

Herbert Marcuse

The End of Utopia
and
The Problem of Violence

lectures in Berlin, July 1967
published in *Five Lectures* (Boston: Beacon, 1970)

scanned/OCR by Harold Marcuse
part of the Official Herbert Marcuse website
page created May 27, 2005; updated 5/30/05

Bibliographical Note

"The End of Utopia" and "The Problem of Violence and the Radical Opposition," also published in *Psychoanalyse und Politik*, were **lectures delivered at the Free University of West Berlin in July 1967**. The questions and answers following these lectures were translated from *Das Ende der Utopie* (Berlin: Verlag Peter von Maikowski, 1967). In view of their frequently topical character and local references, the questions have in many cases been abridged by the translators; Herbert Marcuse's answers have been translated in full. [links to the German version have been added to this on-line text]

JEREMY J. SHAPIRO AND SHIERRY M. WEBER

The End of Utopia

Today any form of the concrete world, of human life, any transformation of the technical and natural environment is a possibility, and the locus of this possibility is historical. Today we have the capacity to turn the world into hell, and we are well on the way to doing so. We also have the capacity to turn it into the opposite of hell. This would mean the end of utopia, that is, the refutation of those ideas and theories that use the concept of utopia to denounce certain socio-historical possibilities. It can also be understood as the "end of history" in the very precise sense that the new possibilities for a human society and its environment can no longer be thought of as continuations of the old, nor even as existing in the same historical continuum with them. Rather, they presuppose a break with the historical continuum; they presuppose the qualitative difference between a free society and societies that are still unfree, which, according to Marx, makes all previous history only the prehistory of mankind.

But I believe that even Marx was still too tied to the notion of a continuum of progress, that even his idea of socialism may not yet represent, or no longer represent, the determinate negation of capitalism it was supposed to. That is, today the notion of the end of utopia implies the necessity of at least discussing a new definition of socialism. The discussion would be based on the question whether decisive elements of the Marxian concept of socialism do not

belong to a now obsolete stage in the development of the forces of production. This obsolescence is expressed most clearly, in my opinion, in the distinction between the realm of freedom and the realm of necessity according to which the realm of freedom can be conceived of and can exist only beyond the realm of necessity. This division implies that the realm of necessity remains so in the sense of a realm of alienated labor, which means, as Marx says, that the [p. 63] only thing that can happen within it is for labor to be organized as rationally as possible and reduced as much as possible. But it remains labor in and of the realm of necessity and thereby unfree. I believe that one of the new possibilities, which gives an indication of the qualitative difference between the free and the unfree society, is that of letting the realm of freedom appear within the realm of necessity--in labor and not only beyond labor. To put this speculative idea in a provocative form, I would say that we must face the possibility that the path to socialism may proceed from science to utopia and not from utopia to science.

Utopia is a historical concept. It refers to projects for social change that are considered impossible. Impossible for what reasons? In the usual discussion of utopia the impossibility of realizing the project of a new society exists when the subjective and objective factors of a given social situation stand in the way of the transformation--the so-called immaturity of the social situation. Communistic projects during the French Revolution and, perhaps, socialism in the most highly developed capitalist countries are both examples of a real or alleged absence of the subjective and objective factors that seem to make realization impossible.

The project of a social transformation, however, can also be considered unfeasible because it contradicts certain scientifically established laws, biological laws, physical laws; for example, such projects as the age-old idea of eternal youth or the idea of a return to an alleged golden age. I believe that we can now speak of utopia only in this latter sense, namely when a project for social change contradicts real laws of nature. Only such a project is utopian in the strict sense, that is, beyond history--but even this "ahistoricity" has a historical limit.

The other group of projects, where the impossibility is due to the absence of subjective and objective factors, can at best be designated only as "provisionally" unfeasible. Karl Mannheim's criteria for the unfeasibility of such projects, for instance, are inadequate for the very simple reason, to begin with, that unfeasibility shows itself only after the fact. And it is not surprising that a project for social transformation is designated [64] unfeasible because it has shown itself unrealized in history. Secondly, however, the criterion of unfeasibility in this sense is inadequate because it may very well be the case that the realization of a revolutionary project is hindered by counterforces and countertendencies that can be and are overcome precisely in the process of revolution. For this reason it is questionable to set up the absence of specific subjective and objective factors as an objection to the feasibility of radical transformation. Especially--and this is the question with which we are concerned here--the fact that no revolutionary class can be defined in the capitalist countries that are technically most highly developed does not mean that Marxism is utopian. The social agents of revolution--and this is orthodox Marx--are formed only in the process of the transformation itself, and one cannot count on a situation in which the revolutionary forces are there ready-made, so to speak, when the revolutionary movement begins. But in my opinion there is one valid criterion for possible realization, namely, when the material and intellectual forces for the transformation are technically at hand although their rational application is prevented by the

existing organization of the forces of production. And in this sense, I believe, we can today actually speak of an end of utopia.

All the material and intellectual forces which could be put to work for the realization of a free society are at hand. That they are not used for that purpose is to be attributed to the total mobilization of existing society against its own potential for liberation. But this situation in no way makes the idea of radical transformation itself a utopia.

The abolition of poverty and misery is possible in the sense I have described, as are the abolition of alienation and the abolition of what I have called "surplus repression." Even in bourgeois economics there is scarcely a serious scientist or investigator who would deny that the abolition of hunger and of misery is possible with the productive forces that already exist technically and that what is happening today must be attributed to the global politics of a repressive society. But although we are in agreement on this we are still not sufficiently clear about the implication of this technical possibility for the [65] abolition of poverty, of misery, and of labor. The implication is that these historical possibilities must be conceived in forms that signify a break rather than a continuity with previous history, its negation rather than its positive continuation, difference rather than progress. They signify the liberation of a dimension of human existence this side of the material basis, the transformation of needs.

What is at stake is the idea of a new theory of man, not only as theory but also as a way of existence: the genesis and development of a vital need for freedom and of the vital needs of freedom--of a freedom no longer based on and limited by scarcity and the necessity of alienated labor. The development of qualitatively new human needs appears as a biological necessity; they are needs in a very biological sense. For among a great part of the manipulated population in the developed capitalist countries the need for freedom does not or no longer exists as a vital, necessary need. Along with these vital needs the new theory of man also implies the genesis of a new morality as the heir and the negation of the Judeo-Christian morality which up to now has characterized the history of Western civilization. It is precisely the continuity of the needs developed and satisfied in a repressive society that reproduces this repressive society over and over again within the individuals themselves. Individuals reproduce repressive society in their needs, which persist even through revolution, and it is precisely this continuity which up to now has stood in the way of the leap from quantity into the quality of a free society. This idea implies that human needs have a historical character. All human needs, including sexuality, lie beyond the animal world. They are historically determined and historically mutable. And the break with the continuity of those needs that already carry repression within them, the leap into qualitative difference, is not a mere invention but inheres in the development of the productive forces themselves. That development has reached a level where it actually demands new vital needs in order to do justice to its own potentialities.

What are the tendencies of the productive forces that make this leap from quantity into quality possible? Above all, [66] the technification of domination undermines the foundation of domination. The progressive reduction of physical labor power in the production process (the process of material production) and its replacement to an increasing degree by mental labor concentrate socially necessary labor in the class of technicians, scientists, engineers, etc. This

suggests possible liberation from alienated labor. It is of course a question only of tendencies, but of tendencies that are grounded in the development and the continuing existence of capitalist society. If capitalism does not succeed in exploiting these new possibilities of the productive forces and their organization, the productivity of labor will fall beneath the level required by the rate of profit. And if capitalism heeds this requirement and continues automation regardless, it will come up against its own inner limit: the sources of surplus value for the maintenance of exchange society will dwindle away.

In the *Grundrisse* Marx showed that complete automation of socially necessary labor is incompatible with the preservation of capitalism. Automation is only a catchword for this tendency, through which necessary physical labor, alienated labor, is withdrawn to an ever greater extent from the material process of production. This tendency, if freed from the fetters of capitalist production, would lead to a creative experimentation with the productive forces. With the abolition of poverty this tendency would mean that play with the potentialities of human and nonhuman nature would become the content of social labor. 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 productive 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.

