

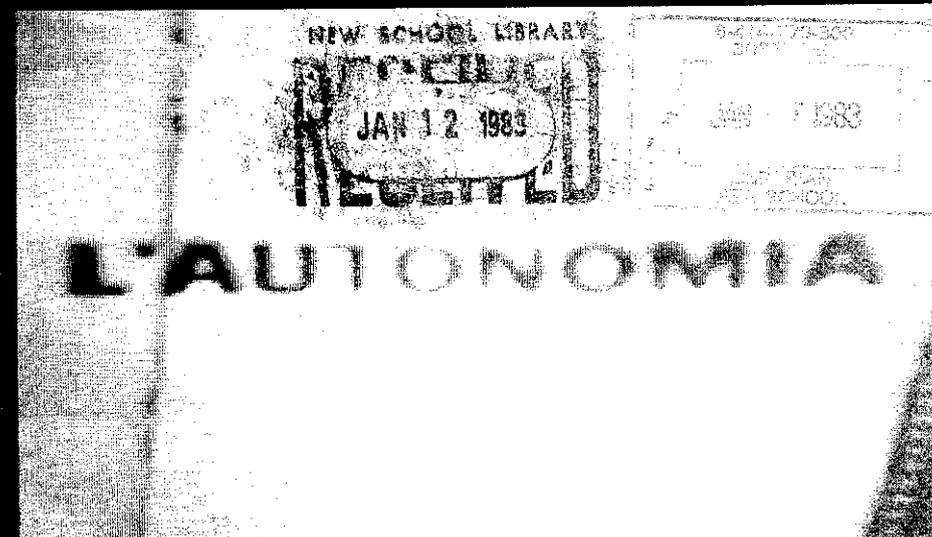
semiotext(e)

intervention  
series □ 1

# ITALY: AUTONOMIA

POST-  
POLITICAL  
POLITICS

\$6.00



# A U T O N O M I A

P O S T -  
P O L I T I C A L  
P O L I T I C S

VOLUME III, NO. 3, 1980

© 1980 by *semiotext(e)* Inc.

Set in Helios by The Type Set, N.Y.C.  
Printed by Capital City Press, Inc.

ISSN 0 093 95779

## EDITORS

Sylvère Lotringer, Christian Marazzi

## ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Laura Barbiani, Diego Cortez, Denise Green

## DESIGN / ILLUSTRATION

Diego Cortez

## VISUALS

Sarah Charlesworth and Joseph Kosuth, Silvia Federici, Peter Fendi, Matthew Guter, The Guardian, Philippo Harari, Lotta Continua, Sylvère Lotringer, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, MIMA, Marion Swamama, Ed Snodgrass, Seth Tiliat, Stephen Torton, Bruce Woliner

## TRANSLATION EDITORS

Jared Becker, James Cascatto, John Johnston, Wayne Storey

Cover photo: Seth Tiliat  
Back cover: Claitalia "202" GT, 1948, Museum of Modern Art, New York

## samiotext(e)

522 Philadelphia Hall  
Columbia University  
New York, N.Y. 10027  
212 288-3906

## EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Denise Green, Diane Holmes, Sylvère Lotringer (General Editor), Roger McKeon, John Rajchman, Pat Storr

## ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Barbara Bernard, Thomas Gora, Lee Hildebrand

## DESIGN EDITOR

Gi Esner

## TRANSLATORS

Betty Sisman, Vincenzo Buonocore, Peter Caravetta, Felicia Chin, Richard Gardner, Wendy Greenberg, Maria-Claude Hays-Melland, Nadina Lassina, Aze Noz, Richard Miasso, Daniel Moshenberg, William Pagnotta, Richard Ridd, Andrew Rosenbaum, Rosamaria Salamone, Dan Spagnoli, Sybil Walker, Robert Zweig, III WWW

## PRODUCTION STAFF

Ann Adams, Catherine Beaudry, Kathryn Bigelow, Rosa Blackner, Peggy Brown, Norman Davis, Michael Guro, Harold Chester, Ron Clark, Fred Dewey, Judith Garrechi, Wendy Greenberg, Jim Holsman, Peggy Johnson, Teresa Lyons, Daniele Mustrone, Elean Muiady, Anna Ratti, Rodney Riley, Yvonne Rockman, Rey Rosenfeldt, Adèle Russo, Duncan H. Smith, Maurizio Toreatta, Stephen Torton, Steve Wedyka

## DESIGN / ILLUSTRATION

Martin Aviler, Kathryn Bigelow, Diego Cortez, Denise Green, Linda Nichols, Michael Oboler, Noa Star

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

Individuals: \$10.00 per volume (i.e. 3 issues); Institutions: \$22.00. Add \$2.00 per volume for surface mail outside the U.S. and Canada. Checks should be made payable to Samiotext(e), Inc. Exclusively use International Money Orders if outside the U.S.A. Samiotext(e) is a self-supporting, non-profit journal. It is indexed in MLA Bibliography and French XX Bibliography.

## INTRODUCTION

Sylvère Lotringer / Christian Marazzi 8  
The Return of Politics

## THE IMPOSSIBLE CLASS

Giampaolo Pansa 24  
Fiat Has Branded Me

Mario Tronti 28  
The Strategy of Refusal

Sergio Bologna 36  
The Tribe of Moles

Toni Negri 62  
Domination and Sabotage

Eddy Cherk / Michel Wieviorka 72  
Autoreduction Movements in Turin

Oreste Scalzone 80  
From Guaranteeism to Armed Politics

Henri Weber 84  
In the Beginning Was Gramsci

Censor 92  
What the Communists Really Are

Guy Debord 96  
The State of Spectacle

100  
Lama Sabachthani?

Maurizio Toreatta 102  
Painted Politics

Felix Guattari 108  
The Proliferation of Margins

Paolo Virno 112  
Dreamers of a Successful Life

Eric Alliez 118  
Hegel and the Wobblies

120  
Let's Do Justice to Our Comrade P.38

Judith Malina 122  
Nonviolence in Bologna

Collective A / Traverso 130  
Radio Alice—Free Radio

3  
APRIL 7 ARRESTS

Lia Magale	136	The City in the Female Gender
Bifo	148	Anatomy of Autonomy
CARI	172	Repression in Italy
Sergio Bologna	178	Workerist Publications and Bios
Gilles Deleuze	182	Open Letter to Negri's Judges
Ferruccio Gambino / Seth Tilet	186	ANSA Story
Toni Negri	188	Interrogation
Toni Negri / Oreste Scalzone, et. al.	196	Memorandum from Prison
Franco Piperno / Il Male	202	The Naked Truth About Moro's Detention
Franco Piperno / Il Male	206	Piperno's Counteroffensive
I Volsci	210	Violence of the State
Dario Fo	214	The Sandstorm Method

