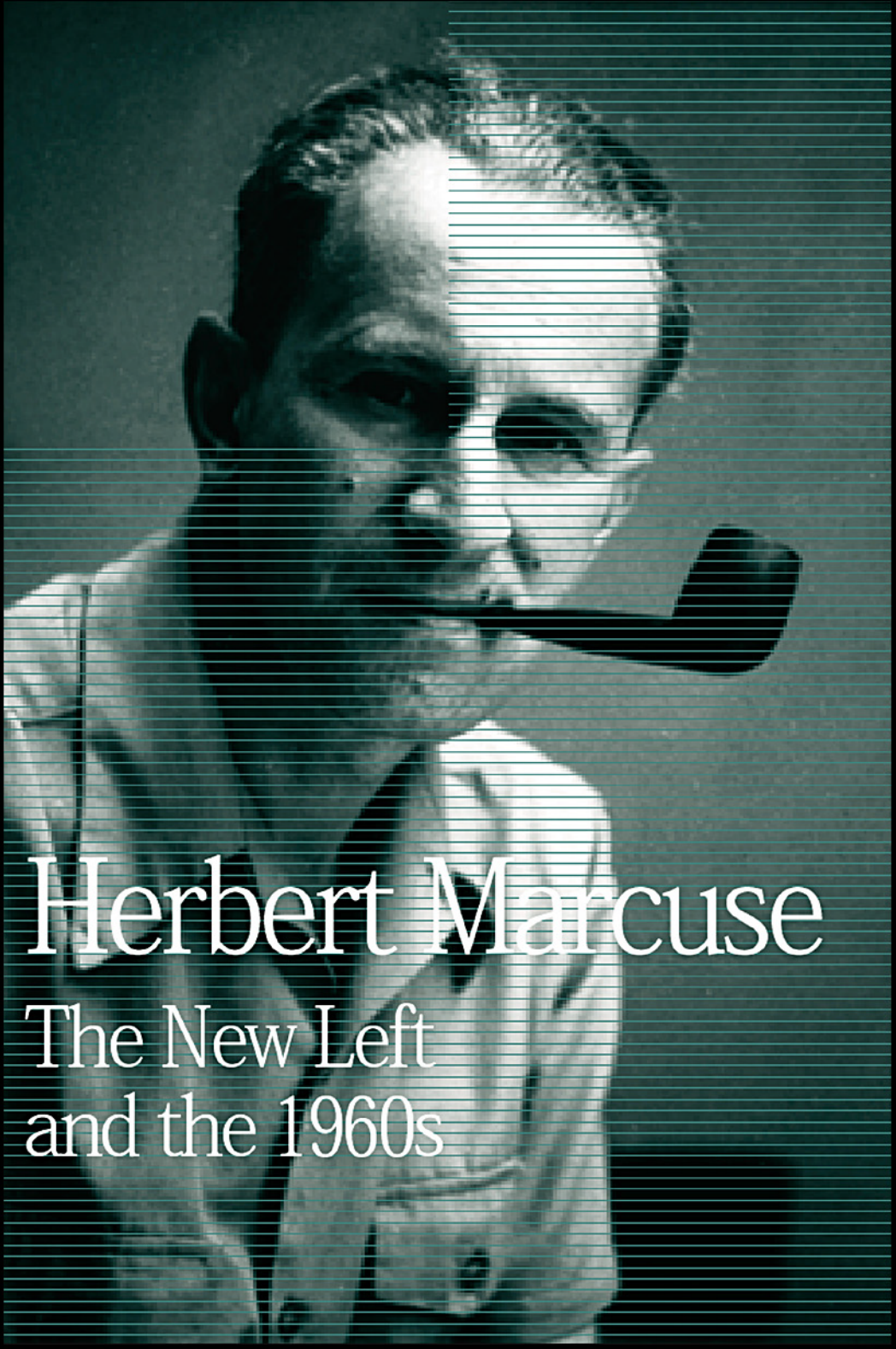

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THE NEW LEFT AND THE 1960s

COLLECTED PAPERS OF HERBERT MARCUSE

EDITED BY DOUGLAS KELLNER

Volume One
TECHNOLOGY, WAR AND FASCISM

Volume Two
TOWARDS A CRITICAL THEORY OF SOCIETY

Volume Three
THE NEW LEFT AND THE 1960s

Volume Four
ART AND LIBERATION

Volume Five
PHILOSOPHY, PSYCHOANALYSIS AND EMANCIPATION

Volume Six
MARXISM, REVOLUTION AND UTOPIA

HERBERT MARCUSE (1898–1979) is an internationally renowned philosopher, social activist and theorist, and member of the Frankfurt School. He has been remembered as one of the most influential social critical theorists inspiring the radical political movements in the 1960s and 1970s. Author of numerous books including *One-Dimensional Man, Eros and Civilization*, and *Reason and Revolution*, Marcuse taught at Columbia, Harvard, Brandeis University and the University of California before his death in 1979.

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HERBERT MARCUSE

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OF HERBERT MARCUSE

Volume Three

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Douglas Kellner

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PREFACE

Marcuse's Legacies

Angela Y. Davis

If we are to examine Marcuse's legacies – and I want to suggest that there are plural legacies – and suggest some future theoretical and practical directions, it seems to me that in seeking to understand the deep connection between his later writings and the political conflicts of the late 1960s, we must simultaneously extricate his work from those linkages that have threatened to entomb and romanticize Marcuse's ideas. Academics and activists alike find it difficult to disassociate Marcuse from the era of the late 1960s and early 1970s. His persona and his work are often evoked as a marker of a radical era, our primary relationship to which tends to be defined by nostalgia. Consequently, the mention of the name Herbert Marcuse elicits a sigh – many of my generation and older tend to treat him as a sign of our youth – wonderful, exciting, revolutionary, but meaningful only within the context of our reminiscences. Parenthetically, as those of us who came of age during the 1960s and early 1970s grow older and older, there seems to be a tendency to spatialize "the 1960s." Recently I have noticed that many people of my generation like to introduce themselves by saying "I come from the 1960s" – the 1960s being viewed as a point of origin, an originary place, rather than an historical moment. It is a place that we evoke with wonder and joy, but one that is forever beyond our reach. Ironically, the very era during which we were encouraged by Herbert Marcuse to think about the radical potential of utopian thought has itself survived in our historical memory as utopia – as a place that is no place.

It is no less ironic that the best known and most widely read thinker associated with the Frankfurt School in the 1970s became the least studied in the 1980s and 1990s, while Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer and Walter Benjamin are extensively studied in the contemporary era. As Marcuse himself acknowledged, his celebrity had both productive and counterproductive aspects. But we can say that the historical conjuncture that linked his own intellectual development with the search for a new political vocabulary during the late 1960s allowed many of us to understand the extent to which he took seriously the charge of critical theory to develop interdisciplinary approaches, anchored in the emancipatory promise of the philosophical tradition within which he worked, that would signal the possibility and need for transformative interventions in the real, social world. And many of Marcuse's ideas during that period evolved in conversation with the contemporaneous social and cultural movements. When he addressed gatherings of young people from California to Paris to Berlin, he spoke as a philosopher who was perennially struggling with the challenges of critical theory to engage directly with contemporary social issues. He was received as a philosopher who urged participants in radical social movements to think more philosophically and more critically about the implications of their activism.

Despite my chronic critiques of nostalgia as a sorry substitute for historical memory, I want to ask you to permit me to engage in what I would like to think of as a bit of productive nostalgia. Because I do long for the days of interminable philosophical discussions about such subjects as the historical agents of revolution, when the participants in such discussions might be students and professors, as well as organic intellectuals who were workers and organizers. Marcuse's interventions as a public intellectual helped to stimulate such discussions. Did the working class still have a revolutionary potential? What role could students play? I imagine that I am nostalgic today because so few people seem to believe that anybody has any revolutionary potential left.

The thinkers associated with the Frankfurt School were motivated in many of their intellectual endeavors by the desire to develop oppositional – which at that time meant antifascist – theoretical work. Herbert Marcuse and Franz Neumann (whose work should also be more seriously read today) were more interested in exploring transformative oppositional possibilities than their colleagues Adorno and Horkheimer. The first volume of Herbert Marcuse's collected papers, edited by Douglas Kellner, contains a prospectus, written in the late 1930s or early 1940s, for a study on which they apparently planned to collaborate – "A History of the Doctrine of Social Change."[1] While this study was not actualized as a result of the

1 Herbert Marcuse and Franz Neumann, "A History of the Doctrine of Social Change," in Herbert Marcuse, *Technology, War and Fascism: Collected Papers of*

outbreak of World War II, both Neumann and Marcuse were active in the denazification program after the war – Neumann in the prosecution of Nazis, Marcuse in his work with the State Department helping to develop the U.S. denazification policy. I urge you to read the recently published posthumous work,[2] especially because of the mystery surrounding Marcuse's involvement with the State Department – including the absurd rumors that he was a C.I.A. agent. The first volume of the unpublished papers Kellner has made available allows us to see the important work he did on the cultural impact of Nazism.

Perhaps Marcuse's willingness to engage so directly in this antifascist project in the aftermath of World War II led him to later broaden his antifascist theoretical approach, drawing U.S. society into the frame of his analysis. In other words, precisely because he was so concretely and immediately involved in opposing German fascism, he was also able and willing to identify fascist tendencies in the United States. Because Adorno's and Horkheimer's antifascism expressed itself on a more formal theoretical register, it remained entirely anchored in German history and tradition. When Marcuse wrote "The Struggle Against Liberalism in the Totalitarian View of the State,"[3] arguing that fascism and liberalism were not political opposites, that indeed, they were closely linked ideologically, he had already established the foundation for his later analysis of U.S. society. When Horkheimer and Adorno returned to Frankfurt and refused to permit the publication of *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Marcuse's critical theory would explore the one-dimensional society in the United States and would later identify the prominent role of racism, encouraging students like myself to attempt to further develop the emancipatory promise of the German philosophical tradition.

One of the most salient and persistent aspects of Marcuse's work is his concern with the possibilities of utopia. This powerful philosophical concept (which meant that he had to contest the orthodox equation of Marxist notions of socialism with the scientific as opposed to a utopian socialism *à la* Fourier) was at the core of his ideas. In his important 1937 essay, "Philosophy and Critical Theory," he wrote:

> Like philosophy, [critical theory] opposes making reality into a criterion in the manner of complacent positivism. But unlike philosophy, it always derives its goals from present tendencies of the social process. Therefore it has no fear of the utopia that the new order is denounced as being. When truth cannot be realized within the established social order, it always appears to the latter as

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Herbert Marcuse, vol. 1, ed. Douglas Kellner (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), pp. 93–104.

2 Herbert Marcuse, *Technology, War and Fascism*.

3 Herbert Marcuse, "The Struggle Against Liberalism in the Totalitarian View of the State," in *Negations: Essays in Critical Theory*, trans. Jeremy J. Shapiro (Boston, Mass.: Beacon Press, 1968), pp. 3–42.

> mere utopia. This transcendence speaks not against, but for, its truth. The utopian element was long the only progressive element in philosophy, as in the constructions of the best state and the highest pleasure, of perfect happiness and perpetual peace. The obstinacy that comes from adhering to truth against all appearances has given way in contemporary philosophy to whimsy and uninhibited opportunism. Critical theory preserves obstinacy as a genuine quality of philosophical thought.[4]

This is one of my favorite Marcuse passages: utopia and philosophical obstinacy. Obstinacy is certainly a quality that drives those of us who call ourselves veteran radicals, but not obstinacy in the sense that we need to hold on to obsolete theories, ideas and organizing practices, rather the obstinacy of maintaining that emancipatory promises are still entangled in the terrifying and ever-expanding system of global capitalism.

This obstinacy is most productive, I believe, when it travels from one generation to the next, when new ways of identifying those promises and new oppositional discourses and practices are proposed. In this context, I want to acknowledge the important intergenerational character of this conference.[5] In a passage from the introduction to an *Essay on Liberation* that many of you – old as well as new Marcuse scholars – have probably committed to memory, Marcuse writes that,

> what is denounced as "utopian" is no longer that which has "no place" and cannot have any place in the historical universe, but rather that which is blocked from coming about by the power of the established societies. Utopian possibilities are inherent in the technical and technological forces of advanced capitalism and socialism: the rational utilization of these forces on a global scale would terminate poverty and scarcity within a very foreseeable future.[6]

Marcuse's lifelong insistence on the radical potential of art is linked to this obstinate insistence on the utopian dimension. On the one hand art criticizes and negates the existing social order by the power of its form, which in turn creates another universe, thus hinting at the possibility of building a new social order. But this relationship is highly mediated, as Marcuse continually emphasized – from "The Affirmative Character of Culture" (1937), to the recently published "Some Remarks on Aragon: Art and Politics in the Totalitarian Era" (1945), to the ninth chapter of *Eros and Civilization* (1955), to the last book he published before his death, entitled, like the ninth chapter of *Eros and Civilization*, *The Aesthetic Dimension*.[7] I cite a passage from his essay on Aragon:

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4 Herbert Marcuse, "Philosophy and Critical Theory," in *Negations*, p. 143.
5 This paper was originally given at the conference "The Legacy of Herbert Marcuse," held at the University of California, Berkeley in November 1998.
6 Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation* (London: Penguin, 1969), p. 13.
7 Herbert Marcuse, "The Affirmative Character of Culture," in *Negations*,

> Art does not and cannot present the fascist reality (nor any other forms of the totality of monopolistic oppression). But any human activity which does not contain the terror of this era is by this very token inhuman, irrelevant, incidental, untrue. In art, however, the untruth may become the life element of the truth. The incompatibility of the artistic form with the real form of life may be used as a lever for throwing upon the reality the light which the latter cannot absorb, the light which may eventually dissolve this reality (although such dissolution is no longer the function of art). The untruth of art may become the precondition for the artistic contradiction and negation. Art may promote the alienation, the total estrangement of man from his world. And this alienation may provide the artificial basis for the remembrance of freedom in the totality of oppression.[8]

On the other hand, emancipatory possibilities reside in the very forces that are responsible for the obscene expansion of an increasingly exploitative and repressive order. It seems to me that the overarching themes of Marcuse's thought are as relevant today on the cusp of the twenty-first century as they were when his scholarship and political interventions were most widely celebrated.

At this point in my remarks I would like to make some comments about my own development. I have often publicly expressed my gratitude to Herbert Marcuse for teaching me that I did not have to choose between a career as an academic and a political vocation that entailed making interventions around concrete social issues. In Frankfurt, when I was studying with Adorno, he discouraged me from seeking to discover ways of linking my seemingly discrepant interests in philosophy and social activism. After the founding of the Black Panther Party in 1966, I felt very much drawn back to [the United States]. During one of my last meetings with him (students were extremely fortunate if we managed to get one meeting over the course of our studies with a professor like Adorno), he suggested that my desire to work directly in the radical movements of that period was akin to a media studies scholar deciding to become a radio technician.

On my way back from Germany, during the summer of 1967, I attended a conference in London, *Dialectics of Liberation* organized by R.D. Laing and David Cooper. I was primarily interested in attending the conference because Herbert Marcuse was one of the major speakers and because I was on my way to the University of California, San Diego to study with him. As I prepared my notes for this talk, I discovered that my copy of the collection of presentations from that conference was missing from my bookshelves. So I embarked on a long and ultimately futile search for this book. The library

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pp. 88–133; "Some Remarks on Aragon: Art and Politics in the Totalitarian Era," in *Technology, War and Fascism*, pp. 199–214; "The Aesthetic Dimension," in *Eros and Civilization* (New York: Vintage, 1962), pp. 157–79; *The Aesthetic Dimension: Toward a Critique of Marxist Aesthetics* (Boston, Mass.: Beacon Press, 1978).

8 *Technology, War and Fascism*, p. 214.

at the University of California, Santa Cruz listed a copy in its collection, but a librarian finally discovered that it had been placed in storage in another city and that there was no way to retrieve it. No one could tell me what had happened to the four copies owned by the University of California, Berkeley library and still listed as part of its current collection. A librarian there speculated that the books had been discarded without removing them from the computer. This search for *Dialectics of Liberation* made me wonder whether other texts including Marcuse's writings have fallen into a similar state of disuse.

But allow me to make a few observations about the conference itself, which gathered an amazing collection of participants – from scholars and university professors to community activists and prominent figures in the black movement at that time. I attended the conference because I was about to resume my studies with Herbert Marcuse and wanted to hear his presentation, as well as those of R.D. Laing, David Cooper and Judith Mitchell. However, this was also my first opportunity to meet Stokely Carmichael (Kwame Toure) and Michael X – the leading black militant in Britain at the time, who was later executed in Trinidad.

Today such a gathering – which was at the same time a scholarly conference, an assembly of community activists and a "happening" – what we now call performance art – would seem quite bizarre. It would clearly challenge our notions of community. But Marcuse felt very much at home in this environment, always pushing himself to communicate across the divides that usually define the language we use – across academic disciplines and across boundaries of race, class, culture and nation. I was a co-convener of a conference that took place [at Berkeley on] *Critical Resistance: Beyond the Prison Industrial Complex*.[9] If Marcuse were alive and well today, no doubt he would have been a key figure in this conference, for we tried precisely to construct unpredictable conversations across those disciplinary divides. Academics talked with activists, advocates, artists, former prisoners and – with the aid of video-conferencing technology – people currently incarcerated in state prisons and county jails.

Marcuse played an important role during the late 1960s and early 1970s in encouraging intellectuals to speak out against racism, against the Vietnam war, for student rights. He emphasized the important role of intellectuals within oppositional movements, which, I believe, led more intellectuals to frame their work in relation to these movements than would otherwise have done so. And Marcuse's thought revealed how deeply he himself was influenced by the movements of his time and how his engagement with those movements revitalized his thought.

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9 This took place at the University of California, Berkeley on September 25–7, 1998. For more information on the conference and for the current political activities of the group that emerged from it, see their website at www.criticalresistance.org.

Today, it seems inconceivable that crowds of people at a political rally would be willing to enthusiastically applaud a philosopher trained in the classical tradition, who might just as easily evoke Kant and Hegel as Marx, Fanon or Dutschke. It seems inconceivable that people did not complain when this philosopher compelled them to use their brains in order to figure out what he was saying in a public rally speech. The lesson I draw from these reminiscences is that we need to recapture the ability to communicate across divides that are designed to keep people apart. At the same time we need to substitute a nostalgic attitude toward Marcuse with one that takes seriously his work as a philosopher and as a public intellectual.

One of the great challenges of any social movement is to develop new vocabularies. As we attempt to develop these vocabularies today, we can find inspiration and direction in Marcuse's attempts to theorize the politics of language. In *An Essay on Liberation* he wrote:

> Political linguistics: armor of the Establishment. If the radical opposition develops its own language, it protests spontaneously, subconsciously, against one of the most effective "secret weapons" of domination and defamation. The language of the prevailing Law and Order, validated by the courts and by the police, is not only the voice but also the deed of suppression. This language not only defines and condemns the Enemy, it also *creates* him . . . This linguistic universe, which incorporates the Enemy (as *Untermensch*) into the routine of everyday speech can be transcended only in action.[10]

While Marcuse was specifically referring to the way Nixon's law-and-order rhetoric conflated criminals and radicals and communists in the former Soviet Union and freedom fighters in Vietnam and defenders of the revolution in Cuba, the challenge he presents is very much a contemporary one, particularly with respect to the need to create a "rupture with the linguistic universe of the Establishment" and its representation of crime and criminals, which has helped to imprison almost 2 million people – which has facilitated the horrifying pattern of the prison as the major institution toward which young black men – and increasingly black women – are headed.

While this is another topic entirely – and this is what I usually speak and write about, so I must restrain myself from beginning another talk – I do want to conclude by suggesting how important it is for us to consider the contemporary relevance of Marcuse's ideas within this context. How do we draw upon Marcuse's critical theory in our attempt to develop new vocabularies of resistance today, vocabularies that effect a rupture with the equation of affirmative action and "reverse racism," vocabularies that reflect a utopian vision of a society without prisons, at least without the monstrous, corporatized system that we call the prison industrial complex?

I am not suggesting that Marcuse should be revived as the preeminent theorist of the twenty-first century. He, more than anyone, insisted on the

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10 *Essay on Liberation*, pp. 76ff.

deeply historical character of theory. It would certainly militate against the spirit of his ideas to argue that his work contains the solution to the many dilemmas facing us as scholars, organizers, advocates, artists, and, I would add, as marginalized communities, whose members are increasingly treated as detritus and relegated to prisons, which, in turn, generate astronomical profits for a growing global prison industry. An uncritical and nostalgic version of Marcuse, which, for example, fails to acknowledge the limits of an aesthetic theory that maintains a rigid distinction between high and low art, one that is not willing to engage seriously with popular culture and all its contradictions, would not be helpful to those who are seeking to forge radical political vocabularies today. But if we abandon our Marcuse nostalgia and attempt to incorporate his ideas into a historical memory that draws upon the useful aspects of the past in order to put them to work in the present, we will be able to hold on to Marcuse's legacies as we explore terrains that he himself could never have imagined.

INTRODUCTION

Radical Politics, Marcuse, and the New Left

Douglas Kellner

In the 1960s Herbert Marcuse ascended to the unlikely role of Guru of the New Left. A philosopher by training who had become affiliated with the German exiles later known as "the Frankfurt School," Marcuse had produced perhaps the best book on Hegel and Marx in his 1941 *Reason and Revolution* and an excellent philosophical interpretation of Freud in his 1955 *Eros and Civilization*.[1] *Reason and Revolution* introduced English-speaking readers to the critical social theory and dialectical methods of Hegel and Marx, providing for later generations of critical social theorists and New Left activists the tools of dialectical thought and theory-informed practice

1 For background on Marcuse and the Frankfurt School, see Douglas Kellner, *Herbert Marcuse and the Crisis of Marxism* (London and Berkeley, Calif.: Macmillan Press and University of California Press, 1984) and the first two volumes in the Routledge *Collected Papers of Herbert Marcuse*, ed. Douglas Kellner, *Technology, War and Fascism* (London and New York: Routledge, 1998) and *Towards a Critical Theory of Society* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001). See also Herbert Marcuse, *Reason and Revolution* (hereafter *R&R*) (New York: Oxford University Press, 1941; reprinted Boston, Mass.: Beacon Press, 1960) and *Eros and Civilization* (hereafter *EC*) (Boston, Mass.: Beacon Press, 1955; reprinted London and New York: Routledge, 1998).

(or *praxis*, in a terminology that would become popular in the 1960s). *Eros and Civilization* in turn provided a splendid access to Freud's thought and the ways that psychoanalytic ideas could be merged with critical social theory and emancipatory culture and practice. In an uncanny way, the text, with its emphasis on polymorphic sexual liberation, play, cultivation of an aesthetic ethos, and burning desire for another world and way of life, anticipated the counterculture of the 1960s which lived out many of the key ideas in Marcuse's visionary text.

In 1964, Marcuse published a major study of advanced industrial society, *One-Dimensional Man*, which emerged as an important influence on the young radicals who formed the New Left. While the Old Left embraced Soviet Marxism and the Soviet Union, the New Left combined forms of critical Marxism with radical democracy and openness to a broad array of ideas and political alliances. Whereas the Old Left was doctrinaire and puritanical, the New Left was pluralistic and engaged emergent cultural forms and social movements. While the Old Left, with some exceptions, tended to impose doctrinal conformity and cut itself off from "liberal" groups, the New Left embraced a wide range of social movements around the issues of class, gender, race, sexuality, the environment, peace, and other issues.

For Marcuse, the New Left at its best united spontaneity with organization, combining strong anti-authoritarian and liberatory tendencies with the development of new forms of political struggle and organization. The New Left sought to join change of consciousness with the change of society, the personal with sociopolitical liberation. The New Left, in Marcuse's view, provided important emphases on the subjective conditions of radical social change and sought new and more humane values, institutions, and ways of life. It embodied the best features of previous socialist and anarchist traditions that it concretized in social struggles such as the antiwar, feminist, ecological, communal, and countercultural movements. For Marcuse, it was the demand for total change that distinguished the New Left and its championing of freedom, social justice, and democracy in every sphere of life.

Marcuse embodied many of these defining political impulses of the New Left in his own thought and politics. Hence, a younger generation of political activists looked up to a white-haired German refugee in his mid-1960s for theoretical and political guidance. Disgusted by the excessive affluence of the advanced industrial societies and the violence of neo-imperialist interventions against developing societies in what was then called the "Third World," the generation that would produce a New Left found theoretical and political inspiration and support in Marcuse's writings. Marcuse in turn tirelessly criticized "advanced industrial society," U.S. imperialism, racism, sexism, environmental destruction, and the forms of oppression and domination that he perceived as growing in intensity and scope.

Energized by the enthusiastic response of young radicals and large numbers of his academic colleagues and fellow travelers on the Left, Herbert

Marcuse embarked on a remarkable trajectory, becoming a major figure in the growing antiwar movement, a hero to the counterculture, and a forceful defender of the New Left. Marcuse also engaged the emerging feminist, environmental, gay and lesbian, and other oppositional social movements of the era, and his writings, lectures, and political interventions became part of the history of the times.

Fredric Jameson wrote in his 1998 book on Adorno that while Marcuse and Sartre were the key thinkers of the 1960s, Adorno was the most relevant for the 1990s,[2] in that the collapse of the Soviet Union and its empire marked the development of global capitalism into a system of domination whereby growing prosperity in the overdeveloped countries absorbed individuals into conforming to the system, while the global economy as such produced tremendous inequalities and much suffering. In this conjuncture, Jameson argued that Adorno's critique of a totalizing system of domination and stance of critique and negation, without positing alternatives, may have been appropriate and justified. Yet I would argue that in the present conjuncture of global economic crisis, terrorism and a resurgence of U.S. militarism, and growing global movements against corporate capitalism and war, Marcuse's political and activist version of critical theory is highly relevant to the challenges of the contemporary moment. Marcuse is especially useful for developing global perspectives on domination and resistance, radically criticizing the existing system of domination, valorizing movements of resistance, and projecting radical alternatives to the current organization of society and mode of life.

In particular, Marcuse's identification with the New Left and attempt to sharpen his critique of the current society and to project radical alternatives could be taken up again in the contemporary era. As a new millennium unfolds, accompanied by the dual forces of terrorism and militarism that are confronted by a growing global antiwar and social justice movement, we find ourselves in a highly turbulent and conflicted era, similar to the 1960s and 1970s. A younger generation may well find theoretical and political guidance and insight in the life and work of Herbert Marcuse. Marcuse attempted to articulate the theory and practice of a New Left during an era of widespread social protest. Hence, a new generation involved in an emergent anticorporate globalization and a worldwide peace movement in the making may find theoretical and political guidance in the Marcusean texts collected in this volume.

It is now possible to gain the historical distance and understanding to grasp and appraise the interconnection of Marcuse's philosophy with the struggles of the day. A wealth of fresh material from the Herbert Marcuse and other archives contains documents, collected in this and accompanying volumes, that provide a richer and deeper grasp of the era and the role of

2 Fredric Jameson, *Late Marxism: Adorno, or, the Persistence of the Dialectic* (London: Verso, 1998), p. 5.

Marcuse in the theoretical and political dramas of the day than was originally possible. I will accordingly in this introduction situate the largely unpublished or little-known texts collected in this volume within the context of Marcuse's major works of the era. Let us, then, return to the 1960s and examine the remarkable theoretical and political odyssey of Herbert Marcuse and the New Left.[3]

ONE-DIMENSIONAL MAN, THE GREAT REFUSAL, AND THE RISE OF THE NEW LEFT

While *Eros and Civilization* provides the most detailed depiction of his vision of liberation, *One-Dimensional Man* provides Marcuse's most systematic analysis of forces of domination.[4] *One-Dimensional Man* explored

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3 For earlier studies of Marcuse and the New Left, that I draw upon here, see Kellner, *Herbert Marcuse*, Chapter 9; Paul Breines's articles in *Antworten auf Herbert Marcuse* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1971) and *New Left Perspectives on Herbert Marcuse: Critical Interruptions* (New York: Herder & Herder, 1972) and Jean-Michel Palmier, *Herbert Marcuse et la nouvelle gauche* (Paris: Belfond, 1973), which contains an exhaustive study of the relevance of Marcuse's ideas to New Left theory and practice in France and America. For more critical accounts of Marcuse and the New Left, see A. Quattrocchi and T. Nairn, *The Beginning of the End: France, May 1968* (London: Penguin, 1968) and Henri Lefebvre, *The Explosion: Marxism and the French Upheaval* (New York: Monthly Review, 1969). Cohn-Bendit is skeptical of whether Marcuse had much influence on the French student movement:

> Some people try to foist Marcuse upon us as a mentor. This is a joke. None of us have read Marcuse. Some people have read Marx, perhaps Bakunin and when it comes to modern authors – Althusser, Mao, Guevara, Lefebvre. Almost all the rebels have read Sartre.
>
> (cited in E. Batalov, *The Philosophy of Revolt* (Moscow: Progress, 1977), p. 52)

Palmier contests this, claiming that many had read Marcuse and that there was a surge of interest in his writings during and after the May events. On this topic, see Palmier's earlier book *Sur Marcuse* (Paris: Union Générale d'Editions, 1968) and *La Nef*, 36 (January–March 1969) on "Marcuse: cet inconnu." On Marcuse and the German New Left, see Rolf Wiggershaus, *The Frankfurt School* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1994) and the documents collected in Wolfgang Kraushaar, *Frankfurter Schule und Studentenbebewgung: Von der Flaschenpost zum Molotowcocktail 1946–1995*, 3 volumes (Hamburg: Rogner & Bernhard). Subsequent histories of the New Left and appraisals of Marcuse tend to stress his importance for and influence on the oppositional political movements of the era. See George Katsiaficas, *The Imagination of the New Left: A Global Analysis of 1968* (Boston, Mass.: South End Press, 1987) and John Bokina and Timothy J. Lukes, *From the New Left to the Next Left* (Lawrence, Kan.: University of Kansas Press, 1994).

4 See Herbert Marcuse (1964) *One-Dimensional Man* (Boston, Mass.: Beacon Press, second edition, 1991; Routledge classics edition with an Introduction by Douglas Kellner, London: 2002) (henceforth *ODM*).

the development of new forms of social control that were producing a "one-dimensional man" and "society without opposition." Citing trends toward conformity, Marcuse described the forms of culture and society which created consumer needs that integrated individuals into the existing system of production and consumption via mass media, advertising, industrial management, and uncritical modes of thought. To "one-dimensional society," Marcuse counterpoised critical and dialectical thinking which perceived a freer and happier form of culture and society, and advocated a "great refusal" of all modes of repression and domination.

One-Dimensional Man theorized the decline of revolutionary potential within the industrial working class in capitalist societies and the development of new forms of social control. Marcuse claimed that "advanced industrial society" created consumer and conformist needs that integrated individuals into the existing system of production and consumption. Domination in institutions of labor, schooling, the family, the state, social relations, culture, and contemporary modes of thought all reproduced the existing system and attempted to eliminate negativity, critique, and opposition. The result was a "one-dimensional" universe of thought and behavior in which the very aptitude and ability for critical thinking and oppositional behavior were withering away.

Not only had capitalism integrated the working class, the source of potential revolutionary opposition, but also the current capitalist system had developed new techniques of stabilization through state and corporate policies and the development of new forms of social control. Thus Marcuse questioned two of the fundamental postulates of orthodox Marxism: the revolutionary proletariat and inevitability of capitalist crisis. In contrast with the working-class focus of orthodox Marxism, Marcuse championed non-integrated forces of minorities, outsiders, and radical intelligentsia and attempted to nourish oppositional thought and behavior while promoting radical thinking and opposition.

For Marcuse, domination combined economics, politics, technology and social organization. For orthodox Marxists, domination is inscribed in capitalist relations of production and the logic of commodification, and for Heideggerians, Weberians and others it is technology, technological rationality, and/or the coercive logic of political institutions that are the major force of societal domination. Marcuse, by contrast, has a multicausal analysis that ferrets out aspects of domination and resistance throughout the social order. Moreover, Marcuse insisted that contradictions of the system, theorized by classical Marxism as the antagonism of capital and labor, continued to exist, albeit in altered forms. He also constantly cited the unity of production and destruction, highlighting the ways that creation of wealth produced systematic poverty, war, and violence. Hence, for Marcuse there was an "objective ambiguity" to even the seeming achievements of advanced industrial society which had the wealth, science, technology, and industry to alleviate poverty and suffering, but used the instruments of production to

enhance domination, violence, aggression, and injustice. Since this dialectic continues unabated into the twenty-first century, Marcuse's critique of the growing distance between the possibilities of justice, the alleviation of poverty and suffering, and a freer and happier life for all in contrast to growing inequality, intensified violence, and proliferating suffering is as relevant as ever.

In contrast to his Frankfurt School colleagues who were becoming increasingly depoliticized,[5] Marcuse constantly attempted to politicize critical theory and to detect forces of resistance and transformation to contrast forces of domination and repression. After a period of pessimism during the phase of *One-Dimensional Man*, Marcuse was encouraged by the global forces of revolt, centered around the student and antiwar movement, the counterculture, national liberation movements, and what became known as the new social movements. Marcuse sought in these forces the instruments of radical social change that classical Marxism found in the proletariat.

But just as oppositional working-class movements were defeated in the course of the twentieth century and the working class, in Marcuse's view, was integrated into contemporary capitalism, so too, for the most part, were the radical movements of the 1960s defeated or integrated into the triumphant system of global capitalism by the late 1970s.[6] Up until his death in 1979, however, Marcuse continued to seek agents of social change in oppositional social movements and in the most critical and radical forms of art and philosophy.[7] During the 1960s and 1970s, Marcuse's work generated fierce controversy and polemics, and most studies of his work are highly tendentious and frequently sectarian. *One-Dimensional Man* was severely criticized by orthodox Marxists and theorists of various political and theoretical commitments. Despite its negativity, it influenced many in the New Left as it articulated their growing dissatisfaction with both capitalist societies and Soviet communist societies. Moreover, Marcuse himself continued to foster demands for revolutionary change and defended the emerging forces of radical opposition, thus winning him the hatred of establishment forces and the respect of the new radicals.

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5 See Wiggershaus, *The Frankfurt School*, and Kraushaar *Frankfurter Schule und Studentenbebewgung*.

6 See Katsiaficas's balanced study *The Imagination of the New Left* for detailed analyses of the suppression and dissolution of many New Left groups combined with the continuing impact of the movements of the period. For Katsiaficas, the period from the late 1960s to the early 1970s was a "world-historical epoch," similar to the 1848–9, 1907, and 1917–18 upheavals, where forces throughout the world struggled for emancipation and created long-term changes in the political, cultural, and personal spheres.

7 Subsequent volumes in this series will present Marcuse's writings on philosophy and art.

One-Dimensional Man came out as the civil rights movement intensified and an antiwar coalition was beginning to arise against U.S. involvement in Vietnam.[8] Marcuse's sharp critique of the totality of advanced capitalist and state socialist societies won him a large audience among the growing struggles against racism, imperialism, and other forms of oppression. During the 1960s when he gained world renown as Guru of the New Left, Marcuse was probably the most controversial public intellectual of the day, as students painted "Marx, Mao, and Marcuse" on walls, the media debated his work, and intellectuals of every tendency criticized his views. Simply reducing Marcuse to the politics of the 1960s, however, does him a disservice, as it covers over his important contributions to philosophy and social theory, by reducing his thought to his political positions of the day.[9]

Marcuse was not the first Marxist to formulate theories of the integration of the working class and capitalist stabilization, but few on the Left have presented such a theory so bluntly and at the same time vigorously sought alternative forces. Marcuse's dilemma was that he wanted at the same time to remain a Marxist, be loyal to the project of critical theory developed by the Institute for Social Research, be an independent thinker, and be committed to the struggles of the New Left. In view of his writings and activity both before and after the publication of *One-Dimensional Man*, it is clear that he fervently desired *total revolution*, described as a radical upheaval and overthrow of the previously existing order, bringing about wide-ranging changes that would eliminate capitalism and establish a new liberated society and way of life.

Marcuse often stated that his experiences in the German Revolution of 1918 gave him a sense that genuine revolution was characterized by a totality of upheaval – a view articulated at the time by Rosa Luxemburg, whom he greatly admired and who decisively influenced his concept of "revolution."[10] Consequently, with such an expansive vision of radical and systemic transformation, any reforms or social change that did not lead to an overthrow of capitalism only impressed Marcuse as a cosmetic improvement of the existing system. In situations when such radical social upheaval appeared unlikely, Marcuse was bound to become distrustful about the

8 See Marcuse's statement against the Vietnam war in this collection, pp. 43–6.

9 See the volumes in the Routledge *Collected Papers of Herbert Marcuse* series dealing with *Technology, War and Fascism* and *Towards a Critical Theory of Society*; Jürgen Habermas's afterword to the latter volume makes the point that one of Marcuse's enduring legacies is his philosophical and theoretical contributions. Subsequent volumes in this series will deal with Marcuse's philosophical contributions, his aesthetics, his engagement with Freud and psychoanalysis, and his contributions to Marxism. Thus it is a mistake to reduce Marcuse's contributions simply to his writings on the New Left. This volume will accordingly attempt to show how Marcuse's politics are grounded in his theory and how both his theory and politics were an important influence on the New Left that continue to be of theoretical and political value in the contemporary era.

10 See Kellner, *Herbert Marcuse*, Chapter 1.

possibility of progressive social transformation. Nonetheless, he constantly affirms the relevance and importance of the Marxian critique of capitalism, and near the end of *One-Dimensional Man* reaffirms his belief in the superior rationality of socialism:

> the facts are all there which validate the critical theory of this society and of its fatal development: the increasing irrationality of the whole; waste and restriction of productivity; the need for aggressive expansion; the constant threat of war; intensified exploitation; dehumanization. And they all point to the historical alternative: the planned utilization of resources for the satisfaction of vital needs with a minimum of toil, the transformation of leisure into free time, the pacification of the struggle for existence.
>
> (*ODM*, pp. 252–3)

This affirmation of his continued commitment to socialism is followed by a poignant and revealing passage in which Marcuse articulates his anger and regret that there is not in fact a revolutionary situation, or class, to carry through the Marxian theory of revolution:

> the facts and the alternatives are there like fragments which do not connect, or like a world of mute objects without a subject, without the practice which would move these objects in the new direction. Dialectical theory is not refuted, but it cannot offer the remedy. It cannot be positive . . . On theoretical as well as empirical grounds, the dialectical concept pronounces its own hopelessness.
>
> (*ODM*, p. 253)

Whereas, previously, the critical theory of society could count on oppositional forces within the society, disintegrating tendencies that would activate these forces, and the "liberation of *inherent* possibilities" (*ODM*, pp. 254ff.), by the early 1960s Marcuse no longer saw in the early 1960s any possibility for revolutionary forces to explode the society from within, believing that advanced capitalism is so totalitarian and pleasantly repressive that only *absolute refusal* can be sustained as a "truly revolutionary mode of opposition" (*ODM*, pp. 255ff.). Marcuse explicitly renounces here advocacy of any reformism, or piecemeal change, and claims that only non-integrated "outsiders" can be a genuinely revolutionary force (*ODM*, pp. 256–7).

In 1964 Marcuse perceived only a slight chance that the most exploited and persecuted outsiders, in alliance with an enlightened intelligentsia, might mark "the beginning of the end" and signify some hope for social change:

> However, underneath the conservative popular base is the substratum of the outcasts and outsiders, the exploited and persecuted of other races and other colours, the unemployed and the unemployable. They exist outside the democratic process; their life is the most immediate and the most real need for ending intolerable conditions and institutions. Thus their opposition is revolutionary even if their consciousness is not. Their opposition hits the system from without and is therefore not deflected by the system; it is an

> elementary force which violates the rules of the game and, in doing so, reveals it as a rigged game. When they get together and go out into the streets, without arms, without protection, in order to ask for the most primitive civil rights, they know that they face dogs, stones and bombs, jail, concentration camps, even death. Their force is behind every political demonstration for the victims of law and order. The fact that they start refusing to play the game may be the fact which marks the beginning of the end of a period.
>
> (*ODM*, pp. 256–7)

This passage bears witness to the hope that the civil rights struggle signaled the beginning of a period of radicalization and change of consciousness which would create new possibilities for qualitative social change. However, this was merely a hope, and Marcuse thought that there was just a "chance" of a radical coalition forming:

> The chance is that, in this period, the historical extremes may meet again: the most advanced consciousness of humanity and its most exploited force. It is nothing but a chance.
>
> (*ODM*, p. 257)

Hence Marcuse ended *One-Dimensional Man* on a note of pessimism, bordering on resignation and stoical opposition for the sake of loyalty to humanity's highest hopes and reverence towards those who have died in the struggle for those hopes:

> The critical theory of society possesses no concepts which could bridge the gap between the present and its future; holding no promise and showing no success, it remains negative. Thus it wants to remain loyal to those who, without hope, have given and give their life to the *Great Refusal*. At the beginning of the fascist era, Walter Benjamin wrote: "It is only for the sake of those without hope that hope is given to us."
>
> (*ODM*, p. 257)[11]

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11 For Marcuse's appraisal of Benjamin, where he elaborates on this notion, see his "Nachwort" to Walter Benjamin, *Zur Kritik der Gewalt und andere Aufsatze* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1965), pp. 99–106. Marcuse's increasingly embittered critic, Erich Fromm, jumped on this passage and wrote:

> These quotations show how wrong those are who attack or admire Marcuse as a revolutionary leader: for revolution was never based on hopelessness, nor can it ever be. But Marcuse is not even concerned with politics; for if one is not concerned with steps between the present and the future, one does not deal with politics, radical or otherwise. Marcuse is essentially an example of an alienated intellectual, who presents his personal despair as a theory of radicalism.
>
> (Fromm, *The Revolution of Hope* (New York: Bantam, 1968), pp. 8–9)

This quote shows how Fromm tends to take a single passage out of Marcuse's complex theory and build a global critique on the basis of it. Marcuse's later activity and theoretical perspectives show the groundlessness of Fromm's "critique."

Marcuse's concept of the "Great Refusal" and his advocacy of the revolutionary potential of those strata, groups and individuals not integrated in advanced industrial society provide the crux of his oppositional politics at the time. The "Great Refusal" is a highly complex and multidimensional term that signifies at once individual rebellion and opposition to the existing system of domination and oppression; avant-garde artistic revolt that creates visions of another world, a better life and alternative cultural forms and style; and oppositional thought that rejects the dominant modes of thinking and behavior. The term the "Great Refusal" was inspired by André Breton,[12] who defended the total refusal of the institutions, values and way of life in bourgeois society. Marcuse long admired bohemian and countercultural refusals to conform to existing bourgeois society and admired the modernist art that rejected its contemporary society and projected visions of a freer and happier mode of life.

Marcuse's emphasis on individual revolt and refusal is indeed a deeply rooted aspect of his thought. In his early writings, he championed the "radical act" against capitalist society,[13] and although he formulated the concept in Marxian terms, there were elements of Heideggerian individualism in his project which surfaced again in *Eros and Civilization*, *One-Dimensional Man* and other later writings. Some of Marcuse's critics see concepts like the Great Refusal as ineradicable individualist and anarchist dimensions in his thought. Yet Marcuse's emphasis on individual revolt and self-transformation arguably constitutes a vital component of a radical politics which maintains that there can be no meaningful program of social change unless individuals themselves are liberated from capitalist needs and consciousness and acquire "radical needs" for thoroughgoing social change. Instead of seeing Marcuse's emphasis on the Great Refusal as a capitulation to "bourgeois individualism" – or "one-dimensional pessimism" – his use of the concept in *One-Dimensional Man* can be read as a revealing indication of the depth and parameters of the crisis of Marxism in an era when a revolutionary theorist could simply not point to any forces of revolution, or revolutionary class, in the advanced capitalist countries. Marcuse was thus honestly questioning the Marxian theory of revolution during an era in which proletarian revolt was for the most part absent and there were no spectacular revolutionary struggles or forces evident in the advanced capitalist countries during a period of almost unprecedented affluence and relative stabilization.

Almost on the eve of the publication of *One-Dimensional Man*, however, the civil rights struggles that Marcuse alluded to at the end of his

12 On Breton, see his *Manifestoes of Surrealism* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: University of Michigan Press, 1969) and *What is Surrealism?* (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1978). Marcuse makes explicit the connection between Breton, the Great Refusal and the artistic avant-garde in the 1960 preface to *R&R*, pp. x–xi.

13 See Kellner, *Herbert Marcuse*, Chapter 1.

book intensified, and the New Left and antiwar movement began to grow in response to the accelerating American military intervention in Vietnam. At this time, a generation of radicals turned to study Marcuse's *One-Dimensional Man*, which seemed to have denied the possibility of fundamental political change. During the heroic period of the New Left in the 1960s, the book helped to show a generation of political radicals what was wrong with the system they were struggling against, and thus played an important role in the student movement. Marcuse himself quickly rallied to the student activists' cause and in 1965 began modifying some of his theses to take account of the surge of militancy that both surprised and exhilarated him. Yet although the Great Refusal was being acted out on a grand scale, Marcuse's theory had failed to specify in any detail agents of social change or strategies for revolution. Consequently, Marcuse began a desperate search for a radical politics that was to occupy him the rest of his life. This search led him to defend confrontation politics and revolutionary violence and deeply alienated Marcuse from those who advocated more moderate models for social change.[14]

From the mid-1960s to the early 1970s Marcuse made a major effort to repoliticize theory and directed much of his work towards the concerns of the New Left. He traveled widely in Europe and America, speaking at conferences and to a wide variety of audiences, and published many books and articles on the topics of liberation and revolution that became the central focus of his work. In the mid-1960s Marcuse moved from Brandeis University, where he had taught from 1954 to 1965, and began teaching at the University of California at La Jolla.[15] In his post-1965 writings, Marcuse sought forces of revolution that would make such change possible, as well as a revolutionary strategy that they could follow. Since the industrial working class was, in his view, integrated into advanced capitalism, Marcuse sought new radical political agency, successively, in non-integrated outsiders and minorities, in students and intellectuals, in a "new sensibility," and in "catalyst groups". Marcuse supported strategies of militant confrontation politics from about 1965 to 1970, then shifted to the advocacy of political education and the formation of small oppositional groups modeled on workers' councils; during the 1970s he called for a "United Front" politics

14 See "Ethics and Revolution," where Marcuse defines revolution as "the overthrow of a legally established government and constitution by a social class or movement with the aim of altering the social as well as the political structure . . . such a radical and qualitative change implies violence"; in *Ethics and Society*, ed. Richard T. DeGeorge (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1966), p. 134. See also Marcuse, "ReExamination of the Concept of Revolution," *New Left Review*, 56 (July–August 1969) pp. 27ff.

15 Marcuse left Brandeis in 1965 when, after a series of disputes with the university president Abram Sacher, his post-retirement contract was not renewed. See *Atlantic Monthly* (June 1971) p. 74. There is a rich dossier of letters supporting Marcuse's appointment to the University of California, La Jolla in the Marcuse archive.

and the long march through the institutions. Throughout, Marcuse remained faithful to a Marxist tradition of revolutionary socialism represented by Marx, Luxemburg and Korsch, while he increasingly criticized orthodox Marxist-Leninist conceptions of revolution and socialism.

Marcuse was the only member of the original Frankfurt School who enthusiastically supported political activism in the 1960s, gearing his writing, teaching and political interventions towards New Left struggles. The result was a remarkable series of writings, from "Repressive Tolerance" in 1965 up until his death in 1979, which attempted to articulate the theory and practice of the New Left while repoliticizing critical theory. Some key examples of texts that articulate the theory and politics of the New Left and that could inspire oppositional theory and politics for the contemporary era are collected in this volume.

Marcuse's political involvement in New Left politics won him notoriety as a guru of the student movement, thereby creating a heated political-intellectual situation that made it extremely difficult to appraise his works dispassionately and to measure his larger contributions to critical theory. Caught up in the political debates of the day, Marcuse's ideas were subject to both fierce polemics and fervent espousal. Moreover, he himself frequently revised his views, developing new revolutionary perspectives, while his critics were attacking his previous positions. Marcuse's political writings thus theorized the vicissitudes of the New Left and both reflected and commented on its development. With the passage of time, it is now possible to gain the necessary distance and perspective to evaluate critically Marcuse's writings from 1965 to 1979 and to analyze his theoretical and political positions in relation to New Left and other political movements of the day.

MARCUSE'S ADVOCACY OF CONFRONTATION POLITICS: "REPRESSIVE TOLERANCE"

In 1965, Marcuse staunchly defends confrontation politics in his provocative essay, "Repressive Tolerance," published in the book *A Critique of Pure Tolerance* (hereafter *CPT*). Liberalism had historically advocated tolerance and pluralism as dominant values and Marcuse and two friends, Barrington Moore and Robert Paul Wolff, undertook to write essays appraising the continued validity of the concept in the context of the then increasing violence in contemporary U.S. society, the repression and murder of blacks and progressive political leaders, the escalating of the Vietnam war and imperialist violence on a global scale, and the many regressive features apparent in supposed "advanced capitalist societies."

Marcuse's politically charged essay "Repressive Tolerance" was criticized harshly for its obvious partisanship, violating the academic taboo of neutrality, as it called for "intolerance toward prevailing policies, attitudes,

opinions, and the extension of tolerance to policies, attitudes, and opinions which are outlawed and suppressed" (*CPT*, p. 81).[16] In effect, Marcuse proposed intolerance towards the established society and its racism, militarism, and imperialism (the Vietnam war was beginning to be an explosive issue), as well as towards its waste and planned obsolescence, advertising, environmental destruction, pollution, and the other "intolerable" phenomena that Marcuse was criticizing. His stated goal was the elimination of violence and the reduction of repression, which he argued was prevented by "violence and suppression on a global scale" (*CPT*, p. 82).

Marcuse criticized imperialist violence in Indo-China, Latin America, Africa and Asia, as well as the harsh repression of oppositional minorities in the centers of Western capitalism. These racist and imperialist policies "should not be tolerated because they are impeding, if not destroying, the chances of creating an existence without fear and misery" (*CPT*, p. 83). Marcuse's essay responds to the contemporary repression of blacks and civil rights workers in the south, the scare of nuclear annihilation in the Cuban missile crisis, escalation of the Vietnam war and U.S. support of military dictatorships and repressive regimes throughout the world, French atrocities in Algeria, and Goldwater's presidential candidacy, which together stirred up atavistic sentiments on the right and increased repression and destructiveness throughout the capitalist world. Marcuse maintains that if the society is thoroughly irrational and destructive, then it must be militantly opposed and its excesses and negativities must no longer be tolerated.[17]

Basing his argument on Justice Holmes's position that civil rights could be suspended if society faced a "clear and present danger," Marcuse claims

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16 Right-wing critics had a field day with "Repressive Tolerance," quoting Marcuse out of context and labeling him an "elitist authoritarian," "nihilist" and worse. See Eliseo Vivas, *Contra Marcuse* (New Rochelle, N.Y.: Arlington House, 1971), pp. 171–7, who calls Marcuse "the Torquemada of the left" and "an intellectual termite" with a "Nazi mind." Hysterical conservative attacks continued on Marcuse for decades, including Allan Bloom who in *The Closing of the American Mind* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987) blamed Marcuse and Mick Jagger for the excesses of contemporary life! In *The Shadow of History* (New York: The Free Press, 1998), Alan Kors and Harvey Silverglate blame Marcuse for inspiring a totalitarian "political correctness" movement in the university. For more intelligent critical discussions of the essay, see David Spitz, "Pure Tolerance," *Dissent*, 13 (September–October 1966) pp. 510–25; Michael Walzer's critique of Spitz and Marcuse, "On the Nature of Freedom," *Dissent*, 13 (November– December 1966), which contains Spitz's reply (pp. 725–39); and Elinor Langer, "Notes for Next Time," *Working Papers for a New Society*, 1, 3 (Fall 1973) pp. 48–83.

17 For an indication of the gravity of the situation to which Marcuse was responding, and the dangers of nuclear extinction, see Robert Kennedy's memoir of the Cuban missile crisis, *Thirteen Days* (New York: Norton, 1969). Other accounts of the period, which render plausible Marcuse's call for intolerance against the policies of the existing society, include Bruce Miroff, *Pragmatic Illusions* (New York: McKay, 1976) and Geoffrey Hodgson, *America in our Time* (New York: Doubleday, 1977).

that militaristic and repressive policies do constitute a "clear and present danger." For Marcuse, advocacy of war and calls for the suppression of dissenting radicals constitute threats to civil liberties and even to human survival that could no longer be tolerated (*CPT*, pp. 109ff.). Not only free speech and academic freedom per se are at stake in "Repressive Tolerance," but also whether increasing racism, militarism and repression should be tolerated or actively opposed. Marcuse argues that "pure tolerance" and neutrality only strengthen the system, and impede liberation and the reduction of violence. Since the mainstream media are controlled by conservative corporate forces, the people are indoctrinated in advance and are immunized against oppositional ideas (*CPT*, pp. 94ff.).

Hence the need for radical means to break through the distorted universe of thought and to bring the public to an awareness of the dangers of aggressive and brutal policies, which were currently being tolerated. Such an activity of enlightenment aiming at radical change "could only be envisaged as a result of large-scale pressure which would amount to an upheaval" (*CPT*, p. 101). Refusal of tolerance could be translated into resistance to the war, draft, and the military, strikes and boycotts, civil disobedience, marches on Washington, occupation of universities and factories, and intolerance towards the representatives of the policies opposed.

It is questionable, however, whether it is a correct radical position to advocate an "intolerance thesis" to justify confrontation politics. The "clear and present danger" argument (as a justification to repress "intolerable" ideas) is often used as an excuse to repress radicals. Therefore, it seems that radicals should defend free speech and civil liberties, while at the same time urging militant struggle against obviously dangerous and repugnant practices and policies (such as imperialist wars, racism, brutality towards women and children, etc.). "Intolerance" towards the worst aspects of imperialist capitalism, bureaucratic communism, or other oppressive political systems or groups may well be justified or necessary, but it should not be formulated in any way that suggests the suppression of free speech, for such arguments often play into the hands of authorities who are all too eager to suppress radicals and tend as well to alienate people from what is often perceived as the "authoritarian Left."

Thus, radicals should arguably take the position of Rosa Luxemburg, who urged the defense of free speech as the freedom to speak differently, to dissent, thus defending unrestricted communication and the development of an open and lively "public sphere."[18] Nonetheless, given the tight control of the means of communication by the established society at the time, Marcuse was probably correct that confrontation politics were the most effective

18 See Rosa Luxemburg, *The Russian Revolution* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: University of Michigan Press, 1962) for her defense of civil liberties. On the concept of a "proletarian public sphere," see Oskar Negt and Alexander Kluge, *Offentlichkeit und Erfahrung* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1972).

means for radicals to express their dissent from the prevailing policies and their opposition to the dominant institutions.

Marcuse's position on violence was even more controversial. Put simply, Marcuse opposed the violence of the established society and supported violence to overthrow it. He argues that "in the advanced centers of civilization violence prevails" (*CPT*, p. 102) in police brutality, in prisons and mental institutions, against racial minorities and women, and in increasingly brutal forms against the people of underdeveloped countries who dare to struggle for their liberation against imperialist domination. Marcuse makes distinctions between the structural violence embedded in the system and the violence that would eliminate systemic violence, between reactionary and revolutionary violence, and between violence of the oppressors and the oppressed. In his view, applying standards of pacifism and non-violence to the struggles of the oppressed against their oppressors serves "the cause of actual violence by weakening the protest against it" (*CPT*, p. 103).

