

CONGRESS ON THE DIALECTICS OF LIBERATION

28 JULY 1967

David Cooper introduces Herbert Marcuse

Cooper: It's my great honour today to introduce to you one of the greatest figures of our age, Herbert Marcuse. Herbert Marcuse is a very modest man - he really doesn't believe he's very important at all, but, I think every word he's written - one goes through the catalogue of his work here, Birth of Civilisation, One Dimensional Man - disproves the modesty that he protests. I think every sentence he utters today will also disprove that. I'd like to introduce to you Herbert Marcuse.

(Applause)

Herbert Marcuse - 28th July 1967

I am very happy to see so many flowers here and that is why I want to remind you that flowers, by themselves, have no power ^{so} whatever other than the power of men and women who protect ^{fix in} them and take care of them against aggression and destruction.

As a hopeless philosopher for whom philosophy has become inseparable from politics, ^{fix in} I am afraid I have to give here today a rather philosophical speech and I must ask your indulgence for it. We are dealing with the dialectic of liberation, actually redundant, because I believe that all dialectic is liberation, and not only ^{fix in} liberation in an intellectual sense but liberation involving the mind and the body, liberation involving the entire human existence. Think of Plato: the liberation from the existence in the cave. Think of Hegel: liberation in the sense of progress and freedom on the historical scale. Think of Marx. Now in what sense is all dialectic liberation? It is liberation from the repressive, from a bad, from a false system: be it an organic system, be it a social system, be it a mental or intellectual system: liberation by forces developing within such a system. That is a decisive point. And liberation by virtue of the contradictions generated by the system, precisely because it is a bad, a false system.

I am using intentionally here moral, philosophical terms, ^{fix end} values "Bad", "false". For without the objectively justifiable goal of a better, a free, human existence, all liberation must remain meaningless, at best progress in servitude. And even that I admit is worth fighting for. I believe that ~~in Marx too~~ socialism ought to be. This "ought" belongs to the very essence of scientific socialism. It ought to be, it is, we may almost say, a biological, sociological and political necessity. ^A Biological necessity in as much as a socialist society, according to Marx, would conform with the very logos of life, with the

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essential possibilities of a human existence, not only mentally, not only intellectually, but also organically.

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Now as to today and our own situation. I think we are faced with a novel situation in history, because today we have ^{fix} to be liberated from a relatively well functioning, rich, powerful society - I'm speaking here, and my main topic as you know is, liberation from the affluent society, that is to say the advanced industrial societies. We are facing the problem, we are facing the need for liberation, not from a poor society, not from a disintegrating society, not even in most cases from a terroristic society, but from a society which develops to a great extent the material and even cultural needs of man, from a society, to use a slogan, which delivers the goods to an ever larger part of the population. And that is, that implies, we are facing liberation from a society where liberation is apparently without a mass basis. We know very well the social mechanisms of manipulation, indoctrination, repression, which are responsible for this lack of a mass basis; which are responsible for the integration of the majority of the oppositional forces into the established social system. But I have to emphasize again that this is not ^{merely} ~~merely~~ an ideological integration; that it is not merely a social integration; that it takes place precisely on the strong and rich basis which enables the society to develop and satisfy material and cultural needs better than before. / CIT

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Now the knowledge of the mechanisms of manipulation, of repression, which ^{fix out} goes down into the very unconscious of man, that is not the whole story.

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I believe that we - and I will use "we" throughout my talk - I believe that we have to be too hesitant, that we have to be ashamed, understandably ashamed, to profess the integral, the radical features of a socialist society, its qualitative difference from all the established societies, its qualitative difference, by virtue of which socialism is indeed and can be the definite negation of the established systems, no matter how productive, no matter how powerful they are or they may appear. In other words - and that is one of the many points where I disagree with Paul Goodman - our fault was not that we have been too immodest, but that

we have been too modest. We have been too modest, we have as it were repressed a great deal of ^{that} what we should have said and what we should have emphasized. If today these integral features, these truly radical features which make a socialist society ^{the} definite negation of the existing societies, if this qualitative difference today appears as Utopian, as idealistic, as metaphysical, this is precisely the form in which these radical features must appear if they are really to be a definite negation of the established society; if socialism is indeed the rupture of history, the radical break, the leap into the realm of freedom - a total rupture.

