

Discussion - 1.

We'll take the first question from Dr. Jarvis:

"I <sup>would</sup> like to understand better what you mean when you relate yourself to the concept of the aufhebung of labour. Does this mean the liberation ~~of~~ <sup>from</sup> work in an aesthetic dimension of life? Or does this mean the liberation of labour from its actual chains, and the possibility of a liberated, new form of praxis? For example, in scientific research?"

The phrase "abolition of labour" is intentionally held in ambiguity, following Marx. As you know, Marx used, relatively early, this as a definition of one of the goals, perhaps the decisive goal, of a socialist society; and the meaning of this phrase in Marx is limited by his later injunction that work can never become play - he said that. And in the Kapital you have the famous statement that the realm of freedom will and must be beyond the realm of necessity, which is to remain ~~in~~ a realm of labour - we would today say even of alienated labour - and all that can be done in this realm of necessity is to reduce labour as much as possible and organise it in the most rational way in the interests of society as a whole. Now this is a modest formulation: The abolition of labour as toil, the abolition of labour as burden, which perverts the entire human existence. But I believe that this is precisely the point where we have to think a little further and seriously ask the questions whether the abolition of labour has not a more radical meaning. Namely, work, even socially necessary work, becoming experimentation, as I said, with the possibilities of things and men; experimentation no longer in the interests of suppression and manipulation, but in the interests of liberation. And here I want to add immediately, from another question: "What is meant by aesthetic reality?". Precisely that - I take the term "aesthetic" in its full original meaning, where it simply designates "pertaining to the sensibilities, pertaining to sensitivity". That is to say, the sensibility and sensitivity of man, now as transforming force,

Q.  
Cooper?  
Record 2  
@ 10.52.11

Marcuse  
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Marcuse transforming the environment - nature as well as the technical environment - into one of joy, into one of pleasure. And here I would ~~at~~ like to at least indicate the dimension, use the term "Gail Scienza" the gay science, of which Nietzsche dreamt; science no longer merely or predominantly in the context of efficiency and in the context of destruction, but science really in the service of refining, of liberating and refining human sensitivity and human sensibility. I believe that a free society is unthinkable without this liberation of human sensitivity. It is not identical - and that we know at least, from Freud - it is not identical with liberating all the senses and all sensuality, because there are such as civilisation has developed in the way of liberation and pleasure rather than enlarging liberation and pleasure. But this is, I think, the meaning. There is another in it, and I would like to mention it here. We have, since at least the '30s, seen an increasing interest in one of the great radical thinkers of the 19th century, who has consistently been called a madman, namely Charles Fourier - ever since, well earlier than the '30s. And Charles Fourier's great idea was a society in which all necessary work could be organised in accord with the developing instincts and inclinations of the individuals: a society, in other words, in which alienated labour in toto would be abolished. Such a society - and it may be interesting perhaps to discuss that in the afternoon - would indeed involve a reduction in the standard of living as it prevails in the most advanced capitalist countries today: that is to say, the elimination of all that which is really waste, planned obsolescence, destruction, instruments of moronisation of man and so on. But the abolition of labour I would like at least to enlarge to include this far-fetched possibility: 'Aesthetic reality' in the sense of sensibility as the transforming force - that is to say creating an environment in which human beings can really be free and are no longer suppressed by the mere weight, by the ugliness, by the noise of their environment.

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Q. What do you mean by aesthetic reality? One that satisfies and/or stimulates all human biological senses?

Marcuse I think I have answered this question. Not all human biological senses, because here I think I agree with Freud: there are such, the repression of discipline of which is really in the interest of refining pleasure and refining joy. But certainly not the subjugation of sensitivity and sensuality to a rationality which is predominantly suppressive and operating under the performance principle.

Records  
© G. 36-06  
Q.

Next question.  
Would you comment on the racial violence in the U.S. Is this not an expression of a subjective need for liberation?

Marcuse It is expression of the subjective need for liberation. Please remember what I said in making the distinction between <sup>ative</sup> quantity and qualitative change; and that there are large areas, even in the affluent society, in which quantitative change is already qualitative change. In this sense the subjective need is there, but I am still reluctant, as far as I know, to say that this movement now - we are speaking of tendencies at this point - can in its great majority be called a socialist movement. I don't know whether it can even be called a movement which aims at the replacement of the entire social system by another system. Since there has been another question here on the violence, I would like to add that it seems to me a typical case where violence is reaction against violence. And here I would like to say a few words on the concept of violence itself. In the first place I think we are much too generous in the figurative use of 'violence'. To illustrate: Authoritarian education is violence in the figurative sense, but it cannot be compared with the violence, for example, which is used in lynching a black man. I mean there we should not obliterate the difference. Violence, physical violence - there can be mental violence, mental torture, but authoritarian education as such is not violence. Now within the realm of violence, physically speaking, or predominantly physically, again the term covers two essentially different forms of violence. It has been

Marcuse

said again and again that violence breeds violence. But I think we can safely say that the continued monopolisation of violence among suppressive forces also breeds violence. We have to distinguish - and this is more than a theoretical distinction - between the violence used in the defence and protection of life, and the violence used in the destruction and suppression of life. Instinctually as well as politically, the two forms of violence have a very different form, and I think we should clearly be aware of that.

