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

Nothing indicates that it will be a good end. The economic and technical capabilities of the established societies are sufficiently vast to allow for adjustments and concessions to the underdog, and their armed forces sufficiently trained and equipped to take care of emergency situations. However, the specter is there again, inside and outside the frontiers of the advanced societies. The facile historical parallel with the barbarians threatening the empire of civilization prejudges the issue; the second period of barbarism may well be the continued empire of civilization itself. But the chance is that, in this period, the historical extremes may meet again: the most advanced consciousness of humanity, and its most exploited force. It is nothing but a chance. The critical theory of society possesses no concepts which could bridge the gap between the present and its future; holding no promise and showing no success, it remains negative. Thus it wants to remain loyal to those who, without hope, have given and give their life to the Great Refusal.

At the beginning of the fascist era, Walter Benjamin wrote:

> *Nur um der Hoffnungslosen willen ist uns die Hoffnung gegeben.*
> It is only for the sake of those without hope that hope is given to us.

from Strategy For Labor

ANDRÉ GORZ

Especially after the Hungarian crisis of 1956 and the subsequent moral collapse of the French Communist Party, one of the major sources of advanced critical theory and analysis has been the informal circle of philosophers and generalists centering loosely around Jean-Paul Sartre's Les Temps Modernes. *If it has hardly been "New Leftist" in its self-conception, this group has nonetheless been very much post-CP in both theory and practice and has been the most important single educator of the current generation of French student activists.*

Gorz was writing Strategy for Labor[1] *when* One-Dimensional Man *appeared; the similarity of his and Marcuse's concerns will be obvious, a convergence no doubt owing less to any direct influence than to each writer's access to a vigorous Hegelian tradition. Gorz's critique differs from Marcuse's in being somewhat more concrete (though no less general) and perhaps also more* Marxist. *That is, Gorz seems more inclined than Marcuse to understand a need for political motion as implying its possibility. He suggests here that social rather than strictly economic issues may be the key to a revived labor radicalism.*

WORK IS NO LONGER only the production of merchandise objects; labor power is no longer subject only to the inertia of things; the worker is no longer only the instrument of a society attempting to organize its survival. Work, labor power, and worker tend to unite in the persons who produce themselves while producing a world. And this production takes place not only in the work situation but just as much in the schools,

[1] Boston: Beacon Press, 1967.

cafés, athletic fields; on voyages; in theaters, concerts, newspapers, books, expositions; in towns, neighborhoods, discussion and action groups—in short, wherever individuals enter into relationships with one another and produce the universe of human relationships.

More and more, this production tends to be an integral part not only of the production of man but of the necessarily wider reproduction of labor power itself. The international and intercontinental development of trade, the division of labor on an ever larger economic scale, the tendency toward regional and national specialization, the rapidity of communications, place every productive activity through the interplay of ever more numerous intermediaries into relationship with the entire world, and tend in practice to unify it.

It is impossible to produce artichokes in the León region or citrus fruits in Sicily without taking into account the activities of other producers, not only in León and Sicily, but in the French Midi, in Spain, and in Algeria. It is impossible to produce turbines in Grenoble without knowing what is being done in Milan, Ljubliana, in the Ruhr, and in Scotland. And this knowledge is part of the "labor power" not only of the commercial director or of the president of a cooperative, but also of every engineer, technician, supervisor, and, through the mediation of the latter, of every worker and every member of the cooperative. It is impossible in a modern production unit, even of medium size, to be on top of one's job without becoming familiar with world history in the process. And it is impossible to be ignorant of political, scientific, technical, socio-economic, and cultural evolution in the largest sense, or else one will lose the ability to enter into relationships with others, however close, or of suffering that absolute oppression which consists of knowing that one does not know what others know.

