

# The Market Economy And The Biological Crisis

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Everybody talks these days about the ecological crisis, while the media make frequent reference to a worsening ecological crisis, the deterioration of the Environment and imminent ecological disasters. No one can of course dispute the extent and seriousness of this crisis, which has become an integral part of the general multidimensional crisis of our times (political, social and economic).

However, few are seriously concerned over another crisis, equally severe and equally frightening in extent and in consequences: the biological crisis. It should be noted at this point that I find it difficult to include the biological crisis in the ecological crisis, inasmuch as ecology in the usual sense of the word mainly deals with the Environment and its deterioration and has very little to do with the biology of the human being. According, however, to a broader sense, which we will introduce in this essay, the biological crisis could be said to be part of the ecological crisis in that both are basically created by environmental factors, as a result of the concentration of the economic and political power during the neoliberal phase of the internationalised market economy. Generally speaking, the biological crisis is part of the broader ecological crisis, inasmuch as man constitutes an integral part of the ecosystem. As it is well known, Ecology, being a branch of Biology, is concerned with the ecosystem and investigates the interaction of the organisms (plants, animals and human beings) with their environment, and the consequences of the normal and abnormal relations among them.

Nearly all specialists believe that the biological crisis is more or less unavoidable, as this is the natural course of things, something like a natural disaster over which we have no control whatsoever. As a matter of fact, the specialists and medical doctors are simply turning a blind eye to the basic causes of this problem. In this essay, we will endeavour to present certain basic information, parameters and aspects of the biological crisis.

No one can deny the fact that at present we are faced with a multidimensional crisis, with political, economic, social and ecological aspects. Those who adopt the project of Inclusive Democracy, know that the basic cause of these crises is the concentration of the economic and political power in the hands of elites, which are generated by the system of market economy and its political complement, representative "democracy". There is, however, a biological aspect of this multidimensional crisis which has not been adequately explored and studied, and has been greatly ignored as a global social phenomenon. The fact that we avoid to face this crisis, does not mean that it is not there, that it is not present in all the communities and social classes of today.

Various studies published in the last few decades confirmed that the biological crisis has

spread dangerously and tends to get worse. Its existence is primarily owed to the social and economic crisis, as well as to the medical crisis, which resulted from the commercialisation of the medical system.

In the last instance, the biological crisis is caused by a wider deterioration of the Environment as a result of said crises, owing to the unhealthy habits that people acquire at an early age in the consuming society in which they grow up (fast food, junk food, etc.), as well as to a generalised pollution and deterioration of the air, water, earth, sea, food and of the Environment at large. The roots of this crisis should be traced in the prevailing miserable socio-economic conditions, such as want, poverty, unemployment, social degradation, etc.

The medical system (academic establishment, big names in medical practice etc.) has not taken any steps to restrain the factors of morbidity, being mainly controlled by those who dominate and direct the market on Health services, especially large multinational companies, which fund the medical research<sup>[1]</sup> and provide various benefits in money and in kind to numerous medical practitioners and researchers.<sup>[2]</sup>

The biological crisis has an extensive symptomatology which is clearly visible all around us, such as chronic degenerative diseases which affect a great percentage of the adult population, mainly in the developed countries. Serious diseases are affecting increasingly larger numbers of young people at more and more younger ages (for instance, cancer is a leading cause of mortality in children between 3 and 17 years — second only to accidents). The phenomenon of autism in children is increasing in developed societies. In February '07 the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) in the US issued a report on autism rates. Although there is still much research to be done, indications point to environmental toxins and also to vaccinations which contain a derivative of mercury called thimerosal. From 1989-2003 children received heavy doses of thimerosal with vaccines, and it so happens that autism rates have jumped during that period. The CDC report finds that in the US 1 in 150 children age 8 are autistic and in New Jersey the rate is an alarming 1 in 94 children age 8 having the disease.<sup>[3]</sup> We note that a significant percentage of the people in the developed and developing countries suffer of an apparent physical and mental weakness, various types of anaemia, intellectual decline, alopecia and baldness from early age, bad teeth from early childhood, disfiguration of the spine, congenital abnormalities, eye diseases, sexual impotency even among young men, sterility in women and men, weakening of the male semen (especially in young men), that is quite worrying. Depression tends to become an epidemic in the developed societies, with a number of other psychiatric and neurological diseases and abnormalities such as atherosclerosis and high blood pressure, even among children and adolescents, an increasing frequency of child and adolescent diabetes, adult diabetes which tends to become an epidemic affecting even adolescences, epilepsy and multiple sclerosis, especially among young people, diseases of the kidneys and of the liver, rheumatoid arthritis, psoriasis, ulcerous colitis, lupus erythematosus, and other autoimmune diseases, and all these with an upward trend. Alzheimer's disease also tends to become an epidemic in the developed societies, in parallel with digestive diseases and skin diseases. Coronary disease and various forms of cancer (breast, lung, prostate, colon, etc.) are the primary causes of death. Asthma, allergies and arthritis affect increasingly large number of adults, and young people. Obesity is one of the greatest calamities of our time in the developed world, and, according to the latest World Health Organisation data, obesity has tripled in Europe in the last two decades. As a result,