The capstone of his argument is the insistence that individuals must choose sides between Establishment or Opposition, and people must make every effort to distinguish between true and false, right and wrong, and to oppose militantly what are perceived as false ideas and erroneous policies. To a generation of intellectuals nurtured on relativism, ambiguity and neutrality, this was a difficult pill to swallow, and when students drew the line and told their teachers, "either you're with us or against us," confused academics turned on Marcuse and accused him of corrupting the youth. Marcuse firmly committed himself to the New Left, siding with the militants. He supported his position by arguing that historically the Left had furthered progress, that violence emanating from the rebellion of the oppressed had reduced injustice, cruelty and war, while increasing freedom, equality and justice (*CPT*, pp. 99ff.).

In short, the Left had furthered the cause of "progress in civilization" (*CPT*, p. 107). As examples Marcuse cited the English civil war, the French Revolution and the Chinese and Cuban Revolutions (but not the American or Russian Revolutions!).[19] He argued that violence that had come from the ruling classes had not aided progress, but had instead created a depressing history of oppression and a long series of dynastic and imperialist wars, culminating in fascism (*CPT*, pp. 108f.). Marcuse concluded that the ruling

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19 Marcuse cites Fanon and Sartre (*CPT*, pp. 103–4), whose advocacy of revolutionary violence against violent oppressors no doubt influenced him. See Franz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (London: Penguin, 1967) with an introduction by Sartre, and Jean-Paul Sartre, *On Genocide* (Boston, Mass.: Beacon Press, 1971). For critiques of these theories of revolutionary violence, see Mohandas Karmarmchand Gandhi, *Gandhi on Non-Violence* (New York: Norton, 1965) and Gil Green, *The New Radicalism* (New York: International Publishers, 1971). Marcuse elaborates his defence of revolutionary violence in "Ethics and Revolution" and "The Problem of Violence and the Radical Opposition," the latter collected in this volume, pp. 65–86.

classes have historically "tightened and streamlined the continuum of repression" (*CPT*, p. 109) and that to perceive this and to motivate people to fight for a different history requires radical re-education and a change of political consciousness to break through the prevailing distorted consciousness and to shift the balance of public opinion from right to left.

DIALECTICS OF LIBERATION AND REVOLUTION

Marcuse's critique of pure tolerance, his insistence that individuals must take a pro or con stance concerning the existing society and its policies, and his advocacy of discriminating tolerance and militant opposition to oppression, made his ideas the center of heated debate. At this point Marcuse also turned to a resolutely revolutionary socialist perspective. This move is recorded in many articles, including his 1967 Berlin lectures, the 1967 London talk "Liberation from the Affluent Society," *An Essay on Liberation* (1968), and other texts collected in this volume.[20]

Since the mid-1960s, Marcuse had criticized the U.S. intervention in Vietnam as imperialist, a position he sketched out in an article collected in this reader, "The Inner Logic of American Policy in Vietnam" (pp. 43–6) presented at a U.C.L.A. Teach-In on March 25, 1966. In an April 1966 conference on "Karl Marx in the Modern World" Marcuse asserted that Vietnam should not be considered as an isolated entity, but as part of a world capitalist system in which the United States was fighting for domination and to control markets and sources of cheap raw materials. He posited the National Liberation Movements against capitalist domination as resistance to global capitalism that contained a "revolutionary potential" and might act as a "major catalyst" in future struggles.[21]

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20 In works like *EC*, *SM* and *ODM*, Marcuse's commitment to socialism is muted and is often expressed elliptically. In his post-1965 writings, however, he articulates his commitment to socialism much more explicitly. Marcuse constantly says that the only alternative to capitalism is socialism and openly proclaims himself a socialist and Marxist: see his *Five Lectures* (Boston, Mass.: Beacon Press, 1970) (hereafter *5L*), pp. 67ff. and 80ff.; *EL*, *passim*; and a 1968 lecture given in commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of the *Guardian*, where he says, "I believe that the alternative is socialism," and affirms his solidarity with the struggle for socialism. See Kellner, *Herbert Marcuse*, Chapter 10, for more detailed discussion of his concept of socialism. There is also a tone of revolutionary buoyancy in his post-1966 writings that first appears, appropriately, in the 1966 preface to a new Beacon Press edition of *Eros and Civilization* and his Hans Meyerhoff U.C.L.A. memorial lecture "Beyond One-Dimensional Man," both collected in *Towards a Critical Theory of Society*.

21 See M.S. Handler, "Marxist Views Vietnam in Context of Capitalism," *New York Times* (April 29, 1966). Evidently, Marcuse's talk and the *Times* report caught the attention of the F.B.I., which started once again following his activity and producing a large dossier on him.

In May 1966, Marcuse participated in a conference organized by German S.D.S. (Sozialistischer Deutscher Studentenbund [German Socialist Students]) on "Vietnam – Analysis of a Model."[22] In addition to denouncing U.S. policy in Vietnam, Marcuse raised the question of whether a non-capitalist form of industrialization in the developing world could avoid the "repressive, exploitative industrialization of early capitalism." Such a possibility is blocked, he suggests, by the capitalist countries that attempt to prohibit development of an alternative socialist model and the fact that developing countries depend on dominant Western and Eastern societies for capital and technology that promote bureaucratic and nondemocratic industrial models. Yet the potential exists in Third World developing countries, he believed, to promote an alternative model of socialism and Marcuse concluded that "the militant Liberation movements in the developing countries represent the strongest potential force for radical transformation."

As the 1960s progressed, Marcuse would continue to reflect upon the potential for liberation in Third World revolutionary movements, the possibilities of solidarity between those organizations and radical forces in the highly industrialized countries, and the potential for emancipatory social transformation in the New Left, student antiwar movement, feminism, black power, and other social forces of the era. Marcuse was indeed an exemplary public intellectual in the 1960s and 1970s. He had supported the civil rights movement and was an early participant in the antiwar and student movement, and continued to speak out and demonstrate against injustices up until his death in 1979. In turn, New Left struggles and the emergence of oppositional social movements of a diverse range encouraged Marcuse to focus on articulating oppositional forces and potentials for radical change, strategies of transformation, and the goals of liberation, returning him to the utopian and emancipatory themes that he had sketched out in the 1950s in *Eros and Civilization*.

Summer 1967 was busy and eventful for Marcuse. He traveled to Berlin where beginning on July 12 he participated in a four-day event organized by the German S.D.S., providing lectures on "The End of Utopia" and "The Problem of Violence in the Opposition" and participating in panel discussions on "Morals and Politics in the Transitional Society" and opposition to the Vietnam war. The students in Berlin were in a high state of politicization, after a student demonstrating against the Shah of Iran had been shot and killed on June 2, and there was a series of demonstrations protesting this police brutality. Moreover, leaders of the German student movement, such as Rudi Dutschke, had indicated their fondness for Marcuse's ideas that

22 See "Vietnam – Analyse eines Exempels" in *Neue Kritik*, 7, 36–37 (July–August 1966) pp. 30–40, and Kraushaar, *Frankfurter Schule und Studentenbebewgung*, vol. 2, pp. 205–9.

they interpreted as legitimation for the sort of radical politics they were practicing.[23]

Marcuse's lectures both sketched out a radical alternative in "The End of Utopia" and legitimized radical student politics in "The Problem of Violence in the Opposition" where he begins by emphasizing that the student movement is an important global force of transformation, but not "an immediate revolutionary force." The student opposition is part of the New Left, which Marcuse defines as neo-Marxist, influenced by Maoism and Third World revolutionary movements, and opposed to the Old Left that is Marxist "in the orthodox sense." The New Left includes neo-anarchist tendencies, is anti-authoritarian, and is not bound to the working class as the sole revolutionary force.

Marcuse characterizes the New Left broadly as including intellectuals, groups from the civil rights movements, and youth groups, including hippies. The New Left rejects the forces of domination, exploitation, and conformity that Marcuse described in *One-Dimensional Man* and includes both outsiders and underprivileged groups that are not fully integrated into advanced industrial society and privileged strata that rebel against it. Focusing on the student opposition, Marcuse describes what in the existing society it opposes, what forms it takes, and what its prospects are. In Marcuse's view it is the total opposition of the New Left to the system's imperialism, racism, sexism, and manifold forms of oppression that distinguishes it, as does the multiple forms of resistance it advocates ranging from peaceful non-violent sit-ins and demonstrations to militant opposition to institutions and practices of violence within the system itself.

Repeating his distinction between revolutionary violence against the violence of the system and systemic violence presented in *A Critique of Pure Tolerance*, Marcuse affirmed once again a "natural right" to resistance. This conception was sharply criticized by conservatives, liberals, and others. In the face of escalating violence by the student movement in the years to come, that sometimes used Marcusean ideas to legitimize it, Marcuse later modified his ultra-left discourse on violence and talked more of a "long march

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23 On Marcuse's 1967 trip to Berlin, see the account in *Der Spiegel*, 25 (1967) pp. 103–4, and the lectures that were later published in *Five Lectures* and a 1980 Verlag Neue Kritik edition of *Das Ende der Utopie* (Frankfurt, 1980). For an account of Marcuse's less successful visit to Berlin in 1968, see Melvin J. Lasky, "Revolution Diary," *Encounter*, 31, 2 (August 1968) pp. 6–8. Documents, letters, and other texts of the era are collected in the three volumes edited by Kraushaar, *Frankfurter Schule und Studentenbebewgung*. Wiggershaus in *The Frankfurt School* provides detailed documentation of the relationships between Marcuse, Horkheimer, Adorno, and Habermas and their complex interactions with the German Left. While Wiggershaus provides an excellent contextualization and some sharp critique of the relation of leading Frankfurt School theorists to the student movement, he arguably ultimately downplays the affinities between Marcuse and the German radical movements and the glaring differences between Marcuse and Adorno and Horkheimer.

through the institutions." He began in the late 1960s emphasizing the importance of education and organization, and arguing against violence that did not further social progress and that brought forces of repression down on the movement.

Right after the Berlin conference, Marcuse traveled to London to participate in the "Dialectics of Liberation" conference. In his contribution "Liberation from the Affluent Society," included in this volume, he affirmed his commitments to both the New Left and the counterculture, arguing that a "new sensibility" and alternative ways of life are necessary to transcend the dominant modes of oppression and conformity in the established society. The Congress of the Dialectics of Liberation attempted to bring together major political theorists like Marcuse and *Monthly Review* editor Paul Sweezy with political activists like Stokely Carmichael, representatives of the counterculture like Living Theater director Julian Beck and poet Allan Ginsberg, and spokespeople for the antipsychiatry movement like David Cooper and R.D. Laing, who were instrumental in organizing the event. Held in the Roundhouse at Chalk Farm, London, from July 15 to July 30, 1967, it brought together a vast number of intellectuals, activists, and counterculture types for lectures, debate, poetry, music, films, and other cultural events.

Marcuse was in a session led off by a Living Theater performance, mantras by Allan Ginsberg, a rousing affirmation of "Black Power" by Stokely Carmichael followed by Marcuse's talk "Liberation from the Affluent Society." The session included intense political debate, and poetry and performance art, combining the cultural and political, participatory and theoretical. Key essays were published the next year in London and in a 1969 Collier Books paper edition titled *To Free a Generation!*, a label that accurately described the ambitions of the conference and many of the participants.

Marcuse's contribution vividly synthesized New Left political perspectives with affirmations of the counterculture. Marcuse opened with an invocation of flower power and defined the dialectics of liberation as "involving the mind and the body, liberation involving [the] entire human existence." He quickly turned to Marx, however, identifying himself with Marxian socialism, but of a kind that advocates more radical qualitative social change, using the technological capacities of the affluent society to liberate individuals from socially unnecessary labor, repression, and domination. Socialism was projected by Marcuse as a complete negation of the existing society and a rupture with previous history that would provide an alternative mode of free and happy existence with less work, more play, and the reduction of social repression.

This unabashedly utopian notion articulated counterculture desire for an entirely new society and way of life with alternative values, sensibilities, relationships, and culture. Yet Marcuse used Marxist terminology to critique existing capitalist societies and insisted that socialist revolution was the most

viable way to create an emancipated society, thus identifying with the perspectives of the politicos at the conference such as Stokely Carmichael and Paul Sweezy. Genuine socialism for Marcuse, however, depended on oppositional needs, values, and a new sensibility that would produce a higher and better form of society than the one based on labor, repression, and social domination. Creating a freer, happier, and more just society, however, required education, political organization, and solidarity with Third World revolutionary struggles and movements for radical change within the affluent society itself.

The year 1968 has been widely celebrated as the year of revolution and Marcuse was excited by the worldwide student movement that seized universities from Berkeley to Columbia and that culminated in the May 1968 upheaval in Paris where students and workers threatened the existing French system and which Marcuse observed at first hand (see the testimony collected in this volume, "Reflections on the French Revolution," pp. 46–52). For Marcuse, the Paris events of May 1968 demonstrated how students could spark spontaneous revolutionary action that could bring the entire society to a standstill. In Marcuse's view, the French student protest movement, like the one in the United States and elsewhere, represents

> a total protest, not only against specific evils and against specific short-comings, but at the same time, a protest against the entire system of values, against the entire system of objectives, against the entire system of performances required and practiced in the established society. In other words, it is a refusal to continue to accept and abide by the culture of the established society. They reject not only the economic conditions, not only the political institutions, but the entire system of values which they feel is rotten to the core.
>
> And in this sense I think one can indeed speak of a cultural revolution in the sense that the protest is directed against the entire cultural establishment, including the morality of the existing society.[24]

Such radical affirmation of the student protest movement and its call for a total revolution necessarily alienated Marcuse from his former Frankfurt School colleagues Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno. Tension and differences over the Cold War had already emerged with Marcuse exchanging letters in the 1950s and 1960s criticizing their anticommunist views.[25] But in 1968–9, relations became more strained as Frankfurt University students occupied offices, and Adorno was severely criticized for calling in the police and more generally distancing himself from the student revolts that Marcuse embraced. In a 1969 exchange of letters, concluded by Adorno's sudden death in August 1969, Marcuse made clear that he sympathized with the student radicals and was disappointed by Adorno and Horkheimer's harsh

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24 See "Reflections on the French Revolution" (pp. 46–52). For Marcuse's concept of cultural revolution, see his study with that title in *Towards a Critical Theory of Society* (pp. 203–24).

25 See *Towards a Critical Theory of Society*, pp. 212–18.

critique of the student movement. The exchange of letters documents the growing distance and signals that Marcuse alone, of his former Institute colleagues, was prepared to embrace the new revolutionary movements.[26]

MARCUSE AS REVOLUTIONIST: *AN ESSAY ON LIBERATION*

Marcuse's gloom about the demise of revolutionary opposition is dispelled in his late 1960s writings, which glow with revolutionary optimism. His perspectives, articulated in countless lectures, interviews, and articles, some of which we have selected for this collection, are summed up in his incandescent text *An Essay on Liberation*.[27] Marcuse saw new prospects for revolution, since the "outsiders" and relatively few practitioners of the Great Refusal had expanded to a growing opposition to the global domination of corporate capitalism (*EL*, p. vii). He maintained that the "threatening homogeneity has been loosening up and an alternative is beginning to break into the repressive continuum" (*EL*, p. viii). The alternative is liberation:

> an emergence of different goals and values, different is – aspirations in the men and women who resist and deny the massive exploitative power of corporate capitalism even in its most comfortable and liberal realizations.
>
> (*EL*, p. vii)

An Essay on Liberation is a highly charged work that expresses the ambience of revolutionary utopianism in the 1960s. Its close connection with its historical situation constituted the text's relevance and interest, but also accounts for its shortcomings. At the time of its publication *An Essay on Liberation* was enthusiastically read as an affirmation of total revolution; it at once exhilarated radical students and shocked the academic

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26 See the documents collected in Kraushaar and the Introduction to and translation of key Adorno and Marcuse letters by Esther Leslie, "Correspondence on the German Student Movement," *New Left Review*, 233 (January–February 1999) pp. 118–36. Horkheimer was especially critical of Marcuse, presenting him as a dangerous example of the radical revolutionary; see Horkheimer, "Die Pseudoradicalen," "Marcuses Vereinfachung," and "Herbert Marcuses Argumente" in Kraushaar, vol. 2, pp. 237 and 285–7. Yet it is interesting that Adorno wrote an especially affirmative letter in support of Marcuse when efforts were made to fire him from the University of California at San Diego in 1968; see Adorno's letter that we include in this volume (pp. 138–9).

27 See Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation* (Boston, Mass.: Beacon Press, 1969) (hereafter *EL*). Interestingly, letters in the Marcuse archive indicate that throughout 1968 and up until shortly before its publication *EL* was to be called *Beyond One-Dimensional Man*, signaling the shift in Marcuse's work from his 1964 book to his late 1960s writings. A formal submission of the manuscript (no date) suggested a title *Beyond One-Dimensional Man: A Contribution to the Debate on Prospects for Liberation* (thanks to Beacon Press for making available material from Marcuse's editor Arnold Tovell's archive).

establishment.[28] Marcuse unabashedly affirms the counterculture and student movement as the manifestation of a *new sensibility*, producing "a political practice of methodical disengagement from the refusal of the Establishment aiming at a radical transvaluation of values" (*EL*, p. 6).[29]

The new sensibility "expresses the ascent of the life instincts over aggressiveness and guilt" (*EL*, p. 23), and contains a negation of the needs that sustain the present system of domination and the negation of the values on which they are based.[30] Instead of the need for repressive performance and competition, the new sensibility posits the need for meaningful work, gratification and community; instead of the need for aggression and destructive productivity, it affirms love and the preservation of the environment; it refuses obscene consumerism, waste and planned obsolescence, and calls for a simpler, more humane life; against the horrors and ugliness of capitalist industrialization, it claims a need for beauty and sensuousness. It translates these values into

> a practice that involves a break with the familiar, the routine ways of seeing, hearing, feeling, understanding things so that the organism may become receptive to the potential forms of a non-aggressive, non-exploitative world.
> (*EL*, p. 6)

This total refusal of the dominant societal needs, values and institutions represents a radical break with the entirety of the society's institutions, culture and lifestyle.

The new sensibility, Marcuse believes, is a radically anticapitalist political force and a catalyst of revolutionary change. It contains a subversion of the needs on which capitalism depends for its very existence and produces new needs that represent the negation of capitalism. Marcuse totally affirms those bearers of the new sensibility which he finds in the New Left and counterculture as portents of a possible liberation from the capitalist warfare state. Throughout the book, Marcuse champions the student movement and

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28 I recall vividly the excitement with which the student movement received this book. See Palmier, *Herbert Marcuse et la nouvelle gauche*, and Johann Pali Arnason, *Von Marcuse zu Marx* (Neuwied and Berlin: Luchterhand, 1971) for the European reaction. The Right was again outraged by this book, violently attacking it in a spate of vitriolic reviews. See John Sparrow, "The Gospel of Hate," *National Review* (October 21, 1969); Sidney Hook, *The NY Times Book Review* (April 20, 1969); Lewis Feuer, *Book World* (February 23, 1969); and Vivas, *Contra Marcuse*, for some choice violent and intemperate attacks that chide Marcuse for being violent and intemperate.

29 On the historical roots of the "new sensibility" in the beatnik generation, civil rights movement and 1960s counterculture, see Morris Dickstein, *Gates of Eden* (New York: Basic Books, 1977). For an unabashed celebration of the "new sensibility" as a revolutionary form of consciousness, see Charles Reich, *The Greening of America* (New York: Random House, 1970) and the collection of reviews of this book, including a critical essay by Marcuse included in this volume, *The Con III Controversy* (New York: Pocket Books, 1971).

30 See *5L*, p. 67.

youth culture that was horrifying the established society (see *EL*, pp. 7ff., 34ff., 49ff., and 79ff.).

Following the publication of *An Essay on Liberation*, Marcuse modified his formerly positive evaluation of the counterculture, as well as the political use of obscenity, rock music, guerrilla theatre, and "flower power."[31] There is no doubt that he was carried away by the enthusiasm generated by the struggles of the 1960s to the extent that he exaggerated the importance of the student movement and diffuse counterculture revolts as agents of revolutionary change. However, it should be noted that even at the height of his militant enthusiasm, Marcuse never said that the counterculture and new sensibility were a revolutionary force. He claimed that the emergence of a new sensibility is encouraging because "it signifies a total break with the dominant needs of repressive society" (*5L*, p. 69); it is characteristic of a state of disintegration and thus indicates cracks in the system, a possible breaking through the continuum of domination; and it is a catalyst for change which may play a revolutionary role in connection with other forces, as it is contagious and may spread throughout society.

Moreover, Marcuse does not see any substantial mass support for the New Left in the working class and continues to stress that a revolutionary upheaval is unlikely unless there is an acute economic crisis to politicize the masses. Over and over in essays, lectures and interviews Marcuse indicates that in his view there can be no revolution without the working class, and never claims to see evidence that the working class is responsive to the New Left.[32] He concludes that advanced capitalist societies are in a pre-revolutionary situation and that radical change requires intensified work in political education: "Historically, it is again the period of enlightenment prior to material change – a period of education, but education which turns into praxis: demonstration, confrontation, rebellion" (*EL*, p. 53).

Contrary to many interpretations of Marcuse's position, his evaluation of the "subverting forces in transition" in *An Essay on Liberation* does not claim that blacks, students and the counterculture are the new agents of

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31 There was some ambivalence as to the status Marcuse assigned to the "new sensibility" and New Left groups-in-revolt in the revolutionary process. On one hand, he argued:

> The social agents of revolution – and this is orthodox Marx – are formed only in the process of transformation itself, and one cannot count on a situation in which the revolutionary forces are there ready-made, so to speak, when the revolutionary movement begins.
>
> (*5L*, p. 64)

On the other hand, in his more enthusiastic moments in *EL*, it seemed as if the new sensibility might be a new revolutionary subject, or at least a "catalyst" producing a new revolutionary subject (*EL*, pp. 23ff., 52f.).

32 *EL*, pp. 16, 53–6. See the interview with Marcuse in the *New York Times Magazine* (October 27, 1968) where he discusses spontaneity and organization, students and workers (included in this volume, pp. 115ff.).

revolution; instead he offers a rather well-balanced account of the political potential and limitations of these groups. He saw radical possibilities in ghetto uprisings and the emergence of black power, but he carefully analyzed contradictions "which were defusing the revolutionary potential of ghetto revolt and the black liberation movement" (*EL*, pp. 57ff.). Likewise, he was restrained in his evaluation of the radical potential of the student movement (*EL*, pp. 59ff.).

From about 1965 to 1972, the student movement in the United States and throughout the world engaged in a series of spectacular actions which made it appear that a new revolutionary force was in the making. Marcuse's *An Essay on Liberation* was written at the peak of this radicalization period and was concluded shortly after workers in France joined with students in a remarkable show of revolutionary zeal and solidarity. At this time, students all over the world were taking over universities, demonstrating and fighting against the Vietnam war and the military machine that was waging it, driving Lyndon Johnson to resign and revitalizing leftist rhetoric while nourishing hopes for socialist revolution. During this tumultuous period, Marcuse was proclaimed guru of the student movement, and he indefatigably defended and advised students and movement radicals.

Stressing the strategic role of students and the university in society, Marcuse noted that the student rebellion poses a threat to the system which depends on them to provide administrators, scientists, lawyers, teachers and the like to keep it going (*EL*, pp. 59ff.). Their opposition to a university system that produces society's elite, combined with demands for radical reforms, touched on a very vulnerable pillar of the society that would be increasingly dependent on education and intellectual skills. Most frightening to the establishment powers was the total character of the refusal, which was at once political and moral. For the radical students' revulsion not only was aimed at the society's worst imperialist and racist excesses, but also targeted the university, middle-class culture, decaying liberalism, abstract parliamentary democracy, and fetishistic consumerism – a total rebellion that struck at the foundations of society. But Marcuse made clear to students in Berlin in 1967 that:

> I have never said that the student opposition today is by itself a revolutionary force, nor have I seen the hippies as the "heir of the proletariat"! Only the national liberation fronts of the developing nations are today in a revolutionary struggle.
>
> (*5L*, p. 93)

Marcuse's revolutionary hopes were based on the belief that Third World liberation struggles were weakening the global framework of capitalism and were shifting the balance of power from capitalism to socialism. His argument was that:

> by virtue of the evolution of imperialism, the developments in the Third World pertain to the dynamic of the First World, and the forces of change in the

> former are not extraneous to the latter . . . The National Liberation Fronts threaten the life line of imperialism; they are not only a material but also an ideological catalyst of change. The Cuban revolution and the Viet Cong have demonstrated: it can be done; there is a morality, a humanity, a will, and a faith which can resist and deter the gigantic technical and economic force of capitalist expansion. More than the "socialist humanism" of the early Marx, this violent solidarity in defence, this elemental socialism in action, has given form and substance to the radicalism of the New Left; in this ideological respect too, the external revolution has become an essential part of the opposition within the capitalist metropoles.
>
> (*EL*, pp. 80, 81–2)[33]

Marcuse had an expansive globalized view of the current world capitalist system and the emergent forces of opposition within it. In his view, Third World revolutionary movements threaten to cut off markets, sources of raw materials, a cheap labor supply and super profits, and by their success spur on other revolutionary movements (the core of truth in the domino theory!), including the opposition at home. He included the so-called "Third World" within the global space and dynamics of capitalism, arguing that these areas and forces are not external to the capitalist sphere. They are an essential part of its global space of exploitation, they are areas and peoples that this system cannot allow to let go and shift into that other orbit (of socialism or communism), because it can survive only if its expansion is not blocked by any superior power. The National Liberation Movements are thus expressive of the internal contradictions of global capitalism and a threat to its global domination.

Marcuse stresses that the Third World revolutionary movements alone will not destroy global capitalism:

> The National Liberation movements in the Third World are not by themselves a revolutionary force strong enough to overthrow advanced capitalism as a system. Such a revolutionary force can be expected only from a confluence of forces of change in the centres of advanced capitalism with those in the Third World. To bring this about is really a most difficult task.
>
> (*5L*, p. 95)

Marcuse was aware that synchronization between revolutionary struggles in the Third World and the advanced capitalist countries is extremely difficult, but insisted that revolutionaries everywhere had common interests that were eliciting a growing solidarity (see *EL*, pp. 79f.). He himself maintained solidarity both with New Left struggles and Third World liberation movements, criticizing the Soviet Union and European Communist parties from

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33 Many of the New Left were attracted to the Third World revolutionary theories of Fanon, Mao, Debray, Castro, Guevara and others; Marcuse was often associated with this tendency; see the critique of this "Third Worldism" in Robert E. Wood, "Rethinking Third World Revolutions," *Socialist Review*, 45 (May–June 1979) pp. 159ff.

the Left, arguing that they were not sufficiently revolutionary.[34] Unlike his analysis in *One-Dimensional Man*, which offered little hope for radical change, Marcuse now argued that a crisis was possible, and in essay after essay called attention to the contradictions in capitalism which could erupt into a crisis, thus emphasizing the weaknesses and disintegrating factors in the system that were portents of the possibility of radical change.

These provocative positions evoked the full wrath of the system against Marcuse, who was subjected to intense media critique, pressures from right-wing groups on the University of California to fire him, and threats on his life. In 1968, a campaign began, supported by the American Legion and other right-wing groups, to revoke Marcuse's university contract. In July 1968, Marcuse received a death threat from the Ku Klux Klan and went into hiding before embarking on a planned trip to Europe; at other times, devoted students would stand guard at his house. Marcuse was now achieving renown as one of the United States' greatest professors, who was unusually revered by his students – if not by all his colleagues and the public. His students included many radicals, and several have written appreciative tributes to his effectiveness as a teacher.[35]

Near the end of his summer 1968 Europe trip, Marcuse gave an interview "Marcuse Defines his New Left Line" to Paris *Express* that was translated and published in October 1968 in the *New York Times* and is collected in this volume (pp. 115–34). Marcuse discusses here the paradox that a relatively unknown German-American philosopher was suddenly affirmed

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34 From the late 1960s on, Marcuse significantly accelerated and radicalized his critique of Soviet Marxism and orthodox Communist parties from his more restrained criticism in *Soviet Marxism* (New York: Columbia University Press, second edition 1988); for commentary on the book see Kellner, *Herbert Marcuse*, Chapter 7, and Peter Marcuse, "Marcuse on Real Existing Socialism: A Hindsight Look at *Soviet Marxism*," in Bokina and Lukes, *From the New Left to the Next Left*, pp. 57–72. No doubt the continuing stifling repression in the Soviet bloc, the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia, and the reformist nature of Communist parties in the West, together with the emergence of new socialist forces, led him to re-evaluate Soviet Marxism. See *EL*, pp. 54f.

35 On Marcuse's 1967 trip to Berlin, see the account in *Der Spiegel*, 25 (1967) pp. 103–4, and the lectures that were later published in *5L*. For an account of Marcuse's less successful visit to Berlin in 1968, see Melvin J. Lasky, "Revolution Diary," *Encounter*, 31, 2 (August 1968) pp. 6–8. California newspapers regularly attacked Marcuse, and pressures from the California Board of Regents forced Marcuse to give up teaching officially in 1969, although he was allowed to keep his office and to give informal seminars. On the death threats he received, see *The Nation* (October 28, 1968) p. 421. Many of Marcuse's students are today teaching at universities and publishing works influenced by him. See Angela Davis, *An Autobiography* (New York: Random House, 1974) for her account of Marcuse's influence on her, as well as her preface in this volume. Other evaluations include "Marcuse as Teacher," William Leiss, John David Ober and Erica Sherover, in *The Critical Spirit*, pp. 421–6; Ronald Aronson, "Dear Herbert," *Radical America*, 4, 3 (April 1970); and George Katsiaficas's recollections that serve as an afterword to this volume.

in the European and global media as a revolutionary prophet linked with Marx and Mao. The probing interview forces Marcuse to clarify what distinguishes his "New Left line" from traditional liberalism and Soviet communism and the difficulty of defining a New Left that was continually mutating and expanding.

In December 1968, Marcuse gave a talk at the twentieth anniversary of the radical newspaper the *Guardian* which we are publishing in this collection (pp. 140–6). Introduced by Bernadine Dohrn, who would soon gain notoriety as a representative of the radical Weatherman faction, Marcuse discussed dilemmas of the situation of the New Left, strategies, targets, and forms of organization. Recognizing that it is unlikely that the New Left could become a mass organization in the present situation and that most political parties are bureaucratically co-opted, Marcuse suggested:

> The strength of the New Left may well reside in precisely these small and contesting and competing groups, active at many points at the same time, a kind of political guerrilla force in peace or so-called peace, but, and this is, I think, the most important point, small groups, concentrated on the level of local activities, thereby foreshadowing what may in all likelihood be the basic organization of libertarian socialism, namely councils of manual and intellectual workers, soviets, if one can still use the term and does not think of what actually happened to the soviets, some kind of what I would like to call, and I mean it seriously, organized spontaneity.

This talk was endlessly misquoted by Marcuse's right-wing critics who claimed that he was advocating violent guerrilla attacks on the established system, whereas he was merely recognizing that the New Left consisted largely of small groups carrying out a variety of activities. The New Left would continue to splinter and fragment, and Marcuse and others were constantly searching for new forms of organization, while recognizing achievements and limitations of New Left groups.

In 1969, Marcuse continued to give high-profile lectures, was discussed in the media, and was the target of right-wing hate mail and political campaigns to fire him. After a detailed review by a faculty committee and a near-unanimous faculty vote to keep him as a professor in 1969–70, Marcuse agreed to return for another year and the Right went wild, continuing to attack him.[36] Tiring of the harassment, however, Marcuse agreed to retire in 1970, although he worked out an agreement that enabled him to keep his office and teach students informally.

Marcuse's F.B.I. files are a useful source of information concerning his travels and activities of the epoch. The subject of frequent F.B.I. inquiries since his work with the Office of War Information and Office of Strategic

36 This story is told in the excellent documentary by Paul Alexander Juutilainen, *Herbert's Hippopotamus* (1998).

Services (O.S.S.) in World War II which required F.B.I. security clearance,[37] Marcuse was closely surveilled by the F.B.I. in the 1960s and there are copious, sometimes comical, reports on his lectures, writings, and travels. Around 1968, the F.B.I. purchased all of his major books, wrote out full reports on them, collected newspaper articles and critiques of his work, reported in detail on his travels, and provide a rich dossier of his ideas and activities, and their global impact.

TOWARDS A "UNITED FRONT": *COUNTERREVOLUTION AND REVOLT*

Beginning around 1970, however, Marcuse turned the major focus of his attention from the world political constellation and analysis of the prospects for world revolution to an analysis of prospects for radical social transformation in the United States, focusing on strategies for the New Left in the bastion of world capitalism. The results of his inquiry were published in *Counterrevolution and Revolt*.[38] In this book he turns from the militant Third World strategy implicit in his late 1960s writings to a United Front strategy, which he seems to propose at least for the United States and advanced capitalist societies.

In *Counterrevolution and Revolt* and his subsequent 1970s writings, Marcuse significantly modifies his theory of one-dimensional society and

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37 F.B.I. reports in 1943 include numerous reports on his work with the Institute of Social Research, his writings, and academic activity at Columbia University with some interviews presenting him as a thoroughgoing Marxist who did not understand U.S. democracy and who was a security risk, while most interviews presented him as a top-notch scholar, strong opponent of fascism, and excellent government worker. Marcuse continued to work for the U.S. government until 1950 (see *Technology, War and Fascism*) and thus continued to be the subject of F.B.I. security reports. These include testimony from a U.C.L.A. librarian who found his research interests "suspicious," from neighbors, and from fellow government workers who provided a rich variety of commentary. When in San Diego in the mid-1960s, Marcuse became increasingly outspoken politically and involved with New Left politics, F.B.I. interest increased and he was put on the "Reserve index" list and then elevated to the "Security index" list and a large F.B.I. dossier was compiled. Ironically, this will help future scholars trace Marcuse's trajectory through the tumultuous 1960s and into the 1970s. Marcuse's F.B.I. dossiers constitute two full volumes of hundreds of pages of material and provide a provocative, although problematic, source of information on Marcuse and materials for a probing diagnostic critique of the F.B.I., encompassing critical scrutiny of its methods, sources, materials, and effects.

38 See Herbert Marcuse, *Counterrevolution and Revolt* (Boston, Mass.: Beacon Press, 1972) (hereafter *CR&R*). Rereading the book during the George W. Bush era of extreme right-wing reaction suggests uncanny resemblance to the regime of Richard Nixon that Marcuse was describing in 1972. See Douglas Kellner, *From 9/11 to Terror War: The Dangers of the Bush Legacy* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003) for comparison of the Nixon and the Bush Junior regimes.

abandons his defense of confrontation politics and revolutionary violence. Whereas his perceptions of the integration of the working class and the stabilization of capitalism led him to affirm the New Left as an important oppositional political force and to defend its forms of struggle, his perceptions of limitations of the New Left in an era of disintegrating capitalism led Marcuse to re-evaluate both his theory of society and of radical social change.

In the opening pages, Marcuse claims: "The Western world has reached a new stage of development: now, the defense of the capitalist system requires the organization of counterrevolution at home and abroad" (*CR&R*, p. 1). To impose its system and order so as to protect its vested interests, the counterrevolution "practices the horrors of the Nazi regime" (*CR&R*, p. 1): cruel persecution, torture, and even genocide. The counterrevolution strives to prevent not only socialist revolution, but even minimal and long overdue social progress. The bulwark of the counterrevolution is the United States of America. Abroad, this means U.S. support of military dictatorships, police states, reactionary governments who maintain the status quo and protect U.S. interests, counterinsurgency and the suppression of national liberation movements, use of the U.S. military in an attempt to police the world and contain communism, and imperialist destruction of countries who dare to resist the will of the capitalist superpower.

At home, Marcuse projects the frightening possibility that the discontent and crises which he sees as a possible breaking up of capitalist domination may lead not to progressive radical change, but rather to a new fascism. The people's frustrations and aggressions could provide a mass base for fascism, and Marcuse sees signs of such a protofascist syndrome in the United States today (*CR&R*, pp. 24–9).[39] As a refugee from German fascism, Marcuse is extremely sensitive to the dangers of fascistic tendencies. He proposes the term "preventive counterrevolution" to describe repressive policies that try to prevent even the possibility of a revolution, and he continues to analyze counterrevolutionary tendencies and the dangers of fascism. But Marcuse stresses that the "preventive counterrevolution" is not yet fascism, which, if it emerged in the United States, would in any case take a different form than German fascism. In a 1971 talk at Berkeley, Marcuse states:

> We are far from a fascist form of government, but some of the possible preconditions are emerging. They are well known and I will just give you a list: the courts, used more and more as political tribunals; the reduction of education and welfare in the richest country in the world; anti-democratic legislation, such as preventive detention and the no-knock laws; economic sanctions if you are politically and otherwise suspect; the intimidation and self

39 For Marcuse's reaction to the publicity that William Calley received after being brought to trial after revelations of the U.S. massacre of Vietnamese in My Lai, see his article in the *New York Times* (May 13, 1971) p. 45, collected in this volume, pp. 57–60.

> censorship of the mass media. These are very frightening signs. You cannot say history repeats itself; it never repeats itself in the same form. The fact that we cannot point to any charismatic leader, the fact that we cannot point to any S.S. or S.A. here, simply means that they are not necessary in this country. If necessary, other organizations can perform the job, possibly even more efficiently. I do not have to tell you which organizations I have in mind.
>
> (See below, p. 170)

In view of the counterrevolution,

> The only counterforce is the development of an effectively organized radical Left, assuming the vast task of *political education*, dispelling the false and mutilated consciousness of the people so that they themselves experience their condition, and its abolition, as vital need, and apprehend the ways and means of their liberation.
>
> (*CR&R*, p. 28)

Marcuse warns that if U.S. society does enter a period of acute crisis, and if a fascist solution is attempted to solve capitalism's contradictions, then it is of utmost importance that the radical opposition becomes stronger and offers a viable alternative in order to become an effective political force in a period of disintegration and change.

Marcuse maintains that the "Marxian theory remains the guide of practice, even in a non-revolutionary situation" (*CR&R*, p. 33). He criticizes, however, what he sees as a prevalent tendency among the New Left (as well as the Old Left) to "the distortion and falsification of Marxian theory through its ritualization" (*CR&R*, p. 33). For Marcuse Marxian theory is dialectical and historical: it describes the changes and transitions in the social-historical world. In his view, neo-Marxist theory must describe changes in the economy and society and the effect that these changes have on the totality of life and the prospects for social transformation. Because the Marxian concepts are historical, all of the concepts used to describe eighteenth- and nineteenth-century capitalism cannot obviously be used to describe twentieth-century capitalism. Consequently, for Marcuse, Marxist theory and practice require constant reconstruction to keep in touch with the changes in the historical situation (*CR&R*, pp. 33ff.). He stresses the need continually to revise the Marxian theory and suggests the relevancy of the New Left's reformulation of Marx's thesis on Feuerbach: "Philosophers have previously only interpreted Marxism in various ways; the point, however, is to change it."

The New Left is to be commended, Marcuse believes, for the vision of a free, liberated individual in a non-repressive society.[40] In Marcuse's view,

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40 Marcuse's favorite book on the New Left at the time was *A Disrupted History: The New Left and the New Capitalism*, by Greg Calvert and Carol Neiman (New York: Random House, 1971); see *CR&R*, p. 10. See also *The New Left: A Documentary History*, ed. Massimo Teodori (Indianapolis, Ind.: Bobbs-Merrill, 1969). It is not an

the New Left is an especially advanced political force because it has drawn political struggle into the realm of non-material needs (self-determination, non-alienated human relations, solidarity, autonomy, cooperation and community, women's liberation, etc.); and the physiological dimension (the preservation of nature, aesthetic-erotic satisfaction and happiness, etc.) (*CR&R*, p. 129). The radicalization of the New Left is, at its best, integral, and combines the revolt of reason with the revolt of sensibility and the instincts, and the political revolution with the personal revolution, the gesture of the barricade with the gesture of love (*CR&R*, p. 130). The movement is novel in that it embraces new values, lifestyles and alternatives which are a radical refusal of the prevailing values and ideology, and is therefore a subversive threat to the system that has evoked a violent response from the underlying population whose values are being attacked and refused.

In Marcuse's view, although the majority of the population resists the thought and action of the New Left, it reflects a growing discontent and dissatisfaction with the system and contributes to undermining its power further (*CR&R*, p. 31). The problem is that the "countervalues, counter-behaviour" and its Marxist-socialist theory and practice are alien to the large majority of the working population, who are not aware of the radical cleavage between what is possible and what is actual, or of the existing possibilities for qualitative change. The New Left's survival and possibilities of becoming a political force for radical change therefore depend on overcoming this hostility, communicating its vision, and changing and raising consciousness.

These activities require political education and a demonstration that all members of the existing society are oppressed and exploited by capitalism to such a degree that radical change is in the interest of the society as a whole. Marcuse now proposes that a critical theory of society must show the shared, common condition of oppression and exploitation in the current society in concepts which at once characterize, criticize, and project constructive alternatives, in a language that avoids canned vocabulary and clichés. The task is to convince people of the need for radical change and to make alternative ideas acceptable and attractive. Although critical theory should avoid the fetishism of the working class (as the sole or principal agent of social change), it must nonetheless attempt to radicalize all the people by showing how their dissatisfactions and frustrations are a result of the

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accident that the two most engaging books on the New Left and the explosive year of 1968 were by Marcuse students; see George Katsiaficas, *The Imagination of the New Left*, and Andrew Feenberg and Jim Friedman, *When Poetry Ruled the Streets: The French May Events of 1968* (Albany, N.Y.: State University Press of New York, 2001). On the New Left, feminism, and cultural battles of the era, see Alice Echols, *Shaky Grounds: The 1960s and its Aftershocks* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002).

capitalist system. Marcuse's insistence that emancipatory change requires a juncture of the working class and radical opposition seems to indicate a new "United Front" turn in his thought:

> Radicalism has much to gain from the "legitimate" protest against the war, inflation and unemployment, from the defense of civil rights – even perhaps from a "lesser evil" in local elections. The ground for the building of a united front is shifting and sometimes dirty – but it is there.
>
> (*CR&R*, p. 56)[41]

During the 1970s, Marcuse become open to and involved with a variety of social movements, connecting with the ecology movement, feminism, and other progressive perspectives which he attempted to link with the New Left and socialism.[42] In a symposium on "Ecology and Revolution" in Paris in 1972, some of which we include in this volume, Marcuse argued that the most militant groups of the period were fighting "against the war crimes being committed against the Vietnamese people" (p. 199). Yet he saw ecology as an important component of that struggle, arguing that "the violation of the earth is a vital aspect of the counterrevolution" (ibid.). For Marcuse, the U.S. intervention in Vietnam was "waging ecocide" against the environment, as well as genocide against the people:

> It is no longer enough to do away with people living now; life must also be denied to those who aren't even born yet by burning and poisoning the earth, defoliating the forests, blowing up the dikes. This bloody insanity will not alter the ultimate course of the war but it is a very clear expression of where contemporary capitalism is at: the cruel waste of productive resources in the imperialist homeland goes hand in hand with the cruel waste of destructive forces and consumption of commodities of death manufactured by the war industry.
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> (pp. 199–200)

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41 It might be noted that the term "United Front" historically signified in Marxian discourse a merger of left-wing parties, both in leadership and base (as with the Mensheviks and Bolsheviks in the Russian Revolution), or at least a unity of action between working-class parties – and not a loose coalition of democratic groups and rebellious individuals. Marcuse's concept is actually closer to what has been called a "popular front," in which separate parties, or groups, remain autonomous while they struggle for a "common program" or for specific goals. It seems that Marcuse's use of the term "United Front" serves as a rhetorical device which makes it appear that a coalition of democratic-populist groups may be the most promising force for developing a revolutionary movement in the United States. Obviously, discourses of the "popular" or "united front" do not resonate in the contemporary era, although discourses of alliance and solidarity have become an important part of politics today; see, for example, Steven Best and Douglas Kellner, *The Postmodern Adventure* (New York: Guilford Press, 2001).

42 "Ecology and Revolution" is collected in this volume (pp. 199–204) and a later article "Ecology and the Critique of Modern Society" will be included in a forthcoming volume in this series. On Marcuse's ecological theory, see Timothy W. Luke, "Marcuse and Ecology," in Bokina and Lukes, *From the New Left to the Next Left*, pp. 189–207.

There was, for Marcuse, a contradiction between capitalist productivity and nature, for in its quest for higher profits and the domination of nature, capitalism inevitably destroyed nature. Capitalist production manifested an unleashing of aggressive and destructive energies that destroyed life and polluted nature. In this process, human beings are transformed into tools of labor and become instruments of destruction. Introjecting capitalism's aggressive, competitive, and destructive impulses, people engage in ever more virulent devastation of the natural environment and anything (individuals, communities, and nations) which stands in the way of its productive exploitation of resources, people, and markets.

In his major writings, Marcuse constantly followed the Frankfurt School emphasis on reconciliation with nature as an important component of human liberation, and also stressed the importance of peace and harmony among human beings as the goal of an emancipated society.[43] Marcuse continually called for a new concept of socialism that made peace, joy, happiness, freedom, and oneness with nature a primary component of an alternative society. Producing emancipatory institutions, social relations, and culture would make possible, in his liberatory vision, the sort of non-alienated labor, erotic relations, and harmonious community envisaged by Fourier and the utopian socialists. A radical ecology, then, which relentlessly criticized environmental destruction, as well as the destruction of humans being, and that struggled for a society without violence, destruction, and pollution was part of Marcuse's vision of liberation.

Marcuse also became involved in the early 1970s with the women's movement and in 1974 lectured at Stanford and then in Europe on "Marxism and Feminism." Here he enthusiastically embraced the goals of women's liberation and defended women's rights, sexual liberation, and the equality of the sexes in terms of his categories in *Eros and Civilization* and more recent works. Marcuse stated that he believed

> the women's liberation movement today is perhaps the most important and potentially the most radical political movement that we have, even if the consciousness of this fact has not yet penetrated the movement as a whole.
>
> (p. 190)

In the widely published and discussed lecture, Marcuse attempted to merge Marxism and feminism and to contribue to developing a "socialist feminism," a project he would continue to work on during the reminder of his life in which he consistently stressed the importance of the women's movement. Marcuse continued as well to reflect on and update the Marxian theory, and gave a lecture in 1974 on "Theory and Practice" at the fiftieth anniversary celebration of the Frankfurt Institute. It is appropriate that

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43 On the Frankfurt School, see Douglas Kellner, *Critical Theory, Marxism, and Modernity* (London and Baltimore, Md.: Polity and Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989).

Marcuse would defend on this occasion the politicizing of critical theory and the continued relevance of Marxism, and analyze the prospects and strategy for social change, as he, of all the original members of the "inner circle" of the Frankfurt Institute, had gone the furthest in actually relating critical theory to political practice.

Marcuse seemed to mellow somewhat as he became older although he maintained his radical critique of capitalist and socialist societies and his ideals of liberation. Yet he was a revolutionary realist who recognized during the 1970s that the period of radical upheaval of the 1960s was over. A reporter summarized a 1977 talk to an audience at Washington University in St. Louis:

> So what was his advice at the lecture? Work within the system; it can be done without damaging one's idealism. Seizure-of-power tactics are self-defeating. Avoid any suggestion of terrorism. It is self-defeating and self-destructive. Don't get radicalism black marks on your record. That would make finding a job even more difficult. Tune in. Don't drop out.[44]

To the end, Marcuse remained active, adjusting his views to the situation of the time, lecturing to the American and European Left, and continuing to write, lecture, and discuss theory and politics with colleagues and young radicals until his death in 1979.

CONCLUDING REMARKS: MARCUSE AND THE NEW LEFT

In a sense, Marcuse's political writings from 1964 to 1979 articulate successive theories and practices of the New Left. The individualistic "Great Refusal" advocated at the end of *One-Dimensional Man* corresponds to revolt that was fermenting within advanced capitalist societies, and its concluding pages valorize the civil rights struggles. "Repressive Tolerance" and his late 1960s essays and lectures justify the confrontation politics that were emerging in the antiwar movement as a response to the Vietnam war. *An Essay on Liberation* expresses the moment of revolutionary euphoria during the spectacular struggles of 1968, and *Counterrevolution and Revolt* articulates the political realism of a movement which saw in the early 1970s that it was facing a long and difficult struggle to transform the existing society.

The extent to which a German-American professor entering his seventh decade involved himself with the New Left is quite remarkable. After decades of deep political gloom, corresponding to devastating defeats of the Left, Marcuse saw his hopes for socialist revolution enlivened by New Left

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44 Robert Sanford, "Marcuse on Revolution; Not in This Generation," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* (March 13, 1977) pp. 2f.

radicalism. Consequently, one encounters a change in the tone of his writings in the mid-1960s from a stoical pessimism to more optimistic and utopian perspectives. In this way, the New Left rejuvenated Marcuse, intensifying and radicalizing his thinking. In the New Left, Marcuse found concrete referents for his dialectical categories of contradiction, negation and the Great Refusal. In Marcuse, the New Left found a teacher, defender, and spokesperson.

Marcuse was, however, somewhat embarrassed by the media image of New Left "prophet" or "father." In a 1978 interview with the BBC, he insisted:

> I was not the mentor of the student activities of the 1960s and early 1970s. What I did was formulate and articulate some ideas and goals that were in the air at the time. That's about it. The student generation that became active in those years did not need a father figure, or grandfather figure, to lead them to protest against a society which daily revealed its inequality, injustice, cruelty and general destructiveness. They could experience that – they saw it before their own eyes.[45]

Marcuse's actual involvement with the New Left was stormy. Although he was revered by many, for others he was a "revisionist," "idealist philosopher," "elitist," and even a C.I.A. agent![46] While, in 1967, Marcuse's defense of socialism and revolutionary violence was acclaimed in Berlin, in 1968 his comments on utopian socialism were met with disdain by some of the same students. Many of the New Left were angry, impatient and ready to tear down the "monster" and slay the "beast" immediately. Marcuse always cautioned the New Left against "counterproductive" action which was not part of a well-thought-out theoretical strategy for social change. He insists:

> I combated the anti-intellectualism of the New Left from the beginning. The reasons for it are, in my view, the isolation of the student movement from the working class, and the apparent impossibility of any spectacular political action. This led gradually to some kind of . . . well, let me say, inferiority complex, some kind of self-inflicted masochism, which found expression in, among other things, contempt for intellectuals because they are only

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45 Marcuse, BBC interview with Bryan Magee, published as part of *Men of Ideas* (London: BBC, 1978).

46 The latter claim was made in a Progressive Labor article "Marcuse: Copout or Cop?" *Progressive Labor*, 6, 6 (February 1969) pp. 61–6. Marcuse was quite angered by this accusation and while he had worked for the O.S.S. that was predecessor for the C.I.A., and was involved in the anti-Nazi struggle. Marcuse was a constant critic of the C.I.A. and of U.S. foreign policy in the 1960s and 1970s. For discussion of Marcuse's wartime activities with U.S. intelligence services, see *Technology, War and Fascism*, and for responses from Marcuse and his wife Inge Marcuse to the charges of being a C.I.A. agent, see their letters in *Der Spiegel*, 29 (1969) criticizing spurious allusions to Marcuse's C.I.A. connection in a previous article.

> intellectuals and "don't achieve anything in reality." This contempt serves well the interests of the powers that be.[47]

Whereas that faction of the New Left who would become "Weatherman" wanted to destroy the universities, Marcuse told them that educational sites provided the best refuge for radicals in U.S. society to struggle for socialism. When Progressive Labor wanted to go to the factories and wake up the working class, Marcuse was skeptical and told them it might be better to organize and radicalize the students. The "action-faction" of the U.S. Students for a Democratic Society wanted revolutionary action; Marcuse advised theory. Newly born Leninists wanted a party; Marcuse proposed revolutionary affinity groups, based on workers' councils, loosely organized into a mass movement and united by demonstrations, confrontations and, when appropriate, direct action. Consequently, sectarian radicals also developed global critiques of Marcuse's politics, often attacking him as vehemently as did his academic and right-wing critics.

In general, Marcuse represented the non-sectarian, anti-authoritarian wing of the New Left, criticizing the more excessive action factions, as well as the authoritarian-sectarian groups which began to spring up in the early 1970s. He was constantly open to new struggles and impulses in the movement and totally identified with the New Left. When asked by Bill Moyers in a 1974 television interview, included in this volume, whether the New Left was dead, Marcuse insisted: "I don't think it's dead and it will resurrect" (p. 178) and he continued to claim throughout the 1970s that the New Left had not "collapsed." In his 1975 lecture, included in this volume, "The Failure of the New Left?," Marcuse answered his question negatively, insisting that the New Left was an avant-garde and anticipatory movement that represented possibilities and goals that advanced capitalism had made possible but had suppressed, and which continued to be relevant (pp. 210–19).

Moreover, Marcuse long carried out a sustained critique of orthodox Marxist-Leninist theories of revolution and developed new revolutionary perspectives. Instead of waiting for capitalism to collapse, or fantasizing about revolutionary insurrection, Marcuse proposed throughout the 1970s less dramatic concepts of social transformation, calling for a "long march through the institutions" and the development of "counterinstitutions." In a 1974 address at the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Institute for Social Research in Frankfurt, Marcuse championed "intelligence in opposition" and called for the development of a "counter-psychology," "counter-sociology," "counter-education," and radical therapy.[48]

Although he supported radical politics aiming at the structural transformation of society, he argued that he did not think that "revolutionary violence" is justified in the advanced capitalist countries. In a 1977 article

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47 Marcuse, "Interview with Bryan Magee."
48 Marcuse, "Theory and Practice," pp. 32ff.

published in Germany during a period of terrorism, collected in this volume, Marcuse argues that terrorist violence is counterproductive since it provokes violence from the society which is destructive for the Left; has little real possibility of gaining mass support or altering the system; and violates revolutionary morality (pp. 204ff.). Hence, in the present situation of advanced capitalism, Marcuse rejects the concept of armed struggle by a conspiratorial party, or terrorist group, as an element of political change.

Marcuse also put in question the "myth of October," which posits revolution as a dramatic process of violent upheaval which in an armed uprising overthrows the previous bourgeois-capitalist order and overnight institutes a socialist (or "transitional") society. As Karl Korsch and others have argued, the Marxian concept of revolution itself was formed by the Jacobin theory in the French Revolution, and the Leninists appropriated this tradition.[49] The (at least immediate) success of the October Revolution created a "myth of October" that the revolutionary process of a dramatic insurrection and violent overthrow of a previously existing social order provided the proper model for revolution. Since such events have indeed played a role in many Third World revolutions, the myth has a basis in reality. In question, however, is the relevance of this vision of revolution to the transition to socialism in advanced capitalist countries.

In his later writings, Marcuse suggests that structural transformation aiming at the elimination of capitalism and the institutionalization of a socialist democracy will be a long and protracted process, implying that the myth of ten glorious days which will shake away capitalism is misleading and irrelevant to the "long revolution" at stake. Up until his death in 1979, Marcuse kept working on theories of social change, searching for oppositional political tendencies and movements, and developing his perspectives on liberation and an alternative society. Subsequent volumes will document his lifelong engagement with Marxism, his work on psychoanalysis and philosophy, and his writings on art and liberation. Marcuse's combining of critical social theory, perspectives on emancipation and revolution, and attempts to link theory with practice produced a long imbrication of his work with that of the New Left. Many of his students and those of us influenced by his work are now teaching and attempting to carry his ideas into a new millennium and we hope that this volume provides access to Marcuse for new generations, as well as providing material for those of us for whom he has long been an inspiration.

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49 See the material in Douglas Kellner, *Karl Korsch: Revolutionary Theory* (Austin, Tex.: University of Texas Press, 1977).

