

# “We Decree the Self-Defense of Our Health”

## By Raoul Vaneigem<sup>1</sup>

The threat that the coronavirus<sup>2</sup> has lowered over the health of the population of the entire world has shown that the real danger comes from the deterioration of the medical services. Without a doubt, the imperatives of profit-making, which are predominant everywhere, will not stop accelerating this deterioration.

Managing hospitals as profit-making enterprises involves underpaying and super-exploiting the personnel and lessening the number of beds and technical means at their disposal. The large pharmaceutical firms paralyze real research, discredit the scientists that they bribe, and prohibit low-cost medicines that have proved their usefulness, all to sell dubious vaccines whose sole guaranteed efficiency is the financial interest that they produce.

It goes without saying that the States will not hesitate to repeat the blow of restrained freedoms, which has been so successful for it. While allowing the viruses that have come from the melting of the permafrost to spread, they will unscrupulously use the very pretext of the epidemic to preventively confine those who rebel against their criminal politics. We must foil this maneuver from now on.

This concerns our lives and those of our children: we decree *the self-defense of our health*. In the streets, the towns and the countryside, we need to put on the white coats of hospital personnel. All of us are healthcare aides; all of us are promoters of health!

The unhealthiness of the States and the transnational institutions is permanent. Against it let us promulgate, through the permanence and intransigence of our struggles, the inalienable right to life.

Whether the vests are yellow,<sup>3</sup> black, red or multi-colored, they are only the clothes of a revolution that engages the future of humanity. More than a symbol, the white coat is a practice. If it invades the streets, how will the police State ever manage to get through?

It is up to the people, the principal victims of the coercive measures and the budgetary misappropriations, to create the conditions that can assure everyone the guarantee of eradicating the illness of which capitalism is the most implacable virus. Are there any better guarantees of health than civil disobedience, resistance to oppression and festive solidarity?

---

<sup>1</sup> Raoul Vaneigem, “DECRETONS L’AUTODEFENSE SANITAIRE.” Dated 17 May 2020 and circulated via email on 18 May 2020 with the following note: “The attached text was intended to be added at the last minute to the book *Textes et entretiens sur l’insurrection de la vie quotidienne* to be published [soon] by éditions Grevis. Since the stage of the book’s publication did not allow this, I leave it to the networks to distribute it, for any useful or useless purpose.” Translated from the French by NOT BORED! on 18 May 2020. All footnotes by the translator.

<sup>2</sup> For Vaneigem’s previous statement about COVID-19, see “Coronavirus,” dated 17 March 2020 and translated into English here: <http://www.notbored.org/coronavirus.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> For Vaneigem’s remarks about the “Yellow Vests,” see “Concerning the ‘Yellow Vests,’” dated 11 December 2018 and translated into English here: <http://www.notbored.org/yellow-vests.pdf>.

We are all care-giving aides. The battle is everywhere that the power of the Communes<sup>4</sup> prohibits pesticides and harmful environmental effects and reinvents schools, transportation, hospital structures and everyday existence. It is a well-known medical adage that the majority of illnesses heal on their own if they are given a sufficient amount of time. We are that time.

---

<sup>4</sup> For Vaneigem's comments about the Commune, see "For the Commune," dated 27 February 2020 and translated into English here: <http://www.notbored.org/for-the-commune.pdf>.