That is why cultural activity is an integral part of the necessarily broad reproduction of labor power, that is, of the ability of individuals to cooperate in a given common task. That also is why cultural activity is a *need.* And that, finally, is why the reduction of the "work" week remains a fundamental demand, together with the multiplication of cultural facilities and their self-management by the workers. The time necessary for the reproduction of labor power is not the same in 1964 as it was in 1904, for any kind of worker; just as it has never been the same for a concert pianist and for a piano tuner. The increase in free time is not an increase in idle time, but an increase in

the socially productive time which is objectively and subjectively necessary for the production of human individuals and a human world.

Confronted by this necessity, it is true, neocapitalist civilization has set up a gigantic apparatus of repression: an apparatus in the service of mystification, the perpetuation of ignorance, the destruction of culture, the conditioning of reflexes, and the transformation of free time into passive, empty time devoted to sterile diversions which a gentle terror summons every individual to perform. The need for culture must be deflected by corrupting it even as far as the consciousness it has of itself; it must be demeaned by offering it trashy objects, and by greeting cultural creation and its agents with derision in the name of primitivism and mass ethics.

Mass culture, a by-product of commercial propaganda, has as implicit content a mass ethic: playing on, maintaining, and flattering ignorance, it encourages the ignorant to resent those who "know," persuades them that the latter despise them, and encourages or provokes their contempt. This abject demagogy, one of whose elements—contempt for "intellectuals" (a term which has become an insult not only in the United States) and for culture—can be found in all fascist movements, professes no respect for exceptional individuals except insofar as their superiority can be accounted for by what they *are,* not by what they *do:* athletes, beauty queens, princely personages. This is because the superiority of *being,* physical or hereditary, can be taken as a product of the nature—of the soil, the race, the nation—from which all individuals derive, and can thus reflect to them a natural bond of community with the hero, their own vicarious aristocracy, their original identity, reproclaimed in chauvinism.

This demogogy of leveling and of the least common denominator begins as business and ends as politics: in order to sell newspapers, radio time, or advertising space, one begins by flattering superstition and lulling reason, by emphasizing myths rather than facts, sensational rather than significant things; one prefabricates individuality in order to sell some of it to individuals whose own individuality one has destroyed (and which one destroys further by this forced sale), and one ends up preferring *and selling,* with the same commercial techniques, the "personality" of a Leader, a Chief, a paternal Dictator possessed of magic powers.

This gentle totalitarianism of monopoly civilization is a consequence as much as a cause. It is a cause insofar as the sales technique of "affluent" capitalism is a technique of manipulation and of domination which aims deliberately at the psychological implantation in public life of the power of production and commerce, and the destruction of the forces which challenge it. It is a cause also insofar as it aims to destroy the concrete and autonomous communication between individuals, and their human relationships; insofar as it aims to conceal from the agents of praxis that the universe which they produce is in truth and in fact their own product. But this mystification, obviously, is possible only because it proceeds on a field which already favors it: because the destruction of the universe of human relationships, the uprooting of culture, the specialization and mutilation of individuals are already in advanced stages. This process originated in the backwardness which the "spontaneous" priorities of monopoly expansion imposed on the cultural and practical levels.

The insufficiency and then the degradation and industrialization of education; the repression of autonomous cultural activity by the militarization of industrial labor; the lack of collective cultural facilities; the rationing of free time; the more or less deliberate dispersion of workers in different locations (that is, the impossibility for them of communicating or meeting together after work, the obligation of living where they do not work and working where they do not live)—all this tends to create individuals who are isolated and beaten down, powerless because of their dispersion and their ignorance of the mechanisms which were born from their collective labor.

And it is among these underdeveloped and "mutilated" individuals (deliberately mutilated insofar as this made their exploitation easier and as their human development was considered an "unproductive expense") that monopoly capitalism, in order to perpetuate its domination, continues to repress and deflect the need for culture, to exploit and to flatter the feeling of powerlessness and of ignorance.

This is a particularly odious aspect of the subordination of individuals to production. But we have already seen that this subordination tends to become an obstacle for production itself; and that insofar as the latter requires workers who have a comprehensive vision of the productive cycle, of socio-economic processes, and of the production process itself, a contradiction arises between the industrialization of culture and the culture of the industrial societies.

