

Against the

Current

Spring, 1983
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a socialist quarterly magazine

Israel: a Sub-Imperialism

by Noam Chomsky

Bringing the War Home

Economic Democracy

**Morality
of Abortion**



Y ATC

Today, millions of Americans are homeless, jobless, hungry and uncared for. The "promises" of Reaganomics have faded into a bad nightmare. And the vacuum that Reaganism filled—created by the failure of liberals and social democrats to offer an alternative to the crisis—has reemerged larger than ever.

On the unemployment lines in Detroit, on the street-corners of Harlem, and in the sweatshops and assembly lines across the country, the economic crisis has taken a devastating toll. Never have so many become so cynical about America's future. And yet, despite the magnitude of the crisis, there is little of the fight-back that shook the country in the late sixties and early seventies. Lacking political and organizational alternatives, the movements of the 60's—of workers, Black and Hispanics, women and gays, communities and students—have failed to stem the tide of reaction by organizing, democratizing, radicalizing and linking their movements.

This is the dilemma the left faces today: At a time when capitalism is clearly incapable of solving the economic crisis—which the ruling class all but admits, and the vast majority of workers and poor know all too well—socialist ideas are reaching fewer Americans than in a long time.

This situation has been created, in part, by both the historical and more immediate failures of the left. During the sixties, the left made vigorous interventions; its struggle against the Vietnam war and its contributions to the Black, women's and gay movements. But it didn't find a way to integrate these struggles into a working class movement for socialism. Today we are divided into a hundred competing groups, some separated only by differences which, because of the left's isolation, cannot be tested in practice. No group has an organic, not to mention healthy relationship to the working class. No group possesses a theory rooted in the specific historic experience of the American working class.

This predicament has led many leftists to put their revolutionary politics on the backburner, trying strategies that aim to shortcut Marx's conception of "the self emancipation of the working class." Today, this occurs primarily through the revival of social democracy, with its reliance on Democratic Party politicians and reform trade union officials. Many de-emphasize the need to organize and mobilize the working class rank and file. ATC has already published several critiques of this development.

While grassroots organizing by revolutionaries in workplaces and communities, rests at the heart of, building a socialist current in America, there is also an important role for theory and education. The lack of a healthy revolutionary tradition contributed to divisions that plagued the left in the sixties. These divisions were fueled by simplistic translations of revolutionary models from other countries, which often led to militaristic, elitist and bureaucratic groups. And, as the feminist movement brought to light, the denigration of individual personal development to frenzied activity leads to enormous, and always disastrous, disparities between leaders and followers.

Today, there are some positive developments occurring. The resurgent anti-nuke weapons movement and the growing opposition to U.S. intervention in Central America are especially noteworthy. And within the left, a smattering of regenerative forces favor a process of revolutionary socialist regroupment. Some of these people have their roots in the best of the democratic and self-reliant tradition of the New Left, and the integration of personal and political struggles from the women's movement. Others, inspired by Third World revolutionary ideologies, particularly Maoism, are reassessing these politics in light of the consolidation of bureaucratic rule in China. Many have years of experience organizing in both the community and workplace.

By sponsoring ATC, Workers' Power seeks to establish a forum for developing theory and strategy for this current of socialists. We hope to help re-establish revolutionary Marxism as a clear pole of attraction for the non-sectarian Left and we are committed to using the magazine as a vehicle for regroupment.

To be successful, ATC needs your participation. We need you to read, distribute and, most importantly write for the magazine. If you have questions about writing an article, or need assistance, let us know. The Left has too often been negligent in assisting political activists serious writing and academics to write accessibly.

While ATC is not a "line" journal, as demonstrated by the political diversity of our contributors, we are committed to the following organizational and political principles:

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a socialist quarterly magazine sponsored by Workers Power

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The Editors of ATC invite submission of articles, particularly on:

- U.S. Economy
- Labor Movement
- Social Movements:
 - Women
 - Blacks
 - Anti-War

Manuscripts should be double-spaced, preferably under 5000 words, and submitted in triplicate

The role of American soldiers in defusing the attempt by President Truman to use the army to intimidate Russia in 1946 is one of the great untold stories of WW2. Truman's explosion of the 2nd Atom Bomb at Nagasaki had as its goal to make Russia toe the mark after the end of the war. The bomb was to have been backed up by the continued mobilization of draftees in the armed forces.

To everyone's astonishment, hundreds of thousands of soldiers and sailors demonstrated demanding demobilization. One of the largest of these, a 100,000 strong demo in Manila, was led by a drafted socialist leader of the UAW, Emil Mazey.

In Vietnam, soldiers' rebellion took other forms. Especially after the Tet offensive—the first major National Liberation Front offensive against the U.S. in Vietnam in early 1968—and the assassination of Martin Luther King in April, Black GIs, joined by Latinos and whites, created their own antiwar movement, the basic aim of which was to survive. By the early '70s, heavy drug use, antiwar and Black counter-cultures, AWOLs, desertions, fragging (shooting and blowing up officers), avoidance of combat and outright and sometimes large scale mutiny, and an extensive GI movement around the world had made the American ground forces, militarily unreliable. As David Cortright concluded in his book *Soldiers in Revolt*: "The plague of disaffection and defiance within the ranks. . . left the once-proud American Army helpless—more a liability than an asset to U.S. purposes."



BRINGING THE WAR HOME

by Michael Wunsch*

"What we can all take great comfort in is the fact that this, yet to be defined, group [of antiwar demonstrators, ed.] is so totally out-of-touch with the feelings and attitudes of our young military men and women today that they will not get to first base in generating any interest or participation in their rally from our Great Lakes population . . ." (printed in the base newspaper by Rear Admiral James H. Flatley, Commander of the Great Lakes Naval Training Center).

"Interest in the demonstration was high. Many of us feel isolated and uninformed about what is going on in Central America and elsewhere. Many more of us would have been here if the base commander hadn't made it clear he was against any of us attending." (Quote from sailor who participated in the demonstration).

(Quote from sailor who participated in the demonstration).

Perhaps better than anything else, these quotes reflect the depth of the class polarization which occurred at the Great Lakes Naval Training Center (GLNTC) in the fall of this year. The catalyst for this polarization was the October 23 antiwar demonstration in from the naval base called by the Illinois/S. Wisconsin region of the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES).

WHY THE NAVAL TRAINING CENTER?

We chose the military installation as the site for our demonstration in part out of consideration of the enormous role which the rank and file soldiers have played in blocking U.S. military aggression in the recent past. (See box.)

The GLNTC was also chosen as the particular site for three specific reasons: it is a major training center for the Navy, with 15,000 sailors; it houses the national Selective Service Computer System; and it would give us the chance to strengthen antiwar groups in the North Chicago area at the same time as it allowed us to avoid the risk of our demonstration being seen as just another in a long series of demos which occur in the larger population centers.

We realized, however, that there was an inherent risk to having the demonstration at the GLNTC. The risk was that the 15,000 enlisted personnel might think that the demonstration was aimed against them. At all costs we wanted to avoid giving this impression. From our point of view, one of the biggest mistakes that was made by the Vietnam antiwar movement was the hostile attitude it took to GIs—it weakened the antiwar movement, slowed the spread of antiwar ideas within the military and ultimately played a role in prolonging the war. To avoid making the same mistake again we planned out an approach to the sailors that would explain that we were demonstrating, not against them, but against military policy; that would explain to them what the U.S. was doing in Central America and show them that they had an interest in participating in the antiwar movement.

A week after our first leaflet, we got our first official response—the first in a series of three editorials by Rear Admiral Flatley, commander of the base, appeared in the

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base newspaper. In the midst of an anti-communist tirade the admiral printed, much to our surprise, that "You (the sailors) should not be surprised at being told that you have the same rights as any other citizen and can join this assemblage if you so choose. The only stipulation for military members is that you must be in civilian clothes and may not speak or give comment on behalf of your branch of service. . . . I'll bet Polish Solidarity wishes very much it had the freedom of choice to join them (the demonstrators). God Bless America!" As if that was not enough of a shock, the navy reprinted both sides of one of our promotional leaflets (including a substantial fact sheet on Central America) in its newspaper.

The editorial offered us a big opening. We decided to speed up our timetable a bit and get out a leaflet written for the sailors as soon as possible. To get a better idea of what the sailors were thinking, we first sent a team of representatives to the base to talk to them. We expected to find isolated pockets of antiwar sailors, but what we found instead was absolutely astounding—*fully nine out of ten sailors we talked to were glad that the demonstration was occurring, were concerned about a new war in the Middle East, did not know much about what the U.S. was doing in Central America but wanted to know more, and admitted that the only reason they were in the military was because of a poverty draft!*

Following these discussions we prepared a second leaflet and began distributing it to the sailors in the bars in Chicago, North Chicago and Milwaukee. The results were, again, excellent. Sailors began spreading word of the demonstration on base and were showing an interest in attending. We were even approached by two sailors who wanted to speak at the demonstration.

THEY CHANGE THE LINE

When the officers on the base realized that we were doing active work among the sailors trying to draw them

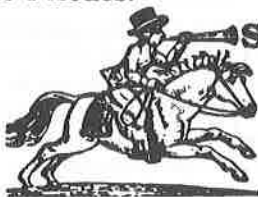
into the demonstration and that we were receiving a good response, their approach to the demonstration changed. Gone was the magnanimous approach that sailors could participate in the demo if they wanted to. The new approach was a mixture of self-deception (see Admiral Flatley's third editorial, quoted at the beginning of this article), pressure on the city to rescind the permit for our demo (we won that one), and intimidation. Repression on the base became severe. The enlisted personnel were told that if they participated they would get extra duty, might lose security clearances and be kept out of training schools, etc. The repression took its toll—by the week prior to the demo, sailors had become afraid to take our leaflets. Yet, in spite of all the confusion and intimidation, a small number of sailors found the courage to attend. (Two of them were subsequently given honorable discharges, which they welcomed.)

The demonstration was, all in all, a success and will do a lot to build the anti-war movement in the Midwest. Just as importantly, it made clear to all the participants in the demonstration that enlisted personnel can be an important component of the antiwar movement and that we should continue to do political work among our brothers and sisters in the military ■

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ISRAEL. THE MAKING OF A SUB-IMPERIALISM

by Noam Chomsky

The Israeli invasion of Lebanon last summer focused the world's attention once again on the Middle East and the special relationship between Israel and the United States. Washington plainly gave the green light for the invasion and, despite an occasional show of displeasure, extended its support throughout the terrible events that followed: the destruction of Palestinian society in southern Lebanon, the indiscriminate bombing of civilian targets, the brutal siege of Beirut, and much else.

Even the mid-September invasion of West Beirut elicited no meaningful protest from the U.S. Government. Conflicts did arise when Menachem Begin rejected President Reagan's peace proposal, and these conflicts intensified—at least at the rhetorical level—in response to the worldwide outrage over the Sabra and Shatila massacres, carried out under the eyes of the Israeli military by Lebanese units sent into the Palestinian camps for what Begin's defense minister, Ariel Sharon, called "mopping up."

At the core of the Reagan proposal is a federation with Jordan of parts of the territories occupied by Israel in 1967. The President would revive, in effect, a plan proposed by Jordan's King Hussein in 1972 and angrily rejected at the time by Golda Meir's Labor government. Reagan also called for a freeze on Israeli settlements in the occupied territories. But as Israeli commentators were swift to point out, that proposal had only limited significance. By now, more than half the land in the occupied territories has been taken over on one pretext or another, and current plans call primarily for urban development rather than new settlements.

Obviously, Reagan's initiative does not meet the wishes of the inhabitants of the occupied territories. A recent survey by Israel's leading polling institute, reported in *Time* magazine, found that more than 98 per cent of the population favors an independent Palestinian state, which 86 per cent would prefer to have run solely by the Palestinian Liberation Organization. Mustapha Dudin, who heads the Israeli-imposed "Village Leagues," received a rousing two-tenths of 1 per cent approval rating in the same poll, though Israel claims that his is the voice of the "silent majority" that has been intimidated by the PLO. But the preferences of the indigenous population in

the occupied territories have never been taken into serious account in Washington.

The US-Israel Rejectionist Front

For years there has been an international consensus in support of a peaceful two-state settlement based approximately on the pre-1967 borders. As Seth Tillman commented in a recent study, "Outside of Israel, the United States, a few 'rejectionist' Arab states, and certain groups within the PLO, support for a settlement along these lines approaches unanimity." If we apply the term *rejectionist*, as we should, to those who would deny the right of self-determination either to the Israelis or the Palestinians, then it is accurate to say that for some years the United States and Israel have headed the rejectionist camp.

The current Reagan plan is also rejectionist, for it opposes a Palestinian state, remains vague about boundaries and security for the Palestinians, and contemplates no role for the PLO, which has the same kind of legitimacy among Palestinians that the World Zionist Organization had among Jews in the years before Israel achieved statchood. Nevertheless, the Reagan plan might gain Arab support, given the likely alternative—outright annexation of the occupied territories by Israel. But there is little to suggest that the United States intends to use the ample means available to it to bring about even this rejectionist settlement.

In its impact on world affairs and on American culture, the relationship between the United States and Israel has been a curious one. Recent votes at the United Nations demonstrate the unique character of the bond. Last June, the United States stood alone in vetoing a Security Council resolution calling for the simultaneous with-

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drawal of Israeli and Palestinian forces from Beirut. On the same day, Israel and the United States voted against a General Assembly resolution calling for an end to hostilities in Lebanon and on the Israeli-Lebanese border; the resolution was approved, with no abstentions, 127-to-2.¹

More concretely, the special relationship is expressed in the unparalleled U.S. military and economic aid to Israel, which may well amount to about \$1,000 per year for each Israeli when all forms of assistance are taken into account.

At the ideological level, the special relationship is reflected in the persistent illusions Americans hold about the nature of Israeli society and the Arab-Israeli conflict. Retired Israeli General Mattityahu Peled observed in 1975 that the "state of near hysteria" in the United States and the "blindly chauvinistic and narrow-minded" support for the most reactionary policies within Israel encourage many in power there to adopt postures of "calloused intransigence."²

ISRAEL: Instrument of U.S. Hegemony

The unique relationship between Israel and the United States is often attributed to the influence of the American Jewish community on public opinion and political life. There is some truth to this, but it is far from the whole story. Since the late 1950s, Washington has increasingly come to accept the Israeli thesis that a powerful Israel is a strategic asset for the United States, serving as a barrier against radical nationalist threats to American interests in the Middle East and against Soviet influence in a region of great economic and strategic importance. A 1958 National Security Council memorandum, recently declassified, noted that a "logical corollary" of opposition to radical Arab nationalism "would be to support Israel as the only strong pro-West power left in the Near East."³

In the 1960s, the American intelligence community regarded Israel as a barrier to Nasserite pressure on the Persian Gulf's oil-producing states, a conclusion reinforced by Israel's smashing military victory over the Arabs in 1967. In September 1970, the thesis was confirmed again when Israel—acting in behalf of the United States, which could not intervene directly—blocked Syrian efforts to rescue Palestinians who were being massacred by King Hussein's army in Jordan.

In the 1970s, Israel and Iran under the Shah were perceived as effective agents of American control over the oil-producing regions of the Gulf. Since the fall of the Shah, Israel, in its role as a Middle East Sparta in the service of American power, has received substantially increased support from Washington. In the 1960s, Israel served as a U.S. agent in black Africa, using secret funds from Washington to assist President Mobutu in Zaire, Idi Amin in Uganda, and Emperor Bokassa in the Central African Republic. More recently, Israel has provided armaments and advisers for brutal and corrupt U.S. clients in Central America, helping to circumvent Congressional restrictions on direct U.S. involvement. An increasingly visible alliance between Israel and South Africa, Taiwan, and the military dictatorships of the southern cone in South America has also proven attractive to major American interests.

But the story is even more complex: The central institutions of American liberalism have led the way in building the "blindly chauvinistic and narrowminded"

support for Israeli policy that Peled deplors. On the day the United States and Israel stood alone against the world at the United Nations, a midterm national conference of the Democratic Party adopted a statement described in *The New York Times* as "highly sympathetic to Israel's recent attacks in Lebanon," qualified only by an expression of regret over "all loss of life on both sides." In contrast, the foreign ministers of the European Economic Community condemned the Israeli invasion of Lebanon as "a flagrant violation of international law as well as of the most elementary humanitarian principles."⁴

Though American liberals had been highly sympathetic to Israel from its founding, there was a positive shift in attitudes in 1967, when Israel demonstrated its overwhelming military power, shattering the Arab armies, quickly conquering the Sinai, the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights, and the West Bank, and once again causing the flight of hundreds of thousands of refugees. Top Israeli military commanders have conceded that Israel faced no serious military threat⁵ and anticipated a quick victory even if the Arabs struck first. But this reality was suppressed in the United States in favor of the image of David confronting a brutal Goliath. The current fall-back position of many "supporters of Israel" is that the "beautiful Israel" of earlier years, which was realizing the dream of democratic socialism, has been betrayed by Begin and his cohorts, abetted by the refusal of the Arabs (apart from Sadat from 1977) to accept the existence of Israel, and the unwavering commitment of the PLO to terrorism and the destruction of Israel. But the real world is rather different, as will quickly be discovered if the historical record is rescued from the oblivion to which it has been consigned.

Israeli-Kissinger Axis

When Anwar el Sadat became president of Egypt in 1970, he moved at once to implement two policies: peace with Israel and conversion of Egypt into an American client state. In February 1971, he offered Israel a comprehensive peace treaty based on the pre-1967 borders and security guarantees. Sadat's offer caused much distress in Israel—"panic," in the view of Israeli writer Amos Elon—and was promptly rejected. Sadat's 1971 proposal was more favorable to Israel than the one he brought with him on his November 1977 trip to Jerusalem, which officially established him as "a man of peace"; in 1971, he had made no mention of Palestinian national rights, allegedly the stumbling block of the Camp David "peace process" that would follow later in the decade. In internal discussion in Israel, labor party doves recognized that a peace settlement was then attainable. But they recommended against it on the grounds that wider territorial gains would be possible if they held out.⁶

The United States backed Israel in its rejection of the 1971 Sadat offer. Unfortunately for Sadat, his efforts came just when Israel had persuaded Washington that it was a great-power asset. Henry Kissinger, who assumed that Israel's might was unchallengeable, takes considerable pride in his memoirs in having blocked State Department efforts to achieve some sort of peaceful resolution of the conflict. His aim, he writes, "was to produce a stalemate until Moscow urged compromise or until, even better, some moderate Arab regime decided that the route to progress was through Washington.... Until

some Arab state showed a willingness to separate from the Soviets, or the Soviets were prepared to dissociate from the maximum Arab program, we had no reason to modify our policy" of stalemate, despite the State Department's wishes.

Kissinger's account is remarkable, even by his own standards, for the geopolitical fantasies it entertains. Sadat had *explicitly* decided at that time that the route to progress was through Washington, and that position was shared by the Saudis and others. Saudi Arabia was, in fact, not only willing to "separate from the Soviets," but did not even have diplomatic relations with them. Furthermore, the Russians backed the international consensus, which included a commitment to the security of Israel within recognized borders.

Sadat's repeated signals that he would be compelled to resort to war if his efforts at a peaceful settlement were rebuffed made no impression on Washington. He was dismissed with contempt, and warnings of impending war from U.S. diplomats and from oil companies operating in the Arabian peninsula were disregarded. As a group of Israeli and American-Israeli scholars observe, "After the Egyptian Ra'is [Sadat] had realized that all diplomatic efforts would lead to a dead end, he decided to try a limited military option which, combined with an oil embargo, would lead to a significant Israeli withdrawal from Arab territories."⁷

In October 1973, Sadat made good his threats. To the great surprise of Israel, the United States, and virtually everyone else, Egypt and Syria were remarkably successful in the early stages of the war, and Saudi Arabia — reluctantly, it appears—joined in an oil boycott of the United States, the first major use of the "oil weapon."

At that point, U.S. policy shifted. Kissinger launched diplomatic efforts aimed at accepting Egypt as a U.S. client state while removing it from the Middle East conflict. Sadat, now joined by other Arab leaders, continued to press for a full-scale settlement. In January 1976, the United States felt obliged to veto a U.N. Security Council resolution calling for a peaceful two-state settlement in accord with the international consensus. The resolution, which called for security guarantees and recognized borders, was backed by Syria, Jordan, Egypt, the PLO, and the Soviet Union. Writing in the *Jerusalem Post* (November 13, 1981), General Haim Herzog, who was Israel's U.N. ambassador from 1975 to 1978, writes that the PLO not only backed this peace plan but in fact "prepared" it, while condemning "the tyranny of the veto" by which the U.S. blocked this effort at a peaceful two-state settlement.

Israel refused to take part in the Security Council deliberations, which had been called at Syrian initiative. The Labor government, often described in the United States as "dovish," announced it would not negotiate with Palestinians on any political issue, and would not negotiate with the PLO even if it were to renounce terrorism and recognize Israel, adopting a position comparable to that of the minority Rejection Front within the PLO. The main elements of the PLO had been moving, and continued to move, toward acceptance of a Palestinian state that would coexist in peace with Israel.

The failure of these and subsequent Arab efforts led Sadat to undertake his trip to Jerusalem. He hoped a Geneva conference of major powers would be convened

to settle the conflict, according to U.S. Ambassador to Egypt Herman Eilts. Instead the Camp David undertaking brought Kissinger's earlier efforts to fruition. Egypt has been incorporated into the U.S. system and retired from the Arab-Israeli conflict. Israel has been able, as a consequence, to concentrate its military forces to the north and to continue its creeping annexation of the occupied territories, except for the Sinai, now returned to Egypt and doing duty as a buffer zone. Diplomatic efforts remain largely in the hands of the U.S., excluding both the USSR and the rivals/allies of Europe and Japan. By 1977, Israel was governed by Menachem Begin's Likud coalition, the second major political grouping. Begin's government rapidly extended land expropriation and settlement in the occupied territories, while instituting a considerably more brutal and comprehensive repression there, particularly from the fall of 1981, with the Milson-Sharon plan.

Begin-Labor Party Unity

Contrary to the impression widely held in the United States, Israel's two major political groupings are in basic accord about the occupied territories. They agree that Israel should effectively control them, and both reject any expression of Palestinian national rights west of the Jordan. The territories supply Israel with a substantial unorganized labor force, similar to the "guest workers" of Europe or the migrant workers in the United States. The Palestinians have a significant role in the Israeli economy, performing undesirable but necessary work at low pay and without workers' rights. The occupied territories also provide a controlled market for Israeli goods and a crucial source of water (a commodity more vital even than oil in the Middle East). These considerations, rather than the official rationale of "national security," account for the Likud and Labor position on the territories.

The two political groupings do differ in the arrangements they would prefer to impose. Likud aims for outright annexation. Labor has pursued a more ambiguous scheme that would leave the bulk of the native population under Jordanian administration (but effective Israeli control) or stateless, rather than directly incorporated into Israel.

Some Israeli doves (e.g., Peled) have argued that the Labor plan is even more cynical than that of Likud, an arguable proposition. The crucial issue is what is called "the demographic problem," a euphemism developed to express the difficulty of incorporating a large Arab population within a Jewish state. The Israeli-American Middle East specialist Amos Perlmutter alleges that Defense Minister Ariel Sharon hopes to evict all Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza and drive them into Jordan.⁸ Labor leaders have entertained somewhat similar ideas. Former Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, for example, has urged that Israel "create in the course of the next ten to twenty years conditions which would attract natural and voluntary migration of the refugees from the Gaza Strip and the West Bank to East Jordan. To achieve this, we have to come to agreement with King Hussein and not with Yasser Arafat."⁹

The feeling that ultimately the Arabs must somehow find their place *elsewhere* has deep roots in Zionist thinking, including people like Berl Katzelson, one of the

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heroes of socialist Zionism (a man who "rose gradually to the status of a secular 'rabbi' for most of the earlier pioneers."¹⁰). Katzelson had in mind Syria and Iraq as the ultimate repository for the indigenous population!¹¹ In any case, Israeli policy since 1967 has ranged between the Likud and Labor plans, with increasingly marginal dissent. Israel and the United States have stood virtually alone in opposing a political settlement that recognizes the national rights of both peoples. It has required a considerable propaganda effort to invert the facts and portray Israel and the United States as seekers of peace and accommodation in the face of violent and unwavering Arab "rejectionism."

Increased Drift to the Right

As many Israeli doves had expected and feared, the 1967 war led to significant changes within Israel: a growing dependence on force and violence; increasing international isolation and, correspondingly, alliance with such pariah states as South Africa; chauvinism, religious fanaticism, and grandiose conceptions of Israel's global mission. It also led, predictably, to much heavier dependence on the United States, ever more faithful service to the U.S. global interests, and association with some of the most reactionary elements in American society, including religious fundamentalists and fervent Cold Warriors. This is not only true of Begin's Likud government; after the October 1973 war, for example, Yitzhak Rabin urged that Israel try to "gain time" in the hope that the United States would eventually pursue "more aggressive policies vis-a-vis the Soviet Union."

At the same time, internal political changes have been taking place within Israel. Menachem Begin succeeded in mobilizing a majority of Israel's Oriental Jewish population behind his chauvinistic and aggressive policies. These segments of the population had long regarded the Labor Party and its institutions as an oppressive bureaucracy, representing the nation's managerial class and the hated kibbutzim—often islands of wealth and luxury alongside of "development towns," notorious for their lack of development, which have been set aside for the Oriental Jews, an exploited underclass. They support Begin in revenge against their oppressors in the Labor coalition.

Attitudes also seem to be more reactionary among the young, so that the prospects are for an intensification of chauvinism and violence. The religious settlers in the West Bank, operating freely with army support, take open pride in creating a pogrom-like atmosphere among the Arabs, who must be trained not to "raise their heads." These developments have aroused much concern among older, more European-oriented Israelis, many of whom see all this as a direct consequence of the 1967 military victory.

Rightist Roots in Zionism

Israel has always been and remains a vibrant democracy on the Western model for its Jewish citizens. But Israeli democracy has always embodied a fundamental contradiction: Israel is a Jewish state with a minority of non-Jewish citizens. The courts have ruled that Israel is not the state of its citizens, but rather "the sovereign State of the Jewish people," where "the Jewish people consists not only of the people residing in Israel but also

of the Jews in the Diaspora." In this sense, according to the courts, "there is no Israeli nation apart from the Jewish people," but the fact remains that about one-seventh of the citizens of Israel are non-Jews. Thus, there is no Israeli nationality, only a Jewish one. While it is constantly argued that Israel is Jewish only in the sense that England is English, that is a flat falsehood. A citizen of England is English, but a citizen of Israel may not be Jewish, a non-trivial fact, much obscured in deceptive rhetoric.

The legal structures, administrative practices, and development programs of the Israeli government and society reflect the inevitable contradiction inherent in this arrangement, though the reality is generally obscured in admiring left-liberal commentary. Thus the Israeli novelist Amos Oz, writing in *The New York Times Magazine*, asserts: "To this day, only about 5 per cent of the land is privately owned; the rest is public property, in one way or another," including the lands of the kibbutz in which he lives. But Oz and others who advance such evidence of Israeli democratic socialism do not tell the full story of the "one way or another" in which the land remains "public property": Through a complex system of legal and administrative arrangements, public land is under the effective control of the Jewish National Fund, an organization committed to use charitable funds (specifically, tax-free contributions from the United States) in ways that are determined to be "directly or indirectly beneficial to persons of Jewish religion, race, or origin." Much of the development budget is in the hands of the Jewish Agency, which professes similar commitments.

These and other national institutions serve solely the interests of Jews, not the citizens of Israel, one-seventh of whom are not Jewish. The consequences of these arrangements, and others like them, for the lives of non-Jewish citizens are considerable.¹² We would hardly regard similar arrangements in a "white state" or a "Christian state" as an illustration of unique moral standards and democratic socialism.

This fundamental contradiction has always been present, but it has become more difficult to suppress with steps towards integration of the occupied territories (which is one reason why the Labor coalition—more concerned with the democratic socialist image than Likud—has always been opposed to absorbing the Arabs of the occupied territories within the state proper). In the early history of Zionism, the notion of a Jewish state was regarded as problematic. It was not until 1942 that the Zionist movement officially committed itself to the establishment of a Jewish state. Previously, its leaders—particularly those from the labor movement that dominated the Palestinian *Yishuv* (Jewish settlement)—at times opposed the concept of a Jewish state on the grounds that "the rule of one national group over the other" could not be justified. David Ben-Gurion and others declared they would never agree to a Jewish state "which would eventually mean Jewish domination of Arabs in Palestine." But with the coming of the war and the genocidal Nazis these became minority views within Zionism, though they persisted until the U.N. partition resolution of November 1947. Since the establishment of the state of Israel in May 1948, the question has been considered closed, but earlier fears of oppression of an exploited Arab population have been borne out.

Conflicts Within Unity

In the pre-state period, the nuclei of Israel's two present political groupings were often in bitter conflict. The Labor Party was a part of Jewish workers—not of all workers; in fact, it opposed efforts by the British Mandatory authorities to improve the conditions of Arab workers. The Revisionists, the precursors of the present Herut (the central element in the Likud coalition), cast themselves in the mold of European fascism, with an ideology that called for submission of the mass to a single leader, strike-breaking, chauvinist fanaticism, and the rest of the familiar paraphernalia of the 1930s.

The two factions also differed in their political aspirations when it became practical to envision the establishment of a Jewish state. Supporting the British partition proposal of 1937, Labor Party leader Ben-Gurion said, "The acceptance of partition does not commit us to renounce Transjordan.... We shall accept a state [within] the boundaries fixed today, but the boundaries of Zionist aspirations are the concern of the Jewish people and no external factor will be able to limit them."¹³ The "boundaries of Zionist aspirations" in Ben-Gurion's vision encompassed southern Lebanon ("the northern part of western Israel"), southern Syria, today's Jordan, cis-Jordan (Mandatory Palestine), and Sinai.¹⁴

In contrast, even after the state was established in 1948, Herut leader Menachem Begin declared, "The partition of the Homeland is illegal. It will never be recognized. The signature of institutions and individuals of the partition agreement is invalid. It will not bind the Jewish people. Jerusalem was and will forever be our capital. Eretz Yisrael will be restored to the people of Israel. All of it. And forever."¹⁵ Echoes of these conflicting positions are heard today.

