

The Cult of Having Versus The City of Being

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There is no more fundamental distinction between men, psychologically and morally, than the one between those who love death and those who love life, between the *necrophilous* and the *biophilous*. (Erich Fromm)

I have put before you life and death, blessing and curse. Choose life, that you and your children may live. (Deuteronomy 30: 19)

He who loves nothing destructible has no place in himself where he can be wounded by the man of power and he becomes inviolable, since he loves inviolable values as they ought to be loved. (Guigo the Carthusian)

What is generally regarded as success—acquisition of wealth, the capture of power or social prestige—[should be] consider[ed] the most dismal failures. (Emma Goldman)

The food of the minority is the hunger of the majority. Where opulence is most opulent, there... misery is most miserable. (Eduardo Galeano)

The wealthy and the comfortable wonder as before at the grumblings of the needy and are measuring the eye of the needle, which the camels of old had some difficulty in squeezing through [Mark 10: 17], to see what chance there is for their passage. They are not so confident of the 'good time' hereafter as they are of the condition of their bank account now. I am on the other side—and would give the under fellow a show in this life. It is a shame to put him off to the next world. (Justice Stephen J. Field)

As the generations pass they grow worse. A time will come when they have grown so wicked that they will worship power; might will be right to them and reverence for the good will cease to be. At last, when no man is angry any more at wrongdoings or feels shame in the presence of the miserable, Zeus will destroy them too. And yet even then something might be done, if only the common people would rise and put down rulers that oppress people. (Greek myth on the Iron Age)

The greater a man's ignorance, the more implicit his obedience, the more absolute his confidence in his leader. (Pierre-Joseph Proudhon)

Ignorance, and admiration arising from ignorance, are the parents of evil devotion and obedience. (Dostoyevsky's Grand Inquisitor)

Education consists mainly in what we have unlearned. (Mark Twain)

If a nation expects to be ignorant and free, in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be. (A. A. Lipscomb)

Every document of civilization is also a document of barbarity. (Walter Benjamin)

You're obliged to pretend respect for people and institutions you think absurd. You live attached in a cowardly fashion to moral and social conventions you despise, condemn, and know lack all foundation. It is that permanent contradiction between your ideas and desires and all the dead formalities and vain pretenses of your civilization which makes you sad, troubled and unbalanced. In that intolerable conflict you lose all joy of life and all feeling of personality, because at every moment they suppress and restrain and check the free play of your powers. That's the poisoned and mortal wound of the civilized world. (Otave Mirbeau)

Bad things happen to the extent that love is absent. (Theresa Sanders)

All it takes for evil to flourish is for good people to do nothing. (Edmund Burke)

To accept as real, limits imposed only by our own minds, is not wisdom but self-inflicted blindness. (Robert Dahl)

The more men have been made to live in a fool's paradise, the more they will be horrified and discouraged by the reality. (Bertrand Russell)

The whole history of the progress of human liberty shows that all concessions yet made to her august claims have been born of struggle. ... If there is no struggle there is no progress. Those who profess to favor freedom and yet deprecate agitation, are men who want crops without plowing up the ground. They want rain without thunder and lightning. They want the ocean without the awful roar of its many waters... Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will. (Frederick Douglass, 1857)

[N]ationalism and state worship [are] the symptoms of a regression to incestuous fixation. Only when man succeeds in developing his reason and love further than he has done so far, only when he can build a world based on human solidarity and justice, only when he can feel rooted in the experience of universal brotherliness, will he have found a new, human form of rootedness, will he have transformed his world into a truly human home. (Erich Fromm)

In each country a web of myths evolves that allows the loyal citizenry to feel good about their nation, that depicts it and its people as generous, progressive, decent to a fault in its international behavior. People who question these myths, whether myths about a beneficent past, or the myths currently employed to put today's actions and policies in a favorable light, are thus highly offensive to good taste and basic feelings of right and wrong. These doubters of myths may even pose a threat to communal integration and policy, which rest on this foundation of myths, and societies therefore usually have methods for containing or squelching critics who raise such questions. (Edward Herman)

None are so hopelessly enslaved as those who falsely believe they are free. (Goethe)

We can easily forgive a child who is afraid of the dark; the real tragedy of life is when adults are afraid of the light. (Plato)

Them that don't do politics will be done. (French saying)

If the workers of the world want to win, all they have to do is recognize their own solidarity. They have nothing to do but fold their arms and the world will stop. The workers are more powerful with their hands in their pockets than all the property of the capitalists. (Joseph Ettor, IWW [Industrial Workers of the World] organizer)

Only dead fish follow the direction of the current. Live ones swim against it. (Malcolm Muggeridge; paraphrased)

Adam Smith summed up the vile maxim of the elite class as follows (back in 1776): “All for ourselves, and nothing for other people, seems, in every age of the world, to have been the vile maxim of the masters of mankind.”¹ To be sure, there was only contempt in the US for the “vile maxim” during the 19th century among industrial workers (including the lively and vibrant working class press), who bitterly condemned the advance of the Industrial Revolution and much of what it entailed, more concisely, the “‘New Spirit of the Age’: gain wealth, forgetting all but self.” Norman Ware, in *The Industrial Worker 1840-1860: The Reaction of American Industrial Society to the Advance of the Industrial Revolution* (published in 1924 and reprinted in 1990 by Ivan Dee, Chicago), describes, relying mostly on the labor press during the 19th century, how private power’s value system had to be hammered into the heads of ordinary folks, indoctrinating them to abandon normal human sentiments so that they could be replaced by the new spirit of the age. Workers then were concerned with what they called “degradation” and “the loss of dignity and independence, loss of self-respect, the decline of the worker as a person, the sharp decline in cultural level and cultural attainments as workers were subjected to wage slavery” (pp. xx, 20, 40-42, 81), which was regarded as not very different from chattel slavery, even insisting that “white slavery in the North [was] as evil as the black slavery of the South” (p. 50). The workers, who ran their own independent press, said that “When the producer, whether master or journeyman, sold his product, he retained his person. But when he came to sell his labor, he sold himself” (p. xx), thereby “los[ing] the rights of freemen,” while “the rich are growing richer and the poor, poorer, and Mammon is usurping sovereignty in all places” (p. xxi). “Here we see a moneyed aristocracy hanging over us like a mighty avalanche threatening annihilation to every man who dares to question their right to enslave and oppress the poor and unfortunate” (p. xxii). “They who work in the mills ought to own them” (p. 79), not have “the status of machines ruled by private despots who are entrenching monarchic principles on democratic soil as they drive downwards freedom and rights, civilization, health, morals and intellectuality in the new commercial feudalism” (pp. 78, 79, 81). All of this would have been inconceivable under conditions of brotherly love, solidarity and subsequent equality of condition (not just opportunity), which is a democratic imperative.

The idea of “free contract” between the master and his starving (or even well-fed, for that matter) subject is, of course, a sick joke. The reference here is not just to food, but to the need for freedom (both negative and positive freedoms; this distinction will be explained below), which is a fundamental human need and right. Case in point: “No long discussion is necessary to demonstrate that the power of denying a man his thought, his will, his personality, is a power of life and death, and that to make a man a slave is to assassinate him.” (Pierre-Joseph Proudhon)

The idea that wage labor is a form of oppression, in fact, not very different from actual slavery, is as “American as apple pie.” It was a standard theme in the independent working class press in the US from the early days of the Industrial Revolution. It was even a slogan of the Republican Party at the time of the Civil War. It was taken for granted that to have to rent yourself to survive is not very different than to have to sell yourself. It goes way back to the Enlightenment and the origins of classical liberalism. One of the founders of the latter, Wilhelm von Humboldt, wrote that if a person creates something beautiful under compulsion, meaning wage labor, we may admire what he does, but we despise what he is, not a free, independent, creative human being but a tool in someone else’s possession. It has to be admitted that the idea of working for the sake of creative, independent work rather than for the sake of survival sounds exotic to say the least, but that is precisely what positive freedom entails. In point of fact, a central tenet of classical liberalism is that people would be willing to work not for extrinsic rewards like power, fame, profit, etc., but for intrinsic rewards, which constitute the *highest* forms of fulfillment and self-realization. In other words, the more external rewards one receives

for one's labors, the more impoverished one becomes as a *human* being, since venality is arguably contrary to human nature.

Even Abraham Lincoln acknowledged the underlying principle of a class society in which the labor of the many is made the wealth of the few:

It is the eternal struggle between these two principles – right and wrong – throughout the world. They are the two principles that have stood face to face from the beginning of time; and will ever continue to struggle. The one common right of humanity, and the other divine right of kings. It is the same principle in whatever shape it develops itself. It is the same spirit that says, 'You toil and work and earn bread, and I'll eat it.'

He also gave a prescient warning about the highly negative import of concentrated wealth:

I see in the near future a crisis approaching that unnerves me and causes me to tremble for the safety of my country. ... corporations have been enthroned and an era of corruption in high places will follow, and the money of the country will endeavor to prolong its reign by working upon the prejudices of the people until all wealth is aggregated in a few hands and the Republic is destroyed. I feel at this moment more anxiety for the safety of my country than ever before, even in the midst of war.

William Forbath, in "The Ambiguities of Free Labor," brings to light labor struggles, aspirations, victories (however limited and short-lived) and defeats during the 18th and 19th centuries (but more in the latter period), in the US. He shows how "organized labor repudiated 'liberty of contract' as 'wage slavery' and forged an alternative vision of industrial cooperation," as noted, a vision that was not only part of the mainstream culture of American society and of the independent working class press, but even of a republican constitution: "A main tenet of republican ideology from Tom Paine and Thomas Jefferson's time to Lincoln's was that freedom entailed ownership of productive property,"² a tenet that has been seriously undermined by industrial capitalism, particularly since the 1920s. "Faced with these changes the Northern elite and middle class gradually departed from the traditional republican definition of the workingman's liberty in favor of a narrower, more strictly liberal definition: the worker's freedom rested simply in his ownership of his capacity to labor." This was described by workers at the time as "contradicting the worker's status as a citizen, " as "degrading," as "a form of slavery," and as "tyranny." Naturally, "the corporation's growing dominance was undermining individual freedom and 'equal rights' in ways fatal to republican government," a dominance that brought about "the spectre (sic) of a permanent propertyless and 'dependent' proletariat."

The problem with freedom in the context of labor is that it must not be allowed to preclude or undermine economic independence and ownership of productive property, "because such independence [is] essential to participating freely in the public realm," in the words of Forbath: "The propertyless 'servant' or 'hireling' was an untrustworthy citizen," since "His poverty and 'dependence' made him vulnerable to coercion, threatening the integrity of his opinions and his ballot." Of course, the ballot presupposes a relationship of power and subordination even under the best of conditions, but this was the 19th century, an era that predated corporate capitalism, since the latter is a 20th century phenomenon. So let us give the workers of that time the due that they deserve, since in some very important respects they were more enlightened, cultured, engaged and alive to the problems of their days than we are.

Since every worker should have an unrestricted, inviolable right to enjoy the *full* value of the fruits of his own labor (naturally not necessarily monetary only), under autonomous conditions of equality, without alienating and stifling, paternalistic guidance, instruction from owners, managers and coordinators (much less overbearing, predatory capital and outright orders from above), it is of the essence that workers are constantly inundated with the mantra: 'Maximize your consumption!', as if this will increase their well-being, when in fact it does the very opposite. It doesn't take a genius or a saint to see through this charade, for how else can

capitalists compel workers to come to accept the degrading and barbarous reality of wage labor unless they have internalized, willingly or reluctantly (it makes no difference in the end, since what counts is the eventual internalization, not the how) the capitalist story? It is want that compels workers to immorally sell their labor on the job market, wants created largely by the public relations industry, through advertising, which is a form of manipulation and deceit.

If we look at the history of modern capitalism, we will notice that “peasants had to be driven by force and violence into a wage-labor system they did not want; then major efforts were undertaken—conscious efforts—to create wants.” This capitalistic “need to manufacture wants in the general population” was a way of driving people “into a wage-labor society. In fact, what the whole history of capitalism shows is that people have to be *driven* into situations which are then claimed to be their nature.”³ Therefore, it does not follow from this that the “kindly” stimulus of poverty is preferable to the “degrading” coercion of the lash, since slavery is slavery no matter the pretexts and no matter how it is framed and rationalized.

The framework within which “freedom of contract” is propounded under corporate-capitalism to justify wage labor is by stressing the supply and demand nature of the “self-regulating” market. The worker is party to a contract, so the argument runs, one in which he voluntarily sells his labor in exchange for “gainful” employment through which he satisfies his needs, so where is the harm in that? The problem with this line of argument (which is utterly unsustainable), as Forbath points out, is that human labor is treated as a “vendible commodity,” and the word voluntary is used dubiously to “describe the labor of an individual who owns nothing and is ‘absolutely dependent’ on his employer.” He may be free in the narrowest and most superficial sense of the term, but more often than not he is only one paycheck away from starvation, which is unavoidable as long as one dollar = one vote in the marketplace, thereby making the latter profoundly undemocratic.

The abstract and illusory nature of “freedom of contract” or “free labor” under capitalist relations of production (and for that matter even under authoritarian socialist relations of production⁴) should be understood in the following terms (in the words of Forbath, pp. 810-11):

‘The anti-slavery *idea* ... was that every man has the right to come and go at will. The labor movement asks how much this abstract right is actually worth without the power to exercise it.’ Saddled with poverty and dependence, the laborer ‘instinctively feels that something of slavery still remains, or that something of freedom is yet to come, and he is not much interested in the anti-slavery theory of liberty.’ (Emphasis in original)

The ‘anti-slavery theory of liberty’ was, of course, the classic liberal definition of freedom—absent the legal bonds of slavery or serfdom a man was free. What the Northern laborer instinctively saw ... was the abstract quality of this freedom. And the worker’s liberty would remain abstract, or only partially realized, until the abolition of the wage system and the creation of a Co-operative Commonwealth.’

Within the wage labor system ... the laborer was an ‘itinerant chattel.’ The ‘laws do not compel anyone to work a longer time than may be acceptable to him; but when a man is without means to subsist upon, his wants compel him to work, and he must ask for employment as a favor from someone who has the property required to carry on productive work. In plain language, *property is a tyrant, and the people are its slaves.*’ (Emphasis in original)

In other words, ‘freedom of contract’ between employer and employee was illusory. As George E. McNeill, [an] Eight Hour League spokesman, argued to the Massachusetts Legislature’s Labor Committee in 1874: ‘The laborer’s commodity perishes everyday beyond possibility of recovery. He must sell today’s labor today, or never.’ The terms of such a sale were thus set by the employer. ‘An empty stomach can make no contracts.’ *The workers ‘do not consent, they submit but they do not agree.’* (Emphasis in original)

[Hence] no actual ‘freedom of contract’ could exist between labor and capital.

In other words, any contract between unequal powers will, far more likely than not, yield an inherently unjust outcome in practice, because enforcement is far easier for master than for

servant (due to the crass authority of money and the monopolization of violence by the wealthy through the state), despite the fact that the parties appear on paper as equals.

Where there is brotherly love and solidarity—hence industrial and economic democracy—there is no division of labor either. The first paragraph of chapter 1, Book 1 of Adam Smith’s work cited above reads: “The greatest improvement in the productive powers of labour, and the greater part of the skill, dexterity, and judgement (sic) with which it is anywhere directed, or applied, seem to have been the effects of the division of labour.” Corporate libertarians and their minions routinely use this statement to justify the prevailing forms of division of labor, but this is a fraud. Smith, in fact, bitterly condemned the division of labor and its pervasively harmful effects, warning, much later in the same work, that it would make people as stupid and ignorant as it is possible to become:

In the progress of the division of labour, the employment of the far greater part of those who live by labour, that is, of the great body of the people, comes to be confined to a few very simple operations; frequently to one or two. But the understandings of the greater part of men are necessarily formed by their ordinary employments. The man whose whole life is spent in performing a few simple operations, of which the effects too are, perhaps, always the same, or very nearly the same, has no occasion to exert his understanding, or to exercise his invention in finding out expedients for removing difficulties which never occur. He naturally loses, therefore, the habit of such exertion, and generally becomes as stupid and ignorant as it is possible for a human creature to become. The torpor of his mind renders him, not only incapable of relishing or bearing a part in any rational conversation, but of conceiving any generous, noble, or tender sentiment, and consequently of forming any just judgment concerning many even of the ordinary duties of private life. . . . His dexterity at his own particular trade seems, in this manner, to be acquired at the expence (sic) of his intellectual, social, and martial values. But in every improved and civilized society this is the state into which the labouring poor, that is, the great body of the people, must necessarily fall, unless government takes some pains to prevent it.⁵

The cruel logic of meritocracy does, of course, suggest that those who are at the top of the hierarchy deserve to be there on the merits of their talents and efforts (or on the alleged merits of efficiency resulting from hierarchical rule⁶), while those at the bottom do not deserve better for lack of talents and efforts. But that is clearly a specious argument, since the system is weighted towards certain groups (who obviously constitute a minority) and weighted against other groups (who constitute the vast majority), meaning that we are not living in a meritocracy, not by a long shot. James Madison, one of the founders of American democracy, made that clear when he mandated that “The primary task of government is to protect the minority of the opulent against the majority.” And how did the minority become opulent to begin with? In brief, though violence and robbery (both historically and contemporarily), which is not even a controversial claim.⁷

Even though money-hungry marauders (political and economic masters) know that only very few of the many who seek wealth will find it, still, it is of inestimable importance for them to peddle “rags to riches” stories with great enthusiasm, because they are a useful myth for control. By mindlessly and pathologically seeking wealth, forgetting all but self, we surely destroy our sense of community without which we cannot renew democracy and regain, or gain for the first time, our status as sovereign citizens, hence cannot thrive as a human race, cannot realize our fullest human potentialities. In other words, seeking wealth for self and one’s kin entails cutthroat competition among the have-nots, which cunningly keeps them diverted (from what is being done *to* them by the rich and powerful) and controlled, thereby allowing the few to continue fattening on the many, literally and proverbially, while selling the seductive illusion of wealth and power to the many. This is why Eduardo Galeano said: “The majority must resign itself to the consumption of fantasy. Illusions of wealth are sold to the poor, illusions of freedom to the oppressed, dreams of victory to the defeated and of power to the weak.”⁸

This kind of alienation is dangerously inimical to democratic equality, encouraging as it does a widening gap between the haves and have-nots, inevitably, since wealth is narrowly concentrated, so that most people who seek wealth do so in vain. Case in point: as the highly respected Lasswell observed, “capitalistic society is a great confidence game, for it feeds on fantastic hopes. Millions throb with the prospect of fabulous riches in an economic system which is *inherently* destined to disappoint most of them.”⁹

Put differently, democratic equality will never be achieved as long as we are alienated from human values, from nature, and from social and political reality, as long as we fail to challenge the disdainful superiority that men have over other men. Nor can this problem be resolved as long as we choose the *having* mode over the *being* mode of existence. We live in a soulless culture that promotes and glorifies the former at the expense of the latter. The *early libertarian* Karl Marx delineated the difference between having and being as two fundamentally opposite principles in the following terms: the science of capitalistic economy is

a truly moral science, the most moral science of all. Self-denial, the denial of life and of all human needs, is its principal doctrine. The less you eat, drink, buy books, go to the theatre, go dancing, go drinking, think, love, theorize, sing, paint, fence, etc., the more you save and the greater will become that treasure which neither moths nor maggots can consume – your capital. The less you are, the less you give expression to your life, the more you have, the greater is your alienated life and the more you store up of your estranged life. Everything which the political economist takes from you in terms of life and humanity, he restores to you in the form of money and wealth, and everything which you are unable to do, your money can do for you: it can eat, drink, go dancing, go to the theatre, it can appropriate art, learning, historical curiosities, political power, it can travel, it is capable of doing all those things for you; it can buy everything; it is genuine wealth, genuine ability. But for all that, it only likes to create itself, to buy itself, for after all everything else is its servant. And when I have the master I have the servant, and I have no need of his servant. So all passions and all activity are lost in greed. The worker is only permitted to have enough for him to live, and he is only permitted to live in order to have.¹⁰

Imposing capitalistic values on human beings is no small task, which is where propaganda comes into play, by (among other ways) openly and furtively promoting the having mode over the being mode. Fanning the flames of avarice is, of course, highly conducive to increasing profits for the large transnationals (because we let them induce in us the sickening desire to consume more, with devastating effects on the South particularly), but it is also highly corrosive in social and environmental terms.¹¹

Even though propaganda is defined in many convergent and divergent ways depending on who is defining the term and in whose interests one is doing so (if one does so at all), a good definition was given by George Sylvester Viereck, head of the German drive in the US prior to 1917: “Propaganda ... is a campaign camouflaging its origin, its motives or both, conducted for the purpose of obtaining a specific objective by the manipulation of public opinion.”

Undoubtedly, corporate propaganda’s role in legitimating the moneyed aristocracy that is sacrificing humanity at the altar of the necrophilous market is very significant, since corporate power’s *undemocratic* rise to dominance would have been impossible without the help of public relations both inside and outside the corporation, so that soulless corporations are personified and humanized in the public eye (Norton Long), with the help of the technocratic elite (meaning “our universities, our schools, our specialists, our scientific men and our writers and those who do the actual work of management in the ideological and economic institutions”—Charles Francis Adams), who have replaced the traditional aristocratic elite. This is why Stuart Ewen observed in the opening words of his work titled *PR! The Social History of Spin*:

aristocratic paradigms of deference could no longer hold up in the face of modern, democratic, public ideals that were boiling up among the ‘lower strata’ of society... The explosive ideals of democracy challenged ancient customs that had long upheld social inequality. A public claiming

the birthright of democratic citizenship and social justice increasingly called upon institutions and people of power to justify themselves and their privileges. In the crucible of these changes, aristocracy began to give way to technocracy as a strategy of rule.

It is with this imperative in mind that Zbigniew Brzezinski, adviser to several presidents since the Carter Administration and one of the most influential gurus in Washington, said (in his *Between Two Ages: America's Role in the Technetronic Era*, online): “In the technetronic society the trend seems to be toward aggregating the individual support of millions of unorganized citizens, who are easily within the reach of magnetic and attractive personalities, and effectively exploiting the latest communication techniques to manipulate emotions and control reason.”

There is an important lesson to be learned here: while literacy is indispensable for the instigation and flourishing of democracy, there is a significant downside: functional illiteracy, which simply means ignorance among the educated, which unfortunately is a widespread phenomenon, particularly in the West. The problem lies in the fact that the more formal education people receive, the more they tend to read and the more credulous they become, hence the more they receive propaganda, unless they read critically. Which is not encouraged by the institutions of cultural transmission, hence not a common trait among intellectuals. It has long been recognized that what we call education in the West is a way of indoctrinating the masses (it is a bourgeoisification process; a status-seeking rather than an enlightenment-seeking tool), so that we (elites) can “keep them from our throats,” as Ralph Waldo Emerson put it in his criticism of the educational system as an instrument of social control. Case in point (as Brzezinski himself put it in *ibid.*): “The university in an industrial society—in contrast to the situation in medieval times—is an aloof ivory tower, the repository of irrelevant, even if respected, wisdom, and for a brief time the fountainhead for budding members of the established social elite. In the technetronic society the university becomes an intensely involved “think tank,” the source of much sustained political planning and social innovation.”

Since ‘social engineering’ covertly accounts for a big part of formal education, it is only natural that young people’s expectations need to be domesticated by the institutions of higher learning. Thus we read (in the Report on the Governability of Democracies to the Trilateral Commission—a private organization of elites in the US, Western Europe and Japan, founded at David Rockefeller’s initiative in 1973 and funded by his family’s wealth—entitled *The Crisis of Democracy* [online], published in 1975 and co-authored by Samuel P. Huntington, Michel J. Crozier, and Joji Watanuki): since questioning of official power tends to cause “a breakdown of traditional means of social control” by undermining “those institutions which have played the major role in the indoctrination of the young,” we need to institute “a program...to lower the job expectations of those who receive a college education,” while addressing just enough of the demands of organized labor to keep workers quiet (organized, that is, through paternalistic trade unions which are an essential element of capitalism, according to Anton Pannekoek: “Though products of the workers’ fight, kept up by their pains and efforts, trade unions are at the same time organs of capitalist society.” Still, they are instruments of democratization, for workers education, exchanging ideas, making plans, entering into political actions, etc. So they should be supported under existing power).

Since much of formal education is selection for obedience, it is understandable that most students will yield to the strong pressures to conform to orthodoxy, given the significant *drawbacks (as opposed to risks to life and limb)* associated with disobedience in the West. If one is sufficiently disciplined and indifferent to social injustice, the higher echelons can be attained fairly easily, since the system rewards obedience while punishing (or at the very least not rewarding) disobedience. If students are independent and strident, they inevitably disrupt the system, at least in the more ideological disciplines: the (anti-)social sciences and (in)humanities. There cannot, by definition, be too many ideological constraints in the natural sciences. The latter

are inherently subversive (even if it is still quite common for students to end up internalizing elite values in this context, too), since there is no other way of making progress; but the social sciences are by definition very conservative, as they must be if the status quo is going to be maintained.

This is why Lasswell said, “there must be something in the structure of our modern society which renders the propaganda function peculiarly indispensable, and that an ethical system which is consonant with present practices must be capable of restatement in a form which sanctions propaganda.”¹² He also said a few years later that “America’s debt to propaganda is very great.”¹³ And that “for better or for worse, the future of business is bound up with propaganda” (ibid., p. 357). So what is it in the structure of our modern society which renders the propaganda function peculiarly indispensable (his talk about an “ethical system” in this context constituting a chimera, of course)? It is the undemocratic nature of the economic system. When power and wealth are concentrated rather than dispersed (which is an *egregious* violation of democratic norms), that requires huge efforts, ideologically, to gain sanction for plutocracy by “secure[ing] the firm attachment of [the] national audience to the *status quo*” (Herbert Schiller), which is done through propaganda.¹⁴ That is why our leaders are indoctrinating us with platitudes about democracy—because the system is undemocratic (which means that we should take our cues from their actual performances rather than their stated intentions).

Since there is no other way of justifying, spuriously of course, four-year dictatorships, except by instilling elite values in non-elites, it is easy to see why propaganda—which is to a formal democracy what violence is to a totalitarian state—is indispensable to elite interests. Thus, as Walter Lippmann (the dean of US journalists, a major theorist of liberal democracy and a veteran of the Creel Commission) put the matter: “...with literacy general in the whole population, with inventions for communicating instantaneously with the population of the entire earth, a political system that will refine, rather than respond abjectly to, manufactured mass opinion is more than ever indispensable.”¹⁵ Put differently, the winning of power by propaganda underscores the indispensability of public opinion as a bulwark against freedom and democracy.

In the Trilateral world particularly, our minds are constantly bombarded with a commodity consciousness that repeats the mantra: ‘seek wealth and buy more stuff in order to be more happy.’ In other words, *existential having* is dangerously predicated on *characterological having* (see note 63 for an explanation of the italicised terms). These two modes are presented as hardly even having any noticeable distinction between them. But like much else, this is a social construction dripping with ideology. It serves the short-term interests of the rich and powerful very well while demoralizing the masses. It cannot be otherwise (so far as the latter claim goes) because maximizing consumption is *not* a core human value. If it were, the PR industry would not need to spend billions of dollars every year constantly urging us to shop until we drop (this expense is tax deductible, which means that the public is coerced to pay for the privilege of being brainwashed). Which leads us to a very optimistic conclusion about human nature: “The fact that corporations and governments feel compelled to spend billions of dollars every year manipulating the public is a perverse tribute to human nature and our own moral values.”¹⁶

Since authentic love has been a rare phenomenon in the modern period particularly, it is no surprise that the ideological quest for money is a defining cultural trait throughout much of the world, since it is not just a reflection of, but an overcompensation for, lack of authentic love:

Our seemingly insatiable quest for money and material consumption is in fact a quest to fill a void in our lives created by a lack of love. It is a consequence of dysfunctional societies in which money has displaced our sense of spiritual connection as the foundation of our cultural values and relationships. The result is a world of material scarcity, massive inequality, overtaxed environmental systems, and social disintegration. As long as we embrace money-making as our collective purpose and structure our institutions to give this goal precedence over all others, the void in our lives will grow and the human crisis will deepen.¹⁷

The solution, according to Korten (ibid.), is to “create societies that give a higher value to nurturing love than to making money.” And by love, it must be understood that we are talking about *non-hegemonic* love, as opposed to sadomasochistic attachment, which is the prevailing form of love today, between parents and children, husbands and wives, teachers and students, etc. (in the second instance, the roles are not fixed but switch according to caprice).