When no vital need to abolish (alienated) labor exists, when on the contrary there exists a need to continue and extend labor, even when it is no longer socially necessary; when the vital need for joy, for happiness with a good conscience, [67] does not exist, but rather the need to have to earn everything in a life that is as miserable as can be; when these vital needs do not exist or are suffocated by repressive ones, it is only to be expected that new technical possibilities actually become new possibilities for repression by domination.

We already know what cybernetics and computers can contribute to the total control of human existence. The new needs, which are really the determinate negation of existing needs, first make their appearance as the negation of the needs that sustain the present system of domination and the negation of the values on which they are based: for example, the negation of the need for the struggle for existence (the latter is supposedly necessary and all the ideas or fantasies that speak of the possible abolition of the struggle for existence thereby contradict the supposedly natural and social conditions of human existence); the negation of the need to earn one's living; the negation of the performance principle, of competition; the negation of the need for wasteful, ruinous productivity, which is inseparably bound up with destruction; and the negation of the vital need for deceitful repression of the instincts. These needs would be negated in the vital biological need for peace, which today is not a vital need of the majority, the need for calm, the need to be alone, with oneself or with others whom one has chosen oneself, the need for the beautiful, the need for "undeserved" happiness--all this not simply in the form of individual needs but as a social productive force, as social needs that can be activated through the direction and disposition of productive forces.

In the form of a social productive force, these new vital needs would make possible a total technical reorganization of the concrete world of human life, and I believe that new human

relations, new relations between men, would be possible only in such a reorganized world. When I say technical reorganization I again speak with reference to the capitalist countries that are most highly developed, where such a restructuring would mean the abolition of the terrors of capitalist industrialization and commercialization, the total reconstruction of the cities and the restoration of nature after the horrors [68] of capitalist industrialization have been done away with. I hope that when I speak of doing away with the horrors of capitalist industrialization it is clear I am not advocating a romantic regression behind technology. On the contrary, I believe that the potential liberating blessings of technology and industrialization will not even begin to be real and visible until capitalist industrialization and capitalist technology have been done away with.

The qualities of freedom that I have mentioned here are qualities which until now have not received adequate attention in recent thinking about socialism. Even on the left the notion of socialism has been taken too much within the framework of the development of productive forces, of increasing the productivity of labor, something which was not only justified but necessary at the level of productivity at which the idea of scientific socialism was developed but which today is at least subject to discussion. Today we must try to discuss and define--without any inhibitions, even when it may seem ridiculous--the qualitative difference between socialist society as a free society and the existing society. And it is precisely here that, if we are looking for a concept that can perhaps indicate the qualitative difference in socialist society, the aesthetic-erotic dimension comes to mind almost spontaneously, at least to me. Here the notion "aesthetic" is taken in its original sense, namely as the form of sensitivity of the senses and as the form of the concrete world of human life. Taken in this way, the notion projects the convergence of technology and art and the convergence of work and play. It is no accident that the work of Fourier is becoming topical again among the avant-garde left-wing intelligentsia. As Marx and Engels themselves acknowledged, Fourier was the only one to have made clear this qualitative difference between free and unfree society. And he did not shrink back in fear, as Marx still did, from speaking of a possible society in which work becomes play, a society in which even socially necessary labor can be organized in harmony with the liberated, genuine needs of men.

Let me make one further observation in conclusion. I have already indicated that if critical theory, which remains [69] indebted to Marx, does not wish to stop at merely improving the existing state of affairs, it must accommodate within itself the extreme possibilities for freedom that have been only crudely indicated here, the scandal of the qualitative difference. Marxism must risk defining freedom in such a way that people become conscious of and recognize it as something that is nowhere already in existence. And precisely because the so-called utopian possibilities are not at all utopian but rather the determinate socio-historical negation of what exists, a very real and very pragmatic opposition is required of us if we are to make ourselves and others conscious of these possibilities and the forces that hinder and deny them. An opposition is required that is free of all illusion but also of all defeatism, for through its mere existence defeatism betrays the possibility of freedom to the status quo.

The End of Utopia - Questions and Answers

Question. To what extent do you see in the English pop movement a positive point of departure for an aesthetic-erotic way of life?

Marcuse. As you may know, of the many things I am reproached with, there are two that are particularly remarkable. I have supposedly asserted that today the movement of student opposition in itself can make the revolution. Second, I am supposed to have asserted that what we in America call hippies and you call *Gammler*, beatniks, are the new revolutionary class. Far be it from me to assert such a thing. What I was trying to show was that in fact today there are tendencies in society--anarchically unorganized, spontaneous tendencies--that herald a total break with the dominant needs of repressive society. The groups you have mentioned are characteristic of a state of disintegration within the system, which as a mere phenomenon has no revolutionary force whatsoever but which perhaps at some time will be able to play its role in connection with other, much stronger objective forces. [70]

Q. You have said that technically the material and intellectual forces for revolutionary transformation exist already. In your lecture, however, you seem to be speaking of forces for "utopia," not for the transformation itself, and this question you have not really answered.

M. To answer this question, of course, a second lecture would be necessary. A few remarks: If I have put so much emphasis on the notion of needs and of qualitative difference, that has a lot to do with the problem of transformation. One of the chief factors that has prevented this transformation, though objectively it has been on the agenda for years, is the absence or the repression of the need for transformation, which has to be present as the qualitatively differentiating factor among the social groups that are to make the transformation. If Marx saw in the proletariat the revolutionary class, he did so also, and maybe even primarily, because the proletariat was free from the repressive needs of capitalist society, because the new needs for freedom could develop in the proletariat and were not suffocated by the old, dominant ones. Today in large parts of the most highly developed capitalist countries that is no longer the case. The working class no longer represents the negation of existing needs. That is one of the most serious facts with which we have to deal. As far as the forces of transformation themselves are concerned, I grant you without further discussion that today nobody is in a position to give a prescription for them in the sense of being able to point and say, "Here you have your revolutionary forces, this is their strength, this and this must be done."

The only thing I can do is point out what forces potentially make for a radical transformation of the system. Today the classical contradictions within capitalism are stronger than they have ever been before. Especially the general contradiction between the unprecedented development of the productive forces and social wealth on the one hand and of the destructive and repressive application of these forces of production on the other is infinitely more acute today than it has ever been. Second, in a global framework, capitalism today is [71] confronted by anticapitalist forces that already stand in open battle with capitalism at different places in the world. Third, there are also negative forces within advanced capitalism itself, in the United States and also in Europe--and here I do not hesitate to name again the opposition of the

intellectuals, especially students.

Today this still seems remarkable to us, but one needs only a little historical knowledge to know that it is certainly not the first time in history that a radical historical transformation has begun with students. That is the case not only here in Europe but also in other parts of the world. The role of students today as the intelligentsia out of which, as you know, the executives and leaders even of existing society are recruited, is historically more important than it perhaps was in the past. In addition there is the moral-sexual rebellion, which turns against the dominant morality and must be taken seriously as a disintegrative factor, as can be seen from the reaction to it, especially in the United States. Finally, probably, here in Europe we should add those parts of the working class that have not yet fallen prey to the process of integration. Those are the tendential forces of transformation, and to evaluate their chances, their strength, and so forth in detail would naturally be the subject of a separate and longer discussion.

Q. My question is directed toward the role of the new anthropology for which you have called, and of those biological needs that are qualitatively new in the framework of a need structure that you have interpreted as historically variable. How does this differ from the theory of revolutionary socialism? Marx in his late writings was of the opinion that the realm of freedom could be erected only on the basis of the realm of necessity, but that probably means that a free human society could be set up only within and not in abstraction from the framework of natural history, not beyond the realm of necessity. In your call for new biological needs, such as a new vital need for freedom, for happiness that is not repressively mediated, are you implying a qualitative transformation of the physiological structure of man that is derived from his natural history? Do you believe that that is a qualitative possibility today? [72]

M. If you mean that with a change in the natural history of mankind the needs which I have designated as new would be able to emerge, I would say yes. Human nature--and for all his insistence on the realm of necessity Marx knew--this human nature is a historically determined nature and develops in history. Of course the natural history of man will continue. The relation of man to nature has already changed completely, and the realm of necessity will become a different realm when alienated labor can be done away with by means of perfected technology and a large part of socially necessary labor becomes a technological experiment. Then the realm of necessity will in fact be changed and we will perhaps be able to regard the qualities of free human existence, which Marx and Engels still had to assign to the realm beyond labor, as developing within the realm of labor itself.