TECHNOCRACY

From then on, a double movement begins. At the bottom, in the technologically most advanced industries—as well as in the professionally qualified sectors of the small and medium peasantry—the workers move toward self-management (cooperative and regional, in the peasants' case) of the means of production and of local and regional life, a management for which they have the necessary competence. *Technological* power has already slipped away from the bourgeoisie (the owners) on this level, and their economic power is compromised by an inevitable process of financial concentration.

At the summit during this time the bourgeoisie sees its power limited by technocrats, specialists in coordination, planning, and synthesis, tasks which the local economic agents, no matter how powerful they may be, are not able to perform. A narrow stratum of specialists is thus given sole responsibility for the task of centralizing and synthesizing—indispensable to the functioning of the over-all System—a task for which the economic agents, whoever they may be, generally have neither the time, nor the competence, nor the information necessary. Totalitarian and dictatorial in the large sense, the technocratic apparatus has become the answer to a real necessity mainly *because of* a cultural Malthusianism which deprives individuals (including the majority of the bourgeoisie itself) of the competence necessary for self-management and democracy on all levels.[2] The decadence of political democracy, which technocracy likes to attribute to the senility of the parties and to the backwardness of political ideologies relative to economic realities, has therefore in fact some deeper reasons: it derives from the incapacity—which is in turn due to cultural and educa-

[2] The necessity for technocratic dictatorship (or centralization of real power) does not arise, in my opinion, from the need for central coordination and direction of decision-making centers. The Yugoslavian system of self-management, which found itself, as was to be expected, faced with the problem of coordinating and integrating decentralized management units, has undertaken a solution which does not reinforce the central power: the 1963 Yugoslavian constitution assigns the task of coordination to specialized federal Assemblies made up of the representatives of self-management bodies of the various sectors (industries, culture and education, health, administration). The technocrats of the national Plan are controlled by these specialized Assemblies, by the federal Parliament, and by a Senate; and the right of self-management of all enterprises (including schools, hospitals, administration, etc.) is reinforced.

tional backwardness—of individuals, organized or not (the owners, political "elites," the bourgeoisie as a class, organized workers), to perform for themselves the management of social production and of society, on whatever level—local, regional, national; the industrial branch, the sector, the city.

Technocratic power, therefore, arises much less as a new form of the direct domination of monopoly capital and more as a contradictory and mediated form of this power. While its members are most often of bourgeois origin, technocracy is not generally the errand boy of the monopolies and does not necessarily wield power as their representative. It is rather the mediator between the particular and contradictory interests of the capitalists on the one hand, the general interest of capitalism on the other, and finally the general interest of society.

The power of the technocracy cannot simply be identified with the direct, totaliarian power of monopoly capital, even though it also is a totaliarian power and even though this power is exercised *in fact* for the benefit of monopoly capital. Technocrats are much more than the trustees or the representatives of the power of the bourgeoisie as a class; they are rather a "caste": because they alone are specialized in the tasks of coordination and synthesis, they cannot accomplish these tasks without having—and without demanding, by virtue of their work, as an inherent requirement of their work—autonomy with regard to all interests, including the various interests of capitalist groups.

By its very function, technocracy tends therefore to locate itself "above the classes," to deny the necessity for class struggle, to set itself up as mediator and referee and in so doing to enter into contradiction with the classes. The famous "depoliticization" of the masses which technocracy pretends to take note of is not a fact it observes; it is rather the end it pursues, the result it wants to obtain—and does obtain in a very limited degree. *"Depoliticization" is the ideology of technocracy itself.* The so-called "neutrality" of the State is the ideology which justifies the power and the domination which technocracy is led to claim for itself by the logic of its situation.

The conflict of technocracy with the working classes as well as with the bourgeoisie is always profoundly ambiguous: this caste refuses from the outset to make decisions on the political terrain. Objectively progressive (or "on the Left") in its conflicts with the monopolies, technocracy is subjectively conservative ("on the Right") in its conflicts with the working class.

