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The Urgency of the Attack

Nicola Gai

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It is now an established fact that we live in a world of shit where the State and capital, basically undisturbed, impose all sorts of monstrosities on us. It is also certain that only a tiny minority of the population is trying to oppose the suppression of spaces of autonomy and freedom that make life worth living, in a more or less conscious way. As a part of this tiny minority, we anarchists are aware of the urgent need to destroy what oppresses us: why are we not more determined and acute?

Without doubt one of the greatest and most serious obstacles to action is the fear of really putting our lives at stake. This is a crucial point of the revolutionary struggle, which is often not sufficiently addressed because it forces us to come to terms with ourselves and our weaknesses. We praise so-called easily reproducible 'small actions', which certainly don't frighten the 'people'; and even if we are aware of the urgency and necessity of destructive attack on the authoritarian-technological system we are reluctant to get involved to the end, to consider ourselves at war and act consequently.

Certainly it is much easier to find oneself along with hundreds/thousands of people defending a territory threatened by some eco-monstrosity than to find oneself on one's own wait-

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Nicola is an anarchist prisoner accused of the wounding of nuclear power manager, Roberto Adinolfi.

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ing for the planner [of the monstrosity] outside his house. I'm not talking about bravery. Everyone is afraid and implements his/her strategies in order to control and manage this. Even those who take part in so-called 'social struggle' risk ending up in prison or being wounded (there are a hundred examples of this). I don't think this is the distinction; it is something more complex, i.e. the determination to engage in struggle practices that don't foresee any possibility of negotiation with power, and express total refusal of the existent.

We take part in meetings where we deceive ourselves by thinking we are contributing to making decisions, even if we usually adapt ourselves to what comrades with more charisma have suggested. Inevitably compromise is always downwards if we say we all have to grow up together (every time) without scaring anyone. We deceive ourselves into thinking we are contributing to some collective project, while it is often not our own. The fact that we find ourselves 'among the people' gives us the illusion we really are working for imminent insurrection. We can share our responsibilities with others and hope we won't be alone when things take a bad turn. We don't realize how much of our individual freedom we are losing, on the contrary we feel reassured by the limits imposed by meetings where we can hide our indecision behind the risk that our impatience could undermine the common project.

But it is only when we decide to put our lives totally at stake, when individually or with our comrades in affinity, we strike power right where we can do more harm, only then do we have total control of our lives and are able to say with joy and serenity that we are making our revolution. By realizing a perspective of direct attack we are freeing ourselves from the obstruction of defensive struggles and opening infinite possibilities of action and freedom. I'm not making a mere aesthetic exaltation of individual action, I'm aware that insurrection is a collective event which will break out when the oppressed rise up in arms, but I'm making a point about the method to contribute to pro-

alyze the authoritarian and deleterious aspects of technology and denounce the authoritarian projects of power, the less we sharpen our weapons. With more or less developed research on the latest breakthrough of control we terrorize those who would like to act. I'm not saying that we don't need analyses but that they don't have to become an end in themselves, exercises of intellectual skill detached from direct action. Whats the use of publishing endless lists of companies responsible for the destruction of nature if nobody attacks them? Already the magnitude and awfulness of the State and economic apparatuses themselves often make us doubt our chances to strike them effectively. Eco-disasters such as the sea of petrol in the Gulf of Mexico or Fukushima seem to suggest that it is not possible to stop the war that industrial society is waging on man and nature.

In spite of everything we are not helpless. Bare instruments of analysis, direct action and the determination of the few can demonstrate that we are not all resigned to accept passively and at the same time they show to the other exploited that it is still possible to fight back. For example, the action of the comrades of the Olga Nucleus of the FAI/FRI tells us that it is possible to express solidarity with those who suffer nuclear catastrophe, even on the other side of the word, and strike the nuclear power industry effectively.

I hope my consideration will serve to start off a debate among comrades, with the aim of highlighting and eliminating anything that limits our anarchist action. Courage and strength to the comrades who practice anonymous action, courage and strength to those who give a name to their anger, courage and strength to those who give birth to the FAI/FRI with their actions: there is an entire world to be demolished.

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voke it [insurrection]. Life is short and the work of demolition is too great and necessary to wait for everybody to be ready. On the contrary I'm convinced that only by fanning the flames with the example of action can we make that moment come closer.