Q. If the vital need for freedom and happiness is to be set up as a biological need, how is it to materialize?

M. By "materially convertible" you mean: How does it go into effect in social production and finally even in the physiological structure itself? It operates through the construction of a pacified environment. I tried to indicate this in speaking of eliminating the terror of capitalist industrialization. What I mean is an environment that provides room for these new needs precisely through its new, pacified character, that is, that can enable them to be materially, even physiologically converted through a continuous change in human nature, namely through

the reduction of characteristics that today manifest themselves in a horrible way: brutality, cruelty, false heroism, false virility, competition at any price. These are physiological phenomena as well.

Q. Is there a connection between the rehabilitation of certain anarchist strategies and the enormity of extra-economic violence which today has become an immediate economic power through internalization, by which I mean that the agents of manipulation know how to internalize bureaucratic and governmental mechanisms of domination? [73]

M. But that's not internalization of violence. If anything has become clear in capitalism it is that purely external violence, good old-fashioned violence, is stronger than it has ever been. I don't see any internalization at all there. We should not overlook the fact that manipulatory tendencies are not violence. No one compels me to sit in front of my television set for hours, no one forces me to read the idiotic newspapers.

Q. But there I should like to disagree, because internalization means precisely that an illusory liberality is possible--just as the internalization of economic power in classical capitalism meant that the political and moral structure could be liberalized.

M. For me that's simply stretching the concept too far. Violence remains violence, and a system that itself provides the illusory freedom of such things as television sets that I can in fact turn off whenever I want to--which is no illusion--this is not the dimension of violence. If you say that, then you are blurring one of the decisive factors of present society, namely the distinction between terror and totalitarian democracy, which works not with terror but rather with internalization, with mechanisms of coordination: that is not violence. Violence is when someone beats someone else's head in with a club, or threatens to. It is not violence when I am presented with television programs that show the existing state of things transfigured in some way or other.

Q. Is there a connection between the program for a new historically and biologically different structure of needs and a rehabilitation in strategy of those groups that Marx and Engels, with a touch of petit-bourgeois morality, denounced as *déclassé*?

M. We shall have to distinguish among these *déclassé* groups. As far as I can see, today neither the *lumpenproletariat* nor the petit bourgeois have become at all a more radical force than they were before. Here again the role of the intelligentsia is very different.

Q. But don't you think that precisely students are such a *déclassé* group?

M. No. [74]

Q. Under the conditions of maturity of the productive forces, is it still possible or valid to speak of "necessity," of necessary, objective laws or even tendencies of social development? Must not the role of subjectivity be completely restructured and reevaluated as a new factor in the present period, which is perhaps what legitimates the reemergence of anarchism?

M. I consider the reevaluation and determination of the subjective factor to be one of the most decisive necessities of the present situation. The more we emphasize that the material, technical, and scientific productive forces for a free society are in existence, the more we are charged with liberating the consciousness of these realizable possibilities. For the indoctrination of consciousness against these possibilities is the characteristic situation and the subjective factor in existing society. I consider the development of consciousness, work on the development of consciousness, if you like, this idealistic deviation, to be in fact one of the chief tasks of materialism today, of revolutionary materialism. And if I give such emphasis to needs and wants, it is meant in the sense of what you call the subjective factor.

One of the tasks is to lay bare and liberate the type of man who wants revolution, who must have revolution because otherwise he will fall apart. That is the subjective factor, which today is more than a subjective factor. On the other hand, naturally, the objective factor--and this is the one place where I should like to make a correction--is organization. What I have called the total mobilization of the established society against its own potentialities is today as strong and as effective as ever. On the one hand we find the absolute necessity of first liberating consciousness, on the other we see ourselves confronted by a concentration of power against which even the freest consciousness appears ridiculous and impotent. The struggle on two fronts is more acute today than it ever was. On the one hand the liberation of consciousness is necessary, on the other it is necessary to feel out every possibility of a crack in the enormously concentrated power structure of existing society. In the United States, for example, it has been [75] possible to have relatively free consciousness because it simply has no effect.

Q. The new needs, which you spoke of as motive forces for social transformation--to what extent will they be a privilege of the metropolises? To what extent do they presuppose societies that are technically and economically very highly developed? Do you also envisage these needs in the revolution of the poor countries, for example the Chinese or the Cuban Revolution?

M. I see the trend toward these new needs at both poles of existing society, namely in the highly developed sector and in the parts of the third world engaged in liberation struggles. And in fact we see repeated here a phenomenon that is quite clearly expressed in Marxian theory, namely that those who are "free" of the dubious blessings of the capitalist system are those who develop the needs that can bring about a free society. For example, the Vietnamese struggling for liberation do not have to have the need for peace grafted onto them, they have it. They also have need of the defense of life against aggression. These are needs that at this level, at this antipode of established society, are really natural needs in the strictest sense; they are spontaneous. At the opposite pole, in highly developed society, are those groups, minority groups, who can afford to give birth to the new needs or who, even if they can't afford it, simply have them because otherwise they would suffocate physiologically. Here I come back to the beatnik and hippie movement. What we have here is quite an interesting phenomenon, namely the simple refusal to take part in the blessings of the "affluent society." That is in itself one of the qualitative changes of need. The need for better television sets, better automobiles, or comfort of any sort has been cast off. What we see is rather the negation of this need. "We don't want to have anything to do with all this crap." There is thus potential at both poles.

Q. If the objective basis for a qualitatively different society is present why place so much emphasis on an absolute break between the present and future? Must not the transition [76] be mediated, and does not the idea of an absolute break contradict concrete attempts to bridge the gap?

M. What I would say in my defense is this: I believe that I have not advocated a break. It is rather that when I look at the situation I can conceive of our definition of a free society only as the determinate negation of the existing one. But one cannot then take the determinate negation to be something that ultimately is nothing more than old wine in new bottles. That is why I have emphasized the break, quite in the sense of classical Marxism. I don't see any inconsistency here. The question implied in yours, namely, how does the break occur and how do the new needs for liberation emerge after it, is precisely what I should have liked to discuss with you. You can of course say, and I say it to myself often enough, if this is all true, how can we imagine these new concepts even arising here and now in living human beings if the entire society is against such an emergence of new needs. This is the question with which we have to deal. At the same time it amounts to the question of whether the emergence of these new needs can be conceived at all as a radical development out of existing ones, or whether instead, in order to set free these needs, a dictatorship appears necessary, which in any case would be very different from the Marxian dictatorship of the proletariat: namely a dictatorship, a counteradministration, that eliminates the horrors spread by the established administration. This is one of the things that most disquiets me and that we should seriously discuss.

Q. Putting aside the choice of dropping out of the system through underground subcultures, how is it possible to engage in heretical activities within the system, for example heretical medicine that does not merely cure people to restore their labor power but makes them conscious of how their labor makes them sick and how they could participate in qualitatively different work?

M. On the problem as to whether and how the elements you have called heretical can be developed within the established system, I would say the following: In established societies there are still gaps and interstices in which heretical methods [77] can be practiced without meaningless sacrifice, and still help the cause. This is possible. Freud recognized the problem very clearly when he said that psychoanalysis really ought to make all patients revolutionaries. But unfortunately that doesn't work, for one has to practice within the framework of the status quo. Psychoanalysis has to deal with just this contradiction and abstract from extra-medical possibilities. There are still today psychoanalysts who at least remain as faithful as possible to the radical elements of psychoanalysis. And in jurisprudence, for example, there are also quite a few lawyers who work in a heretical way, that is, against the Establishment and for the protection of those accused whom it has cast out, without thereby making their own practice impossible.

The interstices within the established society are still open, and one of the most important tasks is to make use of them to the full.