4  
BEYOND TERRORISM

Franco Piperno	220	From Terrorism to Guerrilla Warfare
Lucio Castellano	228	Living with Guerrilla Warfare
Felix Guattari	234	Why Italy?
Paolo Virno	238	On Armed Struggle
Lafranco Pace / Franco Piperno	240	The Recognition of the Armed Party
Massimo Cacciari	244	Sorry, It's Exactly the Opposite

Leonardo Sciascia	246	The Red Harvest
Oreste Scalzone	248	Beyond Terrorism
Toni Negri / Eugenio Scalfari	254	I, Toni Negri
Franco Piperno	262	Unpublished Interview
Paul Virilio	266	Popular Defense and Popular Assault
Valerio Morucci / Pino Nicotri	274	A Brigadist Speaks
	276	Dissenting Brigadists
Renato Curcio	282	Who Is the Traitor?
Toni Negri	292	J'Accuse

5  
FIVE

Madaudo / Melville	300	The Aldo Moro Kidnapping
	315	Back Issues
	317	Index

III: Gramsci Lucio Pozzi, 1977



One day in jail. Two days in jail. Three days in jail. Four days in jail. Christ. Five days in jail. Six days in jail, seven. Today is my eighth day in jail. Nine days in jail. Ten days in jail. Eleven days in jail. Twelve days in jail. The door opens and closes, opens and closes. Thirteen days in jail. Fourteen days in jail. Fifteen, sixteen, seventeen, eighteen. A jail is a jail is a jail is a jail, nineteen days in jail. Twenty days in jail. Twenty days already. Twenty-one, twenty-two days in jail. Twenty-three days in jail. Twenty-four days in jail. Twenty-five days in jail. Twenty-six days in jail. Twenty-seven days in jail. Twenty-eight days in jail. Twenty-nine days in jail. One month. Another twenty-nine months in jail and then I'll be free. Thirty-one days in jail. Thirty-two days in jail. Thirty-three days in jail. Thirty-four days in jail. Thirty-five, six, seven, eight, nine, forty days in jail. The walls of the jail. The ceiling of the jail, the jail of the jail. Forty-one days in jail. Forty-two days in jail. Forty-three days in jail. Forty-four — how will people be when I get out? — days in jail. Forty-five days in jail. Forty-six days in jail. Forty-seven days in jail. Forty-eight days in jail. Forty-nine days in jail. Oh fuck . . . this entire jail. Fifty days in this fucking shitty jail. Fifty-one days in jail. Fifty-two days in jail. Fifty-three, fifty-four days in jail. Fifty-five days in jail. Fifty-six days in jail. Fifty-seven days in jail. Fifty-eight days in jail. Fifty-nine days in jail. Fifty-nine days in jail. Today there is no passage of time. Sixty days in jail. Who knows if the others dream of me as much as I dream of them. Sixty-one days in jail. Sixty-two days in jail. Sixty-three days in jail. Sixty-four days in jail. Sixty-five days in jail. Sixty-six days in jail. Sixty-seven days in jail. Sixty-eight days in jail. Sixty-eight . . . sixty-eight . . . In 1968 . . . now I'm really out of date . . . ty-nine days in jail. Seventy days in jail. Seventy-one days in jail. Seventy-two days in jail. Seventy-three days in jail. Seventy-four days in jail. Seventy-five days in jail. Jail has its own smell, I'll never be able to get it off me, all the soap and scent of a detergent factory wouldn't be enough to remove it, and everybody'll know I've been in jail. Seventy-six days in jail. I could explode at any moment. Seventy-nine. Eighty days in jail. In jail you start to reel. Eighty-one days in jail. In jail you start to reel. Eighty-two days in jail. In jail you start to reel. Eighty-three days in jail. Eighty-four days in jail. Eighty-five days in jail. Eighty-six days in jail. Eighty-seven, eighty-eight, eighty-nine days in THIS ETERNAL JAIL. Ninety days in jail. Now I'm busting. Ninety-one days in jail. Ninety-two days in jail. Ninety-three days in jail. Ninety-four days in jail. Ninety-five days in jail. I have diarrhea. Ninety-six days in jail. Ninety-seven days in jail. Ninety-eight days in jail. Ninety-nine. One hundred days in jail. Hurray, let's break out the champagne. Very funny. 101 days in jail. 102 days in jail. 103 days in jail. 104 days in jail. 105 days in jail. 106 days in jail. 107 days in jail. 108 days in jail. 109

## Introduction

# The Return of Politics

Sylvere Lotringer/  
Christian Marazzi

## THE IMPOSSIBLE CLASS

The workers in Europe should declare that henceforth as a class they are a human impossibility, and not only, as is customary, a harsh and purposeless establishment. They should introduce an era of vast swarming out from the European beehive, the like of which has never been experienced, and with this act of emigration in the grand manner protest against the machine, against capital, and against the choice with which they are now threatened, of becoming of necessity either slaves of the state or slaves of a revolutionary party. Let Europe relieve itself of the fourth part of its inhabitants! . . . Whet at home began to degenerate into dangerous discontent and criminal tendencies will, once outside, gain a wild and beautiful naturalness and be called heroism. . . .

Nietzsche, *the Dawn* [206]

## AUTONOMY AT THE BASE

*Sylvere Lotringer* Autonomy is the body without organs of politics, anti-hierarchical, anti-dialectic, anti-representative. It is not only a political project, it is a project for existence.

Individuals are never autonomous: they depend on external recognition. The autonomous body is not exclusive or identifiable. It is beyond recognition. A body of workers, it breaks away from labor discipline; a body of militants, it ignores party organization; a body of doctrine, it refuses ready-made classifications.

Autonomy has no frontiers. It is a way of eluding the imperatives of production, the verticality of institutions, the traps of political representation, the virus of power. In biology, an autonomous organism is an element that functions *independently of other parts*. Political autonomy is the desire to allow differences to deepen at the base without trying to synthesize them from above, to stress similar attitudes without imposing a "general line," to allow parts to co-exist side by side, in their singularity.

