

# THE REAL REPORT ON THE LAST CHANCE TO SAVE CAPITALISM IN ITALY

by Censor\*  
(Gianfranco Sanguinetti)

Translated by Len Bracken

\* Censor is a reference to Marcus Porcius Cato (234-149 B.C) whose sobriquet became a byword for austerity and puritanism. A soldier, statesman and historian, Cato fought against Hannibal and called for a return to the simpler Roman society of the previous century. His celebrated history of Rome, *Origins*, and other books qualified him as one of the founders of Latin prose style. L.B.

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*The Real Report On The Last Chance To Save Capitalism In Italy*  
by Censor (Gianfranco Sanguinetti)  
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*"To the friendly memory of Raffaele Mattioli,  
who taught us to be prodigal with the most  
precious of our belongings: the truth"*  
-G. S.



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## Translator's Foreword

Gianfranco Sanguinetti was a member of the Italian Section of the Situationist International (1957-1972). Of the texts published by this section, the tract "Is the Reichstag Burning" (signed Friends of the International and circulated after the bombing of Milan's Piazza Fontana on December 19, 1969) and the anonymous essay "The Return of Social Revolution" are attributable to Sanguinetti. The governments of France and Italy considered him to be so dangerous that the former's Interior Minister denied him entry to that country, and the latter locked him up on bogus arms possession charges. In the essay that follows the French edition of this book ("Proof of the Non-existence of Censor by His Author"), Sanguinetti writes that the authorities who searched his residences didn't think much of the manuscript when they found it. Sanguinetti published his *Report* soon after he was released from prison as Italian *samizdat*, sending 520 copies to the country's elite economists, ministers, industrialists, journalists, etc. The Italian journal *Epoca* was one of many papers to attempt to come to terms with it:

*A few copies of the cynical and refined Report appeared in August, eliciting a whirlwind of interpretations... Is it a man from the right or left? What does he really want?... If someone consciously sought to create a success like this, and if he was an upstart, he would be a genius.*

Given his personal history, it is understandable that Sanguinetti quickly looked for an alibi when he heard the news that Prime Minister Aldo Moro was kidnapped in 1978. Not wanting to be framed for this crime, Sanguinetti went to his country villa, which was subsequently searched by a truckload of highly armed agents. Sanguinetti's no less maverick tome espousing the theory of offensive and defensive terror, *On Terrorism and the State*, first appeared in April, 1979 (English translation London: Chronos, 1982). For reasons that go beyond this brief introduction, *On Terrorism and the State* precipitated Guy Debord's break with Sanguinetti - Debord was Sanguinetti's comrade and mentor, and he certainly had a hand in the composition of this very "Debordist" *Report*: their letters make this clear. Readers interested in a more detailed discussion of Sanguinetti's books, as well as documentation of the correspondence between Sanguinetti and Debord, are referred to

my biography *Guy Debord - Revolutionary* (Feral House, 1997).

This translation is based on the original Italian (in consultation with M.C. Quilter, the translator of Renzo Novatore), and, primarily, the French translation by Guy Debord. Like many books, this one appears to have been bolstered through translation. Unlike Debord, I translate the longer Latin and Greek passages in the text rather than in notes. With the exception of a few phrases such as *Ancien Regime*, the foreign words in the original text are translated into English. Words in English in the original are duly noted, and I reiterate both the notes in the text and Debord's notes (my notes are denoted by "L.B."). Consideration was given to the use of "veritable" rather than "real" in the title (as the British translators chose for the Debord-Sanguinetti collaboration *The Veritable Split in the International*), but it was decided that fewer syllables would make the title a little less daunting to the U.S. reading public. Regrettably, "real" does not convey the same sense of "true" as "veritable," but the choice of "real" more readily conveys the distinction to "artificial" that Sanguinetti proposed in the fourth paragraph of chapter IV.

It almost goes without saying that with the Olive Tree coalition (comprised of many former Italian Communist Party members (now renamed the DDS, or Democratic Party of the Left)) participating in the government, and the continued use of terror (by States and other irrational parties), Sanguinetti's work is more relevant than ever. A former communist is now in the decisive post of Interior Minister; and just this month, two bombs were planted in the Italian costal resorts of Lignano and Bibione. Readers familiar with Leonard Lewin's *Report From Iron Mountain* will certainly question the claim that it is the "boldest political hoax ever perpetrated" once they have read Sanguinetti's volcanic *Report* from Mount Etna. Although the prose isn't in the telegraphic style now favored in North America, the words erupt and flow like molten rock, burning everything in their path and burying the lies of his times with the blazing truth. I hope that I have been able to do justice to this literary masterpiece, translating most of it as I did, under the constraints of work and the insane Washington summer heat.

*Len Bracken* August, 1996

*He replied: "The conscience that is dark with shame  
for its own deeds or for another's  
may indeed feel harshness in your words;*

*nevertheless, do not resort to lies,  
let what you write reveal all you have seen  
and let those men who itch, scratch where it hurts*

*Your cry of words will be like the wind  
striking hardest at the highest peaks,  
and this is greatly honorable*

*Dante Paradise Canto XVII*

## Preface

The author of this *Report* is afflicted with a great disadvantage: nothing, or almost nothing, seems to him as if it should be treated with a soft tone. The XXth Century thinks otherwise, and it has its reasons to do so. Our democracy, craving the expression of the personal opinions of an infinite number of brave people who do not have the time to form one, constrains everyone to speak about everything with a softness that we are, in our turn, obligated to excuse due to the necessities of time. This first disadvantage, however, does not give us the cover of an opposing disadvantage: if we refuse to use a soft tone, we reject the academic style with equal force - why demonstrate in fifty pages what can be said in five lines? If this double premise does not fully justify, it should at least excuse, our *trenchant*\* tone.

We would like to thank, right from the start, a number of illustrious Italians whom we would name if they were dead. But they occupy important positions in our economy and government, and would be pleased by our discretion given the undeniably delicate

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\*In French in the text.



subjects discussed below.

Although we must confess that we secretly hoped that someone would have done so before us, we are allowing ourselves to publish these pages as this *Report*. Given the precipitation of the Italian crisis and the urgency of the remedies that must be adopted, we had to resort to confining our opinions to print because their dissemination in the form of confidential notes and private conversations did not reach the audience we had hoped for, precisely “where one can do as one wants,”\* which is to say the summit of economic power.

It must be said that we do not intend to speak for the *entire* Italian bourgeoisie, henceforth debased by its illusions of “openness,” but only to the part of the bourgeoisie in which one can distinguish the real power *elite*<sup>†</sup>: it is to this elite that the following is addressed. In this epoch the monopoly of more or less critical discourse on society seems to come from those who oppose it in a more or less effective way. From our side of the barricade there is only pitiful silence and recourse to embarrassing justifications. As for us, the moment when we break this monopoly, we are too far removed to want to achieve the slightest appearance of “dialogue” with our real enemies. We simply speak to our class to perpetuate its hegemony over this society.

Contrary to those who criticize this society to revolutionize the base, we will not make a demagogic or pedagogic discourse. Rather than resort to radical critiques, we prefer to assume a certain *disgraced grace*,<sup>††</sup> the displeasing honor of pitilessly criticizing errors in our management of economic and political power to the end of reinforcing efficiency and domination.

We are not trying to prove that this society is *desirable*, and even less to weigh its eventually modifiable nuances. With all the cold truth that we adopted for every other affirmation contained in this *Report*, we say that *this society pleases us because it is there*,

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\*Dante.

†In French in the text.

††In Greek in the text.

and that we want to maintain it to maintain our power over it. To speak the truth these days is a long-winded task. And since we cannot hope to exclusively encounter impartial readers, we are content to be impartial while we write, even at the price of having to accuse the politicians who defended our interests for years with more good will, than good luck. We have to stop being hypocritical towards ourselves because we are in the process of becoming victims of this hypocrisy.

From the point of view of the defense of our society, there only exists one danger - that workers succeed in speaking to each other about their condition and their aspirations *without intermediaries*. All other dangers are secondary, or proceed directly from the precarious situation in which we place, in multiple respects, this first unavowable problem.

Once the real danger is defined, it must be exorcised rather than simply having false problems put in its place. Nevertheless, our politicians only seem to be preoccupied with saving their own reputations, and too often it is too late. On the contrary, at present we must *save our base*, especially our economic base. We maintain that the debate that has taken place over the last few months between the major political forces under the heading "the communist question" has been dominated by silliness. It is as if the problem were more embarrassing because it was "new," and as if we - and no other less qualified party - had not established the modalities, time and conditions making it useful for the two sides to have official access to the PCI (Italian Communist Party) in the sphere of power. Since the recent meetings we have had on the most, for them, unfavorable details, it is as if the communist leaders had not already officially accepted to try to make the base of their party, which is becoming more radical, accept the project. This fictitious political debate is of no use even to the majority parties who think it will assure them of the support of moderate voters - a superfluous worry given that voters always vote as they are told. Nor will this debate mislead intelligent conservatives, not in Italy or overseas. We know that it is not important whether we have more or less need of the PCI given that no one can doubt how useful this party was for us these last very difficult years, and how easy it was for its leaders to

harm us in what might be an irredeemable way. But on the contrary, we are now in a position to offer this party sufficient guarantees for it to no longer run any risks when it is overtly allied with our management of power, i.e., of being caught up in our eventual ruin. The PCI will thus find itself sharing, *ipso facto*, the responsibility and consequences of our ruin. At the same time it will lose its worker base that no longer maintains the slightest illusion of change and certainly feels betrayed by its leadership. These workers will freely reassert themselves outside of all control and against all control. This is the real danger.

It is well known that the communist parties have, on several occasions, proved their aptitude in collaborating in the management of bourgeois society. But one cannot be reassured by this general rule as if it conferred an unlimited reserve of security for our power, an ever ready recourse that will suffice for any danger, any time. It is as if this recourse were not itself simply one historical force among many; as if this force was not susceptible to being wasted by inaction or an inept action, or again an action engaged in too late. The summit for us would be to be the last dupes of the myth of communism by investing in *the fantasm of its omnipotence*, which we constructed when it was advantageous for us to combat it. Never forget that the *only effective power* is ours, and that it is now under heavy attack. It is not enough to know that the communist party is ready to heal the society for our profit. More than that, we should have a place to offer the communist party in a capitalist society *that merits being healed*.

If the state and civil society continue to deteriorate at such a dramatic rate under the pressure of truly irreconcilable enemies, we will, in common with the communists (who only understand fellow communists), encounter the same disaster. We will find ourselves as incapable of helping ourselves as the Austro-Hungarian Empire or the Kingdom of Jerusalem. At this moment, the communists will deplore the lack of maintenance of the existing order - this is a subjective perspective that will not give us any consolation. By putting their fortunes in the arms of counter-revolution, the communists will destroy a push for a society without classes in Italy. They will thus merit meeting the proprietary class in America,

Russia as well as those of Europe and China. And they will be admitted rather quickly to the United Nations as the masters of our country. But us, the real dominant class in Italy that can even call itself the foundation of the universal bourgeoisie of modern times, and of the *millennium* that it effectively imposed on the entire world, we will not be there anymore. We will endlessly ask "How much it tastes like salt"\* this bread of exile in London or Madrid.

What we should save is not just capitalism as an economy of commerce and salaries, but capitalism in the only historical form that is good for us. Furthermore, it is only too easy to demonstrate that it is the superior form of economic development. If we do not know how to offer the communists a *chance* to save this capitalism, they will try as hard as they can to save *another form*, the one we have seen in Russia for half a century. The poor rustic! It is well known that the new class of proprietors that this inferior system produces does not allow for any local existence - their heavy-handed dictatorship takes the place of the one that we are not afraid to call our own, the totality of superior values that give existence meaning.

We are talking about banalities here, about what is obvious. Those who do not admit it are sleepwalkers who have not thought an instant about the fact that we have lost all reason, while curing a world in which our objective advantages were suppressed the moment when it was no longer possible for anyone to experience these advantages. Capitalists should never forget that they are also men, and as such they cannot allow the uncontrolled degradation of *all* men, including the conditions of life they enjoy for themselves.

We want to warn the reader of an objection, a reproach that could be leveled against us, and that we think, in the specific case of our *Report*, is absolutely unfounded: that we disclose the secrets that we have come to know in the course of the last few years (secrets of State, of which there have been more than a few, and that we will divulge without worrying about the eventual perilous consequences in public opinion polls). One can quickly divulge who it is that nourishes this fear, if one is aware of the double

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\*Dante.

presupposition that is neglected in our country - he who always lies is never believed, and the truth is destined to find its way to the surface with a force that prevails over the most powerful lies. The destiny of these lies is, on the contrary, to lose all force in proportion to the number of times they are repeated. One will see that the few naked truths that we decided to write about in this pamphlet cannot be killed; not without running the risk that someone else would put them into the service of seditious ends.

Our proposals will be rapid - we never hesitate because our readers are people with whom we have done business these last few years, and we know that they are informed on the better part of the delicate details that we are content to highlight: our allusions to certain events or individuals will completely elude those who live at a distance from the centers of power of our society. To the famous expression *it is forbidden to speak and I cannot silence myself* we prefer the honest *I will not tell all, but all that I tell is true*\*.

Before ending this preface, it might be useful to mention that it is not our habit to write books. This is not because we do not love books, but precisely because we love them more than this century allows: that is why we are only personally known by those *who do not write books* and we abhor the amateur or professional writers of our time - all the illiterate intellectuals who pursue the remission of their ignorance in vain by publishing the evidence of it in a multitude of unreadable tomes; tomes that our cultural industry endeavors to erect as a sort of barricade against real culture, which is presently out of style. If we have picked up the pen it is so that it be interpreted as a payment, in our way, of a tax *una tantum* to the Republic that is now experiencing difficulties. And if we wanted to give this *Report* the literary form of a pamphlet, which has been out of style for two centuries, it is because it has the double advantage of being easy to read and quick to write. We are addressing those for whom the time to read is less than the need to act. As for us, if we fail to reveal everything that seems important to us, without pretending to exhaustively cover every question raised, perhaps we

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\*In Latin in the text.

can leave a monumental work that historians will use one day to shed light on the years under consideration. In this case, the time will come when we lack the material means to dominate, as is our intention, the crucial problems outlined here because we do not believe that it is possible to resolve real problems in *writing*. This pamphlet should be read as it was written - in one spurt - following the humor of the moment; humor that cannot be any better than the gravity allowed by the moment.

This text appears under a pseudonym simply to respect the pamphleteer tradition of the Fronde under Mazarin and by Junius in England in the XVIIIth Century. We are sure to be easily recognized by all those who had the chance to meet us over the last thirty years. For all the others, we prefer that it not be our name that incites the most rigorous reflection, rather the gravity of what we evoke. (June 1975)

## I

### Why Capitalism Must Be Democratic and The Grandeur It Has Attained In Being So

*"...Here you are, thank heavens..., soon you will be outside the hands of your rebel subjects... Thereupon, my Cousin, I enter, as you see, in all your sentiments, and pray that God maintains your power. But I cannot approve your repugnance for this type of government that they call representative, and that I call recreative. As far as I know, there is nothing so amusing for a king, not to mention the great utility it has for us... Representation is marvelous... Money comes to us in abundance. Ask my nephew d'Angoulmeme - we count in billions, or, to tell the truth, we no longer count ever since we have had deputies, a majority compact, as it is called. There are expenses, but insignificant... one hundred votes cost less each year, I am sure, than a month of Mme de Cayla... I thought like you before my trip to England. I did not like this representative government, but I saw what it is. If the Turk is in doubt, he would want nothing less than to turn his throne into two chambers... Do not let representations and advertisements for liberty annoy you. These representations are for our benefit, and the result is immense, the danger none, despite what is said..."*

(This extract, translated here for the first time in Italian, is from a secret letter that Louis XVIII sent to Ferdinand VII in August 1823 - the letter fell into the hands of a secret agent of Canning in Cadiz, and its publication stirred up a polemic in England - cf. *The Morning Chronicle*, October 1823.)

The most notable trait of our century is not that capitalism was contested in a reiterated and bloody way by the workers of all industrial countries, and also in a few countries with economies that were still predominantly agrarian - phenomenon that were not unexpected, except by those who underestimated the first failed revolutions of the last century. Nor was the most notable trait the serious economic and monetary crises that cyclicly disrupted internal stability - seriously inconvenient, but inevitable in all complex economic systems. Nor was the most notable trait of our century the errors of power that have been so numerous and costly in all countries - this fact is inseparably tied to all historical forms of domination.

What seems notable to us about our century is, on the contrary,

that the capitalist system knew how to resist all of the above, and in spite of it, this system continues to exist everywhere, albeit in different and *apparently contradictory* forms. It is the only form of domination in the world that is capable not only of overcoming its own crises, but of doing so in a way that strengthens it to the point of imposing its modes of production, exchange and distribution of commodities on the entire planet - even in the communist countries, the econo-technological systems of modern capitalism have long been the acknowledged preference of the dominant bureaucratic class.

For the first time in universal history a fixed system has been imposed *everywhere*, annihilating the archaic forms of domination that oppose it everywhere it finds them. This was true ever since this system learned how to successfully refute the questions posed by new social forces, such as the class of industrial workers and the wage earners in general who are necessary for the production and consumption of commodities, but who have a tendency to fight, in the name of their "emancipation," the world that they work for and in which they live.

It seems necessary and just for us to recall, at the beginning of this *Report* devoted to the critique of the actual management of our system as well as to its undeniable historical successes and objective merits, that we risk seeing it compromised in the near future due to the present errors. It should be stated exactly *what to conserve*, in other words, what is worth fighting for *here and now*. We must be conscious of what we have to lose at a moment when it is indispensable to decide how to act and what arms to use. We must conquer the serious crises that are the object of our worries and the origin of this text.

The French Revolution, according to Thomas Carlyle, had as its essential significance the assertion of truth. This revolution was the historical proclamation of the fact that all lies (on which was founded, until then, the harmonious organization of a social hierarchy) would henceforth be challenged. If this idea is correct, we can say that for two centuries we have known how to avoid most of the harmful consequences.

All forms of society that have been dominant in history,



have imposed themselves on the masses by force and by illusion so that they should simply *work*. The greatest success of our modern civilization is to have known how to put an incomparable *force of illusion* in the service of its rulers. We see that this is nonetheless where the defect in our power resides. It threatens the existing order in every moment of serious crisis because this illusion must never be shared by the ruling *elite* that produces it and uses it. The rapid and cumulative economic development, as well as the positive technological shake up that incessantly accompanies it as its corollary, have involved the extreme concentration of absolute control of the totality of production and distribution. That this control once possessed a strategy to match its immense means is, unfortunately, what contradicts the present state of the world - we will revisit this below. But what is beyond doubt is that economic development itself demanded and accomplished the separation and passivity of the agents of production in proportions that were previously unimaginable - agents that one finds in another chapter of the book of social science under the headings "consumers" and "citizens."

It is here that is born, as a natural product of our stage of historical development, *the social necessity of contemplation* that Bergson in his time called "a luxury" in his *Creative Evolution*; contemplation that a privileged part of our technology (the creation and diffusion of images) opportunistically satisfies. Reason does not elude anyone of good faith. The objective and measurable success of our society is completely economic and technical. One only has to look at what our society produces. With a sentimentalism that exceeds the topic, some ask us the question: "Must we also love it?" The question is hollow if one admits that to ask such a question from any point of view that transcends actual society is pure absurdity: note too, that the question is effectively in vain in the sense that it already finds its response as soon as it is posed in terms of actual society, which is to say in terms of social classes, by asking *who* should love this production? Those who appropriate the surplus value necessarily love the existing form of production. As for the others, why should they love it? Production appears to them as a necessity, and that is effectively what it is. As for a particular form that can redress this necessity, the holders of capital find nothing

more defensible on their side than any other, and they cannot cite anything other than the advantages they receive. One would blush to recall these truths if the excessive hypocrisy of the social thought of our epoch had not shuffled and scrambled the cards so that the trickster always finished by being incapable of intelligent tricks.

Our workers do not decide, to the slightest degree, what they produce. And this is fortuitous because one could ask what they would decide to produce, being what they are? Regardless of the variety of conceivable responses, one truth is surely constant: they certainly would not produce what is good for the society that we are managing. And workers are no more overcome with joy than you or us by the extension of a multinational enterprise or by the growth curve of combat aircraft sales to the Middle East, but the workers find themselves deprived of all real compensation in the existence made for them. One must certainly distribute a few other compensations to them; and the massive diffusion of images to contemplate corresponds to this, but not as the "luxury" that Bergson spoke of, rather a contemplative necessity (*entertainment*\* in the sense of Roman circuses as well as the sense evoked by Pascal).