Q. Is there not a conflict between the sort of needs that arise among the Vietcong and the sort that you have called sensitivity, are they not perhaps incompatible, and does one not perhaps

have to choose between them?

M. The first tendencies pointing to a new image of man lie in solidarity with the struggle of the third world. What emerges in the advanced industrial countries as new needs is in the third world not at all a new need but a spontaneous reaction against what is happening.

Q. It seems to me that the needs determining social revolutionary movements are quite old ones. Industrialization requires discipline. Isn't it a luxury to lump this together with aesthetic Eros?

M. But the need for freedom is not a luxury which only the metropolises can afford. The need for freedom, which spontaneously appears in social revolution as an old need, is stifled in the capitalist world. In a society such as ours, in which pacification has been achieved up to a certain point, it appears crazy at first to want revolution. For we have whatever we want. But the aim here is to transform the will itself so that people no longer want what they now want. Thus the task in the metropolises [78] differs from the task in Vietnam--but the two can be connected.

Q. Does the thesis that the technification of domination undermines domination mean that the bureaucracy or the apparatus provides itself with its own provocation or that it must be permanently provoked as a learning process that makes comprehensible the contradictions and senselessness of this bureaucracy? Or does it mean that we should not provoke it because of the menace of fascist terror that would cut off any possibility of change?

M. It surely does not mean the latter, for the status quo itself must be endangered. One cannot turn the argument that radical action will menace the status quo against the necessity of doing so. Technification of domination means that if we rationally think through technological processes to their end, we find that they are incompatible with existing capitalist institutions. In other words, domination that is based on the necessity of exploitation and alienated labor is potentially losing this base. If the exploitation of physical labor power in the process of production is no longer necessary, then this condition of domination is undermined.

Q. Are you saying that labor should be completely abolished, or that it should be made free of misery?

M. I have wavered in terminology between the abolition of labor and the abolition of alienated labor because in usage labor and alienated labor have become identical. That is the justification for this ambiguity. I believe that labor as such cannot be abolished. To affirm the contrary would be in fact to repudiate what Marx called the metabolic exchange between man and nature. Some control, mastery, and transformation of nature, some modification of existence through labor is inevitable, but in this utopian hypothesis labor would be so different from labor as we know it or normally conceive of it that the idea of the convergence of labor and play does not diverge too far from the possibilities.

Q. Does not revolution become reified when the oppressed [79] hate the oppressor to the point where the humanistic element gets lost? Is this reification one that can be undone during, or

only after the revolution?

M. A really frightening question. On the one hand, I believe that one must say that the hatred of exploitation and oppression is itself a humane and humanistic element. On the other hand there is no doubt that in the course of revolutionary movements hatred emerges, without which revolution is just impossible, without which no liberation is possible. Nothing is more terrible than the sermon, "Do not hate thy opponent," in a world in which hate is thoroughly institutionalized. Naturally in the course of the revolutionary movement itself this hatred can turn into cruelty, brutality, and terror. The boundary between the two is horribly and extraordinarily in flux. The only thing that I can at least say about this is that a part of our work consists in preventing this development as much as possible, that is to show that brutality and cruelty also belong necessarily to the system of repression and that a liberation struggle simply does not need this transmogrification of hatred into brutality and cruelty. One can hit an opponent, one can vanquish an opponent, without cutting off his ears, without severing his limbs, without torturing him.

Q. It seems that you have an ideal of a harmonious society without tolerance or pluralism. Who will determine the common good in such a society? Are there to be no antagonisms? This ideal is unrealistic and, if there is to be no tolerance in resolving antagonisms, it will be undemocratic and require dictatorship.

M. Either a free society without tolerance is unthinkable, or a free society does not need tolerance because it is free anyway, so that tolerance does not have to be preached and institutionalized. A society without conflicts would be a utopian idea, but the idea of a society in which conflicts evidently exist but can be resolved without oppression and cruelty is in my opinion not a utopian idea. With regard to the concept of democracy: that is of course really a very serious matter. If I am [80] to say in one sentence what I can offer as a momentary answer, it is only that at the moment no one could be more for a democracy than I am. My objection is only that in no existing society, and surely not in those which call themselves democratic, does democracy exist. What exists is a kind of very limited, illusory form of democracy that is beset with inequalities, while the true conditions of democracy have still to be created. On the problem of dictatorship: What I suggested was a question, namely, I cannot imagine how the state of almost total indoctrination and coordination can turn into its opposite in an evolutionary way. It seems to me inevitable that some intervention must occur in some way and that the oppressors must be suppressed in some way, since they unfortunately will not suppress themselves.

Q. It seemed to me that the center of your paper today was the thesis that a transformation of society must be preceded by a transformation of needs. For me this implies that changed needs can only arise if we first abolish the mechanisms that have let the needs come into being as they are. It seems to me that you have shifted the accent toward enlightenment and away from revolution.

M. You have defined what is unfortunately the greatest difficulty in the matter. Your objection is that, for new, revolutionary needs to develop, the mechanisms that reproduce the old needs must be abolished. In order for the mechanisms to be abolished, there must first be a need to

abolish them. That is the circle in which we are placed, and I do not know how to get out of it.

Q. How is it possible to distinguish false from genuine utopias? For example, has the elimination of domination not occurred owing to social immaturity, or because its elimination is, so to speak, biologically impossible? If someone believes the latter, how can you prove to him that he is mistaken?

M. If it were demonstrable that the abolition of domination is biologically impossible, then I would say, the idea of abolishing domination is a utopia. I do not believe that anyone [81] has yet demonstrated this. What is probably biologically impossible is to get away without any repression whatsoever. It may be self-imposed, it may be imposed by others. But that is not identical with domination. In Marxian theory and long before it a distinction was made between rational authority and domination. The authority of an airplane pilot, for example, is rational authority. It is impossible to imagine a condition in which the passengers would tell the pilot what to do. The traffic policeman is another typical example of rational authority. These things are probably biological necessities, but political domination, domination based on exploitation, oppression, is not.

Q. In the advanced sectors of today's industry and bureaucracy there is already, among scientists, technicians, and so on, an alienated form of the integration of work and play--think of planning and strategy games, game theory, and the use of scientific phantasy. How do you estimate the possibility of this activity turning into refusal within the power structure, as suggested for example by Serge Mallet?

M. My objection to Mallet's evaluation of technicians is that precisely this group is today among the highest paid and rewarded beneficiaries of the system. For what you have said to be possible would require a total change not only of consciousness but of the whole situation. My second objection is that as long as this group is considered in isolation as the potentially revolutionary force one arrives only at a technocratic revolution, that is a transformation of advanced capitalism into technocratic state capitalism, but certainly not at what we mean when we speak of a free society.

Q. With regard to a new theory of man: How do the needs of peace, freedom, and happiness concretely become translated into biological, bodily needs?

M. I would say that the need for peace as a vital need in the biological sense does not need to be materially translated because in this sense it is already a material need. The need for peace, for example, would be expressed in the impossibility of [82] mobilizing people for military service. That would not be a material translation of the need for peace but a material need itself. The same applies to the other needs I mentioned.

Q. Back to the problem of the qualitative break. The latter seems to presuppose a crisis, and indeed there is one. But how can we tell when the crisis has progressed to the point of a break? Or does the crisis just turn into a break? How can the minority that has consciousness of what is possible intervene in society to prevent utopia from being blocked off?

M. I would see an expansion of the crisis in certain symbolic facts and events, events that somehow represent a turning point in the development of the system. Thus, for example, a forced ending of the war in Vietnam would represent a considerable expansion of the crisis of existing society.

Q. In connection with the problems of a new theory of man: this new theory has already found its advocates in the third world, namely Fanon, who says, "The goal is to establish the total man on earth," and Guevara, who -says, "We are building the man of the twenty-first century." I should like to ask you how your ideas of a new theory of man are connected with these two declarations?

M. I had not ventured to say so, but after you yourself have said it, and you seem to know something about it, I can now say that I believe in fact, although I have not mentioned it here, that at least in some of the liberation struggles in the third world and even in some of the methods of development of the third world this new theory of man is putting itself in evidence. I would not have mentioned Fanon and Guevara as much as a small item that I read in a report about North Vietnam and that had a tremendous effect on me, since I am an absolutely incurable and sentimental romantic. It was a very detailed report, which showed, among other things, that in the parks in Hanoi the benches are made only big enough for two and only two people to sit on, so that another person would not even have the technical possibility of disturbing.