I think another obstacle to anarchists' possibilities of attack is the way many comrades approach so-called 'social struggles'. In my opinion we often start from a wrong consideration: we feel different from the people and this leads us to seeing the social sphere as something inn which we have to work and approach with caution in order not to create fear, slowly bringing it to more advanced positions so that, once it is ready, we can all be together on the barricades of insurrection.

I'm convinced that anarchists are part of the social sphere and have to relate with the 'others' without all those 'paternalistic' attitudes which inevitably lead to politics. Anarchists must strike and attack with all their power, and others who have similar tensions will follow the example of our actions. We'll find new accomplices and finally, when all the other exploited decide to rise up, insurrection will break out. It is us who have to dictate deadlines and times for struggle. The more we are sharp and able to strike in the right places the more we create possibilities for practices of direct attack to spread. This doesn't mean that we don't have to take part in struggles that arise spontaneously, but we have to do it with our methods: sabotage and direct action.

If in a certain place people take to the streets to oppose something harmful it is not necessary for us to get to know these people one by one, that we cook polenta [typical northern Italy dish] with them and try to make the barricade they have erected advance a few centimetres. This won't bring the insurrectional perspective any closer, on the contrary it will weaken our strength. We have to strike the company responsible for the construction of the toxicity, those who plan it, those who finance it: we have to make it clear that anyone

can take their lives in their hands and destroy what destroys them. We have to clash with the police, not only when they try to disperse the demo in question; we have to provoke and attack them, let people see that it is possible, that they can/must strike first those who oppress them. Some might say that my way of seeing things and understanding action can harbour the germs of authoritarianism and vanguardism.

On the contrary I believe that my way contains the antidote to the two evils that plague revolutionary action. One doesn't disguise one's desires, one says clearly who one is and what one wants, and above all in an equal relationship with others one demonstrates that anyone can concretely oppose the status quo by arming their passions.

In my opinion politics lies exactly in the way one limits oneself in order to keep pace with all the others, in the way one puts some discourses aside in order not to 'frighten' people who are not ready to understand them. It must be clear that anarchists look for accomplices with whom to rise up and not public opinion in favour of vague speeches on freedom and self-management.

Another critique often addressed in a more or less intelligent or veiled way to those who practice attack on the State and capital is the risk of getting stuck in a vortex of action/repression with the apparatuses of power, without advancing on the road of insurrection. Of course it cannot be denied that the more we represent a danger for power the more the latter will harass and repress us. But unfortunately this is natural, and this concatenation of cause and effect will stop only when the spreading of attacks provokes an insurrectional rupture. To think that revolution will only be the fruit of the awareness of the exploited, after decades of 'training' in the gymnasiums of intermediate struggles, led by a minority of enlightened ones who hold their hands [of the exploited] and take a step a little ahead of them by continuously putting off the moment of armed conflict is pure illusion.

This tactic is a loser twice over: first because by renouncing direct action we renounce living our lives fully and making our revolution here and now; and secondly because it suggests that the State will give the oppressed time to become aware of their condition, to know each other, organize themselves and maybe rise up, before crushing them. A simple example could be that of the Free Republic of the Maddalena: swept away before anyone could deceive themselves and think they represented a real danger for the State authority.

Moreover the State has a very efficient weapon, perhaps more powerful than military force: recuperation. For example, when the housing problem becomes urgent and struggles and squatting multiply, when evictions don't sort the problem out, power can play the card of legalization. Once they have a roof over their heads, what will the exploited with whom we have struggled side by side do? Perhaps they will demand more and continue to rebel, but it is more likely that they will be happy, while we will be compelled to dive headlong into the next struggle hoping we'll be luckier this time... Only when our action doesn't contemplate possibilities for negotiation, when our struggle aims at the destruction of what oppresses us, will the State not be able to trick us with recuperation: either it has the strength to crush us or it must succumb. If we have the ability to try and spread the practice of attack and direct action, if we are able to throw petrol on the fire of social tensions, by exacerbating them and trying to prevent them from recomposing themselves, perhaps we will really be able to set the prairie on fire.

Before I conclude I would like to dwell on another aspect that seems to be an obstacle to our action: the analysis of the effects and transformations of dominion. Far too often it seems that this analysis is useless and doesn't give us the ability to affect reality; on the contrary it feeds fear and sense of impotence in the face of the magnitude of the challenge and the monstrosity of the harmfulness to be opposed. The more we an-