



The Catastrophe Psychosis

September 1989

For a long time now there has been a terroristic blackmail in act leading to more and more recourse to the policeman-like logic of emergency. The media carries out the task of upturning problems and using the apocalyptic images of the imminence of catastrophe pushing great masses of people to mobilize to avoid it.

One should ask oneself what lies behind the picture presented by the media of the impending nightmare of ecological catastrophe. This is presented as a problem to be resolved beyond the realms of social relations or class conflict.

We have strong doubts about the show of good intentions made by politicians of every kind and color (including the environmentalists) and their sudden interest in the population's health.

We think that behind the bombardment of news concerning the ecological red alert in the areas of high industrial concentration where atmospheric pollution safety levels have been amply surpassed, there lies another far less noble battle: a battle for power between the old capitalist-industrial class and the new ascending one constituted of the public and private bureaucracy in view of the position the latter have reached within the technological apparatus of capital and the state.

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We know that the image of catastrophe, in this case the ecological one, emotively pushes the mass to fight beyond any motivation coming from their own specific condition of exploitation, not so much for social change but to save their own threatened survival. That pushes them to adopt the reasoning leading to the conservation of the present social order.

The planet is dying, we all know it. It is full of poison and lacking in oxygen because of atmospheric pollution. The rivers are biologically dead; lakes and seas are reduced to dustbins; a greenhouse effect is produced by the raising of the levels of carbon dioxide thanks also to the massive work of deforestation of one of the main lungs of the earth, the Amazon forest. Growing drought is causing the extension of vast new deserts, and we are assisting in the tragedy of peoples and animal species on their way to extinction, sacrificed to the logic of profit and dominion.

Every class that aspires to domination brings with it its own world and its own logic. The ascending bureaucrats are using ecology to accelerate the process of taking over the old world.

But what can that cause in the mass, increasingly terrified by the possibility of catastrophe and internalizing the logic of emergency, if not total adhesion to the repressive codes of behavior dictated by cybernetic power. With scientific punctuality it is inviting millions of proletarianized individuals to participate and mobilize alongside the institutions to create and institute new organisms of control and to sanction new authorities under the thrust of a new democratic radicalism.

Beyond its immediate drama, the Chernobyl nuclear accident gave capital and all the states the chance to coldly experiment elements upon which to apply the repressive projects of control and consensus, precisely by exploiting the idea of a permanent state of emergency.

The emergency intervention therefore does not resolve the problem but serves to install control in order to eliminate conflict over the social territory through the blackmail of duty to collaboration

between classes. All the emergency measures that are presented as being necessary for the general social interest, in actual fact give way to a process of privilege and submission given the inequality of existing material conditions.

The greens and environmental associations are not looking for a solution to the problem of pollution but to a capillary and spreading control in order to make it a source of profit. One discovers that the least polluted parts of the cities are areas destined to the higher social strata; the poor get square meters of cement and waste dumps on the outskirts.

It is time then, instead of giving uncritical praise to such forces, to unmask their role as the new social pacifiers who are going beyond the spectacle rigged on the blackmail that “the planet must be saved at all costs”, to lend themselves to managing existing alienation in an alternative way, but always based on exploitation and oppression.

We think that the struggle against the domination of human over human is the only basis from which to start. It is the only one capable of attacking those responsible for the destruction of both the planet and social wealth. We must aim concretely towards the liberation of humanity and nature in the global sense.

The greens and environmentalists are so-called ecologists whose aim is not a clean ecological planet; their politics are a green apartheid that wants “green islands” destined to the comfort of the privileged. The international environmental associations are the multinationals of “ecology”, capitalism revised and corrected following the damage done by its preceding phase of maximum industrialization.

The social struggle in the ecological sense is valid only if it strikes the relationships of dominion, the structures of capital and the state, showing its subversive force that contains the prospect of a new world, not the alternative management of the old.