



**- STRATEGIC LINES
FOR REVOLUTION -**

We are revolutionaries, by misfortune or by luck¹.

These past few years, many people have gathered behind barricades, have spread on avenues where the situation was chaotic for hours, have scattered on the Champs-Élysées, in Sainte-Soline's mud or among the tight ranks of a black bloc, shooting fireworks or attacking police lines. Not a year goes by in France without an uprising taking place, awakening at times the promise of an authentic insurrection. We identify a sequence from those situations. It starts with the yellow vest movement, tainting so specifically the following years, and extending throughout 2023, which impressed and frustrated us so much. It draws its force from past resonances, 2016, the ZAD; and distant ones, 2020, Chili, Hong-Kong. This sequence is our starting point.

Everywhere we see the strength of the attacks and the weakness of their outcome. It is dreadful, if not insane, to stick to it. Is the riotous enthusiasm doomed to be nothing but a spectacle or a symbol? Some might say that. It is rarely denied that the coming times are imprinted with deep radicality. But we have to admit it: in spite of the crazy era we live in, these attacks didn't suffice to bring about a force strong enough to put an end to this world. Still, we are sure that the situations we went through were made of promises, certainties, positions, sometimes barely whispered. Today, the challenge is to formulate them.

¹ *Destroying Civilisation*, 2021.

We want to be ready for the next opportunity. There are few of us who take a side inside the revolutionary question, that is, who seek liberating actions as well as statements that resonate. There is so much to do to give a revolutionary impulse to what is emerging. This world manages the depoliticisation of everything, including the attacks against it. In order for a situation capable of destroying civilisation to unfold, it will require persistence, intensifying what is already there, building what is lacking, and tirelessly seeking to elaborate and confront political aims.

Our experiences are our starting point. That is why this text is built on the French situation. It is every day more certain that gestures are affecting and contaminating one another far beyond any national framework. We are writing for those who were there, for a revolutionary potency, for the insurgents across the world who are watching the situations that we are facing while we watch theirs. Rebellions are always beckoning beyond those who actually lived them. It doesn't take much, sometimes, to be summoned by political battles.

We are proposing answers to re-open a strategic elaboration. We are drawing it in the form of lines, which should inspire as well as guide our attacks. These lines are drawn through the encounter of our political position and what we take from the situations we experience, between a general overview of what is present and what is missing. They are the significant gap between observations made about the epoch and the uniqueness of every action. It is inside the details that sometimes everything changes.

Some lines may not be accurate in a few months, others will need years to gain enough strength. Whatever. We are leaving them to their own lives. They should be debated, they should be exposed to conflicts, they should be completed, denied, one should be defended while the other is tackled. They should drive the point home.

As we speak, few are optimistic. However, there is a revolutionary opportunity, a historical window. Despite all the vigor used to govern, it is overflowing everywhere. The peak of the rebellion is not behind us, it is to come. We are living the beginning of the end, not the end of the beginning. This bet is the only one that allows us to keep up with the insurrectionary chance that will certainly erupt.

Make the idea of revolution exist. It is not a fad. The fact that the word is corrupted in so many ways does not outweigh what it continues to embody for all those who fight. Taking a position, exposing ourselves, finding each other, building and believing in the force that it creates—fundamentally, there is nothing else to do.

1.

violence Making riots a threat

1. A crisis in meaning 2. Rupture 3. Riot strategy

All you have to do is talk with comrades from ultimately pacified countries to be convinced of it: physical commitment is the *sine qua non* condition to any uprising. The gesture of rioting has carved its way into the epoch: its pace from now on is set by the throwing of paved stones, and anger is experienced head-on. But as for the rest of it, everything is at risk to be recuperated and the meaning of a practice is never guaranteed. As riots are inherently related to a potential insurgency, it is important to reflect on them and to repoliticise them.

1. We're very lucky to have been through such events in France these past few years. So many people have experienced a sense of total incompatibility with power. Logically, the lockdown and containment policy during the pandemic should have restored order for good, but a fire cannot be turned off so easily: year 2023 reminded us of it. The debate on violence doesn't mean anything anymore: it ends at the first thrown stone, at the first strike of a truncheon. In the streets, pacifism is rarely defended, if not merely for "strategic reasons". But it can come back quickly. Social peace is always waiting; there are so many people willing to make us fall in line. Repression is indeed working at full capacity, now entirely unrestrained. When they send CRS8 units for a high school blockade, when they mutilate, arrest, threaten, record, imprison, we can feel there's a will to destroy the seeds of any appetite for rebellion, and to prevent any encounter between those who want to self-organise. The war being waged is therefore also psychological: it aims at discouraging, dissuading us with disproportionate sentences². We can imagine how moments of political offensiveness could become scarce. That is why we must fight against the anticipated exhaustion of our forces and make any conflictual situation a chance to remedy this weariness.

Riot is the universal language of revolt, in war zones as well as in the most aseptic places of the world. Groups find each other and merge, mobs self-organise, a bunch of institutions are violently attacked. We say it's a "riot" when it becomes unmanageable, when anger gets irrepressible; when normality is turned upside-down, new horizons open up. However, in France it often feels like the confrontation is

² The famous "10 months for a redbull" after Nahel's riots, and other examples of sordid legal frame-ups.

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already contained: that the incidents merely punctuate the smooth proceedings agreed upon between the prefecture and the organisers, and that the situation is unlikely to shift. Trapped in the increasingly refined nets of the police apparatus, the *cortège de tête* take on an almost symbolic, demonstrative function, signifying weariness, pride, or a disdain for the trade union's protest practice. To be satisfied with such a function has been a tactical and strategic mistake. Its inevitable aftermath is the exhaustion of confrontations: some now speak of "folklore", "spectacle". Let's not insist on the fact that these critiques generally come from those who do not participate in the confrontations—they are not entirely wrong anyway. When radicality becomes popular wisdom, we must ask ourselves the question of how to break off. Yesterday, Laurent Berger, head of the CFDT, agreed that without violence, nothing will ever change and the government won't bend. Today, the State itself tolerates that the farmers assault on their institutions in order to become valuable interlocutors. The use of violence almost becomes a way to get heard, a last-chance attempt in case of failure.

After facing for many hours some 6000 gendarmes in Sainte-Soline on March 25 2023, coming back from the battlefield, a lot of them wounded, the rioters had to hear from the organisation that it was a just another *means* to support a request to the government – the request of a moratorium on water distribution. Such courage and commitment for nothing. We went through a devastating crisis of meaning then: we must take it seriously, without denying or accepting it. So many people keep putting themselves at stake, so many lives are torn apart by protests that are not even remembered. Three huge protests against the "global security law" took place in Paris in November 2020. Processions swarmed into the streets of the city under lockdown. Unreasonable police features didn't manage to contain violence. Afterwards, we can always argue that the riot was overpowered, ritualised, even that it was useless. That movement is in the past now, few remember it; some, though, took risks then, got arrested or wounded. Others have experienced the joy of making cop lines step back. The unbearable thing is to find ourselves isolated and confused afterwards, so big is the gap between what we've lived and what has outlived us.

Social and ecological struggles have turned our gestures, our success and our wounds into an opportunity for mediatisation and publicisation, in a logic of sacrifice and martyrdom. We're being made tolerable and then sold. As of now, we don't say sabotage: we say disarming. We don't say riot: we say procession. We don't dress in black, but in blue, or even better: in multicolored clothes. The idea is simple and hammered: people must be able to join us. But maybe we should try to know who these "people" are, since the whole left-wing spectrum has been able to understand and digest a gesture that was initially strange and hostile to it.

Some then seek in other offensive forms a remedy to the weariness of the riot. They perceive sabotage (among others) as a less symbolic gesture, and therefore less locked in. Truth is, some attempts can hit hard—when the Tesla gigafactory near Berlin was incapacitated in March 2024, for example. It is a potent demonstration of how a complete surveillance of the territory is impossible, how the system is in fact vulnerable. But such targeted actions, as coordinated as they can be, are the expression of a force built beforehand. No uprising will ever be able to happen without the riot's signal, it's always the beginning of an unprecedented frenzy. Speaking on and on about the riots' loss of impetus is a performative discourse which participates in making it formal and conformist.

Active trivialisation of the riot takes part in counter-insurgency, whether it's in the law enforcement doctrine or in the media coverage. "Football goal-frame", "mobile safety net", *flancardage*: riots are not prohibited, they're only contained by any means. And prefects congratulate themselves for having limited what used to provoke mediatic uproars and political crisis. Sometimes on the 1st of May we even have the feeling that they let us do what we want, or at least concede a few McDonalds' windows to guarantee a larger-scale order. Such a spectacle could be deeply boring if it didn't participate in the war against us. Let's not be fooled by the new "resilience" philosophy: it is a massive bluff. It is henceforth impossible for them to maintain peace, so they make us believe that riots are a lesser evil, the inevitable facetiousness of those who, deep down, have yielded to their fate.

2. To fight the riot's crisis of meaning, we must put it back within a political context. In 2016, the appearance of a *cortège de tête* in anti-Work law protests destroyed the frame of legitimate revolt. Outbursts were not an end-of-the-day, marginal thing anymore: they became the core of the moment. The *cortège de tête* intrude on and overflow apathetic marches to embody, visually and spatially, a way out of the contestation's frame, and a place to join for those who have already bypassed the question of the law itself. In the following years, a whole generation has given consistency to what happened in the streets then. Some encounters became consistent with methods evidences that came to constitute an autonomous thought: no negotiation, no representation, no traditional form, we'll only get what we can wrench. The *cortège de tête*'s gesture was a dividing gesture, and that's what we must get back.

A practice is not enough to constitute a camp. When violence's strangle hold has already been broken in a situation, we must go further. A riot is never enough in itself. It has no mystical purpose that would lead to victory. It must fall within a larger horizon to avoid formal fetishism, to be taken seriously, and to be filled with meaning. Therefore unlocking a general strategy matters, with the riot as one of its pillars, but not as the only one.

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On March 16th 2023, the government pushed through the pension reform without the Parliament's vote. As a reaction, a gathering on Place de la Concorde in Paris, a few yards away from the Assemblée Nationale, escalated into a riot. Protesters surge into the surrounding areas, burn trashcans, cars, whatever they find, and wander late into the night. Everywhere in France, wild protests attack city halls, burn down the piles of trash left in the streets by dustmen's strikes. Every evening for the following week, this scene continues and its energy diffuses to other, more unexpected places such as Angers and Besançon. The crucial point is no longer the pension reform: the government itself has become the target. Struggle gets a taste of revolt, everyone can feel it. The commitment, creativity, and determination that unfurled said something of a refusal to be governed, a rejection of reformism's complete powerlessness. And yet nothing was uttered. This refusal remained an intuition, a promise, a fantasy on which the left could open the floodgates of whining. Our silence is their strength. Even if the *casseroles* themselves were able to escalate, as long as a gesture is not protracted, it can be recuperated. We must politicise our gestures and not give the partisans of order and other sociologists the right to assert anything about their meaning.

To fight the recapture of violence, we must politicise it. A riot is the occasion for an insurrectional tilting point. It's the place where people who want to strike hard find and join each other. Regaining the prospect of victory in order to reinvigorate our participation in riots matters. Every now and then we've had the occasion to get a sense of insurrectional riots: December 1st, 2018 or, more recently, the week following Nahel's death. Their traces are still vivid: the strength we saw then, as well as everything that was missing, is haunting us. We must believe in the offensive strength of riots. The black bloc as an actual threatening practice has grown, some moves have been massively reused. It demonstrates how a radical practice can be contagious and reachable. We refuse to consider it as a negotiation token: the riot's mainspring is to embody our irreconcilable relationship to the world.

The radicals' defensive approach ("it's them who initiated everything") deprives us of any possibility to consider ourselves a threat. We must take responsibility for our gestures, to see them as a sum of impulses, of determinations, of initiatives, of blows we throw at those we want to fight. We can be sure of something: situations can go that far precisely when they are devoid of any sense of legitimacy and legality. On the opposite side, the activists' new journalistic vocation consists of a victimising position. They think they're imbued with a mission no one has given them: to justify themselves to the masses. The result is catastrophe: on every side, comments tend to legitimise and explain violence, saying "it's the only way", "real thugs wear suits". We don't want to concede the enemy the monopoly of being a threat.

If outbursts in France remain limited, it's mainly because they don't connect with the other ingredients of revolutionary politics. The other reason is the lack of strategy within the practice. To make the riot a threat demands to think over its technics and its tactics; to discern the meaning from within the haze of the battle.

3. Overrunning the outbursts: that's the strategy we must diffuse. The riot is a call to join the fight, the signal that a rupture is possible. We must consider it, extend and maximise it to unlock the insurrectional situation. From such a strategy we can gain an intuition that will guide our participation in riots: we'll be able to see their limits and take part fully, before, during and after them. We have some elements of answers that we have pulled from the general confusion, out of our experience. These conclusions lie in practical and concrete questions that aren't generally taken seriously.

We won't desert the battlefield: it's our field. At the core of the conflict we better reflect on things. No more spectacle, no more spectators. The riot is the most collective offensive form: everyone can play a part in it. There's a thousand ways to do it. Not only by staying and holding the frontline, but also by generating a massive stock of projectiles, by caring for the wounded, being on watch, building consequent barricades, looking out for those who fight. The articulation of different modes can release collective intelligence and enable the most beautiful tactical victories. But we have trouble using the expression "diversity of tactics" so it often looks like a pacifying figure of speech which sets up walls between different realities and prevents them from subverting each other. On the contrary, it's by being surprised by the propagation of these differences that the insurgents can meet each other, that we can push further the limits of what is to be envisioned.

