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Down with the Proletariat, Long Live Communism!

Les Amis du Potlatch

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1979

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1979

they aspire to: the world of which their revolt is the bearer, the communism.

Proletarians, one more effort to stop being ourselves...

omy and its condition depends its victory. In the social war, the original ratio of military forces is not decisive. The revolution must deprive the army of a stake to defend and undermine its material base. Thus, breaking up the soldiers' barracks by fraternization demonstrations can sometimes be much more effective than disorderly attacks. With more destructive power than ever before, the military is seeing its traditional values decay as they become alien to the modern world. By the nature of its weapons and technical apparatus, it is dependent on its economic base as it has never been. If the producers consistently and purposefully use their strength, then they will have enough to starve, discourage, divide, paralyze, rally, and crush their opponents. If they don't take advantage of their position, of the enemy's initial disarray, to attack capital where it is vulnerable, then they are the ones who will become an easy target for the ideological and political counter-revolution first, and then military.

Revolutionary violence is a social relation that upsets all beings, that makes men the subjects of their own history. But the insurgents would slip into the enemy's terrain if they engaged in a camp-versus-camp confrontation, if they sought to stabilize a balance of power, to preserve "gains. The insurrection would then degenerate into civil war, a fatal slide that would only reproduce the cause of the failure of the revolutionary past (communards-versaillists, anarchists-franquists...). Faced with an adversary bogged down in a militaristic conception of confrontation, the insurgents also had the advantage of flexibility and mobility. Not fearing to put into play passions, imagination, audacity, the insurrection must unceasingly be based on its own dynamics: communization.

Many people are confusedly aware that we are living in the end of a world, even if they do not yet know what is going to happen: the movement has not yet had the strength to make its content visible and to assert its perspectives. Those who support less and less the capitalist barbarism must discover what

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prise, instead of being the lever that breaks down the partitions of social life, the means to associate and to communize.

Making decisions leads to divergences. Communism does not mean the end of all opposition, on the contrary it enriches them by changing their content. Conflicts no longer come from personal interests to be preserved, but from the solutions that each one proposes to satisfy the common interest. It is these very divergences that will make it possible to compare the possibilities of activities impelled by the councils, without falling back into parliamentary-style debates.

The goal of the communist revolution is not to found a democratic or dictatorial system of authority, but an altogether different activity. The problem of power arises when people lose the power to transform themselves and their environment, when they are forced to act for a purpose other than the content of their activity.

The communist revolution does not seek power, but it needs to be able to realize its measures. It solves this question because it attacks its cause: it is the appropriation of all the material conditions of life. It is by breaking the bonds of dependence and isolation that the revolution will destroy the state and politics. This destruction is not automatic. It will not disappear little by little, as the sphere of non-market and non-wage activities grows. Or rather, this sphere would be very fragile if it allowed the state to exist alongside it, as leftists and ecologists would like to do. One of the tasks of revolutionaries is to put forward measures that will tend to undermine the strength of the state and create an irreversible situation. For example, destroying all civil registration and other mapping of the population by the various administrations would attack both economic and repressive functions. The processes of centralization by computer and micro-film make the state machine ultimately more vulnerable.

Communism is the goal and the weapon of the insurrection. On the capacity of the proletariat to revolutionize the econ-

tastes, the need for quantity no longer being opposed to the requirement for quality.

Thus, excessive specialization is giving way to versatility. One is at the same time a worker, a farmer, an artist and a scientist; in fact beyond all these narrow and primitive categories. Production no longer excludes experimentation, contacts and “wastes of time,” and learning leaves the school and university ghettos to merge into the very movement of productive activity.

Towards Insurrection

Communization passes through the resurgence of the revolutionary councils that the proletarian insurrections of this century have brought to the surface in an embryonic state. If councils develop in the neighborhoods, in the units of production, this mode of association emanating directly from the wandering masses, will regulate the practical organization and the control of the necessary tasks, and thus will have to bypass the organs of political representation.