half of the European adults and 20 percent of children are today characterised as overweight. [4]

All these physical and psycho-mental problems affect a great part of the people living in developed countries. The cost for providing health care has greatly burdened the budgets of developed countries and of the individuals themselves (in Greece, private expenses for medical and pharmaceutical care have reached 46 percent of the total health expenses). [5]

We will continue with certain basic figures concerning the extent and form of the biological crisis on an international scale.

## **Death rates from diseases, and basic causes of morbidity and mortality**

According to the latest reports of the World Health Organisation, which resulted from numerous research programs, the death rate from diseases of the circulatory system represents nearly 50% of the total deaths in industrial countries; another 20% of total deaths is due to neoplasias, 5% respiratory diseases, and 5% traffic accidents. In detail, out of 11 million deaths that occurred in Europe, North America and the other industrial countries during 2002, 3 million occurred as a result of problems of the circulatory system and high blood pressure, and 2.3 million due to high cholesterol.

- In the planet as a whole, according to the World Health Organisation, which has based its findings on a significant statistical research that recorded facts from extensive research work on the main causes of global mortality, out of a total of 55 million deaths in 2002, (22% of them in advanced countries), the causes of death were as follows:
- High blood pressure: 7.14 million deaths, with 3 million occurring in the developed countries.
- Smoking: 4.9 million deaths, with 2.5 million in the developed countries.
- High cholesterol: 4.4 million deaths owing to the great consumption of meat, and obesity.
- Low body weight: 3.75 million deaths, 3.5 million of which in countries with high poverty rates.
- Sexually transmitted diseases: 2.9 million deaths. This rate increased with the outbreak of AIDS in Africa.
- Deficiency of vitamins and antioxidants due to the absence of fruits and vegetables from the daily diet: 2.7 million deaths.
- Obesity causing wear damage and neoplasm: 2.5 million deaths, 60% of which in the developed countries.
- Absence of physical exercise: 1.9 million deaths from diabetes, osteoporosis, and

various types of cancer in old persons and in younger persons with limited physical activity.

- Alcoholic beverages: 1.8 million deaths of persons who systematically consumed alcohol.

A large number of deaths is associated with the quality of life and poverty in developing countries: 1.73 million deaths resulted from drinking unclean water, lack of hygienic conditions and drainage; 1.6 million from the use of wood and biomass in cooking and heating; 840, 000 from iron deficiency; 770,000 from lack of vitamin A; and 790,000 from lack of zinc due to bad nutrition.

Urban air pollution is responsible for 800,000 deaths, 3/4 of which occur in large cities of developing countries. Approximately 500,000 people die every year from unsafe and unsuitable medical services, especially in countries with a deficiently organised medical system. A number of other causes follow, such as exposure to carcinogenic substances at work (470,000 deaths); labour accidents (310,000 deaths, 70% of which occur in developing countries); air, water and soil pollution from lead (230,000 deaths); narcotics (200,000 deaths).

## **Dementia: The new threat to the West**

However, it is not only cancer which had a frightening increase over recent years, especially in the developed countries--even among children-- and tends to surpass heart diseases in terms of mortality.

