

**Neither their war, nor their peace - June  
1999**

[Translated from "Né la loro guerra, nè la loro pace" ("Neither their war, nor their peace") - June 1999]

## **OF MASSACRES AND GOVERNMENTS**

"Show me a place where people are openly massacred; I will show you a government at the head of the butchery"

Anselme Bellegarigue

We don't have bombs over our heads. We don't see houses and villages destroyed. We don't know the exodus, the great wandering of the masses that flee misery, fear and death. We don't live in a refugee camp surrounded by police. We are not at war ourselves.

Here, if one has documents in order, one is not expelled. Here, if you are neither an immigrant nor poor, the police don't shoot at you. Here, the pollution of the air, water and soil doesn't happen with the same speed as a chemical bombing: it proceeds without haste, through the slow arm of profit. Here, the consensus of the market has replaced flags and ethnic claims. It is different here.

Every day, the civilized watch the images that come from Albania, Macedonia, Serbia, Kosovo. They watch them, but they don't see them. Those images are erased, with all their blinding visibility, by all the little daily obligations, by commonplaces and by the incessant voice of the media chattering. So the civilized believe – without believing – in "humanitarian intervention", even when they are shown a train of survivors bombed by NATO planes. They don't even see that train. They have been told that being against the NATO armies means siding with those of Milosevic. And even Milosevic agrees with this. They have been told that the latter is a dictator, in order not to acknowledge that a democratic state – because that is what Serbia is – could generate ethnic cleansing when necessary. Therefore, it is necessary that everyone choose their side: nationalist annihilation or humanitarian bombing. It is believed that it is just a matter of opinion ("I am for, you are against – long live democracy!") but the stake in play is a world of corpses.

The civilized don't imagine that, between a domination dressed as Fatherland and a domination dressed as Humanity, there is no real choice, except to rise up against both. And against all states, the eventual Kosovar state included. The civilized aren't aware that war is the very mode of functioning of the world of authority and money, that it is from their peace that their war arises.

But, it is different here.

Here, in total tranquility and with simplicity, the conditions are prepared for over there.

## **HUMANITARIANISM IN CAMOUFLAGE**

States very rarely allow the sordid motives behind their actions to emerge in the light of the sun. The reason of state almost always advances in camouflage, particularly when it involves a war, the mode of action that arises from the very nature of every government. There is not one single head of state, of any nationality whatsoever, who ever admits that the objective of war is to consolidate the foundations of power for the owning classes, the foundations of exploitation and of the rule of capitalism. In order to gain approval from its citizens—if not their bellicose enthusiasm—it must, necessarily, present its actions in the most acceptable and generous forms, as the expression of some general and superior cause in which its subjects can recognize themselves and thanks to which they can identify their supposed enemy. In the West, the ultimate such cause is that of humanity which seems to relegate national causes to a second place, at least for the moment.

Humanitarianism is the war fought in the name of humanity; it is militarism with a human face. In Western Europe and the United States today, it is difficult to use the myth of defense of the territory of the nation-state to justify wars such as those fought by NATO, since it is evident that no local gang-boss residing in Belgrade or elsewhere threatens the integrity of lands which, with the United States in the lead, want to play the role of world police and make the indispensable world order of their hegemony and monopoly to reign.

It is not by chance that humanitarianism has become one of the principle justifications for such wars. Because at our latitudes, the illusion most shared by the helots of capital is that democracy constitutes the most advanced form of social relationship, the model of protector state from which the whole world could benefit. In the epoch of the triumph of democracy, the model state must not just protect its own, those who live on its national soil, but also others, beyond the border, who are persecuted by whatever Milosevic.

Humanitarianism is the new morality for times of war. It is the good Christian conscience of the laity of the Republic that wants the authority of the state to regulate the great social questions above their heads, without letting their daily survival and security be disturbed by it. Their crocodile tears over the misfortunes of others in Kosovo or elsewhere, soon forgotten, are part of this hypocritical and selfish comedy that absolves the NATO armies, the pillar of the global order, of the of the ignominy perpetrated through high technology around the world.

All this shows that "humanitarian reason", the description coined by the traveling salesmen of national charity, is simply one of the faces of the reason of state. As such, it could only be a variable structure: in terms of the circumstances and interests in play, the state sorts out who might deserve the just work of organized charity from the Red Cross or from supposed non-governmental organizations with an eyedropper. From the beginning, those useless to the new world order in gestation are excluded from it—millions of human beings in Kosovo and elsewhere for whom capital has no use and who could calmly croak from the indifference—along with those who threaten it like Serbian deserters: the solicitude of France, for exam-

ple, goes as far as returning them to Serbia. Humanitarianism mocks at real human beings, particularly those who revolt.

