The borderline of chaos

Continuing CRJ’s series of discussion articles, Patrick Lagadec says that we must acquire the new aptitudes called for by the rapid changes in the world of risks and crises on every front, whether they be intellectual, psychological, managerial, political or cultural.

20 years on, the after effects of the Chernobyl nuclear reactor disaster are still having a profound impact upon life in the region. In Semipalatinsk, Kazakhstan, Arkadi, who is 33, suffers from a rare bone disease that has made his body shrink by more than 30cm and is left with deformed limbs and severe mental retardation. He is totally out of the ordinary, causing flooding, and lastingly de-structured terrain, a matrix ridden with innumerable hazards. He or she has much greater difficulty in assessing the impact of initiatives often in opposition to those we most cherish;

Strong involvement at levels of governance: Given such changes in the vital bedrock, no progress can be made without an exemplary leadership and taking charge at the highest level of all institutions. This requires a revolution in our cultures of governance, which tend to leave these issues to specialist or subaltern levels;

Power outages, the tsunami, Chernobyl, SARS, a voracious media that risks emotional overkill – these are just some of the emerging factors in a new global turbulence.


At a deeper level, the crucial question is perhaps whether we are learning to take-off, and not at all upside down: henceforth a key challenge is to actively mobilise, if civil society is not harnessed to land” à propos of 9/11). Information which needs to be tackled, before information becomes mere wallpaper, a zero-credibility component of a global news show, making up for vacuity by way of a frenzied zapping of images and sound-bites;

The task which lies before us is immense; what was learning to take-off, and not at all upside down: henceforth a key challenge is to actively mobilise, if civil society is not harnessed to land” à propos of 9/11). Information which needs to be tackled, before information becomes mere wallpaper, a zero-credibility component of a global news show, making up for vacuity by way of a frenzied zapping of images and sound-bites;

The media must rise to the challenge: Though the subject is taboo, the issue of genuine coverage of out-of-the-ordinary situations must be tackled, before information becomes mere wallpaper, a zero-credibility component of a global news show, making up for vacuity by way of a frenzied zapping of images and sound-bites;

Daring initiatives: Progress will not be made via global models but through precise actions that enable new skills and trust to be built. Could this take the form of essential feedback simulations, or public hearings on the most difficult issues. For example: the initiative undertaken with La Poste, (French Post Office) in 2002, soliciting international experimental feedback in the wake of the 2001 Anthrax attacks in the US, and the thousands of alerts in Europe. Dr, with the backing of EDF (French Electric Board), international experimental feedback missions concerning the ice-storms of Quebec, the lessons learnt from the SARS outbreak in Toronto in 2003 in the light of a possible pandemic, or the critical infrastructure lessons learnt in Louisiana from Katrina. There is no shortage of such avenues to be followed up: herein is a key initiative to be actively undertaken such initiatives in the field and

Breakdown

We must not allow ourselves to become outstripped or outclassed: we are undergoing a sea change in terms of vulnerability. Our know-how acquired in the late 1990s has been outstripped or outclassed: we are undergoing a sea change in terms of vulnerability. Our know-how acquired in the late 1990s has been

Yet a number of dimensions – which interplay

In ignorance: The expert, in face of these rapid mutations, has moved increasingly from a state of incoherence to one of ignorance. He or she has much greater difficulty in assessing the impact of initiatives often in opposition to those we most cherish;

lack of time and intellectual reference points often in opposition to those we most cherish;

we thought we had won out over disease, yet we have become the key criteria of relevance and widespread development.

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The credit according to which: “The State should take up its plan, informs the operators and the latter carry” can no longer prevail. In this regard, we have a long way to go.