

STORM WARNINGS

*Anarchist bulletin
for the social war*

.....
42 – June 15 2021



| Politics of large numbers |

Since its beginnings, the management of the covid-19 epidemic by the authorities has been logically characterized in our latitudes by a predominance of economic imperatives and the preservation of the social order, which even the constantly-invoked medical rationale of the State no longer manages to conceal.

But what is also striking is that the infinite forms of self-organization that could have arisen from different individuals to face the virus, and continue to *act in spite of it*, were immediately paralyzed by the quicksand of contradictory recommendations and staggering figures: mortality and lethality rates, positivity rates, incidence rates, emergency room and intensive care unit occupancy rates, persistent antibody rates, reinfection rates... and so on. This highlights once again that by starting from the politics of large numbers rather than from oneself – with one's doubts as well as one's burning desires – reflection generally ends up being mired in a managerial logic, where productive calculation quickly takes the place

of life and its *expansive* excesses. To break the very model that presides over any statistical reduction of human complexity, to make uniqueness exist beyond averages and to recreate diversity by dismantling the aggregates of data, there are no thirty-six solutions. It is the very terrain where each individual is summoned to bow to a collective superior interest that must be refused. It is one's own sensitive relationship to life, to death, to illness, to taking risks, to mutual aid, to the stars, that one has to defend in the face of the social requirement to sacrifice it on the altar of quantity. Whether the latter is called the homeland, economy, common good... or even collective immunity.

If the medical method of statistical analysis is certainly constitutive of the contemporary relationship to epidemics, as shown by the old debate between *contagionists* and *infectionists* during the cholera epidemic of 1832 (the former advocating that the disease was transmitted by contact with the sick, the latter by the unhealthiness of the environment, based on the same Parisian

MAY 2021

Early May, Paris (France).
A fire-breathing rat announced on May 23 that he had set fire to an *Enedis* electric car at the beginning of the month, stating that "*entire areas and their inhabitants are being ravaged and populations exploited to find uranium for nuclear power plants and rare earths and metals for photovoltaic solar panels*".

Early May, Paris/Pantin (France).
Unknown people announced on May 17 that they had visited two collaborators in the construction of new prisons at the beginning of the month: *Gaudin Architecture* in Paris, whose fiber optic cables were cut and the tags "*Gaudin designs prisons and police stations*", "*Fire to prisons, freedom for all*" left on the spot. And *Bérim* in Pantin (Seine-Saint-Denis), whose façade was tagged and the entry code device smashed with a hammer.

15/5, Thessaloniki (Greece).
Full Face Queer - Anarcho Maria B claims responsibility for the arson attack on the *Goethe Institute* of the German state, in response to the call for decentralized actions against the threatened expulsion of the *Rigaer94* in Berlin. "*One decision, all together, today and always, until we dance on the corpse of patriarchal civilization*."

15/5, Greece.
Direct Action Cells claim twenty incendiary attacks against police and state targets in Athens and Thessaloniki. Their actions have taken place in

statistics), or the first mathematical modeling based on the plague epidemic in India (1927), this authoritarian relationship that encases individuals has much more distant roots. It could perhaps even be traced back to the origins of writing in Lower Mesopotamia, where this invention was not conceived as a means of representing language, but directly for the lowly purposes of administrative and commercial accounting, intrinsically linking the first numbers engraved on tablets to the emergence of state domination (with its need to count, tax, measure, classify, standardize, manage and anticipate). So much so that one could even wonder if it is not the very notion of calculation and the will to quantify the world that began the process of domesticating our senses.

Today, it will surprise no one that in medical matters, as in many others, this statistical policy of large numbers has become a master in the administration of our lives by the powerful, as the covid-19 epidemic has again revealed. Concerning public authorizations of vaccines (and drugs), the criterion is quietly called the *risk/benefit ratio*, basing the studies on small samples deemed to be representative, from which extrapolations will be projected on the whole of our fellow beings, reducing the living to a collection of more or less standardized and functional machines. Even if it means transforming the world's population into guinea pigs for a giant experimental laboratory with mixtures based on genetic chimeras, of which one of the current scientific miracles is not to prevent the vaccinated from being contaminated or contagious, but only from developing the serious forms of the disease.

As an example of the same logic, statisticians in white coats assign personal *scores* to patients on a daily basis in order to triage vital, heavy, expensive, emergency or crisis care between who can possibly survive and who is no longer worth it anyway. These scores are of course not related to the complexity of each individual, which the inhospitable factory does not bother to linger on anyway, but to the *average probability* of potential survival at the time of this decisive triage: there is the *frailty score* (from 1 to 9, with the last levels attributed according to the "*statistical life expectancy at 6 months*"), the *WHO score* (from 1 to 4, for example based on the fact that one remains bedridden "*more or less than 50% of the day*") and the *GIR score* (from 1 to 6, determining the level of dependence, linked to the fact that an individual can perform a certain number of tasks "*spontaneously, totally, correctly or regularly*"). It is this combination of scores, as performative as it is arbitrarily normative, that officially determines who can live or die, whether between a covid patient and a person who has suffered a road accident or a

heart attack, or between two covid patients. A triage that is discreetly called *selection* or *prioritization*, and whose evaluation grids are best known in advance in case of concern.

Of course, it is possible to point out that these management tools, which claim to be scientific and objective, are above all the reflection of a world which has driven out quality and the individual to the benefit of efficiency and mass, after having dispossessed each person of all autonomy, within an increasingly degraded environment which in turn calls for a multiplication of crisis or emergency situations. And that when fear and death loom, it is certainly more reassuring for many to face it by taking refuge behind the familiar cold rationality of the State than to confront the experimental unknown of freely associated individuals. To which one could retort with a little smile, that when one has no pretension nor will to *manage* the shit of this existence at a level as global as that of society, including in an alternative way, one can on the other hand *self-organize* to try to put an end to it.

