

A CRITIQUE OF HERBERT MARCUSE'S
CONCEPT OF HUMAN LIBERATION

by

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ABSTRACT

Herbert Marcuse's analysis of advanced capitalist society and his subsequent proposals for liberation have gained support from a large section of the "left" in both North America and Europe.

The objective of this thesis is to critically examine what appears to be the central features of his analysis.

The introductory chapter is a brief exposition of Marcuse's conclusions concerning the characteristics and direction of contemporary capitalist society, specifically U.S. society. It also outlines the general features of his notion of liberation.

Chapter two is a more detailed exposition and critique of the main features of Marcuse's particular notion of liberation and their Freudian basis.

Chapter three deals with Marcuse's analysis of the current and probable future trends in contemporary U.S. capitalism. It contains discussions of periodic crisis, arms spending, inter-capitalist competition, and the position of the Third World in the Capitalist system.

Chapter four is a criticism of features of Marcuse's

discussion of the "revolutionary agent" in advanced capitalist society. Specifically, it deals with the "new" working class, the student "revolt" in the U.S., and the revolutionary consciousness of the traditional working class.

Chapter five, the last, is a conclusion in which we both summarize briefly the criticisms of the earlier chapters, and show the interrelationships between the various criticisms. Finally we attempt to reach some conclusions regarding the general validity of Marcuse's analysis and proposals.

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INTRODUCTION

This study of Marcuse's perspective on liberation was motivated by an acute awareness of the widespread acceptance of his thesis by the 'New Left' in North America. While the purpose of this thesis is not specifically to inquire into the basis of Marcuse's obvious attractiveness for the 'New Left', the reader will perhaps be able to pick out certain features of his arguments which are noticeably in harmony with and sympathetic to the general existential situation of the 'New Left' and its subsequent political and tactical stance.

The objective of this thesis is to contribute to the critical assessment of Marcuse's notion of liberation. The discussion will focus on the particular features of Marcuse's perspective on liberation and, because his views derive significant justification ~~from~~ his analysis of the structure and dynamics of advanced capitalist society, it will also focus on the main features of that analysis.

It should be noted at the outset, that while the main body of this thesis reflects a critical approach to much of Marcuse's work, this criticism has been put

forward not without an appreciation of the positive contributions he has made to socio-political criticism.

Indeed, much of what Marcuse has to say in his various works rings quite true and is in harmony with actual events and situations. Particularly has he contributed much towards promoting the notion of a critical approach to the analysis of contemporary socio-economic and political institutions. He has, especially in North America, done a great service to the left by demonstrating the full and dynamic nature of Marx's ideas. Nevertheless, the objective of this thesis is not to sing the praises of Marcuse, (there are many who do that quite well and the reader may of course make his own assessment of these positive contributions). What will be attempted however, is a critical assessment of certain key notions and assumptions in Marcuse's general perspective on liberation.

The main features of Marcuse's views on liberation have remained essentially unchanged during the past five or six years. The central premises and arguments may be found scattered throughout the text of all his recent public lectures and writings on the subject. They have received their fullest expression however, in a short work published in 1969 entitled: "AN ESSAY ON LIBERATION".¹

A review of Marcuse's earlier works shows this

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particular essay to be his first attempt at formulating systematically coherent and concrete proposals for achieving liberation. This is not to suggest however, that many of the basic premises and arguments contained in that thesis were not evident in fragmented form throughout much of his prior writing, particularly from 1954 onwards.

The key notion in Marcuse's perspective on liberation is his insistence on the necessarily prior emergence of a "new man" to lead and guide the revolutionary struggle, whether it be in the advanced industrial societies or in the Third World. He suggests that such a notion was clearly inherent in Marx's concept of the proletariat as the revolutionary agent in capitalistic society. An agent which has values and goals that are antithetical to those of the ruling bourgeois class. It soon becomes evident however that Marcuse's notion of the "new man" and Marx's notion of the "proletariat" are qualitatively different and this difference stems in the last analysis from a basic divergence of ontological perspective between Marcuse and Marx.

These "new men", Marcuse suggests, will have an instinctually, biologically and even physiologically rooted motivation towards the rejection of the status quo of the aggressiveness and the destructiveness of the "one dimensional" society is thereby, clearly the most deep rooted denial

imaginable. These "new men" are characterized as having a "new sensibility", a "new sensitivity" and a "new rationality", which result directly from a relatively unsublimated expression of the demands of the "life instincts" or "Eros". Consequently, praxis is viewed as being guided by and in harmony with the inner essence of man. Marcuse further argues that these "new men" now exist in certain groups both in the advanced industrial societies and in the Third World. Specifically, Marcuse views the "radical young intelligentsia" as the most significant source of these essential "new men".

The whole notion of the "new man" rests as we shall later demonstrate, in the basically Freudian concept of the nature of man, which has come to permeate Marcuse's ideas on social structure and change.

His insistence on the prior existence of such "new men" appears to stem largely from his general conclusion that all previous revolutions have fallen short of achieving liberation in the last analysis because of the existence of a "psychic thermidor". Stemming from the repression and distortion of instinctual drives by life in the advanced capitalist societies, this "psychic thermidor" is viewed as being the key factor which has kept all previous attempts at liberation within the "continuum of repression".

While he readily acknowledges that revolutions in socio-economic forces can be achieved without the guidance of these "new men", he argues that such changes, far reaching as they may be, can have no chance of leading to the construction of a "truly free" society: i.e., a society which, for Marcuse, must be in harmony with the inner essence of man and consequently in harmony with the demands of the life instincts. It follows quite logically therefore, that only under the leadership and guidance of men and women uniquely sensitive to and motivated by the demands of these life instincts, can any revolutionary struggle hope to build a "free" society. Without such guidance, Marcuse suggests that a revolution only in socio-economic forms will probably lead to an ever more effective and efficient domination of man by man. *What about artists' legacy?*

All this is not meant to imply that Marcuse has written off the working class in advanced capitalist societies as the revolutionary agent. Indeed, he hastens to point out that alone, these "new men" could have little hope of overthrowing the capitalist system. The proletariat, that is; that class in society which exist by selling its labor as a commodity, is still conceived of as the prime revolutionary agent upon whose support the success of any revolution in the "affluent" society largely depends. The qualitative

difference in Marcuse's perspective however, rests in his argument that because of the "total" instinctual repression of the general populace of the "one dimensional society", the revolution could never achieve a qualitative change in social individual life unless such efforts were guided and directed by "new men". To this extent Marcuse argues that any struggle for liberation in advanced capitalist societies will inevitably be against the will of the vast majority of people affected. In essence, the proletariat remains the "body", while the "new man" becomes the "head" of the revolutionary force.

As noted earlier, the basis of this "new man" lies in the a priori acceptance of the Freudian theory of instincts. A notion which views the mind as having a constant but displaceable source of "psychic energy". This "energy" is displaceable in the sense that there are two basic categories of instincts: The life instincts or "Eros", and the death instincts or "Thanatos". The constant "psychic energy" is viewed as being proportionally distributed between these two instincts as a result of man's general historical and biographical experiences. If, for example, existential and historical conditions lead to an increase in the intensity of the death instincts, then there will be a consequent and conversely corresponding decrease in

the intensity of the life instincts. The basic "psychic energy" however, remains constant and must find expression or release through varying manifestations of the life or death instincts.

It is on the basis of this particular concept of instinctual energy, that Marcuse develops his notion of a "new sensibility", a "new sensitivity", a "new rationality", and, embodying all of these, the notion of a "new man". It is due to their particular existential experiences that these "new men" have emerged; men whose very thoughts as well as their actions are largely determined and motivated by the demands of the life instincts over and ~~against~~ against the demands of the death instincts. Also as noted above, Marcuse sees the "young radical intelligentsia" as being the most significant group of such "new men" in advanced capitalist societies. The elitist tendencies in such a theoretical formulation are obvious. *Ever heard of a Vanguard?*

This, then, is the image of the essential revolutionary force in advanced industrial society, which emerges from Marcuse's thesis. It is an image of a large industrial proletariat guided by "new men", drawn largely from the "radical young intelligentsia" of the affluent middle classes.

As initially indicated, this approach represents a

clear shift in ontological perspective, which might best be characterized generally as a move from Marx to Freud. The shift appears to have been motivated in no small way by the pessimistic conclusions Marcuse had arrived at regarding the revolutionary potential of the working class in the advanced capitalist society.

Marcuse supposed that as a result of the increases in arms spending, the sustained cold war, the increased centralization of economic ownership, and the general economic and military strength of the U.S.A. (the most advanced capitalist country), the periodic and general crises of recessions and depressions which had previously and unavoidably plagued capitalist production and consequently capitalist society, had largely become capable of management and consequently had been generally overcome. Specifically, he came to view the "one dimensional society" as capable of long term and indeed, increasingly widespread affluency. The "freezing" of competition and subsequent crises both between formerly competing capitalist nations and between here to fore antagonistic classes within each of these nations, was seen by Marcuse to be the result of combined impact of sustained and widespread affluency, the existence of the "enemy" (communism), and the increasingly effective technological manipulation of the

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underlying population by the mass media. As a result of these factors, Marcuse came to view the working class of advanced industrial society as "totally", i.e., instinctually, biologically and physiologically integrated into the goals and values of the system. Militant and radical class consciousness was viewed by Marcuse as significantly absent from the most advanced of the industrial societies. Furthermore he argued that, even if one disregards the long term stability in capitalist production, and renewed and intensified crisis in that area of activity, such instability would hardly prove to be effective in causing a rebirth of militant and radical class consciousness, because of the thoroughness with which the proletariat has been integrated into the culture and psychology of the system. ✓

Finally, Marcuse argues that the increasing introduction of automation into the productive process is rapidly changing the characteristics and structure of the traditional working class. He argues that due to the increasing technological sophistication of the new means of production, a highly educated and highly skilled work force has become a vital necessity to the smooth functioning economy. The emergence of this "new working class" is viewed as a unique and permanent trend in advanced capitalist society. Further

as this instrumentalist intelligentsia is drawn largely from the well educated youth he argues that the student revolt consequently hits the system at an extremely vulnerable spot. He concludes his observations in this respect by noting the convergence of the essential revolutionary catalyst, the "radical young intelligentsia", with the increasingly essential and indispensable sector of the working class, i.e., "the new working class". It is this convergence of subjective and objective factors in Marcuse's view, which reinforces and supports his focus on the students as perhaps the most significant revolutionary force in advanced capitalist society today. Not only is this "radical young intelligentsia" in instinctual, biological and physiological opposition to the affluent society, but also it is increasingly coming to hold the key operative positions in the means of production due to its increasingly widespread role as the new working class.

In summary form, these represent the basic and particular features of Marcuse's perspective on liberation from the affluent society. This essay represents an attempt to critically assess the validity of the key premises and conclusions of Marcuse's perspective.

Initially, we shall look critically at the Freudian

instinct theory which is so clearly the foundation of Marcuse's particular approach to the problem of liberation. It will be argued that the psychoanalytic theory of instincts has serious shortcomings which consequently effect the soundness of the whole structure which Marcuse has built upon these foundations, i.e., "the new sensibility", "the new sensitivity", "the new rationality", and "the new man", as well as his particular notion of "liberation", are shown to be equally questionable notions. [Furthermore it will be argued that the idea which gave special urgency to Marcuse's demand for a "new man", i.e., the "Psychic Thermidor", is also firmly rooted in the Freudian theory of instincts and their repression, and is therefore also suspect.] Apart from the specific criticisms of Marcuse's perspective due to its roots in certain questionable psychoanalytic concepts, the whole notion of such a "new man", existing prior to fundamental and sustained social-economic change appears to be completely at odds with all available anthropological data dealing with the relationship between socio-economic, cultural and psychological change. Also, an attempt shall be made to look critically at the Marcusean dualism between "reason" and "emotion" on the basis of his adoption of Freud's instinct theory and his general "mentalist" approach to psychical phenomena.

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Chapter three will focus upon Marcuse's analysis of the structure and dynamics of capitalist society. He appears to have misconstrued the meaning and tenacity of certain characteristics and tendencies of the capitalist system during the past twenty or twenty-five years.

However, the relative stability of advanced capitalism (particularly in the U.S.A.), during these years must be understood as a short range trend in the process of capitalist development. It stemmed, in large measure from a combination of historically particular factors, the most significant of which were: a) cessation of intercapitalist competition due to the socio-economic and political destruction caused by World War Two; b) the impact of the third industrial revolution; c) sustained and expanded armament spending; d) increased access to third world markets and sources of raw materials and cheap labor; and, e) a wide extension and expansion of credit spending.

These certainly were not the only factors but, as will be argued, they have been the most significant ones. Furthermore, it will be argued that most of these factors are now reaching their limits and some are rapidly becoming non-existent. Particularly, an attempt will be made to demonstrate that intercapitalist competition, both for foreign and domestic markets and for resources, is beginning to

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re-emerge. Both European capitalism, under the auspices of the European Common Market, and Japanese capitalism are increasingly coming into competition with the still dominant U. S. capitalist system. Furthermore, the increasingly vital third world areas are either pulling out of the imperialist network altogether or are engaging in increased industrialization as a result of successful and spreading national liberation struggles. Also even in those third world areas still firmly under the control of the international capitalist system, national liberation struggles increasingly make for an "unfavorable investment climate". This situation generally tends to heighten the already increasing inter-capitalist competition by creating a scarcity of necessary cheap raw materials and labor, as well as a shrinking market. Finally, and in conjunction with these factors, the efficacy of arms spending in providing a "safety valve" for capitalist expansion is beginning to reach its limits, and show adverse effects upon the economies of the metropolises (particularly in the U.S.A.). Apart from the domestic social and political impact of such enormous government spending, it also has the long term effect of causing a permanent trend towards currency inflation. Furthermore, such expenditure, with its attendant massive research, leads to a further speed-up

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in the trend towards an increasing organic composition of capital motivated initially by a desire to counteract the tendency of the average rate of profit to fall. Indeed, the interplay of these general factors combined with the ongoing anarchistic nature of capitalist production and development, point not to the Marcusean vision of increased and expanding affluency in the advanced industrial societies (the metropolises), but rather to a period of chronic crisis. Marcuse's confidence that there will be no more "Cubas" ^{there are actually fewer} until the metropolises are smashed internally, shows itself to be increasingly out of harmony both with events in the third world and with the rising anti-war, anti-intervention and even pro-isolationist sympathies in the U.S.² ✓ X

Chapter four will be a discussion on the basis and degrees of working class consciousness in the advanced industrial society. A whole chapter shall be devoted to a discussion of this subject as it is the crux of most considerations for revolution in and against industrial societies. Particularly, it is on this subject that Marcuse's divergence from much contemporary Marxist thinking shows itself most clearly. It is not a matter of Marcuse flatly rejecting the working class in advanced industrial societies as the essential revolutionary agent,

but rather the peculiarity of his thinking on this matter, may^{be} summed up as a changed conception of the character and structure of the working class in advanced industrial society. Marcuse's conception of the long-range impact of the third industrial revolution on the structure and characteristics of this working class, as well as his notion of the degree of their integration into the aesthetic and political culture of the ruling class, leads him to look elsewhere, to the "young radical intelligentsia", the "new" working class for the essential catalyst and guiding force of any revolutionary struggle in the "affluent society". It will be argued that, contrary to Marcuse's analysis, a radical and militant class consciousness does now exist in some of the most advanced areas of capitalism. Also, the intensification and widespread re-emergence of such consciousness appears to be quite probable considering the basic instability of advanced capitalism. Furthermore, Marcuse's view that even the "improbable" re-emergence of economic instability will not motivate a corresponding re-emergence in radical working class consciousness, shall be shown to be highly questionable. Indeed, it will be argued that just such factors as economic insecurity, social marginality, and, to a lesser extent, adverse

working conditions, are still the key conditions underlying the emergence of working class consciousness wherever it has developed in the advanced industrial society. Therefore, considering what appears to be a trend in capitalism towards a period of prolonged and unavoidable instability and crisis, the widespread emergence of such militant and radical class consciousness would, as noted above, appear to be a far more probable long term trend than Marcuse's notion of instinctual, biological, and physiological integration and combined with and to a great extent, flowing from economic affluency. As to the changing structure of the working class with increased emphasis on the "new working class", Marcuse appears again to have misconstrued a relatively short range rise in the demand for highly skilled and highly educated workers as a long range trend. In fact it will be argued that this rise in the demand for a highly skilled and educated proletariat was a temporary phenomenon motivated by the dynamic of the third industrial revolution. As that revolution reached its peak, and the new technology was largely developed, installed and "jelled", the "real" demand for such a "new working class" began to fall off. In fact, the third industrial revolution which Marcuse saw as leading to a widespread

heightening of the requisite skills, and education of the working class, lead rather to a trivializing of the remaining jobs in the new productive processes and an actual decline of the requisite proletariat skill and education level, even below the post-revolutionary level. It will also be suggested that it was this sharp and sustained drop in the demand for a highly educated working class and the consequent closing of the "better" sectors of the bourgeois society, which is in the last analysis at the root of the student rebellion and counter culture of the sixties. Such conclusion is in clear opposition to Marcuse's emphasis on affluence and eros as the basis for such rebellions.

These are the basic arguments which will be developed in this thesis. Due to the scope of the discussion, the specific ~~criticisms~~ of Marcuse's various premises and arguments will not immediately incorporate large amounts of data. Rather, footnotes will refer the reader to the sources of such data, upon which the arguments have been developed.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 Herbert Marcuse An Essay on Liberation, Boston, Beacon Press, 1969.
- 2 As an example of such moods, the recent quashing of the U.S. 'FOREIGN AID' programme by federal legislators gives at least a hint of the waning determination at least by a sizable group of politicians to prevent any more 'CUBAS'. It should hastily be added however that much should not be too easily read into such occurrences.

II

EXIT FROM THE CONTINUUM OF REPRESSION

The Ontological Shift:

↳ Marcuse's adoption of certain aspects of Freud's theories represents a distinct shift in his ontological perspective. Prior to that shift, Marcuse clearly subscribed to a Marxist concept of human nature.¹ Basically, according to the Marxist perspective, while man has an "essence", this "essence" is not treated as of divine or other mystical origin. It is not a biological or anthropological constant dating back to the initial emergence of man on the historical scene. Rather, it is a developing "essence" which unfolds within history. Man, engaged in praxis, creates and produces himself so that there is consequently nothing in his "nature" that is not the product of integration between individuals, groups, classes, and societies.² "The nature which comes to be in human history -- the genesis of human society --", wrote Marx, "is man's real nature; hence nature as it comes to be through industry even though in an estranged form, is true anthropological nature."³

It should be partially apparent from what was said in the previous chapter regarding Marcuse's analysis of

the structure and dynamics of capitalism and the subsequent integration of the working class in that society into the values and goals of the status quo, that such conclusions in conjunction with a Marxist notion of human nature must logically lead to a posture of extreme pessimism concerning the chances for the emergence of a radical and militant class consciousness. Marcuse's analysis appears to have led him into a closed system of domination. Indeed, given Marcuse's conclusion that the members of the affluent society, particularly the working class, are thoroughly integrated into the values and goals of that system as a result of the peculiar socio-economic and cultural conditions prevalent, it follows logically that any thought of escape from this "continuum of repression" would be sheer utopianism. If Marx is correct in stating that man makes his own essence through social interaction and activity, and further if his perspective on the relationship between existence and consciousness is correct, then it seems highly improbable that there would emerge a radical and militant class consciousness and critique of the status quo, given its stability and sustained and expanding affluency. It becomes therefore extremely problematic to imagine what factors could possibly

stimulate the emergence of the class consciousness requisite for revolutionary praxis. While the work experience, social marginality, and economic insecurity do not by themselves guarantee the development of a militant class consciousness, (as the examples of fascism in Europe during the twenties and thirties have demonstrated), they do however provide the necessary soil out of which such a consciousness could develop.⁴ Further, Marcuse's conclusions as to the thoroughness of working class integration into the status quo culture, (i.e., biological, instinctual and physiological) make it appear highly unlikely that the continuing alienated nature of economic, political and social life would be effective in stimulating a conscious rejection of that system. This is particularly true when we consider Marcuse's argument that even though life in the affluent society frustrates man's fundamental needs, it nevertheless accomplishes this in a manner more or less pleasant to the individual. A dull insensitive happiness prevails, and satisfaction and achievement are geared towards and finally equated with the acquisition and use of "things" and "gadgets".

The prospects for a break in this "continuum of repression" appear bleak indeed. What has been referred

to as Marcuse's "one dimensional pessimism" reflects and articulates the dilemma he finds himself confronted with. Under circumstances of such complete integration and sustained prosperity, the emergence of a widespread and radical critique and subsequent rejection of the values and goals of the status quo appear as a utopian speculation. Futile and utopian that is, if one continues to opt for a Marxian concept of man and the consequent relationship between existence and consciousness.

