

With our heads held high

June 29, 2013

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With our heads held high – A call for debate and solidarity in anticipation of the trial against Nicola and Alfredo

On July 5 the preliminary hearing of the trial against anarchists Nicola Gai and Alfredo Cospito, arrested on September 14 2012 and accused of being the perpetrators of the wounding of Ansaldo Nucleare manager Roberto Adinolfi – designer and builder of nuclear power plants – will take place. The action was claimed by the Olga Nucleus of the Informal Anarchist Federation/FRI.

On that day the dates of the trial will be set, most likely starting in autumn.

An early draft of this proposal has been circulating for the last two months. Starting from one single repressive episode – however serious and full of implications – we came to reflect on a larger scale on the deficiencies and perspectives of a certain anarchist area and on the necessity for debate – and not flattened positions – on some fundamental topics such as repression, solidarity, prospects of the struggle, dynamics and deficiencies of our communication.

Beyond current contingencies we would like to talk about the positive aspects that can be drawn from our reaction to single repressive episodes, our knowledge of the development of control and ‘prevention’ strategies and means so that we can proudly make fool of them; the positive aspects of discussing and re-launching ideas and practices of attack, of recognizing ourselves against a common enemy with our heads held high.

It would be a useful meeting for those who still consider the anarchist perspective as a lively and attractive hypothesis, a tangle of thoughts, actions and experiences in the making: we are aware of the fact that when these experiences and thoughts intertwine and refine we can achieve high levels of analysis, projectuality and practices, which will help enlarge the horizon of the struggle, open rays of light in this oppressive present and weave new webs of revolt.

We are anarchists and therefore naturally allergic to political caryatids, even including those acting as ‘militants’, naturally extraneous to plenary sessions, decision-making and centralizing structures: individual tensions remain strong and vital and at the same time we recognize ourselves in a common base, a historical base but also one built through converging experiences and suggestions; we are not monads in space but we are anchored to a legacy of thought and action, be it the Argentine expropriators and individualists of the beginning of last century, the affinity groups of Catalonia in the thirties, Makhno, the *arditi del popolo*, the First of May Group, the rebels of Genoa 2001, of Athens and of all the piazzas where petrol contributed to making our hearts inflame and guard uniforms burn, today’s groups of action or the future visionaries of subversion in a world that will be increasingly difficult to adapt to.

We feel we have our hearts and minds on the right side, the side that recognizes the multiform practices of revolutionary struggle, discerns insurrectional sprouts

from the shallows of reformist realism – educational or welfare-orientated if you prefer, doesn't abandon imprisoned comrades but recognizes them as an active and alive part of a trajectory of struggle, doesn't comply with the 'minimum wage' of solidarity, is aware that any revolutionary tension is intrinsically 'social' as it intervenes with its means and evaluations in the critique of today's society, and at the same time it is 'antisocial' when alleged social struggles become a limited and limiting enclosure over our anti-authoritarian senses.

We would like to consider again some basic issues: correspondence between thought and action, a sort of anarchism that can recognize and feel the multiform manifestations of anarchist action, even if it can't manage to practice them in the totality of its multifarious forms. We are aware of the fact that there is no ranking in our practices, no hierarchy in our means but only more or less effective instruments to be chosen according to the situation, without hesitation or taboos on individual and collective trajectories, choice of acronyms, anonymities or whatever else.

It is up to us, here and now, to get the chance to discuss, understand each other and recognize each other as active components of an anarchy galaxy, a minority but effective one, at times shining in its ability to create and foment situations of struggle, at other times sterile gym of radical critique, too shy to assert the rightness of its analysis.

It is up to us, here and now, to understand clearly if and up to which point we are able to commit ourselves as we are aware that accomplices can be found in the action and not during meetings or other occasions for encounter.