The body without organs of autonomy has no frontiers, but it does have a history, and this history is Italian. This history is given here without any intermediaries, in the language of its actors. Other experiences and other perspectives are simply

set side by side. Through this Italian history, we can read our own history, our possible history, between the lines.

Historically, Autonomy was born in the large factories of Northern Italy in the early 50's. "Autonomy at the base" was originally devised by emigrant workers from the South in defiance of the union bosses — backed by the Communist Party — who pretended to represent them. Autonomy soon moved beyond claims for higher wages and questioned not only labor relationships, but labor itself. It devised original forms of collective action (autoreduction, sabotage of production, etc.), which entailed numerous confrontations with the State. This whole theme crystallized in 1965 with the refusal of wage labor which still remains directly tied to the struggles of the Italian Autonomy.

Autonomy is a way of acting collectively. It is made up of a number of organs and fluid organizations characterized by the refusal to separate economics from politics, and politics from existence. Autonomy never unified.

Diverse organizations assembled at the national level. They formed "Potere Operaio" (*Worker's Power*), both a group and a magazine gathering together a number of theoreticians such as Mario Tronti, Toni Negri, Sergio Bologna, Franco Piperno and Oreste Scalzone. Their reformulation of Marxism became seminal for the whole of the autonomous movement. In 1973 the militarization of the Movement raised a deep controversy between various currents within "Potere Operaio". The confrontation eventually led to its self-dissolution. (The State today refuses to recognize this dissolution.) Formed in 1970, the Red Brigades were already organizing clandestine actions in order to carry the confrontation "to the heart of the State." On the other hand, various fragments from "Potere Operaio" extended the struggle from the factory to the city (occupation of houses, etc.) to ground it to the daily life of the "socialized worker." This majority constitutes the Italian Autonomy.

The chasm continued to deepen between the clandestine line of the Red Brigades, entrenched in the classic worker position, and the "open" perspectives of Autonomy, eager to account for the profound transformations in the "class composition" of Italian society through forms of "mass" intervention.

Over the last two years, and notably since the April 7 arrests, the Italian State has tried to erase by force the difference between the Red Brigades and Autonomy. It designated "Potere Operaio" as their common source, as their "primal scene." These monstrous matings, these originary embraces are always retroactive fantasies, and convenient "reconstructions" of analysis. They justify repression. Today more than 1,500 intellectuals and militants of the class movement are in prison — indefinitely, it seems — awaiting trial on highly evasive charges. Italy is the only "free society" that can claim to outdo the USSR in the number of political prisoners.

The State repression is deadly — but it is not *serious*. It is not serious because it misses its avowed target (to eliminate the Red Brigades). It eliminates instead what it refuses to acknowledge: the emergence of new forms of conflict linked to a new social stratum. This stratum is supposedly "marginal," but its actual importance, in Italy as elsewhere, can only grow.

Numerous committees against Repression in Italy have formed in Western capitals. International appeals have come from well-known figures, such as Jean-Paul Sartre, Michel Foucault, Félix Guattari, Gilles Deleuze. Recently, Italian artists and intellectuals close to the Italian Communist Party, whose responsibility in the round-up appears overwhelming, have started to publicly question the State's procedures.

Protests however can be misleading since they fall squarely within the framework set up by the Italian State. The State selected its battleground and carefully weighed its weapons. The State's *blitz* on Autonomy violates Human Rights. It

should be condemned internationally. But this is only part of the story. Its complexity, its contradictions, even its ambiguities remain to be told. To simplify the nature of the Movement, the questions it raises and the danger it now faces ultimately plays into the hands of power.

The scant information from Italy is partly responsible. It is urgent to close the information gap on Italy — to unfold the overall context of these events. Every passing day adds to the list. (October 16: Franco Piperno was finally extradited from France). Our "intervention" is not an "answer" to repression. Rather it uncovers a political experience which took almost 20 years to accumulate. This is what the Italian State wants to put behind bars — along with most of the contributors to the present issue.

A new "social subject" is emerging, conscious of its own history and potential. Its existence incorporates the most advanced aspects of our technological societies. The outcome of the present confrontation is uncertain. Repression has taken its toll. Indifference shouldn't take over. The *actual* reasons for which the Autonomists are imprisoned shouldn't disappear with them, or even with their eventual (and unlikely) release. We should preserve against the Italian State what the State so unwillingly contributed to publicize.

*Christian Marazzi* This issue is purposely problematic, the choice of materials hardly unified. It is in fact crucial to understand that what is called "autonomous movement" (*movimento autonomo*) is anything but homogeneous. It is comprised of many different and sometimes opposing experiences. It includes organizational and theoretical paths which may be traced back to a single "origin" (the so-called Italian "workerism"), but this doesn't mean that they can be grouped today under the same definition. Gathered here, then, are political contributions from people who have had nothing to do with one another for years; who have chosen different political outlooks and activities. The Italian State, by herding together those it has arrested (and those it still wants to arrest) into the same blind alley, tries to play down the differences and the specific attitudes within the Movement. There is a reason for this: it is exactly these political differences, the internal variety of the autonomous movement, that allowed it to grow.

L In 1977 Autonomy was riding the crest of the wave. The growth of a movement however cannot be linear. Moments of explosive richness and inventiveness, as in Rome and Bologna in 1977, are often followed by dry periods, times of exhaustion, the ebb and flow: *riflusso*, as one now says in Italy. The experience accumulated in action, the power extracted by the intellect freed from production is then recycled at molecular levels. It generates mobility, nomadic work, social fluidity which in turn prepare the ground for renewed political struggles.

We have witnessed in the US a comparable phenomenon since the end of the 60's: the Radical movement suddenly disappeared. Its impact wasn't lost, but, in the absence of any political perspective, it rapidly dissipated at all levels of society. The knowledge derived from experimentations with drugs, with the body, with communal life, was rechanneled throughout the system. Consumer society benefited and profited from these "undisciplined" researches that it indirectly financed. In Italy drugs still serve as a rallying point for the Movement. In the US, far from encouraging social fluidity, they make the serfdom of labor more tolerable.

The rapidity and scope of molecular transformations, the American "softness" evoked by Felix Guattari, goes also hand in hand with the diffusion of infinitely complex forms of "soft control" throughout society. This virtual reversibility of signs of subversion is characteristic of "post-political" societies.