Whatever might be the importance, and even the gravity, of the perilous faults of our power, one must not forget that everything has been subordinated to its resounding success. One does not defend a social order unless it is alive. And if bourgeois society had not given this victory a universal aspect, we would not be here today to still discuss its defense because bourgeois society would be as dead as the Empire of Darius.

We might take a moment of reflection, as a sane preparation for our real struggles. A hundred years ago the world was on the verge of suddenly slipping out of our grasp. We must not neglect the importance of the adjournment that we obtained, and the excesses that permitted us to effect a profound transformation of all the conditions of this strategy; a transformation that we can clearly define: the arrangement of a new field of battle where we wait for our disoriented adversary who does not *know* he is disoriented, and

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\*In French in the text.

is constrained to advance amid the strong defenses that we have knowingly placed there.

One could say that the XIXth Century, after the formidable revolution of 1848, discovered political economy. Society's division into classes and property itself was already called into question: their critique seemed to be inexorably tied to the progress of knowledge, notably in the working class. When the ruling class fears (apparently with legitimacy) the education of the masses and universal suffrage, this ruling class ties its defense to the past. This atavistic attitude continually accentuates itself because modern industry requires the minimum of a summary education, and as this spreads, it necessarily entails universal suffrage.

The bourgeoisie remembers that the progress of the Enlightenment accompanied its march to political power, and it fears that the same path will be followed by the proletarians. Luckily the proletarians also believed in this destiny. Both classes were mistaken because both revolutionary projects are so different that they cannot be served by the same Enlightenment - not in its distribution, nor in its implementation by analogous means. Thus one class' fears are in vain, and the other's hopes are misplaced.

During the course of this century, the development and expansion of economic power changed the face of the world much more than any revolution in the past. What are the characteristics and permanent effects of this change? What was destroyed and what was created? It seems to us that the moment has arrived to define the distinctive traits of this new reality, and to enunciate them. We find ourselves well placed to evaluate the result of the long series of commotions because we are far enough removed from the beginning of the commotion to shelter the passions of those who began it, and we are also close enough to distinguish the essential elements. It will soon be difficult to have such an objective perspective because the huge historical changes are making the causes that produced these changes disappear, and because the changes are becoming less comprehensible due to their success. We will now consider, not as the hollow consolation of pride in our past success, rather to reaffirm, in the heart of a new war that has so suddenly heated up the entire social field, the secret for the

victory of our past campaigns so as to consciously employ them in other combats that we are again called to fight: what were, in the epic of the old social war, our decisive battles? our Salamis and Marengo?

For the sake of brevity, we will distinguish five.

First, we contradicted the verdict of Carlyle by recognizing the quantitative and qualitative *progress of political lies* to a level of power that has never been seen in history. The content of these lies grows at the same rate as the proliferation of their means. These lies developed with the "radical" bourgeoisie and its journalism and parliamentarianism, which followed the worker movement as it organized into socialist parties. The process that began with parliamentary representation of citizens was completed, naturally, and it was considerably reinforced with the success of union representation of workers - it is true that *all* representation plays our game. What was commonly called the "bluff," the propaganda of false news distributed day after day by all governments during the first World War, had the ulterior effect of crossing the threshold over which in normal times one would never have believed it was possible to lead literate citizens. The phrase of Cardinal Carafa, spoken at the time of the Inquisition, is still true: "*As much as the people wants to be deceived, it will be.*"\* Next, fascism was an incredible pathological excess of falsehood; a bad remedy in a time of crisis. It should be noted that while fascism may have completely failed due to its nature, it never failed in the realm of propaganda. Hitler went so far as to theorize the fact that "the masses... will be more easily fooled by a big lie than a small one." The advertisements of the modern market came next, exploiting its possibilities more rationally than fascist propaganda and proving its excellence as an autonomous power. However, we should criticize the unilateral results that flow from this autonomy - too often these results are not in accord with the higher interests of the *whole* of the economic order. And without doubt the most significant result of this period would have to be the identification of communism with the totalitarian order that rules in Russia, and subsequently with the perspectives

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\*In Latin in the text.

of its partisans in our countries who, for decades, thought that Lenin and Stalin abolished capitalism. We are pleased to recall that years before the translation of *Grundrisse* by Karl Marx, our friend Piero Sraffa, the eminent economist, highlighted the passage in the book that deals with this question: "To let salary work subsist while at the same time capital is suppressed, is a demand that contradicts itself and self-destructs." Thus the social revolution that was so desired in the XIXth Century has effectively become *utopian* because there is no longer any place in the world where it could pretend to affirm itself for what it could really be.

Second, we have witnessed a *grandiose reinforcement of State power* as an increasingly sophisticated organism of surveillance. In this sense one could say that under another aspect, the dream of the bourgeois economists of the XVIIIth Century has been realized - a legitimate dream that raised the hostilities of the aristocrats. The State for whom its economists formulate theory must not only rule the nation, but educate it in a determined way. According to Turgot, Quesnay, Letronne, Mercier de La Riviere and many others, the task of the State is to shape the minds of citizens following a specific model. The State must inculcate certain ideas and certain sentiments that it judges useful and necessary to crush the obstacles that social reality puts up to oppose its actions. The economists of this epoch say that the State must reform political and social reality, going so far as to transform the living conditions of citizens. Bodeau concluded his ideas by advancing a prophecy that was very radical for his time: "The State makes of men what it wants." An aristocrat, very cultivated but too oriented toward the past, accused the economists of the last century of using their imaginations to create:

*...a social power that is not only bigger than all those that exist, it is different in its origin and character. It does not proceed directly from God; it does not originate in tradition; it is impersonal: it does not respond to the king, but the State... This democratic despotism abolishes all social hierarchies, all class boundaries, all fixed rank. This people composed of similar individuals who are completely equal, this confused mass recognized by the only legitimate sovereign (the State), is carefully deprived of all means that would enable it to guide, or even survey, its government.*

The economists defend themselves against these accusations by invoking a public education message: "Despotism is impossible," as Quesnay said, "if the nation is enlightened." The exigencies that the economists advanced were, in effect, well founded: Letronne, prior to the French Revolution, notes, "*The nation has been governed for centuries on false principles that seem to have been created by chance.*"\* We witness today what these economists foresaw. It should be pointed out that contemporaneous with these economists, and in the same direction, emerged a few representatives of the current of thought that latter became known as socialism - a century before Marxism. In the *Code of Nature* by Morelly, for example, one can find all the doctrines supporting State power as a preview of, "the right to work, absolute equality, uniformity of everything, mechanical regularity in all the movements of individuals." It is surprising to see that in 1755, when Quesnay founded his school, Morelly recognized what is only today being full realized everywhere: "Cities," one reads in *Code of Nature*, "will be built in the same design; all buildings for a similar particular use... Children will be taken from their parents and raised in common at State expense in a uniform way."

The centralization of the State effected by the bourgeoisie and by the socialist bureaucrats was produced by the same necessity and on the same terrain; and one of its powers is to the others what a cultivated fruit is to a wild bush. Now the State is the protagonist that plans and programs, with more or less effectiveness, all life in modern societies. Or, the State is the *palladium* of the commercial society that converts even its enemies into proprietors, as in Russia and China. We note here that we are not afraid of revealing the ancient and noble expressions of business society: all the majesty of the world was brought about by businessmen and the societies they built. Art, philosophy, all scientific and technical knowledge, political liberty (in practical forms) - all this did not appear in history, nor did it last, except by the hand of the commercial bourgeoisie (and within the exact limits of its local or universal domination).

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\*In French in the text.

Third, *the isolation, or better said the separation of people, has been highly perfected.* All that leads to the tranquility of the social order and unites particular communities, corporations, the districts of old cities or villages, even the regular clientele of cafes or churches, has almost completely dissolved with the new conditions of everyday life and its new urban decor. One could argue that each person tends to find himself in direct relation with the powerful center of the system that manages even the details of his existence. And this center appears to him, successively or simultaneously, in its aspect of constrained governmental authority, as the choices of industrial production available on the market and the selection of images to contemplate. Thus the masses consume and watch what they want of the diversity programmed for them, but they can only want what is there.

Fourth, we are witnessing an unprecedented growth in the power of the economy and of industry. This modern economy succeeded in giving a value and price to everything, and it permits everyone to consume the commodities produced by industry. It is even possible to say that as the economy piles up the basic needs of the population, it finds itself in a state where it can also offer the superfluous; after which, that which was previously superfluous has become necessary in two ways - subjectively for the consumer, and objectively as a necessity for industrial expansion. The moment when the citizen - as a consumer - accedes to the superfluous, everything the people valued in other times and that was indispensable to the people to guaranty its poorer and more precarious realities has become *useless*, and disappeared. Nothing exists that cannot be industrially produced, which is to say that does not conform to the exigencies of profit: from food to leisure to vacations.

We do not want to deny that previously unknown inconveniences can result from this growth, such as the new diseases caused by pollution, etc. But the progress of science, pharmaceutical science for example, provides in turn the antidotes which, industrially produced, are so many commodities to sell to the population.

The sovereign attribute of the system is the distance, always growing, between the rapidly changing realities and the words and emotions that correspond to these realities in the realm of appearance.

Generations of popular notions no longer have any relationship to the realities that have been transformed by modern industry. Whether it is what one denotes by work, vacations, colds or houses; economic and State power makes use of all elements to understand the modifications introduced into its realities - either by chance or as experiments for deliberate ends. Meanwhile, people *still speak of things* that have disappeared using old words, words that reappear in their public opinion debates on electoral programs.

Fifth and finally (and this is the concentrated result of what we have enumerated above), one must recognize that the vertiginous growth in the complication of the everyday intervention of human society on all aspects of the production of life, and its replacement of every natural element with a new factor that one could call artificial. This justifies the unmitigated power of every expert who erects and corrects the new economic and ecological equilibriums outside of which people can no longer live. One is no longer an expert except with the State and economy, because elsewhere there is no field of operations, nor a diploma. Thus *the existing hierarchy is constrained to develop secrets and control in everything*, even when it would rather not do so. But all hierarchies in history have wanted to do so, even if it was not necessarily in the interest of everyone. The double advantage that we extract from this fact is that discontent with our society no longer makes sense even though it is more shaky than ever on every detail. Only a total refusal (always difficult to formulate and put into practice) signifies a menace to our social order. And this menace is itself attenuated to the degree that a refusal of this sort (deprived of an exact understanding of the whole and disinclined to foresee counter-attacks in real historical confrontations) has the most likelihood of being foolish and content with the ideological illusions of its perpetrators.

In short, this is how modern capitalism was able to make the entire population freely participate in the society that it builds. And modern capitalism is correct to replay this scenario because such an enterprise was never tried before, and because bad omens accumulated at the beginning. Perhaps a more lucid understanding of history - neglected for a century in favor of economic studies which are still intellectually entangled with theology - could inspire



the confidence of the current *elite* who cannot foresee the forms of domination that we have just characterized, but who could more daringly speculate on the general evolutionary line, and thus perhaps more consciously hasten useful formations. One would have perhaps been saved a certain number of inconvenient facts, such as the regressive mutation of capitalism in Russia. Again, despite often legitimate worries (more often exaggerated) that the question elicits in the dominant classes of almost all countries, *capitalism must be democratic* because it cannot be anything else. The first glance at history, as well as its most attentive and keen study, brings us to the same undeniable result that capitalism could never grow anywhere except hand in hand with a democratic society; a society that lives a democratic life, and wants and needs democracy. And to deploy itself fully and completely (to transform everything into commodities and incessantly renovate the totality of commodities), capitalism must permanently assure the whole of the population of a choice, which it has determined. One must be able to choose between two deputies because one must be able to choose between two equivalent commodities. Whoever remembers fascism; whoever knows how poorly State capitalism was managed by the totalitarian bureaucracies of the East; and whoever recalls the permanent atrophy of the merchant class in ancient oriental despotism, finds, on the contrary, the negative proof of this axiom.

Those who do not understand the need to live freely simply do not have a taste for it. And one must renounce making mediocre spirits feel this sublime taste, which they have never known. The unsurpassable limits of democratic freedom are its safeguard, and reality itself imposes these limits on democratic freedom. One can thus conclude that people were more interested in concrete reforms put in place by democratic capitalism than by the multitude of sermons in favor of an abstract and total "freedom;" "freedom" that no one has ever seen, or could ever be, because it is never realized. One can thus only understand the effective reality of democracy without alarming oneself or becoming over enthused by the monotone illusions that always crop up in this regard. No sensible person would think of denying that participation in the political management of democracy, since its admirable appearance in history,

was reserved for rich merchants or land owners - in the Athens of the Vth Century as in the Florence of *Trecento*. We do not see anything different in the famous year 1793, nor after it, other than the fact that the dominant class is actually less well served by its personnel (always more numerous), to whom it delegates the tasks of political administration; and nowhere is this more scandalously the case than in Italy where this dishonest and incompetent domesticity burns the roast while gleaning the small change in the pockets and drawers of its masters. The other side of democratic republics, the always resurgent excesses of popular pretensions, constitutes quite precisely the contrary of the democracy. The proof is that these popular movements always collapse right away. But we are no longer at the moment in the history of the world where democracy, realized in a few cities, could succumb to these pretensions without hindering the general growth of a capitalism which is still generally sheltered in the social relations of past times. Capitalism seized the world for its own profit. The democratic order must be defended without hesitation, "not only with the pick, but with the axe,"\* because when democracy falls, capitalism will definitively succumb.

The hearts and minds who are discouraged because for decades they mistook the end of trouble of a time, for the end of the time of trouble, ask us if one must resign oneself to seeing all assurance victoriously conquered, and if the social crisis is thus destined to last forever. We reply coldly: yes. One must look the hardest truths of this cruelly but inevitably permanent social war in the face: "the truest motive," as Thucidides put it. Our world *is not made for the workers*, nor for the other social stratum of poor salary earners that should in fact be put in the simple category "proletarian." But everyday our world must also be made *by* them, under our command. This is the fundamental contradiction with which we must live. It subsists under the ashes, even on the most calm days, as the spark that can reignite all the insatiable passions of the masses, and their unmeasurable and endless hopes. This is why we never have the right to abstain for too long from being intelligent.

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\*Herodotus - G.D.

## II

### The Degree To Which Capitalism Was Mismanaged in Italy, and Why (1943-1967)

*Oh Italy, although speeches would  
be futile before the mortal wounds  
that I see in such numbers on your beautiful body;  
(...)*

*That your truth is heard here  
by my mouth - who that I might be.*

Petrarch *Il Canzoniere*

We have rapidly enumerated the objective successes that modern capitalism has obtained up to the present time. But we do not intend to write an apology of this world - not to deny the utility of such an apology in terms of propaganda -, rather we find it necessary to envisage, in a few summary themes, the origins of the internal crisis of our country, a crisis that we are called upon to understand and confront without delay.

One knows that the diseases that afflict States are at first difficult to diagnose but easy to cure; and on the contrary, as it develops, the disease is easier to diagnose, but more difficult to heal. As far as Italy is concerned, we are convinced that if a pure and simple political-economic disaster has been avoided so far, it is due to the relative weakness of adversary forces rather than the merits and prudence of our politicians.

In the hope that this illness does not become too easily recognizable, we have to make a diagnosis *right away*, and simultaneously begin shock therapy before the workers understand the proportions and gravity of the malady because this knowledge would undoubtedly present them with new possibilities and pretexts to fight, as well as radiant perspectives for victory. The procrastinations of the ruling class (its fear of action or acting only when compelled by fear) makes it appear ridiculous, even to the uncultivated masses.

The people are tired *long before* they realize it, and nothing animates and supports a movement as much as the ridicule of those against whom the movement is mounted. Such situations are always perilous for both sides - they entail a devastating hopelessness for one and a fatal ardor for the other. In order not to run either of the opposing risks of overly dramatizing or dismissing the actual crisis, one must understand the real nature and profundity of the crisis.

Seen from a distance and in its totality, our history from 1943 to 1968 appears to us as the representation of an embittered struggle that, in its first light up to the elections of April 18, 1948, witnessed the majority of the country oppose the *Ancien Regime*\* of the Italian Kingdom (born late), of which fascism was the supreme episode and the most recent archaism. It was against its traditional routines, inglorious memories and illusions of grandeur that all members of the new Italian society opposed this regime as if it they were one person.

The 1948 elections definitively concluded the first period of collaboration between the bourgeoisie and lower classes of our country - the moment when the *Ancien Regime* was destroyed forever. By putting an end to the illusions of workers (who still hoped for a collaboration between their representatives in parliament and those of the comfortable classes), the bourgeoisie proved to be more realistic than the workers. The triumph of the middle class was twofold: against all those who had been *over* it in the defunct Kingdom, and against all those who must remain *beneath* it. That was a complete triumph, but it was only relatively definitive in regard to those above the bourgeoisie, i.e., the old, decadent, landed aristocracy. In this sense, the victory was effectively *complete* because all the economic powers, all the prerogatives and the government of the young Republic in its totality, finds itself reunited in a monopoly in the interior of the borders that define this bourgeoisie: it became the sole ruler of the ex-Kingdom: it took up positions in all the posts useful for power and multiplied them prodigally, and soon felt as comfortable in posts in the Treasury as in its own industry.

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\*In French in the text.

However, this is a *provisional* success because all the classes that contributed (first under fascism then in the Resistance and finally during the Constituent) in the struggle against the Kingdom see themselves as being “expropriated” of most of the fruits of victory, just when this victory becomes definitive. In such a situation, one could not create many illusions about the possibility of avoiding a new confrontation within the heterogeneous coalition of forces that emerged victoriously from the preceding conflict (itself inscribed in the vast world-wide hostilities, which weakened the working population and permitted the bourgeoisie to consecrate its own interests without the fear of finding itself soon obliged to confront a strong, unified adversary).

After 1948, two decisive facts contributed to reinforce the position of the new dominant class: above all, the political strategy chosen by Togliatti for the communists (and by the left in general) was not in contradiction with the new needs of the democratic and liberal center because, under the vague rubric of economic “reconstruction” of the country, the social tensions that reappeared were momentarily frozen; and reciprocally, to the degree that this reconstruction was effective, political passions calmed down while the allure of public and private wealth developed in a way Italy has never known. No one can forget how much the cold war, excessively augmenting international tension, opportunistically served to quell the passions that are the real reasons for the internal conflict by constantly projecting them over the border. The insurrectional episode of July 1948, for which the attempt against Togliatti served as a pretext, was the only noisy consequence of the deception of the workers after the elections of April 18, and this was when the Italian communists loyally repressed their own troops and proved their coherence and responsibility in relation to their democratic political choices.

Since then, the particular needs of the bourgeoisie became the general needs of the republican government; they also dominate the foreign affairs and internal policy of the country. Thus the spirit was active, industrious, poised - what one calls political corruption always has precise justifications. This spirit was timid by temperament, but it knew how to be egoistically reckless, and mod-

erate in everything except in its mediocre sense of “well-being.” This spirit could accomplish miracles if only it possessed a little of the nobility of intention that we have always found indispensable, but this spirit could not produce anything other than a series of weak governments without virtue and without grandeur. Mastering everything as if there was never an aristocracy on the peninsula, the middle class (or better said the party of this class that one must call the class of government) took its districts in its power, and soon afterwards this class took on the air of private industry and was no longer the political expression of private industry itself. None of the members of the middle class seem to think about public affairs anymore, unless it is how to turn them into profit for its own private interests, or those of its political tendency. Meanwhile, the holders of economic power and the people, in a lack of consciousness that unifies them, occupy themselves with their individual interests (large for some, small for others, all contributing to the success of the false ideology of well being).

Posterity, which only records explosive crimes and which ordinarily escapes the vices that are at the origin of all the most serious crimes, will perhaps never know at what point all the successive Italian governments have created, imperceptibly but quite effectively, the allure of a commercial company in which all operations are carried out with the benefits its associates obtain in mind - naturally under the sign of public interest. At the time, a few of the most authorized representatives of economic power began to worry about the risks of such a system of government. The management of Christian Democracy, accustomed to consider all ministries as sinecures guaranteed for all of its notables, did not recoil from the saddest extortion threatening to publicize a few virtual scandals in which economic power was no less implicated than political power. This maintained the regimes of government in a constant style of *imbroglio* and bankruptcy. It was certainly an error to give in to this blackmail. Almost all the political vileness in our country (of which we were the involuntary, largely powerless, witnesses) flowed from the fact that the men introduced into political life have no personal patrimony and thus dread their ruin if they lose their place; or it flowed from the fact that their ambition, their personal

passions and fears, render them so obstinate in the continuation of their careers in power that the simple idea of abandoning their posts fills them with horror. This clouds their judgment, and makes them sacrifice the future for the present; and then sacrifice honor to their role.