Erich Fromm, in *The Art of Loving*, shows compellingly that “love is not a sentiment which can be easily indulged in by anyone, regardless of the level of maturity reached by him. ...all his attempts for love are bound to fail, unless he tries most actively to develop his total personality, so as to achieve a productive orientation; that satisfaction in individual love cannot be attained without the capacity to love one’s neighbor, without true humility, courage, faith [in reason and the potential for good in humanity] and [self-]discipline.” And he correctly concludes that “In a culture in which these qualities are rare, the attainment of the capacity to love must remain a rare phenomenon.”¹⁸

Fromm’s postulation that love for one’s flesh and blood is no achievement, since even animals are capable of loving and caring for their offspring, is a damning implicit indictment of the nuclear family, since the (totalitarian) family system is a miniature state¹⁹ in which submissive and hegemonic values are reproduced in the young pursuant to their preparation for societal life. The more the child is exposed to arbitrary authority during its upbringing, the more smoothly (*as opposed to naturally*) it will execute its function later in life by submitting to state, church and corporate authority (all of which are coercive hence illegitimate), while also dominating those he can dominate insofar as his social position allows domination (to the detriment of psychosocial health in himself and others, of course). If he doesn’t, then he always has the possibility of procreating, since children are always fair game, towards whom society (even Western society) generally shows nothing but the most depraved indifference, even in cases involving extreme—physical, psychological/emotional, and sexual—abuse (indeed, loving parents are the exception rather than the rule, since toxic parenting is a very pervasive problem throughout the world, as many studies have shown). The point is simply this: *there is a strong connection between the having mode and the authoritarian structure*. Fromm elaborates this point thus: “...in the having mode, and thus the authoritarian structure, sin is disobedience and is overcome by repentance → punishment → renewed submission. In the being mode, the non-authoritarian structure, sin is unresolved estrangement, and it is overcome by the full unfolding of reason and love, by at-onement.”²⁰

The implication of this analysis is quite staggering in terms of international peace and conflict, which is a question of paramount importance in today’s world particularly, because unless war is renounced once and for all by all states (virtually impossible as long as brutal hierarchies exist), but especially by the most powerful ones (since they have acquired the capacity to obliterate human society, as they sooner or later will), the chances of survival for the species are *extremely* slim. Case in point: “Peace as a state of lasting harmonious relations between nations is only possible when the having structure is replaced by the being structure. The idea that one can build peace while encouraging the striving for possession and profit is an illusion, and a dangerous one, because it deprives people of recognizing that they are confronted with a clear alternative: either a radical change of their character or the perpetuity of war.”²¹

George Orwell was astute in his observation pertaining to continuous war and its correlation with status quo preservation by keeping non-elite society on the verge of bankruptcy (in other words, “the war of classes underlies all wars among nations”—Emma Goldman):

It’s not a matter of whether the war is not real or if it is. Victory is not possible. It is meant to be continuous. A hierarchical society is only possible on the basis of poverty and ignorance. This new version is the path, and no different path can ever have existed. In principle the war effort is always planned to keep society at the brink of starvation. The war is waged by the ruling group

against its own subjects, and its object is not the victory over either Eurasia or East Asia, but to keep the structure of the society intact.

By any rational and honest standard, vast asymmetries of wealth and power are incompatible with the most basic requirement of democracy: dispersing power and profit, inevitably leading to a decent standard of living (including free quality education at all levels, free or very affordable quality health care and housing) for every citizen, able-bodied as well as disabled. Case in point: “We can either have democracy in this country or we can have great wealth concentrated in the hands of a few, but we can’t have both.” (Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis) Even Thomas Jefferson—who supported independent production, *not* capitalism, and having no trouble perceiving the basic contradiction between democracy and barbarian capitalism—duly observed the danger posed to democracy by concentrated wealth and its attendant poverty: “widespread poverty and concentrated wealth cannot exist side by side in a democracy.” Since Jefferson was partly a classical liberal, it is understandable that he had faith in the common people: “I know of no safe depository of the ultimate powers of society but the people themselves, and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform their discretion by education.”

For genuine democracy to be instigated, the commanding heights of the means of production and resources, of commerce and finance, have to come completely under workers’ control, a conception shared by anarcho-syndicalists, non-Bolshevik Marxists, and classical liberals, including Adam Smith and Wilhelm von Humboldt (bearing in mind that classical liberalism is anti-capitalist not in its conception but in its evolution, though not in the way that it has been made to evolve by the “bought priesthood” of the prevailing system). John Dewey (America’s leading 20th century philosopher and a relic of the classical liberal tradition; his views were right out of the mainstream, in the 1920s) put the matter in this way: “The magic of eating a hair of the dog which bit you in order to cure hydrophobia is as nothing to the magic involved in the belief that those who have privilege and power will remedy the breakdown they have created. As long as politics is the shadow cast on society by big business, the attenuation of the shadow will not change the substance,” meaning reforms are of limited utility. He held that for democracy to be instigated, the source of the shadow must be removed, not only because of its domination of the political arena, but also because the very institutions of private power undermine democracy and education. The anti-democratic power that Dewey had in mind was explicitly delineated thus:

Power today resides in control of the means of production, exchange, publicity, transportation and communication. Whoever owns them rules the life of the country [despite formal democracy], not necessarily by intention, not necessarily by deliberate corruption of the nominal government, but by necessity. Power is power and must act, and it must act according to the nature of the machinery through which it operates. In this case, the machinery is business for private profit through private control of banking, land, industry, reinforced by command of the press, press agents and other means of publicity and propaganda. In order to restore democracy, one thing and one thing only is essential. The people will rule when they have power, and they will have power in the degree they own and control the land, the banks, the producing and distributing agencies of the nation. Ravings about Bolshevism, Communism, Socialism are irrelevant to the axiomatic truth of this statement. They come either from complaisant ignorance or from the deliberate desire of those in possession, power and rule to perpetuate their privilege.

(Those who try to stigmatize the practical ideal of equality inherent in libertarian socialism by falsely associating it with “scare words” like Marxism and Leninism should be stigmatized for their own authoritarian socialism, since virtually every component of high tech industry relies heavily on public subsidy and a state-guaranteed market in the West, either against the public’s will or without its knowledge, meaning huge amounts of taxpayer funds are sacrificed at the altar of corporate profit, which amounts to a form of collectivism and robbery. For example, as the

business press put it, high tech industry cannot survive in a “pure, competitive, unsubsidized, ‘free enterprise’ economy” [*Fortune*, January 1948, p. 77f], so the government must be its savior. In other words, the system is designed in large measure to socialize risk and cost while privatizing profit, with no public voice. Only when this problem has been squarely faced and the practice done away with will Western leaders and their puppets have a leg to stand on, before they can credibly defame libertarian socialism [which has no such malevolent designs as the need or the desire to externalize risk and cost]. As it is, they ooze authoritarian socialism in much of what they do, and say, since they often adopt vulgar Marxist rhetoric and concepts.)

Dewey was very much alive to the pernicious effects of inequality. “The ultimate problem of production,” he said,

is the production of human beings. To this end, the production of goods is intermediate and auxiliary. It is by this standard that the present system stands condemned. ‘Security’ is a means, and although an indispensable social means, is not the end. . . . The means have to be implemented by a social-economic system that establishes and uses the means for the production of free human beings associating with one another on terms of equality. Then and only then will these means be an integral part of the end, not frustrated and self-defeating, bringing new evils and generating new problems.²²

So as long as industry does not change “from a feudalistic to a democratic social order,” based on workers’ control, free association and federal organization (in the style of George Douglas Howard Cole’s guild socialism and much left libertarian thought), it is quite meaningless to talk about democracy. (N.B. The principle of federation is the granting of maximum autonomy and communal organization to each and every unity of production.)

The need for a demilitarized economy in a genuine democracy is also crucial, for, as Lasswell duly observed: “. . .the threats to individual freedom in an emerging state of chronic mobilization are recognized as imperiling some of the deepest traditions of the body politic.”²³ He also recognized the question of how chronic mobilization would conduce to a failure in providing for a rising standard of living, which in turn would conduce to draconian police measures, naturally to the detriment of civil liberties (ibid., p. 115):

The prevailing expectation among our leaders appears to be that ‘consumption as usual’ is necessary in order to sustain the necessary volume of incentives for the defense effort. Hence the hope is to avoid many drastic curtailments of consumption, and to divert resources into defense measures by the “invisible” device of failing to provide for a rising standard of living. . . . Resentments connected with deprivations in the consuming sphere may accumulate and discharge in ways that provoke police measures as means of combating lawlessness and noncompliance. Premiums are then put upon the search for the discomforts and the creeping immoralities of public and private life. Invasions of individual freedom may be pushed for administrative reasons, and tolerated for security reasons, with the result that liberty is crushed in the process.

It is, thus, not without good reason that Randolph Bourne said: “War is the health of the state.” Even Lasswell said something to the same effect in *Policy Sciences*, Vol. 36, No. 1, p. 82: “. . .so long as the effective radius of the bombing plane increases, the size of political units will expand.” In point of fact, the US came out of WWII as a major industrial power. Not only that, but there is every reason to believe that WWII *is* what enabled the US to come out of the Great Depression (since war, or at least continuous preparations for war, is good for big business), which in turn led to the creation of a “permanent war economy,” with an ever-increasing military budget, currently higher than during most of the Cold War. Stephen G. Brooks and William C. Wohlforth claim, in their “American Primacy in Perspective: From Strength to Strength,” that the US currently commits only 3.5 percent of its GDP to defense spending, in contrast to 5 to 14 percent during the Cold War. These figures seem about right, but the authors nevertheless overlook an important fact: current military spending is higher than during most of the Cold War,

though not enormously so, but is of course a much smaller percentage of GDP. However, the latter figure is meaningless. If the budget were for defense, it would not matter how large GDP is. Defense is relative to threats, not GDP. Since the budget is for offense, not defense primarily, it is relative to intended targets, not to GDP. Irrelevant again. The claim that the budget is for offense, not defense primarily, can be ascertained on the basis of the fact that every single enemy of the US since at least the war's end has been a chimerical fabrication, to keep the economy afloat for the ruling elites (amply demonstrated in William Blum's *Killing Hope* and *Rogue State*). Even the 9-11 attacks were the legacy and debris of the Cold War. During the 1980s the US recruited, armed, trained, and financed the most fanatical killers it could find to drive the Russians out of Afghanistan, after which the mujahedins were tossed by the wayside. The rationale for concocting a parade of enemies has to do with concealing the fact that the primary enemy has always been the domestic population, against whom the ruling elite must wage a bitter class war, and for which purpose foreign and domestic enemies, rarely real, provide the perfect pretext for diverting resources from the poor (who are rich in the aggregate, of course) to the rich and powerful, through the Pentagon system. The distinction between real and imagined enemies is not a very significant one, since even the real ones are a product of Western belligerence or at least wholesale social injustice, as with jihad terrorism for example, which is a byproduct or outgrowth of US violence and wholesale oppression in the Middle East. If we look at colonial—and postcolonial—policies and practices throughout the world, we see, in fact, that "...the whole history of terrorism has a pedigree in the policies of imperialists." (Edward Said)

The offensive nature of advanced military-based state capitalism is easily substantiated in the following terms: consistent with the norms of the democrata-torship,

The new [military preparedness] standard is to maintain military superiority over all potential rivals and to prepare now for future military rivalries even if they can not yet be identified and their eventual arrival is only speculative... Military requirements have become detached from net assessments of actual security threats. Generic wars and generic capabilities are proffered as the basis of planning. Particularities of real threat scenarios have become secondary to the generalized need to show raw U.S. power across the globe.²⁴

Ominously, there are enough nuclear weapons—even the *possession* of which is illegal under international law, according to the 1968 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which was extended indefinitely in 1995. The treaty is considered the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime. And it, besides outlawing the militarization of space, even obligates nuclear powers not only to limit proliferation but "to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects," per the legally binding advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice in 1996—in this world to wipe out the entire population of the globe many times over, within hours. It is indeed in defense of the having structure of existence that the US has had a permanent war economy since WWII, and in fact has waged perpetual war (more accurately, has carried out wars of aggression, genocide and terror) during the post-UN Charter period (claiming anywhere between 12-20 million violent deaths, all of them unprovoked—add at least 1.5 million to that for Iraqi deaths by the U.S-led coalition post-2003, not to speak of *tens of millions* of premature, poverty-related deaths in the South and the East *every year* as a consequence of the West's orthodox neoliberal economic policies which are forcefully imposed on the world. The project of imposing the neoliberal mode of subordination on much of the world has resulted in an incalculable debt, so far as unmet social needs are concerned. The United Nations recently estimated that the number of people facing severe hunger has just passed one billion! And the World Food Program announced that it's got to cut back its contributions by 20-25 percent because the rich donor countries aren't meeting their *meager* obligations and promises to provide aid).

Since the above claim that war is good for big business might appear suspect to those who are brainwashed, it is well to consider the following: in their “American Hegemony: Without An Enemy,” Christopher Layne (senior fellow of the Cato Institute) and Benjamin Schwarz (international policy analyst at the RAND Corporation), observe that

The USSR’s demise has also forced the American foreign policy elite to be more candid in articulating the assumptions of American strategy. . . . Underpinning U.S. world order strategy is the belief that America must maintain what is in essence a military protectorate in economically critical regions to ensure that America’s vital trade and financial relations will not be disrupted by political upheaval. This kind of economically determined strategy articulated by the foreign policy elite ironically (perhaps unwittingly) embraces a quasi-Marxist or, more correctly, a Leninist interpretation of American foreign relations. Such views surprisingly echo the radical “open door school” view of American foreign policy advanced by William Appleman Williams and other left-wing historians. . . . Rather than being the stimulus to peace that it is touted to be, economic interdependence—and the need to protect America’s stakes in it—is invoked to justify a post-Cold War U.S. military presence in Europe and East Asia and military intervention in the Balkan conflict. . . . In effect, the foreign policy establishment has embraced the proposition that wars (or at least continuous preparations for war) are necessary for the American economy to prosper.²⁵

To backtrack, it is also in defense of the having mode that the US is (in collaboration with Israel, Japan and parts of Western Europe) accelerating the militarization of outer space for admittedly offensive purposes under the thin cover of 9/11 (with massively destructive—probably nuclear-powered—laser weapons that will be on hair-trigger alert, and may well do us all in, not least because there is plenty of room for inadvertence, miscalculation and malfunction when dealing with such highly complex technological systems), to further widen the gap between the haves and have-nots. It is in defense of the having mode that the US has instituted a first-strike nuclear option against any state (even and especially non-nuclear states) in the world (to my best knowledge, Obama has not done, and most likely doesn’t intend to do, anything to rescind this option.). Which, if put into effect, is virtually guaranteed to produce a domino effect that will almost certainly lead to extinction of the species.²⁶ The long and short of it is that existing property relations throughout the state capitalist parts of the world are preserved by force and fraud at tremendous social and environmental costs. But the irony is that “Force is the universal coin which is used to hide and to deny impotence.”²⁷ (This holds true for those who pimp for war as well, even if it is only in the form of cheerleading. The fashionable but utterly dishonorable practice of urging everyone to “pray for our troops”: *the aggressors*, is also a form of jingoist hysteria. Which is underpinned by, *inter alia*, racism wrapped in “patriotism.” But it also has the nice effect of spuriously albeit highly consequentially legitimating the bloodfest, of violently perpetuating neo-colonialism under the deceitful guise of “Holy Justice”: another testimony to “the sacralization of war” [i.e., the merger of militarism and the church], which is nothing new; it dates back to the Old Testament era and is still alive and well, readily and effectively applied by the major powers whenever they desperately seek to justify self-serving fraud and criminal violence. And, most revealingly, so deeply ingrained is the imperial mentality and the patriotic drivel underlying it that those who pimp for war do not, of course, offer even a passing thought much less a tiny fraction of a prayer for the tens of millions of innocent victims of Western aggression, terrorism, genocide and colonial wars in the post-UN Charter period alone, quite in accord with their limitless hypocrisy [one is reminded here of Reinhold Niebuhr’s words: “Perhaps the most significant moral characteristic of a nation is its hypocrisy.”]. Besides, what is it exactly that we are supposed to pray for? That our troops carry out slaughter a bit less inhumanely in Iraq and Afghanistan, perhaps? Or that God salves their guilty consciences, if any? Or that God blesses and protects the blood profit from oil and gas? Or that God protects our troops from the sectarian violence that the ultra-criminal US invasion/occupation itself is *solely* responsible for having created in Iraq? Or that God continues to bless our troops so they can

continue to selflessly protect our liberties, when in fact both wars are racist, colonial wars that are undermining whatever is left of our liberties in very significant ways? What all this goes to show—apart from Christians’ utter lack of genuine faith by praying and urging others to do the same, since Jesus urges us not to pray [Mathew 6:24-34]—is that religion, which is a form of “collective insanity” and a way of taming the masses, does more than its fair share in promoting the having mode and necrophilia, since, from time immemorial, the sword and the cross have marched together in the conquest and plunder of the Third World. With churches that are, for the most part, either outspokenly for war or timidly silent, we have lived upon the blood of others for a very long time! When will we stop participating in the “glorious” butcheries of innocent men, women and children whom we slay in the name of freedom and democracy, and, often enough, even in the name of God? To be sure, blood plays a central role in Christians’ lives: “the sacrificial lamb”; “the blood of Jesus”; “our sins are washed away by his blood”; “we are sanctified through his blood”; “when he returns he will destroy all the infidels and let them drown in their own blood” – even though Christians are more infidel than any other religious group, since Christianity did *not* destroy Paganism but *adopted* it. There is also that evil or at least sick ritual called ‘Holy Communion’ [which is a totally unbiblical practice, discussed in “The Quiet Storm,” mentioned in note 66], in which bread symbolizes the body of Jesus and wine or red juice symbolizes his blood, which Christians can never get enough of! The secular metamorphosis of this is that when our troops are out there spilling blood, it is to protect our precious liberties, since America is the Promised Land. The fact that the bloodletting is framed in defensive terms is humbug, of course, since every single war waged by the US since at least the end of WWII has been illegal and immoral. But who cares about that when our God purifies our arms and gives us the divine license to kill in defense of our manifest destiny? Such is the nature of religious fundamentalism, a severe threat to freedom and democracy, and a crime against even God, i.e., the God of the *Gospel and the Koran*. The reason all this is relevant in the context of power and force is that Christian fundamentalists, “at 60 million strong, represent the single most powerful voting block in U.S. history, providing the ultra-right with the rationale for punishing evil and condemning whole populations to submission and poverty in the Third World [Edward Said, *Counterpunch*, Nov. 16, 2002; paraphrased]. They are, indeed, a pervasive force in the world, the leaders of which, claiming to do God’s will and to fight his battles in his name, contribute in no small measure to the concoction of enemies [at the least, the government’s concoctions receive their enthusiastic blessings], while feasting and fattening on the imposed misfortunes of ordinary folks at home and abroad. Surely, religious fundamentalism in the US compares with that of certain West and Central Asian states, including Iran, Saudi Arabia and the toppled Taliban regime in Afghanistan [the latter being an offshoot of the former], that is, culture-wise, since the separation of church and state seems to be intact in the US, despite the comical insanity of “under God.” To make matters worse, the Christian coalition in the US is among the two or three strongest special interest groups and lobbyists, which partly explains why US fundamentalism is so powerful, so much so that every politician pretends to be a fervent religious whatever. But none of this should be construed to mean that the criterion for the farcical “war against terror,” for example, is religion; it is not. The criteria are subordination and service to power.) In other words, coercive power is a pathological, compulsive overcompensation for psychological weakness. In this sense, the lust for power is the expression of “the desperate attempt to gain secondary strength where genuine strength is lacking.”²⁸ On the other hand, tenderness—which of course does not preclude assertiveness and firmness when situations warrant it—is the *strongest* possible affirmation of life, based on and reflecting one’s own genuine inner strength and maturity, not to mention biophilia.

It is noteworthy that true peace within and between nations cannot be realized without equality of condition, solidarity, and loving acts (pretty much in that order). And these are

impossible as long as *we are what we have*, which is a very precarious structure of existence. If our sense of identity is based on what we have, then it is always threatened, because what we have can be lost. “If I feel I am what I have, and I have nothing anymore, then *I am not*” (Fromm), I cease to be sane, to be potent, to love, to enjoy life, to be enlightened, creative and free. The only way to free ourselves of the anxiety and danger of losing ourselves because something may be taken from us, is if we restructure our whole existence around the being mode, that is to say, on the expression of our inner faculties and potentialities in the world, in what we do, not necessarily in an outward sense, but in the sense of the contemplative life, rooted in humanistic ideals. Such an expression does, of course, necessitate outward activity too (in this case, *I am what I think and do*), with the proviso that it serves humanistic ends through socially and morally desirable means (i.e., unalienated activity), always guarding against the very real danger that constructive means do not become destructive ends, as has been the case so far.

Spinoza made an insightful observation regarding irrational passions, such as pursuing wealth, power, fame, etc. He called such strivings a form of insanity: “But if the *greedy* person thinks only of money and possessions, the ambitious one only of fame, one does not think of them as being insane, but only as annoying; generally one has contempt for them. But *factually*, greediness, ambition, and so forth are forms of insanity, although one does not usually think of them as ‘illness’.”²⁹

Not only is the quest for money an overcompensation for lack of genuine love, but, in parallel, for Marx the “struggle between capital and labour (sic) ... was the fight between aliveness and deadness, the present versus the past, people versus things, being versus having. For Marx the question was: Who should rule whom – should life rule the dead, or the dead rule life?” Put differently, “*Being refers to life* and to the present; *having, to death* and to the past.”³⁰ This is not a hyperbolic or metaphorical statement, for, as noted, our artificial well-being in the West translates into ill-being and devastation for much of the Third World, including the Second.

Finding a real, long-term and once-and-for-all solution to global poverty should occupy the highest place on the agenda of progressive activists in the West, because the fire of imposed destitution on Africa and the rest of the Third and Second Worlds (including the Third World within the First) is now so complete that it is no longer possible to turn a blind eye to it, if we have any humanity and decency at all left in us. We do, after all, share responsibility for the monstrous crimes against humanity that our leaders have been perpetrating in our names for centuries (crimes that make Hitler and Stalin *combined* look like petty murderers!).

To be sure, foreign aid could, at least in theory, help alleviate poverty in the South if it didn’t have any destructive conditionalities attached to it and was much higher than prevailing miserly levels. But in the real world of power and subordination, the answer to poverty in the South does not *necessarily* lie in foreign aid³¹—which is so shamefully low as to be laughable, since it claimed only 0.22 percent of GNP of the OECD countries in 2002, far short of the meager 0.77 percent goal agreed to by the international community—since aid presupposes a legitimate claim to one’s holdings, but far-reaching changes in the dominant societies, from the bottom up, by democratizing the economic system and the international order, so that resources are distributed on equitable terms, crucially without overlooking the need for massive reparations to the Third World particularly (for all the absolutely horrifying and highly consequential crimes perpetrated against it since the time of European colonialism), including substantial if not complete debt cancellation, since most Third World indebtedness is illegitimate.³²

The problem with the flow of foreign aid from rich to pauperized countries is that much of it is publicly-subsidized export promotion, which results in socially harmful practices. For example, the so-called ‘debt crisis’ (which is an ideological construct rather than a simple economic fact, and from which much Western coercive power derives) forces pauperized countries to open up their markets to a flood of heavily subsidized Western agricultural products.

Which are dumped at artificially low prices to undermine local production, thereby giving the West a monopoly on humanity's staples. To make matters worse, the South is not allowed to export finished products to rich countries; if it tries to, it is slapped with high tariffs, which it naturally cannot afford, in the light of artificial conversion to poverty. Instead, the South is forced to export primary materials: raw products, minerals, etc., which the West is only too happy to absorb (nay, cannot even do without!). These are then returned in the form of finished goods to the South, which is obliged to buy them back at grossly inflated prices (the reference here is to non-agricultural products).

So the only kind of development that is tolerated and even strongly supported and encouraged in the Third World is that of production for export (because this is a *resource-extractive sector*), which has a double, symbiotic purpose: 1) It is through such export platforms in the artificially poor South that primary products are expropriated by the artificially rich industrial economies under the sacred mantles of 'trade' and 'comparative advantage,' and 2) Debt service forces pauperized countries to keep their economies oriented to production of exports, so that they can earn foreign exchange with which to service their debts, according to Justin Podur. As he duly observes, "Debt service takes an appalling share of income countries need to keep their people alive, and it also forces countries to keep their economies oriented to production of exports to earn foreign exchange. For every aid dollar received by Africa in 1993, three dollars left Africa in debt service; four-fifths of Uganda's export earnings go to debt service. Between 1990-1994, African countries spent \$13.4 billion in debt service—4 times what they spent on health. That Africa produces cash crops for export and imports food is not good for its own food security, but it is good for Western agribusiness, which gets a market in Africa at the expense of land reform and the alleviation of hunger there."³³

Multinational corporations' aggressive search for export platform countries (which is a central component of what's called 'IMF fundamentalism') has the predictable consequence of diverting pauperized countries' much-needed resources from food production for domestic consumption and internal development to exploitation by multinational corporations (with emphasis placed on the expansion of private enterprises, to which education and other social objectives are not immune), further immiserating the underlying populations in the South. Multinational corporations' uncompromising search for export platform countries is predicated on the assumption that the policy of liberal internationalism is a good thing, that it conduces to *general* prosperity for the US and the rest of the world, when in fact it does the very opposite: it further accelerates the narrow concentration of wealth globally. The effect of liberal internationalism is that the South is not producing food for domestic use, which is replaced by agroexport, which in turn leads to increased GNP growth (the latter, of course, is a rich man's game, reflecting not socially desirable, dispersed and eco-sensitive growth but narrowly concentrated growth of wealth, at great social and environmental cost. So it should come as no surprise that when GNP goes up, so does child malnutrition, the death toll, misery and suffering). When the US imposes by force a development model in which production for domestic use is replaced by ecologically unsustainable agroexport for foreign use, that is, in the interests of the large transnationals (even Western Europe *generally* has never had any objections to this), profits go up, but people predictably starve (since production for domestic needs is abandoned in favor of imports of heavily subsidized Western agricultural products). When land that was used for subsistence agriculture is turned over to ranchers linked to American agribusiness to produce beef, specialized vegetables, flowers or pet foods for the American and other Western markets, profits and GNP go up, a small sector of the local economy profits while most of the population plunges into disaster (according to orthodox principles, GNP growth figures are fraudulent, because GNP is unadjusted for externalities, which are huge under state capitalism. If externalities and social indicators were factored in, then growth rates would be lower, maybe

even negative, thereby encroaching on corporate profits). That is why there have been hundreds of millions of people starving and malnourished in the South. That is the effect of the Western development model (in other words, economic growth and development are, in fact, often uncorrelated). So if the South refuses to “fulfill its major function as a source of raw materials and a market” (George Kennan’s State Department Planning Staff), then such unreasonable behavior is described as “internal aggression” by agents of international communism and/or retail terrorism, thereby unleashing the wrath of Uncle Sam, in the form of wholesale (Western state) terrorism (i.e., if the country in question is worth the trouble by virtue of rich natural resources and key markets; if it is not, then indirect subversion and destabilization through the CIA and its underworld allies will do), which is deeply rooted in the corporate interest.

The oft-repeated claim pertaining to Western state terrorism is best substantiated by the most uncontroversial example one can think of (‘uncontroversial,’ because there is a World Court decision from 1986 behind the charge ‘international terrorism’): the US proxy terror war against Nicaragua in the 1980s, when Veterans for Peace (veterans from WWII and Vietnam, along with tens of thousands of ordinary Americans) traveled to Nicaragua while the terror war was raging, in the hope that the sight of white faces might prevent the Contras (short for *counter-revolutionaries* in Spanish) from continuing the massacres (but also to help the hapless victims in other ways), despite great risks to themselves. Such level of civilization is unprecedented, and is a strong testimony to how far people are willing to go when equipped with the truth about how sadistically their government conducts itself against those who dare raise their heads, as Nicaraguan peasants had started to do, since the Sandinista government, through the far-reaching social and agrarian reforms it instituted *within a participatory framework*, was providing the poor peasants with teachers and doctors, for the first time ever, among other services.

The US, having lavished aid on the Contras, both military and financial, for the purpose of terrorizing mostly rural Nicaraguans, predictably targeted precisely those who began to raise their heads, including the Catholic Church, for adopting ‘the preferential option for the poor,’ a crime for which it paid with blood and tears, due to the extremely violent US reaction, virtually making it a prime US enemy at the time. Harbors were mined, fuel tanks were blown up, by the CIA (as noted by the World Court), which then told the Contras to claim credit. Attempts were made to assassinate the Nicaraguan leadership, and the CIA pumped millions of dollars into opposition politicians. But it was unarmed, innocent civilians that bore the brunt of the attacks, which, by the most charitable standard, qualifies as terrorism. This much was conceded even by former CIA director, Stansfield Turner, who testified before the House Subcommittee on Western Hemispheric Affairs on April 16, 1985, that US organization and support of the Contras would “have to be characterized as terrorism, as state-sponsored terrorism.”

In 1986, the International Court of Justice (ICJ), after carefully studying the case brought to it by Nicaragua, and after ruling out any Cold War connections, held the US in violation of international law for the “unlawful use of force,” both through its own actions and those of its Contra proxy army. In fact, the US not only refused to recognize the Court’s jurisdiction but even *escalated* the atrocities, with *bi-partisan* support. Before the Court’s ruling, the ultra-right advocated the use of extreme violence to accomplish its goal in Nicaragua, which was to destroy independent development. The “liberal left” agreed with the end but not with the means, prior to the Court’s judgment. It advocated extreme economic strangulation instead. But once the Court ruled in favor of Nicaragua, even ordering the US to immediately desist and pay substantial reparations, the atrocities were, again, escalated with by-partisan support, virtually destroying the country to the point that it has still not recovered (and may never do so as long as the majority in the West remains indoctrinated hence immobilized).