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Now, this authoritarian relationship of quantity does not only involve the immediate clinical management of the current unstable situation – which also entails the absolute priority given to covid-19 over other serious diseases with heavy prolonged consequences – but also includes another dimension whose premises can hardly be glimpsed: the rapid adaptation of the state apparatus to an epidemic that is not ready to stop, by creating a new type of sanitary and productive order marked for a little more than a year by an acceleration of the technological artificialization of our lives.

Leaving aside China, which is too easily used as a convenient scarecrow, the very democratic South Korea, for example, has established total *contact tracing* of the population since March 2020, using data such as bank statements, detailed telephone bills, geolocation history, public video surveillance images or information transmitted by administrations and employers. This information is collected and then integrated into a national and freely accessible register, indicating the nationality of the person, their age, their sex, the place of their medical visit, the date of their contamination, and more precise information such as their working hours, their respect for wearing a mask in the subway, the stations used, the bars and other massage parlors frequented. This is a very good example of the coupling of computer algorithms to build an epidemiological model and to optimize management by the authorities. This is all completed by mandatory individual quarantines, implemented via a geolocation application that rings and directly alerts law enforcement agencies

recent months and much of it had already been claimed, but the claim contains a proposal to create a “*network of revolutionary violence*” in order to amplify the experience of Direct Action Cells.

The targets attacked in Athens: the *Foundation for Economic and Industrial Research* (IOBE), the 3rd Tax Center, the residence of Stratos Mavroeidakos (coordinator of *New Democracy's* governmental projects), a police vehicle, the home of retired Greek police lieutenant general Christos Kontaridis, the home of the general of the Greek police brigade, Michalis Ladomenou, the home of Gianni Katsiamakas (president of the *Panhellenic Federation of Civil Servants of Athens* (POAXIA) and retired lieutenant general of the Greek police, the home and car of Katerina Magga, head of the Patissia police.

The targets attacked in Thessaloniki: *Hellenic-American Union* offices, a Ministry of Labor vehicle, military residences, across from NATO headquarters, the gate of the Ministry of Macedonia-Thrace, the home of police officer Hatzilias, the home of the president of the Thessaloniki *Police Union*, Dimitrios Padiotis, the home of retired magistrate, former president of the Court of Appeal, Antonios Tsalaportas, the house of the politician of *Nea Demokratia* Aphrodite Latinopoulou, a vehicle of the diplomatic corps, the house of the family, of the right, of the lieutenant-colonel Georgios Paskonis, the house of the family Nakos, of the right, the

house of the family Kosmidis, of the right.

17/5, Rotterdam (Netherlands). Two people spray sixteen guard vehicles with a flammable liquid in the parking lot of the De Schie prison and set them on fire. Unfortunately, only two of them catch fire.

21/5, Munich (Germany). In Bavaria, incendiary sabotage of about 50 medium voltage and fiber optic cables in the east of the city. More than 150 small transformer stations failed, affecting 20,000 customers in the districts of Haidhausen, Ramersdorf and Berg am Laim. *"The main target of this action was the Rohde & Schwarz arms company near the East Station, to whom we were fortunately able to cut off the power for at least 24 hours. [...] No peace with the arms industry. No peace for the climate killers."*

22/5, Kochersberg (France). In the northwest of Strasbourg, several fiber optic cables are deliberately cut during the night at several locations. The sabotage involves not only street enclosures, but also shafts located under sidewalks. In spite of the reinforcement of rescue teams coming from all over the East of France, the internet will remain unavailable for more than four days for thousands of inhabitants of the area, and in particular for students finally freed from remote-distance school.

23/5, Saint-Denis (France). In Seine-Saint-Denis, two days after inaugurating the new *Urban Supervision Center (CSU)* that manages the city's 93 video surveillance cameras, the deputy mayor in charge

if the concerned individuals move, or if their smartphone is switched off for more than 15 minutes, in order to form an *"electronic fence"* around the plague victims, with the addition of random police calls and an SMS notification to the neighborhood about the presence of a contagious person.

As much as this very real example is feels like a caricature, it is perhaps not a coincidence that a senatorial report has also just put forward some proposals in this regard. It was released at the beginning of June in France to outline some prospects for future epidemics (or *"natural or industrial disasters, and terrorist attacks"*) requiring mass confinement. In the time of permanent connection, when everyone is already voluntarily walking around with an electronic surveillance device in their pocket, getting accustomed to telework, telemedicine and remote learning, what better way to achieve this totalitarian dream of every digital democrat, than to be able to remotely deactivate transport passes, transform smartphones into electronic bracelets (with *selfies* to the police to prove one's presence) or issue/withdraw differentiated passes of all kinds in the form of *QR codes* thanks to a centralized *Crisis Data Hub*?

For those who have started to disguise themselves when seeing police drones patrolling during the Great Containment; for those who have frozen when seeing the addition to intrusive video surveillance for controlling bodies in public space in the form of new devices such as thermal detectors, travel certificates and other vaccination certificates; for those who have concluded more often than not that it is better to be alone and wild than accompanied by algorithmic nets... It is certainly high time to raise our eyes towards these great copper cables strung across the sky or to lean towards all the channels where the chains of the twenty-first century run under our feet at the speed of light.



| In the shadows |

*Clandestine activities of Spanish anarchists
exiled in Lyon (1945-1955)*

Monday, January 18, 1951. It is 6:56 pm. The sun has already set, and the streets of Lyon are mercilessly frozen. Like every evening, an armored postal van with a police escort arrives in front of the PTT office at 99 rue Duguesclin in the sixth district. The escort, composed of two cops from the Place Antonin-Poncet station, present at the sides of the driver, is tasked with protecting the transaction of recovering the revenue of the day, handed by a clerk through a sorting door.