M Perhaps it is true that we are living in a "post-political" society, where the definition of "political" has become a problem in itself. But it is also true that side by side with the crisis of the political, we have an increased politicization of people, a different way of "making politics," this is more concrete, specific, and

tied to local needs (health, housing, schools, education, etc.). In Italy, as in the United States, the party system is obviously in a crisis state, since it does not succeed in channeling demands from the bottom and in transcending these specific demands. Yet, alongside this crisis, people have been able to gain power. The great movements of the 60's are surely far behind us, but so is the hyper-ideology of that period. Today we are nearing molecular forms of power. There is less spectacularity, less "movement" with respect to the 60's. But good for us! The electoral absenteeism, for example, which numbers almost 4 million non-voters, constitutes in Italy a true "party", being more a symptom of estrangement from the great political-institutional deadlines (general and administrative elections, etc.), than a symptom of apathy. This estrangement does not indicate "the end of politics", but rather the opposite: a new way of making politics that addresses specific and concrete needs without delegation.

It is interesting to note the enormous interest in the United States on the part of the Italian class movement. This renewed "Americanism" is exploding right at the time when the Italian movement is going through a growth and/or definition crisis. Why is there in Italy an interest in certain aspects of the US which here are considered the very ones that block revolutionary growth? Perhaps because in Italy, especially in the autonomous movement, there is an interest in everything that *changes*, that moves, that explores. And there is no fear in Italy of treading over old paths that are considered *depassé*. Thus nothing is buried. The struggle knows no chronology, it is something circular. Many Italians, asphyxiated by the ideology of the historical parties, come to the United States in order to study the history of the American worker's struggle, a history without ideological mediation, violent and concrete.

L The nature of social confrontations has changed drastically. Politics up to now was tied to the relationships of production: the conflict between exploiters and exploited. This conferred on the working class an indisputable centrality. In post-industrial societies, whether capitalist or socialist, the opposition between factory and society is slowly disappearing. Factories are no longer the focus for struggles. Consequently political antagonisms can be redefined as a properly *social*, even *micro-social*, conflict. Class struggle has yielded to more subtle confrontations. The main objective, I believe, has become the *production* of subversive singularities out of the equivalences created by the system. By another twist in French philosophy, Jean Baudrillard now wants us to envisage this abrupt change as the "end of politics". To invoke the end of politics from conceptual heights is one thing. It is quite another to speak of it from the depths of prison. Unlike the French, the Italians do not have a quasi-religious respect for the pro-



priety of concepts and the systematicity of theory. Autonomists shamelessly borrow what they can use. It is from this conceptual patchwork that the Movement derives its theoretical soundness and political efficacy.

In Italy, contrary to the US, the impact of '88 has proceeded without interruption. It has even gained momentum so that the "end of politics" today proclaimed by the "creative" wing of the Movement (Bologna), is simultaneously the rebirth of politics. Politics returns, but in the Nietzschean sense: it returns as *other*.

Our decision to step in at once in an explosive, conflict-ridden situation — while everything connected with Autonomy is threatened from all sides — is equally a response to preoccupations that are closer to home: in many respects, the reaction against the 60's in the course of the "me" decade (there is nothing less autonomous than an ego) has meant an impatient refusal of politics. This refusal has gone on long enough. Politics must *return*.

**M** But what does "political", "the end of politics", etc., mean? If by political we mean a social relationship, a struggle, then surely in Italy there has always been, until now, a formidable continuity of the "political". If "political" is to mean the *direction of social transformation*, in which autonomous decisions are made in order to channel various struggles into a movement capable of delimiting the choices of both capital and the institutional system, then we are faced with a variety of interpretations.

The ICP's choice of moving organically toward the government, or the Red Brigades' armed choice to strike at the "heart of the State" or the internal debate of the autonomy seeking to create organizational forms different from both the party and the "anti-party", all exemplify the complexity of re-defining "political".

If "the end of politics" means the search for new dimensions of antagonism on levels other than the one defined by concrete needs (wage struggles, the "attack on income" as a refusal of poverty, etc.), then within the Italian movement the "end of politics" has a different meaning, not at all psychological, literary or philosophic. For there the "end of politics" involves a search for new *political* areas of struggle, new territories for the massification of the struggle. In Italy, the French theories, like those of Foucault, Deleuze, Guattari, and Baudrillard too, are immediately translated into the Movement's language, that is, into concrete struggle.

What can be considered as the most original theoretical contribution to Italian workerism originated *abroad*. For some theoreticians of *Working Class* and the *Red Notebooks* (the first two workerist journals, which appeared at the beginning of the 60's), the *Socialisme ou Barbarie* experience of the 50's in France was a turning point. And, bizarre as it may seem, other important sources of "workerism" are American: James Boggs' *American Revolution*, the writings of Martin Glaberman and of G.P. Rawick, to cite but a few.

In Italy, the American struggles have always been a key point of reference, much more so than certain aspects of the American New Left, which was too engaged in criticizing American capitalism from the standpoint of its external, imperialist contradictions. Still, in the 70's, the books of Fox Piven, Richard Cloward (*Regulating the Poor, Poor People's Movement*), James O' Connor (*The Fiscal Crisis of the State*), and many others, were being read in Italy. These contributions have been seminal in the political formulation of the struggles within the Welfare State.

There is nothing "Italian" about the class warfare in Italy; there is nothing "original" in the Italian theoretical contributions. If any, their specificity resides in the fact that in Italy these theories have been able to bloom and develop thanks to the class struggles and their formidable continuity. We must avoid ghettoizing Italy, thus neutralizing its importance. To understand Italy, one must understand

## THE REFUSAL OF WORK

the United States; one must rediscover in the history of American class warfare that political richness which today is attributed to the Italian "intellectuals". To erect a monument to Italy is to play the game of the Italian State: to misrepresent as specific ("the product of certain intellectuals") what is in fact rooted in the worker's history, rooted, above all, in its international dimension.

The ICP's decision to enter the Historical Compromise with the Christian Democrats was more complex than it now seems. The compromise was sought immediately after the Chilean coup and oil crisis of 1973, two events which forced the official Worker's Movement to seek new political strategies capable of expanding the areas of social alliance. The oil crisis was used by the multinational corporations to accelerate the accumulation of capital with labor-saving investments. Thus the political make-up of the class which formed around the mass worker could have been destroyed, and along with it the possibility of generalizing its struggles and aims in the eyes of society. In fact, the period following 1973 witnessed the rise of the chemical and energy sectors as the most important (financially and institutionally) in the system of world capitalism, with the result that the socialization of the mass worker's struggle was further blocked.