The ICJ ruling from 1986 should be understood against the following background (in order to understand the reason for the mild and diplomatic language used by the World Court in

its ruling, including the fact that it makes no judgment about, or even mention of, ‘soft targets,’ thereby possibly casting some doubts in the minds of those who are not sufficiently familiar with the case): the ruling does talk about the unlawfulness of the US intervention through the Contras in Nicaragua’s internal affairs and violation of its territorial sovereignty, since the Contras were based in Honduras and Costa Rica where they were receiving training (“Honduras was [actually] a frontline country in the Contra war, [where] the Honduran military officers were working with the CIA to protect the Contras,” according to Alfred McCoy), but also because US involvement rendered the conflict international. And there can be no doubt that “unlawful use of force” is a technical term for “international terrorism.”

Be that as it may, there are a number of shortcomings in the Court’s judgment, but let us focus on the most significant one: the ICJ makes no mention of “soft targets” because the official authorization of attacks on soft targets was after the Court ruling. The Court used the term “unlawful use of force,” which is the legal term for either (1) international terrorism or (2) aggression, the latter being a far more serious crime than the former (since included in the category of aggression are the extremely serious “crimes against peace, crimes against humanity, war crimes, grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions, and violations of the Charters of the United Nations and the Organization of American States and the ICJ’s 1984 Order of interim protection on behalf of Nicaragua,” according to Professor of Law Francis A. Boyle). The ICJ could not take up the charge of aggression, or any other major issue, because it bent over backwards to accommodate the US, and threw out most of the Nicaraguan case (prepared by the distinguished Harvard law professor Abram Chayes, former US government official). The reason is instructive. When the US agreed in 1946 to accept ICJ jurisdiction (the US backed off on that as soon as Nicaragua brought the case), it entered a reservation: that the US would be exempt from any charges based on international law and treaties, such as the UN Charter or the OAS Charter, which make aggression a crime. That would utterly shock Europeans if it was done by some official enemy, but is conveniently suppressed when it is their master. For these reasons, the ICJ restricted itself to customary international law and a narrow bilateral US-Nicaragua treaty. And even on these narrow grounds issued the harshest condemnation it ever has was for international terrorism, also calling on the US to terminate the crimes and pay massive reparations, and drawing some rather strong general conclusions about the use of force. The US responded by escalating the war, including the explicit authorization of attacks on ‘soft targets,’ finally virtually destroying the country, which descended further into misery since the US took over again in 1991, and is now the second poorest in the hemisphere after Haiti, barely surviving. Of course, in the West none of this means a thing, or is even known, because of the deeply rooted imperial mentality, which grants the West the right to crush anyone into the dust at will.

It bears mention that Nicaragua even took its case to the UN, after failing to gain practical redress at the ICJ. A 1988 UN resolution that “urgently calls for full and immediate compliance with the Judgment of the International Court of Justice of 27 June 1986 in the case of ‘Military and Paramilitary Activities in and against Nicaragua’ in conformity with the relevant provisions of the Charter of the United Nations,” was approved 94-2 (US and Israel voting no, as usual). The implication is important to spell out, because vetoing Security Council resolutions amounts to a double veto, since the resolution is typically banned from history, by the media and mainstream scholarship. The same thing applies to General Assembly resolutions.

The most important conclusion that can be drawn from this case is that terror is primarily a weapon of the powerful. The reason this fact is largely unknown among the more educated classes is that the powerful, besides having a near-monopoly on violence, also have overwhelming control over the ideological system, so that their violence, once it is filtered through the distorting prisms of the ideological system, appears to be benign, well-intentioned, inadvertent, or defensive. But more to the point, soon after Reagan came to office, he declared a

“war against terror.” The focal points of US foreign policy, Americans were told, were going to be Central America and the Middle East. How was the “war on terror” fought in these regions? The US fought a war against terrorism in Central America by massacring a couple hundred thousand people, carrying out horrible atrocities, with many more displaced, traumatized and driven to the razor edge of survival, finally even being condemned by the World Court. A look at the record of international terrorism in the Middle East traces it to the US and its clients, overwhelmingly. In Lebanon, close to 20,000 unarmed civilians were killed by Israel and its Middle Eastern clients. Thousands of innocent civilians were also killed in the occupied territories by Israel, all with crucial US support and approval, during Reagan’s tenure. During about the same time a considerable amount of assistance was given to the Apartheid regime in South Africa, which presided over the slaughter of 1.5 million non-combatant civilians in Southern Africa, not counting the victims in South Africa itself – property damage was estimated by the UN at around \$60 billion dollars. Furthermore, ironically, the same people were involved. The military component of the re-declared war on terror was, until recently, led by Donald Rumsfeld, who, during the 80s, was Ronald Reagan’s envoy to the Middle East. The diplomatic side of the re-declared war was, also until recently, being led at the UN by John Negroponte. During the 80s, he was proconsul of Honduras, meaning the US Ambassador there (Honduras was the base for US terrorist activities in the region). So besides the obvious fact that the US-backed Contra war against Nicaragua was part of a much larger project that left close to 2 million murdered in three different parts of the world, what does this tell us about the reigning level of the political and moral culture of Western elites? Simply put, that they are above the law, and, therefore, can perpetrate horrible atrocities with complete impunity. As is to be expected from this sorry state of affairs, the resort to fear has, from time immemorial, left an endless, horrifying trail of blood and misery by the powerful, all in the name of fighting an imaginary evil, during which time power and profit have been maximized.

It is, thus, not surprising that those Third World governments that have painstakingly made radical or even modest moves in the service of the poor majority (since at least WWII) have been fraudulently perceived as communists by the West, and punished accordingly, as William Blum has demonstrated in his outstanding *Killing Hope*. As he puts it (pp. 100, 392): “Washington policy-makers...[have been] unable, or unwilling, to distinguish nationalism from pro-communism, neutralism from wickedness... From 1945 to 2003, the United States attempted to overthrow more than 40 foreign governments, and to crush more than 30 populist-nationalist movements fighting against intolerable regimes. In the process, the US bombed some 25 countries, caused the end of life for several million people, and condemned many more to a life of agony and despair.” In brief, we are talking about massive human rights violations, crimes against peace and humanity, war crimes, state terrorism, and in a number of cases (Vietnam, Panama, Iraq, etc.) outright aggression. This is why Chomsky has argued that if the Nuremberg laws were applied, then every post-war American president would have to be hanged to death, since there is plenty of damning evidence to this effect, even in declassified US government documents. This paradigm (punishing independent development) persisted throughout the entire *official* Cold War, and has continued to resonate since the official demise of the Cold War, though the pretexts have changed to “crazed Arabs and Islamic terrorists,” “Hispanic narco-traffickers,” “Third World miscreants whose technological sophistication in weaponry we need to defend ourselves against,” etc. (the inference here is that the economy cannot be kept afloat for elites without waging perpetual war against weak and defenseless Third World countries, for which purpose an endless series of enemies must be concocted, particularly in the U.S., since the more powerful a country is, the more fragile power tends to be, hence the more the powerful must resort to fear, so that by inducing fear in the domestic population, authority is thereby granted to the powerful.) The fraudulent perception mentioned above has, of course, been highly serviceable

ideologically, by fueling the permanent war machine. This is why Samuel Huntington (Professor of the Science of Government at Harvard and a government adviser) duly observed (adding thrust to Blum's already strong thesis): "you may have to sell [intervention or other military action] in such a way as to create the misimpression that it is the Soviet Union that you are fighting. That is what the U.S. has been doing ever since the Truman Doctrine." (*International Security*, Summer 1981)

It was, however, inevitable—during the official Cold War—that Third World countries committed to making radical or modest moves on behalf of the poor majority would turn to the former Soviet Union and/or its dependencies for help, to defend themselves as best they could from reactively offensive US military and/or CIA interventions. And of course, the former would indulge all-too-happily (as it and/or they did in the case of Nicaragua, for example), for perfectly cynical reasons. But the main point is that, in this case, Nicaragua's reliance on the Soviet Union and/or its dependencies could not honestly be invoked to justify, either in retrospect or at the time, US actions against it—a matter authoritatively determined by the World Court in 1986.

The highly respected charitable relief and development organization: Oxfam, published in 1985 (reprinted in 89) a report aptly entitled *Nicaragua: The Threat of a Good Example?* Which describes the significant achievements of the Sandinistas during their tenure, as well as how the changes came about. An excerpt (pp. 1, 13-14)

[Oxfam's] long-term development work is most likely to succeed where governments are genuinely committed to the needs of the poor majority. Rarely is this the case. Nicaragua stands out because of the positive climate for development based on people's active participation, which Oxfam has encountered over the past five years [i.e., since 1979 under the Sandinista government]. . . . [S]ince 1979 the scope for development has been enormous, with remarkable progress achieved in health, literacy and a more equitable distribution of resources. . . . The new Government of National Reconstruction stressed its desire to develop a mixed economy and political pluralism in a country that had no tradition of democracy or free elections. Great importance was also attached to achieving a high degree of national self-sufficiency and an independent, non-aligned foreign policy. This radically new focus of social policy in Nicaragua towards the needs of the poor presented enormous scope for Oxfam's work. In addition to locally-based projects, Oxfam was now able to support nationwide initiatives to tackle problems rooted in poverty. The concept of actively involving people in development through community organisations is neither new nor radical, but widely recognised to be a precondition for successful development. However, as the World Bank points out: "Governments . . . vary greatly in the commitment of their political leadership to improving the condition of the people and encouraging their active participation in the development process. From Oxfam's experience of working in seventy-six developing countries, Nicaragua was to prove exceptional in the strength of that Government commitment.

The report goes on to document a wide range of Sandinista reforms (pp. 14-26), which included a national program of mass inoculations against diseases which resulted in a 98 percent fall in new malaria cases; 127 percent more schools and 61 percent more teachers, with a corresponding decline in the national illiteracy rate from 53 percent to 13 percent; 55 percent more children at primary school, as well as popular education collectives established in 17,000 communities; agrarian reform, including compensation for expropriated land, since up to a third of arable land (mainly on large estates) was idle or under-used; 49,661 families in a total population of 3 million receiving titles to land between late 1981 and late 1984; and an 8 percent increase in overall agricultural production between 1979 and 1983. The Inter-American Development Bank summarized: "Nicaragua has made noteworthy progress in the social sector, which is laying a solid foundation for long-term socio-economic development." (Most of the information in this paragraph is excerpted and partly paraphrased from Chomsky's footnotes to his *UP*, ch. 2, note 8) As the *New England Journal of Medicine* put it (cited on p. 17 in the Oxfam report): "In just

three years, more has been done in most areas of social welfare than in fifty years of dictatorship under the Somoza family.”

Since “...a fundamental commitment of US policy [is] to make the world safe for corporate investment abroad” (Michael Parenti), it follows naturally from this that reformist governments, whether left populist regimes or right-wing moderates, have consistently been punished if and when they have made radical or even modest moves on behalf of the poor and against the prerogatives of corporate investors in the US. The severity of the punishment depends on how much stake publicly-subsidized Western conglomerates have in the country in question. At best, the country would be punished by unilateral coercive economic measures. At worst, it would be attacked militarily, regardless of whether or not the Soviet Union and/or its dependencies was/were supporting the country in question, reactively or proactively. At worst, it will be punished both through extreme violence and economic strangulation, as Cuba has for decades (specifically, since 1959), in brazen defiance of international law and institutions.

Perhaps the most essential operative feature, if not the essence, of the Cold War, as applied to the case of Nicaragua (but which can be applied to any other military and CIA intervention since at least WWII by the US) is this:

Those who devote themselves to the needs of the poor majority, or who seek to construct a political system that will not be controlled by business-based groups and a military system not linked to and dominated by the US, are “Castros” who must be driven to reliance on the Soviet Union by unremitting attack, subjected to terrorist violence and other pressures, and crucially prevented from perpetrating the crime of successful development in the interests of the poor majority. These are the reasons for the attack on Nicaragua.” (Chomky, *PI*, pp. 89, 90.)

In other words, Sandinistan social reforms were the prime reason for the US attack. Private property had to be restored to the owning class, in accordance with the sacred dictates from Washington. Failing this, it is not possible to sustain the prerogatives of corporate investors in the West, since the alliance between First and Third World elites is what enables the accumulation of capital in the West to proceed unhampered (for which purpose Third World elites are of course rewarded generously). For example, in his 1953 State of the Union message President Eisenhower observed, “A serious and explicit purpose of our foreign policy [is] the encouragement of a hospitable climate for investment in foreign nations.” *A natural corollary to this is egregious human rights violations in the South*, since the best way to improve the investment climate in a Third World country is to murder union organizers and peasant leaders, torture priests, massacre peasants, undermine social programs, etc. Which yields a second corollary, namely, US foreign aid and egregious human rights violations. It is not likely that the West has a particular interest in egregious human rights violations in the South. It is just that the obsession with short-term capital gains inevitably leads to such a corollary outcome. Does this absolve the West from all its monstrous crimes against humanity? Certainly not, since the correlation was seriously studied by the leading academic specialist on human rights in Latin America close to 30 years ago, Lars Schoultz of the University of South Carolina. In other words, it is entirely predictable that human rights violations will ensue from an obsession with short-term plutocratic benefits for Western elites and their Southern counterparts. In other words, the US has used force (terror and criminal aggression), subversion, gunboat diplomacy and economic muscle (unilateral sanctions [which are illegal under international law. Half the world was hit by them in 1998!], structural adjustment policies, etc.) to guarantee a global order that will be “open” to the penetration and control of multinational corporations, at the expense of political and economic sovereignty and human rights everywhere. Those who try to bring this fact to light in a more or less systematic fashion, thereby challenging and subverting prevailing orthodoxy, even if the impact is marginal, will be vilified and marginalized, lest the rot spreads.

Even though the terroristic horrors that have been visited upon Third World peoples for centuries by the West are shockingly cruel and sadistic, still, it's important to resist the temptation to dichotomize between 'Good' and 'Evil,' since failure to do so enables us to, at least in effect, rationalize human cruelty and sadism (as if these traits were innate). Which in turn can be said to have a self-perpetuating effect. It is, therefore, more wise and constructive to explain (not condone) such inhumane behaviors in terms of an institutional need to behave this way, which nevertheless doesn't absolve the perpetrators of such crimes from responsibility, since it's standard in law to determine intent on the basis of evidence concerning predictable consequences, "particularly when practices persist over a long period and in the face of constant failure to approach the announced objectives" (Chomsky). No one claims evil intentions. The same standard is used constantly in international law, but, of course, only against the weak and defeated. A good book about this is by the well-known international law specialist Michael Mandel, *How America Gets Away with Murder*.

According to Charles Tilly, coercion is closely linked to capitalistic property; it has had a lot to do with the accumulation of capital. And it works. If you want to conquer a people, whether your own or a foreign population, or both, the way to go about it is by coercive measures. Of course, since "problems of social control mount insofar as a state is limited in its capacity to coerce..." (Chomsky)—which is the result of centuries of bitter struggle by popular democratic forces, as opposed to a gift from above—the state-corporate nexus has to resort to propaganda to control the domestic population (since, again, propaganda is to a formal democracy what violence is to a totalitarian state, even if there still has been a system of domestic terrorism against ethnic minorities and dissidents in the US, under the FBI's counterintelligence program, known as COINTELPRO). But Western powers do resort to violence frequently and on a significant scale internationally, both directly and by proxy, in order to protect and advance private power interests. Small wonder, then, that the origin of war lies in theft, which is still true. In his major study of European state formation, Tilly accurately observed that over the last millennium, war-making became the dominant elite project of European states, for an unfortunate reason: "The central, tragic fact is simple: coercion *works*; those who apply substantial force to their fellows get compliance, and from that compliance draw the multiple advantages of money, goods, deference [and] access to pleasures denied to less powerful people." Put more concisely: "war became [...] a means of satisfying the economic interests of the ruling coalition by gaining access to the resources of other states."³⁴

Therefore, one has to ask: is state power legitimate? Let's use an analogy: Suppose X stands with his boot on Y's neck and complains that Y (X's *victim*) doesn't recognize X's legitimacy as a dominant force. In such a case, *can Y's reluctant and fear-induced acknowledgment of X's legitimacy as a dominant force really be taken seriously?* The implication is clear enough: if the state were really a legitimate structure, it would not need to concoct enemies in order to engender fear (thereby hanging onto power), nor would it need to make war and resort to force and fraud to perpetuate itself as an institution, nor would it need to resort to propaganda, or hide behind statute law. It would co-exist with other states harmoniously. It would not need an overt and covert police force, or a technologically advanced military apparatus that is offensive, or a judiciary, or a prison system, or a psychiatric establishment that is for the most part redundant, or any other coercive and devious instruments through which the poor and the working class are cynically kept in subordination and oppression, while the rich and powerful enjoy *complete* impunity for all kinds of horrible crimes (i.e., if we disregard the occasional, symbolic fall guy who serves as a decoy, among the most glaringly egregious corporate offenders), from economic crimes³⁵ to crimes against peace and humanity to environmental degradation, etc., since there's hardly a crime that's not committed by the state-corporate nexus.

The implication is that contempt for democracy is a traditional stance of those who have a share in power and privilege, thereby rendering the ‘social contract’ theory null and void. In other words, as long as Hobbes’ Leviathan or Hegel’s pseudo-organic state rules with an iron fist, Hobbes’ and Rousseau’s ‘social contract’ theory becomes inherently untenable. The basic flaw with their theory is that it’s a result of an unprincipled compromise/coerced agreement between rulers and ruled. The former are sovereign, the latter are not, according to statist doctrine, so that unless the subject people do not slavishly submit themselves to the arbitrary, coercive and extractive authority of the state, they have no rights whatsoever. If they do submit themselves to it (i.e., reluctantly—it cannot be otherwise because the coercive nature of the state invariably and by definition rules out free will and free agreement), then the result is, at best, nominal rights and limited freedoms, with the proviso that the governed can lose these rights and freedoms when “reasons of state” so dictate. So the agreement entered into between the powerful and the powerless can never really be free, because submission to hierarchical authority always entails de facto slavery, through loss of crucial life-affirming values, such as individual sovereignty, solidarity, equity, diversity, self-management, ecological balance, and collective and cultural rights, thereby literally endangering the survival of the species, for the sake of short-term elite interests. And given the lawlessness and violence of powerful states, weak ones do not stand a chance of exercising meaningful national sovereignty, even if the powerful ones use only the threat of force and/or coercive economic measures through the IMF, World Bank and WTO to undercut their sovereignty.

There are many mechanisms through which the deep-seated culture of terrorism that prevails in Western civilization is unleashed on Third World populations: direct military assaults, proxy wars, the arms trade,³⁶ trade sanctions, and economic strangulation (including IMF structural adjustment programs,³⁷ which do nothing but disembowel national economies courtesy of corporate West), when Third World countries refuse to obey Western orders, by trying to strike an independent course (which is the mother of all evils according to American political theology). The logic is simple and straightforward: since military-based state-capitalism is a zero-sum game, since Europe (and its North American offshoots) has always been extremely hierarchical and unequal and brutal, since the wealth of the few is invariably bought on the backs of the poor majority, you have to wage war, in one form or another, against humanity, both domestically and internationally. That’s what the Cold War was really about rather than a simple East-West conflict. Which is why it is misleading to talk about the end of the Cold War, since the war against humanity will end either when the powerful have obliterated it, or when humanity obliterates authoritarian, hierarchical, coercive power structures, *excluding* its purveyors. This is because they too have inviolable human needs and rights, but also because they are not necessarily evil; it is, above all, their value system that is messed up.

A related point of great significance here is that the primary threat of communism was never a military threat (since on average the missile gap was about 10 to 1 in favor of the US, a well-known fact) but an economic one. Daniel Ellsberg was one of the high-level analysts who discovered the facts in 1960-61 by satellite imaging and that the actual ratio was 10-1 in favor of the US, demonstrating that Eisenhower was correct in his assertions, including his final State of the Union address, that the missile gap in favor of the USSR was a myth.

Economic growth in the former Soviet Union under Stalin was so substantial that Western leaders were quite worried by what this entailed for the Third World, implication-wise, since the temptation to emulate it would be strong (Stalin’s monstrous human rights record was never an issue for Western leaders! Truman liked and admired Stalin; he even thought he was an honest leader, despite the fact that he had presided over one of the worst mass-slaughters in history, domestically. Churchill admired him, too. What was important for these men of honor was to get their way most of the time, meaning crimes were not of great consequence for them;

disobedience was—the same is true today). Specifically, communism promised industrial development and a substantial increase in living standards in a *single* generation (which capitalism has never been able to do; it has taken centuries for the West to achieve this [even with all the material gains from plunder of the South], according to Hans Morgenthau: arguably the most distinguished representative of the state religion and a hard-headed ‘realist’). So it naturally had to be demonized, given its reasonably strong appeal to underdeveloped countries, whose populations, most living on the edge of survival, could not care less about ideology and what kind of system their leadership adopted, so long as it could improve their living conditions, even if only potentially. This is why anti-communism should be understood as a crusade against development, an observation that goes back to the outstanding British economist Joan Robinson (as articulated in her “Contrasts in Economic Development: China and India,” printed in Neal Houghton, ed., *Struggle Against History*): “The United States crusade against Communism is a campaign against development. By means of it the American people have been led to acquiesce in the maintenance of a huge war machine and its use by threat or actual force to try to suppress every popular movement that aims to overthrow ancient or modern tyranny and begin to find a way to overcome poverty and establish national self-respect.”

The “war on terror” was declared in 1981, when the Reagan administration came into office, and was used to frighten the population into obedience for the destruction of independent development in Central America, and for other purposes elsewhere in the world. The re-declared “war on terror” 20 years later does not really seek to reduce the threat of terror – on the contrary, it exacerbates the threat, as has been anticipated, step by step, by main analysts. It does keep the US population subdued, and supportive of policies that are harmful to them, and to much of the world, but beneficial to narrow sectors of power. It sufficed to win the 2004 election, as it did in 2002. That included undermining independent development, but a great deal more than that (a legacy enthusiastically perpetuated by caucasianized Obama, whose deceitfulness and profound hypocrisy and subordination to private power only the indoctrinated are not able to perceive³⁸).

Not surprisingly, the Third World’s subordination is being made complete by the increased pace of ‘enclosure of the commons’: privatization of public education, public health and other important public utilities, services and assets, thereby further immiserating the underlying populations in the South (as well as in the North, of course, though to a lesser extent), in accordance with the corporatocracy’s predatory goal of commodifying almost every aspect of life and almost every sphere of activity, since everything is for sale under corporate capitalism—nothing is sacred save power and profit. The monstrous privatization schemes that are forcefully imposed on the Third World have bogged down its people in anti-development, as noted even by the SAPRIN study mentioned above, which acknowledges that “Poverty has been intensified and expanded by privatization.” Malnutrition, undernourishment, hunger, chronic illiteracy, chronic unemployment and underemployment, i.e., the total lack of decent living conditions, have led to the total disintegration of most Third World societies. The cardinal values that have for millennia represented and sustained Southern cultures have, with breathtaking audacity, been so systematically undermined that it is no longer just a matter of domination and theft but of rape and sodomy, so much so that the Third World has now reached the last threshold of the human heartbeat. Despite all this, every effort is made to prevent the Third World from creating a payments deficit, by making it pay out much more than the true total of its budgets. These ultra-criminal policy arrangements owe their existence to a barbaric colonial mentality rooted in the rotten dynamics of *realpolitik*, in which the rule of force coupled with commercial values (the latter underpinned by successful marketing. Which is the highest value under corporate capitalism) have reigned supreme while human values and concerns (for the record, concern for others is *not* a human frailty! It is tragic to even have to point this out), including *basic* decency, have become so subversive as to make it necessary to demonize those who are alive to the

problems around them, since they necessarily try to humanize (hence politicize) their surroundings. Is it any wonder that Africa, Latin America and parts of Asia—having been forced at gun point to lay the foundation for the Industrial Revolution, economic prosperity and the breathtaking wealth of the West through the trans-Atlantic slave trade and global holdings from colonialism and bounty from WWII—should now be in such a completely subordinate and utterly humiliating position as to make independent development impossible, guns still pointed? And pointed they are, thanks to the permanent armaments industry that perpetuates the business of death by propping up and/or keeping in power highly repressive regimes in the South, to quell social unrest and uprisings. This, despite the fact that the South cannot afford expensive weapons systems, since these divert money away from health and education projects, much to the delight of the architects of disorder and destruction in the West, who, intent as they are on preying upon humanity's distresses, have a vested interest in keeping the South divided and conflict-ridden (Colum Lynch, *Boston Globe*, February 19, 1999).

Even as early as 1919, the extremely influential John Maynard Keynes recognized the need for permanent war (the arms trade being part and parcel or one aspect of permanent war, of course) in *The Economic Consequences of the Peace* (a work full of contradictions and ambiguities, but worth reading nevertheless). The opening words read:

The power to become habituated to his surroundings is a marked characteristic of mankind. Very few of us realise with conviction the intensely unusual, unstable, complicated, unreliable, temporary nature of the economic organisation by which Western Europe has lived for the last half century. We assume some of the most peculiar and temporary of our late advantages as natural, permanent, and to be depended on, and we lay our plans accordingly. On this sandy and false foundation we scheme for social improvement and dress our political platforms, pursue our animosities and particular ambitions, and feel ourselves with enough margin in hand to foster, not assuage, civil conflict in the European family. Moved by insane delusion and reckless self-regard, the German people overturned the foundations on which we all lived and built. *But the spokesmen of the French and British peoples have run the risk of completing the ruin which Germany began, by a peace which, if it is carried into effect, must impair yet further, when it might have restored, the delicate, complicated organisation, already shaken and broken by war, through which alone the European peoples can employ themselves and live... Where we spent millions before the war, we have now learnt that we can spend hundreds of millions and apparently not suffer for it* (online; emphasis added).

So, putting aside the fact that the end of WWII understandably brought an end only to war between “democracies,” after which the guns were redirected mostly towards the South, it is “through [war] alone [that] the European peoples,” which of course includes North Americans, “can employ themselves and live”! Can there be any doubt about the extent to which our economic system is rotten, hence about the need for fundamental social change, given the predatory nature of our economic system and the fact that our (elites’ larger-than-life and ordinary citizens’ marginal albeit non-negligible) egocentric welfare is based on the misery and profound suffering of Third World peoples, who have been bearing the brunt of our high tech brutalities and barbarism since at least the end of WWII? I do not mean to suggest that the state capitalist system is fundamentally racist (even if it can and does exploit racism for its own purposes), even if our societies certainly are, profoundly so. Nor do I mean to suggest that power is not ecumenical in resort to violence. For example, the West does not regard Islam as an enemy, or conversely. So why is the West openly targeting powerless Muslims and Arabs around the world? Is it only because they do not contribute to profit-making, or are there other reasons they are being targeted even though they are not regarded as the West’s enemies, officially at least? The West does not regard the Catholic Church as an enemy, or conversely. But the US was “openly targeting powerless Catholics” in Central America in the 1980s, to a far greater extent than it is targeting Muslims and Arabs today, practically destroying one country and devastating

two others in the process. In Kosovo and Bosnia the West claimed to be protecting Muslims and attacking Orthodox Catholics. And so on. Power tends to be ecumenical in resort to violence.

It is because war is big business for the major powers (recall that the arms trade, too, is a form of war) that the merger of militarism and the church (the “sacralization of war”) is so effective in justifying, however perversely, a highly militarized economy that is, of course, highly dependent on military adventurisms in the Third World (the enemies are *always* weak and defenseless; nothing less will do for “home of the brave, land of the free”), in accordance with the strong commitment to the fifth freedom: the freedom to rob, to dominate and to exploit. As is to be expected, the number of victims from Western military and, respectively, economic domination throughout the world is truly colossal.

The nature of economic imperialism is such that the threat of armed coercion—made credible through covert and overt wars, military incursions and destabilization programs by the US military and the CIA when the need arises—is usually more than enough to ensure economic domination throughout the world. Still, Western conglomerates and their subservient states³⁹ will stop at nothing to further enrich themselves at the expense of humanity (not even at clear long-term threats to their own survival), by exploiting raw materials, energy supplies, key markets and cheap labor in the South. (With the *official* demise of the Cold War, the former Eastern bloc is, of course, now fully or almost fully reintegrated into what has, since 1941, come to be called ‘the Grand Area’ [in internal discussions] dominated by unaccountable concentrated Western private economic power, meaning that its fate is similar to, not identical with, that of the Third World, in the sense that its service role [i.e., complementing Western industrial economies] is proceeding unabated, in similar fashion to the period preceding the Cold War, which began in 1917, according to John Lewis Gaddis.) Rich countries are rich because they unscrupulously drain the greatest part of the world’s wealth in royalties, diamonds, profits and interest rates, mostly from economically impoverished countries. To be sure, poverty *is* a by-product of concentrated wealth, and Western profit and affluence are absolutely tied to slavery, to a history of extreme exploitation and oppression. Nor has this stopped, or is ever likely to, as long as we accept the basic assumption that our leaders have the right to own—hence dominate and brutalize—the world courtesy of corporate West. In other words, by failing to own our part of the transaction in the macabre process of power and wealth concentration and the criminal violence employed internationally to maintain and precipitate that process, we only allow and enable such concentrations to proceed unabated, thereby sinking into the abyss of complicity so far as imposed destitution goes, both of foreign peoples’ and our own.