Against specialisation: some groups today in France find their mainspring in the practice of political violence. We indulge in the old distinction between those who make decisions, and those who execute them, between those who get physically involved and those who are preoccupied with the meaning of it all. There are indeed some techniques to be spread, but no miraculous expertise will ever unlock the situation. The secret of creativity lies in the succession of encounters and riots, and above all, in a strategy that doesn't honour leaders nor soldiers. You cannot organise a riot: you can only attach some organisation to it.

The form of the conflict must remain asymmetric, lest it becomes military. The level of intensification violence must go along with the elaboration of discussion and decision-making spaces. In 2020 in the US, the use of weapons was inevitable because the population is already armed. The catastrophe of the use of weapons lies in the inability to counter the individualisation of violence that it implies³. Of course, some thresholds will be crossed; we already saw it, and each time it

3 Watch the movie *Touch the Sky*, about Ferguson's riots after Mike Brown's death in 2014.

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will be different. But when the level steps up, our strength doesn't necessarily increase with it. We have felt how weakening it can be when gestures are too high for us to make them. When riots turn into civil war, there's a risk of enclosure: it's the other side of the pacification of conflict.

A riot reaches its full potency when clashes are fuelled by other forms in which conflict can be expressed. First of all, they can be reinforced by more precise actions such as blockade, sabotage, interruption, or destruction. Taken separately, each of these forms is sometimes insufficient, but they have an actual propensity to shift a situation. Well prepared and well thought-out moves can start decisive dynamics. Afterwards, snatching some time from the enemy, regaining some ground, setting in, all of this is determining. A street that we hold, a supermarket we set on fire, a square we free from the police can all become headquarters. Every time a riot lasts, it enables encounters and a redeployment of forces. The riots that occurred in the summer of 2023 after Nahel's murder taught us that looting is not necessarily stealthy. Next to combats and breaks through supermarkets, we took the liberty of wandering in looted shops, coming and going, distributing the goods. It's false to say that looting is just another form of consumption. Sometimes opening a shop is not the right gesture, sometimes we must choose between a clash and helping yourself, sometimes this choice signals the end of hostilities when the insurgent matter draws away. But the moment when buildings and shops of all kinds are attacked, emptied and even burnt down, the looting becomes the sign that the riot is contagious, that it has time for itself, that it can supply itself, and explore its capacity of nuisance and destruction⁴.

The riot is a disruption of order that no one can get out of unharmed. We ward off its drying up by believing in its potency of deflagration and exploring the ways to reach it. First and foremost we will henceforth oppose everything that tries to turn the riot into an isolated and self-sufficient practice. We can only make so much space for it because we have many things to say about everything else.

4 "The great looting is a magnificent extension of riot: game and party, emotion, joy, vengeance, humor and above all the desire to be sure of it guide every act and are in every mind. (...) It's a huge party whose participants make use of fire and diverse exciting substances. Facing the multiplicity of fronts in the offensive, the State cannot do anything but wait for the looters to finish their piece of work: the great looting is a moment imposed on the dominant order". Laboratoire des fondeurs.

2.

compass

Bringing the revolutionary option into existence

One who denounces exempts itself.

Call

1. The spark 2. Destroying the framework 3. Reformism or revolution

The end of ideologies is the luck as well as the trap of our time. No collective truth prevails over another anymore. Religious millenarianism, class war, the black blocs confrontation, all of this had the strength to make the situations legible, give them meaning. The surrounding confusion is blurring the lines. We can't be satisfied to wander without compass nor horizon. It is not because there is no objective standard to navigate that there is no readability to find and to bring into existence.

1. We can arm ourselves with this certainty: insurrections will keep erupting all around the world. It is however far less foreseeable to know where and when. The fact that they are unpredictable is maybe the only opportunity for them to start and to happen.

The emergence of the Yellow Vest movement in 2018 destroyed the reading grid and the classical mapping of struggles. Being neither left wing or right wing didn't necessarily mean to be right wing. We have seen people that nobody expected rising up, we've seen existences cohabit that should never have met, and better still, we've experienced the threat that this could represent. The sociological analysis arrived after the fight, to justify the absence of those who didn't believe, to dictate their categories, and, deep down, to put everything into order. In every uprising, every struggle, every situation, it is always possible to reduce what is happening to social determinism. It is a decision to refuse this and to take what is resisting as a starting point.

Now that life has resumed its course, there are still some truths to which we must be faithful. It's detestable to pretend that nothing has happened, to carry on playing the old scores, to cover up the promises of the event. The left and the unions have been hell-bent on sweeping away all the practices wrested during the yellow vests, proving their ironclad conservatism in the process⁵. Filing of routes, reasonable demands, framed demonstrations well within the codes: less than a year after the movement, we have witnessed an endless movement-against-pension-reform. Those gravediggers, young dinosaurs, failed seducers, are indeed convinced that a movement of revolt will be organised by the productive sections of society from their functions: "The railwaymen! The nurses!" How about the cops while you're at it? Even during the workers' insurrections of recent centuries, those who fought had become far more insurgents and far less workers.

The root of an uprising remains unpredictable. There is no population category that would necessarily be more legitimate than another to rise up, nor any objective cause that would entirely explain the spark that set up the fire. A too expansive commodity, a person killed by the police, a new law that is too absurd or unfair. All of this without consequences. But sometimes, an outrage is taken seriously, is not digested, and contains almost all of the reasons in the world to rebel: Whatsapp becomes chargeable in Lebanon, the subway ticket price raises in Chile.

We heard that the suburbs couldn't rise up, that they were under the influence of the trafficking, of religion, of the elder brothers⁶. Then, the cops kill Nahel, a video of the murder goes viral, and crews organise in various regions as of the first night to not let it go. There's contagion, there are all the decisions that make it possible. It's not the root of the uprising that should be a compass, but what people do about it, how they appropriate it. We want to be on the lookout, to disdain nothing, even if it's, at times, to find that the inertia runs too deep. It's not about trying to predict the spark, but to be ready for it.

2. How do we know if we have to take part? There are those who will fight any battle, ready to put themselves on the line for just about anything, as long as it involves conflictuality. But they're wrong, the meaning matters, even if it is not given in advance. Transforming the cause into an insurrectionary occasion does not mean humiliating what set us in motion, despising it as vulgar nonsense. We take seriously what triggers the hostilities, asking ourselves to what extent it is possible to reverse the rapport de force between order and disorder. Above all, we look for what it can reinforce, what horizon it can nourish, where it can lead. It's impossible to take part in the takeover of the Capitol that occurred in the United

⁵ They did not call for a strike, nor did they join the movement on December 1st 2018, when everything could have changed. But yes, we did see that they were there afterwards.

⁶ Translator's Note (TN): The elder brother is a pacifying figure of a repented criminal that takes the role of bringing the youth back to a good path, such as an imam or a community worker.

States in January of 2020. Of course, the gesture is impressive, but the seizure of a *place of power* is always a folly, the seizure of power is what we want to destroy. The revolution is not a coup d'état. It is precisely an attack on the permanent putsch that is our world.

We present here a standard for finding one's bearings on the battlefield: does what is expressed take a struggle outside the legitimate framework of protest? The level of violence is one aspect, but not the only one. There's nothing more intuitive in the yellow vests movement than not playing the protest game, to not file the protests itineraries to the prefecture. Those seeking recognition as official representatives of the movement received numerous death threats, and more than one self-proclaimed leader had to move out. We had no one to put on the throne. On the contrary, there are movements that address power directly and won't hesitate to speak its language: *withdrawal, justice, moratorium, distribution, referendum*. We participate in them under the condition that we stubbornly fight for the growth of another option. Revolutionary futures are sometimes embedded in sidetracks.

There is no struggle that doesn't have its own contradictions. Sometimes, it's clear that what's at stake is stronger than the words used, like the rioters who are demanding justice and attacking a prison. We must therefore avoid at all costs the recoding of the new in the already known, which is what shuts out any logic of demand: respect for democracy in the face of a demonstration of force, equality in the face of social injustice. A struggle becomes strong when it goes beyond what is reasonable, the gestures and words that protest authorises. There's always something that escapes the squared-off, premixed discourse, that escapes the hegemony of the social question, and it's from this irreducible part that we attack reformist recuperation. It is often through the upheaval of this liberation that the encounters that mark the history of revolutions take place.

All participation must be a bet that the situation can get out of hand, that it can go beyond its initial framework. All participation must be a commitment to making this happen.

3. The ambient chaos lies in the impossibility of basing ourselves on anything like a legible grid. The Kurds of Rojava, who are experimenting with libertarian municipalism, regret the departure of the international coalition and form an alliance with Bashar el Assad against Turkey. An anarchist squat in Berlin flies an Israeli flag, a GUD⁷ tag calls for the defense of the Palestinian nation. The US government is funding the Tor network, which anonymises Internet connections, while the NSA is trying to crack it. It's enough to make you feel helpless. Everyone says they're lost, at every turn, without realising that this is first and foremost a condi-

⁷ TN: GUD, or Groupe Union Défense, is a french neofascist group.

tion imposed on us. We mustn't wallow in it, or use it to justify our cowardice. There is a great risk of getting lost in theoretical research or endless geopolitical considerations. At a certain point, the search for subtlety, the "it's more complicated than that", contributes to confusing us even more⁸.

To get out of the swamp of confusion, there are those who are infuriated by hypocrisy, who search everywhere for the truth, and the conspiracy it unmasks. As if it were enough to expose the truth, to show the enemy's true face, to bring it down. The lies are often barely concealed, or are even assumed, we know so well that it's all a lie, and nothing changes. Scandal no longer makes scandal, and contributes to our acceptance of everything. Weaknesses of both investigative journalism and the leaking of confidential files, we pretend every day to rediscover the horrors of yesterday. Bolloré's hidden billions, the secret activities of the Queen of England, the Pope's mistress – fiction, reality, whatever. Participating in the revelation of the epoch is a vocation that still belongs to it⁹. This condemns us to endless chatter. We can see this in the profusion of amateur investigative videos on Youtube, the accounts of cyber-detectives, Internet users trying to solve insoluble mysteries¹⁰. The revolutionary gesture is not one of unveiling, enlightenment or denunciation. Truth is always a matter of taking sides.

Perhaps things have never been clearer: there are those who defend this order, even to the extent of claiming to fight it, and those who attack it; there are those who seek legitimacy and those who refuse to play along; those who track down clues and those who no longer need evidences; those who participate in the re-configuration of this world, and those who desert it. There's reformism and revolution: that's the divide that we need to bring into existence.

"The opposite of being left-wing is not being right-wing, it's being revolutionary"¹¹. We act as if everything has become reconcilable, but throwing a paving stone and voting in the same year contributes to the confusion. Autonomous people who said they were ungovernable in 2017 went out to vote in the 2022 elections. The pragmatic argument of the least worst probably made them forget that it was still the worst. The alleged radicalisation of leftism must not deceive us, because that's the aim here: to deceive us, to inhibit us, to *hold us back*. We've forgotten that it's the Left's very purpose to feed off radical impulses and translate them back into the language of power. We can no longer remain silent and let our strength be

8 "Woe, woe to those who live in a time when finesse persuades the mind." Saint Just.

9 On the side of power, fact checking and the war on both fake-news and misinformation is a constant reminder of it.

10 See Pacôme Thiellement, *Infernet*, "Le mystère du net jamais résolu" (The unsolved mystery of the net).

11 Dionys Mascolo, *Sur le sens et l'usage du mot "gauche"* (On the meaning and use of the word "left").

- Bringing the revolutionary option into existence

nibbled away. When we feed reformism, we weaken revolution, we have to repeat banalities that are not revolutionary.

Against the rise of the far right, the left is outraged and seeking to form a united front to defend society. It brandishes this threat to put us all together behind its flag. It then takes on the role of a force preserving the social order, protecting old humanist values. Its defensive stance betrays its profoundly conservative nature. Likewise, liberals find themselves advocating military service and school uniforms. In this context, the radical right has no trouble taking on the role of protester, pointing out social injustices. In truth, the republican project suits it perfectly, and the national hypothesis is gaining strength in all areas of classical politics. So let's face it: progressivism and conservatism are two ways of referring to the same political camp, that of reformism.

It is precisely because the progressive contestation -which was so strong in the twentieth century- has become obsolete that the transformative pole of the epoch is in the process of turning to the right. The question is not to be nostalgic for the left, but to note that the "anti-systems" are in the process of replacing it in its role as useful idiot of the system. Some people seem to have come to terms with this, and are advocating an alliance of all protesters, *rednecks, and barbarians*¹², in a grand unitary progressivism. They are trying to bring all right-wing affects back to the left, in other words, to build today the Communist Party of yesteryear. We need to do exactly the opposite. Only a revolutionary divide can make the reformist camp appear for what it is: the umpteenth attempt to restore meaning to this world and recharge its promise. A reformist aims to improve the existing order, to attenuate its harmful effects, and thus to maintain the social order at all costs. "Everything must change so that nothing changes".

We must go beyond the false pretenses of the epoch: the "rise of the extremes," increased insecurity, the polarisation of society, the "Great Replacement." It's not because people are being called terrorists that they effectively are. Calling people terrorists is one thing, terrorism is another. In the end, behind all these threats and this catastrophism, it's the reasonable option that comes to the fore every time. Everything points in the same direction: the one of homogenisation, integration, smoothing. Almost every time the radical right has come to power in recent years, whether in Europe, in the United States or in South America, its authoritarian radicalism has softened under the test of power. *Business as usual*.