On the other hand, the Chilean experience taught that old socialist modes of government were untenable. They were economically backward with respect to the international capitalist initiative, to which the Historical Compromise was an attempted response. It is now common knowledge that this response, on the part of the ICP, was opportunistic and, as it turned out, ineffective. Nonetheless, some response in kind to the international capitalist initiative was necessary.

Within this framework we can probe the debate within Autonomy. From 1973 onward Autonomy has been above all a search for a newly composed political class capable of acting outside the party system. If capital attacked the worker's struggle with mass layoffs, inflation, chronic unemployment, etc., it was then necessary to determine a new political terrain where the most diverse social strata could join their struggles and recompose a front against capital. And surely it wasn't only against capital, but also and perhaps above all, against the State and its party system, since the capitalist initiative could only succeed with the complicity of the parties, ICP included.

**L** France achieved territorial and linguistic unity nearly two centuries ago. By comparison, Italy remains a young country. Its political unification is recent, its linguistic integration precarious. It is not surprising then that diversified phenomena exist at all levels.



Italian political parties are not as centralized or integrated as French parties. There exists among the Christian Democrats and the Communist Party a degree of interpenetration that explains, for the most part, the possibility of an institutional agreement. The "historic" strategy of the ICP takes into consideration the existence in its midst of a considerable number of Christian militants.

One only has to travel through Italy to realize to what extent regional diversity remains powerful. There is a social, dialectal, political and economic specificity to each city and region. The revolutionary movement itself, in its extreme variety, has obviously adopted modes of existence and forms of identification which are characteristic of Italian society as a whole. The "tribal, communal, pre-capitalist structures" allegedly threatened by any conflict, are in no way an appendage exclusive to the Movement. These structures are found as much in the Worker's Movement as in the "clientelism" practiced by the DC.

Baudrillard is right to assume that the actual effect of confrontation such as the one between the Red Brigades and the State is to eradicate any form of "transversality." But Autonomy is too diverse to be lumped together as mere "pre-capitalist structures." Far from lagging behind, Autonomy has assumed a revolutionary position at the vanguard of capitalism: "inside and against." It challenges capitalism on its own ground, "at the heart" of the system, and not simply as a "marginality" soon to be eradicated. The objective collusion between the Red Brigades and the State, therefore, cannot be taken as a strategy meant to annihilate obsolete structures that fall outside of the reversibility of signs of power and subversion. What is most subversive about Autonomy is precisely that it refutes the inevitability of such a reversion and the ensuing implosion of the system.

Autonomy ought not to be conceived as completely divorced from and opposed to the rest of civil society. The fluidity of its organizational schemes corresponds also to an historical delay in relation to the modes of unification at work in the rest of Europe. The oppositions between North and South, between the underdevelopment of Sicily and the technological advances in the Milan-Turin region, the heterogeneity of languages and cultures, all contribute to ground political diversity (a key-word) in a manner absolutely unknown in post-industrial countries. The persistence of earthly roots and of collective practices in the very heart of an advanced society have kept alive political options which have largely been "passed over" in more unitary countries.

Autonomy is the only political movement today that simultaneously makes use of the most abstract machinery (the technico-scientific intelligence) and of the masses' most traditional, community ties. Left to themselves, territorial groups would eventually be eliminated by power as pockets of archaism; left to itself, abstract labor would conform to the demands of capital. What engenders the originality and force of Autonomy is that economies which in theory exclude one another are allowed to exist side by side in a non-conflictual manner. The "creative" wing of the Movement has nothing to do anymore with the "historic" Autonomy, hardened in its ideological bastion, and devoted to both concrete and symbolic — if not totemic — practices which promote its osmosis with the masses. At all levels, however, provisional conjunctions are being implemented which allow a detachment from territory and a territorialization of the intelligence. More than the spectacular operations of the Red Brigades, this mixture remains virtually the most explosive. The network of free radios, the most extensive in Europe, is a perfect example. *Radio Onda Rossa*, the organ in Rome of the Volsci (the hard core of organized Autonomy), on the one hand broadcast deterritorialized signals, thus appropriating technico-scientific knowledge, and on the other establishes roots in the population through a collective self-management of occupied buildings. The political crystallization of this technical intelligence allows it finally to go beyond the "mad hopes" of an autonomist practice always menaced by revolutionary messianism. As a result, Autonomy does not remain content "waiting for something from outside," but instead tries to live through today's capitalism in an alternative way by deflecting the latter's advances to the profit of

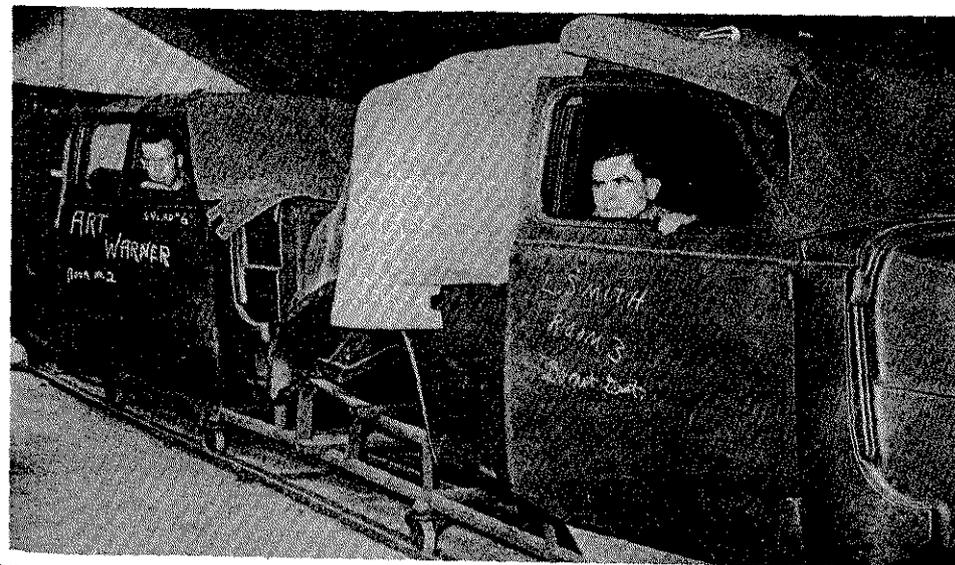
the new social subject. Thus it intends to win against capitalism not by force of arms, but by quickness of intelligence, by pushing capital to the utmost of its possibilities. In this respect the experience of Italian Autonomy has a capacity for generalization unknown to the rest of the west.