It is a matter of great significance that the US has been heavily dependent on raw materials from the Third World for its expanding, highly subsidized—hence dynamic—plutocratic economy. For as James Jay Carafano and Nile Gardiner observed (in their October 15, 2003 article, entitled “U.S. Military Assistance for Africa: A Better Solution,” published by The Heritage Foundation):

With its vast natural and mineral resources, Africa remains strategically important to the West, as it has been for hundreds of years, and its geostrategic significance is likely to rise in the 21st century. According to the National Intelligence Council (NIC), the United States is likely to draw 25 percent of its oil from West Africa by 2015, surpassing the volume imported from the Persian Gulf. (Sub-Saharan Africa currently provides the U.S. with 16 percent of its oil needs)... America must not be afraid to employ its forces decisively when vital national interests are threatened. On the other hand, where U.S. vital interests are not at stake, the United States should be circumspect, but not necessarily absent, in providing military aid to the region...

The fact that that this dependency is expected to grow in the future was also noted by the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), which Laurence H. Shoup and William Minter discuss in their very important work entitled *Imperial Brain Trust: The Council on Foreign Relations & United States*

Foreign Policy (pp. 229-30). For example, Professor John Kerry King of the University of Virginia, who worked as research secretary for a project involving a study group on “United States Policy and Southeast Asia,” published a book in 1956, with blessings from then chairman of the Council on Foreign Relations, Edwin F. Stanton. As Shoup and Minter put it (*ibid.*):

King argued that the United States was a resource-deficient nation and was ‘heavily dependent on materials imported from abroad, especially from the so-called underdeveloped areas, to maintain an expanding and dynamic economy.’ Since American needs would grow in the years to come, ‘an increase in the importance of Southeast Asia’s raw material resources, as well as those of Latin America, Africa, and South Asia, certainly may be anticipated.

C. Fred Bergsten (a former National Security Council staff member under Kissinger and currently [when *Imperial Brain Trust* was published] a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution) in a very important article published in the Summer 1973 issue of *Foreign Policy* (called “The Threat from the Third World”), reinforced the above argument by criticizing Nixon’s administration for its neglect of the Third World and its treatment of it “solely as pawns on the chessboard of global power politics.” He argued that the Third World is very important to the Trilateral world (the US, Europe and Japan): the US “is rapidly joining the rest of the industrialized countries in depending on the Third World for a critical share of its energy supplies and other natural resources.” (For the record, the CFR’s ties to the Trilateral Commission are close. E.g., as Shoup and Minter point out [p. 260]: “The majority of U.S. commissioners are CFR members and no less than eleven Council directors sit on the commission. Council director Zbigniew Brzezinski is the director of the commission.”) He listed oil, natural rubber, timber, copper, bauxite, and other raw materials as vitally important to the Trilateral countries. Bergsten observed that “The book value of U.S. direct investment in the Third World exceeded \$23 billion at the end of 1971 (about \$14 billion excluding oil), and the real market value is at least twice as large. About 5 percent of U.S. corporate profits now derive from these investments. Many jobs relate directly to them. Even excluding oil, they provide over \$1 billion annually for U.S. balance of payments” (p. 112). He even postulated that “a number of [in fact, relatively few] Third World countries exercise major leverage over U.S. investments” (*ibid.*) But this statement earned him a lot of obloquy, exposing as it did a great American vulnerability. But the point is a valid one, even in more general terms, potentially that is.

(The Third World in general surely can exercise major leverage on the Trilateral world if its “disruptive” efforts are well-coordinated. This is a major reason for the militarization of outer space that has been accelerated under the thin cover of 9/11, which was a gift from above for the masters of mankind. Since power considerations alone are surely dysfunctional even for power interests in the long run, it is incumbent upon non-suicidal persons to insist on injecting moral considerations into political discourse, particularly in light of the dire threats facing the Third World [and, by extension, the First World as well], threats that are likely to grow more severe in scale and intensity in the future. Such threats have been and will continue to be contingent on the Third World disobeying or failing to understand Western orders. Once the offensive space program is operational, disobeying or failing to understand orders will literally lead to instant vaporization, as implicitly noted, most likely without forewarning, in order to “establish credibility,” in Mafia lingo)

Of course, America’s heavy dependence on raw material resources from the South (under terms and conditions favorable to private power) could not be satisfied under conditions of political and economic independence and sovereignty in the South, which is precisely why the US took over the paternalistic, life-sapping role of global management in the post-war years from the traditional European colonial powers. Thus we read in the *Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science*, Vol. 25, No. 3, in an article entitled “United States Policy and Colonialism”

published in May 1957 and authored by William Henderson (Director of Meetings, Council on Foreign Relations, Inc.):

For a variety of reasons the United States has been unwilling during the past decade to adopt an intransigent position in opposition to Western colonial rule... The United States has an important stake in the raw materials of various dependent territories... These interests might be jeopardized by the sudden end of colonial rule. We are a colonial Power ourselves, and thus far Washington has shown little disposition to surrender our hold on such territories... We might be accused ... of throwing up a smoke screen to facilitate the preservation of European colonialism... In the long run the dignity of a consistent, enlightened and reasonable colonial policy would gain us respect, even if it did not win us affection (pp. 58, 63).

A striking feature about Henderson's article is that it does not succumb to prevailing dogmatism and paranoia about the never-proven, not even potential, Communist takeover of the world during the Cold War: "From all indications current Communist world strategy aims at bringing about and maintaining a relative *relaxation* of international tensions *for the indefinite future*" (p. 61; emphasis added). We gain similar insight from Samuel Huntington: "Americans devoted much attention to the expansion of Communism (which, in fact, expanded very little after 1949), and in the process they tended to ignore the expansion of the United States influence and presence throughout much of the world in terms of aid, investment, bases, trade patterns, deployment, and commitments." (*Daedalus*, Vol. 96, No. 3) These laudable recognitions render Western anti-Communist policy and action offensive *by definition*, as National Security Memorandum 68 also makes clear, despite its high level of delusion and paranoia.

In sum, the Council on Foreign Relations is an imperial brain trust. The members and active participants of the Council are overwhelmingly members of the corporate upper class, as measured by occupation and wealth level, as Shoup and Minter point out (p. 248). They also clearly demonstrate that American foreign policy is conceived and formulated mostly by the CFR, which the government then uncritically accepts and implements. The CFR represents corporate-imperial interests; and it is totally insulated from public influence, since it is a non-governmental agency, paradoxically, in light of the fact that it has de facto control over the state (p. 161), due to its overwhelming strength and power vis-à-vis the government. This odious alignment and interlocking directorate guarantees that the essential questions of national and international political economy remain essentially removed from the public arena, regardless of which rascals get voted in and out of the political arena, thereby lending credence to arguments to the effect that political democracy is largely a sham (since, in the words of the late Howard Zinn, "voting cannot cut into the power of great wealth and great influence") as long as the economic system, which is highly militarized, remains under the control of private tyrannies (the large transnationals). And highly militarized it must be, since "No better business regulator has yet been devised than the military strongman who sweeps the streets clear with his loyal legions," as Herbert I. Schiller noted in *The Massachusetts Review*, Vol. 9, No. 4 (Autumn, 1968).

To preempt any challenge to raw US unilateral power, "the three grand imperatives of imperial geostrategy," said Zbigniew Brzezinski, "are to prevent collusion and maintain security dependence among the vassals, to keep tributaries pliant and protected, and to keep the barbarians from coming together."⁴⁰ In a similar vein, to keep the "barbarians" at bay, Pentagon planners are proceeding with the task of assuring US control over every part of the globe. Major Ralph Peters, an officer responsible for conceptualizing future warfare in the office of the deputy chief of staff for intelligence, is lucid about why the US needs to fight:

We have entered an age of constant conflict... We are entering a new American century, in which we will become still wealthier, culturally more lethal, and increasingly powerful. We will excite hatreds without precedent... There will be no peace. At any given moment for the rest of our lifetimes, there will be multiple conflicts in mutating forms around the globe. Violent conflict will

dominate the headlines, but cultural and economic struggles will be steadier and ultimately more decisive. The de facto role of the U.S. armed forces will be to keep the world safe for our economy and open to our cultural assault. To those ends, we will do a fair amount of killing.⁴¹

Lippmann, in his essay called “The Challenge of Greatness,” was kind enough to—perhaps unwittingly, as the context which I cannot reproduce here seems to indicate—dispel the official notion of Western benevolence, by saying: “Because a capitalist society cannot change, in its dealings with the underdeveloped countries, it can only dominate and exploit. It cannot emancipate and help.”

So the long and short of it is that state capitalism, like state socialism, is an unjust and necrophilic order, since both systems’ cost in human life cannot be accurately measured, in suffering not even roughly measured.⁴² Those of us who support it, even by virtue of silence and omission, are death-worshippers; those who denounce, resist and try to undermine it are worshippers of life. It’s that simple.

If we continue to let our necrophilous leaders inoculate us with the alienated and alienating bourgeois appetite for personal success (*which is very contingent on the West continuing to rob the South blind through its Western-friendly export platforms*, among other ways), we wittingly or unwittingly allow them to manipulate and control us, since when we are busy pursuing selfish interests,⁴³ we are cleverly diverted from the extremely pressing task of renewing democracy (or instigating it for the first time) in the interests of historic continuity, of love, of sanity (hence of salvation).

The good news, contrary to the vulgar claims of the West’s super-Marxist business class (the reference here is to the late authoritarian Marx, not the early libertarian one),⁴⁴ is that an unjust reality *can* be transformed, which is a creative act rooted in libertarian conceptions, which in turn are based on and conducive to biophilia. “The life instinct thus constitutes the primary potentiality in man; the death instinct a second potentiality. The primary potentiality develops if certain conditions are present just as a seed grows only if proper conditions of moisture, temperature, etc. are given. If the proper conditions are not present, the necrophilous tendencies emerge and dominate the person,”⁴⁵ which leads to suffering (most of all, for the destroyer himself) despite the *illusion* of potency and happiness.

We can be fairly certain that those who feel a compulsion to prove to their surrounding that they are happy, especially without anyone making an inquiry about the matter, are actually quite unhappy (particularly in light of the apparent fact of lack of productive relatedness to the world, hence ultimately to the self). The problem is that “we are indoctrinated not to feel unhappy, because if you feel unhappy you are not a success,”⁴⁶ in the bourgeois hence alienated sense of the words happy and success (and most people find lack of success to be emotionally intolerable, because of the social stigma that is attached to it, due to the wrong kind of socialization). Fromm goes on (ibid.): “But you are permitted to feel neurotic. So you go to the doctor, and you say you suffer from insomnia or you ‘have a problem.’ You have a car, you have a wife, you have kids, you have a house – you have a problem. Our way of thinking and feeling is that all the emphasis is not on ‘to Be’ but on ‘to Have.’ We have much – but we are little. This attitude leads to defeatism, although it may be unconscious.” But the bottom line in this context is that happiness is a very poor substitute for joy, for “A life spent in pursuit of pleasure is like sitting on a pin... every move you make leads to suffering.” (Buddhist saying) And those who claim to have joy despite lack of authentic love in their lives are not being honest with themselves let alone others, because love of money and love of life (hence a joyous existence) are mutually exclusive (but also because exclusive love is pathological⁴⁷). Chomsky has encapsulated the correlation between the New Spirit of the Age and suffering (both in those who mindlessly seek wealth and in their victims) as follows:

...the report of the study group on *Political Economy of American Foreign Policy*...identifies Western civilization with capitalist forms (as contrasted to the collectivist denial of freedom, initiative, and progress) and defines “the aim of economic activity in the West (as) the maximization of money income—in one or another of its forms—by individuals through the investment of capital or of labor on one’s own account or for, and under the direction of, others.” The document goes on, characteristically, to describe this particular perversion in terms of universal ideals. We cannot be merely an “impartial arbiter...maintaining world order,” but must be an active leader in the struggle to save Western civilization and the “universal ideals of human freedom, individual growth, and economic justice” which are expressed (“however imperfectly”) in the capitalist institutions of the West. Surely this concept of economic man is a psychological absurdity which leads to untold suffering for those who try to mold themselves to this pattern, as well as for their victims. “Look out for number one” is a prescription for demoralization, corruption, and ultimately general catastrophe, whatever value it may have had in the early stages of industrialization. Cooperation for the common good and concern for the rights and needs of others must replace the dismal search for maximization of personal power and consumption if the barbarism of capitalist society is to be overcome.⁴⁸

The most pressing need today is to recognize the oppressor ‘within’ the oppressed, so that the fear of freedom (which is a very potent fear) can be discarded in the service of life. Once the oppressor ‘within’ the oppressed is annihilated (thereby more easily leading to liberation from external constraints on freedom, e.g., freedom from state, corporate and ecclesiastical authority and coercion, from exploitation and from the irrational authority of a boss or foreman), then it will be time to fight for positive freedom, e.g., “freedom to spend one’s energy in a meaningful, productive way, by being an active, responsible, unalienated participant in the total work situation”⁴⁹; freedom to engage in creative labor as a means of life and for the sake of intrinsic rewards (which is the highest want in life), rather than for the sake of income, profit, fame or whatnot; and last but not least, freedom to create the cultural and institutional conditions that will foster the wonderful expansiveness of life on an egalitarian basis, which the love of money blocks, since money = faeces (for, among other reasons, those who have money look down their noses at those who don’t, which is a scandalous social crime, since the haves would not have unless they robbed the have-nots, who are rich in the aggregate). Small wonder that much of the world (but especially the West), then, is drowning in a morass of dung, at least in terms of morals, since in a number of very important respects we are already far gone in the direction of necrophilia! Our cesspool morals are a result of our obsession with materialistic values, which do nothing but outrageously stifle the miracle of life and stink the world with a perfidious odor.

In what respects are we already far gone in the direction of necrophilia? Specifically (none of what is described below should be attributed to human nature, or to evil, or any other facile category, but to the fact that it is, as Fromm pointed out, the failure to make sense of life that leads to the attraction to death and destruction), in the form of worship of technique; chronic boredom; competitiveness; treating people as means rather than ends; our tendency to respect the dead more than the living (think of how often we hear the words: “don’t speak ill of the dead!”; but no one says “don’t speak ill of the living.” Indeed, the living, especially nonconformists, are fair game for the most fiendish type of cruelties!); our lack of ethical integrity or our contempt for genuine ethical values (as evidenced by the miserable ways in which we generally treat dissidents, thereby making higher intelligence and commitment to rationality and even minimal standards of honesty socially maladaptive, which is criminal); our affinity for cold pragmatism; blind submission to and awe of coercive authority; the induced desire for maximizing debt-driven consumption and its attendant destruction of the environment (by polluting the air, the water, the soil, the animals, and ourselves); worshipping death through our voracious appetites for action, thriller and horror movies in which the main theme is grisly violence in one form or another no matter how it is framed and rationalized; etc. But there are less obvious forms of non-sexual necrophilia as well, like apathy and silence (the latter, at least, is a form of propaganda), which

are highly functional for power interests. Since the latter are by definition inherently necrophilous, stifling as they do spontaneous human action, creativity, independence, and cultural diversity and dynamism, it is easy to see how inaction becomes a severe threat to survival. But this is no reason to despair, since there is hardly a limit to what an awakened critical social consciousness can achieve, collectively. But the downside is that if the humanistic goals mentioned in this work (a central component of which must be centered around the being mode over the outrageous cult of having) aren't achieved soon, then mankind will in all likelihood have proven itself to be a lethal mutation, an evolutionary dead end, given the grave, terrifying threats facing it, most notably the threats of nuclear holocaust (those who might somehow survive the latter will, in the very best case, be thrown into a state of sheer barbarism, so much so that they will wish they are dead, even if they have a predominantly biophilic orientation) and cataclysmic climate change. The challenges are great, but so will the rewards be, if only we wake up from our dazzling stupor, take matters into our own hands, and shake our masters from their pinnacles, true to our democratic calling. Responding to this calling entails learning to love social justice more than personal gain. It is when we come to terms with and operationalize the fact that our greatest personal gain comes in the struggle for global egalitarian social justice that we will have achieved our humanity, a humanity that will, by definition, be dynamic and contagious yet non-complacent. The alternative is too stark, grave and dangerous to contemplate with equanimity. Those who are able to do the latter are, as Fromm demonstrates in *The Sane Society*, by definition insane, an insanity that is socially patterned, hence unnoticeable to those who suffer from alienation without being aware of it (since the pathological processes lose their individual character when they are socially patterned), the psychiatric establishment ironically playing a major role in this universal process of alienation (the implication here is that *normalcy and sanity are uncorrelated*. In other words, those who cannot tell right from wrong and cannot see the foreseeable consequences of their actions and inactions may be normal inasmuch as this pathology is shared by many, but they are not sane).

As he shows in the same work, most psychiatrists and psychologists use as their criterion in determining mental health the individual's adjustment to society, thus refusing to entertain the idea that society as a whole may be lacking in sanity, ignoring the unadjustment of the culture itself to a reasonable criterion rooted in *normative humanism*. He defines mental health in the following terms: "Mental health is characterized by the ability to love and to create, by the emergence from incestuous ties to clan and soil, by a sense of identity based on one's experience of self as the subject and agent of one's powers, by the [critical] grasp of reality inside and outside of ourselves, that is, by the development of objectivity and reason" (p. 67; participation in a social or religious community are also forms of incestuous ties).

Naturally, one's experience of self as the subject and agent of one's powers entails not just rejecting but aiming to dismantle structures of authority, hierarchy, coercion and exploitation in every realm of life (because "A complete man has no need to play the authoritarian." Not only that, but "...one would need to be very weak to invoke the aid of authority"—Max Stirner). It means living or striving to live an unalienated life. He goes on:

mental health cannot be defined in terms of the "adjustment" of the individual to his society, but, on the contrary, ... it must be *defined* in terms of the adjustment of society to the *needs* of man, of its role in furthering or hindering the development of mental health. Whether or not the individual is healthy, is primarily not an individual matter, but depends on the structure of his society. A healthy society furthers man's capacity to love his fellow men, to work creatively, to develop his reason and objectivity, to have a sense of self which is based on the experience of his own productive powers. An unhealthy society is one which creates mutual hostility, distrust, which transforms man into an instrument of use and exploitation for others, which deprives him of a sense of self, except inasmuch as he submits to others or becomes an automaton. Society can have both functions; it can further man's healthy development, and it can hinder it; in fact most

societies do both, and the question is only to what degree and in what directions their positive and negative influence is exercised (p. 70; emphasis in original).

Obviously, Western society has gone far in the wrong direction, by transforming man into a commodity, regarding human beings as mere instruments, not ends.

To be sure, the psychiatric establishment is largely about power, control and subordination (hence for the most part redundant), as evidenced by the inhumane ways traumatized, love-starved and justifiably recalcitrant albeit often socially harmless patients are treated (whenever one, whatever one's social status may be, feels an urge to control the unalienated, defiant, nonconformist activity or behavior of others, it is always a good idea, in fact *absolutely necessary*, to control one's *own* alienated, authoritarian, conformist activity or behavior!). It will become less redundant only to the extent that it introduces and rigorously practices humanistic psychology, which would have to entail systematically exposing the heinous crimes of the rich and powerful (coupled with a human impact analysis), as well as stopping cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment within the establishment, e.g., Electro Shock Therapy (a form of torture). Which is being revived in Scandinavia particularly, despite serious, irreversible brain damage and other transient and lasting somatic effects for patients. But on the more general level, Fromm sheds insightful light on the issue pertaining to much of the alienation prevalent in society being mirrored in the psychiatric wards (and in group and individual therapy sessions) in his essay called "On the Limitations and Dangers of Psychology," by pointing out that

modern man experiences himself as a thing, as an embodiment of energies to be invested profitably on the market. He experiences his fellow man as a thing to be used for profitable exchange. Contemporary psychology, psychiatry, and psychoanalysis are involved in this universal process of alienation. The patient is considered as a thing, as the sum of many parts. Some of these parts are defective and need to be repaired, as the parts of an automobile need to be repaired. There is a defect here and a defect there, called symptoms, and the psychiatrist considers it his function to repair or correct these various defects. He does not look at the patient as a global, unique totality which can be fully understood only in the act of full relatedness and empathy. If psychoanalysis is to fulfill its real possibilities, the analyst must overcome his own alienation, must be capable of relating himself to the patient from core to core, and in this relatedness to open the path for the patient's spontaneous experience and thus for the 'understanding' of himself. He must not look on the patient as an object, or even only be a 'participant observer'; he must become one with him and at the same time retain his separateness and objectivity, so that he can formulate what he experiences in this act of oneness... If psychoanalysis ... remains enmeshed in the socially patterned defect of alienation, it may remedy this or that defect, but it will only become another tool for making man more automatized and more adjusted to an alienated society.

In sum, it certainly stands to reason that if we do not stop measuring wealth and well-being in material/monetary and other superficial terms—naturally allowing a certain amount of latitude for existential or functional having (since predominantly cultural terms coupled with the latter exigency are the only sane standards by which to measure wealth and well-being)—if we do not start creating the conditions that will enable us to stop "prostituting" ourselves, stop rendering unto Caesar what never was and never will be Caesar's, and change course soon (as there is still some time for constructive action before all hell breaks loose), if we fail to create libertarian structures centered around the *being* mode of existence (in accordance with anarcho-syndicalist goals and visions), then before long there won't be any history left to talk about (since the powerful *will* obliterate human society, sooner or later, if we let the status quo evolve along its present paths). It's that simple.

Choosing positive freedom over wage slavery; free, creative labor over dead, predatory capital; non-exclusive, non-hegemonic love over pathological love of money and sadomasochistic attachment; life over death—these are all moral imperatives, rooted both in our biological instinct for survival and in our human nature in a cultural sense (just because these are

repressed doesn't mean that they don't exist). Those who have lost this basic biological and moral instinct due to decades of overwhelming toxic indoctrination and propaganda need to be assisted in the art of de-programming and humanization, so that they may come to life and bring to life everyone in their orbit.

To be sure, propaganda pervades all realms of life, so that unless we are properly equipped to recognize and resist it, we will fall victim to its toxic, colonizing effects (by 'properly equipped,' it is by no means implied that special training is required. All that is required is skepticism and common sense intelligence coupled with avoiding social isolation, though it certainly helps a lot to inform oneself through independent dissident sources, too). Many people are startled when they first hear that there is propaganda in the West, which is a remarkable testimonial to the subtlety and effectiveness of the Western system of indoctrination and thought control. After all, "The secret of great propaganda is that it is never seen as propaganda." (Jeffrey Robinson, Alex Carey) It can indeed be very distressing to realize that many of the values, ideas, beliefs, attitudes, feelings, tastes and dispositions that we believe to be our own may very well be, and in all likelihood are, inculcated by invisible propagandistic forces. Edward Bernays—the father of spin who pioneered the "scientific" technique of shaping and manipulating public opinion, which he called the "engineering of consent" in his *Propaganda* (1928): the standard public relations manual in the West, used by political and business elites, academics, religious leaders, etc.—assures us that this is, in fact, the case (pp. 37-8).

The conscious and intelligent manipulation of the organized habits and opinions of the masses is an important element in democratic society. Those who manipulate this unseen mechanism of society constitute an invisible government which is the true ruling power of our country.

We are governed, our minds are molded, our tastes formed, our ideas suggested, largely by men we have never heard of. This is a logical result of the way in which our democratic society is organized. Vast numbers of human beings must cooperate in this manner if they are to live together as a smoothly functioning society.

Our invisible governors are, in many cases, unaware of the identity of their fellow members in the inner cabinet.

They govern us by their qualities of natural leadership, their ability to supply needed ideas and by their key position in the social structure. Whatever attitude one chooses to take toward this condition, it remains a fact that in almost every act of our daily lives, whether in the sphere of politics or business, in our social conduct or our ethical thinking, we are dominated by the relatively small number of persons—a trifling fraction of our hundred and twenty million—who understand the mental processes and social patterns of the masses. It is they who pull the wires which control the public mind, who harness old social forces and contrive new ways to bind and guide the world.

The aim of capitalistic society is, in brief, to "regiment[...] the public mind every bit as much as an army regiments the bodies of its soldiers" (ibid.)

Since nationalism—which, like state worship, participation in a clan, a social or religious community, is the symptom of a regression to incestuous fixation—is the essential creed of the bourgeoisie (Pannekoek), it is to be expected that susceptibility to propaganda will stem from nationalistic sentiments. Alex Carey makes the connection between susceptibility to propaganda, on the one hand, and nationalistic and patriotic sentiments, on the other, that are both intense and shallow, thus (in his seminal work entitled *Taking the Risk Out of Democracy*, p. 124):

The effectiveness of propaganda depends on the availability of emotionally charged symbols or ideas that can be manipulated by propagandists. In the western world the most powerful of such symbols have to do with nationalism. These almost sacred symbols (if also secular) affirm loyalty to a cherished (and idealized) 'way of life'. In contrast, satanic symbols are those which signify subversion and 'threats to national security'. Manipulation of such symbols (words, ideas, images) is, of course, the indispensable basis of conservative political rhetoric and propaganda generally. The extraordinary power of such propaganda in the US is wholly dependent on the maintenance

of popular ‘patriotic’ sentiments that are both intense and shallow. These are sentiments that are easily exploited by manipulating sacred and satanic symbols relating to nationalism.

But Carey, in his essay “The Ideological Management Industry,” makes another crucial connection: “To maximise (sic) popular vulnerability to propaganda, it is necessary to complement shallow and intense patriotism as a source of sacred symbols, with an equally mindless and intense anti-communism to provide a powerful source of satanic symbols.” The reason Carey calls anti-communism mindless is because it has been well-known from the start that the fear of communism was a total fraud, given the fact that the former Soviet Union had the lower hand militarily, and posed only a *potential* threat in economic terms, as noted. But more ominously, anti-communism should, again according to Joan Robinson, be understood as a crusade against independent development, both in the Third World and at home.

Anti-communism, to be sure, is not completely dead, despite the demise of the former Soviet Empire. But this demise nevertheless has necessitated a desperate replacement, in order to find a convenient pretext for continuing to feed the permanent war machine. This is where anti-terrorism comes into play, despite the fact that the West has itself terrorized the Third World for centuries, from the time of European colonialism up to the present. As can be expected, those who denounce retail terrorism (“their terrorism against us”) while ignoring or keeping quiet about the far more serious cases of wholesale terrorism (“our terrorism against them”) are perceived as honorable citizens, while those who do the opposite are perceived as traitors, lunatics and terrorists, since “those who aren’t with us are against us,” in the ridiculous words of George W. Bush. Some call this spin, others call it emotional blackmail; either way, it is manipulative and utterly dishonest. It is not without good reason that the revolutionary pacifist, A.J. Muste, advised other pacifists that their task is “to denounce the violence on which the present system is based, and all the material and spiritual evil it entails for the masses of men throughout the world. So long as we are not dealing honestly and adequately with this 90 percent of our problem, there is something ludicrous and perhaps hypocritical about our concern over the 10 percent of violence employed by the rebels against oppression.”

Any serious discourse on propaganda cannot afford to ignore or gloss over a very fundamental problem in regard to rich media, poor democracy. In an important essay called “Cold-War-Mindedness and the Mass Media” (printed in *Struggle Against History*, edited by Neil Houghton, p. 69), D. W. Smythe and H. H. Wilson observed that “The principal *function* of the commercially supported mass media in the United States is to market the output of the consumer goods industries and to train the population for loyalty to the American economic-political system.” How is this done? Through “A standard set of specifications given by major national advertisers to writers of TV and radio dramas” that reads (in *ibid.*, p. 70):

In general, the moral code of the characters in our dramas will be more or less synonymous with the moral code of the bulk of the American middle class, as it is commonly understood... There will be no material on any of our programs which could in any way further the concept of business as cold, ruthless and lacking all sentiments or spiritual motivation.

They cite further the observations of Paul Lazarsfeld and Robert Merton, who, in 1948, pointed out that the mass communication media

not only continue to affirm the *status quo* but, in the same measure, they fail to raise essential questions about the structure of society. Hence by leading toward conformism and by providing little basis for a critical appraisal of society, the commercially sponsored mass media indirectly but effectively restrain the cogent development of a genuinely critical outlook. (“Mass Communication, Popular Taste and Organized Social Action,” online)

This indictment applies equally well to much of the educational system (from grade school to the institutions of higher learning), too. And what better way to accomplish such an outcome than by

aggressively promoting the insane drive for maximization of consumption, through the vile maxim of the masters of mankind: “gain wealth, forgetting all but self”? Which does nothing but debase our values by reducing us, the *product* of the media, to virtual slaves, thereby entrenching the existing social order. Case in point:

The reason why corporate-controlled media is debasing our values is because they exist solely to make money. [And] they do it by selling *us* (access to our minds) to the corporate advertisers who pay the bills for all the major radio, TV, and print media. The corporate advertisers pay huge amounts for the privilege of penetrating our minds with a commodity consciousness that repeats the mantra: ‘buy more stuff.’ We are not the consumers of the media, we are the product; it is the corporate advertisers who possess ‘consumer sovereignty.’ The consciousness of a self-governing citizen (the democratic ideal) is very different from the consciousness of a human commodity being marketed to corporate advertisers. The owners of the media do not want informed, thinking people; they want commodity junkies who will not rebel against their limited roles as workers/consumers. Slavery is the buying and selling of human beings. The commercial media (using public airwaves, *our* property!) buy and sell a part of a human being—attention, our consciousness. It is a far less brutal form of slavery than the historical version but it is still the selling of human beings. (Danaher, *10 Reasons*, pp. 79-80)

Therefore, the steady commercialization of the publicly owned airwaves should be vigorously opposed, if democracy is to be successfully renewed in the West. In other words, our task today—as Danaher points out—is to redefine people as citizens rather than consumers, and democracy as a global movement, not a global market.