The councils of the past, in spite of their defects and timidity, have shown the capacity of the workers to take care of their own affairs. The best manifestations of the councils have been when they have had to respond quickly, clearly and harshly to their enemies. They have forged themselves directly as the organization of struggle. But often they got bogged down in administration and waiting. We then saw magnificent organizations being built, but in a vacuum, outside the imperatives of the struggle and the tasks to be carried out. These organizations are neither the miracle recipe nor the goal of the revolution. Communism is not the replacement of the power of the bourgeoisie by the power of the councils, of capitalist management by workers' management. The risk for the latter is to become a pretext to continue to chain the workers to the enter-

Down with the proletariat. Those who do not aim to become a power among the powers of this world, but want to break them, could summarize their program as follows: “Down with the proletariat.” Not obviously in the sense of opposition to proletarians as men, but precisely because one can only be a man by refusing to be a proletarian. The revolutionaries do not propose the improvement of the proletarian condition but its suppression. The revolution will be proletarian through those who make it and anti-proletarian in content.

Long live communism! The skirmishes of the social war of the last ten years accentuate the threat to the misery of wage labour. The crisis can only get worse, a peaceful solution is excluded.

For the moment the forces of the old world are compelled to take the offensive. But nothing is set in stone yet. To refuse the enemy's call for reforms preserving the supremacy of the economic world. To recognize our terrain; putting forward the possibility of communism. This is what the theory of communist revolution contributes to. Let us give ourselves the decisive weapons for the coming conflagration.

Friends of the Potlatch, 1979.

DOWN WITH THE PROLETARIAT.

Accepted servitude

The greatest obstacle to the emancipation of the proletarian lies within himself. The real disaster for the worker is his complacency in the face of his own misery, his way of accommodating and consoling himself with his own powerlessness. And yet experience has taught him that he can have no recourse to the system that oppresses him and that he cannot make it through without fighting. But he prefers to let out his frustration into a vacuum and dress up his passivity with false anger.

Fatalism and resignation prevail among workers. It's clear that there will always be bosses, in fact there always have been; there's not much to hope for when you were born on the wrong side of the fence. Of course, it happens that the proletariat gets angry and no longer accepts a situation that he considers unbearable. But does it lead him to develop a plan of action? No! Failing to reach those who prosper on his back, he unloads his resentment on those he meets at the corner of the street: petty bosses, beggars and other dregs. He feels he is supporting their livelihood. For the same reasons, he resents his wife and children if they do not give him the satisfaction he expects and do not compensate, by an impeccably kept household or appropriate school results, his feeling of social inferiority. The employee will proudly distance himself from the worker because the latter gets his hands dirty and in return will be despised as a parasitic paper-pusher. The unionized worker will feel superior to the one who is not yet unionized but who should be conscientized. In turn, he will provide a subject for jokes, bad ones.

Even when he is not embittered, unable to recognize the good in life and his own share of luck, the proletariat remains a prisoner of his narrow-minded way of life. He accepts his servitude to the point of recognizing, at a certain age, that things are gradually improving, that the discontented youth should know how to recognize "achievements."

There is a very widespread feeling shared by the proletarians of all countries. It is not internationalism, but the feeling that things could be worse elsewhere... Better to hold on to one's place, because next door, and for the same job... The worker has the consolation of having found, in the midst of the general misfortune, a hideout.

Work is still the best police force. It keeps everyone in check and powerfully hinders the development of reason, of desires, of the taste for independence, because it consumes an extraordinary quantity of nervous strain which is thus withdrawn

very notion of counterpart disappears, since my satisfaction is to enrich the development of the community.

Communism is not simply the generalization of free goods, the world as it is minus money, a gigantic self-service. It does not eliminate painful choices, nor efforts. Its establishment will not be without difficulty: and to believe it easy is as chimerical as to claim it impossible. The persistence throughout the ages of class struggle and proletarian uprisings shows its necessity. And it is not so much the strength of the masters as the immensity of the task that has made them fail. There is an enormous leap to be made and only this leap ensures the victory of the proletariat class, at the same time as it means its negation.

To provide free of charge the goods necessary to satisfy essential needs, that is what the techniques that support the invasion of all aspects of life by the commodity allow. Making food, clothing, housing, means of transport and a whole series of elaborate products available to everyone is immediately possible for the industrialized countries, but could be extended to the rest of the planet quite rapidly. Moreover, if the end of the commodity implies a gigantic transformation of the content of the production and use of goods, it entails the end of the separation of luxury and necessity.

If the use of automation is currently limited to a few industries (steel, petrochemicals, etc.), communization will lead to a more extensive use of automatisms which are, if not quite simple in their principles, at least easily applicable to many activities. The modern machinism (cf. the electronic control), does not allow simply to increase the productivity, to limit the human interventions, but also to generalize the access to the machine tools. To manufacture massively, in the most automated way possible, utilitarian and standardized goods, does not prevent the circulation of materials, tools and machines used to transform them. We must put an end to the reign of the pre-digested, so that everyone can be active according to his or her

opposition between work and leisure. It allows the reunification of human activity on the basis of all technical and human achievements. The worker is no longer chained to the factory, the manager is no longer tied to his briefcase. The need to act is no longer subject to the need for money.