In every war, there are always those individuals who, sickened by the smell of blood and by the heinousness of their masters, refuse the ignoble role which would play into the hands of the state, disobeying it and fraternizing with those who have been pointed out to them as enemy. The function of humanitarianism is really that of extinguishing every spontaneous outburst of such feelings and recuperating them for the greater profit of the state.

Now, every ensuing break with the logic of war passes as well for the refusal of that which justifies it, even when that justification takes on the mellow appearance of the humanitarian ideology.

### **LETTER TO THE EXPLOITED** **On The Purpose Of Militarism And The World Around Which It Turns**

*"That the proprietors are chauvinists in the name of their mansion; that the financiers praise the army that, for pay, stands guard over the cash box; that the bourgeoisie hail the flag that covers their merchandise, this is understood without effort. Even that certain semi-philosophers, people of tranquility and tradition, that coin collectors and archeologists, that old poets and prostitutes prostrate themselves before power—this is also comprehensible. But that the helots, the maltreated, that the proletariat would be patriot—why, then?"*

Zo d'Axa

Militarism is at the center of this society

Militarism is not merely an ensemble of institutions (the police, the army...) created to defend the established order with force; it is also a culture—a culture of obedience, of discipline, of submission, of the planned negation of all individuality.

Militarism is every order shouted and carried out, every act carried out by those who have not decided either the reasons or the means, every uniform of cloth or of the mind, every hierarchy, every sacred cause that stirs flags and calls to sacrifice, every profane cause that exploits with the rhetoric of rationality. Militarism is the boss at work and the police on the street.

Militarism is anyone who is indignant about war without being indignant about its reverse, about a peace made of hierarchy and exploitation. It is anyone who begs us to stay calm—because everything is already so difficult, because the world has already changed so much, because there is nothing else left to do than to light candles and play ring-around-the-rosy around the military bases.

Militarism is anyone who speaks and acts in our names; anyone who wants us to be soldiers, even if in the so-called "revolutionary" army; anyone who promises us a bright future—provided one advances in tight ranks in the shadow of his or her flag.

Militarism is anyone who tells us that it is impossible to combat militarism  
without using its means.

#### ***THE SPIDER WEB***

In this society, a clear separation between civil and military institutions is impossible. The economy scatters the world with corpses through the play of financial speculation. The multinationals that decide the fate of that which we once called agriculture with their seed rackets are the same ones that produce and sell arms. Many technological innovations enter into the civil market only after having been elaborated and tested by the military. Furthermore, the production of arms is possible only thanks to the collaboration of numerous non-military enterprises such as those of transportation, of electronic devices and of precision optics, to mention only a few. This doesn't count those which allow the everyday functioning of the military, from the restocking of food to the supply of clothing, from the systems of communication to the maintenance of machinery. To give another example, the nuclear industry—even leaving out the problem of its use by the military and that of its poisoning of the earth—requires an organization and control similar to that of the army. More generally, economic activity turns increasingly toward the techno-bureaucratic administration of the existing order and toward the informatic control of the population. Every day we hear talk of video-surveillance, of the gathering of information through every sort of magnetic device, of communication between medical, advertising and financial data banks and those of the police.

#### ***THE KNOTS IN THE WEB***

The bombing in the former Yugoslavia and the massacre of the Kosovars have been among us from time immemorial in all that we do not call "war". They are in the calculations of the industrialist and in the submission of the worker, in the voice of the teacher and in the obedience of the student, in the rally of the politician and in the boredom of the citizen. They are in the ticking of the clock; they are in every social role. But if the war machine, which daily renders war possible in the world, appears to us as an untouchable monster, it is because from here we don't see the concrete presence upon the territory, all the tiles—even the least evident—that compose this mosaic of death. It is because from here we don't see the instigators, all the political and economic institutions, all the businesses and financial groups that set it in motion.

With a more discreet structural presence and with the future professional army, the military machine becomes increasingly "invisible", but the more "invisible" it becomes, the more it absorbs and penetrates the social, giving it the appearance of an enormous barracks.

This is why all the speeches about the separation between the economy of peace and the economy of war have no basis. In the same way, the purposes of civil reconversion of military structures or those of fiscal objection to military expenses

are abstracted in an abstraction always functional for power. (On the other hand they are impossible to distinguish given the global nature of the state budget.)

