, and by individual defeatism which shamefully recognises such an incapacity and would like, not to surmount it, but to dissipate it. Those who, instead of affirming and developing their real personalities in critique and decision on what the organization at every moment does or could do, indolently chose systematic approbation, wanted nothing other than to hide this externality by their imaginary identification with the result.

45
Ignorance on organization is the central ignorance on praxis; and when it is wished for ignorance, it only expresses the timorous intention to stand aloof from the historical struggle, all the while affecting, on Sundays and days off, to take a walk by its side as forewarned and demanding spectators. Error on organization is the central practical error. If it is voluntary, it aims to utilise the masses. If not, it is at least complete error as to the conditions of historical practice. It is thus fundamental error in the very theory of revolution.

46
The theory of revolution certainly does not stem solely from the domain of strictly scientific knowledge, and even less from the construction of a speculative body of work, or from the aesthetics of the incendiary speech which contemplates itself in its own lyrical glimmer, and finds that it is already getting hotter. This theory has an effective existence only through its practical victory: here, "great thoughts must be followed by great effects; they must be like the light of the sun, which produces what it lights". Revolutionary theory is the domain of danger, the domain of uncertainty; it is forbidden to people who want the soporific certitudes of ideology, including even the official certitude of being the firm enemies of all ideology. The revolution which is in question is a form of human relations. It is part of social existence. It is a conflict of universal interests concerning the totality of social practice, and it is only in this that it differs from other conflicts. The laws of conflict are its laws, war is its path, and its operations are more comparable to an art than to scientific research or an inventory of good intentions. The theory of revolution is judged by this sole criterion that its knowledge must become a power.

47
The revolutionary organization of the proletarian epoch is defined by the different moments of struggle in which, each time, it must succeed; and it must also, in each of these moments, succeed in not becoming a separate power. One cannot talk of it by making an abstraction of the forces which it puts into play here and now, nor of the reciprocal action of its enemies. Each time it is able to act, it unites practice and theory, which constantly proceed one from the other, but never does it believe it can accomplish this through the simple voluntarist proclamation of the necessity of their total fusion. When the revolution is still far off, the difficult task of revolutionary organization is above all practice of theory. When the revolution begins, its difficult task, more and more, is
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of Reich* (IBM Piranha London WC1V 6XX).
tasks of such an epoch, of the limits encountered, and of the compensations which many individuals create for themselves half way through what they would like and what they can do. The S.I., which understood history better than anybody in an anti-historical epoch, nevertheless still understood history too little.

50

The S.I. has always been anti-hierarchical, but hardly ever knew how to be egalitarian. It was right to support an anti-hierarchical organizational programme, and to itself constantly follow formally egalitarian rules, by which all its members had to acknowledge an equal right to decision, and found themselves even eagerly pressed to utilise this right in practice; but it was greatly wrong in not seeing better and not saying better the obstacles, partly inevitable and partly circumstantial, which it has encountered in this domain.

51

The hierarchic peril, which is necessarily present in every real avant-garde, has its true historical measure in the relations of an organization with the outside, with the individuals or the masses which this organization can direct or manipulate. On this score the S.I. has succeeded in not becoming in any way a power: in leaving outside, in constraining quite often to autonomy, hundreds of its declared or virtual partisans. The S.I., it is known, never wished to admit but a very small number of individuals. History has shown that this did not suffice to guarantee from all its members, at a stage of action so advanced, “the participation in its total democracy (...), the recognition and self-appropriation by all (...) of the coherence of its critique (...) in critical theory strictly speaking, and in the relationship between this theory and practical activity” (Minimum definition of revolutionary organizations, adopted by the VII Conference of the S.I., July 1966). But this limitation was further to serve to guarantee the S.I. against the diverse possibilities of command which a revolutionary organization, when it succeeds, can exert on the outside. It is thus not so much because the S.I. is anti-hierarchic that it had to limit itself to a very small number of supposedly equal individuals; it is much rather because the S.I. wanted to engage directly in its action no more than only this very small number that it was effectively anti-hierarchic in the essential of its strategy.