Officer Morin stands between this door and the rear access of the van, armed with a *Mas 38* machine gun. As the clerk was about to present himself with a bag containing nearly six million francs, two individuals wearing dark felt caps and armed with machine guns emerged from an alley. They order officer Morin to drop his weapon, but he does not comply. The robbers don't hesitate, one of them opens fire and the cop falls to the ground. Inside the van, the driver triggers the alarm. A piercing siren sounds, then the officer opens fire. A bullet is lodged in the leg of a robber, while his accomplice returns fire with a long burst: fourteen shots riddle the windshield. The police officer Arnaud is killed outright. The driver is seriously wounded, but he manages to lock the doors of the van.

The robber advances towards officer Morin on the ground and takes away his machine pistol. Even if still wanting it despite the cops' aggressive reaction, there is nothing more to be done about the van's lock: the daily takings remain elusive. After having covered themselves by a last burst in the direction of the entrance reserved for the reception of the public, wounding several customers, the robbers withdraw by Sèze street. A witness saw them get into a Citroën front-wheel drive, 15 HP model, with a third accomplice at the wheel. They left at full speed, but the witness still managed to get the license plate number.

Major police and gendarmerie roadblocks were immediately set up on all the major roads in the Lyon area, but the robbers remained untraceable. While officer Arnaud was killed immediately, the second law enforcement offi-

of security and public safety finds the windshield of her car completely smashed in by a beautiful nocturnal paving stone.

23/5, Nochten (Germany).
In Saxony, a conveyor belt of the coal mine managed by the energy giant *LEAG* is put out of action. The claim, which details the procedure for sabotaging the belts with bolt cutters, states that they wanted to "*put a spanner in the works of extractivist-shit-capitalism. [...] We found freedom and power in tonight's attack and call on all anarchists, autonomists and insurgents to be dangerous to everything that wages war on our bodies, the earth and our own lives.*"

25/5, Berlin (Germany)
The group *Volcan* set fire to six high-voltage (110,000 volts) electric cables of the company *Edis*, which supplied the construction site of the future *Tesla* factory in Berlin/Grünheide, about 250 meters from the site. "*To stop the ideology of unlimited technological progress and the global destruction of the planet will not only be done with fine words, but with sabotage.*"

25/5, Hamburg (Germany).
The *Job Center* offices in Mümmelmannsberg and Eimsbüttel are attacked with stones, paint and hammers. "*One can go to work in crowded commuter trains in the morning, but it is forbidden to drink a beer in the park in the evening. A few broken windows won't change that, of course. But there could be more! And the latent rage could be looking for its right target... For this reason we go out at night, without a truce.*"

28/5, Erfurt (Germany).
In Thuringia, the *Paul Schäfer Commando* claimed responsibility

for the attack on 25-year-old neo-Nazi Julian Nico Moritz Franz, who had been involved in a neo-Nazi raid in the rather anti-fascist Connewitz district of Leipzig. The group broke down the door with a battering ram and tied up the neo-Nazi and his girlfriend. They then beat him up and broke his leg before leaving the scene. *"If you come to our house, we will come to yours."* The media will draw parallels with an action that took place in mid-March in Ellenburg (Saxony), where a group disguised as policemen rang the doorbell of an official of the neo-Nazi party NPD, Paul Rzehacz, 30, before entering his house and breaking his legs.

28/5, Berlin (Germany)

The private car of Nazi Sebastian Thom, suspected of involvement in several arson attacks on cars of antifascists and leftists in the Neukölln district, is set on fire during the night.

28/5, Kloster Veßra (Germany).

In Thuringia, a neo-Nazi meeting place, the *Goldener Löwe* inn, is targeted. The fire was reportedly set from the cellar. This is the third such place to burn down in the region in just a few weeks.

30/5, Charleville-Mézières (France).

In the Ardennes, four of the seven CCTV cameras in the Manchester district, and two of the nine in the Ronde Couture district, are respectively downed with a disc cutter over the weekend.

31/5, Berlin (Germany).

A vehicle of the construction company Strabag is set on fire. *"Every new meter of freeway means the destruction of the climate, set in concrete. Attacking the IAA [international automobile show]*

cer, Morin, died in the hospital sixteen days later. Despite the significant forces mobilized by the judicial police, the investigation stagnated for days. A week later, on January 25, 1951, the Citroën was finally found in the Jonage canal, near the Croix-Luzet bridge in Villeurbanne. The next day, Auguste Jard, a customer injured during the hold-up, died in the hospital as a result of his injuries.

On January 28, the judicial police decided to organize raids in the 'delinquent' areas of Villeurbanne and Vaulx-en-Velin. Subjected to brutal treatment, some tongues wagged and suggested that the failed hit might well have come from Spanish anarchist circles, whose numbers and presence were quite significant in Lyon. During the interwar period, many Spaniards immigrated to the Lyon region where industry was in demand for labor, and anarchist circles were formed among them. During the revolution of 1936, many of these Spaniards returned to the peninsula to fight in the anarchist militia, a fight they continued after 1939 on French soil against the Nazi occupation. After the Second World War, the Spanish libertarian community remained very active in the Lyon region, especially in Villeurbanne, but also in Vénissieux, Oullins, Saint-Priest and Givors. Further afield, there were also significant networks in Grenoble, Saint-Etienne, Roanne and Villefranche-sur-Saône. In Villeurbanne, the Spanish anarchists had a local, *La Baraque*, located in Zola park, where discussions, meetings, cultural activities and excursions were organized. A significant number of companions from these Rhône-Alpes networks became involved both in the guerrilla war in Spain and in activities supporting this struggle.¹