M The thesis of the "two societies" propounded by a workerist intellectual of the ICP, Alberto Asor Rosa, is quite dangerous. According to this view the "social subjects" who emerged politically from the capitalist transformation of the 70's — women, unemployed youth, those who work off-the-books, etc. — the so-called "marginals", are "something else" with respect not only to the official Worker's Movement and its tradition, but also with respect to society. This thesis implies that these new social vectors should be considered "unproductive workers", their social and cultural attitudes subordinate to those of the factory workers, who are considered the only workers productive of wealth which will subsequently be consumed by others. In short, the struggles of the new "social subjects" are epiphenomena, irrational manifestations which must be brought under the guide of the factory worker. The centrality of the worker means precisely this: the will to impose a worker's direction to the social transformation brought about by the capitalist development.

The strategic position of the Red Brigades may also be characterized in a similar way. Their categorical choice of the factory worker as the decisive political referent is strictly in line with orthodox Marxist tradition. This definition of "productive labor", however, derives more from Adam Smith than from Marx. For Marx, productive labor is the labor which produces surplus value and struggles. Thus his category is not just economic, but also political. Moreover, it is a fact that the new social subject produces surplus knowledge, innovation and intelligence, which capital has a dire need to appropriate.

Asor Rosa's thesis, as the materials included in the present issue repeatedly demonstrate, is wrong not only on the empirical level (today, in Italy, well over one-third of an active population of 21 million work part-time, off-the-books, etc.), but also from a political standpoint. What the Bolognesi call "marginality at the center" is precisely a critique of all attempts to subordinate this *invention-force*, that is, the creativity and productivity of the struggle and of the life-styles developed by the so-called "marginals". These recently formed "social subjects" are productive workers in a double sense: they produce wealth and they produce struggles. Thus they are at the center, or at any rate rightfully belong there.

This brings us back to the central theme of Autonomy: the struggle against work,



the *refusal of work*. Ever since its early formulations, which date back to Mario Tronti's writings of 1964, the Italian revolutionary movement has been moving toward the refusal of work as a positive productive force of capitalist development. Refusal of work, demand for more money and less work, struggle against harmful work (which, after all, characterizes work in all its *capitalist* forms), has always meant forcing capital to develop to the maximum its productive forces. Only when the worker's labor is reduced to the minimum is it possible to go beyond, in the literal sense, the capitalist mode of production. Only when "non-worker's labor" becomes a generalized reality and enjoying life a productive fact in itself, does freedom from exploitation become not only possible but materially achievable.

The "diffused factory" (what in the US is called the "underground economy"), is seen by Autonomy not only as super-exploitative but also as a subjective choice on the part of the young proletarians. The growth of the underground economy is also a consequence of this refusal of factory discipline, and the will to organize working time on the basis of free time. It is precisely this struggle against work that produces the inventiveness and "technical knowledge" typical of the "marginals". "Marginality at the center" means, in this sense, the centrality of the struggle against work, a struggle which goes beyond the factory gates.

The fact still remains that between the new subjects and the factory workers there is a political distance *not* yet organized (mediated) by the extra-parliamentary organizations. Though it may seem paradoxical, capital itself is now closing the gap between the "two societies" by investing high technology in the decentralized production units, and by employing an unskilled work-force (especially women) in the large factories. This restructuring is evident at FIAT's factory in Turin. Yet the recent lay-off of sixty-one FIAT workers, considered "para-terrorists" by the management, clearly shows how this restructuring also necessitates repression.

Since restructuring requires a more flexible labor market, certain behavioral differences among social strata are blurred by capital. In fact, capital cannot act otherwise. Because "marginal" work has potentially the highest rate of productivity, capital must invest technology in the periphery, rather than in the large factories.

L "Marginality" is a massive phenomenon, a true mutation in the field of production, and not a simple malfunction of the system. The absence of a Welfare State in Italy no doubt contributed to a burgeoning awareness of this centrality. In the "diffused social factory" of the post-industrial era, marginality has virtually ceased to be marginal. It has become the very texture of society. At this point the experience of Autonomy transcends Italian frontiers. The marginalization of work is not a phenomenon unknown in the US, as you mentioned, but its actualization through the autonomous movement allow us to rediscover its political dimension.

The events of 1968 fell squarely within traditional political oppositions. Students were rebelling against Imperialism, or Authority. The aftermath of May '68, therefore, was marked by defeat and gloom: the system had prevailed.

The Italian movement avoided, for the most part, these post-May blues. It didn't experience any of the dramatic liquidations of revolutionary hopes and illusions that ensued in most western countries. It went on, unperturbed, on its own trajectory. How can we account for this fact?

Years before May '68, the "strategy of refusal" had opened an entirely new front: the front of wage labor. The refusal of factory discipline advocated by the Movement was bound to set it from the start against the work ethic of the ICP and its hegemony in the Worker's Movement. The present strength of the Italian movement, its steady reinforcement throughout the 70's stem from the fact that its major theme largely *anticipated* the criticism of bureaucratic socialism, of which the most recent—and largely belated—symptom in France has been the marketing by

the media of the brand New Philosophers.

The position of Tronti, "inside and against" the development of capitalism offered early on a positive alternative to the opposition of the ICP and the CD whose increasing obsolescence eventually led to the Historical Compromise. It will take the failure of the Common Program in France before the cleavage between the Right and the Left begins to crumble and political representation starts to implode in the general disarray. At this moment the obsessive, seductive and gloomy theme of the end of politics begins to take credence.

What remains paradoxical, if not mysterious, is why Italy, with its pockets of under-development and rather tardy "economic miracle," should be among the first to propose in political terms, through the bias of Autonomy, the invention of new forms of life relatively or completely detached from the slavery of work.

M It is very doubtful that Italy is still one of Europe's least developed countries. The existence of its underdeveloped regions has always been a function of the rapid growth of other areas of the country. Typical in this regard is the North-South relationship, where we find immigrants from the South working on the FIAT assembly line. Yet the growth of highly advanced struggles in a country that has known periods of economic backwardness remains to be explained.