Top doctors are warning that the West is being threatened by an increased frequency of cerebral dementia. Scientists predict that within the next 10 to 20 years there will be a tremendous spread of this disease due to the anticipated increase of the average life expectancy. The increasing frequency of arteriosclerosis is largely responsible for this calamity.

Dementia is responsible for various and multiple damages of clinical incidents of the brain (such as strokes and dementia), the heart (heart attacks, angina, and sudden death), the peripheral arteries (intermittent claudication), and other organs of the body such as the eyes and kidneys.

## **Epidemics in the USA**

According to reliable international statistics, a large percentage of people living in modern societies are obese and sick. In the USA, for instance, the metropolis of the system of the capitalist market economy:

1. The majority of people over 35 years old face one or more risk factors which predict that these people will suffer a serious disease such as heart attack.
2. The majority of these people (more than 1/3) have high levels of cholesterol.
3. More than 1/3 have high blood pressure.

4. Almost 2/3 of the people are obese, something that predicts health problems in the future. More than 30% are overweight.
5. 10% have diabetes.
6. 1/5 of adult Americans smoke and most of them lead a very stressed sedentary life.

As a result, 1.2 million of Americans die of heart attacks every year, 100,000 people suffer a stroke and more than 500,000 die of cancer.

It has also been noted that the American population suffers from the highest cancer incidence ever seen in human history, much higher than the incidence encountered in less developed countries.

Since 1999 cancer has surpassed heart disease and has become the leading cause of mortality for Americans under 85 years old.

Similar percentages of morbidity and mortality are seen in the entire developed world, including Greece. According to recent European Union statistics,<sup>[6]</sup> Greek children are ranked second in the list of overweight children in Europe, with 4 out of 10 children between the ages of 9-18 classified as overweight.

Out of ignorance or brainwashing, as well as out of lack of willpower for material changes in their live styles and particularly in their eating habits, people prefer to take pills all their life, or undergo operations rather than change their lifestyle and adopt better eating habits. A great number of people living under horrid socioeconomic conditions, which plague the whole world, find it easier to turn to pills instead of effecting lifestyle changes. As a matter of fact, this is the basic approach to life and health adopted by the medical system and society in general.

## **Globalisation of disease**

Here is what Dr. Dean Ornish, a heart specialist, researcher, internationally prominent writer of medical books, and clinical professor of Medicine at the University of California, said with regard to the globalisation of disease:

"Many developing countries copy and imitate the western way of life and nutrition and the western way of dying. Diseases like coronary heart disease that was very rare in Japan and other Asian countries have now become epidemic causing a great waste and bleeding of their economies and, at the same time, equally great personal suffering and premature deaths. A high percentage of this economic bleeding and wasting, as well as of the suffering, could be averted or prevented. The same applies to prostate cancer, breast cancer, colon cancer, diabetes, high blood pressure, obesity, arthritis etc. Trillions of dollars spent for direct or indirect expenses could be saved and tragedies could be spared if only we changed our way of living and eating."<sup>[7]</sup>

However, there are many reasons why, within the framework of the market economy and capitalist neoliberal globalisation, a drastic change in the lifestyle of the greatest part of the

world is very difficult to be achieved. Particularly so, when the developing countries adopt the imported life styles of the developed countries —as a result of the cultural globalisation [8] accompanying the economic globalisation— with all the ensuing consequences.

## **Children: The innocent victims**

According to a joint Report that was published in 2003 by the World Health Organization and the European Committee for the Environment, children, more than adults, suffer the consequences of the environmental pollution. This important Report states that the body of a child is more vulnerable than the body of an adult, and is incapable of sustaining the effects of the 15,000 synthetic chemical substances that accumulate in the environment and in food, among which are the residues of more than 300 chemical substances that were unknown in previous generations.

This damaging process, according to the Report, begins from the fetal stage and causes mutations and congenital abnormalities. More dangerous, for children up to 10 years old, are the residues of pesticides, which weaken the immune system, create problems in the endocrine system, neurotoxic abnormalities and cancer.

A comparison of the consequences on children with those on adults, showed that the danger to get cancer from exposure to radiations is sixteen times greater for babies up to three months of age than it is for adults, eight times greater for children up to one year old, four times greater for children of five years old and two times greater for children of ten years old.

