

Collateral damage

An Eco-Extremist Defense of Indiscriminate Violence

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Merely being an eco-extremist propagandist, I am forced to pay attention to reactions of anarchist and leftist readers to the actions of ITS and other eco-extremist groups. The first reaction I encounter is usually one of disgust. How can eco-extremists carry out indiscriminate acts against property and people, such as burning buses and sending mail-bombs, where “innocent bystanders” may also get hurt? What if a child was near a bomb, or what if the secretary to the scientist, a mother and a wife, opens the package and gets killed instead? Why this obsession with nihilistic violence, where innocent people get killed? Isn't this ineffective for helping to destroy civilization? Doesn't this just show that the eco-extremists are mentally disturbed, probably angry at their parents, off their medications, outcasts, etc.?

Really, the opposition of leftists, anarchists, anarcho-primitivists, and any number of people who react negatively to eco-extremist violence is one of great hypocrisy: hypocrisy of the level that Nietzsche and any good manipulator of words could easily dissect. For civilization, and any ideology really, is based on indiscriminate violence, on hiding dirty laundry and sweeping dirt under the rhetorical rug so no one can see it.

Let's start with the numbers game:

Opposition to eco-extremist violence can be approached from the view of the Christian “Golden Rule”: “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” You wouldn't want to be blown up on a bus. You would not want to have your fingers blown off, or have a bullet put in your head when you are just “doing your job”. Everyone has the right to work and support themselves, right? But your chances of being on the business end of an eco-extremist blast are minuscule: you probably have a better chance of winning the lottery. On the other hand, your chances of crashing your car, or being hit by one, are astronomically higher by comparison. Your chances of dying early of cancer or heart disease due to the consumption of processed foods are even higher. Yet those two last causes of death are “perfectly natural”, while being “collateral damage” in a war to defend nature itself is somehow a tragedy. Cry me a river.

Of course, what such condemnation means is a tacit approval of state or civilized violence. For the bourgeois liberal, “terrorist violence” is horrible because only the State can designate people who need to be killed (if you lived in Afghanistan or Yemen, for example, you would have more to fear than just cars; you would also have drones raining down death on you from the skies. But that's okay, because U.S. democracy approved this.) The leftist and anarchist can criticize eco-

extremist action with more integrity, so the reasoning goes, because they too reject the violence of capitalism and the State. Aside from that, however, they create a fantasy world where “the guilty”, rich parasites who they have tried and sentenced to death in their own minds from the comforts of their talk-shops, are killed indiscriminately and even with cruelty, not taking into account that the bourgeoisie too are also husbands, fathers, sons, daughters, etc. And of course, they expect that violence to be minimal, as Revolutions have historically been dainty tea parties where the innocent never, ever get hurt..

What we are confronting here is the Great Hologram of Civilization: one that compels us to care about people we never will meet, to have deep empathy for the abstract citizen, comrade, or child of God. We are supposed to get upset at the sight of the burning bus, or the destroyed office, or the leftovers of an incendiary device left outside of a government building. We are supposed to go over scenarios in our head: “What if my daughter was in front of that building? What if my wife was in that office? What if I was that scientist lying in a pool of my own blood in a parking lot?” Well, what if you were? And to be honest, you weren’t, so why are you playing that film in your head?

Isn’t that the great narrative of civilization: we are all in this together? That’s a lie, because we aren’t. Your life is merely a cog in a great Machine, and should the Machine decide to spit you out, you will be spit out. You have no agency, your morality is an illusion. It just covers up a lot of violence and death that went into making the clothes on your back and the food you eat. It’s alright for massive numbers of animals to die, to burn down forests and pave over meadows. It’s okay to enslave people in factories, to erect monuments to those who buried the worlds of wild savages, to sacrifice the dreams and sanity of those alive today for a better tomorrow. But for the love of God, don’t place a pipe bomb in front of a government ministry! That’s going too far.

Here’s the key to your liberation: you owe society nothing, and you don’t have to do what it says. Those people who get killed on the other side of the world don’t care about you, and they never will. You are just one digit too many in their Dunbar’s number: at most you will be a headline and then you will be forgotten. Your identifying with the death of the “citizen” or “child of God” hundreds and thousands of miles away is a way to manipulate you into doing what society wants: it’s a tool of domestication, and that’s it.

The poet Robinson Jeffers once stated that cruelty was the most natural thing, yet civilized man makes it out to be contrary to nature. Some tribes in what is now northern California were observed by the Europeans to be the most peaceful and the most violent at the same time: peaceful in that they had no organized warfare, violent because that’s how they settled inter-personal disputes. Those who cower in disgust at individualist acts of violence are really defending the right of the State and civilization to have exclusive power of life and death over civilized human animals.

They’re its property, so how dare those eco-terrorists impinge on that right, as well as the right of 10,000 years of civilized law and order to decide who lives or who dies!

I end my rant with two (apocryphal?) quotes from Joseph Stalin. The first is: “You have to break a few eggs to make an omelette.” Of course, that is what the opponents of eco-extremists will always say: we are sacrificing the lives of innocent people to make our own version of Eden. Anyone with half a brain and a little reading comprehension will know that’s bullshit. Eco-extremism doesn’t seek to break eggs to make an omelette: it seeks to destroy the whole farm, and if eggs get damaged in the process, that’s just the nature of the beast. How many eggs get broken on a factory farm a day?

The second quote from Stalin is: “One death is a tragedy, a million deaths is a statistic.” And is this not the logic of civilization, of the leftist and anarchist? They can shrug off a whole world being butchered by civilization, they can wave off the deaths of savage peoples who did nothing but defend their land, and they can play video games in their heads of strangling capitalists in their beds, but when they see a bus on fire, or a lab blown up, they scream, “Won’t somebody think of the children!?”

You may think these acts are ineffective; you may think them the obsessions of crazy sociopaths, or what have you. We’re not trying to change the world, we would rather see it all go up in flames. And if you don’t see that the destruction of the Earth, of the rivers and mountains, of the forests and oceans, is the real insanity, then we cannot help you, nor would we care to. Just duck when you see us coming.

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