Anonymous
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leave the city centers in total paralysis. The GIPN (the french domestic counter-terrorism unit) in arms, facing down the unarmed crowds. A lesson is to be drawn: the strategy of an economic blockade can never be disassociated from the imperious necessity of annihilating and/or routing the totality of police forces.

18

One never locates oneself simply within a movement, but always in relation to it, facing it, perhaps even in opposition to it. Opposing all of that which is incoherent or flimsy, the reflux of despair, where it flows back into emptiness. It's a question of attacking the material and affective conditions that bind us to this world. The return to normality must be rendered not only impossible, but undesirable. To establish a cartography of everything which holds us: flows, forces, affective states, logistics, and supplies. To acquire, across the conspiring weave of our friendships, the insurrectional know-how to rout this world. We've learned the opening letters of the alphabet of sedition: blockading the refineries, the oil depots, the ports. Allowing the streets to fill with garbage and transforming the latter into barricades. Smashing the shop-windows that reflect our absence. The question put to us might just as easily be: how to shut off, definitively, the nuclear reactors? How to turn the strike into desertion? How to care for, nourish, and love one another without leaving this world in peace?

"*Una salus victis nullam separe salutem.*"

"*The sole salvation of the vanquished is to await no salvation.*"

France, October 27th, 2010.

securely locked-up in the ghetto of the "anti-system" milieu sparks up, catches fire again, and catches fire at last. Ten years of socialist democracy will not have been equal to forty years of fascism. The order put to heel that day looked every bit the frightened Falangist. Everyone was back on the street, across loose stones and broken glass, the laughter and the cheers going up, as if to give chase to the hasty exit of the police.

16

Once again, the appearance of the "*vandal*". Nevertheless, no one is really taken-in any longer by this *stylistic figure*. The dramatic *mise en scene* of the latter is played to little effect. Perhaps only the innocents at the student union, or the members of the veterans' society remain capable of being thus stirred. But what's going on today? One could speak of a certain return, our return: a return to working-class violence, a return to youth violence in the streets, a return to the violence of the "old" who pass stones to the "young" in homage to that which they'd never ceased wanting. The words of an old man in Lyon to a young rioter, "we give you the stones we can no longer throw." What had been so perfectly unlearned and forgotten reappears today with all the violence of a thing repressed. The *magic* linked to the figure of the "*vandal*" seems to have lost its efficacy to the precise extent that the suburban delinquent, the foreigner, the anarchist, in sum *the outsider*, no longer serve to delimit anything. How can one seriously speak about exteriority, about marginality, in a world bereft of any outside? The question of violence is no longer posed, but everywhere imposed.

17

By the same token, the practices of rioting that so regularly punctuate the movement deserve to be recognized as another, mores specific, more surprising form of the blockade. The uncontrollable recurrence of looting and confrontations spanning several days that

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management of labour-time harks back to the most suspect utopias. One cannot qualitatively improve work by a quantitative reduction of its duration. There is no *duration* of labor for the very reason that labor *is* duration, a time one endures.

13

The current media discourse contrives to stage the climate of the strike as though it were a question of some recently discovered branch of meteorology. One frets over a fuel shortage as if it were an imminent heat-wave; one casts the riots of the high-schoolers after the fashion of an unexpected snow-fall; one prattles on about the strike just as one might ruminate over a capricious storm front. Thus each in his manner would have it in for the weather, groaning over their provisions. "May the blockers by struck down by the wrath of the people!" But it doesn't hold. Inserted among the endless ream of news updates, the nightly display of so many "malcontents", of "we're-being-held-hostage"s and "frustrated-at-the-pumps", presented in the manner of tourists stranded by a flood in India or Chilean miners trapped in the bottom of a hole, shows itself to be a decidedly precarious strategy on the part of those in power.

14

In a world where the circulation of flows extends upon a global scale, the party of the blockade, of the insurrection, cannot logically prevail without having forged, globally in its turn, the solidarities necessary to endure. The field of action proper to the latter, like the breadth and reach of its ambitions, knows no limit.