Beyond this, no one should forget the responsibility of America, a country that accorded greater confidence to the power and artificial stability of the Italian political class - who pretended that the recent well-being was their creation - than to the real artisans of the economic miracle, i.e. the industrialists and entrepreneurs in general.

The actual political-economic paralysis, which was the direct and principle result of irresponsible conduct, was the least foreseeable thing in the world. It was seen at this moment as a prophesy by Cassandra that guarded against such an eventuality (as we ourselves are tired of doing). If this prophesy was not publicly mocked, it was, in the best case, out of respect. Most of the time this reticence was due to pure and simple fear. As for the exhortations of our pretentious forecasts, we would have preferred an audience that was more attentive to the epoch, i.e. when one still had time to avoid this painful situation.

In a world like this, what is lacking the most is political life itself. For their part, the majority of industrialists and more generally those who hold economic power, are still too devout in their religion of *laissez faire*\*; they do not see with sufficient clarity the consequences (more detrimental for them than for the politicians) of such a doctrine erected in accord with the unique circumstances of Italian politics. This economic elite depends too much on the force of inertia that should make the political-economic machine work "automatically," following its own internal rules so as to fiddle less with its delicate mechanism. What one gladly forgets is the society itself in which this "automatism" was placed, and the profound transformations that it created over the last twenty years. The industrialists, who were bored by the empty discourse of the government, place an extravagant confidence in the simple technical studies of

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\*In French in the text.

mediocre economists from whom they ask for the forecasts that assure them of the development and growth of their profits. When the time comes that these forecasts are proven wrong, by the facts, the *industrialists will ask for more forecasts*, so as to compensate for real loses with the illusory certitude that enslaves them. A collective neurosis has seized these men, the majority of whom lack the mental formation of their fathers and the character of their grandfathers. They inherited the patrimony but not the courage, the pride but not the dignified prudence. The first failures sufficed to depress them psychologically, and gave rise to the spirit of free initiative. Thus they progressively lost the indispensable class solidarity that should be their first defense against the excessive political power and growing pretensions of their workers; and all this degrades into a sort of law of complicit silence regarding the communal weakness of the political class, by whom they allow themselves to be held ransom.

Henceforth, the nation as a whole openly maintains a tranquil contempt for the economic powers and political administration, which the interests mistake for a confident and satisfied submission. Slowly, the country divides into two halves, unequal but no longer opposed: on high reigns apathy, boredom and immobility; below, on the contrary, political life begins to manifest feverish symptoms - irregular and *apparently* extra-political or extra-union, which an attentive observer could easily grasp. We had the misfortune to make these observations, consequently we are sensitive to the anxiety that grows and takes root in the heart of our society causing public morals to be degraded amid the generalized indifference. Our personal integrity, always above party interests and never dependent on opportunities, and our position, which requires a character disinclined to fall for false fears and consolations, allow us to observe, both in the play of intuitions and in the mass of everyday facts, and to examine with complete coldness, the morals and opinions of the country from the ruling class to the workers. This is how we have been able to clearly discern the numerous indices that ordinarily appear in history prior to each of its catastrophes, and that always announce revolutions - not by the chimerical wisdom that some want to attribute to us these days.



Towards the end of 1967, these symptoms had multiplied so much that we thought it was our duty to privately communicate our preoccupation to the person who, given the position he occupied, should have understood the gravity and should have had the greatest interest in preventing the disastrous conquests more than anyone else.

As we said at the time, the Italian Republic abolished all secular privileges and destroyed all rights, with the exception of one fundamental right, that of private property. And it did so from the utopian perspective of reserving this right for one and all. In a period when half the States of Europe had to confront the growing discontent of workers and the entire young generation, the proprietors should not have maintained too many illusions about the solidity of their situation; nor should they imagine that the right to property is an insurmountable wall due to the simple fact that until now, in Western Europe, it has never been breached. Our time is unlike any other. We have shown how, when the right to property was only the foundation of many other rights, one can defend it without much difficulty; or better said, one does not dare attack it directly. Private property thus constitutes the fortress wall of society, and all the other rights and privileges are the advance defense - shots never reach it and one never seriously tries to reach it. But for many people today, the right to property seems to be the last remnant of an aristocratic world that has been destroyed *de jure et de facto*. When the right to private property is the only thing left standing, it seems to be the only isolated privilege in a society that has been leveled. When other rights that are more questionable and even detested, no longer shield the right to property, the latter finds itself under discussion in the most dangerous way and with a contagious violence: it is no longer the attackers, but the defenders who seem obliged to justify themselves.

What occurred in France during May 1968, confirmed our opinions and showed the world that the time had come when our society was divided in two large parts. One part was engaged in a *real* political struggle that could not be stopped or beaten with words, a struggle that inevitably operated in the factories and streets, engaging those who have and those deprived of this right. And

under a thousand diverse pretexts, one never lost the chance to chose property as the battle ground, and everywhere wage work became the *casus belli*. Our political calendar can be illustrated by an ancient maxim:

*Pain never comes to an era except when those who rule lose their shame, because that is exactly the moment when those who obey lose respect; and it is the same moment when one is revived from lethargy, but by convulsions.\**

Thus we have seen, first in France in 1968 and then in Italy in 1969, our class tremble. Gone were its courage and dignity, as if it were shaken by the fantasm of imminent death. Then this same bourgeoisie thought it was definitively saved, as if it had woken from a nightmare, without looking for a better explanation. We never consented to share any of their errors because we have always challenged the capricious effects caused by this or that circumstance on the human spirit; and because we are too well informed of their singular doctrines that, from time to time, appear or are rediscovered everywhere - as a common denominator they all deny the right to property and contest the necessity of work. The gravity of the state of affairs from whence things come is measured by the extreme facility with which their ideas were spread in the factories, streets, schools, offices, and by the extreme enthusiasm they elicit.

*"Beauty,"* as Stendhal wrote, *"is the promise of happiness,"†* and we acknowledge that all the new theories, or simply the rough ideas, denounce the pallor, boredom and *routine*†† of everyday survival in industrial societies; the real ugliness that scars the faces of our cities that have been abandoned to urban planners and speculators of every sort; the pollution of the air, food and minds that is democratically imposed on all those who dwell in urban centers. Consequently, we readily understand that this "global" critique, even if it is generally imprecise, resonates with those who are weary of the

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\*In French in the text (Retz).

†In French in the text.

††In French in the text.

*leisure*\* and entertainment that this society offers them. At present it has become quite easy to make workers believe anything using alternative media - the mainstream channels of information being accused, often correctly, of hiding the truth and specializing in the manipulation of lies in which the majority of the country has believed in for years. Deception (the effects of which are always dangerous) seized the petite-bourgeoise, who watched the social promotion that the parties promised them (and to which they gave their votes) go up in smoke. The deception of the petite-bourgeoise, less frightful than worker rage, is manifest through the protests of their children in school and at the university; then it seized the family itself which, oriented towards the right-wing opposition in most cases, moved to the left. The communist party could thus compensate for electoral losses that cost it the defection of part of its worker base, which radicalized and escaped party control. What always seems the most immediately worrisome is this vulnerability to illusions of happiness and beauty that our political class creates in all the classes which, by vocation or deception, openly oppose the bourgeoisie; this class prepared the battlefield without preparing itself for the battle against the other class, forgetting the infernal prophesy:

*Eternally, the two sides clash:  
one rises from the tomb  
with a clenched fist, and the others with shaved heads.*<sup>†</sup>

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\*In French in the text

<sup>†</sup>Dante.

### III

#### How the Social War Recommenced and Why Nothing is Sillier Than to Believe it Has Been Won (1968-1969)

*The cause of drowsiness in suffering States, is the duration of the illness, which seizes the imagination of men and makes them believe it will never end. As soon as the day arrives to leave the hospital, which never fails at a certain point, they are so surprised, so comfortable and so carried away that they suddenly pass to the other extreme - revolutions no longer seem to be impossible, they seem easy; and this disposition alone is sometimes capable of making them.*

Cardinal Retz *Memoirs*

Our social preoccupations did not issue from some romantic yearning of the heart, but from intelligent reflection. In the relative but incontestable misery of certain social groups, we do not find sufferings that must be cured (a demagogic utopia on which we will let others speculate), rather *the disorder to come*.

In our time, as in no other, numerous principles and concepts have been formulated with incredible pretensions of universality. If history most often seems like a conflict of interests and passions, our recent history, while not lacking passion, presents itself more as a struggle between *principles of justification*, and partially as a struggle between subjective passions and objective interests (almost always masked behind the flag of certain "superior" arguments that justify these interests).

For years we have impassively witnessed the lamentable spectacle that one part of our bourgeoisie offers us. This part justifies itself before the other through what it understands as siding with "exploited" people; and reciprocally, the other part is accused of pursuing its egotistical interests. It was one way among many - but less useful than another - to pass the time during an epoch when one could still allow oneself to waste time. For our part, we note that all the fictitious interest of these otherwise respectable gentlemen in social issues was principally of a psychological origin - it was itself a justification, and responded less to a "moral" need to put, in

one way or another, their conscience to rest during this euphoric period of “economic miracles.” One babbles about social issues with academic casualness and schoolboy ignorance because the new middle class thinks that the issues are more or less resolved - they did not know or understand the depths of the revolutionary movement in 1919-1920, nor how the bourgeoisie defeated this movement. In reality, behind this “sensitive” facade, they all dissimulate a vague uneasiness and an authentic disinterest for civil society. Corresponding to the loss of what was bourgeois class spirit, is the loss of its confidence and an enormous timidity. In our opinion, the recent bourgeoisie is afraid of being right, and afraid of being afraid. Soon afterwards they perceived that *they were right to be afraid*.

The ruling class’ lack of interest in the mutations in civil society reached its apex when an unforeseen event of global significance suddenly woke them up, but in a traumatic way.

The insurrectionary events that embroiled France in May 1968, showed that a new social revolution, disabused of all previous illusions, was knocking at the door of modern societies. At first it was misunderstood, and then it was hidden - and not without reason - but this insurrection was, by its simple existence, the most scandalous and terrible defeat suffered by the European bourgeoisie since 1848. As in 1848, the winds of revolution swept all of Europe - one breathed it in France and Germany, in Italy and Czechoslovakia, in Yugoslavia and England: everywhere, in different forms and in different ways, it was against our world that the more or less violent thoughts and acts of populations in open revolt turned; populations that for a half-century seemed to have forgotten (no less than the ruling classes) what was referred to in the XIXth Century as the “social question.”

Recalling that France experienced the biggest and longest general strike that ever paralyzed the economy of an advanced industrial country, and that it was also the first “spontaneous” general strike in history, it is not necessary to insist that all State power, and that of the parties and unions, were simply *erased* for several weeks as the factories and public buildings were occupied in all the cities. It is beyond the scope of this pamphlet to show why the

events of May were profoundly revolutionary, and virtually much more dangerous for the world than the Russian revolution. No one is obligated to share this opinion - we confine ourselves to consider that *the facts* are still a very menacing precedent, and that the ideas that began then have infiltrated everywhere because everywhere in Europe the poor have grown in number, and their importance grew more than their lifestyle, and their aspirations more than their power.

Since the French Revolution, which is to say since the bourgeoisie took charge of the direction of States, people in all places have sought to escape their condition. After changing all their political institutions they realize that their conditions are not any better, or that they have improved with a slowness that is intolerable in relation to their desires. It was inevitable that one day workers would discover that what locked them in their situation was not the *constitutions* of different States - kingdoms or republics, fascist or socialist dictatorships, parliamentary or presidential dictatorships -, rather the laws and principles that constitute all modern societies. So it is natural that the lower classes eventually ask (if they have the power, and perhaps also the right) to change these laws as they have changed others. And to speak specifically about property and the State, which are the foundation of all social order, is it not an inevitable consequence that they are again denounced, if in a new way, as the principle obstacles to the revindication of equality between men, and that the thought of abolishing them completely (and not the way it was said to have once been done in Russia) comes to the minds of all those who feel suppressed and excluded?

This natural uneasiness in the minds of the people, this inevitable agitation of their desires, this resentment of needs and the formation of crowd instincts, serve as the canvass on which professional agitators draw the monstrous or grotesque figures that are rejected by all politicians, and first of all by the communists. In May, in Paris, each person proposed a plan to construct a "new society." One exhorted the abolition of wage labor, another the inequality of wealth, a third wanted the end of commercial society and to the oldest inequality, that of man and woman. All agreed on the need to eliminate commands and to experiment with forms of direct democracy, to reject all institutions, parties and unions.

In France and Czechoslovakia, where the revolutionary movement was on the best footing, who repressed it most effectively? Who favored or imposed the return to normal in the factories and streets? Well, in both cases it was the communists: in Paris thanks to the unions, and in Prague thanks to the Red Army. This is the first lesson to be learned from these events.

But social diseases such as those with the symptoms presented by France quickly transform into epidemics. Italy suffered the contagion in a privileged way: the period of incubation and development of our illness is too close in time to write the history here, and it is too engraved in everyone's memory for it to be useful to retrace the chronology. It suffices to recall that the self-described student protest was, here as elsewhere, ephemeral and quickly became a simple phenomenon of depravation - tolerable among so many others - that was of concern to intellectuals and the daily papers rather than the vital sector of productive society. Everyone always knows how, parallel and contemporaneous with the students, a movement that was less apparent, but much more troublesome, began in the factories - at first without liaisons and without a lot of publicity. Despite the traditional union framework of the Italian working class, Italy also manifested the first forms of "spontaneous" struggle and extra-union strikes. Precisely because this phenomenon was under-developed at its birth, it spread easily over the next few months with increasing radicalism. A sort of frenzy seized our workers who, united in pretentious "base committees," began to advance extravagant extra-salary revindications in an autonomous way - sometimes picturesque and sometimes anomalous, but always obscure in the way they find partisans ready to struggle for them. Leaving aside all others, we cite the beautiful example of the employees of an important public enterprise in Milan that a "base committee" organized, with "success," in strikes at the end of 1968 - the goal of these strikes was to have the travel time from home to work be considered as work and compensated as such!

One has the impression that the workers were in competition, and that the victory went to the side that recorded the heaviest damages with their fatal fantasy. In reality, the declared goal of each particular conflict was incommensurate with the social havoc

that the generalization of strikes and the manifestations of all types provoked in Italy. In our opinion, the workers did not want what they were fighting for, what they wanted was to fight. Thousands of pretexts were found, but this was their shameful goal, and no increase in salary would suffice to appease them.

We know that it was not until 1969 that Italy manifested the disastrous "modernity" of its social crisis: it was in fact the first serious disorders in the prisons and factories of the north that illustrated, with the revolt of Battipaglia in the Spring of that year (and the extension of the crisis from one end of the peninsula to the other), what one could call the "qualitative leap." In truth, the student protests of 1968 were never more than political in scope - so much so that they proclaimed themselves to be on the "left." The passions of the working class became *social*, and our readers do not neglect the fatal implications of this fact: the workers do not ask for this or that reform, they do not protest a policy of this government or another, or of this party, rather they dispute the society itself and its very foundations.

Despite this, the government was not as alarmed during this period by what was happening to the country, as were the communist party bosses in the opposition. During the entire first phase of 1969, the only people who were really worried about the near future were a few union leaders and the heads of the communist party - they were the only ones to closely observe the working class and to record their mood and subversive will. Already the state of agitation in the country had suppressed not only the hopes, but also the desires of the most ardent unionists, i.e. those who erroneously believed they were at the origin of the phenomenon. This was not the first nor the last time we heard the lucidity of the honorable\* Giorgio Amendola, but it was perhaps on this occasion that he astonished us the most and when we held him in the highest esteem. This politician, unlike so many others, possesses an agile mind - cold but cordial, without prejudice or rancor, eminently subtle; going to the heart of the question, but not neglecting the details. He is an excellent judge of human weaknesses and traits,

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\*A title given out of courtesy to Italian parliamentarians. G.D.



especially regarding those associated with his party. And he knows how to play with them when it is to his interest. In short, he is a man who merits one's esteem and who deserves to be heard. And so much more so in an era when the honorable Rumor, then President of the Council, could only solicit our confidence with phrases like this: "Be calm, all will end well - every free government must be able to overcome a test like this." Those of us who were less worried about the government than all the other problems, found this response to be a perfect portrait of this man of resolve. Right down to the smallest details, he saw everything that was on his horizon quite clearly, but with limited imagination - he could not imagine that his horizon could suddenly change. We must also mention that certain industrialists were employed with pure and simple stupidity. They could imagine nothing better than to call the unions to order, as if the unions (the moment when they were not responsible for the situation) were in a position to officially oppose the movement without running the risk of elimination themselves, and this time formally.

It was near the middle of 1969 that the Italian Communist Party was explicitly asked what guarantees it would offer the government to work with it to stop the movement before autumn, and what they wanted in return. The communists, who knew better than anyone else the amplitude and danger of the movement, dashed the government's hopes. Either because they underestimated the risks to come in the following months, or because they overestimated the "risk" of an accord with the PCI, the politicians and industrialists would find the demands of the communists out of proportion with the guarantees they offered. One could say with *a posteriori* knowledge that the Christian Democrats neglected the power and utility of a communist party in such circumstances. The communists, for their part, failed to recognize the power of the "spontaneous" strike wave to come. The communists casually relied on a "natural" precipitation of events, waiting for the moment when they would be called. The Christian Democrats relied on the fact that the communists, in order not to provoke an open rupture, would begin to do what they promised, even without immediately requiring anything in return. The calculations of both would have been justifiable if it

was a question of a *political crisis*. Both were insufficient, if not unconscious, because both forgot to address the pre-insurrectional *social crisis* in which Italy found itself. From the moment the communist leaders delayed, waiting for ulterior developments while entrenched in a position that was no less rigid than that of the Christian Democrats (who were always responsible for the initial hardening), and from the moment when this path lead nowhere, quick action was required, but in another direction.

Consequently, what direction should have been taken? We will communicate it with the words of a journalist because, as a great philosopher taught us over a century and a half ago, “in public opinion, the true and the false are all there,” and because journalists are specialists in public and private opinion: “A number of political symptoms,” Nicola Adelfi wrote in *Epoca*, “lead one to think that the situation will continue (...). One does not see how the wave of violence could be broken or even attenuated, unless it is by the advent of some unforeseeable event of a traumatic nature: something that seizes public opinion and gives it the sensation of being one step away from anarchy and its inseparable companion, dictatorship.” It could not be better said. And it will come to pass because, “some unforeseen traumatic event” produced itself, having, above all, a homogeneous government; and one less fragile than the center-right of Rumor-Nenni. One knows that after the formation of the center-left, different representations of economic power had won, or had placed certain men from the unfortunate socialist parties (at that moment supposedly unified) in eminent positions. So, to make the center-left of Rumor-Nenni fall, all that was necessary was to ask the Social Democrats (who were never made for operations of this type) to provoke a new split around the beginning of July: the unification that had endured for ten years failed in ten months. The next day the government fell. One month later, at the beginning of August, Rumor was able to constitute his second “monocolor” government in which were represented, if we remember correctly, all the Demo-Christian currents. Despite all its insolvency, this cabinet seemed to be one of the most *efficient* we can recall in the history of the Republic - if for no other reasons than the actions of the Minister of Labor, the honorable Donat-Cattin, and those of the

Interior, the honorable Restivo during the next autumn. It was Restivo who, by an admirable *understatement*\* baptized the “hot” summer. As the foreign press affirmed at the time, the only things still functioning in Italy were the unions and the police. This was thanks to the ministers of Labor and Interior: Carlo Donat-Cattin had a union career behind him and Franco Restivo, the intimate of Vicari (the police chief at the time) already had experience with political terrorism when, in the Sicily Region (acting as its president in the post-war years) he punished the bandit Giuliano. In 1968, numerous explosive assaults contributed to the disorder that the student and worker protest continued to create in the big cities, and even in small ones. These were perfectly limited attacks as far as the sabotage of factory production was concerned, and they bore the signature of the little fascist groups, or Maoists, opposed on adversary locales. Of the little events found at the origin of big ones, as Tacitus said, “It is never useless to unravel these things first thought to be small, from which often proceeds a chain of big things.” Because in Italy, at this time and before, the unions and police were not the only ones that functioned: for several months the secret services were silently on the move. And since one continues evasion maneuvers in the political sphere to avoid the worsening crisis, it was necessary to launch a diversion tactic during the summer - artificial tension, the principal goal of which was to *momentarily* distract public opinion from real tensions that destroy the country. We can see the undeniable, long term advantages of such a tactic; and the harm it entails in transforming itself into strategy. In the next chapter we will publicize the critiques that, in another place and time, we addressed to our secret service. By a blunder that has no historical precedent, our secret service is now publicly exposed to the accusations of the first magistrate to come along, and to those of the whole country.