On the evening of January 29, 1951, the first suspect was arrested in the investigation of the Dugesclin Street hold-up. He was Juan Sánchez, known as *El Pelao*, an anarchist who had not only fought in the Spanish war, but had also participated in the resistance within the FFL (*Forces Françaises Libres* [Free French Forces]).² The police were on the alert. They need a confession at any cost. Juan Sánchez was beaten and tortured. He ultimately gives in and gives up some names. During the night of January 31 to February 1, three other anarchists are arrested. First there was Francisco Bailó Mata³, a Spanish anarchist who had gone into exile in France after Franco's victory, where he joined the Resistance and then spent more than four years in the Mauthausen concentration camp (Austria) after his arrest by the Gestapo. A few hours later, the Lyon

police also arrested two other companions: Antonio Guardia-Socada⁴ and Juan Català-Balaña⁵ (wounded in the thigh during the robbery). Finally, a fifth suspect is still actively sought: Francisco's younger brother, José Bailó Mata. His lifeless body was discovered on February 5 in a garden in Vénissieux and his death was presented by the police as "a suicide", while forbidding the family to come to identify the body. According to the cops, he had a gunshot wound to the head, while according to journalistic sources, the body had a gunshot wound in the back...⁶

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Over the following days, the authorities launched huge raids leading to the arrest of hundreds of anarchists – French and Spanish – throughout the country, who were interrogated and released after a few days. The police deployment was enormous: checkpoints and roadblocks were set up, for example, to "lock down" the city of Lyon, many homes were searched and interrogations were particularly brutal. Several anarchists reported torture. Among the hundreds of arrests, about twenty people were incarcerated for several months in order to demonstrate the will to "clean up" the milieu of Spanish exiles. If until then, a certain "tolerance" had indeed been able to facilitate the organization of the clandestine struggle and the guerrilla actions from France to Spain, French intelligence had never ceased to inform their Francoist colleagues, nor to alert the French authorities on the potential and real danger that the most militant fringes represented, hardened by more than a decade of armed struggles.

Two years earlier, at the end of 1949, a year rich in actions by anarchist guerrilla groups, but unfortunately also in deaths and arrests, the pundits of the *Libertarian Movement in Exile* (MLE) had also redoubled their maneuvers from Toulouse to slow down and paralyze the continuation of the struggle, while maintaining a combative rhetoric. The secretary-general of the CNT, José Peirats, who was arrested in the wake of the Lyon affair and tortured for two days, was not ashamed to explain a few decades later how he and many other Toulouse cadres viewed the clandestine struggle of those years: "It was not a question of irritating the regime with inopportune violent attacks. The violent action carried out in-

in Munich/Greetings to all forest occupations/ TheRigaer94 will stay!"

JUNE 2021

3/6, Berlin (Germany).
In the Kreuzberg district, two vehicles of the real estate company *Degewo* are set on fire.

5/6, Bremen (Germany).
In the district of Neustadt, garbage containers are set on fire and the windows of two real estate agencies are broken. To cover their escape, the assailants set up a barricade in the street. Claimed by *Autonomous and Anarchist Groups* against evictions: "For self-determined and self-organized living and housing everywhere!"

6/6, Bremen (Germany).
Around 2.40 am, incendiary devices are thrown from the back of the police station onto several riot vehicles. Three vans and a bus were burned to the ground and four patrol cars were damaged. "Three months after the police murdered Qosay K., we set fire to the parking lot of the riot police. Sabotage is a dignified attack against a much stronger enemy."

10/6, Montreuil (France).
In Seine-Saint-Denis, the office of the landscaper Laurence Jouhaud, who was in charge of the re-greening of the Fleury-Mérogis prison, received a nocturnal visit: fuses were ripped out, an intercom was stolen and a keypad was melted down with a blowtorch. The tags "Destroy prison (A)" and "laurence jouhaud landscaper of prisons" are left on site.

12/6, Grand Est (France). In Meurthe-et-Moselle and Meuse during the same night, and while a trial for "association de malfaiteurs" against opponents of the radioactive waste burial center project had just taken place, three actors and infrastructures of this future nuclear waste dump were attacked:

In Nancy, a good ten windows of the building that houses the chamber of agriculture, the SAFER and the offices of the insurer *Groupama*, a civil party in the trial, were shattered, while a tag on the facade read: "*Nik le Nuk*".

Between Ligny-en-Barrois and Tréveray, the disused railroad tracks that the SNCF wants to rehabilitate in order to connect CIGÉO to the national network were damaged in several places with a car jack.

B.O.R.I.S., which signs these coordinated attacks, specifies: "So that the project never sees the light of day, because we don't want a system that destroys more and more, let's continue our harassment of the institutions, companies and infrastructures that are helping Andra to establish itself in Bure. There is still time!"

12/6, Bruay-sur-l'Escaut (France). In the North of France, the personal car of the town councillor in charge of festivals is deliberately set on fire around 11:30 pm in front of her house. This is the sixth time that an elected official of this municipality has seen his vehicle go up in smoke since 2019, to the great displeasure of the mayor and the police.

14/6, Toulouse (France). In Haute-Garonne, the window of a bailiff's office and that of an adjacent real estate agency are

side Spain by individuals and groups, who were more or less suicidal, coming from exile, was, even inside, poorly appreciated when it was not condemned because of the savage reactions it provoked from the police. This uncontrolled violent action was carried out by individuals who were not capable of doing anything else and who tomorrow would surely be a burden for a re-established unionism."

And what was true for the armed activities in Spain, was even more so for the subversive and armed activities in France, the welcoming land of CNT exile. The *Libertarian Movement in Exile* could in no way be associated with any kind of illegality, or even action, on French soil: this was the immutable tenet followed for decades by all the leaders of the MLE, beyond their rhetorical variations.