Zionist Terrorism: The Record

Pre-state Zionism exhibits a number of striking similarities to current divisions within the PLO between the Rejectionists, who refuse to accept any compromise with Israel, and the mainstream around Yasser Arafat, who have officially accepted the idea of establishing a state in any territory of the former Palestine evacuated by Israel, though they too refuse to abandon their "dream": a unitary democratic secular state to be achieved, they assert, through a long-term process of peaceful interaction with Israel.

Quite generally, the PLO has the same sort of legitimacy that the Zionist movement had in the pre-state period, a fact that is undoubtedly recognized at some level within Israel and, I think, accounts for the bitter hatred of the PLO. The PLO has been recognized by Palestinians as "their representative" whenever they have had the chance to express themselves, even under the harsh Israeli military occupation, an act of some courage. Some have seen still broader similarities: Israeli doves have observed (in an advertisement in *Ha'aretz*) that "those who shall sober up from the collective intoxication will have to admit that the Palestinians are the Jews of our era, a small, hunted people, defenseless, standing alone against the best weapons, helpless... the whole world is against them."¹⁶

The similarities extend to the use of terror. Recall that the current prime minister and foreign minister of Israel are former terrorist commanders with violent histories of atrocities that include the killing of Jews as well as



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Britons and many Arabs, while the secretary-general of the Jewish Agency until 1981 was a man who murdered several dozen Arab citizens under guard in an undefended Lebanese village during the land-clearing operations of October 1948.¹⁷

The self-defense forces (Haganah) based in the labor movement also engaged in terrorist violence, though on a more limited scale than the outright terrorist army of Begin and its LEHI (Stern Gang) offshoot. The first example, to my knowledge, was the Haganah assassination of a religious anti-Zionist Jew in 1924 who was organizing among the largely anti-Zionist native Jewish inhabitants of Palestine!¹⁸ The record is long and bloody, as in the case of most nationalist movements—and has generally been suppressed in the United States, where terror is cynically described as an invention of the PLO.

The Arabs of Palestine were overwhelmingly opposed to establishment of a Jewish state and to Zionist immigration, which often led to dispossession from their lands. They frequently resorted to terrorist violence against Jews. In 1936–1939, they attempted a nationalist revolt, which the British crushed. Their opposition to Zionist aspirations was never a secret. President Wilson's King-Crane Commission reported in 1919 that the Palestinian Arabs were "emphatically against the entire Zionist program." To subject them to it, the Commission warned, "would be a gross violation of the principle [of self determination]," a judgment disregarded by the great powers, including the United States.¹⁹

In later years, the indigenous Arab population resisted the idea, accepted as natural in the West, that it had a moral obligation to sacrifice its land to compensate for the crimes committed by Europeans against Jews. Whether there would have been a way to reconcile competing claims and needs in Palestine is not clear. By the end of World War II, the options had substantially narrowed.

In November 1947, the General Assembly of the fledgling United Nations recommended the partition of Mandatory Palestine (cis-Jordan) into Jewish and Arab states. The recommendation was accepted by most of the Zionist movement (though not, as noted, by Begin's Herut and its military arm), and rejected with near unanimity by the Arabs of Palestine. General Assembly resolutions are considered to be nonbinding; Israel, for example, holds the world record for rejecting them. The United States remained ambivalent, apparently preferring a trusteeship of some sort, until the Jewish state was established in May 1948 and granted almost instant recognition by President Truman.

Civil strife between Arabs and Jews broke out immediately after the November 1947 partition recommendation. The better-organized Jewish settler army had the advantage in the military conflict; by May, its forces had occupied substantial parts of the territory assigned to the Palestinian state. The armies of the Arab states entered the war immediately after Israel's founding. Most of the fighting took place within the proposed Palestinian state, and when it ended almost half of it was incorporated into Israel, while the remainder was taken over by Transjordan (later Jordan) and Egypt. This arrangement lasted from the 1949 armistice agreement until 1967, when the remainder, too, was conquered by Israel. About 700,000 Palestinians fled or were expelled.

In the United States, it is intoned with ritual uniformi-

ty that Israel's wars, before the 1982 Lebanon invasion, were strictly defensive. That is untrue, certainly with regard to the 1956 Israeli-French-British attack on Egypt and the 1978 invasion of Lebanon, which is not generally counted as one of the Arab-Israeli wars, but should be.

Shortly after the armistice agreements of 1949, Israel began encroachments into the demilitarized zones. Israeli attacks caused heavy civilian casualties and led to the expulsion of thousands of Arabs, some of whom later formed terrorist bands that carried out what they presumably regarded as reprisals and what Israel and its supporters call unprovoked terrorism. The Israeli actions, along with terrorist acts of Palestinian infiltrators, set the stage for further conflicts with Egypt and Syria.

Israeli raids in the Gaza region led to the initiation of Fedayin attacks. The latter served as the pretext for the 1956 invasion, though as is known from captured Egyptian documents and other sources, Egypt was attempting to calm the border region in fear of such an attack. Encroachments in the north led ultimately to shelling of Israel from the Golan Heights by those described here as "Syrian killers-for-the-fun-of-it" in a typical misrepresentation of the facts,²⁰ the pretext for the conquest of the Golan in 1967 and its virtual annexation by the Begin government in December 1981.

In the early 1950s, relations between Israel and the U.S. were often strained, and it appeared for a time that the U.S. might firm up its relations with Nasser, who had some direct CIA support. To avert this consequence, Israel organized terrorist cells within Egypt which carried out attacks on U.S. installations (also railroad stations, cinemas, etc.) in an effort to exacerbate relations between Egypt and the U.S. These terrorist initiatives too have generally been suppressed in the U.S. (Amos Oz, for example, refers to them obliquely as "certain adventurist Israeli intelligence operations"), a recurrent pattern. Another example is the sinking of the U.S. spy ship *Liberty* with 34 killed and 171 wounded by the Israeli air force in 1967, in a premeditated attack that was covered up by a U.S. naval Court of Inquiry.²¹

Within Israel, vast areas of Arab land were expropriated and converted to Jewish settlement, used in part to settle Jewish refugees who fled or were expelled from Arab countries after the 1947-49 war. Arab citizens were thus compelled to become a work force for Jewish enterprises (including Kibbutzim). A democratic system based on suppression of the non-Jewish minority was established. Apart from the wars, there were continual border disturbances, with much mutual terror, to which again Israel contributed to a greater degree than is generally acknowledged in the U.S.

Shortly after the 1967 war, the Labor government began to integrate the occupied territories with Israel. Paramilitary outposts were established first, followed by permanent civilian settlements. East Jerusalem was annexed, and the city's borders were extended into the Arab West Bank, while Arabs were expelled from some sections of the Old City. The Labor Party even refused to permit conservative Arab "notables" to form an anti-PLO grouping.²² In 1976, Israel permitted free elections in West Bank towns after banishing two candidates regarded as pro-PLO. As has almost invariably been the case when Palestinians were permitted some form of free expression, the elected mayors adopted the standard position that the PLO is the representative of Palestinian

nationalism. The mayors also have unsuccessfully sought a political settlement in accord with the international consensus that has been rejected by Israel and the United States.

In the past year, the Begin government has effectively dismantled these Palestinian political structures, attempting to impose the authority of selected Quislings, through the so-called Village Leagues. In the terminology of the U.S. media, the largely conservative elected Palestinian leadership is "radical," while the collaborators appointed by the Israeli occupation forces are "moderates." Against all evidence, the Begin government insists that the elected leadership attained power as a result of PLO intimidation and violence.

Since 1949, Israel has sought to remove the Palestinian refugees farther from the border areas and to destroy their emerging political and military structures. The 1982 invasion of Lebanon is the latest stage of these efforts. Their general character was indicated by former Chief of Staff Mordechai Gur in an interview in the Israeli press after the 1978 invasion of Lebanon, which drove another quarter-million Arabs from their homes with heavy casualties, in retaliation for a PLO terrorist attack in Israel. Gur observed that "For 30 years, from the War of Independence until today, we have been fighting against a population that lives in villages and cities," and he noted as examples such incidents as the bombing of the Jordanian city of Irbid, the clearing of all inhabitants from the Jordan valley by bombing, and driving a million and a half civilians from the Suez Canal area during the 1970 "war of attrition." All these were undertaken in alleged retaliation against Arab attacks. Gur's remarks were accurately summarized by the noted Israeli military analyst Ze'ev Schiff:

In South Lebanon we struck the civilian population consciously, because they deserved it... the importance of Gur's remarks is the admission that the Israeli Army has always struck civilian populations, purposely and consciously... the Army, he said, has never distinguished civilian [from military] targets... [but] purposely attacked civilian targets even when Israeli settlements had not been struck.²³

"Unmentionable" Israeli Conduct

The motive for these actions was dual: to disperse the Palestinian refugees, and to embitter relations between the Palestinians and the local population in the areas to which they had been driven. As Labor dove Abba Eban explained: "There was a rational prospect, ultimately fulfilled, that affected populations would exert pressure for the cessation of hostilities." Eban was writing in criticism of an article by Prime Minister Begin which reviewed attacks against civilians under the Labor government, presenting a picture, according to Eban, "of an Israel wantonly inflicting every possible measure of death and anguish on civilian populations in a mood reminiscent of regimes which neither Mr. Begin nor I would dare to mention by name."²⁴ Eban does not contest the facts, but criticizes Begin for contributing to Arab propaganda. He also does not mention that his own doctrine, just quoted, represented the standard practice of these regimes. Recent events in Lebanon again confirm Eban's judgment about the "rational prospect."

With regard to Lebanon, Israel is now realizing plans that have early antecedents in Zionist thinking. It had

long been hoped that Israel's boundaries would ultimately extend to the Litani river, incorporating what Ben-Gurion called "the northern part of western Israel" (see above). As early as a week after the establishment of the State of Israel, Ben-Gurion wrote in his diary:

The Achilles' heel of the Arab coalition is the Lebanon. Muslim supremacy in this country is artificial and can easily be overthrown. A Christian State ought to be set up there, with its southern frontier on the river Litani. We would sign a treaty of alliance with this State.²⁵

In the mid-1950s, plans were developed at the highest level to establish a collaborationist Christian enclave in southern Lebanon.²⁶ These plans were put into abeyance after 1956, when Israel was allied with France, which saw itself as "the protector of Lebanon." But they were taken up again after the 1967 war.

In 1970, the Palestinians were driven from Jordan after a bloody conflict in which thousands were killed by King Hussein's forces. The PLO at first attempted to keep clear of Lebanon's internal strife, but it was drawn into the the civil war in 1976, and engaged in murderous conflict with Israeli-supported Christian elements and increasingly in the south, with local Muslim groups. At the same time, it frequently acted to protect Muslim elements from Christian massacres. Syria entered Lebanon at the invitation of a powerless Lebanese government in 1976, first supporting the Christian Maronites against the Palestinians and their Muslim allies, then turning against the Maronites, "who used their power as ruthlessly against rival Christian groups as against Moslems and the PLO [and] were encouraged by Israeli support to challenge Syria" (officially, the "peace-keeping force" with a mandate from the Arab states).²⁷ Israel meanwhile conducted regular military attacks in Lebanon, including shelling of refugee camps, bombardment of coastal cities by gunboats, the outright invasion of 1978 (after which a collaborationist Christian enclave was established in the south in defiance of the United States), and now the occupation of large parts of Lebanon in June-July 1982.

From Terrorism to Barbarism

The history of the current effort is revealing. In July 1981, the Israeli planes initiated hostilities after a period of peace, striking Palestinian targets in southern Lebanon. Palestinian retaliation led to extensive Israeli bombing, ultimately the terror attacks of July 17-18 on Beirut and other civilian targets in which hundreds were killed. A cease-fire was then put into effect under U.S. auspices; but Israel insistently sought a pretext to strike again. Provocative military deployments in southern Lebanon, the sinking of Lebanese fishing boats, and other actions failed to elicit a response. Finally, in April 1982 Israel bombed Lebanon, causing many civilian casualties, after a contrived "PLO provocation" Specifically, an Israeli soldier had been killed when a military jeep struck a land mine in southern Lebanon. There was still no PLO response. Israel's incredible claim that the bombing was in "retaliation" for a PLO attack was accepted in the U.S. The *Washington Post*, for example, responded to these events as follows:

So this is not the moment of sermons for Israel. It is a moment for respect for Israel's anguish—and for mourning the latest victims of Israeli-Palestinian hostility.²⁸

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Emboldened by this signal from the U.S., Israel prepared for the next "provocation." The attempt by a fringe Arab group that had been engaged in a running battle with the PLO to assassinate the Israeli Ambassador in London on June 3, served as the pretext for the heavy Israeli bombing of Palestinian and Lebanese targets. This time the PLO shelled northern Israel in retaliation, and Israel launched the full-scale invasion, Operation "Peace for Galilee," to "protect the northern border." For 11 months there had been no Palestinian action on the northern border apart from the single retaliatory strike mentioned.^{28a} Indeed, it had been Israel's initiative in July 1981 that shattered the peace along Israel's northern border, and not for the first time. Another example was the interchange of shelling and bombing with many civilian casualties (overwhelmingly Arab) in November 1977 just prior to Sadat's trip to Jerusalem. This was, once again, initiated by Israeli forces within Lebanon and in Israel and by Israel's Maronite allies.²⁹ In this case too the standard U.S. commentary was in terms of PLO terrorism and Israeli retaliation.

A number of Israeli's, commenting on the "retaliation" after the attempt to assassinate Ambassador Argov, have suggested that we "imagine that the British would have bombed Tel Aviv or Netanya in retaliation for the Murder of Lord Moyne [by a group directed by the current Israeli Foreign Minister] or the hanging of the [British] Sergeants" by Begin's terrorist army, asking: "Wouldn't we have called it barbarism?"³⁰ The same might be said about the assassination of two Palestinians in Rome in June 1982 by the "Jewish Armed Resistance." The latter group appears to have had contact with the Jewish Defense League,³¹ whose leader calls for the expulsion of Arabs from Palestine when he is not beating and shooting at them as part of his regular army service on the West Bank. In this case, of course, no question was ever raised in the U.S., in accordance with the normal double standard.

War to Prevent Peace

The Israeli claim to be acting in Lebanon in legitimate self-defense was accepted by the U.S. government and large segments of the press and intelligentsia, although an unprecedented negative reaction did develop in the U.S. The obvious purpose of the Israeli attack, as predicted long before, was to disperse the refugees once again and to destroy the organization that represents Palestinian nationalism—to ensure as one senior Israeli diplomat said, that "They [the PLO] are dead people politically."³² On this basis Israel can proceed with its plans to suppress any meaningful form of Palestinian autonomy within the occupied territories and ultimately annex them, without concern for Palestinian political opposition in the international arena or for Palestinian retaliation to further oppression and brutality in the occupied territories ("unprovoked terrorism") from southern Lebanon. At the same time, destruction of the PLO would, it is hoped, serve to demoralize the Palestinians in the occupied territories (and elsewhere), in accordance with the assumption of General Sharon that "quiet on the West Bank" requires "the destruction of the PLO in Lebanon."³³

This point was subsequently elaborated by Yehoshua Porath, Israel's leading specialist on the Palestinians and

the author of major works on the Palestinian national movement. Porath dismisses the idea that the motivation for the Israeli invasion was the London assassination attempt, as well as the claim that the purpose was to protect Israeli settlements in the Galilee, noting that there had been no rocket attacks since the July 1981 cease-fire. But Porath argues that the many commentators who have criticized Israeli propaganda on these grounds are missing the main point. "It seems to me," he writes, "that the decision of the government (or, more precisely, its two leaders) flowed from the very fact that the cease-fire had been maintained." Arafat had succeeded in imposing discipline on the many factions of the PLO, thus maintaining the cease-fire that had been achieved under U.S. initiative. His success constituted, in Porath's words "a veritable catastrophe in the eyes of the Israeli government," since it indicated that the PLO "might agree in the future to a more far-reaching arrangement," in which case Israel could no longer evade a political settlement on the grounds that the PLO is nothing but a collection of murderers.

It was this eventuality that the Israeli attack was primarily designed to prevent. . . . The government's hope is that the stricken PLO, lacking a logistic and territorial base, will return to its earlier terrorism, that it will carry out bombings throughout the world, hijack airplanes, and murder many Israelis. In this way, the PLO will lose a part of the political legitimacy that it has gained and will mobilize the large majority of the Israeli nation in hatred and disgust against it, undercutting the danger that elements will develop among the Palestinians that might become a legitimate negotiating partner for future political accommodations.³⁴

On Porath's quite plausible analysis, Israel's goal is precisely to fend off the catastrophe of a political settlement in which both Palestinians and Israelis can live in peace and security. As was quite evident at the time, the Camp David accords and Kissinger's earlier arrangements were perceived in Israel (and by the Palestinians) as providing the means for further moves to incorporate the occupied territories. As former military intelligence chief Shlomo Gazit pointed out, "behind the Lebanon victory lie the peace accords with Egypt," which permitted Israel to concentrate its military forces in the north without fear of military retaliation by the Arab states.³⁵

Israeli commentators are clear enough on the central point (except when writing for an American audience). As David Krivine of the *Jerusalem Post* observes, Israel will not talk with the PLO, "but not because they are nasty people." Rather, "the obstacle is the subject on the agenda. It can only be the creation of a Palestinian state on the West Bank, and that we can't agree to." Specifically Israel will have to retain "part of" the West Bank.³⁶ Meanwhile, much of the American press, either through naiveté or cynicism, writes of the great opportunities that the Israeli invasion has offered for a territorial compromise in the former Palestine that will lead to genuine recognition of Palestinian national rights in the occupied territories now that the PLO military force has been destroyed and PLO intimidation of "moderates" will no longer be possible in the West Bank and Gaza.³⁷

Leaving no doubts as to its actual intentions, Israel quickly proceeded to dissolve the elected city councils of

Nablus and Dura in the West Bank and to dismiss the mayors of Jenin and Gaza, also arresting city employees in Jenin. Previously, all other elected mayors of major towns had been dismissed or deported, leaving only Mayor Elias Freij of Bethlehem. Shortly after, Israel set up a new Village League near Nablus, with a substantial grant for a water supply project, elsewhere denied where officials were democratically elected. Along with the supply of arms, this is the major device that Israel has adopted to impose the rule of the Quisling leadership it has selected: channeling subsidies for development to them, requiring merchants apply to them or join them to obtain support for licenses, etc.

Meanwhile, student protests over the invasion of Lebanon at Bir Zeit university led to tear-gassing by Israeli soldiers and many arrests, beating and harassment of students (according to the university president), and finally closing down of the university—once again. Since mid-June, demonstrations and a general merchant strike (in the usual manner, merchants were forced by the occupying army to open shops) had been met by firing with injuries. Two inhabitants of Nablus were killed during a demonstration in which Israeli soldiers opened fire (the government claims that they were not killed by soldiers), and members of the Village Leagues, armed by Israel, had killed and wounded a number of West Bank opponents. West Bank organizations and associations, including religious circles, insistently repeated their support for the PLO. The Supreme Islamic Council of Jerusalem, normally apolitical, sent a letter to the United Nations rejecting the Camp David "peace process" and recognizing the PLO as the only legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. It stated publicly its "support for the PLO in its heroic attempt to reach a noble solution for the Palestinian problem," calling upon the Palestinian people to donate one day's salary "to our sons and brothers in Lebanon." West Bank and Gaza municipalities issued a communiqué denouncing the war in Lebanon and declaring that the PLO remains the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people (June 20). A supporting statement, announcing once again "our full support for the Palestinian Liberation Organization, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people in the homeland and in the diaspora," was issued by a broad group of West Bank unions.³⁸

From Nationalism to Imperialism

There were further motives for the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. Kapeliouk notes the statement by Israeli Chief of Staff Rafael Eytan: "Since I have constructed a military machine costing billions of dollars, I am obliged to use it. . . . Tomorrow I may be in Beirut."³⁹ Of broader scope and greater historical depth is the aim of placing Israel in a position to dictate the terms of any political settlement in Lebanon. One factor in the timing of the invasion may have been the fact that the mandate of the Syrian Arab Peacekeeping force was to expire in late July, and that elections were scheduled for August. The political situation was therefore somewhat open, and some observers believe that there was a small chance for a political agreement among Lebanese.⁴⁰ Israel would no doubt prefer rule over Lebanon by the Falange, its Christian Maronite allies. An alternative, would be partition, with Maronite domination of the north and southern portions associated in some form with Israel, perhaps under

the rule of Major Saad Haddad. Right-wing Israelis have been explicit about this matter. The well-known physicist Yuval Ne'eman, a Knesset member from the Tehiya party, urges that Israel "establish a new order in Lebanon" (the terminology is interesting). The Israeli army "must be prepared for a long stay in Lebanon," during which

Israel will have an opportunity of reaching a stage of socio-economic or technological development in the nearby region which, geographically and historically, is an integral part of Eretz Yisrael. Israel could possibly even reach an agreement on border rectification.

Possibly, "Israel could integrate the strip south of the Litani, with its friendly citizens, into Israel's development plans,"⁴¹ thereby taking a long step towards realizing the traditional "vision" of Ben-Gurion and others.

If there is a little response from the U.S., it is likely that in the longer term Israel will attempt to implement broader goals, including a kind of "Ottomanization" of the area, with Lebanon, Syria and Iraq dismembered into ethnic and religious groupings dominated by Israel in alliance with Turkey and possibly even Iran, if a post-Khomeini military coup restores the alliance that held under the Shah, a development regarded as feasible by Israeli analysts. Sharon and others hope to transform Jordan into the "Palestinian state" that it already is in Israeli propaganda, so that it can offer an opportunity for transfer of the Arab population from the occupied territories, and can be held hostage to Israeli attack and intervention in the manner of Lebanon. One right-wing Israeli analyst has proposed that the Arabian peninsula too be "Ottomanized" (with the unstated implication that Israel will attain control over its unparalleled energy reserves), and that Israel retake the Sinai and dismember Egypt too into separate states. His broader vision is that Israel alone can withstand the collapse of Western civilization under the assault led by the USSR, now that Europe has been effectively neutralized and the U.S. has proven too weak to resist.⁴² It is worth noting that these grandiose conceptions, replete with references to neo-conservative literature in the U.S. and reminiscent of the rhetoric of regimes which (in Abba Eban's phrase) we do not dare mention by name, appear in the official ideological journal of the World Zionist Organization.

Suppose that the U.S. should sharply modify its policy of supporting Israel's adamant rejectionism, its opposition to any political settlement that would recognize the right of Israel and the Palestinians to national self-determination with secure and recognized boundaries, thus joining the international consensus that has long included the PLO and the major Arab states. What effects would this have on Israel's policies and actions? It would at first glance appear that Israel is incapable of resisting U.S. pressure. After all, the economy of Israel and its military strength are highly artificial, crucially dependent on American largesse. Capital transfer from abroad, largely from the United States, has constituted virtually the whole of Israeli investment since the establishment of the state of Israel.⁴³ And in recent years, U.S. economic and military support has been on a phenomenal scale.

But this argument, though correct as far as it goes, leaves out a crucial factor. Several years ago, some U.S. military analysts began to fear that Israel's military power had reached such a high level, thanks to U.S. as-

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sistance programs, that the state could no longer be controlled and might pose "a major national security problem" for the U.S. by carrying out aggressive actions on its own contrary to U.S. interests.⁴⁴ There have often been barely disguised hints from Israel that if it is pressured towards a political settlement, it will be able to respond with military actions that would severely harm U.S. interests. A case in point was the reaction to the Saudi Arabian (Fahd) peace plan in November 1981. As Daniel Block wrote in the Labor Party Journal *Davar*, "all the handstands attempted by our propagandists will fail to dispel [the] impression" that the Fahd plan is a "sign of open-mindedness and moderation," a shift towards a political settlement. He interprets Israel's reaction—provocative military flights over Saudi Arabia—as "the continuation of diplomacy by other means." "Jerusalem seems to believe that if rational arguments fail, we must threaten irrational behavior in order to discourage the world, and especially the United States, from putting any pressure on us." What is the "irrational behavior" that is threatened? This is understood very well in Israel and presumably by U.S. planners as well:

Last week both Begin and Shamir gave strong hints that the adoption of the Fahd plan by the world might cause Israel to reconsider various policies, among them the planned evacuation of the rest of Sinai. This must have caused many

foreign intelligence agencies to reach for the old files containing statements by Israeli generals about Israel's capacity to bomb the Saudi oil fields. After the bombing of the Iraqi reactor, Israel is thought capable of such acts.⁴⁵

Similarly, when Israel lets it be known that its joint programs with South Africa have led to the development of nuclear-armed missiles that can reach the Soviet Union,⁴⁶ the intention is not to frighten or deter the USSR, but rather to put U.S. planners on notice that Israel will bring down the temple walls if pressured towards a meaningful political settlement. This is not a threat to be taken lightly, given the military force that has been amassed as a result of U.S. programs and the social and political developments internal to the state of Israel in the years since the 1967 conquest, particularly since the rise to power of Begin's Likud coalition.

But as long as the U.S. remains committed to an Israeli Sparta as a "strategic asset," blocking the international consensus on a political settlement, the prospects are for further tragedy: repression, terrorism, war, and possibly even a conflict that will engage the superpowers, eventuating in a true "final solution" from which few will escape ■

Noam Chomsky
August 6, 1982

FOOTNOTES

¹ Bernard D. Nossiter, *N.Y. Times*, June 27, 1982; UPI, *Boston Globe*, June 27, 1982. The U.S. objection to the Security Council resolution, according to Nossiter, was that it was "a transparent attempt to preserve the P.L.O. as a viable political force." This interpretation expresses accurately the motive and intent of the Israeli invasion.

² General (Res.) Mattityahu Peled, *New Outlook* (Tel Aviv), May/June 1975, reporting on a visit to the United States.

³ "Issues Arising Out of the Situation in the Near East," declassified 12/10/81, commenting on NSC 5801/1, January 24, 1958.

⁴ Adam Clymer, *N.Y. Times*, June 27, 1982. *Le Monde*, June 11, 1982. The Foreign Ministers' declaration added that this "unjustifiable action" posed the risk of "leading to a generalized war."

⁵ For some citations from the Israeli press, see my *Peace in the Middle East?* (Pantheon, New York, 1974), pp. 124, 140. See also Jon Kimche, *There Could Have Been Peace* (Dial, 1973).

⁶ Amos Elon, *Ha'aretz*, November 13, 1981, commenting on the current reaction of "panic" to the newly-announced Saudi peace plan. On Israel's unwillingness to accept Sadat's offer and the reasons, see the comments by General Haim Bar-Lev, a cabinet member in the Meir and Rabin governments, in the Labor Party journal *Ot*, March 9, 1972, cited in my *Towards a New Cold War* (henceforth, TNCW), Pantheon, New York, 1982, p. 460.

⁷ Amos Perlmutter, Michael Handel and Uri Bar-Joseph, *Two Minutes Over Baghdad* (Valentine, Mitchel & Co., London, 1982), p. 34. They argue that Sadat's war aims were limited because of the threat of nuclear retaliation by Israel, and also alleged that Israel's threat to use nuclear weapons impelled the U.S. to provide a massive shipment of conventional weapons to Israel. For more on this topic, see TNCW, pp. 321, 458.

⁸ Amos Perlmutter, *N.Y. Times*, May 17, 1982. In a Paris news conference, General Peled asserted that Sharon's statements should be taken as "a very serious intention." Ronald Koven, *Boston Globe*, July 21, 1982.

⁹ Francis Ofner, "Sketching Rabin's Plan for Peace," *Christian Science Monitor*, June 3, 1974; dispatch from Tel Aviv.

¹⁰ Amos Oz, "Has Israel Altered Its Visions?" *N.Y. Times Magazine*, July 11, 1982.

¹¹ Cited by Moshe Shamir, *Ma'ariv*, August 9, 1974, from Katznelson's *Writings*, vol. 12, p. 361, on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of his death.

¹² For discussion of these matters, see Ian Lustick, *Arabs in the Jewish State* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1980); TNCW, and sources cited there.

¹³ Speech of 1937, cited in *New Outlook* (Tel Aviv), April 1977, from Ben-Gurion's *Memoirs*.

¹⁴ Report to the World Council of Poalei Zion (the forerunner of the Labor Party), Tel Aviv, 1938; cited by Israel Shahak, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Spring 1981.

¹⁵ Menachem Begin, *The Revolt* (New York: Schuman, 1951), p. 335.

¹⁶ "Liberated Territory No. 20," *Ha'aretz*, June 13, 1982, advertisement.

¹⁷ *Al Hamishmar*, March 3, 1978; *Jerusalem Post*, February 28, 1978 (a somewhat sanitized version).

¹⁸ *Toldot Hahaganah*, vol. 2, Ma'arachot Publishing House, pp. 251f. See TNCW, pp. 461-2, for more details.

¹⁹ Cited with discussion by Leila Meo, ed., *U.S. Strategy in the Gulf*, Association of Arab-American University Graduates, Belmont, Mass., 1981.

²⁰ Alfred Friendly, "Israel: Paradise Lost," *Washington Post* (*Manchester Guardian Weekly*), July 11, 1982.

²¹ See James M. Ennes, *Assault on the Liberty* (New York: Random House, 1974). Ennes was an officer on the *Liberty*. See Philip Geyelin, *Washington Post* (*Manchester Guardian Weekly*), June 20, 1982, for a rare recording of the facts.

²² *Emda*, Tel Aviv, December 1974.

²³ *Al Hamishmar*, May 10, 1978; *Ha'aretz*, May 15, 1978.

²⁴ Abba Eban, "Morality and Warfar," *Jerusalem Post*, August 16, 1981. For further quotes and discussion, see Edward S. Herman, *The Real Terror Network*, South End press, Boston, 1982.

²⁵ David Ben-Gurion, May 21, 1948; cited by H.D.S. Greenway, *Boston Globe*, July 2, 1982.

²⁶ These are reported in the personal diary of Prime Minister Moshe Sharett. See Livia Rokach, *Israel's Sacred Terrorism*, Association of Arab-American University Graduates, Belmont, Mass., 1980.