Reformist unity acts as a vast depoliticisation offensive, leading to the most bizarre hybridisations. All structuring divisions tend to be deconstructed: nature-culture, modernity-tradition, the list goes on. Everything is becoming interchangeable and

12 TN: The terms come from Houria Bouteldja, a french decolonial writer, who's allied to the far left party.

superficial. We don't want to update them, but we're only halfway if we stay there. Other fault lines need to emerge, otherwise we risk participating in the prevailing relativism. The act of dividing, of making things irreconcilable, is an eminently political act.

In any case, we can be sure that this confusion is paving the way for a redistribution and perfecting of civilised fields. As civilisation advances, both its reactionary and progressive arms assimilate and integrate even the most radical discourses. Ecology is the most successful example of the integration of all aspirations for change into the promise of civilisation. As a discourse of the whole, it too easily replaces the revolutionary question. It opens up seemingly irreconcilable fields: market gardening versus agribusiness, autonomy versus state management, local versus global. But even in its most radical ranks, problems are often formulated in the terms of power, and it's always management that's at stake. For us, the question is not to modernise the *productive order*, but to destroy it. To produce is to reduce to something or to nothing, and this is what holds reality captive. Broad categories such as *the living* sacralise and ultimately condemn what ecology intends to defend. A reductionist vision of what matters is the big mistake. Sometimes, battles are fought in places where the natural environment is reduced to a concrete slab. There are things that resist and that we must not try to fit into an objective category created from scratch by biologists. It's because we've made it an object that we've made the domination and destruction of Nature possible. All the force that emanates from ecology must therefore be placed within a revolutionary horizon to foil the traps that are set for it, to counter its own conservative slope (defense of the peasantry, centrality of the connection to the land¹³). From this point of view, it's hardly surprising that today's hippie communities have become reactionary.

Today, ecological struggles can be seen as attempts to bring power back to its senses. Clearly, ecology is the permanent incentive to participate in the changes that will keep everything going and working.

There's no doubt that civilised reign is changing its course, that its transitory agony is, in the absence of any real opposition, an invitation to reconfigure its premises. The organisation of confusion enables a vast offensive to restore and preserve civilisation. Yet factious people are everywhere, and the revolutionary desire lies dormant in many reformist politicisations. Imposing the reformist-revolutionary divide wherever possible, making it a priority in the political debate is an imperative of the times. The revolutionary option won't exist on its own; we have to constantly bring it to the fore, and dare to join it.

¹³ "Because the earth doesn't lie", Pétain (the French President who orchestrated french collaboration with Nazi Germany between 1940 and 1945).

3. **vertigo** Attacking the institution, everywhere

Sumud Akbar !¹⁴

1. Anticipating the return to normalcy
2. Full stop
3. Targeting the institution

We are reminded every day of the elusive nature of power. The enemy is a disease, as well as inflation, global warming, all sorts of things we don't have a hold over. No doubt the projection of the disaster that runs in a loop has a function. The decision to let thousands of migrants die at sea: look, we're not going to do anything. Climate disasters that pile up, lives destroyed, areas uninhabitable forever: look, we cannot do anything. Thousands of deaths in Gaza: look, we've done nothing.

We convince ourselves that there is only this life of resignation. Each time we push further the limits of cynicism, the driving force behind widespread impotence. The machine seems to work by itself, to be out of control. We're desperately looking for the on-off button, knowing full well there isn't one. And that's how everything stays in place, how everything goes on, without anyone having to believe in it, deep down. Our vertigo comes from this gap: the sensation that a detail can contain everything that disgusts us, and, at the same time, that we're never facing an enemy that can be seen or touched. How can we imagine destroying this world, we, a handful of revolutionaries?

1. When an uprising occurs anywhere, and the possibility of insurrection is revived, our eyes are riveted on what happens. In Sri Lanka in July 2022, insurgents squat the presidential palace, and what seemed impossible happens. We put all our faith in this event, which we'll never really get to know, but which we feel so close to at the same time, and which we hope, above all, will unblock everything.

¹⁴ The idea of *sumud* in Palestine can be translated into unwavering resistance or perseverance. "Resistance to what? The force that aims to bend us to our herd-becoming condition, to transform questions into sectors of society, to reduce the world to a gigantic institutional park, is our enemy." *Sumud Akbar!*, 2023.

And the Prime Minister becomes President, the “political crisis” is over. Resignation isn’t so much about the possibility of situations opening up again, but rather about the certainty that they’ll close again and again.

Whether it’s the writing of a new constitution, as in Chile in 2019¹⁵, the reformulation into more general demands, such as the RIC¹⁶ during the yellow vests, or simply the rise of a new leader, each time, the governmental perspective points the way to defeat. Return to normal. The sense of betrayal we then feel is a truth that can be experienced everywhere, linking situations that seemingly have so little in common. And it’s precisely what we have to face up to: the force that is instituting, everywhere.

We can and must anticipate what will always come to fuck us over, because it’s basically always the same thing. Any overflow contains the promise that it’s possible to do things differently, and any institutionalisation of this overflow is the capture of this promise, its enclosure. It doesn’t matter if the intentions are good. Progressives of all shades will tell us that a new law, or better still, a new constitution is the inevitable conclusion of anger, that this is the only way to be taken seriously, to last, to win. The victory of the constituent forces is always the defeat of the revolutionaries. Constituents hurry, they hasten, or conversely, impose infinite delays. They imitate and mime that which must disappear, and falsify that which is being born. During the Tunisian uprising of 2011, some of the insurgents demanded precisely time; time to find out what they wanted, thereby rejecting the forced speed-ups, the credibility blackmail and political hack’s outlets. To destitute is to prolong negation and make it last, make it endure time. Assertion is the patience of refusal, not its overcoming. An insurrection becomes politicised when it is no longer reactive, when it *refuses* what institutes, what governs, what produces. We’re aiming for a destituting revolution.

Whenever something escapes from its normal course, there are two opposing paths: the return to reason or the prolongation of destitution. Designating the enemy as that which institutes makes it possible, in every situation, to see the obstacle, to break through the barriers, to prevent the formation of a new order. A confrontation is not yet an uprising, and an uprising does not necessarily lead to revolution. With every intervention, the aim is to maximise and reinforce attacks on the norm in all its forms.

2. The social order is propped up by all the small habits of respecting the rules, by the separation and atomisation of everything, by the fact that there are *citizens*. There is no doubt then, that the destruction and stopping of absolutely all the re-

¹⁵ After months of insurgent riots in Chile, an assembly is elected in 2020 to write a new constitution, thus ending all revolutionary ambitions. Ironically, it was rejected in a referendum twice, deemed too radical, and the project was eventually cancelled.

¹⁶ TN: RIC - Référendum d’Initiative Citoyenne (Citizens’ initiative referendum).

lays that allow normality to follow its course must be extended. The past few years have reminded us of the immense joy that this can bring. We've seen it through blockages and occupations of roundabouts. Roundabouts, this French specialty, a platform for distributing flows in different axes. It is literally the crossroads between those who go to work, those who take the exit to the mall, those who go home to watch TV or look after their children. It is the node that allows the moments of our lives, cut, chopped, atomised, to be linked and connected. Blocking them induces an unsuspected nuisance capacity. The blockage was as much about the possibility of going to your local Ikea as it was about the ordinary life of those who were blocking. All the scheming, sick leaves, romantic intrigues, everyday life was turned upside down.

In social struggles, the question of the daily life interruption is delegated to the strike, which is delegated to the unions. When the CGT¹⁷ called, during the movement against the pension reform of 2023, to “put France at a standstill”, it based all the effectiveness of the threat on the workers' strike alone. When governments show without any problem that they could not care less, it often means just losing money for nothing. We experienced massive transport strikes for several months, during which every good Parisian went quietly to work on a scooter. When a sector goes on strike, the public and the media almost come to understand, sympathise, *keep calm and carry on*. There is not really a “hostage-taking situation” anymore, everything is rearranged for a while. In the age of widespread teleworking and continuous information, it is clear that we will need surprising mixtures, tactical ingenuity to unlock the problem of blocking. This is what we felt during the movement against the pension reform, as in Rennes during the “dead city operations”, when the full stop had exceeded the small symbolic blockage: ambitious targets, perfecting the art of barricade. Or like during the power cuts by Enedis technicians. These gestures, sometimes closer to sabotage, show us the way: the way of the blackout.

With this in mind, a *full stop* isn't like a temporary suspension. Work must not be suspended, but destroyed, it is the sinews of war. Work is the institution of daily life par excellence, which absorbs our time, our desires. Everything we do becomes work, we work on ourselves, we work on this or that, it works, we put a value on everything constantly. When a good meal becomes a valuable experience through social networks, we can see very well that production has largely exceeded the economic question. The general interruption must take this into account: we do not simply stop work, we stop everything.

17 TN: CGT - Confédération Générale du Travail (General Confederation of Labour): the first of the five major French confederations of trade unions.

As long as the world around us continues to function, it is a sign that the event has remained peripheral, that the *rapport de force*¹⁸ has not crossed a certain threshold. When it becomes impossible to remain a spectator, to not take sides, is when the event becomes central. Once again, to generalise and intensify an uprising, to make it last, to prevent the return of order, implies a suspension of time that releases time. The riots that followed Nahel's death took place in early summer, when the school year was over and there was time. The week of uprising gave rise to clashes of historic proportions, and massive attacks on institutions. "Not schools, nor libraries", pleaded Mélenchon¹⁹, saying implicitly that it was ok to target town halls and police stations. Fortunately, no one stopped there. The targets also illuminated what destroys us every day, our little hells. A Lidl store, a Post Office, a Social Security Office, a school²⁰. Everything that makes us fall in line. Sometimes the targets were stunningly banal. A driving school. A pharmacy. So many relays of an order much larger than Macron and his police.

3. We have to be faithful to this feeling that what we want to destroy is everywhere, to those moments when we go out into the street and absolutely everything disgusts us. That filthy look of complicity in the metro because a tramp is making too much noise, that falsely funny and offbeat announcement on the train, those green spaces where every blade of grass carries an urbanistic intention, the smiling sign of that new concept store, that continuous flow of passers-by pretending that everything is normal. How can we not think that we are the problem? Personal development tricks don't help, we have to resort to psychotherapy to make sense of it all, as one young person in five was taking antidepressants in 2021. Illiterate of the meaning, every day has become a wandering.

Hatred of the institution is everywhere, but repressed everywhere, it exists as self-hatred: hating life, people, time and everything that surrounds us, what a program. Attacking the institution means disabling the mechanisms of social adaptation one by one. We've always learned to *adapt*, meaning: to the institution. We move from one to the other, without even realising it, assuming that we have to learn to live with it, to deal with it, because we have integrated the idea that there is no other way of doing things.

School, marriage, family, work: institutions punctuate our biography, leaving their mark on every individual. Conservative by nature, they are what maintain the order invisibly. We must do everything we can to free our lives from their stranglehold. To regain a hold over things is to feel that we can now, without waiting, experience that *rapport de force* is already taking place in everything. The battle against what

18 TN: The confrontation or the struggle between forces that take part in a conflict, and where the outcome can't be determined in advance.

19 The head of the French left-wing party.

20 Or when opportunity, boldness and common sense replace legitimacy.

institutes can be waged at any moment, on any scale, anywhere. Such as, in a discussion, a turn-taking is imposed because it's been decided somewhere that this distributes the opportunity to speak more equally (which remains to be proven), and that this is necessarily what's most important in a discussion.

However, we're not saying that you have to attack everything with the same vigor, but that the logic to be faced is everywhere. One can get into the habit of going for a run, and just like that it becomes jogging. It's good for your health, and not just physically, it's also good for stress management. One can give in to it or resist it. We can decide to be primarily a function, or we can refuse to compartmentalise our lives into boxes with different degrees of priority: leisure activities, not important; work, important; family, very, very important.

This world doesn't stand on its own. At some point, we pledge allegiance to it. You just have to look around to see that. We need to make citizen an insult again. The citizen is the smallest unit of law enforcement, the police minus legitimate violence (for now). Guardian of civic-mindedness, member of the neighborhood watch, outraged cyclist, snitch in the making. There are decisions to be made, at all levels, about what we want to participate in: strengthening the institution or strengthening what resists it. That's how we find ways to fight when everything is done to tell us we can't do anything. It's always a mistake to personify the enemy, whether it's Macron, Bernard Arnault or the 1%. But there are plenty of people who decide to take part, who do everything they can to keep it going, who organise themselves accordingly. When some people are at one with their function, it's their body that needs to be attacked (the police).

There are plenty of ways to take the side of the world order, different degrees of commitment to keep everything in place. Where the progressive always likes to show how behind the sign of the institution there are contradictory things going on, we say that his detestable reality needs no sign. But the torture is refined. The feeling of existing, participation, income and honesty are the compensation, and the painkillers are that which make it profitable. Anyone who thinks it's possible to change things from the inside is mistaken. One could try to make school less of an abomination, to become a teacher in order to do something else than prepare disciplined bodies for the world of work. Except that's impossible: school functions with work, school functions with society-making, the catechism of emancipation, the becoming of the citizen - that's its very function. We take a lot of damage trying, at the level of our own little person, to resolve all the contradictions of the institution. So we give up on meaning, and the institution gets the better of us.

The logic that runs through all of them, that guarantees that everything stays in place, is the civilised logic. When we succeed in asserting elements within the institution that are heterogeneous to its functioning, we end up extending the civilised hold, not breaking out of its hegemony. And any alternative practice, from pedagogy to peasantry, can be picked up by the very thing it was intended to combat. It's important, then, to nurture ways of doing things that are beyond its reach. Attacking the institution everywhere means trusting what resists it. If the institution is the force that seizes upon everything, we need to find what arms and protects that which matters to us. It's never a given, it's always a fight.