Attempting to eliminate in advance the question of power, which it thinks can be held only by professional managers, it tries to keep a clear conscience in the midst of the contradictory criticisms to which it is exposed. Toward the monopolies it internalizes the conservatism of which the Left accuses it by showing that the rationalization measures which it proposes consolidate and protect the capitalist system. Toward the labor movement it boasts of its conflicts with the monopolies in order to underscore its objectively progressive role.

This double game is obviously a mystification: to pretend to keep a balance between a bourgeoisie which is in power and a working class which is not is necessarily to play into the hands of the former. Technocracy is conservative ideologically (subjectively) to the very degree that its objective progressivism serves it as an alibi in its efforts to consolidate the existing System, to arbitrate its conflicts, and to absorb the anticapitalist forces.

It shares this conservatism with all technicians insofar as they are empiricists. Conductor of an apparatus which interests him only for its smooth and efficient functioning, the technician cares a great deal more for the instrument than for the ends it serves. He lives from the beginning in a ready-made rationality with predetermined purposes which his work and his education do not lead him to question. The only truth, for him, is smooth functioning; and he sees value only in immediately applicable propositions. The rest is utopia.

However, this attitude is essentially fragile. The role of arbitrator and of neutral manager above classes and parties, dedicated to a rationality which transcends them—this role which technocracy attributes to itself is tenable only on three conditions:

1. That there exists no alternative to the type of rationality of the existing society, or that this alternative never be made sufficiently explicit to appear as a requirement already on the way to fulfillment, to unmask the present System. For this System is a combination of choices which anticipate certain solutions, purposes, and a certain model of life to the detriment of other choices, other purposes, a different model whose superior rationality would burst apart the irrationality of the present rationality.

2. That the incompetence of the anticapitalist forces be evident, that their inability to manage the economy and the State without catastrophe strike the eye. Only this incompetence, this

glaring inability and the absence of an anticapitalist alternative which is sufficiently worked out and coherent, can justify and confirm technocracy in its "vocation" of serving capitalism.

3. That the labor movement, on the other hand, be strong enough to counterbalance the pressure exercised by monopoly capital on the State, that is to say, on technocracy itself. Only a strong labor movement can prevent technocracy from becoming the servant of monopoly capital, the manager of a society in bondage, the accomplice of the repressions and cultural devastations of a capitalism without counterbalance.

To the degree to which the incompetence of the labor movement and the absence of a coherent anticapitalist perspective are real, technocracy will thus deploy its forces with the aim of attracting into its camp and integrating into the institutions of the capitalist State all the labor organizations which are susceptible to such a maneuver without, however, destroying the labor movement as a "loyal" opposition (or "countervailing power") to the power of monopoly capital.

If, on the other hand, the labor movement does not retreat into a defensive position but instead begins vigorously to work out an anticapitalist alternative with strategically scaled and economically coherent objectives, then it will destroy the ideology which justifies technocracy; it will force technocracy to choose between the monopolies and the working-class movement, and will win over a more than negligible portion of this "caste" to its side. This will be the case not only because the socialist movement can no longer appear to the technocrats as a simple protest movement, capable of destroying the apparatus of production but not of managing it for other ends; but also because a minority among the technocrats work for monopoly capital not out of conviction but because they find no other outlet for their competence, because they believe they can follow a policy of the "lesser evil," and because they see no real road to socialism.

These technocrats are in the same position as that vast sector of lower- and middle-class groups who "sympathize" with socialism but are in practice skeptical. They will not make a choice until they can see intermediate objectives, that is, mediations, which will make them see socialism not as something beyond the present society, separated from it by an unbreachable wall, but like the real horizon of the internal exigencies of this society—as a horizon toward which the progression of realizable intermediate objectives indicates a practicable way. Only the possibility of such a way will force this vague mass of

"sympathizers" to make a choice which in the recent past it has all too often been spared.