SABRA AND SHATILA: An Eyewitness Account of Israeli Participation

by Ralph Schoenman,* and Myra Shone

Contrary to Israeli assertions, Israeli troops were actually present inside Sabra and Shatila during the massacres, according to eyewitness accounts. As a U.N. consultant on the status of prisoners, and a documentary filmmaker, we visited the camps a mere hour after the killer militia left. There we were given accounts of the Israeli presence in the camps. Independent evidence of their presence was also given to the Israeli Investigative Commission by Dr. Paul Morris. But the Commission excised his testimony. (For details see his protest in the popular (not left) Lebanese magazine, Monday Morning.)

As described to us by survivors, Israeli troops entered Shatila on Friday, passing down the main street and fanning out into the small alleyways. Meeting no resistance they retreated 100 yards, still inside Shatila, and formed a phalanx, through which units of killer militia passed. The butchery was carried out as Israeli soldiers looked on.

We ourselves entered the camps midday Saturday, an hour after the last Militia left. We found a charnel house (victims mutilated, eyes removed, heads chopped open, skin stripped and women eviscerated). Four thousand five hundred people were killed, though it is impossible to say how many of these were the result of the shelling. The mass grave prepared by the Lebanese Civil Defense held some 3000 bodies.

We telexed our information to the Israeli Investigation Commission, but were never called. Only after the hearings were concluded did we receive a request for more details, but no invitation to testify.

Ralph Schoenman is former Exec. Director of the Bertrand Russell Foundation. His study on the status of prisoners will be published by the U.N. Myra Shone is a documentary filmmaker.

²⁷ Greenway, *op. cit.*

²⁸ Editorial, *Washington Post*, April 22, 1982. The reference to Israel's "anguish" has to do with the difficulty of "suppressing" Palestinian nationalism in the occupied territories, and the "great pain" caused by the evacuation of settlers from the Sinai, in a "national trauma" that was largely staged, with cooperation between the settlers and the army, for the benefit of a domestic and American audience, a fact that received some acid commentary in the Israeli press but was ignored here. There has, incidentally, been little notice here of the "great pain" of the Arabs who were brutally forced out of these regions a few years earlier, their homes and villages destroyed, to make way for Jewish settlement.

^{28a} In fact, there had been a symbolic retaliatory strike in response to Israeli bombing a month earlier, but it had been aimed away from settlements and had caused no casualties.

²⁹ *Economist*, November 19, 1977.

³⁰ Dr. David Zemach, letter to the editor, *Ha'aretz*, June 16, 1982.

³¹ *N.Y. Times*, June 18, 1982; *Boston Globe*, June 18, 1982.

³² Henry Kamm, *N.Y. Times*, July 17, 1982. See note 1, above.

³³ Ze'ev Schiff, *Ha'aretz*, May 23, 1982.

³⁴ Professor Yehoshua Porath, *Ha'aretz*, June 25, 1982.

³⁵ *Yediot Ahronot*, June 18, 1982; cited by Kapeliouk, *Le Monde diplomatique*.

³⁶ David Krivine, letter, *Economist*, July 10, 1982.

³⁷ It would be a useful exercise to compare European and American reactions to the Israeli invasion and the propaganda accompanying it more generally. For example, the U.S. press has quite generally accepted at face value the scene of Lebanese villagers greeting Israeli soldiers with flowers, etc. Compare the report by Eliahu Zahavi, "Do not tell us about flowers and rice," *Ha'aretz*, June 27, from Copenhagen, where Knesset Member Yosef Rom told a television audience "that Israeli soldiers were greeted in Lebanon with flowers and rice." The interviewer interrupted Rom with the following words: "Do not tell us in Denmark about flowers and rice. Nazi Germany also had pictures of how the Danish people greeted the April 1940 conquest with flowers..." He adds that the Danish foreign minister issued a criticism of the Israeli invasion that was unprecedented in its harshness.

³⁸ *N.Y. Times*, July 6-11; *Boston Globe*, July 7, 9, 10, 11; *Christian Science Monitor*, July 12; *Le Monde*, June 13-4, July 7; *Al Fajr* (Jerusalem), July 2; Kapeliouk, *Le Monde diplomatique*, July; K. Amnon (Amnon Kapeliouk), *Al Hamishmar*, June 25. David Shipler (*N.Y. Times*, July 11) quotes the spokesman for the Israeli administrative authority on the West Bank who states: "We're conducting a political war against the P.L.O. The army is conducting a military war. We're conducting a political war." Shipler notes that "Taking advantage of the P.L.O.'s weakened position in Beirut, Defense Minister Sharon has stepped up political and economic assaults on the organization's adherents and admirers in areas occupied by Israel since 1967," giving a number of details.

³⁹ *Yediot Ahronot*, May 14, 1982. Cited by Kapeliouk in *Le Monde diplomatique*, July.

⁴⁰ Marvine Howe, "Mandate Expires for Syrian Troops," *N.Y. Times*, July 28, 1982. For discussion of the possibilities for settlement of Lebanon's internal conflicts prior to the invasion, see Edward Mortimer, *New Statesman*, June 11, 1982. Walid Khalidi has argued that similar considerations may have been a factor in the 1978 Israeli invasion. See his *Conflict and Violence in Lebanon*, Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, Cambridge, 1979.

⁴¹ Yuval Ne'eman, "Israel's options in Lebanon," *Jerusalem Post*, June 24, 1982.

⁴² Oded Yinon, "A strategy for Israel in the 1980s," *Kivunim*, February 1982. For further discussion, see my articles in the *Guardian* (London), July 12, 1982; *Middle East International* (London), July 16, 1982; *Inquiry*, August 1982; *Merp Reports*, September 1982; and Alexander Cockburn, *Village Voice*, July 27, 1982.

⁴³ See Nadav Safran, *Israel: The Embattled Ally* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1978), p. 110.

⁴⁴ See Anthony H. Cordesman, *Armed Forces Journal*, October 20, 1977.

⁴⁵ Daniel Block, "The Israeli Bull in America's China Shop," *Davar*, November 13, 1981; translated in *Israeli Mirror*, 21 Colingham Road, London SW5, ONU, No. 583, November 24, 1981.

⁴⁶ See Perlmutter *et. al.*, *op. cit.*



THE MORALITY OF ABORTION*

by Nancy Holmstrom

Many feminists and Marxists resist addressing abortion as a moral issue—and indeed resist talking of morality at all—at least when it relates to social and political issues. This is for the very good reason that most of the time “moral talk” is used against us. And, as Marxists, we know that the dominant morality expresses the interests of the ruling class (or other ruling groups)—even if it does so in a very indirect way, through abstract universal, good sounding principles.

When people reject the dominant morality they often become cynical about any talk of morality. However, this aspect of the issue cannot just be dismissed. For one thing, people often reject the official morality for good instinctive reasons but without a worked out counter-theory. This can leave one prey to guilt feelings because it feels like one is doing something for *non-moral* (and this slides into *immoral*) reasons. So, at minimum, it is important to subject the usual moral reasoning to a critique.

The Left often does this by exposing the hypocrisy of the anti-abortion forces. The anti-abortionists can't be pro-life, we argue, if they support the arms race and capital punishment and oppose most of the things that make a decent life possible. While this is useful, it does not

establish the pro-choice case. And it is totally ineffective against the small minority of anti-abortionists, like Daniel Berrigan, who *share our* values on these other questions. Moreover, I think there *is* a moral dimension to life and we should think about what a Marxist feminist morality of abortion would be.¹ Another reason many resist talking about abortion as a moral issue is that it involves very difficult psychological and philosophical issues.

The Nature of the Fetus

Many of the moral issues surrounding abortion center on just what it is that is being aborted—i.e. the nature of the fetus. How one ought morally to behave towards the fetus depends on just what it is. No one, for example, would question one's right to remove a tumor from one's own body. *If* a fetus were just like a tumor, then there would be no moral problem of abortion. So, although the

*This article is a revised version of a talk given in a series on Reproductive Rights co-sponsored by CARASA (Committee for Abortion Rights and Against Sterilization Abuse) and the New York Marxist School.

nature of the fetus is not itself a moral question (or so it seems) I will discuss it first.

The Human Life Amendment declares that human life begins at conception. At the hearings on the bill all sorts of experts testified to this effect. But the claim is totally ambiguous. When a female human being gets pregnant, *something* is alive—that's true. (Although even to call it a "something" is a bit problematic—or at least potentially misleading—because it is such a completely dependent something—like a tumor in this respect.) Anyway, let us assume that something is alive. And this something is related to the *human* species—as opposed to the elephant, the butterfly or the oak tree. In that limited and unproblematic sense, of course it is human. However, it does not follow that the fetus is *itself* a human being—any more than an acorn *is* an oak tree. In fact, the human fetus bears exactly the same relation to a human being that an acorn bears to an oak tree. No scientific or common sense criteria can demonstrate that they are literally the same thing. The only way to support this is to bring in some non-rational religious revelation—and thus end the discussion. Given certain conditions, the acorn will *become* an oak tree; the fetus of a human being will *become* a human being. So we could call it a *potential* human being. The question, then, is the moral significance of that potential.

We have no adequate moral theory to resolve this extremely complex question. It does seem that this potential has some moral significance—at least on the face of it. Thus we feel more moral as well as psychological conflict regarding abortion than birth control. This issue comes up in other political areas. For example, in ecology and anti-nuclear politics, the question of our obligations, if any, to future generations. Do we have such obligations? How could we owe *them* anything if *they* do not exist? Or would it be *morally* acceptable if, because of our actions, the universe just came to an end after we all died? I think we would all say no. But why? In *The Fate of the Earth* Jonathan Schell² argues that we do have obligations to future generations and speaks of these future generations calling out to us to let them exist. This particular justification for not destroying the earth should bring a chill to anyone who is pro-choice because it relies on exactly the same assumption as the anti-abortionist: That we have the same moral obligations towards a potential human being as we do towards a person. This is a difficult issue. However, the assumption that a *potential* human being has the same rights—and we have the same obligations towards it that we would to a human person in the full sense simply cannot be sustained. What rights a thing has, what obligations we have towards it depends on its properties. Our moral obligations to human beings depend on the properties human beings have—in particular, their ability to feel and to understand—properties a fetus does not have.³ Since potential things do not possess most of the properties of the things they potentially are, there seems little rational basis for ascribing to them all the moral properties of the things they can become. Here again is where non-rational revelation comes in and there is no further basis for discussion.

However, it is worth seeing the logical implications of this position. If one were morally obligated to actualize all the potential human beings (if they're calling out to us, as

Schell says), then not only would abortion be wrong but so would contraception...and so would abstinence. In fact, maybe we are morally obligated to have intercourse as often as we possibly can. Clearly this is absurd. Many anti-abortionists do not hold that birth control is wrong (nor of course abstinence). What makes abortion morally different to them is the existence of "something"—something human (in the limited sense of not bovine) which has its own genetic code. But since this something is only *potentially* a human being in anything *more than* this limited and uncontroversial sense, it must be the *potentiality* that gives it moral importance. If so, then I believe the anti-abortion position leads logically to anti-birth control and anti-abstinence. Now I am not saying that the potential of the fetus to become a human being has *no* moral significance—I will come back to what I think its significance is. What I am saying is that the anti-abortionist's view of its significance is totally untenable.

Abortion and Sex

But the debate about the nature of the fetus tends to presume that *if* a fetus were a human person, it would then follow that abortion is morally wrong. But this is mistaken. All that this would mean is that there are two people involved—the fetus and the woman. Then we would have the moral problem of a conflict between two persons' needs and rights—a common moral dilemma where, oftentimes, the needs of one person or group must be sacrificed. The anti-abortionist's position is that the woman's needs and rights must always be overridden by the fetus'. Again, I see no moral basis for this.

Consider this hypothetical example.⁴ Suppose, instead of reproduction occurring in the usual way, human beings developed in the following way: spores were floating around in the air and occasionally landed in someone's carpet. When they did, and were not dislodged, they developed into human beings. If you want one to land in your carpet, you open the window; if you don't, you close the window. But suppose you forget to shut it, or suppose it's hot and you don't have the money for screens, or suppose the screens are defective. In any event, suppose that not because of your wishes, or even against your wishes, the spore lands in your carpet. Are you morally obligated not to dislodge it or even to help it along? It's certainly not clear that you are. In fact, I think our institutions would say that you are not. And notice that this example is dis-analogous to the real case in ways that would make our obligations less in the real case. To grow *in* a person's room is a lot different from growing *in* a person's body.⁵ The physical and psychological relations are quite different. The disruption and danger to her health and even life—plus the social implications for her life are much greater in the real case. So if it is uncertain that a person in the hypothetical case is obligated not to dislodge those beings from the carpet, it is certainly not clear that a woman's right to lead her life as she had planned must be over-ridden by the rights of the fetus—even if the fetus were a *person*.

If my hunch is correct, that most people would feel less moral conflict about dislodging the spore from the carpet than about abortion, the question is *why*. One reason is just that the example is so hypothetical. Abstracted from real conditions, which include a very powerful pro-motherhood ideology as well as our beliefs and emotions about the child a fetus can become, our attitudes are

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bound to be different. Another reason for feeling that in the real case the woman is obligated not to abort comes from our feelings about the means by which—in reality—one gets into that position, *viz*o, sex. Without the idea that sex is in some way bad, that one gets “caught” when one gets pregnant, the issue of abortion would generate less emotional and moral conflict.⁶ In the hypothetical example, there does not seem the same heavy moral responsibility to shut the window.

To be more precise, I think most anti-abortionists oppose sexual freedom and may or may not disapprove of sex *per se*. Although some anti-abortionists share the position of St. Paul and Pope John Paul that sex-for-itself (lust) is always evil, though less bad within the confines of marriage, others no longer believe this. In fact some rightwing bookstores feature explicit sex manuals which seem to advocate sexual pleasure by any means necessary. However, this sex is to take place only within the confines of the male dominated nuclear family.⁷ Thus, although there are differences within the anti-abortion forces on sex, they are nearly unanimously opposed to sexual freedom, that is, the freedom of women (as well as men) to choose if, when, how and with whom to have sexual relations. Women's freedom to control their sexual and reproductive lives inevitably goes beyond the bounds of the traditional family and poses a tremendous challenge to a sexist society.

The same anti-sexual position is a logical basis for the exceptions many anti-abortionists make in cases of rape and incest. Motivated by sympathy for the victim, and the feeling that since such pregnancies are not the result of freely chosen sexual acts they exempt the victims from responsibility and believe an abortion is justified to minimize further suffering. However, if an anti-abortionist holds that abortion is wrong because the fetus has an absolute right to life, then the woman's motivations, etc. are irrelevant and these exceptions are not logically and morally justifiable. The *fetus*, and the future person it will become, are no different when it is the result of rape or incest. The only logically consistent way to distinguish abortion in these circumstances from others is that in these cases, the woman was not intentionally engaging in adult sexual activity. But since there is no rational moral justification for the premise that non-procreative sexuality is wrong, there is no rational justification for distinguishing abortion in these cases. Feminists should always be clear about this in our propaganda.

Moral Primacy to Women

Let us come back to the question whether the fetus is a person. I think that despite appearances, this is not an issue that must be settled *prior* to settling the moral question of whether abortion is justified. Rather, to ask whether the fetus is a person (or a human being in anything but the not-bovine sense), is just another way of posing the moral question of whether abortion is justifiable. Analogous questions come up regarding mercy killings and the moral status of severely retarded people. Granting that it is living and related to the human species, the question of whether the fetus, or anything else, is a person, is just the question of how we should treat it, what our obligations towards it are, what its rights are. I think that rights to the future should be

based on the possession of purposes, goals, projects that extend into the future. We should not cause pain to any sentient creature, but a sentient creature without purposes or projects for the future does not have the same rights to the future as a creature who does. This criterion gives clear moral primacy to the woman's needs over the needs of the fetus.

That's looking at the question in individual terms. When we turn to women as a group, there is even more reason to give moral primacy to women over fetuses. Whether women can control their reproduction determines everything else in their lives. As long as contraception is not 100 percent reliable (and that is the major reason for abortions), women need access to abortions to control their reproduction. Without that, it is next to impossible to end an oppressive sexual division of labor and all that that entails. Whatever ambiguities there are as to the nature and moral status of a fetus, there is no such ambiguity regarding women. And it is clear that the moral goals of equality, freedom and self determination for women can only be realized if women control their reproduction. Thus I am basing women's rights to abortion on their need to control their reproduction and on the basic values of freedom, self determination and equality.⁸

Parenthetically, aside from contraceptive failure, women need abortions, particularly younger women, because of their failure to use contraceptives. And the main reasons for this go back to two things: First of all, an anti-sex morality. They may be having sex, but it seems worse to plan for it than to be “carried away.” Secondly, the traditional role of motherhood. Many women lack an alternative vision for their lives, or lack a *practicable* alternative vision. This is particularly true for younger women, poor women and minority women.⁹ These social conditions need to be overturned to eliminate both their need for abortion and their hesitation to get one.

Abortion Is Not Infanticide

The anti-abortionist will often reply to a moral position like the one I've sketched out that the logic of my argument leads to the justification of infanticide. Since development is continuous, there is no clear line between a not-quite-born fetus and a newborn baby. Since infants, like the fetus, do not have the properties of self-consciousness, goals, etc. that adults have, they do not have moral rights and hence one could kill them if one wanted.¹⁰ (The strategy of the anti-abortionist here is to try to show that their opponent's argument leads to clearly unacceptable conclusions—the justification of infanticide — just as I tried to show that their argument leads to the ridiculous conclusion that we are obligated to have sex as often as possible.)

Now the continuity of development does make it difficult to draw a precise line, but the conclusion that you cannot draw one at all is a fallacy, known in logic as the slippery slope argument. There are millions of cases where the exact place to draw a line is hard to find but where there is a clear difference nevertheless—between yellow and orange, for example, or the front and the back of your head. Whether infants have the *same* rights as adults is a complex question—I don't think so—for reasons similar to the ones already discussed—but leaving

that aside, the justification of abortion does *not* entail a justification of infanticide. There is a clear difference between an infant and a fetus: An infant is not so uniquely connected and dependent on one particular person as is a fetus. Others can take care of it. That provides a basis for saying that women should have the right to abortion but not to infanticide.¹¹ Prior to birth, the continuity of development does make it difficult to draw a line. Most of us would feel less easy about the morality of aborting an 8 month fetus than a 2 month fetus. That is because of its near-viability, and because its qualities are closer to that of a human being.

Here, I would suggest, the moral significance of the fetus' potential to become a person (given certain conditions) lies in the value we place on persons. The potentiality in itself—i.e. independent of people's valuation of what it may become—does not give it moral rights. Similarly, I think that our obligation not to destroy the Earth, which can be expressed as an obligation to future generations, stems from the fact that we care about what happens after we die. The values, projects and attachments of actually existing persons extend into the future beyond their lifespans. Independent of these, future generations should not be said to have rights. There is a psychological parallel to this which provides some support to this moral intuition. We have very different feelings toward a fetus depending on whether or not we want a child. If a woman (or man) does *not* want a child, the fetus is experienced as a tumor would be—as a dangerous obstruction—to be gotten rid of. Abortions in such circumstances are experienced with tremendous relief and a sense of liberation.¹² However, if a woman (or man) wants a child, i.e. wants what the fetus could become, then they see the fetus as something developmentally continuous with the desired baby. An abortion in these circumstances would produce feelings of pain and loss. Women who have amniocentesis feel a marked shift in their attitudes after they know the fetus is all right and will become the child they desire.

Who Should Decide?

Thus far I have been addressing the issue of the rightness or wrongness of abortion, arguing that there is no rational basis for the position that abortion in general is wrong. Another moral question is who has the right to decide this moral question. These two questions are often confused. What I have said implies that only the pregnant woman has this right because no one else is affected in as intimate and far reaching way. Others may or may not be affected: The man who impregnated her may not even know she is pregnant. On the other hand, he may desperately want a child (though, of course, he might change his mind at a later point). Her family might be affected or might not. Society might need more children or, on the other hand, might need fewer children. But no one will be affected by a particular birth or abortion as predictably, as intimately and in as far reaching a way as the woman who is pregnant. Therefore she has the right to make the decision.¹³ To some extent this is due to present social conditions: the expectations on women, individualized child rearing, lack of adequate child rearing, lack of adequate child care, etc., all of which could, and hopefully, will change.¹⁴ However, women's greater rights over the question is also rooted in

the biological relation she has to the fetus. As long as that exists, no one but the woman should decide whether or not to let the pregnancy go to term.¹⁵

The criterion of unique biological dependence that I have used to distinguish the right to abortion from the right to infanticide raises the question of whether women's right to abortion is absolute—or could it change if technology permitted a fetus to be viable outside a woman very early in pregnancy. Here I think it is important to distinguish two aspects of the question. At present the woman's decision to abort necessarily has the consequence that the potentiality of the fetus to become a human being is not actualized. Abortion is feticide. But suppose the woman's decision as to whether or not to keep the fetus in her body could be separated from the issue of whether or not the fetus could develop into a human being. Then, in my opinion, women would still have the exclusive right on the former question but probably not on the latter. The only reason a woman might have some greater say over what happened to the fetus is that she might feel greater emotional connection to it than other people would. However, this might very well change, and in any case does not seem sufficient to give women the same exclusive rights over the future of the fetus as they have on abortion—if the two issues could be separated.

Society's Right?

The biological connection I have emphasized raises another interesting though speculative question regarding a possible difference between the two aspects of reproductive freedom: women's right to abortion and women's right to have a child. Although all moral issues are to a large extent dependent on social and historical conditions, the biological relation of a woman to a fetus, in my opinion, gives women the moral right to an abortion under all social-historical conditions. Raising a child, however, inevitably affects people other than the mother (possibly even to as great or greater a degree), and requires social resources. As feminists have insisted, women's greater responsibility for raising children is socially, not biologically determined. Raising children should be seen as the responsibility of society as a whole. Therefore, should women have the same exclusive right to decide to *have* a child that they do to *not* have a child? Or should society be able to make that decision?

A child has such a profound affect on one's life that, ideally, any woman or man who wants a child ought to be able to have one.¹⁶ However, if social resources are so desperately short that every child causes greater hardship, then the majority of people (women and men) might want to decide that no one should have more children (or no more than a certain number). This sounds like it should be people's democratic right to make such a decision.¹⁷

If we can imagine social conditions where a woman would not have the right to decide to have a child, then this right is more dependent on social conditions than is the right to abortion. However, the biological connection is still key. Suppose a woman becomes pregnant (and does not want an abortion) despite the democratic decision to have no more children? It would seem a terrible violation of her individual person to force her to have an abortion (though society might require her to do more

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work to provide for the additional child). Thus the democratic right to limit children runs up against the biological fact that it is individual women who get pregnant and have abortions. This basic fact should limit the rights of society, in any social historical conditions, to decide whether someone ought to have a child. As Ros Petchesky has argued, abortion is profoundly and inherently both biological and social, both individual and social.

Morality and the Law

One final brief comment on the relation between the moral and the legal questions. Feminists often deal with

the moral issue just by saying that most people are in favor of abortion. But this does not even address the moral question and is not going to convince someone with moral qualms. It is quite possible that most people are wrong on a moral issue; they often are. However, the same point can be made in a different way. Where there is no moral consensus in a society on a particular question and no consensus on a moral theory to decide the conflict, then the right thing for a society to do is leave it to individuals to decide and not make laws about it.¹⁸ If that is the right procedure, then—independent of the morality of abortion—it ought to be left to each woman to decide ■

FOOTNOTES

¹ I try to present a valid moral justification of abortion based on women's needs. If it should turn out that there is an irresolvable conflict between women's needs and those of some other group, then it may be impossible to have one moral position on abortion that is valid for everyone. If so, then my argument can be seen as a moral position for women. For a Marxist argument for the necessity of class-relative moralities, see Milton Flisk's *Ethics and Society* (N.Y., New York University Press, 1981). I am hopeful that the conflict between women's needs and others' is not so irresolvable as the conflict between the needs of different classes.

² Jonathan Schell, *Fate of the Earth* (N.Y., Alfred Knopf and Co., 1982).

³ Hence although we have obligations to animals, they are not the same as our obligations to humans. Even (most) vegetarians agree with this, since they do not believe that those of us who eat (animal) meat are doing something as morally bad as it would be to kill humans in order to eat them.

⁴ This example and a number of other imaginative examples come from Judith Jarvis Thomson's "A Defense of Abortion," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 1 (1971).

⁵ As Ellen Willis put it, "There is no way a pregnant woman can passively let the fetus live, she must create and nurture it with her own body, a symbiosis that is often difficult, sometimes dangerous, uniquely intimate. However gratifying pregnancy may be to a woman who desires it, for the unwilling it literally an invasion—the closest analogy is to the difference between lovemaking and rape. . . . Clearly, abortion is by normal standards an act of self-defense." *The Village Voice*, March 5, 1979.

⁶ Of course one might still feel emotional conflict about an abortion because one is ambivalent about having a baby. One might want a baby but want other things more or feel that circumstances simply preclude having a child. However, I am only concerned here with emotional conflict that stems from moral conflict.

⁷ My information on this comes from a talk on sexuality in the CARASA/NYMS series by Gloria Jacobs who is writing a book on the subject with Barbara Ehrenreich and Elizabeth Hess.

⁸ Someone might object that my talk of "rights" is un-Marxist. What I mean by saying that some person or group has a right to something is just that no one ought to prevent them from having it and, moreover, that society should help them to secure it. This does not commit me to a liberal theory of rights. In my sense of "rights" people would have rights in a socialist society and even in communism. In the ideal communist society, however, where production and distribution would be "according to need" (as Marx says in *The Critique of the Gotha Program*), it would be unnecessary to speak in terms of rights.

⁹ On the reasons for abortion see "The Psychosocial Factors of the Abortion Experience: A Critical Review" by Lisa Roseman Shusterman in *Psychology of Women*, ed. Juanita Williams (N.Y., Norton, 1929).

¹⁰ Some pro-choice writers agree that this follows. See Michael Tooley "Abortion and Infanticide" in Joel Feinberg's *The Problem of Abortion* (Belmont, CA., Wadsworth, 1973).

¹¹ Alison Jaggar makes this point in "Abortion and a Woman's Right to Decide" in *Women and Philosophy*, ed. by Carol C. Gould and Marx Wartofsky (N.Y., Capricorn Books, 1976).

¹² Since most abortions are voluntary, it is not surprising that studies of legal abortions show that very few women suffer long term negative psychological affects. See Shusterman.

¹³ This does not guarantee, of course, that she will always make the most morally responsible decision. Feminists have had to struggle so much for the moral right to make the decision that less attention has been paid to the question of the values by which they should decide. Some feminists have urged that we devote more attention to the question. (See Ros Petchesky "Reproductive Freedom: Beyond a 'A Woman's Right to Choose'" *Signs* 1980: Vol. 5, No. 4; Mary Segers "A Feminist Perspective on Abortion: Responsible Reproductive Freedom", unpublished). However, even a woman choosing an abortion for "bad" reasons (e.g. the fetus is the "wrong" sex, the pregnancy conflicts with her vacation etc.) should not be prevented from making the choice. Moreover, unless we knew that there were good homes waiting for all unwanted babies, it seems morally better that a woman who wants an abortion have one—regardless of her reasons.

¹⁴ Jaggar stresses this point.

¹⁵ Petchesky stresses that abortion is inherently both biological and social.

¹⁶ Assuming, of course, they are not known child abusers, etc. It might also be possible and preferable, however, to have nurturing desires satisfied with children other than one's own.

¹⁷ I want to stress the two conditions I have put on this decision: (1) that there are not sufficient resources no matter how they are distributed, (2) that the decision is democratically made with the full participation of women. No currently existing society meets both these conditions. Hence in all existing societies, women have the same moral right to have a child as to not have a child.

¹⁸ Elizabeth Rapaport and Paul Sagal develop this point nicely in "On Step Forward, Two Steps Backward: Abortion and Ethical Theory" in *Feminism and Philosophy* edited by Braggin, Elliston and English (Totowa, New Jersey, Littlefield, Adams & Co., 1977). I would add one qualification: As long as no one clearly suffers. I take this qualification to be met in the case of abortion. It is not clear that fetuses can be said to suffer from abortions. It is clear that women suffer when abortions are illegal. Aside from forced pregnancies and childbearing and unwanted children, there are illness and death from illegal abortions. Although precise estimates of deaths from illegal abortions are impossible to obtain, it is estimated that the vast majority are of poorer women and thus 3/4 of the deaths are of black women.

ON THIRD WORLD DEVELOPMENT

by Steve Zeluck

Once upon a time the problem of Third World development, or lack of it, seemed simple enough. The colonial subdivision of the world and the subordination of these economies to the various national imperialisms seemed to tell us all we needed to know. But the end of colonialism after World War II required a new analysis of underdevelopment. The most important theory which arose in response to that need and which has dominated Left thinking about the relationship between the developed and Third World economies is Dependency Theory—based on the works of Andre Gunder Frank and Samir Amin, among others. These authors contend that the penetration of capitalism into Third World countries will not develop their economies but rather perpetuate their backwardness. In this article I shall argue, contrary to the dependency school of non-development, that capitalism under certain conditions is in fact capable of developing the former colonial and other underdeveloped areas and has done so. I will demonstrate the emergence out of underdevelopment of *one section* of the Third World which I will call the “developing countries”; offer the mechanisms by which this process occurred and the peculiar forms which economic development assumed in these countries; consider some objections raised by the dependency school; and explore the political implications of development in those areas where it has occurred.

But facts in themselves can be meaningless, or at least have diverse meanings in the absence of a theoretical structure through which they can be read. So while I will not offer a *rounded* theory of economic development, nor offer a country by country analysis of the *always* unique social, political and economic circumstances which have governed any country in the process of development, I will suggest some of the common forces which made development possible in *these* countries at *this* particular time.

THE FACT OF DEVELOPMENT

It is not difficult to document the fact that capitalism has fostered profound economic growth in a whole series of countries such as S. Korea, Taiwan, Brazil, Mexico, Turkey, Algeria and others* (not to speak of countries where serious development efforts have, so far, been abortive—Peru, Iran). Of course, the development is not proceeding *uniformly*, any more than capitalism has at any other point in its history. But these outstanding cases constitute evidence that development

can and does occur. Insecurity, hunger, degradation, unremitting toil are still the fate of masses in many of these countries. Nonetheless, crucial economic changes are altering the shape of their societies—shifting population, creating an urban middle class and proletariat alongside the impoverished and marginalized unemployed and underemployed in town and countryside. In *these* developing countries, as distinct from those Third World economies which remain relatively undeveloped, there has been dramatic industrial growth and even improvements in social welfare.

