

## “Notice to the Proletariat About the Events of the Last Few Hours”<sup>1</sup>

“Those who governed in the West were not impolitic. They judged it essential to save Italy. (...) This whole scheme was upset by a revolution more fatal than all the others. (...) thus delivering the mortal blow to the empire.”

(Montesquieu, *Considerations on the Causes of the Grandeur and Decadence of Rome*)<sup>2</sup>

Comrades,

Revolutionaries must not underestimate either the depth of the current class struggle or the crisis in which all the powers and political parties are floundering, *because that crisis is the result of their own struggles*. But revolutionaries should also not exaggerate and fall into a kind of apocalyptic optimism that announces the victory of total subversion the day after each conflict is settled and afterward relapses into the miserable, imbecilic disillusion of the recuperators, who are already talking about the “ebb of the movement” *precisely when that movement is extending beyond the workers and the factories*.

Yesterday in Milan, for the first time, 3000 delegates from 350 factory councils gathered in a joint assembly, thus breaking the monopoly on workers’ coordination maintained by the trade union bureaucrats and laying the foundations for the first autonomous organization of revolutionary workers since the defeat of the Workers Councils’ movement of 1919-20. Some of us attended this first assembly, which will be immediately followed by others. *The union bureaucracies will be defeated by the workers themselves!*

Today in Italy there is a real danger of *violent* repression and, in some cases, it has already started. But it is not enough to merely be aware of such a possibility, nor is it sufficient to simply protest against the repression: it must be stopped!

The repressive forces of the system are the unions, the police, and the secret services. At this time, these forces have two possible courses of action: either they conduct *preventive* repression of the struggles they fear will break out or they repress these struggles *after they’ve broken out*, though they know that each repressive measure they employ effectively feeds those struggles. In Padua, Florence and Naples, the repression and the arrests of workers and unemployed comrades preceded the violent explosion of the movement. In Bologna, it followed it, which was applauded by the so-called Communist Party. In Rome, the repression has just begun today.

Comrades,

The only way we can prevent this repression is to extend the current movement everywhere, and above all into the factories of every city in Italy. Yesterday, at the Teatro Lirico

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<sup>1</sup> “*Avviso al Proletariato Sugli Avvenimenti Delle Ultime Ore*” was signed “Speedy Pen,” dated Rome, 7 April 1977 and distributed in Rome and Milan. It has been translated into French as “*Avis au prolétariat sur les événements des dernières heures*.”

<sup>2</sup> Adopting the translation in Montesquieu, *Considerations on the Causes of the Greatness of the Romans and their Decline* (1734), translated with notes and an introduction by David Lowenthal (London: The Free Press, 1999), p. 128

in Milan, the coordination of future fights was prepared by removing them from the control of the unions.

All the political parties have formed a coalition that sustains our decadent capitalism, and they have accused us of being subversives. All right then, comrades: *let's be totally subversive!* Let us not allow them to merely accuse us of being revolutionaries; we must earn this "accusation" and, for us, it is an honor.

There is no need to worry about criminal charges: our own struggle obligates power to retreat, for example, by means of an amnesty. In 1969, charges were brought against a total of 10,000 workers in Milan and Turin. But no one followed through on those charges: power had to choose between celebrating 10,000 guilty verdicts *and provoking a civil war*, on the one hand, or backing down, on the other. And it preferred to avoid civil war.

We need to be clear about the possibilities and risks of the current movement: our only means of true self-defense consist in *extending the struggle throughout the entire country*. Whoever makes a revolution halfway digs his own grave (Saint Just), and we have barely begun to fight. The workers have to occupy all the factories indefinitely and expel the Stalinist bureaucrats from them. Then we will know what needs to be done. The very consequences of our actions will carry us forward. Then the slogan will be: *All power to the Workers' Councils!*

Comrades,

Beware terrorist provocations by the secret services! Let us remember the [bombing of the] Piazza Fontana and immediately denounce hired terrorists. The kidnapping of De Martino<sup>3</sup> is part of the strategy of the SID;<sup>4</sup> it is well known that the APN<sup>5</sup> are masterminded and infiltrated. Terrorist acts, under the most varied labels, only serve power: they are spectacular events that only serve to hide and mask the real class struggle in which we are engaged and that the so-called Communist Party would like to pass over in silence.

Let us expose and denounce the maneuvers of the SID-SIS<sup>6</sup> by clarifying the true objectives that they pursue. The principal function of the abduction of De Martino was to disorient the council of factory delegates who were to gather in Milan a few hours later in an assembly that neither the Italian Communist Party nor anyone else could prevent. This police maneuver failed in that respect. When the unions can no longer control the struggle, it is to be expected that the police and the secret services will emerge.

Comrades,

The old mole has finally come out into the light. We have to make Lama<sup>7</sup> stop provoking the proletariat by brazenly smoking the pipe of social peace.

*The autonomous struggles of the proletariat are growing faster than wages, and the credibility of the so-called Communist Party is going down faster than the value of the Lira.*

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<sup>3</sup> Guido De Martino, son of the prominent Socialist politician Francesco De Martino, was kidnapped on 5 April 1977. He was released on 15 May 1977 in exchange for one billion Lira ransom.

<sup>4</sup> The Defense Intelligence Service (*Servizio Informazioni Difesa*).

<sup>5</sup> The Armed Proletarian Nuclei, which claimed responsibility for the kidnapping of De Martino.

<sup>6</sup> SIS is short for the SISDE (*Servizio per le Informazioni e la Sicurezza Democratica*) ("Intelligence and Democratic Security Service").

<sup>7</sup> Luciano Lama, a Communist union leader who was expelled on 17 February 1977 from the University of Rome, which was then occupied by revolutionary students.

Long live the Metropolitan Indians!<sup>8</sup>

Long live Radio Alice!<sup>9</sup>

Long live the autonomous struggles!

Long live the workers who ousted the Stalinist bureaucrats from their movement in Milan! Long live the autonomous and sovereign assemblies!

Long live the absolute power of the Workers' Councils!

Rome and Milan

7 April 1977

Via Carlo Pisacane

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<sup>8</sup> *Indiani metropolitani*, a group of situationist-inspired pranksters, known for their face paint, graffiti and public antics.

<sup>9</sup> A pirate radio station.