The Problem of Violence and the Radical Opposition

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

I must begin by sketching briefly the principal difference between the New Left and the Old Left. The New Left is, with some exceptions, Neo-Marxist rather than Marxist in the orthodox sense; it is strongly influenced by what is called Maoism, and by the revolutionary movements in the Third World. Moreover, the New Left includes neo-anarchist tendencies, and it is

characterized by a deep mistrust of the old leftist parties and their ideology. And the New Left is, again with exceptions, not bound to the old working class as the sole revolutionary agent. The New Left itself cannot be defined in [84] terms of class, consisting as it does of intellectuals, of groups from the civil rights movement, and of youth groups, especially the most radical elements of youth, including those who at first glance do not appear political at all, namely the hippies, to whom I shall return later. It is very interesting that this movement has as spokesmen not traditional politicians but rather such suspect figures as poets, writers, and intellectuals. If you reflect on this short sketch, you will admit that this circumstance is a real nightmare for "old Marxists." You have here an opposition that obviously has nothing to do with the "classical" revolutionary force: a nightmare, but one that corresponds to reality. I believe that this completely unorthodox constellation of the opposition is a true reflection of an authoritarian-democratic "achieving" society, of "one-dimensional society" as I have tried to describe it [note 1], whose chief characteristic is the integration of the dominated class on a very material and very real basis, namely on the basis of controlled and satisfied needs that in turn reproduce monopoly capitalism--a controlled and repressed consciousness. The result of this constellation is the absence of the subjective necessity of a radical transformation whose objective necessity becomes ever more flagrant. And in these circumstances opposition is concentrated among the outsiders within the established order. First it is to be found in the ghettos among the "underprivileged," whose vital needs even highly developed, advanced capitalism cannot and will not gratify. Second, the opposition is concentrated at the opposite pole of society, among those of the privileged whose consciousness and instincts break through or escape social control. I mean those social strata that, owing to their position and education, still have access to the facts and to the total structure of the facts--access that is truly hard to come by. These strata still have knowledge and consciousness of the continuously sharpening contradictions and of the price that the so-called affluent society extorts from its victims. In short, there is opposition at these two extreme poles of society, and I should like to describe them briefly:

The Underprivileged. In the United States the underprivileged are constituted in particular by national and racial [85] minorities, which of course are mainly unorganized politically and often antagonistic among themselves (for example there are considerable conflicts in the large cities between blacks and Puerto Ricans). They are mostly groups that do not occupy a decisive place in the productive process and for this reason cannot be considered potentially revolutionary forces from the viewpoint of Marxian theory--at least not without allies. But in the global framework the underprivileged who must bear the entire weight of the system really are the mass basis of the national liberation struggle against neo-colonialism in the third world and against colonialism in the United States. Here, too, there is no effective association between national and racial minorities in the metropolises of capitalist society and the masses in the neo-colonial world who are already engaged in struggle against this society. These masses can perhaps now be considered the new proletariat and as such they are today a real danger for the world system of capitalism. To what extent the working class in Europe can still or again be counted among these groups of underprivileged is a problem that we must discuss separately; I cannot do so in the framework of what I have to say here today, but I should like to point out a fundamental distinction. What we can say of the American working class is that in their great majority the workers are integrated into the system and do not want a radical

transformation, we probably cannot or not yet say of the European working class.

The Privileged. I should like to treat the second group that today opposes the system of advanced capitalism in two subdivisions. Let us first look at the so-called new working class [note 2], which is supposed to consist of technicians, engineers, specialists, scientists, etc., who are engaged in the productive process, albeit in a special position. Owing to their key position this group really seems to represent the nucleus of an objective revolutionary force, but at the same time it is a favorite child of the established system, which also shapes the consciousness of this group. Thus the expression "new working class" is at least premature.

Second, and practically the only subject of which I shall speak today, is the student opposition in its widest sense, including [86] the so-called dropouts. As far as I can judge, the latter represent an important difference between the American and German student movements. In America many of the students who are in active opposition stop being students and, as a full-time occupation, organize the opposition. This contains a danger, but perhaps a positive advantage as well. I shall discuss the student opposition under three categories. We may ask first, what is this opposition directed against; second, what are its forms; and third, what are the prospects for the opposition?

First, what is the target of the opposition? This question must be taken extremely seriously, for we are dealing with opposition to a democratic, effectively functioning society that at least under normal circumstances does not operate with terror. Furthermore, and on this point we in the United States are quite clear, it is an opposition against the majority of the population, including the working class. It is an opposition against the system's ubiquitous pressure, which by means of its repressive and destructive productivity degrades everything, in an increasingly inhuman way, to the status of a commodity whose purchase and sale provide the sustenance and content of life; against the system's hypocritical morality and "values": and against the terror employed outside the metropolis. This opposition to the system as such was set off first by the civil rights movement and then by the war in Vietnam. As part of the civil rights movement students from the North went to the South in order to help blacks register for the vote. It was then that they saw for the first time how this free democratic system really looks, what the sheriffs really are up to, how murders and lynchings of blacks go unpunished though the criminals are well known. This acted as a traumatic experience and occasioned the political activation of students and the intelligentsia in general in the United States. Second, this opposition was augmented by the war in Vietnam. For these students the war revealed for the first time the essence of the established society: its innate need of expansion and aggression and the brutality of its fight against all liberation movements.

Unfortunately I have no time to discuss the question whether the war in Vietnam is an imperialist war. However, I [87] should like to make a short observation here because the problem always comes up. If imperialism is understood in the old sense, that is that the United States is fighting for investments, then it is not an imperialist war even though this narrow aspect of imperialism is today already becoming an acute problem again. In the July 7, 1967, issue of *Newsweek*, for example, you can read that Vietnam represents twenty billion dollars worth of business, and this figure is growing every day. Despite this, however, we do not need to speculate on the applicability of a new definition of imperialism here, for leading

spokesmen of the American government have pronounced upon it themselves. The aim in Vietnam is to prevent one of the world's strategically and economically most important areas from falling under Communist control. It is a question of a crucial struggle against all attempts at national liberation in all corners of the world, crucial in the sense that the success of the Vietnamese liberation struggle could give the signal for the activation of such liberation movements in other parts of the world much closer to the metropolis where gigantic investments have been made. If in this sense Vietnam is in no way just one more event of foreign policy but rather connected with the essence of the system, it is perhaps also a turning point in the development of the system, perhaps the beginning of the end. For what has been shown here is that the human will and the human body with the poorest weapons can keep in check the most efficient system of destruction of all times. This is a world-historical novelty.

I come now to the second question that I wanted to discuss, namely the forms of the opposition. We are speaking of the student opposition, and I should like to say from the start that we are not dealing with a politicization of the university, for the university is already political. You need think only of the extent to which the natural sciences, for example, and even such abstract disciplines as mathematics find immediate application today in production and in military strategy. You need think only of the extent to which the natural sciences and even sociology and psychology depend today on the financial support of the government and the large foundations, the extent to [88] which the latter two fields have enrolled in the service of human control and market regulation. In this sense we can say that the university is already a political institution, and that at best the student opposition is an attempt at the anti-politicization, not the politicization of the university. Alongside positivist neutrality, which is pseudo-neutrality, it is necessary to provide a place in the curriculum and in the framework of intellectual discussion for its critique. That is why one of the main demands of the student opposition in the United States is a reform of the curriculum so that critical thought and knowledge are fully brought to bear on intellectual discussion--and not as agitation and propaganda. Where that is not possible, so-called "free universities" and "critical universities" are founded outside the university, as for example at Berkeley and at Stanford and now at some of the larger universities in the East. At these free universities courses and seminars are given about subjects that are not or only inadequately dealt with in the regular curriculum, such as Marxism, psychoanalysis, imperialism, foreign policy in the Cold War, and the ghettos.