Thus whatever the complete *background*† of the little attacks that we evoked above, the beginning of this diversionary tactic

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\*In English in the text.

†In English in the text.

coincides with what arrived in Milan on April 25, 1969, and elsewhere the following August: the operations we are alluding to were, in a certain sense, like a general repetition foretelling the events of autumn. These events were not long in coming, and in September the first large acts of sabotage occurred in the F.I.A.T. factories of Turin and the Pirelli plant in Milan, and then a hundred others. The summit negotiations to renew contracts between employers and unions were only one pretext among many: the quantity of facts and events (of a period that did not lack them) were eclipsed by those that succeeded them in *crescendo*. We lose interest here because the profound significance that this class war unconsciously gave itself, through its intensive and extensive development, was more important than the ensemble of particular episodes that were but a billion stones on a road that always more manifestly leads to social revolution.

In the course of our life, we have frequented those lettered writers of history who never become involved in public affairs. And we have dealt with the politicians who constantly produce or inhibit events without thinking much about describing them. We have always observed the way the former find general causes everywhere, while the latter live amid the day to day facts.

It goes without saying that all the events that serve their ends should be attributed to their merit as if it were incumbent exclusively upon them to determine the way the world turns, and that everything else was merely the consequence of such and such unforeseeable and particular event. There is room to believe that both are wrong. And if one waits for everything in our epoch, it is because everything is possible. Therefore, never be taken by surprise. For example, it was the autumn of 1969 that Raffaele Mattioli defined as "the lyrical expression of history and action, where no one had the courage to be what it was" - one witnessed the pitiful spectacle of the industrialists who place more confidence in the unions than in themselves; the unions put their confidence in the concessions that they obtained from the government; and the government in the efficiency of its secret services. Only a few of us knew that what was seen as the worst case scenario was, on the contrary, too optimistic. And today very few know that Italy is

once again *only an hour away* from general insurrection, and if by chance this does not happen, it will be due less to the precautions of those or those, than the play of other factors.

The struggles over contracts were notably successful with the wage earners, but it was an illusion to believe that their spirits would be appeased once the contracts were rewritten. As we already said, when workers no longer struggle for a simple raise, it is clear that - however consistent one's argument - one can no longer hope to buy social peace with them. And everyday, this social peace threatens to become nothing more than a happy memory from another time. For example, as certain categories, such as municipal workers and others, obtain a new work contract, they persevere in their illegal strikes under the pretext of following the striking workers in private (mechanical) industry, for whom negotiations remained suspended. The unions could not expose themselves to the peril of breaking with the mass of workers by disavowing all strikes that they did not begin, and that they could have stopped: they had to accept the reality of these worker strikes so as to not exclude themselves in advance from being accepted by the workers, for the second time, as the authorized mouthpiece of their revindications. To prevent an open riot, the union federations had to find objectives other than the revindications of salaries in order to channel the worker protest toward themselves.

This was one of its objectives and it seemed artificial to the workers, furnishing them with occasion to launch an insurrection. November 19, 1969, announced a day-long general strike to the nation on the question of pay. This strike, which was the most extensive abstention in the history of the Republic, quickly degenerated into a riot in Milan: the union leaders that were speaking at the Lyrical Theater were boycotted and insulted by the workers who, abandoning the meeting, attacked the forces of Public Safety, who were constrained to retreat from the district and erect barricades in the center of the city.

We have a precise memory of this spectacle because on November 19, around noon, we had to cross the via Larga to get to the home - situated not far from the attacks - of an industrialist where we had lunch with a few politicians and others from the

economic world. Since it was impossible to get a taxi, we traversed an entire district of the city on foot - most of the streets were quiet and nearly deserted, such as one finds in Milan early on Sunday morning, when the rich are still sleeping and the poor do not work! Here and there, once in a while, a young man (looking more like a suburban wage earner than a student) tranquilly posted a flyer on the wall signed by this or that group of "autonomous workers" or "base committee," and one of their manifestos surprised us by its lugubrious title that smelled of the XIXth Century, something like: "Advice to the Proletariat on the Present Occasions for Social Revolution." Having crossed, and not without difficulty, the barrages of the public forces and the protesters, we at last arrived at the apartment of our host, who was more anxious than usual. The entertainment was excellent as usual, but the table was empty; and of the half-dozen guests only one other showed up, and then late. A pensive air hovered over the room, along with a profound silence involuntarily provoked by a simple reflection on our part - we live in a strange time: as Tocqueville said in 1848, one can never be sure if a revolution will not overcome a dinner party between the moment one sits down, and the moment desert is served.

The telephone calls that marked the intervals of time were more nerve-wracking than waiting for some silly event. News accumulated: an agent from Public Safety was killed in front of the Lyric Theater, and neither the unions nor the police were in a position to dominate the battlefield that they had abandoned. The telephone was the only umbilical cord that tied us to the world. The worst fears concerned the situation in Turin, because if it were known in Milan that elsewhere the situation was out of control, the chances that the riot and strike would be limited to that day would have completely expired. From Rome one learned that the unions were "holding" in Turin, and that there were no serious incidents, nor in Genes. A few hours later, the information was confirmed for us directly by the union leader who was there. Happily there were no deaths among the protesters—it was a windfall that the agitators escaped. In the night, Milan, the workers' Milan, was discouraged to learn that everywhere the strike proceeded without incident. But in Rome, and not in popular Rome, the events in Milan were recog-

nized in all their gravity, and they created even more emotion than one would hope in a capital that is usually so cunningly insensitive to the impulses from the rest of the country. One advised them that there was no time to waste because neither the unions nor the police were capable of stopping the riot. And even if that riot had been brief, one knows all too well that none of the conditions from which it flowed were overcome - not in Milan or anywhere else in Italy. There was more than one good reason to fear (a few weeks later, if not sooner), a new riot that would transform into a general insurrection.

Instead, three weeks later, December 12, bombs exploded in Milan's Piazza Fontana and in Rome. One sees the truth of this "unforeseen event of a tragic nature" that the journalist cited above was talking about, and that would completely disrupt public opinion in Italy and overseas.

Disoriented and shaken to a stupor by the number of innocent victims, the workers remained hypnotized by this unforeseen event, and were distracted by the rumors that followed. In the face of events like this, their mind was changing, and as Tacitus said: "*Vulgarity varies according to unforeseen events, and is much more inclined towards mercy than towards cruelty.*"\*

As if by magic, a strike movement that was so widespread and so prolonged, forgot itself and stopped.

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\*In Latin in the text.

## IV

### It Is Never Good To Simply Defend Oneself Because Victory Only Goes To The Offense

*...Before the wars of the French Revolution, the theoretical sphere was the dominant perspective. But with those wars an entirely new side of the phenomenon of war opened up... the old models were cast aside. One concluded that this was the consequence of new discoveries and grandiose ideas, etc., but also transformed social conditions. Thus it was judged that one no longer needed older methods...*

*Such changes of opinion always engender two opposing parties. The old concepts have their defenders and knights who consider the recent phenomenon to be a brutal shock that precipitates a general decadence in the art, and who exclusively support the equitable game of war - laying aside the empty results - as the goal... This perspective lacks logical and philosophical bases, and can only be defined as a devastating conceptual confusion. But the opposing opinion, that what came before would never come again, was also unbalanced. Of the new phenomenon in the art of war, only a small proportion should be attributed to new discoveries. On the contrary, most of the new phenomenon were due to new circumstances and social conditions... To begin with defense and end with offense fully corresponds to the natural course of war.*

Karl von Clausewitz *On War*

One knows that the truth is more difficult to hear the longer it has been kept silent. Beyond that, we have had too much experience in the play of real forces in the bosom of past and present human societies to be among those who pretend (be it by hypocrisy or ingenuity) that one could govern a State without secrets and deceptions. If we reject this utopia, we also reject with equal resolution the pretense of governing a modern democratic country with the systematic use of *bluffs*, as ex-president Nixon impudently believed before he finally repented. On the contrary, we have always firmly believed that when the people say they want the truth to which democratic constitutions give them the right, they really only want explanations: so why not give them some? Why mislead them in the most awkward way, as was done with the bombing of Piazza Fontana? Our rulers and judges, those responsible for the forces of order, casually forget that there is nothing in the world more noxious



for power than to give birth, in the minds of democratic citizens, to the sentiment that they are continually treated like imbeciles. In the end, this inevitably puts the subtle correlation of human passions and resentments in gear, by virtue of which even the most timorous of the petite-bourgeois begin to rebel - to accept and nourish radical ideas. This is when citizens feel they have the right to reclaim "justice," less out of love of justice than out of fear of having to submit to an injustice.

Our political class today perceives how much these stupid, embarrassing justifications for the 1969 bombings have begun to cost it. If no good policy has ever been founded principally on truth, the worst policies were exclusively founded on the *improbable* - they incite citizens to doubt everything, to make conjectures, to want to penetrate all the secrets of State with a prodigal number of suppositions and chimerical fantasies. Then any impostor has the right to the city and can operate with complete freedom. And when everyone spots the impostor, the voter who is usually content with what seems real, suddenly pretends to know the whole truth about everything, thus intimating to those in political power the menacing cry of *hic Rhodus, hic salta*.<sup>\*</sup> At this point, everyone is bold and full of courage vis-a-vis the cowardice of the State. And the State is locked in a vicious circle whereby it must successively disavow all the preceding official versions of the facts. This is how a State can fatally waste itself to the point of losing its power - not by correcting its errors, but simply by admitting them. To regain this power, it must expose itself to the risk of at *last telling the truth*, because power in Italy is in one of those perilous situations whereby it is no longer possible to say anything else.

And the truth, when it at last arrives after all the lies are disclosed by contact with each other, this same truth, as improbable

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<sup>\*</sup>This phrase was taken from Aesop's fable "The Swaggerer," who, when he claimed he had leapt to Rhodes, was told "Here is Rhodes, leap here!" In Greek, Rhodes is both the name of the island, and "rose." In his *Philosophy of Right*, Hegel used the latter translation: "Here is the rose, dance here!" This passage from Hegel was paraphrased by Marx in his *18th Brumaire of Louis Napoleon* to denote that conditions are ripe for revolt. In his translation, Guy Debord gave the phrase with a different interpretation: "here is the foot of the wall, here is where one sees the mason." L.B.

as it seems, is strong enough to contest all sorts of suspicions and prevail against the general distrust:

*Man must always close his lips as much as he can  
to the truth that appears to be a lie  
because it never fails to engender shame*

*but here I cannot quiet it, and as for the notes  
to this comedy, dear reader, I assure you... Etc.\**

Goethe was of the opinion that to “write history was in a way to extricate oneself from the past.” We add that at present we must be definitively extricated from the fantasm of Piazza Fontana, whatever the price, because the moment has arrived when it is infinitely more costly to keep it alive artificially. We had wanted the present *Report* to be *real* from its title onwards, and we hope that the sane forces in Italy know how to profit from this bitter lesson that we have to inflict on ourselves.

Above, one has seen what the social situation was around the end of 1969: the workers, without bosses to obey, acted freely outside of democratic legality, and *against* this legality. They refused to work and to be represented by the unions. They did not want to renew this tacit social contract on which all legalistic States are based, and notably our Republic that declares itself to be “founded on work” in the first article of its Constitution. Everyday and everywhere workers violate this constitution in a hundred ways. What were the dramatic alternatives facing our Republic? The alternatives were nothing more and nothing less than to *reinstate constitutional legality and civil order, or disappear*.

On whom can the State count to impose order? The forces of Public Security and the unions seemed powerless, and the proposal to form a government with communist participation was rejected as blasphemy by all the other parties. After the riot of November

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\*Dante.

19, the State could no longer count on anything other than its secret services, and on the affect its propaganda and information might have on public opinion once they had sufficient help from the “unforeseeable event of a traumatic nature,” namely the bombs of December 12.

Was the recourse to bombs an error or salvation? It was both at once, or better said, the provisional salvation of the institutions while being a perpetual source of successive errors. For this reason we are persuaded that one can never criticize too much, the operation of December 12, 1969. The bombing of Piazza Fontana wanted to be the last rebuke against the menace of proletarian subversion, and was in fact already the first canon shot of the civil war: and in the way it was fired, this shot measured the incapacity of our forces in such a civil war. The entire burlesque of the successive failed *putsches* of our extreme-right was already contained in this manifestation of grandiose incompetence.

We would never dream of denying the utility of such urgent initiatives in any modern country in a particular moment of necessity. Nor would we deny that the bomb of Piazza Fontana had, in its way, a salutary affect by completely disorienting the workers and the country as a whole. The bombing permitted the communist party to rally the workers behind it in democratic “vigilance” against the phantom fascist peril. Meanwhile, the unions quickly concluded the last of the most laborious contractual negotiations. What we do resolutely deny is that this positive affect had been assured, or was even predictable with a suitable degree of security. In other words, the remedy could have been worse than the illness using such a parallel action in approximately the same way. And this is true from two points of view. Above all, too many people knew about an operation of this type before December 12. In this regard, we advance one consideration: if only one representative of the left among those who knew, had gone public immediately after the explosion of the bombs with the truth that today is on the lips of all, well, the television could have said what it wanted, but *the civil war could have broken out that instant*, and nothing could have stopped it. In a real stroke of luck, it happened that the political class was enclosed in their caution and murmurs. In addition, we

reveal that the worst possible choice of the guilty ones (no way was Valpreda the probable author of the attack, even if a hundred taxi drivers gave testimony to the contrary before they died), and the way the police and courts comported themselves in this affair, made this gigantic farce of mistakes mixed with distractions seem more likely to have been held in a South American dictatorship than in a European democracy.

Despite all this, how could December 12 be considered a success? These bombs succeeded in imposing the desired affect to the degree that all the means of spreading information were well-aimed, in advance, to the exclusion of the bombs' real significance and their multiple labels - the anarchist or fascist defenders or detractors. These means of disseminating information were at first believed despite the contradictory versions, or perhaps thanks to them. The bombing also succeeded because one never saw such reciprocal support from all institutional forces as in this circumstance - such solidarity between political parties and the government, between the government and the forces of order, between the forces of order and the union. What appeared in public opinion as the parliament "against" the government, the government "against" the bombs, and "bombs" against the Republic, was not a conflict between constitutional power and another - such as the legislative and executive powers - it was the State itself that found itself in such extreme peril that it was led to maneuver against itself using certain extreme instruments under its own power to show to everyone that they, along with the State, were in peril.

A few years separate us from these events, events so dangerous for everyone and very sad for some, events that we now publicly critique. One must not underestimate the admirable aspect of this "lyrical expression of history in action," as Don Raffaele called it when the State was reduced to the role of *deus ex machina* and knew how to stage its own terrorist negation to reaffirm its power; because the ruse of reason that governs and makes universal history progress is present in each of these contingent and decisive episodes, even if men did not perceive it right away - they were dominated by particular passions that serve as a pretext for the permanent conflict that opposes some against others. Someone who is coura-

geous enough not to fear having his ingenuity overly taxed would still be astonished today when reflecting on the way the expedient of bombs had a good affect on the masses, but this naive hypothesis is wrong because, as Machiavelli said, "most men take equal delight in what appears, as in what is: often they are animated more by the things that appear, than by those that are." But here is the limit of such expedients formulated in the negative by the same Machiavelli: "...the extraordinary recourse to such means renders the Prince himself unhappy and assures misfortune because, as much as he uses cruelty, the more his government becomes weak."

As incomprehensible or terrifying as this appears to certain people, it is not possible to deny the new reality: since 1969, Italy had its revolutionary "party" - informally organized, thus more difficult to attack. We are not alluding to the extra-parliamentary student groups who do not really alarm even the most fearful of provincial employees, rather to those who protest individually or collectively, in the streets and factories, for a total refusal of the organization of work, and of work itself, which in truth is already the refusal of this society based on this organization. Since 1969, all the defeats and successes of our internal politics are not even comprehensible if one did not relate them to the conflict - sometimes overt and sometimes covert - between the new reality and our traditional institutions that are now in crisis.

Deprived of leaders as much as coherent policies, workers, youth, women, homosexuals, prisoners, students and the insane suddenly decided to desire everything that was forbidden them while rejecting all the goals that our society permits them to pursue. They refuse work, family, school, morals, the army, State and the idea of a hierarchy - whatever it might be. This heterogeneous and violent, this uncultivated and unskilled "party" wanted to impose itself everywhere with brutality. This "party" became, so to speak, *the measure of all things*. It is the measure of what happens because no one comes along to stop anything anymore; and it is the measure of what does not happen because our institutions can no longer make anyone obey them.

To say that this situation is produced by the errors in the management of Italian society would be more false than unjust (the

communists are well aware of this); and right at the moment when such situations are occurring in all industrial countries, be they bourgeois or socialist, as in Poland. The communists are well aware of this too, but this argument certainly does not console us. On the contrary, this *virus* of rebellion has found here, more than elsewhere, a particularly good broth of culture in which to develop the syndrome of pathological infirmities that have chronically effected our institutions, as we saw in the second chapter of this *Report*.

How did Italy respond to the new revolutionary menace? First of all, our politicians simply denied its existence, preferring to see the acts of the workers in 1969 in the same light as the students in 1968: not much more than a phenomenon of habits, a sort of "fashionable" protest that would go the way of all fashions. One neglects to consider that a State can momentarily do without universities (which has been the case since they ceased to exist as universities), but not without its factories. When everyday reality and the damages caused by the social conflict become overwhelming, our ruling class wakes up from its comfortable sleep and finds itself besieged by an enemy that is everywhere (and therefore difficult to circumscribe and define); and from that moment it retreats in a policy of *absolute defense*.

In our youth, we had the opportunity to take a course in military strategy. The only shortcoming of the lieutenant-colonel instructing us was that he specialized too much in military questions and was too far removed from the policies of the regime of the time to make a career in the Italian army. We have never heard anything about him since then, but he gave us a beautiful book that is not well known by those in power: *On War* by Karl von Clausewitz. As early as the Thirties, our Benedetto Croce deplored the Italian negligence of this book, saying that "it is only the unilateral and poor culture of those who ordinarily study philosophy, their unintelligent specialism, their provincialism, which is to say their custom of avoiding books such as Clausewitz', which they consider foreign and inferior to their subject." As for us, when this book was offered to us, we judged it to be as important for a man in power as *The Prince*. We would like to cite a passage from *On War* to criticize the political strategy of absolute defense that our governments applied

during these years:

*What is the fundamental idea of defense? To block a blow. What is its characteristic? To wait for the blow that one must block... But absolute defense would be in complete contradiction with the idea of war because this presupposes that only one of the adversaries effects acts of war; consequently defense can only be relative... The defensive form of the conduct of war is not limited to shielding blows, but also entails skillful use of ripostes. What is the goal of defense? To conserve.*

Clausewitz pursues this theme a little later:

*The goal of defense is negative, it is conservation; while the goal of attacks, conquest, is positive; and thus conquest tends to augment the means of war, but conservation does not (...); defense should only be deployed when necessary, because one is too weak, and it is best to abandon it when one becomes strong enough to be able to propose a positive goal.*

Whoever observes Italian internal affairs from 1969 to date with a minimum of attention sees that the entire period was marked by *absolute defense* - the only exception was the riposte of December 12. We want to clarify our thoughts on this matter. During the entire year, until the last month, one waited and waited while the crisis worsened. Only the rulers of F.I.A.T. had proof of their predictions, having researched, from the end of June, a “global solution” in negotiations, which remained insufficient because one could not hope to resolve a general crisis by an accord in the auto sector. What did it signify to wait? One quickly saw that it signified letting workers, who had launched an offensive, the time to unify, to reinforce and close their ranks; it signified allowing an ally as precious as the unions to waste itself in a thousand conflicts during which it was contested by the workers on a daily basis. We do not really know (and to know this is of little importance) if the root of this excessive waiting by the government was a conscious *and* erroneous choice, or, as is more likely, a simple refusal to chose. We know that this refusal engendered almost all of the ulterior errors of its political conduct, and at base was a huge error of evaluation, or worse, a gross ignorance in the matter of revolutions. Of those who were in government (and they are still there), none

really believed it was possible that workers without leaders, without means and without any apparent coordination were capable of constituting a peril to the security of the State and the survival of our social order. They were only worried about economic damages caused by the strikes - considered to be enormous at the time, the damages constituted the *least damage* because at that time our economic situation, compared to today, was all roses.

On the contrary, we were in one of those circumstances whereby the worst error consisted precisely in not fearing such an adversary "party," because it did not have leaders. One did not worry about this party because it was informal and because the State was armed. We were always persuaded, and history only offered us too many examples, that populations count for a great deal when they take themselves for everything, because "the problem is that their force resides in their imagination; and one can say with veracity that unlike all other forms of power, populations, when they arrive at a certain point, can do everything they believe they can," as the Cardinal de Retz said, speaking about the Fronde. Besides, all revolutions in history began without leaders and when they had them, they were finished.