The fact of development can be demonstrated by the expansion of the industrial workforce and GNP, including sustained increases roughly double that of the U.S. and 50% greater than European capitalism *at its best*; dramatic increases in the place of manufacturing in GNP; in the share of manufactured goods among exports; and extraordinary increases in saving-investment as a share of GNP. The transformation of these economies can be seen further in that over just one decade, 1960–1970, manufactured goods not based

CHART I

	Industry as a % of Gross Domestic Product (GDP)		Manu- facturing as % of GDP		Avg. annual increase in Gross Domestic Invest. (GDI)		GDI as % of GDP		Gross Domestic Savings as % of GDP		Primary goods as a share of exports		Manuf. goods as a share of exports		Life expect- ancy		Infant mortality		Public & publicly guaranteed invest. as % of total loans		% ann. increase in GNP		% ann. growth in energy	
	'60	'70	'60	'70	'60s	'70s	'60	'79	'60	'79	'60	'78	'60	'78	'60	'79	'60	'79	'70	'79	'60s	'70s	'60s	'70s
S. Korea	20	39	14	27	23.6	14.9	11	35	1	28	86	11	6	57	54	63	62	37	88	99	8.6	9.5	6.3	4.6
Brazil	35	38	26	28	7.0	10.1	22	23	21	21	97	66†	3	30	55	63	128	92	66	80	5.4	8.4	8.3	7.3
Mexico	29	38	23	29	9.6	7.4	20	28	18	26	86	70	8	27	58	66	78	60	70	91	7.2	5.2	5.8	15.7
U.S.	38	34	25	24	4.8	1.9	11	19	19	18	37	31	60	66	70	74	26	14	—	—	4.3	3.0	3.7	0.7
Germany	53	49	40	38	4.1	1.6	27	25	29	25	13	12	83	83	—	—	—	—	—	—	4.4	2.6	-0.6	0.1

Source: *World Development Reports*, 1981, 1982, by World Bank

† Recall that Mexico/Brazil, like U.S. & Canada, can be major exporters of primary goods without being any less capitalist developed.

*A recent book by Bill Warren, *Imperialism, Pioneer of Capitalism*, argues in part a parallel viewpoint. He argues that imperialism, through the multinationals, has developed the Third World; offers a sustained empirical and analytic cri-

tique of dependency theory; and consolidates and makes more coherent a number of ideas which have long been in the air. But, as I will argue, his approach is seriously flawed.

Against the Current

CHART II

	Number Workers in Manufact.	% Annual Increase Average	Workforce (000,000)	Manufact. Workers as % of Workforce	Change in Real Wages
Brazil					
1960	2.0	9.0	—	—	
1970	3.2		30.0	11.0	80%
1976	6.1		40.0	16.0	1972-80
Mexico					
1974	2.8	5.6	15.9	17.5	
1979	3.6		19.7	18.0	n.a.
Korea					
1971	1.3	14.0	10.0	13.0	1965-80
1980	3.0		13.7	22.0	300%
Taiwan					
1969	0.8		n.a.		
1975	1.5	5.7	14.0	10.4	1960-80
1980	2.2		18.0	11.8	400%
Germany					
1972	9.6	-1.0	26.1	36.0	1970-80
1980	8.8		25.2	31.0	40%
U.S.					
1971	19.6	1.6	79.0	24.7	none
1979	22.1		96.9	23.0	

Sources: Yearbook of Labor Statistics; Republic of China Statistical Abstract; Bank of Korea, Econ. Stat. Yearbook; Anuario Estadístico do Brasil

merely on processing domestic raw materials rose from 19% to 40% of total manufacturing output, a tendency which accelerated throughout the 70's. And industrial production is now more weighted toward heavy industry—whose rate of growth is 70% greater than that of light industry.¹

As for social welfare, one can note the rapid expansion of education and the radical improvement in health, including the elimination of smallpox, malaria, yellow fever, etc., sharp *increases* in life expectancy, *decreases* in infant mortality, and improved nutrition. Hence the much noted population explosion in the Third World, which parallels a similar phenomenon in the 19th century when Europe's population tripled, dramatically outstripping that of Africa or Asia. In addition, real wages in manufacturing have risen substantially. While U.S. real wages were stagnant during 1965-80, S. Korean wages tripled. In Brazil and Taiwan wages almost doubled from 1970-80.

Of course, despite significant wage increases in the developing countries, the increased wealth is not widely shared, anymore than it was during the industrial revolution in Europe. And where, as in the case of Brazil (and, to a limited extent, northern India) modern capitalist agriculture came to predominate* *without land reform*, it has meant (as again it did in 18th century England) a loss of land by the poorest and an increase in day-laborers, i.e., an actual decline in welfare for many. We are reminded that *under capitalism* the relation of economic growth to income equality has historically appeared U-shaped. In the earliest stages of growth, inequality (and at times absolute misery)

*Traditionally (and it was certainly true for early European capitalism), a land reform which created a class of small landowners was considered essential for capitalist economic development because it provided a market and was also a source of capital accumulation. Several of the developing countries (for example, Korea and Taiwan) have in fact followed this classic

CHART III

TAIWAN GROWTH: % increase per annum

	1952-60	1960-68	1968-73
Real GDP	7.3	8.5	10.6
Real/Cap Income	3.1	4.0	7.1
Agriculture Output	3.6	4.2	1.2
Manufacturers' Output	13.3	15.8	23.0

Source: Alice Amsden, *Modern China*, Vol. 5

has increased, only to begin a lagging correction later. The undeniable poverty and suffering of so many peasants and urban migrants testify to the horrors of class oppression but not necessarily to underdevelopment.

If development is in fact occurring, how was it possible, and what are its prospects? Of *today's* developing countries, only a fraction of the third world, the question becomes, "is the glass half-empty or half-full?" Is the incomplete character of development even in these developing countries proof that they can go no further, or is it evidence that the filling-up process, the tendency to a mature capitalist development is at work? To answer this question we will have to explore the conditions of development and the specific circumstances which give development today the special shape it must assume. Only then can we really judge whether the development is real or illusory, i.e., lacking a self-sustaining dynamic.

THE SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT

Economic growth in the developing countries can be attributed to two interdependent processes. One is rooted in the radical transformation of the character of post-war capitalism and imperialism. The second is an expression of a more long-term process, the uneven and combined character of capitalist development throughout its history. To start with the first.

Decline of Colonialism

It is generally accepted that pre-World War II imperialism impeded industrialization and the development of capitalism in the Third World. One major factor here was the *national* monopolies which in the *age of colonialism*, could limit development to raw material extraction and processing, and to building the necessary minimal economic infrastructure. This policy required measures to prevent the growth of an indigenous capitalist class, except in the capacity of junior partners. Limits on indigenous capital were achieved through cooperation with the non-capitalist and anti-industrial domestic ruling classes. But after World War II, colonialism all but disappeared, replaced by states with varying degrees of independence. The importance of this change has all too often been ignored. Most Marxists have focused nearly exclusively on the neo-colonial *limitations* of these new states and tended to downplay the independent states' economic expansionist potential. This is especially deplorable for Americans, since the American Revolution's goal of independence was so clearly central to the U.S.'s economic development.

road, though it is questionable if, *today*, this is the most efficient way of accomplishing those goals. Other developing countries, Brazil and (increasingly) Mexico sought to achieve the ends of capital accumulation and markets through the establishment of modern large-scale agriculture.

The New State

The rise of the new independent states, with their varying degrees of weakness, did not guarantee full economic independence of course, as 19th century Latin America testifies. These new states were a necessary though not sufficient pre-condition for growth. The very fact that independence released a whole spectrum of responses ranging from the neo-colonialism of much of French West Africa to states such as those in the rapidly developing Asian economies is proof enough of this fact. But even the Latin American states, which were formally independent even before World War II, were profoundly affected by the end of colonialism. For they had been *politically*, as well as economically subordinate through the generally acknowledged form of "spheres of influence." It would be difficult to see Brazil, Mexico, or Argentina *today* in that light.

It may well be asked, in what sense could one speak of some of these newly independent states as capitalist at all, given the initial absence of a strong, already-existing capitalist class within them, and given that the initiative for independence and actual rule of these states is often accomplished under the hegemony of an apparently non-capitalist class of soldiers and civil servants. But the development of capitalism is studded with instances of critical roles for formations of a non-capitalist character. The role of the German junkers under Bismarck, the English Whig aristocracy, the Japanese "feudal" Daimyo in 1868 in developing capitalism comes to mind. Such layers can come to see the road to national power and to their own survival lies only in the controlled development of capitalism, including encouraging and even creating a capitalist class. (In some cases, as in Japan, it seemed also the precondition for national independence.)

The development of their national economies requires these states to create new state apparatuses to hot-house growth, raise capital, engage in indicative planning. Through nationalizing the banks, or otherwise dominating them, the state invests in a state industrial sector and heavily supports research and development. But it also provides relatively cheap credit and a favorable investment climate to the nascent capitalist class. With these weapons, the state can "provide" directions to the capitalists on where to invest, refuse to support inefficient industries, guarantee bank loans to private capital, etc.—"instructions" whose impact far transcends what passes for planning in such places as France, Italy, and even Japan.

In addition, the state opens the door to foreign capital and makes "deals" with the multi-national corporations which include provisions aimed at creating a domestic capitalist class.* This is done by local-content laws, creating a sub-contracting class which gains capital, know-how and contacts, and by insisting that local capital or the government, or both, share in the new corporations.

*For illuminating studies of the rise and creation of capitalist classes under such circumstances, see C. Leys in the 1978 *Socialist Register*; Peter Evans' "Dependent Development," Alice Amsden on Taiwan (*Modern China* Vol 50; and, not least, the splendid novels of NgUGI, especially *Devil on the Cross*.

Such policies have resulted in substantial local ownership of key industries in several developing countries. For example, in S. Korea, the steel, shipbuilding, chemical, cement and other basic industries are owned by native capital (not multinationals). Through intercession of the state, these domestic capitalists borrowed huge sums on the Eurodollar market. In Taiwan, steel, power, cement, etc. are state-owned and the vast majority of remaining industry is owned by local capital, 45 of the largest 100 corporations are state owned.³ Throughout Latin America, however, the multi-nationals' direct role is substantially greater than in Korea or Taiwan (a point to which we return below).

The effective pursuit of such sweeping, all-encompassing state policies required two further interrelated changes which must be addressed. First, the new states took on an authoritarian character. Equally essential, the new stage of world capitalism created international conditions unknown before World War II.

The Authoritarian State

There is a long tradition in the socialist movement that a bourgeois democratic state is necessary for capitalist development. However true this theory may once have been,* today it is a luxury which developing capitalist nations cannot afford.

In the Third World, a democratic state would be an enormous obstacle to capitalist development. Only an authoritarian state could risk creating an expanding, profoundly exploited working class, or dare to either impose land reform (in S. Korea, Taiwan, and Japan) or retain large-scale capitalist agriculture (as in Latin America). The combination of low wages with advanced technology offered the great promise for these economies to break into the world market. But the development of modern industry, by encouraging working class organization and by increasing the demand for labor, tends to raise wages, thereby threatening the high profits necessary for continued growth. The state must be able to repress the new working class in order to curb this tendency toward rising wages. In addition, hostile pre-capitalist classes who might threaten nascent capitalism at its birth have to be contained. Consequently, with one notable "exception" we witness the identification of economic growth with authoritarian regimes—in Brazil, Mexico, Turkey, Argentina, not to speak of S. Korea, Taiwan, etc. The exception, India, could well be the exception which proves the rule. A strong case could be made that the bourgeois democratic "heritage" of India was a substantial obstacle to capitalist growth in a nation which, in 1946, had such an enormous headstart over most of the other now developing countries. Even land reform, either in the form of division of land among the poor, or its consolidation into large-scale agriculture, was beyond its capacity.

*In fact, from the start, an oligarchical republic was always decidedly the preferred "democratic" state, even in the U.S. pressure from the working class (and more recently women and blacks) forced universal suffrage and other democratizing institutions. Indeed, the working class specter has haunted and aborted bourgeois democracy from the start, as far back as the 1795 Babeuf rebellion in France. As a result, the classic bourgeois democratic revolution ended up with Napoleon.

The Restructuring of Post-War Capitalism

The effect of the independent authoritarian states would have been very limited were it not for the far-reaching changes which occurred after World War 2 in the advanced capitalist world itself. More than the end of colonialism was involved. Alongside increased concentration and centralization of capital, the rise of the multinationals, we also witnessed renewed competitive forces, as exemplified by GATT, the expansion of free trade, and the revolution in transport and communication, which contributed to the competitive flow of capital to the former colonies.

It was no longer possible for *national* capitals, even in their multi-national form, to stifle economic development in the colonies out of fear of creating competitors. US steel, for example, might not like the development of a steel industry in the Third World. But there was now little they could do to prevent it. US steel could no longer refuse to build a steel mill abroad, either for itself or others, for it had no way of guaranteeing that another steel corporation, American or foreign, would not do so. Similarly, the growing internationalization of the banks weakened their ties to the *national* (e.g. steel) enterprises, so that Western banks found it in their own corporate interest (and unavoidable) to lend developing countries money for steel mills despite the possible effect upon their "own" national steel industry. If the "national" bank did not lend out of "loyalty," there were others who would.

Paralleling, and in part as a result of this competitive climate, we have witnessed an unprecedented free flow of capital, freer than ever before in the history of capitalism. Entire industries began their migration to the Third World; entire countries and regions declined (England, the U.S. Northeast, French-speaking Belgium), while others soared into new economic prominence. Individual national industrial concerns, including the multi-nationals, had little choice but to participate in this restructuring and relocation of industry, if only to minimize their own losses. The process was too powerful to be resisted by any one industry, multi-national corporation or state. Examples are legion. Quijano documents one in which U.S. capital is displaced by the Peruvian state in alliance with Japanese and European capital.⁴

This renewed competitive pressure has manifested itself even in that most truly neo-colonial area, French West Africa. There, the rulers are using competition between U.S. and French capital to their own ends. The French corporations' monopoly on oil and banking been broken. This year alone, only French government cheap credit allowed the French multi-nationals to defeat their American rivals in two deals worth \$3 billion.

Perhaps the most ironic evidence of this new competitive situation is the fact that Japan, in this new climate, was able to accomplish, precisely those goals of economic domination which she sought to reach, unsuccessfully, in another era, by war.

If the post-war period provided the political and economic preconditions for growth by a new stratum of developing countries, the next question arises immediately and naturally: where were the huge sums required for development to come from?

SOURCE OF FUNDS

There are two classic sources of capital. One of these is outright theft (politely called primitive accumulation by 19th century economists)—robbing the domestic peasants, expelling them from their land via enclosures, and plundering the wealth of the Indies. The other source is the slow accumulation of capital by the domestic capitalist class through the direct exploitation of wage labor.

But a classic case is seldom if ever also the *norm*. Third World capitalists barely existed, and there were certainly no Indies to exploit, even if they could. To Lenin (and Marx) it appeared that economic development would be stimulated by a substitute method, the export of capital from the developed countries to the Third World. They were both correct and mistaken. Even in Lenin's day private corporate and banking capital went to the already *developing* countries (in pre-World War 1 days, to Czarist Russia, the U.S., the British Dominions, but *not* to Africa or Asia). More recently this objection seemed to gather force when it became evident in the post World War 2 days that corporate export capital went primarily to the other *already mature* capitalist countries (not the "developing" ones). The \$80 billion in U.S. private capital exports has been equally divided among Canada, Europe, and the rest of the world. The consequent shortage of capital for the Third World is compounded when we consider that the flow of *private* capital exports today, while huge in absolute terms, has actually shrunk as a per cent of GNP.*

If therefore direct investment from the advanced economies is not the decisive source of capital for the Third World, where could the capital come from? Accumulation of capital in those countries which have broken through or are breaking through occurs on the following basis which distinguishes them from classic Europe or even the Third World's closest model, Japan.

Again, the decisive instrument is the national state.

For a start, the strong states imposed *forced savings* upon the population which were diverted to industrialization by both state and private capital. In Singapore all wage earners "contribute" 18% of their salaries to a "social security fund" which is in turn invested in or loaned to industry by the state. In Taiwan similar forced savings were extracted primarily from agriculture.

But since extracting capital from the domestic economy is not sufficient, and since the multi-nationals are not investing enough, the only alternative is development and capital accumulation via loans, not direct investment (a very crucial difference in the short run). In fact, the bulk of basic industry in the developing countries, whether built by the state directly, or by private corporations with state-acquired or state-secured loans, was constructed (in accord with Lenin's theory?)

*But however relatively small the role of private capital exports to the developing countries, it must be noted that those investments which did occur were, in the post-war world, increasingly more likely to be in industrial facilities, rather than in raw material production and allied investment in infrastructure. (See Cardoso in *Sociology of Developing Societies* by Alavi and Shanin, pp. 118-9.)

on some \$400 billions of loans since World War II, two-thirds of it from private banks.*

That these huge sums were forthcoming ought not surprise us. During the 1970s, the world banking system was flooded with petro-dollars—the enormous sums of money which the OPEC countries accumulated but could not spend, and therefore had to be either invested or loaned out by the banks. But while OPEC money may have affected the *amount* of money available for loans, the tendency to *lend*, instead of direct equity investment in plant, was already present before 1973. After all, banks are in the business of lending money to make profit, like any other corporation. If, under classic imperialism, there were obstacles to investing in the Third World, the end of colonialism re-inforced powerful pressures to participate in and encourage the development of those countries which were ready for growth.**

The states of the *developed* countries (under varying pressures and to varying degrees) *encouraged* this development via bank loans, and aided it directly through the IMF and the World Bank. Populist radicals tend to deny this because they misconstrue the function of these two institutions. The IMF and World Bank have dual tasks. They encourage loans and investments and even make loans which private banks will not make. But they also function to discipline the Third World (and, today, even discipline and cohere the policies of the great banks themselves), *not with the aim of preventing development* but with the (illusory) goal of assuring stable capitalist development. This they believe can be done by helping Third World governments impose austerity on the working class, by "encouraging" the state, through *conditional loans*, to strengthen and even to build an indigenous capitalist class, and finally even by disciplining the state itself, forcing it to retreat to a less hot-housed pace of develop-

*In one sense, this role of bank capital would appear to support Lenin's views on the centrality of capital exports and their role in Third World development. Unfortunately we still remain with the difficulty that Lenin never offered any theory or explanation for the existence of "surplus capital," the alleged source of capital exports. The only evidence offered is the fact of capital export itself. But that is clearly a case of circular reasoning. The existence of capital surplus is "proved" by the very phenomenon it is supposed to explain, capital export. Clearly capital export could occur without a "capital surplus," i.e., just capital in search of *maximizing* its profits. Furthermore, the fact that the income from *accumulated* capital abroad (to the extent that it is repatriated) *must* quickly become *greater* than the *annual* capital sent abroad, indicates that Lenin's theory can hardly provide any solution to the "surplus capital" problem as he saw it.

**The fact that capital takes the form of international loans reflects the complementary needs of both parties. The authoritarian states have greater control of development, if the money comes through the state. For world capital, including the multi-nationals, development via loans instead of direct equity investment hedges bets and reduces risks. If a direct investment in a productive facility fails, the multi-national shares in the loss. But if the capital is state capital (the multi-national is invited in as manager, etc.), then the loss is with the state and is ultimately shared by the country's economy as a whole. The multi-nationals and banks are left with a debt rather than an outright loss of capital. (However, today, with the shaky character of bank debts in the developing countries, the distinction appears to be reduced in importance.)

ment and back into "normal" state functions.

The IMF's ultimate weapon for enforcing its will is that a bankrupt, defaulted country is effectively cut off from the world market. Whether this weapon is actually available to the U.S. and the IMF today is questionable, given the economic crisis and the danger of increased world instability if a major developing country were declared in default. The irony of Reagan saving Poland from default, and the desperate, so far successful, efforts to "save" Brazil, Mexico, and Argentina testify to this limitation upon the developed countries' ability to impose discipline.

To argue that international loans provide the major source of capital for the developing countries in the Third World is not to deny the influence of the multi-national corporations. Their complex residual dealings with the OPEC states are one case in point. And their very substantial role in Latin America is real enough. What, then, is the actual place of the multi-nationals in development?

THE MULTI-NATIONAL DETTERRANT TO DEVELOPMENT?

The view that the multi-nationals stifle growth and subordinate Third World economies to imperialist interests is a widely accepted but highly misleading characterization of the multi-nationals' role. In pursuit of their own interest, and under the increased competitive pressure from other multi-nationals, the multi-nationals have little choice but to accept and pursue a stake in Third World investment and development.

(1) It is not *generally* in the multi-national's *interest* to block development even if it could. Since World War II, most multi-national investment in the Third World has been in production for the *domestic* market (90% according to Petras) not for export. That gives the multi-national a stake in the host country's development. In addition, there has been a shift since World War II from portfolio investment to equity investment, i.e., to actual production facilities, not just shares in an already existing plant. Equity investment not only increases the multi-national's stake in the host country, but makes it more difficult for a multi-national to remove its capital, thus reducing the multi-national's still very considerable bargaining power.

(2) The multi-nationals, one is told, have the very real monopoly power of their advanced technology. This is expressed through their licensing fees, limitations of exports on licensed goods, transfer pricing policies, etc. These are very real; but they are *shrinking* capacities. The multi-national's bargaining and monopoly power diminishes with the increasingly powerful role and bargaining position of the independent state in dealing with the multi-nationals—a power which varies, of course, with the degree of economic development and with strategic considerations, such as with OPEC. For example, in Colombia in the 1960's, 409 out of 457 licensing agreements contained clauses banning export of the goods to be produced, because the multi-nationals wished to retain those markets for themselves. But through increasingly self-confident intervention by the state, by 1970 most of these clauses had been eliminated. Similarly, the threat of outright denial of patents and licenses was radically

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reduced because the multi-nationals recognized that they might lose even Colombia's market to other multi-nationals⁵

The Indian steel industry is another case in point. Through forceful government intervention, sub-contracting, including the development of design and technology for the mills, was made part of turn-key agreements with Russia and Germany. As a result, Indian engineers and designers are now in a position to export their technical capacity to other developing countries.⁶

(3) The presumed power of the multi-national to dictate terms to the host country rests on the unspoken premise that the multi-national's investment there is a matter of choice, not necessity—i.e. the multi-national could invest at home, or "elsewhere," if its terms were not met. In fact, the multi-nationals know better. They invest abroad because tariff or other political barriers make local investment the only way to reach a given market (the Common Market is a case in point), or because investment abroad may be the price for a temporary monopoly in a given market, or because of high transport costs, or because of local-content laws (which increasingly apply even to advanced countries such as England and the U.S.). In short, their investment is the road to profit maximization.

(4) The multi-national's danger to the host is often presumed to lie in its ability to repatriate profits, thus shipping *potential* capital out of the country. But one may wonder at the power of this tool, when one considers that the multi-national seeking profit is only marginally less likely to reinvest its profit in the host country than a *national* capitalist, if economic conditions make that advisable. Thus, 85% of the profit of American multi-nationals in Latin America were *reinvested locally*, during the 1970's.⁷ Favorable investment conditions, not ill-will or good will, are decisive. Even the national domestic capitalists can and do export their profits abroad when the returns are higher there. The Mexican national capitalists have sent \$24 billion abroad in the past four years—a sum many times greater than repatriated profits by U.S. corporations in Mexico.⁸

(5) The weight of the multi-national in the developing countries is not just lower than in the colonial period, but far lower than is generally believed. The multi-nationals primarily focus on investing in other *developed* countries. And even within the developing countries, the extent of multi-national involvement covers a wide range.

In the Asian developing countries, *domestic* production is mainly in national hands. In exports, the multi-nationals are the dominant investors *only* in the electronic industry. Apart from that, the vast majority of export manufacturers is controlled by domestic capital.⁹ Those facilities owned in their majority by multi-nationals account for a surprisingly small per cent of manufacturing export capacity. Only 10% from Hong Kong, 20% for Taiwan, 15% for S. Korea. This does not tell the whole story, of course, since the foreign role in licensing, design, and marketing has to be included. Yet all in all, these data reveal the rise of a powerful new capitalist class, starting initially as import-substitution manufacturers, then as sub-contractors for foreign firms, developing the skills, contacts and capital for

full independence—a class which is fighting its way into the world market. In close collaboration with its state, this class is building a substantially rounded national economy.

In Latin America, however, the role of the multi-nationals within the domestic economy is unquestionably greater than in Asia. In Mexico and Brazil, multi-national subsidiaries are as prominent as domestic capitalists among the large corporations. Only when one includes the very large state-owned or controlled sector does national capital become decisively dominant.*

The Peruvian economist, Quijano,¹⁰ is one of many who insist that the mere fact of heavy foreign ownership, as in Peru or Brazil, defines an economy as "dependent" though, curiously, he never tells us why. By this thesis we would have to call Canada a dependent nation because its industry is half U.S.-owned. But as we have argued above, the multi-national functioning in a foreign state depends primarily on its place in the domestic economy, not on the juridical fact of ownership. The ardent dependency theorist Emmanuel concurs that the nationality of ownership is not of qualitative importance.

Quijano's resistance boils down to a phenomenon Bill Warren analyzes with great skill and detail—the nationalist bourgeoisie's hunger hiding behind an anti-imperialist rhetoric.

In sum, the multi-nationals, for all their substantial power, have *radically* less power and bargaining position than the old *national* monopolies. The ability of an imperialist state or multi-national to prevent the rise of a competing Third World industry is gone, essentially. Nor is there much left of the monopolies' one-time ability to impose a mono-crop economy in large parts of the Third World.

Finally, the notion that, in case of a crisis, the multi-nationals and banks will scurry home leaving the developing countries high and dry, will be dealt with below.

The Impossibility of a Self-Developing Capitalism in the Third World?

Recognizing the significance of the economic development of an important group of Third World countries, some dependency theorists have shifted ground and now claim to see a *new form* of dependency, the impossibility of a *self-developing* capitalism. In support of this view, they point to a number of presumed deviations from the normal path of economic development which, we are told, are bound to abort any mature development.

But to say that Third World development is real does not mean that it must follow some supposed *norm* of

*Not so long ago, we used to be told that the near-total dependency of Third World countries on agriculture was a sign of and could only lead to, dependency and subordination to world imperialism. Today, as these countries shift to industry, we are told that it means greater integration in the world market and therefore, again, greater subordination to world capital. As they stand, both arguments seem fallacious. Neither distinguishes at all clearly between *dependency* and *interdependency* (the fate of *all* national economies on the world market).

capitalist development. On the contrary, the fact of the developing countries' late entry on the scene imposes a new shape and form on their development. It is only if one insists on imposing some timeless "norm" of development, some classic form, that one can mistake the inevitable *peculiarities* of this latest crop of capitalist nations, for evidence of an *abortive* development.

No Innovation?

(1) One proof offered for the non-self-developing character of the developing economies is that they are not yet highly innovative. But to focus on the lack of innovation misjudges the relation between technological innovation and economic development. A capitalist economy must be firmly embedded before it can serve as a base for innovation (not just for inventing, but for *using* the inventions). The burst of innovation which constituted the Industrial Revolution in Britain between 1770-1800 was preceded by a British economy which was already, for its day, highly developed, organized on capitalist lines, strong in metal engineering, and *non-factory* manufactures. Even so, it should be noted that the rapidly evolving developing countries, aware of the problem, do have their own (usually state-sponsored) research and development institutions.

(2) A particularly promising indicator of future innovation and emergence of an *internally based* dynamic of development is that increasingly, the production of producer goods (machinery, etc.) is surpassing the production of consumer goods in the developing economies.¹¹ Indeed, several of them have reached that epitome of capitalist development, a machine tool industry.

(3) In any developing economy, especially today, a *focus* on innovation cannot be expected. The initial stages are inevitably "copying" stages. Imitation is even economically wise at the start, avoiding the immense costs of invention already borne by the developed economies. Certainly the Japanese economy was developed as far back as World War I. Yet it was hardly known for its innovation. Indeed, the many-decades-long Japanese copy-economy is still incompletely transformed. As late as 1975, Japan remained a heavy net debtor in payments for licensing. Japan's virtue, even today, lies in transforming scientific knowledge and basic innovation from abroad into marketable products. One might just as well argue that Japan (and the U.S. until after World War II) was dependent in that it engaged in relatively little basic research and thus produced next to no Nobel prize winners in science. Or, similarly, that Western Europe is "underdeveloped" since it is still struggling to avoid dependence on the U.S. in computers, aircraft and aerospace technology, and other high-tech industries.

That the developed countries have a "monopoly" on advanced technology means only that, *as within U.S. industry itself*, the competitive sector of production is exploited by the monopoly sector, however short-term that may be.

Low Wages Equal No Development

Two prominent supporters of dependency theory, Samir Amin and Arghiri Emmanuel, maintain that the

low wages which prevail in the developing countries may spur *some* economic growth, but ultimately prevent any deep, rounded development. Low wages, they tell us, mean low domestic consumption. The lack of a domestic market aborts economic expansion. Amin and Emmanuel assume that *domestic* consumption is the only possible basis for sustained growth. In doing so, they are prisoners of a played-out formula. Domestic consumption does not play the same role it once did in stimulating economic growth by providing a market to fledgling industry. With low-cost transport and communication and the increased international division of labor, international trade opens the world market to newly developing countries. U.S. imports since 1960 have tripled as a percent of GNP (itself vastly expanded). This rate of growth of international trade is a measure of increased *interdependence*, not dependence.

Under such conditions, a nation can develop its industry initially with a less extensive domestic market than was possible in the past. If, in the very first stages of development, the focus was primarily on the production of import-substitutes for local consumption, real industrial take-off in the developing countries can utilize and indeed requires a different base: export-oriented production. Exports become at least a short-run substitute for domestic demand as a stimulus to production. Once started, of course, this growth in production does tend to generate a new domestic market, and more than just a middle class market. The initial manufacturing focus on labor intensive, low wage industries gives way to more capital intensive, higher wage manufacturing *without hurting the development process* (see below). The pace at which this occurs determines, in part, the dependency on exports. Low wages would appear then to be the result of underdevelopment and not the cause of it.*

(If, despite Amin and Emmanuel, low wages are *not* necessarily an obstacle to development, it does not follow that they are always a stimulant to development. As Bob Fitch has insistently reminded us, low wages

*However, the lack of development cannot alone take the rap for low wages in the Third World. For even within a given level of development, the *range* of wages can, in the short-run, be very substantial. Labor shortages and surpluses clearly play a role. The former was responsible for high wages in the U.S. in the 19th century, just as the Third World today is an example of the effect of labor surpluses in keeping wages down.