Besides, the cooperation of technocrats is indispensable to the labor movement for the specification (but not the definition) of certain strategic objectives, of an economically coherent antimonopolist alternative.[3] The fact is that the labor movement, in order to take power and to manage the State, needs specialized managers. But this requirement must not in any way imply that the socialist State can or should maintain the dictatorial and totalitarian character of the capitalist State, nor that socialism can, likewise, preserve for technocracy the monopoly of management, coordination, and organization of social relationships.

THE CRISIS OF CAPITALIST VALUES

The formation of a technocracy as instrument and agent of the totalitarian and repressive power of the State arises in all advanced industrialized societies, whether capitalist or socialist, because it is impossible for organized workers to manage their production and exchange by themselves. But this impossibility is not inherent in the complexity of social production and exchange. This impossibility, as we have already emphasized, is provoked—and in certain respects deliberately created—by cultural underdevelopment, by the mutilation of individuals in their work and even in their professional education, by the overexploitation of labor power, i.e., the deprivation of free time and of cultural facilities, and finally by the absence or the deliberate liquidation of institutions and organs of democratic control.

This formidable repression has been justified up to now in the name of efficiency, of the need for an ever more specialized division of labor, with the aim of a rapidly increasing productivity and production of wealth. But with the advent of automation, this rationalizing and specializing tendency now

[3] The definition of objectives cannot be carried out except by the labor movement itself because these objectives must make social *needs* explicit, needs whose satisfaction requires structural reforms, that is to say, a modification in the relationship of powers. Once these objectives are defined, the collaboration of technicians is essential for determining how they may be made economically coherent, how soon they may be implemented, and therefore, in a limited way, which of them has priority. For no matter how wide-sweeping structural reforms may be, not everything can be done at once; some things must have precedence over others.

reaches its limit: it must be reversed if advanced industrial civilization is to be something other than a barbaric system of waste and stupefaction. On the level of production itself, this tendency collides with a technological evolution which tends to re-establish the value of the many-sided worker and of autonomous praxis. The replacement of laborers and of semiskilled workers who are tied down to their solitary work spot, by skilled teams who regulate their own cooperation themselves and who are conscious of their technical power and of their independence, creates a crisis within hierarchy inside *and outside* the company.

The demand for self-management which arises out of productive praxis cannot be contained within the factory walls, the laboratories, and research bureaus. Men who cannot be ordered around in their work cannot indefinitely be ordered around in their life as citizens, nor can they submit to the rigid decisions of central administrations.

The contemporary transition from mechanization to automation will bring about a crisis in the organization of work and the techniques of domination founded on it. The notion of individual output and even of labor-time tends to fall by the wayside; the borderline between productive activity and leisure becomes confused; manual and intellectual work tend to go together and to cause the rebirth of a humanism of work which had been destroyed by Taylorism.[4] But this humanism of work is itself only a transitional form: automation will cause it in turn to disappear, as it destroyed it for the technicians of the nuclear plant at Marcoule, thus creating a crisis in the whole system of "values" of capitalist ideology. Already the latter denies the "values" of efficiency and of maximum output by proclaiming the "values" of affluent consumption and of comfort. "Its sweeping rationality, which propels efficiency and growth, is itself irrational . . . Here, the social controls exact the overwhelming need for the production and consumption of waste; the need for stupefying work where it is no longer a real necessity; the need for modes of relaxation which soothe and prolong this stupefaction; the need for maintaining such deceptive lib-

[4] Frederick Winslow Taylor (1856–1915), an American engineer who was generally credited with pioneering the time-motion study of factory work. Taylor's method consisted of dividing each manual operation into a series of standard motion-components. He then eliminated "unessential" motions and so finally shaped the work process into the series of infinitely repeated simple tasks which are the essence of modern nonautomated assembly-line manufacturing. [Translators' note.]

erties as free competition at administered prices, a free press which censors itself, free choice between brands and gadgets . . . Advanced industrial society is approaching the stage where continued progress would demand the radical subversion of the prevailing direction and organization of progress."[5]

For capitalist civilization, efficiency, productivity, and output have always been the supreme "values"; these "values" now reveal themselves in their true light: as a religion of *means*. They could find their justification in the midst of acute scarcity by making possible an intense accumulation of the means of overcoming scarcity. In the midst of disappearing scarcity, they become a religion of waste and of factitious opulence. But these two value systems—the one which requires the worker to become subhuman in his work, and the one which requires him to consume superfluous goods—cannot long coexist. They could coexist only if dehumanization in work were strong enough to make the workers unfit for any but subhuman and passive leisure and consumption. Such is no longer the case.