According to the same report the body of a child will absorb nearly 50% of the lead contained in foods, while an adult body will absorb a mere 10%.

Another characteristic example is the incidence of children's asthma on which the Report stresses: "We are witnessing a tremendous increase of asthma among the children of Europe. In England these problems are encountered in 32.2% of the children. In the developed countries, the frequency is 10 times higher than in the third world countries".

Children, therefore, are the first victims of this insane behaviour against the Earth's Environment in the name of "growth and development" and for the sake of our consumerism and eudemonistic lifestyle.

## **The biological effects of pollution in Athens**

According to a recent report of the World Health Organisation, as a result of deteriorating environmental conditions, the average Athenian loses eleven months of life simply because he resides in the city of Athens and his quality of life has become lamentable. A cocktail of diseases including heart problems, respiratory problems, cancerous births, skin problems, headaches, etc. have increasingly hit Athens and its residents in recent years

Thousands of deaths are attributed to air pollution in the region of Athens. The causes of death are cancer, heart and respiratory problems, and (for the first time) skin problems. Also, according to the same report, life in the city, with its enhanced stress and anxiety, causes damages to the neurological system of the inhabitants, weakens their reflexes,

contributes to a bad physical condition, impairs the hearing, causes headaches and migraines. Athens ruins, slowly but steadily, the life of its inhabitants.

With Athens ranking third among the European capital cities in terms of pollution 873 out of 100,000 deaths in the city are related to air pollution. Out of this total, 441 deaths are due to heart and cardiovascular diseases and 72 are blamed on respiratory problems. As the report stresses, "The life-threatening pollutants in the capital are increasing instead of decreasing".

The incidence of dioxins and furans (dangerous chemical and toxic compounds that cause cell mutations and cancer both to animals and humans) is heavy throughout the district of Attica and such dangerous compounds were found in plant products in Messogia, Keratea and North Attica. In fact, these substances are so dangerous that the WHO has not set any safety limits considering that humans must not be exposed at all to such substances!

Furthermore, instead of a decrease, an increase is noted in the nitrogen oxide emissions in Athens, whereas the majority of the European countries were able to lower these emissions by 40%. On the other hand, in the entire area of Attica, these emissions increased by 17%, and, according to forecasts, this increase will be maintained until at least 2010. Greece has also shown a very poor and discouraging performance in the reduction of ozone. Athens is one of the three European countries where ozone emissions have been increasing instead of decreasing.

About 20% of the pollution in Attica is mainly due to citizens' indifference. The catalytic converters that car drivers forget to replace, the filters that industries do not change, the central heating installations of apartment buildings that are not properly maintained --all these create a nightmare and an air pollution cocktail which becomes all the more dangerous for city residents. The situation is similar in all big cities of the world.

## **The biological crisis and the market economy system**

The existing system of the market economy, with its acts and omissions, is basically responsible for the biological crisis, as its primary goals are profits and power, regardless of the consequences of its economical activities. It is also responsible for the greenhouse effect, the depletion of the ozone layer, and for the repeated nutritional scandals coupled with the production of unsuitable and unhealthy foods. Endless growth, which is the quintessence of the system's dynamics, is the basic cause of all the above problems. If we realise that economic growth, which is the outcome of the dynamics of neoliberal globalisation, is basically uncontrollable and beyond any drastic social controls aiming at the protection of the environment, which could have resulted in lower competitiveness or lower ability to attract foreign investments<sup>[9]</sup>, then we will be able to understand why the existing system is the basic cause of the biological crisis and the wider multidimensional crisis.