This absolute defense presupposed that only workers carried out "acts of war," according to Clausewitz' schema; and this attitude on the part of power gave the workers more courage than anything else. One waits, almost with resignation; and one does not do anything else. Or, more precisely, what one did to justify this attitude relied on those few derisive episodes of artificial and useless pseudo-offense, namely the attacks carried out in April and August. One will later admire this monument to political irrationality: these attacks, based on calculations or merely hopes, should have won over at least part of public opinion to the side of order that, at that moment, generally favored the strikers. One hoped for a surrender to this war *by the arm of public opinion*, joyously forgetting the simple truth that when public opinion is hostile to power, it harms it; and when opinion is favorable to power, as an ally, it counts for nothing.

Because one did not want to comprehend the nature of the conflict, and because one underestimated the danger of it, one expe-



rienced the insurrectional episodes of November 19 that we spoke of in the preceding chapter. The big fear of November 19 was necessary, and it sufficed because in one blow it produced the change of mind that would mount the operation of December 12. This operation that was so frenetically carried out, that the time between November 19 and December 12 was dominated by the anxiety that spoke to the country of an imminent event that most people imagined would be a riot with consequences more serious than those in Milan. Everyday new alarms - authentic or artificial - put pressure on this or that sector of power or opinion. A friend seated in Montecitorio\* reported to us that the entire Parliament was obsessed by the idea of a declared social conflict, which seemed inevitable. By all appearances, the State was not ready to read the words *civil war* written on the walls of the room. According to the custom of parliamentary assemblies, what troubled them the most was also what they spoke of the least; but they implicitly proved all the while that they never forgot it. To this is added the fact that the unshakable tranquility of the head of government was a subject of preoccupations for those who did not know the causes of this tranquility and who saw it as a sort of a lack of consciousness; and this tranquility was an even greater preoccupation for those who knew the reason for it. One knows that if the High Commissioner of our Army is incapable of fighting a classical war, he is even more incapable when confronted with a civil war. The Army itself is best described by a recent book of "political-fiction" written by anonymous: "what no one ever talks about is that our divisions are as discouraged as our postal services."

Since we were always least disconcerted by the personality of admiral Henke, we even considered ourselves to be authorized at the time to discretely advise him to be prudent, and to remain above the fray that certain politicians created around him. We advised him to not uselessly compromise his reputation in the chaos that we saw coming - counsel that is always good to give to a man impassioned by action, but not very accustomed to act. Before taking care of the useful and even the most necessary things, he

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\*Meeting place of the Chamber of Deputies.

always seemed ready to take up noxious and dangerous projects, rather than do nothing at all. Our advice was ineffective, like all advice that goes against human nature! What followed would confirm it.

Precisely because one did not know how to predict a situation that required an operation such as December 12, and then because it was carried out so badly, Italy senselessly acquired the habit of confronting all critical situations by playing the false card of artificial terrorism from one end of the field to the other for the next few years. This card was deprived of all credibility, and even more so of usefulness: when the expediency of bombs obtained a good result the first time, one made this tactic the sole strategy without asking any more questions - this strategy has since become known by the name "strategy of tension," or the "strategy of opposing extremities." Our State, continually defending itself from phantom enemies - red or black according to the mood of the moment, all poorly constructed - never wanted to confront the problems posed by the *real enemy* of the society founded on property and work. Our State wastes its time combatting the phantoms that it created, waiting to create an alibi that would maintain its innocence for its real desertion. Hence the State that has not been able to obtain the support of the population for its hardly credible struggle, reaped this result: it ridiculed and, as we say, "burned" its para-Statist expediencies, and it was even obligated to put the chief of the secret service in prison when the game became too fully disclosed. No one could believe that general Miceli would have stayed in prison longer than the indispensable time it took to get him out: the hypocrisy with which one should liberate such a detainee. A fine result! The S.I.D.\* is the symbol of scandal for our nation.

We will say it for once and for all, and clearly: the time has come to put an end to the uncontrollable use of this parallel action that is brutal, useless and dangerous for order itself. Order must be able to show that it can save itself by more effective means. And more particularly, we would like to ask what were the real fruits and utility of each of these acts of terrorism that followed December

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\*Defense Information Service.

12, 1969? What was the utility of the pre-electoral attack against the publisher Feltrinelli, who was an inoffensive left-wing industrialist? What was the utility of eliminating commissioner Calabresi when today the last citizen knows more than Calabresi about the attacks of those years.

The alternation between inefficiency and hyper-efficiency exhibited by our secret services for years, gave rise to an equivocal worry: those who could relieve it, did not want to; those who wanted to, could not. The more one knows about cowardly maneuvers in the wings, the less likely one is to denounce them because one who has the proof is personally implicated in this vicious circle, or because he is afraid to die (like many court witnesses that one did not want to call over the course of these past few years). It is remarkable that every modern secret service risks losing its “secret” trait, and thus its power. These secret services play an arbitrary game beyond what is necessary for the defense of the general interests of society. They are constrained to silence, in one way or another, whomever gets a good look at these, by no means invisible, practices: “is there any hope of justice when the wrongdoers have the power to condemn their censors?”\*

The paradox resides in the fact that these means do not maintain public order, which is covertly seen in military secrets. Rather, these are *the means by which one has not succeeded in maintaining order*. Everyone saw how these methods generally exacerbated disorder when they did not create it deliberately.

In all States in this world, secret services get orders from executive power, but executive power, happily, is not managed in other States in this world as it is in Italy: could one not conclude that the secret services have become in Italy the *double tipped arrows in the hands of an imbecile*<sup>†</sup> that the Latins spoke of? The power of the killings in the street and in the killings on the stage, *drugged* a majority of the population. They become accustomed to learning about another death while recalling the investigation into the last one, or about the “official recusation” of the magistrate

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\* A slightly modified quote by Saint-Just.

† In Latin in the text.

who came too close to the truth, losing hope that the same forces of the country are capable of obligating the State to make a radical purification using pressure from below. This purge is urgent, but it has to go to *the top*, and our own public intervention signifies the beginning of this sanitation while also showing the need: "Where everything is bad, it must be a good thing to know the worst."

The court itself, where the highly valued men sit, is governed in such a way that it precisely resembles a troop of traveling comedians. Whistling in place, they hope in vain to rake in dough in another city. And if this troop no longer dares to stage its representations in the North where the public finds them obscene, or in Rome where the public finds them daring, one simply orders Catanzaro to constitute a Court of Justice to replay the representation on the same *libretto*, which was undoubtedly suspended after the habitual prologue, used for contrast, because the comedian praised for the previous failure preceded the show. A humorist from another century said that the difference between a cat and a lie, is that the cat has nine lives.

After committing a foolish act, men usually do a hundred more to hide the first; and our State, always dominated by the same men, does not behave like a State, but like these men, it tries to limit the damage created by an error, by committing a worse one. Eventually, it is in a situation where it can only commit errors. The defense of a bad cause is always worse than the cause itself. But the defense of a good cause - *and we are weak enough to believe that our world is worth defending* -, when it is pursued without dignity and so awkwardly, is a crime that adversely effects what was desired.

On the question of the "strategy of tension" and parallel services, it is necessary and desirable henceforth be much more radical than our communists - here it pleases us to pick up our thoughts on the question with the sentences that are not ours:

*...It seems to me that we are in extreme danger and that there is no one to elect who is between the resolution to enlighten the people and that of combatting them... If one dreads plebeian troubles, don't dread popular distaste any less, and watch the steps and proceedings that can excite it. This distaste can lead to worse*

*troubles, including more serious and rational ones...\**

To conclude, we argue that the *theatrical killing* (the scenic protagonists of decadence and of its political chronicle in Italy) demonstrated the weakness of those who govern as much as it displayed the general desire to *change the scene*, intrigue and actors. All the very serious problems of 1969 are still with us, and if one speaks less of them it is only because others, no less serious, have come up in the meanwhile. Men *who have not resolved these problems* are still in power. And at the very moment we write this, these men are having a long quarrel over the miscarriage that our Republic itself is about to abort. *Frailty, thy name is Italy!*<sup>†</sup>

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\*Francesco-Maria Gianni, former advisor to the State of Grand Duke Pierre-Leopold in a work with an evocative title: *The Fears that I Have and the Disorders that I Dread Given the Actual Circumstances of the Country*.

<sup>†</sup>In English in the translation. L.B.

## The World Crisis and Its Various Manifestations

*Troy, still standing, would have already fell, and great Hector's spear would no longer have a master... The authority of the contact was not respected; and for all the Greek tents on the plain, there are as many hopeless factions... When all the ranks are disguised, the most unworthy look just as good as the others in this masquerade... When the planets, in guilty confusion, drift towards disorder, what sinister flailing! what sedition! What tidal waves, earthquakes, fright, changes, horrors that turn into something else and break, ripping up the unity and the peaceful marriage of the classes outside of their fixed position. Oh! when the hierarchy is shaken, the measure of all grand plans, the whole enterprise is riddled with disease!... Thus everything is reduced to questions of power, and power to will and will to appetite; and appetite, the universal wolf - backed up by will and power - necessarily makes the universe its prey, and finally devours itself... It is our weakness that guards Troy, and not its force.*

Shakespeare *Troilus and Cressida*

When the present does not regret the past, and when the future does not seem comprehensible from a precarious present such as ours, men live their time in all its richness: to give an evocative example, in the second half of the XVIIIth Century, Venitian society could afford the luxury of literally forgetting the masterpieces of a Vivaldi and an Albinoni because the new masterpieces by Mozart and Lorenzo Da Ponte arrived from Vienna.

But in an epoch such as the present, with its worrisome and stagnant poverty that heralds a tragic future; in an epoch when the rediscovery of the masterpieces of the past, quickly stolen, does not console us at all; in an epoch when misery, notably cultural misery, dominates our societies of lost abundance, and dominates, we admit, individuals and classes, rulers and ruled right up to the State - everything as a whole seems to move in a sort of "*absolute anxiety of not being what it is*," to speak like Hegel. We are witnessing a strange generalized and universal alienation, by virtue of which no one can play the role that defines him: workers no longer want to be workers, rulers fear being seen as such, conservatives hide or shut up, the bourgeoisie is afraid of being bourgeois. We want to

repeat it: "when all the ranks are disguised, the most unworthy look just as good in the masquerade," and thus disappears the "unity and peaceful marriage of the classes," because there is no longer, for anyone, a "fixed positive."

As for the concerns of this Italian bourgeoisie (whom Giorgio Bocca vainly reminded that "it wasn't born yesterday," and that it was the first bourgeoisie that appeared in history, and the one that invented the bank as we know it), it subscribes to the prophesies of its adversaries - it gives more credence to the current brand of Marxism and its forecasts than to its own forgotten history and culture. The bourgeoisie fills its mouth with quibbles over the proletariat and the most adequate means for the workers to conduct their struggle: the time has come to tell this faction of the bourgeoisie that, in the great sunset of capitalism, *all cows paint themselves red*.

This general crisis of identity is only a particular aspect of the world crisis, but it still merits our attention. While we are on the subject, we would like to cite, without commentary, an eloquent passage from a private letter, addressed to us right after the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 by a Russian diplomat whose name we will omit:

*It's stupid for there to be a worker question in your country: I absolutely don't see what you intend to do with the European worker after turning him into a question. If you want slaves, you're stupid to give them the things that make masters. But you, you have destroyed the germination of instincts that make workers possible as a class, the instincts that make them admit this possibility to themselves: what's so astonishing, after all, about the fact that the existence of your workers seems like a calamity, or to speak the language of morality, like an injustice?*

We wanted to share this piece to show that in the cold and brutal language of soviet bureaucracy there is sometimes more truth, sincerity and realism than in the Marxist dissertations of certain Italian bourgeois, more or less intellectual. It would be the height of historical irony if our politics, having forgotten Machiavelli, had to look for its science lessons near the dominant bureaucracy of Moscow! In Moscow, the class that holds power seems to have

forgotten its identity less than us, and despite its immense insolvency, it is conscious of its interests - it knows how to defend them and *against whom* they must be defended. Communists, in Russia and elsewhere, know better than others that in today's world no veritable revolution is possible that is not really proletarian, i.e. against domination and ruling classes in any form, thus against themselves in the countries where they hold power: it is not by chance that their parties in foreign countries have ceased to speak of a revolution that they could not accept, because in Russia in 1917, they saw it up close; and if it serves them to share power, it is only by smashing it that the communists could maintain themselves at the head of the State and economy.

Now we take up the biggest question facing the world, which we will summarily treat in this chapter. Only since 1973 - our point of reference being the last Israeli-Arab war that had such grave consequences - has the social crisis that had previously invaded almost all European countries, suddenly become *global and total*.

This crisis is global because, *extensively*, all the regimes of all countries have, one way or another, been hit by it simultaneously even if the specific traits of the crisis initially seem different in different countries.

Beyond this, this crisis is total because, *intensively*, it is life itself (in all its profundities as it exists inside each of these countries) that succumbed to the contagion.

Whether it is a political or economic crisis, or chemical pollution of the air that one breathes or the falsification of food, or cancer or social struggles or the urban leprosy that proliferates in the cities, and in the countryside as well; whether it is the increase in suicide or mental illnesses, the so-called population explosion or the invasion of noxious noise, the public order is disturbed by rebels or bandits - everywhere one is shaken by the impossibility of *going any further* in the degradation of the conquests of the bourgeoisie.

We will admit it (we, not us personally, but "we" as the inheritors of these conquests), *we did not know how to think strategically*. Resembling more the little ones than a proprietary class, *we thought and lived day to day*. To hypothesize systematically,



we could be accumulating debts that will become unpayable in the future. If this is true, then everyday we renounce a future that would be dignified of our past just to retain a few negligible advantages, the deceptive advantages of such a fleeting present. As the poet of Vacluse said:

*Life is being overthrown and doesn't stop for an hour  
and death accompanies the succession of great days  
and things of the present and past  
make my war, and also my future \**

Our ruling classes seem to be reduced to discuss nothing more than the end of their mandate - a mandate that we too often forget that we obtained, not from God or from the people, but solely from our past capacities. This discussion itself is reduced to what will be the most appropriate palliatives to *delay* this due date. And this is because, in such a decadent process, one has arrived to the point of total incompatibility when the social, economic and political system that we manage seems to want to be tied to the incessant contribution of a growing and intolerable deterioration of all the conditions of existence - for everyone, and regarding everything. It was said that the crisis caused by the oil embargo (and then by the augmentation of the piece of crude dictated by the Arab oil producing countries) provoked the very serious economic crisis that the world now debates - there is some truth there, but this is only part of the truth and certainly the most contingent part, if not the most transitory. Regarding the actual world crisis, it must be said after Thucydides, "the truest cause is also the one least advanced," because the veritable crisis today is that it is not an *economic crisis* as in 1929, which we were able to overcome. Our crisis is, above all, a *crisis of the economy*, which is to say a crisis of all economic phenomenon as a whole. It is inside this general crisis that the particular oil and economic crisis has been inserted.

This is the most troublesome effect of two converging processes: on the one side workers are imposing better working conditions and salary increases on us, which seriously disrupts the decisions

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\*Petrarch.

and plans of our economists, and all this as workers escape union control. The other problem is that these same workers and consumers suddenly seem to be disgusted with the goods that they buy, creating difficulties if not hindering the circulation of commodities. We find ourselves in an *impasse*: we cannot sell the commodities that the workers both refuse to produce, and refuse to consume. There is no subjective, individualist attitude at the root of this crisis as some think - this attitude inserts itself in the process and augments the damage. First of all, the economy has entered into this crisis *by itself*, and by its own movement it is on the road to its auto-destruction. It is certainly not on a quantitative basis that the economy found itself incapable of developing productive forces, but *qualitatively*.

The development of this crisis of the economy, on which we maintain the resistance, was anarchic and irrational: we followed archaic models better suited for an agrarian economy than for an advanced industrial economy. As with all ancient societies, always struggling with penury, we sought the maximum productivity in purely quantitative terms, "not discerning too much from enough."\* This identification with agrarian modes of production was then translated into the model of pseudo-cyclic overproduction of commodities, in which one knowingly "integrated usury" to artificially maintain the *seasonal character* of consumption that justifies the incessant productive effort, while conserving the proximity to penury. This is why the cumulative reality of such useless and harmful production turns against us in the form of pollution and social unrest - we poisoned the world, and we gave the people a special reason to revolt against us every instant of their daily lives: we poisoned life itself. We will take up a few remedies for this "economic disease" in the last chapter.

From the first symptoms of the social war, we defended - and not very well, as we have seen - the abundance that was under attack by the forces of subversion. Today we must defend *the lost abundance*: in a word, we find that we have to cure the woes of the world. We would like the reader to pay attention to the paradoxical coincidence that follows. For the first time in world history, when

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\*Guichardin. G.D.

all the powers of the world are disposed to help each other (despite divergences over *details* they are not really in opposition) each of these powers is in so much need of help that it is not able to effectively aid the others - the power of each State is severely limited outside of its borders because it is seriously compromised within its borders.

Beyond this, the self-proclaimed peaceful coexistence between the superpowers is not the laudable choice deliberately made in the sphere of world politics, nor is it the result of the success of modern diplomacy as people are led to believe. We know that peaceful coexistence is not a virtue, *but a necessity*, and much less joyous than one would believe: if there is no longer a possibility of world conflict, it is not, according to us, so much because of the danger of thermonuclear war - it is because of the new, much more serious social conflicts that each nation must overcome on its own. World war is no longer possible because the world is no longer at peace; and the highest degree of military power attained by States corresponds to the highest degree of weakness.

Clausewitz said that war "is the continuation of politics by other means," but this definition, valuable until now, no longer is because the pretense of "peace" is another mode of the continuation of war; but it is the continuation of *another type of war* that States do not chose, nor declare. Armies themselves should be quickly restructured, following the English example of the career soldier, to be able to fight inside his country against subversion. Meanwhile, the secret services will deal with internal politics and not foreign (hopefully not following the example of the Italian S.I.D.!). The next "big war" will be a generalized civil war, and the theoreticians who can instruct the professional units in civil war must be engaged in the combat for our altars and hearths.

Naturally there will still be wars between States, but they will be *local wars* as in the Middle East, and the great powers will have to indirectly intervene to limit the damage, and to prevent the world-wide counter-attacks that they are susceptible to - notably in the advanced industrialized countries - because they find themselves in such a precarious situation. Here it is important to underscore the political defeat suffered by the great powers, and consequently

by the world, following the last Arab-Israeli war of 1973. The Israeli victory, with the applause of Europe and military and diplomatic support of the United States, has cost and continues to cost the United States and its allies more than a defeat in the global theater of operations. At that moment, even those who were most reticent to admit it, are convinced of the vulnerability of our entire economic and monetary system at this juncture that is already very delicate, given the social crisis.

In his time David Ricardo correctly defined wheat as “the only commodity that is necessary, as much for its own production as for the production of all other commodities,” because in their economy this wheat assured the survival of the labor force in a privileged way. Times have changed, and today it is oil that can be defined as *the necessary and indispensable product to produce and consume all others*. In the epoch of the “Yom Kippour War,” Europe only had to spend a winter in the cold for the Atlantic Alliance (created to resist the enormous arms on the other side of the iron curtain), to appear as snow melting in the sun: only Caetano remained faithful to NATO, and NATO can no longer count on him.

Then, much worse, came the energy crisis - successive augmentation in the price of crude oil, and all the displacements of the economic and financial equilibrium produced, within the economic crisis, an intensification of the economic crisis. And at the same time the Arab countries were offered the sword of Damocles that (for our comfort) they were voluntarily directed to suspend over our industry. We should note in passing the mental debility manifest by the economic-political calculations of those who have governed our affairs for the last generation: if one wanted to pursue *this* precise form of expansion (largely founded on supplying low cost oil) the old colonialism should have been maintained, and not sacrificed to the illusions of immediate profit of the “neo-colonialists.” Less than thirty years ago, the troops of the principle bourgeois States controlled almost the totality of the countries that produced raw materials and were our sources of energy. Based on the simplest calculations, one chose to abandon these countries *with the least apparent outlays*, and this to *then develop our technology as if we still controlled these countries!* A dozen permanent colonial wars

would not have cost us a quarter of the difficulty.

