

# To the Greek comrades

Alfredo Cospito

July 19, 2016

*Note of **crocenera**: Alfredo's text dates back to over than a month ago. We have just received it with a request to circulate it to contribute to a debate among Greek comrades that has been going on for some time. We point out that the comrade, still held under high surveillance regime in the AS2 unit in Ferrara, is not formally subjected to censorship. However, delays and censorship in communication continue.*

## **A point of view**

***An individual contribution to the debate begun by the brothers and sisters of CCF-Urban guerrilla cell-Fai***

I had the pleasure of reading your piece in five points translated by 'Sin Banderas. Ni fronteras' and felt a strong desire to contribute to the debate. News is scarce in prison here in Italy and, hoping that the Spanish translation of the piece is reliable, I'll try the best I can to have my say. So I'll begin by saying that my contribution will be limited by the position I find myself in and my poor knowledge of the situation in Greece. I shall skim over your interesting analysis of the situation of the Greek anarchist movement and its historical development over the last ten years, which strongly reminds me (with due historical differences) of the 'retreat' following the experience of armed struggle in Italy in the 70s (without, fortunately for you, the disgusting aftermath of the *pentiti* ['repentant terrorists'] and dissociated), which here in Italy, just to be optimistic, led to the birth of a more vital and original anarchism from the ashes of the armed struggle phenomenon.

I agree with you that the words of imprisoned anarchists must not be sanctified or taken as absolute truth; they are simply theoretical contributions to the struggle. Likewise I totally agree with you when you maintain that we should 'Remember our past experiences, not to imitate them but to go beyond them'. Precisely for this reason the creation of an 'autonomous anarchist movement', an 'autonomous anarchist pole for the organization of the anarchist urban guerrilla', an 'international anarchist federation', seems to me to be a step backward. A return to the past, to the old schema that risk taking us back to the classic specific organization of synthesis, an old instrument, a blunt scalpel.

After 'Black December', a splendid campaign of action that many Fai-Fri groups participated in, you felt the need to propose a leap forward, you felt the need for an 'autonomous anarchist

pole' structured on 'its own political mechanisms, without bureaucracy, our own meetings without meddlers, our own organizations without ranks', and you did this in the name of the CCF-Urban guerrilla cell-Fai. I perfectly understand your enthusiasm and desire to become stronger, more effective, to unite the various revolutionary anarchist tendencies, individualists, nihilists, insurrectionalists, rebels, but I don't think this is the right way. And above all I don't think that a proposal of this kind should come from a Fai/Fri cell.

I mean, to form a structured organization through the creation of assemblies would inevitably lead to the creation of specific organizations, thus distorting the Fai-Fri instrument of informality, diverting the objectives the informal federation has given itself, taking its simple nature of instrument of communication away from it.

A proposal such as yours is certainly a generous effort, but in the name of the Fai-Fri to push for the birth of an autonomous anarchist pole, make a quantitative ideological discourse of aggregating sectors of the movement, would transform the informal federation into an organization that with such presuppositions by its very nature would inevitably become hegemonic, impoverishing it, slowing it down, and in the long run killing it.

A proposal such as yours made in the name of the Fai-Fri would divide rather than unite, weaken rather than strengthen. I'll never tire of repeating it, in my opinion the informal federation must 'limit itself' to being a simple instrument which even comrades like myself, totally extraneous to any organization, can use, giving themselves the possibility of relating with other individuals or nuclei scattered around the world. Fai-Fri is a weapon of war, and the simpler its structure, the more elementary its dynamics, the more efficient it will be. Reducing its complexity increases its effectiveness. Like a sharpened knife, a well-oiled Tokaref. In my opinion coordination and assembly are the two methodologies that should be avoided in order not to transform the Fai into a mammoth, slow, structured organization. Two methodologies that would risk turning it into a specific anarchist organization, basically no different from the usual anarchist federation impregnated with ideology, one that smooths out all the dissent around it until it disappears under the blows of repression.

Both coordination and assemblies require that groups and individuals know one another directly. Representatives of the various groups need to meet in order to coordinate and establish deadlines for carrying out actions, in terms of time etc. In assemblies individuals know one another and say what they think, inevitably leading to leaderism: those who can talk or move better, those who have more time to dedicate to the assembly dictate its line, generating hierarchies and delegating.

Both coordination and assembly are exposed to repression, everyone knows everyone else, it's like a house of cards, if one falls all the others fall. The Fai, in a very simple and natural way through the collective experience of dozens of groups scattered throughout the world has, without even realizing it, substituted these two old methodologies with revolutionary campaigns that don't need deadlines or reciprocal knowledge, only the actions speak. There's no need for coordination when it is sufficient to communicate the beginning of a campaign with claims, pieces of writing that follow the actions and open debates among different tensions (insurrectionalists, individualists, nihilists, social and anti-social anarchists) thus creating new trajectories that are never characterized by uniformity, ideology, politics. As for the assembly this is a way of politicizing, and rendering ideological the simple and natural relations of affinity, friendship, love, sisterhood, brotherhood that every Fai-Fri group has within itself and which concern their most

intimate lives and only in the moment of the action intertwine with the existence of the informal federation.

Relations that only concern the individual and their group and that cannot be imprisoned in a political instrument such as the assembly. There being no direct contact between the groups, any authoritarian mechanism that might emerge would necessarily remain limited to that particular group and wouldn't infest the whole organism.

That said, I know very well that those who want to make the revolution must necessarily relate with assemblies and coordinations especially as a revolution is made with the exploited, the excluded, the so-called 'real movement'. The informality of the Fai-Fri is not up to a 'political' objective of such a scale. The informal federation follows its trajectory of war which within the limits of its strength wants only to destroy and build nothing. An unpredictable trajectory, which is never ideological, never political, never constructive, and which sometimes intersects with that of the 'real movement'. Two trajectories with quite different objectives, the first the anarchist movement, combative, violent, revolutionary with its assemblies and specific organisations and the second the Fai-Fri, a simple instrument, elementary, basic, informal to make war, strike, then disappear, communicate without ever becoming visible. The two trajectories must be kept separate from each other as they would annihilate each other if they came together.

Above all one thing must be clear, one is only part of the Fai -Fri in the moment of the action, then each one returns to their life as anarchist, nihilist, individualist, to their own projects and rebel or revolutionary perspectives with all their adjuncts of assemblies, coordinations, affinity nuclei, occupations, communes, struggles in the territory and so on and so forth.

The Fai-Fri (at least that's how I see it) is not a party or a movement and even less an organization, but a means to strengthen single affinity groups or single individuals of action through international campaigns that unite our forces without coordination, without surrendering precious freedom.

A means that can be used by any anarchist who aspires to destruction here and now. It's not a perfect instrument, many things could be improved starting with the international campaigns, which, I think, have never been exploited to the full. Imagine concentrating forces on objectives of the same kind, on an international scale.

What are more international and harmful than the multinationals, the technology industry, science... if campaigns are generic I think they end up losing strength and meaning if one limits oneself to mere testimonies of generic solidarity one doesn't fully exploit the real potential of a means that could (in that case yes) take a huge leap in quality.

The first generation of the CCF had one great merit, certain discourses that had been only made theoretically before, through their strength and consistency became concrete, came to life in the international campaigns. An old discourse, which the European anarchist youth federations had put into practice at the beginning of the 60s and which seemed to belong to a distant past, has come back to life today thanks to the courage and imagination of the brothers and sisters who have been locked up in the Greek prisons for years, never giving up. A very topical discourse, which through informality has been born again and is stronger than ever.

*Alfredo Cospito*

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