Faced with this repressive operation of unprecedented magnitude, which shortly preceded the normalization of diplomatic relations between the French Republic and Franco's Spain in February 1951, the *Libertarian Movement in Exile* was caught up in a panic and hurriedly distanced itself from the arrested robbers. They presented them as "*people from outside the organization*" who had acted "*on their own behalf*", denouncing in passing those "*former comrades who had fallen into gangsterism*", while ignoring the fact that these expropriations fed the MLE's resistance coffers rather than the private accounts of those "*former comrades*". The libertarian organizations did not even do the bare minimum, denouncing, for example, the fact that the young José Bailó Mata had "committed suicide", and they even took the opportunity to expel troublesome "illegalist" comrades, such as Laureano Cerrada Santos⁸. Meanwhile, other inconvenient anarchists, such as Francisco Sabaté, known as *El Quico*, were tortured and held for months in French jails.⁹

During these raids, the police also made an important find, discovering a small tourist plane, the *Norécrin*, parked on the Guyancourt airfield, near Versailles. It turned out that this plane, registered to Georges Fontenis (then secretary-general of the *Anarchist Federation*) and piloted by the companion Primitivo Gómez, had been used for several raids on Spain in the previous years, the plane landing on its return either in Angoulême, Saint-Jean-d'Angély or Guyancourt. The funds for its purchase had been collected by the anarchist Laureano Cerrada,

who was arrested a month before the Lyon robbery and incarcerated in Evreux, following the discovery of a clandestine printing shop in Gaillon (Eure), where counterfeit German money was manufactured. According to the statements of the accused, the aircraft had been used in September 1948 with the aim of assassinating Franco, during the traditional demonstration in San Sebastian. In the lower part of the plane's body, a hatch had been built to allow bombs to be thrown by hand at the official stage. However, the *Norécrin* was intercepted by four Spanish army fighter planes just before it could carry out the attack.¹⁰ If there was no direct link between the Lyon hold-up and the *Norécrin* plane, as those rounded up tried to argue, it remained undeniable that exiled action groups were active, including on French soil...

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Following these raids and arrests in Spanish anarchist circles, some clusters and small networks of CNT militants supported the accused of the Lyon affair almost in secret, while the organizations tried to one-up each other in professing the good life and morality in order to distance themselves from any illegal activity. It is true that the French State was then in full search of a pretext to outlaw the libertarian organizations in exile¹¹ in order to paralyze the clandestine activities that were developing, in spite of their managerial firefighters, within them and especially at their margins. But this distancing was not a simple formal and tactical game whose aim was to disorient the repressive forces. The companions who put their lives at stake for anarchy could not really count on a defense from the libertarian organizations if they were caught for armed actions. In the event that this happened in Spain, a certain opportunist defense was perhaps still possible in some cases (and more to underline the relentless repressive brutality of Franco's regime than to defend the armed struggle, and not without slapping the fingers, including post mortem, of any uncontrollables who did not comply with the directives of the bodies of the MLE, as Federica Montseny did in an infamous communiqué after Sabaté's death¹²). On the other hand, if this happened in France, that great Republican homeland, it was not only out of the question, but it was also necessary to mobilize, at any cost, infamy upon infamy, all the propaganda organs in order to defuse any imaginary link

broken in the night. "Solidarity with the evicted! Long live the squat! Long live the night! Long live vandalism!" concludes the communiqué.

that could be made here between “Spanish anarchists” and “violent action”.

Needless to say, if, in addition, things went sour, as in the case of the hold-up in Lyon, where a simple customer of the Post Office lost his life, it was necessary not only to denounce the “gangsterism”, but also to cry out that it was a “set-up” fabricated by the Francoist services! And it doesn’t matter that these companions carried out these expropriations in order to finance the clandestine struggle in Spain, to help the libertarian prisoners, to finance newspapers and posters, to buy weapons and – why not – to exempt oneself from the wage slavery that leaves too little time to be able to dedicate oneself to subversive activities¹³. It doesn’t matter either that these companions fought in the anarchist militias in Spain, that they escaped from Franco’s jails, that they participated in the maquis against the Nazis, that some of them spent years in a Nazi concentration camp... No matter what: they were nothing less than “*ex-comrades, fallen into gangsterism*”.

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As the investigation in Lyon progressed, the investigators began to establish links between the various facts and hold-ups, as well as with the previous investigation into the clandestine network set up around Laureano Cerrada, which provided vital logistical support to the anti-Franco guerrillas with counterfeit money, truck robberies, transport companies to cover travel and money transfers, arms purchases, etc. Cerrada had of course been disavowed by the entire MLE leadership, succeeding for once in “*re-establishing CNT unity*”¹⁴ against him. But the investigators also made the connection with another attempted hold-up in the region that bore the signature of Spanish anarchists: the one that had targeted the Rhône-Poulenc chemical plant in

Péage-de-Roussillon, three years before the one in rue Duguesclin in Lyon, establishing a link between Cerrada’s network, guerrilla groups like Sabaté’s, and the expropriators’ groups around Lyon.

In Péage-de-Roussillon, in Isère, a car stopped on the night of May 6-7, 1948, near the *Rhône-Poulenc* factory. Masked and armed men then entered the building, but not without first cutting the telephone wires outside, with the aim of seizing the staff’s pay. Two guards, Poncet and Hennebaud, were quickly bound and gagged. But the third, Maurice Monnot, who was making his rounds, unexpectedly appeared and tried to oppose the intruders, before being shot dead with a burst of machine gun fire. The guard’s death was obviously not part of the plan, and the little group returned to the car without missing a beat. Their escape was so hurried that they left behind many clues. The thieves had thought of changing the car’s license plates, but they had kept the real ones, no doubt with the intention of putting them back once they had succeeded. When they arrived on the scene, among all their material, they had put down on the ground the real plates, by mistake or voluntarily, that they forgot to collect in the panic of the departure.

The police had no trouble identifying the owner of vehicle number *7263 FS 8*: Carlos Vidal Pasanau, a Spaniard living in Toulouse who had bought the car in November 1947 from a garage owner in Toulon. Carlos obviously did not wait for the police to come and find him, and crossed the border in clandestinity. However, he was arrested on June 4, 1949 in Barcelona. Immediately interrogated by a judicial commission, Carlos declared that the vehicle registered in his name actually belonged to a certain Francisco Sabaté Llopart, who had asked him on May 3, 1948 to drive it to Perpignan, which he did, and then asked him to continue to Lyon, still with the car, which he refused. These state-

ments made in Spain against a man who had been taunting the police for years were the cause of Sabaté's indictment, although the case was eventually dismissed for lack of evidence. This did not prevent the investigation from remaining open until 1955.