There's a feeling of infinity when you think of the extent of what needs to be destroyed. The institution captures, sometimes suggesting that there is no form that can resist it. Shame and disgust for this world are what we have in common, a shared experience that is a meeting point and a starting point. We don't wage this war against civilisation alone, each in his own life. If we say that it begins here, it's because it opens the way to greater assaults, revolutionary assaults. The size of the challenge does not frighten us, quite the contrary.

4.

victory

Starting from what is missing

1. Tout Concorde : Révolution²¹
2. What victory is not decisive
3. Being

Each time an insurrectionary sequence ends, the idea of rocking this world fades. The encounter along the way of comrades, gestures and truths are treasures of this adventure. Too often it stays that way, we fight for the beauty of it, to resist, to not let it be. But the meaning of our fight matters. Reframing victory is finding a projection of strength that allows us to refute fatalism as the only outcome.

1. Victory is possible. In other words, a revolutionary shift isn't unthinkable in this current environment. We bet that a pre-revolutionary period is growing, that the timing is right and that the window of opportunity may be closing. Grasping that chance is wanting to be up for what the situation demands. Inflation, the loss of faith in the institution, defiance against conventional politics, the rise of fascism, widespread medicalisation, climate inactivity, lockdown, is this the famous re-emergence of the objective conditions? Did you know, the astrologists say that the stars' alignment in the sky are the same for the first time since... 1789.

Our generation *may* know a revolution, we have to be sure of it. For us, it's a decision that guides our lives, we choose to be revolutionaries. Sometimes, it's almost a reasonable choice, most of the time, it's the encounter of many things: a determination, persons, situations, places, texts, evidences. It can also magically happen to you. Yet, this faith is not a submission, an ideology, alienation. We are not revolutionary once and for all, permanently and forever, without any doubt. It's not about creating a new identity, but to see how it provides an orientation, a course. This truth accompanies us every day, guiding our wanderings as much as our certainties, bonding our fates into a life of fighting.

It's about leaving the limbo of our time. Some say that the current generations are the most depressed, anxious, insomniac, sad, that they don't find any meaning, that they don't believe in anything anymore. The nihilism of our time is not about taking down core models, giving up the founding principles of norms. It's about a

²¹ TN: Graffiti (Everything *match*: revolution). Concorde, like the name of the square where nighttime demos began in 2023, and like the verb meaning "to concord", "to match", "to fit".

victory -

stressful and depoliticised hyper-reality, it's the name given to accepting the crash test of the hectic and locked down world that is coming, the name of forfeiture. When you don't believe in anything, you end up believing in nothing else but what is there. Fatalism serves the order in place. By saying that, we mean that nihilism is the ultimate allegiance to this world, the last bastion, and that our faith is the refusal to submit to it.

No Future has become a conformist slogan. Humiliation of the past, invisibilization of the future, the time we live in is the one of the present, everywhere, at all times. What is now needed is taking what's there for the only thing that has substance, a reality. The 24 hours news channel, the reality TV, the instagram stories, we are pushed in a mystified and transparent present, ours, other's. We are bombed by the present, endlessly coating, endlessly renewing. An array of apparatuses hold us in the real, here and now, and everything goes on like the future was an idea of the past. We feel suffocated by the forced resilience of our time, this neurotic zen demeanor. The tea bag mantras have become a political program, recited with a smile: enjoy the present time, the journey is meaningful, not the destination. World devastation, domination, the generalised work assignment, the destination is pretty clear.

"For those who believe in the sky, the earth is often too small²²". Victory is not a certainty, neither a program nor a religion, it's an impossibility that we have to make happen. Skeptics will always be right, they have lucidity on their side. They participate in the defeat by making their "concept of reality" hegemonic. We must take the risk to believe. Victory is a possibility that must grow. A roll of the dice. When no one believes in it, revolutions are doomed to be two wars behind, like these "revolutions of customs" that have been fantasised by the West for the countries it colonised. By reducing them to social revolutions, it makes certain that they won't affect the state of the world.

2. What is winning? The word seems adulterated. There are those who have made a lifestyle of it: the winners, when we want we can, let the weak perish, that kind of shit. Keeping a positive attitude in every situation is not limited to the self entrepreneurial spirit, many use the same childish ways in politics. "Well done everyone, we were able to march without being trapped, a round of applause for ourselves²³". Triumphalism does not prevent victimisation, we celebrate victories which aren't victories, it's good for morale, for team spirit. Crying victory like the boy who cried wolf, they disarm the greatest existential explosive.

²² *L'Insurgé* (The Insurgent), Jules Vallès.

²³ We can quote XR, Cerveaux Non Disponibles and so many other marketing groups, who only exist on the internet, using the same entrepreneurship codes, Whale emoji, sun emoji, radish emoji.

When the airport project was rejected at Notre-Dame-des-Landes's ZAD, a part of the movement quickly cried victory, putting an end to the ongoing and overflowing conflict. Sure, the big project was gone, but that wasn't the main point. The international revolutionary's aura which arises from this piece of land was the start and the proof of something greater. Fighting for a cop free zone or the hut's legalisation? The normalisation path was chosen, again a defeat. When the government is backtracking, yielding or withdrawing its law, it undeniably exposes a weakness. Either we take what they give us and we push it even more, or we settle for it and end up celebrating the end of the conflict, by their side. The yellow vests did not make the same mistake. We barely remember it, but the tax which had started the movement was withdrawn, and no one had the indecency to talk about victory, for what was at stake greatly overlapped that question.

It's always the same realism at play: it would be better to lower our demands in order to achieve them than to dream of even more. And anyway it would be crazy to talk about revolution because it's not for now. We say that whatever we say or hope for, they give us nothing, or so little. So we better aim high. Especially after experiencing moments when what we once thought unthinkable or undoable became real. No one could believe that it was possible to attack and burn 250 police stations, 200 schools and more than 100 city halls. Especially not those who were wallowing in their pessimism, and who, very wisely, will reply "Nothing has changed, even with all that". We told you, they will always be right. When everything becomes possible, this realism asserts that we have to stop here, when everything falls back it pretends that nothing even happened, because generally speaking nothing is possible, except some sentence adjustments.

The question of victory does not play in the field of reason. We have to shift it and see that we are a part of the problem. People have assimilated a very stoic idea of the revolution: in the end, it does not depend on us. We integrated that, anyway, the uprising will pass. There is exhilaration in a comfortable defeat, as if it was beautiful and noble not to seek to overcome it. We refuse to turn defeat into a revolutionary romanticism. We must fight the false modesty of our times, and dare to rebound with audacious statements. We are haunted by the history of past revolutions, it's quite normal. Sometimes it seems like after so many defeats, repression, domination, governmentality, in our ranks there is an internalisation of a trauma and it became almost reassuring to see that everything continues undisturbed, that nothing changes.

Civilisation is a politics, and this politics can fall. It's not natural nor inevitable. What may present itself as an unshakable hegemony can be brought back to a possibility. Insurrection is the ignition of a rapport de force, between order and disorder, between power and potency. It's an opportunity, if it's politicised, to

open the possibility of a revolutionary victory. We will not be able to get rid of the power, of what institutes, what encloses. A revolutionary victory does not stop the fight, but it projects it differently. Revolution is a horizon, it will always have an unfinished part from which it will redeploy itself, but the terms will have changed completely. One could say it will be this, a change of epoch.

3. The end of civilisation seems to be a mirage, but still, people talk about it. The new prophet, reciting GIEC's rapports like Apocalypse verses, promising an always closer end, which never stops not happening. What has been used to "awaken the minds", "expose the truth", leads to resignation.

There is nothing to do, the dice has already been rolled, it will happen eventually. For our part, we are apocalypto-skeptics. The theme of the end, the end of the world, the end of mankind, is counter-revolutionary. It implies that there is nothing to do but to sit comfortably and watch the spectacle of the decline. It seems like we are locked in the locomotive of history, irremediably moving forward: when everything is fine, then there is nothing to do, when everything is wrong, then nothing can be done.

We know that the future is never given. Talking about revolutionary victory means that our epoch is not the end of the world, but the end of this world. We are not promising the messianic Grand Soir, brighter days or the return of lost golden ages. We will not miraculously wake up in a revolution. To say it's possible, to say that we believe in it, also means that it has to be *built*. There is no revolution without revolutionaries. What we mean by building, is a way to relate to things. When we decide to belong to the revolution, we access a potency from which everything is reorganised. We must always ask ourselves what is restraining a situation, what is stopping it from overflowing. Do not start from what is here, but rather from what's lacking, commitment, persons, positioning? What do we need to attack: pacifism, taxi drivers, morality? Are we in a phase of intensification of the conflict or should we aim at it's expansion? We are always taking orientations and decisions that affect the course of events. We should not keep this way of thinking for insurrectional moments, but ask ourselves from the situation in which we are: what stands today in the way of revolution?

Surely, there is a lack of faith, but also an abandonment of strategy as a general thought of our gestures, which is inseparable²⁴. We have experienced it in the last few years, it was particularly striking during 2023's movement. When we don't believe in our forces, we prevent ourselves from deploying any strategy, we adopt by default those of the union. Then we can't cry a river when some of the yellow

²⁴ One cannot take control of the other, otherwise religion, otherwise obedience.

vests have become leftists, conspiracists or fascists, when it is said nowhere how to bring to life another path, when nobody expresses an idea of victory that is not a public referendum or bringing down Macron.

Once we started to feel what an insurrection could mean, we had to be told that revolutionaries, by definition, could not be determinant in the situation. That revolution is the matter of those who rise up, and that organising toward this goal and preparing ourselves for it was an ugly idea, an impure one. The never ending poetry of fantasised spontaneism has a lot of believers, as if the calls to invade the Champ-Élysée on December 1st or March 16th weren't weighed, *decided*, tried.

We must spread the vision that it's possible to intervene without being a vanguard. Like everybody else, we come with a position. Those who hide it have a tendency to treat events like fragile little things that shouldn't be rushed, for fear of crushing them. They are just pretending, pretending they have no history before going into the battle, nor a background, whether it's an opinion, things they care about, things they refuse. We are not here to anticipate questions, answers, events, but rather think about what must be done, here and now, giving ourselves the necessary distance, and not simply settle for the tactical level. Those who have taken part in any way in the recent years' political conflicts, should not stay alone, keeping for themselves their analysis, expertise, memories, and their capacity to vision. It is by finding the ones with whom we can project ourselves that the matter of strategy stops to be just an empty word, a prerogative of classical organisations. It's often in the anecdote that we find the accuracy of great moments of upheaval, as revolution is in the end a question of mood. Political audacity is unleashed when the desire for the situation to overflow is taken seriously, it conspires, boiling points collide, feed each other, the atmosphere changes.

Wanting to be determinant is to refuse self hatred, it's to accept oneself as part of what's going on, it's to not seek to apologise and dissolve into who knows what *people*. *Peoples*, it's what makes no sense, it's the empty unit which justifies every cowardice and keeps alive every fantasy. It's not *the people* who stormed and sieged Puy-en-Velay's prefecture on December 1st 2018, who burned down the town hall of Bordeaux on March 23th 2023, who attacked, looted and burned the police station and the town hall of Mons-en-Baroeul on June 28th 2023, but rather some determined fractions who, one way or another, *organised* themselves into the very heart of the situation. Each component who wants to take part, take some initiative, fail, retry, meet up. Often it's in the heat of the action that a mob becomes an unfurling force, although it is still nourished by all the organisation projected into it.

victory -

In a situation, to affirm, to make choices, take risks, this exposes us to being wrong. Our failures and our doubts are also landmarks. Our political present is the one of insurrection, from now on our strategic goal must be to seek, by any means, to clear the obstacles which prevent it and to cross every step to make it victorious.

5.

decision

Opening political spaces

1. Never give up politics
2. Concentration enables decision-making
3. Saying is doing

Whether at the bar or in radical literature, to access to the government²⁵ or to overthrow it, antipoliticism has grown everywhere. It is a shared wisdom: politics would be the deadly enemy. Being radical and being antipolitics has almost become synonymous. The offensive of the autonomists, who wanted to release the ways of struggling from ideological and hierarchical capture has led to evanescent and inconsistent forms of organisation. By justly refusing classical politics, we simply have thrown the baby out with the bath-water. We have to make possible and assume a destituent politics.

1. We don't long for old-fashioned activism, that some try to bring up to date, where you have to have your Party-card, where you have to be current in your contributions, where we separate the personal on one side, politics on the other. It is also not a question of returning to the resolutely political character of our ways of living or our relationships. The problem is that, when everything becomes political, nothing really is anymore. Everything is up on the same level: a canteen, a banner-working-group, a "legal-team", a concert, a discussion about a book, a demo, a gathering. Political worlds are parceled, organised around projects where everyone can pursue what interests them here and there, with respect to practices and commitments of various individuals. This ingrained niceness has quickly condemned itself with inevitable troubles, which is to depoliticise almost always.

A symptom and remedy for this ambient apoliticism, organisation through Signal reveals the secrets of its experience: it sucks. We are not talking here about a simple coordination or communication tool, but about what has really imposed itself as the one and only way to get organised. You can leave a political group by unsubscribing from the channel, deciding using the number of "thumbs-up". Commitment has become liquid, you have to be in a lot of groups at the same time and manage your time like an investment. Its ok to take risks, but always on the condi-

²⁵ Whether it's the libidinous clowns of Brazil, Argentina or the USA, the young premiers of Canada, New Zealand or France, or the aestheticized dictators of Central America or even Russia, it's always a campaign promise to get rid of the political class.

tion of being certain that it is possible to leave at any time. At the intersection of all this is always the Individual, overwhelmed, and completely empty. The self has become a little thing to protect, we have become incapable of giving ourselves to anything.