None of these serious problems can be solved unless the economy in the West is completely re-organized, from the bottom up. Far reaching changes would have to take place in the dominant societies before we can talk seriously about democracy, human rights and freedom, because under the prevailing system the only kind of freedom that really counts is “the freedom to rob, to exploit and to dominate, to undertake any course of action to ensure that existing privilege is protected and advanced.” (Chomsky) The first four freedoms (courtesy of Roosevelt): freedom of expression, freedom of worship, freedom from want and freedom from fear, being mostly for show. It should go without saying that the most important battlefield is the space between our ears, for which reason we should apply a considerable amount of critical thought before incorporating images and ideas into our intellectual system. Failing this we become virtual slaves, duped by consent without consent, with the enthusiastic help of corporate media (which, besides sharing the same preconceptions as the general public, is “...used deliberately for diversion, sedation, and pacification,” according to Herbert Schiller).

To be sure, it is (as Fromm discusses in his *To Have or To Be?*) the atrophy of our emotional life (which goes together with the supremacy of cerebral, manipulative thinking) that makes it hard to discriminate between people who are genuine and fakers. Since our emotional life has remained stunted, never maturing beyond the level of a child’s, we are easily attracted to leaders (political, corporate and religious, including cultural icons, of course), especially to those who portray strong emotions (or simply have the necessary eloquence and style at their disposal to elicit strong but shallow emotions in us), since by doing so they compensate our own emotional atrophy (which is another way of creating and reinforcing alienation). The solution is to cultivate our emotional life, by actively developing our total personality, realizing that there is a dangerous split between our intellect and affect, so that our emotional life is no longer an impediment to optimal functioning, so that the marketing character which is served very nicely by the above deficiencies in us (including our naiveté and gullibility) may be perceived for the charlatan that it really is. Only then will we be able to discriminate between the public relations product who fakes strong emotions and those leaders who are genuine (which is actually kind of oxymoronic, since leadership almost always entails fakery. In other words, we will fare much

better in the long run by being extremely skeptical towards, and contemptuous of, leadership in general, with the view of dissolving all forms of concentrated, unaccountable power structures).

Apropos of activism, some people know, but many more should know, about the pyramid game and why it is a scam. For example, let's say that the person who initiates the game recruits 5 people, collects a certain sum from each, and tells them that if they, too, each recruit 5 people, collect their dues (after sending a good part of the loot up to the top of the pyramid, by whatever method that's employed), and urge them to do the same, not only will they recuperate their costs, but make huge profits. So a chain reaction is created, with the initiator being the biggest collector of money. By the time the people at the mid- or low-level of the pyramid realize that they've been duped, the initiator is a rich person, s/he quickly relocates to a country with no extradition treaty with her/his country, and lives "happily" ever after. The reason this game is a scam is that it is based on a mathematical trick. The initiator recruits 5 people. The first 5 people each recruit 5 people. The latter do the same, and so on and so forth. If you do the math (i.e., $1 + 5 + 5^2 + 5^3 + 5^4 \dots$ 14 times), after the 14th cycle, you actually end up exceeding the entire world population!

Now, given that the ideological system (the schools, the universities and the media) is generally not hospitable to dissidents and working class interests, I wonder why anti-capitalist activists have not used this kind of calculation to mobilize support on a very large scale, and make it known to their readers/listeners that this theory could very well work to the advantage of the working class in a relatively short time frame, considering the very large number of people who could be reached if each person committed himself to informing 5 people, and so on and so forth. Promisingly, there are probably at least a million people throughout the world who are already enlightened about the utter evils of the so-called capitalist system. Which of course means that the task is made immeasurably easier by virtue of the fact that we are not dealing with merely 1 or 5 knowledgeable people to begin with. So, if each of the million (even much less) were to take anywhere between 6 to 36 months to inform up to 5 people, perhaps more,⁵⁰ and the chain reaction is thereby set, within 25 years billions could be empowered with the kind of knowledge that would in turn motivate the largest scale revolution that this world has ever known (despite the language barriers that exist throughout the world, which can be overcome by virtue of the fact that each country in the world contains well over 5 knowledgeable persons). (Since there are at least a billion throughout the world who are too destitute to think in long range terms and be mobilized, naturally those who aren't will have to act on their behalf, always making sure that their vital needs are attended to in accordance with the availability of existing and "expropriated" resources, finally being able to reap all the benefits of the revolution on equal terms with those who fought on their behalf.) The aim is to challenge, undermine and ultimately dismantle military-based state capitalism and the world system it dominates, so that all forms of concentrated power, not least wage slavery, can be dismantled, in order to instigate and entrench substantive democracy at every level of life. This would increase our chances of long-term survival very significantly. The 25-year projection happens to roughly coincide with the projection by some serious analysts about when all hell is likely to break loose *at the latest*, so this scarcely available window of opportunity should not be squandered! (This should, of course, not be construed to mean that passivity and inaction would be justified if there were no serious threats to survival of the species, since slavery and oppression in all their forms must be abolished no matter what, both as a matter of principle and for pragmatic reasons.)

Returning to the question of wage slavery, naturally, any serious challenge to it carries momentous implications for the prospects of freedom, "because slavery symbolize[s] the most extreme example of treating men [and women] as exploitable objects." (Forbath) Such an attack, if widespread, will undermine the prevailing forms of authority in the corporate dominated economy (even if the attack must be part of a larger struggle seeking to dismantle military-based state capitalism), since a free society is incompatible with dependent classes of workers who are

regimented, degraded, alienated, fragmented, atomized and demoralized. The way to change that is the same as the way to achieve any progress through history: ending chattel slavery, obtaining the vote, providing some degree of medical care, restricting aggressive violence, the Multilateral Agreement on Investments being stopped by popular organization around the OECD through the Internet, efforts to revoke the Union Oil Company of California (Unocal) charter (even if unsuccessful⁵¹), etc. (meaning of course that there are reasons for cautious optimism despite everything). The only methods are education, organizing, and activism. In the West, as elsewhere, many people are engaged in these efforts, in global justice movements (ridiculously called “anti-globalization”), movements for democratizing the economy by eliminating private tyrannies (corporations), etc. These movements are unprecedented in scale and commitment, even if the scale has to be much larger for libertarian socialism to be instigated globally, which is the only ideal that offers genuine hope for humankind, so that by studying and committing ourselves to it, we can stop being apologists for the status quo, thereby coming to understand who we are and what we must do if we aspire to be moral agents, not servants of power. The alternative: contemporary barbarism, cannot be sustained for long.

“Dissatisfaction with our way of life is the first step toward changing it.” (And what greater dissatisfaction could there be in life than lack of love manifesting itself through the mindless quest for material wealth, which stems from greed and envy, not to speak of lack of positive and negative freedoms, thereby living as “happy slaves”?) “As to these changes, one thing is certain: They must take place in all spheres simultaneously—in the economic, the social, the political and the spiritual. Change in only one sphere will lead into blind alleys, as did the purely political French Revolution and the purely economic Russian Revolution. Man is a product of circumstances – but the circumstances are also his product. He has a unique capacity that differentiates him from all other living beings: the capacity to be aware of himself and of his circumstances, and hence to plan and to act according to his awareness.”⁵²

Since the hegemony of the ruling class under state capitalism (or any other elitist system for that matter) results from a constantly nurtured bond (by the elites themselves as well as by their lower level representatives) between the rulers and the ruled (Antonio Gramsci), one strategy than can be employed to break the ideological bond is to question by what *natural and moral* right political and economic masters rule. Consensual validation at the societal level—stemming mostly from dogmatic traditions, cultural myths and social illusions to begin with—certainly spuriously legitimates the status quo (as does the ballot box, which isn’t about whether or not people want to be ruled but who will rule over them, thereby making it largely a sham, since the ballot presupposes a relationship of power and subordination even under the best of conditions), but those at the top nevertheless bear a very heavy burden of justification, through rational and honest argumentation and proof. This is why Chomsky has opined, “Power always has to prove that it is legitimate, in any given context. If it cannot bear that burden, then it’s illegitimate and should be dismantled. Rarely can such a challenge be sustained, when honestly posed and squarely faced” (paraphrased).

But there is a level of complexity here that we ought to be willing to tolerate, if we wish to alleviate human suffering (which is the highest task when living under oppressive structures): it is of the essence that the public comes to understand the symbiotic relationship between—along with all the rotten intricacies of—state and private power, so that the public can use its latent power to strengthen those aspects of state power than can weaken private power while strengthening those aspects of state power that have the potential to promote human welfare (*as a temporary measure*). In other words, governments should be compelled to pursue social reform for the many rather than venal satisfaction for a few, even if they respond only in limited or marginal ways, which can be meaningful in the short run), until ideally both state and private power are dissolved when the time is ripe, since, in the final analysis, both structures are quite

illegitimate (owing to the innumerable and limitless iniquities that they generate; only then, i.e., when the poor and the working class has created a common consciousness of its situation and when it has forged strong bonds of solidarity, can the wrongs and oppressions under which humanity labors be remedied). This strategy is called “expanding the floor of the cage” (an expression popularized by South American rural workers unions), which is a wise and sensible approach. The logic can be summed up as follows:

We know we’re in a cage. We know we’re trapped. We’re going to expand the floor, meaning we will extend to the limits what the cage will allow. And we intend to destroy the cage. But not by attacking the cage when we’re vulnerable, so they’ll murder us. That’s completely correct. You have to protect the cage when it’s under attack from even worse predators from outside, like private power. And you have to expand the floor of the cage, recognizing that it’s a cage. These are all preliminaries to dismantling it. Unless people are willing to tolerate that level of complexity, they’re going to be of no use to people who are suffering and who need help, or, for that matter, to themselves.⁵³

In terms of the lesser of two evils, and *only* in those terms, state ownership of the means of production and resources, of commerce and finance, is better than private ownership, since the state has a positive defect: it is, in theory at least, accountable to the public, hence susceptible to public influence/dissidence, while private tyrannies (the large transnationals) are not. According to Chomsky (*Znet*, May 2005; paraphrased), “every single element of the neo-liberal programs is designed mainly to destroy democracy. Eliminating fixed currencies and removing absolutely essential constraints on capital flight is no less inimical to democracy. By definition, privatization undermines democracy, since it takes things out of the public arena. For example, turning services into private control takes away everything that the government might want to do, *under public pressure*. So the system is basically designed in such a way that the state will lose the capacity to respond to its citizens and will be compelled to respond to concentrations of private power” (with privatization’s main benefits naturally flowing to those who already are privileged, since under the misnomer “free market capitalism” the only criterion of success is profit maximization for those who already have *much, much* more than they will *ever* need). It is disingenuous, because private ownership of the means of production is a form of theft.

Of course, “property rights are...the centerpiece of the capitalist system,” according to Immanuel Wallerstein. And Western states’ primary function is to protect the rights *to* property—to the detriment of human rights and meaningful democracy—for the men of best quality. According to Korten, “the protection of corporations and corporate property [is] a centerpiece of constitutional law,” which is confirmed by other scholars such as Lance Banning and Gordon Wood. As the latter observe, “‘the Constitution was intrinsically an aristocratic document designed to check the democratic tendencies of the period,’ delivering power to a ‘better sort’ of people and excluding ‘those who were not rich, well born, or prominent from exercising political power’.” (Cited in Chomsky, “Consent Without Consent,” online)

The place of property rights in the symbiotic relationship between Western states and the large transnationals is a question of tremendous import, given Western states’ single-mindedness in protecting private property despite its devastating effects on freedom and democracy. Thus, according to Joel Bakan, “the state is the only institution in the world that can bring a corporation to life. It alone grants corporations their essential rights, such as legal personhood and limited liability, and it compels them always to put profits first. It raises police forces and armies and builds courthouses and prisons (all compulsorily paid for by citizens) to enforce corporations’ property rights—rights themselves created by the state.” (*The Corporation*, pp. 153-4) Such spurious legal rights are precisely what elevate economic crimes to the highest virtue, since Western conglomerates, which are totalitarian command economies, could never survive were it not for economic crimes, which are not only welcomed and supported, but are required, by law.

The implicit idea here that needs to be made explicit is that hating government is dangerous, since it is, by law and principle, the only institution that has the power to protect citizens from transnational corporations (but it will never do so unless it is forced to by a demanding and threatening constituency, not by virtue of 1 or 2 demonstrations, but by constant pressure). But one should not overlook the fact that the role of the state has for a long time now been expanding in the opposite direction: protecting corporations *from* citizens (Bakan). If reversing this trend proves to be impossible, it does not mean that a brake cannot be put on it. The success or failure of such an endeavor all depends on how well- or ill-informed and engaged or apathetic the public is. Encroachments on the system of totalitarian private control of production, commerce, and finance will be fiercely resisted by both the state and the private sectors, but in the short and perhaps medium runs, it is the only solution that offers a modicum of hope for the working class and the poor. It is indeed a major achievement of corporate propaganda, and a severe blow to democracy, that anti-political sentiments are so rampant, since this inevitably results in de-politicization, thereby leaving private power intact and free from negative state interference (negative, that is, from private corporations' vantage point).

It is to make such rational insights and arguments unthinkable that our system necessitates the creation of illusions, so that the "rabble are kept in line."⁵⁴ Which cannot be done unless the masses are bewildered. And bewildered they are, which is symptomatic of how tyrannical the corporate system is. This is why Barrington Moore, Jr. said: "'the vested interest in confusion' seems to be an essential element in the internal dynamics of totalitarianism."⁵⁵ The latter claim we need not be ambivalent about, given the merger between state and private power and what this entails for the public, since by definition this merger (which constitutes the essence of fascism) subordinates human needs and rights to the overriding need for profit. As one of the more serious political scientists, Robert Dahl, duly observed: "...much in the way of political theory ... depends on the assumptions one makes about the sources of political attitudes. ...if one assumes that political preferences are simply plugged into the system by leaders (business or otherwise) in order to extract what they wish from the system, then the model of plebiscitary democracy is substantially equivalent to the model of totalitarian rule."⁵⁶ There are at least three senses in which we are living under totalitarian rule:

- Corporate capitalism was mostly imposed by radical judicial arrangements, not by legislation. The expansion of corporate rights was the work of both Federalist and Republican lawyers and judges removed from (formal) democratic processes. And it was the state courts, not legislators, that gave the corporate entities extraordinary rights, granting them rights of persons (with the proviso that they are immortal), actually, rights far beyond what mere flesh-and-blood persons could ever even dream of, meaning they have freedom of speech, can propagandize freely, advertise (i.e., coerce the public to pay for the privilege of being brainwashed), run elections, etc. And they are protected from inspection by the irrelevant citizenry and even by state authorities, in order to preserve these autocratic structures, which are mostly unaccountable to the public (if these private tyrannies are accountable to the public, it is only by means of congressional subpoenas, but congress is typically on their payroll [indirectly] so it rarely happens). And they are required legally to maximize power and profit no matter what effect that has on anyone else, even future generations. They are also required by law to externalize costs and risks (since power is largely what externalities are about). It would be illegal, according to international private law, for corporate executives to act differently. In brief, corporations are pathological by legal requirement. The implication is that the law has been manipulated by economic interests to such an extent as to make reforms meaningless *in the long run*, so much so that corporate social responsibility (CSR) is illegal, at least when it is genuine. (Joel Bakan, Milton Friedman. Peter Drucker. See references in note 58). Of course, a seemingly strong argument can be made to justify the existence, role, and impact of multinational corporations (MNCs) or corporate capitalism: that is, they or it has or have raised the living standard for hundreds of millions of

people across the globe, not to mention that MNCs feed, house, clothe, transport, inform, medicate and entertain us. Even though these things are all true, the *argument* is a terrible one. Nazism and Stalinism raised the living standards for many Germans and Russians (as noted, much faster, in the latter case, than the West did for its people). Is that a justification for Nazism and Stalinism? Comment is superfluous, excepting the fact that as long as corporate capitalism is a zero-sum game, which is intrinsically and unavoidably the case, then the role and impact of MNCs is a very negative one, socially and environmentally, which humanity ignores at its peril.

- More people are *made* to die of hunger and easily preventable diseases every 3 years under state capitalism than died in the Second World War. The amount of money that would be required to remedy this problem is a small fraction of America's yearly military budget, which is used not for defense but for offense (see note 58 for reference).
- “[T]here was a massive recruitment of Nazi war criminals [by the CIA] at the war’s end” (Norman Finkelstein), in order to adopt Nazi counterinsurgency programs: doublespeak for ‘aggression,’ ‘genocide,’ and ‘international terrorism’ in the true sense of the expressions (see references in note 58)

So in a very real sense, corporate (or state) capitalism is the Fourth Reich, if only because of the endless suffering that that this monstrous system is causing, even if it doesn't send people to the gas chamber. But in the last analysis, the fate of the planet depends more on what the ruled do and do not do than on what the rulers do and do not do, since the latter can do nothing at all without the manufactured consent of the ruled. It therefore behooves us to come to terms with the fact that direct democracy is the only way to go if we want to be truly free, which we cannot be as long as we tolerate hierarchies, accept irrational authority and allow ourselves to be governed. Even the Trilateral Commission recognized in its very important study (*The Crisis of Democracy*, online), that there is an “inherent contradiction involved in the very phrase ‘governability of democracy.’ For [...] governability and democracy are warring concepts. An excess of democracy means a deficit in governability; easy governability suggests faulty democracy.” Such honesty is rare among those who have a share in power and privilege.⁵⁷

David Hume's observation that “It is on opinion only that government is founded” (it is also founded on the power of the Sword, of course, since force, or at least the threat of force, is the ultimate guarantor of submission and discipline, especially in the South where states are not as limited in their capacity to coerce the domestic population as the West is); and Gramsci's idea that there is a constantly nurtured bond between the rulers and the ruled; and Samuel Huntington's observation that “Power remains strong when it remains in the dark, exposed to the sunlight it begins to evaporate”; and the libertarian principle that power always has to prove that it's legitimate, in any context—these truisms should constantly be kept in the foreground by those who wish to liberate their minds from orthodoxies, in order to become part of the global justice movement, if we are to make strides against state-supported private tyranny. Which is not a law of nature any more than it is a law of physics. The Fourth Reich⁵⁸ can be challenged and undermined, even dismantled (since the system of depredation that the masters practice upon their subjects is obviously not susceptible to fundamental social change). What is needed is a substantial, broad-based democratic social struggle, encompassing primarily those who are disenfranchised by the prevailing system in all countries (while being open to the possibility that even those who are not but are of good faith may join in of their own accord), a fundamental change, international in scope, requiring a degree of solidarity hitherto unprecedented. Bottom line is that the economic system that replaces state capitalism must be subordinated to the real needs of man, both material and non-material,⁵⁹ in contrast to the synthetic, artificially produced needs of man which chain and weaken him.

This must happen in an egalitarian fashion, because inequality is not sanctioned by nature, as Jean-Jacques Rousseau demonstrated in his *Discourse on Inequality*, an eighteenth century

investigation of freedom and servitude. In this work, he challenges virtually every social institution's legitimacy, including individual control of property and wealth. These are, in his words, "usurpations ... established only on a precarious and abusive right. . . . having been acquired only by force, force could take them away without (the rich) having grounds for complaint." Even property acquired by personal industry is not held "upon better titles." Against such a claim, he objected: "Do you not know that a multitude of your brethren die or suffer from need of what you have in excess, and that you needed express and unanimous consent of the human race to appropriate for yourself anything from common subsistence that exceeded your own?" It is indeed contrary to the law of nature that "a handful of men be glutted with superfluities while the starving multitude lacks necessities."

It is, therefore, totally unacceptable that over 1000 children die *every hour* from easily preventable diseases and malnutrition throughout the world, day in and day out (according to UNICEF, *State of the World's Children 1997*), while in the aggregate the rich spend more money on their pets than they do helping humanity. It is totally unacceptable that close to twice that many women die or suffer serious disability in pregnancy or childbirth, also easily preventable, since the needed remedies and care are simple (according to UNICEF, *Progress of Nations 1996*). If we can observe and contemplate such tragic but totally avoidable facts with equanimity, then not only are we weak and miserable creatures, but total, raving lunatics. It is our duty, if we are at all human, to explode with moral indignation at what we have allowed to happen while sleep walking through our mindless, unvigilant lives. It is high time to give up the ostrich-like legacy. We owe it to the *hundred of millions* of hapless victims whose premature deaths we have helped make possible/contributed to during the 20th century alone through structural violence (along with the deep suffering of about half the world's population, at least), and to the who-knows-how-many victims of premature deaths and suffering that we are sure to help make possible/contribute to in the future; since things will get worse as long as most of us continue to wallow in our depraved mode of apathy, during which time our self-appointed leaders will wreak more havoc, true to their calling as bureaucratic gangsters, democratic thugs, sacred mass murderers, lawful robbers, princes of darkness and cave men and women in expensive suits, crucially with our witting or unwitting blessings and subsidies.

Those who object to equality do so mostly on economic grounds⁶⁰ (oblivious to the fact that equality of income is just one aspect of equality; there are many other aspects, but for our purpose it should suffice to reduce a long argument to its essentials by postulating that perhaps the most important aspect is this: "that no man should be used for an end independent of his welfare" – Frederick B. Artz), by arguing that it is right and just for a brain surgeon to make more money than, say, a sanitation worker. But this is a spurious argument, because a surgeon could certainly not successfully perform a single surgery without a clean operating room, nor could the patient recover without a clean recovery room. Under status quo arrangements, those who receive the lowest remunerations are those who do the most productive work. And those who receive the highest remunerations are those who do the least productive work, almost invariably, as evidenced by the fact that a movie star makes more money *per* film than many low wage earners would make in *several* lifetimes, despite the fact that the entertainment industry is for the most part oppressive (and largely devoid of contemporary social relevance), since it keeps people diverted and controlled. It is, after all, not value free. It is very much part of the propaganda system (to be more accurate, "Popular entertainment is basically propaganda for the status quo."—Erik Barnouw. It's "all about...the evisceration of social meaning and the reinforcement of the status quo."—Schiller), just like secular and religious education, news media, major spectator sports (which is training in irrational behavior, since it engenders chauvinistic attitudes in people while de-politicizing them), reality TV shows, sit-coms, etc. The "manufacture of consent" could not be accomplished so spectacularly without the film and music industries.

Entertainment's great propagandistic utility as a mechanism of social control makes actors, singers, musicians, dancers, talk show hosts, painters, sculptors and even amateur and professional sportspersons utter failures in terms of healthy social function, unless they are in the *habit* of raising social and political awareness through their work, which is rare (if the value of a work of art is *purely* aesthetic—which it cannot *really* be as long as necrophilic class interests are built into it, as they usually are—it is not necessarily worthless, but it should be borne in mind that aesthetic values make no contribution to material well-being). Bob Marley, Miriam Makeba, Fela Kuti, Lucky Dube, Thomas Mapfumo, Linton Kwesi Johnson, Marvin Gaye, Pink Floyd and Rage Against the Machine are some notable exceptions among a few others, but even in such cases we are dealing with infotainment at worst and only partial politicization at best, since it is hardly possible to coherently raise matters of human significance through entertainment. In other words, entertainers help to mystify and perpetuate the undemocratic nature of the economic system in powerful ways, even and especially if they are doing so unwittingly. Case in point: as Edward Bernays put it (in his *Propaganda*): “The American motion picture is the greatest unconscious carrier of propaganda in the world today.” (The fact that he did not include much of the music industry as well is attributable to the fact that the statement was made before the music industry became highly commercialized.)

The fact that the entertainment industry (which is a huge corporate system, hence illegitimate) provides an effective means of gaining wealth, class power and social prestige while simultaneously distracting, subduing and de-politicizing the masses, is proof positive that authentic creativity is almost wholly suppressed and numbed in most so-called artists. Case in point: As Schiller observed in *The Antioch Review*, Vol. 27, No. 1 (Spring, 1967), p. 72:

It is assumed that films and television and radio programming are the inspired efforts of talented individuals. Yet only in rare cases is this so. Most often, the television program or the typical American movie is merely another commodity, designed carefully, in the same sense that soap and cereals and cosmetics are prepared, to satisfy artificially stimulated wants. ... Individual expression and talent have long since departed from most of the products of the newspaper, film, and broadcasting industries in the West. What comes out of these faceless complexes today are neat packages of stereotyped dramatic ingredients, formalistically arranged.

When the possibility for genuine creative expression is blocked, then human destructiveness in any of its more or less malignant forms inevitably rears its ugly head. Which is understandable in light of the fact that the essence of human nature—hence of the being mode—is, in Humboldt's words, “to inquire and to create.” He goes on: “these are the centers around which all *human* pursuits more or less directly revolve” (emphasis added). But he also cautioned that: “all moral culture springs solely and immediately from the inner life of the soul, and can never be produced by external and artificial contrivances. The cultivation of the understanding as of any of man's other faculties is generally achieved by his own activity, his own ingenuity, or his own methods of using the discoveries of others.” It is easy to see, then, how and why authentic creativity is almost wholly suppressed and numbed in most so-called artists, given the standardized (hence stupefying) methods of artistic production and expression (i.e., the formula content of entertainment generally), and given the necrophilic class interests built into what passes for creativity under status quo arrangements.

Following is one notable exception: there was a time when Hip Hop (until about the mid-90s), for example, was kind of a politicized, militant social movement, but over time it, too, has sunk to the depths of degeneracy, by entrenching degrading materialistic (as well as sexist and homophobic) values. In other words, entertainers are, in effect if not intent, part of the state-corporate machinery that is waging a bitter class war against humanity, excepting a tiny minority that raises awareness through its work in rather limited ways. The main task is to promote class interests while dumbing us down, by masking social, political and economic reality, in order to

keep us shackled. So virtually a hundred percent of entertainers are our enemies, based on the truism that if they are not part of the solution, then they are part of the problem. Besides, if they do what they do for benevolent reasons (a constant claim of theirs, itself a strong indication that they know their motives are far from benevolent, since the proof is not in the saying but in the doing), then that should *hurt* their self-interest,⁶¹ rather than abusing the pauperized through shows like, say, MTV Cribs™, by rubbing in the fact that they have *far* more than they will ever need in an existential sense, which is *the* cause of our material poverty, meaning the few owe their wealth to the impoverishment of the many. Specifically, “it is the structure of Western society and the rules of power in it that create poverty” (Danaher), an obvious truism, but one that typically elicits incomprehension or fury in the West. An aroused public can and should dethrone the moneyed aristocracy, so that the economic system can be geared towards unconditional necessities for all rather than extremely abusive luxuries for the awesomely degenerate few, since luxury and decadence are symbols of a sick society.

In the event that the shackles of oppression are successfully broken one day on a significant scale, a far-sighted and compassionate approach should entail challenging and medically treating former oppressors (there should also be punishment of course, but it should be as mild as possible, since punishment does not deter crime, but primarily for humanitarian reasons, always guarding against punishment becoming the outlet for our anger and disappointment), so that they do not perpetuate the old patterns of oppression with other newfound victims, even on a small scale. This is an act of solidarity not only towards victims-to-be, but even towards the oppressors, so that the latter can recognize and reclaim the humanity that they have negated in themselves, which was/is done by negating the humanity of their past and/or present subjects/victims. For, as Paulo Freire duly opined, it is “Only power that springs from the weakness of the oppressed [that] will be sufficiently strong to free both” the oppressed and the oppressors. Only then can we reasonably hope that the vicious cycle of human destructiveness can be undone (not just killing and physically and psychologically harming people but depriving them of their rights and needs through distant institutional forces is also a form of destructiveness!). Only then can the shameful inheritance of moral and social backwardness be disinherited, so that both the oppressors and the oppressed can emancipate themselves from this symbiotic existence in which each derives his self-esteem from oppressing or from being oppressed, since the fear of freedom is quite potent for many people, as a result of the wrong kind of upbringing and wrong education.

Since the authoritarian underpinnings of the having structure of existence are not very pervious to reason and love, how, one may ask, can one “win over” to the libertarian side those whose money lust and thus soulless authoritarian characters are “deeply” entrenched? Since the problem is one of being uninformed and heavily propagandized, and ultimately about potent (hence peaceful) life versus impotent (hence violent) death and destruction, it would not be unreasonable to postulate that there is a very good chance of overcoming this problem, because “the propaganda that inundates [most people] is effective when unchallenged, [as] much of it goes only skin deep.” Such people “can be brought to raise questions and apply their decent instincts and basic intelligence,” thereby “quickly escap[ing] the confines of the doctrinal system”⁶² in the service of libertarian goals and visions.