It is this dilemma, this apparent perpetual "one dimensionality", which finally obliged Marcuse to seek a new ontological perspective. It would seem that he had several alternate but not necessarily mutually exclusive routes out of this dilemma. First, he could resign himself to a more or less complete pessimism regarding the possibilities for liberation from the affluent but alienating society. Second, he could engage in utopian speculation as to the possibilities for such liberation. Third, he could reject the validity of his own analysis of advanced capitalist society. Finally, he could seek a new ontological perspective, one which would provide him with a potential way out of the "vicious circle" he

had drawn around himself. It was to the latter, to the new concept of human essence, that he finally and completely turned.

Marcuse was certainly not unfamiliar with Freud's instinct theory. His association with the Frankfurt school had given him a thorough acquaintance with the theories of psychoanalysis. Further, while there were certain clear affinities between some aspects of his peculiar brand of "Hegelian-Marxism" and certain psychoanalytic concepts,⁵ it was not until the mid-fifties that he began to move decisively away from his earlier Marxist perspective and towards the instinct theory of psychoanalysis. *Imp.*

It appears therefore that given his prior acquaintance with Freud's ideas, and further given the peculiar affinities between these ideas, it was finally Marcuse's perception of the before-mentioned dilemma which was the decisive factor in bringing about his shift to the psychoanalytic perspective on the essence of man. He turned to Freud for the "necessary" new concept of human nature.

Whereas according to Marcuse's analysis, the past estimations of the limitations and contradictions of capitalism had been proven by the actual course of

historical development to be incorrect, (with all indications pointing towards an increasingly stable and powerful capitalist system), the inner dynamic of Eros, the life instincts, was substituted as the only "realistically" significant stumbling block now facing that "smooth functioning" system. It becomes for Marcuse, the "life instincts" which provide the basic motivation and direction for a potential break in the "staying power" of capitalism and consequently for an exit from the "continuum of repression".

According to Marcuse, psychic energy, with its various particular biographically and culturally determined manifestations in the life and death instincts, provides the necessary dynamic force which was lacking in the Marxian concept of man, (given Marcuse's conclusions as to the characteristics of advanced capitalist society). Even in a situation of total integration effected and sustained by advanced technological manipulation of thought processes and more importantly, long term prosperity, the basis for the emergence of a radical new political perspective (not to mention the basis for the creation of a "new man"), was present in the form of psychic energy. As we shall see more fully in the following section, the principal and central notion underlying the whole

psychoanalytic system is that conscious life is essentially determined by unconscious and highly energized instinctive ideas and impulses.⁶ The unconscious, volitional effective side of mental activity is stressed in this concept of human essence, with the driving force being viewed not as social but rather, in the last analysis, as biological.⁷ As pointed out by H.N. Wells in his study of psychoanalysis, it is compulsion, not reactivity, which is viewed as motivating man in the psychoanalytic approach.⁸ It is thus this psychic energy, more specifically, the relatively unsublimated demands of the life instincts, which Marcuse hails as the only "slight glimmer of hope" in the struggle for liberation. Confronted by the one dimensional dilemma his analysis has led him into, he assures us that he has found a material basis, "under" the traditional material basis, for the rejection of the status quo of domination. Seeking desperately to escape the bleak cloud of pessimism conjured up by what will later be demonstrated to be his own faulty, one-dimensional and a historical analysis of advanced capitalist society, Marcuse has turned to the psychoanalytic theory of instincts for a solution. In doing so he has committed himself enthusiastically to the most extreme and outrageous psychoanalytic concepts,

"... at once embracing", points out Paul Robinson, "Freud's death instinct and rising to a lofty vision of universal erotic gratification".⁹ In the following section it will be argued that Marcuse's material basis (the demands of the life instincts) which lie "under" the traditional material basis of revolution, is in fact an only thinly veiled idealism. Further, in a subsequent section it will be suggested that this idealism results often in clearly utopian proposals for achieving human liberation.

Instincts, New Rationality and False Dualism:

Marcuse writes:

I base my discussions on the final version of Freud's instinct theory, according to which there are two primary drives: Eros, the life instincts, formerly called sexuality, and the death instincts -- the former governed by the pleasure principle, the later governed by the Nirvana Principle, which is to say that these instincts aim at destroying life and returning to a state before birth free of tensions. I have to add only that, according to this conception, this instinctual energy in the organism is constant but that its distribution between the two primary drives is changeable. In other words, if you have conditions in which the energy of the erotic instincts, libido, is reduced, it means that at the same time, the energy of the destructive and death instincts will increase, and vice versa.¹⁰

It is the existence of this constant displaceable psychic energy, divided in varying proportions between the life and death instincts which provides Marcuse with a basis for a "guarded" optimism in assessing the potential for realizing human liberation. It is the manifestation of Eros over and against Thanatos, in thought and praxis, which Marcuse sees as offering the most significant hope for an exit from the "vicious circle of repression". Such predominant manifestations of the life instincts among various groups in society (particularly the young intelligentsia and certain sectors of the ghetto populations due to their peculiar socio-economic and cultural positions and experiences), offer the only hope for a "real" revolution. A revolution not only in socio-economic forms but also, and more importantly, a revolution in the very infrastructure of the human being.

It should be clear therefore that the very core of Marcuse's perspective on liberation relies for its validity upon the prior validity of the Freudian instinct theory. While Marcuse's interpretation of Freud's ideas, is in numerous respects brilliantly original and unique, it remains in the last analysis well within the general

theoretical framework of psychoanalytic theory. That is to say, Marcuse accepts a priori the basic assumptions and concepts of Freud's theory. It is the position which these assumptions and concepts come to occupy in Marcuse's proposals for liberation, as well as his fundamentally uncritical acceptance of that theory, which motivates this critical assessment of these psychoanalytic notions.

A key feature of psychoanalytic theory is that it rests essentially and necessarily upon the notion of a displaceable and constant source of psychic energy. These notions of an impulse which is universally inherent in man and consequently of instinctual origin, are badly tangled in their systematic aspects in the complexity of Freudian meta-psychology. One conclusion constantly emerges however, and that is that if a consistent theory of the psyche is developed along the lines of psychoanalysis it must necessarily include a concept such as libido, and conversely, if a concept similar to libido is initially posited, then the whole theory which consequently follows must have a structure largely similar to that of psychoanalysis.¹² The crucial point then is that without the basic premises of a universal, compulsive and unconscious motivation in man, there can be no psychoanalysis. Once this premise is granted however all the central Freudian techniques and doctrines follow more or less logically.

They are fully valid inferences in view of the major assumption and exist in large part within that assumption.¹³ Speaking of the central concept, Freud states that "without assuming the existence of a displaceable energy of this kind we can make no headway".¹⁴

The notion that there exists universally in man some constant psychic force or energy has been one of the most persistent and frequent errors in the history of psychology. We find it running through most 18th and 19th century rational psychology and finally reaching its climax in the "instinct" school. Freud developed his particular concept of psychic energy not on the basis of objective data but rather on the basis of analogies¹⁵ and by circular reasoning¹⁶ and the consequent drawing of unwarranted inferences on the basis of those analogies. Psychoanalysis drew and still does draw its credibility largely from an apparent substantiation in phenomenal appearances.¹⁷ In fact, this is a consistent feature of all speculative theories. They are not constructed in a manner completely abstracted from reality, but rather they utilize phenomenal appearances which at the time cannot be adequately accounted for by science.¹⁸ The arbitrary positing of a constant though displaceable psychic energy provided Freud with the "starter button"

of human behavior, and further, the "cause" of underlying neuroses. The fundamental notion that "every event has a cause" had long provided the basic perspective for explanatory schemes guiding inquiry into the meaning of a whole range of social and natural phenomena, though the degrees of complexity to which such a general proposition has been developed has varied enormously.

In this respect V.G. Childe notes:

'Every event has a cause', though long before any such rules were formulated, causality thus conceived inevitably engendered a horde of fictitious beings -- gods, spirits, demons . . . to act as causes. It is indeed still replenishing language with their symbols -- 'gravity' ('the pull of gravity'), 'the chemical affinity', 'the libido' are just attenuated descendants of Jove and Juno. Of course the categories have been refined and depersonalized by generations of philosophers and logicians.¹⁹

The theory of instincts, assessed logically, possesses no explanatory value. Initially, one observes man engaging in some form of activity and from this observation infers an instinct.²⁰ This inferred element is then separated from the observed activity and posited in the organism as a force or dynamic cause of activity. This procedure simply treats an attendant name for some particular activity as the explanation of it.²¹ Such explanations are

however tautological. Instincts are nothing more, therefore, than hypothetical inferences drawn from some observed behavior, and in the specific case of psychoanalysis the observation does not even go beyond the level of phenomenal appearances. They are not biological and cannot therefore be considered as "causes" of behavior. As one writer has put it:

They are second order constructs set up to explain first order concepts which were set up to explain the observed behavior. In effect they are attempts to explain a mystery by a greater mystery.²²

Looking at Freud's particular "brand" of instincts, we see he argues that living matter instinctually aims for death by trying to reduce or abolish external stimuli and thereby attain an unstimulated or tensionless state of being (death). Such a premise is untenable however, for there are many examples from comparative ethology of "taxes": reflex-like directing movements which activate the organisms behavior "towards" external stimuli.²³ Furthermore, the procedure of assigning certain functions to certain parts of the organism and then to conceive of other processes or parts of the organism as "making demands" upon them, seems a very dubious method of explaining cyclical phenomena. Various features of

physiological processes, structure, experience, and behavior have emerged, in the evolution of particular species in accordance with heredity, natural selection, and genetic variation, and are consequently "coordinated" in the total functioning of the system. Therefore to refer to instincts as making demands on the nervous system or other parts of the organism is totally misleading.²⁴

Earlier a reference was made to the fact that Freud conceived this instinctual energy as being not only constant but also displaceable. That is, displaceable between the two general categories of the life and the death instincts. It was also noted that the particular features of an individual's instinctual structure, i.e., the proportional strengths and weaknesses of the death and life instincts was the consequence of two general processes of instinct modification or repression. In the first case ontogenesis, the original instinctual energy, is modified and repressed as a result of the individual's biographical experiences. In the second case, phylogenesis, the instinctual structure, is viewed as being modified through many generations of human experience, so that our present instinctual structure is in no small way the result of the experience of our distant ancestors.

This notion, attains particular importance in Marcuse's assessment of the degree to which men have been integrated into the dominant system of values, and the subsequent rationality of domination. It is his acceptance of the validity of this process which provides the key underpinning of his notion of a "psychic thermidor" and the consequent "vicious circle of repression" (both of which formulations shall be discussed in subsequent sections).

This whole Freudian notion of phylogenesis, and consequently the socio-political conclusions Marcuse draws from it, are rooted in a rather misconceived notion of evolution. The evolutionary change through mutations has not and does not now change as a "response" to external disturbing forces. Rather, changes in physiological, and biological make-up result from mutations that are spontaneous variations of the genetic constitution and it is the survival of the resultant species or individuals that is dependent upon external forces, in accordance with the principle of natural selection.²⁵ To speak as though external disturbing forces have brought about each evolutionary change in the many animal species, and further to suggest that because each organism grows in accordance with its genetic constitution it implies that the organism is seeking to restore to an earlier state,

is completely false.²⁶ This Freudian theory of instincts and their subsequent modification and repression grew out of a milieu (in the 19th and early 20th centuries) of general ignorance of the exact processes of the brain.²⁷ It was this situation which led Freud to explain in the midst of his theory construction, that "the indefiniteness of all the discussions of what we describe as meta-psychology is of course due to the fact that we know nothing of the exact processes that take place in the elements of the psychical systems, . . . we are consequently operating all of the time with an unknown quantity."²⁸

This lack of knowledge of objective psychical processes did not, however, deter Freud from proceeding to develop a complex theory of "mental" processes.²⁹ Freud indeed assumed that there was an anatomical and physiological base for the activity of the brain.³⁰ But as the requisite knowledge was lacking, he chose to proceed on the basis of conjecture, mythical constructions,³¹ and reasoning by analogy³² to construct a purely "mentalistic" theory of psychical processes. That is, one which considered the mind as a separate entity from the rest of the organism³³ when in fact it is a function of highly organized matter.³⁴ Later in this section it will

be argued that this "mentalistic" feature of Freud's theories is at the root of the existential split which manifests itself in certain of Marcuse's ideas on liberation.

While there exists no objective or material basis for Freud's instinct theory, it obviously possesses a certain social reality due to the socio-cultural reinforcement of its precepts in certain societies. Perhaps this is one reason for both Marcuse's uncritical acceptance of the Freudian notion of psychic energy and the subsequent widespread acceptance of Marcuse's analysis of the advanced industrial society and his subsequent proposals for liberation from it. In this respect, P. Berger and T. Luckmann note:

Neither the Voudun gods nor libidinal energy may exist outside the world defined in the respective social context, but in these contexts they do exist by virtue of social definition and are internalized as realities in the course of socialization. Rural Haitians are possessed and New York intellectuals are neurotic.³⁵

In any event, regarding Freud's notion of psychic energy, there is one point on which we can claim perfect agreement with him. That is when he states: "the theory of instincts is, as it were, our mythology."³⁶ In

consideration of the above discussions regarding the validity of Freudian instinct theory, let us turn to a consideration of Marcuse's consequent notion of a "new rationality". We will recall from our introductory elaboration of Marcuse's position that he views as essential to the success of any struggle for liberation, the prior existence of a "new man" with a "new rationality". A rationality of freedom as opposed to the prevalent and widespread rationality of domination. In essence, a rationality guided by the demands of the life instincts. Marcuse writes:

In Freud's theory, the mental forces opposed to the reality principle appear chiefly as relegated to and operating from the unconscious, the rule of the 'unmodified' pleasure principle obtains only over the deepest and most 'archaic' unconscious processes; they can provide no standards for the construction of the non-repressive mentality, nor for the truth value of such a construction. But Freud singles out phantasy as one mental activity that maintains a high degree of freedom from the reality principle even in the sphere of the developed consciousness. . . . Phantasy plays a most decisive function in the total mental structure: it links the deepest layers of the unconscious with the highest products of the consciousness (art), the dream with reality; it preserves . . . the tabooed images of freedom.³⁷

Therefore, he argues that:

Beyond the limits (and beyond the power) of repressive reason now appears the prospect for a new relationship between sensibility and reason, namely, the harmony between sensibility and a radical consciousness; the rational faculties capable of projecting and defining the objective (material) conditions of freedom, its real limits and chances. But instead of being shaped and created by the rationality of domination, the sensibility would be guided by the imagination, mediating between the rational faculties and the sensuous needs.³⁸

This "new rationality" is the core of the "Great Refusal" which Marcuse detects in the advanced industrial society. Being guided by the demands of the life instincts, this "new rationality" is assumed to have as its basic feature not the cultural possessiveness and aggressiveness of the one dimensional society, but rather, it combines the knowledge of advanced techniques of production with the inner essence and needs of man.³⁹ It thereby provides the only sure guide for praxis which can lead to the construction of a society which is in harmony with the true nature of man; a society which may facilitate and encourage the development of his potential for building and living a qualitatively better life.⁴⁰

The basic objection to the notion of a "new rationality" as envisaged by Marcuse is rooted in the

previously elaborated criticism of the psycho-analytic theory of instincts. It will be recalled that for a variety of reasons the conclusion was drawn that the Freudian notion of psychic energy in general and "Eros" and "Thanatos" in particular were unwarranted a priori assumptions. Further, if, as was implied earlier, such a notion had more than a superficial similarity to alchemy and evil spirits, and a parallel level of scientific validity, then it clearly follows that any theoretical structure built upon these pseudo-scientific cornerstones is likewise little more than a further sophisticated form of romantic idealism. If the Freudian concept of instincts is accepted a priori as valid, then obviously, the Marcusean notion of a "new rationality" takes on an aura of scientific and logical correctness. To reemphasize the point however, the acceptance of that initial and "necessary" postulate, represents the first and clearly unwarranted step into the realm of mysticism, idealism, and subsequent utopianism.

Further, the acceptance of such untenable assumptions represents the beginning of an unnecessary confusion of the relationships between biology, physical processes, culture and social structure.

It was also mentioned earlier in this discussion that there is a distinctive existential split detectable in certain of Marcuse's notions regarding the achievement of liberation. Further, it was noted that the root of this split lay in the fundamentally "mentalistic" nature of the psycho-analytic theory, to which Marcuse clearly subscribes. In considering the problem and possibilities confronting the struggle for liberation Marcuse repeatedly makes the distinction between a new consciousness and a new sensibility and sensuousness.⁴¹ He clearly considers the new consciousness, brought about largely by the individual's experience in society, as a much more transitory and superficial level of rejection of the status quo than is the "new sensibility" which stems from and is rooted in the instinctual, physiological and biological structure of man. It is this "new sensibility" which provides a sure and unwavering reference point for the construction of a free society. Consequently Marcuse argues that while a radical political consciousness is essential to the struggle for liberation it must be this "new sensibility" which is the central factor in breaking out of the "continuum of repression" because it represents the inner essence of man, the demands of the life instincts. Were

radical class consciousness, while essential, is rooted not in the demands of the life instincts, but rather it is a conscious response to certain disturbing socio-economic and political experiences. Therefore, while such class consciousness can and must provide the main source of rejection of the status quo, its roots in external experience and not in eros render it incapable of carrying that rejection beyond a given point (out of the "continuum of repression"). Only the new sensibility, rooted in and representing the demands of the life instincts, can take that rejection to the point where society may be constructed in harmony with and facilitating the development of eros.

This split between consciousness and sensibility is based in the fundamental split Freud has made between the mind and the organism. The split is reinforced and made more distinct by the notion of instinctual demands. Such demands, supposedly stemming from within the mind in the form of psychic energy, and being merely modified by the historical and biographical experience, suggests that there are two sources of motivation for mental processes. Consequently, we are faced with ideas and emotions stemming from contact with the external environment as well as those stemming largely from the

"instinctive" demands of the individual "mind". As with the notion of a new rationality, such a dualism of the origin and consequent value of thought must be rejected on the grounds that it is firmly rooted in the untenable "mentalistic" psychoanalytic instinct theory.

Human senses should not be considered as simply given by nature. The senses become specifically human and increasingly more refined as the world of nature becomes humanized, showing the marks of human activity.

This historical process of refinement and humanization of senses is an inherently social process.
 . . . Separating senses -- what have become 'directly in their practice theoreticians' -- from reasoning, in order to subordinate the former to the latter is, therefore artificial and arbitrary.⁴²

What will ultimately determine how a person thinks and feels is the way that one lives, the type of social practice he has.⁴³

Again, this distinction Marcuse makes between sensibility and consciousness does not appear to be fully justified. Having posited the distinction on the basis of the Freudian theory of instincts, he then proceeds to abolish the split by advocating a "new rationality" which is in effect the union of the demands of the life instincts with the knowledge and techniques gained by

"practical" inquiry and experience. The "new man" is seen to represent a union of the demands of the life instincts with a socially acquired radical political consciousness.