One illustration how this awareness, or half-awareness, of the need for such a total rupture, was present in some of the great social struggles of our period. Walter Benjamin quotes reports that during the Paris commune, in all corners of the city of Paris, there were people shooting at the clocks: on the towers of the churches, palaces and so on, thereby consciously or ~~un~~half-consciously expressing the need that somehow time has to be arrested; that at least the prevailing, the established time continuum has to be arrested, and that a new time has to begin - a very strong emphasis on the qualitative difference and on the totality of the rupture between the new societies and the old.

Now in this sense I should like to discuss here today with you the repressed prerequisites of qualitative change. I say intentionally "of qualitative change", not "of revolution", because we know ^{of} too many revolutions through which the continuum of repression has been sustained, which have replaced one system of domination by another system of domination. We must become aware of the essentially new features which distinguish a free society as a definite negation of the established societies, and we must begin formulating these features, no matter how metaphysical, no matter how Utopian, I even say no matter how ridiculous, ^{we} they may appear to the normal people in all camps, on the right as well as on the left.

What is the dialectic of liberation with which we are here concerned?

It is ^{the} construction of a free society, a construction which depends on the prevalence of the vital need for abolishing the established systems of servitude, and which depends secondly, and that is decisive, on the vital commitment, the striving, conscious as well as sub- and un-conscious, for the qualitatively different values of a free human existence. Without the emergence of such new needs and satisfaction, the new needs and satisfaction of free men, all change in the social institutions, no matter how great, no matter how large, would only replace one system of servitude by another system of servitude. Nor can the emergence (- and I should like to emphasize this - nor can the emergence of such new needs (and satisfactions be envisaged as a mere by-product, the mere result, of changed social institutions. We have seen that, that is a fact of experience. For the development of the new institutions must already be carried out and carried through by men with the new needs. That is, by the way, the basic idea underlying Marx's own concept of the proletariat as the historical agent of revolution. He saw in the industrial proletariat the historical agent of revolution, not only because it was the basic class in the material process of production, not only because it was at that time the majority of the population, but also because this class was free from, in quotation marks, "the repressive and aggressive competitive needs of capitalist society", and therefore, at least potentially, the carrier of essentially new needs, goals and satisfactions. ~~We can~~

We can formulate this dialectic of liberation also in a more brutal way as a vicious circle. The transition from voluntary servitude, as it exists to a great extent in the affluent society, to freedom presupposes the abolition of the institutions and mechanisms of repression. And the abolition of the institutions and mechanisms of ^{sup}repression already presupposes liberation from servitude, prevalence of the need for liberation. (As to the needs) I think we have to distinguish between the need for changing intolerable conditions of existence, and the need for changing the society as a whole. ^{fix it} The two are by no means identical, and they are by no means in harmony. Quantitative change: if the need is

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for changing intolerable conditions of existence, with at least the reasonable chance that this can be achieved within the established society, with the growth and the progress of the established society: quantitative change. Qualitative change: change of the very system as a whole. I would like to point out that the distinction between quantitative and qualitative change is not identical with the distinction between reform and revolution. Quantitative change can mean and can lead to revolution. Only the conjunction, I suggest, of these two is revolution in the essential sense of the leap from pre-history into the history of man. Or, the problem with which we are faced is, the point where quantity can turn into quality, where the quantitative change ^{to determine} in the conditions and institutions can become a qualitative change affecting the entire human existence.

Today the two potential factors of revolution which I have just mentioned are disjoined. The first is most prevalent in the undeveloped countries, where quantitative change - that is to say the creation of human living conditions - is in itself qualitative change, but is not yet freedom. The second potential factor of revolution, the pre-requisites of liberation, are potentially there in the advanced industrial countries, but are contained and perverted by the capitalist organisation of society.