A central question that arises in conjunction with elites’ indispensable need for propaganda, is: why do they fear and, subsequently, hate freedom and democracy? Can and should we blame human nature, even though elites only constitute a tiny minority? I would venture to say No, for two reasons. First, it should not be taken for granted that “elites’ human nature” corresponds with the human nature of ordinary persons (even if there is some question-begging involved in this line of thinking), since a “minority’s human nature” cannot, by definition, be representative of the majority’s. Second, it is not possible to say anything about the

cultural aspects of human nature with much certainty, certainly not in a reductionist or scientific manner. (What is meant by "...certainly not in a ... scientific manner" is simply that questions about human nature are beyond the scope of scientific inquiry. But at the same time there is enough compelling evidence in *authentic* history, in human experience and intuition, in poll results, that human beings do have an innate sense of morality, which can nevertheless be distorted or in the worst case scenario even be destroyed by the wrong kind of upbringing and wrong education.) What is meant by the former is that most people usually are not necessarily one thing to the exclusion of other things. If we can identify socially and morally undesirable traits in humans (on whatever scale), we can just as easily identify a more or less equal amount of socially and morally desirable traits in them. The traits that are going to be accentuated and brought to the fore are the ones that the prevailing politico-economic system encourages and rewards (in this case, competition, acquisition, high levels of consumption, accumulation, selfishness, greed, indifference to social justice and lack of solidarity, awe of irrational authority, etc., to wit, the having mode). While the traits, qualities and concerns that the system punishes or at least does not reward (solidarity, community, equality, ethical concerns, concern for the environment and for future generations, to wit, the being mode) will tend to recede into the background, or be destroyed, in the worst case scenario. In brief, human beings and their behaviors are too complex to be pigeon-holed. And this holds true of elites, too, to a limited extent. For example, in their private lives, in their dealings with their spouses, children, friends, perhaps even housekeepers, *if they want* they can be the nicest people on earth, but in their *institutional roles as owners, executives and managers, they are necessarily monsters, since there is an institutional need for them to behave as monsters* (but this does not mean that moral standards should not be imposed on them by a demanding and threatening constituency, in order to mitigate their worst excesses). Otherwise, they cannot maintain the traditional structures of power and privilege with which they have long been allied. But the bottom line about at least ordinary citizens' human nature in a cultural sense is that it is *not*, contrary to the mind managers' vulgar and self-serving assertions, intractable. But since human expectations have a lot of bearing on human behavior, it is well to consider Herbert Schiller's insightful remark (in his *The Mind Managers*): "What human nature is seen to be ultimately affects the way human beings behave, not because they must act as they do but because they are expected to act that way."

If implemented, the ideas of the Enlightenment could produce free human beings whose values are not the prevailing ones (accumulation and domination⁶³) but rather free association on equal terms and sharing and cooperation, with efforts geared toward achieving common, democratically conceived goals. (Chomsky; paraphrased) To keep the ideas of the Enlightenment alive amounts to nothing less than attempts to kill the culture of darkness and death that we are surrounded by, in the hope that the submerged culture of light and life will gain the upper hand and start flowering. If and when it does, we must never let our guards down again, since the price of freedom is eternal vigilance. But for the here, now and foreseeable future, let us—instead of indulging in the immoral luxury of not caring about humanity—dare to care, which is the greatest lesson in life (Maya Angelou); so that historic continuity and universal welfare can be safeguarded, because the human family is already more united than it realizes (what is needed is to be acutely aware of this and to make this unity much more pronounced, with strong cooperation and coordination across the board, in the service of universal emancipation, so that the awakening of the socialist idea may be hastened):

Suppose that you want a cup of coffee from the vending machine at work. First, there is the cup of coffee itself: that involves the workers on the coffee plantation, the ones on the sugar plantation and in the refineries, the ones in the paper mill, and so on. Then you have the workers who made the different parts of the vending machine and the ones who assembled it. Then the ones who extracted the iron ore and bauxite, smelted the steel, and work for the electric utility which

supplies power to the machine. Then all the workers who transported the coffee, cups, and machine. Then the clerks, typists, and communication workers who coordinated the production and transportation. Finally, you have all the workers who produced all the other things necessary for the other ones to survive. That gives you a direct material relationship to several million people, in fact, to the immense majority of the world's population. They produce your life, and you help to produce theirs (the former claim is very true, the latter is evidently a highly questionable claim). In this light, all artificial group identities and special group interests fade into insignificance. Imagine the potential enrichment of your life that at present is locked up in the frustrated creativity of these millions of workers, held back by obsolete and exhausting methods of production, strangled by lack of control over their own productivity, warped by the insane rationale of capital-accumulation which pits one against all and makes life a mad scramble for economic survival. Here we begin to discover a real social identity—in people all over the world who are fighting to win control over their own lives we find ourselves.⁶⁴

Coming to terms with “the possibility of being in touch with our unconscious is, precisely, that if we are in touch with it, then we are in touch with humanity,”⁶⁵ then we are able to get rid of the fetters of egoboundness and egocentricity, thereby overcoming the monstrous cult of having (and only then is the mortal, idolatrous sin of estrangement from at-onement with humanity washed away), so that the City of Being may be inaugurated, crucially without seeking allies in the sky, either before or after the inauguration, since salvation *always* comes from below; and, in the secular realm, is maintained without any assistance from “above,”⁶⁶ in my view. In other words, it is *totally* immature, irresponsible, insane and even idolatrous to pray to and expect God to fix the problems that we have created and are unwilling to take responsibility for and solve (the underlying mentality of this type of extreme alienation can be translated thus: “Lord, I *humbly* pray to you to take the high road by ignoring the fact that I am a criminal who is totally unwilling to change, maybe even incapable of change because human nature is fundamentally corrupt [you know that better than anyone, since you created us! If we were not fundamentally corrupt, we would not need you!] and just clean up the bloody mess that I have created so that I can fuck up the world all over again, with you always bailing me out in the end, because you are a benevolent father who forgives and forgets. That is admittedly your job, after all.”).

The escalating calamities that have been proliferating under pathological power and the deep, ubiquitous misery that has been descending upon humanity did not come from “heaven,” or from “hell,” or anywhere else, but from the principle of command (which, as we have seen, is closely connected with the having mode), as Mikhail Bakunin duly observed: “If there is a devil in human history, that devil is the principle of command. It alone, sustained by the ignorance and stupidity of the masses, without which it could not exist, is the source of all the catastrophes, all the crimes, and all the infamies of history.” And religion, which is “the opium of the people,”⁶⁷ is the single most noxious cause that has given rise to the principle of command.⁶⁸ In other words, next to the concentration of wealth and power, nothing is more inimical to freedom and democracy than spiritualizing secular issues and secularizing spiritual issues. The secular and spiritual realms must never be conflated (as conflating them is indicative of religious fanaticism), because the price of religious superstition and fanaticism so far has been far too great. And if we persist in our superstitious and fanatical beliefs and subsequent apathy and passivity, then before long there won't be a habitable earth to live on, and certainly no “heaven” to ascend to either, because *genuine spirituality presupposes—even from a biblical point of view—love for humanity by practical example in the here and now* (not just in words and in some unspecified future)—impossible as long as we are using religion to hide the basic economic and social realities (hence using it as a cover for wickedness) and gangster pimping (hence rotting) in the Faustian culture of “gain[ing] wealth, forgetting all but self.” There is indeed much wisdom to be gained by reflecting on Mark 8:36 (for money-hungry Christians, Mathew 6:24 is also worth looking up. For Muslims, Sura 9: Verse 35. Buddhism and Judaism, too, treat covetousness in totally

negative terms): “What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul?” – except that one does not have to gain the whole world to lose one’s soul. It is enough that one is sufficiently money-hungry so that chasing the mighty dollar becomes one’s *raison d’être*—surely a fundamentally wrong and immoral choice of enormous social and environmental consequence. Instead, our *raison d’être* should be, instead of aping our cruel masters by seeking wealth hence exacerbating poverty, fighting for social justice with an unswerving passion, forgetting none but self (at least that is the ideal that we ought to strive for, even if it is unattainable). That is the essence of radical humanism—the only religion that leads to true salvation—unattainable as long as the greatest diseases in our time: greed, indifference and despair, continue to reign supreme.

Those who are inflicted by despair or are otherwise immobilized by fear ought to bear in mind that “There are occasions when it pays better to fight and be beaten than not to fight at all” (George Orwell), instead of blowing with the wind like virtually a hundred percent of starry-eyed intellectuals. Besides being shamelessly sycophantic, they voluntarily immolate humanity every day in the service of necrophilous power and blood profit, to wit, in the service of the having mode, until finally there won’t be anything left *to* have, nor the possibility *to be*, if the current social order evolves along its current paths. In other words, the frantic, cut-throat effort to get on the gravy-train of illusory wealth may have its rewards for the few who do manage to gain wealth, but the cost is, as we have seen, far too high. To be sure, this high cost itself is attributable in large measure to the absolutely disgraceful service that death-worshipping intellectuals typically render to concentrations of political and economic power through the ideological management industry, at times by lying outright but mostly by toxic omissions, distortions, misrepresentations, etc. This is how the “tacit assumptions that guide policy and shape its doctrinal disguise” are reinforced. (Chomsky)

What makes intellectuals—who really are a kind of secular priesthood (I prefer to call them “specialized idiots”), since their job is to uphold the doctrinal truths of the society—dangerous particularly in the West is that 1) they believe their own propaganda; 2) they are conceited and venal; and 3) they are dedicated, *voluntary* commissars⁶⁹ who can always be counted on, as a special class, to transmute offensive violence or otherwise objectionable policies into sweet charity (always imposing thoughts on ordinary citizens while framing ideas for people in power, never putting forward sustainable arguments or evidence, hence by definition *anti-intellectual*, since they don’t use their minds anywhere near as much as, say, an auto mechanic). In other words, the only intellectual talent that is required to worship power is a large dose of stupidity (and what an abundance of it there is among intellectuals!).

The good news, however, for the majority of the world’s population whose life instinct is at least latently potent—since the mind and body are generally geared toward health despite all the dark ideological forces that criminally militate against the life instinct—is that the City of Being does not have to be created from scratch. It exists within most of us.⁷⁰ It only needs to be discovered, nurtured, refined, accentuated, embodied and hastened (breaking all fetters in human society and finding as many new social bonds as possible will be its revolutionary manifestation), in the service of a powerful but delicate force called Life.

The planet is burning. As we have seen, this is very much a consequence of the cult of having, since the process of capital accumulation, however it may be framed and disguised if it is ever even fully acknowledged by the rich and powerful, is the basic cause of human suffering (Gabriel Kolko). This cult’s intrinsically dark, empowering sense of dominance over victims leads to escalating acts of cruelty and lasting emotional disorders, primarily for the dominators themselves, since they suffer a dangerous expansion of ego that cannot be appeased except by escalating acts of cruelty. Either we are putting out the fire or adding fuel to it. There is no middle ground. Those who are immobilized due to one or another form of disgraceful rationalization naturally belong to the latter group, hence bear the much more onerous burden of that mortal sin

called alienation. Which will only deepen and widen as long as the Cult of Having morbidly triumphs over the latent City of Being, ultimately leading to extinction of the species, which appears to be an imminent threat. Like much else, that is a matter of will and choice, not just by the powerful, but, at least by default, by the powerless as well, since those who are silent are understood not just to consent but to be complicit in terrible crimes against peace and humanity, war crimes, economic crimes, social crimes⁷¹ and environmental crimes (the cumulative effects of which already have been devastatingly enormous)—contrary to our calling as *human* beings.

It may be objected that I have not given a detailed vision of a future society, and for this reason I don't have a leg to stand on. But such an argument is specious. In note 60, I borrowed a quote from Mike Albert's *Parecon*, which seems to have become a cult unto itself. To elaborate: even though there is a rich tradition of libertarian thought and action, documented in many fine works, none attempt to give detailed visions of a future society reorganized along egalitarian lines (those that do should, of course, be ignored, in my view, but only after exposure, since they may nonetheless contain some valuable insights), and only Anton Pannekoek's and G.D.H. Cole's works provide, more or less exhaustively, the *basic framework* for what libertarian structures *can* (as opposed to ought to) look like. But, crucially, to leave the question of detailed descriptions, modalities, modes of implementation, etc. of a future society, not only open-ended but *necessarily to be worked out by the poor and the working class* is, in my view, not a weakness. If anything, it is a strength, because it will encourage and provide the possibility for those who *appear* to be least likely to show signs of creativity to do much more than just that. It will encourage and bring out in them the genius of creating a system that is most suited to the material and inner needs of the time, based on the material and non-material resources that are available at that same time in the history of the future. The risk with coming up with too detailed a plan (like *Parecon*: short for *Participatory Economics*), no matter how well-intentioned, of what a future society can or ought to look like has the very real potential of being transformed into an authoritarian system by reactionary forces (this risk will always exist even under the best conditions of course, so the name of the game will have to be eternal vigilance), simply because it will not have been the creative product of the working class and the poor themselves, thereby creating no incentive for them to defend its purest form and substance, if any, to the death. For them to adopt a system that was devised by Albert or anyone else, now or any time in the future, will effectively evacuate that system of meaning and substance, thereby relying, once more, as always, on externally imposed ideas or schemes. It should be up to the working class and the poor to tap into their own creative powers to work out, *on a trial and error basis*, the details of libertarian socialism, within the basic, pretty much complementary frameworks set up by Pannekoek (in *Workers' Councils*, online) and Cole (in *Guild Socialism Restated*, online; for the record, there is a considerable amount of blueprinting in this work, but it should be ignored, while focusing only on the general framework of self-government in industry), if they appeal to them to begin with. If not, then even those frameworks can and should be rejected for a better one, in accordance with the needs, aspirations, available resources, creative ideas and grassroots efforts of the rank and file themselves. Which must include the "primitive" peasantry (who in reality are the *greatest* heroes of all, since their goal, unfortunately largely thwarted by Western agribusiness, is to feed humanity), the "riff-raff," "the hopeless dregs of humanity" (to borrow Frantz Fanon's coinage), a big part of prison populations,⁷² in brief, the underlying population in all its diversity (otherwise, it cannot, by definition, be libertarian). In other words, none of the founders of classical liberalism or anarchism would have accepted Parecon. This is more a matter of logical pessimism than criticism. The critique aspect of it, however, is that just because Parecon is being experimented with and is allegedly functioning more or less smoothly in Argentine factories and other workplaces, is *not* a justification for Parecon, since the justification for any kind of system is to be found not *necessarily* in practical outcomes but in *how the system*

was conceived, by whom, and for what purpose(s). This is putting aside the very problematic fact that Parecon is, again, simply too detailed, hence pretentious, since no one is smart enough to plan a society, as no one knows what kind of effects the new institutional arrangements that one may wish to devise will have on people. No amount of erudition can provide an answer to that. These are the reasons why Parecon is unmistakably anti-libertarian, at least in effect. In brief, libertarian socialism will either be achieved by the activity and ingenuity of the working class and the poor themselves (no matter how demanding this may be), without any interference or direction from above, or it will not be achieved at all. The reason is simple. As one of the founders of classical liberalism put it: “Whatever does not spring from a man’s free choice, or is only the result of instruction and guidance, does not enter into his very being, but still remains alien to his true nature; he does not perform it with truly human energies, but merely with mechanical exactness.”⁷³ In a similar vein, Goldman said (in her *Anarchism and Other Essays*):

‘Why do you not say how things will be operated under Anarchism?’ is a question I have had to meet thousands of times. Because I believe Anarchism can not consistently impose an iron-clad program or method on the future. The things every new generation has to fight, and which it can least overcome, are the burdens of the past, which holds us all as in a net. Anarchism...leaves posterity free to develop its own particular systems, in harmony with its needs. Our most vivid imagination cannot foresee the potentialities of a race set free from external restraints. How, then, can any one assume to map out a line of conduct for those to come? We, who pay dearly for every breath of pure, fresh air, must guard against the tendency to fetter the future. (Online)

In other words, the demand to put forth a detailed plan of a future society comes from an alienated place. And alienation—which, according to Fromm, “cannot be fully understood without the concept of the negation of productivity”—is the destructive god of the modern world, a god created by man himself. It comes in many different forms,⁷⁴ but it is totally incompatible with the exigencies of the being mode and the life instinct, hence incompatible with freedom, democracy and thus with long-term survival.

The problem is that “Things are in the saddle and ride mankind.” (Emerson) How do we get back on the saddle in order to direct the horse? Is it enough to have the feeling of putting ourselves back on the saddle? No, for demagogic politicians can easily create that feeling in us. Nor is it enough to have the feeling of having freed ourselves from the domination by natural forces. The immediate problem is to free ourselves from the shackles imposed on us very consciously by the so-called intellectual classes, in order to be able to create lasting, non-hegemonic peace within and between nations (bearing in mind that the nation state system in the modern form is an artificial structure that should be brought down, since it is neither viable nor necessarily the natural form of human organization); which can only be done if we institutionally create equality of condition (thereby eradicating material wealth and, consequently, material poverty, since both are vices that block the possibility of realizing human potentialities), subjecting ourselves only to the laws of reason, following only our own decisions. But the latter must be subordinated to collective rights⁷⁵ if historic continuity is to be safeguarded, by *substantively* democratizing every aspect of life—political, industrial, economic, social, cultural and spiritual, forever vigilant about new signs of crude and subtle oppressions and never complacent, no matter how secure the new libertarian structures that humanity one day creates, if it does so, may appear.

If the goals of bringing down the nation-state system and dissolving other oppressive super-structures are not within reach, then ordinary citizens’ freely chosen development model(s) should be implemented through ‘freely’ and ‘fairly’ elected governments with a clear mandate for doing so. This is a pragmatic and a relatively moral question. And anyone who has read or decides to read Cole’s and Pannekoek’s pretty much—as opposed to perfectly—complementary works should have no trouble seeing that they are not, unlike Mike Albert, imposing a

development model but merely trying to raise awareness for the need for thoroughgoing revolutionary changes in education, economic life, industry, trade, community life, etc.; and that the basic frameworks that they have set up are by no means dogmatic, or definitive, or beyond criticism, frameworks that should be accepted on their merits and/or rejected on their demerits, either wholly or partially, in accord with ordinary citizens' own inclinations, needs, and interests, within the framework of their own culturally- and historically-specific situations.

Be that as it may, one can make a *prima facie* argument for Parecon in terms of the lesser of two evils, since Parecon is, in its present form, less brutal and demoralizing than military-based state capitalism. As long as there are no illusions on the part of those who adopt Parecon against their better judgments and in the absence of any near-term prospects for less negative cultural and institutional changes, then it might be alright to adopt it until libertarian socialism is ripe enough to be instigated throughout all societies in the world (since the emancipation of the working class and the poor will either be international in scope or it will not be at all). But this is the maximum amount of latitude that can be granted to Parecon, which is more than charitable.

With or without Parecon, getting to the source of real power (private power), in order to dissolve it, as well as bringing down the nation-state system on a world-wide scale—since it is simply unviable, owing to the fact that its primary task throughout history has, with no exceptions among the more powerful states and few exceptions among the less powerful ones, been to protect the rich against the poor—are not enough. Before these tasks are undertaken, it is of inestimable importance to create alternative cultural and institutional structures (respectively, of course) alongside existing power (even if it is done informally), so that they may replace existing power when the time is ripe. In other words, unless alternative cultural and institutional structures are created, there will not be a basis for sustaining them post-ground-zero, meaning dismantling the prevailing structures under such conditions will send us all straight back to the Stone Age. Of course, existing power structures will dislike libertarian structures within their domains, and if they become significant, will try to destroy them, but it does not follow that they will succeed. In fact, one can see something like that throughout history, since much of history is about people struggling for democracy in the face of brutal elitism.

Overcoming the impasse reached by humanity will require dedicated efforts that must be sustained even in the face of seemingly intractable challenges and defeats. This is why organized action is important, because past gains can be preserved in the face of defeats, with the latter providing valuable lessons on how to better strategize in the future.

Those of us who live in the West are comparatively privileged, very much thanks to the bitter struggles of past generations (since rights and freedoms are never granted but won). It is now our turn to perpetuate that laudable legacy by fighting for our *collective* selves *and* for posterity (which we cannot do if we let the powerful control us by defining reality and our options for us and if we let them beat the dignity out of us, both of which are among their principal tasks), so that the City of Being, founded upon common title, may have a good chance of gloriously triumphing over the monstrous Cult of Having one day on a grand scale. Self-education is the key, for it nurtures and reinforces the sense of human dignity without which it is impossible to rise against oppressive power.

But if we don't overcome our moral obtuseness and our spiritual insensibility to fundamental human values, then we are mere automatons, very much in accordance with the wish of the masters of mankind (thereby becoming exquisitely delicious, honey-dripping fodder for the state capitalist machine's infinitely elastic stomach). It should be our main task to frustrate that wish and maximize their fear of democracy by instigating it every chance we get, no matter how small in scale, for if we are too fearful to instigate it on a small scale, we will never be able to do so on a large scale. The implication is that our natural instinct for freedom needs to be nurtured by small scale exercises in freedom if we are to reach the maturity for freedom on a large scale,

so that the dreadful human tragedies and problems that are awesome in scale may be overcome. The alternative: the failure to break out of our role as isolated receptacles of propaganda, happy slaves and commodity fetishists, is not really a victory for anyone, not even for the masters, in the last analysis. How could it be, even in the most morbid of all senses?⁷⁶

It seems apt to round off our discussion by pondering the words of Kant, who justifiably said that he cannot accept the proposition that certain people “are not ripe for freedom.”

If one accepts this assumption, freedom will never be achieved; for one can not arrive at the maturity for freedom without having already acquired it; one must be free to learn how to make use of one’s powers freely and usefully. The first attempts will surely be brutal and will lead to a state of affairs more painful and dangerous than the former condition under the dominance but also the protection of an external authority. However, one can achieve reason only through one’s own experiences and one must be free to be able to undertake them. . . . To accept the principle that freedom is worthless for those under one’s control and that one has the right to refuse it to them forever, is an infringement on the rights of God himself, who has created man to be free. (Cited in Chomsky, “Language and Freedom,” online)

Protest against the having structure of existence coupled with dedicated efforts to incrementally stop being money whores (‘incrementally,’ because meaningful change takes time) and dismantle the status quo (to be replaced with far-reaching, deep libertarian structures) are moral imperatives; they are among the strongest possible affirmations of life. Those who are not imbued with the spirit of social justice are not yet fully human; their way of life is incompatible with the principle of being. They need to be humanized, which is a *lifelong process for everyone*. And in the face of all the terrible crimes that our leaders perpetrate in our name and with our tax dollars, silence is, again, no longer passive consent but complicity in those crimes. It is, again, not a law of nature for a minority to gorge itself on superfluities through force and fraud while the starving multitude lacks basic necessities, with tens of millions of our soulful brothers and sisters dropping like flies every year while we emulate largely white vocations, like the pursuit of money and hegemony. We need to be humanized so that the system can be denazified (not least in the sense of discarding our homophobic mindset, because homophobia, which happens to be a witch-hunting mindset and a great social injustice with the Christian church at the helm, is really a defense against latent homosexuality in heterosexual men, a scientifically proven fact documented in the seventh [1998] edition of *Abnormal Psychology*, p. 382), so that sweet freedom may finally reign, thereby allowing cybernetic man to stop worshipping the goddess of destruction to which humanity, even and especially religious humanity, is willing to sacrifice itself and its progeny (case in point: evangelical Christians not only look forward to Armageddon but are even *precipitating* it by strongly supporting Israeli power and expansionism, and help fund it and lobby for it, even though this has been severely harming the Palestinians, a people who have suffered tremendously under the hand of Israel’s 40-year long illegal and immoral military occupation and who have scant hope of national survival, thanks to America’s far-reaching and consistently rejectionist stance pertaining to a peaceful two-state settlement—willing to grant *no* national rights to the *indigenous* Arabs).

Our pathetic, highly destructive property-structured existence must give way to biophilia in all its rich diversity. It is not too late to reverse course, but the time to start acting is now. And we must never make the fateful mistake of holding out the olive branch to the masters of mankind before they have been completely disarmed and dethroned, lest we end up with slavery by another name. And we, libertarians, must do everything in our power to institute universal disarmament (of WMD and conventional weapons) while the status quo is being changed, with strong safeguards against the cropping up of new risks of weapons development, so that war (which, at bottom, is nothing more than organized lovelessness) and its absolutely devastating consequences may become a thing of the past. Biophilia and the “resistance movement against

the destruction of love in social reality” (Paul Tillich) demand it (!), because the human spirit cannot endure lovelessness in social reality for long without serious detriment to the human race.

The tremendously idolatrous, necrophilic war machine erected in the name of “national security” with our blessings and subsidies may vicariously make us feel potent as well as speciously at ease, safe and invulnerable. But genuine potency and genuine security can be realized and assured only if we dismantle this gigantic death machine to which we have criminally transferred so much of our life energy (in the US, roughly 50 cents out of every tax dollar is expropriated by the Pentagon system to rain down flame from the skies on innocent and defenseless targets, *mostly children!*) and vitality, because the worst enemy of all is not the “other” but the insecure and immature part of the *self*, the part that’s filled with fears of powerlessness. Which in reality is a symptom of lack of creative pursuits and its concomitant conduciveness to lack of potency, hence the deep lust for cruelty, sadism and destructiveness among the powerful and, to a lesser degree, among those who belong to the lower social classes (in the latter case, both among themselves and vicariously through the brutalities of the powerful, which they wittingly or unwittingly support. *But this fact cannot and should not be used as a pretext for denying freedom to the lower classes, since their cruelty, sadism and destructiveness are largely by-products of the existing social order!*). The only way to remedy this psychological defect among the lower classes is through radical humanistic education, based on reason and free, fearless, non-hegemonic love, since the cult of having evidently affords nothing but abject wretchedness and, sooner or later, total or near-total extinction.

Seeking freedom means finding one’s own foundation and one’s own center, rooted in humanistic conceptions. It means the ability and willingness to engage in reciprocal recognition of humanity in all persons, without distinction as to race, gender, sexual orientation, age, language, religion, health condition, or whatnot. This, provided that humanity really does exist in oneself and others, not by virtue of biology, but by virtue of cultural excellence, or at the very least by striving for such excellence (this qualification should not be used as a pretext for objectifying people!), by virtue of severing the ties of blood and soil (which do nothing but block mankind’s full human development), by virtue of doing away with the mindless pursuit of power and wealth, etc. If such humanity doesn’t yet exist on a large enough scale, then resignation is a mortal sin. The aim must be to create the psychosocial and economic conditions that will make it possible to achieve the goal of reciprocal recognition, so that humanity can learn to fly, but never at the expense of others. Mankind must remove all the conditions that thwart its reason and critical capacities, so that it can become free, self-determining and productive. A different world is possible; indeed, it is a biological and moral imperative, and must be striven for with uncompromising energy and spirit, because repugnant necrophilia is not a law of nature; it is a social construction that has been inculcated in us by notoriously insecure hence pathologically ambitious men and women, thanks to our pathological submissiveness. Radical social reconstruction is contingent on the antithesis of the latter, which is to say, vigorous resistance and disobedience—the handmaidens of freedom, a truism and a historical constant. If brief, our dangerous and highly consequential habits of obedience must be atrophied and ultimately starved to death if freedom is to have a chance to prevail. By failing to act, we only strengthen tyranny (because “our conformist subservience to those in power” (Morgenthau) is highly serviceable ideologically), with social and environmental costs and consequences that are so grave and enormous as to endanger the very survival of the species, probably sooner than later.

Salvation—in the form of people taking precedence over things, life over property, and work over capital—will come only through disobedience followed by dedicated efforts to democratize every aspect of life. It can be done. Indeed, it must be done, because living “for any length of time under the constant threat of destruction creates certain psychological effects in most human beings—fright, hostility, callousness, a hardening of the heart, and a resulting

indifference to all the values we cherish.”⁷⁷ Such a condition has already transformed us into barbarians, but this pathological trend can be reversed, because the human mind is malleable even under harsh and inhumane conditions, owing to the ever-present if latent and even decaying dynamism of the life instinct. The poet Percy Bysshe Shelly has left us with these powerful words (which should vitalize those of us who have become sickeningly apathetic):

Rise like lions after slumber
In unvanquishable number!
Shake your chains to earth, like dew
Which in sleep had fallen on you—
Ye are many; they are few!

Notes and References

¹ *The Wealth of Nations*, New York: Bantam Classic Edition, 2003, Book III, ch. IV, p. 525.

² It bears stating that it wasn't industrial progress that created the "system of wage labor" and all the iniquities attending it, but the capitalists' monopolization of the producers' wealth (Forbath, "The Ambiguities of Free Labor: Labor and the Law in the Gilded Age," *Wisconsin Law Review*, 1985, p. 806 at pp. 767-817).

³ Noam Chomsky, *Understanding Power*, London & NY: Vintage Press, 2002, p. 204. Henceforth *UP*.