9.  
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I find that your radical and prophetic message, if properly communicated to large audiences, can be equally inciting as Stokely Carmichael's words: equally much, if understood properly, a threat to the established order. In other words, when you call for the total dissolution of our type of society and the education to oppose it, you are, in fact, subversive. Do you think it's possible therefore that you will also be banned from this country in the future? Or is the intelligentsia today so well integrated that they are power-less and therefore considered harm-less?

Marcuse  
Record 3  
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22.25.23

Whether or not I am in the future going to be banned from this country I don't know, but it seems to me that the alternative put at the end is a very serious one. I can safely say I don't like to talk about it because, as it was said before, I really think that I am not so important that these things should be discussed here, and we have very little time. I do indeed believe that I present no danger whatsoever for the existing system, certainly not in the U.S., and that is one of the reasons why I have a large range of freedom in this society. This however does not prevent me at all from doing what I can to participate, and very actively participate, in the kind of education which I outlined.

Marcuse  
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22.25.23  
11.20

Referring to new human beings, biologically incapable of fighting wars: this reminds me of Huxley's Brave New World. Do you think the Brave New World on the Huxley model is desirable?

Marcuse

Well, I like this question. It comes up very often when I speak, and my answer is always the same. I have a kind of <sup>heretic</sup> ~~theoretical~~ attitude towards Huxley's Brave New World: I don't find/terribly wrong in it <sup>much</sup> except for the existence of the Epsilots - you probably know, that is a slave substratum underneath the society - and in as much as Brave New World is exactly built according to a model of a society in which sensibility and happiness are maximised, I don't think we - at least I don't think I can object to it. It brings up a very interesting question - I only hinted at it. Can we envisage the transition from the established - a qualitative change from the established society to a new one as a more or less gradual transition? And my answer was No. There is, I said, indoctrination in servitude; there must be indoctrination in freedom, or in the prerequisites of freedom. Or, to make it even less acceptable, I don't think we can avoid a stage of the administration - I use intentionally this terrible word - of the educational administration of new possibilities, of needs and new possibilities of satisfaction. Here moves in the background - and I don't want to skirt this question - the idea of the educational dictatorship. I think sooner or later we will have to come to terms with it, it is about time, and I am perfectly willing to discuss it. I think we can better - because it is a large subject - discuss it this afternoon.

Q. Not in the Record  
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(There's a word left out I think, the way it reads is: "Can you speak honestly on what the society you have described has had on your freedom?" "The effect" I think is meant isn't it? "Can you speak honestly on what effect the society you describe has had on your freedom?"

Marcuse

Record 3  
© 26.08.09  
Again, that is a personal question. I will answer it, very briefly. I already said that I enjoy a large range of freedom in the society in which I live; but I'm also fully aware that the point can be reached very easily where this large range is considerably cut down. I don't

Discussion - 6.

Marcuse

want to take myself as an example, in the first place because of my age, and in the second place because of a whole chain of fortunate circumstances. But let me give you the example of colleagues of mine, intellectuals, educators, who certainly do not enjoy the freedom I have. I only remind you of *? Lind* who was one of the great and most consistent fighters against the war against Vietnam and for the Civil Rights movement, and who still has not succeeded in getting a job anywhere in the U.S. at any of the Colleges and Universities - at least as of 2 or 3 weeks ago. His contract was not renewed and he is still looking for a job. So we should not nourish the idea that the democratic liberties are really normally functioning - this is certainly not the case.

In the emphasis on creative imagination and instinct, is there not the danger of forgetting the creative role of reason, which is not per se capitalist and mutilating?

Marcuse

Yes, the question is very much justified. I have, in the context - precisely because I wanted to emphasize the more or less repressed part - underplayed the role of reason. I have never been a protagonist of irrationality, and I certainly have never engaged in the defamation of reason. We have to distinguish between reason, and the form of reason - the social and historical form of reason which governs the established capitalist, and not only capitalist, societies. Reason can exist in a very different form, and the idea of the *gave Science* already points that out. It is science; that is to say, in the strictest and most rigid sense, reason and rationality, and at the same time it is not hostile or antagonistic to sensibility and sensitivity, but on the contrary - to use Freudian terms - entirely in the service of Eros, of the life instincts, trying to protect and to refine sensibility. This is predominantly the job of reason, and I am very glad the question

Q.  
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tendencies among the left and in the opposition. Without this kind of reason, this rationality of liberation - I use the term technology of liberation - without the ideal goal of a *Gaia Serenya* we will never make it. /

