

Extract from **Internationale Situationniste** at **Context XXI**

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No Useless Leniency

(excerpt)

■ MICHÈLE BERNSTEIN ■ KEN KNABB
(TRANSLATION)

“Intellectual” or “artistic” collaboration in a group devoted to the type of experimentation we are engaged in involves our everyday life. It is always accompanied with a certain friendship.

Consequently, when we think of those who have participated in this joint activity and then been excluded from it, we are obliged to admit that they were once our friends. Sometimes the memory is pleasant. In other cases it's ridiculous and embarrassing.

On the whole, later developments have confirmed the correctness of our reproaches and the irredeemability of the people who have not been able to remain with us. A few of them have even ended up joining the Church or the colonial troops. Most of the others have retired to one or another little niche in the intelligentsia. And given the current state of affairs, they probably won't even be able to make a career out of it: François Giroud isn't particularly likely get out of the way for the first unemployed would-be genius to come along. So much so that one of them.

The recent formation of the Situationist International has given a new relevance to the questions of accord and breaks. A period of discussions and negotiations on a footing of equality between several groups, beginning with the Alba Congress, has been concluded with the formation at Cosio d'Arroscia a disciplined organization. The result of these new objective conditions has been to force certain opportunist elements into open opposition, leading to their imme-

diolate elimination (the purging of the Italian section). Certain wait-and-see attitudes have also ceased to be tolerable, and those of our allies who have not seen fit to join us immediately have thereby unmasked themselves as adversaries. It is on the basis of the program since developed by the majority of the SI that all the new elements have joined us, and we would risk cutting ourselves off from these elements, and especially from those we will meet in the future, if we consented to pursue the slightest dialogue with those who, since Alba, have demonstrated that their creative days are over.



We have become stronger and therefore more seductive. We don't want innocuous relationships and we don't want relationships that could serve our enemies. [...]

It should be clearly understood that all the situationists will maintain the enmities inherited from the former groupings that have constituted the SI, and that there is no possible return for

those whom we have ever been forced to despise. But we don't have an idealist, abstract, absolutist conception of breaks. It is necessary to recognize when an encounter in a concrete collective task becomes impossible, but also to see if such an encounter, in changed circumstances, does not once again become possible and desirable between persons who have been able to retain a certain respect for each other. [...]

As I said at the beginning, a collective project like we have undertaken and are pursuing cannot avoid being accompanied by friendship. But it is also true that it cannot be identified with friendship and that it should not be subject to the same weaknesses. Nor to the same modes of continuity or looseness.

Michèle Bernstein: Geboren 1932 in Paris. Sie studierte an der Sorbonne und traf ab 1952 in der Bar „Moineau“ auf die Mitglieder der Lettristen und späteren Situationisten. 1954 heiratete sie Guy Debord und veröffentlichte Texte in *Potlatch* und der *Internationale Situationniste*. 1960 erschien *Alle Pferde des Königs*, 1961 gefolgt von *La Nuit*, der genau die gleiche Geschichte wie *Alle Pferde des Königs* erzählt, allerdings mit Stilmitteln des *Nouveau Roman*. Offiziell trat Bernstein 1967 aus der SI aus; sie lebte ab 1982 in England, heute wieder in Paris.

Ken Knabb: Geboren 1945 in Louisiana. Autor, Übersetzer und radikaler Theoretiker, Betreiber des Website *Bureau of Public Secrets*.

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