52

As for the inequality which manifested itself so often in the S.I., and more than ever when it brought about its recent purge, on the one hand it relapses into the anecdotal, since the situationists accepting in fact a hierarchic position, found justly they were the weakest: in uncovering in practice their nothingness, we have once again fought the triumphant myth of the S.I., and confirmed its truth. On the other hand, one must draw a lesson from it which applies generally to periods of avant-gardist activities — which we are only beginning to leave — periods where revolutionaries find themselves obliged, even if they want to ignore it, to play with the fire of hierarchy, and do not all, as the S.I. has had, have the strength not to burn themselves with it: historical theory is not the place of equality, the periods of equal community are there its blank pages.

53

From now on, situationists are everywhere, and their task is everywhere. All those who think of being it have simply to give proof of “the truth, that is to say the reality and the force, the materiality” of their thought, before the whole of the revolutionary proletarian movement, everywhere that it begins to create its International; and no longer only before the S.I. As for us, we no longer have to guarantee in any way that such and such individuals are or are not situationists; for we no longer need to and we have never liked to. But history is an even more severe judge than the S.I. We can on the contrary guarantee that those are not situationists who were forced to leave the S.I. without having found in it what they had for so long declared they found there — the revolutionary realisation of themselves — and who thus quite normally only found there the stick to be beaten with. The very term “situationist” was only employed by us to pass on, in the renewal of the social war, a certain number of perspectives and theses: now that this is done, this situationist label, in a time
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The first revolutionaries who consecrated intelligent writings to the recent crisis in the S.I., and who approached closest to an understanding of its historical meaning, have up to now neglected a fundamental dimension of the practical aspect of the question: the S.I. holds effectively, by reason of all that it has done, a certain practical power, which it has never used except for its self-defence, but which could evidently, in falling into other hands, have become baneful to our project. To apply to the S.I. the critique which it had so justly applied to the old world, this is not just a matter of theory either, on a terrain where our theory besides found no adversaries: it is a precise critico-practical activity, which we have led in breaking the S.I. A very small number of climbers, for example, in putting their trust in the routine fidelity of some comrades honest but borne by their very weakness to be little clairvoyant and little demanding, could have attempted to keep control of the S.I. for some time, at least as object of negotiable prestige. Those who everywhere else are so disarmed and so divested of importance, had there their only weapon and their only importance. It was only the consciousness of the excess of their incapacity which held them back from taking advantage of it; but they could feel themselves all things considered constrained to it.

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The debate of orientation of the year 1970, as well as the practical questions which had to be resolved simultaneously, had shown that the critique of the S.I., which from everyone met with immediate approval in principle, could only become a real critique by going as far as practical rupture, for the absolute contradiction between the ever reaffirmed accord and the paralysis of many in practice — including the most minimal practice of theory — was the very centre of this critique. Never in the S.I. had a rupture been so predictable. And this rupture had thus become urgent. In the course of the development of this debate, those who constituted the then existing majority of the members of the S.I. — a majority which was it must be added shapeless, without unity, without action and without avowable perspectives — found themselves extremely badly treated by an extreme minority; and for good reason. It was no longer possible, without lying, to accord any further respect to these people. And it is well known that "men must be treated with great respect, or eliminated, because they revenge themselves for the petty offences, and for the grievous ones, they cannot any more".

56

It sufficed then to declare that a split had become necessary. Each one had to choose his camp; and each one moreover had his chance, since the question to be resolved was infinitely more profound than the glaring insufficiency of this or that comrade. The fact that this forced split did not produce from the other side any splitter who was able to sustain himself, does not in any way change its character of a veritable split; but confirms its very content. In the S.I., in proportion as the number shrank, the capacity for manoeuvre of all those who would have liked to retain something of the status quo diminished. The very fact that this split had for programme to forbid the previous comfort of the "situationists" who accomplished nothing of what they affirmed or countersigned, rendered it even more impossible for the others to persevere with the same kind of bluff without the conclusions from it being straight away drawn. Those who do not have the means to struggle for what they want or against what they do not want, those can only be numbered for a short time.
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The first revolutionaries who consecrated intelligent writings to the recent crisis in the S.I., and who approached closest to an understanding of its historical meaning, have up to now neglected a fundamental dimension of the practical aspect of the question: the S.I. holds effectively, by reason of all that it has done, a certain practical power, which it has never used except for its self-defence, but which could evidently, in falling into other hands, have become baneful to our project. To apply to the S.I. the critique which it had so justly applied to the old world, this is not just a matter of theory either, on a terrain where our theory besides found no adversaries: it is a precise critico-practical activity, which we have led in breaking the S.I. A very small number of climbers, for example, in putting their trust in the routine fidelity of some comrades honest but borne by their very weakness to be little clairvoyant and little demanding, could have attempted to keep control of the S.I. for some time, at least as object of negotiable prestige. Those who everywhere else are so disarmed and so divested of importance, had there their only weapon and their only importance. It was only the consciousness of the excess of their incapacity which held them back from taking advantage of it; but they could feel themselves all things considered constrained to it.

