

Speech at the debate on the struggle against nuclear power held during the initiative "You give him twenty years, we give him the word"

The following text is the speech of the imprisoned anarchist Alfredo Cospito at the debate on the struggle against nuclear energy held during the initiative "Voi gli date vent'anni, noi gli diamo la parola" ("You give him twenty years, we give him the word"), at Circolaccio Anarchico, in Spoleto, on March 20, 2021.

After watching this film on the Chernobyl tragedy, I was asked to give a speech.

What to say?

The last nine years of my life were spent locked up in a cell because, together with a comrade of mine, I shot one of the most important nuclear executives in Italy at the time. We did it because we didn't want what you have seen happen in this film to happen here. A very simplistic motivation, but that's what happened.

Was it worth it?

I'd like to think that our action, however isolated, carried its weight. The only thing that is certain is that actions of this kind will never in any way be recoverable by the system. They can be demonised but never recovered, let alone cancelled, because they pose an ultimatum to power, and from my point of view that is more than enough to gamble everything, freedom and even life.

Yes! At the end of the day it was worth it.

We didn't want to kill, we only wanted to wound, to erect an impassable wall in front of the technological and murderous cynicism of unscrupulous scientists and politicians: "Beyond you don't go, you will not bring nuclear power back to Italy, otherwise we will oppose it with all our means".

Nine years ago, when we struck, the possibility of a return of nuclear power to Italy seemed to be resurfacing strongly. Fukushima had just taken place, and in "our" country, years and years of struggle against nuclear energy seemed at risk of being wiped out, and this was happening in total silence. At the time, and still today, Italy, through Ansaldo Nucleare, contributes to the construction of nuclear power plants in countries such as Romania and Albania. Shortly before our action, an accident during construction at one of these sites killed two workers. No one in Italy was talking about it, except for those few utopian ecologists and anarchists who feared a return of power stations to "our" territory, and many parties supported this nightmarish prospect. Of course, I have no illusions that our action has blocked the return of nuclear power in Italy, but we have put some fear into them. We made our contribution, albeit limited, and it had its weight, and I don't think it was as negligible as they wanted us to believe.

Today, the Italian government must, of necessity, "dispose" of the nuclear waste from the old decommissioned power stations by sweeping 78,000 cubic metres of radioactive waste under the carpet in Piedmont, Sardinia, Tuscany, Lazio, Puglia, Basilicata and Sicily. They are passing it off as the "disposal" of low-level radioactive waste, plate products and other medical waste, but in reality they are

trying to pass off, under the table, the "disposal" of far more dangerous radioactivity, waste from the old nuclear power stations.

Let me be clear, the solution cannot be to take our waste out of Italy, perhaps as has already been done in the past in Africa, using poorer countries as dustbins for our nuclear shit. An "ecological" movement that actually pushes for this is bourgeois and infamous "ecologism". Those who oppose the nuclear storage structures because the value of their property is going down will never have my trust. They are the kind of people who have brought the most blatant politics into the anti-TAV (high-speed train) movement. Always ready to sell out struggles, to disassociate themselves from actions. We cannot appeal to certain bourgeois instincts, nor will we be able to turn a blind eye when the mayors, the local institutions of these countries, demand compensation or whine about their property, their businesses, their economic losses. Dealing with such characters again would be disastrous. An ancient Hebrew saying goes: "The human being is the only animal that can stumble twice over the same stone". Let's try not to repeat the same mistakes, twenty years of struggle against the TAV must have taught us something.

It would be stupid and counterproductive for us to look for "solutions", palliatives to make the technology more acceptable, "ecological". We are just as much against nuclear storage as we are against wind turbines – there are no half measures in this field. The only real and definitive solution to nuclear waste is to fight by all means to ensure that nuclear power stations close everywhere. We can't go around it, it's a matter of life and death. The planet is dying, there is only one thing to do: destroy from the inside the technological and capitalist society we are forced to live in. It is useless to run away, it is hypocritical to carve out a little paradise on earth, even if you don't want to, you become an accomplice; it is criminal to look for palliatives, to delude yourself that technology can become "ecological". It is not the number of participants in a demonstration that will get us results, but the strength and radicality of our actions. This is one of our peculiarities, as anarchists we aim for the qualitative, not so much the quantity of people behind a banner but the quality of actions, of our lives. People will come but it will depend on our coherence and honesty of purpose and also on our revolutionary projectuality. The first obstacle we encounter in this area is always the same, bourgeois qualunquist ecologism.

With this I do not want to argue that we should isolate ourselves, certainly we fight alongside the people who are directly affected by these nuclear deposits, we participate in the demonstrations, in the meetings in the streets, but do not sacrifice our point of view to the "reality", to compromise. We always try to be critical of who we find at our side and, above all, we do not limit our actions in the name of an alleged incomprehensibility on the part of the people.

Let us participate in the assemblies (if there are any) but let us not mystify our real purpose, the destruction of the technological society, the construction of a society free of the state.

Let us also remember that by acting outside the decisions of the assemblies we are not doing any harm to the collectivity in struggle, we are simply expressing our being anarchists.

Let us not disassociate ourselves in the name of a common struggle from violent actions that will happen, if they ever happen, even if we do not share them. Let us renounce the false benefits (comforts) that this rotten society "gives" us, let us be consistent.

I believe that these are the few lessons that the "social" ecological struggles have given us in recent decades.

Perhaps another opportunity is appearing on the horizon, an opportunity not to be missed. I am firmly convinced that it would be enough not to repeat the usual mistakes in order to meet with unexpected results.

One could condense all this soliloquy of mine into a very simple concept: "multiformity of actions without preconceptions and stakes".

Let's put an end to paranoia about the avant-garde, about the spectacle of actions, let everyone act as they wish, everything will harmonise into a "unicum", and above all let's dissociate ourselves from dissociations.

I may have gone "off-topic", but I believe that there will be anarchists among you. Mine is a speech by an anarchist addressed more to anarchists than anything else, but I hope it has been picked up by everyone, even if it represents a "particular" point of view.

What is certain is that the problems we have faced today affect everyone, everyone's life.

I would very much like to take part in the debate there with you, but for reasons of force majeure it is impossible for me.

An anarchist and revolutionary greeting,

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Prison of Ferrara

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