In the developed countries there is an enormous consumption of alcoholic beverages, cigarettes, narcotic substances, medicines, pesticides, soft drinks (especially cola-type drinks) as well as animal food and refined processed foodstuff, which altogether undermine the health and well being of young and old people and unavoidably lead to a biological crisis. The system is also responsible for the deforestation of the planet, as more and more

land is needed for the cultivation of animal feed (grain and soy), in order to cover the continuously increasing needs for meat consumption. Vast areas of fertile land are used for the cultivation of grain and fruits intended for the production of alcoholic beverages, sugar beets intended for the production of sugar and corn for the production of high fructose corn syrup. These are leading causes of obesity and other pathological conditions. Also, extended areas are used for the cultivation of tobacco and coffee, which are sources of profits, but constitute also important causes of disease and add to the biological crisis. These areas could all be used for the production of healthy foods to feed millions of hungry and undernourished people of our planet. It has also been reported that many developing countries cultivate fruits and other expensive foods intended for the rich people of the developed world, in an effort to bring in foreign exchange. Thus, the traditional and healthy foods that people used to eat in the past are no longer produced, and the lower social strata in particular are forced to consume industrialised, processed junk food.

Huge amounts of natural resources are being wasted in the production of numerous useless, unnecessary and harmful products with the exclusive aim to generate profits for the multinational companies, with no concern to basic human needs. A leviathan civilisation has been gradually created within the framework of the market economy, whose target is the accumulation of profits from the production and consumption of products and services which not only do not cover the basic needs of people but functions exclusively to satisfy the needs of the system for new markets and for more profits—a process which eventually leads to poverty, unemployment, undernourishment, morbidity and a worsening biological crisis-- and, of course, a continuous degradation of the Environment. For the sake of economic growth, the system leads to a tremendous waste and exhaustion of natural resources, causing in the process infections, pollution and an unimaginable human morbidity, in order to best serve its own interests. The orthodox medicine's response to all these diseases and causes of morbidity and premature mortality, is more pharmaceutical treatment and more operations.

Although the biological crisis is gradually worsening in the entire world, nothing is done to stop it. The medical profession is constantly trying to alleviate, relieve and suppress just the symptoms of the biological crisis — that is the various forms of disease and morbidity in general — but nothing is being done to eliminate and deal with its basic causes. Nothing is done also for the thousands of premature deaths. Therefore, the causes of morbidity and biological decline remain intact, showing a steadily increasing trend, having become a threatening, deadly nightmare.

Never before in the history of humanity was there a greater production of useless and harmful products, using up the planet's resources and harming the health and wellbeing of the majority of the people for the sake of profits. All this in the altar of economic growth and development, which is the oxygen of the system.

Never before were there so many addictive substances produced and consumed, like tobacco, alcohol, narcotic substances, coffee, sugar, drugs and medicines, soft drinks, etc., as the fundamental 'law' of the market economy system is "grow-or-die" without any regard to the consequences that these products may have on the health, the biological wellbeing of the people, the Environment and the planet's resources.

Everything nowadays has become commercialised and "man himself" has become a piece of merchandise and a consumer of products, which in their majority are useless. "Man" has

become addicted to toxic substances. “He” is brainwashed by the Media and can hardly understand or claim “his” rights for health and clean environment, peace and quality of life.

Intensive agriculture — which is a basic element of the growth economy — does not only entail an ecological crisis in general, but also a life-threatening biological crisis. The system pollutes in many ways the earth, the seas, the rivers, the air, the fields, the water and our homes with thousands of chemical toxic substances. The only concern of the system is profit, offering to the ignorant false information, illusions and dreams for happiness and wellbeing instead of a real life, one that will satisfy the vital needs of everyone.

A world of insanity is thus being created in which our children grow up and new generations will also grow up and will be obliged to live in an unnatural way, within a toxic and diseased environment from the moment of birth, with tragic consequences to their health and their biological existence. Clearly, the market economy places economic growth and development over and above prosperity, health, welfare and the biological wellbeing of the people.

People live in full ignorance and confusion on the means and factors promoting real life. They ignore, in other words the causes of illness, morbidity and biological decline.

The system does not provide the necessary knowledge of how to walk safely through life, for, if such knowledge was really accessible to all, huge economic interests would be put at stake.

Doctors, who are also the victims of a deficient and biased education, believe that most diseases could be dealt with (or “managed”) through an antidote, a drug, a pill, a medical prescription or an operation--which however will only temporarily relieve and alleviate the symptoms--showing total indifference to the causes that produce them. No wonder that those books, foods, ideas and products are being promoted by the system, which better promote its interests. As a result, the system ignores and puts aside every idea or effort or personality that stands in the way and is in any way an obstacle to its long range targets or puts at stake its uncontrollable activities and interests.