Abolition of work and exchange

The human community and the end of the enterprise as a unit of productive life bring about the end of exchange. To abolish the money that serves exchange is not to return to that primitive form of exchange that is barter. Objects do not circulate in one direction with the compensation of other objects in the opposite direction. They are distributed directly according to need, designed and produced to develop the possibilities of the most socially meaningful activities.

Obviously, for bankers and certain ideologues, we can never do without money: it is to the social body what blood is to the human body. However, we do not have to go back far to find a time when the vast majority of peasant humanity produced essentially to satisfy its family needs and hardly practiced monetary exchange.

Today the compulsion to sell one's labor power is not the result of a direct and personal force, but an economic and anonymous one. Through the need for money, it seems that it is the dictatorship of one's own needs that forces the worker to surrender to grief, that this is a natural fact.

The separation between men is so deep that money, this abstract social bond, appears as the only commodity that is truly communal, passing indifferently and odorlessly from hand to hand. Humanity can only do without money, this abstract, impersonal relationship, by uniting concretely in the communist association. At present, my personal contribution is measured only in terms of a personal reward: with the association, the

from better things like reflection, daydreaming, and love; it constantly presents to the eye a petty goal and assures mediocre but regular satisfactions. Thus a society in which people work hard all the time will have more security: and security is nowadays worshipped as the supreme deity.

There are still fools who honor this repulsive activity and don't spontaneously run away from it. The one who destroys his health day after day will be proud of his strong biceps and happy that he doesn't need to do sports anymore to be in shape. In some workshops there is a real Olympic mentality. Piece-work and bonuses are not even necessary for everyone to set a record. Open contempt or paternalism for those who are not capable or do not care. However, it is increasingly difficult to believe in the real usefulness of what one does, and indifference, even disgust, towards work is gaining ground.

However, those who stop working often have a guilty conscience. Sick or unemployed, many are afraid of not being up to the task, ashamed of letting themselves go. Those who measure themselves by their work believe they are proving to themselves that they are not a wreck and that they have a social purpose. This is the fundamental character of proletarian misery: without work, life has no consistency, no meaning, no reality.

It is not the interest of the task that brings us back to work, but boredom as well as the need for a salary. The routine of daily life can make one believe that access to the after-work world or even unemployment is a liberation. One has to become unemployed or retired to see the opposite. Retirement or unemployment is work at zero.

Modern misery is not expressed by the lack of leisure or the shortage of consumer goods, but by the separation of all activities, the fragmentation of time, the isolation of men. On the one hand, as an often obsessive and fragmented productive activity where the necessities of the production of capital make of man an empty shell of time, an instrument among the instruments. On the other hand, as free time where he is supposed to belong

to himself but where, domesticated by education and dumbed down by work, he is cut off from everything by the necessity of paying things.

Consumption, and especially the dreams fostered by it, remain the ultimate consolation. The worker, the saleswoman or the secretary, in addition to the time devoted to window-shopping and the reading of photo novels, uses her vitality to enhance her social rank through visible grooming efforts. "Femininity" can have a field day thanks to the miracles of all accessible goods. Desire to be taken into consideration and submissive adhesion to the servile representations of the woman intermingle in order to deceive her more on the reality of her own fate. The working-class "household" cherishes the idea of this small suburban house that will belong to it one day and where "we will finally be at home". But above all there is the car. One dreams of buying it, of changing it. It is the measure of wealth and lifestyle, it provides an inexhaustible subject of conversation. Even if the worker prefers to talk to the bar owner about the problems he has with his wife and to show him pictures of his kids, it is the garage owner who remains his real confidant.

The worker is often suspicious of politics, but rarely does he criticize politics and politicians. Inflated by the momentary importance that this confers on him and excited by the sporting side of the matter, he does not refuse to go and cast his ballot. All it takes is for the wind of "Union" to start blowing again for all his apparently extinguished illusions to be revived. It doesn't matter that the left has regularly betrayed the hopes that the masses placed in it, that the social democrats supported the deadly war in 1914, participated in the worst bourgeois schemes, supported colonial repression. As for the so-called communists, as soon as they touch power, they do more than abandon the defense of workers' interests: they call for rolling up their sleeves and do not hesitate to physically repress the proletariat as in Kronstadt, Barcelona or Budapest.

work and play. From now on, we can conceive hunting, gathering, gardening as something other than work while being productive activities. The same is true for activities related to industry, but the cold metal of machinism weighs on our imagination, especially since these tasks can only become sources of pleasure themselves with the emancipation of all humanity.