Pressed by his conclusions regarding the structure and dynamic tendencies of advanced capitalist society, Marcuse has found a way out of the "vicious circle of repression" in the form of the "radical young intelligentsia" who have overcome this dualism and thereby represent a union of eros and radical political consciousness. Marcuse might well have spared himself the trouble, as such a dualism between consciousness and sensibility does not appear to be justified, not only because of its roots in the untenable Freudian instinct theory and the general "mentalistic" nature of psychoanalysis but also because as A. Salter points out:

The fact is, differentiating between reason and emotion is almost always a medieval relic. . . .
 In a sense, reason and emotion are two nostrils of the same nose. We talk of different levels of behaviour, but whether we like it or not, the processes of emotion and reason go on side by side. At all times all of us cannot help using them together, because they are actually one neurological thing.
 There was never any other kind of thinking since our reptilian ancestors left the swamp.⁴⁴

The New Man and Liberation:

Having posited a "material basis under" the traditional material basis for the rejection of the status quo, Marcuse then proceeds to further tighten his analysis of the dynamic and structural tendencies of the "one-dimensional society" while at the same time proposing a potential way out of the consequent dilemma. If the correctness of his analysis of the advanced capitalist society and his new ontological perspective are granted, then his subsequent and increasing emphasis on the nature and need for a "new man" would appear to follow more or less logically. However it is precisely the incorrectness of this new ontological perspective which we have so far sought to demonstrate. Further, chapters three and four will focus on a criticism of the validity of his initial analysis of the main features of the "affluent society". Before turning to that discussion, a closer and more critical look must be taken at Marcuse's notion of the "new man". These "new men" Marcuse conceives of as existing necessarily prior to a revolutionary struggle. Necessary, not in the sense that a revolution in the socio-economic forms could not be achieved without them, but rather in the sense that without their leadership and guidance, any revolution

will necessarily fall short of achieving the final goal of "real" human liberation. Given his present Freudian ontological position, "real" liberation implies an existence in which the structural forms of the new society have been developed in accordance with the demands of the life instincts. Such a society is therefore in harmony with the inner essence of man and consciously structured on the basis of the "new sensitivity" and subsequent "new rationality" so as to facilitate the further development of eros. Marcuse argues that a revolution without the guidance of these "new men" has no hope of breaking out of the "vicious circle of repression". He writes that

This psychological repetition of the dynamic of domination in civilization finds its world-historical expression in the ever recurring dynamic of revolutions in the past. These revolutions manifest an almost schematic development. Insurrection succeeds and certain forces attempt to drive the revolution to its extreme point, from which the transition to new, not only quantitatively but qualitatively different conditions could perhaps proceed. At this point the revolution is usually vanquished and domination is internalized, reestablished, and continued at a higher level. If Freud's hypothesis is really legitimate, then we can raise the question whether alongside the socio-historical Thermidor that can be demonstrated in all past revolutions there is not

also a psychic Thermidor. Are revolutions perhaps not only vanquished, reversed, and unmade from outside, is there perhaps in individuals themselves already a dynamic at work that internally negates possible liberation and gratification and that supports external forces of denial?⁴⁵

Consequently, he writes that

. . . no economic and political changes will bring this historical continuum to a stop unless they are carried through by men who are physiologically and psychologically able to experience things and each other outside the context of violence and exploitation.⁴⁶

Therefore he concludes:

Liberation will mean subversion against the will and against the prevailing interest of the majority of the people.⁴⁷

He then goes on to re-emphasize that

The construction of such a society presupposes a type of man with a different language, have different gestures, follow different impulses; men who have developed an instinctual barrier against cruelty, brutality, ugliness. Such an instinctual transformation is conceivable and a factor of social change only if it enters into the social division of labour, the production relations themselves. They would be shaped by men and women who have the good conscience of being human, tender, sensuous, who are no longer ashamed of themselves -- . . . the imagination of such men and women would fashion their reason and tend to

make the process of production a process of creation. This is the utopian concept of socialism which envisages the engression of freedom into the realm of necessity.⁴⁸

Finally he writes:

The productive imagination would become the concretely structured productive force that freely sketches out the possibilities for a free human existence on the basis of the corresponding development of material forces. In order for these technical possibilities not to become possibilities for repression, however, in order for them to be able to fulfill their liberating function, they must be sustained and directed by liberating and gratifying needs.⁴⁹

Marcuse's concern for the need for a "new man" appears to stem not only from his conclusions regarding the "total" (i.e., instinctual, biological, physiological) integration of the working class in advanced industrial society into the values and goals of the ruling class, but also it seems to derive from his belief that all past revolutions have failed to achieve the goal of human freedom. The fundamental reason for this failure, this "continuum of repression" is rooted in the phenomenon he refers to as the "Psychic Thermidor".⁵⁰ He concludes that the instinctual structure of the vast majority of the people in the "one-dimensional society"

has been sublimated (perhaps a better term would be "repressively de-sublimated") to such an extent that without the guidance of the "new man" any revolution in socio-political and economic structure and relations would not only fail to achieve the goal of human liberation, but in all probability result in a more effective and intensified level of domination of man by man. Without the guiding "truth" of the "new sensibility", "new sensitivity", and the resultant "new rationality", the "Psychic Thermidor" will only bring about renewed and intensified repression, domination and exploitation.

It certainly cannot be denied that thought patterns, linguistic forms, etc. are cultural phenomena which bear the stamp of and help to sustain and perpetuate the general socio-economic conditions which gave rise to them. Furthermore, it is clear from the experience of past social revolutions, that such social phenomena can at times confront the continuing revolutionary struggle with significant and often near disastrous consequences. However, it would appear in closer correspondance with the actual dynamic of past and present revolutionary struggles and their successes and failures in the realm of human liberation, if an analysis were to assign greater weight to particular internal and external socio-economic

and political factors,⁵¹ than to a "Psychic Thermidor". We hasten to add that this comment is certainly not meant to minimize the impact of cultural lags and individual psychological types on the success of any revolutionary struggle. Indeed, such factors must be seriously considered in any particular analysis or subsequent praxis. However, Marcuse, due largely to the Freudian instinct theory and the attendant notions of instinctual repression, etc., gives generally too much weight to such factors. Without referring to any particular situations he simply takes the position that a "Psychic Thermidor" is in the last analysis, the most significant cause of all the past failures of revolutionary struggles to transcend in a practical way the domination and repression of men.⁵²

All this is not meant to imply that there is not a certain, but certainly not in the Marcusian sense, need for new men and women in any revolutionary struggle; new, to the degree that they have rejected as far as possible the values and attitudes of the suppressive order they are living under and struggling against. Certainly such men and women must have a concept of freedom and of goodness that takes them beyond the restrictive confines of the status quo. However, to expect

such men and women to have "the final" perception of the nature of freedom and the institutional forms which will complement and encourage its development, appears to be a clear lapse into utopianism. Adam Schaff points out in this respect that:

Even a revolutionary fighting certain conditions and opinions is in some respects their product and bears their stamp, particularly on his mentality. It is therefore advisable to appreciate the symbolic value of Jehovah's decision to bar the Promised Land to all those born in slavery including the man who led them in their march to Freedom.⁵³

To expect and seek out leaders of the revolution who, while still very much in the old order have nevertheless rejected it to the very biological, instinctual, and physiological levels of their beings, who speak a "new language", who, in a word, have a "new sensibility", is to fly in the face of all previous anthropological and sociological evidence on the nature of cultural change and the relationship between cultural and social forms.⁵⁴

The relationship between economic, social, political, cultural, and psychological factors is a dialectical one,⁵⁵ but it is still the case that in the last analysis the existential situation of people must change

prior to any deep rooted change in their psychologies. Nevertheless, the problem of overcoming and combating cultural and psychological phenomena antagonistic to the struggle for liberation is of utmost importance. Furthermore, it cannot be assumed that by socializing the means of production there will either immediately or easily emerge a "new man" and liberation. However, if alienation and domination are to be finally overcome, the first major step must be to sever the roots of the main source of such alienation and domination. Hence a revolution in the productive relations is essential and to a great degree necessarily prior to any deep rooted, widespread and permanent cultural and psychological transformations. It is only during times of deep going transformations, when men are pivots of historical change, that the notion of "human nature" becomes problematic. Otherwise, emotions, vocabularies, thought patterns, and in general "human nature" appear to remain more or less stable fitting neatly into the traditional human relationships.⁵⁶

It is, finally, only on the basis of new socio-economic relationships that men and women can, and not in an utopian way, begin to "wear down" the cultural and psychological heritage of a past, repressive, alienating,

and exploitative society.⁵⁷ As noted above, the problem of exploitation and alienation is not completely settled by merely negating the property-relations of capitalism. Economic, political and ontological alienation do not simply vanish with a revolution in productive processes.⁵⁸ Property-relations are only a part of the complex set of inter-relations inherited from capitalist society. Further, there can be no absolute safeguards, as Marcuse would have, to insure that alienation will be surpassed and liberation achieved, for such problems are "inherently historical". There will exist continuing dangers of alienation in the reifying potential of certain instruments and institutions of human interchange and no accomplishment, however radical and important can be considered an absolutely definitive transcendence of all forms of alienation.⁵⁹ However, as I. Meszaros has suggested:

Dangers, nevertheless, can be controlled, at least in principle. And this is precisely what is denied by the mystifiers who first make history stop arbitrarily at its capitalist stage, characterized by an actual lack of control, and then conclude that human "objectifications" are uncontrollable in principle. They misrepresent dangers and alienating potentials as metaphysical necessities . . . Consequently the programme of superseding capitalistic alienation

can be concretized as the replacement of the uncontrollable reified instruments of capitalism by the controllable instruments of human interchange. For in the very moment in which man succeeds in consciously subordinating his instruments to the realization of his own ends their "altérité insurmontable" is surmounted.⁶⁰

Again, there is a need for "new men and women" in all phases of any revolutionary struggle. However, Marcuse's particular notion of such "new men and women" must be rejected on the basis of previously elaborated criticisms of the psycho-analytic theory of instincts. The Freudian theory of instincts seeks, in a very real and fundamental sense, to abstract psychical processes from the rest of the organism, and then to view the purely 'mental' processes as acting upon the organism and so the external world, a clearly idealistically inspired perspective. On this point, A. Salter writes:

We do not like to be reminded that evolutionarily speaking, we are merely stomachs that grew more complicated. In the beginning was the gut and the gut was law, it is still so . . . Only the drilling into the human tissues of healthy habits will yeild 'good' thinking and feeling. We are meat in which habits have taken up residence. We are the result of the way people have to us. We are the reactions. Having conditioned reflexes means carrying about pieces of a past reality.

We do not control ourselves. We are constantly controlled by our habit patterns. . . . We think with our habits, and our emotional training determines our thinking. . . . We sit in the audience and insist that we are in the projection booth.⁶¹

We shall now turn to a consideration of the main features of Marcuse's analysis of advanced capitalist society, as it is the conclusions of that analysis, or at least the premonition of them, which to a great extent gives warrant to Marcuse's development of such a radically novel perspective on human liberation.

FOOTNOTES

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- 53 Adam Schaff, op. cit. p. 191.
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TENDANCIES OF ADVANCED CAPITALISM

Introduction:

Marcuse's argument that advanced capitalism has shown itself to be capable of overcoming the "traditional" crises that have beset such economic systems throughout all its past history, rests essentially up on four main premises. They are: a) increasing concentration of economic control and intensified government interventions into the economy, are proving to be extremely effective in curbing and eliminating periodic crises in the system; b) expanded and sustained armament spending provides a relatively limitless safety valve for the pressure towards economic expansion which is intrinsic to capitalism; c) the economies of the Third World are not finally so essential to the well being of capitalism as a system that their exit from the imperialist network could cause its collapse, nor will the revolutionary forces in these areas ever be capable of breaking out of that system until the metropolises are first smashed internally; and finally, d) the existence of the external "enemy", communism, not only justifies the extension of armament spending but also before its threat,

all former crises and competition both between formerly competing capitalist nations and between formerly competing classes within individual capitalist societies are permanently "frozen".

In order to systematically confront each of these key premises, the whole argument in this chapter has consequently tended to take on a rather schematic appearance. The chapter discusses the phenomena of periodic crisis, Third World in capitalist economy, inter-capitalist competition, and the efficacy of arms spending, in consecutive sections. While this approach tends to give a fragmented picture of the various sources of crises confronting advanced capitalism, an effort has been made, particularly in the summary, to at least indicate the main interconnections and reciprocal relationships between these several phenomena.

Periodical Crisis:

Marcuse states:

As to the West: the former conflicts within society are modified and arbitrated under the double (and interrelated impact) of technical progress and international communism.¹

He concludes:

Therefore, we are faced with a novelty in history, namely with the prospect or with the need for a radical change, revolution in and against a highly developed technically advanced industrial society, which is at the same time a well functioning society.²

And further, he adds:

The benefits . . . were expected to be wiped out periodically by wars and crisis since there was no basis for long range international consolidation. This interpretation did not provide for the possibility (soon to become a fact) that such an international basis would materialize.³

In these and numerous similar statements during the past few years Marcuse has elaborated his view of the economy of the "affluent" society. He envisages it as a "well functioning" and "stable" economy which is increasingly capable of "delivering the goods" to a growing number of people.⁴ It is also clear that he considers appalling, the price extracted from the populace of the advanced industrial society for this "affluency". Specifically, he concludes that monopoly capitalism has, in the past twenty-five years, shown itself to be increasingly capable of overcoming the periodic and perhaps even the general crisis that have previously plagued capitalism.

This conclusion is, however, a misconception. As Paul Saran suggests:

This glimmering facade of economic prosperity and social and political cohesiveness is, however, highly deceptive. It may readily convey the impression that monopoly capitalism's basic problem of overproduction and under employment has been mastered and that the stability and functioning of the system are 'in principle' assured.⁵

It is a characteristic of capitalism that once commodity production has become the general feature of the economy, periodic crises are probable. Indeed, all that is necessary to initiate such a crisis with its consequent effects on socio-political stability, is for a situation to arise in which the capitalists in various sectors of the economy are unable to find an "effective" demand for their commodities. If there is any interruption in the process of circulation or any holding back of buying power, a contradiction in the circulation process may result giving rise to an overproduction of commodities.⁶ Further, it should be clear that if there occurs any decrease in ΔM^+ , capitalists will immediately reconsider the desirability of putting their capital into the circulation process.⁷ It is therefore this M which

⁺ This symbol refers to the rate of profit on capital investment.

is the "achilles heel" of capitalism.⁸

Developing systems of trade and credit make possible a "bridging" of the separation between commodity and its equivalent in money, and consequently lengthens the time span of each production cycle. However, the contradiction inherent in the commodity and its divided condition is aggravated, and all countries become bound ever more closely into a single system, as this "bridge" stretches, as it must, in both time and space.⁹

In consequence of this generalizing of commodity production and the periodic absence of effective demand for those commodities, there has developed the general laws and tendencies of capitalist development; a) the gradual increase in the organic composition of capital; in order to counteract, b) the long range tendency of the average rate of profit to decline.¹⁰ These "laws" and tendencies in turn result in periodic changes in the cost of production of commodities and thereby create the possibility of the crisis of overproduction.¹¹

The consequence of these phenomena is an economic development characterized by unsteady and uneven growth, alternating between periods of rapid development and periods of stagnation and retreat. The advanced capitalist countries are indeed no exception to this general

rule. At any stage, capitalism is structurally incompatible with sustained economic growth.¹² In fact it appears most probable that such countries will more than ever before be plagued by "the grim dilemma between war induced bursts of output and depression induced floods of unemployment."¹³

In addition to and in relation to this phenomena, the increase in organic composition of capital does not result in a smooth and gradual change in the price of production. Rather, it results in relatively regular but sudden and "jerky" changes. This "jerking" effect is a consequence of capitalists becoming aware only after the fact that too much social labour is being used in producing certain commodities. In part caused by and partly the cause of technological revolutions, the sharp variations in the rate of accumulation becomes increasingly the rule as capitalism reaches its more advanced stages.¹⁴ Furthermore, once there has been an introduction of new production methods in the economy, there is always a time lapse before the market can react to these new production innovations and the subsequent changes in the supply of certain commodities. Therefore, there results a slump during this period. Quite simply, this briefly summarizes the basis of the anarchy of capitalist

production.

It should always be kept in mind that capitalism is production for profit, whether it is referred to as profit "maximization" or profit "optimization", in the long run it amounts to the same thing. This central point is frequently lost sight of and such misconceptions often provide the basis for notions of a "managed" end of crisis and "crisis free" capitalism. The average rate of profit is the key criterion in determining the condition of capitalist economy.¹⁵ Further, while the tendency of the average rate of profit is downward, it moves in this direction not in a straight line, but in a fluctuating manner through periodical crises and recoveries.¹⁶

The main phases of the business cycle and consequent periodic crisis which continues today, unabated by government intervention in the economy or by the "unifying" effect of the external "enemy" are outlined below.¹⁷ Following the fluctuations in the average rate of profit, it may be seen that economic recovery begins, when after a slump production period, the previously over-produced surplus of commodities has gradually been used up and there results a demand proportionally greater than the supply. Consequently the time lapse between the moment

of production of commodities and the realization of their value on the market is greatly shortened. The business cycle has contracted. The resultant increases in the average rate of profit, the large and as yet unsatisfied demand, the shorter production cycle, etc., all of these factors draw increased investments by capitalists hoping to realize super profits.

After a period, the inevitable (under capitalism) happens. The increase in investment in particular sectors of the economy results in a gradual change in the relationship between supply and demand. The previously unsatisfiable demand becomes increasingly satisfied. The shift towards imbalance is imperceptible at first and consequently before the tendency is detected there has been extensive over-production of certain commodities. These tendencies result in the lengthening of the production cycle, a decrease in prices, and subsequently a decrease in the average rate of profit. The consequent reduction in the average rate of profit implies that only the most efficient enterprises are able to remain open and operating at near full production capacity while numerous less efficient enterprises are forced, by falling profits, to cut back production and often cease production completely, resulting in increasing

unemployment. Further, those more efficient enterprises which realize a higher than average rate of profit, that is, higher than average for the industry, also begin to feel the effects ~~upon~~ profit by decreasing sales, resulting from a gradual decrease in demand as a result of the reciprocal plant shutdowns and employee layoffs. Subsequently these enterprises too, reduce their production to lower than maximum. E. Mandel argues that:

The cyclical movement of capital is thus nothing but the mechanism through which the tendency of the average rate of profit to fall is realized. At the same time, it is the systems reaction to this fall, through the lowering of the value of capital during the crisis. Because capitalist production is not consciously planned and organized production, these adjustments take place not apriori but aposteriori. For this reason they necessitate violent shocks, the destruction of thousands of lives and enormous quantities of values and created wealth.¹⁸

Such cyclical crisis extend throughout the entire economy and are not simply restricted to the consumer goods sector. For the capitalist and the workers who are engaged in the capital goods sector, must purchase consumer goods that are equivalent in market value to purchases of capital goods by the capitalists who are involved in the production of consumer goods. Therefore it is seen

that if the economy is to run smoothly and remain stable it necessarily requires a proportional development between the two major sectors of the economy. Thus, each time there is a break in this proportionality, a crisis, and subsequent unemployment etc. results.¹⁹

Particularly, this disequilibrium comes about when the capital goods producing sector, recovering from a slump and having re-equipped itself,²⁰ finally begins at near to maximum production capacity to supply the demand for equipment from the consumer goods sector. However, because of the relatively long time lapse of placing of orders for capital goods and the filling of these orders, the consumer goods sector has, about the time their capital goods orders are filled, developed productivity to the extent that the demand for consumer goods is being more or less satisfied. Indeed, it is at this point in the cycle that the consumer goods sector should cease or even cut back further investment in capital goods so as to prevent overproduction and subsequent fall in the average rate of profit. Further, as noted earlier, that point in time when supply equals demand is not immediately, but only gradually perceived because of credit spending and the length of the production cycle. As is pointed out by W.T. Foster and W. Catchings:

When this point (equilibrium) comes few men are aware of the fact, because the volume of commodities offered for sale does not indicate either the large volume in the making or the invisible supply in the hands of the speculators. . . . On account of the time it takes to purchase commodities and get them into the shops, the markets can not feel the full effects of maximum productivity until months after that state has been reached. Production, therefore, continues at a high rate; and the volume of commodities coming onto the market, as a result of loans previously made, continues to increase.²¹

A rational response by capitalists to this movement towards over-production and crisis, even in the event of their detection of a tendency towards over-production before it actually occurs, would be unrealistic to expect. Capitalism, as we have said, is production for profit. If these enterprises which have just re-equipped themselves were to cut back production it would increase the depreciation rate on that equipment and would result in a further reduction in the particular rate of profit. The result of all this is a gradual movement towards disequilibrium between the two main sectors of the economy. This disequilibrium shows itself first in the area of the rates of profit and prices, and consequently spreads into the area of demands. Because full employment has already been

achieved, total consumer goods purchasing power no longer increases to any significant degree. However, the production of these consumer goods continues to increase.

Further as a result of the lengthening of the production cycle, enterprises in the capital goods sector, like enterprises in the consumer goods sector, rely increasingly upon loans to finance production until exchange value from commodities already produced can be realized on the market. The increasing demand for such finances affects a gradual rise in the rate of interest on these loans which in turn contributes further to the falling average rate of profit.

These are the origins and general phases of the ^{BIG DEAL}
cyclical development of capitalist production. ^{WHAT'S?} As noted, ^{YOUR POINT?}
 it is characterized not by a smooth and balanced development, not by a priority on human needs, but rather "development" proceeds in a more or less convulsive fashion, sometimes surging ahead then stagnating and often declining. Even in "boom" periods, it is infrequent that enterprises operate at maximum productive capacity. Always the prime objective is profit maximization, or to put in terms more acceptable to the bourgeois economist but amounting to the same thing, "profit optimization".

It is often objected, and this position appears both

implicity and explicitness in Marcuse's "analysis", that such periodic crisis can be avoided or at least minimized in the most advanced stages of monopoly capitalism. However, it is clear that the necessary preconditions of planning are largely outside and indeed antithetical to the fundamental logic of capitalism at any stage. Furthermore, the experience of the Japanese and German war economies have given clear demonstrations that to suppose a rational organization of investment, which in effect means the regulation of investment, could be effected under fundamentally capitalist economic relations, is patently false.²³ As E. Mandel argues:

No reasoning will lead all capitalists to restrict their production voluntarily when demand exceeds supply. No logic will induce them to maintain their investment at an average level, at the moment when the current production is no longer being absorbed by the market. To eliminate crisis completely, the entire cyclical development of production must be abolished, i.e., every element of uneven development, i.e., all competition, all endeavors to increase the rate of profit and surplus value, i.e., everything that is capitalist in production. The anarchy of capitalism cannot be regarded as a cause in itself, independent of all other characteristics of this production, independent in particular of the contradiction between production and consumption which is the distinctive feature of capitalism.²⁴

Line.