Very often, organisation is then reduced to the pragmatic, tactical level. Participation only aims to reinforce what is proposed. But paradoxically, this is only possible because others have a strategic vision and make decisions that determine situations. To abandon the field of strategy is to be condemned to the tempo set by others. After this, it's all too easy, to get indignant because of union betrayals or organisers deciding everything, especially when you don't want to decide anything. And indeed, if we scan the geography of the radical camp, we see that formalist organisations and other riot unionism has only grown its ranks, to be the alternative to the gaseousness of the milieu. There are those who might grumble and rage, "well, great! We found new politicians." But it is because so many people are content to sit back and be the armed wing of a cause that others occupy the political field²⁶, like the central committee once did. This disturbing cartography encourages us more than ever to find and defend another vision of politics.

Politics is not a story of witticisms, dirty relationships, scenes and backstage betrayals. Politics is the encounter and the interplay between one's own life and that which exceeds it. There is potency elsewhere, but it is in the political field that the upheaval beyond oneself is the greatest. It is there that the question arises of what matters most in the world, and therefore engages the greatest potency in existence. Politics is not a question of temperament or interest, but rather a way of putting the offensive back at the heart of our existence, a way to think war. We do not want to stick to what is there, to the state of this world, we believe that there is something greater than the condition imposed on us. Beyond the small scale of the crew, beyond the too-loose scale of the network, what remains is to construct a revolutionary politics, a politics which is not synonymous with power but which allows us to resist it.

2. *Be Water.* A watchword emerging from the Hong Kong movement in 2019, it set the tone for the following years. Warrior wisdom, asymmetry in the relation with the enemy. The more law enforcement becomes refined, the more we need to blend in, to wield appearance-disappearance. In Hong Kong, there was a whole art of emergence, of redeployment. In Paris, in the spring of 2023, wild night time demos responded to the high pressurisation of union marches. At the turn of a street, the appearance of ultra-mobile police forces signaled dispersal, inaugurating the great game of knowing where and how to meet up. But the prospect of avoiding head-on conflict aligns a little too often with just fleeing from

²⁶ Les Soulèvements de la Terre (The Earth Uprisings Collective) is the strategic entity that allows environmental activists not to have one.

conflict entirely. There's a difference between gaining collective intelligence and putting up with the impossibility of maintaining the slightest rapport de force. Faced with this disintegration, we must rediscover spaces where we can come together. Concentration exposes but also allows for surpassing limits: the encounter creates a fusion, the magma broods, the eruption explodes. *Be volcano*.

Politics is a matter of presence; it's the reminder of yellow vest roundabouts and also that of the confinement. Not every decision is necessarily a relationship of authority, and it's when we meet in a place that we experience this. We can no longer simply say that decisions are what take us, thus sidestepping the question. Within spaces of organisation, initiatives thought up in advance or on the spur of the moment can be discussed, enriched, suddenly attract a crowd, or take longer to find their way. A decision doesn't belong to the person who formulates it; it resonates with the people who hear it because it puts into words what is felt or desired, it then very quickly becomes a reality, it sets in motion an energy, it deploys a force. It is in the name of this vision of decision-making that we must do everything to ensure that places exist that put it in common.

To organise, we must suspend the temporality that's running amok, and time needs space. In Paris in 2023, no decision-making space emerged which would allow the situation to overcome the overflowing-social-movement. Ultimately, it wasn't determination, numbers, or inventiveness that were lacking, but rather a place from which to plan the attacks. There are universities, of course, but we can find other places to concentrate. There are new headquarters to invent. This is the basic condition for finding each other, for meeting. Freeing up the space, we can discuss in all directions, we can party, we sleep there, we occupy. What do we discuss? What's happening, the day, what comes next, comrades from elsewhere, the enemy, false friends. The roundabouts of the yellow vest movement were both a rallying point, where it all happens, and the site of decisive discussions, ranging from detailed analyses of December 1st to Macron's fate once captured, from the debate over the effectiveness of this or that blockade to the debate over whether to recreate a national or regional date. A place breaks down barriers between all the usually separate realities. At once a barracks, an infirmary, or a ballroom, it fills with all our expectations.

The major obstacle to taking a place is not believing sufficiently in its explosive power. Sometimes, an occupation has barely begun, and it is immediately wrecked, emptied and abandoned. Beyond the obvious joy of ravaging a building, it is as if we ourselves were afraid of what a headquarters could provoke and we immediately abandon the possibility of staying there. As good moderns, everything pushes us to reject any form of a common, of obligation, to be free to betray anything at any time. In France, law enforcement has taken note of this lack of tenacity, this

inconsistency, and repression often proceeds by exhaustion. Cops position themselves, play intimidation, prevent entry, and wait for exits. It is then necessary to hold, to aggregate. In Hong Kong, *Be Water* led into a university occupation at the end of the movement, which resisted a siege for several days. Inside, they said they would rather die than surrender. Police surrounded Poly-U university, making numerous incursions which were repelled by the insurgents. Groups attempted to create a diversion by attacking them from outside, while inside, the occupiers held them back with flaming arrows and various pyrotechnics. *Be Castle*. In retrospect, it's clear that the occupation was the movement's swan-song, but the occupiers determination attests to the profound meaning of owning and defending a place.

The possibilities freed up by holding a place are infinite, and it is precisely the danger of a "rear base" which is attested in the obsession of evacuating all centrality²⁷. It is because we know that a headquarters can take the overflow to the next level that we want to succeed in seizing a place together, from the situation at hand.

3. Never has the idea of talking to each other been so repugnant to people. It is good fashion now, to be concrete, to do concrete things. Anything that does not directly concern action, anything that attempts to take a step back, to get an overview, brings all radical tendencies into agreement, even the most opposed: it is for the bourgeois, it is a waste of energy, or it is an attempt to force through and impose one's vision on others. Whats most perplexing is the nature of the separation between what would be concrete such as organising the snacks or organising against the Olympic Games, and what would be abstract by asking questions about why we are fighting, which field to invest in, which strategy, which force of intervention.

It's not easy to collectively find a path to thought. We've all had the unpleasant experience of overly technical, never-ending discussions, where we no longer understand what we're talking about, where some people listen to themselves speak, leading to intolerable valorisation dynamics. We're all familiar with these discussions. They've taken away from more than one person the slightest desire to organise themselves politically. We're thinking of assemblies like Nuit Debout where everyone lays bare their lives, their disappointments, their opinions, veritable dumping grounds of ambient despair.

²⁷ In March 2023, the Faculté de la Victoire in Bordeaux was occupied. A political hotspot and a rallying point for students and non-students alike. The prefecture itself referred to it as a "rear base for several violent actions" to justify its evactuation.

But it is perhaps in universities, in General Assembly, that they have done the most damage. Many people are determined to remove all of the flavor, by replaying the same tragi-comic failure, completing the process of making universities the primary place of general depoliticisation. The apparent boredom of those who hold the podium and distribute the floor, true conductors, barely conceals their pleasure in ensuring that no intervention can be mustered. There are even very sophisticated means for this, speaking turns in 2, 3, 4 columns, “safe” bureaucracy, those who master the codes pass the buck. Every device of the assembly, order of the day, speeches, votes, notes, is an opportunity to lock in all those who know what will be decided before it happens. No place is left for surprise, disagreement, common elaboration. The Trotskyists change their name but remain a plague to any assembly. Their distribution of roles is such a caricature: the new kids who come across well on the podium, the demagogic baritones who grow heated, the smartest ones who conclude. And the spectators supporting each moment of boredom with silent and limp clownish gestures. Many of us feel the depth of this nothingness. On the wall of a university in 2023, one could read: *“If you’re not afraid of emptiness, look UNEF²⁸ in the eye”*. But then, why let them do it? Why continue to endure them? There’s enough to become enraged, angry, to castigate, which the activists will not fail to immediately turn to their advantage. They keep those who refuse this charade in the role of eternal nuisances, and in the process arrogate to themselves the monopoly on politics. The autonomous people who shout at the back of the room contribute to the atmosphere; you only have to see the deadly boredom when they are not there.

And yet, assemblies remain a possible place of political centrality, a space that can bring together people beyond circles that already know each other, where anyone can turn up. We must not abandon them. If more and more uninitiated people are deserting them, it is also because those who could give them a different face have capitulated. They create other assemblies, autonomous, separate, peripheral, ever more narrow, where the codes are even more twisted. On the contrary, it is by seeking to widen the stakes and the invitation that we give importance to an assembly, that we want to think about its form and let ourselves be surprised by what can emerge.

We must rediscover the art of discussion, as we would think of an art of combat, the meeting between strategy and the common that is emerges. It is not a question of mastering everything, but of learning to see what is important: where, when, how, with who. It is important to free ourselves from the deadly democratism that spoils the rare moments when people come together. When everything is flattened under the guise of equality in speech, it prevents progress. When we

28 TN: UNEF is the historical student union that systematically takes the role of the struggles’ manager.

renounce discussions with many people by breaking them up into small groups, even when we have done everything to ensure that everyone is present. We do this in the name of a greater sharing, but the strategic sense is lost, words are neutralised in endless restitutions, we develop nothing, we share some emptiness, it is pacified, and it is long... We believe that small groups protect against the effects of power²⁹, when they are actually a godsend for all political maneuvers. In a discussion, the ability to put disagreement on the table, and not under the rug, is the best defense against the institutional and inflexible slope of management, formalism, and power relations. Raising the tone does not necessarily indicate a lack of respect, but rather demonstrates that what is being said is taken seriously. A discussion with 200 or 2,000 people is necessarily risky, it also demonstrates that the stakes are high. It is by trying it, ever more, that we actively attack the democratic hypothesis.

We have rendered ourselves absolutely mute by an inability to develop thought together. We must find the complicities, the texts, the issues that give us the appetite for reflection. This is how we break the figure of the unbearable intellectual, whose thought leads nowhere. Like any political practice, we must be careful not to make thought independent of the rest, nor the prerogative of a few experienced people. We do not all have the same capacities, we must find how to overcome our fears; like rioting, the practice of theory requires courage and sharing.

A watchword is precisely the meeting between thought and action, the two influencing each other. Finding the right one is finding the one that sets things in motion, the one we remember and that projects us. It's sometimes a question of timing, of place: *Les Gilets Jaunes triompheront*³⁰. We could see it as a detail, say that the essential is unspeakable, but the difference is notable between the social movement of 2016 which said "Law, work, withdrawal of both", and that of 2023 which proposed "Taking years of study into account in the calculation of pensions". It's dead. "Retirement at 60" is a shipwreck. You understand, it assumes that we must consent to everything else.

It is indeed not certain that we will understand each other. There is no miracle form that could solve the problem, no institution to be found. Within a language, depending on its use, separations form, distancing us or bringing us closer. Language has historically been constructed by assuming that one must prevail over another. Fortunately, there are a whole host of situations where these barriers

29 These emancipatory procedures are compliance procedures, confirming the very impasse of emancipation, this *cheap* revolution.

30 TN: The yellow vests will triumph, written on the Arc de Triomphe during the 18th act of the movement, on March 16th, 2019.

fall, where what matters is no longer the way we speak, but the issues we share. The very strength of a revolt is to break down separations. We find a common language, words that make sense, when we exchange them, dispute them.

The ambient depoliticisation is a springboard that turns all politics into a support for governmentality. Our politics are built by ignoring this blackmail. Some have grown disgusted with the term, to the point of abandoning it completely. But the depth of this impotency speaks volumes about the importance of recharging it, without delay.

6.

the aftermath Refusing any model of society

What will happen to all that beauty?
James Baldwin

1. Anticipate on anticipation
2. The question of scale
3. Use versus need

“What do you propose?” This question, so often asked to anyone who claims to be a revolutionary, is a trap into which we won’t fall. There is no good model to look for now, because there is no good model at all, and there won’t be any good model afterwards either. Actually, we have nothing to *sell*, no model to propose, no ready-made solutions, *pret a manger* style. Because a model is an affirmation of how things should be, whereas we cannot foresee that, nor do we want to. We are not looking for answers to questions we don’t know yet, we take the risk of proposing something else. We must seek a strength of projection, an impulse that frees us from short-term views and from the incapacity to see anything but what is right under our nose. We believe in revolution because we know there are ways of doing things that don’t continue the logic of power, and we must spread them and make them grow.

1. Those who try to imagine a model for Afterwards often do it with the best intentions: give substance to the idea of revolution, take it seriously and even, for some of them, find ways to limit seizures of power and to counter the reformation of a state. But the problem lies in *resolving* the future in today’s market. Any *solution* for tomorrow, when it’s uttered in today’s language, remains locked up in it. And the future becomes way too similar to the present.

The insurrectional event, a series of seismic shocks which will wipe out the current hegemony will be filled with many questions that we don’t know yet. What will start it? This impulse will have destroyed a tremendous amount of things but will also have built others. Will we destroy roads and spare the electric network? Will it be the other way around, or will it be both? Things must be thought of differently depending on the situation. Revolutionary experiments from the past teach

us how matters are reconfigured in time of war. For instance, let's take the aching question of vengeance: we should be careful not to let it become overwhelming, but so long as we don't experience its motives, how can we predict its forms in advance?