### **CUTTING THE KNOTS**

Genocide, institutionalized and gregarious violence, the hierarchy of the sword, blind obedience, the complete undermining of individual responsibility are unmasked and fought: they are the means of war. Together with these, the plans for division by the powers that be, by the capitalists and the states, are refused—it is worth mentioning the objectives of war, even when these are reached through diplomacy. In the same way, it becomes necessary to refuse not only the objects of mercantile production—profit above all and from all—but also its methods: the division between who decides and who carries out, specialization, the domination of machines over people, the subjugation of nature and the alienation of relationships.

To sabotage their war then, one must try to attack their peace: in all the thousand threads and knots of the military spider web. But without creating organizations and without creating leaders. Otherwise, even without uniforms, even in times of peace, we would all remain like soldiers, accomplice and victim of an immense enterprise of death.

*Ready, aim...fire!*

*And the soldier, Masetti, shoots. But at his captain.*

### **LET'S TAKE ANY NAME**

*One of the factors affecting the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia is the future of the economic control of the Balkan region. What remains of the federation created by Tito will be shared within areas directly controlled by different western countries, particularly by Germany in the north and by Italy in the south. If this process is in an advanced phase in Slovenia and Croatia, which have been German fiefs for years, it is still in the embryonic phase for Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia—lands rich in natural resources and, above all, cheap labor power.*

*The western masters, small and great, have had their eyes on this region for a long time, but strong social tensions slowed down the affair. The Albanian insurrection of 1997 made them reflect bitterly: in the course of two months, many Italian contractors saw their enterprises razed to the ground and were forced to abandon the country.*

*Hence, this war is also a tool for protecting future western investments, particularly from the risk of future social upheavals. Let's take any name of these wandering masters, particularly those from Italy, and we'll discover that behind these bombings, suspicious contractors, powerful financial groups, banks and local corporations are concealed.*

*Far Italian capital, the door to the Balkans has always been Albania, since the time of the empire. But it is since the beginning of the 1990's that so many contractors from Italy have safely planted themselves beyond the Otranto Channel, and, if we exclude the upheaval of*

1997, from this time forward talks of creating an Italian-Albanian integrated economic area have been going on.

It was the extremely low cost of labor power that attracted Italian masters to Albania. Albanian wages range from about \$50 to about \$75 a month. Today, according to the Industrialists' Association of Bari (Italy), there are between 600 and 700 Italian companies in Albania, about half of them from the province of Apulia and nearly all of medium-small dimensions. They occupy themselves with transforming raw materials imported from Italy—through highly labor intensive processes—into partly made and finished products that are always then exported back to Italy.

The productive sectors with interests in these investments are those involving textiles, shoe manufacturing, chemicals, citrus fruit products and construction, as well as those involving articles of stone, ceramic and metal.

The Italian businesses have not been left alone in their work of conquest. Above all, after the insurrection of 1997, the European Union made the Italian government provide support for all of them. Two lines of credit were opened for their use by branches of the Cooperation for Development of the Foreign Ministry while the Interregnum Program 2 is occupied with financing the formation of cadres.

The AREF (Albania Reconstruction Equity Fund)—financed by the Italian government through BERS (the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development) and with an additional share, by the Banca Popolare di Bari—underwrites shares of risk capital (up to a maximum of 49%) for the companies that invested in Albania. Besides, in Bari, a secretariat of the Investment Region has opened up for the monitoring of the initiative for cooperation between the two countries. To seal the massive entry of Italian capital into Albania in a definitive manner, for the first time in May, 1998, a performance of the Levantine Fair took place on the other side of the Otranto Channel.

Along with this help in the financial arena, the Italian masters in Albania and their local partners are receiving consistent aid from the Italian government, which is engaged—after the task of reorganizing and arming the forces of order—in collaborating with the Albanians in a concentrated effort to reform the legislative, fiscal and local judiciary systems. In this way, briefly, the final difficulties of administrative, bureaucratic and social order for the Italian enterprises will tend to disappear.

The Kosovar territory is rich with beds of soft coal, lead, zinc, nickel, gold, cadmium and magnesium. Seventy percent of its economy is represented by the Electric Company of Kosovo—which produces most of the electricity used not only in Kosovo, but also in Serbia and Macedonia as well—and by the mining and metallurgical complex of Trepca, the most important in the Yugoslav Federation. Both are still controlled from Serbia which has already launched a plan for privatization. In addition, a substantial portion of other Kosovar businesses is under the guardianship of Serbian contractual groups.

