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One Way or Another, One Day We'll All Wear Masks

Let's Meet These Disasters Head On

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Let's Meet These Disasters Head On

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the rest of us as expendable. We can't trust our survival to their expertise.

If we resign ourselves to the future implied by catastrophic climate change, widespread pollution, and ecological collapse, sooner or later, the disaster will come for us. In some parts of the world, people are already forced to wear masks when they leave the house just to protect themselves from poisoned air, toxic waste, or infectious conditions.

If we do not accept the destruction of our lives, our land, our food, and everything that connects us with each other and the biosphere as a whole, we have to fight to regain control over the conditions of our lives and the decisions that determine our survival. In a world of police, prisons, surveillance cameras, we will have to wear masks that conceal who we are so we can fight for what we really want.

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In solidarity with those in China, Hong Kong, and elsewhere who are facing the coronavirus outbreak and the bureaucratic nightmare that accompanies it, our Brazilian comrades have updated a poster they made years ago in response to environmental disasters in Latin America. We present it here in Portuguese, English, Spanish, and Italian.

The earthquake in Puerto Rico—the fires in Australia, Brazil, and on the West Coast of the United States—the coronavirus in China and all around the world: all of these catastrophes are compounded by the power structures that concentrate power in a few hands and value the lives of the privileged few above everyone else. Now our rulers are telling us that they are the only ones qualified to manage the emergencies that are unfolding. Yet their priorities haven't changed. Trusting them means marching lockstep into the apocalypse.

Rather than struggling to manage the increasingly drastic consequences of this social order on an individual basis, let's come together to confront them on our own terms. Together, we can resist and survive.

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Wherever we are situated in this society, our future boils down to two options: accepting our fate and trying to reduce the harm to our bodies and the environment on a piecemeal basis—or actively resisting in order to interrupt the disaster and implement our own solutions. If there is anything that scientists, sociologists, military strategists, and day laborers all agree on, it is that we are headed for global collapse.

Those who hold power seek to take advantage of hurricanes, forest fires, and pandemics to impose more and more invasive forms of control on us. Their responses to crises always prioritize protecting their own privileges and profits while they treat