Clearly this brief discussion has not exhausted the characteristics and causes of periodic crisis in the development of capitalist economy. The arguments, and the elaboration of this aspect of the dynamics of capitalistic development have, however, tried to emphasize that such crisis have in no way been effectively overcome in the "affluent" society. Indeed, in so far as there is an increased rate of accumulation under advanced capitalism in its monopoly stage, the result is clearly an accelerated decline in the average rate of profit. Furthermore, capitalism in its advanced monopoly stage appears not only to intensify old contradictions, but it also creates new ones. Paul Sweezy argues that:

Since the monopolist is guided by marginal rate of profit in his own industry, and since the rate in the remaining competitive spheres is depressed, the net result is the depression of the rate of profit which is controlling for investment decisions. This is a factor contributing to crisis and depressions independent of and additional to the falling tendency of the average rate of profit. . . .25

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Further, there are increases in crisis stemming from competition between monopoly and non-monopoly sectors as well as from competition between monopoly sectors sharing the same basic areas of production, i.e., between various

chemical trusts, etc.²⁶ Finally, under conditions of monopoly capitalism there is an increasing frequency in the occurrence of periodic crisis due to the emergence of competition between different vertical trusts. These competitions are conducted in the form of economic wars, i.e., as between coal trusts and electric power trusts, oil trusts against automobile trusts, etc.²⁷ In the subsequent sections of this chapter we shall see how U.S. capitalism has, in the past decade or so, avoided more serious domestic socio-economic repercussions stemming from these intrinsic contradictions in its structure and methods of development. A position of more or less unchallenged dominance of world markets has given the U.S. a nearly unlimited area of effective demand for the commodities produced in both its capital and consumer goods sectors. It will be argued however that this unchallenged position is rapidly dwindling under the impact of other re-vitalized capitalist nations. Further, as we shall note in another section, the role that arms spending has played in staving off the crisis of over-production. With its huge and rapidly expanding replacement market, the arms industry and all its affiliated industries and enterprises have clearly contributed significantly to the sustained "smooth functioning"

of the capitalist system. However, such spending, as we shall see, is not only affecting a permanent trend towards currency inflation, but also the attendant research of such enterprises leads to a further speed up in the already present trend towards an increasing organic composition of capital. Finally, and leading us into our next section, the Third World has for a long time provided not only markets essential for the consumer goods produced in the metropolises, but also, increasingly vital raw materials and sources of cheap labour. It has in effect allowed the advanced capitalist countries to "export" their crises and contradictions onto the indigenous populations of these areas. However, with the increases in inter-capitalist competition for such markets and sources of raw material and cheap labour, as well as and perhaps more importantly due to the increasing "unfavorable" investment climate resulting from spreading national liberation struggles, the Third World is gradually rejecting its former role as the ready and defenseless recipient of the metropole's "exported" crises. For all these reasons, the periodic crises, which incidently never were overcome, appear to be due for further intensification and the tendency towards longterm capitalist economic stagnation.

The problem was
the debt not
inflation

The Third World and Crisis:

Marcuse states: "The powers that be will not tolerate a repetition of the Cuban example."²⁸ Therefore, "Under these circumstances, the preconditions for the liberation and development of a Third World must emerge in the advanced capitalist countries."²⁹ Because, "The national liberation movements in the Third World are not by themselves a revolutionary force strong enough to overthrow advanced capitalism as a system."³⁰ Conclusion: "The chain of exploitation must be broken at its strongest link."³¹

These statements sum up Marcuse's assessment of the prospects for successful national liberation struggles in the Third World countries. Further, it reveals a depreciated assessment of the impact upon the capitalist system of successful national liberation struggles. Marcuse, while clearly not unaware of the phenomenon of contemporary imperialism, does not seem to appreciate the extent to which these imperialist relationships have become integral and essential to the capitalist system.³² Indeed, if he did, he would not so lightly dismiss the potential impact of successful national liberation struggles on the "well-functioning society" of the metropolises. The work of Harry Magdoff and P. Jallée clearly demonstrated

the increasingly vital and essential position which the economies of the Third World areas occupy in the world capitalist system.³³

In fact, Marcuse does see struggles in the Third World as significant factors in the long range objective of human liberation. The point is, however, that for Marcuse these struggles have a tremendous impact upon political consciousness in the advanced capitalist societies. Their existence, while doomed never to realize success until the metropolises have broken down internally, nevertheless, prick the consciences of the citizens of the metropolises and increasingly arouse moral indignation and inspire a radical political consciousness. Marcuse places stress, not so much on the economic impact that struggles have on the "well functioning" capitalist system, as on their direct impact upon the subjective factors of morality and political consciousness. While this aspect of the struggles in the Third World should not be disregarded, it seems clear from the increasingly vital position of the Third World in the world capitalist economy³⁴ that the most significant disruptive impact that national liberation struggles have is upon the economic base of the "affluent society", and through that mediating impact they have subsequently

significant effects upon the consciousness of the citizenry of the metropolises.

Increasingly, due to the diminishing supplies at home, the advanced capitalist countries have turned to the Third World for necessary supplies of raw materials.³⁵ Even though trade between the advanced capitalist countries has increased rapidly in the last decade³⁶ in proportionally greater quantities than has trade with the Third World, the latter trade has also increased greatly, and generally involves what Jallée terms "essential" commodities as opposed to the largely "non-essential" nature of the commodities exchanged between the advanced capitalist nations.³⁷ This trade in "non-essential", comes increasingly to rest upon the Third World and imperialist trade in "essential" commodities, i.e., raw materials. The giant corporations of the advanced industrial society, as in the past, still rely upon the chief sources of raw material, labour, and open markets of the Third World areas for their monopolistic positions and their super profits.³⁸ The novelty of contemporary imperialism is not, as Marcuse seems to suggest, an appreciation of the role of the Third World in the world economy due to the tremendous technological and productivity advances made in the advanced capitalist

countries, but rather that the U.S. is rapidly becoming a "have not" nation for many essential resources.³⁹ In this regard, H. Magdoff writes that:

The Third World . . . has an ace up its sleeve; its hand is on the tap controlling an essential flow, and thus it enjoys a position of strength in one respect which must not be underestimated in a dynamic and changing world.⁴⁰

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Marcuse seems perhaps to have incorrectly construed the meaning of the before-expansion of inter-imperialist trade for the importance of trade between the advanced capitalist countries and the Third World. His conclusions appear to be bolstered by the relative and contingent "prosperity" of capitalism during the past twenty-five years. His analysis appears to be further limited by a primary focus on the features which capitalism exhibits in its most advanced areas. This false abstraction, and the subsequent positing of one "aspect" of the total capitalist phenomenon has given rise to many of his incorrect conclusions regarding the direction of capitalist development.⁴¹ This however is not to take the position that a consideration of the proportionally higher increase in inter-capitalist trade is insignificant for appreciating the structure and dynamics of capitalist development, and consequently, its developing contradictions

and crises. Indeed, it may well be that in the particular historical configuration, these considerations are of primary importance in understanding the dynamic and location of severe economic crisis. The point we wish to make is that this increase in intercapitalist trade in no way justifies a conclusion which diminishes the significance of imperialist trade with the Third World. The latter trade gives us a much better appreciation of present and potential structural crises in advanced capitalism.⁴² The fact is that capitalist exploitation in the Third World areas is growing steadily more severe.⁴³

In the case of investment in enterprises producing "non-essential" commodities, capitalism can in general choose an area which enjoys relative political stability to establish such enterprises. It is substantially different however, in the case of investment in ^{where} raw materials are found, and as noted earlier they are increasingly being found in the necessary quantities only in the Third World countries.⁴⁴ It is for this reason that P. Jalée writes: "Imperialism does not pillage the Third World ^{here} diabolically or for fun, but because of vital necessity, because it could not survive otherwise."⁴⁵

Not only are the metropolises increasingly reliant upon the resources extracted from the Third World, but also

they are constantly driven by the inherent logic and basic contradictions of capitalist production and development to expand their markets into the Third World areas.⁴⁶

The Third World thereby increasingly offers the advanced capitalist nations a potential market for the increasing abundance of commodities produced within the metropolises. Consequently, the most advanced capitalist countries have a vital interest in stifling industrial development in these areas.⁴⁷ Each move towards industrialization in the Third World is consequently met with all the concerted sanctions the metropolises can muster.⁴⁸ Wherever such industrialization has been successful, capitalism is confronted with a decline in the potential rate and degree of exploitation of that area. In the last analysis it is the tendency of the average rate of profit to decline which increasingly drives capitalist investment and exploitation into the Third World areas, as well as into other advanced capitalist nations which have lower than average labour costs. The obvious problem confronting advanced capitalism is that the widespread industrialization which tends to follow successful national liberation struggles, deprives it not only of an essential source of "cheap" raw materials but also

increasingly deprives it of necessary expansion and manoeuvring room⁴⁹ in the form of markets and cheap reserve labour pools. It is these reasons which lead P. Baran to argue that:

The principle impact of foreign enterprises on the development of underdeveloped countries lies in hardening and strengthening the sway of merchant capitalism, the slowing down and indeed preventing its transformation to industrial capitalism.⁵⁰

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To use A.G. Franks apt phrase, the developed countries work actively to insure the "development of underdevelopment" in the Third World.⁵¹

Finally it should be re-emphasized that the Third World often provides the international corporations of advanced industrial societies with sources of cheap labour, enabling them to realize a higher profit. In efforts to counteract the aforementioned tendency of the average rate of profit to fall, and or to realize super profits, corporations often establish enterprises in the Third World areas to take advantage of the cheap and large reserve labour pool. In general, the only significant "benefit" which accrues to these areas so blessed, stems from income in the form of wages, and low wages at that.⁺

+ If wages were forced up in these areas much of the "incentive" for capitalist investment in these areas would be lost.

Corporations may thereby avoid the restraints of union or government control of the more crass types of worker exploitation by setting up enterprises in these areas. This attraction adds to the increasingly integral position occupied by the Third World and world capitalist economy. It is these features and functions of the Third World in the total capitalist system, which causes a tightening up of the economic flexibility within the metropolises whenever the "investment climate" worsens or is made impossible by national liberation struggles in these areas.⁵²]

Therefore, in light of these factors, the discussion will turn briefly to a consideration of the potential for success of the numerous national liberation struggles in the Third World⁺ and their present and potential impact upon capitalism as a system.

In recalling the opening quotation of this section we note that Marcuse maintains by and large a low estimation not only of the prospects for further success for national liberation movements, but also of the adverse effects such struggles, even if successful, would have

⁺ This discussion about the Third World will be generalized, since it is beyond the scope of this thesis to deal with particular national liberation struggles except by way of references to their existence.

upon the stability of advanced capitalist. This is not meant to suggest that it must be a question of either liberation in the metropolises first as a precondition for liberation in the Third World, or vice versa. Clearly, to pose such a question reflects a lack of appreciation of the real complexity of imperialist relations. Furthermore, such a question cannot be answered without an extensive analysis of the particularities of imperialist socio-economic and political relationships in this historical epoch for, as P. Jallée points out: "the relations between the Third World and imperialism are dialectical and not all of the weapons are on one side."⁵³

Indeed, in the dialectical relationship between these two general segments of the world capitalist economic system, it may well be that the struggles in the Third World prove most significant in precipitating the final decline of the capitalist system. In any event, to write it off to the degree to which Marcuse does is naive. Perhaps the simple existence of national liberation movements in the Third World do have an increasingly radicalizing effect upon the political consciousness of certain groups in advanced industrial society. However, the arguments considered in this section would seem to lead one to disagree that this is their most significant

and immediate effect. Rather, it appears that it is the consequent deprivation of the manoeuvring space of capitalist economy that will have the most far reaching effects upon the stability of capitalism as a system. Marcuse is misinformed if he supposes, as he appears to, that this is not occurring. Such a position seriously underestimates the essential position that the Third World occupies in the capitalist system. It has, as noted earlier, provided the advanced industrial society for a long time with the opportunity to "export" many of their crises. At a time such as the present, with the unprecedented and increasing need for expansion and manoeuvring room in capitalism, the closing of these Third World areas to such expansion, exploitation, and "exported" crises, would seem more capable than ever of initiating perhaps the most important condition for the subsequent collapse of capitalism in the metropolises.⁵⁴ Contrary to Marcuse's position, it seems clear that a series of successful national liberation struggles in the Third World contribute in no small way to precipitating general crisis and perhaps collapse of the capitalist system. Indeed as George Novack points out: "the spread of world revolution has already administered stiff jolts to American imperialism."⁵⁵

Marcuse nevertheless maintains that the advanced capitalist nations will not allow "another Cuban example", and having the military power and political determination to back up its position, it will be successful in this resolution. [Indeed Marcuse would have us believe, that it is utopian to expect further successful national liberation struggles until there has been a prior breakdown of capitalist society from within the metropolises. We argue that such a view is an unfounded⁵⁶ and arbitrary generalization resulting from Marcuse's lack of appreciation of the peculiar socio-economic relationships that typify imperialism in this particular historical epoch. It is based upon a limited and therefore faulty understanding of the nature and dynamic of monopoly capitalism. Since the time Marcuse first took this position, struggles for national liberation in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, have been growing in number and intensity,⁵⁷ and meeting with increasing success. For some years now in fact, the most significant struggles between socialism and capitalism have been in the Third World areas, in Cuba, the Congo, Algeria, Viet-Nam, and Korea, -- in Africa, Latin America, and in Asia. It is likely that such struggles will continue to grow both in number and in intensity.⁵⁸]

Indeed, E. Mandel's assessment appears to be far more in

harmony with the actual situation when he states that:

The frightful differences in standard of living, the brutal subjection of one nation to another, prepares the way for the material revolution which in turn pushes forward the industrializing of the underdeveloped countries and intensifies the international contradictions of capitalism.⁵⁹

Techniques employed by the advanced capitalist powers to contain this gathering storm in the Third World and to establish a favorable "climate" for investment (exploitation) have not been as Marcuse would have us believe.⁶⁰

However, he seems convinced that not only will imperialist suppression of these struggles be successful as long as the domestic society of the metropolises is stable, but also that there will be no hesitancy on the part of the imperialist policy makers to engage ever more heavily, by direct intervention, if necessary, to prevent another "Cuba".

It appears however, that not only will domestic resistance in the metropolises to such increased intervention⁶¹ be difficult to contain, but also the impact of such action upon other countries, would increasingly create more and perhaps larger problems than those which imperialism originally sought to solve by such action.

Given the domestic situation in the U.S. today and the strong anti-war sentiments, the consideration of such factors will in all probability, prove increasingly effective in deterring the "affluent" society from the too ready extension of such action.⁶²

Clearly, in light of even this brief discussion, it is apparent that Marcuse's prescribed (or perhaps predicted) chronology of events should be rejected or at least seriously modified. To speak, in this age of imperialism and intensifying and increasingly successful national liberation struggles in numerous areas of the Third World, of the absolute necessity of smashing capitalism first at its strongest link, in the metropolises, becomes clearly ludicrous. Conversely, this is not to suggest that it will be the Third World that is essentially the prior area of struggle. The point here is merely to criticize the validity of Marcuse's chronology of potential revolutionary successes. Or as David Horowitz points out:

Liberation is no longer, and cannot be, a national concern: the dimensions of the struggle as Lenin and the Bolsheviks so clearly saw, is international: its role is the socialist revolution.⁶³

Intercapitalist Competition:

Marcuse states that:

. . . if and when there is a 'common enemy' outside the capitalist world whose growing power and expansion requires the maintenance of 'permanent' war or preparedness economy in which the imperialist powers unite, while at the same time technological progress enables capitalism to maintain this economy without noticeably reducing the standard of living (perhaps even increasing it!), then a situation prevails where the very growth of the soviet orbit seems to sustain the unity and the stability of the 'imperialist orbit'.⁶⁴

Consequently he writes that: "Class struggles are attenuated and 'imperialist contradictions' suspended before the threat from without."⁶⁵ And finally he states that: "Moreover, and the common enemy of all capitalism, communism promoted the organization of a common interest superseding the intercapitalist differences and conflicts."⁶⁶

Marcuse takes the position here that, among other stabilizing effects the existence of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries poses such a threat to capitalism that competition between imperialist powers has been "frozen".⁶⁷ He argues that this common enemy combined with the increasing dominance of the United States in the world economy, has in effect led to a cessation of rivalry

between imperialist powers. It appears that of two factors -- increased U.S. domination of capitalist world and the external threat of "the enemy" -- it is "the enemy"⁶⁸ which Marcuse sees as the most significant. Indeed, he argues that not only does "the enemy" have this cohesive effect on the capitalist nations, but also it is equally important as a justification for sustained and increasing armament expenditures by the state, which expenditures provide a "safety value" for capitalist problems of over-production and expansion, and thereby help prevent periodic crisis.⁷⁰ Further, he argues that "the enemy" has promoted a unity of interest among historically competing classes.⁷¹

In this section however, consideration will be given only to the validity of this proposed "freezing" of inter-capitalist rivalries and competition. Contrary to Marcuse's view, a number of economist have concluded that, far from being "frozen" either by U.S. economic dominance or by fear of Soviet Block countries, conflicts and contradictions between competing capitalist powers is on the increase.⁷² While it is clear, especially in the post-war decade, that there was a marked decline in such inter-imperialist competition, it is argued in this thesis that this was a transitory phenomenon.⁷³

Having come out of World War Two not only relatively unscathed but economically much stronger,⁷⁴ the U.S. enjoyed an enormous technological and productive advantage over other imperialist (or former imperialist) nations.⁷⁵ It was mostly to the fact that other capitalist countries, i.e., Japan, Germany, England, etc., were either greatly weakened or completely shattered as a result of the Second World War⁷⁶ that gave the appearance of the permanent ending of interimperialist competition. Indeed, during the decade following the war, most capitalist powers were in such a weakened state that they could not have competed with the U.S. if they had wanted to.⁷⁷

Furthermore it should be pointed out that while the existence of the "enemy" as Marcuse calls it does promote varying degrees of unity between capitalist nations, the real long range impact of the "enemy" has been just the reverse of what Marcuse supposes. In the post World War Two years, the existence of the Soviet Block countries and the increasing tide of anti-imperialist colonial revolutions was a major factor⁷⁸ in obliging the U.S. to assist in the reconstruction of the capitalist economies of Japan, West Germany, Britain, France, Italy, etc. As E. Mandel points out in this regard:

Confronting these two poles, the eastern block and the colonial revolution, America's global strategy was finally forced to restore and support the economic strength of western Europe and Japan. It is a commonplace to assert that the re-birth of West Germany and Japan after the second World War was the fruit of the Cold War.⁷⁹

The U.S. could not hope to confront the threat of these two "enemies" alone. Further, there existed the danger that these countries (Germany, France, Italy, etc.) might themselves turn to socialism.

The Western European capitalist nations and Japan enjoyed an extra advantage as a result of this U.S. sponsored economic reconstruction. Inasmuch as their productive machinery and enterprises were destroyed, the rebuilding of them not infrequently took advantage of the most advanced technology available⁸⁰ and thereby greatly speeded the process whereby it became possible for these nations to move into a competitive position vis a vis the U.S.A. (their benefactor).

The argument here is not that these interimperialist competitions have reached a peak, but only that the movement is in that direction, with Japan on the one hand and the increasingly unified Western European capitalist powers under the auspices of the European Common Market on

the other.⁸¹ It is this re-emergence and intensification of intercapitalist competition which further points toward a period of prolonged instability for international capitalism.⁸² Further, it is clear that at no time since the Bolshevic revolution has the existence of that or any other "enemy" signified the elimination of intercapitalist rivalries.⁸³ Marcuse has simply and uncritically presupposed that a general ideological, and sometimes military, unity represented an end to economic rivalry and competition. Indeed, there have been periods where such rivalry decreased, as was the case in the aftermath of World War Two. But as noted earlier, the existence of an "enemy" is not an adequate explanation for that occurrence. If it were, how is one to explain the re-emergence of intercapitalist competition precisely at a time when the "enemy" appears more powerful than ever in most areas of the world?