Through incessant technological innovations, through the rationalization of the use of labor power, capitalism has multiplied productive efficiency. The reduction of working time: the standardization of parts, the interchangeability of tasks... this is what makes humanity run. Some comment that progress leads to better qualification. And they cite the increase in the number of engineers throughout the 20th century. But they forget to mention that in the USA the number of doormen has increased by the same amount during the same period... The race for productivity has in fact deepened the degradation and devaluation of work.

Scientific and technical achievements show that scarcity arises from abundance itself. While automobile congestion is set against the automobile, pharmaceutical consumption against health, the destruction of nature against its humanization, the fault lies in the use of the commodity as such. Why move when, in the system of objects, there is no one left to meet? Consumption, in spite of all the false promises of advertising, can no longer prove to be a remedy against misery. The colonization of all social life by merchandise and money has undermined traditional values and respect for institutions. The most intimate misery reveals itself to be shaped by capital. But this destruction is also a liberation and a multiplication of desires.

Communism is only possible thanks to the clearing away of capitalism. It is not the defense of the proletarians, but the abolition of the proletarian condition. It does not bring the workers to power and does not level the whole population to the same income. It puts an end to wage slavery, to productivism, to the

ical need for communism and made it an immediate requirement, in accordance with its deep nature. But communism was not invented by individual thinkers. It is the old aspiration to abundance and community that was present in the slave revolts of antiquity as well as in the peasant revolts of the Middle Ages.

Capitalism tries to erase all traces of communism. But the most integrated and servile activity is nourished by participation, creation, communication, initiative, even if these faculties cannot be developed. The need for a salary is not enough to make the worker function. He has to put in his own effort.

Communism is not a fixed form of social organization. It is not constructed as those who draw plans on the comet claim. It arises constantly within human activity, even if it can only develop at certain times. The more activity stands up against capital, the more it tends to draw communism. When people start to have experiences to communicate, things to say and do, consciousness ceases to be the passive reflection of congealed representations and situations. The more the struggle deepens, the more those who take part in it find themselves cleansed of the prejudices and pettiness that used to inhabit them. Their consciousness is unraveled and they look at reality and their existence with new and astonished eyes.

The proletarians cannot reappropriate the means of production and a totally fragmented activity piecemeal, they have to associate and pool. But, beyond the movement of reappropriation and pooling, a new activity develops, new relationships are born, buried passions are reawakened, the relation of domination of objects over men is reversed.

The capitalist system is based on the opposition production/consumption. Isn't the existence of the proletarian double? Pressed, timed, panting when he scratches; and solicited, flattered, played when he consumes. With communism, it is not so much the maximum reduction of the working time that is important, but the unveiling of the phony character of the opposition work/leisure. Primitive societies used the same word for

But what does the worker know about the history of proletarian struggles? Of the Paris Commune, of the Russian revolution, of the strikes under the Popular Front, he only knows the popular representations and images that the political apparatuses and the left-wing teachers have concocted for him.

If he is a member of a Stalinist party, the "worker" will denounce the abusive profits of the monopolies and the shameful speculations of the property developers. But he will not understand what the profit and the function of the boss really are. He will only see theft, parasitism, abuse of the "two hundred families," and not, first of all, economic functions that need to be liquidated by undermining their basis: capital and wage labor. As soon as we talk about a model socialist country, Sweden or Cuba, depending on taste, these profits, these splendid offices, these dachas at the service of the people will immediately seem more honest. Let any fat bureaucrat be a "workers' leader" and his lifestyle will become a question of workers' dignity. In the countries where the proletariat exercises its dictatorship, how satisfied must the worker be, in the morning at the factory, when he points and lifts his cap in front of the foreman, to know that in fact he is the owner of his enterprise, and in the last instance the superior of his superiors?...

The enemy of the proletariat is not so much the power of the capitalists or of the bureaucrats as the dictatorship of the laws of the economy on the needs, the activity and the life of men. The modern counter-revolution is centered on the defense of the proletarian condition and not on the maintenance of bourgeois privileges. It is in the name of the proletariat and economic necessities, with the help of its political and trade union representatives, that attempts are made to save capitalist society.