There are a many studies showing, beyond any doubt, that poverty, unemployment, insecurity and underemployment, unavoidably lead to a very low quality of life, to bad habits, stress, malnutrition and bad health, illnesses of the body and the mind and to a biological degradation without precedent in the history of humanity. A relatively recent WHO study<sup>[10]</sup>, for instance, shocked many people with its conclusions that, as a result of poverty, about 10.6m children under five die each year, most from preventable causes, and that almost four in 10 die within 28 days of birth. A similar study by the *Lancet* medical journal concluded that poor nutrition is an underlying factor in more than half of all the deaths under five<sup>[11]</sup>.

If this crisis is not stopped in time, it will lead, in a foreseeable future, to a tragic decline of the human species, on account of the damages and mutations of the genetic material. No one will be the winner in the end, just like in Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*. Under the moonlight of the end, there are no winners or losers. Everybody sinks in this Shakespearian tragedy.

It follows, therefore, that the system of the market/growth economy in combination with the capitalist neoliberal globalisation, not only cause the concentration of economic power and the consequent political, economical and social crisis, in terms of unemployment, poverty, injustice, exploitation, inequalities, crime, violence, pollution, wars, etc., but are also the cause of a number of other social and individual problems, which will endanger in the long run the ecological and social future of humankind. In other words, it will lead to an unprecedented biological crisis as part of the incredible ecological crisis described in the just published report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)

After a life-long research on the matter, I have come to the conclusion that it is humankind itself, which is the ultimate recipient of this multidimensional and multifaceted crisis. The different crises that comprise the multidimensional crisis perpetuate and gradually worsen the biological crisis, which embraces not only humans as biological beings, but also the planet's animals and plants — fauna and flora —, which suffer all the adverse consequences of the multidimensional crisis. Furthermore, I concluded that the biological crisis, like all the other dimensions of the multidimensional crisis, could not be examined or dealt with by a political project that is one-dimensional and not anti-systemic. Such a project must be one that will investigate and examine the deepest and basic causes of the multidimensional crisis and not a project aiming to bring about just some improvements and reforms, so that the symptoms of the multidimensional crisis could be relieved or diminished.

To my mind the project of Inclusive Democracy is the only political proposal today which, after a thorough investigation of the basic causes of the multidimensional crisis, has as its primary aim the eradication of the causes of the crisis themselves, and proposes a fundamental way out of the ecological crisis in general, and the biological crisis in particular.

The existing system has created a social, economic and ecological environment that is unnatural, alien and hostile to the interests of mankind. Humankind has, for a long time, been placed in the Procrustean bed of the system, with no one knowing for sure what the ultimate aim is. The greediness and brutality of the New World Order is leading to an unprecedented barbarism. We allow, out of ignorance and lack of determination, the system to deconstruct, distort and destroy everything around it, just for the sake of satisfying the interests of a small minority on this planet.<sup>[12]</sup> It is therefore the duty of every well-intentioned and sensitised individual to fight as much as s/he can for the reversal of this inhuman and merciless mechanism that is the market economy.

There is a well-known ancient myth that perfectly illustrates the present impasse, which the market/growth economy has led us into. According to this myth, whatever King Midas touched turned into gold, but in the end he died of starvation. A similar situation is now prevailing in the advanced capitalist countries. Whatever the system touches, unavoidably becomes polluted, poisoned, distorted or mutated for the sake of profits and power gained by the privileged and the elites in general. To the majority of the people, who are the recipients of harmful and not really needed products and services, as well as of the system's destructive acts and omissions, the same system offers poverty, unemployment, misery, want, insecurity, malnutrition, a degraded social and natural environment, disease, premature death, and a widespread biological crisis.

The system pushes the modern human being to cut the branch of the tree she/he sits on. People nowadays are spending their savings in a stupid and desperate manner, trying to

buy health, happiness, creativity and quality of life, and, in general, the tasteless and brainless "bread and spectacles" that the system offers.

The existing system must therefore at all cost be overthrown and replaced by a system of genuine Inclusive Democracy, under which people will put an end to the hierarchies and exploitation of centuries and millenniums, open a new bright page in human history.