In the case in which Kosovo were to be granted autonomy—if not independence—who would be considered the proprietor of this inheritance, who would cash in on the profits of privatization? The Rambouillet accords have not cleared this matter up. Just as they have

*not explained who will get the 416,000 square meters of productive area not exploited by the Development Fund of Serbia.*

*The businesses of the European Union that want to put their hands on Kosovar resources are not of small dimensions at all, with Italy and ENEL being first in line, aiming at control of the Electric Company of Kosovo. For its part, Peugeot is in negotiation with Zastava of Kragujevac for acquisition of the shock absorber factory in Pristina. Zastava is itself part of FIAT.*

*The master of the metallurgical sector, however, is to be Miltineas, a Greek holding which is already using the enormous mining complex in Trepca. It has trebled the value of its own enterprises in the last year, thanks, above all, to investments in the Balkans, whereas Italy's interests in the mining sector are exclusively in magnesium mines.*

*Before the outbreak of the war, the Serbian government had intentions of selling the controlling share of Serbian Telecom—the business that controls telecommunications and the postal service. The only candidates for this purchase are the other two shareholders in the company, Italian Telecom and the Greek OTE, which currently own 49% of these shares.*

### **THE NATIONALIST RACKET**

*(slightly revised)*

*Flight, extermination or resistance: these are the three alternatives for the inhabitants of Kosovo in the face of the advance of the Yugoslav military and the NATO bombing. We are well acquainted with the first two; the images of slaughter and forced exile are there before our eyes again and again as we watch television. From what we can tell from here, the third possibility is currently represented only by the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). But what price will the exploited have to pay for this new nationalist army?*

*In times of peace, nationalism is an ideological swindle that steals periods of time from the struggle of the exploited against the exploiters. One way or another, nationalism summons—exploited and exploiters to fight “the common enemy” together.*

*But when war flares—when it is no longer merely a threat—when an army arrives to kill and burn, nationalism ceases to be merely an ideological swindle, it becomes a practical racket, hard as a rock. The case of the KLA illustrates the situation well. The exploited, who would have defended themselves against the invaders of today if they were armed, if left to themselves, would be able to attack the masters of tomorrow—the nationalist leadership. Again as before, however, the rage against the Serb invasion is easily directed into the ranks of the Liberation Army and controlled from there. Let's not forget that the KLA, along with the Yugoslav army, has the monopoly of arms; and without arms, there is no way for one to defend oneself. So for most Kosovars who want to resist the plans of Milosevic the choice becomes compulsory: either join the KLA or be disarmed.*

*The elder nationalists of Liberation Army, thus have the troops that they have always lacked at their disposal and now face the possibility of becoming the Kosovar leadership in the future, undermining their ancient rival Rugova.*

*The roots of the KLA sink into the fertile terrain of the revolts and repressions that have marked Kosovo for the past eighteen years. Founded in 1992, the KLA is the offspring of*



*several maoist and marxist-leninist groups that had been struggling for the unification of Kosovo to Enver Hoxha's Albania ever since the beginning of the 1980's. It was only in 1996, however, that this organization began to make itself known and became a serious competitor of Rugova, the unquestioned leader of the opposition to the Serbs. Armed and trained in Germany—the historic competitor of Serbia in the Balkans—the KLA began to structure itself as a true and proper army, carried out attacks against camps of Serbian refugees in Krajna and won the backing of Albanian president Berisha. From this time on, the marxist-leninist element tends increasingly to disappear, giving way exclusively to the nationalist element: the declared aim is the creation of the great Albania—the union of the current Albania with Kosovo, the southern portion of Montenegro and the western half of Macedonia. It was not mere chance then that when Albanian nationalists would finally get control, in 1998, of a third of Kosovo, they would persecute the Serbian, gypsy and mixed minorities in the “liberated territories”. Starting in 1996, the KLA chose to ask for aid from the clans of Kosovo and Albania, which control the Albanian diaspora almost completely. It is in light of this solid alliance that we should interpret the calls to mobilization made by the KLA during those months: they were orders of compulsory conscription, just as the “revolutionary tax” it demanded of emigrants was obligatory. Embryo of a potential Kosovar government, the political committee made the decisions. The clans, the police of the future, were to carry them out. Here, then, is the price the KLA may still make the exploited Kosovars pay: the creation of a new state, the next dominating power, when the occupation ends.*

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