When an individual discovers himself as a praxis subject in his work it is no longer possible to make him consume and destroy superfluous wealth at the price of the essential element, his free disposal of himself. The creation of consumer wealth no longer needs to be bought at that price in the midst of disappearing scarcity. There is too glaring a disparity between the goods which "affluent" capitalism offers to individuals, and the possibilities which, in exchange, it denies to them by its pursuit of an ever greater efficiency, by the division of tasks and the centralization of power. "Thus, economic freedom would mean freedom *from* the economy—from being controlled by economic forces and relationships; freedom from the daily struggle for existence, from earning a living. Political freedom would mean liberation of the individuals *from* politics over which they have no effective control. Similarly, intellectual freedom would mean the restoration of individual thought now absorbed by mass communication and indoctrination, abolition of 'public opinion' together with its makers. The unrealistic sound of these propositions is indicative, not of their utopian character, but of the strength of the forces which prevent their realization."[6]

It also reveals the strength and the nature of the means that

[5] Herbert Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964), pp. xiii, 7, 16.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 4.

will have to be applied to break this opposition. The only humanism which can succeed the humanism of work is the humanism of free activity and of self-management at all levels. It presupposes that individuals, instead of seeing themselves and being seen as means of society and of production, be seen and see themselves as ends, that no longer the time at work, but free time becomes the standard of wealth. As Marx wrote:

> But to the degree that big industry develops, the creation of real wealth comes to depend less on labor-time and on the quantity of labor expended, and more on the power of the instruments brought into play . . . whose powerful effectiveness itself has no relation to the direct labor-time necessary to produce them, but depends rather on the general level of science and the progress of technology, or on the application of this science to production . . . Real wealth is manifest rather . . . in the monstrous disproportion between expended labor-time and its product, and equally in the qualitative disproportion between work, reduced to a pure abstraction, and the power of the productive process which it supervises. Work appears less as a part of the productive process, for man relates to the productive process rather as supervisor and regulator. (*What is true for machinery also holds true for the combination of human activity and the development of human relationships* [emphasis added—A. G.].) It is no longer the worker who inserts a modified natural object [i.e., a tool—A. G.] between himself and the object; he rather inserts the process of nature, transformed by him into an industrial process, as a link between him and inorganic nature, whose master he becomes. He stands at the side of the productive process, instead of being its chief agent. In this transformation, the great fundamental pillar of production and of wealth is neither the direct labor which man performs, nor the time he works, but *the appropriation of his own productive force in general* [emphasis added—A. G.], his understanding of nature and his mastery over nature in his existence as a social being—in a word, the development of the social individual . . . As soon as labor, in its direct form, has ceased to be the great source of wealth, labor-time ceases and must cease to be its measure, and exchange value the measure of use value. The *surplus labor of the masses* has ceased to be the precondition of the development of collective wealth, and the *idleness of the few* for the development of the general powers of human thought . . . The free development of individuals, and therefore not the reduction of necessary labor-time to create surplus labor, but in general the reduction to a minimum of necessary labor-time in the society [becomes the goal of production—A. G.], which then corresponds to the artistic, scientific, etc. development of individuals in the time which has become free and with the means that have been created for all. Capital is its own contradiction in this process, for it seeks to reduce labor-time to a minimum, while at the same time postulating labor time as the sole measure and source of wealth. *It therefore reduces necessary labor-time, in order to increase superfluous labor-time; in an increasing measure, therefore, it posits superfluous labor-time as the precondition—a question of life and death—of the necessary* [emphasis added—A. G.]. Thus, on the one hand, it enlists all the powers of science and nature, as well as of social organization and social intercourse, in order to make the creation of wealth (relatively) independent of labor-time expended. On the other hand, it wants to measure the gigantic social forces created in this way by means of labor-time, and to restrict these forces within the limits necessary to preserve already-created value as value. Productive power and social relationships—which are different sides of the development of the social individual—appear to capital only as means, and are only means to allow it to produce on its restricted base. But in fact these are the material preconditions to blow this base to pieces . . .
>
> The measure of wealth is then not labor-time at all, but disposable time.[7]