The impact of such increased competition and conflicts between competing capitalist powers results in an intensified increase in the organic composition of capital resulting in turn in higher productivity, and subsequently a (temporary) higher average rate of profit. However, as always under capitalism, increases in the organic composition of capital tend to be reflected in

increases in structural unemployment. The United States which has enjoyed a marked superiority in technology and productive potential has been able in the past to pay relatively high wages to the working classes,⁸⁴ however, as Japan and Western Europe increasingly close the technology gap,⁸⁵ it becomes more and more difficult for U.S. capitalism to continue to pay their working class the up to 500% wage differential they have enjoyed in the past over the Japanese and European working classes.⁸⁶ The result must be a forced decrease in the real wages of the U.S. working class if U.S. capitalism is to be able to produce more and more for an increasingly large number of people as Marcuse would have us believe,⁸⁷ it appears that from this contradiction alone, more and more shall have less and less in the "affluent society". As George Novack projects:

Under intensified foreign competition U.S. corporations will be increasingly pressed to shave their costs, beginning with the cost of labour. The average wage of the American worker has been 2 1/2 times that of the West European and 5 times greater than the Japanese. Big business will have to try to reduce this immense wage differential through direct or indirect moves against the earnings and living standards of the industrial work force.⁸⁸

Not only foreign, but also domestic markets must suffer increasingly from this intensifying competition between capitalist powers. The closing of the differential gap between U.S. and Japanese and European technological know-how and consequent productivity results in the further intensification of intercapitalist competition and the consequent threatening and disappearance of foreign markets even in such previously U.S. dominated fields as automobiles and steel.⁸⁹

Further, the gradual disappearance of this productivity differential is leading to severe competition for U.S. firms even in domestic markets. The lower labour costs of the capitalist nations of Japan and Western Europe, combined with this gradual narrowing of the productivity differential, increasingly puts U.S. capitalism in an extremely difficult if not often impossible competitive situation, both in domestic and foreign markets. This worsening competitive situation tends to put U.S. capitalism in the position of realizing a "below average" rate of profit. The response has already come in the form of certain tariff restrictions.⁹⁰ However, extensive moves in this direction would inevitably precipitate retaliatory measures by other capitalist countries. Given the essential global nature of U.S. capitalism,

such measures would probably do more damage to the economy than good in the long run. Consequently, U.S. capitalism has begun to shave production costs by increasing the organic composition of capital. This results in an increase in structural unemployment⁹¹ and a consequent rise in class consciousness. Capitalists in the "affluent" society, in further efforts to overcome the increasing trend towards an unfavorable trade and competition position and the consequent trend towards their earning lower than average rates of profit, are beginning to move more of their enterprises to within the borders of these competing capitalist countries in order to take advantage of the lower labour costs.⁹² However, as capital surpluses build up within these areas (Western Europe and Japan), it would not seem improbable that there would emerge increased resistance by the indigenous capitalists to such "raiding" of the labour force by their competitors. Finally, the Third World, as mentioned earlier, provides a vast potential source of the increasingly necessary cheap labour. However, due to the spreading and intensification of National Liberation struggles in these areas, they do not always offer the "favorable investment climate" necessary. Indeed, it is increasingly the case that in order to insure the

realization of an "adequate" profit and return of the initial capital investment, the rate of exploitation of both labour and resources in these areas must be continually intensified to insure a relatively "quick" investment cycle.

Not only is it clear, especially from the work of E. Mandel,⁹³ that intercapitalist competition is not "frozen" under threat of the "enemy", but on the contrary, it appears that the re-emergence and intensification of such intercapitalist competition comes at a most inopportune time for U.S. capitalism. The increased frequency of periodic crisis, dwindling investment security of essential Third World areas, and a gradual closing of the productivity differential between U.S. and Japanese and European capitalism, all point to a shrinking of the essential manoeuvring room of advanced capitalism. E. Mandel argues that: "Providing a wave of protectionism does not entirely alter the present course of World capitalism, the relative success of European capital interpenetration could become a key factor in undermining the social equilibrium of America."⁹⁴

It should be emphasized however, that this re-emergence of intercapitalist competition is only just beginning, but already serious repercussions are being

felt in the U.S. economy.⁹⁵ It is a long range trend, and one which points towards substantially different conditions in the "affluent" society than Marcuse envisages.

Arms Spending:

Marcuse states that:

The break is expected to come about through the reactivation of the 'inherent imperialist' in the 'imperialist' camp. They are frozen in the Western defense economy.⁹⁶

Therefore, he concludes that: ". . . the most promising way of utilizing the capitalist crisis is to undermine the ground of the 'defense economy' on which the relative stability of capitalism still rests."⁹⁷

Marcuse sees the establishment's justification for the defense economy as resting basically in the existence of an external "enemy" i.e., "communism";⁹⁸ an enemy that would have to be invented if it didn't already exist. He argues that if the Soviet Union pulled out of the arms race, it would undercut capitalism's essential rationale for arms spending, and thereby precipitate a major structural crisis. Using the same rationale, he stresses the undermining of the defense economy through the "emergence"

(in the stifling atmosphere of the "one dimensional society"), of a "new man" who "instinctually" rejects, among other things, warfare. With the spread of this "new sensibility", "new rationality", etc., the defense economy, that unshakable center of capitalist economy, will perhaps finally begin to show "signs of mounting strain".

While we certainly do not mean to suggest that arms spending has not and does not now play a major and most significant role in the curbing of periodic and structural crises in capitalism. However, to see it as a potentially permanent mechanism (unless undermined by "subjective" turned "objective" factors) is, to say the least, over-stating the case for the efficacy of arms spending.

As we have pointed out in earlier sections, capitalism is increasingly denied the maneouvering room that is essential to accomodate this intrinsic need for expansion. In what E. Mandel refers to as the "epoch of capitalist decline", capitalism increasingly finds itself with enormous amounts of surplus capital while at the same time with rapidly diminishing areas of potential investment⁹⁹ due in large part to the factors previously discussed. If the capitalist system is to persist it

must have an effective outlet for this growing capital surplus. Increasingly, this "outlet" has become investment in arms. There can be no doubt that such arms spending has provided, however imperfectly, the answer to the biggest question facing capitalism in its most advanced stages: The question, "on what shall we spend surpluses?"

Arms spending has provided the "affluent society" with an essential mechanism for prolonging its existence by making available an enormous replacement market. While this factor must not be overlooked, neither must the limitations and defects of such a "safety valve".

One limitation to the efficacy of arms spending in deferring capitalist crises is that such investment results in a process of contracted reproduction which in turn results in a long term trend towards currency inflation.¹⁰⁰ Once full employment of the means of production and labour have been reached, there can be no further expansion of military spending unless resources are transferred from other sectors of the economy to the military sector. This contracted reproduction sets in first in those economic sectors which are in competition with the military sector for resources.¹⁰¹ It is possible however, to still have expending reproduction in

this sector, but only in so far as the rate of expansion remains stable or declines so that most of the newly available resources go to the military sector. This increasing investment and expenditure in the arms sector results in the large increase in the available purchasing power, while at the same time, because of the contracting reproduction brought about by such spending, there are relatively fewer consumer goods available on the market. The consequence of this is a more or less permanent tendency towards currency inflation.¹⁰² Increasingly the wage rises of the underlying population serve only to stabilize the falling "real" wages. It is this result which leads Paul Baran to the conclusion that:

Such a course, however, while creating the semblance of "a good time had by all", amounts to a continuous dissipation of the nation's economic surplus and leads to no improvement of the people's real income. Worse still, it cannot be followed indefinitely. The common man, employed and hardworking but seeing no advances in his living conditions, is bound to get increasingly weary of being taxed just to maintain a military establishment the necessity of which becomes increasingly doubtful.¹⁰³

Perhaps however the most significant limitation

which arms spending gives rise to relates to the technological and scientific advances achieved by the massive research sponsored by the armament industries and government. These discoveries are frequently employed in making the productive processes more effective and efficient, first in the armament industry and then spreading to other enterprises. Motivated by the aforementioned tendential fall in the average rate of profit, the increased availability of scientific and technological knowledge makes possible a speed-up of the already existing trend in capitalist enterprises towards an increasing organic composition of capital. The result of this is a continuous reduction in the proportion of capital needed for labour in the productive process, and a consequent rising of structural unemployment. As Paul Baran and Paul Sweezy point out:

Ironically, the huge military outlays of today may even be contributing substantially to an increase in unemployment: many new technologies which are by-products of military research and development are also applicable to civilian production, where they are quite likely to have the effect of raising productivity and reducing the demand for labour.¹⁰⁴

Indeed, this is no exaggeration, as Ben B. Seligman clearly demonstrates in his book, analyzing the impact

of the technological revolution on structural unemployment.¹⁰⁵ Capitalist enterprise seems highly reluctant to allow government expenditure on the massive scale necessary to provide an alternative "safety valve" for the increasing surplus of capital. Expenditures such as public housing, hospitals, medical research, etc., do not provide the investment opportunities necessary; furthermore such products are not so easily destroyed to provide a huge replacement market, as is the case in arms production. We should not overlook the fact that arms spending on such a scale serves the interests of capitalists inasmuch as it better enables the securing of markets and investment opportunities for capitalist enterprises abroad. Perhaps we should also note that this attraction of arms spending may become increasingly important with the emergence of the aforementioned intercapitalist rivalries. Considering that factor and also our earlier discussions on the economic position and political climate of the Third World today, it does not seem improbable that there will be an increased emphasis placed upon such expenditures, and consequently an increase in the adverse effects of such expenditures. It is these factors of increasing unemployment and currency inflation, as well as the weariness that develops in the underlying

population from war preparedness and actual war, ¹⁰⁶ which indicate definite limitations to arms spending as a "cure-all" for the capitalist system in this epoch of shrinking markets, diminishing resources, increased inter-capitalist competition, subsequent increasing organic composition of capital, and increasing demands for "real" wage increases. For these reasons we share Paul Baran's view on the shortcomings of arms spending as a "safety valve" for capitalism's intrinsic need for expansion. Conceding the obvious immediate remedial effects of such spending he argues:

But as with many other narcotics, the applicability of this shot in the arm is limited, and its effect is short-lived. What is worse, it frequently aggravates the long-run condition of the patient.¹⁰⁷

We have now considered the main features of Marcuse's "analysis" of the characteristics and tendencies of capitalism in this particular period. Considering the various problems covered, the comments have been necessarily brief. Each of the four main premises underlying Marcuse's conclusions regarding the condition of advanced capitalism has been assessed and found to be in varying degrees of disharmony with the actual state of affairs and tendencies. He has argued that advanced capitalism

exhibits a stability and cohesion "unknown in the history of capitalism". Furthermore, he sees a trend leading toward ever greater stability and unity. Bolstered by the increasing concentration of economic and political power, advances in technology, the "freezing" of inter-nalist contradictions and also the "freezing" of class struggles (brought on we will remember by the existence of the outside "enemy", communism), and the "safety valve" of arms spending, Marcuse sees capitalism as capable of sustaining, perhaps indefinitely, this period of stability and productive development. Barring the rejection of capitalism from within by a "new man", "the Great Refusal", capitalism's future seems more secure now than ever before. Finally and in a clear shift to a subjective approach to the problem of liberation, he concludes that: "The translation of economic into radical political struggle would be the consequence rather than the cause of change."¹⁰⁸

The arguments presented in this chapter have tried to point out that Marcuse has underestimated (in many cases grossly) the structural problems inherent in contemporary capitalism. Both periodic crisis and intensified intercapitalist competition lead to a decline in the average rate of profit. Consequently there is an

intensification of the rate of increase of organic composition of capital in order to counteract this trend. Furthermore, this subsequent rise in the organic composition of capital and the consequent increases in structural unemployment and decrease in purchasing power combined with re-emerging intercapitalist competition leads to a further aggravation of the problem as capitalists find it increasingly difficult to realize an "acceptable" profit. Much of these crises have been and in fact still are "exported" to the Third World countries by the exploitation of monopoly controlled markets, sources of raw material, and sources of cheap labour. However, increased intercapitalist competition tends to undercut these markets while on the other hand intensified national liberation struggles create an "unfavorable investment climate". Moreover, when such struggles are successful they often lead to industrialization of these areas and cause a consequent further shrinkage of markets, sources of cheap raw materials and cheap labour from these areas. Finally, while arms spending has clearly provided a significant safety valve for capitalist expansion needs, which have been aggravated by the above-mentioned factors, we have seen that such spending also has long term adverse repercussions on the system. Not

only does it create a permanent trend towards currency inflation but also the necessary research for such industries not infrequently leads to further increases in the already speeded up rate of increase in the organic composition of capital, with all its attendant social repercussions.

Clearly this does not do full justice to the complex interplay of forces leading to the "epoch of capitalistic decline". However, it should be at least minimally clear from this and the preceding discussions that all is not as well in the "affluent society" as Marcuse suspects.

In summary, it should be argued that contrary to Marcuse's conclusions, it is increasingly apparent that while capitalist, at substantial sacrifice to the underlying population, contained the first and second industrial revolutions within the general framework of private property, the third industrial revolution presently taking place strains the boundaries of private property to their limits and increasingly shows itself to be completely antithetical to the capitalist productive processes and, to private property in general.¹⁰⁹ All this is not meant to suggest that such intensified crises and potential collapse of capitalism will necessarily or

automatically lead to a socialist revolution. Given the objective circumstances, that event will depend upon "subjective" factors, and appropriate practice. As H. Lefebvre points out in this respect, "a revolution is the consequence of a structure, but a revolutionary event depends upon a conjunction of circumstances."¹¹⁰ The point should also be made that given the fact that the four premises considered in this chapter in large part provided the material basis and consequent justification for Marcuse's seeking a "new route" to liberation, the demonstration of the weakness of these fundamental premises subsequently under cuts his warrant for his subsequent shift of focus to primarily "subjective" factors. He clearly still sees the destruction of capitalism as necessary, but he now places major emphasis upon "subjective" factors to realize this, i.e., the impact of the "new man" and the "Great Refusal" on the smooth functioning economy. Rejecting or denying the efficacy of the structural limitations of imperialism and the internal contradictions of capitalism to bring about a major crisis in this epoch of "delivering the goods" and sophisticated "technological manipulation", he pins his hopes for a reactivation and precipitation of crisis instead, on the "new man", the "new rationality", and

the "new sensibility". He writes that:

The radical social content of the aesthetic needs becomes evident as the demand for their most elementary satisfaction is translated into group action on a large scale from the harmless drive for zoning regulations and a modicum of protection from noise and dirt to the pressure for closing whole city areas to automobiles, prohibition of transistor radios in all public places, decommercialization of nature, total urban reconstruction, control of birth rate -- such action would be increasingly subversive of the institutions of capitalism and their morality. The quantity of such reforms would turn into quality of radical change to the degree to which they would weaken the economic, political, and cultural pressure and power groups which have a vested interest in preserving the environment and ecology of profitable merchandizing.¹¹¹

And further he adds that:

The on-functioning of television and the allied media might thus be able to achieve what the inherent contradictions of capitalism did not achieve -- the disintegration of the system.¹¹²

Again, we are not arguing that subjective factors are unimportant in precipitating a crisis in capitalism. However, contrary to Marcuse, who seems to be very much impressed by the relative stability which capitalism has enjoyed for the past few years, (largely due to the

third industrial revolution and the post war construction and expansion) we have concluded that this apparent stability is neither "deep-rooted" nor "permanent", and therefore such factors are still by far the most significant ones to consider in any effort to assess the potential for revolutionary change in the advanced industrial society. Indeed, the inherent contradictions of capitalism remain the most significant of all obstacles to the continued survival and "well-functioning" of capitalism as a system. Henri Lefebvre writes:

Although they are belittled during stagnant periods for the benefit of those who preserve stagnation -- those who show contempt for history and those who are preoccupied with stability -- events re-activate the movement of both thought and practice. They pull thinkers out of their comfortable seats and plunge them headlong into a wave of contradictions. Those who are obsessed with stability lose their smiling confidence and good humor. 113

FOOTNOTES

- 1 Herbert Marcuse One Dimensional Man, Boston, Beacon, 1964. p. 21.
- 2 Herbert Marcuse Unpublished text at a talk given at the 20th anniversary program of the Guardian, transcribed by Liberation News Service, No. 105, 1968.
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 Herbert Marcuse Negations, Boston, Beacon, 1968. p. 248.
- 5 Paul Baran The Political Economy of Growth, New York, Monthly Review, 1957. p. 120.
- 6 In response to such a decline in effective demand E. Mandel points out: "Between December 1956 and January 1957 and April 1958, American industrial production fell by 21 points, production of durable goods by 36 points, and production of consumer durables by 44 points (of which motor-cars by 75 points!). In percentages these reductions were 14.2, 21.5, 31.2, and 44.4 respectively. Compared with the previous speak in September-October 1955, the fall amounted to 14.2 per cent, 18.6 per cent, 37 per cent and 51.8 per cent, respectively." E. Mandel Marxist Economic Theory, London, Merlin, 1962. p. 530.
- 7 Ibid. p. 348.
- 8 Paul M. Sweezy The Theory of Capitalist Development, New York, Monthly Review, 1942. pp. 135, 140-143.
- 9 E. Mandel Marxist Economic Theory, op. cit. p. 344.
- 10 Ibid. p. 345; and, P.M. Sweezy, op. cit., Chapter IX; E. Mandel Where is America Going, New Left Review, No. 54, March-April 1969. pp. 3-4. Here Mandel argues that U.S. industry has been transformed by the third industrial revolution during the last decade. Consequently there has been a steady increase in the organic composition of capital throughout this entire period.

- 11 P.M. Sweezy, op. cit. p. 135; and, E. Mandel Marxist Economic Theory, op. cit. p. 529. Here Mandel shows four recessions experienced by advanced capitalism precisely during the period which Marcuse sees, as the beginning of a 'relatively' crisis free epoch. 1948-1949, 1953-1954, 1957-1958, and 1960-1961 all were periods of crisis brought about by overproduction in most sectors of the economy.
- 12 Paul Baran, op. cit. p. 11.
- 13 Ibid. p. 11; E. Mandel in Where is America Going, op. cit. pp. 4-5, points out that even though structural unemployment in the U.S.A. is high, the conjunctural unemployment, that brought on by periodic crisis, pushes this unemployment rate much higher, even though such conjunctural unemployment is not always reflected accurately on official U.S. unemployment statistics.
- 14 P. Sweezy, op. cit. p. 149; and, E. Mandel Marxist Economic Theory, op. cit. pp. 534-536.
- 15 E. Mandel Marxist Economic Theory, op. cit. p. 346.
- 16 Ibid. p. 347; and, P. M. Sweezy, op. cit. p. 181.
- 17 E. Mandel Marxist Economic Theory, op. cit. pp. 367, 434-435.
- 18 Ibid. p. 349.
- 19 Ibid. p. 349.
- 20 Not only worn out production equipment is effected during this period, but also in an attempt to further counteract the falling average rate of profit, the organic composition of capital is increased during these periods of re-equipment to boost production potential.
- 21 W. T. Foster and W. Catchings Money, Boston, Mifflin, 1924. p. 274.
- 22 E. Mandel Marxist Economic Theory, op. cit. p. 355.
- 23 Ibid. p. 367 and 254-255.

- 24 Ibid. p. 307.
- 25 P. M. Sweezy, op. cit. p. 277; and, see E. Mandel Marxist Economic Theory, op. cit. p. 435.
- 26 E. Mandel Marxist Economic Theory, op. cit. pp. 434-435.
- 27 Ibid. p. 435.
- 28 Herbert Marcuse An Essay on Liberation, Boston, Beacon, 1969. p. 81
- 29 Ibid. p. 81.
- 30 Herbert Marcuse Five Lectures, Boston, Beacon, 1970. p. 95.
- 31 Herbert Marcuse An Essay on Liberation, op. cit. p. 82.
- 32 Ibid. p. 17.
- 33 See H. Magdoff The Age of Imperialism, New York, Monthly Review, 1969; and, P. Jallée The Pillage of the Third World, translated by M. Klopper, New York, Monthly Review, 1968; and, P. Jallée The Third World in World Economy, translated by M. Klopper, New York, Monthly Review, 1969.
- 34 P. Jallée The Pillage of the Third World, op. cit. Chapter VI.
- 35 E. Mandel Marxist Economic Theory, op. cit. pp. 441-481; P. Jallée The Pillage of the Third World, op. cit. p. 55; and, D. Horowitz Imperialism and Revolution, London, Allen Lane, 1969. p. 238.
- 36 P. Jallée The Pillage of the Third World, op. cit. pp. 52 and 54.
- 37 Ibid. p. 111.
- 38 H. Magdoff, op. cit. p. 45; E. Mandel Marxist Economic Theory, op. cit. pp. 459-481; and, E. Mandel Europe vs. America, New York, Monthly Review, 1970. pp. 80-92.
- 39 H. Magdoff, op. cit. p. 45.