Another form of student opposition is that of the famous teach-ins, sit-ins, be-ins, and love-ins. Here I should like to point only to the range of and tensions within the opposition: critical learning and teaching, concern with theory on the one hand, and, on the other, what can be referred to only as "existential community," or "doing one's own thing." I should like to say something about the meaning of this tension later, because in my opinion it expresses that fusion of political rebellion and sexual-moral rebellion which is an important factor in the opposition in America. It finds its most visible expression in the demonstration--unarmed demonstration--and there is no need to go hunting for occasions for such demonstrations. To seek confrontations only for their own sake is not only unnecessary, it is irresponsible. Confrontations are there. They do not have to be drummed up. Going out of the way to find them would falsify the opposition, for today it is in a defensive, not offensive, position. The occasions are there: for example, every escalation of the war in Vietnam; visits by

representatives of war policies: picketing (as you know, a special form of American demonstration) [89] factories in which napalm and other means of chemical warfare are produced. These demonstrations are organized and they are legal. Are such legal demonstrations confrontations with the institutionalized violence that is unleashed against the opposition? My answer is based on the American situation, but you will see that you can easily infer from it what applies to your own. These demonstrations are not confrontations when they remain within the framework of legality. But when they do so, they subject themselves to the institutionalized violence that autonomously determines the framework of legality and can restrict it to a suffocating minimum; for example, by applying laws such as those forbidding trespass on private or government property, interfering with traffic, disturbance of the peace, etc. Accordingly what was legal can become illegal from one minute to the next if a completely peaceful demonstration disturbs the peace or voluntarily or involuntarily trespasses on private property, and so on. In this situation confrontations with state power, with institutionalized violence, seem inevitable--unless opposition becomes a harmless ritual, a pacifier of conscience, and a star witness for the rights and freedoms available under the status quo. This was the experience of the civil rights movement: that the others practice the violence, that the others are the violence, and that against this violence legality is problematic from the very beginning. This will also be the experience of the student opposition as soon as the system feels threatened by it. And then the opposition is placed before the fatal decision: opposition as ritual event or opposition as resistance, i.e. civil disobedience.

I should like to say at least a few words about the right of resistance, because I am astonished again and again when I find out how little it has penetrated into people's consciousness that the recognition of the right of resistance, namely civil disobedience, belongs to the oldest and most sanctified elements of Western civilization. The idea that there is a right or law higher than positive law is as old as this civilization itself. Here is the conflict of rights before which every opposition that is more than private is placed. For the establishment has a legal monopoly of violence and the positive right, even the duty, to use this [90] violence in its self-defense. In contrast, the recognition and exercise of a higher right and the duty of resistance, of civil disobedience, is a motive force in the historical development of freedom, a potentially liberating violence. Without this right of resistance, without activation of a higher law against existing law, we would still be today at the level of the most primitive barbarism. Thus I think that the concept of violence covers two different forms: the institutionalized violence of the established system and the violence of resistance, which is necessarily illegal in relation to positive law. It is meaningless to speak of the legality of resistance: no social system, even the freest, can constitutionally legalize violence directed against itself. Each of these forms has functions that conflict with those of the other. There is violence of suppression and violence of liberation; there is violence for the defense of life and violence of aggression. And both forms have been and will remain historical forces. So from the start the opposition is placed in the field of violence. Right stands against right, not only as abstract claim but as action. Again the status quo has the right to determine the limits of legality. This conflict of the two rights, of the right of resistance with institutionalized violence, brings with it the continual danger of clashing with the violence of the state unless the right of liberation is sacrificed to the right of the established order and unless, as in previous history, the number of victims of the powers that be continues to surpass those of the revolution. That means, however, that preaching nonviolence on principle reproduces the existing institutionalized violence. And in

monopolistic industrial society this violence is concentrated to an unprecedented extent in the domination that penetrates the totality of society. In relation to this totality the right of liberation is in its immediate appearance a particular right. Thus the conflict of violence appears as a clash between general and particular or public and private violence, and in this clash the private violence will be defeated until it can confront the existing public power as a new general interest.

As long as the opposition does not have the social force of a new general interest, the problem of violence is primarily a problem of tactics. Can confrontation with the powers that be, [91] in which the challenging force of the resistance loses, nevertheless in certain cases alter the constellation of power in favor of the opposition? In the discussion of this question one often-quoted argument is invalid, namely that through such confrontations the other side, the opponent, is strengthened. This happens anyway, regardless of such confrontations. It happens every time the opposition is activated, and the problem is to turn this strengthening of the opponent into a transitional stage. Then, however, the evaluation of the situation depends on the occasion of the confrontation and especially on the success of systematically executed programs of education and the organization of solidarity. Let me give an example from the United States. The opposition experiences the war against Vietnam as an attack on freedom, on life itself, that affects the entire society and that justifies the right of total defense. But the majority of the population still supports the government and the war, while the opposition is only diffusely and locally organized. The form of opposition that is still legal in this situation spontaneously develops into civil disobedience, into refusing military service and organizing this refusal. This is already illegal and makes the situation more acute. On the other hand the demonstrations are accompanied ever more systematically by educational work among the population. This is "community work." Students go into poor districts in order to activate the consciousness of the inhabitants, initially to eliminate the most obvious needs, such as the lack of the most primitive hygiene, etc. The students attempt to organize people for these immediate interests, but simultaneously to awaken the political consciousness of these districts. Such educational work, however, does not take place only in slums. There is also the famous "doorbell-ringing campaign," which involves discussing what is really going on with housewives and, when they are there, their husbands. This is particularly important before elections. I stress discussion with women because it has in fact turned out, as one might of course expect, that in general women are more accessible to humane arguments than men are. This is because women are not yet completely harnessed into the productive work is very laborious and slow. Will [92] it have success? The success is measurable--for example by the number of votes obtained by so-called "peace candidates" in local, state, and national elections.

Today a turn toward theory can be observed among the opposition, which is especially important in that the New Left, as I emphasized, began with a total suspicion of ideology. I believe that it is becoming more and more visible that every effort to change the system requires theoretical leadership. And in the United States and the student opposition today we find attempts not only to bridge the gap between the Old and the New Left but also to work out a critical theory of contemporary capitalism on a Neo-Marxist basis.

As the last aspect of the opposition I should like now to mention a new dimension of protest,

which consists in the unity of moral-sexual and political rebellion. I should like to give you an illustration that I experienced as an eyewitness, which will show you the difference between what is happening in the United States and here. It was at one of the large anti-war demonstrations in Berkeley. The police, it is true, had permitted the demonstration, but forbidden access to the target of the demonstration, the military railroad station at Oakland. This meant that, beyond a particular and clearly defined point, the demonstration would have become illegal by violating the police order. When thousands of students neared the point at which the forbidden road began they came upon a barricade consisting of about 10 rows of heavily armed policemen outfitted in black uniforms and steel helmets. The march approached this police barricade, and as usual there were several people at the head of the march who yelled that the demonstration should not stop but try instead to break through the police cordon, which naturally would have led to a bloody defeat without achieving any aim. The march itself had erected a counter-cordon, so that the demonstrators would first have had to break through their own cordon in order to cross that of the police. Naturally this did not happen. After two or three scary minutes the thousands of marchers sat down in the street, guitars and harmonicas appeared, people began "necking" and "petting," and so the demonstration ended. You may find this [93] ridiculous, but I believe that a unity spontaneously and anarchically emerged here that perhaps in the end cannot fail to make an impression even on the enemy.

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

I have spoken of a possible crisis, of the eventuality of a crisis of the system. The forces that contribute to such a crisis would have to be discussed in great detail. I believe that we must see this crisis as the confluence of very disparate subjective and objective tendencies of an economic, political, and moral nature, in the East as well as the West. These forces are not yet organized on a basis of solidarity. They have no mass basis in the developed countries of advanced capitalism. Even the ghettos in the United States are in the initial stage of attempted politicization. And under these conditions it seems to me that the task of the opposition is first the liberation of consciousness outside of our own social group. For in fact the life of everyone is at stake, and today everyone is part of what Veblen called the "underlying population," namely the dominated. They must become conscious of the horrible policy of a system whose power and pressure grow with the threat of total annihilation. [94] They must learn that the available productive forces are used for the reproduction of exploitation and oppression and

that the so-called free world equips itself with military and police dictatorships in order to protect its surplus. This policy can in no way justify the totalitarianism of the other side, against which much can and must be said. But this totalitarianism is not expansive or aggressive and is still dictated by scarcity and poverty. This does not change the fact that it must be fought--but from the left.