It is neither utopian nor premature to wage a struggle in this perspective. Automation will be a reality in the industrialized societies before the end of the century. At least one generation will be necessary to rid individuals of the idea that they are the tools of their tools, to accustom them to a liberty which will be within their reach, and of which the sociologists only demonstrate that it "is frightening," without demonstrating at the same time that this fright is due to the emptiness with which the dictatorship of efficiency and profit has filled the men it mutilates.

"The ultimate cause of the degradation of leisure is to be found in the degradation of *work* and of *society*";[8] in the subordination of the State to the interests of capital, in the destruction of the organs and institutions of democracy, by-passed by the fundamental decisions of those who wield power in the economy, free of control by elected assemblies. As the technicians who presently die of boredom in Marcoule, Lacq, and elsewhere—administered with a very bureaucratic and distant efficiency by officials who are equally bored—become the predominant reality, the path of liberation will inevitably proceed

[7] *Grundrisse der Kritik der Politischen Oekonomie* (Berlin: Dietz, 1953), pp. 592–594, 596. [Translated from the German by Martin A. Nicolaus.]

[8] Ernest Mandel, *Traité d'Economie Marxiste* (Julliard, ed.), II, p. 363.

through the individuals' conquest of the right to "administer" themselves in their work, their company, their community, their leisure, their home, their cultural and social services.

But when that day comes it may well be too late already if the preparations for this conquest are not begun now. The despecialization, generalization, and the autonomous management of higher education, the decommercialization of the media and of culture, the decentralization and multiplication of centers of democratic decision-making, the enlargement of local, provincial, and regional autonomies, the multiplication of self-managed cultural centers and installations are all fundamental demands from now on.

THE CULTURAL BATTLE

"To be sure," writes Herbert Marcuse, "labor must precede the reduction of labor, and industrialization must precede the development of human needs and satisfactions. But as all freedom depends on the conquest of alien necessity, the realization of freedom depends on the *techniques* of this conquest."[9] The means determine the end, and when the end is the "all-sided development of the individual," the means cannot be left to chance.

The *de facto* dictatorship of organized capitalism can no longer be combatted in the advanced industrial countries in the name of an opposed dictatorship or a dictatorship which differs only in details and color scheme. It is impossible to fight against it only on the economic and political fields. The dictatorship of capital is exercised not only on the production and distribution of wealth, but with equal force on the manner of producing, on the model of consumption, and on the manner of consuming, the manner of working, thinking, living. As much as over the workers, the factories, and the State, this dictatorship rules over the society's vision of the future, its ideology, its priorities and goals; over the way in which people experience and learn about themselves, their potentials, their relations with other people and with the rest of the world. This dictatorship is economic, political, cultural, and psychological at the same time: it is total.

That is why it is right to fight it as a whole, on all levels, in the name of an over-all alternative. A battle which is not from the beginning waged on the cultural, "ideological," and theoretical fields as well as on the *main* battleground, would be in

[9] *Op. cit.*, p. 18.

vain—as vain as a battle fought in the name of an over-all alternative but without knowing how to embody it in mediations, without knowing how to link it to immediate struggles and needs.