⁴ The essence of socialism is understood in the left libertarian tradition to be *direct as opposed to proxy control by the workers over production* (which will result in collective enjoyment of social capital, the instruments of labor and the products of the labor performed). That's the *core*. That's where socialism *begins*. Then you go on to other things. In other words, "real self-management is the direct management (without any separate leadership) of social production, distribution, and communication by workers and their communities." ("The Revolutionary Pleasure of Thinking for Yourself," online; no author, no date) Such movements for self-management have appeared briefly and sporadically in a few places, in the form of workers' councils (with one notable exception, below): "sovereign assemblies of producers and neighbors that *elect delegates to coordinate their activities*. The delegates are not representatives, but carry out decisions *already* made by their assemblies," and they "can be *recalled at any time* should the general assembly feel that its decisions are not being rigorously carried out." (Ibid., italics added) By this standard, socialism did *not* exist in the Soviet Union (except briefly and partially in 1905 and 1917-1921), or in Eastern Europe (except briefly in Hungary in 1956). Spain is the only country where libertarian socialism was experimented with on a *very* large scale, with very impressive results. But eventually it was violently destroyed by reactionary forces, chief among them the *USSR, backed by Western powers*, through Franco's fascist regime (the Spanish Revolution of the 1930s offers many priceless lessons for those who are ignorantly satisfied or discontent with the status quo. See, for example, Chomsky, "Objectivity and Liberal Scholarship" in *Chomsky on Anarchism* (an abridged version with endnotes is available at <http://www.ditext.com/chomsky/1968.html>); Sam Dolgoff, *Anarchist Collectives: Workers' Self-Management in the Spanish Revolution, 1936-39* (available at www.scribd.com); Burnett Bolloten, *The Spanish Revolution: The Left and the Struggle for Power During the Civil War*; and George Orwell [who actually fought in that war], *Homage to Catalonia*, also available in its entirety at http://orwell.ru/library/novels/Homage_to_Catalonia/english/e_etc). It's not likely that there's any other way of overcoming contemporary barbarism than by instigating libertarian socialism, initially in one or a handful of countries, but ultimately universally, since in the last analysis socialism will either be universal or it will not be at all. All things considered, efforts to instigate stateless socialism worldwide is a moral imperative rooted in the all-important need for long-term survival and universal welfare; it has nothing to do with daydreaming. Even Andrew Carnegie recognized this much: "I believe that socialism is the grandest theory ever presented, and I am sure some day it will rule the world," he told the *New York Times*, and when it does, "we will have attained the millennium." (Carnegie cited in Chomsky, *Year 501: The Conquest Continues*, London: Verso, 1993, p. 76). Of course, Carnegie was cognizant of the difference between stateless and authoritarian socialism, as the establishment generally is, despite pretenses to the contrary by the latter: "The Soviet Union, from 1917, has been even more remote from socialism than the US and its allies have been from capitalism, but [...] both major propaganda systems have had a longstanding interest in claiming otherwise: the West, so as to defame socialism by associating it with Leninist tyranny, and the USSR, so as to gain what prestige it could by associating itself with socialist ideals – ideals whose force was powerful and wide-ranging." (Ibid.)

Last but not least, it should be borne in mind, by both the right and the establishment left in the West (since the latter has not even a vestige of socialism in it, except marginally in Europe) that *the socialists and anarchists are the ones who gave us whatever liberty and democracy we have in the West today!* That's a lesson within a lesson.

⁵ Smith, op. cit., Book V, ch. I, pt. III, art. II, pp. 987-88.

⁶ As Forbath notes ("The Ambiguities of Free Labor," p. 806), "The origins and functions of capitalist hierarchy had...little to do with efficiency... The development of the minute division of labor and the creation of pyramidal work organization took place not for reasons of technical superiority...but [for reasons of capital] accumulation...[and] it is at least an open question whether...hierarchical production is essential to a high material standard of living." (Forbath is relying on Stephen Marglin's study entitled *What Do Bosses Do? The Origins and Functions of Hierarchy in Capitalist Production*. Therefore, it's not surprising that, according to Marglin, "when workers are given control over decisions and goal setting, productivity rises dramatically" (this time he is cited in Chomsky, *Chomsky on Democracy and Education*, NY: RoutledgeFalmer, 2003, p. 102).

⁷ Case in point: the West's affluence is basically stolen property from the South, which Winston Churchill was kind enough to observe in a paper submitted to his Cabinet colleagues in January 1914: "we are not a young people with an *innocent record* and a scanty inheritance. We have engrossed to ourselves...an *altogether disproportionate* share of the wealth and traffic of the world. We have got all we want in territory, and our claim to be left in the unmolested enjoyment of vast and splendid possessions, *mainly acquired by violence, largely maintained by force,*

often seems less reasonable to others than to us.” (Cited in Clive Ponting, *Churchill*, Sinclair-Stevenson, 1994, p. 132; the italicised phrases are Churchill’s own!) A similar but more contemporary observation was made by the chief founder of the policy sciences, Harold Lasswell: “Modern events have sharply reminded us that distribution depends on myth and violence (on faith and brigandage) as well as bargaining.” (*Politics: Who Gets What, When, How*, Cleveland, Ohio: Meridian Books, 1958, p. 8.) Consider also the following: in 2005, John Perkins came out with *Confessions of an Economic Hit Man*, in which he showed the inner workings of the American empire through US instruments like the World Bank, USAID and other “aid” organizations, all in the service of the ‘corporatocracy,’ as he calls it: “that fraternity of corporate, government, and banking heads whose goal is global empire.” An abiding theme is, as is to be expected, the predatory and kleptocratic nature of Western finance (since conquest and expropriation are central features of the prevailing politico-economic system), hence how the US employs the full armada of its political, military and economic muscle (strengthened in the first place by genocide, slavery and plunder) to further enrich private corporations at the expense of humanity. The opening words:

Economic hit men (EHMs) are highly paid professionals who cheat countries around the globe out of trillions of dollars. They funnel money from the World Bank, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and other foreign “aid” organizations into the coffers of huge corporations and the pockets of a few wealthy families who control the planet’s natural resources. Their tools include fraudulent financial reports, rigged elections, payoffs, extortion, sex, and murder. They play a game as old as empire, but one that has taken on new and terrifying dimensions during this time of globalisation. I should know; I was an EHM.

⁸ Cited in Chomsky, *Chomsky on Anarchism*, Oakland (California): AK Press, 2005, p. 155.

⁹ Lasswell, op. cit., pp. 71-2; emphasis added.

¹⁰ *The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*, p. 63 (henceforth *E.P. MSS*), available at www.scribd.com

¹¹ To illustrate, high levels of consumption in the West are contingent on deeper exploitation of raw materials in the South (hence deeper poverty), as well as higher levels of pollution export from core to periphery, along with higher energy consumption at home, including higher levels of long-distance road, air and ocean transport, hence more environmental degradation (for the record, pollution export is perceived as a very good thing by the US. See Jim Vallette, “Export Our Filth to the Third World Says Summer – ‘They Don’t Live as Long Anyway’.” *CounterPunch*, 1999, <http://www.globalpolicy.org/soecon/envronmt/summers.htm> Summers [obviously a racist lout], who also bears significant responsibility for the current financial crisis, is now practically the chief economic adviser “under” Obama!). Until we come to appreciate the natural interdependence of this world and how our artificial well-being translates into ill-being and devastation for much of the Third World (including the Second, since the former Eastern bloc is being Latin Americanized), until we explicitly refuse to implicitly embrace the following sick attitude: “We in the West are used to our lifestyles. We have to maintain it and somebody has to pay for it”—until that level of civilization is reached, we can hardly call ourselves humans. (Excepting those with severe mental impairment, people are responsible for the foreseeable consequences of their actions and inactions. It’s a given that the market is a powerful force, which obviously doesn’t recognize social value and doesn’t respond to those without money [markets also under price social consequences, by under pricing what is called systemic risk, meaning they do not take into account externalities, which are huge under status quo arrangements], but it’s nevertheless not commendable or wise to blame it on “the market” at the cost of doing nothing about the problem, since ultimately everything is under public control.)

Significantly, consumerism should be understood as a compensation of anxiety and depressiveness, which is why Fromm said, “most consumption engenders passivity; ... the need for speed and newness, which can only be satisfied by consumerism, reflects restlessness, the inner flight from oneself; ... looking for the next thing to do or the newest gadget to use is only a means of protecting oneself from being close to oneself or to another person. (*To Have or To Be?*, London: Abacus, 1976, p. 174)

Sadly, Western politicians aren’t showing any willingness to tackle the problem of global warming head-on and in serious ways. At best they’re only tinkering with the problem around the edges. There’s a window of opportunity that will be closed soon; but even if it’s used, it’s not likely to reverse some of the devastation that will be caused by global warming. James Hansen, director of the NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies, warned in *CBS 60 Minutes* (March 21, 2006): “We have to, in the next 10 years, get off this exponential curve and begin to decrease the rate of growth of CO2 emissions. And then flatten it out. And before we get to the middle of the century, we’ve got to be on a declining curve. If that doesn’t happen in 10 years, then I don’t think we can keep global warming under one degree Celsius and that means we’re going to, that there’s a great danger of passing some of these tipping points. If the ice sheets begin to disintegrate, what can you do about it?” For some insights into eventual (though in some cases, actual and imminent) cataclysmic climate changes due to prevailing high rates of growth of CO2 emissions (which Western leaders and the biggest emitters in the South are unwilling to solve in serious ways), see the “British Stern Review: The Economics of Climate Change” (online). David Chandler, “Revised MIT Climate Model Sounds Alarm,” MIT, Vol. 53, No. 26, May 20, 2009 (online). Mark Maslin, *Global*

Warming: A Very Short Introduction; among others. For proof that carbon trading exacerbates global warming rather than mitigating it, see Oscar Reyes, “Carbon Trading: A Brief Introduction,” 7 Sept. 2009, <http://www.carbonradewatch.org/articles/carbon-trading-a-brief-introduction.html>

¹² “The Function of the Propagandist,” *International Journal of Ethics*, Vol. 38, No. 3. (Apr., 1928), p. 261 at pp. 258-268.

¹³ “The Propagandist Bids for Power,” *The American Scholar*, Washington, D.C., 1932, p. 350 at pp. 350-7.

¹⁴ For an extremely important study on the scale of these efforts and the frenzied dedication to winning “the everlasting battle for the minds of men,” see Elizabeth Fones-Wolf, *Selling Free Enterprise*. See also the pioneering work of the late Alex Carey, *Taking the Risk Out of Democracy*.

¹⁵ Clinton Rossiter and James Lare, eds., *The Essential Lippmann: A Political Philosophy for Liberal Democracy*, New York: Random House, 1963, p. 26.

¹⁶ John Stauber and Sheldon Rampton, *Toxic Sludge is Good For You: Lies, Damn Lies and the Public Relations Industry*, Monroe (Maine): Common Courage Press, 1995, p. 206.

¹⁷ David Korten, *When Corporations Rule the World*, Bloomfield (CT): Kumerian Press, 2001, pp. 239-40. The early Marx had interesting things to say about money: “That which exists for me through the medium of money, that which I can pay for, i.e., that which money can buy, that am I, the possessor of money. The stronger the power of my money, the stronger am I. The properties of money are my, the possessor’s, properties and essential powers. Therefore, what I am and what I can do is by no means determined by my individuality. I am ugly, but I can buy the most beautiful woman. Which means to say that I am not ugly, for the effect of ugliness, its repelling power, is destroyed by money. As an individual, I am lame, but money procures me 24 legs. Consequently, I am not lame. I am a wicked, dishonest, unscrupulous and stupid individual, but money is respected, and so also is its owner. Money is the highest good, and consequently its owner is also good. Moreover, money spares me the trouble of being dishonest, and I am therefore presumed to be honest. I am mindless, but if money is the true mind of all things, how can its owner be mindless? What is more, he can buy clever people for himself, and is not he who has power over clever people cleverer than them? Through money, I can have anything the human heart desires. Do I not possess all human abilities? Does not money therefore transform all my incapacities into their opposite? ... [Money] is the universal whore, the universal pimp of men and peoples.” (*E.P. MSS*)

¹⁸ London: Unwin Paperbacks, 1975, p. 5; also at <http://d.scribd.com/docs/2ddo6o7ctd3vjok7xpe.pdf>. The term total personality is borrowed from Fromm. It means the genuine expression of humankind’s intellectual, emotional and sensuous capacities, hence the realization of these things’ potentialities, but also spontaneous action. Pertaining to the latter, he had this to say: “Spontaneous activity is free activity of the self and implies, psychologically, ... of one’s free will. By activity we do not mean ‘doing something,’ but the quality of creative activity that can operate in one’s emotional, intellectual, and sensuous experiences and in one’s will as well. One premise for this spontaneity is the acceptance of the total personality and the elimination of the split between ‘reason’ and ‘nature’; for only if man does not repress essential parts of his self, only if he has become transparent to himself, and only if the different spheres of life have reached a fundamental integration, is spontaneous activity possible.” (*The Fear of Freedom*, London: Ark Paperbacks, 1984, p. 223)

On the subject of love, it bears mention that saying ‘I love you’ to those one loves is far less important than loving acts towards them. In fact, the words are often a substitute for the act. What passes for love today is mostly hegemonic in nature or purely sentimental. That must change because hegemony is an unloving act, and sentimentality is not the same thing as love (the essence of sentimentality is feeling by remembering feelings, or what appear to be feelings, of the past, according to Fromm). If we truly love someone, then we won’t try to dominate them and we will love them because of who they are today, not because of who they were in the past or because of what they have now or had in the past (e.g., fame, status, power, outer beauty, etc.).

¹⁹ “Thus the governmental idea arises out of family practice and domestic experience: consequently, there was no objection voiced, government appearing as natural to society as the subordination that obtains between the father and his children. ...the family is the embryo of the State, whose essential categories it reproduces.” (Proudhon, in Daniel Guérin, *No Gods, No Masters: An Anthology of Anarchism*, London: AK Press, 2005, p. 81)

To make matters worse, more often than not, “marriage is a prison with golden bars” (Emma Goldman) at best and a form of “legalized prostitution” at worst. I say “legalized prostitution,” because it is hard not to see something mercenary about marriage *in both sexes*. For example, most women are socialized to marry success objects (hence objectify men. To be sure, legal marriage—which benefits primarily women by granting them access to varying degrees of financial security, especially after the husband’s death—violates libertarian principles) and most men prostitute themselves for outer beauty (hence marry sex objects). Which, after all, is one of the most potent drugs in the world. In other words, generally *both sexes perpetuate the having mode over the being mode*. So as long as each sex objectifies the other, both sexes do each other and themselves a disservice, because objectification leads to lack of respect for the person’s humanity, thereby significantly diminishing the quality of the marriage. It’s a given that female beauty is very hard to ignore (even heterosexual women would

need to go around with a jack to keep their jaws from dropping at the sight of beautiful women!), but it is nevertheless not impossible for men to relate to women on the basis of their inner qualities and human potentialities; and, conversely, for women to relate to men in the same way, while creating the social climate that will make the alienated, soul-sucking pursuit of success in the bourgeois sense wholly or far more undesirable (a powerful incitement in this context is that *inner* beauty *never* fades; it lives *forever*, in contrast to outer beauty which fades *quite fast!*). **Rule of thumb:** When two (let alone a large group of) people get together for romantic or any other—social, political or business—purpose (even occasionally), there is *always* going to be a question of power. Therefore, it is of the essence, if harm is to be avoided, to be aware of this question and to *explicitly* discuss how power is going to be distributed amongst the two (or amongst the larger group), unless both parties are manifestly decent. Is there going to be a balance of power that is always or usually one sided, in which one party or side is overridden and his or her or their needs, rights and concerns are canceled out or undermined more often than not? Or is there going to be a two sided, *accountable* balance of power that will be predicated on an *explicit* agreement in which risks and costs on the one hand, and benefits and rewards on the other, are equally distributed? **Warning:** Christianity’s emphasis on male responsibility for marriage is just a “clever,” chauvinistic way of making sure that the balance of power is usually one sided. Still, there is the risk that women can covertly carve out a power niche even in this context (the implication being that any unilateral victory is, in reality, a bilateral injury. The fact that men usually interact with women in terms mostly dictated by women (mostly implicitly, since women tend to be subtle), does, of course, need to be clearly and openly addressed if gender conflict issues are to be resolved. In other words, men must resist the temptation to let women manipulate them in order to get their “affection.” This is the most frightening thing that men can do vis-à-vis women.) For useful insights into gender conflict issues and their potential solutions within and without a religious framework, see Warren Farrell, *The Myth of Male Power*.

²⁰ *To Have Or To Be?*, p. 125; this work can be downloaded in its entirety at <http://d.scribd.com/docs/12iftkif2bzabmhyh34t.pdf>

To gain valuable insights into the hows and whys of toxic parenting and its devastating effects on society, see Susan Forward, *Emotional Blackmail; Toxic Parents*; and *Betrayal of Innocence*. Alice Miller, *The Drama of Being a Child; Breaking Down the Wall of Silence*; and *For Your Own Good*.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 115.

²² Dewey quoted in Robert Westbrook, *John Dewey and American Democracy*, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991, pp. 441, 442 (first and second quotes), 453 (third quote).

²³ “Does the Garrison State Threaten Civil Rights?” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 275, Civil Rights in America. (May, 1951), p. 115, at pp. 111-116.

²⁴ Charles Knight, Project on Defense Alternatives, panel presentation at the Council on Foreign Relations, New York, 14 June 2000, on “U.S. Military-Strategic Ambitions: Expanding to Fill the post-Soviet Vacuum,” <http://www.comw.org/pda/0006vacuum.html>

²⁵ *Foreign Policy*, No. 92 (Autumn, 1993), pp. 9, 12, 13 at pp. 5-23.

²⁶ The recent agreement between Presidents Barack Obama and Dmitry Medvedev to lower the *operational* warheads to between 1,500 and 1,675 by the year 2012 does not reduce the likely prospect of at least 1 billion people being annihilated when, not if, a nuclear exchange takes place. For revealing but disturbing projective details on this point, see Daniel Ellsberg, “American Planning for a Hundred Holocausts: An Insider’s Window Into US Nuclear Policy,” September 12, 2009, at www.commondreams.org/view/2009/09/12-12. On the apocalyptic risks involved behind adamantly persistent, totally archaic and genocidal Cold War thinking in the post-Cold War era, see Lee Butler, “At the End of the Journey: The Risks of Cold War Thinking in a New Era,” *International Affairs* 82, no. 4 (June 22, 2006), at <http://www.nuclearinfo.org/documents/hndm/butler.pdf>. On the ultimate inevitability of a nuclear exchange resulting from a combination of human fallibility and nuclear weapons, see Michael MccGwire, “Shifting the Paradigm,” *International Affairs*, Vol. 78, No. 1 (Jan., 2002), pp. 1-28. See also Robert McNamara, “Apocalypse Soon,” *Foreign Policy*, May/June 2005. For arguments against proceeding down the path of NMD, see Charles L. Glaser and Steve Fetter, “National Missile Defense and the Future of U.S. Nuclear Weapons Policy,” *International Security*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (Summer, 2001), pp. 40-92. For valuable insights into the realities of the space program (i.e., the ultra-criminal militarization of outer space, which has been accelerated under the thin cover of 9/11), see Chomsky, *Hegemony or Survival*, 2003, ch. 6 & 9. For a bit of a technical discussion, see Carl Boggs (ed.), *Masters of War*, 2003, ch. 3. For official government statements on the offensive nature of the program, see William Blum, *Killing Hope*, 2003, p. 384 (in ch. 56). For official government documents, see Air Force Space Command, *Strategic Master Plan FY04 and Beyond*, February 9, 2000, Executive Summary, www.thememoryhole.org/mil/space-commandplan-fy2004.pdf; and US Space Command, *Vision for 2020*, http://www.middlepowers.org/gsi/docs/vision_2020.pdf. For a good analysis of the portents of the Japan-US missile defense collaboration, see Gordan Mitchell, “Japan-U.S. Missile Defense Collaboration: Rhetorically

Delicious, Deceptively Dangerous,” *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs*, Vol. 25:1, Winter 2001, www.pitt.edu/~gordonm/JPubs/JapanTMD.pdf

- ²⁷ Fromm, “War Within Man,” p. 3 (it is the same thing with fraud, for if a person feels compelled to defraud others [almost invariably, people with lust for money do feel such a compulsion and act on it whenever the opportunity arises, since the morally corrupting effect of money hunger is a plain, undeniable fact], it is only because he does not know who he is; he has not yet discovered his innate morality and gotten in touch with his soul; he has yet to come to terms with the fact that a compromised integrity in dealing with others cannot be the *sine qua non* of potency and a productive orientation, the result of which is unhappiness for the defrauder, even though it is likely to be masked with a happy face in social situations). This and all the other online articles by Fromm can be downloaded at <http://www.erich-fromm.de/e/index.htm>
- ²⁸ Fromm, *The Fear of Freedom*, p. 139; this work can be downloaded in its entirety at <http://d.scribd.com/docs/1rxitmtbbe6i472d29mt.pdf>
- ²⁹ *Ethics*, Book 4, prop. 44, cited in Fromm, *To Have or To Be?*, p. 98; emphasis in original.
- ³⁰ First quote by Marx in Fromm, *To Have or To Be?*, p. 99. Second quote by Fromm in Fromm, *On Being Human*, New York and London: Continuum, 1994, p. 157. (N.B. Like life, labor is sacred. In fact, the two are closely intertwined if not virtually identical. When labor becomes commodified, that kills the soul of the laborer, hence diminishes his most fundamental need and drive, since the need for workers to control production is indeed fundamental). At this point, it is important, I think, to identify the roots of the having orientation. According to Fromm, the roots are “one’s sense of powerlessness, one’s fear of life, one’s fear of the uncertain, [and] one’s distrust of people.” (*The Art of Being*, p. 119)
- ³¹ “[O]ne of the realities of foreign aid: a means by which the poor in the wealthy societies pay the wealthy in the poor societies for their services to the wealthy in the wealthy societies” (Chomsky, *On Power and Ideology*, Québec and NY: Black Rose Books, 1987, 1995, p. 82. Henceforth *PI*). Which is a way of protecting the sanctity of the fifth freedom, defined as the freedom to dominate, exploit and rob. In other words, “aid is a device to compel the [Western] taxpayer to subsidize the wealthy and powerful, at home and abroad” (*ibid.*, p. 83), so as to facilitate the expropriation of wealth from the poor and the working class, at home and abroad, in the latter case, crucially with the help of the IMF and WB (both *extraordinarily* human rights averse), who are guilty of theft on a scale that dwarfs all the great bank robberies in history combined. For an excellent work that demonstrates how corrupt the aid industry (including the UN system) is, see Graham Hancock, *Lords of Poverty*. See also Arundhati Roy, *Help that Hinders*, <http://mondediplo.com/2004/11/16roy>
- ³² To verify this claim, see Chomsky, “Debt, Drugs and Democracy,” *NACLA Report on the Americas*, Vol. 33, No.1, Jul/Aug 1999, <http://www.chomsky.info/interviews/19990312.htm>. See also his “The People Always Pay,” *Guardian Unlimited*, Jan. 21, 1999, www.guardian.co.uk/world/1999/jan/21/debtrelief.development3
- The recent so-called debt cancellations given to the HIPC (Highly Indebted Poor Countries) by the G8 should not be taken at face value, since they were cosmetic gestures “hiding a strengthening of the creditor countries’ dominant position.” (“CADTM Outraged at the G8’s Meanness over the Debt,” [www.fuckyouusa.com/Writings/CADTM Outraged at the G8.pdf](http://www.fuckyouusa.com/Writings/CADTM%20Outraged%20at%20the%20G8.pdf)). See also John Pilger, “G8 Will Not Ease Third World Poverty,” www.greenleft.org.au/2005/632/34388, and “The G8 Summit: A Circus and a Fraud,” *Znet*, June 24, 2005, www.zmag.org/sustainers/content/2005-06/24pilger.cfm, by the same author.
- ³³ Podur, *History Handbook*, “Non-Reformist Reparations for Africa: Repairing the Damages,” *Znet*, <http://www.zmag.org/Zmag/articles/february02podur.htm>. For some old albeit revealing figures of the in- versus outflows of capital to and from the South through FDI (Foreign Direct Investment), see Richard B. Du Boff, “Transferring Wealth from Underdeveloped to Developed Countries via Direct Foreign Investment: Comment,” *Southern Economic Journal*, Vol. 38, No. 1. (Jul., 1971), pp. 118-121. Lawrence B. Krause, who is clearly pro-business, arrives at the following conclusion in one of his studies: “...earnings from [...] foreign operations by 1970 contributed between 20 and 25 percent of total U.S. corporate profits after taxes, a very considerable magnitude indeed.” (“The International Economic System and the Multinational Corporation,” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 403, The Multinational Corporation. (Sep., 1972), p. 96 at pp. 93-103) Some parts of the next paragraph in the main body are an adaptation from a debate between Richard Perle and Chomsky (available on Youtube, date unknown).
- ³⁴ *Coercion, Capital, and European States: 990-1990*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1992, pp. 70 & 30. For an excellent discussion of the hows and whys of the fact that the state is, at least in the last analysis, a criminal organization, see Charles Tilly, *War Making and State Making as Organized Crime*, <https://netfiles.uiuc.edu/rohloff/www/war%20making%20and%20state%20making.pdf>
- ³⁵ Economic crimes are not only welcomed and supported, but are required, by law. Thus pharmaceutical companies are required, by law, to produce drugs for rich people to reduce wrinkles but not to save the lives of thousands of children in Africa every day who are dying from easily treatable diseases. Not only is this the core of Anglo-American corporate law, but the justification for it is taught in every economics department in the

universities. And it is hailed in the press as the height of civilization. It is within such a context that IMF policies should be brought to light. Thus IMF's structural program is basically a way of siphoning off the wealth of the Third World, to the point of disemboweling national economies (see note 37). In brief, structural adjustment policies are a major cause of 24,000 people (maybe higher) dying from hunger every single day, eighteen thousand of them being children. They could surely be kept alive if the West stopped robbing, manipulating and arming (in a number of cases, to the teeth) the Third World, and if it stopped punishing independent development, which is perceived as the mother of all evils by the rich and powerful.

³⁶ In some respects the arms trade is legal without ever being legitimate (except for purely defensive purposes, virtually a non-existent category), since it's responsible for a lot of death, maiming, human rights abuses and suffering around the world. But, according to Gideon Burrows, the arms trade is not lucrative for Western countries, because of "high government subsidies, tax breaks, insurance schemes and promotion for arms manufacturers," all of which "costs governments more money than weapons producers generate for them." (*The No-Nonsense Guide to the Arms Trade*, London: Verso, 2002, p. 77) So the appeal of the trade to Western leadership lies in the fact that it is a significant source of power (hence a defense of the having mode), since it keeps the domestic population "quiescent and obedient and passive. And international conflict is one of the best ways of doing it: if there's a big enemy around, people will abandon their rights, because you've got to survive. So the arms race is functional in that respect—it creates global tension and a mood of fear. It's also functional for controlling the empire." (Chomsky, *UP*, p. 70). Notwithstanding Burrows' claim that the arms trade isn't lucrative for Western countries, which is suspect, for states there are other benefits. Thus providing arms goes along with training, logistics, upkeep, and close relations with military officers, hence influence the country's policies. One of the standard ways to overthrow a civilian government is to support the military. But for corporations, it is pure gravy. Multiply in fact. Take, say, Lockheed Martin. It is strongly in favor of US military aid to Israel because (1) it is used to purchase LM equipment; and (2) it is a "teaser," which induces Saudi Arabia and others to purchase (of course inferior, but nevertheless profitable) LM equipment. How profitable? That would be hard to determine.

³⁷ IMF policies invariably have the following elements: "(1) radically reduce government spending on health, education and welfare; (2) privatize and deregulate state enterprise; (3) devalue the currency; (4) liberalize imports and remove restrictions on foreign investment; and (5) cut or constrain wages and eliminate or weaken mechanisms protecting labor." (Kevin Danaher, *10 Reasons to Abolish the IMF and World Bank*, NY: Seven Stories, 2001, p. 11. Henceforth *10 Reasons*). For a good general discussion of global poverty, its causes and potential solutions, see Jeremy Seabrook, *The No-Nonsense Guide to World Poverty*. For an important study on the policy roots of poverty, see *The Policy Roots of Economic Crisis and Poverty: A Multi-Country Participatory Assessment of Structural Adjustment*, prepared by SAPRIN, April 2002, www.saprin.org/SAPRIN_Findings.pdf. Executive summary: www.saprin.org/SAPRIN_Exec_Summ_Eng.pdf. There is a somewhat significant bias in favor of privatization in this work. Still, it is an uncontroversial study, since it was supported by the UNDP, the EU, including the governments of Norway, Sweden, the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany (even if the fora's output was not embraced by the governments just mentioned), with inputs by, among others, the World Bank itself, even if the latter was understandably very unhappy with the outcome of the study, predictably refusing to learn anything from it, let alone allow the fora output to make its way into country programming or back to Washington, or into adjustment operations themselves.

³⁸ In "The Propagandist Bids for Power," Lasswell said [p. 356]: "America pays more for propaganda as the nation grows less secure. Business has always divided its contributions to advertising and to political parties." Those who somehow believe that this enduring feature of American "democracy" suddenly came to an end or was greatly weakened in conjunction with Obama's victory in the last elections are in for a rude awakening. Here is why in a nutshell: "The Obama campaign greatly impressed the public relations industry, which named Obama 'Advertising Age's marketer of the year for 2008,' easily beating out Apple. The industry's prime task is to ensure that uninformed consumers make irrational choices, thus undermining market theories. And it recognizes the benefits of undermining democracy the same way." (Chomsky, "The Election, Economy, War, and Peace," *Znet*, Nov. 25, 2008) On the psychic processes underlying the caucasianization of non-Whites, which is a widespread phenomenon, see my "Overcoming Caucasianization and Dehumanization" in pdf at <http://www.scribd.com/people/documents/3219608-mhctiop3296>

³⁹ Western states' subordination to private power is a matter about which we should have no doubts. Thus, according to Woodrow Wilson, "The masters of the Government of the United States are the combined capitalists and manufacturers of the United States." (*The New York Times*, January 29, 1913)

⁴⁰ *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives*, NY: Basic Books, 1997, p. 40.

