

The Enchantment of Nuclear Destruction

Anti-Authoritarians Anonymous

The possibility of total destruction through nuclear war corresponds to a condition of ruin everywhere that makes such destruction attractive. And in the absence of opposition that contests everything about the existing social order, only the eruption of nuclear war can be expected to put an end to our present flattened lives.

To work for a freeze on the number of nuclear weapons is ludicrous. Our lives are already frozen in the routines of work or the debasement of having to look for it. Nuclear weapons are merely the most absurd and increasingly costly burden of the obsolescence of national borders. And when the State maintains a condition where entire populations may be destroyed at once, that condition must be abolished by entire populations destroying the State once and for all.

Behind the State, however, stands the force of habit, and behind the habit of work forced by the dead weight of hierarchical society stand the military and police powers of the State. When the social passivity induced by spectacular diversions, religion, culture, specialized knowledge, ideology, isolation and resignation to a life that remains always somewhere else begins to crumble, these powers provide the prisons, psychiatric wards, forced labor camps, massacres, death squads and torture centers necessary to preserve order.

For class society to perpetuate itself through automation, it becomes increasingly necessary to impose austerity and discipline through military force. But the process is different everywhere, and not always savage or direct, as in Chile and Poland. The language of the military is command and obey, and the computer language of the Department of Defense (sic) will probably be the language of most programs within a few years' time, says a Danish computer scientist (Computer Decisions).

More important ultimately to the preservation of order is that automation now makes possible a computer terminal at the lowest possible level: every household. Passivity assumes a fixed character and overtakes the mobile isolation represented by the automobile, which has perhaps been the most significant contribution thus far to the perfection of separation accomplished by capitalist society.

As capitalism extends its automation in every direction, our forced participation, as always, is presumed. The terms are changing, but more will be expected of us. As one management consultant put it, "Nowadays, many functions of an effective manager depart radically from the standard philosophy and principles of supervision. For example, decision-making involving the staff has to be participative and representational rather than centralized or unilateral...The new approach requires that employees take greater responsibility and initiative in their work."

Where the apocalypse is always present, the present is always apocalyptic. Now only the adventure of abolishing all that destroys us little by little every day is worthy of the effort. And if work isn't killing us, why are we being paid to do it?

In the sermons, symposiums and well-mannered marches of the peace activists, the word "survival" is heard again and again, but the question of whether survival is worth having is not addressed.

The decision to live is a political act, and so is the use of words. Where people have to work, so do words, and where the machines of society process words, the minimum demand of words is to submit the society of machines to the process of play. Desire, conscious of itself, advances, and the realm of words becomes a liberated zone. The terrain changes constantly—the zone must ground itself everywhere or be reclaimed. The project begins with each person, but dies in isolation.

The end of time is the unlawful inheritance of the time of the end. “All pleasure desires eternity,” said Nietzsche, “deep, deep eternity,” and until time is forgotten it remains our master: time is indeed money.

What has been represented remains to be realized—for ourselves or for our supervisors. Everything has been said—now it must be created and discovered.

One more effort, Workers, if you want to be Adventurers!

“Don’t mourn for me friends, don’t weep for me never,
For I’m going to do nothing forever and ever ”

— English workingwoman’s tombstone, early 19th century

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FE note: “The Enchantment of Nuclear Destruction” is available as a 21 x 13 inch poster from the above address.

A critique of his ideas & actions.



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