- 40 Ibid. p. 45.
- 41 P. Jalée The Pillage of the Third World, op. cit. p. 114; P. M. Sweezy, op. cit. p. 352; and, A. Schaff Marxism and the Human Individual, translated by O. Wojtasiewicz, New York, McGraw-Hill, 1970. p. 55.
- 42 P. Jalée The Pillage of the Third World, op. cit. p. 55.
- 43 Ibid. pp. 53 and 110.
- 44 David Horowitz, op. cit. p. 328; and, H. Magdoff, op. cit. p. 38.
- 45 P. Jalée The Third World in World Economy, op. cit. p. 131.
- 46 P. M. Sweezy, op. cit. p. 352.
- 47 A. G. Frank Latin America: Underdevelopment or Revolution, New York, Monthly Review, 1969. Chapter I; and, E. Mandel Marxist Economic Theory, op. cit. pp. 476-481.
- 48 E. Mandel Marxist Economic Theory, op. cit. pp. 80-81.
- 49 David Horowitz, op. cit. p. 260.
- 50 P. A. Baran, op. cit. p. 194.
- 51 A. G. Frank, op. cit. Chapter I.
- 52 David Horowitz, op. cit. p. 260.
- 53 P. Jalée The Pillage of the Third World, op. cit. p. 112.
- 54 Ibid. p. 103.
- 55 E. Mandel and G. Novack On the Revolutionary Potential of the Working Class, New York, Merit, 1969. p. 29.
- 56 P. Jalée The Pillage of the Third World, op. cit. p. 115.
- 57 P. Jalée The Third World in World Economy, op. cit. p. 139.

- 58 P. A. Baran and F. M. Sweezy Monopoly Capital, New York, Monthly Review, 1966. pp. 216-217.
- 59 E. Mandel Marxist Economic Theory, op. cit. p. 465.
- 60 P. Jallée The Pillage of the Third World, op. cit. pp. 102-103.
- 61 David Horowitz, op. cit. pp. 257-258; and, I. Mészáros Marx's Theory of Alienation, London, Merlin, 1970. p. 310.
- 62 P. A. Baran, op.cit. p. 131.
- 63 D. Horowitz, op. cit. p. 262.
- 64 Herbert Marcuse Soviet Marxism, New York, Vintage, 1961. p. 60.
- 65 Herbert Marcuse One Dimensional Man, op. cit. p. 21.
- 66 Herbert Marcuse An Essay on Liberation, op. cit. p. 85.
- 67 Herbert Marcuse Soviet Marxism, op. cit. p. 60.
- 68 P. A. Baran, op. cit. p. 257; and, P.A. Baran and F. M. Sweezy, op. cit. p. 186.
- 70 Herbert Marcuse Soviet Marxism, op. cit. p. 83.
- 71 Herbert Marcuse One Dimensional Man, op. cit. p. 21.
- 72 See especially E. Mandel Europe vs. America, op. cit.; E. Mandel Marxist Economic Theory, op. cit.; P. M. Sweezy, op. cit.; P.A. Baran, op. cit.; P.A. Baran and P. M. Sweezy, op. cit.; A.G. Frank, op. cit.; H. Magdoff, op. cit.; P. Jallée The Pillage of the Third World, op. cit.; P. Jallée The Third World in World Economy, op. cit.; and, David Horowitz, op. cit.
- 73 E. Mandel Europe vs. America, op. cit. Chapters I and II; and, P. Jallée The Pillage of the Third World, op. cit. pp. 101-102.
- 74 E. Mandel Europe vs. America, op. cit. pp. 5-9.
- 75 Ibid. pp. 30-35.

- 76 Ibid. p. 9.
- 77 Ibid. Chapters I and II.
- 78 Another significant factor was that U.S. capitalism had ended its first postwar economic cycle: with full employment, rising wages and contracting markets. In general, there was a sharp fall in the average rate of profit. With a surplus of capital, U.S. capitalism was seeking new areas of investment, which offered lower wage rates, etc., as well as the creation of an expanded market for the surplus of commodities produced at home. See Ernest Mandel, Europe Versus America, Monthly Review, New York and London, 1968. pp. 11-12.
- 79 E. Mandel Europe vs. America, op. cit. p. 11.
- 80 Ibid. pp. 13-14.
- 81 Ibid. pp. 63, and 80-92; and, D. Horowitz, op. cit. p. 260.
- 82 D. Horowitz, op. cit. p. 261; and, P.A. Baran, op. cit. p. vii.
- 83 H. Magdoff, op. cit. p. 41.
- 84 E. Mandel Where is America Going?, op. cit. p. 12.
- 85 Ibid. p. 12-13.
- 86 Ibid. p. 13.
- 87 Herbert Marcuse One Dimensional Man, op. cit. p. 255.
- 88 E. Mandel and G. Novack, op. cit. p. 31.
- 89 E. Mandel Europe vs. America, op. cit. p. 13.
- 90 Ibid. pp. 91-92.
- 91 Ben B. Seligman Most Notorious Victory, New York, Free Press, 1966. p. 208.
- 92 E. Mandel Europe vs. America, op. cit. pp. 18-29.

- 93 Ibid.
- 94 Ibid. p. 92.
- 95 One needs only note the consistent U.S. balance of payments deficit and the recent tendencies towards further devaluation of the U.S. dollar to appreciate the significance of this increasing intercapitalist competition on the general economic stability of monopoly capitalism.
- 96 Herbert Marcuse Soviet Marxism, op. cit. p. 83.
- 97 Ibid. pp. ix-x.
- 98 Ibid. p. 60; and, Herbert Marcuse One Dimensional Man, op. cit. p. 21.
- 99 E. Mandel Marxist Economic Theory, op. cit. p. 215.
- 100 Ibid. pp. 524-529.
- 101 Ibid. pp. 524-525.
- 102 Ibid. p. 527.
- 103 P. A. Baran, op. cit. p. 129; Research conducted by J. C. Leggett into the underlying causes of working class consciousness lends support and legitimacy to this view. See J. C. Leggett Class, Race, and Labor, New York, Oxford, 1968.
- 104 P. S. Baran and P. M. Sweezy, op. cit. p. 215.
- 105 Ben B. Seligman, op. cit.
- 106 David Horowitz, op. cit. pp. 98-99. This point should be clear from the present widespread anti-war mood in the U.S.
- 107 P. A. Baran, op. cit. p. 121.
- 108 Herbert Marcuse An Essay on Liberation, op. cit. p. 83.
- 109 E. Mandel Marxist Economic Theory, op. cit. pp. 606-607.
- 110 H. Lefebvre The Sociology of Marx, translated by John Sturrock, New York, Vintage, 1968. p. 121

- 111 Herbert Marcuse An Essay on Liberation, op. cit.
pp. 27-28.
- 112 Herbert Marcuse One Dimensional Man, op. cit. p. 246.
- 113 H. Lefebvre The Explosion, translated by A. Ehrenfeld,
New York, Monthly Review, 1969. pp. 7-8.

IV

THE REVOLUTIONARY AGENT

Introduction:

Marcuse's analysis of the one dimensionality of the "affluent" society, while penetrating and accurate in many respects, appears often to lean towards a peculiarly functionalistic and a historical perspective, much in the same manner as do certain features of his economic "analysis". In respect to the structure of the working class, Marcuse argues that "new working class" is gradually coming to occupy the key operative positions in the increasingly revolutionized means of production. He maintains that this highly sophisticated and complex new productive machinery necessitates a permanent upswing in the requisite education and skill levels of the working class. Employers, he insists, increasingly prefer highly skilled and educated workers, so that automation results in the ousting of the traditional labouring class from its key operative positions in the productive processes. In consequence of this changing structure in the working class, Marcuse points out that the increasingly necessary "instrumentalist intelligentsia" must be drawn from the highly educated youngæ. Consequently he argues that the student rebellion

rooted in affluency and manifesting an increase in intensified "Eros" hits the "well-functioning" system at perhaps its most vulnerable spot.

Finally he argues, that due to the "smooth functioning" and expanding affluency of the system, combined with the impact of the mass medias manipulation of consciousness and the instincts, the working class, the formerly pivotal revolutionary agent, has become integrated instinctually, biologically, and even physiologically, into the dominant and repressive culture of the status quo. Further, he insists that a "mere" but clearly improbable (given his economic "analysis"), re-emergence of economic instability would not necessarily motivate the re-emergence of a radical class consciousness, due to the "thoroughness" of its integration into the system.

The New Working Class:

Marcuse states that:

The long range trend to replace heavy physical labour by technical, mental energy, increased the social need for scientifically trained, intelligent workers; a considerable part of the student population is prospective working class -- 'new working class', not only not expendable, but also vital for the growth of the existing society. The student rebellion hits this society at a vulnerable point.¹

Further he argues that:

This student intelligentsia is potentially a revolutionary group because from this group, capitalism will recruit its future cadres in the productive process, its technicians, scientists, engineers, mathematicians, even sociologists and psychologists, and perhaps even philosophers. This group will assume an increasingly basic function in the productive process itself.²

Therefore he states that:

. . . precisely those strata of the working class which bore, and still bear, the brunt of brute exploitation will perform a gradually diminishing function in the process of production. The intelligentsia obtains an increasingly decisive role in this process . . . This 'new working class', could disrupt, reorganize, and redirect the mode and relationships of production.³

Finally, as for the "old working class": "The chances of promotion decline as management prefers engineers and college graduates."⁴

Marx noted long ago, and the observation remains true today, that capitalism exists only by continually revolutionizing the means of production. Capitalist reaction to the tendencial fall in the average rate of profit has, among other things, resulted (as noted earlier) in a steady increase in the organic composition of capital. This trend has in the last decade or so seen the application

of computers in a wide variety of techniques of automation to the productive process on a scale scarcely imagined in the 19th century. The impact of this particular phase in the increasing organic composition of capital on the composition of the working class has been peculiar and, as is the case with Marcuse, has often prompted premature and therefore misleading conclusions. Since the early fifties the "third industrial revolution" has gained momentum. Social scientists studying its impact on the characteristics and composition of the working class such as C.R. Walker⁵ and Daniel Bell,⁶ (whom Marcuse relies upon heavily⁷) have in their enthusiasm often taken a narrow and in some respect an historical view of this phenomenon.

It is the too often uncritical acceptance of C.R. Walker's conclusions that seem to have led Marcuse to certain misconceptions regarding the long term effects that this "third industrial revolution" is having and will increasingly have on the composition and characteristics of the working class in advanced industrial society. Indeed, as it is clear from the few but representative statements quoted above, Marcuse views the "instrumentalist intelligentsia" as increasingly becoming the most significant group in the working class. They are in Marcuse's words

the "new working class".

Let us be more specific in our criticism. Marcuse supposes that there will be a long range increase in the demand for a highly skilled work force under monopoly capitalism.⁸ However, Seligman⁹ and Lockhart¹⁰ argue, using much more and recent data, that this trend is in fact a temporary phenomenon and is just now coming to an end. The first phase of the "automation" or "third industrial revolution" was a period of rapid development through extensive and intensive research and installment of the newly developed automative techniques to the major sectors and enterprises of the economy. During this period, particularly in the fifties and the early sixties, the demand for highly skilled labour such as engineers, scientists, etc., far exceeded the supply. The whole range of expertise necessary to achieve this "third industrial revolution" was in short supply. To compensate for this shortage there was a marked upsurge in immigration of highly skilled and highly educated workers to the advanced industrial societies, particularly to the most advanced of these, the U.S.A. This was the phenomenon commonly referred to as the "brain drain". Also, there began a rapid increase in the "production" of highly skilled manpower from the universities of the advanced

industrial societies, again, particularly from the most advanced of them, the U.S.A. It was thus during this period and in response to this situation that the "human capital thesis", still widely held today, was clearly articulated and began to have full impact upon government educational policies. Government spending in all fields of higher education climbed sharply. Very roughly, the thesis argued that there is a more or less direct relationship between increased number of highly skilled people and economic prosperity. The increase in skills being the prime and motivating factor driving economic development forward. We need only reflect on the previous discussions on the nature of capitalist development in the preceding chapter to see the limitations of such a thesis.

Once the first phase of this "third industrial revolution" was reaching its zenith, there began a gradual overproduction of highly skilled workers,¹¹ much in the same general way as cyclical process of capitalist production of commodities which we referred to in chapter two. The peculiar feature of the "third industrial revolution" not anticipated by Marcuse, was that once the techniques for automation and cybernation of enterprises were developed, the equipment manufactured and installed, the

first and major obstacle was overcome, and the demand for highly skilled and highly educated workers began to fall sharply. The major work necessary to facilitate a transition to a new method of production had been completed and now the major task remaining was the operation of these new enterprises.¹² Related to this point, R. Lockhart points out that

. . . the reigning 'human capital' thesis insisted that the increase in Ph. D. output was necessary because of the anticipated outside industrial demand for post graduates. But the fact is that this demand, far from increasing has shown a steady decline since 1960, even in the most industrially employable fields of natural and applied science. The most recently available data indicate for example, that in the U.S. there has been a 30% drop in jobs outside of university teaching for Ph. D. chemists and physicists in a one year period, 1968-1969.¹³

Contrary to Marcuse's thesis, the demand for highly skilled and highly educated personnel is by no means a permanent and long range trend.* Rather it has just now passed its peak and is beginning to decline. It would seem that even though there was a falloff in the demand for engineers, scientists, etc., in the development and installation of automated enterprise, once the initial phase of the "automation revolution" had been passed, there

would nevertheless be a constant and growing demand for these highly skilled people in the work force in the field of plant operation supervision. This too, however, proved to be a false thesis held incorrectly not only by Marcuse but by numerous other "Marxists". It was also falsely concluded that the automated enterprises would require increasingly higher levels of skill in the work force. This is only partially correct. In fact the trend appears to be towards a "trivializing" of the operations performed by human labour in these newly and highly automated plants. Indeed, investigations conducted by James Bright¹⁴ show that automation does not lead to an upgrading of the work force, in fact, just the opposite is true. One of the most important objects of automation, in addition to raising the productivity, was the replacement of human labour by machines, consequently education and skills required for the remaining jobs were much lower than before automation was introduced. He states that: ". . . automation often had reduced the skill requirements of the operating work force and occasionally of the entire factory force, including the maintenance organization."¹⁵

This resulted from the increasing automation of control of machines by machines, the introduction of self

correcting machines, electronic measurement, and in general a mechanization of the decision making in production.¹⁶ As gauges and sensing apparatus provided data which simply had to be recorded (and often even that process is automated), no great mental skill is necessitated.

Clearly, during the initial stages of automation there is some demand for advanced education and skills, however once the new technology has come to be operating smoothly, even the necessary numbers of circuitry experts and maintenance men can be reduced. Further, the high skills which automation demands are consequently scarcely distributed.¹⁷ The result is a general downgrading for the largest numbers of workers and, as fewer workers are required; in automated enterprises, this small gain in high skilled employment is more than counteracted by the tremendous upsurge of unemployment of the unskilled workers.¹⁸ Seligman points out that:

The early calls for these skills appear to have been more reflections of novelty than of continuing industrial need. . . . Here then are the first two myths of automation -- that it upgrades the workers and produces many or more jobs than it destroys -- and, because, they tend to assuage our concern, they are vicious.¹⁹

Further on this same point, R. Lockhart has concluded

that although there is an initially high emphasis upon and demand for high level skills, the long range effect is that

. . . the persistent dynamic of the industrial organization of production is to reduce this initial demand either by progressively rationalizing, and hence 'trivializing' the individual operation (whether these be manual or mental), or by automating such operation procedures altogether.²⁰

This decrease required skills in automated plants refers not only to the "blue collar" work force. The required number of engineers, etc. is drastically reduced as self correcting and adjusting machinery replaces the need for such highly skilled workers, particularly once the new productive apparatus has been installed and is in full operation.²¹ After all, considering the general motivation behind capitalist production (profit maximization or "optimization"), and the particular drive behind the introduction of computers and other techniques into industry and other enterprises (the desire to counteract the falling average rate of profit caused largely by factors mentioned earlier), why then should the capitalists be expected to unnecessarily hire expensive labour when unskilled workers can quite easily be trained to do the remaining manual tasks at greatly reduced labour costs?²²

All this is in striking contrast to Marcuse's somewhat hasty conclusions quoted earlier regarding the "old working class" i.e., "the chances of promotion decline as management prefers engineers and college graduate".²³

It certainly should not be concluded from this that it is the "old working class" that benefits from the third industrial revolution. Indeed, introduction of automation under capitalism results in increased and structural unemployment.²⁴ However, Ben B. Seligman points out that even though

. . . this fact could not be discerned in the early years after World War Two, but it became undeniable in the 1950's and in the first part of the 1960's. Nor could the shift from goods producing industries to service provide enough jobs to take up the slack. By mid-1963 the proportion, between the unemployed, of those out of work six months or more had risen to 15.8%; a decade earlier the figure had only been 3.7%.²⁵

Further, the situation for the potential "new working class" is clearly not much better than it is for the blue collar workers.²⁶ Indeed, recent trends make it clear that proportionally, the long term unemployment situation is worse for these prospective "instrumentalist

intelligentsia" than it is for the traditional working class.²⁷ Ben B. Seligman's study of the impact of the technological or third industrial revolution on the work force led him to the conclusion that

. . . the promise of jobs for the educated and skilled may have an empty ring, for, with alterations in defense and space research programs, large numbers of engineers, scientists and skilled workers may also be wondering about the shape of the future. In July, 1964, the engineers joint Council reported that the demand for Engineers had 'eased' over the previous two years. Its findings were based on data from 543 companies and government agencies employing more than 250,000 engineers. Automation tends to exacerbate the problem.²⁸

Also, it should be pointed out that the impact of this "automation revolution" hits not only the blue collar production workers but increasingly it is decimating the ranks of the white collar workers as well. Even though this "automation revolution's" impact upon the white collar work force is at first nearly imperceptible, the decrease in demand for manpower in these fields is real enough. This imperceptibility is due largely to the fact that white collar workers are not simply fired, rather, and more often, they are simply shunted to more menial jobs and when they quit or retire no replacement is hired,

or often they are simply absorbed by "normal business expansion" and automation techniques are expanded to encompass their former jobs.²⁹ This disguised "cutback" often leads, as it seems to have in Marcuse's case,³⁰ to the misconception that automation has no significant effects upon the white collar work force.

It may be concluded from this brief discussion that contrary to Marcuse's observation, there is: a) no long range trend towards increased demand for engineers, scientists, etc., under contemporary monopoly capitalism; b) once an automated enterprise is set up and has "jelled", the need for highly skilled labour force rapidly decreases; c) the operator and supervisory jobs remaining are "trivialized" to an extent that those who remain once the system has "jelled", require, in fact, lower skills than the previous "blue collar" work force; d) management at a certain point no longer "prefers" college graduates in any field including engineering, physics, and chemistry, etc., for not only is such a highly skilled work force increasingly expensive given the sophisticated nature of the new techniques of automation, but also management is becoming increasingly aware that the disproportionally high expectations for upward mobility held by this "new working class"

are increasingly incompatible with the real prospects available. Therefore, there is a distinct turn by management towards the employment of relatively unskilled labour and training them to perform the few menial physical, and mental tasks required in the new automated plants.

Finally, considering the factors enumerated above, the "flood" of engineers, scientists, etc., onto the job market, and the sharp increase in structural unemployment among both highly educated and highly skilled workers as well as among the relatively unskilled, it seems highly unjustified to assert, as Marcuse does, that the "new student intellegentsia" is increasingly a potential revolutionary force because, as he puts it, "this group will assume an increasingly basic function in the productive process".³¹ On the contrary, it appears more probable that this "new instrumentalist intelligentsia" is rapidly pricing itself out of a job³² and those who remain employed will be unlikely to "disrupt, reorganize, and redirect the mode and relationships of production"³³ when confronted by the ever growing reserve labour pool of engineers and scientists. More likely their response will be to work diligently with their mouths shut.