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

NOTES (back to top)

[1]. Herbert Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man* (Boston: Beacon, 1964).

[2]. On this point, see Serge Mallet, *La Nouvelle Classe Ouvrière* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1963).

The Problem of Violence: Questions and Answers

Question [René Mayoraga, Bolivia]. If you say that the proletariat of the third world is the major force capable of destroying imperialism, then you have to take this into the structure of your theory. But you have not done this, since you assert in *One-Dimensional Man* that theory lacks an agent of revolution, and in your talk you [95] say that the student movement has no mass basis. The opposition must make the third world proletariat its mass basis.

Marcuse. The relationship has already been established in objective reality. I take as my starting point the conception that in today's situation there is no longer anything "outside capitalism." Even the socialist and Communist systems are linked with capitalism today, come what may, in a world system. Therefore we can speak of an "outside" only in a very relative sense. The national liberation movements in the third world are not by themselves a revolutionary force strong enough to overthrow advanced capitalism as a system. Such a revolutionary force can be expected only from a confluence of forces of change in the centers of advanced capitalism with those in the third world. To bring this about is really a most

difficult task. Naturally it is easy to say that the opposition of the intelligentsia has or must have its mass basis in the national liberation fronts of the third world. How to produce this association is something which still has to be achieved and with which we have not even yet begun. The difficulties that stand in the way are immense. Aside from the problem of distance, there is the problem of language, of the total cultural difference, etc. These are all new elements, which must be taken into account both in theory and in practice.

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

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

M. The worker who says that he has it better than before is right if, in a nonrevolutionary situation, he does not think and behave like it revolutionary. All you can do is to make [96] him aware of the costs of his (poor) well-being--the perpetual toil of his own life and the misery of others. And we must eventually come to grips with the idea that, in the period of advanced capitalism, the driving revolutionary force may not be generated by poverty and misery but precisely by the higher expectations within the better living conditions, and by the developed consciousness of highly qualified and educated workers: precursors of a new working class or a new part of the old working class. The internal contradictions of capitalism assume an ever more brutal and global form, and the new consciousness may become a catalyst in their explosion and solution. As to your suspicion about humanitarian arguments, I think we should not believe that we can no longer make use today of humanitarian arguments. I should like to ask you all a question. If I really radically exclude humanitarian arguments, on what basis can I work against the system of advanced capitalism? If you only operate within the framework of technical rationality and from the start exclude historically transcendent concepts, that is, negations of the system--for the system is not humane, and humanitarian ideas belong to the negation of the system--then you continually find yourself in the situation of being asked, and not being able to answer, the question, What is really so terrible about this system, which continually expands social wealth so that strata of the population that previously lived in the greatest poverty and misery today have automobiles, television sets, and one-family houses? What is so bad about this system that we dare take the tremendous risk of preaching its overthrow? If you content yourself with material arguments and exclude all other arguments you will not get anywhere. We must finally relearn what we forgot during the fascist period, or what you, who were not even born until after the first fascist period, have not fully become conscious of: that humanitarian and moral arguments are not merely deceitful ideology. Rather, they can and must become central social forces. If we exclude them from our argumentation at the start, we impoverish ourselves and disarm ourselves in the face of the strongest arguments of the defenders of the status quo.

[One question not translated (see German ed., 60ff): Peter Trautfest, SDS, about reproaches

aimed at the student movement]

Q. Assuming for a moment that the opposition in the [97] United States succeeds in its fight with the established power structure, how do you imagine the constructive work of the opposition, which would then be the possessor of state power?

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

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

In my lecture I have already suggested what students can do. First they must make clear to those who ask that it is really impossible to ask what is really so wrong in this society, that this question is all but inhuman, brutal. They must be made to see and hear and feel what is going on around them, and what their masters, with the silent or vociferous consent of the ruled, are doing to the peoples in the countries under the heel of the imperialist metropolises. The subsequent steps differ according to the type of society or area, in other words if you have a "democracy" such as that in the United States or a "democracy" such as that in Berlin. Each case would require its own first step. [98] I should consider it constructive in the United States today, for example, if the war in Vietnam were ended with the withdrawal of American troops; that is, I should consider it an achievement of the opposition. But this has nothing to do with the construction of a socialist society; and yet it is an immensely positive and constructive step. So we must proceed from one step to the next. If you say to anyone in the United States today, "What we want is socialism and the expropriation of private property in the means of production and collective control," then people run away from you. That does not mean that the idea of socialism is false: to the contrary. But it does mean that we have not at all succeeded in awakening the consciousness of the need for socialism, and that we must struggle for its realization if we are not to be barbarized and destroyed.

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

that disagreement about the consequences of even your own ideas is just shouted down.

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

I hope that nothing in my essay on tolerance suggests that I repudiate every sort of tolerance. That seems to me such idiocy, that I cannot understand how such an interpretation [99] has come into being. What I meant and said was that there

I hope that nothing in my essay on tolerance suggests that I repudiate every sort of tolerance.

are movements, which manifest themselves in propaganda as well as action, of which it can be predicted with the greatest certainty that they will lead to an increase of repression and destruction. These movements should not be tolerated within the framework of democracy. Here is a classic example: I believe that if, in the Weimar Republic, the Nazi movement had not been tolerated once it had revealed its character, which was quite early, if it had not enjoyed the blessings of that democracy, then we probably would not have experienced the horrors of the Second World War and some other horrors as well. There is an unequivocal criterion according to which we can say: here are movements that should not be tolerated if an improvement and pacification of human life is to be attained. To make of this the claim that I believe that tolerance is an evil in itself is something that I simply do not understand.

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

Q. [this is actually a much longer question from Rudi Dutschke, see German ed. 65f] Do you think that the European working class can play an important role in a future transformation? Or are we not at a point where the revolution of the future will be not the proletarian revolution but the human revolution, for which all people can be considered potentially revolutionary, owing to the defunctionalization of the capitalist class?

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

But aside from the vague concept of political tradition, the answer to your question depends on another question, namely, whether the tendencies that have become dominant in the United

States will do so in Europe as well, so that all countertendencies based on the political tradition of the European [100] working class are stifled in Europe, too. This depends on the time at which activation, political activation, commences. If it begins at the end of Americanization, then we could probably not speak of a revolutionary role for the working class as such in Europe. If it begins in a situation in which this tendency has not yet gained the upper hand, in which the developmental stages of European capitalism clearly differ, as they do now, from those of American capitalism, then the chances are greater. Will the European economy, the European capitalist economy, completely follow the tendencies of its American counterpart? Will the American economic penetration of Europe make further progress, or will it be arrested at a certain point?

Q. [Wolfgang Lefevre, SDS, German ed. 68f--much longer question] You have spoken of the eventuality of a crisis of the capitalist system that is to be hoped for and feared--feared because it might mobilize the workers into fascism. I think that the latter cannot occur because the fascist mobilization of 1933 was connected with a society that was not as homogeneous as today's but was rather influenced by relics of the past. On the other hand, the recent development of capitalism, especially through Keynesian policy, shows that there is no reason to expect a crisis, even taking automation into account. The crisis theory is based on the classical theory of imperialism. This theory and the hopes based on it seem dubious. But are not our opponents not the masses but the institutions? Will not the human forces tend to be on our side?