I

INTERVENTIONS

THE INNER LOGIC OF AMERICAN POLICY IN VIETNAM[1]

The official justification for the American policy in Vietnam is couched in Orwellian language; as such, it defies rational discussion. "We are fighting for freedom" – that is to say, on behalf of a military dictatorship which wouldn't last twenty-four hours without American bombs. "We are fighting for freedom" by protecting the social groups and interests whose power is based on exploitation and slavery. "We are fighting for freedom," in short, by supporting a military junta which fights *against* the economic and social changes which might create the very preconditions of freedom.

"We are fighting aggression" – by whom? The North Vietnamese are, after all, Vietnamese. The Chinese have not dispatched their military strength beyond their borders; they have not established military bases all over the globe; they have not succeeded in promoting the overthrow of established governments; they have even abandoned their meager economic support of socialist Cuba.

"We want to avoid another Munich." Here, too, the language is Orwellian, although the analogy is ultimately correct. The question is, who is the current appeaser? Who now boasts the most powerful war machine of all time? And who is now using it in foreign countries? Remember that Hitler, too, sometimes claimed that the German presence beyond German borders existed by "invitation."

Why is the war in Vietnam and the general policy of direct or indirect intervention in foreign lands justified in terms of the "national interest"? To

1 "The Inner Logic of American Policy in Vietnam" transcribes an edited text of a talk at a Teach-In at the University of California, Los Angeles on March 25, 1966. It was published in 1967 in *Teach-Ins: USA*, ed. Louis Menashe and Ronald Radosh (New York: Praeger, 1976), pp. 64–7.

answer this question we must turn from propaganda to reality. In spite of the heroic pronouncements from Washington about defending freedom or stopping aggression, official definitions of the national interest insist on the necessity of fighting and containing Communism wherever it appears. But, in fact, our foreign policy deviates from this definition in two ways: First, we do not wage war against the Soviet Union and the powers associated with her; second, we engage in a convenient kind of circularity, since we usually define whatever we fight as "Communism." Who or what then, are we really fighting? We are fighting a specific form of Communism in backward areas. We are waging war against wars of liberation initiated by indigenous revolutionary movements. These movements attempt to institute radical agrarian reforms in order to abolish the exploitative domination of the traditional ruling classes; they attempt to eliminate the power of foreign capital; and, of course, they attack the native governments dependent upon that power.

Such movements are dangerous to us for three different reasons. First, if successful, they would lead to the expropriation of foreign investment and to the abolition of the corrupt and oppressive semi-feudal regimes characteristic of the backward nations. They would thus reduce the capitalist hinterland to a dangerously suffocating area. I should add that I do not believe that the classical concept of imperialism is applicable to Vietnam viewed as an isolated phenomenon. But it is essential to consider Vietnam within the global context in the familiar "domino" terms: The defeat of the United States would indeed be the signal for activating liberation movements in other colonial areas, much closer to home, and perhaps even at home. In such areas, the stability of vested interests is indeed vital to the metropolitan economy. Seen in this perspective, our Vietnam policy is only one aspect of a policy which extends from West Germany to Indonesia, from Turkey to Japan – a policy which is, perhaps, reflected in Mississippi and Alabama as well.

Second, the existence of a gigantic military establishment is an integral, stimulating factor of the U.S. economy. This is something that has been operative since the collapse of the New Deal in the mid-1930s. The American economy may not require a war establishment, but any conversion at this point would necessitate sweeping economic and political change.

Third, the affluent society is in need of an Enemy, against whom its people can be kept in a state of constant psychosocial mobilization. As technical progress increases the possibilities for the pacification of the struggle for existence, the obsolescent character of the social institutions, which perpetuate the profitable struggle for existence, becomes more apparent. Consequently, in order to protect and reproduce the established institutions, it becomes increasingly necessary to divert the available resources from rational employment to destructive and repressive use. This "surplus repression" activates a primary aggressiveness, which must be sublimated and channeled into activity on behalf of the national interest lest aggression

explode within the established society. Such sublimation would be normal were it not for the novel factor of "technological" aggressiveness and its fateful consequences. The fact that aggression and destruction are carried out by a thing – a mechanism, an automated device – rather than by a person, impairs the satisfaction of the aggressive instinct, and this frustration prompts repetition and escalation of aggression. To the degree to which the agent of destruction is a thing and the person is removed from the victim, guilt and the sense of guilt are reduced. One of the most effective barriers against cruelty and inhumanity has thereby collapsed. The result is brutalization on a massive scale, a quality which is expressed also in our daily life at home in the form of violent language, images, and mass behavior.

The conclusion suggested by these tendencies is that the war against "Communism," waged on this basis of brutalization, becomes – by the inner logic of prevailing conditions – a war for reactionary military dictatorship. Revolutionary movements for social and economic change in the backward countries can be counteracted only by support of the old ruling classes. They, in turn, can maintain their dominion over the population only by means of constantly intensified suppression. There is no alternative, since a non-Communist, liberal "third force" cannot exist. It would lack an adequate economic and social base, and it would be unable or unwilling to carry through the radical changes necessary to bring backward areas onto the road to humane and modern forms of existence. Third force regimes succumb to either Communist or fascist dictatorships.

Thus, the reverse side of the domino theory – the side that actually exists in the contemporary world – is that, in one country after another, revolutionary and even liberal regimes are replaced, through bloody *putsches*, by counterrevolutionary dictatorships. The function of these regimes is to sustain or reinstate the very interests which kept the backward countries in conditions of backwardness and dependence. The American mission has become one of protecting reactionary regimes and refusing to accept any progressive historical changes.

The nation that was once the hope of all liberating forces the world over has become the hope of all counterrevolutionary forces the world over. The United States has become the advance guard of repression and reaction.

REFLECTIONS ON THE FRENCH REVOLUTION[2]

Professor Herbert Marcuse was in Paris when the current French crisis began, between May 6 and May 12. On returning, he spoke about his impressions

2 "Reflections on the French Revolution" contains Marcuse's widely distributed comments on the May 1968 French student and worker uprising; it was published, among other places, in *Canadian Dimension*, 5, 6 (September–October 1968) pp. 20–2.

of the French situation to several hundred students and faculty members at the University of California at San Diego where he teaches philosophy.

What Happened

The movement started quite innocently as a movement for the reform of the university. The whole thing was apparently sparked by a demonstration in Nanterre, the new branch of the University of Paris, and ensuing disciplinary measures against students who had participated in a demonstration against the war in Vietnam. That was followed by demonstrations in Paris itself, in the Sorbonne, and the demands were the usual ones; namely, radical reform of the totally outdated structure of the university.

In order to give more weight to these demands, the students demonstrated in the courtyard of the Sorbonne. For a reason nobody actually understands – the demonstration was perfectly peaceful – the rector of the university, apparently on the suggestion of the minister of the interior, asked the police to clear the courtyard. The police appeared and invaded the Sorbonne for the first time in the history of the university.

This was indeed a historical novelty. European universities are immune against the police. The police are not supposed to enter the universities and that is one of the age-old traditions which is actually adhered to in France and other countries. It was the first time in history that the police intervened and by force cleared the courtyard, with several hundred students injured.

There followed the larger and larger demonstrations, beginning in very remote parts of Paris and all converging on the Latin Quarter. The Sorbonne in the meantime had been closed and the entire region around the Sorbonne occupied by the police and blocked. The students now demanded that their university be opened again to them, and that the Latin Quarter, which they considered as their own quarter, be cleared of the police and become again their quarter.

They converged on the Sorbonne and since the news had spread that the police would again by force clear the region, the barricades were built. This was a spontaneous event. The students took numerous automobiles which were parked, not only on the streets, but as usual in Paris, on the sidewalks, too, and without the slightest regard for private property, overturned the cars and put them straight across the streets (not on the wide boulevards, which would have been impossible, but in the narrower old streets, in the rear of the Sorbonne).

On top of the cars they put all kinds of wooden stuff, garbage, cartons, garbage cans, whatever they could find. Then, they tore out the street signs, "One Way," "Stop," or whatever, and with them they loosened up the good old cobblestones of Paris, which had already served in the Revolutions of '48 and 1870, and used them as weapons against the police.

They also armed themselves with the lids of the garbage cans, and with steel chains. They built the barricades up to a height of about three and a half to four meters, and the plan was not to attack the police but to confront them on the barricades. Everything went all right until about 2:30 in the morning, when the police finally got the order to clear the streets and to remove the barricades. The police used gas grenades, tear gas, allegedly also gas with a chlor base (they deny it but the evidence seems to corroborate it). I myself have seen the students with their faces all red . . . inflamed wrinkles, the eyes all inflamed. They used this gas with the result, of course, that the barricades had to be evacuated.

The gas forced the students to leave the barricades, and to flee, whereupon the police apparently shot incendiary grenades, and put the barricades on fire. I would like to point out that during this time, and this is the greatest difference between the events in Paris and here, the population of the quarter was definitely and decisively in sympathy with the students. They threw all kinds of stuff out of the apartment windows on the police. The police shot back gas grenades into the apartments.

The students tried to flee, and it turned out that their own barricades became obstacles to them, because they had barricaded the street at two ends and just couldn't find a way out. The police had an easy game. There were altogether about 800 injured that night, and out of the 800 about 350 to 400 police.

This did by no means finish the demonstrations and the protest. Their young leader, Cohn-Bendit, who organized the barricades and was with them all the time until 6:00 in the morning, when the street battle was lost, said, "Now there is only one thing to be done: the general strike." The following Monday the strike order was followed one hundred percent.

What It Means

At this point, I would like to suggest to you why I believe this event is of such great importance. In the first place, it should once and for all heal whoever still suffers from the inferiority complex of the intellectual. There isn't the slightest doubt that, in this case, the students showed the workers what could be done, and that the workers followed the slogan and the example set by the students.

The students were literally the avant-garde, not of a revolution because it isn't a revolution, but of an action which indeed turned spontaneously into a mass action. And that is in my view the decisive point. What we have witnessed in Paris during these weeks is the sudden resurgence and return of a tradition, and this time a revolutionary tradition, which has been dormant in Europe since the early 1920s.

We have seen the spontaneous enlargement and intensification of demonstrations from the building of the barricades to the occupation of buildings;

first the university buildings, then theaters, then factories, airports, television stations – occupation, of course, no longer by the students, but by the workers and employees of these institutions and enterprises.

The whole protest movement was at first violently condemned by the Communist-controlled trade unions, and the Communist daily *L'Humanité*. They were not only suspicious of the students, but they vilified them, and they suddenly remembered the class struggle, which the Communist party has for decades put on ice, and denounced the students simply as bourgeois children. They didn't want to have anything to do with children, at attitude viable if we keep in mind that the student opposition from the beginning was directed not only against the capitalist society of France beyond the university, but also against the Stalinist construction of socialism.

That is a very important point. It has also very definitely been directed against the Communist party in France for years now.

When we ask how it came about that the student movement turned into a mass movement, the answer is very hard to find. As I said, the movement was first confined to the university, and the demands were at first academic – demands for reform of the university. But then came a recognition that the university is, after all, only a part of the larger society, of the establishment, and that unless the movement is extended beyond the university and hits at the more vulnerable spots of the society as a whole, it would remain isolated.

Therefore, a long time before the eruption of these events, there was a systematic attempt to win over workers against the trade union prohibition to join the protest movement. The students were sent into the factories, into the plants in Paris and in the Paris suburbs. There they talked with the workers, and apparently found sympathy and adherents, mainly among the younger workers.

So when the students really went out on the street, and when they started occupying buildings, these workers followed their example and joined their own demands for higher wages and better working conditions with the academic demands of the students. The two came together again in a rather spontaneous and by no means coordinated way, and in this way the student movement actually became a larger social movement, a larger political movement.

At this turn of events, when already hundreds of thousands of the workers were on strike and had occupied the factories of Paris and the suburbs, the Communist-controlled union, the C.G.T., decided to endorse the movement, and to make it an official strike. This is the policy they have followed for decades. As soon as they see that a movement threatens to get out of hand, and no longer remains under the control of the Communist party, they quickly endorse it and in this way take it over.

As to the political demands of this movement, they may be summarized as being against the authoritarian regime in France and for the politicization of the university; that is to say, for establishing a visible and effective link

between what is taught in the classroom and what is going on outside the classroom; to bridge the gap between a medieval, outdated mode of teaching and curriculum and to meet the reality, the terrible miserable reality, which is outside the classroom.

They demanded complete freedom of speech and expression, with one very interesting qualification. Cohn-Bendit has declared on several occasions that it would mean an abuse of the freedom of speech and expression to tolerate the protagonists of American foreign policy and of the defenders of the war in Vietnam. So the right to freedom of speech was not to be interpreted as tolerating those who are, by their policy and by their propaganda, working on bringing down the last remnants of liberty still existing in this society, and who are turning the world, or rather a large part of the world, into a neo-colonial dominion. This was very clearly stated.

The movement is, again spontaneously, very decidedly a socialist movement, but one, as I want to stress again, which rejects from the beginning the repressive construction of socialism which has been prevalent in the socialist countries up to this very day. That may explain the allegedly Maoist tendencies among the students.

This brings out another very essential aspect of the student movement, and I think here there is common ground between the American movement and the French movement. It is a total protest, not only against specific evils and against specific short-comings, but at the same time, a protest against the entire system of values, against the entire system of objectives, against the entire system of performances required and practiced in the established society. In other words, it is a refusal to continue to accept and abide by the culture of the established society. The students reject not only the economic conditions, not only the political institutions, but also the entire system of values which they feel is rotten at the core.

And in this sense I think one can indeed speak of a cultural revolution in the sense that the protest is directed against the entire cultural establishment, including the morality of the existing society.

If you now ask how we can explain that in France the student movement found spontaneous help and sympathy on the part of the population, and found very definite support among the working class, organized as well as unorganized, whereas in this country [the U.S.], the exact opposite is the case, the answer that comes to mind is twofold.

First, France is not yet an affluent society. The living conditions of the majority of the population are still far below the level of the American standard of living, which of course makes for a much looser identification with the establishment than prevails in this country.

Second, the political tradition of the French working-class movement is still alive to a considerable degree. I might add a rather metaphysical explanation; namely, the difference between the prospects of a radical movement in France and in this country may also be summed up by remembering that France, after all, went through four revolutions within 100 years. This

apparently establishes such a revolutionary tradition which can be sparked and brought to life and renewed when the occasion arises.

I think that is one of the expressions of the total character of the protest, because, as you know, the traditional working-class strategy does not officially endorse occupation of factories, and in this tradition too, private property retained a certain sanctity. When this had happened, it was usually against trade union policy and to a great extent spontaneous.

So this spontaneous character by which change announces itself is, I think, the new element . . . which surpasses all traditional organization and grips the population directly and immediately. Now if you assume that the paralysis in France goes on, and spreads, that the government does not succeed, then you indeed have a vision how such a system can collapse. Because no society could for any length of time tolerate such a paralysis.

One thing we can say safely is that the traditional idea of the revolution and the traditional strategy of the revolution are outdated; they are simply surpassed by the development of our society.

I said before, and I'd like to repeat, because I think in this situation nothing is more seriously required than a sober mind, that the idea that one day or one night a mass organization or mass party or masses of whatever kind could march on Washington and could occupy the Pentagon and the White House and set up a government is utterly fantastic, and simply in no way corresponds to the reality of things. If there ever were such masses and this happened, within 24 hours another White House would be set up in Texas or in North Dakota and the whole thing would quickly come to an end.

So we have to forget this idea of the revolution, and that is why I believe that what is taking place in France today is so significant and may well be decisive, and that is exactly why I stress the spontaneous nature of this movement and the spontaneous way in which it spread.

Now I say spontaneous, and I stick to this concept, but you know that there is no spontaneity which doesn't have to be helped on a little in order to be really spontaneous, and that was exactly the case in France and that was why I mentioned the preparatory work of the students in factories, in discussion with laborers and so on, but nevertheless, compared with traditional organization of the opposition, this has been a spontaneous movement, which as long as it could, didn't care about existing organization, party as well as trade union, and simply went ahead.

In other words, for one reason or another, the time had come when hundreds of thousands and, as we see now, millions of people didn't want it any more. They didn't want to get up in the morning and go to their job and go through the same orders and comply with the same working conditions and perform the same performances. They simply had it up to here, and so if they didn't stay home or didn't take a walk, they tried something else.

They occupied the factories and the shops, and they stayed there by no means as wild anarchists. For example, only yesterday came a report that they took meticulous care of the machines and saw to it that nothing was damaged. They did not let in any outsiders. In this act, they demonstrated that they consider this business, in one way or another, their own and they are going to demonstrate that they know it is their own or ought to be their own, that is why they occupied it.

STUDENT PROTEST IS NONVIOLENT NEXT TO THE SOCIETY ITSELF[3]

The present campus unrest must be seen in the context of a deep-rooted protest against the established society, its immoral and illegal war in Vietnam, its glaring inequality and injustice, its general aggressiveness and hypocrisy. The following remarks refer to this context only; therefore other cases of legitimate police intervention (such as enforcement of civil rights legislation against segregationists) are not mentioned.

There are instances where the intervention of the police on campus would be justifiable even according to the standards of the Left: when human life is endangered, and when there is the possibility of serious bodily injury; also in the case of willful destruction of facilities and materials serving the *educational* purposes of the university (libraries, etc.). To the best of my knowledge, such destruction is no part of the strategy and tactics of the New Left.

The occupation of buildings and the disruption of "business as usual" are, in my view, no reasons for police intervention. Such temporary violations of Law and Order must be judged in the light of the crimes against which they try to draw attention – the continued slaughter in Vietnam and the continued oppression of racial and national minorities. Compared with this normal daily violence which goes largely unpunished and unnoticed, the student protest is nonviolent.

CHARLES REICH – A NEGATIVE VIEW[4]

If you read a critical essay in the *New Yorker*, you can be reasonably sure of at least three things: (1) It is beautifully written; (2) it comes very close to the

3 "Student Protest is Nonviolent Next to the Society Itself" contains a short piece published in the *New York Times Magazine* (May 4, 1969) arguing that the real violence is found in U.S. society and not in student protests. Yet Marcuse also stresses what sort of New Left strategy he feels is legitimate use of dissent and what sort of actions should be avoided.

4 "Charles Reich – A Negative View" was initially published in *New York Times*

truth; (3) you are satisfied: no reason to get frightened, everything will be all right, or – beyond your (and anybody else's) power.

Take as example the by now classical piece on "Hiroshima": there is to my knowledge no better, no more moving description on what happened, and all this appears like a natural catastrophe, an earthquake, the last day of Pompeii – there is no evidence, no possibility of crime, of guilt, of resistance and refusal.

The most recent example is Charles A. Reich's long piece, "The Greening of America," a condensation of the book with the same title. We should admire the sensitivity and good instincts of the editors: they must have realized immediately the vital importance of the piece. The opening sentences read as follows:

> There is a revolution under way. It is not like the revolutions of the past. It has originated with the individual and with culture, and if it succeeds, it will change the political structure only as its final act. It will not require violence to succeed, and it cannot be successfully resisted by violence.

So we are advised that we are in the middle of a revolution which is "spreading with amazing rapidity," and at the same time assured that there will be no violence.

If true, this revolution would indeed be very much unlike the revolutions of the past. All that has to happen (and it is already happening, according to Reich) is that more and more people develop a new consciousness (Consciousness III as contrasted with Consciousness I, corresponding to the early American tradition, and Consciousness II, corresponding to the "Corporate State"), with new values, new goals, a new sensitivity which reject the values and goals of the Corporate State – and the latter will collapse. There will be, there can be no resistance, for the people will just stop working, buying, selling, and they will have won. For the State is nothing but a machine, controlled by nobody, and if the machine is no longer tended to, it will stop.

Consciousness III is of course that of the young generation in rebellion against the establishment. What are the new revolutionary values of the rebels? The author formulates them in three "commandments"; the first: "thou shall not do violence to thyself"; the second: "no one judges anyone else"; the third: "be wholly honest with others, use no other person as a means." The astonished reader might ask: What is revolutionary about these commandments which from the *Bible* to Kant and beyond have graced the sermons of the moralists?

In a sense, they are indeed present in "Consciousness III" but in a sense essentially different from the tradition which has professed and sublimated"

(November 6, 1970) and was republished as "Charles Reich as Revolutionary Ostrich" in *The Con III Controversy*, ed. Philip Nobile (New York: Pocket Books, 1971), pp. 15–17.

them so that they get along well with repression, misery, frustration. For the militant young, they are desublimated so that they are no longer compatible with repression, misery and frustration. They are a little less nonviolent: they presuppose the abolition of the established system of institutions, a new society, a new way of life.

For Reich, this is not really a serious problem. One day in the foreseeable future, men and women, boys and girls from all walks of life will have enough of the old, will quit. And since there is "nobody in control," this will be it.

Nobody in control of the armed forces, the police, the National Guard? Nobody in control of the outer space program, of the budget, the Congressional committees? There is only the machine being tended to? But the machine not only must be tended to, it must be designed, constructed, programed, directed. And there are very definite, identifiable persons, groups, classes, interests which do this controlling job, which direct the technical, economic, political machine for the society as a whole. They, not their machine, decide on life and death, war and peace – they set the priorities. They have all the power to defend it – and it is not the power of the machine but *over* the machine: human power, political power.

Even granted that the dream comes true – is it conceivable that this will come about, all over the nation, spontaneously and at the same time? Without any form of preparation, organization, mobilization?

Violence is ingrained in this society: in its institutions, its language, its experience, its fun – violence of defense and violence of aggression. Nobody in his right mind would "advocate" violence: it is there. The task is to reduce it as much as is humanly and socially possible. But this goal cannot be attained by an ostrich policy.

Reich recognizes that the revolutionary changes to come will have a pattern very different from the preceding historical revolutions, that their scope and depth will be greater, that the traditional concepts do not suffice forces. His analysis of the hippie subculture is sensitive – although again much too sensitive – sentimental sublimation.

The best part is perhaps his picture of the Corporate State – not its evaluation. But all this is distorted by the false perspective, which transfigures social and political radicalism into moral rearmament. Notwithstanding its insights and critiques, "The Greening of America" is the Establishment version of the great rebellion.

DEAR ANGELA[5]

November 18, 1970

Dear Angela:

I felt uneasy when I was asked to introduce the publication of the two first lectures on Frederick Douglass which you delivered at U.C.L.A. in October 1969. I know that, "under normal circumstances," you would not have authorized their publication in the form in which they were delivered. Moreover, they deal with a world to which I am still an outsider – can I say anything about it in an authentic manner? And lastly, you were my student in philosophy, and I taught philosophy; your thesis was to be on a problem in Kant: what does your life for the liberation of the black people, what does your present plight have to do with the philosophy of German Idealism?

Then, however, I took out the prospectus you wrote for your thesis, and I read the following sentence: "The notion (in Kant) that force provides the link between the theory and practice of freedom leads back to Rousseau . . ." So there is a link, an internal link between the theory and practice, between the concept and the reality (or rather realization) of freedom? And I remember that I criticized Sartre's notion of a freedom which is truly inalienable and can be practiced even in prison, even in a concentration camp, namely, the freedom to refuse submission, the freedom to reject the false identity which the masters impose on their slaves. I criticized this notion because it seemed to me that the free choice between slavery and death or life imprisonment *is not* freedom, that it makes a mockery of human freedom. And now I read in your lecture how, one day, "Frederick Douglass gathers the courage to resist the slave-breaker to whom he is sent for domestication, for taming, the slave-breaker who is infinitely more brutal than any of his previous masters . . ." Frederick Douglass one day hits back, he fights the slave-breaker with all his force, and the slave-breaker does not hit back, he stands trembling; he calls other slaves to help, and they refuse. The abstract philosophical concept of a freedom which can never be taken away suddenly comes to life and reveals its very concrete truth: freedom is not only the goal of liberation, it *begins* with liberation; it is there to be "practiced." This, I confess, I learned from you! Strange? I don't think so.

There is more to it. Years ago, we had a seminar on Hegel. We read, among other texts, the famous chapter on the dialectic of Master and Slave in the *Phenomenology of Mind*. It ends with the recognition of the Master's dependence on the Slave, which outweighs the Slave's dependence on the Master. In your lecture, you discuss the *Phenomenology*, and Hegel's

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5 "Dear Angela," a letter to Angela Davis, was published in *Ramparts*, 9 (Berkeley, Calif.: February 1971) p. 22.

philosophical analysis comes to life in the struggle in which the black slave establishes *his own* identity and thereby destroys the violent power of the master.

People ask me again and again to explain how you, a highly intelligent, sensitive young woman, an excellent student and teacher, how you became involved in the violent events at San Rafael. I do not know whether you were involved at all in these tragic events, but I do know that you were deeply involved in the fight for the black people, for the oppressed everywhere, and that you could not limit your work for them to the classroom and to writing. And I think that there is an inner logic in your development and in the development of things – a logic which is not so difficult to understand. The world in which you grew up, *your* world (which is not mine) was one of cruelty, misery, and persecution. To recognize these facts did not require much intelligence and sophistication, but to realize that they could be changed and must be changed required thinking, critical thinking: knowledge of how these conditions came about, which forces perpetuated them, and of the possibilities of freedom and justice. This, I believe, you learned in your years of study. And you learned something else, namely, that almost all the celebrated figures of Western civilization – the very civilization which enslaved your people – were in the last analysis concerned with one thing: human freedom. Like any good student, you took seriously what they said, and you thought seriously about it, and why all this had remained mere talk for the vast majority of men and women. So you felt that the philosophical idea, unless it was a lie, must be translated into reality: that it contained a moral imperative to leave the classroom, the campus, and to go and help the others, your own people to whom you still belong – in spite of (or perhaps because of) your success within the white Establishment.

But you fought for us too, who need freedom and who want freedom for all who are still unfree. In this sense, your cause is our cause.

In solidarity
Herbert Marcuse

REFLECTIONS ON CALLEY[6]

> *Has the sense of guilt, the guilt of a society in which massacres and killing and body counts have become part of the normal mental equipment, become so strong that it can no longer be contained by the traditional, civilized defense mechanisms (individual defense mechanisms)? Does the sense of guilt turn into its opposite: into the proud, sado-masochistic identification with crime and the criminal?*

6 "Reflections on Calley" was published in *New York Times* (May 13, 1971) p. 45.

The obscene haste with which a large part of the American people rushed to the support of a man convicted of multiple premeditated murder of men, women and children, the obscene pride with which they even identified themselves with him, is one of those rare historical events which reveal a hidden truth.

Behind the television faces of the leaders, behind the tolerant politeness of the debates, behind the radiant happiness of the commercials appear the real people: men and women madly in love with death, violence and destruction.

For this massive rush was not the result of organization, management, machine politics – it was entirely spontaneous: an outburst of the unconscious, the soul. The silent majority has its hero: a convicted war criminal – convicted of killing at close range, smashing the head of a 2-year-old child; a killer in whose defense it was said that he did not feel that he was killing "humans," a killer who did not express regret for his deeds; he only obeyed orders and killed only "dinks" or "gooks" or "V.C." This majority has its hero – it has found its martyr, its Horst Wessel whose name was sung by hundreds of thousands of marching Nazis before they marched into war. "Lieutenant Calley's Battle Hymn Marches On," the record, sold 300,000 copies in three days.

How do Calley's worshippers justify their hero?

- "The act which Calley is accused of was committed to warfare and is thus subject to special consideration." Now Calley was tried and convicted, after long deliberation, by a military tribunal of his peers, of whom it may be assumed that they knew that he acted in war. In fact, he was tried and convicted under the international rules of warfare. The rules of his own army stipulate the duty of disobedience to illegal orders (a disobedience which, as the hearings showed, was actually practiced by other American soldiers at Mylai).
- "What Calley did was widespread practice." Scores of men have come forth denouncing themselves as having done the same Calley did. Now the fact that one murderer was caught and brought to trial while others were not, does not absolve the one who was brought to trial. On the contrary, the others, having voluntarily confessed, should also be tried. The man who wrote on the windshield of his automobile: "I killed in V.N. Hang me too!!" may well have meant it. People madly in love with death, including their own.
- "Everyone knows there are few genuine civilians in Vietnam today." A most revealing statement, which admits that the war is waged against a whole people: genocide.
- "Society is to blame." This is perhaps the only weighty argument. It moves on several levels:

  (a) If society alone is to blame, nobody is to blame. For "society" is

an abstract which cannot be brought to trial. It is true that this society is (and must be) training its young citizens to kill. But this same society operates under the rule of law, and recognizes rights and duties of the individual. Thus it presupposes individual responsibility, that is to say the ability of the "normal" individual to distinguish between criminal and noncriminal behavior (Calley was declared "normal").

(b) If the argument implies that all individual members of society are to blame, it is blatantly false and only serves to protect those who are responsible.

The reason for the "paroxysm in the nation's conscience" is "simply that Calley is all of us. He is every single citizen in our graceless land," said the very Rev. Francis B. Sayre Jr. Blatantly false, and a great injustice to the Berrigans, to all those who have, at the risk of their liberty and even their life, openly and actively fought the genocidal war.

To be sure, in a "metaphysical" sense, everyone who partakes of this society is indeed guilty – but the Calley case is not a case study in metaphysics. Within the general framework (restrictive enough) of individual responsibility there are definite gradations which allow attribution of specific responsibility. If it is true that Calley's action was not isolated, but an all but daily occurrence in Vietnam (which would corroborate the findings of the Russel War Crime Tribunal and call for the prosecution of all cases recorded there), then responsibility would rest with the field commanders, and, in the last analysis, with the Supreme Commander of the United States armed forces. However, this would not eliminate the responsibility of the individual agents.

(c) Technical progress in developing the capacity to kill has led to "death in the abstract": killing that does not dirty your hands and clothes, that does not burden you with the agony of the victims – invisible death, dealt by remote controls. But technical perfection does not redeem the guilt of those who violate the rules of civilized warfare.

What does this all add up to? Perhaps Governor Maddox gave it away when he exclaimed at a rally in support of Calley: "Thank God for Lieutenant Calley and thank God for people like you." Blasphemy or religious madness? The convicted war criminal an avatar of Jesus, the Christ? "He has been crucified," shouted a woman, berating the court-martial in a German accent (one wonders?!). "Calley killed 100 Communists single-handed. He should get a medal. He should be promoted to general." And a Reverend Lord (!) told a rally: "There was a crucifixion 2,000 years ago of a man named Jesus Christ. I don't think we need another crucifixion of a man named Rusty Calley."

Has the lieutenant taken our sins upon himself, will he redeem our sins? What sins? Could it be the wish to kill, kill without being punished? Has the lieutenant become the national model for a new Super Ego, less exacting than the traditional one, which still presented a trace of thou shalt not kill?

The old Super Ego still stuck to the memory of this prohibition even in war. The new Super Ego is up to date. It says: you can kill. No – you can waste and destroy. Calley never used the word "kill." He told a psychiatrist that the military avoided the word "kill" because it "caused a very negative emotional reaction among the men who had been taught the commandment 'Thou shalt not kill.'" Instead, Lieutenant Calley employed the word "destroy" or the phrase "waste 'em." A pardon for Calley, who did not kill but only destroyed and wasted 'em would, according to some, be a "constructive step to restore the morale of our armed forces and the public at large."

The mad rush away from individual responsibility, the easy-going effort to vest guilt in anonymity is the desperate reaction against a guilt which threatens to become unbearable. Infantile regression: Billy cannot be punished because Maxie and Charlie and many others did the same thing; they do it daily, and they are not punished. People incapable of the simplest adult logic: if Maxie and Charlie did the same thing, they are equally guilty and Billy is not innocent.

Has the sense of guilt, the guilt of a society in which massacres and killing and body counts have become part of the normal mental equipment, become so strong that it can no longer be contained by the traditional, civilized defense mechanisms (individual defense mechanisms)? Does the sense of guilt turn into its opposite: into the proud, sado-masochistic identification with the crime and the criminal?

Has the hysteria also gripped the left, the peace movement which finds in the indictment of Calley an indictment of the war? A strange indictment indeed which regards the war criminal as a scapegoat – scapegoat for anonymous, for other scapegoats? Even Telford Taylor, who spoke so eloquently at the Nuremberg trials, thinks that the sentence may have been too harsh. And Dr. Benjamin Spock thinks that it is unjust to punish one man for the brutality of war.

Compassion. But has it ever occurred to all those understanding and compassionate liberals that clemency for Calley might indeed "strengthen the morale of the army" in killing with a good conscience? Has it ever occurred to them that compassion may be due the men, women and children who are the victims of this "morale"? Once again, we are confronted with that principle of diseased justice which was pronounced at Kent State and which expresses so neatly the perversion of the sense of guilt: "not the murderer but the murdered one is guilty."

ISRAEL IS STRONG ENOUGH TO CONCEDE[7]

I have been asked by many friends here, especially among the students, to give them my opinion, based on talks with many people in different regions of this country, Jews and Arabs, and based on rather extensive readings of documents and secondary literature. I am fully aware of its limitations: I offer it merely as a contribution to the discussion.

I believe that the historical goal which motivated the foundation of the State of Israel was to prevent a recurrence of the concentration camps, the pogroms, and other forms of persecution and discrimination. I fully adhere to this goal, which, for me, is part of the struggle for liberty and equality for all persecuted racial and national minorities the world over.

Under present international conditions, pursuance of this goal presupposes the existence of a sovereign state which is able to accept and protect Jews who are persecuted or live under the threat of persecution. If such a state would have existed when the Nazi regime came into power, it would indeed have prevented the extermination of millions of Jews. If such a state would have been open also to other persecuted minorities, including the victims of political persecution, it would have saved still many more lives.

In view of these facts, the further discussion must be based on the recognition of Israel as a sovereign state and on consideration of the conditions under which it was founded, that is to say, the injustice done to the native Arab population.

The establishment of Israel was a political act, made possible by the great powers in pursuit of their own interests. The period of settlement prior to the establishment of the state, and the establishment itself proceeded without due regard of the rights and interests of the native population.

The foundation of the Jewish State involved, from the beginning, the displacement of the Palestinian people, partly by force, partly under pressure (economic and otherwise), partly "voluntarily." The part of the Arab population that remained in Israel found itself reduced, in spite of the granting of civil rights, to the economic and social status of secondary citizens. National, racial, religious distinctions became class distinctions: the old contradiction within the new society, aggravated by the merger of internal and external conflicts.

In all these aspects, the establishment of the Jewish State is not essentially different from the origins of practically all states in history: establishment by conquest, occupation, discrimination. (The endorsement by the United Nations does not alter this situation. The endorsement *de facto* recognized conquest.)

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7 "Israel is Strong Enough to Concede" was published in *The Jerusalem Post* (January 2, 1972) after Marcuse's first trip to Israel.

"Accepting this accomplished fact, and accepting the basic historical goals the State of Israel has set for itself, the question arises: whether the State of Israel as presently constituted and under its present policies can be expected to achieve its own aim while existing as a progressive society in normally peaceful relations with its neighbours."

I shall argue this question with reference to Israel's boundaries as of 1948. Any annexation in whatever form would, in my opinion, already suggest a *negative* answer. It would mean that Israel could preserve itself only as a military fortress in a vast hostile environment, and that its material and intellectual culture would be geared to growing military requirements. If this were at present the only solution, its dangerously precarious and temporary character is all too evident. While a superpower (or its satellite) may well continue to exist under such conditions a long time, the smallness of the country, and the armament policy of the superpowers preclude this possibility for Israel.

Starting from the presently prevailing conditions, the first prerequisite for a solution is a peace treaty with the U.A.R. which would include the recognition of the State of Israel and free access to the Suez Canal and the Straits, and a settlement of the refugee problem. I believe that the negotiation of such a peace treaty is possible now, and that Egypt's reply to Jarring (February 15, 1971) provides an acceptable basis for immediate negotiations.

Egypt's reply asks above all for an Israel commitment to withdraw its armed forces from Sinai and the Gaza Strip. The argument that this would open Israel to a devastating Arab attack could be met by the establishment of a demilitarized zone, protected by a neutral U.N. force. The task involved seems to me not greater than the perpetuated risk of war under present conditions. It is the stronger power which can afford the larger concession – and Israel still is the stronger power.

The status of Jerusalem may well turn out to be the hardest impediment to a peace treaty. Deeply rooted religious sentiment, constantly played upon by the leaders, makes Jerusalem as the capital of a Jewish state unacceptable to the Arabs (and Christians?). A unified city (both parts) under an international administration and protection seems to offer an alternative.

Just Settlement

The Egyptian reply furthermore asks for a "just settlement of the refugee problem in accordance with U.N. resolutions." The wording of these resolutions (including Security Council Res. 242) is open to interpretation and to that extent itself subject to negotiations. I shall outline only two possibilities (or their combination) which were suggested in discussions with Jewish and Arab personalities:

(1) *Resettlement in Israel of those Palestinians who were displaced and*

wish to return. This possibility is from the beginning limited by the extent to which Arab land has become Jewish land, and Arab property Jewish property. This is another historical fact which cannot simply be undone without righting one wrong by another wrong. But it could be mitigated by resettling these Palestinians on still available land, and/or by giving them adequate facilities and reparations.

This solution is officially rejected with the argument (correct in itself) that such return would quickly transform the Jewish majority into a minority and thereby defeat the very purpose of the Jewish state. But I believe that it is *precisely the policy aiming at a permanent majority* which is self-defeating. The Jewish population is bound to remain a minority within the vast realm of Arab nations from which it cannot indefinitely segregate itself without returning to ghetto conditions on a higher level. To be sure, Israel would be able to sustain a Jewish majority by means of an aggressive immigration policy, which in turn would constantly strengthen Arab nationalism. Israel cannot exist as a progressive state if it continued to see in its neighbours the Enemy, the *Erbfeind*. And lasting protection for the Jewish people cannot be found in the creation of a self-enclosed, isolated, fear-stricken majority, but only in the coexistence of Jews and Arabs as citizens with equal rights and liberties. Such coexistence can only be the result of a long process of trial and error, but the preconditions for taking the first steps are given *now*.

There is a Palestinian people which has lived for centuries on the territory part of which is now occupied by Israel. The majority of these people now live in territories under Israeli administration. These conditions make Israel an occupying power (even in Israel itself), and the Palestinian liberation movement a national liberation movement – no matter how liberal the occupying power may be.

(2) The national aspirations of the Palestinian people could be satisfied by the *establishment of a national Palestinian state* alongside Israel. Whether this state would be an independent entity, or federated with Israel or with Jordan, would be left to the self-determination of the Palestinian people, in a referendum held under supervision by the United Nations.

The optimal solution would be the coexistence of Israelis and Palestinians, of Jews and Arabs as equal partners in a socialist federation of Middle Eastern states. This is still a utopian prospect. The possibilities discussed above are interim solutions which offer themselves nowhere – to reject them outright may well create irreparable damage.

II

THE PROBLEM OF VIOLENCE AND THE RADICAL OPPOSITION[1]

Today radical opposition can be considered only in a global framework. Taken as an isolated phenomenon its nature is falsified from the start. I shall discuss this opposition with you in the global context with emphasis on the United States. You know that I hold today's student opposition to be a decisive factor of transformation: surely not, as I have been reproached, as an immediate revolutionary force, but as one of the strongest factors, one that can perhaps become a revolutionary force. Setting up connections between the student oppositions of various countries is therefore one of the most important strategic necessities of these years. There are scarcely any connections between the American and German student movements; the student opposition in the United States does not even possess an effective central organization. We must work for the establishment of such relations, and if in discussing the theme of this talk I mainly take the United States as an example, I do so in order to help prepare for the establishment of such relations. The student opposition in the United States is itself part of a larger opposition that is usually designated the "New Left."

I must begin by sketching briefly the principal difference between the New Left and the Old Left. The New Left is, with some exceptions, neo-Marxist rather than Marxist in the orthodox sense; it is strongly influenced by what is called Maoism, and by the revolutionary movements in the Third World. Moreover, the New Left includes neo-anarchist tendencies, and it is characterized by a deep mistrust of the old leftist parties and their ideology. And the New Left is, again with exceptions, not bound to the old working class as the sole revolutionary agent. The New Left itself cannot be defined

1 "The Problem of Violence and the Radical Opposition" is a translation of a lecture that Marcuse gave at the Free University of West Berlin in July 1967, translated by Jeremy J. Shapiro and Shierry M. Weber and published in *Five Lectures*. The questions and answers at the end of the lecture were translated for *Das Ende der Utopie* (Berlin: Verlag Peter von Maikowshi, 1967); the questions were abridged by the translators and the answers provided in full.

in terms of class, consisting as it does of intellectuals, of groups from the civil rights movement, and of youth groups, especially the most radical elements of youth, including those who at first glance do not appear political at all, namely the hippies, to whom I shall return later. It is very interesting that this movement has as spokesmen not traditional politicians but rather such suspect figures as poets, writers, and intellectuals. If you reflect on this short sketch, you will admit that this circumstance is a real nightmare for "old Marxists." You have here an opposition that obviously has nothing to do with the "classical" revolutionary force: a nightmare, but one that corresponds to reality. I believe that this completely unorthodox constellation of the opposition is a true reflection of an authoritarian-democratic "achieving" society, of "one-dimensional society" as I have tried to describe it,[2] whose chief characteristic is the integration of the dominated class on a very material and very real basis, namely on the basis of controlled and satisfied needs that in turn reproduce monopoly capitalism – a controlled and repressed consciousness. The result of this constellation is the absence of the subjective necessity of a radical transformation whose objective necessity becomes ever more flagrant. And in these circumstances opposition is concentrated among the outsiders within the established order. First it is to be found in the ghettos among the "underprivileged," whose vital needs even highly developed, advanced capitalism cannot and will not gratify. Second, the opposition is concentrated at the opposite pole of society, among those of the privileged whose consciousness and instincts break through or escape social control. I mean those social strata that, owing to their position and education, still have access to the facts and to the total structure of the facts – access that is truly hard to come by. These strata still have knowledge and consciousness of the continuously sharpening contradictions and of the price that the so-called affluent society extorts from its victims. In short, there is opposition at these two extreme poles of society, and I should like to describe them briefly:

The Underprivileged. In the United States the underprivileged are constituted in particular by national and racial minorities, which of course are mainly unorganized politically and often antagonistic among themselves (for example there are considerable conflicts in the large cities between blacks and Puerto Ricans). They are mostly groups that do not occupy a decisive place in the productive process and for this reason cannot be considered potentially revolutionary forces from the viewpoint of Marxian theory – at least not without allies. But in the global framework the underprivileged who must bear the entire weight of the system really are the mass basis of the national liberation struggle against neo-colonialism in the Third World and against colonialism in the United States. Here, too, there is no effective association between national and racial minorities in the metropoles

2 Herbert Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man* (Boston, Mass: Beacon Press, 1964).

of capitalist society and the masses in the neo-colonial world who are already engaged in struggle against this society. These masses can perhaps now be considered the new proletariat and as such they are today a real danger for the world system of capitalism. To what extent the working class in Europe can still or again be counted among these groups of underprivileged is a problem that we must discuss separately; I cannot do so in the framework of what I have to say here today, but I should like to point out a fundamental distinction. What we can say of the American working class is that in their great majority the workers are integrated into the system and do not want a *radical* transformation, we probably cannot or not yet say of the European working class.

The Privileged. I should like to treat the second group that today opposes the system of advanced capitalism in two subdivisions. Let us first look at the so-called new working class,[3] which is supposed to consist of technicians, engineers, specialists, scientists, etc., who are engaged in the productive process, albeit in a special position. Owing to their key position this group really seems to represent the nucleus of an objective revolutionary force, but at the same time it is a favorite child of the established system, which also shapes the consciousness of this group. Thus the expression "new working class" is at least premature.

Second, and practically the only subject of which I shall speak today, is the student opposition in its widest sense, including the so-called dropouts. As far as I can judge, the latter represent an important difference between the American and German student movements. In America many of the students who are in active opposition stop being students and, as a full-time occupation, organize the opposition. This contains a danger, but perhaps a positive advantage as well. I shall discuss the student opposition under three categories. We may ask first, what is this opposition directed against; second, what are its forms; and third, what are the prospects for the opposition?

First, what is the target of the opposition? This question must be taken extremely seriously, for we are dealing with opposition to a democratic, effectively functioning society that at least under normal circumstances does not operate with terror. Furthermore, and on this point we in the United States are quite clear, it is an opposition against the majority of the population, including the working class. It is an opposition against the system's ubiquitous pressure, which by means of its repressive and destructive productivity degrades everything, in an increasingly inhuman way, to the status of a commodity whose purchase and sale provide the sustenance and content of life; against the system's hypocritical morality and "values"; and against the terror employed outside the metropolis. This opposition to

3 On this point, see Serge Mallet, *La Nouvelle Classe ouvrière* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1963).

the system as such was set off first by the civil rights movement and then by the war in Vietnam. As part of the civil rights movement students from the North went to the South in order to help blacks register for the vote. It was then that they saw for the first time how this free democratic system really looks, what the sheriffs really are up to, how murders and lynchings of blacks go unpunished though the criminals are well known. This acted as a traumatic experience and occasioned the political activation of students and the intelligentsia in general in the United States. Second, this opposition was augmented by the war in Vietnam. For these students the war revealed for the first time the essence of the established society: its innate need of expansion and aggression and the brutality of its fight against all liberation movements.

Unfortunately I have no time to discuss the question whether the war in Vietnam is an imperialist war. However, I should like to make a short observation here because the problem always comes up. If imperialism is understood in the old sense, that is that the United States is fighting for investments, then it is not an imperialist war even though this narrow aspect of imperialism is today already becoming an acute problem again. In the July 7, 1967, issue of *Newsweek*, for example, you can read that Vietnam represents twenty billion dollars' worth of business, and this figure is growing every day. Despite this, however, we do not need to speculate on the applicability of a new definition of imperialism here, for leading spokesmen of the American government have pronounced upon it themselves. The aim in Vietnam is to prevent one of the world's strategically and economically most important areas from falling under Communist control. It is a question of a crucial struggle against all attempts at national liberation in all corners of the world, crucial in the sense that the success of the Vietnamese liberation struggle could give the signal for the activation of such liberation movements in other parts of the world much closer to the metropolis where gigantic investments have been made. If in this sense Vietnam is in no way just one more event of foreign policy but rather connected with the essence of the system, it is perhaps also a turning point in the development of the system, perhaps the beginning of the end. For what has been shown here is that the human will and the human body with the poorest weapons can keep in check the most efficient system of destruction of all times. This is a world-historical novelty.

I come now to the second question that I wanted to discuss, namely the forms of the opposition. We are speaking of the student opposition, and I should like to say from the start that we are not dealing with a politicization of the university, for the university is already political. You need think only of the extent to which the natural sciences, for example, and even such abstract disciplines as mathematics find immediate application today in production and in military strategy. You need think only of the extent to which the natural sciences and even sociology and psychology depend today on the financial support of the government and the large foundations, the

extent to which the latter two fields have enrolled in the service of human control and market regulation. In this sense we can say that the university is already a political institution, and that at best the student opposition is an attempt at the anti-politicization, not the politicization of the university. Alongside positivist neutrality, which is pseudo-neutrality, it is necessary to provide a place in the curriculum and in the framework of intellectual discussion for its critique. That is why one of the main demands of the student opposition in the United States is a reform of the curriculum so that critical thought and knowledge are fully brought to bear on intellectual discussion – and not as agitation and propaganda. Where that is not possible, so-called "free universities" and "critical universities" are founded outside the university, as for example at Berkeley and at Stanford and now at some of the larger universities in the East. At these free universities courses and seminars are given about subjects that are not or only inadequately dealt with in the regular curriculum, such as Marxism, psychoanalysis, imperialism, foreign policy in the Cold War, and the ghettos.

Another form of student opposition is that of the famous teach-ins, sit-ins, be-ins, and love-ins. Here I should like to point only to the range of and tensions within the opposition: critical learning and teaching, concern with theory on the one hand, and, on the other, what can be referred to only as "existential community," or "doing one's own thing." I should like to say something about the meaning of this tension later, because in my opinion it expresses that fusion of political rebellion and sexual-moral rebellion which is an important factor in the opposition in America. It finds its most visible expression in the demonstration – unarmed demonstration – and there is no need to go hunting for occasions for such demonstrations. To seek confrontations only for their own sake is not only unnecessary, it is irresponsible. Confrontations are there. They do not have to be drummed up. Going out of the way to find them would falsify the opposition, for today it is in a defensive, not offensive, position. The occasions are there: for example, every escalation of the war in Vietnam; visits by representatives of war policies; picketing (as you know, a special form of American demonstration) factories in which napalm and other means of chemical warfare are produced. These demonstrations are organized and they are legal. Are such legal demonstrations confrontations with the institutionalized violence that is unleashed against the opposition? My answer is based on the American situation, but you will see that you can easily infer from it what applies to your own. These demonstrations are not confrontations when they remain within the framework of legality. But when they do so, they subject themselves to the institutionalized violence that autonomously determines the framework of legality and can restrict it to a suffocating minimum; for example, by applying laws such as those forbidding trespass on private or government property, interfering with traffic, disturbance of the peace, etc. Accordingly what was legal can become illegal from one minute to the next if a completely peaceful demonstration disturbs the peace or voluntarily or involuntarily

trespasses on private property, and so on. In this situation confrontations with state power, with institutionalized violence, seem inevitable – unless opposition becomes a harmless ritual, a pacifier of conscience, and a star witness for the rights and freedoms available under the status quo. This was the experience of the civil rights movement: that the others practice the violence, that the others are the violence, and that against this violence legality is problematic from the very beginning. This will also be the experience of the student opposition as soon as the system feels threatened by it. And then the opposition is placed before the fatal decision: opposition as ritual event or opposition as resistance, i.e. civil disobedience.

I should like to say at least a few words about the right of resistance, because I am astonished again and again when I find out how little it has penetrated into people's consciousness that the recognition of the right of resistance, namely civil disobedience, belongs to the oldest and most sanctified elements of Western civilization. The idea that there is a right or law higher than positive law is as old as this civilization itself. Here is the conflict of rights before which every opposition that is more than private is placed. For the establishment has a legal monopoly of violence and the positive right, even the duty, to use this violence in its self-defense. In contrast, the recognition and exercise of a higher right and the duty of resistance, of civil disobedience, is a motive force in the historical development of freedom, a potentially liberating violence. Without this right of resistance, without activation of a higher law against existing law, we would still be today at the level of the most primitive barbarism. Thus I think that the concept of violence covers two different forms: the institutionalized violence of the established system and the violence of resistance, which is necessarily illegal in relation to positive law. It is meaningless to speak of the legality of resistance: no social system, even the freest, can constitutionally legalize violence directed against itself. Each of these forms has functions that conflict with those of the other. There is violence of suppression and violence of liberation; there is violence for the defense of life and violence of aggression. And both forms have been and will remain historical forces. So from the start the opposition is placed in the field of violence. Right stands against right, not only as abstract claim but as action. Again the status quo has the right to determine the limits of legality. This conflict of the two rights, of the right of resistance with institutionalized violence, brings with it the continual danger of clashing with the violence of the state unless the right of liberation is sacrified to the right of the established order and unless, as in previous history, the number of victims of the powers that be continues to surpass those of the revolution. That means, however, that preaching nonviolence on principle reproduces the existing institutionalized violence. And in monopolistic industrial society this violence is concentrated to an unprecedented extent in the domination that penetrates the totality of society. In relation to this totality the right of liberation is in its immediate appearance a particular right. Thus the conflict of violence appears as a clash

between general and particular or public and private violence, and in this clash the private violence will be defeated until it can confront the existing public power as a new general interest.

As long as the opposition does not have the social force of a new general interest, the problem of violence is primarily a problem of tactics. Can confrontation with the powers that be, in which the challenging force of the resistance loses, nevertheless in certain cases alter the constellation of power in favor of the opposition? In the discussion of this question one often-quoted argument is invalid, namely that through such confrontations the other side, the opponent, is strengthened. This happens anyway, regardless of such confrontations. It happens every time the opposition is activated, and the problem is to turn this strengthening of the opponent into a transitional stage. Then, however, the evaluation of the situation depends on the occasion of the confrontation and especially on the success of systematically executed programs of education and the organization of solidarity. Let me give an example from the United States. The opposition experiences the war against Vietnam as an attack on freedom, on life itself, that affects the entire society and that justifies the right of total defense. But the majority of the population still supports the government and the war, while the opposition is only diffusely and locally organized. The form of opposition that is still legal in this situation spontaneously develops into civil disobedience, into refusing military service and organizing this refusal. This is already illegal and makes the situation more acute. On the other hand the demonstrations are accompanied ever more systematically by educational work among the population. This is "community work." Students go into poor districts in order to activate the consciousness of the inhabitants, initially to eliminate the most obvious needs, such as the lack of the most primitive hygiene, etc. The students attempt to organize people for these immediate interests, but simultaneously to awaken the political consciousness of these districts. Such educational work, however, does not take place only in slums. There is also the famous "doorbell-ringing campaign," which involves discussing what is really going on with housewives and, when they are there, their husbands. This is particularly important before elections. I stress discussion with women because it has in fact turned out, as one might of course expect, that in general women are more accessible to humane arguments than men are. This is because women are not yet completely harnessed into the productive process. This educational work is very laborious and slow. Will it have success? The success is measurable – for example by the number of votes obtained by so-called "peace candidates" in local, state, and national elections.

Today a turn toward theory can be observed among the opposition, which is especially important in that the New Left, as I emphasized, began with a total suspicion of ideology. I believe that it is becoming more and more visible that every effort to change the system requires theoretical leadership. And in the United States and the student opposition today we

find attempts not only to bridge the gap between the Old and the New Left but also to work out a critical theory of contemporary capitalism on a neo-Marxist basis.

As the last aspect of the opposition I should like now to mention a new dimension of protest, which consists in the unity of moral-sexual and political rebellion. I should like to give you an illustration that I experienced as an eyewitness, which will show you the difference between what is happening in the United States and here. It was at one of the large anti-war demonstrations in Berkeley. The police, it is true, had permitted the demonstration, but forbidden access to the target of the demonstration, the military railroad station at Oakland. This meant that, beyond a particular and clearly defined point, the demonstration would have become illegal by violating the police order. When thousands of students neared the point at which the forbidden road began they came upon a barricade consisting of about ten rows of heavily armed policemen outfitted in black uniforms and steel helmets. The march approached this police barricade, and as usual there were several people at the head of the march who yelled that the demonstration should not stop but try instead to break through the police cordon, which naturally would have led to a bloody defeat without achieving any aim. The march itself had erected a counter-cordon, so that the demonstrators would first have had to break through their own cordon in order to cross that of the police. Naturally this did not happen. After two or three scary minutes the thousands of marchers sat down in the street, guitars and harmonicas appeared, people began "necking" and "petting," and so the demonstration ended. You may find this ridiculous, but I believe that a unity spontaneously and anarchically emerged here that perhaps in the end cannot fail to make an impression even on the enemy.

Let me speak for just a few minutes about the prospects of the opposition. I never said that the student opposition today is by itself a revolutionary force, nor have I ever seen in the hippies the "heir of the proletariat"! Only the national liberation fronts of the developing countries are today in a revolutionary struggle. But even they do not by themselves constitute an effective revolutionary threat to the system of advanced capitalism. All forces of opposition today are working at preparation and only at preparation – but toward necessary preparation for a possible crisis of the system. And precisely the national liberation fronts and the ghetto rebellion contribute to this crisis, not only as military but also as political and moral opponents – the living, human negation of the system. For the preparation and eventuality of such a crisis perhaps the working class, too, can be politically radicalized. But we must not conceal from ourselves that in this situation the question whether such radicalization will be to the left or the right is an open one. The acute danger of fascism or neo-fascism has not at all been overcome.