We must first recall that in the sixties the worker's struggles exploded within an institutional scheme called "center-left" (*centro sinistra*). During the recession in 1964, the Socialist Party joined the Christian Democrats in order to form a government based on a program of economic development. This coalition attempted to make the economic system more dynamic by nationalizing certain corporations in the electrical and chemical sectors, and by improving public services. Even though only a small part of this economic program was actually carried out, no doubt it rendered the Communist opposition, already weakened by its decision to engage only in parliamentary struggle, completely ineffective. In fact, from Togliatti onward, the ICP had been losing strength as it slowly moved away from the working class, leaving to the unions the purely economic regulation of wages. For the Worker's Movement, in short, the center-left meant political weakness.

It was in this context that *Quaderni Rossi* ("Red Notebooks") and *Classe Operaia* ("Working Class") were born. *Quaderni Rossi* tackled the problem of analyzing the new class composition as it emerged from the most recent capitalist transformations at the beginning of the sixties: the mass-worker, the new means of mass production which, by reducing the strategic importance of skilled workers,



weakened the unions in which they figured prominently. *Class Operaia* on the other hand, attempted to formulate a new political strategy, which Tronti called "inside and against": to act on the inside of capitalist development, promoting it through the refusal of work (thus bringing about the introduction of new machines and new technology), but at the same time to remain against capitalism wanting everything from it, all the wealth produced through its reformism.

From their inception, these new political hypotheses aimed at redefining the relationship between workers and organization. Because the ICP had lost its contact with workers, the situation called for a reformulation of the "party" and necessitated a scrutiny of the class composition. Both from the standpoint of capitalist development and from that of the anti-capitalist struggle, a new strategic role for the mass-worker had emerged. Its struggles now created a new terrain to the left of the ICP, thus posing in new terms the question of organization.

L The American system is like a self-regulating machine, not inhibited by illegality — indeed capitalist profit feeds on the invention of illegalities not yet codified as such — but once an illegality is identified (Watergate, Lockheed, etc.), the system rapidly corrects itself. Italy lacks this self-correcting flexibility. In order to expunge illegality, the State must itself adopt illegal measures.

The State initiative required more than public consent: a new reality had to be created to accommodate these institutional illegalities. The co-production with the media of a new reality went also beyond the scope of a classical "ideological" manipulation. Any other reality had simply disappeared.

As one of its celebrated falsifications of the Italian press, *Il Male*, a satiric magazine close to the Movement, reported with photographic evidence the arrest of the well-known actor Ugo Tognazzi as chief of the Red Brigades. The *Il Male* staff then experienced the vertiginous "loss of reality" which has come to constitute Italian life, when the public took this simulation for the literal truth. It must have fulfilled the public's secret desire to see, at long last, a "conspiracy" unveiled and a Supreme Leader denounced. But the simulation also meant that they were ready to believe in anything! *Il Male* had incidentally put its finger on the nerve-center of repression. Reality had become weightless, a gigantic simulacrum.

M The fact that the State itself assumes subversive forms to maintain control over subversive forces is, whether we like it or not, the consequence of an entire cycle of struggles. Today, the delay on the part of those who want to revolt (a theoretical rather than a practical-political delay), forces a complete dislocation of the terrain of social subversion. If it is true, like Bifo claims, that Autonomy has shown itself to be, at times, of a reversible nature, that is easily inverted by the State (the military aspect, for example, is exactly what the State has chosen to fight, with alarmingly positive results), this does not alter the fact that to dislocate the terrain of the rebellion implies finding new forms of violence. The violence of the Red Brigades is to be radically criticized not because it is "violent", but because it isn't violent enough! And it isn't violent enough for the simple reason that it corresponds to the State's violence. The Red Brigades, in their actions, produce State-Power. But what we want today is liberation from the State. It appears that the limitation of the materials here presented (ultimately an objective limit) concerns precisely this blocking of the search for newer forms of destruction of all that is State. Perhaps Autonomy ran ahead of itself: it is not by accident that at the very moment of greatest desire to explore different ways of social subversion, the State steps in massively.

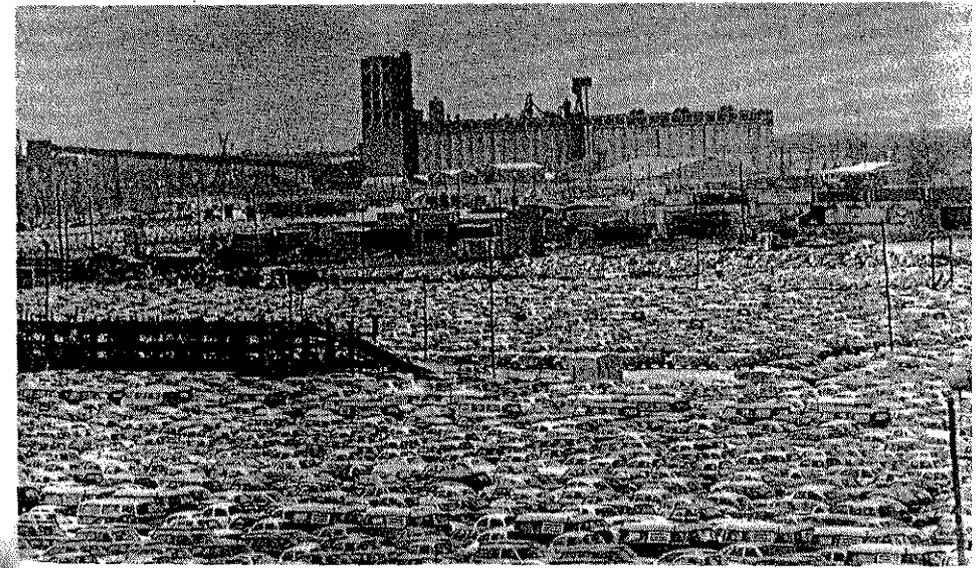
L The lucidity of the State goes way beyond rationality. The "mutating" position adopted by the Italian State to face the challenge of the Autonomists is one of the most astonishing aspects of the current repression. The "Defense Memorandum" of the prisoners clearly shows how far the "legal procedure" defined by the prosecution has departed from democratic legality. It is impossible to confront "speculations" presented as specific accusations, if not as proof, if we

don't understand the rationale of the highly acrobatic maneuvers by which the prosecution is building a case against Autonomy. The evasiveness of the initial accusations, the heterogeneity of materials isolated from their contexts and subsequently pieced together through osmosis, suggest the imposition of an unusual logic. Gilles Deleuze defined such logic as a violation of the principle of identity (A is always A, never B), and of the principle of the excluded middle (Either A is A or non-A). In other words, the State has deliberately jumped out of the magic circle of Aristotelian logic.