The effort towards the gradual overthrowing of the present system, which is aimed by the project of Inclusive Democracy, will be our greatest challenge for the first half of the 21st century. The outcome of the social struggle for change and for the replacement of the existing structures, organisations and institutions of the market economy and representative "democracy", with new political, economic and social structures, new organisations and institutions of a genuine inclusive democracy and autonomy, will definitely determine our chances for survival on this planet.

## **ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES ON THE BIOLOGICAL AND GENERAL ECOLOGICAL CRISIS**

The views of neoliberals, social liberals, social democrats, even ecologists on how to deal with both the biological and the ecological crisis, are diametrically opposed to the views of Inclusive Democracy. An unbridgeable chasm separates them. The followers of Inclusive Democracy search and investigate in depth and beyond any prejudice, dogmas and specialist group interests based on class, race, etc., the basic causes of this multidimensional crisis, which can be traced back to the very structure of the system, which leads to the concentration of political and economic power in the hands of the few: the market economy and representative "democracy". Inclusive Democracy does not aim to alleviate or relieve the symptoms of particular aspects of the crisis, as the reformist Left or the Ecologists do. Inclusive Democracy believes that both the proximate and the ultimate causes of the biological, as well as the ecological crisis in general, must be eradicated.

On the other hand, the reformist Left, as well as social liberals, ecologists, et. al., naively believe that the problems of the biological and the ecological crisis in general are not systemic, i.e., they do not originate in the system itself of the market economy, and what we have to do is to try to reduce and improve the symptoms of the crises, within the institutional framework of the existing system. What we have to do, they argue, is to constantly press the politicians for improvements of the conditions of life, and disregard the causes that generate, reproduce and perpetuate the multidimensional crisis. We must also forget that professional politicians are the mouthpieces and puppets of the economically strong, being obliged — for reasons inherent to the system — to blindly obey the orders of the system (to sustain the perpetual "development" on which the survival of millions of people depends), given that the political system of representative "democracy" is an integral part — in fact, the political complement — of the existing system. Professional politicians critically depend on the dominant economic elites, who finance their expensive election campaigns and promote them through the media they control. The policies, therefore adopted by politicians, in all sectors of individual and social life, are in principle perfectly compatible with the broader interests of the market economy.

The few exceptions to this rule do not deny it, but simply corroborate it. Only a society of

Inclusive Democracy could ensure the objective and subjective conditions that are needed for the basic needs and the cultural requirements of the masses to be fully met. Such a society will offer access to knowledge and information, as well as the ability to make good use of such knowledge, in order for the people to be able to organise their lives on sound biological and ecological foundations. The people will be offered detailed information on how to satisfy their basic needs. Coverage of the basic needs will be totally feasible in a society of Inclusive Democracy as the umbilical cord connecting the production and distribution of goods with the interests and privileges of a small minority of powerful elites and their race for "growth" and profits, is cut off. In such a society, the basic criteria will be prosperity, health and well being for all, and the rule will be for an ecological and rational management of the planet's resources, and not their depletion for the sake of profit. Only what is friendly to the environment will be produced. The persons who will make the basic decisions of how to allocate society's scarce resources (what, how and for whom to produce) will not have any economical interests so as to put at stake their quality of life, if not their lives as well. All products will be of high quality and will be aimed strictly to cover the basic needs of the people, as the democratic assemblies will decide these. There will not be products serving the greediness of the few and the extreme exploitation of people and resources, as it happens in the system of the market economy. In an Inclusive Democracy there will be no interwoven interests of businessmen, multinational corporations and professional politicians. The causes leading to the destruction of the fauna and flora, devastation of forests, deterioration and poisoning of food, depletion of the ozone layer, creation of the greenhouse effect, production of genetically modified foods and degradation of the natural foods, which is the reason of the repeated food scandals-- all are for the sake of profits. All these contribute to the general morbidity of the population and put at stake the future of new generations, gradually leading to a deeper and irreversible biological crisis.

Could these changes take place within the framework of the market economy as the reformists of the Left believe? The answer is no, for a number of reasons. The view of some people that Inclusive Democracy is non-feasible and a utopia (in the negative sense of the word) is inconsistent with the history of mankind and the admirable achievements of Homo sapiens through the millenniums.