Some questions are finally uttered. Some ruptures must be definitive, to maximise the destruction of forms of power and prevent it from coming in through the back door. But still we must get over using the tabula rasa stance, according to which revolution should be a white page to write everything on. Such a stance is a fundamental dead-end of modern politics. The insurrectional event is a break, a neat and vertical separation between before and after. But it doesn't erase the horizontality of how time goes by, it still *invents* forms of continuity with what used to be. A number of more-or-less underground techniques and practices will emerge and some of them will be protracted way farther than what we can currently figure out. And so long as we cannot figure out to what extent our way of thinking and our way of considering reality will have changed by then, it is impossible to foresee the way our present will be affected and the ways lives will be able to change. Grow some tomato plants or build a pool inside the Elysee, it will depend on how big the breach is.

Some would speak of an imaginary rather than a model because it sounds less authoritarian: but they won't fool us. Of course, making the revolution does require imagination; we constantly imagine how things will go next year, or how everything would have been different that time if it hadn't been for this-or-that small detail. To imagine means to stand within what is not yet here. But to make a political program out of a fiction means to dictate a projection, and this is no less authoritarian than to take on a model. We don't necessarily want to choose between being a forest, a witch, or a soviet. We won't go for the zadist or the com-mie imaginary – thank you. This type of impersonation aims at giving an impulse to the idea of revolution, but all it can do is make its imaginary look lifeless, and in the end it produces the opposite effect.

To reflect on the revolutionary aftermath must never mean to answer governmental questions. There is no solution to bring to the question of education, to the problem of nuclear energy. To base one's political action on existing societal sectors kills the very seeds of insurrection, even when one claims that it will eventually "go beyond" that. Indeed, it means to give an endless legitimacy to the principle of government, as if it were the only principle able to answer such massive questions as *water* or *energy* for instance. But we don't want to do things better than the state does; we don't want to propose new formulations for things as they are now. And moreover, we don't only want to destroy existing institutions: we want

to destroy any instituting process. "To be radical is to consider the problem in its very roots," said Marx. Therefore it's about attacking deeply the way questions are uttered: that's what destitution means.

2. Any model is primarily a model of society, that is to say, a general method of functioning which is supposed to be the same for everyone. Acting in a societal perspective always defines a priority agenda on every level, up to the most radical forms of communalism: it always protracts governmentality. More generally, the problem of decision should not be solved by an automatic consensus, there is no way to know evidently what matters to whom. Sometimes, some decisions matter to everyone; sometimes, we want to set against the very fact of having to make a decision.

The ready-made solution to regain a semblance of political potency is often to turn toward small-scale and localism. *Small is beautiful*. But communalism renews universalism, it assumes that the relationship to a territory has to be the same for everyone, that the territory is the mandatory spot of the sense of belonging. Why should the place we live in absolutely draw the limits of a community able to make decisions together? Sometimes we share more things with realities located at the other end of the planet. What do we do with that? We don't necessarily want to make decisions that matter to our neighbors (there's no harm in being anonymous). We cannot ask ourselves the political question *how we do things?*, without asking with radicality the question *what is the sense of belonging?*, then define it against social belonging, against citizen subjectivity.

Division of the territory in small entities that should make decisions for themselves equals the hell of district assemblies extended to all spheres of life: complaints offices, decision for the sake of decision, for hours, without any stake. We have taken in the fact that any large-scale happening could only have a bad issue and be pure treason. But counter-revolutionary forces can also emerge from embryonic units. Nothing says that by reducing the scale of action we forearm ourselves from power logics. Within the myriad of micro-alternatives to the world, we can already see it. Even within the realm of the individual: you can be your own boss, self-civilise yourself.

We must fight the instinctive moral decision that the smaller, the better. That kind of question obstructs the fact that what matters most is precisely the scale of the decision; *that the answer lies within the question*. For example, when you ask whether you want to pursue a road blockade or not, the true decision is deciding who will decide: should it be those who will block?, all of those in attendance (both the blockers and the blocked)?, or should there be a nationwide poll?

Knowing where decisions must be made depends above all on the sense of belonging you choose to recognise. In that choice, there is no *objective* standard that could help. Territorial scale is often the criteria taken on: not only locally, but also on a more general level. National affiliation is still a cornerstone of the established order. Any social pact defines a population and sets it within a territory which implies governmentality – whatever the regime. A sovereign subject is always a government's objective. To get rid of the mythology of the people is one of the greatest missions of today's revolution.

Indeed, we cannot cut up decision-making levels upstream. We will have to make room for spaces that will have been constructed in the moment, for a new geography, for newly emerged senses of belonging. There will be conflict, people will want to write a constitution, but we won't let them, we won't let them say "it's their business". We start from the refusal of what usually decides for us³¹: so we cannot agree to let decisions slip through our fingers.

3. We were taught to consider any form of organisation through a managerial prism. We plan to do something with someone, and it instantaneously becomes a to-do list of what we'll have to manage. Management is the planning of what exists, it is an optimal measure between needs and resources, between diverging interests which should converge, it is a rational and therefore depoliticising mechanism.

Not every projection has to base on such a harrowing logic: but how will we eat? Famine, or its spectrum, has indeed overran revolutions in the past, and we will have to think about it thoroughly before we dismantle certain industries. Refusing to think of needs as a political starting point, it doesn't mean we erase a word from our lexicon. We think it is possible, not idealistic or crazy. We certainly won't accept starving to death, the important thing is to not be guided by hunger. We can be hungry in many ways; whatever gives us energy or makes us feel alive feeds us in some ways. On the other hand, when we say we need something, we become that thing's object; we make it mandatory, we lose our subjectivity, and we considerably impoverish whatever we talk about.

We are not Sims: our happiness doesn't consist of seeing our needs satisfied. The principle of need, when it is applied to everything, puts everything on the same level and makes it quantifiable. There is a scientific theory about the hierarchy of human needs: first come psychological needs, then security, sense of belonging, respect, and finally, achievement³². Except this doesn't work at all. We don't wait until we've eaten up to think about friendship. There is so many people who feel unfathomably empty when they've got precisely everything they need.

³¹ Government, our parents, our children, our work, our smartphone.

³² Maslow's pyramid.

We want to demolish the reign of necessity, and not just attack those who produce needs – advertising or government. During lockdown, only “essential” shops were allowed to be open. It created a great legitimisation race: “I am essential too”, the bookshop says. The reasoning is wrong here, as it is precisely unessential things that matter most. “A problem of the rich”, will say those who consider it a privilege only to ask that question. That some people cannot think of anything but their survival is another reason to make revolution a priority.

When people share a projection, necessity dissolves in the name of something greater. We all experienced moments when energies come together somewhat magically, without any concern of who does what, of what is valued and what isn't. When we organise a concert, when we prepare a meal, when we travel. We start from the meaning of what needs to be done, of how it matters to us. Everything that matters then, everything important can't be reduced to management and functionality. In order to give substance to this irreducibility, we must put an end to the myth of interest, according to which *man is a wolf to man* and you can only either fuck over other people or get fucked. As long as it is not clear for everyone intimately, we can only protract the *rapport de force* everywhere, regardless of the procedures we implement to remedy them.

The principle of need obliterates the reason of why we do things. We shall need money to make revolution. Yes, ok, but why? We need money so that we can avoid work; it is not the same thing as needing money to travel and meet insurgents at the other end of the world; it is not the same thing as needing money to buy places to live or hang out, nor is it the same thing as needing money in case of emergency. Each of these ideas does not cover the same idea of money. It shows that what we oppose to the principle of need is a strategic principle: we think of money depending on what we want to reinforce, the meaning and the issue, the direction we want to go.

Experimentation in these ways of doing things must not be postponed. There is already a bunch of people who find meaning in doing things otherwise, who recognise the strength there is in preserving their practices from the principle of need. When something we care about becomes an obligation, for ourselves or for others, then we objectify it and we lose it. It is precisely in the name of those things some care about so much, when others don't care at all, that we believe in revolution. Collective canteens which feed thousands of people, people who figure how to feed themselves from the sun, scientists who make steaks out of shit: nothing says we must take distance with it all, we cannot know yet what is relevant, nor for whom it is so.

Something important must be able to exist without having to vanish immediately. We can notice that what is opposed to management and principle of need is often reduced to an evanescent existence. We speak of “experimentation”, “desire”, of the “unspeakable”; without seeking its extension, its consequence. It is a devastating commonplace to say that what is beautiful cannot last. But we can make something last without institutionalising it: that is what we call a use. So it’s not about refusing all forms, but about finding a way to make these forms last without becoming prescriptive about it. We decide to live together in a small studio, sometimes a whole neighbourhood is occupied, we squat in houses rather than wait for the municipality to grant us social housing. We don’t say that it is the solution for everyone. The sense of what is happening here is irreducible to the housing problem. It exceeds it and overruns it completely.

It is in insurrectional periods that the greatest uses are unlocked. During the Spanish revolution, collectivist processes were different in each rural zone, there wasn’t any preset protocol. Lands were communised or divided up. Their fate was decided by the absence of property titles, most of which had disappeared, as much as it was by the number of militias to feed, and sometimes the specificity of a settlement implied a specific processing. None of these villages waited for a decision from above to find a sense of organisation. The impulse of pooling and sharing rather came from the political breath of those years. And such experiences contradict anticipation models, that’s why it is a treason to consider anticipation a fundament of new alternative models. We haven’t yet got rid of the will to control, the hegemony of programs. We must stop trying by all means to ward off the great leap into the void that a revolution necessarily represents.

7.

desertion Making ourselves irreducible

*A society which abolishes every adventure
makes its own abolition
the only possible adventure.*

1. Offensive desertion
2. Breaking free from the logics of this world
3. Strategic refusals

No revolutionary salvation will ever emancipate our existence: it is now, in the present, that we must live what we believe. We must continuously seek out what is foreign to the reign of institutions, to what we wish to fight. Is it possible to escape hegemony? Is there anything outside what is present? In any case there is such a thing as offensive desertion and it must be discovered as much as it must be built. This will be done with intuition and strong decisions.

1. We don't believe in what power constantly tries to make us believe; that we could not live without it. Just as if Fleury-Michon³³ were to tell his pigs that they are nothing without him. We invite every rebel, escaped pigs or lost children, to step out of line, to renounce and defect from this cursed world. From time to time, everyone is repelled by this world. Then we forget. Let's forget no longer.

The task is not to play at being martyrs who shatter their lives for the sake of a great cause. Sacrificial and frustrated existences necessarily produce a distant and illusionary vision of revolution. As if what we needed above all today was self-abnegation, activist toil, in order to maybe, someday, reach something like paradise. On the contrary, the best way to know what we fight for is to make space in our lives for the things that matter. A sensitive relationship to things nurtures political combat precisely because the enemy lies in what stands against us as much as in the relationships that hold us back. To attack this world, we must get out of the cage. That is why we draw a strong insight from the heritage of political

33 TN: Fleury-Michon is a major agribusinessman in pig farming.

autonomy: the ambition to live in accordance with our ideas. Collective occupations, self-reductions on electricity, frauds of all kinds, concert invasions, expropriations of supermarkets³⁴.

But how can we refuse a world that seems all-encompassing? This question can seem naive, but it isn't. We cannot refuse everything, every time, in the same way. This is why most pragmatic people are quick to point out: your sneakers come from China, you live on welfare, your food comes from supermarkets, and how would you manage without medication? Bad faith or not, it doesn't matter: that is not the question to ask. We do not want to resolve the contradictions of society: we want to attack it. That's why we take it upon ourselves to leech off it; it's always a partial retaliation. We all live in civilised districts and that is the starting point of our fight. No escape is total, no purism is desirable; the question is not about easing our conscience.

We nevertheless must find a political ethics, strong choices which stand outside the realm of civilisation. There are already many ways to escape. One can always flee alone, but this decision should not be made from one's small individuality: what disgusts me, what I accept, and all of which can change according to my moods. Desertion is not a lifestyle: it's a refusal to participate in what destroys us. It's neither about withdrawal nor about giving up the fight. We are not just looking for a good life, for a new comfort at the margins of society. We seek to withdraw from institutions to go deeper into what escapes them, to find the time and energy to confront what presents itself as the only possible reality. This is what an offensive desertion can be.

After more than a century of Marxism's stranglehold over revolutionary politics – based on a unified, hierarchical party and a certain conception of the course of History - it was necessary to attack all rigid forms of organisation in order to break away from it. To do this, we questioned the abusive rigidity of ideology, roles and functions. We are now entering an epoch in which revolution is conceived as fragmented reality, where the important aspects are multiplicity, desire and plurality. Motion and flexibility have become the norm, both in life and struggle. It's no longer enough to run away, as society increasingly incorporates marginal ways of life and existences that were once opposed to it. Soon, it will be possible to showcase one's riot experiences on a résumé, just as the best security guards are former robbers and hackers become experts in cybersecurity. In itself, there is no practice that cannot be captured; the civilised movement seeks to destroy or incorporate what escapes it: everything will find its place. *Another shitty world is still possible*. Even the most alternative life-forms can revitalise the system when

34 "Autonomists were not content with taking pastas, meat and oil, as Marxist-Leninists prescribed to, they also grabbed whisky, caviar, salmon and all kinds of luxury products: [...] grab merchandise was a way to annihilate its evil symbolic power." Marcello Tari, *Autonomie*.

they become a desertion from revolution and politics. It is by seeking the irreducible part, or rather what is irreconcilable with the order of things, that we can keep ourselves from being recuperated.

2. If it's not possible to run from the world, we must attack its constitutive logics. It's a mistake to think that if we go to the countryside, we escape civilisation. No place is immune to social production, no sky is spared by Elon Musk's Starlink project. In the city, we find CCTV, generalised indifference, continuous flows of information and people, and work everywhere. In the countryside, work is also everywhere, and life is centered around family, cars, villages' micro-apparatus and widespread gossip. The processes are the same: one must maximize their time and space, be efficient, compartmentalise their life, make even the useless useful; everything must contribute to productivity. But we can still get out of this Lego-world.