After four years of investigation in all directions, the trial against the defendants of the bloody attempted robbery in Lyon opened on January 10, 1955 before the Assises du Rhône, in what was one of the most important criminal cases of the post-war period. Although 222 arrests had initially been made in anarchist circles, 37 individuals remained accused of having participated in expropriations in some way, not only in the Lyon region, but also in Paris and in the Midi region. The first hold-up brought against the "*Spanish gang*" took place in October 1947 when a group held up the *Entreprise Industrielle* in Séchilienne, taking several million francs intended for the workers' pay. Then, in May 1948, there was a robbery at the *Rhône-Poulenc* chemical plant in Péage-de-Rousillon. And in March 1950, another one against the *Aujoulat* jewelry store, Jean Jaurès avenue in Lyon. Then the one on Duguesclin street against the Post Office van in January 1951, which launched the whole affair.

The Court of Assizes rendered its verdict on March 31, 1955 after a fifteen-day trial. In total, the companions were found guilty of 19 armed robberies between the end of 1945 and the beginning of 1951, for a sum of more than 25 million francs stolen during these hold-ups. Juan Sánchez was sentenced to death, which was commuted to life imprisonment, and he was released after twenty years in prison. Juan Català-Balaña was sentenced to twenty years and was released after fourteen years in the Fresnes prison. Antonio Guardia-Socada and Francisco Bailó Mata were sentenced to hard labor for life, and were released after twenty years in prison. Ten other anarchists were sentenced to several years for complicity.

The cases of counterfeiting and some hold-ups committed elsewhere were tried in the Assises of Isère and Haute-Garonne. Here too, dozens of companions were sentenced to prison terms of up to several years.

Meanwhile, while the State was settling the score with the uncompromising, the MLE was disavowing the "*suicidal individuals who knew how to do nothing else*", denouncing "*inadmissible methods*" and condemning what was most alive, most tenacious, most audacious in the anarchist struggle against Francoism. If we should not be surprised that the lives and torments, the efforts and pains, the daring acts and the terrible failures of those who acted in the shadows remain unknown beyond the circles that dedicated themselves to the underground struggle, nothing says that we should resign ourselves to the fact that not only the authoritarian enemy, but also the "*irreproachable comrades*"¹⁵ drag this struggle in the mud, soiling not only the memory of the anarchist struggle, but also all present and future experience. Yesterday as today.



Notes

1. Like the young Lyonnais Francisco Conesa, Antonio Miracle Guitart and Manuel Ruiz Montoya, who accompanied Sabaté on his last excursion to Spain in 1960 and were all shot by the *Guardia Civil*. Previously, from the 1940s onwards, we can mention some who marked Spanish anarchist activity in Lyon; the Padrós and Ruipérez families, Juan de la Flor, Vicente Galindo, known as Fontaura, Cayetano Zaplanna, Eduardo Puncel, José del Amo, Juan Figueras, Vida Figueras, Enrique Soler, José Ruiz, Agustín Longas, the Hiraldo brothers, the Bernabeu brothers, the Hernández family, Flores and Izquierdo.
2. Juan Sánchez (born in 1914 in Lorca, Murcia) came to France with his parents in the 1920s, who settled in Villeurbanne, a suburb of Lyon. During the Spanish war, he

made the trip in the opposite direction to fight in the anarchist ranks. After Franco's victory, he crossed the border again and was interned by the French authorities, then deported to Algeria to the Djelfa camp. He escaped and finally reached London in 1943, where he joined the army to participate in the fight against Nazism. After the war, he settled in Lyon and participated in an anarchist action group.

3. Francisco Bailò Mata, born in 1917 in Leciñena (Zaragoza), participated in the anarchist movement during the Spanish War. Exiled to France, he was arrested by the Gestapo for his participation in the Resistance and deported to the Mauthausen camp in April 1941, from where he was liberated on May 5, 1945. Back in France, he suffered from serious illnesses and anxiety attacks, but he decided to join an anarchist action group. José Bailò Mata, born in 1924, crossed the border with his parents during the fascist victory. Despite his young age, he served as a liaison for the maquis in France. Later, together with his brother, he joined an anarchist action group in Lyon.

4. Antonio Guardia-Socada (born in 1917), participated in the Spanish war on the anarchist side, and later served as a guide in Ponzán's escape network during the Second World War.

5. From the very first days of the Spanish Civil War, Juan Catalá Balanya (born in 1913) fought with the *Durruti Column*. He also participated in the guerrilla group *Libertador*, organized by Francisco Ponzán Vidal, which was responsible for penetrating enemy territory to evacuate the militants trapped in Zaragoza. On February 10, 1939, he entered France with the other members of the *Libertador* group and was interned in Bourg Madame and then in the Vernet camp. On May 18, 1939, together with Pascual López Laguarda Sixto and Francisco Vidal Berdie, he passed through the gates of the Vernet camp as if he were going to work and never returned. Two days later, after recovering weapons hidden in a farmhouse in Bourg-Madame, the three men