I have spoken of a possible crisis, of the eventuality of a crisis of the system. The forces that contribute to such a crisis would have to be discussed

in great detail. I believe that we must see this crisis as the confluence of very disparate subjective and objective tendencies of an economic, political, and moral nature, in the East as well as the West. These forces are not yet organized on a basis of solidarity. They have no mass basis in the developed countries of advanced capitalism. Even the ghettos in the United States are in the initial stage of attempted politicization. And under these conditions it seems to me that the task of the opposition is first the liberation of consciousness outside of our own social group. For in fact the life of everyone is at stake, and today everyone is part of what Veblen called the "underlying population," namely the dominated. They must become conscious of the horrible policy of a system whose power and pressure grow with the threat of total annihilation. They must learn that the available productive forces are used for the reproduction of exploitation and oppression and that the so-called free world equips itself with military and police dictatorships in order to protect its surplus. This policy can in no way justify the totalitarianism of the other side, against which much can and must be said. But this totalitarianism is not expansive or aggressive and is still dictated by scarcity and poverty. This does not change the fact that it must be fought – but from the left.

Now the liberation of consciousness of which I spoke means more than discussion. It means, and in the current situation must mean, demonstrations, in the literal sense. The whole person must demonstrate his participation and his will to live, that is, his will to live in a pacified, human world. The established order is mobilized against this real possibility. And, if it harms us to have illusions, it is just as harmful, perhaps more harmful, to preach defeatism and quietism, which can only play into the hands of those that run the system. The fact is, that we find ourselves up against a system that from the beginning of the fascist period to the present has disavowed through its acts the idea of historical progress, a system whose internal contradictions repeatedly manifest themselves in inhuman and unnecessary wars and whose growing productivity is growing destruction and growing waste. Such a system is not immune. It is already defending itself against opposition, even that of intellectuals, in all corners of the world. And even if we see no transformation, we must fight on. We must resist if we still want to live as human beings, to work and be happy. In alliance with the system we can no longer do so.

THE PROBLEM OF VIOLENCE – QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question: If you say that the proletariat of the Third World is the major force capable of destroying imperialism, then you have to take this into the structure of your theory. But you have not done this, since you assert in *One-Dimensional Man* that theory lacks an agent of revolution, and in your

talk you say that the student movement has no mass basis. The opposition must make the Third World proletariat its mass basis.

Marcuse: The relationship has already been established in objective reality. I take as my starting point the conception that in today's situation there is no longer anything "outside capitalism." Even the socialist and Communist systems are linked with capitalism today, come what may, in a world system. Therefore we can speak of an "outside" only in a very relative sense. The national liberation movements in the Third World are not by themselves a revolutionary force strong enough to overthrow advanced capitalism as a system. Such a revolutionary force can be expected only from a confluence of forces of change in the centers of advanced capitalism with those in the Third World. To bring this about is really a most difficult task. Naturally it is easy to say that the opposition of the intelligentsia has or must have its mass basis in the national liberation fronts of the Third World. How to produce this association is something which still has to be achieved and with which we have not even yet begun. The difficulties that stand in the way are immense. Aside from the problem of distance, there is the problem of language, of the total cultural difference, etc. These are all new elements, which must be taken into account both in theory and in practice.

From a general perspective I see the possibility of an effective revolutionary force only in the combination of what is going on in the Third World with the explosive forces in the centers of the highly developed world.

Q: The student opposition knows how difficult it is to get popular support in the advanced capitalist countries. In discussions with workers, students have repeatedly heard the answer: "I don't know what you are talking about – I have got it good, much better than before." And what does this worker care about the terror in Vietnam? Humanitarian arguments wouldn't do, since humanity itself gave rise to terror.

M: The worker who says that he has it better than before is right if, in a nonrevolutionary situation, he does not think and behave like a revolutionary. All you can do is to make him aware of the costs of his (poor) well-being – the perpetual toil of his own life and the misery of others. And we must eventually come to grips with the idea that, in the period of advanced capitalism, the driving revolutionary force may not be generated by poverty and misery but precisely by the higher expectations within the better living conditions, and by the developed consciousness of highly qualified and educated workers: precursors of a new working class or a new part of the old working class. The internal contradictions of capitalism assume an ever more brutal and global form, and the new consciousness may become a catalyst in their explosion and solution. As to your suspicion about humanitarian arguments, I think we should not believe that we can no longer make use today of humanitarian arguments. I should like to ask you all a question. If I really radically exclude humanitarian arguments, on what basis can I work against the system of advanced capitalism? If you only operate within the framework of technical rationality and from the start exclude

historically transcendent concepts, that is, negations of the system – for the system is not humane, and humanitarian ideas belong to the negation of the system – then you continually find yourself in the situation of being asked, and not being able to answer, the question, What is really so terrible about this system, which continually expands social wealth so that strata of the population that previously lived in the greatest poverty and misery today have automobiles, television sets, and one-family houses? What is so bad about this system that we dare take the tremendous risk of preaching its overthrow? If you content yourself with material arguments and exclude all other arguments you will not get anywhere. We must finally relearn what we forgot during the fascist period, or what you, who were not even born until after the first fascist period, have not fully become conscious of: that humanitarian and moral arguments are not merely deceitful ideology. Rather, they can and must become central social forces. If we exclude them from our argumentation at the start, we impoverish ourselves and disarm ourselves in the face of the strongest arguments of the defenders of the status quo.

Q: Assuming for a moment that the opposition in the United States succeeds in its fight with the established power structure, how do you imagine the constructive work of the opposition, which would then be the possessor of state power?

M: You mean how do I imagine the construction of a free society under given conditions? To answer this question would take hours. Let me say only one thing. We cannot let ourselves think that the success of the student opposition would push the situation to a stage from which we can ask about the construction of a free society. If the student opposition remains isolated and does not succeed in breaking out of its own limited sphere, if it does not succeed in mobilizing social strata that really will play a decisive role in the revolution on account of their position in the social process of production, then the student opposition can play only an accessory role. It is possible to regard the student opposition as the nucleus of a revolution, but if we have only a nucleus, then we don't have a revolution. The student opposition has many possibilities of breaking out of the narrow framework within which it is enclosed today and changing the intelligentsia, the "bourgeois" intelligentsia, from a term of abuse into a *parole d'honneur*. But that would mean breaking out of or extending the framework to the point where it included quite different forces that could materially and intellectually work for a revolution.

I shall attempt to be concrete. I am sorry if I have understood the question in the sense of the power of positive thinking; I still believe in the power of negativity and that we always come soon enough to the positive.

In my lecture I have already suggested what students can do. First they must make clear to those who ask that it is really impossible to ask what is really so wrong in this society, that this question is all but inhuman, brutal. They must be made to see and hear and feel what is going on around them,

and what their masters, with the silent or vociferous consent of the ruled, are doing to the peoples in the countries under the heel of the imperialist metropoles. The subsequent steps differ according to the type of society or area, in other words if you have a "democracy" such as that in the United States or a "democracy" such as that in Berlin. Each case would require its own first step. I should consider it constructive in the United States today, for example, if the war in Vietnam were ended with the withdrawal of American troops; that is, I should consider it an achievement of the opposition. But this has nothing to do with the construction of a socialist society; and yet it is an immensely positive and constructive step. So we must proceed from one step to the next. If you say to anyone in the United States today, "What we want is socialism and the expropriation of private property in the means of production and collective control," then people run away from you. That does not mean that the idea of socialism is false: to the contrary. But it does mean that we have not at all succeeded in awakening the consciousness of the need for socialism, and that we must struggle for its realization if we are not to be barbarized and destroyed.

Q: How can the potentialities be realized if the working population has no need of them, if we have to first awaken the need, which seems impossible within the system? Also, it appears that people are using your critique of repressive tolerance to say that all tolerance is repressive, so that disagreement about the consequences of even your own ideas is just shouted down.

M: With regard to realization: you cannot see how a system of this cohesion and strength can be overthrown, since it will meet the least provocation with all its power. If that were true, then this would be the first social system in world history that is of eternal duration. I believe that today the fissures are deep enough. The internal contradictions of the system are more acute than ever: first, the contradiction between the immense social wealth on the one hand and its repressive and destructive use on the other; second, the tendency toward automation, which capitalism is forced to if it wants to maintain expanded reproduction. Automation tends toward eliminating the use of physical labor power in the production process and is therefore, as Marx saw, incompatible with the preservation of capitalism in the long run. Thus there is no basis for talking of the system's immunity.

I hope that nothing in my essay on tolerance suggests that I repudiate every sort of tolerance. That seems to me such idiocy that I cannot understand how such an interpretation has come into being. What I meant and said was that there are movements, which manifest themselves in propaganda as well as action, of which it can be predicted with the greatest certainty that they will lead to an increase of repression and destruction. These movements should not be tolerated within the framework of democracy. Here is a classic example: I believe that if, in the Weimar Republic, the Nazi movement had not been tolerated once it had revealed its character, which was quite early, if it had not enjoyed the blessings of that democracy,

then we probably would not have experienced the horrors of the Second World War and some other horrors as well. There is an unequivocal criterion according to which we can say: here are movements that should not be tolerated if an improvement and pacification of human life is to be attained. To make of this the claim that I believe that tolerance is an evil in itself is something that I simply do not understand.

On the first question: today we are faced with the problem that transformation is objectively necessary but the need for it is not present among precisely those social strata who were defined as the agents of this transformation. The mechanisms that stifle this need must first be eliminated, which presupposes the need for their elimination. This is a dialectic from which I have found no issue.

Q: Do you think that the European working class can play an important role in a future transformation? Or are we not at a point where the revolution of the future will be not the proletarian revolution but the human revolution, for which all people can be considered potentially revolutionary, owing to the defunctionalization of the capitalist class?

M: While the political tradition of the European workers still seems strong in at least a few European countries, in America, where it also existed at one time, it has been stifled.

But aside from the vague concept of political tradition, the answer to your question depends on another question, namely, whether the tendencies that have become dominant in the United States will do so in Europe as well, so that all countertendencies based on the political tradition of the European working class are stifled in Europe, too. This depends on the time at which activation, political activation, commences. If it begins at the end of Americanization, then we could probably not speak of a revolutionary role for the working class as such in Europe. If it begins in a situation in which this tendency has not yet gained the upper hand, in which the developmental stages of European capitalism clearly differ, as they do now, from those of American capitalism, then the chances are greater. Will the European economy, the European capitalist economy, completely follow the tendencies of its American counterpart? Will the American economic penetration of Europe make further progress, or will it be arrested at a certain point?

Q: You have spoken of the eventuality of a crisis of the capitalist system that is to be hoped for and feared – feared because it might mobilize the workers into fascism. I think that the latter cannot occur because the fascist mobilization of 1933 was connected with a society that was not as homogeneous as today's but was rather influenced by relics of the past. On the other hand, the recent development of capitalism, especially through Keynesian policy, shows that there is no reason to expect a crisis, even taking automation into account. The crisis theory is based on the classical theory of imperialism. This theory and the hopes based on it seem dubious. But are not our opponents not the masses but the institutions? Will not the human forces tend to be on our side?

M: Potentially everyone is on our side. But can we make an actuality of this potentiality? The new fascism – if it comes – will be very different from the old fascism. History does not repeat itself so easily. When I speak of the rise of fascism I mean, with regard to America, for example, that the strength of those who support the cutback of existing civil and political liberties will grow to the point where the Congress can institute repressive legislation that is very effective. That is, the mass basis does not have to consist of masses of people going out into the streets and beating people up, it can also mean that the masses support increasingly actively a tendency that confines whatever scope still exists in democracy, thus increasingly weakening the opposition.

I am reproached with being so terribly pessimistic. But I must say that after hearing you I feel like an irresponsible optimist who has long left the solid substance of reality. I cannot conceive of even the nicest capitalist system lasting for eternity. The objections you have raised about automation are correct if you isolate automation from the other social trends which make of it a revolutionary force, for example: first, the enlightenment of consciousness; second, the education especially of the "new working class"; third, psychological-moral disintegration (which is again one of the reasons why I believe that morality has long ceased to be mere ideology); and fourth, a subject we have not discussed at all tonight, the fact that there is also a second world consisting of the Soviet bloc, which will enter into ever sharper economic competition with capitalism. These forces should be taken into consideration.

Q: Must we not attempt to concretize in detail the negation of the established order? If not, are we then not in danger of remaining a minority since the majority has indeed much to lose if this order is destroyed? How much tolerance must we have of reformists and revisionists? Does social democracy have a positive function in the transformation?

M: On the question of a concrete alternative: How you can formulate this in Berlin I do not know, because I have been here too short a time. If this question were asked in America, my students and I would say this: a state must be created in which you no longer have to send your sons to be slaughtered in Vietnam; a society must be created in which Blacks and Puerto Ricans are no longer treated as second-class citizens (now indeed they are often not treated as citizens at all) and in which a good education is granted to all, not merely to the children of the wealthy. And we can also specify the steps that must be taken in order to bring about this state. You may still not consider this something positive. But I believe that it is something positive, it is an alternative, particularly for those who are really hit hard by what is happening in Vietnam.

I do believe that it is inadequate to equate Soviet society with advanced capitalist society under the title "developed industrial society" and that this concept does not do justice to the fundamental trends. Nevertheless I do see a cooperation in effect today between the Soviet Union and the United

States which goes beyond temporary *Realpolitik* and seems to correspond to the wholly unMarxian theory that there is a community of interests of the richer nations in opposition to the poorer nations, one which overcomes the distinction between capitalist and socialist society and includes both within it.

With regard to the problem of socialism as the alternative, in America you naturally hear again and again: "If that's your alternative, then we don't want to have anything to do with it. Whatever you may say against established society, there's no question that we're better off than people in the Soviet Union or other socialist countries." Then it is hard to tell them that what goes on there is not socialism.

There are in fact large groups in the population with whom discussion is hopeless. It is a waste of time and energy to talk to these people. This does not mean being intolerant or aggressive, it simply means avoiding talking to them. It is really not intolerant because one knows and can know that this talking will lead nowhere.

We should concentrate energy and time on those strata and groups of which we can assume that they will listen and that they can still think. There real educational work is possible. But not haphazardly: indoctrination has gone too far for that.

Q: On the definition of revisionism mentioned in the previous question: revisionists are those who think they can change something in this society within the established institutions, while a large number of students thinks it is necessary to form an anti-institutional and extra-parliamentary opposition.

M: It is necessary to see important differences and make significant distinctions. Let me say something personal. If you mean by revisionism the German Social Democratic Party, I can only say to you that from the time of my own political education, that is since 1919, I have opposed this party. In 1917 to 1918 I was a member of the Social Democratic Party, I resigned from it after the murder of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, and from then on I have criticized this party's politics. Not because it believed that it could work within the framework of the established order – for we all do this, we all make use of even the most minute possibilities in order to transform the established order from inside it – that is not why I fought the S.P.D. The reason was rather that it worked in alliance with reactionary, destructive, and repressive forces.

Since 1918 I have always been hearing of left forces within the Social Democratic Party, and I have continually seen these left forces move more and more to the right until nothing left was left in them. You see that I am at least not very convinced by this idea of some kind of radical work within the party.

Q: Is not even major social change, such as from Stalinism to the contemporary situation in the Soviet Union, immanent to the system, and would that not be true of America, for example, if the Vietnam war were

ended? Isn't the question of violence not just one of tactics but of strategy and humanitarian principles? And cannot progressive ideas such as Leninism become perverted?

M: In my lecture I have emphasized that there are many different kinds of violence employed in defense and in aggression. For example, the violence of the policeman which consists in overpowering a murderer is very different, not only externally but in its instinctual structure, its substance, from the violence of a policeman who clubs a demonstrator. Both are acts of violence but they have completely different functions.

What applies here in an individual case also applies socially and historically. The violence of revolutionary terror, for example, is very different from that of the White terror, because revolutionary terror as terror implies its own abolition in the process of creating a free society, which is not the case for the White terror. The terror employed in the defense of North Vietnam is essentially different from the terror employed in the aggression.

How one can prevent revolutionary terror from turning into cruelty and brutality is another question. In a real revolution there are always ways and means of preventing this. At the beginning of the Bolshevik Revolution there was no cruelty, no brutality, no terror going beyond resistance against those still in power. Where in a revolution this sort of terror changes into acts of cruelty, brutality, and torture, then we are already talking about a perversion of the revolution.

Q: Several questions:

First, should we not use opportunities to join existing organizations to attempt to introduce ferment and consciousness into their lower levels?

Second, on the right of resistance: in your essay on tolerance you put this right in quotation marks, but now you have interpreted it as an ancient principle. What is this right based on? Is it a romantic relic of natural law, or is it a self-posited right and, if so, how can the opposition invoke a right which it must first generate?

Third, it is true that enlightenment of consciousness must occur through demonstrations as well as discussion. But how can we organize unarmed opposition and carry out materially manifest nonviolence when the bureaucracy reacts with efforts at physical annihilation? Our opposition essentially consists in defending existing rights, which are continually violated by state violence and manipulation. Perhaps instead of invoking the "right of resistance" we should say that we are sacrificing lower-level laws in order to defend constitutional law. Furthermore, the theoretical reasons against the principle of nonviolence contradict the humanitarian reasons for it.

M: I can answer your questions only in brief.

The last contradiction is based on a misunderstanding. I have not asserted that nonviolence should be applied or preached as a principle of strategy. I have in no way equated humanitarianism and nonviolence. To the contrary, I have spoken of situations in which it is precisely the interest of humanitarianism which leads to violence.

Whether there are situations in which work aiming at radical transformation can be carried out within existing parties? If the question is posed in this way, I would say, Yes. This is actually a question of practicability. If you know from experience, in your evaluation of the situation, that there are groups and local organizations which are open and willing to listen, then of course one should work in these groups. I only said that from my experience I consider the possibility of transforming the major parties from within to be null and am just as pessimistic as I was forty years ago.

On the question of the right of resistance: the quotation marks in the essay on tolerance were only supposed to indicate that it was an old term of political theory.

There is a very interesting problem contained in the question whether those who invoke the right of resistance in their favor have not themselves brought into being the principle on whose basis they resist positive law. That is, whether the appeal to the right of resistance is not relative and no more than the particular interest of a particular group. I should like to point out that historically that is not the meaning of the doctrine of the right of resistance. The doctrine of the right of resistance has always asserted that appealing to the right of resistance is an appeal to a higher law, which has universal validity, that is, which goes beyond the self-defined right and privilege of a particular group. And there really is a close connection between the right of resistance and natural law. Now you will say that such a universal higher law simply does not exist. I believe that it does exist. Today we no longer call it natural law, but I believe that if we say today that what justifies us in resisting the system is more than the relative interest of a specific group and more than something that we ourselves have defined, we can demonstrate this. If we appeal to humanity's right to peace, to humanity's right to abolish exploitation and oppression, we are not talking about self-defined, special, group interests, but rather and in fact interests demonstrable as universal rights. That is why we can and should lay claim today to the right of resistance as more than a relative right.

On the thesis that tolerance must turn into specific actions in specific situations, I am in complete agreement. In my talk I asserted that we have found ourselves for a long time in a situation in which discussion will turn into demonstration and other forms of action. No matter how nonviolent our demonstrations are or will be, we must expect them to be met with institutional violence. We cannot calm ourselves with the thought that we are demonstrating peaceably, that therefore it's legal and nothing bad will happen. In this sense there is no general organization of "manifest-material nonviolence." What we must anticipate at every moment is that the established order will put into action the institutionalized violence at its disposal. This is not to exclude our being able to and having to find forms of demonstration that avoid this confrontation with violence in which, in the present situation, we are bound to be defeated. If I was correctly informed yesterday, such forms have already been developed and even tested right here

in Berlin. You will know what I am referring to. I don't want to go into it at greater length.

One thing seems to me to be dangerous. You are quite right to assert that actually we are the ones who are defending existing positive laws. If in a democracy we defend civil liberties, we are in fact defending the laws of the establishment. But unfortunately that is too simple. For example, the police and their ordinances are also positive law. In general we can in fact say: we are the ones who defend democracy. But that changes nothing about the fact that in the same breath we must add that we are fully conscious that we are violating positive law and that we believe we are justified in so doing.

Q: Some observations and questions on concrete problems:

On the workers – the role of the European working class differs from that of the American working class because the class conflicts can't be shifted onto minorities, since there are none here. This means that the working class can be radicalized.

On the universities – in the historical situation in which we find ourselves at present, academic freedom is part of repressive tolerance for it now consists predominantly in the fact that anyone who wants to can and does buy the faculty and institutes of the university. Therefore it is our duty to organize a critical university as a counter-university and make clear that our tolerance threshold has been reached, that we will bring charges against specific forms of the misuse of knowledge for destructive and inhuman purposes. Would you go into your published proposal for setting up a documentation center on the misuse of knowledge and science?

On students and radicals in the professions – how do you envisage the possibility of student revolutionary potential after students leave the university and are on the way to getting immersed in bourgeois life? At the moment it is not so important how students are internationally organized – we are already trying that in Western Europe – but how they are organized after they get their degrees.

M: That is really one of the most important questions. In America much more even than here. While here one can study for years without having to get a degree and then even go to another university, in the United States this is not possible. Instead one has to look for a job, and then the happy days of student opposition are simply over. It is therefore immensely important to find some means by which those who were in the opposition during their studies still remain in the opposition afterwards. How this is to be done must be worked out differently in different cases. But precisely in view of the terribly important role that the intelligentsia will be playing in the future social process of production, such a continuity of opposition after one's studies is really a crucial problem.

I have already outlined the difference between the European and American working classes. I agree with the questioner. I believe that we cannot say that American capitalism has shifted its contradictions onto minorities. That has little to do with the current situation of capitalism. In

the long run the essential contradictions of capitalism cannot be shifted onto minorities.

On the one hand we defend existing rights, including academic freedom. We must insist on academic freedom, one element of which is the right of students to discuss and demonstrate not only in the classroom but on the entire campus. In America at least this is still recognized as a right and as part of academic freedom.

But there is also real misuse of academic freedom: the misuse of science for purposes of destruction, particularly for military purposes in Vietnam, is a striking example. In America it has been brought about at several universities that the university will no longer be a party to contracts with government agencies and industries that produce means of biological and chemical warfare. This was, by the way, the result of the work of but a small number of people who without any help sat down, got the material, and then organized a group. Although it is infinitely difficult, people are working at documenting such misuse of science, and to prevent this misuse is a very important task.

III

LIBERATION FROM THE AFFLUENT SOCIETY[1]

I am very happy to see so many flowers here and that is why I want to remind you that flowers, by themselves, have no power whatsoever, other than the power of men and women who protect them and take care of them against aggression and destruction.

As a hopeless philosopher for whom philosophy has become inseparable from politics, I am afraid I have to give here today a rather philosophical speech, and I must ask your indulgence. We are dealing with the dialectics of liberation (actually a redundant phrase, because I believe that all dialectic is liberation) and not only liberation in an intellectual sense, but liberation involving the mind and the body, liberation involving entire human existence. Think of Plato: the liberation from the existence in the cave. Think of Hegel: liberation in the sense of progress and freedom on the historical scale. Think of Marx. Now in what sense is all dialectic liberation? It is liberation from the repressive, from a bad, a false system – be it an organic system, be it a social system, be it a mental or intellectual system: liberation by forces developing within such a system. That is a decisive point. And liberation by virtue of the contradiction generated by the system, precisely because it is a bad, a false system.

I am intentionally using here moral, philosophical terms, values: "bad," "false." For without an objectively justifiable goal of a better, a free human

1 "Liberation from the Affluent Society" presents Marcuse's contribution to a 1967 "Dialectics of Liberation" conference. The Congress of the Dialectics of Liberation attempted to bring together major political theorists like Marcuse and *Monthly Review* editor Paul Sweezy with political activists like Stokely Carmichael and representatives of the counterculture like Living Theater director Julien Beck and poet Allan Ginsberg. Held in the Roundhouse at Chalk Farm, London, from July 15 to July 30, 1967, it drew together a vast number of intellectuals, activists, and counterculture types for lectures, debate, poetry, music, films, and other cultural events. It was published in a 1969 Collier Books paper edition titled *To Free a Generation!*

existence, all liberation must remain meaningless – at best, progress in servitude. I believe that in Marx too socialism *ought* to be. This "ought" belongs to the very essence of scientific socialism. It *ought* to be; it is, we may almost say, a biological, sociological and political necessity. It is a biological necessity inasmuch as a socialist society, according to Marx, would conform with the very *logos* of life, with the essential possibilities of a human existence, not only mentally, not only intellectually, but organically.

Now as to today and our own situation, I think we are faced with a novel situation in history, because today we have to be liberated from a relatively well-functioning, rich, powerful society. I am speaking here about liberation from the affluent society, that is to say, the advanced industrial societies. The problem we are facing is the need for liberation not from a poor society, not from a disintegrating society, not even in most cases from a terroristic society, but from a society which develops to a great extent the material and even cultural needs of man – a society which, to use a slogan, delivers the goods to an ever larger part of the population. And that implies, we are facing liberation from a society where liberation is apparently without a mass basis. We know very well the social mechanisms of manipulation, indoctrination, repression which are responsible for this lack of a mass basis, for the integration of the majority of the oppositional forces into the established social system. But I must emphasize again that this is not merely an ideological integration; that it is not merely a social integration; that it takes place precisely on the strong and rich basis which enables the society to develop and satisfy material and cultural needs better than before.

But knowledge of the mechanisms of manipulation or repression, which go down into the very unconscious of man, is not the whole story. I believe that we (and I will use "we" throughout my talk) have been too hesitant, that we have been too ashamed, understandably ashamed, to insist on the integral, radical features of a socialist society, its qualitative difference from all the established societies: the qualitative difference by virtue of which socialism is indeed the negation of the established systems, no matter how productive, no matter how powerful they are or they may appear. In other words – and this is one of the many points where I disagree with Paul Goodman – our fault was not that we have been too immodest, but that we have been too modest. We have, as it were, repressed a great deal of what we should have said and what we should have emphasized.

If today these integral features, these truly radical features which make a socialist society a definite negation of the existing societies, if this qualitative difference today appears as utopian, as idealistic, as metaphysical, this is precisely the form in which these radical features must appear if they are really to be a definite negation of the established society: if socialism is indeed the rupture of history, the radical break, the leap into the realm of freedom – a total rupture.

Let us give one illustration of how this awareness, or half-awareness, of the need for such a total rupture was present in some of the great social

struggles of our period. Walter Benjamin quotes reports that during the Paris Commune, in all corners of the city of Paris there were people shooting at the clocks on the towers of the churches, palaces and so on, thereby consciously or half-consciously expressing the need that somehow time has to be arrested; that at least the prevailing, the established time continuum has to be arrested, and that a new time has to begin – a very strong emphasis on the qualitative difference and on the totality of the rupture between the new society and the old.

In this sense, I should like to discuss here with you the repressed prerequisites of qualitative change. I say intentionally "of qualitative change," not "of revolution," because we know of too many revolutions through which the continuum of repression has been sustained, revolutions which have replaced one system of domination by another. We must become aware of the essentially new features which distinguish a free society as a definite negation of the established societies, and we must begin formulating these features, no matter how metaphysical, no matter how utopian, I would even say no matter how ridiculous we may appear to the normal people in all camps, on the right as well as on left.

What is the dialectic of liberation with which we here are concerned? It is the construction of a free society, a construction which depends in the first place on the prevalence of the vital need for abolishing the established systems of servitude; and secondly, and this is decisive, it depends on the vital commitment, the striving, conscious as well as sub- and un-conscious, for the qualitatively different values of free human existence. Without the emergence of such new needs and satisfactions, the needs and satisfactions of free men, all change in the social institutions, no matter how great, would only replace one system of servitude by another system of servitude. Nor can the emergence – and I should like to emphasize this – nor can the emergence of such new needs and satisfactions be envisaged as a mere by-product, the mere result, of changed social institutions. We have seen this, it is a fact of experience. The development of the new institutions must already be carried out and carried through by men with the new needs. That, by the way, is the basic idea underlying Marx's own concept of the proletariat as the historical agent of revolution. He saw the industrial proletariat as the historical agent of revolution, not only because it was the basic class in the material process of production, not only because it was at that time the majority of the population, but also because this class was "free" from the repressive and aggressive competitive needs of capitalist society and therefore, at least potentially, the carrier of essentially new needs, goals and satisfactions.

We can formulate this dialectic of liberation also in a more brutal way, as a vicious circle. The transition from voluntary servitude (as it exists to a great extent in the affluent society) to freedom presupposes the abolition of the institutions and mechanism of repression. And the abolition of the institutions and mechanisms of repression already presupposes liberation from servitude, prevalence of the need for liberation. As to needs, I think we have

to distinguish between the need for changing intolerable conditions of existence, and the need for changing the society as a whole. The two are by no means identical, they are by no means in harmony. *If* the need is for changing intolerable conditions of existence, with at least a reasonable chance that this can be achieved within the established society, with the growth and progress of the established society, then this is merely quantitative change. Qualitative change is a change of the very system as a whole.

I would like to point out that the distinction between quantitative and qualitative change is not identical with the distinction between reform and revolution. Quantitative change can mean and can lead to revolution. Only the conjunction, I suggest, of these two is revolution in the essential sense of the leap from pre-history into the history of man. In other words, the problem with which we are faced is the point where quantity can turn into quality, where the qualitative change in the conditions and institutions can become a qualitative change affecting all human existence.

Today the two potential factors of revolution which I have just mentioned are disjointed. The first is most prevalent in the underdeveloped countries, where quantitative change – that is to say, the creation of human living conditions – is in itself qualitative change, but is not yet freedom. The second potential factor of revolution, the prerequisites of liberation, is potentially there in the advanced industrial countries, but is contained and perverted by the capitalist organization of society.

I think we are faced with a situation in which this advanced capitalist society has reached a point where quantitative change can technically be turned into qualitative change, into authentic liberation. And it is precisely against this truly fatal possibility that the affluent society, advanced capitalism, is mobilized and organized on all fronts, at home as well as abroad.

Before I go on, let me give a brief definition of what I mean by an affluent society. A model, of course, is American society today, although even in the United States it is more a tendency, not yet entirely translated into reality. In the first place, it is a capitalist society. It seems to be necessary to remind ourselves of this because there are some people, even on the left, who believe that American society is no longer a class society. I can assure you that it is a class society. It is a capitalist society with a high concentration of economic and political power; with an enlarged and enlarging sector of automation and coordination of production, distribution and communication; with private ownership in the means of production, which however depends increasingly on ever more active and wide intervention by the government. It is a society in which, as I mentioned, the material as well as cultural needs of the underlying population are satisfied on a scale larger than ever before – but they are satisfied in line with the requirements and interests of the apparatus and of the powers which control the apparatus. And it is a society growing on the condition of accelerating waste, planned obsolescence and destruction, while the substratum of the population continues to live in poverty and misery.

I believe that these factors are internally interrelated, that they constitute the syndrome of late capitalism: namely, the apparently inseparable unity – inseparable for the system – of productivity and destruction, of satisfaction of needs and repression, of liberty within a system of servitude – that is to say, the subjugation of man to the apparatus, and the inseparable unity of rational and irrational. We can say that the rationality of the society lies in its very insanity, and that the insanity of the society is rational to the degree to which it is efficient, to the degree to which it delivers the goods.

Now the question we must raise is: why do we need liberation from such a society if it is capable – perhaps in the distant future, but apparently capable – of conquering poverty to a greater degree than ever before, of reducing the toil of labor and the time of labor, and of raising the standard of living? If the price for all goods delivered, the price for this comfortable servitude, for all these achievements, is exacted from people far away from the metropolis and far away from its affluence? If the affluent society itself hardly notices what it is doing, how it is spreading terror and enslavement, how it is fighting liberation in all corners of the globe?

We know the traditional weakness of emotional, moral and humanitarian arguments in the face of such technological achievement, in the face of the irrational rationality of such a power. These arguments do not seem to carry any weight against the brute facts – we might say brutal facts – of the society and its productivity. And yet, it is only the insistence on the real possibilities of a free society, which is blocked by the affluent society – it is only this insistence in practice as well as in theory, in demonstration as well as in discussion, which still stands in the way of the complete degradation of man to an object, or rather subject/object, of total administration. It is only this insistence which still stands in the way of the progressive brutalization and moronization of man. For – and I should like to emphasize this – the capitalist Welfare State is a Warfare State. It must have an Enemy, with a capital E, a total Enemy; because the perpetuation of servitude, the perpetuation of the miserable struggle for existence in the very face of the new possibilities of freedom, activates and intensifies in this society a primary aggressiveness to a degree, I think, hitherto unknown in history. And this primary aggressiveness must be mobilized in socially useful ways, lest it explode the system itself. Hence the need for an Enemy, who must be there, and who must be created if he does not exist. Fortunately, I dare say, the Enemy does exist. But his image and his power must, in this society, be inflated beyond all proportions in order to be able to mobilize this aggressiveness of the affluent society in socially useful ways.

The result is a mutilated, crippled and frustrated human existence: a human existence that is violently defending its own servitude.

We can sum up the fatal situation with which we are confronted. Radical social change is objectively necessary, in the dual sense that it is the only chance to save the possibilities of human freedom and, furthermore, in the sense that the technical and material resources for the realization of freedom

are available. But while this objective need is demonstrably there, the subjective need for such a change does not prevail. It does not prevail precisely among those parts of the population that are traditionally considered the agents of historical change. The subjective need is repressed, again on dual grounds: first, by virtue of the actual satisfaction of needs, and secondly, by a massive scientific manipulation and administration of needs – that is, by a systematic social control not only of the consciousness, but also of the unconscious of man. This control has been made possible by the very achievements of the greatest liberating sciences of our time, in psychology, mainly psychoanalysis and psychiatry. That they could become and have become at the same time powerful instruments of suppression, one of the most effective engines of suppression, is again one of the terrible aspects of the dialectic of liberation.

This divergence between the objective and the subjective need changes completely, I suggest, the basis, the prospects and the strategy of liberation. This situation presupposes the emergence of new needs, qualitatively different and even opposed to the prevailing aggressive and repressive needs: the emergence of a new type of man, with a vital, biological drive for liberation, and with a consciousness capable of breaking through the material as well as ideological veil of the affluent society. In other words, liberation seems to be predicated upon the opening and the activation of a depth dimension of human existence, this side of and underneath the traditional material base: not an idealistic dimension, over and above the material base, but a dimension even more material than the material base, a dimension underneath the material base. I will illustrate presently what I mean.

The emphasis on this new dimension does not mean replacing politics by psychology, but rather the other way around. It means finally taking account of the fact that society has invaded even the deepest roots of individual existence, even the unconscious of man. *We* must get at the roots of society in the individuals themselves, the individuals who, because of social engineering, constantly reproduce the continuum of repression even through the great revolution.

This change is, I suggest, not an ideological change. It is dictated by the actual development of an industrial society, which has introduced factors which our theory could formerly correctly neglect. It is dictated by the actual development of industrial society, by the tremendous growth of its material and technical productivity, which has surpassed and rendered obsolete the traditional goals and preconditions of liberation.

Here we are faced with the question: is liberation from the affluent society identical with the transition from capitalism to socialism? The answer I suggest is: It is not identical, if socialism is defined merely as the planned development of the productive forces and the rationalization of resources (although this remains a precondition for all liberation). It is identical with the transition from capitalism to socialism, if socialism is defined in

its most utopian terms: namely, among others, the abolition of labor, the termination of the struggle for existence – that is to say, life as an end in itself and no longer as a means to an end – and the liberation of human sensibility and sensitivity, not as a private factor, but as a force for transformation of human existence and of its environment. To give sensitivity and sensibility their own right is, I think, one of the basic goals of integral socialism. These are the qualitatively different features of a free society. They presuppose, as you may already have seen, a total trans-valuation of values, a new anthropology. They presuppose a type of man who rejects the performance principles governing the established societies; a type of man who has rid himself of the aggressiveness and brutality that are inherent in the organization of established society, and in its hypocritical, puritan morality; a type of man who is biologically incapable of fighting wars and creating suffering; a type of man who has a good conscience of joy and pleasure, and who works, collectively and individually, for a social and natural environment in which such an existence becomes possible.

The dialectic of liberation, as turned from quantity into quality, thus involves, I repeat, a break in the continuum of repression which reaches into the depth dimension of the organism itself. Or, we may say that today qualitative change, liberation, involves organic, instinctual, biological changes at the same time as political and social changes.

The new needs and satisfactions have a very material basis, as I have indicated. They are not thought out but are the logical derivation from the technical, material and intellectual possibilities of advanced, industrial society. They are inherent in, and the expression of, the productivity of advanced industrial society, which has long since made obsolete all kinds of inner-worldly asceticism, the entire work discipline on which Judeo-Christian morality has been based.

Why is this society surpassing and negating this type of man, the traditional type of man, and the forms of his existence, as well as the morality to which it owes much of its origins and foundations? This new, unheard-of and not anticipated productivity allows the concept of a technology of liberation. Here I can only briefly indicate what I have in mind: such amazing and indeed apparently utopian tendencies as the convergence of technique and art, the convergence of work and play, the convergence of the realm of necessity and the realm of freedom. How? No longer subjected to the dictates of capitalist profitability and of efficiency, no longer to the dictates of scarcity, which today are perpetuated by the capitalist organization of society; socially necessary labor, material production, would and could become (we see the tendency already) increasingly scientific. Technical experimentation, science and technology would and could become a play with the hitherto hidden – methodically hidden and blocked – potentialities of men and things, of society and nature.

This means one of the oldest dreams of all radical theory and practice. It means that the creative imagination, and not only the rationality of the

performance principle, would become a productive force applied to the transformation of the social and natural universe. It would mean the emergence of a form of reality which is the work and the medium of the developing sensibility and sensitivity of man.

And now I throw in the terrible concept: it would mean an "aesthetic" reality – society as a work of art. This is the most utopian, the most radical possibility of liberation today.

What does this mean, in concrete terms? I said, we are not concerned here with private sensitivity and sensibility, but with sensitivity and sensibility, creative imagination play, becoming forces of transformation. As such they would guide, for example, the total reconstruction of our cities and of the countryside; the restoration of nature after the elimination of the violence and destruction of capitalist industrialization; the creation of internal and external space for privacy, individual autonomy, tranquillity; the elimination of noise, of captive audiences, of enforced togetherness, of pollution, of ugliness. These are not – and I cannot emphasize this strongly enough – snobbish and romantic demands. Biologists today have emphasized that these are organic needs for the human organism, and that their arrest, their perversion and destruction by capitalist society, actually mutilates the human organism, not only in a figurative way but in a very real and literal sense.

I believe that it is only in such a universe that man can be truly free, and truly human relationships between free beings can be established. I believe that the idea of such a universe guided also Marx's concept of socialism, and that these aesthetic needs and goals must from the beginning be present in the reconstruction of society, and not only at the end or in the far future. Otherwise, the needs and satisfactions which reproduce a repressive society would be carried over into the new society. Repressive men would carry over their repression into the new society.

Now, at this furthest point, the question is: how can we possibly envisage the emergence of such qualitatively different needs and goals as organic biological needs and goals and not as superimposed values? How can we envisage the emergence of these needs and satisfactions within and against the established society – that is to say, prior to liberation? That was the dialectic with which I started, that in a very definite sense we have to be free from in order to create a free society.

Needless to say, the dissolution of the existing system is the precondition for such qualitative change. And the more efficiently the repressive apparatus of the affluent societies operates, the less likely is a gradual transition from servitude to freedom. The fact that today we cannot identify any specific class or any specific group as a revolutionary force, this fact is no excuse for not using any and every possibility and method to arrest the engines of repression in the individual. The diffusion of potential opposition among the entire underlying population corresponds precisely to the total character of our advanced capitalist society. The internal contradictions of the system are as grave as ever before and likely to be aggravated by the

violent expansion of capitalist imperialism. Not only the most general contradictions between the tremendous social wealth on the one hand, and the destructive, aggressive and wasteful use of this wealth on the other; but far more concrete contradictions such as the necessity for the system to automate, the continued reduction of the human base in physical labor-power in the material reproduction of society and thereby the tendency towards the draining of the sources of surplus profit. Finally, there is the threat of technological unemployment which even the most affluent society may no longer be capable of compensating by the creation of ever more parasitic and unproductive labor: all these contradictions exist. In reaction to them suppression, manipulation and integration are likely to increase.

But fulfillment is there; the ground can and must be prepared. The mutilated consciousness and the mutilated instincts must be broken. The sensitivity and the awareness of the new transcending, antagonistic values – they are there. And they are there, they are here, precisely among the still non-integrated social groups and among those who, by virtue of their privileged position, can pierce the ideological and material veil of mass communication and indoctrination – namely, the intelligentsia.

We all know the fatal prejudice, practically from the beginning, in the Labour Movement against the intelligentsia as a catalyst of historical change. It is time to ask whether this prejudice against the intellectuals, and the inferiority complex of the intellectuals resulting from it, was not an essential factor in the development of the capitalist as well as the socialist societies: in the development and weakening of the opposition. The intellectuals usually went out to organize the others, to organize in the communities. They certainly did not use the potentiality they had to organize themselves, to organize among themselves not only on a regional, not only on a national, but on an international level. That is, in my view, today one of the most urgent tasks. Can we say that the intelligentsia is the agent of historical change? Can we say that the intelligentsia today is a revolutionary class? The answer I would give is: No, we cannot say that. But we can say, and I think we must say, that the intelligentsia has a decisive preparatory function, not more; and I suggest that this is plenty. By itself it is not and cannot be a revolutionary class, but it can become the catalyst, and it has a preparatory function – certainly not for the first time, that is in fact the way all revolution starts – but more, perhaps, today than ever before. Because – and for this too we have a very material and very concrete basis – it is from this group that the holders of decisive positions in the productive process will be recruited, in the future even more than hitherto. I refer to what we may call the increasingly scientific character of the material process of production, by virtue of which the role of the intelligentsia changes. It is the group from which the decisive holders of decisive positions will be recruited: scientists, researchers, technicians, engineers, even psychologists – because psychology will continue to be a socially necessary instrument, either of servitude or of liberation.

This class, this intelligentsia has been called the new working class. I believe this term is at best premature. Its members are – and this we should not forget – today the pet beneficiaries of the established system. But they are also at the very source of the glaring contradictions between the liberating capacity of science and its repressive and enslaving use. To activate the repressed and manipulated contradiction, to make it operate as a catalyst of change, that is one of the main tasks of the opposition today. It remains and must remain a political task.

Education is our job, but education in a new sense. Being theory as well as practice, political practice, education today is more than discussion, more than teaching and learning and writing. Unless and until it goes beyond the classroom, until and unless it goes beyond the college, the school, the university, it will remain powerless. Education today must involve the mind *and* the body, reason *and* imagination, the intellectual *and* the instinctual needs, because our entire existence has become the subject/object of politics, of social engineering. I emphasize, it is not a question of making the schools and universities, of making the educational system political. The educational system is political already. I need only remind you of the incredible degree to which (I am speaking of the United States) universities are involved in huge research grants (the nature of which you know in many cases) by the government and the various quasi-governmental agencies.

The educational system *is* political, so it is not we who want to politicize the educational system. What we want is a counter-policy against the established policy. And in this sense we must meet this society on its own ground of total mobilization. We must confront indoctrination in servitude with indoctrination in freedom. We must each of us generate in ourselves, and try to generate in others, the instinctual need for a life without fear, without brutality, and without stupidity. And we must see that we can generate the instinctual and intellectual revulsion against the values of an affluence which spreads aggressiveness and suppression throughout the world.

Before I conclude I would like to say my bit about the Hippies. It seems to me a serious phenomenon. If we are talking of the emergence of an instinctual revulsion against the values of the affluent society, I think here is a place where we should look for it. It seems to me that the Hippies, like any nonconformist movement on the left, are split; that there are two parts, or parties, or tendencies. Much of it is mere masquerade and clownery on the private level, and therefore indeed, as Gerassi suggested, completely harmless, very nice and charming in many cases, but that is all there is to it. But that is not the whole story. There is in the Hippies, and especially in such tendencies in the Hippies as the Diggers and the Provos, an inherent political element – perhaps even more so in the United States than here [United Kingdom]. It is the appearance indeed of new instinctual needs and values. This experience is there. There is a new sensibility against efficient and insane reasonableness. There is the refusal to play the rules of a rigid game, a game

which one knows is rigid from the beginning, and the revolt against the compulsive cleanliness of puritan morality and the aggression bred by the puritan morality as we see it today in Vietnam among other things.

At least this part of the Hippies, in which sexual, moral and political rebellion are somehow united, is indeed a nonaggressive form of life: a demonstration of an aggressive nonaggressiveness which achieves, at least potentially, the demonstration of qualitatively different values, a transvaluation of values.

All education today is therapy: therapy in the sense of liberating man by all available means from a society in which, sooner or later, he is going to be transformed into brute, even if he doesn't notice it any more. Education in this sense is therapy, and all therapy today is political theory and practice. What kind of political practice? That depends entirely on the situation. It is hardly imaginable that we should discuss this here in detail. I will only remind you of the various possibilities of demonstrations, of finding out flexible modes of demonstration which can cope with the use of institutionalized violence, of boycott, many other things – anything goes which is such that it indeed has a reasonable chance of strengthening the forces of the opposition.

We can prepare for it as educators, as students. Again I say, our role is limited. We are no mass movement. I do not believe that in the near future we will see such a mass movement.

I want to add one word about the so-called Third World. I have not spoken of the Third World because my topic was strictly liberation from the affluent society. I agree entirely with Paul Sweezy, that without putting the affluent society in the framework of the Third World it is not understandable. I also believe that here and now our emphasis must be on the advanced industrial societies – not forgetting to do whatever we can and in whatever way we can to support, theoretically and practically, the struggle for liberation in the neo-colonial countries which, if again they are not the final force of liberation, at least contribute their share – and it is a considerable share – to the potential weakening and disintegration of the imperialist world system.

Our role as intellectuals is a limited role. On no account should we succumb to any illusions. But even worse than this is to succumb to the widespread defeatism which we witness. The preparatory role today is an indispensable role. I believe I am not being too optimistic – I have not in general the reputation of being too optimistic – when I say that we can already see the signs, not only that *They* are getting frightened and worried but that there are far more concrete, far more tangible manifestations of the essential weakness of the system. Therefore, let us continue with whatever we can – no illusions, but even more, no defeatism.

IV

DEMOCRACY HAS/HASN'T A FUTURE . . . A PRESENT[1]

Hentoff: This first question has to do with what is presumably the reaffirmation of the democratic processes, the fact that because of Eugene McCarthy and Senator Kennedy various young people have become convinced – some say for the last time, if it doesn't work – that the political processes are viable, that you can change things that way. Do you three on the panel agree with this assessment: that there is a reason to be reasonably optimistic about the processes of democracy in terms of what's been happening politically? Does it make you hopeful about the future of democracy?

Norman, do you want to start?

Mailer: All right. If this question had been asked six months ago, the consensus, if I may use that gentleman from Texas's favorite word, would have been altogether more pessimistic. In fact, it's hard almost to conceive of a forum of this sort in New York City with this panel six months ago.

It's obvious that there's been an extraordinary shift in the tempo of events. When McCarthy began to run no one believed that he had a chance. We were all drenched with a sense of defeat. People went through the ritual of democratic gestures, democratic moves, democratic stands. They attempted to express dissent in one form or another. It never amounted to anything.

Suddenly we've had this incredible phenomenon. McCarthy, while not winning a majority in New Hampshire, nonetheless comes close enough to take the delegates. Kennedy comes out. Johnson, if he does nothing else, reveals to us that he's a man of incredible political imagination.

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1 "Democracy Has/Hasn't a Future . . . a Present" contains excerpts of a 1968 Theater for Ideas panel discussion at the Friends' Meeting House on Gramercy Park in New York. Panelists included Marcuse, Norman Mailer, Nat Hentoff, Arthur Schlesinger, and comments from the floor by Robert Lowell, Elizabeth Hardwick, Susan Sontag and others. It was published in the *New York Times Magazine* on May 26, 1968.

Even if his resignation from the Presidency was done for Machiavellian reasons, at least he's a Machiavellian, which you couldn't say before. And I work on the firm theory that a democracy depends upon having extraordinary people at the helm – even if they're villains, because an extraordinary villain can sometimes create an extraordinary hero. Just as a doctor is no better than his patient, so a hero is no better than his opposition.

I think the answer to the question, then, has to be in the affirmative. Now, the next point to consider is what is actually going on in American life. I would suggest that Technologyland tends to create a psychic condition which is the equivalent of plastic. And just as plastic objects work well and show no sign of age until the moment when they cease to work – and then they give no warning; they just split – so certain things in American society are breaking – with no warning at all.

Hentoff: I wonder if Professor Marcuse is that optimistic.

Marcuse: He is not. He disagrees with Norman Mailer. He is where he was six months ago. He is optimistic if the question means that the American democratic process will go on. The American democratic process, which I do not consider a democratic process [*applause*]; at least it is not what the great theoreticians of the West understood by democracy.

We see shifts. We see even important shifts. But they are all shifts within the same mess. We say, in favor of the democratic process, that the people's will makes itself felt. It makes itself felt up to the point where the will of the people would threaten the established institutional and cultural framework of the society. So changes we have indeed. But they are changes within the established framework.

So I would say democracy certainly has a future. But in my view it certainly does not have a present.

Schlesinger: I would like to distinguish between what one might call the practical and the pure democratic process.

The practical democratic process deals with the possibilities existing within the kind of industrial society which prevails in the developed countries of the West. I would say that the practical democratic process as it has established itself in political procedures implies, for example, the First Amendment of the Constitution. It implies freedom and discussion, and it implies in particular the inability to change things in a decisive way unless you have a majority of the people with you.

In general, it seems to me the values associated with civil liberties and with the effort to persuade majorities to shift from one position to another are more useful to a society than the values associated with short-run decisions in the interests of what one group or another believes to be absolutely right. I believe that the views of those who were deeply opposed to the Vietnam policy but were willing to rely on the democratic process to achieve a change in that policy have had a certain vindication. Because what has happened, as Norman Mailer pointed out, is that in

January of this year this country appeared to be locked in, so far as the Presidential contest in November was concerned, to a choice between the two most disliked and mistrusted politicians of the twentieth century. In the weeks since, the political situation has changed. President Johnson accepted the case of his critics and we now have – rather than a choice between the worst among the Presidential possibilities – a choice from among the best. [*Loud hissing*.]

Now let me distinguish between the practical model of democracy and the pure model. The pure model, I suppose, is a democratic system which would instantly reach infallible results. This pure model of democracy has never existed anywhere on earth.

You have to make a choice. We have, for example, a system which always has a lot of dolts and idiots who have to be brought along. Either you exist in this system and you do your best through every kind of pressure and persuasion to make the maximum gains within that system, or you abandon that system. Herbert Marcuse has written with great eloquence about an alternative system. This would be a system which would abrogate, for example, the Bill of Rights, which would deny freedom of expression to those who took views which Herbert would consider antipublic views.

Marcuse: Here, a correction. I certainly haven't said there should not be freedom of expression for those opinions with which I do not agree or which I consider as damaging to the public cause. I have suggested there should be discriminating tolerance – that is to say, movements which are obviously and objectively aggressive and destructive, not in my personal view but objectively, should not be tolerated. I think that is a very different thing.

Hentoff: The term you used was "objectively" determined?

Marcuse: Yes.

Hentoff: How does one accomplish this?

Marcuse: Let me give you the example which I myself gave long before Hitler came to power. It was clearly beyond the shadow of a doubt that if the movement came to power there would be a world war, there would be the extermination of the Jews. That was not a personal opinion. That was objectively demonstrable. If the Weimar Republic had not tolerated the Hitler movement until it was too strong to be suppressed, we would have been spared the Second World War and the extermination of 6 million Jews. I think that is one case where you can say the definition of this movement as not deserving democratic tolerance is more than a personal value judgment.

Similarly, you can very well decide today in [Vietnam] who is the aggressor and who is not the aggressor. Again, not in terms of personal preference, but objectively.

Schlesinger: I would not, perhaps, disagree with Herbert Marcuse on his substantive judgments on the war in Vietnam. Where we do disagree is in

the way a democratic society should confront a problem of this sort. It is my belief that a democratic society should confront a problem of this sort as we have confronted it, with all the defects and messiness of this confrontation, and that is through some form of public argument and political pressure, and not through some system of exclusion and control.

Herbert [has written] that in a proper democratic society there should be: "the withdrawal of toleration of speech and assembly from groups and movements which promote aggressive policies, armament, chauvinism, discrimination on the grounds of race and religion or which oppose the extension of public services, social security, medical care, etc." These people would be denied protection under, for example, the First Amendment. Moreover, the "restoration of freedom of thought may necessitate new and rigid restrictions on teachings and practices in the educational institutions." All this seems to me a high price to pay.

Let's take, for example, Herbert's proposal that racist arguments and teachings should be automatically suppressed. Now, this contains for anyone, since I assume we're all antiracist, a certain flavor of acceptability. But there are two problems with it. First, if you accept this, you have to have a mechanism which is going to effect the suppression, and this implies the concentration in our society of an extraordinary degree of power; and you have no assurance that the power is going to be used disinterestedly, for the suppression of racist teachings rather than for the benefit of the men operating the mechanism. In the second place, the actual judgments: Even if you are persuaded of the disinterestedness of any central authority, what, for example, would happen to Stokely Carmichael or Rap Brown under this proposition?

Hentoff: I would like to ask Norman, as a conservative, a rather singular conservative, what his reaction is to the quotation from the essay on sin.

Mailer: From Dr. Marcuse? Oh, I think it's too much! [*Laughter.*] Let me make my side of the argument.

Democracy consists of the resolution that comes out of a play of forces. The moment you legislate what is part of the game and what is not part of the game, you are entering into the most dangerous territory of all. Now, of course, every society does precisely that. It legislates. It cuts off part of a terrain. It says, for example, you cannot kill, you cannot steal, and so forth. So that there is not a free play, if you will, of every human desire. To that extent, a society is not democratic.

If we're going to talk about the nature of democracy and whether democracy has a future, we've got to consider the problem in some depth rather than should we legislate against this or legislate against that, because I can give one immediate answer to Marcuse, which is that not every racist is void of ideas, of human content. Sometimes a profound idea is buried in a particularly ugly notion.

The moment one starts wiping whole ideologies off the board and giving them no chance to enter into a civilized dialogue, one may be losing untold intellectual fertilities of the future. We just don't know. It's an incredible arrogance to assume that one knows what should belong in the game and what shouldn't. So in that sense, I'm completely against what Marcuse says.

On the other hand, I think that Marcuse is absolutely right to this extent: that the sort of things that have been going on in the last six months have been going on in democracies so-called. What's fascinating about the game is not that we have been having true democratic expression these last six months. What is fascinating is that the old tricks that used to be used to pen us up and keep us away from any kind of democratic expression at all are not working any more. In other words, I grant you that the forms that are used now are not democratic. But what's interesting is that the old forms that were able to contain us ever since the Second World War are just not working. There is something loose, and this something can go on to break down those old forms and create new ones.

This brings us back to the whole notion of what I talk about when I talk about democracy. You might say the great democrat of them all was DeSade because DeSade said that everybody should have absolute rights over everybody else. Now, what does that mean? That means when a man is walking down the street, he goes up to a girl and he says, "I want to have you." And, according to DeSade – this is where DeSade is a little bit impure as a democrat – she is supposed to say, "All right, you can have me," and DeSade's theory was that the woman might make it sufficiently distasteful so that the man would never approach her again. We Americans prefer a more direct riposte: we prefer the girl to say, "Get lost, mother ——." Now, the point I'm making is that if you go down the street and you do that to a girl in life, what happens? If she's attractive enough, the odds are she has a boyfriend – and he's a real stud. And you're in trouble. In other words, democracy consists of a play of forces and some of these forces are not altogether divorced from violence.