15

Barcelona, September 29, 2010. Day of the general strike. One day against ten years of murmuring silence. What had seemed so

11

Traditional politics is founded upon a few axioms, invariably presented as unsurpassable a priori. The principle of "governmentality"; the organization of a social need in virtue of which "things must be governed", failing which they would invariably fall into chaos. "Work" is likewise postulated, like a blackmail, affirming nothing but the obligation to "make a living", under any circumstances and however possible. Thus a narrow solidarity unites the apparent diversity of political conceptions and their attendant neurosis, all deriving, in the final analysis, from the same feeble anthropology. On the one hand, the cybernetic *project* of generalized governance, on the other, the anarchist *ideal* of a heavenly autonomous governance. The *myth* of full-employment directed toward sustainable development and the self-managed *fable* of voluntary work, lotted out along egalitarian lines. In either case we see the same managerial apparatus applied to life and living, the same ferocious will to suppress our better instincts. The same *objective* of desperate regulation. Mobilization and Total Appropriation constitute at once the ethico-practical ideal of the most inveterate activism and the very power which it pretends to combat.

12

Return of the paradox: the contestation of a reform remains the prerogative of the most advanced reformists. Calculating the future to the point of abandoning any present, any form of presence. The exemplary schizophrenia of the anarcho-syndicalist, codifying, from the present on, the posterity of the revolution, legislating the "after". But to legislate the *after* is to have already forgotten the now, to have let slip away the absolute necessity of a present which escapes us and *for which* we are on strike. The density of a time that couldn't be reduced to the platitude of a bare chronology. A foreseeable future will always be at war with the invisible destination of the present. A programed thereafter will never rhyme with the here and now. Freeing up a bit of "leisure" in the interest of an improved

The Institute for Experimental Freedom's European appendages and friends are proud to release an English translation of "La Grève Infinie" (Infinite Strike). This text was written on Oct 27th 2010 from within the events transpiring throughout the French strikes and blockades. It has appeared throughout France, and is available in at nantes.indymedia.org and juralibertaire.over-blog.com.

Although the US is not France, we can't help but find a certain resonance with the strike, with the determinacy of struggle. We welcome the return of*causseur*, of the vandal, of course! We delight in the fine fractures that link our deep sense of despair with the its negation — the secret solidarity between our weakness our others strength. And so, as a means of reverberating the call, the IEF offers this text to those of us who are everywhere homeless, and everywhere foreign.

Within the text — which is just overheard within the event — we see a clear proposition. The elementary strategy of "shutting it all down." Blockade the oil refineries, extend all self-reductions beyond ourselves, block the ports, defeat the police, shut down the nuclear reactors. Realize all strikes as a position.

Practice makes perfect.

With love and in struggle

The Institute for Experimental Freedom

Nov 2010

8

Saint-Nazaire. The demonstrations called for by the unions lead systematically to confrontations lasting several hours. Heroic displays of rock-throwing and hastily set-up barricades. "Sarkozy, you're fucked", intoned by the thousand. A courthouse jointly stoned by diverse groups of rioters. A friend said, "how beautiful to see a city rise up against its police."

9

The true orientation of the struggle is not to be found between opposing classes, Capital versus Labor, but rather a partisan opposition between those who make a pathological cult of work and those for whom it inspires a simple disgust. From here on out there are those who still want to work and those who would prefer not to.

10

A disquieting *omerta* reigns within the interior of the movement. It consists in the denial of what the events themselves ceaselessly demonstrate, namely, a pained rejection of work. Not merely a local protest against a quantitative extension of the latter, but a total indictment of the manner in which work is everywhere experienced. Which is to say, as a disaster. The rejection is unequivocal. Work. The looming shadow of death. The "theft of human energies", mesmerizing its victims. We are witnessing the agony of the classical world of Work, and with it the disappearance of the figure of the Worker. The ruination of the cozy intimacy that the latter had achieved with his hardship. Even though work has always been experienced as a prolonged torture, one still finds "mind over matter" specialists who attempt to determine the threshold beyond which work becomes intolerable.

cops. The entirety of the social landscape is subject to this cruel partition.

6

To the extent that a strike recognizes itself as forming part of this process it remains one of the rare sites in which a transmission of experience persists. The strike doesn't set out to commemorate past struggles, but rather to recall them: which is to say, *to restore them to memory*. This is done not only for the sake of the strike itself, but for the carelessness of a world occupied with the organization of forgetting.

7

One must always take care to see that the terrain upon which a situation is articulated isn't chop full of mines. Such is our case. First step: abandon the neatly demarcated terrain upon which a thing, an event, is understood *in the form of a thing*. A thing never exists for-itself, for nothing exists outside of the intelligence beholding it. It is possible that by dint of usage the term "social movement" no longer serves to designates anything but a particular form of powerlessness, the semantic operation of a certain sociology, which, from the moment it finds acceptance, paralyzes any and all strategic elaboration as much as any form of collective intelligence. This stems from the fact that sociology has itself been completely *socialized*. It invests every discourse with the same obsession for statistical calculation, allowing only for a laborious objectification of reality via a handful of depressing categories. That which shapes and gives form to our worlds remains firmly beyond its grasp. For them, our friendships represent no more than a handful of aberrant variables. The *unknown* of their equations. The infinity of a strike.