The arrangement of servitude

Protesting and making demands is also part of the worker's role and powerlessness. Impotence, decoupling from reality and lack of perspective to which his work first conditions him. Passive and isolated, he accepts to rely on bureaucratic apparatuses, believing to find there the cohesion he misses.

The worker, when he make demands within his "responsible organizations," endorses what is at the root of his misery. What does he demand? bread? space? machines? the means to enjoy his life, to meet friends, to act and produce for them and with them? No. What he obstinately demands is the guarantee of being able to work, to be exploited in the dungeons of wage labor, and in return the advancement of the age of retirement, so that the young can enjoy their right to work and the old can prepare for their burial. That the worker is forced by the economic environment to sell himself in order to obtain a living is fine, but that once he is at work he does everything possible to avoid damaging his health, to pursue activities that are more profitable and to reduce the time during which he is exploited, is obvious. These attitudes, which must take into account the capitalist environment, have nothing to do with the demand for the right to work and pension rights.

Reforms are not conquests of the proletariat, but the adjustments that the system is obliged to make to ensure its survival and progression. It generally does nothing — sometimes under the pressure of the masses — but liquidates its archaisms. Workers' reformism only manages to cover the necessities of capital's development, in particular the need to treat labor power relatively well in order to be able to exploit it more intensively.

The crisis and the unrest it causes are a moment of hope for the upstarts and the bureaucrats. They try to slip into the good places that have become free because of the action of the proletariat. This was seen in particular during the Russian revolution where the Bolshevik party pushed back, sometimes militarily,

An activity and a community that escapes wage labor takes shape under the mask, when workers use machines for their own ends. The order "It is necessary to make that" is replaced by a question: "What is it possible to make?" This work, if it is a goal in itself, is not without a purpose. The possibilities are not unlimited, but the worker under the mask makes his head work, inquires. He reviews the equipment around him, examines the unused possibilities other than those offered by his machine: those of the small auxiliary machines, the plate shearing machine in the corner of the shop, the grinding wheel, the tools at his disposal; and he decides. This work behind a mask, humble, performed in secret, is the seed of a free and creative work: such is the secret of this passion.

When workers act against capital, their action is not simply a means but also the outline of something else, of a world where human activity will no longer be chained but liberated, no longer subjected to the production of wealth, but enriched and the manifestation of wealth itself. In the struggle, the worker becomes master of himself and regains control of his own gestures. The sanctity of tools and the oppressive seriousness of factory reality collapse. With sabotage, but more generally with everything that directly attacks the organization of work, joy reappears.

In the initiative which reappears, the bonds which are tied, the racisms of any nature which are erased, the gratuity of the gestures and the feelings, it is the community which is reborn. The proletarians in revolt, produce an infinitely richer use of their life, of the time and the space of which they become fleetingly the masters. The affirmation of their human life and no more life of the capital is immediately communist.

The yearning for communism

The need for human community is the heart of communism. The descriptions of the Utopians already manifested the histor-

By strike, sabotage, disobedience of all kinds, the workers can threaten the development of capital. They are able to block the production of such and such an indispensable good or service, to stop the running of large plants, to divert production to their own account.

This power can be used at a higher level to avoid inconvenience to others. A transport strike results in lost workdays. So much the worse for the workaholics. There are other ways to pressure people to pay for those days. Some transportation strikes have already resulted in a simple stop of payment control. What about free delivery of certain products, postal workers who no longer cancel letters, cashiers who stop work and allow customers to leave without paying, employees who destroy important papers? Extraordinary possibilities for action exist almost everywhere. What is missing is the boldness, the agreement, the real taste for efficiency and play.

It is already significant that regularly the riots of our time, whether they take place in the United States, Poland, London or Cairo, lead to the storming of stores. A blackout in July '77 in New York and respectable fathers participate in the looting along with the "thugs."

To defend in all circumstances the methods dear to the trade unionists, to warn before going on strike, to make cautionary strikes, to protect the employer's or state property, is to give in to the fetishism of capital and to remain its prisoner, not to use what it has itself concentrated in the hands of the proletarians. The workers for whom the tool of labor is no longer a sacred thing that must not be diverted from its primary function, those who no longer accept to sacrifice their lives before fetishes, will know when the time comes how to make the best use of the instruments bequeathed to them by capital. They will know how to put back into operation all that will be necessary to assure the revolutionary tasks: to clothe themselves, to feed themselves, to associate, to arm themselves... to live.

the forces of the revolution to restore capitalist order and discipline in the factories: but also during the German (1918/1923), Spanish (1936/1937) revolutions...