This unforeseen defeat came at a time of decline in American power in the world; the defeat intensified the internal political crisis that would later reverse Nixon's fortunes and make him seem ridiculous; and it sounded the alarm of crisis that had been silently tearing the internal social fabric of America for years. The first effects of the crisis were seen right away. But one only began to see them, and it was difficult to comprehend the end results. What can be said about the naive nonchalance with which Nixon's successor, Gerald Ford, proclaimed in his inaugural address that, "Now we know that a State is strong enough to give all that you want, is also a State that is strong enough to wipe out all that you have"? "Now we know"? What do we know? Today, a few months after that bold declaration, we know that the federal deficit has soared; and that Ford hopes that the 1975-76 budget will not exceed 900% of the previous year's budget. If the miserable thinkers of this superpower that weakens right before our eyes have any foresight for the good, they see badly; and if they foresee bad things, they see well. Henry Kissinger, for example, while not being a "man without qualities," nonetheless resembles Musil's character by his flaw: he dissolves action in the vanity of action, utility in the useless; in other words, he lacks (along with most of those he meets in the four corners of the Earth) a strategic vision of what must be done or avoided, beyond contingent obligations, to save a world whose mastery has become increasingly difficult. It is useless to want to dominate what is falling into ruin rather than save what one wants to dominate. As for this war that the Arabs lost to the Israelis, it suffices to say to all the modern Metternichs that they would do better to keep a couple of ancient maxims in mind: one is that "it is never wise to reduce the enemy to hopelessness" (Machiavelli); and the other, that "those who know how to win are more numerous than those who know how to make good use of their victory" (Polybius).

Europe seems to have forgotten that it produced all the masterpieces of human thought; and over the last thirty years it put more confidence in thinkers from the other side of the Atlantic than in itself. It is clear that Europe has disaggregated even as a simple

“economic community.” And in Italy, the biggest effort by certain economic and political powers in the face of the crisis is the attempt to go back to the old fascist “solution,” just when the last ruins of fascism crumbled in Portugal and Greece.

Politicians can deny it as much as they want, but their currency, the lie, is at this moment in the jaws of inflation even more so than the Lire: an epoch is over, and a new epoch has commenced. We know that men, so often ready to interpret the past in new terms, are also frequently given to interpret a new situation in old terms; and they do not comprehend what must be done because temporal change always means that *the hour has arrived*. The illicit affair between one epoch and the next never runs the risk of being institutionalized in marriage, despite the assertion of Senator Amintore Fanfani, who will undoubtedly be more highly regarded as an interpreter of the Tuscan countryside than an interpreter of history.

But one has already said everything about the intellectual misery that has entrenched itself in our country, and devastated it, when one reveals the apparently innocent reflections in the press that are meant to amuse us while waiting for some unknown panacea - we are thinking of the candor with which our most important daily paper repeatedly stated that it “envied the French for having Giscard d’Estaing.” It is true that the whole of our political class, with few exceptions, would be a source of shame to a tribe of Pygmies, but this is no reason to make fun of our poor neighbor by pretending to envy the French politicians that no Watusi tribe would be content with. Someone less urban than us, but who had the occasion to dine once or twice with the new French president, would judge his character no differently than that of Mr. Nicolas in his *in mortem* epigram on Gonfalonieri:

*The night when Pier Soderini died  
His soul went to the gates of hell;  
Pluto cried: Hell for you? Silly fool  
Go to limbo with the other babes. \**

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\*Machiavelli.

Forgive us this literary artifice, but in the generalization of bad habits, every stupidity receives the citation it is due, and imbecility is never without its protectors: here in Italy, we respect too many things to deserve to be respected. At bottom, it is not even Giscard that journalistic triviality envies the French, it is worse: it envies the flattering *image* of a manager-president - the efficient technocrat who is full of hope, casual enough to effect a few spectacular changes in etiquette and to promote, with juvenile fervor, a hundred innovations on details that distract his country from the approaching subversion that still smolders in the ashes of May, seven years ago now.

The "Italian question," or the French, or the English, cannot be resolved by putting someone more "telegenic" in place of a Flaminio Piccoli or a Rumor, someone less implicated in the bankruptcy of the past or someone less compromised with the Mafia than minister Gioia. No one would deny that it is necessary, and at present urgent, to *also* change most of the men who should defend our interests. But to replace them with Giscard would in no way remedy the situation. One talks about their disease, one writes about it, and many sick people play the role of doctor: their diagnoses are always wrong and their prescriptions are only a supplementary symptom of this common illness. The opinion of Manzoni was that "we, the others, are generally made like this: we revolt with indignation and passion against mediocre problems and resign ourselves to the extremes; we support, not with resignation, but stupidly, the epitome of what we declared was insupportable when it first appeared."

We cannot pretend that to speak to our readers in such harsh terms is an ungrateful task, but to speak otherwise seems impossible to us - silence is shameful. Our harshness concerning the things that are so close to us is not the product of the cynicism that certain malevolent people want to attribute to us, this harshness is necessary for maintaining our sang-froid in the face of the peril of the end of our world: he who does not really feel the peril of this end, will never be in a state to put an end to this peril.

There are those who, in Italy and elsewhere, make risky forecasts concerning the economic "revival," feigning to believe

that this crisis resembles so many unfavorable “junctures” that came and went in the past. These people make these demagogic forecasts with the consideration that it is not useless to make the people - whom they can no longer promise mountains and marvels - believe that at least the rulers, if not the workers, foresee a revival for the next year. But each quarter that passes requires these same prophets to delay and renew this chimerical change of trends: the illusion of change only entails a change in illusions. Piero Ottone recently wrote that “to wait for pain is oppressive and unnerving; when the pain at last hits us, it is almost out of relief that we cry (and, paradoxically, we suffer less.) Until yesterday, one feared that the country would not collapse; the simple fact that it had not yet collapsed gave even the most pessimistic a curious sensation of victory.”

We who are not pessimists or optimists do not benefit from this “curious sensation of victory,” but since we do not want to leave the reader who has arrived at the end of this displeasing chapter in bad humor, we will tell him a little joke relevant to our topic. Jokes are a minor Italian art, but the only living one. We will go so far as to say that jokes are in inverse proportion with the times: the best jokes come from the worst times and provide a unique sort of consolation. “It’s too bad,” the president of one of our most famous national industries told us, “that jokes aren’t quoted on the Stock Exchange!” Here is the little story, situated elsewhere in another time: after their crops had been destroyed by catastrophic rains, the Sioux chief gathered his tribe to break the news. Not knowing exactly how to express the impending calamity, he found a rhetorical expedient that our politicians would envy: “Brothers, I have *two* pieces of news to tell you: one is good, the other is bad. We begin with the bad: this year, you won’t have anything to eat but s... Now for the good news: as compensation, there will be plenty for everyone.”



## VI

### What Communists Effectively Are, and What to Do With Them

*Princes have found greater loyalty and utility in men who first raised suspicions than in those who inspired confidence. I will just say that if the men who at first were enemies are in need of support, the prince can win them over very easily. The prince knows that these men who are more constrained to loyally serve, must erase this sinister opinion the prince had of them by their works. Thus the prince gains more from those men, than from those who, serving the prince in a secure position, neglect the prince's affairs.*

Machiavelli

By this point in our pseudonymic text, certain people will have recognized our hand behind many of the preceding arguments. We do not want these readers to reconsider their opinion because of what follows. If they guessed from whom the above disclosures emanated, they should know that the following is only in *apparent* contradiction with our previous positions - the rest was already stated in the preface to this pamphlet. If it is true that in past years we have repeated the famous *they are not ripe* of Phadrus' fox in regard to the "communist question," we must now explain why the fox says what he says. In truth, this is not a subjective change on our part, rather the arrival of the objective possibility of a useful and necessary change that requires us - and others who are no less qualified - to prepare. There is nothing in the world that does not have its decisive moment, and the mastery of good conduct, especially in politics, is to recognize and seize this moment.

Having posed this premise, we will not say anything that is new in regard to this question, which itself is not new: we will say what is necessary, and what has become urgent. What will be new, for those who knew us in the past, is our actual disposition towards the communists, which appeared throughout the preceding chapters. The hour has come when it is necessary and possible to reject many of the faults of our nation: the ruse of the present situation is to pass it up - intelligence consists of never forgetting, and prudence

in this case, is not to be prudent. At such a moment, it is more important to be careful not to miss the chance to strike, than to fire a hundred excellent shots in other directions: "Neither the season, nor the hour waits for anyone."\*

Those seasons of games of verbal prestige in which our political trapezists measure themselves in "parallel convergence" with the communists, have passed. Now our politicians are offered what is called the "strategy of attention," an antechamber of undefined duration before the "historic compromise," that the Council President, the honorable Moro, defined (with precautions that obligated him to walk on eggs) as "a sort of halfway meeting, something that is and at the same time isn't a relief in the roles of the majority of the opposition, the profiling of a diversity that doesn't consist in a change in the direction of forces, but a modifying adjunct from the communist composition to others." *Such noise to make an omelette.*†

No one among the political *leaders*†† who have gargled with the "historic compromise" have yet to state the principal and simple truth on the question: the "historic compromise" is a compromise in the real sense of the word *only for the communists*, and absolutely not for us. For us this accord with the communists is not even "historic" - unless one wants to label as "historic" all *tactical* measures that are necessary to make people who do not want to work, work. But in this case, and despite this accord, how many "historic charges" must our police mount against the factories? And with what results? Even the ex-minister of Labor, the socialist Bartoli ("a subtle interpreter of Hegelian dialectics") said it better than anyone else and for once and for all: "It must be decided if one wants to govern with the unions, or with carabinieri."

That is where the question stands, the question that is as economic as it is political - during the course of these last few years, we could have profited greatly were the carabinieri utilized three times less, and the unions three times more. Aberto Ronchey,

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\*Baltasar Gracian.

†In French in the text.

††In English in the text.

who is by far the best Italian editorialist, recently wrote that the biggest economic problem is to convince people to work, and it is true. It is no longer possible to live with the constant hope that the workers will delay their smoldering revolt "still another instant," or that our industry will catch its breath and reinvigorate itself while this vindictive anarchy reigns in our factories, and Italy throws out one government after another, none lasting more than a few months. These governments are constantly and exclusively engaged in the titanic enterprise of remaining in power a little longer than it seemed possible, ignoring all questions (even the slightest) because they suffice to make these governments fall.

And who better than the communists can now impose a period of convalescence on the country when the workers stop fighting and begin to work again? Who better than a Minister of the Interior like Giorgio Amendola could extirpate the spreading delinquency and silence the agitators by good, or less good, methods? What is necessary is government action for a long duration, and for this a solid and highly resolved government is required. Not to now accept the compromise in question actually signifies, for us, accepting to fatally compromise the existence of our tomorrows. We always remember that neutrality in such affairs is the daughter of irresolution, and that "To banish a present danger, irresolute princes most often follow the neutral path, and most often they lose themselves."\* In order not to see the real peril, one pretends to view the accord with the PCI as a peril, and one banishes the peril before both of them.

Even if they are obligated to admit the justice and utility of our propositions, timorous minds will perhaps find a slight fault in them - a fault that they think will be a good buy in the perilous times that could arise following the fact that we put a communist party in the heart of political power, precisely at the stage of a crisis when our powers were no longer capable of making the workers work. *Who will guard our guards?*†

We reply that this objection has no basis other than their erroneous fears. One must never fear hypothetical future dangers

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\*Machiavelli

†in Latin in the text.

the instant when one can die from a certain and present danger. And one must never risk all of one's fortune without having risked all of one's forces. The force of the communist party and unions has already been useful to use, and it has been our principle support since the autumn of 1969. However, the effect of the communists has remained, until now, insufficient to reverse the process. It is in our undeniable interest to *galvanize* this force by applying it to the center of State power.

The so-called "perils" of this future communist participation in the government only exist in the sphere of illusions concerning the revolutionary tendency that the communist party constitutes. These artificially disseminated illusions were useful for the defense of a world that today (the times having changed) wants to be defended by these same communists. Our government types could only hope, despite their miserable bankruptcy, to give autonomy to their existence as the simple delegates of Italian society in its State administration. They still pretend to have a strategic rationale based on a real threat (the presence of the revolutionary tendency of the PCI) that was never more than an ideological "item for export" destined for the people. In fact, what they want when the washed-up rulers hang up their old specialization, when necessary modernization "recycles" them, is not to prolong (for their own interests) the apparent existence of the profession they still know how to perform, but *that of the profession they did not know how to perform*.

The Trojan Horse should not be feared, except when there are well-armed Achaean troops inside. The communist party sold and should still sell, a certain panoply to disguise itself as an enemy of our City, but *it is not* an enemy of our City; just as it is not commanded by Ulysses. The Italian communist resembles the carpenter behind the lion's mask in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* who allows himself to be seen, "half of his face through the mane of the lion," and who should tell the spectators: "I beg you not to be afraid, not to tremble. My life responds to yours. If you think that I've come before you as a real lion, this would be harmful for my life. No, I'm nothing of the sort..."

And precisely because we dare to admit that the Italian workers who took the offensive in the social war are our enemies,

we know that the communists support us. One cannot pretend to reassure the country by pretending the inverse to be the case. We have arrived at the hour of truth when lies are worthless, and only force serves our ends. In past years when we spoke about the communists with Raffaele Mattioli, we never heard him say that he found them worrisome, and many times we heard him repeat the same conclusion: "They are very brave." A year before his death, Togliatti sent his last book to Mattioli, who showed us (he was at once amused and flattered) the dedication in the famous turquoise blue ink of the communist *leader*\* that imbeciles fear, and that we appreciate: "To My Friend, etc. with the regret that I could not call him Comrade." Who knows, if Raffaele Mattioli were still with us, he might reply with a dedication such as, "To Comrade Amendola in the hope of soon calling him Excellency..."?

We should never forget that for years our parliamentary majority has relied on the communist opposition, and that the communist opposition is opposed to the same things as the majority; and that all political life in the country is paralyzed before the nightmare that seems to be, for the Christian Democrats, the idea of granting a few ministerial posts to the communists. Until recently, this Christian Democrat attitude found its semi-rational justification in the necessity of keeping a monopoly of power in order to continue to hide the way this power was managed; as well as a few scandalous facts that, if they were known, would lead to the disaggregation of the party. But now that these facts are, little by little, becoming known to the whole country, this last justification is nullified.

As for the rest, we ask: *what is the alternative* that incorporates the "historic compromise" as one of its elements? The other element presents itself as follows: sooner or later a situation arises in which neither the communists, nor the unions, nor the forces of order, nor the secret services will be able to stop the general insurrection by the workers. The consequences of such an insurrection are not unforeseeable. In the best case - and we only see two - this insurrection will not become a civil war. This scenario entails the communists succeeding for a second time in seizing the reins, at first seeming

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\*In English in the text.

to participate in the insurrection only to take over command. It is evident that in such a situation, Berlinguer will set his conditions, and he will not be disposed to share the government with us. In this case, when the insurrection movement is launched, the communists seize the State in the name of the workers, whom the communists enlist to defend the State. If, on the contrary, the communist party has lost all credibility with the workers (and this is more likely), the communist action of "co-opting" insurgents from the ranks of the party is useless or impossible, and civil war is then inevitable. In this case, the communist party, amputated from its base that has unified with the revolutionaries, will no longer be useful to us. These are the two variations that form an alternative with regard to the "historic compromise;" *the third is excluded*.\*

What will become of the Atlantic Alliance - already in crisis - if these events come to pass? And the Warsaw Pact, that has already shown its weakness in the face of worker insurrections in Stettin and Gdansk? In regard to the tragedy to come, staged in a theater of war no less vast than the actual crisis, we only have to repeat, under the guise of a useless *mea culpa*, a verse from Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*:

*Where oh where does the Law hide?  
Reason is disenheartened by its powers,  
Intelligence numbly gropes,  
Its quick wit having grown dull  
Our reign is compromised,  
Disaster is near:  
Where can I turn?...*

Our opinion on the "communist question" can now be reduced to one phrase: do not make a question out of what is no longer a question, while real questions and problems do not wait for senator Fanfani whose *usefulness comes too late*<sup>†</sup> to become irredeemably serious. Giovanni Agnelli is, among all the young people in positions

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\*In Latin in the text.

†In Latin in the text.

of power, perhaps the one who can flatter himself for possessing the intelligence that is most rooted in the reality of our time. He arrived at the same analysis as us, and on the majority of his conclusions (despite a few divergences in detail) our views converge. And to say nothing of our private encounters, we are content to remind the reader of one of Agnelli's public positions:

*If our illness is almost fatal, we might well think that the communist party understood the necessity of making good use of the illness so that we all save ourselves together, so that class hatred does not overcome the world and divide it in half: rioters in the streets, and the others in the bunkers with their body guards...*

It cannot be better said.

At last, our conclusion. With the help of communists in the government, we will either succeed in saving our domination, or we will fail. If we succeed, we will view the communists both as a large party composed of political personnel, and as domestic servants. The communists already admit it themselves as if it were an article in their work contract. And we know that since Heraclitus, "everything that crawls on the earth is governed by conflict." If we do not succeed, nothing else matters - to even talk about it would be the worst of Byzantine discussions at a time when the Turk is on the rampart. Better to tolerate a few trophies going to the Green and Blue circus in a world that will have fallen to pieces.

## VII

### Exhortation To Deliver Capitalism From Its Irrationalities, and to Save It

*They find me difficult?  
Yes, I know:  
I require them to think...*

Alfieri *Epigrams*

Whoever considers the world from the perspective of reason is in turn judged by the world from the same perspective. One must act in accord with one's times, and the times have changed. To want to go against the flow of time is an impossible enterprise that is assured of failure. The proximity of the fatal epoch *if it is finally sensed as such by all of us* could, paradoxically, be our last chance to save ourselves. Perhaps we can one day, in our turn, repeat the words of Prince Condé in the religious wars: "We would have perished if we were not so close to perishing."\*

It is not as though all ills arrive with the condition of exploiting, for our exclusive advantage, *everything* that is presented to us - this merely appears to be the case despite the undeniable precariousness of our situation, a situation expressed in the "Exhortation to Deliver Italy From Foreign Barbarians"<sup>†</sup>:

*To discover at present, the value of the Italian spirit, it was necessary for Italy to be carried to its present state, and for it to be without a leader, without order, beaten, pillaged, torn apart; in brief, that it endured all manner of woes.*

To those who accuse us of speaking too much or too quickly about our ruin and its non-hypothetical proximity, we reply that *this* is the first task of those who really want to avoid ruin because

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\*In French in the original

<sup>†</sup>Title of the last chapter of *The Prince* - in Latin in the text.



one is not always capable of avoiding such disasters. Besides, what else is there to talk about today?

The intelligent conservative can summarize the principle behind his actions in one phrase: *everything that does not merit being destroyed, merits being saved*. But what does not merit being saved (what is in contradiction with our health, or simply whatever bothers us) must be destroyed without hesitation or superfluous scruples. To lose the dead weight of the past is necessary so as to make the heavy task of purifying the present a little lighter.

The *principal* irrationality of contemporary capitalism is that it does not do all that it can to defend itself from the dangerous attacks against it. But we admit that there are other irrationalities, and we must correct them if we can. Where our management has been unreasonable, it must be changed. All of our power has been intimately tied, since the origin of the bourgeoisie, to *rational management*, and our power will not last without it. There is nothing new about putting profound reforms in place. We have given birth to them in all epochs. This is our force: we are the first society in history to always know how to correct ourselves. We label as “unreasonable” everything that produces results that are in objective contradiction with the necessity of our possession of society, results that are measurable by us, and felt by all. We will evoke these reforms below.

Here we would rather repeat after the French that when in peril one must *make arrows out of all wood*,\* but first out of the most accessible and malleable. We must employ our communists rather than sell the whole country to Arab capital, as a few of our crazy politicians have proposed. The sole goal of our use of the communists is to make the economy of this experience emanate from a government with communists in it. While this experience costs us nothing, the logic of the other proposal leads to our fatal and integral dispossession. How is it possible to put, even for an instant, these two manifestly unequal solutions on the same plane. That which is not logically conceivable, properly speaking, obeys a hidden and highly particular logic. Three fourths of our political

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\*In French in the original.

personnel must be licentiates in the eventuality that saves us. In those that we lose, this same personnel will remain entirely in place to divert the most important portion of its capital for a few years, which we will eventually expropriate without even assuring half of the term in power of the new proprietors. From this grotesque perspective, assuming that the productive forces and the majority of the property of Europe goes to a few Arab potentates, one must ask who can control this unfit international monetary system when these potentates provisionally control the principal source of energy that the industrialized countries depend on? One would have to be blind not to see that the workers who posed so many problems for us will expropriate their new foreign masters (both archaic and incompetent) with much greater ease and on a much greater scale. To transport the proprietary class of our country to an exotic and backward land means selling our birthright for a plate of lentils. Can these novices hope to control our countries? With their troops, or with the help of ours? With our political skill, or theirs? Our troops are no longer trustworthy, and theirs are worthless. Our skill is wanning, and theirs is in question.