The disparity between wages and the level of economic development arises today because population growth can be substantially *autonomous* of economic development (to which population changes are *usually* linked). The population explosion is a case in point. Thus, in developing 19th century Europe, population grew at a rate of 0.5%/annum, compared to the Third World current rate of 2.5%. The ruling colonialists, for reason of self preservation, and for "missionary" reasons, introduced modern medicine *at a pace which did not correspond to the then low rate of economic development*. The result of this bizarre demographic situation was a gigantic labor surplus throughout the Third World. To this biological surplus were added two intensifying factors: the capitalization of agriculture which expelled millions from the land, and the simultaneous post-war, post independence "revolution of rising expectations." As a result we witnessed a flood of migrants to the urban centers, producing a further depressing effect on wages.

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have characterized the Third World for past generations without resulting in significant development. Low wages made their contribution to sustained development *only* in the context of the tendencies outlined above—decolonization, increased competition, increased international division of labor, and the new authoritarian state, etc.)

Fragility in Crisis

It is argued that Third World development is essentially a by-product of the post-war boom. Consequently, these economies, so dependent on exports and bank loans, will reveal their continued underlying dependency by their greater sensitivity to economic crisis. The evidence so far hardly provides conclusive support for this view.

(1) The first test of this prediction came in the recession of the early 1970's. The developing countries proved themselves less sensitive than expected. During 1970-74, while the developed countries stagnated; the developing countries increased manufacturing output at a steady 6.5% (down from 8%). Perhaps one reason for their relative health is that these developing economies were technologically up-to-date, and equally important, that they did not have to deal with protecting old, inefficient industries.

(2) In the late 1970's we witnessed another indication of the adaptability and relative dynamism of these economies. Rising wages forced them to begin the so far successful process of speeding up the change-over to more capital intensive industry and to larger and fewer firms. Sweatshop-type manufacturing, a major part of the "export platform" stage of development, began to shift from Taiwan and Korea to Thailand, the Phillipines, Central America, etc.

(3) It is widely assumed that in a crisis foreign investors will retreat to their home bases, thus intensifying the economic problems of the Third World. But, in the first place, the vast majority of foreign corporate investment is in plants producing for the domestic market not exports, making the withdrawal of capital pointless, and perhaps even impossible politically. Furthermore, in one significant way, the stagnation of the developed countries after 1973 appears to have *aided* the developing countries. The multi-nationals responded to the crisis not by retreating to their (stagnating) home bases, but by shifting corporate investment *toward* the now more profitable developing countries.¹² Thus, even in the midst of today's economic crisis, U.S. auto corporations continue to open new plants abroad, especially in the developing countries, while closing factories at home, in obedience to the supranational laws of profit.

This is hardly new. The more deeply Great Britain falls into crisis, the more it exports capital. Will that also be the case for the U.S. as its crisis intensifies?

(4) It is still too early to generalize about the impact of the current economic crisis. No country is immune to the crisis. As for the developing economies, so far it is very uneven. The Asian economies are to date *maintaining* a 5% growth rate (down from as much as 10%), while the Latin American countries appear to have declined by an amount similar to that of the *advanced* economies. Austerity is the order of the day

everywhere. Such *interdependence* should not be confused with dependence.

Some questions rather than answers are in order. The crisis in the Latin American developing countries is quite clearly a typical capitalist crisis of over-expansion. Its impact is compounded by its occurrence in the midst of a world crisis and the accompanying soaring interest rates, which have jointly caused a capital flight. (Capital from the mature as well as the developing economies has been moving into the U.S. to take advantage of the high interest rates.) Plummeting production in the U.S., etc., depress the demand for raw materials, perhaps explaining in part why the Asian economies have suffered less than the Latin American economies. The latter are still, *like the U.S.*, major raw material exporters. But clearly, the still important role of agricultural exports can, again, be seen as evidence of the growing *interdependence* of all economies and not as proof of "dependency."

But is the evident weight of the developing countries' international debts proof of some inescapable "dependency"? In itself, no. Even in the midst of a profound general crisis of capitalism such as the present one, the problem of international debts has to be seen in the context of a capitalist society which is itself surviving on a gigantic debt structure (\$3 trillion for the U.S. alone). This structure threatens to collapse into a financial crisis of 1929 proportions. That would be a disaster for developed and developing economies alike. But short of that, the "normal" response, an attempt by the U.S. to once again export its crisis is highly problematic. The U.S. could revert to protectionism, and try to impose even more stringent austerity on the developing countries. But there are grave obstacles to such a course. The U.S. does not have the free hand it had even a short decade ago. There are the political difficulties such as the need to contain the Central American revolution, which limits what the U.S. can do elsewhere in Latin America. An austerity deeper than that which is already in force would only further shrink the world market. And lastly, the default option is exceedingly difficult to implement when the sums involved are so huge that default would threaten the entire world's monetary system. So the developed countries are hoist by their own petard.

As for protectionism, it does remain a serious possibility. But significantly, this weapon has been relatively little used so far by the U.S. despite the depression-level crisis in steel and auto.

(5) Finally, the fragility which is most dangerous to these nations is not the economic crisis per se, but the existence of a new working class, with rapidly widening horizons and insistent upon sharing in the fruits of industrialization. This force has the potential, even today, to cut short *capitalist* development and open a new road for the developing countries. This potential is compounded by the fact that the developing countries have far less "fat" than the developed economies—few welfare state fallbacks. As a result, a crisis can be deeper (working class consumption drops more) and sharper. A case in point is Latin America, where the relatively high level of class struggle impedes the implementation of the permanent austerity and labor "discipline" which are so "necessary" in a modern developing capitalist economy.

POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THIRD WORLD DEVELOPMENT

If capitalist economic development in the Third World is a possibility, what follows? Is that development inevitable, an unavoidable stage? Does it mean that socialist revolution is off the agenda? Does it mean an end to imperialism?*

A Stagist Theory of Development

The notion that if the Third World is to experience development it will, must pass through the stage of capitalism has recently received an exceptionally forceful presentation by Bill Warren.¹³ In a thoughtful and provocative critique of dependency theory, Warren argues that capitalism, through the instrument of the multi-nationals can and has led to development in the Third World. This development is, for him, just an example of capitalism carrying out its historic tasks of freeing humankind from the tyranny of nature. To Warren this is an inevitable and necessary stage. Indeed, he is so carried away by his assessment that he at times can be mistaken for an apologist for capitalism, as, when he argues that Third World unemployment is only 5%. He appears thus to be the polar opposite of dependency theorists for whom no fundamental development is possible

We shall maintain in what follows that both the stagist and dependency views are incorrect; that they are mirror images of a common error, rooted in a common misconception of the nature of development.

Uneven and Combined Development

The uneven and combined form of development (UCD) is organic to capitalism and has characterized it from the very start. That the various capitalist societies did not develop simultaneously, but in successive waves, has profoundly shaped the form and content of their development. Under the whip of external necessity, newly developing economies were, from the start, compelled to start with the most advanced forms of social, political and economic instruments, and even generate new ones. In the process of "catching up," entire stages of development can be skipped. Tribal societies exchange their bows and arrows for rifles all at once without traveling the road which lies between

*Economic development of the Third World in no way implies an end to imperialism. That arch-enemy of imperialism, Lenin, clearly had no doubts on that score. His theory had as one of its main pillars the export of capital and the development of the Third World even at the expense of development at home (see his *Imperialism*, in *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, p. 243). Given this, it is ironic that most dependency theorists admire Lenin's book. They accomplish this feat by focusing on the monopoly aspects of his theory (even though he believed that monopoly increased competition and thus made development more likely).

Closer to home, the imperialist character of U.S. policy is all too evident. In addition to its military expression in Latin America, etc., the U.S.'s economic strength and the fact that the dollar is the world currency permit the U.S. to exploit all countries. The U.S. is able to shift the burden of its inflation and war expenditures onto other nations. And most recently, it tried to resolve its own economic crisis by attracting capital from other economies, thus helping to throw them into deeper crisis.

these two weapons. As a result, development itself breeds more development, radical leaps in development and even *de*-development. * To be specific:

(1) The uneven (and even reversible) character of capitalist development is nowhere seen more vividly than in the widespread split between north and south *within* developed capitalist economies. For generations, the development of the "North" in the U.S., England, Belgium, Italy, etc., was accompanied by the underdevelopment of their respective "souths." But contrary to expectations of dependency theory, this split is in a constant state of turmoil and reorganization. Thus in the U.S., the formerly backward economic sun-belt is in the process of displacing the once-all-powerful Northeast; in England, the shift of industry from the historic midlands and Scotland to the south of the country is proceeding at a disastrous pace; a similar situation exists in Belgium, as once-industrial Wallonia is displaced by once-backward Flanders.

(2) This internal flux of development and *de*-development is repeated *internationally* as well. England, from the start exerted *both* an inhibiting and a stimulating influence on the rest of Europe. As a result, when industrial Germany emerged fully 100 years later, it entered with the newest, most efficient industrial plants, with a new banking system closely integrated with industry (unlike England), and with a "safer" undemocratic, semi-authoritarian Junker regime. In doing so, the new Germany contributed to the process of Great Britain's decline which is so evident today. Almost a century later, the really modern Japan repeated this scenario, and helped to deliver the final blow to a de-industrializing, de-developing England. Whether the same scenario may apply to the U.S. is worthy of sustained attention.

(3) Pre-revolutionary Czarist Russia provides some classic instances of combined and uneven development. The heavily state-sponsored industry of this underdeveloped country included the largest industrial enterprises in the world, resulting in the most *concentrated* workforce in all Europe, facing an autocratic state and a vacillating national bourgeoisie. This combination of elements put socialist revolution on the agenda in Russia. For the Russian revolutionaries of 1917 conceived their task as arising from the need to *combine* the historic tasks of liberal capitalist society (land reform, self-determination for the national minorities, and democracy), with the *class* demands of workers. This combined revolution was to be accomplished through a workers revolution which skipped the stage of a mature capitalist society. To their socialist opponents such a stage-skipping course "violated the laws of history."

(4) In today's developing countries, the effect of UCD is perhaps even more pronounced than it was in 1917 Russia.

(a) Once again, the new entrants on the capitalist scene utilized and developed a capitalist state machinery to a level never reached in peacetime by any capitalist power—perhaps even anticipating the structure

*For a splendid, scholarly and historical treatment of this facet of historical materialism, see Michael Lowy's "Combined and Uneven Development," New Left Books and Schocken Press.

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of that "strong" capitalist state which as yet only threatens to emerge in the advanced capitalist countries.

(b) In many respects, the new countries start their mature lives with the most recent technology (as Japan and Germany once did before them). Thus, even relatively primitive economies such as India, have, with one leap, jumped into the age of nuclear weapons manufacture. Indeed, as a group, the developing countries are, regrettably, more committed to nuclear energy than the older capitalist economies.

(c) We noted earlier that the classic role of agriculture as the precondition for economic development was substantially transcended in the developing economies, particularly through increased dependence on the world market, i.e., on exports.*

(d) Finally, and most urgently, in the 70's the specter of revolt by the new Third World working class once again comes back to haunt the international capitalist class. Some of the most powerful and innovative working class struggles of the past decade have occurred in the Third World in the pressure cooker of rapid proletarianization under repressive conditions. We have witnessed explosive movements in Portugal, Soweto, Iran, Korea, to name just a few. Indeed, recognition of the critical importance of Third World industrial development and of the "instability" it generated has forced the U.S. to intensify its political grasp in the Third World—building up its arms and preparing for various kinds of interventions. In turn, the combination of newly-proletarianized masses, facing repressive states backed up by international imperialism force feeds the creativity of the Third World political movements.

UCD vs. Warren and Dependency

The concept of UCD does more than permit recognition of Third World developments, with all their unique characteristics. It also opens the door to *alternative* forms of development which skip the capitalist stage. But in refusing to utilize the framework of development offered by UCD, Warren was led to a relatively barren version of the stages theory of development.

And because dependency theory shared Warren's diffidence toward UCD it is forced into the mirror image of Warren's error. As opposed to Warren's *inevitability of development*, dependency theory insists upon the equally mistaken *impossibility* of deep-going capitalist economic development in any Third World country.

It must be noted however that dependency theory *does* exhibit in one respect a methodological superiority to Warren. For dependency theory does realize that a new historic situation can yield a non-linear "norm" of development—the presumed impossible capitalist development comes to mean, for some, that the next "capitalist" stage *must* be skipped, transcended, and the socialist road must and can be entered upon directly. It is this perception which is the source of the appeal of dependency theory for revolutionaries. Unfortunately, this merit of dependency theory is not enough. For an erroneous theory (the refusal to recog-

*Space does not permit an elaboration of the crucial and changed role of agriculture in developing economies.

nize the fact of development), however revolutionary sounding that refusal, ends up, however unwittingly, leading to false expectations, thus disarming the movement, just as the revolutionary rhetoric of Weatherman did.

History and Choice

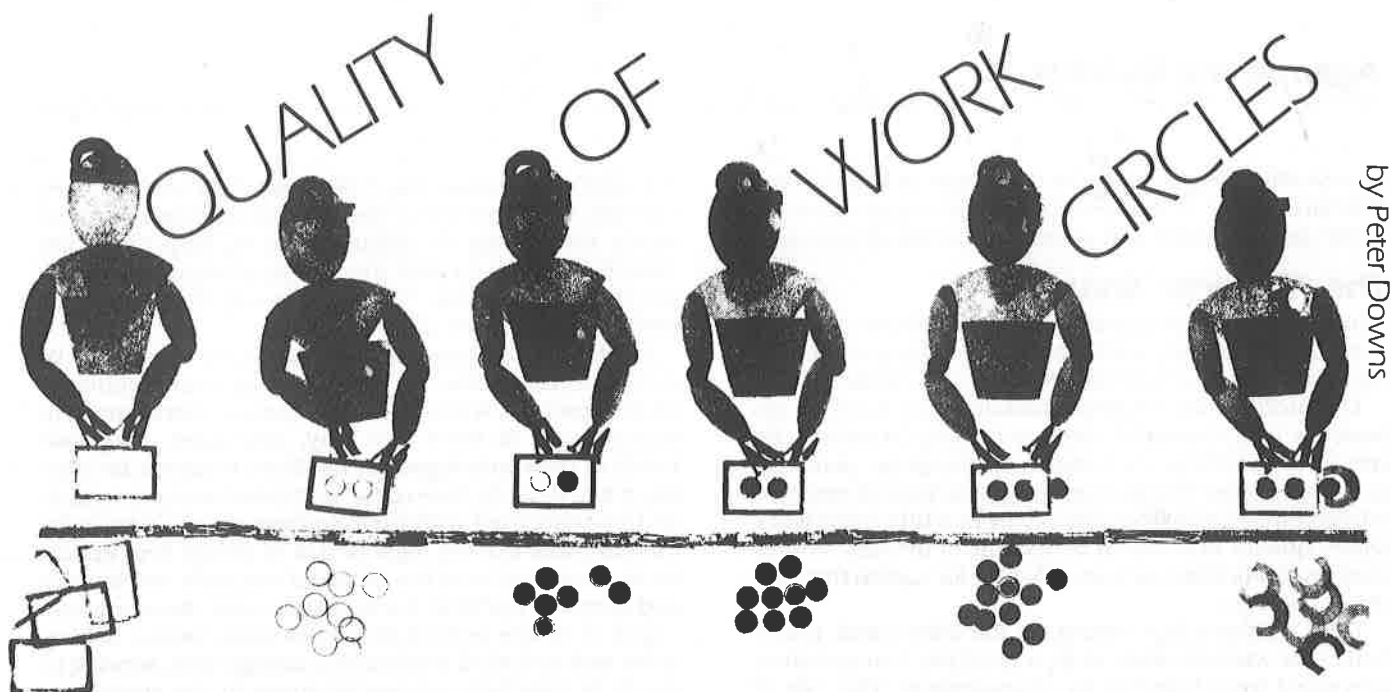
UCD, apart from its rejection of unilinear and stagist theories of development, has still another dimension to which Warren was insensitive. Implicit in UCD is the notion of alternatives in politics—of roads not taken. If at the start of industrial development there was indeed no alternative to the "capitalist road," it does not follow that that must be the case today, 200 years later. On the contrary, the very fact that a large part of the world has already reached an advanced stage of development makes a new, less barbarous alternative a possibility (not an inevitability) for others. Modern history is studied with missed or aborted alternative "roads not taken."

Warren's failure to recognize historic alternative roads undermined his very valuable contributions. Had he and the dependency theorists started from the vantage point of UCD, they might have recognized its bi-focal truth—that capitalism tends to and can develop the Third World, but that at the same time, this stage is not inevitable. It can be transcended. As the struggles of the newly created working classes suggest, socialist revolution is also on the agenda. But in the spirit of UCD, it is evident that in these countries the struggles against capitalism will be necessarily *combined* with the struggle for political democracy. And in that same spirit, it must be equally evident that a *socialist* outcome for the revolution depends upon its ability both to inspire and to link up with a reawakened working class movement in the long-developed countries.

Warren and the dependency theorists would have done well to remember Marx's classic critique of mechanistic, economic theories of history. "History does nothing; it does not possess immense riches; it does not fight battles. It is men, real living men, who do all this, who possess things and fight battles. It is not 'history' which uses men as a means of achieving—as if it were an individual person—its own ends. History is nothing but the activity of men in pursuit of their ends" ■

FOOTNOTES

- ¹ Paul Bairoch, *The Economic Development of the Third World Since 1900*, p. 71.
- ² Alice Amsden, in *Modern China*, vol. 5.
- ³ Ronaldo Munck, *State, Capital and Crisis in Brazil*, in *Insurgent Sociologist*, Spring, 1980.
- ⁴ Anibal Quijano, *Nationalism and Capitalism in Peru*, M.R. Press.
- ⁵ Rugo Radice, (ed.), *International Firms and Modern Imperialism*, pp. 204-8.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 215.
- ⁷ Peter Evans, *Dependent Development*, p. 196.
- ⁸ N.Y. Times, Sept. 30, 1982.
- ⁹ Martin Landsberg, *Export Led Industrialization in the Third World*, URPE, Winter '79.
- ¹⁰ Quijano, *op. cit.*
- ¹¹ R. Munck, *op. cit.*, p. 46.
- ¹² Marcussen and Torp, *Internationalization of Capital*, p. 23
- ¹³ Bill Warren, *Imperialism: Pioneer of Capitalism*.



by Peter Downs

"The Work Life Program will provide the opportunity for all employees to further develop, demonstrate and be recognized for their creativity, talents, innovative skill, and knowledge. The rewards for these efforts are: a more stimulating and satisfying work life, and enhanced quality of our products and services, to assure a profitable future for all of us at RZ."

So began the efforts of the RZ corporation to introduce Quality of Work (Q of W) Circles in the factory I worked in.

A Quality of Work life circle is a group of eight to twelve workers, usually in the same department of production, that meets to discuss problems at work and recommend solutions to management. This can include removing headaches and inefficiencies at work, rearranging work patterns, rotating jobs, etc. Whatever the changes, the goal for management is to increase productivity by offering workers greater job satisfaction; consequently everyone is said to benefit.

When Q of W circles were introduced into the medium size manufacturing plant I worked in, most of us were interested. The company's propaganda emphasized that circles seek to release workers' potential creativity in the presumed interest of the company and the workforce. Inherent in the idea was the notion that workers understand many aspects of production better than management and that we know how to organize the workplace to minimize the frustration and stress of everyday work.

In the past few years, as the labor movement retreated, many unions have welcomed Q of W circles as a way to humanize work, increase productivity, and save jobs. Today, they are part of labor relations at more than 100 of the largest corporations, including GM, Ford, American Airlines, and Bank of America.

Many socialists attack Q of W for being a subtle form of speed-up. Others support it, seeing it as a prefigurative experience in workers control of production. Capitalists, as well as many progressives such as the economist David Gordon, believe Quality circles can help revitalize the economy by heightening worker motivation, which they contend is a main cause of sagging U.S. productivity.

These are three very distinct, though not necessarily mutually exclusive, assessments of Q of W circles. None of them, however, neatly explains what happened at my workplace. But before telling this story, and before suggesting what unions could do about the Q of W, I'd like to present some background material.

Behind the Q of W Circles

Unwilling to invest in new plant and equipment in many industries, American capital has applied two strat-

egies to restore profits. On the one hand, it has pushed for concessions in wages and working conditions. On the other, it has attempted to involve workers in the production process, especially in improving the quality of production, which is one facet of increased productivity. Although this has been a slower and more tentative development than concessions, its ideological foundation has been laid, and mis-labeled as "economic democracy."

Under capitalism, attempts to involve workers in improving production generally result in identifying workers interests with those of the company. Deindustrialization and massive unemployment create a great impetus for this identification with the corporation. In the common parlance of many unions "conflicts aren't helping anyone, we have to work together to make American industry more competitive if we're to preserve our jobs." One way to do so is to eliminate poor quality production.

Waste: The Technocratic Rationale

If capitalism improves the *quantity* of output, a tendency to poor *quality* production is also inherent in capitalism. Through mechanization and automation, and the intensive Taylorization of the production process, workers' skills were stripped from them, and their physical motions became more standardized. But the more this process preceeds, the less there is to be gained from the further simplification and standardization of motions, or even from further speed-up. This is because there is a physical limit to how fast people can work. As the pace of production approaches that limit, job dissatisfaction mounts and the quality of work declines. Unfinished products are passed and both intentional and un-

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intentional damage soars. Each increase in speed or the standardization of work motions yields less of an increase in production, but *greater* numbers of mistakes.

The "Experts" Solution

Industrial consultants deny any link between the lack of motivation among workers and capitalist production. Instead they use one of two alternative theories.

The *Indifference Theory* maintains that workers are basically lazy. Creatures interested solely in money. So employee motivation is secured by discipline, penalties and inspections. The problem with this kind of negative reinforcement is obvious, especially in white collar work where quality production is difficult to oversee. A self-motivated workforce is more effective for capital than the use of coercion.

The *Craftmanship Theory*, on the other hand, maintains that workers want to do a good job, but are often prevented from doing so by management. The role of management is then, according to these experts, to "create the job conditions which remove frustration and permit normal human drives for accomplishment and craftsmanship to assert themselves." This is the stuff Q of W circles are based on.

Craftsmanship proponents realize that workers don't live on craftsmanship alone. Therefore, they recommend that quality assurance programs be linked with earnings "high enough to satisfy physiological need," job safety, and job security. Some also emphasize that programs be coupled with "interesting assignments, increased responsibility, deserved promotions, and pay increases."

But very few companies can afford such labor conditions. Or, to put it another way, unless forced to do so, most employers find it cheaper to suffer from low quality than to pay the costs of a safe, secure and satisfying worklife. This is especially true when there is little craft left in a job. It's difficult to appeal to an individual's sense of craft or skill when work is de-skilled, routine and tedious. And the tendency is for more of the same. Office work and fast food service, two of the fastest growing occupations, provide few creative opportunities.

This suggests that Quality of Work programs have many limitations. They seem to be best suited for companies that can afford to be "generous" with their workers. But that is a *very* severe limit today, in a period of cost-cutting drives, demands for concessions, etc. The effect of this limitation is becoming increasingly evident in many places with already established circles. Dissillusionment has been setting in.

White Collar Q of W Circles

Quality circles are most valuable for companies where the quality and precision of the product are essential and where skills and "professionalism" are still recognized by workers. That is why one prominent management consultant believes that "Quality of Work Life programs are most useful for white collar environments."

The fact that technical and clerical work is often "mental," as opposed to physical, militates against strict supervision and inspection. Whether a technician is testing a prototype or a bank clerk is transferring funds, management cannot easily inspect the results without redoing

the entire operation. Inspection can thus become very expensive. But errors or falsified data can also result in losses of millions of dollars. That is why corporate America presses on with the computerization of technical and clerical work. That is also why Q of W circles make more sense in these industries.

But there is still another motivation for using Q of W circles in these jobs — to keep workers from organizing on their own. As white collar jobs become more narrowly defined and, in their own way, routinized, they lose much of their privileged status. Work relations become more like those in blue collar work, and workers tend to be less concerned with their performance and riper for unionization. But the logic of Q of W circles is to undermine the cohesion of the informal shopfloor workgroup and increase workers' identification with the company.

Q of W is also used to link a *privileged sector* of blue collar and technical workers to management, serving to divide or maintain existing divisions in the workforce. This explains why Q of W circles are popular in places like the Silicon Valley — and primarily among the technical workers, not the production workers who are usually low-paid, non-union female workers.

Q of W and the Unions

The anti-union logic and purposes of Q of W go deeper. Q of W circles cannot only help keep unions out, but weaken unions where they already exist. This is because Q of W circles strengthen the view that workers' job security and future depend on being more efficient, on beating the Japanese, and other forms of cooperation with the company, *and not on union solidarity*. Once such a climate, such a relationship is created and accepted, then ties among workers and ties to the union are inevitably weakened.

Firstly, divisive currents enter the workforce. Workers who refuse to collaborate with the Q of W program come to be seen by other workers as a threat to their livelihood and future. Less productive workers, whether due to age, illness or whatever, begin to incur the anger of the other workers for threatening their job security or wage level.

Secondly, the door is opened to weakening or violating the union contract. For example, Q of W circles can become a wedge to the introduction of a bonus system of wages, depending on efficiency. This means a wage bonus system, above a minimum level set by the contract. Wages and benefits therefore tend to drift into dependence on the company's evaluation of "performance" with all the room for discrimination which that implies. Furthermore, if wages can be made to depend on an individual's or sub-group's performance then why can't they also be made to depend on the company's profitability, or lack of it? Workers would then in effect be on the road to yielding management the right to cut wages by cutting bonuses when profits fall.

It is not just the local union and local solidarity which are affected. Q of W circles for the same job at two different plants (even of the same corporation) are used to make workers compete with one another. For if there is little work, "the more efficient quality team gets the preference." This is exactly what happened with Q of W circles in Japan.

Given that the Q of W circles could weaken the union,

why are labor officials, especially the UAW, so friendly to them? The officials are in a hole. They have no solutions to the crisis of American industry and economy, so that their strategy is to hold on till times get better. In the meantime, they accept the policy criterion of "profitability" and make concessions, even though the concessions weaken the union. And if, in addition, Q of W helps atomize the rank and file further, that's not all bad either even though it too weakens the leaders' own long-term prospects.

My Experience at RZ

"By generating an atmosphere in which people solve their own problems, the quality of each individual's work life is improved. Since a good portion of your time is spent at work, the elimination of many of the frustrations you encounter daily will help you feel better about what you do."

RZ produces and services corrosion resistant protective coatings for heavy industry, e.g. roofing materials, industrial paints, caulks, and mortars. By 1979 it was the largest industrial coatings company in the United States with sales of over \$75 million that year and 450 employees.

I worked as a painter in a division of the company which was not unionized. But even without a union, in the days before Q of W circles were instituted, we were able to express our discontent. We painters were a small minority of workers, but on issues of health and safety and hazardous waste disposal we did, as a group, petition management, winning such slight improvements as information about the chemicals we were exposed to, more safety equipment, and a broader classification of what products were hazardous for the purpose of waste disposal.

As our group worked together longer, we also began to discuss how to limit the supervisors' power. For us, this included problems with discipline, promotions, discrimination, and what we perceived as interference with our work, problems that all workers experience to some degree. As a result, we were able to include in our discussions some clericals and some workers from the printing department (for whom health and hazardous waste were not a burning issue). We had only begun these broader discussions (with their implicit union potential) when the Quality of Work Life program was introduced.

The program seemed to be an extension of the company's traditional employee relations program, which included decent wages and medical benefits, as well as company-paid schooling, a policy of rapid promotions, no layoffs, a company-paid counseling service, budget seminars "to help people cope with inflation," frequent contests to "recognize individual achievements outside of work," and company sponsored sports teams. Workers and management personnel were encouraged to mix socially, and at work we were divided up into work groups of from three to nine people, each with its own supervisor. In short, RZ's management style was already similar to the model of Japanese paternalism and the Quality of Work Life program fit right in.

Some workers thought that management proposed the program because "it cared." Others interpreted the policy as one which allowed RZ to make the most money with the least amount of trouble. These workers figured

quality circles were probably just a scam to get us to work harder without the company having to pay us for it.

Despite pockets of skepticism towards the program, the dominant attitude was one of "wait and see, maybe it's something good." Even the most negative people were not sure what the quality circles would do, how they would be organized, or whether they couldn't be used to improve working conditions.

Before we could answer these questions, the quality circle program began to corrode our tenuous solidarity in subtle ways. The circles were introduced into only a few selected departments, as an experiment. Suddenly the basic groundrules were different for different departments, so that it appeared as if there was no longer a basis for common action. The discussions about work problems and what actions we could take, which we painters had initiated with pilot plant workers and printers, broke down. Within the painting department, our unity dissolved as some members insisted on trying management's offer of a "cooperative" way to improve working conditions—the Quality of Work Life Pilot Program.

Work and discussions within a circle were "facilitated" by a group leader appointed by management. Supervising all the circles was a Coordinator, also appointed by management. Finally, the whole program had a Steering Committee composed of top management personnel and management-chosen representatives from the quality circles. Suggestions from the circles were screened by the Steering Committee before being passed to the Board of Directors. *Participation in quality circles was entirely voluntary* and each circle was allowed one hour a week during worktime to meet. Circles were forbidden to discuss anything which had to do with benefits and salaries, hiring and firing, or personalities. Beyond this, quality circles were "free to make their own rules." This framework obviously selected those employees most likely to be cooperative with management, but others joined in order to escape from an hour of work or to improve working conditions.

The Coordinator attended our first quality circle meeting, and overruled any discussion which escaped the control of the circle leader and violated management's guidelines. Chastened, we discussed such weighty matters as what to name our circle and our rules of conduct. At a subsequent meeting I proposed that supervisors should be excluded from at least some circle meetings (our circle had three supervisors, three in-house painters, and usually four service engineers or field painters) so that others could talk freely. This was not allowed and we were directed to learn the methods for choosing and solving problems. After two months of this, the painters suggested that the circle discuss health and safety and hazardous waste problems. The engineers split on this proposal and the supervisors defeated it.

