

CALOGERO E SBAGLIATO

An Answer: by Johan Galtung

Francesco Calogero, in his "review," Non e Nemmeno Sbagliato, of my book Ambiente, Sviluppo e Attivita Militare (l'Indice #9, p.36) demonstrates in his choice of quotes that he has read the first, third and something at the end of the book. If his "review" had reflected on the rest of the book he might have discovered the following:

- that the sentences he quotes belong to the preparatory part, clearing the ground, so to speak, for the conclusions to follow;
- that these conclusions have to do, in some detail I think, with the tight connection between military activity in general, and nuclear war in particular, social and human degradation, ecological destruction, in a multiplicity of chains and cycles, back and forth; that we are already on the way, in the wrong direction, even before any major war has started;
- that the environment enters in a fundamental manner in all these considerations in spite of being left out of most strategic discussions;
- that an entire alternative military doctrine or doctrine of security is much overdue; that we simply cannot afford to continue with the present reliance on highly offensive and highly destructive weapons - and an alternative doctrine, based on defensive weapon systems and socio-economically less vulnerable societies, is then developed (Chapter IV);
- that in an alternative security concept, ecological factors will have to play a much larger role - including the idea that there may be some "wisdom of nature" worth imitating in thinking about security.

All of this can be, and is, discussed, but not by Calogero, who chooses to ignore it totally. This is his right. He seems to know that a nuclear war will have to be of very short duration, whereas I have never found any convincing argument. Nor do the US nuclear war planners, who for a long time have been preparing for a protracted nuclear war; evidently they know less about this than Calogero. Calogero should consider that superpowers are not quite unaware of the destructiveness of nuclear war; they are strongly motivated to limit destruction and try to keep it slow. They may also - early in the game - destroy the capability to fight the war quickly. So I stick to my agnostic position: maybe short, maybe long duration.

Calogero has difficulties reconciling 25% of world research and development in the military sector with the research intensity of the military production being twenty times higher. Maybe not all research and development efforts result in production,

Calogero?

Calogero tries to push on me an opinion. I do not have: that nuclear war can be an outcome of technical error and/or human error. Well, I do not exclude it entirely. What I say as clearly as I can is that these sources of technical and human error are known, there are ways of handling them. But much more dangerous is the military doctrine itself, the "cold logic pursued by a cold mind." This is where we should focus our attack on the present system in order to avoid the colossal destruction in store for us - not on marginal issues. And that is the substance of the book as pointed out in the review by Angelo Chiattella, loc. cit.

Calogero does not like the symbols and the matrices. Well, we in the social sciences are often grateful, if we are able to clarify an issue a little. I think the matrices serve the useful purpose of pinpointing exactly which chain and cycles of effects we have, in this important area - even if Calogero refers to it as dilettantism. There is no mathematical model in it, that is true. I am not sure that is a goal either. But I do claim that the approach chosen makes it very easy to trace all interconnections. And that is what I have been missing in the by now quite extensive literature in this field.

But all of this is lost on Calogero. Instead, he displays the whole range of physical science arrogance against one (of many) social science styles. He displays a total disinterest in even discussing alternative security policies; an attitude frequently found in Italy (and other countries), now rapidly disappearing. As executive committee member of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, he is perhaps used to documentation ending with admonitions to disarm. I do not document much, and I end with the admonition to transarm, not to disarm (unrealistic for the time being). But all of this seems alien to Calogero's mind, that if he has registered it at all it is at least not transparent from his "review."

At one point, however, Calogero and I agree completely: it was a mistake of Indice to ask Calogero to review the book. Or, is this way of discussing anything but the real issues, Indice's conception of debate?