The debate of orientation of the year 1970, as well as the practical questions which had to be resolved simultaneously, had shown that the critique of the S.I., which from everyone met with immediate approval in principle, could only become a real critique by going as far as practical rupture, for the absolute contradiction between the ever reaffirmed accord and the paralysis of many in practice — including the most minimal practice of theory — was the very centre of this critique. Never in the S.I. had a rupture been so predictable. And this rupture had thus become urgent. In the course of the development of this debate, those who constituted the then existing majority of the members of the S.I. — a majority which was it must be added shapeless, without unity, without action and without avowable perspectives — found themselves extremely badly treated by an extreme minority; and for good reason. It was no longer possible, without lying, to accord any further respect to these people. And it is well known that “men must be treated with great respect, or eliminated, because they revenge themselves for the petty offences, and for the grievous ones, they cannot any more”.

It sufficed then to declare that a split had become necessary. Each one had to choose his camp; and each one moreover had his chance, since the question to be resolved was infinitely more profound than the glaring insufficiency of this or that comrade. The fact that this forced split did not produce from the other side any splitter who was able to sustain himself, does not in any way change its character of a veritable split; but confirms its very content. In the S.I., in proportion as the number shrank, the capacity for manoeuvre of all those who would have liked to retain something of the status quo diminished. The very fact that this split had for programme to forbid the previous comfort of the “situationists” who accomplished nothing of what they affirmed or countersigned, rendered it even more impossible for the others to persevere with the same kind of bluff without the conclusions from it being straight away drawn. Those who do not have the means to struggle for what they want or against what they do not want, those can only be numbered for a short time.
Contrary to previous purges which, in less favourable historical circumstances, were aimed at reinforcing the S.I. and each time did reinforce it, this purge aimed at weakening it. There is no supreme saviour: it was incumbent upon us, once more, to show it. The method and the aims of this purge were naturally approved by the revolutionary elements outside with whom we were in contact, without any exception. One will understand quickly that what the S.I. has done in the recent period when it kept relatively silent, and which is explained in the present theses, constitutes one of the most important contributions to the revolutionary movement. Never have we been seen mixed up with the business, the rivalries and the frequentations, of the most leftist politicians or the most advanced intelligentsia. And now that we can flatter ourselves with having acquired among this rabble the most revolting celebrity, we will become even more inaccessible, even more clandestine. The more our theses become famous, the more we will ourselves be obscure.

The veritable split in the S.I. was the very one which must now be wrought in the vast and shapeless movement of present contestation: the split between, on the one hand, all the revolutionary reality of the epoch and, on the other hand, all the illusions on this subject.

Far from claiming to shift on to others all the responsibility for the defaults of the S.I., or to explain them by the psychological particularities of certain wretched situationists, on the contrary we accept these defaults as having also been part of the historical operation which the S.I. has conducted. The game was not elsewhere. He who creates the S.I., who creates situationists has had also to create their defaults. He who aids the epoch to discover what it can do, is no more sheltered from the tares of the present than innocent of the most baneful of what can come to pass. We recognize all the reality of the S.I. and, in sum, we rejoice that it is that.

May one cease admiring us as if we could be superior to our time; and may the epoch terrify itself by admiring itself for what it is.

He who considers the life of the S.I. finds there the history of the revolution. Nothing has been able to make it sour.

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