One is not astonished to find that those responsible for this strategy, most notably in Italy, have no other strategy than the *liquidation* of our national patrimony and its clandestine exportation to their Swiss accounts. While the upper-level bureaucrats of our ministries or economic organizations will pay dearly - alas, in bad money - to leave careers that leave them, one sees that the Padoue hospital will sell a Mantegna at auction. All those responsible for the management of Italian society (seen by everyone as being on the verge of great losses) dream of selling what they have. And what they collectively have is nothing less than Italy itself - its monuments and real estate. Presently, it is better not to measure the market value of our productive forces, because our workers and managers are in such a dilapidated state. In a few words, we must counter those who place a "Public Notice of Sale" on Italian society.

We want to go back to one of our earlier propositions for a moment. Recall that we must destroy without scruples all impediments to overcoming the crisis facing our State. For example, President Leone, who is not unmoved by these arguments, has

made unsuccessful allusions to the necessity for constitutional reform for more than year - urgent reforms according to certain communists as well. We must now propose a reform that is both radical and favorable to the restructuring of the Republic; one that gives priority to the survival of our world and the maintenance of democracy (as outlined in the first chapter of this *Report*).

With the engagement of the Communist Party and the application of the new Constitution, we are persuaded that there is a real possibility to overcome the crisis. The new Magna Carta must maintain democracy, but in a disabused way, contrary to what happened over the first thirty years of our Republic. To maintain democracy is to maintain the rule of voting that is at the base of modern liberal republics. We know that this rule is the inverse of that used in primitive democracy: the Ancient Greeks only counted the votes of those who were ready to openly fight for one side or another. And Plato showed, as has history, how this primitive democracy slides into disorder and despotism. In the modern sense, democracy must be understood as a way to make people vote for the issues for which they are not disposed to fight. This aspect must be accentuated, and as in the past, one must exhort citizens to vote, but on a great variety of topics that have no bearing on the functioning of society; and citizens must continue to chose between diverse candidates. But these candidates, regardless of their place on the political spectrum, must be previously selected with a qualitative rigor exceeding that of our time by the veritable *elite* of economic and cultural power.

And this economy itself, this modern technology at our disposal whose power is virtually without limit, requires that we make better and *more intelligent* use of it: we must no longer allow ourselves to be dominated by this power that incessantly tends to increase its own autonomy, often slipping out of our hands - hands that in the recent past maneuvered the economy according to democratic and demagogic fictions on which we built the giant with clay feet in the epoch of "abundance of well being" and commercial abundance. But since this epoch is over, we must cease making people consume images that are too beautiful and too insane - we can simply put on our gloves and create a world where the people

consume less harsh realities (less pollution, fewer automobiles; bread, meat and better housing, and so on). In conclusion, the reform of our economy and its reconstruction on more solid bases, must found a new economy capable of being *both* authentically liberal and generally controlled by the State: but certainly not by *this State*, because the new State must be rigorously ruled by an elite deserving of the name. We will return to the subject below.

Now we must realize that not only do we have to maintain a dominant class, but *the best dominant class possible*: our ministers must apply all their forces in order to prevail both by merit and talent - he who is satisfied to be second in command from the outset will never be second, rather nothing at all. If this minimum requirement now seems too ambitious it is only because the last crop of government types distorts one's perspective. But such a requirement is called for given the present situation; and, as a general rule, this requirement is in direct proportion with the realities that one ultimately confronts in the difficult tasks undertaken in the good administration of a society.

"How Should A Prince Govern to Acquire Esteem?"\* Who is adept at saving our society? This is what we must ask when we chose our ministers, and this is what we neglect in favor of ridiculous "titles of merit," as in the fact that Moro was more or less the enemy of Cefis, or that another's wife might be the intimate friend of the mistress of General Miceli, who is in prison. "Stranger," Plato said, "the moment has arrived to be serious." And one knows the interest this philosopher had for the political problems of our peninsula.

In Italy today, the men we need *exist*, and we should use them right away, making them emerge from the pack of Christian Democrats, disguised as wolves who flatter themselves for having condemned the men of talent in perpetuity to having the leisure to freely satisfy their own clique of ministers and clients. Otherwise, few traits would suffice - if only there were not such scarcity of merit in our Republic to better define these men: a few well-chosen ministers suffice to make a State run as it should - in the France of

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\*Title of chapter XVI of *The Prince*.

Louis XIII only one was necessary. It is also evident that one wants to dress the various stews of our government in Italian style, giving a ministerial post to a man like Bruno Visentini, and another to Gioia, for whom "to remain silent is the most beautiful."\* Thus one compromises the possibility for action by men of worth. And one also gives proof to the rationale of Mussolini, according to which, "to govern Italy is not a difficult enterprise; it is a useless enterprise." Luckily the future of capitalism is not tied to the future of the Christian Democrats any more than it was tied to fascism. But we should recall that a half-century of stupidity in power is an enviable world record, especially since it was not contested by anyone. Today there are few men of talent who take the risk of compromising themselves amid the administrative corruption of a State that seems to be, as Dante said, "the sad sack that turns everything it swallows into shit."

To save us from the problem of subversion that will probably persist for years to come, even if the communists in government get a better grip on it than us, our first operation must not be the obstinate and obtuse defense of Italy and its incapable rulers. On the contrary, our first operation resembles a *scorched earth policy* that permits us to get rid of these men, these frilly garments with whom we share our poor Republic. And simultaneous with this radical cleansing operation, we must reconstruct a society around us with qualities that render it, in the eyes of many people, deserving to be defended and saved. And who knows if the workers would then cease attacking us so violently, even if, deep down, they must always remain hostile to property? Rather than wandering off into utopian philosophical theories on the future of the world at a time when, personally, we will not be there, it is better to consider, while we are still here, everything that is necessary *not to survive in our world*. Who, in the end, are our enemies?

Today we have to face *several* hostile realities, but the only one that is historically immanent to our mode of domination and production is the proletariat, which has a natural and perpetual tendency to revolt - already in Roman times it was summed up

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\*Dante.

nicely in the adage: *so many slaves, so many enemies*.<sup>\*</sup> Once one recognizes this incontestable and constant fact, it is important to see if other realities hostile to us have the same immutability and constant presence as the proletariat. More precisely, we would like to be able to determine if these other realities are as necessary and *useful* to us as the proletariat. We do not forget for an instant that at least the workers, when they work and do not riot, are the most useful reality in the world, and merit our respect. The proletarians under our direction produce our wealth, *id est* our power. We dispute the fact that the other realities that compromise our power are necessary and inevitable. We propose to examine at least two: the bad habits and incompetence of our political class give ample proof of this, and the anarchic economy give still more. These two deleterious phenomenon can be eliminated because they depend on our will.

Regarding what we define as “insufficiency” (a euphemism) of our government as a whole (exceptions aside), we argue that we no longer have any scruples about the fate of its errors and scandals - we already have proof that the government has more knowledge than us about the services that we admit it knew how to render in the already distant past. And for too long we have accorded it more patience than we thought possible. Of all human virtues, patience is the only one that ceases to be a virtue when it is practiced in excess. We leave it to the Pope, who is less occupied than us by the necessities of mundane life, to accomplish the act of charity of cleansing the conscience of these *orphans of power*. The satisfaction that is needed for public opinion sake (by now legitimately tired of seeing incompetents in power) demands that we avoid the trouble of defending men who, instead of implementing intelligent conservative policies as they were told, prefer a policy of obtuse reaction, ruining everything that touches their hands. The men who were supported by our capital, which they claimed to want to defend to mock the electorate, now mock us by getting their support from the electorate. To once again express ourselves on human nature in the words of Machiavelli: “While using a man, you lose the power to

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<sup>\*</sup>In Latin in the text.

use him.”

Even among the Christian Democrats there are intelligent men, and here we are not simply making allusions to an Andreotti or Donat-Cattin. But how can the intelligence of these men bear fruit when Fanfani asks them to defend the indefensible while systematically neglecting to save the essential. The survival of a political world made like this is already *in itself* one of the hostile realities that we must cease to uphold. We must dismantle it “...and the combat will be short.”\*

As for what we called “economic anarchy,” we must authoritatively limit the tendency to accumulate profits in certain basic sectors where the development attained by modern techniques (especially chemical) permits everything, but the results harm the population in its daily existence and deprives their existence of the little that absolutely must be left to the population. For example, we completely disapprove of the industrialists who take the risk of constantly provoking the people it makes consume oil and chemical wine, or inedible food, just to augment profits in a given sector - they neglect the more general and superior interests of our class.

Nothing provokes the democratic citizen more than giving the impression that his vote is systematically paid for. Even if this citizen is disinterested in politics, he is not oblivious to the quality of what he eats and the air he breaths. On the contrary, we must maintain the best qualitative level of life possible, firstly for the dominant class; and secondly, for the dominated. As early as 1969, an industrialist like Henry Ford said, “...the terms of the contract between society and industry is changing (...) We call for contributing more to the quality of life than to the quantity of goods.” To play the hypocrite does not relate to anything, or at least *should no longer* relate to anyone. We are not very inclined to record with reserved satisfaction an account of the miserable savers, the active types that Cefis lauds in the balance-sheet of Montedison - active types who acquiesce the way Scalfari recently revealed to the public in his good book *The Ruling Race* - in truth these same profits represent a formidable incitation to social revolt.

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\*Petrarch.

Since we cited Eugenio Scalfari, a man whose courage and intelligence we hold in high regard, we will take the occasion to express our opinion on what he excellently defined as the "bourgeois State." One of the reasons we chose the ancient form of expression, the pamphlet, rather than a more systematic text, is that we do not renounce the pleasure of speaking with swords drawn. The pamphlet allows us to touch on everything without the pretense of an exhaustive treatment. At the same time, this form allows us to avoid being implicated in the swamps of the sophisticated "demonstrations" written by our politicians to spread their elastic "truths" (to tell *the* truth, few speeches suffice: *the truth is the touchstone of itself, and of the false*\*) Besides, this way of writing seems useful to us because it is quick, and we have so many other engagements.

This "State bourgeoisie" that encompasses in itself the defects of the parasitic and decadent bourgeoisie, and those of the bureaucratic class that holds power in the socialist countries, is one of the products of "Italian" management of power; it is also a highly noxious residue of the "division into plots" of this power. The President of Montedison, Cefis, is the model that inspired Scalfari's description. But this "State bourgeoisie" actually exceeds its model. It is everywhere in the State industries, and in the forest of the sixty thousand public "organisms," and hence it has created its own power that is autonomous vis-a-vis the great traditional bourgeoisie. It has founded its power on what Alberto Ronchey calls "Christian-Democracy State capitalism." The members of such a "ruling race" are in reality individuals without any original personal patrimony. They are deprived of culture (we are not even talking about a culture that a ruling class deserves), and comparable to the austere petit-bourgeois of the past. Of course only a relatively restrained number of individuals hold real power today, and most of them can only do harm with their limited talents. This phenomenon is expanding and merits our attention.

Historically, capitalism has continually modified the composition of the classes to the degree that it transforms the society that it has ruled up to now. It has weakened or recomposed, suppressed

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\*In Latin in the text.



or even created classes with subordinate, but necessary, functions in the production, distribution and consumption of commodities. Only the bourgeoisie and proletariat remain the permanent historical classes that continue a conflict that is essentially the same as it was in the last century - they are the only ones who play with the destiny of the world. But the circumstances, scenario and even the spirit of the principal protagonists have changed.

This phenomenon is not particular to Italian society. The unprecedented economic expansion of the last thirty years entailed the creation of a class of *managers*,\* technicians adept at directing industrial production and the circulation of commodities. These managers, often called *executives* in modern speech, were recruited outside of our class, which could no longer assume all these tasks by itself. Despite the golden legend that only they believe, the executives are actually nothing more than the metamorphosis of the urban petite-bourgeoisie, previously composed of independent producers of the artisan type who have *become wage workers*, no more and no less than the workers. This is despite the fact that sometimes the executives hope to resemble members of liberal professions. This inexpensively purchased "resemblance" has made them the object of promotional dreams of numerous levels of poor workers. In reality, nothing they have can define them as *rich*. They are paid enough to consume a little more than the others, but always the same industrially produced commodities.

Contrary to the worker or feudal serf, the executive never feels *he is in the right place*: always uncertain and always disappointed, he always aspires to be more than he is and more than he can ever be: he pretends, and at the same time, he doubts. He is the man of malaise, so unsure of himself and his destiny - not without reason - that he must continually dissimulate the reality of his existence. He is dependent in an absolute way, and much more so than the worker because he must follow all the styles, including ideological trends - it is for the executive that our "avant-garde" writers cook up their repugnant *best sellers*† that turn bookstores

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\*In English in the translation. L.B.

†In English in the text.

into supermarkets into which we have never set a foot (happily, there are still a few good bookstores for our consolation). It is for these managers, or executives, that the physiognomy and functions of our urban centers were changed. Our cities were the most beautiful and oldest in the world. They now house restaurants that were once excellent, but that presently serve the repugnant and falsified food that the executives always rave loud enough for their neighbors to hear that they were able to learn the tone and pronunciation used on airport loudspeakers. "Oh! Plebe, created so much worse than the others..."\*

Politically, this new class perpetually oscillates because it is always waiting for contradictory things: there is no single party that gets all their votes.

Like the *petite-bourgeoisie* of the past, these managers are very diversified. But the strata of upper managers who are the model of identification and the illustrative goal for the others is already tied in a thousand ways to the bourgeoisie, and is integrated with it more than it thinks. This is the portrait of those in whom the bourgeoisie has placed a growing portion of its own functions. One should not be surprised if these functions are assumed in the manner described above.

A growing portion of our class itself has become, by discouragement or ineptitude, parasitic - where it is not ruined, it is at least notably impoverished. Not only should this part of the bourgeoisie *not* be defended, it must be eliminated: or it should be reintegrated in the society that we must consciously compose. In the contrary case, they will have our full support, these communist ministers who call for a draconian fiscal reform that is at last dignified of the word "reform."

These comfortable, inactive bourgeois gentlemen do not believe for an instant that a communist minister might be necessary for such a reform because that measure flows less from the "historic compromise" than from their lack of competitiveness. Necessity sharpens the intelligence, and the time is at hand for the creativity and fantastic spirit of enterprise that the bourgeoisie has shown in

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\*Dante.

other times to find the conditions to deploy itself again. There are only two eventualities - the bourgeoisie in Italy and elsewhere proves this intelligence and will to live; or it perishes with few regrets: having collaborated too much with its enemies it accelerates and renders inevitable, its end. In the end, this is because it wanted to identify its survival as the hegemonic class, with the survival of its insolvency. In this case, the condemnation has already been written:

*For such lack, and not for any other fault  
we are lost, and condemned to this fact  
we live, without hope, in a state of desire.\**

At the beginning of the last chapter, we made an allusion to the possibility of effecting reform. This is not the place to treat such questions in a profound way - this was done in an unsigned document with a very confidential circulation, entitled (in homage to the famous text by pseudo-Xenophon) *The Italian Republic*. We do not believe that it is a lack of modesty to recall the comforting pleasure that this document gave to people occupying the highest functions in government and industry: it is really to the honor of these people that one can elicit their prompt comprehension of the necessity for change. We will outline here a few of the methodological bases of this reformism.

Evidently the difficulty lies in the necessity of defining what is vital for our economic and social order - to distinguish the vital from those things observed by illusion, ease and routine. Just like everyone else, we know that things can not go on as they have, except that we know it from a lucid, combative perspective and not from the imbecilic prostration of all those who have made errors in the past and are not even capable of discovering that it is all about big mistakes. The irrationalities of our power must be corrected, which is nothing new for those of us who consider our history with disabused eyes.

Raw capitalism is condemned. Not that one can no longer sell everything. Rather, it is no longer civic to only produce what is

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\*Dante.

immediately most profitable when it is detrimental to every conceivable future. All concurrent excesses must be eliminated by the power of production. But this is true at precisely the moment when, literally, *there is no place* to live with our production that destroys its base and future conditions. The production process struggles with itself because too much faith was put in its automation, and although it is aided, it is never really corrected by political power. This is true just when all socially given *justifications* for this production universally cease to be accepted. We no longer believe, and nor does anyone else, that the progress of production is capable of *diminishing work*. We no longer believe, nor do many others, that this production is open to distribute, in growing quantity and quality, *effective goods*. We must therefore draw our conclusions. The real holders of social authority (in property, culture, the State, unions, etc.) must quickly agree (secretly at first, then publicly) to promulgate a long term *charter for the rationalization of society*. Capitalism must proclaim and fully realize the rationalism that it has brought with it from the beginning, but that it only partially accomplished. Precisely because our country could attain the force to save itself because of the excess peril it faces, we could create the "Italian Model" of capitalism to be taken up across Europe, and eventually the world.

From the perspective of a qualitative society, one must very consciously distinguish between *two sectors* of all consumption. One sector is of authentic quality, with all its real consequences. The other, that of current consumption, must, whenever possible, be destroyed. For a long time one pretended to believe that the abundance of industrial production slowly elevated everyone to the conditions of an elite. This argument has so completely lost its very slight appearance of seriousness that it has been degraded to being nothing more than the ephemeral incitations of publicity. One knows, however, that this abundance of fabricated objects requires the demarcation of an elite more than ever - an elite that is sheltered by this abundance and takes what is really precious: otherwise, there will soon be no place on Earth with anything precious left in it. The mechanically egalitarian tendency of modern industry to want to make everything for everyone, and to break and maim

everything just to distribute its most recent merchandise is what has poisoned almost all space, and most of our time, with its piles of cheap goods: cars and "second homes" are everywhere. If words remain rich, the same is not true of things, and the countryside is deteriorating everywhere. The law that dominates all this is, of course, that the only thing one distributes to the poor is poverty: cars that do not circulate because there are too many of them, wages paid in inflated currency, meat from animals fattened up in a few weeks by chemical means, etc.

What would a real elite love? Everyone should ask themselves this in all sincerity. We love the company of people of good taste and culture..., art, quality food and choice wine, the calm of our parks and the beautiful architecture of our ancient buildings, our rich library, the management of the major issues in human affairs, or just their contemplation behind the scenes. Who could one make believe that he could have all that when our industrial production throws so much trash on the market? Dare we ask if the things we love could really be felt and practiced by just anyone, even if it is a minister (that we made a minister), but who still feels the sweat of his poor youth and his feverish studies?

We must rethink the whole of our production and consumption; and institute a little instruction in class spirit - recall that our class has the historical merit of having discovered classes. It is the bourgeoisie, not Marxism, that declared class war and founded its possession of society on it. Our social elite is not closed, as was the case with the "estates" of the societies of the *Ancien Regime*, but we will attain this closure when our education system becomes realistic and adapts, and when we can offer the best people real advantages that justify great effort. Likewise, we must offer the subordinate classes (artisans, State bureaucrats, or political or union bureaucrats) fewer advantages, but sufficient and authentic. The tendency to valorously pull oneself up the social ladder to attain a qualitative force of existence will be reinforced - such a goal will appear in all its beautiful reality when we begin to play with this, presently suspended, reality. We have thoughtlessly dispersed so much false luxury and comfort that the entire population is quite rightly dissatisfied.

Avarice opposes our trivial remark about qualitative consumption by recreating a *monetary barrier* via-a-vis the ubiquitous polluted consumption, and these quality goods that will elevate the everyday expenses of the dominant class. We reply that the rich must pay of their luxuries or else they will soon have none at all. The bourgeoisie must understand, especially in Italy, that it is no longer possible for the rich to pay less, and that they must also begin to pay their taxes. We must also begin to ameliorate the consumption of the people by correcting, as much as possible, everything that harms their physical or psychic health - everyone knows there is a great deal of harm in everything from transportation to agriculture to leisure activities. At present, the people is so *used* by this artificial and deceptive consumption that a measured and secure consumption would come as a relief, so long as it satisfied the people's authentic needs. To the degree that we effect this correction, it will suffice for us to reveal (especially from a medical point of view) what has become of bread, wine, air: in short, all the simple pleasures of the people. The people will be retrospectively *horrified*, and quite rightly. We will be recognized as having stopped them from continuing along their ridiculous path. Pollution must be stopped except when it *really* cannot be avoided, and then only in industrial zones and not all over the country "a bischero scioto,"\* as is now the case.

The education question is so serious that it will almost suffice to make everyone understand that we must urgently reconstruct a qualitative society that is in our interest, but also in the interest of the entire people. We see the quantity of young people with diplomas from what we call our universities, young people who have no real culture or employment and who cannot even find manual labor because employers normally reject these people. They become discontented, and perhaps even rebels. We consider this to be the product of an incompetence that did not feel any qualms about tapping the resources of the State (not without results, but with the results whose dangers we are exposed to). This annihilated the

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\* An old Florentine expression meaning in a thoughtless, slipping and sliding way.

most elementary sense of honesty, as well as the most elementary logic. Italians were the first to invent the University and the bank, and during the Renaissance they invented the best scientific theory of domination.