The Roots of the Student Rebellion:

. . . in the revolt of the student intelligentsia, one of the greatest productive forces, and one of the most tabooed and repressed social forces is an open rebellion against the society: the moral, the instinctual, and I would even say the biological and physiological revolution against the conditions and values of the corporate capitalist system.³⁴

Further:

in proclaiming the 'challenge' (la contestation permanente), the 'permanent education' (the Great Refusal), they recognized a mark of social repression, even in the most subline manifestations of traditional culture.³⁵

And finally he states that: ". . . today's rebels against the established culture also rebel against the beautiful in this culture, against its all too sublimated, segregated, orderly, harmonizing forms."³⁶

Marcuse views the student revolt as a total rejection of the "conditions and values" of the "affluent society". This revolt, he suggests, differs qualitatively from past revolutionary movements by the thoroughness or depth of its rejection of established society. It is not only a political and social but also an "instinctual", "biological", and "physiological" rejection of the system. Indeed, considering the depth of the revolt one might ask what is

the basis of the "Great Refusal". Why now and not ten, twenty, or even thirty years earlier? Certainly there have been periods of disenchantment among youth with the society they have inherited. But the completeness or thoroughness of the "Refusal" is peculiar. Marcuse suggests to us that this revolt was nurtured in prosperity and affluence. The well fed, clothed and cared for middle class youth turned against the repressive desublimation of advanced industrial society. As a result of technological manipulation through the media, the focus of the oedipal complex has shifted from the traditional fathers to the institutional father or fathers. It is the state and its institution and institutional heroes which now demand obedience and sacrifice.³⁷ These youth, because of their prolonged adolescence and therefore lack of integration into the system, have not suffered the repression of their basic instinctual drives to the same extent as the adults. They have been spared, more than any other generation, integration into the repressive system by the very affluence of that system. Eros retains its freedom to a greater extent than would otherwise been the case had they been integrated earlier and necessarily into the system. The growing size of the student group in advanced industrial society adds to the power of their

rebellion. Not having internalized to the "biological" and "physiological" level of their being the repressive needs and values of the system, they are freer to see the hypocrisy of that system. The affluence and the beauty of the system are seen as counterfeit. And this is why, according to Marcuse, the student rebellion happens now and why the "Refusal" of the established society is as complete or thorough as it is.

This thesis rejects the validity of this pseudo-scientific explanation of the roots and depth of the student rebellion.³⁸ In an earlier chapter criticisms were suggested of the psycho-analytic theory of instincts and their repression; that criticism is itself adequate to dispense with Marcuse's explanation. However, we wish here to propose a more accurate, structural explanation of the basis of the student revolt in the sixties.

It was noted in the previous section that in the sixties the demands for students for as "instrumentalist intelligentsia" began to fall off. The human capital thesis which we referred to earlier, continued, even though supply was surpassing demand, to influence the general government educational policies and spending. The result was and is, that students, the potential "new working class", the potential "instrumental intelligentsia",

continued to pour out of the education and skill mills.³⁹ However, during the late fifties and the early sixties, the lack of opportunities for these potential "new working class" members began to be felt.⁴⁰ Increasingly the system was unable to provide a place within it for this influx of "intelligentsia", due to factors mentioned previously. These youth had lived a good middle class life and come to see it as "normal life style". They had, for 16 to twenty years in school and at home and in social life been taught and encouraged to expect at least the life style of their parents, and probably much more. After all, education was continually equated with success, prosperity, and upward mobility. As the full impact of the "third industrial revolution" began to be felt, more and more students opted for longer periods of study in order to remain off the unfavorable labour market.⁴¹ It was first supposed and still is by many policy makers (and students) that the decline in the demand for highly educated labour was a temporary phenomenon in the cyclical development of capitalist production. In the U.S., where the problem was most severe with upwards of 50% of the University aged youth having attended an institution of higher learning for some period of time,⁴² the Vietnamese war provided a safety valve which veiled the extent of

this oversupply of highly educated and trained work force.⁴³ Nevertheless, students became increasingly aware that the system had no place for them,⁴⁴ and if it did it usually represented a clear downward mobility from their accustomed and anticipated life styles. The result of thus being excluded from the "affluent society" was the development of a counter-culture.⁴⁵

In essence, this argument holds that contrary to Marcuse's view, the student rebellion in the 1960s is, in the last analysis, rooted in economic stagnation and in social and economic disillusionment and frustration rather than in affluency and unrepressed Eros.⁴⁶

These arguments are not meant to be a complete analysis by any means, of the roots and characteristics of the student revolt of the sixties, but it is this disillusionment which follows the rescinding of the "promise", which is the soil out of which the student rebellion and counter culture grew and continues to grow. Students, contrary to Marcuse's uncritical utopian belief, are quite expendable⁴⁷ and where their talents are necessary to the system they are available in such quantities that the system cannot be "held for ransom", so to speak, by this group. Clearly the counter-culture is in a sense increasingly a political force on its own. Its roots lie

not in Eros but in the disillusionment resulting from the peculiarities of capitalist development in this epoch. Further, much in the same way as religions quickly forget or never perceive their roots in the struggles of the real world, so has the counterculture, with no small help from Marcuse, often misunderstood its own origins and characteristics. As for the revolt being "biological", "instinctual", and "psychological", a reflection on our earlier discussions of the psycho-analytic theory of instincts and Freud's use of them should put these notions in their proper perspective, i.e., sheer phantasy. Again it is frustration and rejection rather than affluency and Eros which underlies the "Great Refusal".

Working Class Consciousness in the "Affluent Society":

Marcuse states that while:

The benefits for the working class were expected to be wiped out periodically by wars and crises since there was no basis for long-range international consoladation. This interpretation did not provide for the possibility (since become a fact) that such an international bases would materialize.⁴⁸

Consequently: " . . . the development of mature capitalism shows a long-range trend towards class collaboration rather than class struggle."⁴⁹ " . . . the capitalist development

has altered the structure and function of these two classes in such a way that they no longer appear to be the agents of historical transformation."⁵⁰

In the advanced capitalist countries, where the radicalization of the working classes is counteracted by a socially engineered arrest of consciousness, and by the development and satisfaction of needs which perpetuate the servitude of the exploited, a vested interest in the system is thus fostered in the instinctual structure of the exploited, and the rupture with the continuum of repression -- a necessary precondition for liberation -- does not occur.⁵¹

"Hatred and frustration are deprived of their specific target."⁵²

And finally: ". . . this society has integrated the individuals to such an extent that no escape seems possible."⁵³

Marcuse's analysis of the working class in advanced industrial societies, particularly in the U.S.A., does not lead him to the conclusion that their support is unnecessary to ensure the success of a socialist revolution in this area. He does argue however, that they have become so integrated into the capitalist system that without an outside catalyst, i.e., "students" they are incapable of mentally rejecting the status quo. Having previously posited the end of international capitalist

competition and crisis, the effective management of periodic crisis in capitalism, the impetus of Third World upheaval, the end of class antagonism within the "affluent society" because of the "increasing spread of good life" to more and more members of that society,⁵⁴ and the impact of the "external enemy", Marcuse concludes that there is and probably will be no material basis for a working class rejection of the status quo. The goodies continue to roll in, in increasing quantities, if not quality. However, if we recall the earlier discussions concerning the generally "unstable" and crisis ridden condition of advanced capitalism such conclusions, (which are the basic premises of Marcuse's further argument) hardly seem in harmony with the actual material conditions. Particularly, we should recall in this respect, the discussions regarding the re-emergence of intercapitalist competition and the consequent trend towards renewed crises. Nevertheless, Marcuse further argues that even if there were a return to poverty and deprivation, ("improbably" brought on by renewed crisis in capitalism) the values and goals of the status quo have been established at the instinctual level, and therefore, cannot without great effort be altered.⁵⁵ It is only an instinctually unrepressed group in this society, i.e.,

"the radical young intelligentsia", (or the ghetto populations), that can break out of this "vicious circle", this "continuum of repression".⁵⁶

Clearly, Marcuse is correct in his observation that much of the working class in advanced industrial society is "thoroughly integrated" into the system.⁵⁷ They subscribe to its values and objectives, they identify with the status quo and seek improvement of their conditions within its framework.⁵⁸ It will be argued however, that working class consciousness does in fact exist, often in militant forms in this "affluent society". Furthermore, its basis does not lie in any ethical or moral rejection of values of the system; inspired by "outside catalysts", but rather, it is the fluctuations in socio-economic security which are the most important factors giving rise to this consciousness, although certain organizations certainly do facilitate the development of radical political consciousness once the base has been shaken up so to speak, as we argued it did among the "outside" catalysts, i.e., "the students".⁵⁹ Problems arise however when analysts, and Marcuse is no exception to this, incorrectly consider class consciousness not in varying degrees but as simply either existing or not existing. Such an approach fails to appreciate the continual

fluctuations in the socio-economic factors which provide the basis of the corresponding fluctuations in consciousness. J. C. Leggett points out that:

Too often we treat class consciousness as a quality either present or absent, much as we would define a person as a Catholic or a non-Catholic (using a nominal scale of measurement). Actually, class orientation is seldom ordered in such terms; rather, it builds step-by-step (ordinal) as in a continuum.⁶⁰

Empirical analysis of the degrees of working class consciousness has been scarce in most of the advanced areas of the "affluent society", and such "analysis" which has been done has often been shallow or based on immediate appearances. Examples have often been drawn from areas of the working class with long periods of prosperity behind them.⁶¹ J. C. Leggett's Detroit study, conducted in the mid-sixties, attempts to assess the level of working class consciousness in a working class area which had been recently hit by high unemployment due to an economic recession. His analysis led him to conclude that working class consciousness was still very much a reality in advanced industrial society. He states that: "What we found has led us to believe that the facile generalizations on the disappearance of class consciousness are false."⁶²

Leggett observed in his study that significant levels of militant class consciousness existed in the Detroit area,⁶³ particularly among the blacks, because they were the hardest hit by economic instability, but also among effected whites. He noted further that this working class consciousness could be discerned not only in subjective perspectives on numerous socio-economic questions but also in matters of political choice. Significant rises in pro-labour support accompanied the rise in working class consciousness.⁶⁴ He observed also that when working class consciousness reached certain degrees, inter-ethnic hostility began to be transcended. He states: ". . . when white workers are highly militant they often support the right of minorities despite their prejudices."⁶⁵

In Detroit, Leggett also observed that the heightening of working class consciousness led not only to reformist perspectives but began to foster radical reassessments of the status quo. Disproportionally large numbers of workers who foresaw the possibility of collective violence, also favored government ownership of all industry. There was a clear blending of scepticism regarding the efficacy of government ability to run things smoothly, with a heightened degree of class militancy.⁶⁶

In particular reference to Marcuse's emphasis on youth, it should be noted that manifestations of working class consciousness observed by Leggett by no means were located in the young workers,⁶⁷ though when it was so located it is to be explained by the disproportionately high rate of unemployment experienced by the youth in all fields of labour,⁶⁸ rather than by reference to Eros and the shifting nature of the oedipal complex.

While Leggett's study was limited specifically to Detroit, with some references to a few other major industrial centers, it should not be considered peculiar to that area. Recently Leggett conducted a similar study of working class consciousness in the working class areas of Vancouver and Burnaby, in British Columbia. While the data of that study has not yet been fully assessed there did emerge extensive evidence of working class consciousness, often of a radical and potentially militant brand.

The most significant and persistent factor in stimulating a rise in working class consciousness is economic insecurity and the resultant social marginality. Leggett's Detroit study led him to the conclusion that class consciousness derives fundamentally from the workers' economic problems.⁶⁹ In this connection he points out that:

Had Detroit's Labour Unions been completely successful in eliminating job insecurity, the neighbourhood grievances, and structural unemployment, militant class consciousness would have become a part of the community's history. But unions have not done so. Hence consciousness remains.⁷⁰

No matter how "advanced" the industrial society is, when crisis results in economic insecurity for workers of all types, the consequence is a fostering of working class consciousness.⁷¹ Furthermore, it follows that the more prolonged and widespread the economic insecurity is, the higher the level of class consciousness which will be created and the more likely it is to result in militant behaviour and radical socio-economic perspectives.⁷²

Leggett also points out that where plant and neighbourhood organizations are formed, class attitudes are further heightened.⁷³

Clearly, economic insecurity does not hit all members of the labour force at once. Some (the instrumentalists and intelligentsia) have apparently been spared the tramau for prolonged periods, and have only recently felt the impact of the anarchy of capitalist production and development. Consequently, it was noted earlier, class consciousness develops unevenly,⁷⁴ in ^{the} same manner and parallel to the uneven development of capitalist economy, with its

periodical instructual crisis. It should be noted also in passing, that world War II, with all its intense social frustrations and the consequent monetary inflation (mentioned in chapter 3), was seen to often result in heightening of class consciousness. Again, J.C. Leggett observed that: ". . . whatever the stage of industrialization, great depressions and cataclysmic wars destroyed traditions and create vacuums in which uprooted workers can acquire radical perspectives and form revolutionary organizations."⁷⁵

Considering our preceding discussions regarding the tendencies and trends of contemporary capitalism, what might we suppose are the long-range prospects for a revival of a radical and militant and class consciousness? As it has been argued in the preceding chapters of this thesis, contrary to Marcuse's "analysis", the multiplicity of problems now plaguing the capitalist system in the ominous tide of more and more severe crisis to come, lead us to the conclusion that it is not at all Utopian to expect a wide-spread intensification of those phenomena which contribute strongly to increases in class consciousness, i.e., economic insecurity and social marginality both within and without the capitalist metropolises.

In addition to structural unemployment in the affluent society, D.B. Seligman forecasts even higher percentages of unemployment in all areas of labour (white collar, blue collar, instrumentalists, intelligentsia)⁷⁶ as a result of the introduction of sophisticated automation techniques in commodity producing enterprises as well as in the extensive field of administration. Further, this expanding structural unemployment is by no means limited to what until now have been in marginal groups, i.e., blacks, Puerto Ricans, chicanos, etc. Seligman points out that:

A department of labour study be issued in 1964 summarizing the experience of the workers effected by shutdowns . . . revealed quite similar impacts. One striking disclosure was the fact that the average displacement worker was a white male: in no case did "nonwhite" exceed 7% of the total.⁷⁷

Furthermore, E. Mandel points out that the impact of this automation or "third industrial revolution" on the work force of capitalism, ". . . tends to integrate a constantly growing part of massive wage and salary earnings into an increasingly homogeneous proletariat."⁷⁸

The combination of the third industrial revolution, deriving from and reacting back upon such phenomenon as

increasing competition between capitalist nations, the long range adverse effects and limitations of arms spending, the steadily worsening investment climate in the Third World areas, and the intensification of periodic crisis, would appear to indicate a definite and long range trend toward an increasingly widespread and militant working class consciousness. Capitalists' efforts to counteract the falling rate of profit through incomes policies, wage restraints, anti-trade union legislation, and the limitations of the right to strike (all of which tactics are clearly on the upswing today in advanced capitalist society)⁷⁹ as well as recurrent and growing structural unemployment, mass layoffs, and periodic factory shutdowns, and the increasingly obvious inequalities of economic power and wealth, will, in all probability lead to a resurgence of class consciousness and consequent political activity. Therefore, it is not at all utopian or out of harmony with the actual characteristics and tendencies of contemporary capitalism, to expect a turn towards worker militancy and the increased use of such tactics as general strikes; as was the case in Belgium in 1960 to 1961, in France in 1968, and the near general strikes in Britain in 1970 and the massive demonstrations of agricultural

workers and small farm owners in Brussels in 1971.

Perhaps it is assumed erroneously that the nature of trade union leadership represents and reflects the consciousness and militancy of the membership.⁸⁰

Labour leaders, while often extremely well entrenched in their position, lack in the long run, the economic base such as is enjoyed by capitalist leaders, to sustain their position. While they often do control extensive financial and political power, it is qualitatively different from that controlled by the capitalists. In the long run, the labour leader's position is dependent upon a sympathetic though often apathetic constituency. Clearly in times of prolonged or even short term economic insecurity and consequent labour discontent, the position of the labour leader becomes increasingly contingent upon support from the rank and file.⁸¹ And as Leggett points out:

When underdogs are convinced that the U.I.O., the Trade Union Leadership Council, the NAACP, the Democratic party, and like established organizations cannot find them jobs other than demeaning tasks without union job protection, pay, and prestige, the peaceful politics of coalition is in serious trouble.⁸²

If and when the labour unions develop and are guided by a class based radical perspective, they become

the most significant force in hastening the overthrow of capitalism by accentuating capitalist crisis and propounding alternate proposals for socio-economic and political organization.⁸³ Marcuse would do well to remember that revolutions and intense radical militant class consciousness are not and never have been "normal" conditions. Rather, they are relatively unique, maturing at rare intervals when the usually slow growth of the preconditions for the struggle between contending classes reaches a peak. In the interim however, there is a relative lull in such activity between objectively antagonistic social classes.⁸⁴ Consequently, observers such as Marcuse, having no real deep rooted or dialectical analysis of society, come to the hasty conclusion that capitalist social contradictions will never generate revolutionnary moves or movements in the foreseeable future. However, as E. Mandel notes:

They (the workers) go along with it because it has been capable of delivering the goods to them over the last thirty years. The system has been capable of giving them higher wages and a higher degree of social security. It is this fact which has determined their acceptance of anti-communism, and not the acceptance of anti-communism which has determined social stability. Once the system becomes less and less capable of delivering the goods, a completely new situation will appear in the United States.⁸⁵

Henri Lefebvre sums up well the roots of Marcuse's misconception. He writes:

At once objective and subjective, the class conflict is perpetual, though sometimes only latent and hidden and sometimes overt and explosive. It never stops, though it sometimes appear to have done so.⁸⁶

Summary:

In summary then, it has been initially, argued that Marcuse's conclusions concerning the long range impact of the "third industrial revolution" on the composition of the working class, is in general incorrect. Indeed, we have seen that while automation has given rise to an expanded "instrumentalist intelligentsia" in the working class, Marcuse has however grossly exaggerated the extent of its potential control of the productive process, its powers and its indispensability, to the capitalists. Further, he designates what are in fact short term tendencies in this direction as long term ones. As pointed out earlier, this is not to refute the essential nature of certain types of sophisticated knowledge and skills for the capitalism of and after the third industrial revolution, nor to suggest that there will be any regression in this area. The arguments stated however that

the upsurge in the demand for highly skilled and educated workers was a temporary phenomenon peculiar to the peak stages of the "third industrial revolution". Finally, it should be recalled that even the highly skilled labour required after the "peak" is being rapidly "trivialized" to enable workers with low basic education, proportionally lower salary expectations, and significantly lower social and job mobility expectations to be trained for specific tasks of operating the complex new machinery.

Next it was argued that the student rebellion was best explained at base, by an appreciation of student's increasing exclusion from the capitalist system, due largely to the nature of the "third industrial revolution" as well as to numerous other contradictions and aspects of capitalist development, rather than by reference to Eros and Oedipus. Youth's rejection of the system does not stem from a relatively uninhibited libidinous drive, rather the student rebellion in general and the counter-culture in particular have their origin also in the exclusion from and therefore disillusionment with the established culture. This is certainly not meant to be an exhaustive analysis of the student movement, rather, only a general indication of its roots

or bases in the socio-economic structure and contradictions of advanced capitalism.

Finally it was argued that, on the basis of recent studies, particularly J. C. Leggett's, and in consideration of earlier discussions on crises and contradictions in the capitalist system, Marcuse's assessment of both present and probable future levels of working class consciousness is to varying degrees incorrect. In other words, his assessment of the quantitative and qualitative degree of the working class' integration into the capitalist system is often overstated and tends occasionally towards the absurd.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 Herbert Marcuse An Essay on Liberation, Boston, Beacon, 1969. p. 59.
- 2 Herbert Marcuse Negations, Boston, Beacon, 1968. p. 248.
- 3 Herbert Marcuse An Essay on Liberation, op. cit. p. 170.
- 4 Herbert Marcuse One Dimensional Man, Boston, Beacon, 1964. p. 21.
- 5 C. R. Walker Toward the Automatic Factory, New Haven, Yale, 1957.
- 6 Daniel Bell Work and its Discontents, Boston, Beacon, 1956; and, see a discussion of Daniel Bell's analysis of the impact of automation on society in Ben B. Seligman most Notorious Victory, New York, Free Press, 1966. pp. 337-345.
- 7 See especially Herbert Marcuse One Dimensional Man, op. cit. pp. 22-55.
- 8 Herbert Marcuse An Essay on Liberation. op. cit. p. 55.
- 9 Ben B. Seligman, op. cit.
- 10 R. A. Lockhart, The Effect of Recent Techno-Economic Changes on the mobility Patterns and Opportunities of the American middle-Class with Particular Emphasis on Emergent Contradictions between Occupational and Educational Factors, Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Simon Fraser University, 1970.
- 11 Ibid. p. 239.
- 12 This is not to suggest that further research and development and installation in the field of automated science and automated techniques has come to an end, though it has certainly ceased to expand as it did and needed to do it the first phases of this industrial revolution. What is suggested however is that the initial "birth" of activity in all fields associated with the development of automated production is over. It is no longer a rapidly expanding part of the economy.