The cultural battle for a new conception of man, of life, education, work, and civilization, is the precondition for the success of all the other battles for socialism because it establishes their meaning. But the precondition for waging this battle is a labor movement which has abandoned its cult of conformity and all schematicism, which has re-established research and theoretical creativity with full rights and autonomy, which lets all disputes develop freely, which does not subordinate theory to ephemeral tactical opportunities. Never has the workers' movement had so great a need of theorists, and never in France has it been so poor in them, abandoning immense fields of potentially creative research to empiricist sociologists, abandoning with the same blow to neocapitalism the task of forging an ideology of consolidation and justification for the ever growing strata of non-manual workers.

If Marxism—as the humanism of praxis and of free human development—wanted to play a losing game, it would go about it no differently. In fact, it has everything to gain by occupying itself with all problems and by enriching itself, insofar as these problems have concrete substance, with the currents and researches which proceed in its margins.

> The deepening contradiction between monopolist development and the most profound human ideological and professional requirements of the intermediate social strata, cannot ripen except through the mediation of the elites, of the avant-garde which are capable of interpreting the deepest demands, the most permanent interests of these social groups . . . The contents which the proletariat can directly express are not really sufficient to constitute a positive critique of the capitalist system . . . Power will not be achieved by the proletariat without the lasting alliance of the social and political forces which can adhere to a revolutionary solution only insofar as they can see it as a well-defined positive whole. The ideals of communist society, its content, its institutions, and values, cannot therefore remain a vague promise for the future (if they ever could), but must become, even in the form of successive approximations, a decisive preliminary element of the struggle for power.[10]

[10] Lucio Magri, *Les Temps Modernes*, September–October 1962, pp. 616, 619.

The Western labor movement cannot wait for the positive model of the society that is to be constructed to be furnished to it from outside. Certainly one can speculate that automation will bring all the capitalist societies to the point of crisis; it will destroy the quantitative criteria of efficiency on which these societies are based; automation will make it clear that the rational utilization of machines (fixed capital) according to the exigencies of maximum profitability cannot be achieved except at the price of an irrational utilization of men, of their time and their abilities, to the detriment of their human exigencies. One may further speculate that automation will be imposed on the capitalist societies by the advanced socialist societies, for whom there are no economic and ideological obstacles (although there are bureaucratic ones) to its application.

But this kind of speculation would simply defer the problem a generation or more while permitting the continued existence of the risk that capitalism, in order to maintain its criteria of rationality, will defend itself against the social and political consequences of automation by the organization of waste and destruction on a global scale. It is not possible to wait until a ready-made model is furnished by the socialist societies, which are barely emerging from decades of forced accumulation. They are not very far advanced in the theoretical investigation of the purposes and the model of life. All investigations to that purpose in the "Western" socialist movement will be for them a positive contribution.

Contradiction and Overdetermination

LOUIS ALTHUSSER

First Jean-Paul Sartre submits to Marxism (conditionally) in the name of existentialism. Then, in the name of structuralism, the anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss resumes the attack on Marxism in an extended debate with Sartre. Whereupon the phenomenologist Louis Althusser produces a Structuralist Marxism. The French are clearly superior at this.

"Contradiction and Overdetermination" is the most difficult essay in this collection, partly just because Hegelian styles of thought, ways of posing questions, are not familiar to Americans, whose philosophical sense is more likely to have been shaped by a generally empiricist outlook. Its difficulty does not diminish its importance, however, for the question Althusser is posing is central to the Marxist view of the world. Very much simplified: is it the general contradictions of the objective economic structure which determine events, or are they determined by the special textural realities of a society—its public ideologies, institutions, superstitions, customs, etc? The conventional Marxist view is that the former produce the latter and are always determinant in the final analysis. Althusser's response is that there is no final analysis except that which remains, by definition, on the other side of history—and that Marx and Engels never argued otherwise.

IN AN ARTICLE devoted to the young Marx,[1] I have already stressed the ambiguity of the idea of "inverting Hegel." It seemed to me that, strictly speaking, this expression suited Feuerbach perfectly; the latter did, indeed, "turn speculative

[1] "Sur le Jeune Marx," in *Pour Marx* (Paris, 1965), pp. 45–83.