Infinite Strike

It's clear. The Party of Order seeks, with all the forces at its disposal, to have us return home. On this point, at least, the unions and the government are of one accord. Doubtlessly banking upon our most miserable inclinations, our insidious predilection for the emptiness and absences in which we have so perfectly forgotten how to live and struggle. Here they are mistaken. We will not go home; we who are everywhere homeless. For if there exists a single place that we might deem inhabitable, it's within this *event*, in the intensities taking shape therein, thanks to which we are living. In accordance, above all, with the means we will be able to provide ourselves.

It's clear. An insurrectional process gathers strength to the extent that the givens that make up its particular understanding of reality become, imperceptibly, blaring truisms. Being given that Capitalism is a universal lie, the form of its negation, inversely, will be that of a plurality of worlds combined jointly by the *truths* that hold them together.

The words by which a situation becomes comprehensible to itself directly determine both its forms and its spirit. The forced objectifications will manage, at best, to trace vague contours around a muchness. The diversity of analysis, be they those of the sociologists or those of the radical activist, put about the self-same concert of confusion: broken-winded apology or interested pessimism. In either case one is struck by the want of so much as a glimmer of the *tactical sense* by which a voice finds its real comprehensibility, a veritable Common which could liberate the possibilities opened-up by the situation, and through which one could rid oneself, like a nightmare upon waking, of our programed despondency. The trenchancy of this voice resides as much in its choice of words as in the positivity of its orientation.

An opening gesture proves necessary to set out the strategic intelligibility of the events in progress. That of situating oneself, of orienting oneself. To speak from somewhere, not simply from behind one or another point of view, but from the position of a *party*.

1

This movement, to name but one of its virtues, has, from the very outset, approached matters from the root. Generalized economic blockades, deliberate organization of a total paralysis, refusal to compromise or negotiate. Direct, crude language. From there it has simply given material form to the slogans habitually condemned to languish as expectations or simulacra. The strike has materialized itself in so many bodies, in so many determinations. And it's for this reason that it appears as something truly menacing. So it is, from the perspective of practices set in place, that the movement situates itself beyond a simple social movement, that it participates *already* along the lines of an insurrectional process. This is our point of departure.

2

Let us set down a fact: there no longer exists, at the present, anything of the old revolutionary movement. And as those who'd taken over the watch plunge ever deeper into the morass of self-satisfied civicism, we can feel out, from time to time, the sensation of an emptiness. It's precisely this emptiness that we will need to inhabit, to transform into an opportunity.

3

In France a singular superstition afflicts a great majority of bodies who otherwise pride themselves on being so rigidly *secular*: the belief, a reedy thing, though apparently unshakable, in the reality of the "social movement". The misfortune of this acceptance resides in the following: it's a belief which no longer credits the least amount of *faith* among its adherents. From "victories" to "defeats", from sporadic mobilization to conclusive demobilization, it's a belief ever more clapped out and threadbare. Never mind that the object of this

belief is itself the heir of a historical catastrophe, that of the classical workers' movement. The latter, as underlined by Mario Tronti, was not defeated by Capital, but rather by Democracy. Not by some external victory on the part of the former, but by as a result of the *internalization* of the latter. To the extent that this pack of illusions goes unrecognized, the burden placed upon those who struggle is that much greater.

4

A movement defines itself negatively in accordance with its limits. Its field of action is nevertheless circumscribed by that beyond which it dares not venture. This predefined scope assures that the movement remains nothing but the hysterical conjuration of a predictable end. The very life of a movement is directed under the sign of this headlong rushing ahead, this frenzied effort to forestall the end for which it had been set going in the first place. Its end is frightening in that it means nothing less than its death. A temporality separated from the course of History. No enduring project or vocation. The movement is to be forever started over again, laboriously, from the beginning, out of the same nothingness. From such a beginning we can only ever start over, without learning, since there's nothing to learn, ad infinitum. Close the parenthesis.

5

But the horizons of true historical action hang not upon this sad canvas, there isn't any "return to normalcy." What there is, on the other hand, is the persistence of a revolutionary project, with its subterranean accelerations and decelerations. With respect to such a process there exists but one time. A time in which nothing left undone is forgotten. What there is are two camps: on one side there are those who seek to carry out a total strike, an irreversible blockade of the circulation of flows, and, on the other side, the scabs and the