When we continued to bring up the topics of hazardous wastes, health and safety, and supervisors at the circle meetings, the company responded in two ways. On the one hand, it broke up the troublemakers, both in and out of the quality circle through transfers to different departments and positions. On the other hand, it addressed some of the health worries and *appeared* to

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reduce the supervisors role in the daily work process. This was accomplished by delegating supervisory authority to one worker in the group. But this worker still reported directly to the supervisor who instructed him on what the jobs were and when they had to be completed.

Eight months later, after I had left the company, the circles were still operating. But cooperation among the painters had broken down as they freely reported one another for holding up work or making a mistake.

Conclusions

The conclusions I draw from the RZ quality circle program are: 1) Workers may actually gain some improvements in working conditions. 2) The company will freely grant such improvements only if they are inexpensive and help to halt any challenge to management control. 3) Quality circles can be firmly controlled by management to be used as its tools. Any attempt to use quality circles to organize nonunion workers can be easily quashed. Indeed, Quality circles can be used to keep workers disorganized. 4) My experience convinced me furthermore that the Q of W circles, on balance, lacked the progressive value claimed for them. It is true that the notion that workers know more about the job and therefore should in some way control it, strikes a responsive cord in many workers. It helps them resist the feeling of being just a cog in the machine. There can be real satisfaction in seeing your ideas implemented. In addition it has been argued that such involvement raises workers' self-confidence and depreciates in his/her mind the importance of capitalists and managers. In short, a net step toward class, even socialist consciousness.

But the net effect of Q of W programs, especially in this period, has been to weaken the unions, weaken shop floor solidarity, promote division between groups of workers, atomize the workforce, and encourage workers to identify with their employers. Such tendencies clearly retard the development of class consciousness. Whatever the potential gain from workers participation in production it becomes individualized and does not result in an increase in group, class consciousness.

But Can We "Use" Q of W Circles?

I believe it is possible to use the concept of workers participation in control of production in such a way as to heighten class consciousness and strengthen the workers hand even in production. Two examples:

Workers with basic union rights have been able to use the start up period of quality circle programs to expose what management was really after. Thus, at the H. M. Porter plant, the union, United Electrical Workers Local 262, agreed to negotiate with management over quality circles. It requested full disclosure of quality circle training manuals, promotional materials, and of information on the financial set-up and past activities of the consultants. Information obtained made it clear that the company's primary motivation was profit, while the consultant's refusal to discuss his past activities cast doubt on the program's image of impartiality and openness. The union therefore proposed to cooperate with the company to set up quality circles, but only under the conditions that no management personnel could attend a meeting uninvited and that all suggestions would be

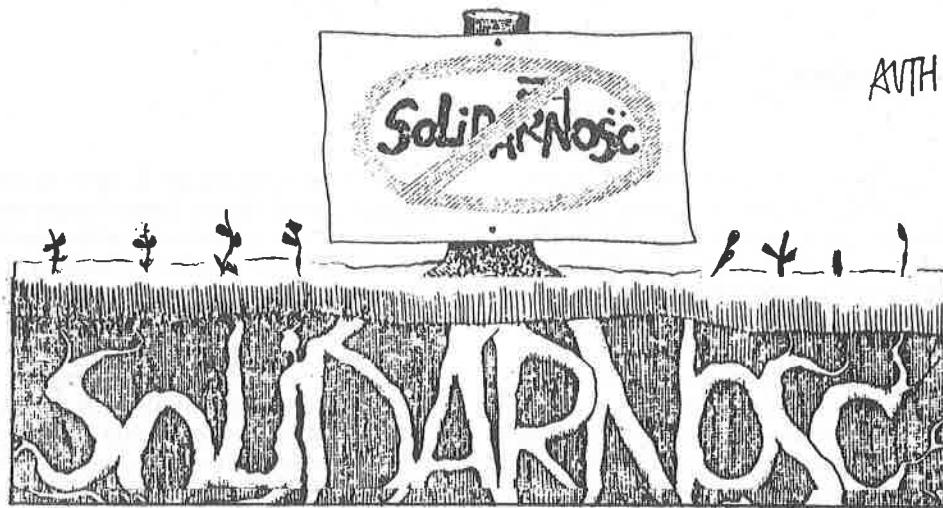
screened by the union before being passed on to management. Porter turned down the proposal and the quality circles were dead. But should the union have left the issue there?

As an alternative, the union could have established its own "quality circles." Something similar to this happened at the Moog Automotive plant in St. Louis during the course of a contract struggle by UAW Local 282. When the contract with Moog expired in September 1981, the company demanded a \$3/hour wage cut and various other givebacks. The company, which makes replacement parts for cars, was doing better than ever, but it sought to take advantage of high unemployment and UAW concessions elsewhere. The workers, concluding that if they walked out they would just be replaced, decided to carry on the fight on the shop floor. As time went on, workers had ever "more problems" operating their machines correctly and the company's discipline caused them to swamp the grievance procedure. Management began to suspend workers for using the grievance procedure, so the workers decided to replace it with "problem solving sessions" on company time. These problem solving sessions were similar to quality circle meetings, except that when the workers decided something was a problem (and they had no restrictions on problems), they gave their supervisors 24 hours to fix it. Management responded with additional disciplinary actions, whereupon all the workers in the coil and spring department clocked out "to meet with their district representative." The company first thought to suspend all of those workers, but within an hour it reversed itself and began negotiating. A few hours later it agreed to the union's demands, including a blanket amnesty for all worker actions during the 5½-month struggle.

At Moog, the "problem solving sessions" were part of a strategy to gain a contract, but it seems that they could also be used as a vehicle for continual organization and struggle against the company.

Union-controlled "quality circles," however, could have very different consequences. When management proposes to introduce a quality of work life program, it legitimizes struggle over the control of the work process. Union activists should expose not just management's real reason for wanting quality circles, but also the basis of alienation in capitalism. Then they can take advantage of the real appeal of quality circles to organize worker "circles" to carry on the struggle for control of the work process and to push for a real solution to dehumanizing labor: worker control of production. The very goals of worker control require that worker circles, "quality circles" without management, strive to unite all workers, manual, clerical, and technical, for the purposes of planning production and exercising decision-making power on their own, including the power to determine the speed of assembly lines, to govern introduction of new technology, to decide what to produce, the power to inform the community of the corporation's shoddy products, the power to inform the community of unhealthy aspects of the product's production, and even to serve as watchdog over prices.

Clearly the corporations will have nothing to do with such "economic democracy," nor for that matter will union officialdom. The fight for workers' control, not just "input," is thus inseparable from the fight to create democratically controlled unions ■



Again on Reform or Revolution in Poland, a response to *Theoretical Review*

by Robert Brenner

The *Theoretical Review* comrades are right to begin their reply (*Against The Current* #5) to our article "Reform, Revolution, and Repression in Poland" (ATC #4) by asserting that the differences between us on the Polish workers struggle revolve around the question, what is socialism? For it is clear from their article that they believe that Poland is in some meaningful, if limited, sense socialist. This leads them to make two major misassessments of the nature of the working class movement in Poland. First, they fail to appreciate the revolutionary character of the Polish workers movement. Second, they believe it was possible to reform the regime so as to achieve a good measure of workers democracy, short of revolution; in particular, they think that Jacek Kuron's "self limiting revolution" represented a viable strategy. Both of these misconceptions flow from a profound misunderstanding of the nature of the ruling bureaucracy and its irreconcilable antagonism to the aspirations of the working class, not only in Poland, but also in the other so-called socialist societies. The TR comrades base their views on Paul Costello's general interpretation of the Polish revolt, presented in *Theoretical Review*. In the first part of our response, we shall reply to the arguments of the TR comrades concerning the strategy and tactics of the Polish movement. In the second part, we shall show that the weaknesses of their position flow directly from Costello's misleading analysis of Polish society and of the other states of the Soviet bloc.

I. STRATEGY AND TACTICS OF THE POLISH MOVEMENT

ATC did not dismiss Kuron's strategy as "social democratic" or "reformist," as TR implies. We went to great lengths to understand why it gained, for a time, widespread acceptance within the Polish movement. Indeed, we devoted a good part of our article to laying out the agonizing dilemma which faced Solidarity. Solidarity's explicit program and the whole trajectory of the Polish workers movement led toward the overthrow of the regime and appeared to require an explicitly revolutionary strategy. Yet, the implementation of such a strategy would, very likely, have provoked Soviet military intervention, with its potentially disastrous consequences. Even so, on the basis of our analysis of the Polish social order and of the evolution of Solidarity's struggle against it we concluded that the alternative strategy of "limiting the revolution," followed by Solidarity until the coup of December 1981, profoundly disoriented the movement and helped prevent it from fully confronting the difficult situation it faced.

For Kuron and Solidarity, "limiting the revolution" meant struggling for a Poland in which the working class exerted a large measure of control over the economy and even the governmental institutions, but

where nevertheless the bureaucracy retained control of the state and the Party maintained its "leading role." In our view, however, this goal was profoundly self-contradictory. The basis of the bureaucracy's dominant position is its control over production and over the economic surplus; this control is maintained through its top-down administration of the economic plan and is guaranteed by its monopoly of force. This means that there is no way, without revolution, that the bureaucracy can be made to accept the democratic control of the economy by the workers, or made to tolerate a "civil society" which is free to organize itself independently from the state. For were the bureaucracy to grant democracy, it would agree to its own self-destruction. The TR comrades dismiss out of hand a revolutionary approach. But they do not begin to explain how Solidarity could have induced the bureaucracy to accept its democratic goals. Nor do they suggest how a compromise might have been achieved, short of total surrender by Solidarity—or even how Solidarity could have avoided repression.

At the same time, the TR comrades fail to tell us how, lacking a revolutionary strategy, it was possible to preserve the dynamism and creativity, or even the existence, of the Polish movement. As a result of Solidarity's extraordinary self-organization and mass

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militancy, and the succession of defeats it was able to administer to the ruling bureaucracy, the working class raised its self-confidence to unprecedented levels. It thereby created the material conditions in which the movement could, and did, begin to take over and run the economy and society. The increasing strength of the workers led to the increasing paralysis of the ruling bureaucracy and its servants. By the summer of 1981, this resulted in a profound crisis—the disastrous decay of production and distribution and the breakdown of administration. If, in this situation, Solidarity failed to take control of the economy to raise production and restore order, it invited its own destruction from two possible directions. On the one hand, Solidarity would lose the confidence of the workers, with the demoralization and disorganization of the movement the unavoidable result. On the other hand, sections of the working class would feel obliged to attempt to seize power themselves, in order to resolve the impasse. This would lead to an *unprepared* confrontation with the authorities and the likely repression of the movement by the state. In fact, as Solidarity leaders have explicitly recognized, *both* of these developments did occur. Before the coup, there was a serious loss of confidence in Solidarity *and* an unorganized and unfocused push to overthrow the regime on the part of the working class—with disastrous results. If it had wished to strengthen the movement, Solidarity had no choice but to resolve the crisis itself. Therefore, it could not afford “to rule out in advance” the seizure of state power. Only through *explicitly* recognizing that it was necessary to overthrow the regime in order to resolve the profound economic and political crisis could Solidarity have worked out the best tactics in what was undoubtedly an extremely difficult situation.

Toward Revolution?

The TR comrades grant that Solidarity was “not just a trade union.” Their own view is that Solidarity “wanted a hand in the decisions at the state level affecting the masses, wanted to transform the institutions of the party and the unions so that workers, peasants, intelligentsia, the church and students and youth could play a role in them, restoring social mass organizations through initiatives from below.” But this formulation is vague and misleading. The TR comrades do not make clear just what role they think Solidarity envisioned for the social/mass organizations and therefore fail to indicate just how far they think Solidarity sought to go, or could go. They invite, moreover, massive confusion when they refer to the “restoring” of independent mass organizations of the working class, since such organizations have never been allowed in “communist” Poland, or in any other of the so-called socialist countries. The TR comrades seem to forget that the key to Solidarity’s success was precisely the creation of new and autonomous mass organizations, not the penetration or reform of the old ones—which are controlled by the bureaucracy. Moreover, they totally ignore the overpowering fact that, practically from the start, the bureaucracy considered Solidarity to be an insufferable threat to the regime, to be eliminated at the first opportunity. For this reason alone, Solidarity could ill-afford to ignore the questions of state power and revolution.

From the beginning, in fact, Solidarity was incomparably more than a trade union. Basing itself on the power of “big battalions” of the industrial sector (the shipyards of the north, the tractor and steel plants of Warsaw, the mines of Silesia), Solidarity sought to represent the working class as a whole, indeed the entire society. In the first couple of months of its existence, Solidarity not only won independent trade unions and the right to strike, but also the freeing of political prisoners, unprecedented rights of free speech and association, access to the mass media, and the dismissal of thousands of corrupt officials. Meanwhile, Solidarity had succeeded in extending organization and a degree of equal treatment to the weaker sections of the working class (especially in government services) and had begun to contemplate an alliance with the peasantry. The bureaucracy had suffered massive defeats and was losing its capacity to rule. We would submit to the TR comrades that even at this early state a revolutionary situation was emerging. There was effectively a state of *dual power*, and this point was emphatically brought home when, in the wake of the police outrages at Bydgoszcz, Solidarity pulled off the most massive strike in Europe since World War II and forced the recognition of Peasant Solidarity. This was a situation which the bureaucracy could not tolerate over any medium run. As then premier Stanislaw Kania told party officials as early as January 15, 1981, “There is no room for two power centers in this country. Double power has never been and could never be a system of organization in public life.”

Of course, Solidarity’s development did not cease at this point. From the summer of 1981, workers in some of the largest factories, the so-called “Network,” began developing a program for the democratic self-management of the entire economy. A version of this program was ratified at Solidarity’s autumn congress, along with demands for the abolition of the Party’s exclusive right to make appointment to key posts in industry, a national referendum on self-management, free elections to local government councils and to the Sejm (parliament), free access to official media, and a variety of additional improvements in working and living conditions. Meanwhile, strikes involving hundreds of thousands of people further deepened the crisis, and the stage was set for the descent toward confrontation.

The TR comrades are of course right to say that Solidarity “did not have designs on assuming the functions of the state” (at least until the last minute). But they are quite wrong to draw from this the conclusion that Solidarity was not a revolutionary movement or that there was not a revolutionary situation. Do the TR comrades deny that the continued existence of Solidarity, with the level of organization it had achieved, let alone its program of workers self-management and the democratization of the society, posed a mortal threat to the bureaucracy? Do they deny that the normal methods of governance had been systematically disrupted by Solidarity and that the state was left with few means, besides force, to reassert its authority? Can they forthrightly argue that, in these circumstances, it was reasonable to refrain from adopting a revolutionary perspective and to face up to the problem of state power?



"The Self Limiting Revolution"

It is quite absurd to attribute to us the view, as do the TR comrades, that "Popular support for the demand for workers' self management was tantamount to support for seizing state power, a phenomenon that the leaders of Solidarity could not recognize." In fact our argument was just the opposite: that no section of the movement, leadership or ranks, developed a *full and explicit* appreciation of what sort of struggle was actually needed to achieve their demands for significant workers self management of the economy and the other radical planks in Solidarity's program. Nor did ATC put forward the rather ludicrous notion that Solidarity's failure adequately to think through the question of state power was "another example of the leaders' blindness and the rank and file's militancy," let alone the view that what was essentially at stake was merely a logistical or tactical question. On the contrary, we consistently argued that the fundamental issue was a *political* one—that of the proper overall *strategy* for struggle. Above all, we argued that the Solidarity leadership's strategy of maintaining effective dual power over an extended period failed to reflect the realities of power in Poland's bureaucratically-dominated system and was therefore a faulty basis from which to develop policies for the movement. What was therefore, needed was a cohesive organization within Solidarity—a party in effect—to put forward and win over the mass of the working class to the view that the bureaucracy could never accept a substantial *de facto* democratization of the society, even if its formal authority was left unchallenged, and that therefore the only way to resolve Poland's crisis was through revolution. A revolutionary *perspective* had to inform day to day struggle, whether the movement was advancing or in retreat.

In light of developments since Autumn 1981 it should be clear to all that Solidarity's perspectives were inadequate. Adherence to the permanent dual power strategy led to a disorientation of the mass movement, a paralysis of the leadership, and ultimately an incapacity to confront the repression.

Even before Solidarity's national congress, central figures of Solidarity's leadership were reporting that the perceived collapse of the organization's perspective of limiting the revolution was leading to declining confidence in Solidarity and confusion in the movement. Here are a few assessments of the movement by top Solidarity leaders, published in *Robotnik* three months before martial law under the title "One Year After August, What Shall We Do Next?"

Jan Litynski. It seems that waiting to see what the authorities do and negotiating compromises has proved ineffective. Solidarity is slowly losing points. It is disappointing its members. Those who expected the economic situation to improve are as disappointed as those who hoped that the radicalism of the union movement would bring about a new political structure and the fall of the current structure. Their hopes have been dashed.

Jacek Kuron. One senses increasing impatience, a feeling that we cannot stand this any longer. For many people this means it is time to overthrow the authorities. The argument goes as follows: we have created the union to control the authorities. But this appears to be impossible, because they are too devils.

Zbigniew Bujak. Our movement grows weaker. At the outset it was based on a great hate towards the authorities, towards the party. But this is not enough anymore. Motives must change. The members of our union do not understand the policy of their leaders. From the beginning, this policy was never explained to them. Protests, strikes, local struggles do not form a coherent whole. I became convinced of this during a meeting at URSUS tractor factory. It was only when I told them that all these self-management initiatives were leading to taking control of the economy that people understood and approved.

On the other hand, to the extent that sections of the movement ignored the perspective of "self-limiting revolution," they found themselves without a central leadership and without coordination. There was rising radicalism and militancy without much organization. In the period following Solidarity's congress, sections of the working class began attempting to resolve the crisis themselves by carrying through the piecemeal takeover of the institutions of society. The workers thrust, came from the bottom up and took place very unevenly and without the consent of the national Solidarity leadership. First of all, workers in some regions began to elect their own factory managers, replacing the official incumbents. In this way, they initiated the practical struggle to break the hated system of Party *nomenklatura* (top-down appointments) by which the bureaucracy controlled the administration of the economy and society as a whole. Secondly, some workers began to prepare for "active strikes," which had been widely-discussed since the previous summer and recognized as an accepted method of struggle by the national Solidarity in October 1981. By this tactic, workers in a given region, during the course of coordinated strike action, could continue to operate their factories, overseeing production and seeing to distribution.

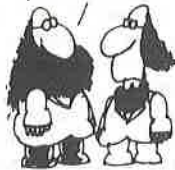
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Of course, during this period, the government's actions were becoming ever more threatening. The announcement of the ban on strikes convinced some elements in Solidarity that a forceful confrontation was unavoidable. Zbigniew Bujak, leader of Warsaw Solidarity, seems to have received widespread backing when he outlined a plan drawn up by his region, to form factory-based workers militias to defend strikes and occupations. By December 12, one report from Warsaw suggested that "The majority of union activists see confrontation as inevitable in the near future and are already taking counter measures in the factories; in the big factories the organization of workers militias is not infrequent, nor is the forcing out of 'orthodox' Communist Party members." Shortly thereafter, of course, Solidarity's leadership made the call for a national referendum on the government, which was tantamount to demanding the dismantling of the regime. By then, of course, the coup was in progress.

The bureaucracy of the party controls the means of communication and culture in the name of the proletariat



The bureaucracy of the party controls the means of production in the name of the proletariat



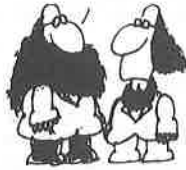
The bureaucracy of the party claims legitimacy in the name of the proletariat



The bureaucracy of the party runs the the judicial apparatus in the name of the proletariat



The bureaucracy of the party runs the army and police in the name of the proletariat



The bureaucracy of the party uses repression in the name of the proletariat



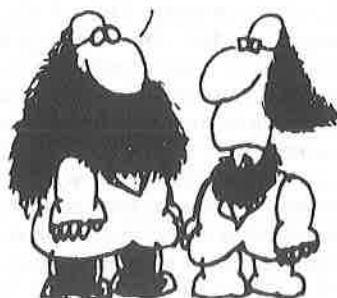
The bureaucracy of the party lives very well in the name of the proletariat



And the proletariat is happy with this?



Sure, the bureaucracy of the party never complains in the name of the proletariat, does it?



Richard

Obviously, Solidarity as a whole did not prepare to confront the state until the last minute, and by then it was too late. But, in view, on the one hand, of the workers own quite broadly-based, spontaneous thrust to extend their control over society, and, on the other, the bureaucracy's preparation for the coup, can the TR comrades continue to argue that a revolutionary perspective was out of place?

Did Solidarity Go Too Far?

Clearly, so long as Solidarity remained as organized and as powerful as it was, the bureaucracy was resolved to repress it. But perhaps the TR comrades think that Solidarity "went to far," and should have sought a compromise with the bureaucracy before the ax fell—or, alternatively, that Kuron's strategy could, somehow, have been made to work? One cannot, of course, dismiss out of hand the possibility of an agreement. But the TR comrades are obliged to say on what basis such a compromise or *modus vivendi* between the workers movement and the bureaucracy could have been secured. In our view, the combined economic and political character of the crisis left the bureaucracy little room to maneuver. The bureaucracy *could* not grant economic concession, and it *would not* grant political concessions, so there was little ground for a compromise acceptable to Solidarity.

The revolt thus found its short term roots in Poland's economic crisis. Radically declining growth, combined with disastrous balance of payment problems, obliged the Polish government to install austerity measures in 1980. The increase in food prices was what provoked the initial strikes which led to the formation of Solidarity. Poland's national income had fallen by 2.3% in 1979, and by another 5.4% in 1980. The revolt naturally made things worse. Income dropped by a further 15-20% in 1981, and inflation was running at a 30% annual rate. The workers' refusal any longer to bear the material burden of the crisis and their conviction that they could protect themselves from the bureaucracy only by building their own independent sources of strength were what led them to form Solidarity and to make their demands for rights and powers. At the same time, in view of the disastrous crisis of production, the bureaucracy had inadequate resources to co-opt the movement, to buy off the workers' political demands by granting the economic concessions.

On the other hand, as documented at length in our article, the bureaucracy was not in the slightest bit willing to allow Solidarity *political* concessions. It violently resisted every political demand of the workers, and attempted to revoke every political gain of the movement at the first opportunity. Neither the right to strike nor even Solidarity's existence were ever secure. The bureaucracy was, moreover, at no time close to conceding significant workers democracy in overseeing the economy. Rather the bureaucracy sought from the start to destroy the movement: to co-opt it, to harass it, and, over time, to prepare to repress it. The bureaucracy's recent outlawing of Solidarity and its re-installing the old official unions (in new garb) are the logical outcome of the bureaucracy's consistently applied policy. Can the TR comrades suggest a compromise for Solidarity which was short of giving up everything?

What Tactics?

The TR comrades consistently confuse questions of strategy with questions of tactics. They fail to see that a revolutionary strategy is required not merely—nor even primarily—to plan insurrection. It is required to provide the guiding *framework* for developing day-to-day policy. Only through *explicitly* recognizing the irreconcilable antagonism between the working class and the bureaucracy, the strictly limited potential for reforming the regime, and the impossibility of resolving the socio-economic crisis short of revolution can the Polish movement adequately confront its day-to-day tasks. This is no less true in the East than it is in the West.

But the question remains: was a seizure of power possible in Poland in 1981 or even a thinkable option? In the last analysis, only those who are actually "on the ground," fighting the struggle, can decide what are the appropriate tactics at any given moment. No one outside of Poland is in a position to tell Solidarity what to do. Nevertheless, we felt it incumbent upon us to point out, however provisionally, certain possible alternatives for the Polish movement in order to concretize, however insufficiently, our overall perspectives.

With this proviso stated, we must take strong exception to TR's argument that the fact that no workers rising took place following the coup proves it was absurd, unrealistic to prepare for a forceful confrontation with the state. The position of the TR comrades is a total non-sequitur. How can one be surprised that the Polish working class offered no forceful resistance, either before or after the coup, when such resistance was never seriously contemplated, let alone planned. The Solidarity leaders never took seriously even the possibility that the state might move to outlaw and repress the movement. For the TR comrades to argue that no forceful resistance was conceivable simply because none took place is like arguing that insurrection was inevitable in 1917 Russia whether or not the Bolsheviks had organized it.

The fact that sections within Solidarity did, in the end, actually began to prepare for a forceful conflict with the state makes our view that such preparations were necessary that much more plausible. When it became clear that a confrontation was likely they refused to rule out resistance either because of some ostensible immaturity of the movement or because of the threat from the Russians. Instead, as noted, they started to eject Party officials from their posts and begin to plan for "active strikes." As Zbigniew Bujak, chairman of Warsaw Solidarity stated, in calling for active strikes and workers guards early in December 1981:

This involves a conflict with the authorities, virtually a final one, a conflict similar in dimensions to the one over Bydgoszcz but this time with no concessions. We are convinced that this is the only road we can take. If we lose, the situation will hardly be worse than it is today. But we will be in a better position than if we yielded. Because giving way would mean disarming ourselves . . . *The situation has now become revolutionary again.* If we do not act accordingly, we will betray the working class. It cannot wait any longer because it knows that the authorities are prepared to keep the society in a state of crisis, if only to maintain their privileges and defend their own interests. . . . *There is*

only one alternative—either a bureaucratic dictatorship that crushes the society, or workers self-managing socialism. (Emphasis added.)

Do the TR comrades conclude that these militants were adventurist and that there was really no choice but to lay low?

Perhaps most indicative, Jacek Kuron himself concluded not too long ago that preparation for an armed rising must be the centerpiece of the Polish underground's tactics. Kuron proposed that it was necessary to combine mass strike action with plans for military defense, and called as we did, for agitation within the conscript army to attempt to win over the soldiers. Are the TR comrades willing to label Kuron reckless and mechanical as they did us for suggesting the same things?

But there remains the argument that a successful rising in Poland would likely have provoked Soviet intervention. TR calls us recklessly insensitive for daring to estimate the potential of such an invasion and to assess its likely effects. Yet, in our view, no serious Polish movement can possibly operate without making such calculations.

It is necessary to notice then that intervention in Poland would be very costly for the Russians and, partly for this reason, it could not be assured of success. Poland is much more populous than Hungary in 1956; its working class was far better organized to prepare military and economic resistance than was the Czech working class in 1968. Moreover, the Russians are already paying a huge price to put down the Afghan rebels. A Polish adventure would not only be far most costly, but would put the Soviet Union under tremendous strain as a result of the likely western response. Almost certainly, supplies for the Siberian pipeline would be cut off; the western banks would probably call in their debts from Poland and all of Eastern Europe; the US and its West European allies, above all Germany would be pushed back together, spoiling the advantages to the Soviet Union of US-German frictions. These are not costs which the Russian invaders could take lightly. But still we cannot conclude that such problems would dissuade them from intervening, or cause them to withdraw once they had occupied Poland.

In fact no one can guarantee that there would not be Russian intervention in the event of revolution in Poland, or convincingly deny that the results could possibly be disastrous. Does this mean that such a rising should be ruled out in advance? The TR comrades seem to speak as if they think so. But can they actually hold such a position? To do so, would be to advise, in advance, against any serious resistance in Poland. For the entire history of Solidarity has shown that no successful movement can be sure to avoid confrontation with the state, and thus having to organize against it, possibly provoking thereby a Soviet invasion. Would the TR comrades accept the analogous argument, often put forward by the Western Communist Parties, that since the US would not stand by and allow a successful workers revolution in any of the West European countries, we must rule out in advance any seizure of the revolutionary road in such countries as Italy, Spain, Portugal, etc.? What would be their advice to

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Mexican or Canadian revolutionaries, or those throughout the third-world?

Kuron himself in calling for military preparations by the Polish resistance, has recently stated that "We cannot base our programme on the hope that the generals themselves will willingly accept a compromise. We have to acknowledge that violence only retreats in front of violence, and to openly state that the movement will not refuse to use force." Kuron is well aware, of course, that such steps could provoke Soviet intervention, and he wants to take measures to try to avoid that eventuality. But he is now quite clear that to rule out in advance forceful confrontation with the authorities is tantamount to surrender. In the words of Zbigniew Kowalewski, a Solidarity leader from the Lodz region, "If we allow ourselves to be intimidated by the threat of Soviet military intervention, there will be nothing left for us but to give up the struggle. I believe that there is another solution: to accept that foreign military intervention is not inevitable; to neutralise the Kremlin through compromises with the Polish bureaucratic regime, but only insofar as they allow ourselves (rather than our enemy) to accumulate our forces; and to give an example of struggle to the workers of other East European satellites and the USSR itself, so that they may follow our path and understand that we can only win through common struggle." (Emphasis added.)



Reform or Revolution: The Nautre of Polish Society

We suspect that what most disturbs the *Theoretical Review* comrades about our argument for the necessity of a revolutionary perspective for the Polish movement is their own lingering hope that workers democracy can be won in Poland by means of gradual reforms. Indeed, Paul Costello concluded *Theoretical Review's* extensive analysis of the Polish revolt in issue No. 19 by stating that, "we think that it may still be possible to utilize existing social structures through their transformation within the parameters of the present system, so as to reverse the direction of development of Polish society, short of revolution." (Emphasis added.) This hope of transformation

through reform colors their entire presentation. Yet what is striking is that almost the entirety of Costello's own analysis actually leads in precisely the opposite direction—to the conclusion that Poland is not socialist, and that its fundamental structures cannot be transformed short of the revolutionary destruction of the bureaucratic state.

Costello makes admirably clear that for socialism to exist it is necessary to have workers democracy. "Clearly," writes Costello, "control by the masses (even peasants!) over the workers' state and the Communist Party was an essential component of Lenin's conception of socialism." (Our emphasis.) Costello is careful to explain, moreover, that nationalization, *in itself*, cannot constitute socialism. For it is quite possible, says Costello, for the state to use its control over the means of production in an anti-working class, anti-socialist direction (p. 9-10). As Costello approvingly quotes Bettelheim: "The real significance of state property depends on the real relations existing between the mass of workers and the state apparatus. If the workers do not dominate the state apparatus, if it is dominated by a body of functionaries and administrators, and if it escapes the control and direction of the working masses, then the body of functionaries and administrators effectively becomes the proprietor of the means of production." (Costello's emphasis.) On the basis of this conception of socialism, and from Costello's own subsequent description of the character of Polish state, society, and socio-economic development since the installation of the Communist regime, the reader might be excused for concluding that Poland certainly is not socialist.