People will not stop dreaming of a better world as otherwise they will feel mentally mutilated and politico-economically bankrupt. The solutions proposed by neoliberal and social democrats as well as by social liberals and Greens for dealing with the biological and ecological crisis are only offering a temporary relief, capable of suppressing the symptoms of the crisis, and definitely not touching the fundamental causes of the problems. Most of these solutions may have some limited usefulness, but only during a transitional period of social development, as they do not solve any fundamental problems, but simply relieve or suppress the worse symptoms of the multidimensional crisis.

Drastic, radical and systemic measures are therefore needed, which cannot originate from and materialise within the system of market economy, capitalist globalisation and representative "democracy".

There is no indication at all that this multidimensional crisis, especially the biological crisis, could start to recede within the framework of the system of the market economy. On the contrary: everything indicates that the multidimensional crisis, especially the biological one, will be getting deeper and wider. The sooner the people will understand this and take

drastic action accordingly, the better for humankind.

If all reasonable and sensible people of this planet wish to see their children grow up in a better and more humane world and not in a hell of fear, terrorism of the system, lack of freedom, insecurity, poverty, unemployment, want, extreme inequalities, pollution and general deterioration of the Environment, repeated food scandals, general morbidity and premature mortality, social conflicts, soaring criminality and local wars, they must wake up and forget their apathy and easy living. Drastic measures must therefore be taken at this very last moment, putting aside individual interests, partiality, selfishness, opportunism and prejudice, and disregarding the plasmatic, temporary benefits and carrots that the system offers in order to fool and befuddle the masses. Collective action, based on a coordinated program, must be taken within the framework of a massive liberatory movement, where every person is doing his/her best with the ultimate aim to gradually overthrow the existing system.

This must be done before it is too late, before unbearable and irreversible situations are created which harm the lives of the many, society in general, as well as the Environment and the biological existence of human beings. If people do not strive through collective action to overthrow the existing system, they will prove lower than the circumstances and will only have to blame themselves for the outcome. They will therefore miss their best chance to create a human world for all.

We do hope, however; that in the not-so-distant future the necessary wisdom, maturity and realisation of our obligations will be created, which will lead to the determination for the necessary radical transformation of society.

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[1] See e.g. Philippe Riviere, "How big pharmaceutical companies control medicine", *Le Monde Diplomatique* (November 2003).

[2] See e.g. Sarah Boseley, "Junket time in Munich for the medical profession - and it's all on the drug firms. How 'opinion leaders' among doctors are won over by cash on offer from the giants of the pharmaceutical trade", *The Guardian* (October 5, 2004).

[3] see Centers For Disease Control and Prevention, "[Prevalence of the Autism Spectrum Disorders in Multiple Areas of the United States, Surveillance Years 2000 and 2002](#)" and Robert F. Kennedy Jr., "Deadly Immunity".

[4] Associated Press/Elftherotypia (17/11/2006).

[5] This is according to the results of a study carried out by ICAP research organization, *Elftherotypia* (26/07/2006).

[6] See the announcement by the European Heart Network which met in Athens in January 2005, *Elftherotypia* (26/1/2005).

[7] See Dr. Dean Ornish's website <http://www.ornish.com>.

[8] see T. Fotopoulos, "[Globalisation, the reformist Left and the Anti-Globalisation 'Movement'](#)", *Democracy & Nature*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (July 2001).

[9] See. T. Fotopoulos, "[Is de-growth compatible with a market economy?](#)", *The International Journal of INCLUSIVE DEMOCRACY*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (January 2007).

[10] James Meikle, "Poverty leads 10 million children to an early grave", *The Guardian* (25/3/2005).

[11] *The Lancet* (25 March, 2005).

[12] See mainly the books by Takis Fotopoulos, *Towards An Inclusive Democracy*, (Cassell/Continuum, London/New York, 1997) and also [\*The Multidimensional Crisis and Inclusive Democracy\*](#) (Gordios, Athens, 2005); see also his articles in [\*Society & Nature/Democracy & Nature\*](#), as well as in the present journal.