

The Terrorists Talk

In the spring of 1977, the Open Road, an international anarchist newspaper based in Vancouver, British Columbia began publication to serve as the central communications center for anarchist, terrorist groups in Western Europe and North and South America. What follows are selections from recent issues of Open Road.

After a bomb recently planted by the George Jackson Brigade was disarmed before it went off, the group found itself faced the dilemma of being willing to watch a cop die trying to disarm a booby-trapped bomb or being willing to watch unbooby-trapped bombs disarmed. In response to the GJB's request for "constructive criticism about this and other contradictions that surround bombing as a revolutionary tactic," the Bay Area Research Collective ... has asked that people send their thoughts on the subject to them. BARC will compile the feedback, then redistribute it so as to further the discussion on this "extremely critical and necessary" topic.

— Open Road, *Issue 4, Fall, 1977*

The space of an urban center must be studied strategically in the same manner as rural guerrillas study the countryside, jungles, and mountains for military advantages.... To be effective the enemy must use the well-beaten paths and is thus subject to ambush at will.... Fighting can take place in areas where small numbers of guerrillas can immobilize the firepower and numerical strength of a far superior repressive force....

The same issue of Open Road gives coverage of how their "theoretical discussion of urban guerrilla warfare" is put into motion:

The fear aroused in the (West German) authorities by the Siegfried Bubach assassination has further tightened security around political prisoners. Bubach, West Germany's Chief Prosecutor, was recently submachine-gunned by the Ulrike Meinhof Action Committee while waiting for a traffic light to change. He had played a major role in the trial of the Red Army Fraktion and had helped initiate "anti-terrorist" laws that eliminated the confidentiality of lawyer/client relations....

Political Statement of the George Jackson Brigade:

So, the GJB is back. We got our asses kicked real bad at Tukwila (January 21, 1976, an attempted bank robbery in which two members of the GJB were arrested and one killed in a shootout with police—ed.), and we've spent this last year licking our wounds and learning our trade.

— May 1, 1977

The destruction of capitalism is our central strategic goal.... The main tactics available to the urban guerrilla are as follows: 1) Expropriation and confiscation; 2) Taking prisoners; 3) Liberating prisoners; 4) Enforcing revolutionary justice; 5) Bombing and sabotage (this can be either punitive in nature or in support of the peoples' struggles); 6) Propaganda and counter-propaganda.

The ruling class is made up of *real people*, who conspire and plan their crimes behind closed door.... Our task is to seek out the enemy behind all his fronts and attack him there.

September 18, 1975 — Pipebombed Capital Hill Safeway Store. Bombed a 50 pound bag of dog food inside the Capital Hill Safeway store in Seattle. This action was intended to show love and solidarity with a man who, ... had died four days earlier attempting to arm a bomb behind the same Safeway store. On the day our bomb was to be planted, we received word of the SLA capture and our rage increased... Our bomb caused minor injuries to several customers. This action was *wrong*, because we brought violence and terror to a poor neighborhood....

— Nov. 3, 1977

On environmental terrorism:

A sharp debate is beginning to develop within the growing antinuclear movement on both sides of the Atlantic over the appropriateness of some of the tactics.... The debate has tended to divide pacifists from those who would defend themselves against State-invoked violence.... (Critics of the established leadership) say that the leadership has actively suppressed all organic discussion of any tactics other than non-violence and civil disobedience, even to the point of exposing thousands of unprepared people to violent attacks by the police and the military....

— Open Road, *Issue 4, Fall 1977*