Those who base their power as negotiators of labor power on the impotence and atomization of the proletarians, are defenders of this system of exploitation. Their program is the management of the proletarian condition. They can shout "Long live the proletariat," since they live off the proletariat! And if they display themselves shamelessly, these heirs of the failure of proletarian insurrections, it is because they have prospered on their burial.

Self-management, a great illusion

Capital has commodified all social relations. But this very movement has rendered fragile the system's regulatory mechanisms and all the unstable equilibria of accumulation on which it rests, whether monetary, social, demographic or ecological. The crisis of 1929 came after the crushing of the proletariat (the failure of the revolutionary period of the 1920s); on the other hand, the crisis we are experiencing comes at a time when the proletariat is rediscovering its strength and a decisive confrontation is being prepared.

The capitalist universe is based on the proletariat as no other class society was based on its slaves. The fundamental class of capitalism is the proletariat, not the bourgeoisie. As long as there is a proletariat, there is capitalism, and it is the revolutionary character of capitalism to extend the proletariat, the class that expresses the dissolution of all classes, the class that can only reconquer its humanity and appropriate its world by upsetting its condition and destroying capital.

The proletariat is pushed to action all the more so that with the crisis, the workers' movement becomes incapable of managing wage labor. Compared to their ancestors and the wretched of the Third World, the exploited of the developed

countries are relatively spoiled. Yet the revolutionary transformation to come will rest on them, because the gap between what is and what would be possible is greater than ever. This gap, whether or not they are aware of it, is a contradiction that incites and will incite them all the more to act in order to unravel the situation.

For lack of being able to offer a bourgeois, proprietary, moral or religious ideology to the dispossessed, some propose a proletarian ideology: socialism, self-management. The generalization of wage-earning has destroyed the old values of property and obliges capital to put forward access to responsibilities, the enrichment of tasks, the democratization of power in the enterprise, participation. Even more so when economic difficulties make cash compensation more costly.

The problem of management only becomes central in a fragmented and atomized universe, where men remain powerless before economic necessity. The advocates of self-management and other apostles of workers' control want to tie the workers to "their" company. This is concretely presented as the action of committees in each enterprise, scrutinizing the accounts, controlling the boss or the management, monitoring both production and commercial activities. A kind of eternal economy is thus assumed, whose laws would be more or less identical under capitalism and communism: the workers would thus have to learn the rules of administration and commerce. The logic of the commodity imposes itself and determines everything: what will be manufactured, how, etc... But the problem for the proletariat is not to claim the "conception" of what it would ensure today only the "manufacture."

In the best case, its solution would be synonymous with self-management of capital. The example of Lip is striking: the tasks previously carried out by the boss become the workers' tasks. In addition to the material production process, they take care of the marketing. But all the problems that "management" can pose are completely different in a non-market society.

This is why workers' control is an absurdity: workers can only learn from it capitalist management, whatever the intentions of those who do it.

Praised by the new ideologues, self-management is adorned with the appeal of utopia. But what a sad dream it is, where the confusion of a capitalism without a capitalist would be added to the ridicule of workers getting enthusiastic tomorrow for what they don't care about today: the maintenance of the wage-earning system... Faced with future outbursts, the democratic left sees in self-management a discourse that allows it to strengthen itself, to be more complete, to absorb a movement that is threatening.

LONG LIVE COMMUNISM

Communism stumbled

What the press and television present as "class struggle," the workers' struggle, is very often only a prefabricated political-union spectacle. The real strength of the working class and the fear it can inspire are expressed in a more effective and subterranean way. Attitudes of indecency, of refusal to work, have a greater impact on the level of wages than the ritualistic May Day parades. There is a complicity between the different powers that share society in order to conceal the social war that threatens them all.

Because of their situation, because of the enormous masses of capital that they are responsible for animating, because of the level of integration of all productive and economic acts, the workers have formidable means of action and pressure. Incomparable to those available to the oppressed in other times, and yet the consciousness of this strength is most often absent. It is not a question of an abstract power that the working class as a whole would possess, but of means that are concretely held even by restricted groups by virtue of their class situation.