went to Andorra, where they set up bases for the first groups of militants sent to Spain. From then on, he would not stop participating in the many activities of the network organized by Francisco Ponzán Vidal. At the beginning of March 1940, after a meeting with him, he agreed to work with the Allied intelligence services and to participate in the fight against German activities in Spain. He went on several missions to Spain, but was arrested in May 1940. On November 25, 1940, he managed to escape and reach the region of Zaragoza and to cross back into Andorra with another prisoner thanks to the complicity of other companions. He immediately left for Spain, where he was arrested again in Barcelona in early 1941. A few days later, during an interrogation in the judge's chambers, after having his handcuffs removed, he pushed the guards who were accompanying him and managed to escape. On a new mission to Barcelona in August 1941 he was arrested again and interned in the Modelo prison. On December 23, 1942, he escaped with two other prisoners, but injured himself by jumping over a wall before reaching a house in Sants where, half paralyzed, he was arrested a few days later and interned in the 5th gallery of the Modelo. After recovering from his injuries, he was transferred to Lleida and later released. He was arrested again on June 25, 1944 in the Seu d'Urgell, and sentenced to a heavy prison term. In March 1947, he escaped from Carrabanchel prison and went to France on April 1, where he was detained for "*clandestine border crossing*". He was freed from the Toulouse prison thanks to the intervention of Robert Terres, a former member of the France Libre secret service who had collaborated closely with Francisco Ponzán's group in the Pat O'Leary network, which was responsible for the evacuation of resistance fighters and allied airmen during the war. As a guide, Juan Catalá had indeed spent several dozen expeditions in Spain. He settled in Toulouse and finally participated as best he could in the clandestine activities of the libertarian action groups. Juan

Catalá Balanya died on October 14, 2012.

6. Elsa Osaba (José and Francisco's cousin), whose mother, Felisa Bailó Mata, lived at the Mata family home in those years, recounts the violence of the raids: "*Francisco was brought back [from the concentration camp] by two nurses in July 1945. He couldn't stand up, being deported to Mauthausen for four years and one month had broken him. The family and neighbors never lamented the cries of his night terrors, his insatiable thirst, his anxiety, his traumatic extravagances... [...] They arrested many Spaniards. They humiliated my father, they slapped him, they punched him in the face which doubled in size... [...] My uncle Pascual [a volunteer in the Forces Françaises Libres who had his feet amputated because of frostbite during the Ardennes offensive in 1944-1945] was stripped naked, they beat him, they locked him in a cold room. [...] Francisco's companion, a beautiful woman, was humiliated, stripped, tortured...*"

7. José Peirats, *Les anarchistes espagnols, Révolution de 1936 et luttes de toujours*, Repères-Silena editions, 1989, p. 319. The same publishers published, a year later, the translation of Antonio Telléz Solá's book about Sabaté and the urban guerrilla in Spain (1945-1960), which was republished in 2019 by *Tumult Editions*.

8. Born in Miedes (GuadelaJara) in 1902 and emigrated to Barcelona in 1920, Laureano Cerrada Santos animated the railway workers' unions of the CNT and was a very active member of the defense groups. In July 1936 he participated in the capture of the Atarazanas barracks. Exiled to France, he set up a forgery workshop during the Nazi occupation, participated in the Resistance (sabotage, arms recovery) and built up a vast infrastructure (hotels, print shops, arms depots, etc.) which he later put at the service of the anti-Franco struggle. As coordinating secretary (1945) of the *Movimiento Libertario*, he financed the purchase of various bases for the action groups (the Tartas farmhouse, a hotel in Font Romeu, etc.), and was the linchpin of the main at-

tempts to assassinate Franco. Thanks to the manufacture of counterfeit money and the falsification of treasury bonds, he set up several import-export companies in Spain that camouflaged the clandestine activities of the CNT. In February 1946, he was the organizer of the attack on a *Credit Lyonnais* van in Paris, where 30 million dollars were recovered and destined for the purchase of arms in Italy, which were then transferred from the Italian coast to the French coast in speedboats. In May 1947 he was stopped in Ventimiglia, at the Italian border, where, pretending to be a general, he managed to pass a hundred false passports and counterfeit money. In 1948 he was a member of the F.A.I.'s Relations Committee. He gave great financial support to the exile press, in particular *Solidaridad Obrera*, as well as to many militants to whom he provided counterfeit papers. Arrested in 1951 following a denunciation in Gaillon (Eure) for trafficking in counterfeit money, part of his infrastructure was dismantled: a printing shop in Elbeuf, a hotel in Paris, a garage on la Douane street with its large fleet of trucks, a shoe factory and a transport agency. All these businesses were legal, but it was impossible to justify their origin. At the same time, several bank accounts (representing several tens of millions at the time) were seized. Incarcerated from 1951 to 1954, he was "excluded" from the libertarian movement for "*inadmissible methods*". He was arrested again on May 27, 1970 for trafficking in counterfeit papers and was imprisoned until 1974. On October 18, 1976, Laureano Cerrada was murdered while leaving the Café de l'Europe in Belleville (Paris).

9. Sabaté was arrested on February 2, 1951. Subjected to torture, which he always refused to talk about, he tried to commit suicide by throwing himself out of the police station window and escaped with several wounds to his neck. He "signed" a confession in which he admitted to having cut the telephone wires during the hold-up of the Rhône-Poulenc factory on May 7, 1948. Sabaté was released from prison in Novem-

ber 1951, but the affair continued until his death, as the French authorities now had a clear lever to complicate his guerrilla activities in Spain.

10. With three men on board (the pilot, Antonio Ortiz Ramirez and José Pérez Ibáñez, known as *El Valencia*), in charge of transporting the twenty five-kilogram cluster bombs and the four incendiary bombs of ten kilograms each – stolen from a powder keg in d’Orléans during the Occupation – the *Norécrin* took off from the Dax airfield (Hautes-Pyrénées) on Sunday, September 12, 1948, then headed for Biarritz and the sea to turn left and reach San Sebastian by the La Concha bay. After having bombed the stand of the *Nautical Club*, from which Franco and the high dignitaries of the regime were to preside over regattas, the plane would land on a Spanish field that had already been chosen and its occupants would blow it up, before being taken in by the clandestine Organization of the Interior. That was the plan. But no sooner had the homemade bomber arrived at the target than it was intercepted by four fighter planes, which ordered it to land. Without a moment’s hesitation, Primitivo dived towards the sea at three hundred kilometers per hour, straightened up at the level of the waves and headed back to the French coast. The incident gave rise to an exchange of diplomatic communiqués between Madrid and the Quai d’Orsay, but without any further consequences.