These same Italians are the first to suffer, and more than other peoples, from the crisis of the things they excel in. We could still be the first if we know how to show the world the path that will lead us out of this crisis.

If we offer everyone a relatively satisfying place, but especially if we can assure the non-evasive collaboration of the whole of what we call the *elite troops*, we will be able to resist all subversion with an intelligently selective minimum of repression. It will not be the phoney "Red Brigades" who put our power in danger. And if the four exalted ones who compose this group seem to pose a danger for the State and have easily evaded prison, it is not because this is a small but powerful group, rather because the State has disappeared to the point that anyone can deride it. When we speak of selective repression, we are talking about defending ourselves from altogether different things.

Censorship - and here we must not use the short bridle of our communist allies - does not correspond to the spirit of capitalism. Censorship has no place in our laws, nor in practice, except in exceptional cases, at least as far as books are concerned. On this question, one must not overestimate the perils, nor fall asleep at the wheel. For example, over the last ten years in all the democratic countries, it seems intelligent censorship would only have had to have been applied to three or four books. But those books should have disappeared completely using all possible means. Not that we neglected to read them, but we keep them to ourselves like the erotic books in the Vatican library. When books on political criticism only relate to a detail or a local phenomenon, they are out-of-date before they reach many readers. We only have to pay attention to very rare books that are susceptible to creating adepts over a long period, and finally, disturbing our power. We must certainly study these books, not to critique their authors, but to annihilate them. One knows, but often forgets, that the pens we are speaking about always end up inciting people to pick up arms. We forget who said

it first, but there is a significant historic simultaneity between the invention of printing and that of gunpowder. In sum, we should treat the authors of certain books as disturbers of the peace who are disastrous for our civilization, which they do not want to reform, but to destroy. On all crucial points, we must scrupulously defend ourselves from all sentimentality and the need for excessive justifications which threaten to compromise our lucidity - we are not administering Paradise, but this world.

As terrible as this might be, the present situation in Italy is such that one cannot accuse us of exaggerating the peril and pain (to the point of making us divert everything that harms us as a universal class), the particular woes of this:

*...slave called Italy, hotel of pain  
ship without a captain in a huge storm...\**

On the contrary, if at this point we are worried that what happened could still happen in Italy, it is because we know that the crisis is global. The unification of capitalism is so advanced on a planetary basis, that it is global capitalism itself that we risk running over the abyss. Italy is no longer the backward province, separated from modern nations, that it was for so long. Class power was challenged in Russia as well as in America, but Europe is the center of the storm. And all the historic woes of Europe are, unfortunately, not foreign to the shores of France. Without the French, capitalism would have enjoyed a qualitatively superior development. The fall of Charles VIII broke the Italian commercial republics; and Bonaparte, three centuries later, finished even the memory of Venice. The Revolution of 1789 gave free reign to the limitless programs of the rabble, while the bourgeois revolutions in England in the XVIIIth Century founded a political city suitable for the harmonious development of modern capitalism. Finally, the ideology of abundance of commodities still appeared, until recently, to be capable of calming the dissatisfaction of the working classes with consumption. Yet some well-informed observers have doubted the

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\*For Italians, this verse from Canto VI of Purgatory evokes the verse that follows: "no longer master of the provinces, but a brothel." G.D.



solidity of this equilibrium - once again, in 1968, the French delivered the death blow.

We are now confronted with a universal problem, and it is a very old problem. Last year Giovanni Agnelli said that workers no longer wanted to work because they were demoralized by the conditions of modern life. Despite the finesse one finds in this original observation, Agnelli excessively privileged the circumstances that are characteristic of our immediate period and did not go to the heart of the question. Workers do not want to work every time they find the slightest possibility not to, and they find this type of possibility every time our economic and political domination is weakened by objective difficulties or difficulties that come from our poorly chosen words. If one looks deep enough, to never work was the goal of the Ciompi as it was for the Communards. Every society in every epoch has confronted this problem in its manner, and solved it. Presently, one would say that we are dominated by it.

Those readers who know us are well aware that in no season of our life have we consented to form a pact with fascism, and that we would not do so with any form of totalitarian bureaucratic management, and for the same reasons: the bourgeoisie must remain the historical class, par excellence. Karl Marx himself is irrefutable on this point, having shown the error the bourgeoisie commits when it abdicates its political power to "Bonapartism." We are thus facing the future, but not just any future.

To speak the language of our "executors," what would be our "model"? While the most cultivated of our adversaries find the outline of their model in the Athens of Pericles or pre-Medici Florence - insufficient models, but worthy of their real project because it displays to a comic degree the violence and incessant disorder that are the essence behind the utopian radicalism of ultra-democracy. We designate the Republic of Venice as the model of a qualitative society, a model that was sufficient in its time, even perfect. This was the most beautiful dominant class in history: no one resisted it, or even pretended to reckon with it. For centuries, no demagogic lies, hardly any troubles and very little bloodshed. It was *terrorism tempered by happiness*, the happiness of each in his place. And do not forget that the Venetian oligarchy, supported at

certain moments of crisis by the armed workers of the Arsenal, discovered that an elite selected from the workers always plays the game of the proprietors of society quite well.

To conclude, we add that having realized these pages, we do not know what pertinent objection a rigorous mind could have with them; and we are persuaded that the truth will impose itself in a generalized way.

## **Appendix:**

### ***From the Egg to the Apples: The Combined Chronologies of the Strategy of Tension in Italy and of the Italian Section of the Situationist International***

(by Len Bracken)

July 9, 1943	Allies land in Sicily and drive the Germans north of Naples.
July 25, 1943	Hitler and Mussolini meet at Feltre. King Victor Emmanuel is invited to assume command. Mussolini is arrested.
July 28, 1943	Otto Skorzeny frees Mussolini, who then assumes leadership of the Repubblica Sociale Italiana - the Salo Republic.
June 4, 1944	The Allies occupy Rome. James Jesus Angleton heads OSS special ops in Rome recruiting from his fascist contacts facilitating the rebirth of neo-fascism.
December 8, 1944	British and US military accord to support anti-communists. MI6 and OSS work closely on this.
December 27, 1944	Founding of <i>The Common Man</i> newspaper to appeal to fascist sympathizers, reactionaries, monarchists and Salo republicans.
March 21, 1945	Report from the "Confidential Affairs" section of the Interior Ministry of Mussolini's Salo Republic on the establishment of espionage in occupied Italy - calls for infiltration of the Communist Party. Also points to ties between Italian fascists and the Roman Catholic Church.
April 29, 1945	Angleton rescues Prince Borghese (a wartime fascist) from his hiding place in Milan and escorts him to Rome dressed as a US officer.
August 8, 1945	Christian Democrats - mostly fascists or sympathizers, with a few exceptions - take political power in Italy.

September 20, 1945	US President Truman disbands the OSS, but Angleton remains in place in Italy.
June 18, 1946	Communist Minister of Justice Togliatti proclaims a general amnesty with very few exceptions.
December 26, 1946	Foundation of the neo-fascist Italian Social Movement (MSI) in Rome.
November 14, 1947	National Security Council document 1/1: "The Position of the United States with Respect to Italy."
1948	Covert CIA operations against leftists in Italian elections.
February 1948	Right wing victory leads to rapid purge of socialist and pro-Resistance elements in the Italian administration.
July 1948	Anti-anarchist and communist repression swings into gear - people are tried, convicted and do time for anti-fascist activity. MSI expands.
1949	Italy signs secret NATO protocols agreeing to prevent communists from gaining political power.
July 1951	Premier de Gasperi authorizes the formation of a "civil defence corps" to assist police and <i>carabinieri</i> .
May 14, 1952	US Joint Chiefs of Staff top secret memo on a plan code-named "Demagnetize" to reduce communism in Italy and France using "political, paramilitary and psychological operations." The governments of Italy and France were not informed of the plan - carried out in Italy by General Giovanni De Lorenzo, then head of military intelligence and later accused of having plotted a military coup in the summer of 1964.
1956	Ordine Nuovo founded by Pino Rauti - its members will be sentenced in 1973 for reconstituting the banned Fascist Party: the prosecutor was killed by the group in 1973.
1959	Military intelligence (SIFAR) begins collecting dossiers on Italian citizens - copies forwarded to the CIA.

- 1960 Fascist and anti-Semitic slogans painted on the walls of Jewish buildings and Socialist Party offices.
- 1961 Notorious soldier of fascism, Stefano Delle Chiaie, is arrested for removing the flag of the Resistance from the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Rome.
- 1961 Right-wing Italian journalist, Ordine Nuovo founder and future secretary of MSI, Pino Rauti gives a lecture at the US Marine College in Annapolis on "Techniques and Possibilities of a Coup d'Etat in Europe."
- 1963 Top secret Operation Gladio begins - SIFAR and CIA secret network that would stay behind in the event of Eastern Bloc invasion of Italy or communist subversion. Financed and controlled by the CIA. Later revealed that arms caches were buried around Italy for use by Gladio members. P2 master Licio Gelli later reported that Gladio members were fascist members of Mussolini's last stand.
- 1964 Secret plan called "Piano Solo" is created for the paramilitary police to intervene to restore public order in a coup - exposed in May 1967 by *L'Espresso*. General De Lorenzo of the *carabinieri* and others were to have assassinated Premier Aldo Moro who promised an "opening to the left." The coup was called off at the final moment by a compromise between the Socialists and right-wing Christian Democrats. De Lorenzo would go on to create La Rosa Dei Venti, a secret organization that aimed to keep officers loyal to De Lorenzo and his plan.
- May 3-5, 1965 Conference of fascists and conservatives sponsored by the Alberto Pollio Institute at Rome's Parco dei Principi Hotel on "Revolutionary War" - considered to be the *momento zero* of the strategy of tension.
- 1966 De Gaulle denounces previously secret NATO protocols committing the signatory countries to prevent communists from assuming political power as an infringement of national sovereignty.
- April 21, 1967 CIA-inspired military coup in Greece - Greek junta visited immediately

by Pino Rauti.

- June 5, 1967      NATO decides to move its Mediterranean naval command to Naples and its Defense College from Paris to Rome. The US Sixth fleet base changed to Gaeta, Italy due to de Gaulle's decision to withdraw from full membership in the Atlantic Alliance.
- 1968      Student and worker protests amid explosive attacks by Maoists and fascists.
- January 1969      Constitution of the Italian Section of the Situationist International (henceforth the "SI").
- April 25, 1969      Milan trade fair bombing injures twenty people - investigations center on anarchist and left-wing circles, but turns out that they had been infiltrated by the extreme right, which was in contact with the secret services. Two right-wing publishers and booksellers (Franco Freda, au. of *The Disintegration of the System*, and Giovanni Ventura) were responsible for the blast. They were said to have met with Pino Rauti and another right-wing journalist, Guido Giannetti on April 18 - the latter were linked to \$800,000 payments from the US embassy for a "propaganda effort."
- July 1969      Publication of *Internazionale situazionista* #1 (4,000 copies) edited by Claudio Pavan, Paolo Salvadori and Gianfranco Sanguinetti in the middle of the "hot" summer.
- September 1969      Venice Conference of the SI. The Italian section represented by Pavan, Rothe, Salvadori, Sanguinetti. Sabotage of FIAT factories in Turin and the Pirelli plant in Milan.
- November 1969      Publication of the anonymous Italian document *Our Political Action* by the Lisbon-based Aginter Press infamous for giving cover to extremist political activity throughout Europe. The document recommends the promotion of political and economic chaos: "This will lead to a situation of strong political tension, of fear in the industrial world, of hostility towards the government and all the parties. In our opinion the first action to be embarked upon is the destruction of the structures of the state, which should appear to be the action of the communists and the pro-Chinese." The goal is to make it

	seem as if the armed forces are the only force capable of providing a solution.
November 19, 1969	Publication of the tract <i>Advice to the Proletariat</i> by the Italian Section of the SI on the day of a day-long general strike. Riots erupt in Milan.
December 12, 1969	Bombs explode in Milan's Piazza Fontana and in Rome. The cover-up of the Piazza Fontana bombing would last decades and involve secret service officers uninvolved with the bombing itself. General Maletti and Captain Labruna were sentenced for sabotaging the investigation and the main suspects - Freda, Ventura and Giannettini - were acquitted even though two other courts had sentenced them to life for carrying out the bombing. The SID and latter renamed SISMI were undoubtedly involved, with the police playing a minor role. Ventura, who tried to pose as a lefty, later claimed to be working for the CIA. Giannettini was an SID informant since 1967. Politicians such as Moro, who were made aware of the details of the bombing and opposed the strategy of tension, accommodated the plotters rather than expose them publicly.
December 19, 1969	Publication of the S.I. tract <i>Is the Reichstag Burning?</i> (denouncing the police provocation of the bombings in Milan and Rome on December 12 - signed "Friends of the International").
January 17-19, 1970	SI conference in Trier Wolsfeld with Pavan representing the Italian section.
February 20, 1970	Pavan's resignation from the SI is refused and transformed into an exclusion.
April 21, 1970	Exclusion of Eduardo Rothe from the SI.
July 27, 1970	Attempted exclusion from the SI of Sanguinetti by Salvadori.
August 1970	The Red Brigades convene in Pecorile.
September 18, 1970	Exclusion of Salvadori from the SI.
October 1970	Publication of <i>The Workers of Italy and the Revolt of Reggio de</i>

*Calabre* by the Italian section of the SI.

- December 7, 1970      Coup attempt by WWII naval commander and founder of right-wing National Front Prince Borghese under the code name Tora Tora (after the Japanese attack on the same date in 1941 that brought the US into WWII).
- July 23, 1971      Expulsion of Sanguinetti from France by the Minister of Interior as he attempts to join the French section of the SI.
- April 1972      Sanguinetti and Debord sign the *Theses on the SI and Its Time* as the act of autodissolution of the SI.
- May 31, 1972      Car bombing in Peteano kills three *carabinieri* and injures a fourth. Fascist Vincenzo Vinciguerra collaborated with the police in the case, revealing the way investigations followed wrong leads and generally covered up the strategy of tension by falsely blaming the left.
- May 17, 1973      Self-professed anarchist Gianfranco Bertoli throws a hand-grenade into a crowd outside the Milan police HQ killing four and injuring twelve. Thought to be revenge for the murder, while under interrogation for the Piazza Fontana bombing, of anarchist railway worker Giuseppe Pinelli. It was later discovered that Bertoli worked for SIFAR, i.e. military intelligence, and was a member of the Gladio conspiracy.
- 1974      Red Brigade founders Renato Curcio and Alberto Franceschini arrested, paving the way for Mario Moretti, former member of Superclan, and his strategy of constant military escalation. Moretti maintains contacts with CIA front Hyperion Language School in Paris. Moretti was so suspect that even the Red Brigaders put him on trial in prison when he was arrested - he wasn't acquitted or convicted, rather isolated from his comrades. Note that in 1974, the Brigades had also been infiltrated by Marco Pisetta and then Silvano Girotto. Despite the information they gave to authorities regarding Brigade activity, the group was allowed to carry on.
- April 18, 1974      Red Brigades kidnap Mario Sossi, a right-wing magistrate from Genoa. He was held, then released without any concessions from



authorities. Later revealed that the secret service had planned to kidnap a left-wing lawyer in contact with the Red Brigades to force Sossi's release. Note that former counter-espionage chief Giandelio Maletti had reports in 1975 that the Red Brigades were "recruiting terrorists from all sides and the leaders remained in the shadows, but I wouldn't say you could describe them as leftists." Many secret services officers reported that it was well-known where Sossi was being held. Maletti agreed that there were Eastern Bloc agents in the Brigades, but that one found "further in, in the most secret compartment, the infiltrators of the Interior Ministry and Western secret services."

May 28, 1974

Bombing in Brescia during a union and anti-fascist protest kills eight and injures 94. In May 1987 trial one of the terrorists stated that, "All the bombings had a single purpose: to create social tension and prepare the conditions for intervention by the army."

June 17, 1974

Killing of neo-fascists by the Red Brigades; speculation that it was an internal right-wing dispute.

August 1974

Bombing of the Italicus express train. 12 deaths, 105 injuries. The bombing was linked to the P2 by the courts - the injured parties were on record stating that the accused had been "inspired, armed and financed by freemasonry, which made use of subversion and right-wing terrorism in the framework of the so-called 'strategy of tension' to create the conditions for a possible *coup d'etat*."

September 1974

As Foreign Minister, Aldo Moro visits the United States. Kissinger opposes Moro's efforts at a historic compromise with the communists and his pro-Arab foreign policy. The next day Moro becomes sick and swears off politics. He is also said to have been warned by US intelligence that his policies would be blocked and that groups on the fringes of the official secret services might be used. His wife recalled his recounting of the meeting: "You must abandon your policy of bringing all the political forces in your country into dire collaboration. Either you give this up or you will pay dearly for it. Press reports in the US carried Kissinger's unabashed intention use covert action to undermine communism in Italy."

Sept.-October 31, 1974 General Vito Miceli, then head of Italian military intelligence, test

released unharmed. Beginning of the end for the Red Brigade.

- December 1987      Gelli sentenced to eight years for financing an armed band responsible for planting bombs on railway lines in Tuscany between 1973 and 1975. This and other convictions would later be reversed by complex legal maneuvers.
- 1990      Christian Democrat-controlled channel of state-run Italian television broadcasts allegations by an American who claimed to have worked for the CIA about Gelli's manipulation of Italian terrorism and his relationship with the CIA. He claimed that the CIA financed P2 drug trafficking and terrorism.
- August 3, 1990      Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti makes a partial disclosure of Operation Gladio, a secret NATO resistance network sponsored by SIFAR and the CIA since 1963 and armed with Eastern Bloc weapons. They trained to go into action in the event of an Eastern Bloc invasion of Italy or domestic communist subversion. Andreotti quells the crisis by claiming that Gladio was legitimate. Evidence was destroyed and false information was supplied by President Francesco Cossiga. Demonstrations calling for the truth regarding Gladio and the right-wing bombings. Gladio was linked with the Parallel SID, Piano Solo plan and the Rosa dei Venti conspiracy to plot coups in the Seventies. Gladio may have been involved in the Red Brigades' kidnap of Aldo Moro (tied by a photocopier from the secret service ending up with the Red Brigades and by the fact that Moro's body was left near what had been a gladiator amphitheater, as Mino Pecorelli had predicted before Moro was found: "I read in a book that in those days runaway slaves and prisoners were taken there so that they could fight one another to the death. Who knows what there was in the destiny of Moro that his death should be discovered next to that wall? The blood of yesterday and the blood of today").

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“...absolute, aristocratic cynicism...”

“A real and authentic manifesto of the political and economic right in Italy... In any case, what is certain is that it is the most cynical political-economic diagnosis ever made in Italy...” *Europeo* (9-18-75)

“The life and experiences of Censor are intimately tied to those of the most enlightened capitalism in our country.” *Panorama* (9-11-75)

“A mystical vision of power seems to be the light that guides the thought of Censor... The psychoanalytic key can, without doubt, give us the best indication of what provoked this ‘real report’: one could speak of the complex of the protagonist...” *Corriere della Sera* (9-27-75)

“It is, in sum, a perfect construction of great literary value. The elevated style, while being impeccably sustained, never fails to be enjoyable, which is to say accessible... doing justice to the questions on the wrapper that defies the reader to guess who Censor is, ‘A conservative? A cynical reactionary?

A partisan of the left in disguise?" *La Stampa* (10-31-75)

"One can *not* share Censor's elitist conceptions and aristocratic cynicism that are derived from his long familiarity with Machiavelli, Alfieri, Clausewitz and many conceptual categories from classical literature, *and still* value a discourse that is given from the point of view of those who have real power and the problem of losing as little of it as possible..." *Europa-Domani* (10-15-75)

"The latest anonymous writer to succeed calls himself Censor... being incapable of defending itself, the bourgeoisie must form an alliance with the Italian Communist Party to save the capitalist system. But if it doesn't do it right away, an orgy of proletarian revolution will sweep the structures of this society." *L'Espresso* (10-5-75)

"Who could this Censor be who is so well-informed about the secret of things?... What one reads about the 'hot autumn,' the strategy of tension, the bombs and massacre of Piazza Fontana can only be forbidden given the authority that the anonymous author has already acquired and because of the seriousness of his affirmations... Until now the thesis of "State massacre" was only supported by ultra-left groups; the communist party itself is officially reluctant to make it its own. But it is stupefying that this thesis is publicly stated by a committed conservative whose only worry is to save capitalism in Italy." *Il Resto del Carlino* (9-11-75)

"The final part of the pamphlet is absolute, aristocratic cynicism." *Il Giorno* (8-31-75)