In everything it is possible to fight the process of identification, valorisation, functionalisation and control. No matter who holds those weapons, they are pointed at us. It is not enough to merely state it, we must also understand how to reveal these logics in their most insidious forms. Some people valorise themselves by exhibiting their weaknesses, while others lead a debauched lifestyle in which everything functions perfectly. It's never easy to stop thinking in terms of interest, utility, achievement or recognition, but doing so is extremely liberating.

Let's leave behind the tales of success, career, and a good and balanced life. We are not promising one great adventure, an existence free of all problems. Often we get bored, we struggle, and we can see what we lose and what we pass by; every life gets its share of suffering, anxiety and frustration. But these obstacles will be overcome as long as we can grasp the liberating effect of coherence, as long as we remain close from what motivates our choices. It takes courage to refuse a life to which everything leads us, but also to continue participating in this world. Waking up every morning, dealing with traffic jams or public transports, standing in line at the supermarket - this requires bravery. We see the widespread disorientation, the lives worn out by social games, from which it is so difficult to extricate oneself. Our choices must be guided, not by the economic criteria applied to every inch of our existence, but by what gives us the strength to fight against it.

It can be tempting to reverse the stigma and to make people ashamed of working: it's true after all that economic production condemns our planet. But we must never give in to a policing affect, seeking to uncover evil in every behavior, and every condition. All moralized relationships produce human beings riddled with guilt. What we refuse must, on the contrary, be based on solid and renewed decisions, decisions that are constantly revisited. This is what gives them the most potency; they are not based on a necessity; it could have been otherwise. There is

no prohibition to impose. We can always be convinced of the possible use of something we used to refuse; it's a matter of the *rapport de force* and it can always be debated.

The critique of morality has produced so many cynical existences. When the refusal to consider good and evil as valid criteria gives permission to all abuses, existential liberalism reigns, and everyone does as they please. Primal immorality feeds moral authoritarianism through a pendulum effect. And so here we are, caught in the blackmail of the epoch, where any limit is perceived as a ban. Instead, we want to find a way to have commitments that can halt decisions, a non-moral way to talk about duty, an political ethic. Because we know the effect of what is left unsaid and how that can become overwhelming, whether it's in a relationship or in a group, we know we must talk to each other, even when it's hard. We keep looking for the right thing to say, to do or not to do; we refuse to behave like assholes and to give in to contempt for what is different.

3. Some refusals are more sensitive, almost inexplicable. Others are a matter of strategic choices. Often, it's a mix of both. Fortunately, we are not all repulsed by the same things. There are those who will never accept paying for highways, and others to eat meat. We could decide this concerns nothing more than a personal choice, that in the end it is not political. But we can also decide that, among friends or within an organisation, some refusals are meaningful enough to become collective commitments. What matters to someone doesn't necessarily matter to the next person, everything is a question of priority: and we must choose our battles. It matters to hold on to these distinctions because things are not given in themselves, and it is essential to be able to discuss them. Should we have refused to get vaccinated for Covid? Was this refusal political in itself? We could debate it for days without ever reaching an agreement. We nevertheless have to decide what to do about such a disagreement. Does it lead to a rupture, or should it be put into perspective?

There is the question of priority, and there is also the question of the *rapport de force*. In theory, it would be great if we could live without ID papers. What that would call into question is enormous: the destitution of identity and nationality. But in fact, we don't see how today, at the scale at which we think, it would give us more potency than it would take away. We do not have the sufficient strength to withstand it. This doesn't mean that it is impossible: once again, let's not reduce these choices to individual decisions, at the risk of making it always too difficult to do anything. The question of the existence we want to pursue requires us to ask with whom we want to consider these choices. Different kinds of bonds overlap depending on what is at stake. Let's not constantly seek the strength in the most intimate sphere to make important decisions – an old habit which reserves all ca-

capacity for projection for the couple. It's precisely because we organise ourselves in such a way that we can desert, starting now. It is possible today in France to live without working and without a smartphone. We want to be able to spread theses political refusals.

To free oneself from work is to refuse to participate in the march of the world, to stop feeding the monster that destroys us. To work is to be dispossessed from our own time. Today it is impossible to define oneself without referring to work: "what do you do for a living?" For the luckiest, work is the capture of what we hold dear – an obligation of productivity, and the valorisation of what cannot be valued. For others, it is just torture. how many people hate their jobs? The hurdle to overcome seems immense; the question of money appears unavoidable, as does that of daily life and free time. Work is so structuring that to escape it, one must find other forms of attachment– connections that make theses questions less daunting. Refusing work is not a privilege: it is leaving the comfort of the norm and exposing oneself to a certain marginality. It is worth it. At the very least, we can ensure that it takes up as little space as possible in our lives, spread our refusal, stop believing in it, stop giving it importance and all our time. The rest we leave to the imagination, resourcefulness and ingenuity to assert what a life without work would mean³⁵.

The Smartphone is an institution that forces us to produce and captures our time, almost as much as work does. Today, everything is designed to make it impossible to do without it. Everything constantly brings us back to it; it is unavoidable: paying online, tracking our movements, the inability to truly turn it off. An apparatus is alienating when it seems impossible to do otherwise. Every aspect of our lives falls under this question: from QR codes to all those awful apps that facilitate payment between friends. We struggle to find a single area of existence that doesn't have its app, and of course, there are always some that we can find brilliant. The one that lists sunny terraces, the one that recognises mushrooms, Google Earth! We have to admit it's quite clever. We often mistakenly think we can win against it, taking only what there is to take; it's an illusion. The smartphone transforms us into an object, a surface that can be colonised by billions of injunctions, data, information, and of which we become a mere relay. Refusing an apparatus, means rejecting everything it does to us, everything we give to it. The smartphone turns our lives into simply a moment to endure. Deserting it involves knowing how to navigate without Maps, how to bypass a police checkpoint without Waze, how to set appointments without messaging, and how to be bored. That we may resort

35 When you steal, you have your cake and eat it too.

desertion -

to it at times does not mean that we have accepted all its terms: that is individual, that it accompanies us everywhere. In fact, we can find other uses for the smart-phone than its destruction³⁶.

Smartphones, like work, are what we love to hate. No one really defends them, and yet no one truly gives up on them. These institutions capture our subjectivity, and it is for this reason that we prioritise refusing to let them act upon us. It's like money: it's impossible to do without it completely, but we refuse to subordinate our lives to its authority. We can refuse to let money be too central, to let it contaminate our relationships, to let it turn us into greedy people, and to let everything we love become a commodity. We must fight against everything that enslaves us. Saying that in our lives we have neither a job nor a smartphone evokes both envy and contempt, sometimes in the same person. We could be seen as both too courageous and too privileged. To ensure that this does not just reflect individual temperament, let's make it a real political choice, a proposition to join and spread.

Desertion gives substance to the life we want to live, through the experience of what is irreducible to civilised reality. It especially prepares us for the assaults that need to be undertaken. Insurrection is the space-time that allows for the greatest accelerations; it is in revolutionary moments that desertion extends to the institutions we cannot attack today, extending to those who have not yet taken a side.

³⁶ Use it as a plate, a cutting board, to wedge in a table or a chair, as a racket, a projectile, as fuel, as a ball, as an envelope, as a sex-toy, as confetti.

8.

alliance

Building the revolutionary camp

We're not in the same side, madam.

Didier Lallement³⁷

1. Which belonging? 2. Against the camp of Good and the idea of legitimacy 3. Finding each other

We're not going to make the revolution alone. With how many people, in which ways, with whom do we organise ourselves? The question obsesses those who have only the word "massification" on their lips, a question they use like blackmail. Once it has been said that we will never be in the majority, that we won't wait until there are millions of us to take action, we still have to find each other, to meet, to spread, to contaminate.

1. How can we be strong together? We have to find a collective potency, a commonality that is embodied in a force that strikes. It must not be based on a common condition. Those who no longer want to play the game, who refuse to keep being a part of this world, who don't want to be citizens anymore, can come from anywhere. No objective criteria can structure the general antagonism, dividing some and others on one side or the other. Society provides us a range of ready-made divisions: race, gender, class are the best-known ones, the most structuring ones. There is a strong temptation to start from the status of the dominated in order to fight: that is the Marxist idea of a revolutionary subject. To make class domination the political lever of choice above all others is not an option anymore. The destruction of nature, patriarchy, slavery and colonisation are not all explained and justified by capitalism, which is itself a keystone of civilisation. The latter maintains its dominion when the fight is distorted by truncated attacks³⁸. It's all about finding the right way to strike the totality at each point, it is important to generalise the assault.

³⁷ TN: Didier Lallement was the prefect of Paris during the Yellow Vests movement. The prefect is the administrative agent in charge of the police in a department.

³⁸ And capitalism can even act as a fuse to be blown as a last resort.

In the Marxist tradition, other categories of domination can always be put forward, but the logic remains the same. Each time a social category is invested with a political meaning, we say that the fight is *also* against this categorisation. In the United States, the murder of George Floyd sparked the Black Lives Matter uprising. This time the murder of a black man by the police, often occurring without visible consequences, opened up a propensity for infinite revolt, especially in the land of slavery and segregation. And the feeling everyone could feel, the fight everyone could join. Racial dividing lines were a way to stem the insurgency, contain it and deny it. In some places, they were completely overwhelmed, but journalists and the liberal wing of the movement never ceased to re-impose them. "Identity politics, intersectionality and the social privilege discourse constitutes the most sophisticated sector of this police apparatus³⁹."

Yet, we cannot deny the force that a refusal of domination can become. This arbitrary split cannot stay invisible, intact. Many lives have been politicised this way. The refusal of any condition in which we are trapped leads us to search and find complicities with those who share the condition. There is strength in deciding to be loyal to our feelings rather than our determinations. Belonging through identity gives strength and this is the trap: we won't try to destroy it anymore. To fully attack a domination, one must refuse the separations that it entails.

We refuse that the content of our relationships could be reducible to an identity. We refuse social labels, as sophisticated as they may be. Intersectional theory has developed an ever more precise analytical grid which criss crosses every domination, which dissolves the thorny (and absurd) issue of knowing which one is the most important. At the center, the Individual and all its determinations. What we have to share must not be reduced to suffering or guilt, depending how the chosen criterion places us on one side or the other of domination. Reducing situations to social predicates, and seeing the world only through these, is particularly depoliticising. For example, during a university occupation this kind of analysis can prevent us from throwing out security guards on the pretext that they have an precarious job and are racialised 31. Anti-authoritarianism is weakened and can even become authoritarian when the status of the dominated is used to gain the upper hand in a discussion or in a political conflict.

To assert a legitimate belonging to a struggle inevitably leads to a withdrawal, to put the "most effected" into a bubble. And for the bigger picture: there's the "convergence of struggles". This is the soup we're always served: everyone stay in their little struggle, their little sector, students in the universities, the "rank and file" on the picket lines, high school students at the high schools, and all of this will end up uniting around the same objective, on the cheap. In an insurrectional situation, it's precisely by exceeding any identity whatsoever that the insurgent

³⁹ *How it might should be done*, Idris Robinson.

“we” is found and deployed. This is simply because it is already dealing with something else: the matter of taking sides. It is irreducible to the territory in which it formed, or the suffering it has endured.

What brings us together is the key question of any revolutionary attack. As long as we continue to play with categories that were created to maintain order, order between men and women, order between White and non-White, order between rich and poor, we’ll keep this order in place. The yellow vest never meant white proles. It’s a mistake to try to shape a revolutionary subject. A yellow vest can easily mean someone who has participated in every act⁴⁰, someone who is determined, or someone who doesn’t retreat in front of the cops. What people have in common is not the color of their cell walls but the huge prison of social categories. It is what they join when they flee from it.

2. In recent years we have seen the emergence of a true cult of composition, with an appetite for encounter at every level. We think about the alliance before we even know what we are aiming for, and rather than ask ourselves why we are acting, we first ask with whom. For fear of being too few, fear of withdrawing into ourselves, we imagine that the only way to gain strength is to be more numerous. At the slightest divergence, we hear “We mustn’t go for the wrong enemy”, and too many speeches begin with “everyone here agrees that...”. Conflict is seen as heresy and acts as a scarecrow, something to be prevented at all costs to preserve the unity of the group or, on a wider scale, of a struggle. And to avoid disagreements what better way is there than to stop trying so hard to find out what you think?

On the contrary, we argue that asserting and holding a strong political position allows us to bond with others more effectively. This way we know what we’re talking about, what’s at stake, the agreements as well as the disagreements. These last few years, many radical groups have welcomed alliances with unions on a variety of occasions. Always with the same reassuring feeling of rubbing shoulders with “real people”, a fantasy of otherness and heterogeneity. Yet what is really being celebrated is normality in all its homogeneity, a reactivation of the good old figure of the worker⁴¹. But classical organisations do have a clear political position, objectives and agenda: the politics of integral management. Autonomous groups have come to see themselves as platforms for networking different positions. We are not saying that an alliance with unionists is impossible in all circumstances, but it’s all the more important to know what you want and where you are heading. Without a strong political position, you’re bound to be at the service of those who have one.

40 TN: During the yellow vests uprising, every demonstration was called an “act”, as in a play.

41 One shouldn’t be surprised that more and more people who refuse normality come back to it.

Especially since an alliance is not simply the result of a well-defined pact between two organisations. Sometimes things are formalised, but often they are not. Co-organising demonstrations, concerts and discussions always seems benign, circumstantial and above all opportune as long as it brings in people! Behind this naivety lies an unspoken presupposition: we're on the same side, obviously.