11. In 1953, the French state banned the publication *Ruta*, the organ of the *Iberian Federation of Young Libertarians* (FIJL), which continued to defend clandestine action despite the fact that the leaders of the MLE disavowed all armed actions in Spain and elsewhere. In 1965, they banned the FIJL itself, which had resumed the clandestine struggle in Spain.

12. *“The courts of Francoism will not be able to judge him [Sabaté], nor others severely enough: those with a collective conscience will not forgive him so easily for having been insubordinate against it, for having gone be-*

yond the rules and agreements. In his obsession, in that unreasonable will that carried him to Spain against all logic, against all individual and collective interests, [...]” Federica Montseny in CNT, January 17, 1960.

13. It is worth noting, in passing, that the police were astonished at the simplicity and poverty of their lodgings during the raids to arrest the robbers of Duguesclin Street.

14. Luis Andrés Edo, *La CNT en la encrucijada*, 2006.

15. A formula used by libertarian and left-wing organizations to defend the militants and leaders of the MLE arrested in the wake of the raids after the Lyon hold-up.

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Caught in the Net, *Collection of anarchist texts against the computerization of the world (1987-2021)* [Pris dans la toile, Recueil de textes anarchistes contre l'informationisation du monde (1987-2021)], February 2021, A4, 144 p.

As its title summarizes, this copious compilation of more than a hundred large-format pages is a collection of texts and articles that convey an intransigent hostility towards the *digital caging* of the world. While there are a few articles that appeared in Italian newspapers in the late 1980s and early 1990s after the years of lead, pushing for insurrection rather than retreat, already identifying technology as the main axis of capitalist and state restructuring, most of the articles included in the collection are more recent and were written in recent years. The selection thus includes many texts written in French, but also several translations from Italian and German, some of them unpublished.

The value of such a collection, in addition to providing a starting point for reflection and discussion, is to highlight how the critique of the digital, and of technology itself, has been honed in recent years within some anarchist circles.

While other companions continue to see technology as “just another layer of domination”, and not as a process that is changing the very basis of domination – and transforming its subjects – or worse, as something that could help to liberate humanity if used “intelligently” and to save the planet like the great prophets of the new technologies, one can only rejoice in the fact



that the critique of technology is spreading and deepening. Because the deepening of this critique remains necessary, not only to sharpen action, but also because it obliges us to confront the mistakes inherited from anarchist thought, such as scientific belief, productivist logic, the quantitative discourse, the justification of the machine for “liberating work”, etc. It also pushes us to question ourselves on other things we’ve inherited, like the overly uncritical appreciation of the figure of the “industrial worker”, on the more or less contemporary myth of the “farmer” (whereas most of the fields are worked by... “farmers” subcontracted by the agro-industry), and more generally on any oppressed and exploited subject who, somewhere, also participates to the continuity of domination, through their work or adhesion to the values of the machine.

In short, the critique of technology invites us to do away with any convenient sociology, of any determinism promoted by the ideologies of progress (from syndicalism to Marxism), of a certain revolutionary messianism from which the anarchist movement has not been exempt. Why? Because technological development certainly takes place in a context of division between exploiters and exploited, between oppressors and oppressed, but its development does not rest only on the force and the imposition exercised by the powerful, but at least as much on adhesion or acceptance by significant parts of the exploited and oppressed. Such a sharpened awareness cannot remain without consequences for our perspectives, our methods, our angles of attack. This is

clearly shown by the succession of texts in this collection and the evolution of the critical thought they express over the years. ■

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blabIDNA. *Burn it all down to burn longer: a guide to leaving no traces* [blablADN. Tout cramer pour brûler plus longtemps : un guide pour ne pas laisser de traces], June 2021, A5, 26 p.

We have to admit that we are generally rather reluctant to open anything that can be considered as a “guide” and has been abounding in the movement for the last fifteen years. Because when it is not about alternative legal treaties, we are too often confronted with prescriptive pamphlets on the way one should behave, trying to establish, despite all their good will, what we must call counter-norms.

Here, with *blablaDNA*, we are fortunately in a completely different world, since not only do the authors specify from the start “*what we don’t want is to be taken at our word*”, but above all their perspective is directly offensive, that of strengthening the different individuals who go on the attack, by trying “*to understand how the cops identify a person with DNA, and to propose ways to protect oneself from it*”. And this is not for the purpose of information in general, but clearly in line with the perspective of “*seeing the disappearance of the prisons, courts and police-stations and all those who participate in the machinery of repression.*”

This being said, it is clear that whatever the famous “most damning evidence” thinks, the risk of leaving DNA traces on a target is sometimes paralyzing, and this brochure

is therefore timely in explaining in an extremely clear way what DNA is and how the enemy proceeds to locate, extract, analyze, archive and use it for their investigations. But that’s not all, because with the help of a small concrete example entitled “*Don’t burn yourself out by burning a Porsche*”, this booklet details a whole possible *modus operandi*, from the starting point to the satisfied return of having carried out what one had planned.

To leave nothing to chance, it distinguishes, for example, between the question of DNA that is left directly on site and DNA brought in on material, with lists of very precise products (on their composition, dosage, effects, use) to be used to prevent this from happening. Finally, it also develops an interesting proposal in the form of a “*protocol*”, in order to “*clean one’s material well before going into action*”, avoiding any contamination of undesirable DNA, especially in case of home-made preparation of the latter (from the preparation of the work space to the cleaning to the packaging/storage).

In short, whether it is to “scientifically” understand what we are talking about, whether it is to know the latest techniques of the enemy, whether it is to know where their labs are located, or simply to compare its content with one’s own experiences, here is a really complete guide for those who are not content with only words... ◆