Is it not exactly in these terms that *Anti-Oedipus* defined the positive "syntheses" of the "schizo" flux — non-contradictory, non-exclusive, unlimited and multifocal? The logic of the prosecution recognizes identity not on the basis of identical subjects, as is usually the case, but on the basis of identical predicates. The number of subjects (Red Brigades, Autonomy) is limited, but the number of predicates called upon to justify the identity of the two subjects (Red Brigades = Autonomy) is unlimited. This hypertrophy of the sense of identity is enough to provoke what pathologists call an "orgy of identifications." Has there ever been, in the course of history, an openly schizophrenic State?

The Italian State has moved onto its adversary's territory; it has simulated the fluidity characteristic of Autonomy. A "pilot" decision rendered September 21, 1979, in the trial of Luigi Rosati, ex-husband of the Brigadist Adriana Ferranda and ideologue of *Autonomia Operaia*, described Autonomy as "an indefinable mixture of groups and varied tendencies, a veritable mosaic made of different fragments, a gallery of overlapping images, of circles and collectives without any central organization." This definition echoes in every respect the logic deployed by the prosecution against Autonomy . . .

That this may be another dizzying example of the reversal of signs and of the imposition of power is too hasty a conclusion. To be sure, the Italian State has taken a leap at the heart of capital's flux — but only in order to master it. Here ceases the abstract reversibility of signs on which the "end of politics" is founded. The orgy of the accusation's identifications constitutes only the first phase of a strategy which has little to do with schizophrenia. It consists of using Aristotelian thought to support conclusions reached through non-Aristotelian cognitive operations. The identification of "coincidences" established between the Red Brigades and the Autonomists on the basis of identical predicates ("any Left revolutionary literature inevitably has some points of similarity," the Memorandum remarks) and the boundless number of charges become the ground upon which the prosecution builds up "paranoid" systems of regularity centered upon a unique point



of interpretation. The simulation of the State thus becomes the hallucination of a truth which is artificially resuscitated as reality. It suffices that the State substitute its simulacrum for the *autonomous* (non-unified) reality of the Movement in order to justify its campaign of repression.

The distinction is of some importance. It leads us to supplement the inevitable short-comings of a defensive position. It must be recognized that the looseness of Autonomy constitutes a considerable innovation in the history of the revolutionary movement. It confers a flexibility heretofore never attained in the struggle to destabilize power. It is no wonder that the State, confronted with this elusive network whose fluidity permits a virtually total transfer of responsibility, has also proved its inventiveness and forged a mode of accusation just as polymorphously perverse. It is inadmissible, however, that these loose charges were cast *in advance* from a perspective contradicting absolutely everything Autonomy stands for. The logical delirium of the State projects the mosaic of Autonomy upon the rigid screen of the Red Brigades. And so the game goes.

The President of the Court who judged Luigi Rosati went so far as to recognize what separates the Red Brigades from Autonomy: "The Autonomy groups refute in principle every rigid, verticalizing, hierarchical structure"; he distinguished the attack "at the heart of the State" advocated by the Red Brigades from the "capillary penetration" of *Autonomia Organizzata*; he readily admitted that these micropolitical actions are the fruit "not of a coordination among diverse, associated organs but of a spontaneity which has very little in common with the character of professional crimes"; yet he condemned no less severely the intellectuals who, like Luigi Rosati, without personally participating in any criminal activities, "accepted, exalted and advocated them."

The "pilot" sentencing of Rosati to four years' imprisonment confirms the will of power to integrate the wave of criticisms directed against it without departing in the least from its accusations. It is now clear to everyone that the prosecution of Autonomy is a truly *political* trial less interested in condemning its ideas than in annihilating "an entire section of the political movement in Italy." (Memorandum). The real danger to the State comes not from the Red Brigades, who speak the same language and who develop structures which "mirror" and thus reinforce its own. The profound menace to the State comes from the fact that Autonomy speaks a language and develops forms of organization and of subjectivity against which there exists no "classic" response. It is in this innovation — this positivity — with which the present issue is concerned, and not with the defense, in "reactive" or reductive terms, of innocents unjustly accused.

As Franco Piperno here recognizes, the new spontaneity requires the practice of illegality as a necessary condition for its existence. But then so does the State. The whole problem is in knowing whether this illegality is active, inventive, creative of life and values, or, like the somber, embracing couple formed by the Red Brigades and the State apparatus, a bringer of terror and death.

*Translated by Peter Caravetta and John Johnston*

III/1 *Icarus* Empire State Building, New York, 1930

Lewis W. Hine (1874-1940) Courtesy: The Brooklyn Museum

III/2 NXP1690 38 SPEAKING WITH THE SQUATTERS SANTIAGO, CHILE: President Salvador Allende (left) speaks to squatters who have unlawfully taken over a housing estate in a poor section of Santiago. They are part of a movement which is protesting the bad housing conditions by seizing other people's homes and refusing to move. Allende is expected to decree the establishment of a National Council of Peasants, Dec. 21st. According to the Agriculture Ministry, the council will speed the peasant's participation in the government's land reform program. (UPI) 12/21/70

III/3 19885 FLINT, MICH.—THERE'S PRIVACY, TOO, FOR THE MORE FASTIDIOUS "SITTER". THESE HAVE ESTABLISHED INDIVIDUAL ROOMS IN INCOMPLETED AUTO BODIES. THEY HAVE EVEN INSCRIBED THEIR NAMES AND NUMBERS, ALSO BITS OF HUMOR ON THE DOORS OF THEIR QUARTERS. 2-10-37

III/4 Funeral for the victims of the Everett Massacre, 1916. A scene from the American documentary *The Wobblies*, directed by Stewart Bird and Deborah Shaffer, 1979.

III/5 DAPO70507-7/5/74-HOUSTON, TEX: A Jam of over 30,000 new imported automobiles with no place to go because of a decline in foreign sales has turned the port of Houston into an overcrowded parking lot. With 10,000 more expected this month, Importers are scrambling to grab what little parking acreage there is left. (UPI)

III/6 XPO12705-1/27/75-Fenton, MO.: Changing of shifts of employees as Chrysler Corp. reopened truck and automobile assembly lines in Fenton 1/27 after a three-week layoff. About 5800 persons on two truck-assembly shifts and one auto-assembly shift went back to work. A second auto-assembly shift was not called back, leaving about 2100 workers laid off. (UPI)