Costello thus explains that from the late 1920s in Russia and from the late 40s in Eastern Europe, including Poland, "a perspective was consolidated . . . which abandoned Lenin's emphasis on socialization [the transfer of control over and direction of society by the masses themselves] as the essence of the transition period . . . For Stalinian socialism and its economic Marxism, the essence of socialist construction was, and remains, the development of the productive forces with the vanguard of that process being a militarized state system."

Costello makes it very clear that as Stalinian socialism was consolidated in Poland, any independence of the party and other "mass institutions" was destroyed, and these bodies were integrated into the state as instruments of state rule. Thus,

Polish socialism, like the socialisms in the rest of Eastern Europe, developed in such a way that the enormous state apparatuses made the economic and political decisions without the active participation of the masses. Statization of the means of production, which should have been viewed as a preliminary step toward socialization, had instead become an institutional structure which blocks any progress toward socialization . . . by the transformation of working class organizations into state organs . . . As a result of this process not only did socialization fail to develop, but the very mechanisms which would have made socialization possible—a party distinct from the state machinery, independent labor unions, and organized workers control over the state and party—never developed. (Emphasis added.)

Costello logically draws the very important conclusion that, as a result, workers struggles in Poland have, of necessity, proceeded outside the party, trade union, and other official organizations. This is because "their bureaucratic structures and practices . . . make it impossible for the mass of honest cadre to defend working class interests. This in turn makes it impossible for these organizations to be organized proletarian bodies." (Emphasis added.)

Sadly, Costello cannot draw from all of this the indicated conclusion that the bureaucratic regime long ago consolidated itself, that there is no progress within the established institutions toward socialism, that the official institutions cannot be used as instruments of working class rule, and that a revolution is necessary to make possible workers democracy and socialization. Inexplicably, he concludes that Poland is still socialist and that therefore it is possible to win democratization and socialization on the basis of its own structures by gradual reforms. On what basis does Costello come to this astounding result? Astonishingly, *there is only one*: "We do not believe that there are no significant restraints on the growth and reproduction of capitalism in Poland, nor do we find that a new bourgeoisie has been created which holds state power as a class." One need pay very close attention to Costello's words, for they have been carefully chosen. Clearly, he has abandoned workers democracy and socialization as criteria for socialism, since he has stated very explicitly again and again that these do not exist in Poland. Nor is it a question of *moving toward* democracy and socialization, for as he emphasized, there is no evidence whatsoever that the Polish regime (or any other of the regimes in Eastern Europe) is moving in that direction. No, Costello's sole criterion for Poland's being socialist is that . . . it is not capitalist and a bourgeoisie does not rule there! In a remarkable syllogism, Costello argues that *since* Poland is not capitalist, *therefore* it *must* be socialist . . . and since Poland is socialist, *therefore* it must be reformable from within—even though Costello has given us every reason, theoretical and historical, for concluding that this is not possible.

Costello lamely *asserts*—he offers not a shred of analysis or evidence in favor of this—that "the struggle of the workers shows that it may still be possible to utilize existing social structures . . . short of revolution." Why? Because "In every struggle, 1956, 1970-1, 1976, and now in 1980, events have demonstrated that when workers go on strike the rank and file of the party and the labor unions will frequently side with the masses against the official leadership." But this is a complete non-sequitur. Costello is of course perfectly right—and the *Theoretical Review* comrades made the same point—that much of the rank and file of the Party, trade unions, and the other mass institutions of Polish society sided with the revolt against the regime. But in what way does this prove that these structures can be used by the workers to reform the system?

The Polish revolt won the support of almost the entirety of the Polish working class. It is, therefore, hardly surprising that large numbers of workers in the Communist Party, the official trade unions, and other official bodies supported Solidarity. Since these are insti-

tutions which include hundreds of thousands of workers, some of their members were *bound* to have been Solidarity supporters, and the workers revolt was bound to make itself felt within these institutions. We made the same point at great length. But it in no way follows that these bodies can be made to serve the workers interests, let alone be used to transform the regime. The main function of all these apparatuses—party, trade unions, and other official bodies—is to bind the working class to the bureaucracy. They serve as transmission belts by which the ruling bureaucracy gets order carried and, in turn, gets feedback from society at large. For this reason, these bodies are constructed in a way which precludes their takeover by the working class: their leadership and membership, at every level, is co-opted from the top; there is no democracy, no control, from below. On this basis (has Costello forgotten?), *Costello himself* concluded that "the bureaucratic structures and practices" of these organizations, "make it impossible for the mass of honest cadre to defend working class interests by using them" and "make it impossible for these organizations to be organized proletarian bodies." Naturally, the Polish revolt spilled over into the party. But the really striking fact is not that the party was affected by this titanic movement, but that it was affected so little. Even in the summer of 1981, at the height of the struggle, Solidarity was unable to move the Party Congress one inch in its direction. What better proof that the Party is impervious to workers' control and incapable of being used to transform society.

Indeed, from one point of view, the series of working class revolts in Poland in 1956, 1970, 1976, and 1980-1, can be seen as a process by which the working class came to realize this very fact—that it cannot use the Party or official state bodies for its own ends. In the revolt of 1956-7, the workers ultimately put their hopes in Gomułka's new reforming government to win their aims, even though this was to place their fate in the hands of one section of the ruling bureaucracy and Party. As late as the strikes of 1970-1, there were still hopes that Gierek might do what Gomułka had failed to do. But, by 1980-1, there were few such illusions. Solidarity achieved the authority it did within the whole working class precisely because it was in every way *independent* from the ruling bureaucracy, the Party, and the official trade unions. Its whole point was to *control* them.

In any case, as was shown in 1981 and since, the bureaucracy's rule, though facilitated by the Party, is not dependent upon it. As Costello himself so well put it:

It is not the party which controls and leads the state under Stalinian "socialism," but the massive state system which dominates and shapes the party. When, in Poland, the party ceases to function as an institution for controlling the masses, the State thrusts it aside to disclose the real power of these regimes: the armed might of the state security police and the army.

How, in this light can Costello still continue to speak of "rectifying" the Party and, in this way, reforming society? Doing so contradicts his whole analysis.

In the last analysis, Costello and the *Theoretical Review* comrades cannot avoid these contradictions be-

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cause they have not broken from a theory which interprets the policies of Poland and the other so-called socialist countries as resulting from political error, rather than as the logical outcome of the bureaucracy's requirements for maintaining its rule on the basis of centralized state production and the exploitation of the working class. It is because they view the unfortunate developments of the so-called socialist countries as the result of an ideological deviation—the "Stalinian deviation"—that they are enabled to contemplate a transformation of these regimes through reforms—through ideological change, rather than armed struggle.

Costello summarizes the *Theoretical Review* position as follows:

The Stalinian deviation departed from [Leninism] in two important respects. First it liquidated the distinction between the two functions of the state, one-sidedly defining the essence of the dictatorship as force (state compulsion). . .

Second the Stalinian deviation's "economism" led it to subordinate the political and ideological organization of the masses to the demands of a distorted and one-sided economic development plan, which was based on the development of the productive forces without sufficient regard for the transformation of production to the detriment of the worker-peasant alliance and the standard of living of the masses.

It is all too indicative of the idealist character of this account that Costello here writes as if it was the "Stalinian deviation" which was itself the major actor, if the *deviation* itself was somehow determining policy, rather than particular group with particular interests. He thereby saves himself from asking the obvious question, which is what explains the adoption of these policies aimed at rule by coercion, the buildup of the state apparatus, and the subordination of almost everything to the development of the productive forces? Who supported these policies and who benefited from them?

If Costello would remove his theoretical and political blinders, he could easily use his own excellent account to conclude that it is the bureaucracy which rules in all of the so-called socialist countries, and that the series of "deviations" which marked their development were systematically promoted by the bureaucracy in its own interest. If Costello could grant that it is the bureaucracy which rules in all of the so-called socialist countries, he would indeed have no difficulty in understanding why, *in every one of them without exception*, the so-called Stalinian deviation was adopted and maintained to this day. Indeed, how can we speak about "deviation" when these deviations—the very same repressive and economic practices—were systematically adopted by every one of the so called socialist states? Deviation from what? Does it not make sense to recognize that there are social forces which are common to all these countries and which determined the universal appearance of the practices?

The point is that if Costello interpreted in a materialist fashion the developments in the state and the economy he so well describes, he would no longer feel impelled to view these as products of ideological deformation—as if they resulted from a mistaken understanding of the role of force and/or skill of an economist

outlook. He would view the terrifying buildup of the means of force in the hands of the bureaucracies of all of the so-called socialist countries merely as *necessary* to exclude the working class from power and see the huge buildup of the administrative apparatus as indispensable for exploiting the working class, in the state-run, centralized economy. He would interpret the forced march industrial development common to most of the so-called socialist countries simply as the necessary means for bureaucracies based in *rational* economies to build up the material base for their own power—without regard for the working class, and against the hostile capitalist states. He would see, in turn, that the economic stagnation and crisis of most of the so-called socialist countries is not the result simply of erroneous policy, but of the conflicted character of bureaucratic rule. The fact is that without the cooperation of the workers whom it exploits, the bureaucracy cannot do a great deal more to get economic development than force the peasants off the farms into the factories and compel the workers to labor longer and harder (the first, "extensive" stage of industrialization). From this vantage point, Costello could understand the slippage of Poland and most of the other East European states toward greater involvement in the world economy and greater reliance on the market: It is necessary to use competition and profits to motivate increased production and to employ the market to get a semblance of rational allocation in economies because the working class is systematically alienated from the state and will not collaborate with it. Finally, if Costello could see that for the bureaucracy to maintain itself it must bring exploitation, oppression, and crisis, he would have no trouble seeing why working class opposition in the so-called socialist societies is endemic, why the goal of this opposition is workers democratic self management (socialization), and why this goal cannot be achieved short of revolution ■

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The crisis of the US economy has brought with it a parallel crisis of the labor movement. In the search for "solutions," participation by workers and their representatives in shop floor and plant-wide management are being widely discussed. In post-war Germany, this conception has had a 30-year trial, under the name of Co-determination. It involves worker representatives on corporate Boards of Directors and on other levels of management in all plants with over 2,000 employees. How co-determination came into being, how it works, and what its consequences have been, are the subject of this article by a worker socialist militant from Frankfurt, Germany.

CO-DETERMINATION: THE GERMAN WORKPLACE EXPERIENCE

by Chris Scherrer *

In post-war Germany, as in the US today, "worker participation" arose out of the social and economic crisis of the country. As in 1919, the German worker of 1947 got co-determination as a substitute for the real power they threatened to take.

In 1919, after the *revolutionary* workers councils had been crushed a law was introduced which provided for workers councils, but with a very different meaning. The original councils were stripped of all their previous influence, indeed control, over production and were reduced to the status of something like a grievance board. Of course, *these* councils did not prove to be an effective tool against the rising tide of Nazism, and after Hitler's accession to power they were simply integrated into the fascist corporate system.

A parallel situation arose immediately after Germany's capitulation in 1945. The workers in basic industry took possession of the largely destroyed and idled plants,¹ and organized the food supply for the families and began preparations for the start-up of production. A huge groundswell arose in support of nationalization of basic industry, especially that of the industrialists who collaborated with the Nazis. Many of the owners of heavy industry had left their companies, either because they were put on trial by the allies for war crimes, or had just simply fled in expectation of these trials. To counter the workers' initiative and popular sentiment, to coopt them, the allies followed a dual course. First they installed trustees over the factories, who were usually from the old management. But lacking the authority of ownership, these trustees had to rely, more or less, on the cooperation of the new workers' council (which did not prevent them from struggling to restore the old order). In

their resistance to the then popular demand of nationalization or socialization of basic industries and banks, the trustees could count on the allies and the newly formed unions. When two referenda overwhelmingly endorsed nationalization of basic industries, General Clay simply vetoed the outcome.

In place of nationalization under workers' control, the Social Democratic union leaders like Hans Boeckler put forward the sop of co-determination as early as March '46. "We have told ourselves right from the start of the total catastrophe: There should be no second disaster for the German worker . . . we must be represented in the business world on a totally equal footing. . . . The idea is this: Representation in management and on the company boards."

Nationalization was not on their agenda. Their rise to top union offices was largely due to the influence of the allies, which had taken the place of the collapsed state apparatus and, to some extent, employed Social Democrats for the governing of the former Reich. Allied occupation—in the west—meant thus safeguarding private ownership, and it prevented the working class from settling accounts with its foes. In addition, a general lack of direction prevailed within the working class since the KPD (Communist Party) also followed the policies of the occupying forces.

In 1947 an agreement was reached between the North German Iron and Steel Control and the union federation of the British sector which was the forerunner of the Montan-Co-Determination law. It provided, in addition

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to the works councils, for equal representation of capital and labor on the boards of directors (supervisory board) in the de-concentrated iron and steel industry, and for the appointment of an industrial relations vice president (Arbeitsdirektor) for each firm.

This agreement served two purposes. On the one hand it appeared to give in to workers' demands—actually the demands of the union hierarchy—while avoiding socialization. On the other hand it softened demands of western capitalists to destroy Germany's basic industries. Workers' participation in directing these industries was viewed as a safeguard against German imperialist aspirations. It was reasoned that once the workers were able to co-determine, they would not only protest against the dismantling of "their" works, but also against the break up of the giant firms. The director of the trustee agency, H. Dinkelbach, put it like this:

"I have chosen this kind of participation for the workers, first to tell them that these works are theirs. . . . and that they have to defend them; and secondly because that way a possibility arose to mobilize the workers against socialization."

The illusory character of these events is recognized by Paul Harig, a long-term president of the works council of a steel plant, top level official of the I.G. Metall union and former Member of Parliament:

"Looking back no one can dispute that both the General Order No. 7 of the Allied High Command as well as the initiation of talks concerning the de-concentration of the steel industry were a trick. Within the union it was widely believed that the company bosses had lost their power, even though the question of ownership was not yet resolved."

One of Hans Boeckler's assistants, Dr. Erich Potthoff from Cologne, contributed to this widely held belief. Dr. Potthoff circulated the argument that one had to distinguish between ownership and management. Management, rather than the owners, now played the leading role. A personnel office had been established at the trustee agency of director Dinkelbach headed by a social democrat, who would see to it that no unqualified person would receive an executive position.

The company bosses argued equally cleverly. In order to distract the attention of the working class away from socialization they declared their will to participate in the creation of "industrial democracy."

Four years later this agreement was put into law. But by that time the idea of "industrial democracy" as an alternative to class conflicts, as a possibility of pulling capital's teeth without taking away its political and economic clout had become nothing but a dream. The 1951 Montan Co-determination law passed in the Bundestag only after a nationwide strike in the coal and iron industries was threatened. When the talks with the owners, who now felt strong enough to do without co-determination, broke down, 96% of the steel workers and 92% of the miners voted for a strike.

The restoration of the old "balance" of power was now only a matter of time. Those who gave their support to a capitalistic reconstruction—with democratic facade—paid the price. The communist union officials were eliminated by the social democratic party; the dream of the social democratic union officials of co-determining economic development fell victim, as we shall see below, to capitalist reconstruction and economic recovery.

Provisions of Co-Determination Law

The law of 1951 applied to about 100 companies in the iron, steel and mining industries (the "Montan" industries) when it came into effect. (It must be distinguished from a later, more generally applicable law passed in 1952, and revised in 1976.)

What are the specifics of that law? Co-determination occurs at the enterprise's highest level, the board of directors. The stockholders elect half of the board members; the other half is appointed by the unions. To avoid ties the board then elects a neutral chairman. The board appoints management executive committee (Vorstand) to oversee day-to-day operations. But *this* committee need only include *one* labor representative, an industrial relations vice-president (Arbeitsdirektor), whose appointment requires the approval of the workers' representatives on the Board. The *arbeitsdirektor* has been traditionally a former official of the unions.

This labor member of the company's management committee handles wage and salary questions, work schedules, lay-offs, hiring programs, disciplinary action, plant security and fire prevention, social activities and cases of social hardship. (I realize that many of these tasks are regulated in the U.S. by union contract.) The department is independent and has its own budget. But, the *arbeitsdirektor* is, by law, required to work for the "well-being of the corporation."

The *arbeitsdirektor* performs these managerial responsibilities by representing *management* in its relations with the "works council," a body which is elected by all salaried and non-salaried, union and non-union employees of the company—all, that is, except the senior managers.

A Conflict of Interest?

Do union representation on the Board of Directors and union *officials'* control over the *arbeitsdirektor* result in substantial gains for workers even while a corporation is run subject to the profit mechanism? Or do the workers representatives' dual allegiances necessarily result in an unbreachable conflict of interest? What follow are some typical examples covering the whole range of worker-company relations in Germany.

(1) When the I. G. Metall union demanded a wage raise of 20 pfennige per hour in the collective bargaining negotiations in Nordrhein-Westfalen, the management *together with the Arbeitsdirektoren* decided on 14 pfennige as a maximum and risked a strike. (This is reminiscent of the situation in the U.S., when the UAW's Fraser was in a similar position. He argued the company's case *against* a wage increase to Chrysler workers.)

(2) Since 1962, the companies *and Arbeitsdirektoren* have at many crucial moments, jointly called for a wage freeze, arguing that profits were down in iron and steel. Moreover, they pointed out that the I.G. Metall (union) leadership, because of co-determination, was well-informed about the situation. Many more of examples of similar behavior by *Arbeitsdirektoren* could be cited.

(3) In cases of lay-offs the position the *Arbeitsdirektor* is no different from the one taken by his fellow executives. He has to represent the interests of capital. If lay-offs become necessary, he cannot prevent them, he can only determine the way these lay-offs are conducted,

who goes first and who goes last. (The seniority principle is far less pervasive in German labor relations than in American unions.) The same is true for hiring, transfers, job classification and distribution of severance pay. Concerning these questions there exists some leeway for the Arbeitsdirektor to arrange for some accommodation between his "fellow" executives and his social democratic comrades on the work council. This constitutes the main positive aspect of Montan co-determination, since it does matter whether an old worker is provided for with a job until he can collect retirement benefits or how the social compensation fund is used.

But massive reductions of jobs in the Montan industry came about in spite of co-determination. In mining 400,000 jobs were lost from 1950 to 1980; in steel from 1962 to 1980 140,000 jobs were lost. *In most cases the permanent layoffs found approval from the workers' representatives on the Boards.* The help the workers could expect was in the form of compensatory payments (severance pay) and concerted efforts by government, Social Democrats and unions to attract new business in the area.

Eugen Loderer, president of the I.G. Metall, put it like this recently:

"We have never disputed the necessity to lower costs. On the contrary, we always have worked for solutions that were in the interest of all participants. I remember places like Kalldorf. . . . These are examples of how, with our help, difficulties were overcome without having major social conflicts. In any other western country—where there is no co-determination—in most of the above mentioned cases, major strikes would have taken place. The consequences for business are known. That's the situation! We are interested in profits as much as you are. Only a profitable enterprise secures jobs in the long run."

(4) Co-determination and Plant Closures: Neither co-determination, nor the Arbeitsdirektors have had any significant effect on curbing or meliorating plant closures. As in the US, the Arbeitsdirektor limit themselves to negotiating the compensatory (severance) payments, not to save jobs. The weight of this failure falls especially upon young workers and foreign workers.

In one especially prominent case, VDM in Frankfurt, while the union negotiated, a group of works councilmen, active union members, members of the local clergy and community activists got together and formed a community group in support of jobs at VDM (reminiscent of the effort at Youngstown, U.S., when the steel corporations closed their plants). When the actual date of closure was announced, a group of workers spontaneously took over the factory gates (again as in Youngstown), but after four hours were persuaded by union leaders to leave (again, a repeat of Youngstown). The union leaders told the workers to stay calm and wait for the results of the negotiations concerning severance pay. At the same time he fended off all demands to stage a one hour work stoppage in all of Frankfurt's metal works.

Finally, when management refused even any significant severance pay, the workers under rank and file leadership occupied the plant. The company was not prepared for this action, and speedily acceded to severance pay, but *not* any form of job plan for the young and the foreign workers. The union used "its victory" to split the workers. The older workers returned and the occupation collapsed.⁴

Co-determination and the Current Crisis

In its efforts to rationalize German industry, the corporations are seeking to eliminate even the minimal positive side of co-determination. Even though the 1951 Montan Co-determination law had not stood in the way of job reductions in steel and coal, it *had* demanded a heavy price—compensatory payments for speed up, and lay-offs. This was tolerable in the boom period (just as the "social contract" was tolerable throughout most of Europe). But with profits taking a deep dive, management considers those payments more and more burdensome, especially in the light of a "favorable" change in the balance of power between labor and capital since 1974. The owners feel no longer obliged to keep the social peace through concessions to labor, since manpower is not scarce anymore. The lockouts during the strike of 1979 prove this abundantly. The companies feel they can do without co-determination.

As a result, the steel and other Montan-covered companies began a campaign to be covered by the much looser co-determination law of 1976. This law applies to all corporations with 2,000 or more employees. It is weaker than the Montan law in that the compulsory post of arbeitsdirektor is eliminated, one employee seat is delegated to senior managers, and in that the employee representatives are no longer appointed by the union, but elected by all the workers, union and non-union. This last proviso meant a possible loss of union sinecures, but also a possible role for more conservative unions and ranks. (It also opened the door to militants, but the latter tend not to be interested in such posts.)

Labor's response.

Back in 1979, the union had attempted to come to grips with the rising lay-offs through a fight for the 35-hour week (which, despite co-determination, the Boards of Directors opposed). The strike was lost because of the leadership's indecisiveness and refusal to involve the entire industry.⁴

When, following the defeat of the strike, the move to get out from under the Montan self-determination law was launched, the leadership was alarmed. A compromise was arrived at. I.G. Metall, through the union's president, Loderer, declared in public that the union would not stand in the way of necessary cost-cutting measures, i.e., job reductions and "productivity improvements." In exchange, the company would remain under the Montan co-determination law, with some changes—the worker representatives on the Board of Directors would no longer be appointed by the union, but elected by the works council. Other unions, that is, in most cases "company unions" could also run for the Board.

The lost steel strike of 1979, as well as the workers' illusions about co-determination have demobilized the German steel workers. The hard-won co-determination did little to help them against the laws of the market society. If the German workers are not to suffer even greater defeats, they will have to start to rely on their own power and the grass-root connections among all workers, and wage a battle against the strategies of the corporations ■

Marxism and Monopoly Capital Theory—A Reply

by John Bellamy Foster*

To “curb monopoly” would mean to curb capitalism as it has developed into the 20th century. It is naive to think otherwise. The “fight” against monopoly cannot be to reform it—to transform its private power into public power. That is, the fight has meaning only as a means of transforming capitalism into socialism.

Joseph M. Gillman¹

Steve Zeluck's critique of monopoly capital theory in *Against the Current* (vol. 1, no. 1, 1980) represents a “great leap backward” which is becoming increasingly evident among “fundamentalist” Marxists.² It is Zeluck's contention that theorists such as Paul Sweezy and Ernest Mandel (and to some extent even Lenin himself) have constructed analytical frameworks which have a liberal and reformist logic, insofar as the “economic ills” of a social constellation are traced to “capitalist monopolies, not capitalism” itself.³ Indeed, he goes on to argue that monopoly theory is both “incompatible” with Marx's economic analysis and historically inaccurate as an attempt to describe the present stage of capitalism.

It is perhaps worthwhile to point out from the very beginning that Zeluck seems to have very little acquaintance with the theory which he is so earnestly attempting to critique. Hence, it turns out that many of the facts which are meant to “disprove” monopoly capital theory either miss the boat altogether or have already been accounted for by the analytical apparatus under attack. This situation—which unfortunately is far from uncommon—is further complicated in this particular case by the fact that Zeluck makes no serious attempt to clearly outline his interpretation of monopoly capitalism.⁴ Thus, one is left with the mere semblance of substantive criticism.

The first task which he sets for himself is to prove that there is a necessary contradiction between Marx's theory and the work of the “theorists of monopoly capital.” He begins by pointing out three ways in which the concept of monopoly appears in Marx's analysis: (1) the necessary monopoly of means of production by the capitalists; (2) the existence of temporary monopoly profits as the innovator's reward; and (3) the emergence of temporary surplus profits as a consequence of disequilibrium in supply and demand.⁵ Virtually no economic theorist, Marxist or otherwise, would deny that such factors are present in capitalism. At this point, Zeluck indicates that Marx was also aware of certain “‘natural’ monopolies” which are more closely related to the usual sense of the monopoly firm. Such monopolies are especially prevalent, according to Zeluck, whenever government action creates special privileges (e.g. patents in the drug industry or regulated industries such as railroads).⁶

Having, therefore, conceded that a monopolistic corporation can exist (though only temporarily or as a result of political intervention) Zeluck proceeds to analyze “the source of monopoly profits.” This problem need not detain us. Marx's solution to this question and that of all Marxist monopoly capital theorists is essentially the same: these surplus profits are gained at the expense of competitive firms and workers. Zeluck, however, appears to argue—in contrast to most monopoly capital theorists—that monopoly profits are *simply* the result of a transfer of surplus value from competitive to monopoly firms, while the wages of workers are not significantly cut except in the very short-run.⁷

We shall “bracket-off” this issue for the moment and examine Zeluck's conclusion: monopoly profits cannot

be the cause of “generalized inflation” since the profits of competitive firms are deflated proportionately.⁸ Here he confuses profits and prices. Monopolistic capital manages to obtain its surplus profits by, in effect, raising prices and lowering output, relative to competitive capitalism. Under monopoly capitalism inflation becomes structurally embedded in the system due to oligopolistic price-fixing; price levels are maintained even in the face of a drop in demand and a growth of excess capacity. These higher prices in the monopoly sector(s) increase pressures for “generalized inflation” throughout the system. The fact that inflation is seldom fully “generalized” or smooth, however, is one of the reasons why it is so dangerous to the system. At any one time, certain classes, individuals and firms fall behind in the tangle of “profit-push” and “cost-push” inflation.⁹ Zeluck's confusion lies in a failure to comprehend that monopoly capital reinforces inflation not simply because profits are high in the monopoly sector, but because the attempt on the part of the individual monopolist (or oligopolist) to maintain his profit-margin leads to a situation in which prices are stuck (inelastic) in the downward direction. Inflation is not a consequence of a rise in total value (as Zeluck, burdened by the assumption that the system is completely competitive, seems to believe), but a function of a built-in tendency for instability of prices in the upward direction.

Let's now remove the brackets that we have placed around the issue of wages. Obviously, one way in which the “real value” of wages cut is through inflation. One needs to provide little evidence to back up the assertion that, generally speaking, wages of workers as a whole tend to lag behind increases in prices and profits. Thus, this has become a means whereby wages of workers are in fact reduced, and not simply in the short-run as Zeluck suggests. Anyone who understands the role of interest in a capitalist economy can readily understand that income deferred is income lost, never to be regained. The fact that wages continually lag behind (at best) has a cumulative effect on the living standards of workers.

Yet, value may also be extracted from workers in another way. One of the difficulties that Zeluck and many other critics of monopoly capital theory seem to have is that they tend to view total value in static terms. Hence, since monopoly prices involve a net transfer from competitive firms and workers to monopolistic capital, it is assumed that the theory also claims that profits of the former and wages of the latter are progressively reduced. This may in fact be true at times, but one must also not

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lose sight of the fact that capitalism involves the reproduction of capital on an ever increasing scale—a requirement which is fulfilled only through the incessant revolutionization of the means of production. In other words, productivity must continually rise. This creates the possibility that the rate of exploitation may rise as well. In fact, for capitalism this may be viewed as the essential purpose of expanded reproduction. Thus, monopoly capital is frequently in a position to take advantage of increased productivity (which has grown massively during this century) in order to extract a larger share of the social product from workers, i.e. the rate of exploitation will rise in the monopoly sector(s) without any reduction in wages. If the organic composition of capital (*roughly* equal to the capital/labor ratio) does not increase to an equal or greater degree (and most monopoly theorists contend that it won't) the giant corporations may well be in a position to reap windfall profits.

At this point in his discussion, Zeluck shifts his ground once again in order to confront the theory with a *reductio ad absurdum*—the notion of "universal monopoly."¹⁰ Zeluck convincingly argues that it would be impossible to have a world with monopoly producers as the only capitalist actors. Thus, he succeeds in proving that a "generalized monopoly system" is impossible. The peculiar nature of this argument, however, lies in the fact that Zeluck seems to be arguing with *no one at all*. None of the theorists of monopoly capitalism have ever suggested that "universal monopoly" was in any way possible. Indeed, the continuing co existence of a competitive sector has been a basic axiom of the theory from the time of Hilferding to the present. Nor is Zeluck completely unaware of this fact. "Of course," he writes, "no monopoly theorists claim that capitalism today is composed solely of monopolies. But the general claim is made that the decisive parts of the system are monopolist in character."¹¹ True enough, but a critique of the first point of view (professed by no economic theorist—Marxist or otherwise) is completely inadequate if what one really wants to disprove is that the monopolistic sectors of the economy are determinant.