Solidarity and Repression

Repression is the natural counter-altar of anarchist action. Active solidarity should be an equally natural spontaneous process. But most often it is not like this. Repressive scenarios reproduce themselves cyclically with some variations, 270, 280, organized crime, devastation and plunder, strategies of preventive control (expulsion orders, oral warnings, special surveillance, etc) and last but not least solitary confinement units destined to imprisoned anarchists with the consequent strategy of separating them from the rest of the prison population. The state continues to do its job as it defends itself – more or less effectively – from the attempts at creating – more or less strikingly – agitation and attack.

For now the score is low, not only because of the many imprisoned comrades – too many even if it was just one – who find themselves facing years in prison in the name of the revenge of dominion but also and mainly when the strategies of control and repression manage to demolish the basic forms of belonging and

solidarity within the movement, when the usual reluctant ones are increasingly becoming immune to solidarity and closeness to the comrades in the name of political opportunism and personal safety, when even writing a solidarity poster becomes a complicated matter, when the blow of the uprising expanding across the globe – instead of instilling anger, pride and will of action – feeds the worn-out bellows of fearful hearts unable to make choices.

At times solidarity and complicity are words laden with consequences, at other times they are the tombstone that seal a tension born death, stuck on the rocks of a pragmatic and wretched coastal navigation in the name of quiet life.

We are not interested in this. We can't build any hypothesis worth experiencing on the basis of realism and fatalistic adaptation, this is playing down and it is the case to invert the course.

Let's continue to consider the comrades fallen in the hands of the enemy for what they are, active individuals in the struggle and in the debate, neither martyrs nor saints to be shown off on the altars of the victims of repression, comforting those who create them rather than those who end up onto them. It is necessary to give solidarity to these comrades in an active way, without hesitation, beyond the particularities of our different projectualities.

Information – Counter-information

Circulation of counter-information and propaganda should be a means useful to the encounter and exchange of perspectives and projectualities but most often it becomes nothing more than a self-referential end. There are various types of problems, from the instruments we choose to spread information and debate to the modes of communication, direct or mediated by paper or digital instruments. In spite of the fact that anarchist propaganda has always abundantly produced pamphlets, fanzines and the like, in the past the most common complaint concerned lack of information. Now the problem appears inverted but the result is the same. We navigate in a sea of information and counter-information, which are often absorbed and leave things as they are or, at the worst, become an end rather than a means. It is also true that digital communication offers itself to the strategies of control and repression more easily, as it is automatically traceable and perpetually monitored. But this happens with any instrument.

The web concedes quick exchanges of information and often provides global and local overviews, which could give us interesting hints. But if the latter don't become reality the fault it is not of the IT-communication instruments but rather of the inability – or far too often lack of will – to find one another face to face on a trajectory of struggle.

Prospects of the struggle

It is difficult to circumscribe the prospects of the struggle a priori. We are in an open field and suggestions are numerous, from the struggle against harmfulness to the various forms of opposition against the erosion of the scarcer and scarcer individual and collective spaces of freedom, which dominion continue to impose on us in its cyclic restructuring processes. What interests us here is not to discuss the possible fields of intervention but rather to continue to defend the validity of the method – the anarchist one of direct action and refusal of delegating, of confidence in one's instruments and analysis, without being allured by quantity sirens and improbable alliances, without concealing behind the litany of the 'we are few we don't go anywhere'. To this we'd like to oppose the 'although we are few we can recognize the paths worth walking along without hesitation, to be proposed to one another, and the possible comrades we can find there.' Nothing more.

In conclusion, this proposal for debate is ambitious and risky. We wouldn't like the spectre of repression to cut down the possibility for debate. On the contrary, it is exactly the strategies of repression that make us abandon any hesitation and make us feel the urge of this possibility. Debate doesn't necessarily mean to make everything converge in the classic form of the meeting, an increasingly inadequate container. Nevertheless we believe a direct exchange is fundamental: the debate could take the shape of encounters, even on a local level, to be made before the trial, which should be due soon anyway, in autumn, as we would like to realize a significant solidarity presence on that occasion.

Some anarchists

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