If we're going to start to think about democracy, we have to start to think about it as a process which consists of much more than people getting together and voting on where they want to go with the next step. Democracy consists of an open play of human forces with the end unknown. Its essential affirmation is that a good rather than an evil society will eventually emerge. For the first time in years I feel there is a hope for this to emerge in America.

Marcuse: Well, that was very illuminating. This notion of democracy I accept completely – that it is an open play of forces. My criticism was precisely that it isn't open.

The word that occurred again and again in Norman Mailer's presentation was "game" – "playing the game" – and precisely here is, in my

view, the unbridgeable gap between what I and my friends stand for and what he stands for. We don't want to play the game any more. We consider it a rigged and a brutal game; I would be ashamed to call it a game.

Mailer: That's all marvelous, but Marcuse misread me 180 degrees. I said that, to the extent that society is a game, it is not democratic. To that extent, democratic forces are cut off. You just misread what I said.

Marcuse: I misheard.

Mailer: Misheard. We're finally going to get arbitrary: O.K.

Schlesinger: May I say something?

The problems which we confront today are not peculiar to the United States. One need only read the newspapers to know that every form of frustration – for example, of student protest, of bitterness about the devaluation of human values – appears in societies all over the world at a certain stage of industrial development, quite regardless of whether they're capitalist, communist, socialist or whatever.

The problem is not something specifically related to the United States, to the military-industrial complex or whatever else one likes to attribute all original sin to, but is a worldwide phenomenon which exists in all highly organized societies.

Question: What would happen if Columbia . . . [*Hisses.*] I'm sorry to bring up Columbia. It seems to me that here you have clearly a question of people who resorted to force instead of sitting down and talking. You have people who did not have any power, could not control force, setting up a situation where they did finally have some power to confront a people who normally in a society do have power. That's why this whole discussion of the forces is unrealistic. There isn't an equality of forces.

Hentoff: Would you, Norman, focus on what's been happening at Columbia – in terms of your idea of the play of forces?

Mailer: All right. I support that strike at Columbia completely. I support it because it was existential, because these kids went out and did something that they had never done before, and they did not know how it was going to turn out.

If they end up making an institution of this strike, and disrupting that particular campus year after year, I'll probably end up being against it.

But what's interesting about this is it was a new way of forcing the administration to recognize that they had no sense at all of how powerfully the students felt about a great many issues. These students had gotten to the point where they recognized that any number of polite protests were going to mean nothing with the Columbia administration. They'd obviously been doing this for years. So they broke a whole series of rules, and profoundly shocked the administration, and in return got beaten up by the police. So they then learned something else about themselves.

What is necessary for democracy is that you must learn more about yourself. Sometimes, in a democracy, one will need peaceful modes, because there's nothing more boring, more debilitating of the real resources of a whole cadre of students than to be on perpetual strikes. Listen to those meaningless speeches for hour after hour, week after week, year after year. That's no way to spend a college education when you could be reading a great many things. But to do it once – to do it that brilliantly, with that much force, that much conviction – was marvelous.

It's just that, next time, they're going to have to do something else. I think some of them decided that they'd had enough. I think others decided that they were going to go back with more. The fact of the matter is that if this technological society which rules us and brainwashes us is as bad as we all say it is then there's no way to get around it. There's going to be violence before that society is cracked to the point where we can begin to breathe a little more.

That [Columbia] strike was a good one because it had an air of the unexpected. It was bold; it was passionate, and the causes were good. Another strike in another school might just be a disaster – a dull disaster, like the one in Harvard, where 700 kids penned one man in a room, a man from Dow Chemical. I mean, that's not the way to show the administration that you're fed up with them.

Marcuse: The thing I was interested in hearing is that apparently Norman Mailer believes, at least in this case, that the democratic process wouldn't work unless from time to time broken by extrademocratic and non-democratic action.

I believe that you can transform the democratic process we have today only by this injection of extrademocratic, extraparliamentary actions for the simple reason – now I use the word "game" – that the game is rigged. The play of force is not the play of equal forces. I can hardly imagine a concentration of power which is more overwhelming than the concentration of power we have right now in this country.

Hentoff: Dr. Schlesinger, the terms now that have been introduced are "extrademocratic," "extraparliamentary." What's your reaction to Columbia in that context?

Schlesinger: There is nothing that the students at Columbia did which was not wholly consistent with the American version of democracy.

Marcuse: Then why the police?

Schlesinger: This has nothing to do with the police. There is nothing – and I will repeat it – "there is nothing in what the Columbia students did which is in the slightest degree extrademocratic." We do not in the United States identify the democratic process with the parliamentary process. Ours is a rich and complex conception of democracy in which the right to strike – by labor, by students or whatever – is a basic part.

The democratic process in any sense in which a historian has to deal

with it includes a wide variety of means of pressure. I don't think any serious student of the American democratic process would say that the sit-down strikes [of the 1930s] were not a contribution to the democratic process.

One of its great qualities is the diverse means by which the democratic process absorbs public protest and converts it to a change of policy. I am unwilling to settle for a definition of the democratic process so restrictive that it would exclude what the Columbia students did, or what the sit-down strikers did, or what the abolitionists did. To have so impoverished and legalistic a definition of the democratic process is against what the American democratic tradition is about.

Marcuse: May I ask one question (because I am afraid that we may agree here)? Do you consider the forcible occupation of buildings and the invasion of private property a part of the democratic process?

Schlesinger: Yes.

Marcuse: Then I agree with you on the definition of democracy.

Question: I am struck with the agreement between Norman Mailer and Arthur Schlesinger. I think that Norman Mailer is amoral. I think that Arthur Schlesinger is immoral.

I can give a few examples. Norman Mailer said, about the Columbia thing, he liked it. He constantly referred to its novelty, its newness, its daring. At no point did he talk about the Columbia thing in terms of its issues. If it was a right-wing thing, if it was reaction, if it was against students' rights, if it was just as novel, I think he would have enjoyed it, too. I think that is amoral.

I think that Arthur Schlesinger has been extremely immoral and dishonest. For instance, the way you talk about Herbert Marcuse's discussion of democracy. It's the kind of activity that's to be permitted or not to be permitted that must be discussed, not who has the right.

Mailer: I think that charge has a great deal to it. What characterizes totalitarianisms is that they are no fun. One of the reasons it's very, very hard to get pro-Russian for more than a few weeks is that we keep coming face to face with the fact that the Soviet Union must probably be the most boring country in the history of nations.

But the young lady, like many mechanical leftists – I'm using an old-fashioned phrase – is extraordinarily inaccurate in her indictment, because I was concerned with these issues. I said several times over that I thought they were excellent issues. If some right-wing kids were going up and saying they didn't want any Negroes allowed in Morningside Park do you really think that I would applaud equally? If you believe that, then a certain portion of the Left has become psychotic.

I'm perfectly willing to go down in a leaky rowboat with Arthur Schlesinger – so long as we're both for Kennedy, that is – but let one thing be understood, which is that Schlesinger and I are not at all in any kind of profound agreement.

He is talking about the institutions that we have, and he's saying that he thinks there's much more vitality in those institutions than most of you believe. I feel there's much less than he feels.

If we are amoral we are each amoral in our own separate ways.

Question [by *Robert Lowell, a Pulitzer prize-winning poet*]: I'm going to ask a short, concise question of Arthur Schlesinger, but I'm going to cheat and make a statement.

The only definition of democracy that makes any sense to me is that you have the power to vote people out of office. That's a very profound rule. But the democratic process is something much deeper, and I want to ask Arthur this: Do you think the police were acting within the democratic process at Columbia, or should they have been put on trial?

Schlesinger: I fear I must seem to cop out of this question. I've been out of town. [*Hisses.*] O.K. The question is a perfectly legitimate and searching question which, when I have had a chance to get caught up on the *New York Times* and Jimmy Wechsler and Nat Hentoff and the facts, I'm prepared to answer [*hisses*] but I'm goddamned if I'm going to answer to please an audience on the basis of no knowledge of what the facts are.

Hentoff: I'm going to move on to another question. Herbert Marcuse has written that American society is "an explosion of insanity." Norman Mailer writes that he had come to decide "that the center of America might be insane." Now, is democracy possible in a society of madmen? How serious are you, both of you, in these diagnoses, and how do you apply them to what we're talking about?

Mailer: Insanity consists of building major structures upon foundations which do not exist. I think American society has become progressively insane because it has become progressively a technological society. A technological society assumes that if it has a logical solution to a problem then that is the entire solution. If it decides that the problem, for instance, is to keep food in such a way that it may be eaten six months later, then it proceeds to freeze it, and then it points out to you that six months later when you unfreeze that food you can still eat it. What it does not decide scientifically – although it pretends that this has been a scientific operation – is what portion of that food has been destroyed, what unknown ailments may possibly be inflicted upon the generations of the future.

This is a tiny example of it. But if you start going through every single manifestation of American society you find that it's just an endless series. There's architecture, there's food, there's the incredible fact that in a supposedly rational society we've come to a point where it's almost literally impossible to breathe the air in the city. That's a sign of a society that's mad.

The question is: How do you take a society away from madmen? Well, you take a society away from madmen by getting weapons and charging the castle where the madmen have barricaded themselves and are terrifying the countryside.

The point of the impasse in which we find ourselves is that no one knows where the castle is, no one knows quite who the madmen are, because every time we think we've found a madman, he disclaims himself on television.

For instance, we have this enormous hope that maybe Richard Nixon is the madman. But he gets on television: He's as reasonable as you or I. He cannot be the madman.

Can it be our own dear Governor Rockefeller, who has never said anything interesting that any of us can remember? It certainly can't be Jack Armstrong, our Mayor. He's not the madman. Or is it General Motors then? Yes, conceivably. Now we're getting a little closer. Where in General Motors?

The point is that what we are getting into is not a revolution which is going to take over the seats of power. We're going to have a revolution which is going to be a reconnaissance to find out where the power is located. That's what the sense is of all these operations. That's why I approve of the Columbia strike, because everybody at Columbia now knows a lot more about where the power is located.

So, as I say, the way in which you discover the madmen is that you have a slow continuing revolution which consists of artful moves that expose the madmen, or expose some of the places where they've buried their power, their techniques, their secrets, their fears – because they're terribly afraid.

That's the one thing we've won in these six months, Marcuse, that you give no credit to. The people who have the power are terribly afraid. Which one of us thought that Lyndon Johnson would cave in? The fact of the matter is that the man was suffering from that barrage we were giving him. The barrage we were giving him is much powerful than he, than any of us, believed. That's the incredible fact.

Hentoff: Professor Marcuse, do you think it's that difficult to find out where the men involved are?

Marcuse: No. I don't think we need a revolution to find out where the power lies in the country today. The problem is not: "Who are the madmen?" It is the society that is insane.

I would consider a society sane – or, rather, not insane – which uses the available resources – technical, material, intellectual – not for increasing waste and destruction and unnecessary consumption, but for the abolition of poverty, alienation and misery all over the world. And inasmuch as this society disposes over resources greater than ever before and at the same time distorts and abuses and wastes these resources more than ever before, I call this society insane – not the people in it.

Question [*by Elizabeth Hardwick, writer; advisory editor*, New York Review of Books*; Mrs Lowell*]*:* As a resident of Manhattan I can't have too much of Norman Mailer and Arthur Schlesinger, but I'm fascinated by our visitor from the West. I don't want to ask a stupid question,

so I'm trying to think of one that would be cogent so that he could talk about it.

Well, does it bother you, Professor Marcuse, when you talk about the inequalities in our society, that perhaps the real Left as we all think of it isn't a very large thing in American society? Perhaps it has as much power as the people want it to have, maybe a little more?

Marcuse: Well, I think this is about the most important question you could ask in this context because it involves what is really, in my view, the problem of democracy today. Namely, whether we can still say, with good conscience, that the majority is right. I think we cannot say it any more.

Within the established society we no longer have a majority constituted on the basis of the completely free development of opinion and consciousness. We do not have a majority constituted on the basis of free and equal access to the facts and all the facts. We do not have a majority constituted on the basis of equal education for all.

However, we do have a majority which is standardized and manipulated and even constituted by standardized and administered information, communication and education. In other words, this majority is not free, but it belongs to the very essence of democracy that the people who are sovereign are a free people. That was the notion of Rousseau and John Stuart Mill. That was also the way the great fighters for democracy understood it from the beginning – not the people as people, but the really free people, the people who are allowed to think for themselves, to feel for themselves and to form their own opinion, not subject to the terrific pressure of lobbies, political parties, the whole power structure as it exists today.

Schlesinger: The implication of Herbert's proposition is that there was some golden age of democracy in which the majority was pure, unfettered and wise, and that this golden age has –

Marcuse: If you want me to make it perfectly clear once and for all, I do admit such a democracy has never existed and does not exist in any society today. But I do believe that we could have it.

Schlesinger: All right. Herbert has made it clear that the indictment he has made of American democracy in the 1960s is something he would level equally at American democracy at any stage in its history, at the time of Jefferson or whatever.

Marcuse: No, because we didn't have mass media at that time. The technological society has means of control that never existed before.

Schlesinger: There are two mild points I would like to make if no one minds. One of them is this: Herbert Marcuse has said that the democracy of an immaculate majority has not existed, does not exist, but he hopes it may sometime exist. Is that correct?

Marcuse: I not only hope it may sometime exist. I say today that all the resources are available so that it can be translated into reality.

Schlesinger: In order to bring about the democracy of the immaculate majority, I take it that the policy which you would advocate in the transition is the suppression of those views which you think are incompatible.

Marcuse: No.

Schlesinger: Well, do I misread you?

Marcuse: I'm afraid so.

Schlesinger: I don't want to read that quotation again, but I gather you feel that those who are "opposed to the extension of the social services" and so on . . .

Marcuse: Yes, but what has this to do with the question whether the majority today is a free majority or not?

Schlesinger: My second point is this, and perhaps it's a different or a deeper problem: If there is any society which, far from being arrogant and tyrannical, is confused, has a bad conscience, is vulnerable to argument and, in fact, is condemned by its critics because of its pathetic desire to come to terms with its critics, it is this one. Even Herbert is embarrassed by the fact he's being celebrated by *Time* and the *New York Times Magazine*. Critics resent the fact that they are hailed by the society.

Mailer: The danger of this technological society is that it appropriates everything that's new. It does not appropriate Marcuse's thought. But it takes one piece of Marcuse's flesh and it introduces it into the machine. It appropriates him to the point where people who couldn't begin to understand one of his sentences can use his name at a cocktail party.

Marcuse: Your name, too.

Mailer: Yes. Now this is a debasement of nature. It's debasement of the Gothic intricacies of Mr. Marcuse's style.

Marcuse: You write much better.

Mailer: Thank you.

Marcuse: But I write deeper.

Mailer: Yes, you write deeper . . . The point I might like to get to is this: Someone asked whether the left wing we have now is a reflection of what the democratic majority wants – I'm talking about the orthodox left wing. But the orthodox left wing really doesn't matter because that's not the Left that I think anyone is really talking about now. That's not the left wing that produced this particular, odd, nascent revolution in American life. This nascent revolution in American life popped out to everyone's amazement. It came out of the youth. It came out of a very basic reaction. Untold millions of this youth began to say, "They are snowing us. They are burying us." And they said, "We cannot put up with it any more. We're going to overthrow it." Now there are two perspectives in all this. One is a revolution from the top and, in fact, it's a revolution that's impossible, given the present state of American life. It's a revolution which would come to pass only if worldwide Communism won everywhere and then some of you might inherit the mantle here and be as unhappy as

all those guys with names like Norodny or Novotnick or whatever his name is.

The real revolution that's going on in American life is a revolution that no one in this room can predict. No one can say which way it will turn. It's a revolution, I submit, that comes out of the very marrow of the human condition – which is what is exciting about it. And the reason it cannot be put down is that no one comprehends it. That's its strength.

The horror of the technological society is that the moment it comprehends something it acquires it. The moment it understood how to freeze food it acquired that act of freezing food without knowing the rest of what was going on. The moment it knows how to sell an idea it sells an idea, whether it cares about the rest of the idea or the consequences of the idea or not.

One of the ways in which the society would be overthrown is for this revolution to be directed against the mass media. For instance, how about occupying some of the television stations? [*Applause*.] How about occupying some of the newspapers? [*At this point a young man approached Mailer and offered what appeared to be a marijuana cigarette*.] Are you joining me? Thank you, I don't smoke. You've unmasked me. I'll tell you why I didn't take a puff on that stick. I see no reason to arm the police while I'm feeling a state of euphoria. The action of the gentleman coming up to me was marvelous and interesting. He revealed the conservative side of my nature. Thank you.

Hentoff: We've been talking about new institutions, new structures, as the only way to get fundamental change. What would that mean to you, Mr. Marcuse, in terms of the university, in terms of Columbia?

Marcuse: I was afraid of that because I now finally reveal myself as a fink.

I have never suggested or advocated or supported destroying the established universities and building new anti-institutions instead. I have always said that no matter how radical the demands of the students and no matter how justified, they should be pressed within the existing universities and attained within the existing universities.

I believe – and this is where the finkdom comes in – that American universities, at least quite a few of them, today are still enclaves of relatively critical thought and relatively free thought. So we do not have to think of replacing them by new institutions. But this is one of the very rare cases in which I think you can achieve what you want to achieve within the existing institutions.

V

MARCUSE DEFINES HIS NEW LEFT LINE[1]

Six months ago, sir, your name was almost unknown in France. It came to prominence in connection with the student revolt in Berlin, then in connection with student demonstrations in America. Next it was linked with the May demonstrations here [France]. And now, all of a sudden, your last book has become a best-seller. How do you see your own position in relation to the student uprisings all over the world?

Marcuse: The answer is very simple. I am deeply committed to the movement of "angry students," but I am certainly not their spokesman. It is the press and publicity that have given me this title and have turned me into a rather salable piece of merchandise. I particularly object to the juxtaposition of my name and photograph with those of Che Guevara, Debray, Rudi Dutschke, etc., because these men have truly risked and are still risking their lives in the battle for a more human society, whereas I participate in this battle only through my words and my ideas. It is a fundamental difference.

Still, your words preceded the student action.

Marcuse: Oh, there are very few students who have really read me, I think . . .

No doubt, especially in France; but there are also very few students who have chosen a doctrine for their revolt. Can we say that for these students you are the theorist?

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1 "Marcuse Defines his New Left Line" was based on an interview with Marcuse on the French Riviera in late summer 1968 after a year of writings and lectures in which he became renowned as a major figure of the New Left. It was originally published in the French journal *Express* and was translated for the *New York Times Magazine* and published on October 27, 1968.

Marcuse: If that is true, I am very happy to hear it. But it's more a case of encounter than of direct influence . . . In my books, I have tried to make a critique of society – and not only of capitalist society – in terms that avoid all ideology. Even the socialist ideology, even the Marxist ideology. I have tried to show that contemporary society is a repressive society in all its aspects, that even the comfort, the prosperity, the alleged political and moral freedom are utilized for oppressive ends.

I have tried to show that any change would require a total rejection or, to speak the language of the students, a perpetual confrontation of this society. And that it is not merely a question of changing the institutions but rather, and this is more important, of totally changing human beings in their attitudes, their instincts, their goals, and their values.

This, I think, is the point of contact between my books and the worldwide student movement.

But you feel that they did not need you to arrive at these ideas, is that right?

Marcuse: One of the essential characteristics of the student movement is that the students apply to reality what has been taught them in the abstract through the work of the masters who have developed the great values of Western civilization. For example, the primacy of natural law over established law, the inalienable right to resist tyranny and all illegitimate authority . . . They simply cannot comprehend why these great principles should remain on the level of ideas instead of being put into practice. And that is exactly what they are doing.

Do you mean that fundamentally this is a humanist movement?

Marcuse: They object to that term because, according to them, humanism is a bourgeois, personal value. It is a philosophy which is inseparable from a destructive reality. But in their minds there is no point in worrying about the philosophy of a few persons; the point is to bring about a radical change in the society as a whole. So they want no part of the term "humanist."

You know, of course, that here in France we are very far from that "affluent society" whose destruction you propose and which for the moment exists, for better or worse, only in the United States.

Marcuse: I have been accused of concentrating my critique on American society, and this is quite true. I have said so myself. But this is not only because I know this country better than any other; it is because I believe or I am afraid that American society may become the model for the other capitalist countries, and maybe even for the Socialist countries. I also believe that this route can be avoided, but again, this would presuppose a fundamental change, a total break with the content of the needs and aspirations of people as they are conditioned today.

A break . . . that is, a revolution.

Marcuse: Precisely.

Do you believe in the existence of a revolutionary impulse in the industrial societies?

Marcuse: You know quite well that the student movement contains a very strong element of anarchy. Very strong. And this is really new.

Anarchy – new?

Marcuse: In the revolutionary movement of the twentieth century, I believe it is new. At least on this scale, it is new. This means that the students have perceived the rigidity of the traditional political organizations, their petrification, the fact that they have stifled any revolutionary impulse. So it is outside of these organizations that the revolt spontaneously occurs.

But spontaneity is not enough. It is also necessary to have an organization. But a new, very flexible kind of organization, one that does not impose rigorous principles, one that allows for movement and initiative. An organization without the "bosses" of the old parties or political groups. This point is very important. The leaders of today are the products of publicity. In the actual movement there are no leaders as there were in the Bolshevik Revolution, for example.

In other words, it is anti-Leninist?

Marcuse: Yes. In fact, Daniel Cohn-Bendit has severely criticized Leninism-Marxism on this ground.

Does this mean that you rely on anarchism to bring about the revolution you desire?

Marcuse: No. But I believe that the anarchist element is a very powerful and very progressive force, and that it is necessary to preserve this element as one of the factors in a larger and more structured process.

And yet you yourself are the opposite of an anarchist.

Marcuse: That may be true, but I wish you'd tell me why.

Isn't it because your work is dialectical? Your work is very carefully constructed. Do you think of yourself as an anarchist?

Marcuse: No. I am not an anarchist because I cannot imagine how one can combat a society which is mobilized and organized in its totality against any revolutionary movement, against any effective opposition; I do not see how one can combat such a society, such a concentrated force – military force, police force, etc. – without any organization. It won't work.

No, it won't work. The Communists will quote you Lenin's analysis of "leftism" which, according to him, was the manifestation of "petits bourgeois overcome with rage before the horrors of capitalism . . . a revolutionary attitude which is unstable, unproductive, and susceptible of rapidly changing into submission or apathy or going mad over some bourgeois fad or other."

Marcuse: I do not agree. Today's left is far from the reaction of a *petite bourgeoisie* to a revolutionary party, as in Lenin's day. It is the reaction of a revolutionary minority to the established party which the Communist party has become, which is no longer the party of Lenin, but a social democratic party.

If anarchy doesn't work and if the Communist parties are no longer revolutionary, what do you hope for from the student unrest but a superficial disorder which serves only to stiffen the repression?

Marcuse: All militant opposition takes the risk of increasing repression. This has never been a reason to stop the opposition. Otherwise, all progress would be impossible.

No doubt. But don't you think the notion of the "progress" that might result from a revolution deserves to be better defined? You denounce the subtle restraints that weigh upon the citizens of modern societies. Wouldn't a revolution result in exchanging one series of restraints for another?

Marcuse: Of course. But there are progressive restraints and reactionary restraints. For example, restraints imposed upon the elemental aggressiveness of man, upon the instinct of destruction, the death instinct, the transformation of this elemental aggressiveness into an energy that could be used for the improvement and protection of life – such restraints would be necessary in the freest society. For example, industries would not be permitted to pollute the air, nor would the "White Citizens Council" be permitted to disseminate racism or to possess firearms, as they are in the United States today . . . Of course there would be restraints; but they would be progressive ones.

The ones you mention are commonplace enough. The possession of firearms is forbidden in France, and in America it is a survival, not a creation of the affluent society. Let us consider freedom of expression, which means a great deal to us. In the free society which you advocate this freedom disappears, does it not?

Marcuse: I have written that I believe it is necessary not to extend freedom of the press to movements which are obviously aggressive and destructive, like the Nazi movement. But with the exception of this special case, I am not against freedom of expression . . .

Even when this means the propagation of racist, nationalist or colonialist ideas?

Marcuse: Here my answer is no. I am not in favor of granting free expression to racist, anti-Semitic, neo-Nazi movements. Certainly not; because the interval between the word and the act is too brief today. At least in American society, the one with which I am familiar. You know the famous statement of Justice Holmes, that civil rights can be withdrawn in a single case: the case of immediate danger. Today this immediate danger exists everywhere.

Can't this formula be turned against you in connection with students, revolutionaries, or Communists?

Marcuse: It always is. And my answer is always the same. I do not believe that the Communism conceived by the great Marxist theorists is, by its very nature, aggressive and destructive; quite the contrary.

But has it not become so under certain historical circumstances? Isn't there something aggressive and destructive about the Soviet policy toward Hungary in 1956, or toward Czechoslovakia today?

Marcuse: Yes. But that isn't Communism, it is Stalinism. I would certainly use all possible restraints to oppose Stalinism, but that is not Communism.

Why do you criticize America more severely for its deviation from the democratic ideal than you do Communism for its deviations from the Communist ideal?

Marcuse: I am just as critical of these deviations in Communist countries. However, I believe that the institutions and the whole culture of the capitalism of monopolies militate against the development of a democratic socialism.

And you believe that one day we shall see an ideal Communist society?

Marcuse: Well, at least there is the theory. There is the whole Marxist theory. That exists. And there is also Cuba. There is China. There is the Communist policy during the heroic period of the Bolshevik Revolution.

Do you mean that Communist societies do these reprehensible things in spite of themselves? That the Soviet Union invaded Czechoslovakia in spite of herself?

Marcuse: In spite of the idea of Communism, not in spite of the Soviet Union. The invasion of Czechoslovakia is one of the most reprehensible acts in the history of Socialism. It is a brutal expression of the policy of power that has long been practiced by the Soviet Union in political and economic competition with capitalism. I believe that many of the reprehensible things that happen in the Communist countries are the

result of competitive coexistence with capitalism, while poverty continues to reign in the Communist countries.

Here you are touching upon an important point. It does not seem possible to reduce poverty without an extremely coercive organization. So once again we find that restraint is necessary.

Marcuse: Certainly. But here, too, there can be progressive restraint. Take a country in which poverty coexists with luxury, waste, and comfort for the privileged . . . It is necessary to curb this waste to eliminate poverty, misery, and inequality. These are necessary restraints.

Unfortunately, there is no economic correlation. It is not the curbing of waste that eliminates poverty, it is production.

Marcuse: That's true. But my point is that the restraints that certainly exist in, say, Cuba, are not the same as those that are felt in capitalist economies.

Cuba is perhaps not a very good example of a successful Socialist economy, since the country is totally dependent on daily deliveries of Soviet petroleum. If the Soviet Union were to stop those deliveries for two weeks . . .

Marcuse: I don't know what would happen. But even under these conditions of dependence on the Soviet Union, Cuba has made tremendous progress.

In comparison with what she was that's certainly true. Have you been there?

Marcuse: No. I can't get there.

Do you think that there can be progress within the framework of the American democracy?

Marcuse: Do you really think that democracy is making progress in the United States?

Compared with the period of "The Grapes of Wrath," yes.

Marcuse: I disagree. Look at the elections, the candidates for the Presidency of the United States fabricated by the huge political machines. And who can find the differences between these candidates? If that's democracy, it's a farce. The people have said nothing and they have been asked nothing.

True. But at the same time thousands of young Americans have shown in recent months that they were against the war in Vietnam, that they were willing to work to eliminate the ghettos, to act in the political sphere.

Marcuse: This movement is encountering a more and more effective repression.

Do you feel, then, that we are witnessing a definite obstruction of American society?

Marcuse: The answer is a little more complicated than that. There is a possibility of progress toward democracy in the United States, but only through movements that are increasingly militant and radical. Not at all within the limits of the established process. This process is a game and the American students have lost interest in playing this game, they have lost confidence in this allegedly democratic process.

Do you believe in the possibility of revolution in the United States?

Marcuse: Absolutely not. Not at all.

Why not?

Marcuse: Because there is no collaboration between the students and the workers, not even on the level on which it occurred in France in May and June.

In that case, what role do you attribute to the students?

Marcuse: They are militant minorities who can articulate the needs and aspirations of the silent masses. But by themselves they are not revolutionaries, and nobody says they are. The students know that very well.

So their only role is to reveal?

Marcuse: Not only to reveal. Only the students can truly be called spokesmen.

And who will make the revolution in America, in Germany, in France, if the students do not make contact with the working class?

Marcuse: I cannot imagine. In spite of everything that has been said, I still cannot imagine a revolution without the working class.

The drawback – at least from the viewpoint of revolution – is that the working class is more interested in belonging to the affluent society than in destroying it, although it also hopes to modify certain aspects of it. At least this is the case in France. Is it different in other countries?

Marcuse: You say that in France the working class is not yet integrated but that it would like to be . . . In the United States it is integrated and it wants to be. This means that revolution postulates first of all the emergence of a new type of man with needs and aspirations that are qualitatively different from the aggressive and repressive needs and aspirations of established societies. It is true that the working class today shares in large measure the needs and aspirations of the dominant classes, and that without a break with the present content of needs, revolution is inconceivable.

So it will not happen tomorrow, it seems. It is easier to seize power than to change the needs of men. But what do you mean by aggressive needs?

Marcuse: For example, the need to continue the competitive struggle for existence – the need to buy a new car every two years, the need to buy a new television set, the need to watch television five or six hours a day. This is already a vital need for a very large share of the population, and it is an aggressive and repressive need.

Aggressive to watch television? But it would seem on the face of it to be a passive activity.

Marcuse: Are you familiar with the programs on American television? Nothing but shooting. And they always stimulate the consumption that subjects people to the capitalist mode of production.

There can be a different use of television.

Marcuse: Of course. All this is not the fault of television, the fault of the automobile, the fault of technology in general. It is the fault of the miserable use that is made of technological progress. Television could just as well be used to re-educate the population.

In what sense? To persuade people that they do not need cars or television sets or refrigerators or washing machines?

Marcuse: Yes, if this merchandise prevents the liberation of the serfs from their "voluntary servitude."

Wouldn't this create some problems for the people who work in the factories where they make cars, refrigerators, etc.?

Marcuse: They will shut down for a week or two. Everyone will go to the country. And then the real work will begin, the work of abolishing poverty, the work of abolishing inequality, instead of the work of waste which is performed in the society of consumption. In the United States, for example, General Motors and Ford, instead of producing private cars, will produce cars for public transportation, so that public transportation can become human.

It will take a lot of television programs to persuade the working class to make a revolution that will reduce their wages, do away with their cars, and reduce their consumption. And in the mean time there is reason to fear that things may take a different turn, that all the people affected by the economic difficulties may potentially furnish a fascist mass. Doesn't fascism always come out of an economic crisis?

Marcuse: That's true. The revolutionary process always begins with and in an economic crisis. But this crisis would offer two possibilities: the so-called neo-fascist possibility, in which the masses turn toward a regime

that is much more authoritarian and repressive, and the opposite possibility, that the masses may see an opportunity to construct a free society in which such crises would be avoidable. There are always two possibilities. One cannot, for fear of seeing the first materialize, stop hoping and working for the second through the education of the masses. And not only by words, but by actions.

For the present, aren't you afraid that these actions, especially when they are violent, will produce the opposite effect, and that the society will become even more repressive in order to defend itself?

Marcuse: Unfortunately, that is a very real possibility. But that is not sufficient reason to give up. On the contrary, we must increase the opposition, reinforce it. There will always be privileged classes which will oppose any fundamental change.

It is not the privileged classes which have manifested their opposition in France. It is the middle class and part of the working class. The privileged classes have been content to exploit the dissatisfaction.

Marcuse: Next you'll tell me that the revolutionary militants are responsible for the reaction. In Germany they are already saying that neo-Nazism is the result of student action.

In France, the result of the elections is incontestably the response of the majority of the country to the May movement, which frightened them.

Marcuse: Well, we must fight that fear!

Do you think that one can fight fear with violence?

Marcuse: Violence, I confess, is very dangerous for those who are the weakest. But first we should examine our terminology. People are always talking about violence, but they forget that there are different kinds of violence, with different functions. There is a violence of aggression and a violence of defense. There is a violence of police forces or armed forces or of the Ku Klux Klan, and there is a violence in the opposition to these aggressive manifestations of violence.

The students have said that they are opposing the violence of society, legal violence, institutionalized violence. Their violence is that of defense. They have said this, and I believe it is true.

Thanks to a kind of political linguistics, we never use the word violence to describe the actions of the police, we never use the word violence to describe the actions of the Special Forces in Vietnam. But the word is readily applied to the actions of students who defend themselves from the police, burn cars or chop down trees. This is a typical example of political linguistics, utilized as a weapon by the established society.

There has been a lot of fuss in France over the burned automobiles. But nobody gets at all excited about the enormous number of automobiles

destroyed every day on the highways, not only in France but all over the world. The number of deaths in highway accidents in America is 50,000 per year.

And between 13,000 and 14,000 in France.

Marcuse: But that doesn't count. Whereas one burned automobile is terrible, it is the supreme crime against property. But the other crime doesn't count!

How do you explain this phenomenon?

Marcuse: Because the other crime has a function in production. It is profitable to society.

But people don't kill themselves to make a profit. How can you separate the society from the people who compose it? Society is not some special tribunal of people who meet in secret and say to each other: we are going to see to it that people kill themselves on the highways so that we can sell a lot of cars! Society is everyone, and everyone consents. You have a car yourself and you drive it . . .

Marcuse: But there is a very good reason for all this. It is that this society, at the stage it is at, must mobilize our aggressive instincts to an exorbitant degree to counteract the frustrations imposed by the daily struggle for existence. The little man who works eight hours a day in the factory, who does inhuman and stupefying work, on the weekend sits behind a huge machine much more powerful than himself, and there he can utilize all his antisocial aggressiveness. And this is absolutely necessary. If this aggressiveness were not sublimated in the speed and power of the automobile, it might be directed against the dominant powers.

This seems to be what is happening in spite of the weekend traffic!

Marcuse: No. It is only the students who are revolting and crying, "We are all German Jews!" that is, We are all oppressed.

And why do you think this diffuse oppression is more precisely experienced and formulated by the students? Why is it that the torch of revolution which seemed to be wavering, to say the least, in the industrial countries, has passed into their hands?

Marcuse: It is because they are not integrated. This is a very interesting point. In the United States, for example, there is a vast difference in behavior between the students and teachers in the social sciences and the humanities on the one hand and the natural sciences on the other. The majority comes from the first group. In France, I believe it is not the same . . .

No, it isn't.

Marcuse: And in the study of these sciences they have learned a great deal. The nature of power, the existence of the forces behind the facts. They have also become very much aware of what goes on in societies. And this awareness is absolutely impossible for the vast majority of the population, which is, in some sense, inside the social machine. If you will, the students are playing the role of the professional members of the intelligentsia before the French Revolution.

You know that Tocqueville denounced the role of writers in the revolution of 1789, precisely because they were on the fringe of political life, lacking experience in public life, constructing arbitrary schemata.

Marcuse: Magnificent! And here is my answer to Tocqueville. I say that it is precisely *because* the students and intellectuals have no experience in what is today called politics that they are in the avant-garde. Because the political experience today is the experience of a game that is both faked and bloody.

Politics has always been a bloody game which kings and heads of state played among themselves. Do you mean that today it is faked because the people have the illusion of participating in this game?

Marcuse: Yes. Who really participates in politics? Who takes part in it? Any important decision is always made by a very small minority. Take the war in Vietnam. Who really participated in that decision? A dozen people, I would say. Afterwards the Government solicits and receives the support of the population. But in the case of Vietnam, even Congress did not get a chance to learn the facts. No, the people do not participate in decisions. We do not participate. Only in secondary decisions.

But if the American Government stops the war tomorrow – they certainly will some day – won't it be as a result of public opinion? Of the revolt in public opinion?

Marcuse: Precisely. And who is responsible for this change in public opinion?

American television.

Marcuse: No, no! First there were the students. Opposition to the war began in the universities.

There is a slight contradiction in what you say, since you have written that this opposition is tolerated in so far as it has no power.

Marcuse: It may have the power to alter American policy, but not the system itself. The framework of society will remain the same.

And to try to destroy this society which is guilty of violence, you feel that violence is both legitimate and desirable. Does this mean that you think it

impossible to evolve peacefully and within the democratic framework toward a non-repressive, freer society?

Marcuse: The students have said it: a revolution is always just as violent as the violence it combats. I believe they are right.

But you still think it is possible, in spite of the judgment of Freud, to whom you refer frequently in Eros and Civilization, *to create a free society. Doesn't this betray a remarkable optimism?*

Marcuse: I am optimistic, because I believe that never in the history of humanity have the resources necessary to create a free society existed to such a degree. I am pessimistic because I believe that the established societies – capitalist society in particular – are totally organized and mobilized against this possibility.

Perhaps because people are afraid of freedom?

Marcuse: Many people are afraid of freedom, certainly. They are conditioned to be afraid of it. They say to themselves: if people only had to work, say, five hours a week, what would they do with this freedom?

This is a condition which is not related to capitalism. The whole Judeo-Christian civilization is founded on work and is the product of work.

Marcuse: Yes and no. Look at feudal society. That was truly a Christian society and yet work was not a value in it; on the contrary.

Because there were slaves, villagers. It was very convenient for the feudal lords.

Marcuse: There were slaves, but the system of values was altogether different. And it was within this system that the culture was created. There is no such thing as bourgeois culture. Every genuine bourgeois culture is against the bourgeoisie.

In other words, we should return to the feudal system, but with machines taking the place of the slaves?

Marcuse: We must have machines in place of slaves, but without returning to the feudal system. It would be the end of work, and at the same time the end of the capitalist system. Marx saw this in that famous passage where he says that with technological progress and automation, man is separated from the instruments of production, is dissociated from material production, and acts simply as a true subject, experimenting with the material possibilities of the machines, etc. But this would also mean the end of an economy founded on exchange value. Because the product would no longer be worth anything as merchandise. And this is the specter that haunts the established society.

Do you regard work, effort, as a repressive value?

Marcuse: It all depends on its purpose. Effort is not repressive by itself. Effort in art, in every creative act, in love . . .

Would you work if you were not obliged to do so?

Marcuse: Certainly. I work if I am not obliged to do so.

Do you consider yourself a free man?

Marcuse: Me? I believe that nobody is free in this society. Nobody.

Have you been psychoanalyzed?

Marcuse: Never. Do you think I need to be?

It's quite possible, but that's beside the point. What seems curious is that you have made such a thorough study of the work of Freud and his views on the inevitably repressive quality of all civilization without asking yourself about your own obstacles to the exercise of your personal freedom.

Marcuse: I have discussed Freud only on the level of theory, not on the level of therapy.

Don't you give European civilization any credit for being able to create its own values in reaction to American civilization while at the same time appropriating the positive element in that civilization, that is, the technical progress which you yourself have said is absolutely fundamental to the liberation of man?

Marcuse: It is almost impossible to speak of a European civilization today. Perhaps it is even impossible to speak of a Western civilization. I believe that Eastern civilization and Western civilization are assimilating each other at an ever increasing rate. And the European civilization of today has already absorbed much of American civilization. So it seems impossible to imagine a European civilization separated from the influence of America. Except, perhaps, in a few very isolated sectors of intellectual culture. Poetry, for example.

So you think the battle is lost. That we are Americans?

Marcuse: We mustn't say it is lost. It is possible to change, to utilize the possibilities of American civilization for the good of humanity. We must utilize everything that enables us to facilitate daily life, to make it more tolerable . . . We could already, today, end air pollution, for example. The means exist.

What role do you envision for art in the free society of which you dream, since art is by definition denial, challenge?

Marcuse: I am not a prophet. In the affluent society, art is an interesting phenomenon. On the one hand, it rejects and accuses the established society; on the other hand, it is offered and sold on the market. There is not a single artistic style, however avant-garde, that does not sell. This means that the function of art is problematic, to say the least. There has been talk of the end of art, and there really is among the artists a feeling that art today has no function. There are museums, concerts, paintings in the homes of the rich, but art no longer has a function. So it wants to become an essential part of reality, to change reality.

Look at the graffiti, for example. For me, this is perhaps the most interesting aspect of the events of May, the coming together of Marx and André Breton. Imagination in power: that is truly revolutionary. It is new and revolutionary to try to translate into reality the most advanced ideas and values of the imagination. This proves that people have learned an important lesson: that truth is not only in rationality, but just as much and perhaps more in the imaginary.

The imaginary is above all the only realm where man's freedom has always been complete, where nothing has succeeded in curbing it. Dreams bear witness to this.

Marcuse: Yes. And this is why I believe that the student rebellion, whatever its immediate results, is a real turning point in the development of contemporary society.

Because the students are reintegrating the imaginary with reality?

Marcuse: Yes, there is a graffiti which I like very much which goes, "Be realists, demand the impossible." That is magnificent. And another: "Watch out, ears have walls." That is realistic!

You have no desire to go back to Germany?

Marcuse: I don't think so. Only to give lectures. But I like the German students very much, they are terrific!

Have they succeeded any better than the others in making contact with the working class?

Marcuse: No. Their collaboration has been even more precarious.

Is it true that in the United States you received threats from the Ku Klux Klan?

Marcuse: They were signed Ku Klux Klan, but I don't think it was they who sent them.

Is it true that you moved out of your house following these threats?

Marcuse: Yes. Not in a panic, but I did leave. Frankly, I wasn't afraid. My students came and surrounded the house with their cars to protect me . . . In one sense, they were right in thinking that there was a risk.

And do you feel that your life in the United States can continue, now that your notoriety has put you in the public eye?

Marcuse: I'm not sure, not at all sure. At the university there's no problem. But universities are always oases.

Do you think that the American university as it is set up now can be a model for the French university, for example?

Marcuse: One must distinguish among American universities. The large universities are always sanctuaries for free thought and a rather solid education. Take mine, for example, the University of California in San Diego. This is probably the most reactionary area in the United States – a large military base, a center of so-called defense industry, retired colonels and admirals. I have no difficulty with the university, the administration, or my colleagues. But I have a great deal of difficulty at the hands of the community, the good middle-class townspeople. No problems with the students. Relations between professors and students are, I think, much more informal than here and in Germany.

In this respect, you know, there really is an egalitarian tradition in the United States. The sanctity of the professor does not exist. It is the American materialism that prevents it. The professor is a salaried man who has studied, who has learned certain things, and who teaches them; he is not at all a mythical personage identified with the Father, not at all. His political position depends upon his position in the university hierarchy. If you reach a permanent position it is practically impossible to fire you. My own situation is precarious, and I am very curious to find out whether I will be able to retain my position at the university.

What you say is very serious. If freedom of expression no longer exists in the United States, it will no longer exist anywhere . . . or perhaps in England?

Marcuse: Yes. England may turn out to be one of the last liberal countries. The democracy of the masses is not favorable to nonconformist intellectuals . . .

This is the crux of the matter. You have often been criticized for wanting to establish a Platonic dictatorship of the elite. Is this correct?

Marcuse: There is a very interesting passage in John Stuart Mill, who was not exactly an advocate of dictatorship. He says that in a civilized society educated people must have political prerogatives to oppose the emotions, attitudes and ideas of the uneducated masses.

I have never said that it was necessary to establish a Platonic dictatorship because there is no philosopher who is capable of doing this. But to be perfectly frank, I don't know which is worse: a dictatorship of politicians, managers and generals, or a dictatorship of intellectuals.

Personally, if this is the choice, I would prefer the dictatorship of the intellectuals, if there is no possibility of a genuine free democracy. Unfortunately this alternative does not exist at present.

The dictatorship of the intellectuals must first be established to educate and reform the masses, after which, in a remote future, when people have changed, democracy and freedom will reign. Is that it?

Marcuse: Not a true dictatorship, but a more important role for intellectuals, yes. I think that the resentment of the worker movement against the intellectuals is one of the reasons why this movement has stopped today.

The dictatorship of the intellectuals is rather disturbing, to the extent that intellectuals often become cruel because they are afraid of action.

Marcuse: Is that really so? There is only one example in history of a cruel intellectual: Robespierre.

And Saint-Just.

Marcuse: We must compare the cruelty of Robespierre and Saint-Just with the cruelty and the bureaucratized violence of an Eichmann. Or even with the institutionalized violence of modern societies. Nazi cruelty is cruelty as a technique of administration. The Nazis were not intellectuals. With intellectuals, cruelty and violence are always much more immediate, shorter, less cruel. Robespierre did not use torture. Torture is not an essential aspect of the French Revolution.

You know intellectuals: they are not, or are only slightly, in touch with reality. Can you imagine a society functioning under their direct government? What effect would this have on trains running on time, for example? Or on organizing production?

Marcuse: If you identify reality with established reality you are right. But intellectuals do not or should not identify reality with established reality. Given the imagination and rationality of true intellectuals, we can expect great things. In any case, the famous dictatorship of the intellectuals has never existed.

Perhaps because an intellectual is by his very nature an individualist. Lenin said this, too. What form of dictatorship do you prefer? One that operates directly as is the case in the Soviet Union, for example, or one that adopts the mask of democracy?

Marcuse: It is absolutely necessary not to isolate a given situation from its tendencies for development. There is a social and political repression which can foster human progress, which can lead toward a true democracy and a true freedom. And there is a repression which does the opposite. I have always said that I utterly reject Stalinian repression and

the repressive policy of Communism, although I recognize that the socialist base of these countries contains the possibility of development toward liberalization and ultimately toward a free society.

It is a question of not being too skeptical about the end . . .

Marcuse: I am very skeptical about the end, in both cases.

Do you think that man can be free and at the same time believe in the existence of God?

Marcuse: The liberation of man depends neither on God nor on the nonexistence of God. It is not the idea of God which has been an obstacle to human liberation, but the use that has been made of the idea of God.

But why has this use been made of it?

Marcuse: From the beginning, religion has been allied with the ruling strata of society. In the case of Christianity, not from the very beginning, but still, rather early on.

In short, one must belong to the ruling strata of society! That is the sad conclusion that one could cynically draw from what you say. All the rest is adventure, more or less doomed to failure. Of course, one can prefer adventure, need adventure, and dream of being Guevara, in Paris or Berlin.

Marcuse: Guevara was not adventure; it was the alliance between adventure and revolutionary politics. If revolution does not contain an element of adventurism, it is worthless. All the rest is organization, labor unions, social democracy, the establishment. Adventure is always beyond . . .

What you call adventurism, others call romanticism . . .

Marcuse: Call it what you will. Adventure is transcendence of the given reality. Those who no longer wish to contain the revolution within the framework of the given reality. Call it what you will – adventurism, romanticism, imagination – it is an element necessary to all revolution.

No doubt. But it would seem that a concrete analysis of the situation in the countries in which one wants to make a revolution is also not an entirely negligible element. Provided, of course, that one wants to bring it off, and not merely to dream. One more question. You denounce as a painful form of oppression and one from which we suffer the deprivation of solitude and silence inflicted on us by modern society. Isn't this a plague that is just as characteristic of collectivist societies?

Marcuse: First of all, we must eliminate the concept of collectivist societies. There are many modes of collectivization. There is a collectivism that is based on true human solidarity. There is a collectivism that is based on an authoritarian regime that is imposed on people. The destruction of autonomy, silence and solitude occurs in the so-called free societies as well

as in the so-called collectivist societies. The decisive problem is to determine whether the limitations imposed on the individual are imposed in order to further the domination and indoctrination of the masses, or, on the contrary, in the interest of human progress.

It would be interesting to learn which noises are the progressive ones, if only so as to bear them with a smile. Sorry . . . we were being facetious.

Marcuse: So was I. There is no free society without silence, without the internal and external space of solitude in which individual freedom can develop. If there is neither private life, nor autonomy, nor silence, nor solitude in a socialist society – well, it is very simple: it is not a socialist society! Not yet.

VI

TESTIMONIES

HERBERT MARCUSE ON CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND VIETNAM[1]

September 12, 1968

Professor Walter Munk
Academic Senate
University of California, San Diego,
La Jolla, California 92038
U.S.A.

Dear Walter,

Jason Saunders has sent me the statement on the Czechoslovak crisis that you and members of the Academic Senate of U.C.S.D. have drawn up on September 4, and he has asked me whether I would sign it.

I completely agree with you that the invasion of Czechoslovakia by the Warsaw Pact nations is a reprehensible crime – inexcusable on any grounds. I do not agree with the wording of your statement. How can one today appeal to the President of the United States to use his influence with the Warsaw Pact nations so that they might rescind an "intervention contrary to the charter of the United Nations" when the very same President has pursued in Vietnam a policy equally reprehensible and equally "incompatible with the principles of freedom guaranteed to all sovereign nations"? For this reason I cannot sign your statement.

My position is a matter of the public record. In fact, I did not wait, and 12 hours after the invasion, I, together with philosophers from Yugoslavia, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and the Western world, signed a statement which unequivocally condemned the invasion. The statement addressed itself to the

1 A September 12, 1968 letter from Herbert Marcuse to the University of California, San Diego, Faculty Senate on Czechoslovakia and Vietnam.

Warsaw Pact nations, and was published in the European press. Moreover, I myself, as an individual, was interviewed, in the days that followed, by various European journalists, and my statements condemning the invasion were again printed in a number of European papers. I have also stated my view on the Czechoslovak crisis in an interview with "L'Express," the French weekly, which will appear on September 16.

With best regards to you and your wife, also from my wife,
Yours,
Herbert

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT SAN DIEGO DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY ON HERBERT MARCUSE[2]

On the occasion of the seventieth birthday of our distinguished colleague, Herbert Marcuse, the members of the Department of Philosophy wish to express their admiration of him as a philosopher, teacher and colleague. Professor Marcuse is in the great tradition of such political and social philosophers as Plato, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Hegel, Mill and Marx. Like these important predecessors, Marcuse has critically examined and evaluated his society and culture, has sharply pointed out some of its defects, has brilliantly diagnosed some of its ills, and has courageously suggested some basic remedies that would involve transforming the social order. For more than 35 years he has in his rich and scholarly writings examined the insights of Hegel, Marx and Freud, developing a powerful and original theory of the nature of modern society. For this he has justly become the pre-eminent contemporary social and political philosopher in the world. The present concern among intellectuals everywhere with Marcuse's ideas and the many books and articles in various languages discussing his views testify to his fundamental contribution. His work is causing people everywhere to reconsider their beliefs and assumptions about the nature and destiny of modern man and his society. The recent citation given to Marcuse by *Who's Who* in the West, recognizing him as "Dean of a New Human Spirit," indicates the esteem in which he is held by those concerned with understanding and improving man's lot.

We believe that philosophy, as it always has, should lead people to examine and evaluate beliefs through meaningful controversy. As a department, we are dedicated to the presentation of a variety of views, whether unpopular or not, so that we and our students can explore our convictions in the hope of finding a deeper and more significant understanding of man

2 A July 19, 1968 testimony from the University of California at San Diego Department of Philosophy on Herbert Marcuse's seventieth birthday.

and his world. In this perilous though sometimes rewarding venture, Herbert Marcuse has played an inestimable role here in the development of a vital and vibrant intellectual community. Only through the free interplay of ideas can we hope to discover new insights and better theories to solve our problems. The recent outrageous attacks and threats that have been made against Professor Marcuse are contrary to the traditions of free inquiry, for they attempt to silence a man and his ideas because they are unpopular. We speak out today on his seventieth birthday in support of the age-old philosophic quest to find the truth, and we salute our colleague, Herbert Marcuse, for his creative contribution to this quest.

Herbert Marcuse is one of the most exciting and thought-provoking teachers alive today. Our students have had the good fortune to be exposed to his wisdom, learning, criticism, and insight, and to profit from this in coming to their own intellectual independence and maturity. We are grateful to have had the opportunity to work with Professor Marcuse in the development of the philosophy program at U.C.S.D., and we hope to continue our association with him here for many years to come. It has been a rare privilege for all of us and for our students. As a gesture of our esteem for him, we are today establishing an annual Herbert Marcuse prize in Philosophy at U.C.S.D.

T.W. ADORNO ON HERBERT MARCUSE[3]

September 18, 1968

Professor Jason L. Saunders, Chairman
Department of Philosophy
University of California
San Diego, California 92037

My Dear Professor Saunders:

With sincere thanks I acknowledge your letter of August 21 and thank you for the confidence which it expresses.

It is with the greatest joy that I express my opinion about Herbert Marcuse, for many years my colleague at The Institute for Social Research, and my old friend. I have the highest opinion about his intellectual qualities as well as his humane and moral integrity. His power of thought and intellectual energy, his opposition to all the "mechanisms of stupefication" to which we are exposed today, speak for themselves. There is no particular need to acknowledge and comment on his fame. For myself, I can only say that during the course of a life-long friendship, his outstanding productive

3 Translation of a September 18, 1968 letter from T.W. Adorno to the University of California, San Diego, Department of Philosophy on Herbert Marcuse.

abilities have proved themselves without any sign of a diminution of his intellectual powers. And, my vote should perhaps have a certain weight inasmuch as I have known him and thought so highly of him for a long time, and long before world-wide recognition thrust his name into prominence. But, I can most emphatically assure you that even that recognition has not spoiled him in the slightest, and that he has not changed at all. He is altogether without conceit and without pretension, as only truly great men can permit themselves to be.

Perhaps I should add that Herbert is, as I am myself, opposed to the violence which manifests itself as one form of the universal repression which we both fear. His sense of reality and his profound sense of humor protect him from evaluating *any* movement out of proportion to the actual balance of power. He has maintained his independence from the so-called extra-parliamentary opposition in Germany as publicly and as unflinchingly as he has opposed the threatening reaction in the Western World, and just as he has always opposed the Communist terror. He and I are in agreement in our fundamental positions, although these have developed independently. Thus, I do not feel that I am a blind partisan when I speak so strongly on his behalf. I must say that his age certainly presents no difficulty; I have never yet seen a man of 70 who in every aspect, and to an almost unbelievable degree, has so preserved his youth.

These words represent my spontaneous reaction to your letter. Should there be any need for document which would be something more of the character of a formal statement and which should be written in English, please let me know as soon as possible. Of course, I would reply immediately. I hope with all my heart that this letter will serve your purpose.

With very best wishes, I remain devotedly,
Theodor W. Adorno

VII

ON THE NEW LEFT[1]

I'm not responsible for what the *New York Times* calls me. I never claimed to be the ideological leader of the Left and I don't think the Left needs an ideological leader. And there is one thing the Left does not need, and that's another father image, another daddy. And I certainly don't want to be one.

There's one thing: I would like to resume what Carl [Oglesby] just said. We cannot wait and we shall not wait. I certainly cannot wait. And not only because of my age. I don't think we have to wait. And even I, I don't have any choice. Because I literally couldn't stand it any longer if nothing would change. Even I am suffocating.

I want to give you today as realistic a picture of the situation of the Left as I can think of. This will require some theoretical reflection for which I do not really apologize, because if the Left gets allergic against theoretical consideration, there's something wrong with the Left. [*Applause*.]

Let me start by pointing out the two contradictions with which our movement – and I say our – is faced. On the one hand, we all feel, we experience, we have it in our bones, that this society is getting increasingly repressive, destructive, of the human and natural capabilities to be free, to determine one's own life, to shape one's own life without exploiting others.