End Record  
3 @ 29.57.25

Q. What kind of forces can you envisage from the forces of liberation if Fascism re-emerges from the affluent society?

Karcuse The possibility that the affluent society may go fascist is of course a real possibility. I have pointed out the contradictions, the serious contradictions permeating the society. The possibility of a crisis, either coming about through the danger, really almost fatal to the affluent society, that peace may break out and that we may indeed have peaceful coexistence. Or through some catastrophe, for example that the insane experimentation with annihilation - something goes wrong. Or on economic grounds - as I said, there are economic grounds for a, at least, serious depression. That in such a situation large parts of the population can go fascist. Now by fascist - we should here too be careful; they usually tell you immediately there cannot be fascism because there is no armed or semi-military fascist mass movement in the advanced industrial countries. I would like to be a little more liberal in using the term fascism, and call fascism any authoritarian regime which, in the interests of the ruling classes, suppresses whatever is left - and it is considerable - of democratic rights and liberties; which in all likelihood, though this is not necessary, is hostile to the unions; and which takes rigid counter-measures against the opposition. Such a situation is certainly conceivable and I don't hesitate to call it a fascist development. Against it, the opposition as it is now is terribly weak. And the response - well, if we succeed in saving whatever left may still be left, it's a great thing. But otherwise, we should prepare; we should also keep in mind that this situation is a very real possibility.

Marcuse (after inaudible conversation with Cooper over written question)

Well, I said I don't want to be too cowardly and I don't want, if I can, to avoid answering any questions. This is, as you will see, a tough one; this is a dangerous one. I would like to say that there are certain things one should not bring up in such huge meetings - that should be one of the lessons of political experience we should gradually learn. There are quite a few things which should not be discussed other than in a circle of ten or fifteen people who know each other intimately. But this question is so general that I think I can say at least a word about it:

Q. "Is not the loyalty of troops and civil servants the ultimate sanction of the state? Is not, therefore, the test of our ideas the promotion of what would amount to mutiny in the armed forces, especially in Vietnam?"

Marcuse I shall answer the question philosophically. (laughter and applause)  
There have always been, and this is one of the great achievements of western civilisation and perhaps not only western civilisation - two different dimensions of right: namely, the institutionalised right of an existing society to defend itself against subversion (positive law) with all available means; and secondly, you may call it natural right or law of nature or whatever it is, that under certain circumstances man must remain committed to a law higher than positive law and higher than established law. To overlook it, to repeat in one form or the other: "Right or wrong, my country", is the utter degradation of civilisation and really a denial of one of the great sources of progress in western civilisation. The total invalidity of this formula, "Right or wrong, my country", is I think one of the basic assumptions which we should make. There are situations in which you have to evoke a higher right. Now, nobody can go around and preach such civil disobedience who is not willing to take the same risk for his own person and in his own existence. But going around and preaching civil disobedience to



others while staying safely at home is at least one of the things I do not care to do.

Q (inaudible from Hall)

Marcuse I told you why I believe I am so protected: first, because I am a relatively old man; and secondly because, my influence has by no means reached, or come even near a dimension which could be considered dangerous to the system.

Q. (from Hall, partly audible) Why don't you come out strongly against the government, ask people..... to pull out of the system, ask everybody to pull out of the system, and you pull out too.....(inaudible)

Marcuse What I risk is, in the first place, that I do what I can to cry out and to tell - and not only to tell students and my colleagues constantly that which you tell me now I should tell them - that is a fact and that is a matter of the record. What I do not do is simply what you call pull out, throw down my job; for the very simple reason that I think that in my job I can still achieve quite a number of things, and secondly - and let me be perfectly honest about it - because I do not see that at present I can, I have no resources, that I can face poverty or whatever.....

Q. Would Professor Marcuse comment on Paul Goodman's remark that the U.S. does not need the raw materials of the Third World. If this is so, is the exploitation of the Third World merely a spreading of enslavement, and a reflection of the need for an enemy?

Marcuse Again, ambiguity in the use of the term "need". If it is meant that the American economy could operate without, let's say, much of the resources of the Third World, I agree. But it is not the question of the economic capacity of the U.S. to operate at the present high-level. It is - and I think this should be said as clearly as possible - a question of profits.

## Discussion - 10.

Marcuse

Whereas you can certainly say that the U.S. do not need the resources of the Third World, the economy based on profit and on sustained and increasing profitability does need it. What would happen, for example, to the oil industry if in the Latin American countries all oil would be nationalised, if the American investment would stop, I think is easy for anyone to see. The question of ~~the~~ Vietnam is only slightly more complicated. We are here in the happy situation that we can take the explicit declarations of official spokesmen of the U.S. government at their face value - I think they are true. It has been said, from the highest sources including the Secretary of State - they have made statements to the effect that the Americans are in Vietnam for mainly one reason: to fight wars of national liberation everywhere in the world. A defeat of the Americans in Vietnam - and our policy makes us know that very well - would be the signal for the activation and mobilisation and strengthening of such movements all over the world, and especially far closer to home, where the investments really matter, for example in Central and South America. And this is a very material reason. The other is that the U.S. - or at least those who make policy in the U.S. - do not consider it possible to let one of the richest areas of resources in the world come under communist control. These two statements I did not pull out of my pocket, they have been made. And I think that is the root of the presence in Vietnam, quite apart from the fact that now it has already become a very considerable direct investment. According to Newsweek, I think two weeks ago, for example, the American business in Vietnam annually today already amounts to 20 ~~xxx~~ billion dollars.