CLODO Communique following attack on Colomiers (FR) data-processing centre (1983)

Comité Liquidant Ou Détournant Les Ordinateurs (C.L.O.D.O.)

7 February 1983

The brain drain continues! Last night, at more than 6,000 meters/second, a fraction of the state's memories dissipated into air at Colomiers. Catalogues of offences, alerts and objects; catalogues of stolen vehicles; catalogues of vehicle registration cards; catalogues of migrant workers; the embryo of an anti-terrorist catalogue... The prefecture of Haute-Garonne experienced memory loss when its computer centre was shaken.

Of course they will say that they have duplicates in Paris (the pleasures of centralisation!), that there could have been human victims, and that it is a cowardly attack (the more one risks one's life and one's freedom, the more one is a coward... of course!). However, we know that for several weeks the prefecture of Haute-Garonne will be paralyzed. We also know that by using explosives for the first time (dismantling the locks and alarm system was beyond our competences) we will be treated as followers of Khadafi or Carlos, even if our arrangement of the explosives, and their discharging, left no room for accidents. Let's say it, once and for all: the end justified the means, and the risks were ours only.

The centralised computer system of policing that we were aiming at – that of files and secrecy –perfectly symbolizes what we are fighting against day after day. We do so because the spectacle is not our destiny. Many bosses have learned, and will learn, that their 'negligence' and 'bugs' are more costly than our fires and explosions.

Our society of "IF... GO TO" – squared, codified, aligned, controlled – this society where we connect like trains in a rail yard, desperately hoping to reduce chance and cancel the revolt, where those in power consider themselves the indispensable designer or analyst, where the binary and the quantitative are supposed to solve the crisis, this society in which we live is unbearable and inhuman.

In an appendix to the Nora-Minc report, Philippe Le-Moine wrote that he saw the computer as a tool for change. Indeed, the computer is only a tool, a pile of junk, which we take as neither a devil nor as a god. But it is a tool in the hands of the dominant and, as a result, it only reinforces hierarchies and inequalities. If computers could allow people to work 2 hours a day, they would produce unemployment for some and stupefaction for others... and the socialists turn them into the symbol of change! What could be more laughable and more distressing than the ecstatic bliss

of a Mitterand or of a Servan-Schreiber faced with the magical computer potion that will be the change of society!

The reality in which we are living is the multiplication of files; the alienation of programmers, desk clerks and operators (who are often unaware of what they are doing and, a fortiori, of the results of their work); the search for profit and perfection of rationalisation. Behind the smokescreen of an expanding microcomputer industry – with large and medium-sized systems which cost more than one million francs selling like hotcakes – IBM France, which prides itself on having become the 5th largest French exporter, is continuing its monopolistic hold.

The progress of technology is not the same as the progress of humanity. That some people see in the personal computer the 'man of the year' or the instrument of a rediscovered conviviality makes us smile. That others want to teach basic computer skills to 50 million French people in 2 years (following the example of the Cuban literacy campaigns) is even more of a joke. But when all this seems to justify the real computerization, the one that enables our flawed society, that causes the filing and the unemployment, the reinforcement of power and centralisation, then our laughter turns into a grimace, and fighting becomes necessary.

The leftist parties are as stupid and dangerous as the parties on the right, even if naivety and ignorance sometimes replace the thirst for profit. One need to only look at their miserable municipal campaigns... We refuse to choose between the plague and the cholera when the life or non-life of billions of people is at stake. By attacking this fragmentary, but oh so symbolic and significant, sector that is telematics, we join the struggle of billions of oppressed people, and we KNOW it. Our dreams of change have led us to sabotage – spectacular or not – but destruction carries its own opposite; don't you think, dialecticians!

C.L.O.D.O. (for reference: Comité liquidant our détournant les ordinateurs)

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The communiqué appeared in 01 Hebdo (numéro 735) on 7 February 1983 under the headline
"Le Clodo adresse une lettre à 01".
*Translator note: The communiqué appeared in 01 Hebdo (numéro 735) on 7 February 1983 under
the headline "Le Clodo adresse une lettre à 01". It was received ten days after CLODO's bombing of
the data-processing centre of Colomiers, a municipality just outside of Toulouse.*