But isn't it true that Marx's argument foreshadowed the emergence of a monopoly stage of capitalism through its emphasis on the concentration and centralization of capital? This is the question that Zeluck turns to next. In doing so he attempts to drive a wedge between the self-expanding trait of capital and what he views as the "illusion" of an increasing tendency towards domination of the economy by the giant, monopoly firms. Quite correctly, he bases his argument on the issue of barriers to entry. Monopoly capital theory (particularly the version developed by such theorists as Michal Kalecki, Josef Steindl, Paul Baran and Paul Sweezy) claims that monopoly power (or "degree of monopoly") in any industry is dependent on the extent to which it is difficult for new capitals to enter that particular industrial sector or market (whether because of economies of scale, product differentiation, financing obstacles, etc.). Zeluck attacks the monopoly theory by asserting that "purely economic" (as opposed to political) barriers to entry based on "size of capital" no longer exist.¹²

In order to defend this assertion Zeluck shifts from an argument based on his reading of Marx to one which has its foundations largely in "empirical fact." These so-called "facts" in summary are as follows:

- (1) The growth of banks has increased "the mobility of capital," vastly reducing the effects of concentration.
- (2) The capitalist economy is international and not national and so the number of potential competitors is greater than supposed.
- (3) A lack of capital flow into an industry may be the result of economic weaknesses in that sector rather than barriers to entry.
- (4) An "influx of capital" may take the form of the buying of a company's stock on the market. This would increase the "stock price to profit ratio," thus diminishing rates of return.
- (5) When profits are high obstacles to entry "disappear."¹³

Only the first and last of these points, if true, would do damage to monopoly capital theory. The notion that credit is sufficiently free to essentially eliminate barriers to entry caused by differentials in the size of capitals seems to contradict not only common sense, but also Marxian political economy itself. No wonder Zeluck does not provide a single iota of evidence to back this up. Certainly, financial institutions have the capital potentially available to seriously undermine monopoly structure in certain industries (the mentioned \$200 billion in pension funds may come into the argument here)¹⁴ but there is no reason to assume that banks, whose interests generally correspond to those of the giant corporations, will seek to upset the apple cart in favor of some would-be competitor at great risk to themselves. As for Zeluck's last "fact," one wonders why the positive correlation between corporate size and profit-rates has not simply disappeared but, on the contrary, has remained high over the long-run, with the largest firms doing substantially better than their smaller "competitors."¹⁵

Zeluck also argues that technological progress "increases both the movement to concentration (a larger market area and a larger optimum plant), and at the same time, serves to *decrease* monopoly possibilities."¹⁶ Thus, "capital cheapening," "commodity substitution," and "improved transportation and communication" have presumably increased the amount of competition in the economy. In fact, he lists OPEC oil as one of those commodities vulnerable to substitution.¹⁷ Yet, one might wryly remark, that "OPEC's ability to maintain its monopoly nevertheless remains considerable."

It is useful to note, somewhat parenthetically, that Zeluck has a tendency to highlight concentration while saying little about *centralization* of capital (the fusing together of many individual capitals into "a huge mass in a single hand").¹⁸ Yet, for Marx, it was centralization of capital which was responsible for the most dynamic aspects of capital's self-expansion. At one point, Zeluck flatly claims that there is no real basis for the "popular association" of multinational corporations with monopoly, *in spite of the fact that they obviously represent the centralization of capital on a world scale*. In order to defend this line of thought he relies entirely on the fact that the cartels which existed before the Second World War were vastly different from present multinationals.¹⁹ One might as well argue that imperialism no longer exists today since its surface structure has changed.

Assuming that he has quashed the theory of monopoly capitalism by showing that it is "incompatible" with Marx's theory, Zeluck now turns to a much more straightforward examination of the empirical evidence. To sum up his views as briefly as possible, the examples

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of the railroads, AT&T, the aluminum firms, Xerox corporation, and the trucking and grocery industries demonstrate that, in the United States at least, "concentration and centralization of capital have not resulted in an increasingly monopolized economy."²⁰ But what does this evidence consist of? It simply means that in certain cases the number of firms dominating an industry has increased (in the case of aluminum from one to four).²¹ IBM's "share of the market," he tells us, "has fallen to only 45% from its previous 65%."²² What is important here is that one cannot disprove (nor even seriously question) the theory of monopoly capital on such grounds. The theory does not claim that industries will be dominated by a *single* firm, but by a *small number* of firms. Competition is not eliminated but will remain intense in its various non-price forms. What the theory does claim, however, is that the price in an industry dominated by oligopolies will be set at the same level, or approximately the same level, that it would be set at if there were a single price-fixer, rather than many price-takers as was assumed in the purely competitive model. To quote Sweezy:

the average firm in an industry becomes so large that it must take account of the effect of its own production on market price. It then begins to function more and more like a monopolist, for whom the problem of continued growth is radically transformed. Monopoly profits make possible even more rapid growth than in the past, but the need to maintain monopoly prices dictates a policy of slowing down and carefully regulating the expansion of productive capacity. Given these possibilities and constraints, the result is an irresistible drive on the part of the monopolistic firm to move outside and beyond its historical field of operation, to penetrate new industries and new markets. Thus the typical production unit in modern developed capitalism is a giant corporation, which is both conglomerate (operating in many industries) and multinational (operating in many countries).²³

Contrary to what Zeluck would have us believe, and as we have already briefly noted, there is considerable correlation between a high degree of economic concentration in an industry and the existence of supernormal profits (which can be attributed to monopoly power rather than economies of scale). As Gabriel Kolko has explained:

profits at any given time are unevenly distributed. Large corporations, with assets of at least \$10 million after the [Second World] war, tended to make far more on their equity before taxes than smaller firms, but companies among the 200 biggest manufacturers were much more profitable than the rest. The after-tax profits as a percentage of sales of the largest companies were at least two-fifths greater than the smaller firms during 1947-1956. This was due not merely to their economies in the scale of production, which often were at best marginal, but also their advantages in being able to use oligopoly to more effectively control prices and profit. Firms in industries with a high concentration ratio generally had a return on their net worth of anywhere from one half to two thirds greater than those more competitive. Both in terms of profits on equity before taxes or the always lower profits on sales before taxes, the 1961 profits of corporations with at least \$250 million in assets were substantially greater than those in the \$25-250 million asset range, and far greater than those below. Because of their monopolistic or oligopolistic control of prices, many of the giants could compensate for lower demand during economic downturns.²⁴

In opposition to such well-documented facts, Zeluck states: "The effect of the oligopoly type of pricing seems . . . to be primarily to rigidify prices, reduce flexibility, and not to produce significant superprofits."²⁵ Although he admits that oligopolies *may* obtain higher profits, he contends that *if* higher profits exist they are necessarily not far above the competitive rate (the figure of 5-10% above average is used).²⁶ His criticism of the notion of "administered prices" is largely based on the steel and automobile industries. He contends that "falling profits" in these industries prove that the theory is invalid. Quite the contrary! Perhaps no better examples could be chosen to substantiate the theory of monopoly capital. It is now a well recognized fact in the literature on these industries that the hardships being imposed are the result of the emergence of surplus productive capacity on a world scale. In the third quarter of 1979 almost 25% of productive capacity in the U.S. automobile industry was idle (according to conservative BEA estimates)²⁷ By July 1980 unemployment in the industry had reached 22%.²⁸ Profitability in the motor vehicles industry is not being damaged by a growing organic composition, as Zeluck might argue, but by an *inability to sell* potential surplus product at prevailing prices—and prices are *not* being reduced. With respect to the steel industry, the editors of the *Monthly Review* have written:

each of the leading capitalist nations is striving to cope with a common problem: excess steel capacity in the face of stagnant *world* demand. And one way of coping is to try to take over the markets in other countries. Steel plants, it should be noted, are idle not only in the United States but in England, Germany, France and Japan as well.²⁹

The existence of surplus productive capacity throughout the industrial world is itself both an effect and a cause of monopoly capital's inability to expand accumulation.³⁰ Profitability becomes a problem at the monopoly stage because there is a growing gap between the capacity of the giant corporations to produce and the capacity to absorb the bottleneck of surplus capital which appears in the monopoly sector. Thus there is a long-run tendency towards stagnation brought about by overaccumulation. A crisis of profitability (based on realization difficulties) is clearly not in conflict with the theory of monopoly capitalism. Indeed, it is what the theory leads us to expect. On the average, nearly 20% of American productive capacity in manufacturing, conservatively estimated, has remained idle in the period since the Second World War (if the level of utilization actually achieved during that war was used as a base measure, with adjustments to account for capacity growth in the intervening years, this figure might actually be as high as 50%).³¹ Yet, if competition were completely effective such chronic underemployment of productive capacity would be impossible.

Zeluck closes his article with a discussion of the political implications of the theory of monopoly capitalism. Here he contends that monopoly capital theory inherently leads to a liberal or social democratic practice. To use his own words, "the theory compels its adherents to move toward bourgeois politics, bourgeois economics, and bourgeois philosophy."³² According to this point of view, a theory which emphasizes a perpetual realization problem for mature capitalism and, in consequence, an underlying tendency towards secular stagnation forms

"two giant openings into reformism."³³ On the one hand, the state can eliminate crises by spending away the surplus. On the other hand, the state can be used to either reform monopolies, or "administer prices downward" in order to counteract their effects. "Or to put it into plain English," Zeluck writes, "why not join DSOC or the Democratic party, both of which favor such Keynesian solutions?"³⁴

The problem with Zeluck's thesis is that he assumes that the theory logically leads to reformism and revisionism, while the most influential practitioners of this type of theoretical and historical analysis (Lenin, Bukharin, Dobb, Baran, Sweezy, Gillman, Kolko, Mandel, O'Connor, Sherman, Magdoff, Amin, etc.) have been both revolutionary and Marxist in outlook. Is there, then, a contradiction between their theory and praxis? Or is there something that Zeluck has overlooked?

There can be little doubt that Keynesian policies after the Second World War (in the form of "the permanent war economy") did much to stave-off the ultimate day of reckoning. To admit otherwise seems, to the present author, to engage in wishful thinking. Thus, the emergence of what Kolko has termed "political capitalism" took the form of a new alliance between big business and the state, with the military sector as the core. This coincided with the whole period of American hegemony. At the same time, Keynesian meddling (overbalanced budgets, massive extensions of the credit system, the emergence of what Kalecki termed a "political business cycle," etc.) resulted in the stagflation of the seventies. The much talked-about fiscal and monetary tools proved incapable of averting economic crisis in the late seventies. U.S. capitalism is, therefore, turning once

again to increased reliance on military spending for the eighties.³⁵

Given the fact that this theory recognizes that the state can play an important role in shoring-up the capitalist system, Zeluck claims that it necessarily heads in a liberal and reformist direction. What he fails to understand is that it is *not* argued that the capitalist state is capable of *eliminating* the contradictions of "maturity and stagnation" which occur at this stage. Any attempts to do so only create new contradictions which are eminently visible. Elimination of the contradictions of monopoly capitalism would require the abolition of capitalism itself. There is no other way.

Marxist theorists have always argued against the naive notion of liberals and social democrats that the system could be reformed through "control" of the state. This is naive for two reasons: First, it is impossible to obtain effective political control over the capitalist class without first destroying the framework of capitalist society. Second, there is no way in which capitalism will simply reform itself out of existence—which is exactly what would be required if the contradictions resulting from concentration and centralization of the means of production (monopoly capital) were to be surmounted. Overaccumulation is an inherent part of capitalist maturity. Hence, the philosophy and science of praxis, when applied to the monopoly stage, lead to socialist revolution.

At any rate, capitalism will not simply break down for economic reasons. It will be surmounted when workers take their history into their own hands. The theory of monopoly capitalism is only the starting point for the development of a new class awareness of "the present as history." ■

NOTES

¹ Joseph M. Gillman, *Prosperity in Crisis* (Marzani and Munsell, 1965), p. 152.

² See Steve Zeluck "On the Theory of the Monopoly Stage of Capitalism," *Against the Current* (Vol. 1, no. 1, 1980), pp. 44-52. I would like to thank Paul Sweezy for bringing this article to my attention and for his advice and encouragement in relation to other, closely related, work on capitalist maturity. To Gabriel Kolko I would like to extend the gratitude of a pupil inspired many times over by his example.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

⁴ Zeluck also doesn't make it entirely clear what theory of monopoly capital (and there are several) he has in mind. It seems fairly obvious from the context, however, that his critique is leveled more at Baran and Sweezy than at the Mandel version. In this paper, therefore, we will generally focus on the *Monopoly Capital* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1966) model of the former.

⁵ Zeluck, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Howard Sherman, *Radical Political Economy: Capitalism and Socialism from a Marxist-Humanist Perspective* (New York: Basic Books, 1972), pp. 114-116.

¹⁰ Zeluck, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 47.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ See below. Also Sherman, *op. cit.*, p. 107.

¹⁶ Zeluck, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 47-48.

¹⁸ Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy* (New York: International Publishers, 1970), vol. 1, pp. 625-627.

¹⁹ Zeluck, *op. cit.* p. 47.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 48

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *Ibid.*

²³ Paul M. Sweezy, *Modern Capitalism and Other Essays* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972), p. 8

²⁴ Gabriel Kolko, *Main Currents in Modern American History* (New York: Harper & Row, 1976), p. 338.

²⁵ Zeluck, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, *Survey of Current Business* (vol. 59, no. 12, Dec. 1979), p. 18.

²⁸ *The Economist* (July 14, 1980), pp. 80-81.

²⁹ Paul Sweezy and Harry Magdoff, "Steel and Stagnation," *Monthly Review* (vol. 29, no. 6, Nov. 1977), pp. 2-3.

³⁰ On excess capacity see the following: Andre Gunder Frank, *Crisis: In the World Economy* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1980), pp. 73-85; Kolko, *op. cit.*, p. 339; Susan Strange, "The Management of Surplus Productive Capacity," in Nake M. Kamrany and Richard H. Day, eds. *Economic Issues of the Eighties* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1979), pp. 226-246.

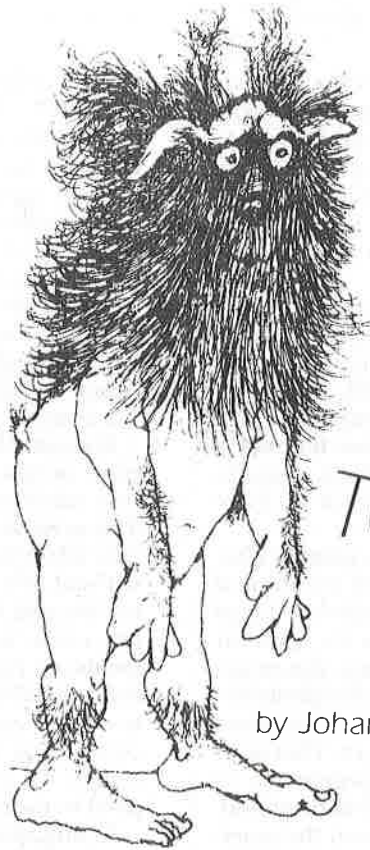
³¹ U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, *Handbook of Cyclical Indicators* (May 1977), p. 148. A detailed study of the various statistics exists in the form of an unpublished manuscript by the author of this article.

³² Zeluck, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ Paul M. Sweezy, "The Crisis of American Capitalism," *Monthly Review* (vol. 32, no. 5, Oct. 1980), pp. 11-12.



MAD ABOUT TOOTSIE

by Johanna Brenner

Tootsie is a film about a man passing as a woman. It is also a basically anti-woman film passing as critique of sexism. Underneath its apparent sympathy for women's predicament, *Tootsie* celebrates precisely those characteristics of traditional heterosexual romance that are so oppressive to women.

Limited, yes, you might reply . . . but anti-woman is too strong. Yet, I don't think so. *Tootsie* responds to the women's movement by recognizing rather than dismissing its critique, but then absorbs that critique into a framework which reimposes the old values. The film is much more subtle than outright resistance and therefore much more dangerous.

Tootsie is well-made, fast-paced, clever. It has two underlying messages: 1) men oppress women because women let them—we are our own worst enemies; 2) men are crazy to hold onto the old masculine roles— with the new macho, men can have it all: men can be both powerful and nurturant, in touch with their emotions *without losing control*, in better, more intimate relationships with women but *still on top*.

Tootsie's plot has Michael Dorsey (Dustin Hoffman), unemployed actor and confirmed womanizer, in desperation going after a soap opera part as a woman. He lands the part, is shoved around by a piggy director and sexually harassed (along with the other women on the show) by a male-chauvinist actor; fights back, ad-libbing lines for his female part and generally showing the other girls how easy it is to stand up for yourself after all. His act appeals to millions of viewers, preventing him from getting fired for disobeying orders and upsetting the high-priced director. As Dorothy Michaels, actress, our hero experiences what it's like to be the recipient of the heavy come-on, the objectified prey of his own male pursuit. He is also freed to be less aggressive and competitive, more sensitive than he was as a man. He establishes supportive relationships

with the other women on the soap, teaching them how to be more self-assertive. He falls in love with one of them, Julie (Jessica Lange), but she loves him as Dorothy, a protective, motherly older woman. When he reveals himself she is furious, betrayed. But ultimately, he wins her back. "I miss Dorothy," she says. And he affirms, "Dorothy is here. I just have to learn how to be her without the dress."

So what's so terrible? For one, that it takes a man to show women how to stand up for themselves. Not only that, but the film makes it too simple. He walks onto the set and just turns things around. He takes the lead. The learning in this picture goes all one way—the women teach him nothing. In order to get in touch with his feminine side, Dorsey only has to put on a dress. The women have to learn from him how to be tough. That's bad enough: they couldn't teach each other. But he doesn't even have to learn from them how to be more sensitive, generous, open and non-competitive.

Dorothy's rebellion is entirely individual, very often physical, and works every time. In all respects, this minimizes the dangers to women who fight back as isolated individuals, especially who physically challenge men. As Dorothy, Dorsey hits the doctor over the head with a book and grabs his face, throws a guy trying to steal his taxi out of a cab, adlibs advice to a battered wife on the soap by throwing a flower pot crashing into the wall to show her how to deal with her husband. Dorsey never suffers a defeat. He is never physically intimidated.

Dorothy is a very unattractive woman, but nobody ever calls her an ugly broad, or makes remarks in the street, or kindly asks her if she ever considered a nose job. She never gets ingored at a cocktail party or finds that her men friends all remain just friends. Expressing the prevailing sentiment perfectly, Dorsey tells his roommate that he wishes Dorothy could be more attractive, because "she deserves better." He wonders if maybe a different hair-do would help. The pain, however, is allowed to surface for only that moment, and we're off again on Dorothy's rollicking sexual career as two men pursue her—one because she's "womanly" in real life, even if powerful on the screen, only because he *wants* her to kick him around.

The major female characters and their relationship with the hero are fundamentally traditional. Dorsey's wise-cracking actress friend, Sandy, needs him to take care of her professionally. He has to coach her on how to act angry. And Sandy's relationships with men are, by her own report, of the doormat variety. Jessica Lange as Julie is breathless, innocent, warm, and voluptuous—a true girl-woman. Julie is a single mother with a bit of a drinking habit, yet there are no sharp edges here. She too needs Dorsey (Dorothy) to help her act angry and to develop enough gumption in real life to dump the piggy director who is two-timing her. This is supposedly the great feminist message of the film: hero and heroine each grow by developing more of the strengths of the opposite sex. But the key to the real (underlying) film is this: she shows no sign of ever being strong enough, independent enough or accomplished enough to be his equal or challenge his leadership. Indeed, she shows no sign of ever wanting anything other than a protector, albeit preferably one who is nice rather than nasty. That's why *Tootsie* is so backward.

Now I'm not denying that women have problems expressing anger, nor that even the more independent among us may be exploited in our intimate relationships with men. I do not demand that films show us only strong, competent women. But for neither of the major female characters to be our hero's peers, not as competent as he professionally, nor his equal intellectually puts *Tootsie* well behind a film like *Adam's Rib*, made in 1949. In that film Katherine Hepburn has as many clever lines as Spencer Tracy does, maybe more. She has her "feminine foibles," but she is his sparring partner not his protege. There is not just a chance but a likelihood that she can get the better of him in an argument. No so in *Tootsie*. The only person Dorsey has that kind of relationship with is, you guessed it, his male roommate and long-time friend. As Dorothy he may exchange intimacies "woman-to-woman" with Julie, but they never have an intellectual conversation or a witty interchange.

Underneath its modern clothing, *Tootsie* has the structure of a traditional love story. The heroine is beautiful, vulnerable and child-like. The hero falls in love with her pretty much at first sight. His love for her forces him to mend his wild ways. His tenderness and quiet strength win her over, as he takes her under his loving protection.

So in the end, "all's right with the world." Women will remain under the tutelege and protection of men, since we have neither the courage nor the brains to

really challenge them. And we will remain male-identified because we really have nothing to offer each other.

I probably wouldn't be so mad about *Tootsie*, if it wasn't being played up even in some "left" publications, as a feminist film. The Village Voice called it a "thoroughly modernist, thoroughly feminist parable of emotional growth." And, *In These Times*, in a rave review, said it "vividly revealed the conditions under which we are women and men."

I probably wouldn't be so mad, if I hadn't laughed at all the jokes and rooted for Dustin Hoffman to get Jessica Lange. A lot of humor in the film rests on mistaken sexual identities. It exploits those deepest fears and uncertainties that are part of compulsory heterosexuality for some sure-fire laughs. I found myself, as usual, drawn into seeing women through men's eyes, falling in love with Jessica Lange and identifying with that sexist image of femininity.

Tootsie's appeal ultimately rests on its connection with our most traditional selves. It's effective propaganda, not for the liberated woman, but for the new macho male ■

ROUND HOUSE

as the 'new man' in the roundhouse,
I learn among other things,
an aweless indifference to unfathomable iron
and a ruthless pleasure of tools enjoying the winter or
their own metal.
as the 'new man', I memorize the dull drawl of idling en-
gines
and study absolute steel refuting hot, blue acetylene.
as the 'new man', I learn that despite a compass of possi-
bility
the rails cast out in only two directions;
and that into a world precisely scheduled, rolls the lum-
bering power of engines
often driven by vague men whose lives are emptied and
broken as bottles.
I learn of brakemen who dance faultless for thirty-five
years,
only to slip beneath the wheels a week before retirement.
I learn that owners still dine in private coaches filled-up
sweet with the scent of just cut flowers and
the smiles of bankers.
I learn that the perfect harmony of the rails
leads out of the impoverished shadow of decay,
past the rotting houses and stilled factories,
past the tall stand of sharp pines,
out past even the immaculate deser.
as the 'new man' in the roundhouse, I learn that the rails
come
from a century of blood,
that they travel up through our unfinished present,
and lead all the way to the end of America.

—Brad Rose

Continued from inside front cover

1) A commitment to workers self-emancipation as exemplified by the role of workers councils in Russia, 1917, in the Spanish Civil War in 1936, in Hungary, 1956, as well as in the embryonic workers and neighborhood councils which were built in Chile, Portugal and Poland in the revolutionary upsurges of the past decade. Such struggles exemplify both *how* socialism will be achieved and *what* socialism will look like.

2) A radical break with reformism and social democracy. This is not to abandon the fight for reforms, but to work for them in a manner which raises the class consciousness of workers and opens them to a socialist perspective. Alliances with left and reform elements within the union leadership should be built when events and pressures compel these elements to support or lead actions which advance the struggle. But, we can not lose sight of the fact that this stratum can also be an obstacle to any evolving radicalization of workers. Our central strategy then must be to focus on the building of the rank and file movement, independent of reform elements in the labor leadership.

3) We reject Stalinism and all forms of bureaucratic and elite rule as not only *not* socialist but as obstacles to socialism. Socialism, i.e. workers democracy, cannot be built by bureaucratic rulers whose interests are fundamentally opposed to those of the working class. Moreover, the ruling bureaucracy nationalist orientation, runs contrary to the needs of the workers and oppressed of the world. In addition, they distort the name of socialism to members of their own and capitalist societies. The way forward to socialism in the countries like Poland lies in the workers' overthrow of bureaucratic rule and the return to an internationalist orientation.

4) We support uncompromisingly the struggles of specially oppressed groups such as blacks, latins, women and gays for their own liberation. Such struggles are essential both to the making of a socialist revolution by building a unified working class movement and to the creation of a socialist society free of exploitation and oppression of any kind. Since oppression can neither be ended within capitalism nor ends automatically with the end of capitalism, our task is twofold: On the one hand we support the independent organization of oppressed groups; we help to build the autonomous black and women's movements, etc, caucuses within trade unions to fight racism and sexism and caucuses within our own revolutionary organization as a defense against pressures to accommodate to racism and sexism. On the other hand, we strive to win the relatively privileged sectors of the working class to support the movements of the specially oppressed, and, to integrate the struggles against race and sex oppression with the struggle against capitalism.

5) We support uncompromisingly all movements for national liberation—both because we support the right of all people to self determination and as a blow against world imperialism. However, national liberation cannot in itself spare the underdeveloped countries the long-drawn-out travail of development. This would require an international working class revolution to liberate the capital of the industrialized economies. Therefore, although we support all anti-imperialist struggles no matter who leads them, we look to, and encourage, the working classes of these countries, however small

numerically, to struggle for leadership of national liberation struggles because only their interests require a socialist and internationalist outcome.

6) The strategic centrality of the working class as the instrument of socialist revolution requires that the revolutionary socialist organization have as its primary political focus the problems and struggles of the working class (those organized and those in need of organization) especially at the workplace. A socialist organization must, of course, always be involved in non-workplace activities as well. We will actively participate in and defend movements which are not directly or exclusively working class in character or composition, such as: the anti-nuke movement, the feminist, gay and anti-racist movements, and community organizations around housing, schools etc. But one important dimension of our strategy for these movements will be to find ways and means of linking them to an alliance with sectors of the working class. A necessary part of that process is supporting within the class the demands of these groups and the need for alliances with them. But in the long run, the socialist, anti-capitalist character of this alliance can only be guaranteed by the working class focus.

7) No support to candidates of the Democratic and Republican parties. We support electoral campaigns that give an impetus to independent working class action and put forward the idea of a labor party as an important vehicle for establishing independent working class politics in this country.

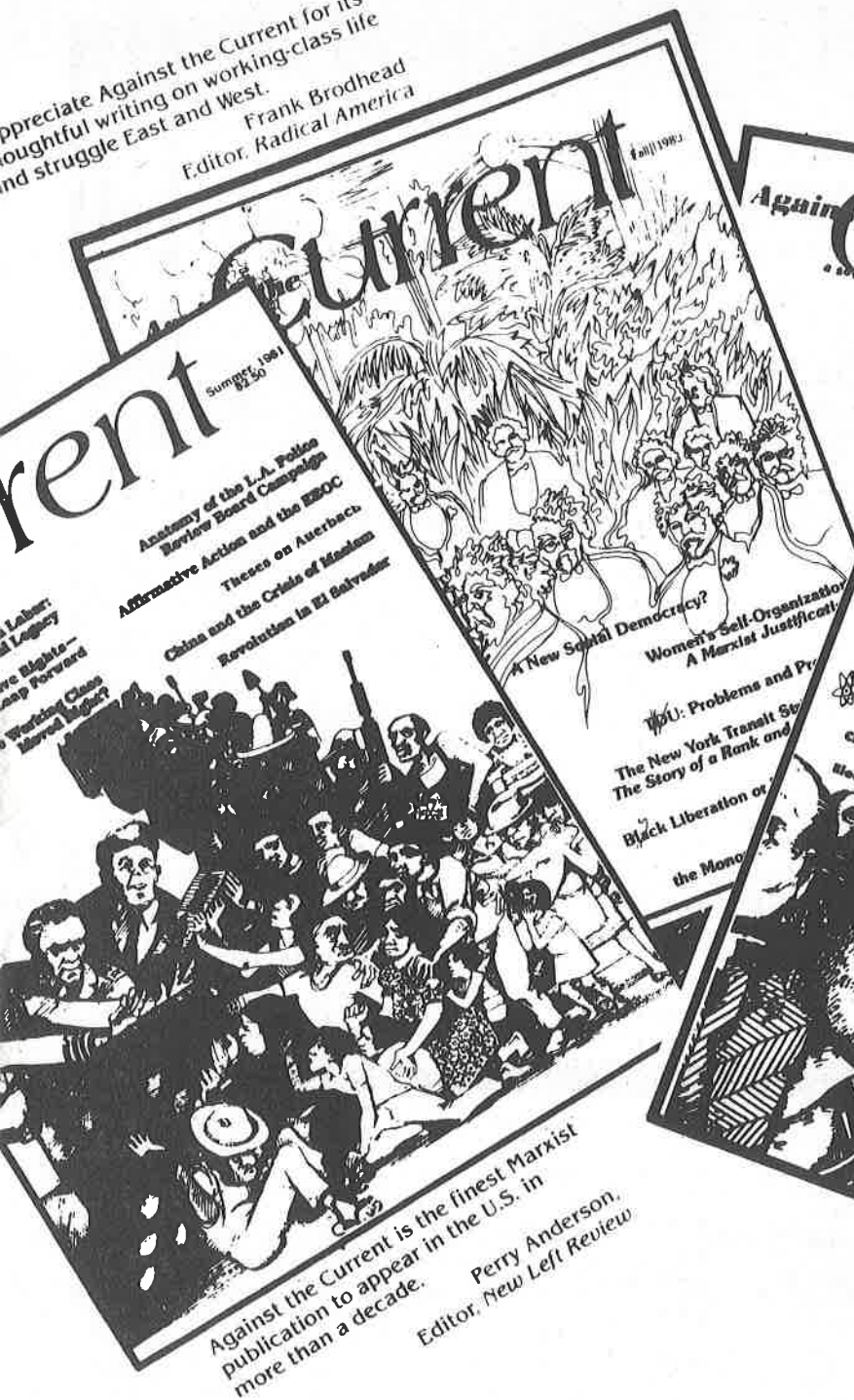
8) a. The need for revolutionary organization. We look forward to the construction of a revolutionary workers party. We see such a party as a necessary component of socialist revolution and a natural expression of the unavoidably uneven development of working class consciousness. But, however necessary, such a party is not a substitute for the organs of working class power and rule.

b. We do not see ourselves or any other group, by themselves, as the nucleus of such a party. Instead we look to a regroupment of democratic, revolutionary elements from different political traditions and experiences as essential to the building of a revolutionary party.

c. Even today, in the absence of such a party, we believe that a revolutionary organization must be a cohesive, cadre group of committed activists, each responsible to and able to depend on his/her comrades. Extra effort must be taken to break down differences between members inherited from a racist, sexist capitalist society and to ensure that working people and other oppressed groups feel that it is *their* organization. All members should be developed and encouraged to participate to their maximum potential. The organization must be governed in its actions by majority rule; it must also be profoundly committed to the view that the "corrective of differences" is indispensable to the political health of the organization. Consequently, the organization must be open to the existence of organized tendencies within it (and even at times factions), and to the right of minority views to appear in the organization's press and other publications. Indeed, majority rule does not preclude minority-led experiments to test their ideas.

Appreciate Against the Current for its thoughtful writing on working-class life and struggle East and West.
Frank Brodhead
Editor, Radical America

Against the Current tries to advance the concept of "socialism from below" — which we in City Life see as the cornerstone of our politics — through analysis of actual workers' struggle.
Kathy McAfee, City Life, Boston



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