And we – let us not only mean we here in this room, it means all those who are repressed, who are enslaved by their jobs, by the unnecessary and still so necessary performances that are required from them, by the morality that is required from them, all those who are exploited by the internal and external colonization policy of this country – this large WE, in bad need of change, but, on the other hand, I think we have to admit that in large part if not the majority of this population does not really feel, is not aware, is not

1 "On the New Left" transcribes the text of a December 4, 1968 talk at the twentieth anniversary of the radical newspaper the *Guardian*. It was published in many places including *The New Left: A Documentary History*, ed. Massimo Teodori (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1969) pp. 468–73.

politically conscious of this need for change. This presents, as I can see it, the first great problem of our strategy.

The second great problem for our strategy – we are constantly faced with the demands, "What is the alternative? What can you offer us that is better than what we have?" I do not believe that we can simply brush aside this question by saying, "What is necessary is to destroy; afterwards we will see what comes." We cannot for one very simple reason. Because our goals, our values, our own and new morality, our OWN morality, must be visible already in our actions. The new human beings who we want to help to create – we must already strive to be these human beings right here and now. [*Applause*.]

And that is why we cannot simply brush this question aside. We must be able to show, even in a very small way, the models of what may one day be a human being. But the alternative, precisely in these terms, I still believe the alternative is *socialism*. But socialism neither of the Stalinist brand nor of the post-Stalinist brand, but that *libertarian* socialism which has always been an integral concept of socialism, but is only too easily repressed and suppressed.

Now, if this is the alternative, how do we transmit it, because people will look around and will say, "Show us, where is this kind of socialism?" We will say, it is perhaps, it is probably going to be built up in Cuba. It is perhaps being built up in China. It is certainly fighting in Vietnam [against] the super-monster. But they will look around and say, "No, this isn't socialism. Socialism, as we see it, socialism is what we have in the Soviet Union. Socialism is the invasion of Czechoslovakia." Socialism, in other words, is a crime.

And how can we meet this contradiction? The two contradictions which I just outlined, I think, can be telescoped into one. Radical change without a mass base seems to be unimaginable. But the obtaining of a mass base – at least in this country – and in the foreseeable future – seems to be equally unimaginable. What are we going to do with this contradiction?

The answer seems to be very easy. We have to try to get this support. We have to try to get this mass base. But here we meet the limits of democratic persuasion with which we are confronted today. Why the limits? Because a large, perhaps a decisive, part of the majority, namely the working class, is to a great extent integrated into the system; and on a rather solid material basis, and not only superficially. It is certainly not integrated for ever.

Nothing is for ever in history.

And the contradictions of corporate capitalism are more serious than ever before. But this does not and cannot and should not foster the illusion that such an integration, temporary integration, has indeed taken place, and can be loosened only if the contradictions within the system become more aggravated. They do, we have seen it during the last years and it is our task – since such a disintegration will never happen automatically – it is our task to work on it.

The second item – why we are here faced with the limits of democratic persuasion – is the mere fact that the Left has no adequate access to the media of mass communication.

Today, public opinion is made by the media of mass communication. If you cannot buy equal and adequate time, if you cannot buy equal and adequate space, how are you supposed to change public opinion, a public opinion made in this monopolistic way?

The consequence: we are, in this pseudo-democracy, faced with a majority which seems to be self-perpetuating, which seems to reproduce itself as a conservative majority immune to radical change. But the same circumstances that militate against democratic persuasion also militate against the development of a revolutionary centralized mass party, according to the traditional model. You cannot have such a party today, not only because there are no revolutionary masses to be centralized, but also because the apparatus of suppression is infinitely more effective and powerful than it ever was before, but even more and perhaps most so, because centralization today does not seem to be the adequate way of working for change and obtaining change. I will come back to it in a few moments.

Here I want to add one more thing. I said that the contradictions of corporate capitalism today are as serious as ever before, but we have immediately to add that today the resources of corporate capitalism are equally strong and they are daily strengthened by the cooperation, or shall I say, the collusion, between the United States and the Soviet Union. What we are faced with, and I think this is one of the old-fashioned terms we should save and recapture, is a temporary stabilization of the capitalist system, a temporary stabilization; the task of the Left is a task of enlightenment, a task of education, the task of developing a political consciousness.

I would like to discuss under three headings very briefly the target of the strategy of the New Left, the methods and, finally, the organization of the New Left. First, as to the target: we are faced with a novelty in history, namely with the prospect of or with the need for radical change, revolution in and against a highly developed technically advanced industrial society, which is at the same time a well-functioning and cohesive society. This historical novelty demands a re-examination of one of our most cherished concepts. I can here of course only give you a kind of catalog of such re-examination.

First, the notion of the seizure of power. Here, the old model wouldn't do any more. That, for example, in a country like the United States, under the leadership of a centralized and authoritarian party, large masses concentrate on Washington, occupy the Pentagon and set up a new government, seems to be a slightly too unrealistic and utopian picture. [*Laughter*.]

We will see that what we have to envisage is some kind of diffuse and dispersed disintegration of the system, in which interest, emphasis and activity are shifted to local and regional areas.

The second concept that should be re-examined is the role of the working class. And here I would like to say a few words to one of the most defamed notions today, namely the concept of the new working class. I know what can be said against it, and what has been said against it. It seems to me that the concept of the new working class simply comprehends and anticipates tendencies that are going on before our own eyes in the material process of production in capitalism, namely that more and more highly qualified salaried employees, technicians, specialists, and so on, occupy a decisive position in the material process of production. And even in orthodox Marxian terms, just in this way become members of the industrial working class. What we see, I submit to you, is an extension of the potential mass base over and beyond the traditional industrial working class to the new working classes that extend the rage of the exploited.

Now this extension, which indicates a large but very diffuse and dispersed mass base, changes the relationship between what we may call leading minorities or cadres of the Left, politically militant, and the masses. What we can envisage is not, as I said, this large centralized and coordinated movement, but local and regional political action against specific grievances – riots, ghetto rebellions and so on, that is to say, certainly mass movements which in large part are lacking political consciousness and which will depend more than before on political guidance and direction by militant leading minorities.

A few words on the strategy of the New Left. To the degree to which the pseudo-democratic process, with the semi-monopoly of the conservative mass media, creates and constantly reproduces the same society and a largely immune majority, to that degree must political education and preparation go beyond the traditional liberalistic forms. Political activity and political education must go beyond discussion and writing. The Left must find adequate means of breaking the conformist and corrupted universe of political language and political behavior. The Left must try to arouse the consciousness and conscience of the others, and breaking out of the language and behavior pattern of the corrupt political universe, a pattern which is imposed on all political activity, is an almost superhuman task and requires an almost superhuman imagination, namely the effort to find a language and to organize actions which are not part and parcel of the familiar political behavior, and which can perhaps communicate that what is here at work are human beings with different needs and different goals which are not yet and I hope never will be co-opted.

In terms of the establishment and in terms of the rationality of the establishment, such behavior would and must appear as foolish, childish and irrational, but that may very well be the token that here is the attempt, and the at least temporarily successful attempt, to go beyond, to break out of the repressive universe of the established political behavior.

Now, last, to the organization of the New Left. I already mentioned the obsolescence of traditional forms of organization, for example a

parliamentary party. No party whatsoever I can envisage today which would not within a very short time fall victim to the general and totalitarian political corruption which characterizes the political universe. No political party, but also no revolutionary centralism and no underground – because both are all too easy victims to the intensified and streamlined apparatus of repression.

As against these forms, what seems to be shaping up is an entirely overt organization, diffused, concentrated in small groups and around local activities, small groups which are highly flexible and autonomous.

I want to add one thing here that may almost appear as heretical – no primitive unification of strategy. The Left is split! The Left has always been split! Only the Right, which has no ideas to fight for, is united! [*Much laughter*.]

Now the strength of the New Left may well reside in precisely these small contesting and competing groups, active at many points at the same time, a kind of political guerrilla force in peace or so-called peace, but, and this is, I think, the most important point, small groups, concentrated on the level of local activities, thereby foreshadowing what may in all likelihood be the basic organization of libertarian socialism, namely councils of manual and intellectual workers, soviets, if one can still use the term and does not think of what actually happened to the soviets, some kind of what I would like to call, and I mean it seriously, organized spontaneity.

Let me say a few words on the alliance which I think should be discussed in the New Left. I would not suggest an alliance even with the Devil, as Lenin said, because the Devil today has become much too strong. He will eat us up. No alliance with liberals, who have taken over the job of the un-American committee. [*Applause*.] Who have taken over the job of the un-American committee in denouncing the Left, doing the job the committee has not yet done, and I think I don't have to mention names, you know perfectly well. But instead, alliance with all those, whether bourgeois or not, who know that the enemy is on the right, and who have demonstrated this knowledge.

Let me come to the summary of the perspectives for the New Left. I believe, and this is not a confession of faith, I think this is at least to a great extent based on what you may call an analysis of the facts. I believe that the New Left today is the only hope we have. Its task – to prepare itself and others, not to wait or to prepare today, yesterday and tomorrow, in thought and in action, morally and politically, for the time when the aggravating conflicts of corporate capitalism dissolve its repressive cohesion and open a space where the real work for libertarian socialism can begin. The prospects for the next year, the prospects for the New Left are good if the New Left can only sustain its present activity. There are always periods of regression. No movement can progress at the same pace; sustaining our activity would already be a success.

And, a word on a friend or enemy on the left. Those who denounce especially the young of the New Left who fight for the great refusal, and who

do not conform to the fetishism and the fetishist concepts of the Old Left and the Old Liberals – those who denounce them as infantile radicals, snobbish intellectuals, and who in denouncing them, invoke Lenin's famous pamphlet: I suggest to you that this is a historical forgery. Lenin struck out against radicals who confronted a strong revolutionary mass party. Such a revolutionary mass party does not exist today. The Communist party has become and is becoming a party of order; as it itself called itself. In other words the shoe is today on the other foot. In the absence of a revolutionary party, these alleged infantile radicals are, I believe, the weak and confused but true historical heirs of the great socialist tradition.

You all know that their ranks are permeated with agents, with fools, with irresponsibles. But they also contain the human beings, men and women, black and white, who are sufficiently free from the aggressive and repressive inhuman needs and aspirations of the exploitative society, sufficiently free from them to be free for the work of preparing a society without exploitation. I would like to continue working together with them as long as I can.

VIII

MR. HAROLD KEEN: INTERVIEW WITH DR. HERBERT MARCUSE[1]

Mr. Keen: The most serious academic crisis in the short history of the University of California at San Diego has been settled, at least for the time being. The dispute raging over retention of Dr. Herbert Marcuse, controversial philosophy professor was resolved when the Board of Regents upheld Chancellor William McGill's decision to give him another one-year contract to June 1970. What are the views of Dr. Marcuse which led to demands by the American Legion, the local daily press, and several San Diego County State Legislators that the professor be ousted? As a public service, TV-8 presents this interview to learn at first hand what Dr. Marcuse believes and what he stands for.

First of all, Dr. Marcuse, you've been described as a Marxist philosopher. Is this a correct designation?

Dr. Marcuse: Stalin described himself as a Marxist. The Communist rulers who engineered the invasion of Czechoslovakia described themselves as Marxists. If they are Marxists, I'm certainly not.

Mr. Keen: Well, then, I take it that you were opposed to the invasion of Czechoslovakia, opposed to Stalinism, and opposed to the government of Russia as it stands today.

Dr. Marcuse answered affirmatively to all three questions.

Mr. Keen: What is your definition of Marxism, then?

Dr. Marcuse: Well, Marxism as a theory is an analysis – political, sociological and economic – of capitalism, which comes to the conclusion that the capitalist system can preserve itself and develop only through increasing conflicts, waste of resources, destruction of resources, wars,

1 The "Interview with Dr. Herbert Marcuse by Harold Keen" was broadcast on San Diego KFMB-TV on February 25, 1969 and covers the recent political controversies over the renewal of Marcuse's contract at the University of California, San Diego, and the political attacks on him by right-wing groups. Keen was a TV and print journalist who carefully followed the controversies concerning Marcuse and regularly covered the issues on television and in print.

and so on, and that the transition to socialism is the only solution in this philosophy.

Mr. Keen: Isn't Russia a socialistic or a communistic state now? What objection do you have to the way it is operating?

Dr. Marcuse: The objection I have, or let me put it this way, the way in which socialism in the Soviet Union deviates decisively from the Marxist concept is in the authoritarian and bureaucratic construction of Soviet society in which the regime is imposed upon the people instead of the people actually determining the development of their own society.

Mr. Keen: You're against this sort of totalitarianism, then?

Dr. Marcuse: Very definitely.

Mr. Keen: You've been bitterly attacked in the Soviet Union's official newspaper, *Pravda*, as a phony prophet and a werewolf. Why?

Dr. Marcuse: I don't know why I have been attacked by *Pravda* as an agent of Wall Street and a lackey of capitalism. I have been attacked in the leftist press here, especially by P.L. as an agent of C.I.A., and I have been attacked by the conservative press as working in the service of the Kremlin. On the one side, again by the conservatives, I have been attacked for promoting student rebellions all over the globe. P.L. has attacked me for trying to suppress student rebellions all over the globe in the service of the C.I.A. Now, being equally violently attacked from the left and from the right, I gradually come to the conclusion that there must be something right in what I say.

Mr. Keen: For the uninitiated, what does P.L. stand for?

Dr. Marcuse: Progressive Labor.

Mr. Keen: Is there any model in the world today that would come closest to your concept of an ideal Marxist society?

Dr. Marcuse: Well, I don't have the concept of an – there is no such thing as an ideal socialist society. There is no such thing as an ideal society. I would say the society which comes closest to what Marx had in mind today is perhaps Cuba, where an effort is made to build up socialism not in an authoritarian, bureaucratic way but really from below; that is to say, not on the back of the people but with the active participation of the people.

Mr. Keen: Dr. Marcuse, in the past week, during the furor following Chancellor McGill's announcement of intention to reappoint you for another year, your opponents extensively used a quotation from a speech at a New Left rally in New York last December. You were quoted as "advocating political guerrilla forces to advance libertarian socialism." This has a connotation of violent revolution. What do you mean by "political guerrilla forces and libertarian socialism"?

Dr. Marcuse: You said and you quoted "advocating." Now, let me say once and for all, as a teacher and educator, I do not advocate. I present to my students the facts, all the facts which are at my disposal and at the disposal of everyone who wants to see the facts and does not shut himself off

against them. I leave the conclusions to them. If the students will do something because I advocated it, I would quit teaching. I think that is the worst that can happen to a teacher.

Mr. Keen: What you are saying, then, is that you do not incite student action or activism?

Dr. Marcuse: That is not my job as an educator and teacher. What I did and what I am doing and will keep doing if I can, is, as I just said, analyze the facts, present the facts, analyze the facts, demonstrating the alternatives which are possible in a given situation. The decision is left to the students. Now in this case, "political guerrilla," I analyze the strategy which is actually being practiced among the New Left, and, in this strategy, political guerrilla, is one element. It means, well, let me give you a very known example, the so-called Living Theater, for example, is called Guerrilla Theater. In other words, there is a very definite distinction made between political guerrilla and military guerrilla. "Guerrilla" because in small groups and in very specific localities all over the place.

Mr. Keen: What did you mean by "libertarian socialism"? Is there a distinction between that type of socialism and other types?

Dr. Marcuse: Yes, libertarian socialism is a term most frequently used together with humanistic socialism to distinguish a generally socialist society from the Soviet model. Libertarian socialism means a society which is indeed developing in accordance with the needs and faculties of the people, and not under dictatorship from authority.

Mr. Keen: Do you believe in freedom of speech and press for all as we now enjoy it in this country?

Dr. Marcuse: I do not believe in the freedom to advocate racism, aggression, and so on.

Mr. Keen: Do you feel that people who advocate these should not be given freedom of speech or assembly?

Dr. Marcuse: People who advocate the lynching of black people, who advocate anti-Semitism, who advocate aggression should not be allowed to benefit from the full freedom of speech.

Mr. Keen: Isn't this in itself a form of totalitarianism in which a certain group of people decide what cannot be said and what people cannot assemble to say?

Dr. Marcuse: I don't think so. I think it is a form of totalitarianism and utterly anti-democratic to preach such things.

Mr. Keen: Do you propose that an intellectual elite govern?

Dr. Marcuse: I never proposed that an intellectual elite govern. If the choice would be between a democracy and an elite, a democracy would be infinitely preferable. There's no doubt about it. The question I raised is whether indeed we have an authentic democracy, whether indeed we are not governed – if you don't want to call it an elite – by a relatively small stratum. And, if the choice is between government by an intellectual elite and government by a non-intellectual elite, I prefer the first.

Mr. Keen: Are social conditions it this country today right for revolution in your opinion?

Dr. Marcuse: No, and I have said so many times. I have said many times that there is no revolutionary situation in this country. There is not even a pre-revolutionary situation in this country.

Mr. Keen: Why not?

Dr. Marcuse: Because the subjective as well as objective conditions are not there. The conditions for a revolution exist only if the majority of the population feels the need for radical change and is willing to fight for radical change. That is not the case here.

Mr. Keen: Wouldn't that indicate then, Dr. Marcuse, that the majority of Americans are satisfied with their way of life, that the system is fulfilling their needs and that your criticism of the system is not really well based?

Dr. Marcuse: Well, that is a question which requires a very careful and I'm afraid, lengthy, answer. The fact that people are satisfied with their situation should not be the final criterion for the analysis of the situation and for a guide to action. For example, what would you say if, owing to effective brainwashing and indoctrination, an entire people would be satisfied with the conditions as they existed under Nazism? In fact, you can say that until the war started, a large part of the German population was satisfied with these conditions. Does that justify the system? Does that block me from working for changes if such changes seem to be necessary?

Mr. Keen: What do you find intolerable about the way of life in America today?

Dr. Marcuse: I find intolerable, or let me put it this way, I find reasons for change in this country because we have a society which is engaged in a destructive, and in my view, aggressive war against one of the poorest and weakest people on earth, a society which has accumulated a terrible degree of aggressiveness and brutality, a society which wastes its incredible resources while at the same time sustaining poverty and misery, not only abroad but even within its own frontiers. It seems to me that such a society, precisely because of the tremendous potential for the improvement of the human condition which it has, that such a society should be examined, to determine whether certain fundamental changes are not necessary.

Mr. Keen: Have you given up on peaceful methods of change through the democratic process which has served this country so well nearly two hundred years?

Dr. Marcuse: Peaceful methods of change are always preferable, and if the powers that be would indeed peacefully and on their own introduce the necessary changes, nobody could be happier about it than I; but unfortunately, I don't see much evidence in this direction.

Mr. Keen: Well, do you feel, then, that violence is justified to achieve what you consider a just objective?

Dr. Marcuse: It seems to me that there are many cases in which there is general agreement that violence is justified. If a country is invaded by a foreign power, nobody would deny that to survive it should defend itself with all available means. If I am on the street, set upon by a criminal threatening to kill me, I am allowed to use all the violence at my disposal in order to defend myself. So in this case, certainly, if it is a defensive measure, violence seems to me justified.

Mr. Keen: Do you defend the violence which is being committed on college and university campuses – the occupation of buildings, destruction of property, assaults on individuals?

Dr. Marcuse: You see, compared with the violence on the other side, I would be really hesitant to call it any other thing than a counter-violence. But to the question whether I endorse the means used in the student movement, let me make one correction: it was not I who said that occupation of buildings and invasion of private property are an essential part of the democratic process. That was part of the question which was posed to Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., by no means a Communist, the former adviser of the late President Kennedy and adviser of Robert Kennedy, and he said emphatically yes. He said that indeed he would consider the occupation of buildings and the invasion of private property part of the democratic process. I agreed with his definition of democracy.

Mr. Keen: I understand that you have virtually given up on the working class as the vanguard of the revolution. Is that right?

Dr. Marcuse: There again, man, I neither advocate nor give up. The only question is whether the working class, historically in the given situation, is still the same as it was when Marx wrote, and my opinion was that in this country at least, the working class, for very understandable and justified reasons, is not a revolutionary force.

Mr. Keen: Is that because the working class has been or is so satisfied with its conditions?

Dr. Marcuse: Well, I don't know how satisfied it is. Talking to automobile workers on the assembly line, conveyor belt, whatever it is, under the speed-up system, I don't think you can call them a very satisfied population. The question is: are they willing to give up what they have against the uncertain chances of a revolution, and I think the answer is no, they are not willing to do so.

Mr. Keen: Well, whom do you consider, then, in the vanguard of the revolution today?

Dr. Marcuse: I would not say "vanguard of the revolution" because, as I said, there is no revolutionary situation in this country. A vanguard, in a political sense, is indeed, in my view, the student movement; that is to say, I see the main function of the student movement today in the effort to arouse a consciousness of the people and to make them see what is actually going on in their own society and abroad and to show them the need for change.

Mr. Keen: In connection with that, one of the major problems of opposition to you by the American Legion and Assemblyman Stull of San Diego County, is that you are a revolutionary who has asked the students to engage in guerrilla warfare and sabotage as steps toward establishing a left-wing dictatorship and that, therefore, you should not be retained on a tax-supported campus. Can you comment on that?

Dr. Marcuse: I have never asked the students to do anything. If there is one thing certain, it is that the students today neither want a new father image, a new daddy, nor do they need one, and if I would tell them something, they would certainly have their own ideas about it and would not attempt it. I agree to a great extent with the objectives of the student movement, but I do not tell them anything; I don't advocate.

Mr. Keen: Well, in your teachings, you are critical – aren't you critical of the present system?

Dr. Marcuse: Oh yes.

Mr. Keen: Well, you point out the need for drastic changes?

Dr. Marcuse: Yes.

Mr. Keen: Doesn't that in itself breed unrest and revolt among the students?

Dr. Marcuse: No. I would say what breeds unrest and revolt, and not only among the students, but also, for example, among the black population, are the prevailing conditions and not what I write and what I say. And those forces who actually foster a revolution today are the forces who try to prevent the necessary changes with all the available means. These are actually the ones who promote revolution.

Mr. Keen: Do you agree with the placards and banners carried by revolutionary students in Europe describing "Marx as the prophet, Marcuse as his interpreter, and Mao as the sword"?

Dr. Marcuse: I am not responsible for these placards. I think they do me much too much honor.

Mr. Keen: Dr. Marcuse, many people feel the university should prepare its students to live in harmony with the society as it exists instead of being a hot-bed of revolt.

Dr. Marcuse: I think that is a very dangerous conception of education. Again, let me give you my example. Would you have said of the German universities after 1933 that they should educate the students to live in harmony with their society? They did, and you know the result. Education is, as a great philosopher once said, not for the existing society but for a future, better society; and it seems to me, that a genuine education should foster criticism and independent thinking. I think that is the main job of education in a democracy and a free society; and if a society, a free society, can no longer tolerate dissent which violates or seems to violate vested interests, there is something wrong, not with the education, but with that society and community.

Mr. Keen: You have been quoted as "advocating a moral and sexual rebellion of youth." What did you mean by that?

Dr. Marcuse: I didn't mean anything by that because I didn't say it. That is one of the beautiful falsifications of quotes of which, let me say, our local press is full. What I did say, and I think I quote literally, is that "The New Left should develop the political implications of the moral and sexual rebellion of the youth," which is almost the opposite, because it means that we should try to transform the sexual and moral rebellion into a political movement.

Mr. Keen: Do you consider yourself repressed in our society? Don't you have a tremendous amount of freedom of critical expression which would be actually denied you in a communist form of government?

Dr. Marcuse: Well, most certainly, and I'm fully aware of the fact that I belong to the very small privileged group which has such freedom, and I'm very grateful for it. However, I must add immediately that it is a privileged situation, and if I, for example, look at my colleagues who do not yet have tenure, who have a family to feed, I know how afraid they are that they may lose their job for political activity and may not so easily find a new job.

Mr. Keen: The American Legion feels that you should be grateful to this country which gave you refuge as a fugitive from Nazi Germany and gave you citizenship, employment and full freedom to pursue your activities.

Dr. Marcuse: For once, I am in full agreement with the American Legion. I'm terribly grateful that this country accepted me as a refugee from Nazi Germany, and that is precisely why I want to do the best I can in order to prevent this country from taking the road to a police state.

Mr. Keen: Hmm. And yet you feel that there should be complete change in the government and social structure of this country.

Dr. Marcuse: Only inasmuch as the conditions which I consider as – not only I – which I consider as repressive of the real possibilities for freedom and justice we have. If these conditions continue to prevail, they certainly should be repressed.

Mr. Keen: This will be your last year at U.C.S.D., ending in June 1970. What are your future plans?

Dr. Marcuse: Well, I probably will do what I would have done anyway already this year if this mess had not developed; I would give up full-time teaching so that I finally find time to do some reading and writing which I could not do. I have been teaching almost without interruption since 1962, because, owing to my age, I did not participate in any of the benefits and compensations my colleagues have, neither sabbatical nor retirement system, nor anything else, so I would be very happy if I could finally find the time.

Mr. Keen: Had you actually intended to retire prior to 1970; retire this year?

Dr. Marcuse: I seriously considered, yes, to retire already this year.

Mr. Keen: And what changed your mind?

Dr. Marcuse: What changed my mind? Let me put it very clearly: I wanted to see whether this university is still capable and still courageous enough

to fight for its integrity and to fight against ignorant and reactionary forces which try to bring pressure upon the university. Chancellor McGill has fought, and I'm grateful to him for it.

Mr. Keen: Well then, you actually decided to remain or to resist the pressure of your ouster because of these demands?

Dr. Marcuse: I decided to remain mainly for that reason, and because of my students. I feel a deep obligation to my students. I like my students. I may add that I found here some of the most intelligent students I have met anywhere, and because of them I certainly do not want to quit.

Mr. Keen: Do you still feel yourself endangered as you did last July, when you received a letter threatening your life?

Dr. Marcuse: Yes, I do. I requested police protection, and I was granted police protection.

Mr. Keen: By the San Diego City Police?

Dr. Marcuse: By the San Diego Police.

Mr. Keen: And the Campus Police?

Dr. Marcuse: Campus Police, I was told, is not competent because it is off-campus.

Mr. Keen: Why do you consider yourself endangered?

Dr. Marcuse: Because I continue to receive threatening letters, and I am fully apprehensive of the consequences the inflammatory editorials and letters in the local press may have. I know too well this method of fighting from Nazi Germany, and I am aware of implications.

Mr. Keen: You consider the community generally hostile to you?

Dr. Marcuse: Certainly not the community in general. I have received many letters from groups and individuals in the community which declare their support for me and for academic freedom and for the integrity of education. The only trouble is that these dissenting groups, and I think that they are very large, find no voice whatsoever in this town. You know that this town is a one-newspaper town, and the dissenting element of the community simply cannot speak.

Mr. Keen: Dr. Marcuse, the Republican Central Committee has quoted you as being on record favoring violence which you consider socially useful destructiveness. Now, what do you mean by this, if that is correct?

Dr. Marcuse: I don't think I ever said such nonsense, and again, this is probably a mere misunderstanding, a throwing together of things [with which I] have nothing to do. I probably, in discussing Freud's psychoanalytic theory, talked about sublimation of aggressive instincts into socially useful aggressiveness; and mentioned the very familiar example of the surgeon, for example, who according to Freud, sublimates aggressive instincts into a socially very useful and wholesome activity.

Mr. Keen: Now, you then, to summarize it: you're being attacked on all sides it seems by both the Right and the Left. Who actually do you feel supports your views, then? The extreme Right, the extreme Left are opposed to you.

Dr. Marcuse: I think I have support from among all strata of the population. My friends ask me again and again why I do not refute the attacks, and my answer is always the same: I cannot possibly talk with people who have neither read my books nor attended my lectures, and still arrogate to themselves judgment over what I said and what I am. I am perfectly willing to discuss with anyone, and at any time, who has really read my books, understood what I said, and is seriously willing to talk it over with me.

Mr. Keen: Dr. Marcuse, do you see any good points in our society?

Dr. Marcuse: I see plenty of good points in our society. For example, the young people in protest, who are today, I think, our great hope. Even the people, the people in general, who do their best to fight against the mental and physical pollution in this country. I see very many positive sides in this fight, in the fight to save the last beautiful areas in this country from pollution and commercialization. I find very beautiful and positive in this country the people who still have preserved their humane, independent thinking and feeling, and who are desperately trying to protect themselves against the brainwashing and indoctrination to which they are practically daily exposed.

Mr. Keen: Well, thank you, Dr. Marcuse, for outlining your views which have aroused controversy of not only national but international proportions. This has been a special service, a special public service of TV-8.

IX

USA: QUESTIONS OF ORGANIZATION AND THE REVOLUTIONARY SUBJECT[1]

A Conversation with Hans Magnus Enzensberger

Enzensberger: In Europe we have the impression that the political situation in the United States has intensified enormously and has come to a head in recent years. We hear of preventative arrest, of police riots; the American Left has published lists of concentration camps which are ready to be used; there are rumors that the American government had investigations carried out of how the country would react if the 1972 presidential elections were cancelled, if elections were simply no longer permitted. Can we conclude that the entire system of law and order is becoming more and more identical with its opposite – that is, lawfulness with racketeering, order with arbitrary rule: an almost jointless welding of politics and crime, of mafia and government? How can these developments be explained?

Marcuse: Your examples are well chosen. As far as the concentration camps are concerned, I can't speak with any certainty; I haven't seen them. Also, I don't know if it's true that the American government is toying with the idea of abolishing the elections. I think it's improbable, because this government has nothing to fear from elections. The question is whether

1 "USA: Questions of Organization and the Revolutionary Subject" provides a translation of a 1970 conversation between Marcuse and the German writer Hans Magnus Enzensburger published in *Kursbuch* 22 (1970) pp. 45–60 and included in Marcuse's last German publication *Zeit-Messungen* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1979). The translation by Mark Goldberg, found in Marcuse's archive, was intended for the New Left publication *University Review*, but no published version in English has so far been found.

fascism is taking over in the United States. If by that we understand the gradual or rapid abolition of the remnants of the constitutional state, the organization of paramilitary troops such as the Minutement, and granting the police extraordinary legal powers such as the notorious no-knock law which does away with the inviolability of the home; if one looks at the court decisions of recent years; if one knows that special troops – so-called counterinsurgency corps – are being trained in the United States for possible civil war; if one looks at the almost direct censorship of the press, television and radio: then, as far as I'm concerned, one can speak with complete justification of an incipient fascism.

People argue against this view by contending that there is much more room for radical criticism in the United States than, say, in France. That's true; but this is probably related to the fact that, for the time being, American society can put up with this criticism because it is without effect.

Enzensberger: But other aspects of fascism, as we know it, are missing; for example, a charismatic leader. Or do you believe that people like Nixon or Agnew or Reagan have such a potential? The direct appeal to the masses has not yet assumed the forms which we usually attribute to fascism.

Marcuse: I don't believe that a charismatic leader is a necessary part of fascism today. As with every other movement, every other form of oppression, fascism is also dependent upon the overall tendencies of the society. American fascism will look different than German fascism, and, to be sure, to the extent that American society is different from German society of 1933. A charismatic leader is no longer necessary. I remind you of an excellent formulation by William Shirer who, God knows, is no socialist: this man said recently that American fascism will probably be the first which comes to power by democratic means and with democratic support.

Enzensberger: What analytic reasons can you give for this development in the United States? The most crass theories of fascism explain the victory of Hitler in Germany with the economic crisis of 1929. Do you see an even halfway comparable intensification of the economic and social contradictions in the United States?

Marcuse: I believe that there is something like preventative fascism. In the last ten to twenty years we've experienced a preventative counter-revolution to defend us against a feared revolution, which, however, has not taken place and doesn't stand on the agenda at the moment. In the same way preventative fascism comes about. The gradual desiccation of the constitutional state in the United States is a result of the growing contradictions of American imperialism. To be sure, these contradictions are manageable for the moment, but they threaten to enter the consciousness of even the most indoctrinated: the contradiction between the immense social wealth and the miserable and destructive use made of

it; the contradiction between the possibility of reducing alienated labor and its systematic maintenance; the contradiction between the possibility of abolishing poverty and misery in the shortest time and enormous waste. In the long run, these contradictions can be suppressed only by force.

Such values as work discipline, which capitalism must maintain, are losing their power over people and are beginning to disintegrate. At the same time the senselessness of the war in Southeast Asia and of the torture-dictatorships in Greece and Latin America – methodically supported by the United States – have become so obvious that excuses and concealment make no difference. That's why the system has seized on measures which are to show the opposition: as soon as you become dangerous we'll lock you up, we'll beat you to a pulp.

Enzensberger: The contradictions you indicate can be seen concretely as class contradictions, even in America. Or don't you see any possibility of linking them to American class conflicts?

Marcuse: It's a question of shifting contradictions. Marx never maintained that the contradictions of the capitalist system are concentrated exclusively in the class of industrial laborers. Rather, the contradictions permeate the whole society – the infrastructure as well as the superstructure. Naturally, they are actualized in very different ways in the various social classes, but they are contradictions of the system as a whole.

Enzensberger: In your opinion, then, the most striking contradiction is not primarily that between wage labor and capital?

Marcuse: Of course, also between capital and labor. But if one claims to be a Marxist one has to be careful not to make a fetish of the concept of class. The structural changes in capitalism are accompanied by changes in the classes and in their situations. There is nothing more inadmissible and more dangerous for a Marxist than to employ a reified concept of the working class.

Enzensberger: You spoke before of the necessity of a class analysis. Political groups of the Left in Europe are also attempting to foster this work. We are of the opinion that this can't be a matter of academic work. Rather, it demands a direct confrontation with the physical and moral existence of the working class. Class analysis should be only one aspect of political practice itself. For this reason many comrades have gone into the factories, into the social institutions. They have come to the conclusion that theoretical analysis isolated from the organized struggle in the realm of production does not lead anywhere.

Marcuse: The internal social contradictions arising from the relationships of production are not seen and heard by going into the factories. Of course, the analysis of the working class should be as concrete as possible. But I suspect that today this often leads to a disdain for and displacement of theory. People no longer feel up to it. But then we're back again

to the position of bourgeois sociology. As long as the theories are not abandoned . . . as long as one doesn't fall prey to a fetishized concept of the proletariat, then, of course, it is necessary to go into the factories. But if this step is supposed to replace theoretical experience and analysis it is simply a step in the direction of false immediacy . . .

Enzensberger: The student movement was naturally determined by the class situation of those who took part – by their interests and consciousness . . .

Marcuse: . . . Excuse me, but that's vulgar Marxism. That a movement is determined by the subjective state of consciousness . . .

Enzensberger: . . . also by a very specific material position! The working class is notoriously underrepresented in the West German universities . . .

Marcuse: . . . that certainly doesn't mean that students are unable to transcend this state of consciousness and see and articulate general social relationships. It's totally irrelevant whether someone is from the middle class. Marx and Engels came from the middle class . . . But what, in your view, were the shortcomings of the student movement?

Enzensberger: The shortcomings can already be seen in the fact that the movement didn't know how to go beyond its own radius of action and mobilize the working classes.

Marcuse: Was that the fault of the students or of the objective condition of the working class? Let me give you an example . . . To a great extent it was the student movement in the United States which mobilized the opposition against the war in Vietnam . . . That goes far beyond personal interest – in fact, it is basically in contradiction to it and strikes at the heart of American imperialism. God knows it is not the fault of the students that the working class didn't participate . . .

. . . Nothing is more un-bourgeois than the American student movement, while nothing is more bourgeois than the American worker. (Forgive the exaggeration!) The clichés with which you operate are useless. Do you really think that the communes, the political demonstrations, the takeover of buildings are bourgeois?

Enzensberger: Not necessarily. On the other hand, the so-called protest scene, the Hippie scene, the dropout scene – all of the various scenes – seem to me to be largely a bourgeois phenomenon.

Marcuse: I think the political function of the Hippies and the dropouts has ended.

Enzensberger: These phenomena have been absorbed by the ruling culture.

Marcuse: In fact, they have even become reactionary. They were based on the confusion of personal with social liberation . . . The political people reject this confusion. Today they are no longer just Hippies, or they aren't Hippies at all . . .

Enzensberger: Mr. Marcuse, to use a popular term of futurology, do you have a scenario for the next ten years in the United States? How do you assess the prospects for this society?

Marcuse: I would guess that in the coming years repression will become more intensive; I would guess that the radical opposition will have extremely difficult problems to solve – above all, problems concerning the role and boundaries of political action, of counter-violence, etc.; I would guess that the contradictions of American imperialism will intensify, internally as well as internationally, and for this reason repression will increase; I would guess that the potential for fascism will continue to rise and that the radical opposition will need all of its energy to enlighten and educate by example the working class so that it does not fall to fascism.

It is possible that the neo-fascist period of imperialism can still be prevented. The opposing powers are there. We haven't discussed the most important thing: political economy . . . In the so-called society of consumption the capitalist mode of production pushes up against its inner borders: saturation of the investment and commodity markets. "Unproductive" labor grows in relation to productive labor. Inflation, and that means the falling of real wages, belongs to the dynamics of the system. While imperialistic expansion in the less developed capitalist countries (Canada, France, England) advances, it meets with increasing resistance in Latin America (Chile, Peru, Bolivia). China is on the road to becoming a major Communist power. The war of liberation of the Vietnamese and Cambodian peoples demonstrates the human and military possibilities of stopping the most powerful war machine of all times. In the metropolises of world capitalism the disintegration of work morality threatens to become a material force which endangers the smooth functioning of the system. But the only real opposition struggling today in the United States to stop the global counterrevolution is that of the radical youth and the ghetto militants. All differences in questions of strategy and tactics, all ideological differences must be suspended; all actions which are self-destructive, all impatience and defeatism must be overcome for the sake of the common struggle – for today it is not a matter of offense, but of self-preservation of the movement as a radical political force.

X

THE MOVEMENT IN A NEW ERA OF REPRESSION

An Assessment[1]

I should like to submit for discussion a theoretical analysis of the situation in which the radical movement finds itself today. I want to say from the beginning that I still consider the radical student movement and the Black and Brown militants as the *only* real opposition we have in this country. There is no other. Or, if there is, at least it remains concealed from me. I hope that the analysis I try to give you is indeed a Marxist analysis, if Marxism means more than regurgitating concepts that were elaborated a hundred years ago.

It is difficult for me to engage in such a theoretical analysis when the things that are happening all around us seem to cry out for action – no matter what action – so that we don't suffocate, so that we don't bust up. It is very difficult to engage in a theoretical analysis when Orwellian language has become the normal medium of communication between the government and the people, and even to a great extent among the people themselves. However, the Orwellian language is not only a blatant lying contradiction, it is also expressive of the facts. We terminate the war in Indo-China by extending it. We withdraw while invading. We dismiss charges against alleged massacres in Vietnam "in the best interests of justice." And so on, and so on. It seems to me that here we have, strange as it may seem, the linguistic expression of the real contradictions of capitalism today: it is simply correct that this society can have peace only by preparing for war or even by waging war. It is simply correct that it can mitigate or temporarily resolve conflicts only by expanding and creating conflicts somewhere else.

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1 "The Movement in a New Era of Repression" presents a talk given at the University of California, Berkeley, February 3, 1971. It was published in the *Berkeley Journal of Sociology* (Winter 1971–2) pp. 1–14.

The analysis I want to submit to you starts with two theses. First, the close of the twentieth century may well mean the advent of the first world historical revolution. Second, the progress of this revolution is counteracted by a preventive counterrevolution organized on a global scale and centered in the United States. I say preventive counterrevolution because there was no revolution preceding it. The coming revolution (if it comes – and you will see this is by no means certain) will be a world historical revolution because, for the first time in history, society controls the resources for abolishing poverty and exploitation the world over. It will be a world historical revolution because of the emergence of the powerful revolutionary potential in the Third World, affecting the main proponents of capitalism themselves in the ranks of the oppressed minorities. It will be a world historical revolution because we have in China the development of a new form of socialism that does not follow the authoritarian, bureaucratic model; and we still have the very existence of the Soviet Union and the Soviet orbit, perhaps, as potentially objective anticapitalist powers.

Now against these prospects (truly threatening for the system) we have the organization of counterinsurgency on an unprecedented scale at home and abroad. Counterinsurgency is not only to prevent the revolution, it is also to counteract the aggravating contradictions of the capitalist system today. Most generally, the blatant conflict between the vast productive forces and their private control and utilization demands the increasing restriction, perversion, and distortion of the productive forces. It demands constantly renewed planned obsolescence and waste. However, I think we see already today that even the most rigorously organized capitalist restraint and destruction of productive forces cannot for any length of time halt the decline in the rate of profit, inflation, and so-called technological unemployment.

This picture I have so briefly sketched seems to corroborate one of the central theses of Marxian theory, which apparently was refuted by the actual developments in the twentieth century up to now: namely, the thesis that a totally socialist society is possible only on a worldwide scale, and that such a revolution would start in the most highly developed industrial country. In other words, the capitalist chain must be broken, not at its weakest but at its strongest link. Why is this so? I think we can see the answer today very clearly. Just consider for one moment what a radical change in the imperialist metropole would do on a global scale. It would mean the collapse of the lackey regimes in the Third World and not only in the Third World. It would remove a major obstacle to the development of the European revolutions; it would allow an independent development of the Chinese and Cuban revolutions; and perhaps it would mean a political upheaval in the Soviet Union itself. Moreover, this new quantitative scope of the potential revolution also suggests a qualitative difference between it and preceding revolutions. This revolution, the first to be based on the achievements of industrial society, could assume a total character from the beginning. The

abolition of man's subordination to the instruments of his labor and the productive and progressive reduction of alienated labor would in turn make for an economic, political, and cultural revolution, all three in one, and, by virtue of this scope, far outdo the preceding revolutions. It would for the first time in history make the construction of integral socialism possible from the beginning, and not postpone it indefinitely to a second phase which may never arrive.

This novel historical situation calls for a re-examination of the preconditions and of the productive strategy of the radical opposition working under the preventive counterrevolution. I would like to take, as a point of departure, the structural changes which have taken place within the capitalist system since the Second World War. I will mention only the main tendencies. To the degree to which the international concentration of economic power progresses, individual capitalists are increasingly subjected to the interests of capital as a whole. Capital is ever more directly and immediately fused with the state, with the government. The dependence of capital on the political and military power structure and the interference of government in the economy, have increased to such an extent that even in this country "nationalization" is no longer a dirty word; one even considers the nationalization of certain large enterprises. In other words, what we witness is that monopoly capitalism tends toward state capitalism.

What does this mean for social stratification? It means that ever more strata of the middle class depend on monopoly capital. They are occupied in the realization, if not in the creation, of surplus value. Thus, with this transformation of capitalism, we witness the extension of exploitation beyond the class of industrial and agricultural labor, and we witness the emergence of what has been called a new working class of educated labor necessitated by the increasingly technological and scientific character of the process of production. At the same time, owing to the technical progress in the productivity of labor, this type of capitalism can indeed bring an increased standard of living to a large part of the population. In consequence, although the integration of a large majority (including organized labor) into the system takes place, the class struggle does not disappear. It cannot possibly disappear before the abolition of class society itself, but it proceeds in the well-known classical forms of an economic contest on trade union terms.

This transformation now brings us to the decisive question. Is the traditional working class, the blue-collar working class, still the social base of the potential revolution? Or, is the transformation of capitalism creating a new, not smaller, but larger base? There is a widespread but rather insufficient and un-Marxist answer to this question on the part of those who maintain that, just as before, industrial labor and mainly blue-collar labor provides the base for the revolution. Thus it is maintained that if the laboring masses today in the most advanced industrial countries (I stress once and for all that this refers only to the most advanced industrial countries) are not

revolutionary (and perhaps are even antirevolutionary) then it is because their consciousness lags behind their social existence. Thus, we have the well-known conflict between the subjective and objective factors. I consider this answer not only inadequate but also totally un-Marxist. If we know anything of Marx, we ought to know that he believes that it must be social existence which determines consciousness. And the answer must therefore be sought in the social existence, in the objective conditions of the working class today, and only in a secondary way in their consciousness. Or, to put it in a shorter form, if indeed the consciousness of the working classes has changed, it is because the objective conditions of the working classes have changed.

What has happened to bring about such a change in the objective conditions of the working class? I propose that what we have witnessed is a new stabilization of capitalism on two levels: first, global economic, political, and military expansion abroad, and second and closely related to it, internal and external neo-colonization. What has this stabilization of capitalism achieved? Competitive, scientific, and technical progress has created whole new branches of industry and has enlarged the internal and external markets, while at the same time, the growing productivity of labor counteracted the decline in the rate of profit and made possible a relatively high standard of living for the working classes.

This transformation is accompanied by, and this I think is decisive for a Marxist analysis, a growth in what is called the tertiary sector of the economy: the publicity industry, services, entertainment, and so on. This growth of the tertiary sector (in which the production of services is the main activity) means in Marxian terms that an increasing part of the working population today is employed in unproductive labor. That is to say, labor which does not produce material commodities, which does not produce capital, as Marx says, and which is therefore not proletarian. This is Marx speaking (in *Capital*, Modern Library Edition, p. 673), not I. But Marx says even more disagreeable things. The assimilation of a large part of the working classes to the middle classes, that is to say, to those middle classes that do not belong to the ruling classes, is therefore not merely ideological, nor a surface phenomenon, but originates in the productive process itself. Let me again refer to Marx, *Theories of Surplus Value* (German Edition, vol. 1, pp. 324ff.). He says, and it is one of the most amazing anticipations, that with the growing productivity of labor, an ever larger part of the population is employed in nonmaterial production. This part includes intellectual producers. They form an ever more essential base of capitalist reproduction in the realization and, we can add today, even in the creation of surplus value.

This certainly means a decisive change in the composition of the working class. Does it mean that the working class is no longer the revolutionary subject? Certainly not. As long as labor remains the human base of the productive process, the working class will remain its political base. But it will

be a very different and very extended working class. We have terrible difficulties in finding the revolutionary subject today because we look for it as if the revolutionary subject were a thing that exists somewhere ready made or at least partially made, and just has to be found. We have to get rid of this fetishism of labor, and also of this mystification of the class concept. We must realize that the revolutionary subject emerges in the struggle itself. Only in the struggle itself can it become a revolutionary subject.

A class changes with the changes in the productive process. These changes suggest first that the revolutionary subject would be an extended and transformed working class in which labor in the traditional sense, blue-collar labor, would only be one (and at present, the least active) element. These changes suggest, secondly, that the subject, the motives, the mainsprings of revolution would be in non-material needs. This is a qualitative difference between this revolution and the preceding one. In other words, if and when material needs are satisfied, this revolution would, for the first time, put the self-determination of man in all spheres and dimensions of his life, and not only at work, on the agenda. At the present stage, capitalism operates on the back of the vast majority of the population. Separated from control over the means of production, this majority spends its life in alienated work. Yet, it is not a proletariat in the classical sense; it is not living in abject poverty like the former. Large parts of it are rather bourgeois in outlook, values, and aspirations, though they are very different from the small class that rules this society. Beneath this vast majority lives the large number of the underprivileged racial and national minorities, unemployed and unemployable, at the margin of the regular process of production. This, I think, is a new technostructure of exploitation: the growing productivity of labor constantly augmenting the wealth of commodities and services; the intensified meaningless work and performances required for producing, buying, and selling these goods and services; and the scientific control of consciousness and instincts, that is to say, domination through steered satisfaction and steered aggression.

Who is in control of this technostructure of exploitation? Charles Reich has written a fiction best-seller, *The Greening of America* (it should be a fiction best-seller but unfortunately it is not listed under fiction) in which he maintains frequently and in a literal sense that nobody is in control. Since nobody is in control, nothing can possibly be easier than the revolution, and, therefore, it is understood that the revolution will be without any violence on either side. Now I think you all agree with me that we wish that this were the case. It is not our fault that it is not. And I think that it is clear who is in control. However, there is one decisive difference. Those who are in control, those small groups of military men, of politicians, of those holding economic power, are no longer, and I think this is important, a ruling class which develops the productive forces. Rather this ruling class does just the opposite, perverting and destroying the productive forces in the service of an increasingly desperate offensive system. The system is offensive to such an

extent that even its activities abroad are no longer primarily economically founded but driven by the all-out struggle against Communism in the interests of prolonging the status quo. As long as this power structure of exploitation is sustained by an intrinsically conservative majority, the political class struggle is indeed transformed into an international struggle with the national liberation movements and their counterparts in the metropoles as the objectively anticapitalist forces.

But this is not the basic tendency, because we remember that without the internal weakening of the heartland of global capitalism, these external forces will not be able to assert themselves for any length of time. These inner contradictions of the capitalist system appear today in a new historical form, in the so-called consumer society, which is the highest stage of capitalism. The contradictions appear first in the so-called consumer society in a seemingly ideological, even a psychological way. They assert themselves in the increasing dysfunctioning of the operational values which are essential for the reproduction of the system. The contradictions also manifest themselves in the increasing loosening of the moral fiber and cohesion of the society, the weakening of work discipline, responsibility and efficiency, the complete denial of that spirit of inner worldly asceticism which was, until recently, the mainspring of capitalism. The contradictions assert themselves in the form of dropouts, withdrawals, dissociations not only among the rebellious middle class but also the ruling class itself. In short, in this so-called consumer society we see a largely unpolitical, diffused, non-directed and yet profound non-identification with the system. This, I propose, is the reverse, the soil beneath the noisy, hysterical, and well-propagandized identification with the system. It is ground which is still shifting, still weak, but bound to get larger and stronger because, and this I think is decisive, this rebellion against the behavior patterns and values required by the capitalist system is not only generated by the system, but also constantly promoted and aggravated by it.

How does the consumer society manage to drive the internal contradictions to an ever greater intensity? Alongside the world of alienated labor, misery and repression, capitalism, at the present stage, creates a world of ease, gadgets, enjoyment, and surpluses, in which increasing numbers of people participate, although largely in a precarious way. The wealth of capitalist societies is still, as Marx defined it, an immense accumulation of commodities, but these commodities require an increasingly smaller quantity of labor power for their production. That is to say, they provide an increasingly smaller source of surplus value. Since capitalist wealth is made up of an increasing mass of services, products of unproductive labor, we see the near starvation of the investment and commodity markets. In other words, the consumer society demonstrates in a very tangible form the internal limits of capitalist production. Or could it be that the consumer society is the gravedigger of capitalism? In the French paper, *Le Monde*, M. Troute has written a nontechnical description of this internal

development. I will paraphrase his argument, relating it to our discussion. The development of the tertiary sector henceforth takes place at an accelerated rate. It absorbs growing demands and calls for ever increasing unproductive investments, that is to say, investments that no longer yield the necessary rate of profit. The growth of this sector creates a disequilibrium in the balance of forces which, up to now, has entirely turned on the multiplication of goods and the profitability of production. It is not a paradox that the producer recedes more and more before the consumer, nor that the will to produce weakens before the impatience of a consumption for which the acquisition of the things produced is less important than the enjoyment of things living. The revolt of the young generation against the consumer society is nothing else than an intellectual manifestation of the will to go beyond the industrial (that is to say, capitalist) era, nothing else than the search for a new profile of society beyond a society of producers. This is the sense in which the consumer society may well become the gravedigger of capitalism. You have seen from my paraphrase of M. Troute how the rebellion of the young can be understood, far better than it understands itself in most cases, as an expression and outflow of tendencies that go on in the production sector of the society itself. That is to say, the rebellion of the young is expressive of basic tendencies, and not only of ideological tendencies in the consumer society.

I will now do what I promised to do, try to give a very brief sketch of how I see the situation of the radical movement today. And I will be perfectly frank. In spite of its apparently elitist character, the movement expresses an objective radical potential in the society at large the more it articulates (though often unconsciously) the new internal contradictions at this historical stage. Thus the ruling class today, far more intelligent than we give it credit for, knows perfectly well where the enemy in its own country is. The full weight of repression is directed against the Black and Brown militants and against the schools, colleges and universities. It is not directed against organized labor. It does not have to be directed against organized labor. This is the preventive counterrevolution – not yet American fascism. We are far from a fascist form of government, but some of the possible preconditions are emerging. They are well known and I will just give you a list: the courts, used more and more as political tribunals; the reduction of education and welfare in the richest country in the world; antidemocratic legislation, such as preventive detention and the no-knock laws; economic sanctions if you are politically and otherwise suspect; the intimidation and self-censorship of the mass media. These are very frightening signs. You cannot say history repeats itself; it never repeats itself in the same form. The fact that we cannot point to any charismatic leader, the fact that we cannot point to any S.S. or S.A. here, simply means that they are not necessary in this country. If necessary other organizations can perform the job, possibly even more efficiently. I do not have to tell you which organizations I have in mind.

This counterrevolution has seriously deprived the movement of action which previously was effective. What was right only a year ago can no longer be done today. Now the movement is divided in itself, in search of a new strategy. I suggest that what is at stake today is the self-preservation of the movement as a political force. This means one step backward in order to be able to take two steps forward. In these terms I would like to discuss very briefly five points: first, the divisions within the movement; second, the problem of alliances and the extension of the base; third, the question of organization versus spontaneity; fourth, personal and social liberation; fifth, self-destruction and anti-intellectualism. I am afraid, as I said earlier, that I can make only a few remarks; it would be delightful if you would take them as material for discussion.

THE DIVISION IN THE MOVEMENT

Let me start by saying that division in the movement itself is not necessarily detrimental. We have seen this in Russia, where the split between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks certainly did not prevent the Russian Revolution; we have also seen such divisions in China. Division makes sense if it is a question of a realistic mass strategy, of testing, of consciousness, of strengths, of readiness, and so on. Ideological differences and divisions become utterly irrelevant and ridiculous when such a mass base has yet to be created. In such cases the conflicts become merely ideological, and usually terminate in ritualized discussion, in a rhetoric which lives and moves in a fantasy world with no relation to reality. This is apt, from the beginning, to antagonize possible sympathizers. The use of terms and concepts such as imperialism, exploitation, and capitalism may and should make very good sense among ourselves, but it makes no sense whatsoever in persuading and convincing what we may call outsiders. Until and unless you can translate these concepts into ordinary language, and it should be possible to translate them in this way, they should be avoided. This is one of the very rare cases where I am in favor of ordinary language.

By and large, I suggest that whatever ideological differences may exist in the movement can and should be safely bracketed – suspended for better times when they are more realistic. They should be suspended in favor of united action on common issues: action which, precisely because it is organized around concrete and transparent issues, can extend the base of the movement. The so-called battle for the streets does not require ideological puritanism. On the contrary, such puritanism in this situation can be fatal to the progress of the movement.

THE PROBLEM OF ALLIANCES AND THE EXTENSION OF THE BASE

I am sorry (it took me a long time to admit it and I am still willing to be convinced or persuaded of the opposite) but I believe that in the face of the counterrevolution there is indeed such a thing as a lesser evil. It has been said that a true revolutionary knows when to make compromises and what compromises to make. We are in a very bad and a very serious situation, one in which even such things as a fight for the recovery and restoration of civil rights is and should be on the agenda. It is such a bad situation that, it is almost horrible to say it, even some temporary alliances and compromises with certain liberals seem to be appropriate. These may be good for many things. First, they may be very good and helpful (and let's be vulgar materialists for a while) for overcoming one of the gravest deficiencies in the Left today, namely the total lack of funds. You can't get money if you go to them with terms like "capitalism," "imperialism," and "exploitation," but you may perfectly well be able to persuade them when you keep these concepts for those who know what they mean. Second, and most importantly, we must look carefully at the relationship of the movement and the working class. I have already said that it is nonsense to claim that a revolution is imaginable without the working class. I immediately added that we are confronted with structural changes within the working class. Can we say anything, then, about a possible alliance between the student movement and the working classes? Let me say from the beginning, I believe that it is not a question of alliances, but a question of a junction between two political and social forces. And this junction depends on the progress of capitalist destabilization in which both forces, the student movement on the one hand and labor on the other, operate on their own base and in their own ranks. Students today are not, by any stretch of the imagination, a Leninist avant-garde because you cannot have an avant-garde where there is no mass movement behind. What does this mean in practice? If we see a junction as a process, a point which is approached by the two political and social forces, each on their own side, it means above all that the slogan "Go to the workers" is utterly insufficient, quite apart from its ridiculously patronizing character. This junction is not achieved by visiting a factory or by leafleting at the factory gates. Either you become a worker and continue to build in the factory, or there must be a division of functions of which I will give you an example. This example was tested with success in Italy, which has some experience in these things. The Proletarian Left (the name of the organization of which I speak) has decided to change its strategy and to arrive at a complete division of functions. The students prepare their information and propaganda material and give it to the base committees in the facto-ries (which consist exclusively of workers) to use as it fits their own situation. This is only one example of cooperation with division of functions, cooperation which does not try to obliterate the obvious gap between these two forces today.