- 13 R. A. Lockhart, op. cit. p. 225.
- 14 James Bright "Does Automation Raise Skill Requirements?", The Harvard business Review, July-August 1958; and James Bright "Skill Requirements and Wage Aspects of Automation", paper delivered at the Labor Relations Council Conference, Washington D.C. November 3, 1960.
- 15 James Bright quoted in Ben B. Seligman, op. cit. p. 222.
- 16 Ben B. Seligman, op. cit. p. 222.
- 17 Ibid. p. 223.
- 18 Ibid. p. 223.
- 19 Ibid. p. 223.
- 20 R. A. Lockhart, op. cit. p. 211.
- 21 Ben B. Seligman, op. cit. p. 214.
- 22 Ibid. p. 215.
- 23 Herbert Marcuse One Dimensional Man, op. cit. p. 30.
- 24 Ben B. Seligman, op. cit. p. 208.
- 25 Ibid. p. 208.
- 26 Ibid. pp. 212-213.
- 27 R.A. Lockhart, op. cit. Chapter 12.
- 28 Ben B. Seligman, op. cit. p. 212.
- 29 Ibid. pp. 198 and 204.
- 30 Herbert Marcuse An Essay on Liberation, op. cit. p. 55.
- 31 Ibid. p. 55.
- 32 R. A. Lockhart, op. cit. p. 236.
- 33 Herbert Marcuse An Essay on Liberation, op. cit. p. 55.

- 34 Herbert Marcuse Negations, op. cit. p. 228.
- 35 Herbert Marcuse One Dimensional Man, op. cit. p. xiii.
- 36 Herbert Marcuse An Essay on Liberation, op. cit. p. 46.
- 37 Herbert Marcuse The Containment of Social Change in Industrial Society, Unpublished text of Herbert Marcuse's Tuesday evening lecture on May 4, 1965, Fred Goff, Box 2123 Stanford. p. 5.
- 38 Henri Lefebvre The Explosion, translated by A. Ehrenfeld, New York, Monthly Review, 1969, pp. 106-107; and, R. A. Lockhart, op. cit. pp. 252-253.
- 39 R. A. Lockhart, op. cit. Chapter 12.
- 40 Ibid. Chapter 12.
- 41 Ibid. p. 230.
- 42 Ibid. Chapter 12.
- 43 Ibid. Chapter 12.
- 44 E. Mandel and G. Novaek On the Revolutionary Potential of the Working Class, New York, Merit, 1969. pp. 13-14. It should be pointed out that the closing of the system did not only affect students, but in fact all youth. Unemployment statistics are often misleading in that they do not consider youth, because of a lack of openings, never enter the roles of the working class, and often give up trying to enter as a result of their own or others frustrating experiences. See, Ben B. Seligman, The Most Notorious Victory, The Free Press, N.Y., 1966. pp. 197-105.
- 45 R. A. Lockhart, op. cit. p. 254.
- 46 Ibid. p. 225.
- 47 Ibid. Chapters 12 and 13; and, E. Mandel and G. Novaek, op. cit. pp. 5-6.
- 48 Herbert Marcuse Soviet Marxism, New York, Vintage, 1961. p. 21.

- 49 Ibid. p. 4.
- 50 Herbert Marcuse One Dimensional Man, op. cit. p. xiii.
- 51 Herbert Marcuse An Essay on Liberation, op. cit. p. 16.
- 52 Herbert Marcuse One Dimensional Man, op. cit. p. 32.
- 53 Herbert Marcuse The Containment of Social Change in Industrial Society, op. cit. p. 3.
- 54 Herbert Marcuse One Dimensional Society, op. cit. Chapters 1-4.
- 55 E. Mandel and G. Novaek, op. cit. p. 27.
- 56 Herbert Marcuse An Essay on Liberation, op. cit. pp. 15, 53-54, and 56.
- 57 E. Mandel and G. Novaek, op. cit. p. 28.
- 58 J. C. Leggett Class, Race, and Labor, New York, Oxford, 1968. p. 18.
- 59 Ibid. p. 42.
- 60 Ibid. p. 16.
- 61 Ibid. pp. 3 and 42.
- 62 Ibid. p. ix.
- 63 Ibid. p. 79.
- 64 Ibid. p. 119.
- 65 Ibid. p. 129.
- 66 Ibid. p. 142.
- 67 Ibid. p. 144.
- 68 Ben B. Seligman, op. cit. pp. 197-198.
- 69 J. C. Leggett, op. cit. p. 148; and, see Ben B. Seligman, op. cit. pp. 2-8.

- 70 J. C. Leggett, op. cit. p. 148.
- 71 Ibid. pp. 15, 74-75, and 94; and, E. Mandel and G. Novaek, op. cit. p. 37.
- 72 J. C. Leggett, op. cit. p. 139.
- 73 Ibid. p. 145.
- 74 Ibid. pp. 56-57.
- 75 Ibid. pp. 74-75; see also p. 60.
- 76 Ben B. Seligman, op. cit. pp. 197, 203, 205, 209, 211, 218, 228, and 269-279; E. Mandel Marxist Economic Theory, London, Merlin, 1962. pp. 151-154; and, E. Mandel Europe vs. America, New York, Monthly Review, 1970. pp. 144-146.
- 77 Ben B. Seligman, op. cit. p. 205.
- 78 E. Mandel and G. Novaek, op. cit. p. 11; B. B. Seligman, op. cit. pp. 13-14; and, A. Lefebvre The Sociology of Marx, translated by John Sturrock, New York, Vintage, 1968. pp. 105-106.
- 79 E. Mandel Europe vs. America, op. cit. p. 150.
- 80 E. Mandel and G. Novaek, op. cit. p. 44.
- 81 Note the frequent union leadership turnover during contract negotiations in periods of "normalcy" in capitalism.
- 82 J. C. Leggett, op. cit. p. 153.
- 83 Andre Gorz Strategy for Labor, translated by M. A. Micolaus and V. Oritz, Boston, Beacon, 1967. pp. 10, 16, and 54.
- 84 E. Mandel and G. Novaek, op. cit. p. 41.
- 85 E. Mandel and G. Novaek, op. cit. p. 15.
- 86 Henri Lefebvre The Explosion, op. cit. p. 102.

CONCLUSION

This thesis has sought to examine critically the main features of Marcuse's particular perspective on human liberation. Also it has focused on the four main premises of Marcuse's analysis of the "affluent society". This was done because it was largely the conclusions drawn from these main economic premises which significantly motivated the development of his perspective on liberation in the general direction it takes.

Marcuse's analysis of the main features and dynamics of advanced capitalism, led him to four main conclusions. First, we recall, he argued that struggles for national liberation in the Third World were more or less destined to failure until the capitalist system first had been destroyed at its "strongest link", (the advanced industrial society itself). As a result of his perception of (1) the determination and "power" of the leaders of the advanced industrial society to prevent another "Cuba", and (2) the thorough "instinctual", integration of the vast majority of the populace of the "Affluent Society", into the goals and values of the system, Marcuse concluded that the emphasis on the "weakest link", the Third World, as

the primary focus for revolutionary struggle was unwarranted. Not only did he see such struggles as being finally ineffective while confronted by the sustained power of the affluent society, but also he depreciated the probable impact such struggles, even if successful, would have upon the "well-functioning" capitalist system.

The second major premise, suggests that due to the threat of the "enemy" communism inter-imperialist competition had been "frozen", and the consequent crisis stemming from such competition had been averted. Further, and inter-related with this premise, he suggested that the existence of this "enemy" provided the necessary justification for advanced capitalism's sustained and expanding war preparedness economy, based increasingly upon a huge military replacement market. Such an emphasis on arms spending, was seen to provide capitalism with a relatively limitless and effective "safety valve" for the intrinsic and increasing pressures for economic expansion of the capitalist system.

Finally, and largely as a consequence of these factors, but also significantly due to increased government intervention in the economy and increased economic control due to monopolization trends, Marcuse argued that the periodic crises, and perhaps even general crises

which had previously plagued the system causing frequent and widespread economic instability, were increasingly being effectively avoided or at least minimized.

In summary he viewed advanced capitalism, unless undermined initially by "subjective" factors, as being quite capable of sustaining and even expanding affluence and stability.

It was largely on the basis of that "analysis" that Marcuse further concluded that the working class, the traditional revolutionary agent, was increasingly and "totally" i.e., "instinctually", "biologically", and "physiologically", integrated into the dominant goals and values of the system. Under the combined impact of the threat of communism from without, the sustained and expanding affluency within, and the effective mental manipulation carried out by television and the allied media, the working class had supposedly been stripped of any class-based political perspective. Their integration was seen to have reached the very infrastructure of man. Further, he argued, that the changing nature of the basic means of production was increasingly resulting in a sustained substantial change in the structure of the working class. With developing and widespread use of technologically complex machinery and apparatus in the productive

process, there resulted a long term trend towards a constantly increasing demand for an "instrumentalist intelligentsia" in the productive process. This resulted in a parallel long term trend towards the rising importance of a "new working class" as the essential, developmental, installation and operational personnel of the new productive apparatus.

Consequently, Marcuse concluded that the student rebellion (which he viewed as rooted fundamentally in the student's view of sustained and increasing affluency and opportunity and as deriving its impetus from the demands of the "life instincts"), hit the advanced capitalist society at its most vulnerable spot. The students were the increasingly essential potential "instrumentalist intelligentsia", the "new working class". The combination of the subjective factors Eros and objective factors (their potential new role as "instrumentalist intelligentsia") made this "young radical intelligentsia" a peculiarly effectively situated and subjectively prepared revolutionary force.

Largely motivated by the "one dimensionality" he perceived in the affluent society, Marcuse consequently looked for a break in the continuum of repression elsewhere than in the traditional working class. Their

"total" integration into the dominant culture and political perspectives of the repressive status quo, combined with the apparent trend towards long term economic stability and affluency, effective technological and mental manipulation, and the existence of the "enemy", resulted in their effective elimination from the political scene unless motivated by the prior actions and ideas of a revolutionary catalyst outside their ranks.

With such total integration it became difficult if not impossible to conceive of conditions which would inspire the necessary revolutionary consciousness. Consequently it was argued that Marcuse sought a concept of man which would in this situation of "one dimensionality", allow for an emergent rejection of the status quo. It was this factor which motivated his subsequent shift to a Freudian concept of human essence. The constant instinctual energy of the Freudian "life instincts" provided Marcuse not only with a potential subjective break with the status quo, but also he argued, it provided a break which was qualitatively more radical than "mere" working class consciousness. This was due to the fact that it was derived not from a conscious reaction to external stimuli, but rather it stemmed from and reflected the very essence of man, the "demands" of the "life instincts".

As we noted earlier, such a "new sensibility" was to be found most significantly in the "radical young intelligentsia" (as well as in certain members of the ghetto population). It was, furthermore, this characteristic which resulted in the "new men's" superb suitability as leaders of the revolution, for only they, being motivated in thought and action by the demands of the life instincts, could construct a society which was in harmony with and conducive to the further development of the essence of man. Marcuse insisted that any revolutionary struggle which did not have such "new men" (libidiously motivated) to guide it, could never achieve "real" liberation for mankind for the simple reason that, given their repressed instincts, ordinary men were incapable of perceiving the nature of "liberation". This fact was the basic reason, he suggested, why all past revolutions had failed to break out of the "vicious circle of repression". The "Psychic Thermidor", the consequence of widespread repression of the instinctual structures of the citizenry, simply resulted in the perpetuation of this repression.

This was the basic perspective elaborated by Marcuse and it was these main underlying premises which we have sought to evaluate in this thesis.

Initially, we recall that it was concluded that the four main premises of Marcuse's "analysis" of advanced capitalism were to varying degrees out of harmony with the actual material conditions. First it was concluded that he had seriously underestimated the essential and vital position occupied by the Third World in the world capitalist system as well as the potential for success of national liberation struggles in these areas. Because of increased pressures brought to bear on the system by long term currency inflation, increased inter-capitalist competition and in general, a falling average rate of profit, as well as dwindling supplies of necessary cheap raw materials, advanced capitalism is increasingly coming to rely upon the sources of raw materials, cheap labour, and the markets of the Third World. However, it was also argued that increasingly widespread and intense national liberation struggles in these areas are becoming more successful contrary to Marcuse's assurances that they would not. The consequences of such successes is often the indiginous development of industrial capitalism, which tends to diminish former monopoly markets and sources of cheap labour and raw materials. Even in areas where such struggles have not resulted in socialist take over of the economies, simply the increased intensity of

those struggles is often an adequate deterrent for much potential investment due to the politically and socially "unfavorable investment climate".

Next it was argued that Marcuse's second major premise -- the elimination of inter-imperialist competition -- was also an erroneous conclusion. Conversely, it was pointed out that such inter-imperialist competition was on the upwing, due to the re-emergence of Japan and Europe (under the auspices of the European Common Market) as major capitalist nations. The consequent competition for sources of raw material and cheap labour as well as the increasing battles for control of the markets of the Third World, tends to aggravate an already worsening situation. Further it was noted that such competition in the realm of both domestic and foreign markets was increasingly depriving the most advanced capitalist nation (the U.S.A.) her long enjoyed privileged position in the world economy. The narrowing of the technological gap between the U.S.A. on the one hand and Europe (European Common Market) and Japan on the other, and the consequent narrowing of the productivity gap, increasingly put U.S. capitalism (the most advanced), in a worsening competitive position, especially considering its much higher labour costs.

The third premise concerning the long term efficacy of arms spending as a "safety valve" for capitalist pressures for expansion, also was shown to have significant limitations. It was argued that such spending resulted not only in a long term trend towards currency inflation, with all its attendant social problem, but it was also argued that such an emphasis on arms spending often led indirectly to a speeded up rate of increase of the organic composition of capital and subsequent increases in structural unemployment.

Finally it was pointed out that given the general economic conditions outlined in the above discussions, and further given the basic ineffectiveness of increased monopoly control of the economy and the shortcomings of government intervention in the economy, periodic crisis not only persisted in the advanced stages of capitalism, but occurred with increasing frequency as the intrinsic anarchy of capitalist production and development continued unabated.

For all these reasons, it was concluded that Marcuse's conception of a "smooth functioning", "relatively crisis free" and increasingly prosperous advanced capitalism, was to a large degree completely at odds both with the immediate material conditions and with the probable trends of

this advanced capitalism. Consequently, before the discussion even moved into a consideration of his views on the working class, certain premises fundamental to that analysis had already been undercut. Particularly significant was the rejection of his notion of a "smooth functioning" and "relatively crisis free" economy. Indeed, it should rather be argued that the working class of the most advanced industrial society (U.S.A.) appears to be in for a prolonged period of economic instability and decreasing affluency as the "tariff barriers" go up around the world on imported crises. It increasingly, due to the problems it faces in the Third World with currency inflation and with intensified competition from other capitalist nations, U.S. capitalists will be forced, in order to bolster declining rates of profit, to decrease "real" wages through a variety of direct and indirect techniques and also to hasten the increase in the organic composition of capital so as to both increase productivity and decrease labour costs. Such measures result of course in a gradual increase in the rate of structural unemployment.

As to Marcuse's notion that the working class of the advanced industrial society is "totally" integrated into the system, it was concluded on the basis of Ben B.

Seligman's, and particularly J. C. Leggett's studies in these areas, that such a conclusion was patently false. Indeed, many sectors of the working class were well integrated into the system, but contrary to Marcuse's view, it was in the last analysis, the sustained affluency of the system in these areas which facilitated such integration. The notion of an external "enemy" and consequent war preparedness were seen not nearly as effective at eliminating class antagonisms as Marcuse would have us believe. Indeed, it was argued that prolonged and intense war preparedness and the frequency of actual war are often themselves significant factors in giving rise to militant and radical working class consciousness. Further, Marcuse's notion of the "depth" of the working class integration i.e., "instinctual", "biological", "psychological", etc. and his subsequent notion of a "Psychic Thermidor", were seen to be firmly rooted in the Freudian theory of instincts which were shown to be so much myth making, deriving its limited credibility from its correspondence with and development from phenomenal appearances.

Therefore it was concluded that not only did working class consciousness now exist in some central areas of the advanced industrial society, but also it was seen that the primary base for such working class consciousness rested

in the factors of economic instability, social marginality, and in certain cases, the work experience. Consequently, in consideration of the before mentioned trends and conditions in advanced capitalism, it is not at all utopian or unrealistic to expect a re-emergence of radical and militant working class consciousness in the "affluent" society, particularly if such conditions are exploited by widespread political activity and education.

In regard to Marcuse's views on the changing structure of the working class, we recall that he had misconstrued the relatively short term effects of the third industrial revolution towards increased emphasis on highly educated work force, and thereby falsely concluded that the trend was in fact a long term one. Conversely, it was argued that after a certain point in this "Third industrial revolution", necessity and consequent demand for "instrumentalist intelligentsia" began to fall off sharply. Furthermore we noted that this "revolution" is increasingly resulting in a "real" decline in the requisite skill and education level of the workers who remain employed in these "revolutionized" capitalist enterprises.

Following from this discussion we argued that it was this intensified decline in the demand for the highly educated youth of the advanced industrial society, and the

consequent "reneging" of the "promises" of opportunity, upward socio-economic mobility, "rewarding" work, etc., which lay at the base of the student rebellion of the sixties. This was in sharp contradiction to Marcuse's view that the student rebellion and counter culture had their roots in Eros, as an indirect result of sustained affluency and increasing socio-economic opportunities. Consequently, it was further concluded that the rebellion of the youth of the advanced industrial society in the sixties was not the qualitatively different "Great Refusal" Marcuse insisted that it was, and is. Not only was such a notion shown to be false on these grounds, but also, the earlier critique of Freudian instinct theory, in which the notion of the "Great Refusal" is firmly rooted, was also shown to be erroneous. As a result, while the revolt of the youth should not be "written off", it certainly has been shown to be of a qualitatively different nature than Marcuse views it to be.

On the basis of these criticism, it must be concluded that Marcuse's shift of emphasis to primarily "subjective" factors and his focus on the middle class youth, was by and large unwarranted. His entire justification for a "new approach" to the problem of liberation had rested upon the conclusions he had drawn regarding the

characteristics and tendencies of advanced capitalism and the significant features of the working class in the "affluent" society. Therefore, having shown the weakness and outright errors of these conclusions, it follows that Marcuse's justification for a subsequent shift in emphasis has also been severely undermined. This thesis however does not simply criticize Marcuse's perspective on human liberation by undermining the justification for his general shift in emphasis. It has also been argued that even "granting" Marcuse's justifications, the particular features of his "new" perspective were untenable. Since all the central notions of his particular approach i.e., "new sensibility", "new rationality", "new man", etc., were seen to be intrinsically bound up and rooted in a prior acceptance of the validity of the Freudian theory of instincts, such notions consequently stood or fell on the tenability of that instincts theory. Therefore, on the basis of the previous critique of the psycho-analytic theory of instincts, it was concluded that all the "particular" features of Marcuse's perspective on liberation ("new sensibility", "new rationality", "new man", "Great Refusal", "The Psychic Thermidor", and the dualism between consciousness and sensibility, etc.) were also untenable.

Consequently, Marcuse's "perspective" has been rejected both on the basis of his unwarranted shift in perspective, and also on the basis of the idealistic nature of the particular features of that perspective. Marcuse's analysis of the main features of the structure and dynamics of advanced capitalist society has frequently taken an historical and purely functionalistic approach. Further, his whole conception of the problem of liberation rooted as it is in the pseudo-science of the psycho-analytic theory of instincts, manifests a clearly idealistic and utopian perspective. It is the combination of this historicism, functionalism, utopianism, and idealism, which render Marcuse's "perspective" not only invalid but also potentially politically disastrous if it pretends to guide revolutionary praxis.

As to the widespread appeal which his views have in certain groups (the student groups of the affluent society), we suspect it is fundamentally to be explained by reference to two factors. First, as Marcuse's particular approach to liberation places such heavy emphasis on the "new man", supposedly drawn from the "radical young intelligentsia", especially "appreciate" his views. It certainly is not an historical anomaly to find particular groups in society viewing themselves as the "center" and

"pivot" of both social stability and social change. Indeed, as is particularly noticeable in studies on the basis of religious conversion, people are drawn towards ideas and doctrines which complement and are in harmony with their particular existential situation and consequent world views. It is an aspect of the phenomenon known as ethno-centricism.

Further, as Marcuse's analysis of the affluent society and his consequent and particular perspective on human liberation is heavily psycho-logicistic,⁺ it is not surprising that such an approach finds widespread appeal and acceptance in bourgeois culture. Clearly one of the most distinguishing features of bourgeois culture is its heavy emphasis and reliance upon psychologistic explanations and interpretations of the whole range of individual and social phenomena, ostentaciously stressing the impact of the "individual mind".

These ideas concerning the basis for the relatively widespread acceptance of Marcuse's perspective on liberation are meant only as basic suggestions but certainly not as an exhaustive analysis of the phenomenon. It is because it has gained this widespread appeal and

⁺ Note his emphasis on the psychological impact of "the enemy", "the Psychic Thermidor", "the new rationality", "the new sensibility", "the new man", etc.

acceptance that the idealism, subjectivism, and subsequent utopianism of Marcuse's perspective poses a real obstacle to potential revolutionary praxis in general, and the revolutionary praxis of the youth in particular.

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