It's just that the threat seems so great, so imminent. Ecological crisis, fascism: these are the two struggles of the moment, the urgency in the face of which we cannot hem and haw. We cannot afford the luxury of being demanding. When we make alliance a necessity, those who don't are making a historical mistake. This blackmail for unity needs to be flushed out everytime it appears. For instance, when someone reduces any violent gesture from our side to a defensive reaction in front of the nasty cops to be sure not to bother the pacifists. It's a deadlock to keep being the nice guys of the story and always put forward your legitimacy. Each time you ask a question in those terms you wonder what is fair, for everyone of course, a general interest is presupposed. The common good only exists as a justification of the worst. It's the biggest mental jail we have to dynamite: the framework of legitimacy.

The sacred union fuels the danger it intends to combat. This is the result of trying to make ecology and anti-fascism the pillars of self-righteousness. Yet the problems denounced are real: the return of nationalism, the fascists organising, the police rule of law, the devastation of the planet. The only way to efficiently cope is to open up the revolutionary question. It's commonplace to say that what plays into the hands of the far right today is above all is Macron and his policies. But when all shades of the left come together in the camp of the Good, those who aren't part of it can present themselves as the true resisters. The more we dilute our discourse, the more we round off the edges, the more the other camp appears subversive, rebellious, desirable, the camp of those who resist the system. The fascist or even conspiracist option is strong in that it reveals the fracture lines and undermines the social peace. We talk about the fascist threat as if we had something to protect. It's up to us to be threatening. It's time to take the revolution out of its defensive position. And here is the real problem: to be frank, who wants to join a camp that includes Yannick Jadot⁴²?

3. Revolutionaries should obviously ask themselves the question of numbers. We need to find each other, to rally forces, without forgetting that encounters also happen through rupture, disagreement, division. We have better discussions when the indisputable has been established, which allows us to sharpen what we have in common without delighting in a facade of unity. Physically removing the fascists from a Yellow Vests demonstration was a good start, removing the jour-

⁴² TN: Yannick Jadot is an anything but radical ecologist politician who showed up to the Sainte-Soline demonstration on March 25th 2023.

nalists is another. Common ground is found through refusals that must be more specific each time: Who are those who refuse a law? Those who refuse to stick to the struggle against this law? Those for whom this law is just an opportunity?

Nor should we fear loneliness either. We can be alone and be right. If we believe enough in our truth, we will meet those who share it. Anonymous comrades, insurrections thousands of miles away from one another, the eternal and infinite space of those who seek to meet cannot be swallowed by the frightening pessimism of thinking we'll always be too few. The decisive aspect of an idea calls for both rigour in discourse and a refusal to reserve it for a small circle.

Concealing your position, making it more attractive, more acceptable, is weakening. On the contrary, it's important to go right to the end of your thought, to put it at risk, to translate it relentlessly. By sticking to the lowest common denominator we condemn ourselves to a weak belonging with only two levels: those who are with me, those who are against me. Conversely insofar as we insist on a certain intransigence, we need to think of a broader and more precise conception of disagreement. Conflict within a space that has already accepted the refusal of the cops and negotiation won't be the same as conflict in a place where procop discourses are tolerated.

On closer inspection, disagreement is sometimes expressed more virulently between people who are very close to each other than between distant positions, but it's not the same thing that's at stake. You can ally yourself with leftists against the prefecture but you'll never ally yourself with the prefecture against leftists (or anyone else). The category of enemy must be reserved for absolute incompatibility. At this level, conflict is expressed through political violence and there are only two sides to the barricade. However, other levels of disagreement, whether between political adversaries, friends, comrades, insurgents, or revolutionaries, must find their singular form of expression that can never be that of pacification.

The stakes are high: knowing how to talk to each other, how to meet, how to form spaces whose force of attraction extends far beyond those who initiate them. We want to find, immediately, those with whom we'll fight alongside in the next battle. We can not know for sure, but we have to keep looking. That's the only way to ensure that we don't start from scratch every time, so that we don't wait for the next insurrectional opening to regret once again that revolutionaries were not up for the task. What we're aiming for is anpotency of intervention capable of exploding any obstacle that may arise.

The point is not to form a singular revolutionary Party. We would just be repeating the hegemonic logic that we intend to combat. We know there are always differences of position which shouldn't prevent us from talking to each other but

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which make it necessary to confront each other, to see what can be done in spite of certain disagreements. Everyone chooses their own criteria that matters, the words they use or refuse. Everyone imagines differently what can be a meeting point, a common plan beyond oneself. Exceptional situations are political tests where those who fight for the idea of revolution reveal themselves. Where they nourish it with their gestures and thoughts.

From now on, we must try to create spaces where all those who insist on making the revolution exist meet. This what it means to build the revolutionary camp. Those who are called to the encounter are as much organised groups as gangs or persons all on their own. We can not detail a list of objective, definitive and closed criteria, nor say surely who should be in or out. But everyone wherever they might be, wherever they speak must ask themselves: what gathers those who ask the question of the end of this world and the means to succeed?

Refusal of reformism, refusal of the institution, refusal of negotiation, refusal to reduce the enemy to capitalism, refusal to separate thought and gesture, refusal to organise from social conditions, refusal to abandon to the enemy the definition of politics, refusal to aim less than the insurrection, refusal of civilisation. These are the clues to what we think we have in common with those who talk of revolutionary construction. The point is not to make it a prerequisite but to take things the other way: if you, who is reading us, agree with some of these refusals, it is urgent that we meet.

9.

hold-out Resisting time

1. Quiet times 2. Long term

Revolutionary life is a matter of endurance. Throwing yourself wholeheartedly into a situation means thinking about what happens when it subsides, when the event closes up and the institution of everyday life takes over again. Revolutionaries often founder during this low ebb. When the opportunity passes, when normality spreads, how can we resist the passage of time? How do we keep fighting in peacetime?

1. The moments when conflict erupts - what we call exceptional situations - turn everyday life and priorities upside down. So far, each of these moments has been followed by a return to normal. Sometimes, the calm is short-lived, but we can expect to experience some real dry periods. In all cases, it's a question of persisting, of holding out, so as to be in a position to emerge again whether it be tomorrow, or in ten years, whenever the situation calls for it.

When a situation closes up, it's because the conflict has been successfully erased. In other words, governmental, media, liberal and sometimes even militant counter-insurgency sets up the same apparatus, the one that conjures up and denies at all costs what has arisen, "no-nothing happened". And at the heart of the event, the negation of what is happening is already at work. This age-old strategy of power helps to stem the tide of revolt. For example, in France, a demonstration turns into a riot and the government congratulates the police forces for maintaining calm, even when clashes are taking place at the same time. In a similar way during the 2020 riots that took place in the US the entire media sphere went out of its way to deny the police station burned in Minneapolis, the arsons in cities like Atlanta and New York, and the live fire on police in St. Louis. This way, they minimise the insurrectionary aspect of the movement, and highlight only its civic side.

What does this teach us? Periods of peace are the narrative triumph of the party of order. The event is covered up, people go home, the crisis fades away. Some return to their daily lives and their small problems, others sink into the sadness of low intensity, and still others disappear for a while because the repression is in full swing. Then there's the frenetic news cycle, which brings a new topic to the table every day, and a few weeks later we've already forgotten everything we've been

through. This return to normality often seems like a sort of inexplicable cursed cycle. But this is not a natural law, it's a condition that is imposed. Because it's false that in these calmer moments nothing happens. Depoliticisation, the denial of what has taken place, all this forms a *situation* in which it is also important to intervene. We need to reactualise conflictuality. Just because we can't see much of the ongoing war from our window doesn't mean it isn't happening. After the year 2023, which was so surprising in France, it's striking how little political impact it had on our side. So few meetings, so few words. This is precisely where the battlefield lies: trying to extend the force and resonance of a sequence beyond its own temporality.

Sometimes we feel closer to what happened during the Yellow Vests than what happened last night. Time isn't linear. An event continues to act in the present, even if everything indicates that it has closed. This takes the form of questions: what was potent, what were the traps, what did we reinforce, what blind spot did we miss? In the form of a promise, what strategy should we develop right now to be ready and make the difference at the next opportunity? How can we avoid starting from scratch next time? During the last social movement, for example, the subject was again and again that of the Yellow Vests, the reasons it failed, the memory of its strength, the lessons we pondered and allowed to decant.

To remain faithful to the event is to let it disrupt us. Life will never be the same afterwards, because we've just had a glimpse of how this world can wobble. The consequences are also existential: opening houses to live in with the friends you've found, giving up your studies, your job, your boyfriend, because it no longer makes sense to carry on as if nothing happened. There are events that leave their mark on us, stories that change us, our destiny turns a corner. Those of us whose *birth* was caused by the recent upheavals know that everything we've lived through is still there.

It's from these disruptions that it makes sense to look for accomplices, for discussions, for spaces where encounters come into play, where tried-and-tested truths continue to act, where we want to get organised. This is the exact opposite of activism, whose job is precisely to melt the event into a dull, sad, everyday routine. We don't want to reduce the exceptional to the ordinary, to be happy to find things where we left them, in their little milieu, in the meandering gossip and other timeless quarrels. More importantly, we risk losing our edge, completely missing out on situations, or forgetting how to speed things up when the time comes.

This doesn't mean sinking into frenetic activism. We see too many people who exhaust themselves, who go everywhere, and who end up exploding, self-destructing. We mustn't confuse temporalities, getting agitated aimlessly, convinced that

it's possible to catch up with the intensity that is, in fact, no longer there. The yellow vests, who kept up the Acts to no end, also exhausted the strength of what we'd experienced; a stubborn determination quickly can turn to despair.

2. It's not enough to say "we need to get organised", we also need to say a little about how. There are a few lessons to be learned from our experiences that we'd like to share.

Political organisation begins, first and foremost, with encounters. Encounters while dodging ticket inspectors, at the end of a lame discussion, shouting from the grandstand, shouting at each other, at the local ZAD, through a childhood friend, or more simply through work or school.

The anecdote only becomes important afterward. Going to one protest after another, preparing for them, taking part in lots of discussions, organising them, living together, talking all night long. Politics is what gives the crew its full meaning, the crew is the scale on which it is lived intensely. We must never lose this energy, when everything flows naturally, and we're ready to explode any limit.

Political friendship is the vital fuel of any revolutionary life, but to stop there is to risk losing everything. The beauty of friendship lies in the fact that it can come to an end, that it is only sustained by the meaning we continue to give it. This is why the *raison d'être* of the fight cannot rest solely on bonds of affinity, however strong they may be, especially if they are strong. Political belonging must be able to resist what structures the life of groups: quarrels, breakups. How many political groups end because of a complicated love story that takes up all the space?

Knowing how to formulate what matters as well as what repulses, defining an enemy, finding ways to intervene, analysing situations together, asking what needs to be strengthened and how, knowing how to take directions. What makes you want to fight can also disrupt other people, so there's great strength in sharing it, in exposing it. We shouldn't keep to ourselves the potency we feel through involvement. We have to move, be curious, go out and meet surprising realities, feed off more distant experiences. We find ourselves agreeing with people we were never meant to meet, and that's the force of politics.

A bond becomes partisan when it's not based on friendship, but on the sharing of a position held together. The partisan aspect of a political bond is a shared affect, the effect of saying "we", of agreeing on what matters most. It can be stated and it can be joined. It is not only experienced by physical presence, we can be partisans without ever having met, even if camaraderie is always the promise of an encounter. The strength of this bond has its real meaning in situations, when the rallying of partisans seems like something obvious.

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Some people think that the easy answer to a lack of political development is to invite everyone. For us, public organisation is the end of organisation. The reign of transparency and the refusal of internal space produce a catastrophic vision of politics. There's strength in not letting everything be seen, in having things to protect, in wanting to discuss things with people you trust. Trust is all we have. The organisation relies on nothing else, and because we *believe* in it together, we can set ourselves high standards. Brandished by those who see the limits of affinity, the public organisation also acts as a great trick, if we look at how these spaces basically reintroduce a vertical logic, or precisely, cronyism. We often think it is generous to open spaces wider and wider, but often the opposite happens. Presence counts. When someone comes into a discussion without knowing anything about the stakes, is he really able to take part in the decisions, is it even desirable? There is no choice to be made between the research requirement and the sharing requirement, but you don't have to do everything at the same time. We must find the levels that make conspiracy possible. This does not mean abandoning public intervention, but reflecting on it, thinking about it, sharpening it in other spaces. Opening up confrontation must not be done at the expense of political elaboration.

Maintaining a level of opacity is also the condition for not getting burned. No one is above security practices. Knowing the surveillance cameras, how to talk to each other, in which place, by what phone, all this has consequences. There will always be people who say that it is useless to take precautions, because in any case you cannot escape surveillance. A self-fulfilling prophecy, so that no one pays attention and so we do the intelligence services work for them. It is sad to reserve the ability to conspire only for the enemy, to abandon any capacity to surprise, to be a step ahead, and to be a threat. A high level of security is also a bet on the future: maybe for now there is nothing political with this person, but who knows what you may be led to do together? We know how traumatic repression can be, to resist it now is to prepare. There's nothing like sharing experiences, stories and know-how. Understanding the mechanisms allows us not to underestimate them, without overdramatising them. It is because this sense is shared that safety practices persist. These skills are valuable because what is at stake is our ability to last.

Our fight is not a teenage angst, a youthful mistake or a momentary detour. There are pitfalls, we know some,, we will face others. Putting our organisation to the test of time is the hardest part. But there is no doubt, unknown obstacles will unlock all the inventiveness we'll need to win.

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