M. Potentially everyone is on our side. But can we make an actuality of this potentiality? The new fascism--if it comes--will be very different from the old fascism. History does not repeat itself so easily. When I speak of the rise of fascism I mean, with regard to America, for example, that the strength of those who support the cutback of existing civil and political liberties will grow to the point where the Congress can institute repressive legislation that is very effective. That is, the mass basis does not have to consist of masses of people going out into the streets and beating people up, it can also mean that the masses support increasingly actively a tendency that confines whatever scope still exists in democracy, thus increasingly weakening the opposition. [101] I am reproached with being so terribly pessimistic. But I must say that after hearing you I feel like an irresponsible optimist who has long left the solid substance of reality. I cannot conceive of even the nicest capitalist system lasting for eternity. The objections you have raised about automation are correct if you isolate automation from the other social trends which make of it a revolutionary force, for example: first, the enlightenment of consciousness; second, the education especially of the "new working class"; third, psychological-moral disintegration (which is again one of the reasons why I believe that morality has long ceased to be mere ideology), and fourth, a subject we have not discussed at all tonight, the fact that there is also a second world consisting of the Soviet bloc, which will enter into ever sharper economic competition with capitalism. These forces should be taken into consideration.

I mean, with regard to America, for example, that the strength of those who support the cutback of existing civil and political liberties will grow to the point where the Congress can institute repressive legislation that is very effective.

...

I must say that after hearing you I feel like an irresponsible optimist who has long left the solid substance of reality.

Q. [Peter Müller, ESG, German ed. 70] Must we not attempt to concretize in detail the negation of the established order? If not, are we then not in danger of remaining a minority since the majority has indeed much to lose if this order is destroyed? How much tolerance must we have of reformists and revisionists? Does Socialdemocracy have a positive function in the transformation?

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

I do believe that it is inadequate to equate Soviet society with advanced capitalist society under the title "developed industrial society" and that this concept does not do justice to the [102] fundamental trends. Nevertheless I do see a cooperation in effect today between the Soviet Union and the United States which goes beyond temporary *Realpolitik* and seems to correspond to the wholly un-Marxian theory that there is a community of interests of the richer nations in opposition to the poorer nations, one which overcomes the distinction between capitalist and socialist society and includes both within it.

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

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

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

Q. [Lefevre, German ed. 72] On the definition of revisionism mentioned in the previous question: revisionists are those who think they can change something in this society within the established institutions, while a large number of students thinks it is necessary to form an anti-institutional and extra-parliamentary opposition.

M. It is necessary to see important differences and make significant distinctions. Let me say

something personal. If you mean by revisionism the German Social-Democratic Party, I can only say to you that from the time of my own political education, that is since 1919, I have opposed this party. In 1917 to 1918 I was a member of the Social-Democratic Party, I resigned from it after the murder of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, and from then on I have criticized this party's politics. Not because it believed that it could work within the frame [103] work of the established order--for we all do this, we all make use of even the most minute possibilities in order to transform the established order from inside it--that is not why I fought the S.P.D. The reason was rather that it worked in alliance with reactionary, destructive, and repressive forces.

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

Q. [Bernd Runge, RCDS; German ed. 73, question shortened] Is not even major social change, such as from Stalinism to the contemporary situation in the Soviet Union, immanent to the system, and would that not be true of America, for example, if the Vietnam war were ended? Isn't the question of violence not just one of tactics but of strategy and humanitarian principles? And cannot progressive ideas such as Leninism become perverted?

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

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

How one can prevent revolutionary terror from turning into cruelty and brutality is another question. In a real revolution there are always ways and means of preventing this. At the beginning of the Bolshevik Revolution there was no cruelty, [104] no brutality, no terror going beyond resistance against those still in power. Where in a revolution this sort of terror changes into acts of cruelty, brutality, and torture, then we are already talking about a perversion of the revolution.

Q. Several questions [German ed. 74-79]:

[Vote in relation to the right of resistance; Dutschke: concrete alternative; Hannah Kröger, SDS: use of violence or not?; Hans-Jürgen Krahel, SDS: violence and the organization of the opposition; Bernd Schlöngel: extra-parliamentary opposition; Knut Nevermann, SPD: concrete, positive utopia]

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

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

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

M. I can answer your questions only in brief.

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

Whether there are situations in which work aiming at radical transformation can be carried out within existing parties? If the question is posed in this way, I would say, Yes. This is actually a question of practicability. If you know from experience, in your evaluation of the situation, that there are [105] groups and local organizations which are open and willing to listen, then of course one should work in these groups. I only said that from my experience I consider the possibility of transforming the major parties from within to be null and am just as pessimistic as I was forty years ago.

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

There is a very interesting problem contained in the question whether those who invoke the right of resistance in their favor have not themselves brought into being the principle on whose basis they resist positive law. That is, whether the appeal to the right of resistance is not relative and no more than the particular interest of a particular group. I should like to point out that historically that is not the meaning of the doctrine of the right of resistance. The doctrine of the right of resistance has always asserted that appealing to the right of resistance is an appeal to a higher law, which has universal validity, that is, which goes beyond the self-defined right and privilege of a particular group. And there really is a close connection between the right of resistance and natural law. Now you will say that such a universal higher law simply does not exist. I believe that it does exist. Today we no longer call it natural law, but I believe that if we say today that what justifies us in resisting the system is more than the

relative interest of a specific group and more than something that we ourselves have defined, we can demonstrate this. If we appeal to humanity's right to peace, to humanity's right to abolish exploitation and oppression, we are not talking about self-defined, special, group interests, but rather and in fact interests demonstrable as universal rights. That is why we can and should lay claim today to the right of resistance as more than a relative right.

On the thesis that tolerance must turn into specific actions in specific situations. I am in complete agreement. In my talk I asserted that we have found ourselves for a long time in a situation in which discussion will turn into demonstration and other forms of action. No matter how nonviolent our demonstrations are or will be, we must expect them to be met [106] with institutional violence. We cannot calm ourselves with the thought that we are demonstrating peaceably, that therefore it's legal and nothing bad will happen. In this sense there is no general organization of "manifest-material nonviolence." What we must anticipate at every moment is that the established order will put into action the institutionalized violence at its disposal. This is not to exclude our being able to and having to find forms of demonstration that avoid this confrontation with violence in which, in the present situation, we are bound to be defeated. If I was correctly informed yesterday, such forms have already been developed and even tested right here in Berlin. You will know what I am referring to, I don't want to go into it at greater length.

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

Q. Some observations and questions on concrete problems [German ed. 81f]:

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

[Wolfgang Nitsche, SDS, German ed. 83f] On the universities-in the historical situation in which we find ourselves at present, academic freedom is part of repressive tolerance for it now consists predominantly in the fact that anyone who wants to can and does buy the faculty and institutes of the university. Therefore it is our duty to organize a critical university as a counter-university and make clear that our tolerance threshold has been reached, that we will bring charges against specific forms of the misuse of knowledge for destructive and inhuman purposes. Would you go into your [107] published proposal for setting up a documentation center on the misuse of knowledge and science?

[Walter Kreipe, AStA] On students and radicals in the professions--how do you envisage the possibility of student revolutionary potential after students leave the university and are on the way to getting immersed in bourgeois life? At the moment it is not so important how students

are internationally organized--we are already trying that in Western Europe-but how they are organized after they get their degrees.

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

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

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

But there is also real misuse of academic freedom: the misuse of science for purposes of destruction, particularly for military purposes in Vietnam, is a striking example in America [108] it has been brought about at several universities that the university will no longer be a party to contracts with government agencies and industries that produce means of biological and chemical warfare. This was, by the way, the result of the work of but a small number of people who without any help sat down, got the material, and then organized a group. Although it is infinitely difficult, people are working at documenting such misuse of science, and to prevent this misuse is a very important task.

Bibliographical Note on Other Essays Published in *Five Lectures*

"Freedom and Freud's Theory of Instincts" and "Progress and Freud's Theory of Instincts" were translated from the texts of "Trieblehre und Freiheit" and "Die Idee des Fortschritts im Licht der Psychoanalyse" respectively as published in *Psychoanalyse und Politik* (Frankfurt: Europäische Verlagsanstalt, 1968). They were originally given as lectures commemorating the 100th anniversary of the birth of Sigmund Freud in 1956 and published in *Freud in der Gegenwart*, volume 6 of "Frankfurter Beiträge zur Soziologie" (Frankfurt: Europäische Verlagsanstalt, 1957), pages 401-424 and 425-441.

"The Obsolescence of the Freudian Concept of Man," previously unpublished in English, was originally delivered as a lecture entitled "The Obsolescence of Psychoanalysis" at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association in 1963.