ORGANIZATION VERSUS SPONTANEITY: PERSONAL AND SOCIAL LIBERATION

I believe I have said that the traditional mass parties of the past are outdated. First, there are no revolutionary masses yet. You cannot have a mass party if you do not have any masses. Second, these centralized mass parties were part and parcel of the system of parliamentary democracy, and parliamentary democracy is no longer a vehicle of radical change. These centralized mass parties can easily be rendered ineffective by the removal of the leadership. Instead, what seems to be shaping up, what was tested in France and in Italy, is the centering of the movement on local and regional organizations of a united front with bracketed and suspended ideological differences; local and regional committees capable of organizing popular rather than radical actions on common issues (of which there are many). Today it is a question of organization and coordination.

I want to stress here, and it somehow hurts to stress it, but I believe that the heroic period of beautiful spontaneity, of personal anti-authoritarianism, of hippie rock and shock, is over. Not because the movement has become weaker, but because it is growing and is becoming more serious. The heroic period is over because the establishment in organizing the counterrevolution has become conscious of the danger to its power. The establishment has become immune to shock, completely immune to ego trips styled as political actions.

In response to the growing difficulties of the capitalist system, the movement is now faced with the task of establishing its authority in its own ranks and with its own members. Let us have no premature anarchism. Anarchism may be good: I believe that I have said that a strong element of anarchism should be incorporated into Marxism. To do it now in the face of a deadly powerful enemy is premature. What remains is the fact that there can be no social liberation without personal liberation, but also no individual liberation without a political struggle on a social scale against the prevailing unfreedom.

What about the framework of action? What strategy is left under the counterrevolution? I can think of no better a characterization of a strategy than the one given by my young friend Rudi Dutschke when he speaks of the long march through the institutions. This is not, does not, and never was supposed to mean the deadly game of parliamentary democracy. Today all radical opposition is necessarily extra-parliamentary opposition. You cannot compete in the pseudo-democratic process. You are not millionaires and you are not able to buy the machinery required to be successful and influential in this process. Yet I think we can still be relatively sure of what is meant by this strategy. Such a strategy does include demonstrations, extended and well-organized demonstrations, for clearly identified issues. This strategy includes the organization of radical caucuses, counter-meetings, counter-associations, in short, the development of what have been called counter-institutions such as radio, television, press, workshops,

anything and everything that promises to break the information monopoly of the establishment. Above all, the long march through the institutions means going into the institutions, learning how to do the jobs, educating yourself and others on the job, and preparing for the time when the jobs have to be done for a new and free society.

Against this not very attractive, and certainly not very spectacular strategy, we have a *handout* to the establishment, one of the fifth columns of the establishment in the New Left, what I now call the pest that infects the New Left, namely the widespread anti-intellectualism that has infested the movement. If you want to hate yourselves, if you are ashamed of what you happen to be, if you are masochistic to the degree of self-destruction, in other words if you really want to be effectively anti-intellectual, take a job in the office of the vice-president of the United States, or of the governor of California, or jobs they might choose for you. For they certainly know how to use anti-intellectualism more effectively than you do. Marx's famous thesis has been interpreted today as meaning that it is no longer necessary to understand and interpret the world; we can simply go ahead and change it. This is an idiotic interpretation because never has theory, never has the effort of thinking, of knowing what is going on and what can be done about it, been needed more than it is today. Today, more than ever before, there cannot possibly be any revolutionary practice without the theory guiding such practice. The Marxian thesis means we have to understand and interpret the world in order to change it, but it does not give a productive alternative to the necessity of understanding and interpreting it.

I want to look at the power of false consciousness. Today this material force of ideology is even sweeping the New Left, with its rhetoric, its withdrawal, its confusion of private with social and political liberation, and even more with its attitudes towards those institutions which can still be used far better than they now are. I know perfectly well (and my relationship to the university has been lengthy enough) your criticisms of education; I know very well how many of them are justified. But what is not justified under any circumstances is the slogan, "Destroy the university because it is a pillar of the establishment." The university is a pillar of the establishment; it is up to you to make it something different. However, you do not cut off the branch on which you are sitting; it is in the university where you become radical. In other words, radical reconstruction, not destruction, of the university should be the task. The demand today, especially for radicals, should be for more, not less, education. We need infinitely more education than we now have in order to cope with the things that will come and will come very soon. Again, if you want to destroy the universities, leave it to the power structure. That is exactly what the power structure is doing and you only have to look at your own budget to see how effectively they are able to do it. Do not compete with people who can do it infinitely better than you.

It occurs to me, perhaps it is only because I quit the university that I now have praise for it. However, I think somehow it is a little more sincere than

that. I cannot take back one word because I still believe that it is in the schools and universities that there are, more or less hidden, all the facts, all the fields, all the possibilities we need. It is up to us to get this material. If you do not get this material, if you have courses and seminars where you know something is wrong, where you know vital facts are not discussed or treated, then criticize this course without any compromises. There is one problem: if you really want to do that effectively, you must know the facts better than the teacher. I would like to add immediately that I think this is perfectly possible and not even very difficult.

Now let me conclude by repeating what I think is really one of the main points: that neither the sexual revolution, if there ever was such a thing, nor any other personal or individual or group liberation will be a vehicle for social liberation unless these private and particular liberation movements transcend individual and group gratifications, unless they are subjected to a new rationality and become part of the theory and practice of social change. I started by saying how strong the desire, the need, is for action. There is, however, a distinction between activism and action. All revolutionary action is based on popular support. In this country such popular support is shaping up in the ghettos. It does not yet exist for the student movement. Violence is institutionalized in the establishment. The movement can only defend itself against violence. It is not and it cannot be on the offensive. There have been enough martyrs and enough victims. As I said at the beginning, you have to preserve your strength as a political force. You have to become those who prepare the soil, the minds, and the bodies for a new society. If you do not do it, who will? And you have to do all this while you are still alive, while you are still young, while you are still capable of thinking, of talking, of loving, of resisting and fighting.

XI

BILL MOYERS: A CONVERSATION WITH HERBERT MARCUSE[1]

Mr. Moyers: Question: What American city is known for military bases, an ultra-conservative press, reactionary wealth, a plethora of retired generals and admirals, and a fortuitous combination of climate and coast that enables the free enterprise good life to flourish? Answer: San Diego, California.

Question: What American city is home for the country's best-known Marxist philosopher? Answer: San Diego, California.

I'm Bill Moyers, and while one shouldn't take too many liberties with paradox, it's intriguing – if altogether coincidental – that this serene, prosperous model of capitalist mores should also have become a spiritual mecca for revolutionaries. But that's what happened in the late 1960s, as students and radicals discovered Herbert Marcuse. The students are quiet, and the protests are over for the moment, but Dr. Marcuse believes that the system that made all this possible still needs to be changed. In the next half-hour, we'll hear some of his reasons why.

Followers of Herbert Marcuse claim that his critiques of modern industrial society provided the student protest of the 1960s and early 1970s with their intellectual power. They see in him a concern for morality and the rights of individuals. He's a man, as one of his colleagues said, who can speak to a thousand students and really excite them. His critics say he's an authoritarian out of power – an old bellows full of angry wind. Dr. Marcuse sees himself as simply an absolute and sentimental romanticist. This is the library of his study in his home at La Jolla, near the campus of the University of California at San Diego, where he teaches philosophy. His most influential works, like everything else he has written, are no light diet, but they had a profound influence on a generation of discontented young people who talked about, and

1 "A Conversation with Herbert Marcuse" is a transcript of a P.B.S. interview with Bill Moyers on March 12, 1974.

sometimes acted upon, his ideas, even when they hadn't read them. Someone pointed out that the student movement discovered Dr. Marcuse on a kind of intellectual blind date. Be that as it may, it was the beginning of a remarkable affair.

Herbert Marcuse is 75. He came to this country 40 years ago [in 1934], as a refugee from Hitler's Germany. He worked in the O.S.S. during the war, and has taught at Columbia, Harvard and Brandeis. He came to San Diego in 1965. In the last five years, he's been publicized, controversial, criticized, and even threatened with his life. The temper of these years has cooled, but Dr. Marcuse believes their full effects are yet to be realized.

Dr. Marcuse, what happened to the student movement of the late 1960s?

Dr. Marcuse: Well, I can tell you what did not happen to it. It isn't dead.

Mr. Moyers: It isn't dead?

Dr. Marcuse: It is not dead. I don't believe it is dead, and it will resurrect.

Mr. Moyers: There's an eerie silence out there on the campuses.

Dr. Marcuse: I wouldn't even say that. We had, about a week ago, a meeting in Chile, where I led the discussion. And the cafeteria – a rather large cafeteria – was filled to capacity. There was a very lively discussion. What happened is that the students have learned . . . Well, two things happened. We have had, in this country, in the schools, in the colleges, in the universities, repression, not open terror, like Kent State and other places primarily, but what you may call economic repression.

Mr. Moyers: Economic?

Dr. Marcuse: Economic repression – a radical young professor not promoted, didn't get tenure, or fired. And the students themselves know that if they have anything politically radical on their record it will be very difficult for them to get a job. But that is only one aspect of the whole thing. The other is that there is what you may call a retrenchment in the student movement. The best of them have learned that what was lacking in 1968, 1969, was a suitable form of organization, and an adequate, theoretical foundation for their action – for their political practice. Both they are trying to find now.

Mr. Moyers: I wonder if you aren't speaking too exclusively of a small group, because a lot of the students that I talk and have met with – who have been very active in the late 1960s and early 1970s, relaxed the moment the draft ended as an interference on their personal lives. And I wonder if you aren't reading more into it.

Dr. Marcuse: I may very well. On the other hand, whenever I can, I criticize the widespread notion that radical change has to start with the masses, or with the people. If you would remember history, it never did. Radical change always started with a very small minority, and mostly with a very small minority of intellectuals. And the masses came in when the economic and political conditions were ripe, and when their consciousness

had been developed to the point that they felt now they had to take action. This point has certainly not been reached in this country.

Mr. Moyers: You once believed that students were beginning a radical, historical transformation. I think that was your term for it. Do you still believe that?

Dr. Marcuse: Yes, I still believe it. By the way, I never said the students, as a group, would replace the working class as the vehicle of change. I always considered the student movement as a preparatory movement in the development of consciousness.

Mr. Moyers: But you did believe, if I read you correctly, that collaboration between the working classes and the students was essential. I don't see any evidence of that, today.

Dr. Marcuse: And neither do I. I don't see any evidence because, as I said, the conditions are not yet ripe for it. You cannot expect the majority of the working class, today, to entertain any, let's say, radical or revolutionary projects, as long as their situation, their living conditions, are what they are today. Compared with their parents and grandparents, they are much, much, much better off. And socialism, to them, is mainly what they have in the Soviet Union, and that, to them, is no attractive alternative.

Mr. Moyers: So you don't see any hope for a real collaboration between the working . . .

Dr. Marcuse: Yes, I do, because I do believe that a very important change is going on before our eyes in the working class itself, and especially among the young workers – but not only. What I mean is that famous – and, of course, we should discuss that in more detail – that famous and familiar so-called decline in the work ethic on which the capitalist system, indeed, depends – heritage of the Puritans, and so on. There is a growing part among labor – mainly young workers – which feel absolutely no responsibility any more toward their job, because they feel – or even, they know – that these kind of inhuman, really killing, nerve-racking jobs on the assembly line, and so on, are no longer necessary.

Mr. Moyers: What does the assembly line worker in Detroit have in common with the leftist student who sits at your feet in graduate seminars here?

Dr. Marcuse: Well, in the first place, as far as this sentiment prevails in Detroit (and it does) we know that from the almost daily acts of sabotage, from the high rate of absenteeism, from the wildcat strikes, and so on, that there you have a link (at least a potential link) between these students (or, let's say, the intellectuals) and the workers: not the working class as a whole, but some of these workers.

Mr. Moyers: I interrupted you a moment ago when you were using the term consciousness, and I'm wondering, as I read your works, whether or not the revolution of which you speak represents real change in society, or simply a deepening of individual consciousness.

Dr. Marcuse: Well, if it doesn't represent, and doesn't bring about a real

change in society, it's not a revolution. But this change in society must be preceded by a change in consciousness. In other words . . . what happened, more and more men and women must see – not only see and know, but must feel that in their own organism, in their own body, and not only in their mind, that the life they are living today is no longer necessary – that they can have a qualitatively different way of life . . .

Mr. Moyers: A deeper appreciation of pleasure? More . . .

Dr. Marcuse: If you want to, yes. That is a way I formulated it, and, I think, in the most radical way, that the human organism (body and mind) in the long history of civilization, has been made mainly an instrument of labor, an instrument of functions to be fulfilled, although they may be (and mostly are) very unpleasant. This, in all likelihood, was necessary in order to overcome the scarcity that existed on earth. I believe it is less and less necessary now.

Mr. Moyers: Work?

Dr. Marcuse: Not work: to make the work is necessary, and will remain necessary, but it will be a very different kind of work. What is no longer necessary is that the human organism, as a whole, is mainly an instrument of toil (I don't say work), an instrument of toil. The technical term is alienated work. Pleasure is relegated to marginal hours of the day, or of the night. This, in my view, is a perversion of the human being itself. Nothing in the human being says that it has to be this way. And to the degree to which society succeeds in abolishing scarcity – to the degree to which society actually succeeds in utilizing and distributing the available resources according to the needs of all citizens – that is to say, primarily abolition of misery, poverty, oppression, whatever it is, to that degree this perversion in human existence can be remedied. What Freud calls the life instincts, the erotic energy of man can gradually prevail over the innate aggressiveness and destructiveness of man.

Mr. Moyers: But it does prompt a question which arises as I traveled around the country, as to whether or not most people want to deepen, to raise or change the consciousness, or whether they simply want more things – more automobiles, more vacations, more clothes, a second house – and if you aren't really trying to read into the desire of the masses your own personal desire?

Dr. Marcuse: I don't think that these are personal desires, and, to tell you frankly, I would consider a human being hopeless without repair if it wouldn't understand what I was trying to say. If more or less consciously or unconsciously these would not be the desire, the wish, the imagination of practically all other human beings. Don't forget that if they want more television, if they want more automobiles, if they want more of the same, their mind and their unconscious is managed and manipulated. They have to want more of them, otherwise the established system would collapse . . .

Mr. Moyers: The economic system?

Dr. Marcuse: Well, sure: if they don't produce more and more, if they can't sell their produce, they would collapse.

Mr. Moyers: Who are the "villains" in this process, then?

Dr. Marcuse: Ah – no persons – no individuals. This is not a matter of an evil will or character of the capitalists. It is the way the capitalist mode of production works.

Mr. Moyers: But this is troubling: it relieves the individual of any responsibility. It says that there are no . . .

Dr. Marcuse: No, because it says: whatever may happen – and, as you know, according to Marx, socialism is the only solution – it would happen only if the individuals realize it, and act accordingly. He has never assumed that it would happen automatically. And we see very well, today, that it doesn't happen automatically. There has always been a socialist doctrine – the alternative: socialism or barbarism. But no real socialist or Marxist has ever assumed that what Marx calls a necessary development is an automatic development.

Mr. Moyers: But if there are no personal, individual villains, if I just may use that in a polemical sense . . .

Dr. Marcuse: Well, I wouldn't entirely exclude the villain. Certainly not. There are plenty of villains around, and you know that, in very responsible positions. But I would, indeed, say that what is happening is not in its tendencies, and in its structure, the work of these individuals.

Mr. Moyers: If you were writing the obituary, today, of Watergate, what would you say?

Dr. Marcuse: I would say something terrible. I would say: I don't believe that anything essential has changed, or will change. This, in my view, is a struggle within the existing power structure. The real reason for it, in my view, has not yet been ascertained. I don't believe in the strange explanation of the so-called Eastern establishment against the Southern cowboy. I don't think that this geographical class analysis makes much sense. But somehow there must be strata in the ruling class which believe that the present administration does not, and cannot, do the job adequately any more. So a replacement may be sought. But I do not believe that any changes in the society itself, or major changes in policy, will occur.

Mr. Moyers: What about the public reaction to the events of Watergate – the sense of indignation . . .

Dr. Marcuse: Yes, they are precisely (and I'm glad that you bring up this question) where my doubts are, because, if you look at the consequences of such scandals in recent history, you will see that they contributed to preparing the way for an authoritarian, and even fascist, regime. I'm thinking of the Stavisky scandal in France in the 1930s. I'm thinking of the Kreuger scandal in the late 1920s. The consequences that people are crying out for – the strong man who can clean up, the leader who can

finish with all this corruption, and introduce clean government – of course, we know what it means, clean government, in this context. But I think the tendency is there, that the emphasis on corruption and scandals makes for the desire for a strong leader.

Mr. Moyers: And you don't think people are more wary, in this country, today, of concentrated power as a result of Watergate?

Dr. Marcuse: They are more aware of it, but they think they cannot do much about it.

Mr. Moyers: What is the possibility, then, Dr. Marcuse, of significant political change in this country?

Dr. Marcuse: I think the changes will come (and will have to come) because I believe that the economic situation in this country will deteriorate. I think that the administration will not be capable of doing something with inflation, or with unemployment, or with the rather difficult international situation. I'm thinking of the increasing competition within the capitalist system: the United States on the one hand, and Japan and Western Europe on the other. I'm thinking of the limits that have been established to American expansion in the Third World. I'm thinking of the activation of the Arab nations, and the use of oil as a political weapon. All this will threaten the still-existing prosperity and stabilization, and will make for a gradual radicalization of larger strata of the population.

Mr. Moyers: Well, what practical form does that take?

Dr. Marcuse: That's just it. It can take the practical form of tending towards the extreme right, or tending towards the left.

Mr. Moyers: The extreme right, demanding someone to come in . . .

Dr. Marcuse: Like Wallace, let's say.

Mr. Moyers: What about the form on the left? What form of radical – what kind of . . .

Dr. Marcuse: What form it will take is not yet established, and is not yet visible. It would probably take the form of exerting pressure that candidates for political office are being selected which, indeed, are not simply the vassals of the establishment, and of the existing power structure, but which would give some evidence that they would introduce major changes in the society. But that is all I can foresee.

Mr. Moyers: Would you rather live under a dictatorship of politicians or a dictatorship of intellectuals?

Dr. Marcuse: You see, that is what I'm constantly being asked; I like being asked precisely this question. They always say: I am an elitist, and for an intellectual dictatorship. The elitist argument is simply used if no other argument is any more available, forgetting that, if the alternative really would be democracy or dictatorship – even educational or intellectual dictatorship – I would be for democracy. But that isn't the alternative. As you indicated, I, indeed, believe we have no democracy today in this country, and we have an elite ruling us, making the most vital decisions, affecting the fate of the nation as a whole, without any effective control

from below. The notion of popular sovereignty has become a joke. There is no longer such a thing.

Mr. Moyers: You mean the people neither speak nor ask . . .

Dr. Marcuse: Nor have any way of effectively asserting their will if they want to assert their will.

Mr. Moyers: You're saying that the elections are simply not expressive of sovereignty by the people.

Dr. Marcuse: Listen, if you need funds, or a fortune of a million dollars or more in order to become a successful candidate, you can hardly speak of democracy.

Mr. Moyers: What is the alternative to the present system that is possible of realization?

Dr. Marcuse: Well, you know that I'm labeled as a Marxist philosopher – though controversial Marxist philosopher – and I never protested against this label. I, indeed, still retain the basic concepts of a Marxian analysis, which means: for any length of time this system couldn't work, no matter what happens, either in a pre-fascist or in a fascist form. The alternative is still socialism, but not the socialism we have today in the Soviet Union, but the socialism Marx really conceived of: that is to say a socialization, of course, of the means of production, and their control and distribution by what he called freely associated individuals. That is to say, men and women themselves, who do the work in a producing society, would have the responsibility for their work, and would determine what to produce, how to produce, and how to distribute the product. What may have appeared as utopia at the time Marx wrote, is today a very real possibility, because we have all the resources to do it. And that is precisely why the entire establishment is mobilized against it.

Mr. Moyers: But you don't have the resources of tradition. You're asking the American people to turn away from 200 and more years of experience, and walk into an unknown area that . . .

Dr. Marcuse: I'm sorry, that, I think, is no problem whatsoever to me, because that has always happened in history. You had the French people, who had to forgo I don't know how many hundreds of years of living under the Ancien Régime, and engage in the great revolution of 1789. They didn't have the vaguest idea what the outcome would be. The same with the English revolution. The same with the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917–18 . . . It was always against a long tradition. What is different in this country is that you don't have a militant worker movement tradition. Whatever there was has been, really, in a violent and a bloody way, suppressed. That you don't have. And that has to be built up gradually and painfully and patiently. But it can be built up.

Mr. Moyers: But the Bolshevik Revolution produced Stalinism, not Marxism, in a political system. What's to keep the kind of revolution you're advocating from producing a new and, at the moment, unforeseen kind of tyranny?

Dr. Marcuse: Well, I could try to suggest several answers to this question. I'm afraid it would take me a long time. There is no historical law according to which a revolution has to develop into some form of Stalinism. One of the main reasons why it did in the Soviet Union is the international condition of competition (militarily and economically) with highly developed capitalist countries, and scarcity in the country itself. Both conditions would not prevail in the United States.

Mr. Moyers: If there's no historical law, there's certainly a lesson of history. It seems to me that the ends we get are often the results of the means we use than they are the ideals we seek. And what worried some of us in the 1960s, Dr. Marcuse, was that the violence which was being used as a means to achieve a good society was going to produce a violent society.

Dr. Marcuse: You see, I have always declined to talk seriously of violence among the Left in this country. If you compare what is called violence practiced by the Left in the 1960s, let's say, with the violence exercised by the legitimate practitioners of violence on the part of the establishment, there is, in my view, absolutely no comparison.

Mr. Moyers: I would have thought, Dr. Marcuse, that the violence you saw in Nazi Germany would have forever soured you – even in the abstract justification of it.

Dr. Marcuse: Well, the funny thing is it did the opposite, because the violence exercised by the Nazi regime was precisely the violence coming from the extreme right, and this violence was not combated in time with democratic force. And only when it was too late did we see in Germany what we simply let go on for years and years and years.

Mr. Moyers: Why did you flee?

Dr. Marcuse: Because of the Nazis. I couldn't possibly pursue my academic career in Germany, and I certainly would have been put in a concentration camp. I had already established – published at that time some Marxist essays.

Mr. Moyers: Well, you found, in this country, the freedom to publish, to write, to think, even to advocate the overthrow of the government. Surely, this society can't be all bad?

Dr. Marcuse: In the first place, you do not advocate the overthrow of a government. If you have to advocate it, it is no good. A government is overthrown, and can be overthrown only in a progressive way by popular political action. But I don't want to go into that. I came to this country on the Fourth of July, 1934. When I saw the Statue of Liberty, I really felt like a human being. If I compare the country as it was, let's say, in 1934, when I came, and as it is now, I doubt sometimes that this is the same country.

Mr. Moyers: What's changed?

Dr. Marcuse: What has changed? At that time, this country effectively fought inflation and unemployment, and prepared the war against fascism. You cannot say today that this country is opposed to fascism, if

it helps to sustain and establish fascist governments in quite a few countries of the world. You say I have the liberty here to publish, to talk. I appreciate it very much, and that is one of the reasons why I'm going to stay in this country. But I know perfectly well that I am free to publish and to speak because the power structure can afford it. What I write is in no way dangerous. I'm being asked again and again: since I'm so critical in this country why I don't go back where I came from, and why do I stay here? I stay here because I have found, in this country, many, many friends, marvelous people from all strata of the population, men and women, and with these I can work; I think it is my duty, as much as I can, to contribute to a betterment of the society. I know it can be a better society, and I feel I have to work for the betterment of the society.

Mr. Moyers: Then, is it not true, as you have been charged with, that you hate society in its present form?

Dr. Marcuse: I hate society in its present form, because I feel that this society is imposed upon human beings, and that human beings start fighting against it. That does not mean that I hate this country, and that I hate the people in this country. I hate the specific institutions – the way they are abused by the power structure – and that is all. In other words, let me put it this way: I hate the established power structure, but I hate by no means the people suffering under it.

Mr. Moyers: You've talked – both before we were taping this conversation, as we were having a cup of coffee, and from time to time in this conversation – about women. Do you consider that women are succeeding in raising their consciousness?

Dr. Marcuse: Well, I have discussed it, though briefly, in my last book, *Counterrevolution and Revolt*. I consider the women's liberation movement definitely as one of the active, progressive forces today, if this movement goes beyond the creation of an equal basis for exploitation. Somebody has formulated it (I forgot who) that sometimes you think that the women's liberation movement simply means that the women want to be equally exploited with men. I mean, if this is the case, of course, we should still support it, but there isn't much radicalism in it, because this platform of equality of opportunity and equality of payment belongs to the oldest items of any socialist platform, and, of course, it is something to be fought for. But I believe the potential of the women's liberation movement goes far beyond this.

Mr. Moyers: You've talked about sensuality as an important expression of the liberated personality. But I wonder if the commercial exploitation of women, as, say, in *Playboy Magazine*, vicarious sensuality, if you will, isn't an abuse of women's freedom?

Dr. Marcuse: Sensuality, if it is authentic, rebels against exploitation, and can only suffer exploitation, except, of course, in clinical cases as in the masochistic or sadistic character. So I certainly would not call (in any way) the development of sensuality exploitation . . .

Mr. Moyers: The vicarious exploitation that occurs in *Playboy Magazine* (in the Hugh Hefner philosophy) in which the woman becomes a symbol of man's desire for her rather than a participant in an actual process . . .

Dr. Marcuse: Well, I have never protested against man's desire for a woman, and I don't see anything terribly reactionary or wrong in it . . . It is entirely different if the woman is forced to become an object. Then, of course, it is sometimes evil, and it should be fought.

Mr. Moyers: You're saying that woman as a symbol, as expressed in (say) *Playboy Magazine*, is not a coerced symbol. She chooses to be . . .

Dr. Marcuse: No, I cannot connect much sense with the exploitation of a symbol. I mean, the woman is still a woman, and either the woman is exploited as an object, or it is not. Now, if a woman, in complete freedom and autonomy, determines she wants to be a model for *Playboy*, and really likes it, and is in no way forced to do it, I personally would not consider this a political issue.

Mr. Moyers: Sensuality becomes a symbol, and not an experience . . .

Dr. Marcuse: That is certainly true. You can say that the satisfaction given by these pictures, and what they present, is vicarious satisfaction, and serves commercialization. I certainly wouldn't deny that.

Mr. Moyers: I wonder if I could ask a personal question. What has given you pleasure in life?

Dr. Marcuse: That is a highly personal, and perhaps even embarrassing . . .

Mr. Moyers: But you're always saying what other people should be doing to enjoy themselves, and how they should be liberated.

Dr. Marcuse: No, I'm not telling them what they're supposed to do to enjoy. If they don't know how to enjoy themselves, and if they do not succeed that they determine by themselves how they want to enjoy themselves, how am I to tell them. My pleasures I can perfectly well describe. I had the very great privilege to have a life from a relatively early stage on in which I could really do the work I like to do. That has been going on until now, writing and teaching things I wanted to write and I wanted to teach, [which] were really pleasurable. I had the great fortune of having met women who gave me great pleasure. I think this is entirely normal, and, as I told you, I don't see any sexism in it, and if it is sexism, I gladly adhere to it. I enjoy very much non-competitive activities. I hate sports, but I love swimming. I love hiking. I love tennis, although I don't play it any more. But I despise all violence in sports.

Mr. Moyers: Have you found (to use your own term) joy in the art of living?

Dr. Marcuse: I have very much: I've certainly found joy in living. I have equally well found very great sadness in living. And I don't think these things you can actually teach other people. You can say what you have found for yourself. You can act accordingly. You can, perhaps, be an example – I don't know what you want to call it – but these things cannot, in any way, be imposed upon other people.

Mr. Moyers: Are you mellowing?

Dr. Marcuse: No, I don't think so, and I hope I don't. I know one says that I have been mellowing. I think that is a misunderstanding. What has changed more is that it is harder today than it was before to get people to sympathize with radical critique. I have tried whenever I could to tell, especially, and show the young people that they cannot expect any spectacular change in the near future, and that they better operate with and under the conditions they have now, and tune down their expectations. If you call that mellowing, yes. I simply call it a more realistic strategy of change.

Mr. Moyers: But you remain (as you once described yourself), I assume, an incurable and sentimental romanticist?

Dr. Marcuse: Well, romanticism, for me, is in no way a curse word. I love romantics. Romanticism has become a label, also a concept of political propaganda, because one condemns as romanticist or utopian what, in fact, is a very real possibility. It has been said again and again and written again and again, the famous slogan of the revolt of 1968 in France: All Power to The Imagination. This is a romantic, and was a romantic slogan, but is, at the same time, for me today one of the most realistic political slogans, because it indicates that the way you get a change, and the new quality of life for which you can fight, you have to ask (in order to know what it is) no longer simply the traditional books (and remember what you have been taught) you have to ask your own imagination. And your imagination will tell you.

Mr. Moyers: There was another piece of graffiti from, I think, the Paris rebellion, that you once said was one of your favorites. Do you remember that?

Dr. Marcuse: Which one?

Mr. Moyers: "Be Realistic – Demand the Impossible."

Dr. Marcuse: Exactly. That is what I still think today. And I don't think you can call that mellowing.

Mr. Moyers: From his home in La Jolla, California, this has been a conversation with Herbert Marcuse – philosopher, Marxist, author, teacher, and confessed romanticist.

XII

MARXISM AND FEMINISM[1]

I shall take the liberty of beginning and ending with some rather personal remarks. For the beginning I just want to say that this is the only invitation to lecture which I have accepted during the entire academic year. The reason is a very simple one. I believe the women's liberation movement today is, perhaps the most important and potentially the most radical political movement that we have, even if the consciousness of this fact has not yet penetrated the movement as a whole.

Explanation of terms:

Reality Principle: the sum total of the norms and values which govern behavior in an established society, embodied in its institutions, relationships, etc.

Performance Principle: a Reality Principle based on the efficiency and prowess in the fulfillment of competitive economic and acquisitive functions.

Eros, as distinguished from *Sexuality*: sexuality: a partial drive, libidinal energy confined and concentrated in the erotogenic zones of the body, mainly genital sexuality. Eros: libidinal energy, in the struggle with aggressive energy, striving for the intensification, gratification, and unification of life and of the life environment: the Life Instincts versus the Death Instinct (Freud).

Reification, Verdinglichung: the appearance of human beings, and relationships between human beings, as objects, things and as relationships between objects, things.

Now, two preliminary remarks on the situation of the women's liberation

1 "Marxism and Feminism" was presented at Stanford University in a March 7, 1974 lecture and was published in multiple places, such as *Women's Studies*, 2, 3 (1974) pp. 279–88.

movement as I see it. The movement originates and operates within patriarchal civilization; it follows that it must be initially discussed in terms of the actual status of women in the male dominated civilization.

Second, the movement operates within a class society: here is the first problem – women are not a class in the Marxian sense. The male–female relationship cuts across class lines but the immediate needs and potentialities of women are definitely class-conditioned to a high degree. Nevertheless, there are good reasons why "woman" should be discussed as a general category versus "man." Namely the long historical process in which the social, mental and even physiological characteristics of women developed as different from and contrasting with those of men.

Here, a word on the question whether the "feminine" or "female" characteristics are socially conditioned or in any sense "natural," biological. My answer is: over and above the obviously physiological differences between male and female, the feminine characteristics are socially conditioned. However, the long process of thousands of years of social conditioning means that they may become "second nature" which is not changed automatically by the establishment of new social institutions. There can be discrimination against women even under socialism.

In patriarchal civilization, women have been subjected to a specific kind of repression, and their mental and physical development has been channeled in a specific direction. On these grounds a separate women's liberation movement is not only justified, but also necessary. But the very goals of this movement require changes of such enormity in the material as well as intellectual culture that they can be attained only by a change in the entire social system. By virtue of its own dynamic, the movement is linked with the political struggle for revolution, freedom for men *and* women. Because beneath and beyond the male–female dichotomy is the human being, common to male and female: the human being whose liberation, whose realization is still at stake.

The movement operates on two levels: first, the struggle for full economic, social and cultural equality. Question: Is such economic, social and cultural equality attainable within the capitalist framework? I will come back to this question, but I want to submit a preliminary hypothesis: there are no economic reasons why such equality should not be attainable within the capitalist framework, although a largely modified capitalism. But the potentialities, the goals of the women's liberation movement go far beyond it, namely into regions which never can be attained within a capitalist framework, nor within the framework of any class society. Their realization would call for a second stage, where the movement would transcend the framework within which it now operates. At this stage "beyond equality", liberation implies the construction of a society governed by a different Reality Principle, a society where the established dichotomy between masculine and feminine is overcome in the social and individual relationships between human beings.

Thus, in the movement itself is contained the image, not only of new social institutions, but also of a change in consciousness, of a change in the instinctual needs of men and women, freed from the requirements of domination and exploration. And this is the movement's most radical, subversive potential. It means, not only a commitment to socialism (full equality of women has always been a basic socialist demand), but commitment to a specific form of socialism which has been called "feminist socialism." I will return to this concept later.

What is at stake in this transcendence is the negation of the exploiting and repressive values of patriarchal civilization. What is at stake is the negation of the values enforced and reproduced in society by male domination. And such radical subversion of values can never be the mere by-product of new social institutions. It must have its roots in the men and women who build the new institutions.

What is the meaning of this subversion of values in the transition to socialism? And second, is this transition, in any sense, the liberation and ascent of *specifically feminine* characteristics on a social scale?

To start with the first question, here are the governing values in capitalist society: profitable productivity, assertiveness, efficiency, competitiveness; in other words, the Performance Principle, the rule of functional rationality discriminating against emotions, a dual morality, the "work ethic," which means for the vast majority of the population condemnation to alienated and inhuman labor, and the will to power, the display of strength, virility.

Now, according to Freud, this value hierarchy is expressive of a mental structure in which primary aggressive energy tends to reduce and to weaken the life instincts, that is, erotic energy. According to Freud, the destructive tendency in society will gain momentum as civilization necessitates intensified repression in order to maintain domination in the face of the ever more realistic possibilities of liberation, and intensified repression in turn leads to the activation of surplus aggressiveness, and its channeling into socially useful aggression. This total mobilization of aggressiveness is only too familiar to us today: militarization, brutalization of the forces of law and order, fusion of sexuality and violence, direct attack on the Life Instincts in their drive to save the environment, attack on the legislation against pollution and so on.

These tendencies are rooted in the infrastructure of advanced capitalism itself. The aggravating economic crisis, the limits of imperialism, the reproduction of the established society through waste and destruction, make themselves increasingly felt and necessitate more intensified and extended controls in order to keep the population in line, controls and manipulation which go down into the depth of the mental structure, into the realm of the instincts themselves. Now, to the degree to which the totalization of aggressiveness and repression today permeates the entire society, the image of socialism is modified at an essential point. Socialism, as a *qualitatively* different society, must embody the *antithesis*, the definite negation of the

aggressive and repressive needs and values of capitalism as a form of male-dominated culture.

The objective conditions for such an antithesis and subversion of values are maturing, and they make possible the ascent, at least as a transitory phase in the reconstruction of society, of characteristics which, in the long history of patriarchal civilization, have been attributed to the female rather than the male. Formulated as the antithesis of the dominating masculine qualities, such feminine qualities would be receptivity, sensitivity, non-violence, tenderness and so on. These characteristics appear indeed as the opposite of domination and exploitation. On the primary psychological level, they would pertain to the domain of Eros, they would express the energy of the Life Instincts, against the Death Instinct and destructive energy. And the question here arises: Why do these life-protecting characteristics appear as specifically *feminine* characteristics? Why did the very same characteristics not also shape the dominant masculine qualities? This process has a history of thousands of years, during which the defense of the established society and of its hierarchy originally depended on physical strength, and thereby reduced the role of the female who was periodically disabled by bearing and then caring for children. Male domination, once established on these grounds, spread from the originally military sphere to other social and political institutions. The woman came to be regarded as inferior, as weaker, mainly as support for, or as adjunct to man, as sexual object, as tool of reproduction. And only as worker had she a form of equality, a repressive equality, with man. Her body and her mind were reified, became objects. And just as her intellectual development was blocked, so was her erotic development. Sexuality was objectified as a means to an end, procreation or prostitution.

A first countertrend became effective at the very beginning of the modern period, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and, highly significantly, in direct context with the great and radical heretic movements of the Cathars and the Albigensians. In these centuries, the autonomy of love, the autonomy of the woman was proclaimed, contrasting with and counteracting male aggressiveness and brutality. Romantic Love: I am perfectly well aware of the fact that these terms have become entirely pejorative terms, especially within the movement. Still, I take them a little more seriously, and I take them in the historical context in which these developments should be taken. This was the first great subversion of the established hierarchy of values: the first great protest against the feudal hierarchy and the loyalties established in the feudal hierarchy, with its specifically pernicious repression of the woman.

To be sure, this protest, this antithesis was largely ideological, and confined to the nobility. However, it was not entirely ideological. The prevailing social norms were subverted in the famous Courts of Love, established by Elinor d'Aquitaine, where the judgment was practically always in favor of the lovers and against the husband, the right of love superseding the right

of the feudal lord. And it was a woman who reportedly defended the last stronghold of the Albigensians against the murderous armies of the northern barons.

These progressive movements were cruelly suppressed. The weak beginnings of feminism, anyway on a weak class basis, were destroyed. But nevertheless, the role of the woman gradually changed in the development of industrial society. Under the impact of technical progress, social reproduction depends increasingly less on physical strength and prowess, either in war or in the material process of production, or in commerce. The result was the enlarged exploitation of women as instruments of labor. The weakening of the social basis of male dominance did not do away with the perpetuation of male dominance by the new ruling class. The increasing participation of women in the industrial work process, which undermined the material grounds of the male hierarchy, also enlarged the human base of exploitation and the surplus exploitation of the woman as housewife, mother, servant, in addition to her work in the process of production.

However, advanced capitalism gradually created the material conditions for translating the ideology of feminine characteristics into reality, the objective conditions for turning the weakness that was attached to them into strength, turning the sexual object into a subject, and making feminism a political force in the struggle against capitalism, against the Performance Principle. It is in the view of these prospects that Angela Davis speaks of the revolutionary function of the female as antithesis to the Performance Principle, in a paper written in the Palo Alto Jail, "Women and Capitalism," December, 1971.

The emerging conditions for such a development are mainly

- the alleviation of heavy physical labor
- the reduction of labor time
- the production of pleasant and cheap clothing
- the liberalization of sexual morality
- birth control
- general education.

These factors indicate the social basis for the antithesis to the Performance Principle, the emancipation of female and feminine energy, physical and intellectual, in the established society. But at the same time, this emancipation is arrested, manipulated, and exploited by this society. For capitalism cannot possibly allow the ascent of the libidinal qualities which would endanger the repressive work ethic of the Performance Principle and the constant reproduction of this work ethic by human individuals themselves. Thus, at this stage, these liberating tendencies, in manipulated form, are made part of the reproduction of the established system. They became exchange values, selling the system, and sold by the system. The exchange society comes to completion with the commercialization of sex: the female body not only a commodity, but also a vital factor in the realization of

surplus value. And the working woman continues, in ever larger numbers, to suffer the double exploitation as worker and housewife. In this form, the reification of the woman persists in a particularly effective manner. How can this reification be dissolved? How can the emancipation of the woman become a decisive force in the construction of socialism as a qualitatively different society?

Let's go back to the first stage in the development of this movement, and assume the achievement of complete equality. As equals in the economy and politics of capitalism, women must share with men the competitive, aggressive characteristics required to keep a job and to get ahead in the job. Thus, the Performance Principle and the alienation implied in it would be sustained and reproduced by a larger number of individuals. In order to achieve equality, which is the absolute prerequisite of liberation, the movement must be aggressive. But equality is not yet freedom. Only as an equal economic and political subject can the woman claim a leading role in the radical reconstruction of society. But beyond equality, liberation subverts the established hierarchy of needs – a subversion of values and norms which would make for the emergence of a society governed by a new Reality Principle. And this, in my view, is the radical potential of *feminist socialism*.

Feminist socialism: I spoke of a necessary modification of the notion of socialism, because I believe that in Marxian socialism there are remnants, elements of the continuation of the Performance Principle and its values. I see these elements, for example, in the emphasis on the ever more effective development of the productive forces, the ever more productive exploitation of nature, the separation of the "realm of freedom" from the work world.

The potentialities of socialism today transcend this image. Socialism, as a qualitatively different way of life, would use the productive forces not only for the reduction of alienated labor and labor time, but also for making life an end in itself, for the development of the senses and the intellect for pacification of aggressiveness, the enjoyment of being, for the emancipation of the senses and of the intellect from the rationality of domination: creative receptivity versus repressive productivity.

In this context, the liberation of the woman would indeed appear "as the antithesis to the Performance Principle," would indeed appear as the revolutionary function of the female in the reconstruction of society. Far from fostering submissiveness and weakness, in this reconstruction the feminine characteristics would activate aggressive energy against domination and exploitation. They would operate as needs and eventual goals in the socialist organization of production, in the social division of labor, in the setting of priorities once scarcity has been conquered. And thus, entering the reconstruction of society as a whole, the feminine characteristics would cease to be specifically feminine, to the degree to which they would be universalized in socialist culture, material and intellectual. Primary aggressiveness would persist, as it would in any form of society, but it may well lose the specifically masculine quality of domination and exploitation.

Technical progress, the chief vehicle of productive aggressiveness, would be freed from its capitalist features and channeled into the destruction of the ugly destructiveness of capitalism.

I think there are good reasons for calling this image of socialist society feminist socialism: the woman would have achieved full economic, political, and cultural equality in the all-round development of her faculties, and over and above this equality, social as well as personal relationships would be permeated with the receptive sensitivity which, under male domination, was largely concentrated in the woman: the masculine–feminine antithesis would then have been transformed into a synthesis – the legendary idea of *androgynism*.

I will say a few words about this extreme of (if you wish) romantic or speculative thought, which I think is neither so extreme nor so speculative.

No other rational meaning can possibly be attributed to the idea of androgynism than the fusion, in the individual, of the mental and somatic characteristics, which in patriarchal civilization were unequally developed in men and women, a fusion in which feminine characteristics, in cancellation of male dominance, would prevail over their repression. But, no degree of androgynous fusion could ever abolish the natural differences between male and female as individuals. All joy and all sorrow are rooted in this difference, in this relation to the other, of whom you want to become part, and who you want to become part of yourself, and who never can and never will become such a part of yourself. Feminist socialism would thus continue to be riddled with conflicts arising from this condition, the ineradicable conflicts of needs and values, but the androgynous character of society might gradually diminish the violence and humiliation in the resolution of these conflicts.

To conclude, the women's movement has gained political significance because of recent changes in the capitalist mode of production itself which provided the movement with a new material base. I recall the main features:

- the increasing number of women employed in the production process
- the increasingly technical form of production, gradually diminishing the use of heavy physical labor power
- the spread of an *aesthetic* commodity form: systematic commercial appeal to sensuousness, luxuries; the diversion of purchasing power to pleasurable things and services
- the disintegration of the patriarchal family through "socialization" of the children from outside (mass media; peer groups, etc.)
- the ever more wasteful and destructive productivity of the Performance Principle.

Feminism is a revolt against decaying capitalism, against the historical obsolescence of the capitalist mode of production. This is the precarious link between the utopia and reality: the social ground for the movement as a potentially radical and revolutionary force is there; this is the hard

core of the dream. But capitalism is still capable of keeping it a dream, of suppressing the transcending forces which strive for the subversion of the inhuman values of our civilization.

The struggle is still a political one, for abolition of these conditions, and in this struggle, the feminist movement plays an ever more vital part. Its mental and physiological forces assert themselves in political education and action, and in the relationship between individuals, at work and at leisure. I stressed that liberation cannot be expected as a by-product of new institutions, that it must emerge in the individuals themselves. The liberation of women begins at home, before it can enter society at large.

And here is my concluding personal statement. You may if you wish interpret it as a statement of surrender, or a statement of commitment. I believe that we men have to pay for the sins of a patriarchal civilization and its tyranny of power: women must become free to determine their own life, not as wife, not as mother, not as mistress, not as girl friend, but as an individual human being. This will be a struggle permeated with bitter conflicts, torment and suffering (mental and physical). The most familiar example today, which occurs again and again, is where a man and a woman have jobs or can get jobs at places distant from each other, and the question naturally arises: who follows whom?

An even more serious example: the conflicting erotic relationships, which inevitably will arise in the process of liberation. These erotic conflicts cannot be resolved in a facile, playful way, nor by being tough, nor by establishing exchange relationships. That you should leave to the exchange society where it belongs. Feminist socialism will have to develop its own morality, which will be more, and other, than the mere cancellation of bourgeois morality.

Women's liberation will be a painful process, but I believe it will be a necessary, a vital stage in the transition to a better society for men and women.

XIII

1970s INTERVENTIONS

ECOLOGY AND REVOLUTION[1]

Coming from the United States, I am a little uneasy discussing the ecological movement, which has already by and large been co-opted [there]. Among militant groups in the United States, and particularly among young people, the primary commitment is to fight, with all the means (severely limited means) at their disposal against the war crimes being committed against the Vietnamese people. The student movement – which had been proclaimed to be dead or dying, cynical and apathetic – is being reborn all over the country. This is not an organized opposition at all, but rather a spontaneous movement which organizes itself as best it can, provisionally, on the local level. But the revolt against the war in Indo-China is the only oppositional movement the establishment is unable to co-opt because neo-colonial war is an integral part of that global counterrevolution which is the most advanced form of monopoly capitalism.

So, why be concerned about ecology? Because the violation of the Earth is a vital aspect of the counterrevolution. The genocidal war against people is also "ecocide" in so far as it attacks the sources and resources of life itself. It is no longer enough to do away with people living now; life must also be denied to those who aren't even born yet by burning and poisoning the Earth, defoliating the forests, blowing up the dikes. This bloody insanity will not alter the ultimate course of the war but it is a very clear expression of where contemporary capitalism is at: the cruel waste of productive resources in the imperialist homeland goes hand in hand with the cruel waste of destructive forces and consumption of commodities of death manufactured by the war industry.

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1 "Ecology and Revolution" contains excerpts from a 1972 French conference on ecology with Sicco Mansholt, Edgar Morin and others that was first published in *Le Nouvel Observateur*, 397 (1972); an English translation was published in *Liberation* (September 1972).

In a very specific sense, the genocide and ecocide in Indo-China are the capitalist response to the attempt at revolutionary ecological liberation: the bombs are meant to prevent the people of North Vietnam from undertaking the economic and social rehabilitation of the land. But in a broader sense, monopoly capitalism is waging a war against nature – human nature as well as external nature. For the demands on ever more intense exploitation come into conflict with nature itself, since nature is the source and locus of the life instincts which struggle against the instincts of aggression and destruction. And the demands of exploitation progressively reduce and exhaust resources: the more capitalist productivity increases, the more destructive it becomes. This is one sign of the internal contradictions of capitalism.

One of the essential functions of civilization has been to change the nature of man and his natural surroundings in order to "civilize" him, that is, to make him the subject-object of the market society, subjugating the Pleasure Principle to the Reality Principle and transforming man into a tool of ever more alienated labor. This brutal and painful transformation has crept up on external nature very gradually. Certainly, nature has always been an aspect (for a long time the only one) of labor. But it was also a dimension *beyond* labor, a symbol of beauty, of tranquility, of a non-repressive order. Thanks to these values, nature was the very negation of the market society, with its values of profit and utility.

However, the natural world is an historical, a social world. Nature may be a negation of aggressive and violent society but its pacification is the work of man (and woman), the fruit of his/her productivity. But the structure of capitalist productivity is inherently expansionist: more and more, it reduces the last remaining natural space outside the world of labor and of organized and manipulated leisure.

The process by which nature is subjected to the violence of exploitation and pollution is first of all an economic one (an aspect of the mode of production), but it is a political process as well. The power of capital is extended over the space for release and escape represented by nature. This is the totalitarian tendency of monopoly capitalism: in nature, the individual must find only a repetition of his own society; a dangerous dimension of escape and contestation must be closed off.

At the present stage of development, the absolute contradiction between social wealth and its destructive use is beginning to penetrate people's consciousness, even in the manipulated and indoctrinated conscious and unconscious levels of their minds. There is a feeling, a recognition, that it is no longer necessary to exist as an instrument of alienated work and leisure. There is a feeling and a recognition that well-being no longer depends on a perpetual increase in production. The revolt of youth (students, workers, women), undertaken in the name of the values of freedom and happiness, is an attack on all the values which govern the capitalist system. And this revolt is oriented toward the pursuit of a radically different natural and technical environment; this perspective has become the basis for subversive

experiments such as the attempts by American "communes" to establish non-alienated relations between the sexes, between generations, between man and nature – attempts to sustain the consciousness of refusal and of renovation.

In this highly political sense, the ecological movement is attacking the "living space" of capitalism, the expansion of the realm of profit, of waste production. However, the fight against pollution is easily co-opted. Today, there is hardly an ad which doesn't exhort you to "save the environment," to put an end to pollution and poisoning. Numerous commissions are created to control the guilty parties. To be sure, the ecological movement may serve very well to spruce up the environment, to make it pleasanter, less ugly, healthier, and hence, more tolerable. Obviously, this is a sort of co-optation, but it also a progressive element because, in the course of this co-optation, a certain number of needs and aspirations are beginning to be expressed within the very heart of capitalism and a change is taking place in people's behavior, experience, and attitudes towards their work. Economic and technical demands are transcended in a movement of revolt which challenges the very mode of production and model of consumption.

Increasingly, the ecological struggle comes into conflict with the laws which govern the capitalist system: the law of increased accumulation of capital, of the creation of sufficient surplus value, of profit, of the necessity of perpetuating alienated labor and exploitation. Michel Bosquet put it very well: the ecological logic is purely and simply the negation of capitalist logic; the Earth can't be saved within the framework of capitalism, the Third World can't be developed according to the model of capitalism.

In the last analysis, the struggle for an expansion of the world of beauty, nonviolence and serenity is a political struggle. The emphasis on these values, on the restoration of the Earth as a human environment, is not just a romantic, aesthetic, poetic idea which is a matter of concern only to the privileged; today, it is a question of survival. People must learn for themselves that it is essential to change the model of production and consumption, to abandon the industry of war, waste and gadgets, replacing it with the production of those goods and services which are necessary to a life of reduced labor, of creative labor, of enjoyment.

As always, the goal is well-being, but a well-being defined not by ever increasing consumption at the price of ever intensified labor, but by the achievement of a life liberated from the fear, wage slavery, violence, stench and infernal noise of our capitalist industrial world. The issue is not to beautify the ugliness, to conceal the poverty, to deodorize the stench, to deck the prisons, banks and factories with flowers; the issue is not the purification of the existing society but its replacement.

Pollution and poisoning are mental as well as physical phenomena, subjective as well as objective phenomena. The struggle for an environment ensuring a happier life could reinforce, in individuals themselves, the instinctual roots of their own liberation. When people are no longer capable of

distinguishing between beauty and ugliness, between serenity and cacophony, they no longer understand the essential quality of freedom, of happiness. In so far as it has become the territory of capital rather than of man, nature serves to strengthen human servitude. These conditions are rooted in the basic institutions of the established system, for which nature is primarily an object of exploitation for profit.

This is the insurmountable internal limitation of any capitalist ecology. Authentic ecology flows into a militant struggle for a socialist politics which must attack the system at its roots, both in the process of production and in the mutilated consciousness of individuals.

Sicco Mansholt replies[2]

I think that all of us here have the same goals: human happiness, quality of life, a society which frees us from the consequences of an ungovernable technology – overcrowding of large cities, etc. But there is still the problem of whether it is possible for us to achieve these goals, and I have found no answer in listening to these presentations.

We all know that it would take a lot of money – enormous investments, and therefore a high rate of growth – in order to develop a better quality of life in our rich societies, to plan better cities, to improve transportation, to get rid of pollution, to achieve ecological equilibrium. If, in addition, we want to raise the standard of living of the poor peoples of the world, will we have enough raw materials and energy to do it all? Of course, one can envision a stabilization at a material standard of living somewhat lower than that enjoyed at present by our most developed Western nations, but this hypothesis certainly reduces the maximum number of inhabitants that the Earth could support. I feel very much attracted to a Robinson Crusoe style of life, but I don't believe it would be possible for more than 300 million human beings.

On the other hand, with the continuation of a 5 per cent growth rate, I don't believe that in 30 years we can hope both to reduce pollution and to raise the poor populations to our standard of living. That would imply the necessity for us to lower our own material standard of living. But this goal also presupposes the pursuit of a different sort of society. I do not think that one can find a solution in state, or organized, capitalism. The Soviet example demonstrates that this model of society ends up with pretty much the same

2 Sicco Mansholt (1908–1995) was a socialist Duth politician who served as Minister of Agriculture in the Netherlands for thirteen years in a row and in 1958 was the first Commissioner on Agriculture in the European Economic Community (also for thirteen years). In 1972, he became Chairman/President of the European Commissionn. At this time, he was influenced by the 'Club of Rome' and became concerned with issues of agriculture, population, limits to growth, and ecology.

problems as capitalist society. And I am well aware that everyone here is looking, as I am, for a type of society which would reduce existing inequalities, which would make it possible to achieve an ecological balance in which every individual could reach a higher cultural level.

This is the root of the problem and I believe that we must now go directly to the heart of the matter. We must no longer speak of the fight against pollution as an end in itself. We won't get much of anywhere if we limit ourselves to treating the symptoms of the disease. The cure can emerge only out of a social change. In my opinion, the remedy lies in a socialist society, in a transformation of the system of production, in giving each individual appropriate responsibilities. I believe that through democratic processes everyone can be convinced of the need for non-polluting production and for the production only of necessary things. But there is still the problem of how our society can be changed. In the European circles [of the European Union] in Brussels, they seem to think that it's an impossible task. I am more optimistic, particularly taking into account the movement emerging in Western Europe, and beginning in Japan as well. Young people are leading the way, and I have faith in them.

To be sure, this doesn't mean we should give up on our organizing efforts. Our political parties – from the extreme right to the extreme left – are often far too rigid, and I believe we must try to give them an understanding of the problems of the future. These new conceptions should guide us toward a far more fundamental kind of socialism, based on an absolutely honest investigation of physical, sociological, economic and political realities.

MURDER IS NOT A POLITICAL WEAPON[3]

In taking a position towards terrorism in West Germany, the Left must first ask itself two questions: Do terrorist actions contribute to the weakening of capitalism? Are these actions justified in view of the demands of revolutionary morality? To both questions I must answer in the negative.

The physical liquidation of single individuals, even the most prominent, does not undermine the normal functioning of the capitalist system itself. On the contrary, it strengthens its repressive potential without (and this is the decisive point) either engendering opposition to repression or raising political consciousness.