⁴¹ "Constant Conflict," *Parameters*, Summer 1997, <http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article3011.htm>

⁴² The French have a saying: "Les extrême se touchent." Which rings true with respect to the fact that Bolshevism, fascism and capitalism grew out of more or less Hegelian roots, which is why US industrialists supported German Nazism, Italian fascism, and (contrary to rhetorical flights) even Russian Bolshevism (as George Orwell observed

in his unpublished Introduction to *Animal Farm* (called “Literary Censorship in England” or “Freedom of the Press,” online at <http://www.brysons.net/teaching/csun/orwell.pdf>). As Paul Mattick observed in relation to the similarities between Bolshevism, fascism and capitalism (in his essay called “Bolshevism and Stalinism”): “In all essential aspects all three of these systems are identical and represent only various stages of the same development – a development which aims at manipulating the mass of the population by dictatorial governments in a more or less authoritarian fashion, in order to secure the government and the privileged social layers which support it and to enable those governments to participate in the international economy of today by preparing for war, waging war, and profiting by war.” For evidence that war is a golden time for state capitalism, see “War is a Racket,” by US Marine Corps Major-General Smedley Darlington Butler, at www.ratical.org/ratville/CAH/warisaracket.pdf

⁴³ Significantly, *the person who is selfish does not love himself* (!), as Fromm demonstrates in his essay “Selfishness and Self-Love,” online. In other words, the real test of self-love is love for humanity.

⁴⁴ To verify this claim, see Gabriel Kolko, “The Premises of Business Revisionism,” *Business History Review*, Autumn 1959, 33.

⁴⁵ Fromm, “War Within Man,” p. 9; he mentions these all-important conditions on pp. 9-10. But even if these conditions were absent during the child’s upbringing, as they usually are, still, hope is not lost, because most of the time man has the capacity to give birth to himself through reason and brotherly love as an adult even if he was raised by moral monsters who have infected him with their toxic energy. But the tragedy is that most people die before they are born in a humanistic sense.

⁴⁶ Fromm, “Freedom in the Work Situation,” p. 4; online.

⁴⁷ “Exclusive love is a contradiction in itself. To be sure, it is not accidental that a certain person becomes the “object” of manifest love. ...love for a particular “object” is only the actualization and concentration of lingering love with regard to one person; it is not, as the idea of romantic love would have it, that there is only *the* one person in the world whom one can love, that it is the great chance of one’s life to find that person, and that love for him results in a withdrawal from all others. The kind of love which can only be experienced with regard to one person demonstrates by this very fact that it is not love but a sado-masochistic attachment.” (Fromm, *The Fear of Freedom*, p. 99) In other words, people either *stand and walk in love* (as opposed to *falling* in love, which is a great fallacy) or they don’t. Those who do are living in the being mode; those who don’t in the having mode.

⁴⁸ *Radical Priorities*, Oakland (CA): AK Press, 2003, pp. 192-3; henceforth *RP*. Elsewhere, he says, aptly: “One might speculate, rather plausibly, that wealth and power tend to accrue to those who are ruthless, cunning, avaricious, self-seeking, lacking in sympathy and compassion, subservient to authority and willing to abandon principle for material gain.” (Chomsky, *For Reasons of State*, London & NY: The New Press, 2003, p. 355) Hence the saying: “Behind every big fortune there are major crimes.” We are fortunate enough in the West to have access to declassified documents that discuss policy imperatives more or less frankly. For example, as George Kennan (head of the State Department policy planning staff in the late 1940s), who was responsible for shaping policy for the post-war period, said in a top-secret document from 1948 called *PPS23*:

We have about 50 percent of the world’s wealth, but only 6.3 percent of its population... In this situation, we cannot fail to be the object of envy and resentment. Our real task in the coming period is to devise a pattern of relationships which will permit us to maintain this position of disparity... We need not deceive ourselves that we can afford today the luxury of altruism and world-benefaction... We should cease to talk about vague and ... unreal objectives such as human rights, the raising of the living standards, and democratization. The day is not far off when we are going to have to deal in straight power concepts. The less we are then hampered by idealistic slogans, the better. (Italics added)

Kennan’s view is from the *dovish, liberal, humane* end of the spectrum. He was dismissed from the State Department largely because his policy recommendations were not hawkish and extreme enough! And since this was a top-secret study, it was naturally implied that the idealistic slogans have to be constantly trumpeted by the ideological system (the media, the schools, the universities and so on), in order to pacify the domestic population and to conceal the real goals of US foreign policy, lest the citizenry’s ethical concerns be activated.

⁴⁹ Fromm, “Freedom in the Work Situation,” p. 8.

⁵⁰ If they lack the skills to convey things pedagogically, verbally or in writing, they can always learn such skills.

Paulo Freire’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* is an invaluable source for this purpose. Three of the four chapters of the book can be downloaded at <http://d.scribd.com/docs/6av4tyt4fx2k62xz811.pdf>. But the fourth is also crucial.

⁵¹ There was an important case against Unocal in California some years ago, in the light of human rights crimes committed in Burma, by aiding and abetting the military junta’s crimes. It did not succeed, but came surprisingly close, and is being used as a precedent against others. To change those laws is not easy. They are deeply embedded in the federal system. Any attempt to change them, even if possible, would simply inspire further popular understanding and resistance. It is a powerful system of control, but pretty fragile. There are lots of opportunities,

and they are beginning to be used. For some useful insights, see Robert Benson, *Challenging corporate rule: the petition to revoke Unocal's charter as a guide to citizen action*.

⁵² Fromm, "Our Way of Life Makes Us Miserable," pp. 3-4, online. For the record, the psychosocially harmful effects of mindless conformity are not to be taken lightly (it is not without good reason that Charles Mackay, a 19th century Scottish journalist, said, "Men go mad in herds, but only come to their senses one by one." Cited in William Blum, *The Anti-Empire Report*, June 5th, 2009, <http://www.killinghope.org>). For example, again according to Fromm, "Physical, especially psychosomatic illnesses, criminality, and drug addiction ... are largely forms of protest against coercion and boredom." (*To Have or To Be?* p. 186) The same thing can be said about bed-wetting, constipation and temper tantrums (which are forms of resistance to domination—Fromm calls them "the weapons of the helpless") in children (Fromm, *The Art of Being*, London: Constable, 1993, p. 113), as well as about compulsive sexuality in teens and adults.

Apropos of greed and envy, the reason they "are so strong [is] not because of their *inherent intensity* but because of the difficulty in resisting the public pressure to be a wolf with the wolves. Change the social climate, the values that are either approved or disapproved, and the change from selfishness to altruism will lose most of its difficulty" (ibid., p. 194; italics in original).

⁵³ Chomsky, "Expanding the Floor of the Cage," Part 1, *Znet*, March 1997, <http://www.zmag.org/zmag/viewArticle/13217>

⁵⁴ In the sacrosanct words of Reinhold Niebuhr (the highly influential moralist and foreign affairs adviser):

The naïve faith of the proletarian is the faith of the man of action. Rationality belongs to the cool observers. There is of course an element of illusion in the faith of the proletarian, as there is in all faith. But it is a necessary illusion. . . . The stupidity of the average man will permit the oligarch, whether economic or political, to hide his real purposes from the scrutiny of his fellows and to withdraw his activities from effective control. . . . Since the increasing complexity of society makes it impossible to bring all those who are in charge of its intricate techniques and processes, and who are therefore in possession of social power, under complete control, it will always be necessary to rely partly upon the honesty and self-restraint of those who are not socially restrained. (*Moral Man and Immoral Society*, New York: Scribners, 1952, pp. 221, 21)

⁵⁵ Barrington Moore, Jr., "Notes on the Process of Acquiring Power," *World Politics*, Vol. 8, No. 1. (Oct., 1955), p. 14 at pp. 1-19.

⁵⁶ "Business and Politics: A Critical Appraisal of Political Science," *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 53, No. 1. (Mar., 1959), p. 29 at pp. 1-34. The claim that the merger between state and private power constitutes the essence of fascism is substantiated by the international financier George Soros: "Perhaps the greatest threat to freedom and democracy in the world today comes from the formation of unholy alliances between government and business. This is not a new phenomenon. It used to be called fascism... The outward appearances of the democratic process are observed, but the powers of the state are diverted to the benefit of private interests." (Soros, *Open Society: Reforming Global Capitalism*, NY: Public Affairs, 2000, xi. Soros, who ironically calls for national controls to dampen speculation in financial markets, even though his own fortune has been built in those same markets, now runs the CIA-created Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty and other institutes.) Before him, the murderous lout Benito Mussolini, whose devastating aggression against Ethiopia in 1935 was carried out with crucial support from the US (which "declared an embargo on munitions but let American businesses send oil to Italy in huge quantities, which was essential to Italy's carrying on the war" of aggression, according to Howard Zinn), said: "Fascism should more appropriately be called Corporatism, because it is the merger of State and Corporate power."

⁵⁷ In point of fact, there is hardly any institution in the West that does not actively go to great lengths in attempts to legitimate the status quo. Case in point: as one of France's most prominent intellectuals, the late Michel Foucault, observed:

[...] it is the custom, at least in European society, to consider that power is localised in the hands of the government and that it is exercised through a certain number of particular institutions, such as the administration, the police, the army, and the apparatus of the state. One knows that all these institutions are made to elaborate and to transmit a certain number of decisions, in the name of the nation or of the state, to have them applied and to punish those who don't obey. But I believe that political power also exercises itself through the mediation of a certain number of institutions which look as if they have nothing in common with the political power, and as if they are independent of it, while they are not.

One knows this in relation to the family; and one knows that the university and in a general way, all teaching systems, which appear simply to disseminate knowledge, are made to maintain a certain social class in power; and to exclude the instruments of power of another social class.

Institutions of knowledge, of foresight and care, such as medicine, also help to support the political power. It's also obvious, even to the point of scandal, in certain cases related to psychiatry. (Noam Chomsky and Michel Foucault, *The Chomsky-Foucault Debate on Human Nature*, New York: The New Press, 2006, p. 40)

Nancy Scheper-Hughes makes a similar observation:

In advanced industrialized societies and in modern, bureaucratic, and welfare states, the institutions of violence generally operate...covertly. A whole array of educational, social welfare, medical, psychiatric, and legal experts collaborate in the management and control of sentiments and practices that threaten the stability of the state and the fragile consensus on which it claims to base its legitimacy. We can call these institutions, agents, and practices the "softer" forms of social control, the gloved hand of the state. But even the most "advanced" state can resort to threats of violence or to open violence against "disorderly" citizens whenever the normal institutions for generating social consensus are weakening or changing. (*Violence in War and Peace: An Anthology*, Oxford [UK]: Blackwell Publishing, 2004, p. 178)

And as Zbigniew Zingh observes, *The Washington Post's*, *The New York Times'* and *The Wall Street Journal's*

primary target audience is the leadership cadre of society. They speak for the ownership class to the management class. These "newspapers" (I use the cautionary quotation marks around the word "newspapers" because of their predilection for uncritical amplification of official government policy and for blatant propaganda) seek to shape the opinions of the upper "management" echelons of society: the mid-level business executives, professors, lawyers, judges, teachers, doctors, other regional news editors and publishers, and government administrators. They, in turn, are expected to disseminate these approved opinions down into society in general. ("The Less Docile American," <http://www.ersarts.com/cgi-bin/pikie/ersarts/ersarts.py%3FTheLessDocileAmerican.html>. This article is a sequel to his excellent "The Docile American: The Nexus of God, Labor, Health Care and the Fear to Strike," *Dissident Voice*, February 13, 2007, <http://dissidentvoice.org/Feb07/Zingh13.htm>)

The expectation is, of course, fulfilled in spectacular fashion. Still, every country in the West understandably has a growing number of disillusioned people who are involved in an informal, disorganized, activist dissident culture (through the Internet) that is marginalized by the mainstream (to verify the claim about disillusionment, dissidence, and marginalization, see John Dillin, "Voters Angry As Delegates Convene," *The Christian Science Monitor*, July 14, 1992, <http://www.csmonitor.com/1992/0714/14011.html>). Granted, this is an old study, but the same results are likely to occur in prospective studies once the Obama mania wares off and people become even more disillusioned over time than they are now, because Obama's deeds do not, in essence, differ from Bush's [which might be charitable, because he even looks more aggressive and violent than Bush], even if Obama's style and rhetoric are much more impressive than Bush's). In any event, there is simply no escaping the fact that representative democracy is mostly a sham, which Walter Lippmann confirmed when he observed that "Electoral politics is a mechanical devise, which is necessarily inadequate to ensure true representation." He elaborates:

...what the public does is not to express its opinions but to align itself for or against a proposal. If that theory is accepted, we must abandon the notion that democratic government can be the direct expression of the will of the people. We must abandon the notion that the people govern. Instead we must adopt the theory that, by their occasional mobilizations as a majority, people support or oppose the individuals who actually govern. We must say that the popular will does not direct continuously but that it intervenes occasionally. ... When public opinion attempts to govern directly it is either a failure or a tyranny. It is not able to master the problem intellectually, nor to deal with it except by wholesale impact. The theory of democracy has not recognized this truth because it has identified the functioning of government with the will of the people. This is a fiction. The intricate business of framing laws and of administering them through several hundred thousand public officials is in no sense the act of the voters nor a translation of their will. (Rossiter and Lare, op. cit, pp. 26, 106, 110)

Those who stubbornly maintain illusions about American democracy ought to consider another observation by Lippmann (from his essay "The Role of Force, Patronage, and Privilege," in *Public Opinion*, at www.scribd.com):

The constitution was a candid attempt to limit the sphere of popular rule; the only democratic organ it was intended the government should possess was the House, based on a *suffrage highly limited by property qualifications*. The American people came to believe that their Constitution was a democratic instrument, and treated it as such. They owe that fiction to the victory of Thomas Jefferson, and a great conservative fiction it has been. It is a fair guess that if everyone had always regarded the Constitution as did the authors of it, the Constitution would have been violently overthrown, because loyalty to the Constitution and loyalty to democracy would have seemed incompatible. Jefferson resolved that paradox by teaching the American people to read the Constitution as an expression of democracy. He himself stopped there. The stereotype of democracy controlled the visible government; the corrections, the exceptions and adaptations of the American people to the real facts of their environment have had to be invisible, even when everybody knew all about

them. It was only the words of the law, the speeches of politicians, the platforms, and the formal machinery of administration that have had to conform to the pristine image of democracy (pp. 90, 91-92; emphasis added).

⁵⁸ On CSR, see Joel Bakan, *The Corporation: The Pathological Pursuit of Profit and Power*, London: Constable, 2005, chapter 2. And Milton Friedman, “The Social Responsibility of Business is to Increase Its Profits,” *The New York Times Magazine*, Sept. 13, 1970, at <http://www-rohan.sdsu.edu/faculty/dunnweb/rprnts.friedman.dunn.pdf> For the extremely high social and environmental costs of the West’s insatiable appetite for economic growth, see Jim Kim et al. [eds.], *Dying for Growth*. To verify the claim about the massive recruitment of Nazis by the CIA at the war’s end (the above quote by Finkelstein is from his *The Holocaust Industry*, London: Verso, 2000, p. 73) and for details on US emulation of Nazi counterinsurgency programs, see Christopher Simpson, *Blowback*; Linda Hunt, *Secret Agenda*; and Michael McClintock, *Instruments of Statecraft*. For Britain’s horrible human rights practices generally, including its support for terrorism, see Mark Curtis, *Web of Deceit*. For details on America’s post-war culture of terrorism and aggression, see William Blum, *Killing Hope* and *Rogue State*. For an account of America’s horrifying crimes against humanity during the pre-UN Charter period domestically, see David Stannard, *American Holocaust*. For a detailed tour the force of US history from the perspective of ordinary persons for the period 1492 to the present, see Howard Zinn, *A People’s History of the United States*. For a 500-year overview of Western conquest of much of the world, see Chomsky, *Year 501*.

⁵⁹ Abraham Maslow drew up man’s “basic needs” as follows: “physiological and aesthetic needs, needs for safety, belongingness, love, esteem, self-actualization, knowledge and understanding.” For an analysis of the common origin of such needs in the nature of man, see Fromm, *The Anatomy of Human Aggressiveness*, 1973, ch. 10.

⁶⁰ Here is an explanation by George Bernard Shaw about who opposes equality of income and why:

Between persons of equal income there is no social distinction except the distinction of merit. Money is nothing: character, conduct, and capacity are everything. Instead of all the workers being leveled down to low wage standards and all the rich leveled up to fashionable income standards, everybody under a system of equal incomes would find her and his own natural level. There would be great people and ordinary people and little people; but the great ones would always be those who have done great things, and never the idiots whose mothers had spoiled them and whose fathers had left them a hundred thousand a year; and the little would be persons of small minds and mean characters, and not poor persons who had never had a chance. That is why idiots are always in favor of inequality of income (their only chance of eminence), and the really great in favor of equality.” (Cited in Michael Albert, *Parecon: Life After Capitalism*, London and NY: Verso, 2003, p. 245)

⁶¹ When it comes to claims of benevolence by the rich and powerful (anywhere) they should not be taken seriously, for as Chomsky observes: “The cultural managers must have at hand the tools to do their work. And apart from the most cynical, planners must convince themselves of the justice of the actions, often monstrous, that they plan and implement. There are only two pretexts: self-defense and benevolence. It need not be assumed that use of the tools is mere deception or careerism, though sometimes it is. Nothing is easier than to convince oneself of the merits of actions and policies that serve self-interest. Expressions of benevolent intent, in particular, must be regarded with much caution: they can be taken seriously when the policies advocated happen to be harmful to self-interest, a historical category that is vanishingly small.” (*Year 501*, p. 75) For the record, entertainers, regardless of their levels of remuneration, are cultural managers and propagandists, and their work, if it can be called that, derives from social policy determined by private power in tandem with state power.

⁶² Chomsky, *RP*, p. 259.

⁶³ Fromm argues that the having mode, or “the attitude centered on property and profit, necessarily produces the desire—indeed the need—for power... In the having mode, one’s happiness lies in one’s superiority over others, in one’s power, and in the last analysis, in one’s capacity to conquer, rob, kill. In the being mode it lies in loving, sharing, giving.” (*To Have or To Be?* pp. 85-6). When Fromm talks about having as a mode of existence and experience, he has in mind what he calls ‘characterological having,’ as opposed to ‘existential (or functional) having.’ It’s a given that humans need to have certain things in an existential sense in order to survive, like food, shelter and clothing. But this is different from having in the sense of a character structure, the latter entailing the ideological need to live *through* property relations and acquisition (meaning material things function as props for one’s *weak* sense of self, thereby making us very susceptible to propaganda), which is a practice that creates a great deal of alienation hence suffering, ultimately leading to insanity, even for those who dominate by virtue of their economic clout (both in the short- and long-terms, no one stands to gain anything from the status quo, *morally and psychologically*). Naturally, psychological benefits do accrue to the rich and powerful by virtue of their domination, but only morbidly, since domination causes suffering both for the rulers and the ruled). Fromm delineates the dynamics of domination and submission thus:

The common element in both submission and domination is the symbiotic nature of relatedness. Both persons involved have lost their integrity and freedom; they live on each other and from each other, satisfying their

craving for closeness, yet suffering from the lack of inner strength and self-reliance which would require freedom and independence, and furthermore constantly threatened by the conscious or unconscious hostility which is bound to arise from the symbiotic relationship. The realization of the submissive (masochistic) or the domineering (sadistic) passion never leads to satisfaction. They have a self-propelling dynamism, and because no amount of submission, or domination (or possession, or fame) is enough to give a sense of identity and union, more and more of it is sought. The ultimate result of these passions is defeat. It cannot be otherwise; while these passions aim at the establishment of a sense of union, they destroy the sense of integrity. The person driven by any one of these passions actually becomes dependent on others; instead of developing his own individual being, he is dependent on those to whom he submits, or whom he dominates.” (*The Sane Society*, London: Routledge, 1955, pp. 28-29; also at www.scribd.com)

⁶⁴ “The Revolutionary Pleasure of Thinking for Yourself” (bracket insert added). See also David Kortzen, “We Are Hard-Wired to Care and Connect,” *YES! Magazine*, Fall 2008: Purple America, at: http://www.stwr.org/index2.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=3266&pop=1&page=0&Itemid=251

⁶⁵ Fromm, *On Being Human*, p. 78.

⁶⁶ In the spiritual realm, once salvation is attained in accordance with a radical understanding of the Gospel and the Koran (since there is compelling evidence that they are in agreement on the prerequisite of salvation), it can never be lost. The notion that salvation comes from below in the spiritual realm is fully substantiated in “The Quiet Storm: Religion Versus Spirituality” (expanded version; no author, no date), which can be downloaded in pdf at <http://www.scribd.com/people/documents/3219608-mhctiop3296>. For a much shorter documentation of, in essence, the same finding (as well as the hows and whys of the agreement between the Gospel and the Koran mentioned above), see “One by One” (n.a., n.d.), also in pdf (same link as above).

⁶⁷ This term cannot properly be understood except by turning to the man, Karl Marx, who coined it:

Religious distress is at the same time the *expression* of real distress and the *protest* against real distress. Religion is the sign of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, just as it is the spirit of an unspiritual situation. It is the *opium* of the people. The abolition of religion as the *illusory* happiness of the people is required for their *real* happiness. The demand to give up the illusions about its condition is *the demand to give up a condition which needs illusions*. The criticism of religion is, therefore, *in embryo the criticism of the vale of woe, the halo of which is religion*. Criticism has plucked the imaginary flowers from the chain not so that man will wear the chain without any fantasy or consolation, but so that he will shake off the chain and cull the living flower. The criticism of religion disillusiones man, to make him think and act and shape his reality like a man who has been disillusioned and has come to reason, so that he will revolve around himself and therefore around his true sun. Religion is only the illusory sun, which revolves around man as long as he does not revolve around himself. (Marx cited in Fromm, *On Being Human*, pp. 166-7; Marx’s emphasis)

In *ibid.*, Fromm makes an observation that complements the above very nicely: “...the aim of life is not the drabness of making a living but the beauty of being. To Marx, in a socialist society, when man has become fully himself, there is no need for religion, because the flowering quality of life will be expressed in the whole of daily life and not in a separate and necessarily alienated sector of life: religion.”

⁶⁸ Put differently, “the theological lie that concocted the doctrine of original sin in order to bring man into dishonor and destroy whatever consciousness of his own self-worth he may have had” (Bakunin), is the cornerstone of ecclesiastical and political guardianship, to wit, of the authority principle.

⁶⁹ Given the absence of the whip that the Leader normally has to crack to get intellectuals to do their somersaults, this curious feature of Western intellectual and moral culture would have greatly impressed Stalin (since he didn’t live long enough to see the most advanced stages of this circus show)!

⁷⁰ The democratic surge of the 1960s in the US is a strong testimony to this. In other words, it should be understood as the being mode rearing its beautiful head like at no other time in modern history, so much so that the ruling elites were literally quaking in their boots. A permanent reenactment of that period can and should be hastened.

⁷¹ The latter category is wide and includes cruelty amongst the oppressed (sadly a pervasive problem), which should not be rationalized or romanticized.

⁷² This is because their worst crimes pale into insignificance when compared with the gargantuan crimes of the rich and powerful. That small part of the prison population that is truly and too irreformably anti-social and dangerous to society to be released nevertheless needs to undergo a thoroughgoing program of humanization (including abolishing the death sentence, where applicable), since there can be no justification for further dehumanizing those who are already dehumanized, as that can only lead to escalating acts of cruelty. This is why punishment should be as mild as possible, to decrease recidivism rates, which usually increase as punishment gets stronger (an op-ed in the *New York Times* confirmed this in 1993: Todd R. Clear, “Tougher is Dumber,” December 4. An excerpt: “police and prisons have virtually no effect on the sources of criminal behavior,” because the conditions that nourish crime—like deep poverty, exclusion, marginalization and despair—are totally ignored by the powerful).

Nor should we overlook the fact that the criminal (in)justice systems in the US and Western Europe are very racist. Extricating the race factor from the equation would result in a significant drop in the size of prison populations, instantly! For example, non-Whites are incarcerated far out of proportion to the severity of their crimes, which are usually victimless, like drug possession for personal use, usually mild drugs like marijuana (the poor man's drug); while rich white folks sniffing cocaine in suburbia and upscale business districts are conveniently, and deferentially, kept out of law enforcement's mind and sight. The full story is much worse. The incarceration rate in the US started exploding about 30 years ago, with the onset of neoliberalism, financialization of the economy, dismantling of the industrial system that had offered a brief window of opportunity during and after WWII to African-Americans. (Since the 1970s industrial production in the US has declined: steel, automobiles, etc. Actually the share of the US in global manufacturing until at least some years ago remained fairly stable, but that's because of production abroad by US multinationals. There have been some attempts to arrest it: the sharp increase in protectionism in the Reagan years was one example. But more generally, it's been tolerated by the state authorities. In fact, even the productive system has become financialized: GE, GM, and others.) The laws were targeted against them and applied disproportionately against them. It's not unlike what happened after the end of the Reconstruction period in 1877, when black life was essentially criminalized, and a slave labor force was created that was the base for a large part of the industrial revolution in the US, lasting until WWII. It's a little known and utterly horrifying story. There's finally a good readable book about it, which brings it out of the recesses of scholarship and adds a good deal of new and awful detail: Douglas Blackmon, *Slavery by Another Name*. His account ends with WWII, but in the past 30 years, another chapter is being written by Randall Shelden. (Now that the US has a Black President, the doctrinal managers would have us believe that America has gotten to a post-racial society, despite all evidence to the contrary!) Finally, who do you think the biggest drug runner in the world is, if not the US government *itself*? To verify this claim, see Alfred McCoy, *The Politics of Heroin*, reprinted 2003 (this is the major source on the CIA's post-war reconstruction of the Mafia by the US as part of its campaign to destroy the European labor movement); and Alexander Cockburn & Jeffrey St. Clair, *Whiteout*. (N.B. One of the major implications of all this is that "law and order" [an ideological cover that is invoked by our—conservative *and* liberal—leaders as much as it was invoked by Hitler] have nothing to do with justice. In other words, "law and order" just means constant harassment by law enforcement agencies against the poor and powerless, especially [in the West] against ethnic minorities. For an excellent discussion on this subject, see Glenn Loury, "A Nation of Jailers," March 11, 2009, <http://www.cato-unbound.org/2009/03/11/glenn-loury/a-nation-of-jailers/print/>).

⁷³ Wilhelm von Humboldt (ed. by J.W. Burrow), *The Limits of State Action*, Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1993, p.23.

⁷⁴ "The whole concept of alienation found its first expression in Western thought in the Old Testament concept of idolatry. The essence of what the prophets call "idolatry" is not that man worships many gods instead of only one. It is that the idols are the work of man's own hands – they are things, and man bows down and worships things; worships that which he has created himself. In doing so he transforms himself into a thing. He transfers to the things of his creation the attributes of his own life, and instead of experiencing himself as the creating person, he is in touch with himself only by the worship of the idol. He has become estranged from his own life forces, from the wealth of his own potentialities, and is in touch with himself only in the indirect way of submission to life frozen in the idols. The deadness and emptiness of the idol is expressed in the Old Testament: "Eyes they have and they do not see, ears they have and they do not hear," etc. The more man transfers his own powers to the idols, the poorer he himself becomes, and the more dependent on the idols, so that they permit him to redeem a small part of what was originally his. The idols can be a godlike figure, the state, the church, a person, possessions. Idolatry changes its objects; it is by no means to be found only in those forms in which the idol has a so-called religious meaning. Idolatry is always the worship of something into which man has put his own creative powers, and to which he now submits, instead of experiencing himself in his creative act." (Fromm, *Marx's Concept of Man* [with a translation of Marx's *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* by T.B. Bottomore], NY and London: Continuum, 2004, p. 37-8, also at <http://www.scribd.com>)

⁷⁵ It bears stating—for those who are understandably alarmed by the foreboding that the term 'collective rights' is likely to evoke due to decades of ideological distortions and blatant propaganda in both the East (during the post-Cold War era) and the West—that under anarchism the individual will have far more *practical* rights and freedoms than under state capitalism, and, of course, even greater rights and freedoms than under authoritarian socialist relations of production. But it should also be borne in mind that the reason individual rights are *rhetorically* raised to the highest virtue under status quo arrangements is that they are negated in practice for all but a small minority in quite significant ways. So the apprehension about collective rights is really wholly without merit, since individual egoism has never led either to peace and harmony or to growth in everyone's welfare.

⁷⁶ The effects of propaganda—both on the designers and victims, since the designers are also victims—are very harmful. Which is why Fromm said: "*we must prohibit the use of all hypnoid forms of propaganda, for commodities as well as for politicians.* The hypnoid methods used in advertising and political propaganda are a serious danger to mental health, specifically, to clear and critical thinking and emotional independence. I have no

doubt that thorough studies will show that the damage caused by drug addiction is only a fraction of the damage done by our methods of brainwashing, from subliminal suggestions to such semi-hypnotic devices as constant repetition or the deflection of rational thought by the appeal to sexual lust ('I'm Linda, fly me!'). The bombardment with purely suggestive methods in advertising, and most of all in television commercials, is stultifying." (*To Have or To Be?* p. 183-4) And that's because the information-entertainment menu, whether it be movies or advertising, "rel[ies] heavily if not exclusively on techniques that work directly on the nervous system, by "Utilizing sound, computer animation, dazzling photography, a whole assortment of special effects," thereby making films and TV ads powerful "emotional concoctions [...] aimed at the senses, not the intellect." (Schiller, "Corporate Sponsorship: Institutional Censorship of the Cultural Realm," *Art Journal*, Vol. 50, No. 3 [Autumn, 1991], p. 57 at pp. 56-59) The outcome is an increasingly precarious national grip on reality (*ibid.*, p. 58), hence a severe blow to the last vestiges of democracy.

⁷⁷ Fromm, *On Disobedience and Other Essays*, NY: The Seabury Press, 1981, p. 107.