Obviously the victims of terrorist actions represent the system – but they only *represent* it. That is to say, they are replaceable and exchangeable. The

3 "Murder is not a Political Weapon" appeared in *New German Critique*, 12 (Fall 1977) in a translation by Jeffrey Herf; it was initially published in the German weekly *Die Zeit* (September 12, 1977). At the time of its publication, there was a major media focus and controversy in Germany over the actions of the "Red Army Faction" (also known as the "Baader-Meinhof" gang) and the intense West German state repression against the group and its supporters.

reservoir for recruiting their replacements is practically unlimited. In view of the overwhelming disproportion between the concentrated power of the state machine and the weakness of terrorist groups isolated from the masses, the attempt to create uncertainty and anxiety among members of the ruling class is hardly a revolutionary accomplishment. Given the prevalent conditions in the Federal Republic (the situation of preventive counter-revolution), it is destructive for the Left at this time to provoke the power of the state.

There may exist situations in which the elimination of people who sponsor a policy of repression does really change the system – at least in its political manifestations – and liberalize forms of oppression. (For example the successful assassination of Carrero Blanco in Spain, or the killing of Hitler might have had such an impact.) But in both of these cases the system was already in a phase of disintegration, a condition which certainly does not exist in West Germany today.

Marxist socialism, however, is not only guided by the laws of revolutionary pragmatism. It also adheres to the laws of revolutionary morality. Its goal, the liberated individual, must appear in the means to achieve this goal. Revolutionary morality demands – as long as it remains a possibility – open struggle, not conspiracy and sneak attacks. An open struggle is class struggle. In West Germany (and not only there) the radical opposition to capitalism today is for the most part isolated from the working class. The student movement, the "declassed" radicals from the bourgeoisie and women are all searching for their own forms of struggle. The frustration emanating from their political isolation is hardly bearable. It results in terrorist actions against individual people, actions which come from isolated individuals and small isolated groups.

By personalizing the struggle, the terrorists must be held accountable and judged for their actions. Those representatives of capital whom the terrorists have chosen as their victims are themselves not responsible for capitalism as Hitler and Himmler were responsible for the concentration camps.[4] This means that the victims of terror are not innocent, but their guilt can only be expiated through the abolition of capitalism itself.

Can the current terrorist activity in West Germany be considered a legitimate continuation of the student movement which must now use different political tactics in the face of intensified repression? I must answer in the negative to this question as well. Terror is primarily a break with the movement of the 1960s. The Extra-Parliamentary Opposition (A.P.O.) was,

4 A "not" was added to the text here that corrects the original German version and English translation in the light of a September 20, 1977 letter from Marcuse to the editor of *Die Zeit*. Marcuse wrote that a passage: *muss korrigiert werden wie folgt* (it must be corrected as following): "Die von den Terroristen also Opfer gewahlten Vertreter des Kapitals sind für den Kapitalismus *nicht* verwantwortlich wie Hitler und Himmler verantwortlich waren für die Konzentrationslager."

despite all reservations due to its class basis, a mass movement on an international scale and a movement with an international strategy. It signified a turning point in the development of class struggles in late capitalism, that is, it proclaimed the need of struggling for "concrete utopia." It redefined socialism as qualitatively different from and surpassing all traditional conceptions of socialism – as a concrete utopia that has now become a real possibility. The movement did not turn away from open confrontation, but the great majority of its members rejected conspiratorial terrorism. Today's terrorism is not the heritage of the German New Left. Instead it remains bound to the old society it wishes to overturn. It works with weapons which will undermine fulfillment of its goals. At the same time, it splits the Left just at the moment when it is necessary to unify all oppositional forces.

Precisely because the Left rejects this terror, it is not necessary to join in the bourgeois denunciation campaign of the radical opposition. The Left expresses its autonomous judgment in the name of the struggle for socialism. In this spirit it says, "No, we don't want this terrorism." The terrorists compromise this struggle, a struggle which nevertheless is their own as well. Their methods are not those of liberation, nor are they even those of survival in a society which is mobilized to repress the Left.

THOUGHTS ON JUDAISM, ISRAEL, ETC. . . .[5]

1. Could you describe your Jewish background?

We were a typically assimilated middle-class German Jewish family, meaning that we went to synagogue on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, and I believe my father even fasted. We didn't keep dietary cuisine. My father was a member of B'nai Brith, like all good German Jews. My grandparents had a *Seder abend* (a Passover dinner), but they were all assimilated.

2. How do you define yourself as a Jew?

That's one question I haven't been able to answer. I don't go around defining myself. I am Jewish by tradition and culture, but if culture includes dietary laws and the Bible as holy writ, then I can't be classified in that way.

I've always defined myself as a Jew when Jews were unjustly attacked. In Germany, being Jewish in the face of overt anti-Semitism was being on the left, instead of on the right. Roots of leftism in Judaism come from historical oppression.

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5 "Thoughts on Judaism, Israel, etc. . . ." was published in a University of California San Diego Jewish student publication *L'Chayim* (Winter 1977) and contains reflections on Marcuse's Jewish tradition, Israel, and Middle Eastern politics, in an interview conducted on March 10, 1977.

3. Are the roots of Jewish leftism founded on tradition and teachings?

I don't think leftism for Jews came out of Talmud and Torah; perhaps the indictment of injustice and inequality is derived from the prophets, and was motivated by sympathy for the oppressed. Jewish leftism is derived from sensitivity for oppression and the will and effort to do something about it. All this comes from social experiences, not religious ethics. But we can't say the majority of Jews in Germany were on the left, that just wasn't true.

4. Are you a Zionist? Why or Why not?

In as much as Zionism is defined on religious grounds, I do not share it, nor do I believe that the Bible is a divine document. But for ethical and human reasons, I support the establishment of a Jewish state, capable of preventing the repetition of a holocaust.

5. Then why isn't the United States, for example, capable of serving as a Jewish homeland? There is freedom here.

Israel cannot count on a foreign power. The United States didn't do a goddamn thing under Roosevelt about the persecution of the Jews before and during World War II. We have seen in Germany that in a real crisis situation, the ruling class would not hesitate to sacrifice its Jewish minority. There is a continued effective anti-Semitism that could explode at any time in a neo-fascist regime. There is something to the scapegoat notion. The Jews have been used as scapegoats.

[Marcuse stated that when capitalism exists, the potential for fascism is always there. Nazism and Italian Fascism were forms of capitalism, he said.]

6. Is Zionism the solution to the Jewish Problem?

For me, the solution to the Jewish Problem is a Jewish state which can defend itself, and which would have a very good chance of preventing the repetition of the holocaust. Today, Israel does not meet these conditions because of the Arab–Israeli conflict. Time is not on the side of the Jews, but of the Arabs. To the powers that be, oil is more important than humanitarian concerns.

7. Are Zionism and socialism compatible?

A Jewish state which engages in socialist policies is certainly imaginable. I can easily imagine a socialist Israel, but it certainly wouldn't deliver arms to South Africa.

8. Is Zionism racism?

If Zionism is defined within the framework of the notion of the Chosen People, then Zionism is racist. Any people who claims to have God on its side is racist, and that includes all religions. The human has to develop his own morality, and a morality which does not set one individual against another. This is purely a secular task, and no God can help you with this task. If Zionism is transformed into a secular movement, then it is not racist.

9. What were your reactions to the United Nations resolution which equated Zionism with racism?

I do not agree with every U.N. vote. Simply because the U.N. votes on an issue doesn't make it necessarily correct.

10. Should the Jews as a group continue in the future?

Political conflicts and differences can override the common Jewish background, as has been the case historically. In the Jewish group, there are extremes both on the left and the right. There are such things as proto-fascist Jews with whom I would not associate. I think the Jews have a right to continue, as do other groups.

11. How do you view the Jewish question?

My nationality is not Jewish, but U.S. If I lived in Israel, I'd be Jewish, or Israeli, or whatever you want to call it. You can't say Jews are a nation unless they all live in Israel. Jews are bound by the historical tradition (and the ghetto played an important part in this) which made for community and tradition.

12. What is the solution to the Arab–Israeli conflict?

Prerequisite to anything must be the idea of the continuation of an Israeli state. A settlement must be based on the recognition of Israel as a sovereign state and on consideration of the conditions under which it was founded.

The first prerequisite for a solution is a peace treaty with the Arabs, which would include the recognition of the state of Israel and free access to the Suez Canal and the Straits, and a settlement of the refugee problem.

One solution to the refugee problem which suggests itself from discussions with Jewish and Arab personalities is the resettlement in Israel of those Palestinians who were displaced and wish to return. This solution is officially rejected with the argument (correct in itself) that such return would quickly transform the Jewish majority into a minority and thereby defeat the very purpose of the Jewish state. But I believe that it is precisely the policy aiming at a permanent majority which is self-defeating. The Jewish population is bound to remain a minority within the vast area of Arab nations from

which it cannot indefinitely segregate itself without returning to the ghetto conditions on a higher level. To be sure, Israel would be able to sustain a Jewish majority by means of an aggressive immigration policy, which in turn would constantly strengthen Arab nationalism. Israel cannot exist as a progressive state if it continues to see in its neighbors The Enemy, the *Erbfeind*. And lasting protection for the Jewish people cannot be found in the creation of a self-enclosed, isolated, fear-stricken majority, but only in the coexistence of Jews and Arabs as citizens with equal rights and liberties. Such coexistence can only be the result of a long process of trial and error.

The status of Jerusalem may well turn out to be the hardest impediment to a peace treaty. Deeply rooted religious sentiment, constantly played upon by the leaders, makes Jerusalem as the capital of a Jewish state unacceptable to the Arab (and Christians?). A unified city (both parts) under an international administration and protection seems to offer an alternative.

The national aspirations of the Palestinian people could be met by the establishment of a national Palestinian state alongside Israel. Whether this state would be an independent entity, or federated with Israel or with Jordan, would be left to the self-determination of the Palestinian people, in a referendum under supervision by the United Nations.

The optimal solution would be the coexistence of Israelis and Palestinians. Jews and Arabs as equal members in a socialist federation of Middle Eastern states. This is still a utopian prospect.

As long as the Palestinians feel that the destruction of Israel is a necessity, then there is no basis for any negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. Furthermore, nothing will come out of the Geneva conference as long as the super-powers are not in agreement.

13. Do you feel anti-Semitism is a real concern for Jews around the world, and especially for Jews in the United States?

Anti-Semitism is rampant in all states, and still exists in all states. Anti-Semitism may assume far more aggressive forms. This is a cause for concern, but not as long as things are running smoothly. If this situation changes drastically, anti-Semitism will be a far greater cause for concern.

XIV

THE FAILURE OF THE NEW LEFT?[1]

Before discussing the reasons for the failure of the New Left, we must address two questions: first, who and what this New Left is, and second, whether it has in fact failed.

To begin, some comments on the first question. The New Left consists of political groups that are situated to the left of the traditional communist parties; they do not yet possess any new organizational forms, are without a mass base and are isolated from the working class, especially in the United States. The strong libertarian, anti-authoritarian movements that originally defined the New Left have vanished in the meantime or yielded to a new "group-authoritarianism." Nevertheless, that which distinguishes and essentially characterizes this movement is the fact that it has redefined the concept of revolution, bringing to it those new possibilities for freedom and new potentials for socialist development that were created (and immediately arrested) by advanced capitalism. As a result of these developments, new dimensions of social change have emerged. Change is no longer defined simply as economic and political upheaval, as the establishment of a different mode of production and new institutions, but also and above all as a revolution in the prevailing structure of needs and the possibilities for their fulfillment.

This concept of revolution was part of the Marxian theory from the outset: socialism is a qualitatively different society, one in which people's relationships to one another as well as the relationship between human beings and nature are fundamentally transformed. Pressured by the economic power of capitalism, however, and forced into coexistence, the socialist countries seem to have been damned over time to an almost exclusive

1 "The Failure of the New Left?" provides an expanded version of a 1975 lecture at the University of California, Irvine. It was published in German in 1975 in *Zeit-Messungen* and in *New German Critique*, 18 (Fall 1979) pp. 3–11, in a translation by Biddy Martin.

emphasis on developing the means of production, on expanding the productive sector of the economy. This priority has necessarily perpetuated *the individual's subjugation to the exigencies of his/her work* (a subjugation that, under certain circumstances, can be "democratic" and can mean a more rational and more efficient form of production, as well as a more equitable distribution of goods).

The premise that a surplus of material goods is the precondition for socialism means postponing the revolutionary transformation of society until doomsday *or* harboring the undialectical hope that a new quality of social life and interaction will evolve as a by-product of the quantitative growth in the economy. The emergence of the New Left in the 1960s challenged quite vigorously this concept of socialism and the strategies it involved. A gradual shift in the focal point of the revolt grew out of the experience of contradiction between the overwhelming productivity of monopoly capitalism on the one hand and the powerlessness of the large socialist and communist apparatus to transform it into the productivity of revolution on the other.

The movement mobilized and organized forces that the traditions of Marxist theory and praxis had ignored for the most part up until then. It represented an attempt to totalize opposition – in counter-offensive against the totalization of repression and exploitation in monopoly capitalism. As the manipulation of needs by the capitalist power apparatus became more evident and far-reaching, revolutionizing those needs in the individuals who reproduce the status quo appeared increasingly vital: rebellion and change in human existence both in the sphere of production and in the reproductive sphere, in the infrastructure and the "superstructure." The movement took the form, then, of a cultural revolution from the very beginning; it conceived of the revolution of the twentieth century as one in which not only political and economic demands, but also radically other desires and hopes would be articulated: the desire for a new moral sense, for a more human environment, for a complete "emancipation of the senses" (Marx), in other words, a liberation of the senses from the compulsion to perceive people and things merely as objects of exchange. "Power to the imagination!" The New Left was concerned with the emancipation of imagination from the restraints of instrumental reason. In opposition to the alliance between realism and conformity, the forces of the New Left created the slogan: "Be realistic, demand the impossible." This is where the strong aesthetic component of the movement originated: art was seen as a productive emancipatory force, as the experience of another (and ordinarily repressed) reality.

Was all of that the expression of romanticism, or indeed elitism? Not at all. The New Left was simply ahead of the objective conditions, in so far as it articulated goals and substantive challenges that advanced capitalism had made possible but had channeled or suppressed up until then. This insight and concept were illustrated in strategy as well: there is an inner connection between the struggle of the New Left against outmoded forms of opposition

and the oppositional tendencies of class struggle that gained ground within the working class itself: autonomy versus authoritarian-bureaucratic organization. Since the 1960s, the occupation of factories as well as concepts of self-determination in production and distribution have become meaningful once again.

Now we come to the second point concerning whether the New Left has really failed. This question has to be answered on several different levels. In part, the movement was co-opted or openly suppressed by the establishment; in part it destroyed itself by failing to develop any adequate organizational forms and by allowing internal splits to grow and spread, a phenomenon that was linked to anti-intellectualism, to a politically powerless anarchism and a narcissistic arrogance.

The suppression of the movement by the existing power structures took many forms. It was violent, but also, so to speak, "normal": infallible, scientific mechanisms of control, "black lists," discrimination at the workplace, an army of spies and informers – all of these things were set up and mobilized as instruments of repression, and their effectiveness was enhanced by the Left's continued isolation from the rest of the populace. This isolation has its roots in the social structure of advanced monopoly capitalism, a structure that has long since integrated large portions of the working class into the system. Of course, the domination of politically anti-revolutionary unions and reformist workers' parties presents an additional problem. Such tendencies and problems reflect the relative stability of capitalism with its foundations in neo-colonialism and neo-imperialism and its overwhelming concentration of economic and political power.

Because of the enormous conglomeration of power that is the capitalist totality, revolts against the system were necessarily taken up and carried out by minority groups that exist outside or on the margins of the material production process. In this context, one can indeed speak of "privileged" groups, of an "elite" or perhaps of an "avant-garde." On the other hand, it was precisely these privileges – the distance from or the lack of integration into the production process – that hastened the development of a radical political consciousness, that transformed the experience of alienation into a rebellion against the obsolescence of the existing material and intellectual culture.

Of course, it is for this very reason that the revolt did not completely succeed; the countercultures created by the New Left destroyed themselves when they forfeited their political impetus in favor of withdrawal into a kind of private liberation (drug culture, the turn to guru-cults and other pseudo-religious sects), of an abstract anti-authoritarianism and a contempt for theory as a directive for praxis, of the ritualization and fetishizing of Marxism. A premature disillusionment and resignation was expressed in all such forms of withdrawal.

The New Left's insistence on the subversion of experience and individual consciousness, on a radical revolution of the system of needs and

gratifications, in short, the persistent demand for a new subjectivity lends psychology a decisive political significance. The manipulative social controls that have now mobilized even the unconscious for the maintenance of the status quo make psychoanalysis an object of extreme interest once again. Only the liberation of repressed and sublimated impulses can shatter the established system of desires and needs in the individual and create a place for the desire for freedom. Of course, the mere recognition and validation of these impulses cannot fulfill this function; the process of release must lead to criticism, to self-criticism of needs in reaction to socially manipulated and internalized desires; such internalized desires and needs continue to act as barriers to liberation, for their gratification guarantees the repressive reproduction of the commodity world. It is the critical analysis of needs that constitutes the specifically social dimension of psychology.

Certainly, the psyche also has a super- or, to be more precise, a sub-social dimension of instinctive needs that are common to all social formations: the dimension of primary sexuality and destruction. The conflicts that have their roots in this sphere would exist even in a free society: jealousy, unhappy love, and violence cannot simply be blamed on bourgeois society; they express the contradiction inherent in the libido between ubiquity and exclusiveness, between fulfillment in variation or change and fulfillment in constancy. However, even in this dimension the manifestations of instincts and the forms that their gratification take are largely societally determined. Even here, the general manifests and works itself out in the particular; of course, here, the universal is not the social or the societal in individuals, but rather the primary structuring of instincts in socially determined human beings.

Beyond this primary dimension is the realm of psychic (and physical) conflicts and disturbances that are of a specifically social nature, determined in their particular manifestations and substance by the social system and its mechanisms of repression and de-sublimation. Certainly, the difficulties between the sexes, between generations and in self-definition (identity crises), all difficulties that are very much in discussion at the moment, belong to this category – phenomena that are often too quickly classified as individual alienation. In this psychic realm, society and its Reality Principle constitute the commonality and are that which is central in the particular conflicts and disturbances that emerge; therapy, then, becomes a matter of political psychology: the politicization of consciousness and of the unconscious, and the counterpoliticization of the superego are political tasks.

The close structural relationship between these two realms lends itself to the interpretation of important political problems as private problems of the psyche. The result is the transference of the political into the private sphere and the sphere of its representatives and analysts. (The unorthodox use of the concept "transference" is legitimate in the sense that the satisfaction of repressed impulses follows from such a transfer: the repression or transformation of the radical political impulses of the counterculture after

their supposed failure, for example: in this transformation they take on the character of infantile desires.)

The insight that "Depth Psychology" is decisive in the concept of advanced monopoly capitalism has been very important for the New Left. The New Left understands the nature of integration in this society as a mechanism that depends primarily on the internalization of social controls by individuals, who then learn to reproduce the existing system and their own domination. Social reproduction, in other words, is guaranteed in large part through the systematic manipulation of libidinal needs and gratifications: through the commercialization of sexuality (repressive de-sublimation) and the unleashing of primary aggression, not only in imperialist wars (the My Lai massacre, etc.), but also in the intensified criminality and brutality of everyday life. As political therapy and education, then, nonconformist psychology serves the politicized psyche. The privatization and the conformist business of psychology are increasingly confronted with attempts at a radical therapy: the articulation of social repression is still active on the deeper levels of individual existence.

Back to the New Left. In spite of everything, I think it is wrong to speak of its "failure." As I have tried to show, the movement is rooted in the structure of advanced capitalism itself; it can retreat in order to form itself anew; it can, however, also become the victim of a neo-fascist wave of repression.

For all that, there are indications that the "message" of the New Left has spread and been heard beyond its own spheres. There are, of course, reasons for that. The stability of capitalism has been upset, and indeed on an international scale; the system exposes more and more of its inherent destructiveness and irrationality. It is from this point that protest grows and spreads, even if it is largely unorganized, diffuse, unconnected and still without any evident socialist aims at first. Among workers, the protest expresses itself in the form of wildcat strikes, absenteeism and in undercover sabotage, or appears in flare-ups against the union leadership; it appears as well in the struggles of oppressed social minorities and finally, in the women's liberation movement. It is obvious that there is a general disintegration of worker morale, a mistrust of the basic values of capitalist society and its hypocritical morality; the overall breakdown of confidence in the priorities and hierarchies set by capitalism is apparent.

There is a very plausible explanation for the fact that the deeply rooted social dissatisfaction that I have tried to indicate remains, in spite of everything, unarticulated, unorganized, and limited to small groups. Unfortunately, the great mass of the population equates every socialist alternative either with Soviet Communism or with a vague utopianism. Obviously there as a widespread fear of a possible change in society so radical that it could fundamentally transform traditional ways of life, could undermine the puritanical morality that is now hundreds of years old and end the alienation in our lives. These are conditions that have long been accepted or

forced on people; we have been taught that lifelong drudgery and oppression are unchangeable, that they are, in fact, nothing short of religious law. Subjugation to a constantly expanding production machine has been seen as the precondition for progress.

It is possible that this oppression was really necessary for a time in order to win the struggle against economic lack, to hasten the mobilization of the workforce and the domination of nature; in fact, technical progress led to an enormous upswing in the development of the means of production and to constantly growing accumulation of societal wealth. On the other hand, however, these achievements were used in increasingly brutal ways to perpetuate shortages, to maintain oppression, to rape nature and to manipulate human needs – all of this with the single goal of perpetuating the prevailing mode of production and the existing social hierarchy or expanding their basis.

Certainly today it is abundantly clear that the triumphs of capitalism cannot continue within this repressive framework: the system can now develop only if it destroys the means of production, even human life itself, on an international scale. It is true that capitalism has elevated its own negation to a principle. Against this backdrop, the historical significance of the New Left becomes much clearer. The 1960s mark a turning-point in the development of capitalism (possibly in that of socialism as well); and it was the New Left that put an all-encompassing, if forgotten and suppressed dimension of radical social change on the agenda; it was the New Left that inscribed on their banners – even if in a chaotic and somewhat immature form – the idea of a revolution in the twentieth century that would be specific to its time and distinct from all preceding revolutions. This revolution would be appropriate to the conditions created by late capitalism. Its bearers would be an expanded working class with a changed social existence and different consciousness, an expanded working class that would include large segments of the once independent middle classes and intelligentsia. This revolution would find its impetus and origins not so much in economic misery, but in revolt against imposed needs and pleasures, revolt against the misery and the insanity of the affluent society. Certainty, late capitalist society also reproduces economic pauperization and the crudest forms of exploitation, and yet, it is clear that the forces of radical change in highly developed capitalist countries are not recruited primarily from the "proletariat," and that their demands are oriented toward qualitatively different ways of life and qualitatively different needs.

The New Left *totalized* the rebellion against the existing order in its demands and its struggle; it changed the consciousness of broad sectors of the population: it showed that life without meaningless and unproductive work is a possibility, life without fear, without the puritanical "work ethic" (that has, for a very long time, not been a work ethic at all, but simply an ethic of oppression), life without rewarded brutality and hypocrisy, life finally devoid of the artificial beauty and actual ugliness of the capitalist

system. In other words, the New Left has made that which has long been abstract knowledge concrete with its assertion that "changing the world" does not mean replacing one system of domination with another, but rather a leap to a qualitatively new level of civilization where human beings can develop their own needs and potential in solidarity with one another.

How, then, should the New Left prepare itself for such a radical transformation? (Given the limitations of space, I cannot really take up the problem of organization here, but will necessarily limit myself to a few tentative and general remarks.)

First of all, we have to be very clear about the fact that we live in an epoch of preventive counterrevolution. Capitalism is prepared both for civil and imperialist war. Because of capitalism's global machinery of control, the New Left – isolated from the conservative mass of the population – is left for now with the minimal strategy of the united front: the cooperation of students, militant workers and left-liberal (even unpolitical) persons and groups. Such a united front is faced with the task of organizing protests against certain especially brutal acts of aggression and suppression by the regime. In general, the prevailing integration seems to preclude the formation of radical mass-parties, at least for the time being; the primary emphasis of radical organization would be, then, on local and regional bases (in the factories, offices, universities, apartment complexes); the task would include articulating the protest and mobilizing for concrete actions. Radical organization would not be concerned with organizing actions for the transition to socialism; nothing has hurt the Marxist groups in the New Left more than their language of reified and ritualized propaganda that assumes the existence of precisely that revolutionary consciousness it should be developing itself. The transition to socialism is not now on the agenda; the counterrevolution is dominant. Under these circumstances, a struggle against the worst tendencies becomes the focal point. Capitalism exposes itself daily in deeds and facts that could serve the ends of organized protest and political education: the preparation of new wars and interventions, political assassinations and attempted assassinations, brutal violations of civil rights, racism, intensified exploitation of the workforce. The struggle will ordinarily emerge first in bourgeois-democratic forms (the election and support of liberal politicians, the distribution of suppressed information, the protest against environmental pollution, boycotts, etc.). Demands and actions that have been legitimately condemned in other situations as reformist, economistic, bourgeois-liberal politics can have a positive importance right now: late capitalism boasts a diminished tolerance threshold.

The expansion of the potential forces of revolution corresponds to the totalization of the revolutionary potential itself. I have indicated that, in its heroic phase, the New Left was permeated with the conviction that the revolution of the twentieth century would advance into dimensions that leave behind all that we know of earlier revolutions. On the one hand, it will mobilize "marginal groups" and social sectors that have not been politicized

up until now; on the other hand, this revolution will be more than an economic and political revolution; it will be above all cultural. The vital need to revolutionize those values that have characterized class society are articulated in this new type of revolution.

In this context, the women's liberation movement could become the "third force" of the revolution. It is clear, of course, that women do not constitute a separate "class"; they belong to all social sectors and classes, and the opposition of the sexes is biologically rather than class based; at the same time, of course, this opposition unfolds within a sociohistorical context.

The history of civilization is the history of male domination, of patriarchy. Women's development has been determined and limited not only by the demands of the slave-owners, the feudal and bourgeois societies, but also and equally so by specifically male needs. It is clear that the male–female dichotomy grew into the opposition masculine–feminine. At the same time that women were being integrated on an ever-expanding scale into the process of material production as objects of exploitation and representatives of abstract work (unequal equality of exploitation), they were still expected to embody all those qualities of pacification, humanness, and a self-sacrifice that cannot develop in the capitalist work world without undermining its repressive basis, specifically the functioning of human relationships according to the laws of commodity production. For that reason, the domains and the particular "aura" of the feminine had to be strictly separated from the production sphere: "femininity" became a quality that was validated only within the four walls of the private dwelling and in the sexual sphere. Naturally, even this privatized sector remained part of the structure of male domination. This division and allocation of human resources was ultimately completely institutionalized and reproduced itself from generation to generation. Of course, these antagonistic social conditions then took on the appearance of a "natural" opposition: the opposition between innate qualities as the basis for a supposedly natural hierarchy, the domination of the masculine over the feminine.

We are at a moment in history when the aggressiveness and brutality of male-dominated society has reached a destructive high point, which cannot be offset through the development of the means of production and the rational domination of nature. The revolt of women against the roles forced upon them necessarily takes the form of a negation in the context of the existing society: it is the struggle against male domination waged on all levels of material and intellectual culture.

The negation is, of course, still abstract and incomplete at this point; it is a first and indeed essential step toward liberation; it is in no way liberation itself. Were the emancipatory impulse to remain on this level, the radical potential of this movement for the building of an alternative socialist society would be suppressed – in the end, the movement would have achieved nothing more than equality of domination.

The system itself would change only when women's opposition to patriarchy became effective on the basis of society: in the organization of the production process, in the nature of work and in the transformation of needs. The orientation of production toward receptivity, toward the enjoyment of the fruits of laboring, toward an emancipation of the senses, toward pacification of society and nature would remove the foundation of masculine aggression in its most repressive and most profitable, productive form, namely in the reproduction of capitalism. What has been considered the *feminine* antithesis to masculine qualities in patriarchy, in reality a repressed social, historical alternative, would be the socialist alternative: the end to destructive and self-accelerating productivity, in order to create those conditions under which people are able to enjoy their sensuality and their intellect, and trust their emotions.

Would that be a "feminine socialism"? I think the expression is misleading. Ultimately, a social revolution that does away with male domination would end the allocation of specifically feminine characteristics to the woman as woman, would bring these qualities into all sectors of society, and develop them in work as well as in free time spheres. In that case, the emancipation of women would also be the emancipation of men – certainly a necessity for both.

In this stage of capitalism, the increasingly frenetic spiral of progress and destruction, domination and subjugation can only be brought to a halt if the radical Left succeeds in keeping these new dimensions of social change open, in articulating and mobilizing the very vital need for a qualitatively different way of life. We can discern the beginnings of a strategy and organization that reflect these necessities – the beginnings of a language adequate to these tasks, one that attempts to free itself from reification and ritualization. The New Left has not failed; failure characterizes those hangers-on who have fled from politics.

The New Left runs the risk – as does the Left generally – of being victimized by the reactionary-aggressive tendencies of late capitalism. These tendencies grow more severe as crisis spreads and forces the system to seek a way out through war and the suppression of opposition. The necessity of socialism is confronted with that of fascism once again. The classical alternative "socialism or barbarism" is more urgent today than ever before.

AFTERWORD

Marcuse as Activist
Reminiscences on his Theory and Practice[1]

George Katsiaficas

Herbert Marcuse was not a famous man nor was his writing well known until late in his life. When it became his fate to be blessed (or cursed) with public attention, fame quickly turned into notoriety, and he became more well known than many people might now recall. In 1968, students and young radicals the world over read and discussed the three M's: Marx, Mao and Marcuse. Wherever he went, he was attacked by both the Left and the Right – at least in terms of the Communist Left. In Germany, he was blamed for the wave of guerrilla attacks which has only recently subsided. In the United States, then-Governor Ronald Reagan denounced him for complicity in campus violence, and after a concerted campaign against him, one replete

1 The afterword by George Katsiaficas, then titled "Marcuse's Cognitive Interest: A Personal View," was published in *New Political Science*, 36–37 (Summer–Fall 1996) pp. 159–70. Katsiaficas's richly textured study provides an excellent memoir of Marcuse as a teacher and community political activist and a probing summary of his importance for radical politics. George Katsiaficas teaches at Wentworth Institute of Technology in Boston and is author of *The Imagination of the New Left: A Global Analysis of 1968* (Boston, Mass: South End Press, 1987) and *The Subversion of Politics: European Autonomous Social Movements and the Decolonization of Everyday Life* (Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press, 1997).

with pounds of hate mail, death threats, vilification in the media, and an offer by the American Legion to buy his contract from the university, he was retired unceremoniously and denied the opportunity to continue teaching courses. In his own words, he was "lucky to still have a mailbox" at the University of California, San Diego.

On at least three continents, he was taken to task for subversion of the young – the same charge leveled against Socrates. He was denounced by Pope Paul VI for "theory that opens the way to license cloaked as liberty, and the aberration of instinct called liberation." He was attacked perhaps most vehemently by Soviet Marxists, who considered him a representative of the "reactionary petty bourgeoisie." The British Left's interpretation of Marcuse's life is very similar to the Soviet analysis, at least in Perry Anderson's opinion. Anderson mistakenly characterized Marcuse as living a bourgeois lifestyle in La Jolla, far removed from the exigencies of struggle and the poverty of the lower class.

A lesser man would have been seduced (or broken) by his worldwide notoriety, yet through it all, Marcuse's inner sense of self prevailed. His confidence in his convictions remained unswerving, and although he was denied scheduled classes, he participated in a series of activist study groups, accepted as many of the constant speaking invitations as his time allowed, and, to my good fortune, worked individually (in my case on a regular basis) with selected students who sought him out. Behind closed doors, he was an active participant on campus and in community groups. Not only was he a public spokesperson for us, twice drawing over a thousand people at Socialist Forum lectures, conducting a seminar of sorts with 35 community activists on the need for utopian vision at the Left Bank (an alternative bookstore/craft center), hosting a fundraiser with Fred Jameson there, and debating Kate Millet at Stanford, he also involved himself in our struggles and dilemmas – or perhaps I should say that he let us drag him into some of our less than refreshing personal acrimony, recriminations, and crises. He did live in La Jolla near U.C.S.D., so near that he could walk to work, a necessity because he rarely – if ever – drove a car at that point in his life. He never told me why, but I heard that the entire Frankfurt School nearly perished in an automobile accident when a bee flew into a car full of them while Adorno was driving.

Despite extensive tributes to (and critiques of) Herbert Marcuse, there has been little written concerning the relevance of his work for future social movements, nor has his activist involvement been widely understood. What I seek to do in the following pages is provide an image of Marcuse based upon seven years of friendship and political collaboration, experiences which refute some assessments of him and provide insight into the character and interest of his theoretical work.

For many of us, Herbert was more than a respected philosopher or well-known academic. He was someone whose experiences and insights provided a living link with the practice of twentieth-century revolutionary movements

and the theory of radical critique which has developed since the beginning of history. For his friends, he affirmed that nexus between biography and history which C. Wright Mills dubbed "the sociological imagination." Reacting calmly and with humor in my own moments of dire personal crisis, Herbert was able to situate my concrete dilemmas in a larger historical-psychological context, thereby helping me transcend the painful insecurity of self-doubt by affirming the necessity of living "the examined life." More than once, an evening of Scotch and home cooking during which I vented my frustrations at the absurdities of academic life kept me from dropping out of graduate school.

What I recall most vividly from these early days of our friendship was Herbert's quiet insistence on the necessity of theory and the omnipresent nature of modern anti-intellectualism. When we first met, I was driving a cab at night and active in the antiwar movement and counterinstitutions in Ocean Beach, one of the last havens of the radical counterculture. To my present embarrassment, although I had heard of him, I had read none of his books nor heard him speak publicly. I was surprised at his immediate delight when I invited him to visit me at Red House, a well-known political commune and police/F.B.I. target.

We immediately developed an affinity for each other – from my side because I liked his sardonic wit, his amusement at the uncomfortable personal acrimony which accompanies political activism in the United States, but most importantly because he was able to formulate radical statements in the most unlikely situations. We once found ourselves arguing the merits of monogamy and the appropriateness of his wearing a tie to work (a practice he later all but abandoned) when Herbert quietly announced that the more straight one's attire, the more possible it was to speak one's nonconformist political viewpoints – a hypothesis I have since tested many times and found to be true. On another occasion, I found myself asserting the need to preserve our ancient cultural heritages, particularly our philosophical tradition but also ethnic customs and identities, until Herbert put an end to my prattle with a wave of his hand: "Human beings are capable of creating cultures far superior to those based on Judeo-Christian values. There are enough people working to preserve the past. What about the future?"

A story I like to relate about Marcuse occurred in 1976 when we were demonstrating against C.I.A. involvement at the University of California. I enrolled there in 1974 to work more closely with Herbert. With the help of friendly secretaries, activists had uncovered several C.I.A. projects: dolphins in Point Loma at an institute affiliated with U.C.S.D. were being trained to attack underwater divers and blow up ships below the water line; a weather modification project was being studied that was supposed to seed clouds over Cuba during the harvest season, thereby destroying the ripe sugarcane; an economics professor had set up a private research institute using C.I.A. money in Sorrento Valley behind the university. For months, we met, held teach-ins and published proof of the C.I.A.'s presence on campus. A wide

debate ensued, and in response to a proposal by Herbert, the faculty voted to condemn C.I.A. involvement. Nonetheless, the administration remained impassive, choosing to ignore the many voices of protest as though we were less than worthy of response. In complete disregard of our existence, several administrators traveled to Langley to attend a C.I.A. conference on affirmative action, and they scheduled David Saxon, president of the eight-campus U.C. system, to speak at a public forum on the same topic at U.C.S.D.

As we debated what course of action to take – the militants argued for tomatoes, while the moderates favored a silent vigil – I consulted Herbert, and together we discussed plans for a militant but non-violent protest. A wide array of campus groups – Chicanos, black students and the anti-C.I.A. coalition – drew together to confront Saxon. Marcuse was looking forward to the demonstration and we agreed to meet there. I remember distinctly that as David Saxon was being introduced, Herbert came over to my side. As Saxon went on about the role of the university in society, we began a chant picked up by the hundreds of assembled students: "Bull-Shit! Bull-Shit!" Saxon ended up not finishing his prepared speech, and as he tried to he walk off, he was surrounded and followed by the throng who pressed him on the C.I.A.'s presence at the university. The campus police moved in, shoving some of us aside. We shoved back, without anyone being arrested. We had not really planned any of this, but we all felt very positive about the determination of so many to press the issue. As we did plan, our actions at U.C.S.D., one of the campuses at the largest university in the world when it is considered as one entity including U.C.L.A., Santa Barbara, Berkeley, etc., were widely covered, making the front page of *Excelsior* in Mexico and many dailies in the United States. Anti-C.I.A. protests soon occurred all over the country.

Our next step was to call a conference in San Diego for public discussion of the direction the movement would take. Although Herbert assented to being one of our main presenters, he didn't want it to be announced that he was going to speak to activists who were coming because, as he pointed out, many other people would come just to hear him speak. For several hours, he was the center of the conference. In his talk, he affirmed the importance of what students were doing, of trying to organize in the universities. It should be remembered that at this point in time the movement (not only on the West coast) was dominated by sectarian workerists who insisted that students were 'petty bourgeois" and of no political importance. Some of the existing Marxist-Leninist groups were actually opposed to our protests on the campuses – saying that we diverted attention from the "real" issues – and one wrote and circulated a booklet exposing us as agents of the C.I.A. because we had invited Marcuse, a well-known "counter-revolutionary agent-guru" who had worked for the O.S.S. (which later became the C.I.A.).[2]

2 During World War II, Marcuse did work for the Office of Strategic Services, the

I remember being offended and angered when I found a copy of this booklet one morning on the Red House steps. I showed it to Herbert, and he seemed to enjoy listening to me read it aloud, amused by the absurdity of its language and content. When he came to my initials and his name in the text, he laughed aloud. "Oh! How these people love us!" At that moment, I couldn't quite understand the ease with which he handled insult, but in looking back, I can now appreciate a skill all of us in the movement have had to cultivate.

It would be wrong to infer that Herbert was always able to handle attacks on him without feeling hurt. It depressed him when he was painted as someone who was against democracy, who thought there should be less democracy, as when his essay on repressive tolerance was misconstrued. He seemed taken aback when his book on aesthetics was given abominable reviews in major German newspapers. And he never forgot the rude reception given him by Maoists in Berlin in 1968. Somehow, however, when he was attacked by the Left, he derived some satisfaction from it. Perhaps it had to do with his understanding of who the real enemies of freedom were, with the numerous threats made against his life, threats so real that student groups voluntarily established a sort of watch over him to insure his safety.

Less than a year after it was founded, the Anti-C.I.A. Coalition was dissolved by a majority vote of its members. Internal differences and mistrust had compounded our problems. Around the same time, a coup was accomplished within *Natty Dread*, the campus newspaper which had been the movement's voice (Marcuse never liked the name), and the new editors refused to print any part of an article I wrote (with Herbert's help) summing up the legacy of the year's political struggles. Needless to say, I was crushed. Once again, it was Herbert's insight and wit which helped me get through a difficult time. "What's become of your article?" he asked with a sheepish grin on his face and a copy of the *New Indicator*, as the paper was renamed, in his hand. "That newspaper is the organ of one fraction of the movement," I replied, "if indeed we can still speak of a movement." Disgusted and depressed, I went on: "What's the point of putting all this energy into creating organizations when they don't last?" In one of those rare moments when Herbert answered me directly rather than asking another question, he said quite plainly: "Marx never created a lasting organization. Besides, organizations which last seldom remain revolutionary. Political experience

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forerunner to the C.I.A., eloquent testimony to his understanding of the relation of theory and practice. His job was to analyze Nazi propaganda and to give the American authorities an understanding of what the internal dynamics of the Nazi party might be. As he told me, the group that assembled in that office was one of the finest bunch of intellectuals that he has ever worked with, very dedicated people, and every one of them became a full professor or a writer of note. He also said that most of their research found its way into file cabinets and not into policy-making circles.

and education are cumulative, and with enough time, their quantity produces qualitative leaps."

However struck I was by his logic, I remained unconvinced. "What of us?" I demanded. "Without a unifying organization, how do we help each other move ahead personally and politically?" I reminded him of the animosity one of our most active members faced from her family because, in their eyes, her political involvement had hurt her education and career. I questioned whether or not her political involvement had been a positive force in her life. Neither of us spoke. Finally, Herbert relit his cigar, and as he puffed on it, we let our minds wander. Some questions apparently have no answers, some concerns are not easily put to rest, although I am happy to report twenty years later that the person we discussed is teaching and writing in the field of mass communications at a major university.

As the above experiences testify, Marcuse's life after 1968 was extraordinarily tied to radical politics. Despite his fame, his modesty forbade him from believing the prominence given him by the media. He was exceptionally receptive to visitors, and about once a week, when someone from a distant part of the planet would show up and want to meet with him, he would make time for them. He always disavowed the role of guru or father-figure in our activist circles, and he did his best to subvert our daily routines, questioning our motives and direction while raising theoretical issues designed to create another reality for us. While he was working on his book on aesthetics, we had a small group which engaged some of the issues with which he was involved. I recall now that the majority were Mexican artists – all in the United States illegally. As we read Marquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, Herbert, more than any of us, was able to keep straight the names of the characters. One of his last lectures was in Mexicali, a small border town across the border from Calexico in the eastern part of southern California. One of the members of the aesthetics group accompanied him, serving as translator and companion in a trip few Norteños of any age would have made.

Like many of us, Marcuse was transformed by the global movement of 1968, but his political experience began much earlier. When World War I was ending, he was elected to a soldiers' council in Germany by his fellow enlisted men. He told me of standing with a rifle in Alexander Platz and pondering the fate of the revolution. He noticed that it was increasingly officers who were getting elected to representative positions and came to the conclusion that the revolution had been lost within the councils themselves because the class structure was being replicated.

This was not the first time his prognosis would be correct. He was able to read historical events with an uncanny accuracy. When *Counterrevolution and Revolt* was published in 1972 (which I regard as Marcuse's best political book and which Perry Anderson confirmed to me in 1981 that he had not read even though he had published a major study of Marcuse), many of us were running around with thoughts of radical change, revolution,

international uprising, and declining U.S. military power in our heads. Marcuse contradicted all that, stating clearly that what was occurring was not radical change, but a preventative counterrevolution in response to an already defeated revolt. In our discussions in the late 1970s, he questioned whether it was revolution or fascism which was transpiring in the Third World, and he repeatedly asked who would be militarily mightier than the United States.

Another example of his predictive capacity is contained in *Soviet Marxism* (published in 1958). In 1956, in response to the Twentieth Party Congress of the Soviet Union, uprisings in Poland and Hungary had been suppressed, and there was a great deal of speculation that Khrushchev would have to roll back his program of de-Stalinization and crack down further. Marcuse differed: "The Eastern European events were likely to slow down and perhaps even reverse deStalinization in some fields; particularly in international strategy, a considerable 'hardening' has become apparent. However, if our analysis is correct, the fundamental trend will continue and reassert itself throughout such reversals. With respect to internal Soviet developments, this means at present continuation of 'collective leadership,' decline in the power of the secret police, decentralization, legal reforms, relaxation in censorship, liberalization in cultural life." If one rereads *Soviet Marxism* in light of perestroika and glasnost, it was a powerful analysis of the Soviet Union, one that understood the fundamental direction of Soviet communism. Long before anyone else, Marcuse perceived that the structural conditions of Soviet society, unlike the advanced capitalist ones, indicated that it would not be necessary to use violence to transform it.

As his health deteriorated, we had several discussions about religion and death. At the time, there was something of a revival of Judaism and religion in general among many people who previously had been content with secular utopianism as their metaphysical orientation. Ricky Sherover was active in one of the Jewish groups which met regularly, and we often arranged for Herbert and me to spend that evening together. As Ricky left one night, Herbert challenged me to explain the interest so many of our friends had developed in their religious background. My first response was that anti-Semitism and the insecurity of Israel were probably behind it, but that did not suit him. He asked when Israel had lost a war, and if I could name one incident of anti-Semitism in our circles which came close to any of the cases of racism which were common knowledge. I fell back to a position asserting that whites needed an identity as oppressed rather than oppressors, to which he countered with two other questions: Why had such an identity not been necessary in the 1960s? How could I explain the conversion of Eldridge Cleaver? In his own way, Herbert was helping me realize that the movement's ascendancy (along with that sense of common purpose and solidarity) was long past – a simple fact which I stubbornly resisted (and sometimes still refuse to accept fully).

On more than one occasion, Marcuse said to me that he really did not

care what happened to him after he died. During this period of time, Tito fought death for weeks – was it months? – even while unconscious, and we agreed that way of dying was not one we would choose – if we could help it. I asked him what he thought would become of our movement. He looked me squarely in the eyes. "The revolution will not come in your lifetime," he said, "unless you live to be a very old man like me, which I expect you to do."

Herbert was always after me to have him help me secure a real job – as he referred to a tenure-line academic position (which he liked to remind me were getting harder to find). I resisted his pressure for many reasons, among them that I sensed it would mean I had finished being his student. As I tired of San Diego, I finally gave in to his wishes that I make a move by convincing him that what I really should do was go to Europe for a year, during which time I could think about my future. I applied to go to Madrid for a year, and when notified of my acceptance, I rushed over to his office. "Madrid?" he asked. "What are you going to do *there*? You'll be bored in no time." Somewhat flustered, I asked where he thought I should be going. "Why Germany, of course, to Berlin. There's a lot going on there." I protested that my German was not at the level of my Spanish and that U.C.S.D. had no programs in Germany. Herbert assured me both these issues would easily be taken care of, and then and there, he began to acquaint me with the recent history of German social movements.

It is difficult to understand why in the United States there has been very little interest in his works since his death. The same is not the case in Germany. There a popular movement continued to develop after the mid-1970s and Marcuse is still considered to be important reading. His final German book has never been published in English. To refer to *Time Messages* as a book is not entirely accurate because it is three essays and an interview with Hans Enzensberger. The essays include "Marxism and Feminism,"[3] "Theory and Practice" and "Failure of the New Left?"[4] The interview with Enzensberger deals with the question of revolutionary organization in the United States. While some argue that his books are academic, not political, my understanding is different. In 1978, after I had read all his books, I surmised that his life's project had been to prepare the theory for future revolutionary movements. I called my interpretation to Herbert's attention. He seemed quite pleased. "Yes," he said, "you could say that."

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3 Originally published in the *New Indicator*, "Marxism and Feminism" was reprinted in *City Lights Anthology*, ed. Lawrence Ferlinghetti (San Francisco, Calif.: City Lights Books, 1974).

4 A talk he gave for the Socialist Forum, "Failure of the New Left?" was translated from the German version and printed in *New German Critique*, 18 (Fall 1979) pp. 3–11.

MARCUSE'S THEORY AND PRACTICAL ACTION

Despite his relative obscurity in the United States, Marcuse's theories remain quite relevant, particularly for those concerned with social transformation. Several of the concepts he developed have been extraordinary helpful to me, and I discuss them below to indicate further his orientation to political change, not only in his everyday life but also in his writing. Central to Marcuse's writings throughout his life is the concern that liberation is not abstract (as in Sartre) but depends on sensuous human beings. Rationality has a soul to it, a body that goes along with it. His dialectical thought united mind and body, finding unity in seeming opposites. What seems to be greater individual freedom in modern society may simultaneously be greater enslavement, since it is now the individual who must enslave (or free) him/herself.

Even in moments of revolution, Marcuse argued, our own personalities limit our possibilities, a reality he discussed with me through the concept of psychic Thermidor. (Thermidor was the month of the French revolutionary calendar during which reaction set in.) Psychic Thermidor refers to an internally conditioned reaction which revolutions suffer, a syndrome Marcuse accounted for in the changed material conditions of advanced capitalism: "The economic and political incorporation of the individuals into the hierarchical system of labor is accompanied by an instinctual process in which the human objects of domination reproduce their own repression . . . The revolt against the primal father eliminated an individual person who could be (and was) replaced by other persons; but when the dominion of the father has expanded into the dominion of society, no such replacement seems possible and the guilt becomes fatal."[5]

For Marcuse, the key to unlocking the nascent revolt might not be in the ripening of objective conditions, but in a radical restructuring of our psychology. He tried to locate the kind of psychic structure that would characterize a free society and found it in societies in which the Pleasure Principle is the principle that organizes society, not the Performance Principle. Surplus repression was the concept he developed to explain the mechanism by which the emergence of the Pleasure Principle is internally diminished.

In *Civilization and its Discontents*, Freud made the case that each of us must internalize mechanisms to repress our instinctive desires and needs and that the superego develops methods of repression which allow city life. Marcuse went further, arguing that the superego has become so great a constraint on the ego in mass society (in which the father is replaced by institutions as the domineering force) that this new personality structure imposes far more repression on people (i.e. people impose far more

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5 *Eros and Civilization* (Boston, Mass.: Beacon Press, 1966), p. 91.

repression on themselves) than is actually needed for civilization to exist, for the war of all against all to be avoided.

Marcuse's emphasis on human beings as the center of the universe, not just as the subjects but simultaneously the objects of liberation, led him to ask whether there is a biological basis for freedom. Do human beings have an instinctual need for freedom? His answer was affirmative. For hundreds of years, Western progressive thinking posited the irrational as opposed to freedom. The Enlightenment, the French and American revolutions took as their goals increasing rationality and limiting irrationality – at least to the extent that we generally think of the irrational as meaning something evil and uncontrollable. By locating the movement for freedom in the instinctual structure, Marcuse was able to anticipate the coming of the green movement, long before people began to talk about nature as our ally. When he talked about inner nature as a reservoir of revolutionary impulse, making a point subsequently taken up by the German Greens, he differed from Habermas, who regards the psychic as "inner foreign territory."

Moreover, in response to a feminist study group in which he took part, he extended his discussion to deal with feminism, which he called the movement's most radical potential: feminist socialism. He said that the radical subversion of values can never be the mere by-products of new social institutions. "It must have its roots in the men and women who build the new institutions . . . Socialism, as a qualitatively different way of life would not only use the productive forces for the reduction of alienated labor and labor time, but also for making life an end in itself, for the development of the senses and the intellect, for pacification of aggressiveness, the enjoyment of being, for the emancipation of the senses and of the intellect from the rationality of domination: creative receptivity vs. repressive productivity. In this context, the liberation of women would indeed appear as the antithesis to the Performance Principle, would indeed appear as the revolutionary function of the female in the reconstruction of society."[6]

He had long written on sexuality, developing the concept of repressive desublimation in his synthesis of Marx and Freud in what he thought of as his best book, *Eros and Civilization*. The problem he was trying to understand is this: How can a society in which sexual restrictions are so low still exhibit the characteristics of a sexually repressed society? His answer is that the quantity of sexual activity does not necessarily alter the quality of connections between individuals (sexual or otherwise). This is particularly the case when sexuality has been transformed into a mechanistic act, into a commodity, into part of an entire cultural infrastructure based on the fetishization of commodities. Marcuse argued that the psychic structure of society has remained very similar despite the change in its outward appearance. The Hegelian/Platonic differentiation between essence and

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6 "Marxism and Feminism," op. cit.

appearance is applied here but with a Freudian/Marxist twist, one which understands cooptation as the mechanism assuring the smooth functioning of the social order.

Like repressive desublimation, repressive tolerance requires understanding the difference between essence and appearance, between quality and quantity. Developed out of his understanding of art, particularly how the Dada/Surrealist revolt against modern scientific society was integrated into that society to become a means of entertaining it, repressive tolerance asks: How can a government maintain order and at the same time appear to allow the free expression of opinion? How can there be so little genuine political opposition in the United States when in fact we do appear to have freedom of expression? Marcuse's answer has two dimensions. In the first place, he called attention to the problem that revolution (in his view, a necessity for the realization of freedom) is illegal. If we dispense with the assumption that fundamental change in the social structure can evolve within the normal course of events, then it is important to question the ways in which tolerance – adherence to the rules of normal discourse – makes revolutionary change impossible.[7]

Second, Marcuse asked whether we are free because we think we are free. Is there a level on which our psychic structure and our intellectual assumptions are anesthetized and standardized by the institutions of mass society? As he put it: "the democratic argument implies a necessary condition, namely, that the people must be capable of deliberating and choosing on the basis of knowledge, that they must have access to authentic information, and that, on this basis, their evaluation must be the result of autonomous thought."[8] Just because people are granted the right of freedom of expression does not mean that information and thought are true.[9]

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7 Under a system of constitutionally guaranteed and (generally and without too many and too glaring exceptions) practiced civil rights and liberties, opposition and dissent are tolerated unless they issue in violence and/or exhortation to and organization of violent subversion. The underlining assumption is that the established society is free, and that any improvement, even a change in the social structure and social values, would come about in the course of normal events, prepared, defined, and tested in free and equal discussion, on the open marketplace of ideas and goods.

(Robert Paul Wolff, Barrington Moore, Jr., and Herbert Marcuse, *A Critique of Pure Tolerance* (Boston, Mass.: Beacon Press, 1965), pp. 92–3

8 Ibid., pp. 94–5.

9 The concept of repressive tolerance caused Marcuse immense problems in Germany, particularly since the authorities used it to lump him with guerrillas. Despite their opinions, Marcuse was in no way a believer in such tactics, as I found on many occasions when we discussed this issue at length.

At the same moment, however, he did not believe in extending the right of free speech to Nazis or the Klan, since in his mind the distance between thought and deed was so short. In today's Germany, however, there are many who argue that even fascist demonstrations openly goose-stepping in front of residence houses for

His argument was construed as elitist and antidemocratic, but a different interpretation is also possible, namely that education and truth are vital preconditions for freedom. And who, he never tired of asking, will educate the educators? For many people, it is very difficult to read Marcuse simply because his prose is an obstacle. He wrote small books, yet their ideas are immense – in stark contrast to books today that are huge and contain so much pulp in their content.

The demise of the thinking individual as opposed to the mass-mediated individual able to deal with vast quantities of information is characteristic of our age. Marcuse couldn't deal with information overload. If we were having a conversation, he would ask politely for the music to be turned off. Either we listened to the music or had a conversation, but not both simultaneously. My generation loves to have the music on, with the television turned down, and have something else going on as well. Yet we are unable to read Marcuse. "Debilitating comfort" was Marcuse's poetic way of talking about how consumer society actually is harmful to human beings. The increase in the quantity of material goods is not necessarily linked to an increase in the quality of our lives. If we agree that the concepts with which he concerned himself (the nature of freedom, the character of thought) lie in a domain beyond the satisfaction of "material needs" (the dominant discourse of consumer society), then it would be surprising if his discussion were facilely accessed by people conditioned to buy and consume rather than ponder and transcend.

In preparing this article, I've spent time with Herbert in my dreams and realized how much I miss him – as a friend and as a progressive human being. He had an inner sense of himself in relationship to history that put me at ease. He was somehow at peace as few people are, a very rare quality, particularly in an individual whose intellect was so keen. His passing in 1979 is the passing of an entire generation in which the synthesis of the sacred and profane was possible.

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foreigners should be allowed free expresssion. In Germany, of all places, they argue, every political party, in particular ones like the Republicans that have won seats in elections, must have the right to demonstrate in public. Even when antifascist protestors assemble to prevent neo-Nazis from gathering, many on the left oppose them.

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