I think ^{that} we are faced with a situation in which ^{OUT} this advanced capitalist society has reached a point where quantitative change can ^{turned} technically be ~~changed~~ into qualitative change, into authentic liberation. And it is precisely against this truly fatal possibility that the affluent society, that advanced capitalism is mobilized and organized on all fronts: in the interior as well as abroad.

Before I go on, let me give ^{you} a brief definition of what I mean by an affluent society: a society which even in the U.S. is not yet entirely translated into reality - I would prefer to speak of tendencies here - but of course a model is American society today. In the first place, it shouldn't be necessary to remind us of it, it is ^{IN} a capitalist society. It seems to be necessary because ^{IN} there are some people even on the left who believe that the American society is no longer a class society; I can

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assure you it is a class society. It is a capitalist society with a high concentration of economic and political power, with an enlarged, enlarging sector of automation and coordination of production, distribution and communication, with private ownership in the means of production, which however depends increasingly on ever more active and wide intervention by the government. It is a society in which, as I mentioned, the material as well as cultural needs of the underlying population are satisfied on a scale larger than before - but satisfied in line with the requirements and interests of the apparatus, and of the powers which control the apparatus. And it is a society growing on the conditions of accelerating waste, plant obsolescence and destruction, while the substratum of the population continues to live in poverty and misery.

I believe that these factors are internally interrelated, that they make out the syndrome of late capitalism: namely, the apparently inseparable unity - inseparable for the system - of productivity and destruction, of satisfaction of needs and repression, of liberty within a system of servitude - namely, the subjugation of man to the apparatus - and the inseparable unity of rational and irrational. We can say that the rationality of the society lies in its very insanity, and that the insanity of the society is rational to the degree to which it is efficient, to the degree to which it delivers the goods.

Now the question we must raise is: why liberation from such a society if it is capable of, perhaps, in the long future, but apparently capable, of conquering poverty to a greater degree than before, of reducing the toil of labour and the time of labour, and of raising the standard of living: why liberation from such a society, if the price for all the goods delivered, if the price for this comfortable servitude, for all these achievements, is exacted from people far away from the metropolis and far away from its affluence; if the affluent society itself hardly notices what it is doing, how it is spreading terror, enslavement, how it is fighting liberation in all corners of the globe?

We know the traditional weakness of emotional, moral and humanitarian arguments in the face of such a technological achievement, in the face of

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the irrational rationality of such a power. These arguments do not seem to carry any weight against the brute facts - we can say brutal facts - of the society and its productivity. And yet, it is only the insistence of the real possibilities of a free society, which is blocked by the affluent society - it is only this insistence in practice as well as in theory, in discussion as well as in demonstration; it is only this insistence which still stands in the way of the complete degradation of man to an object, or rather subject/object, of total administration. It is only this insistence which stands still in the way of the progressing brutalisation and moronisation of man. For - and I should like to emphasise it - the capitalist welfare state is a warfare state. It must have an Enemy, with a capital E, a total Enemy; because the perpetuation of servitude, the perpetuation of the miserable struggle for existence in the very face of the new possibilities of freedom, this activates and intensifies in this society, primary aggressiveness to a degree, I think, hitherto unknown in history; a primary aggressiveness which must be mobilised in socially useful ways, lest it explode the system itself. Therefore the need of an Enemy, who must be there, and he must be created even if he does not exist. Fortunately, I dare say, the enemy does exist. But his image and his power must, in this society, be inflated beyond all proportions in order to be able to mobilise this aggressiveness of the affluent society in socially useful ways.

The result is a mutilated, crippled and frustrated human existence: a human existence which is violently defending its own servitude. We can sum up the fatal situation with which we are confronted: Radical social change is objectively necessary; objectively necessary in the dual sense that it is the only chance to save the possibilities of human freedom and, furthermore, in the sense that the technical and material resources for the realisation of freedom are available. But while this objective need is demonstrably there, the subjective need for such a change does not prevail. It does not ~~show~~ prevail precisely among those parts of the population which are traditionally considered the agents of historical change. The subjective need is repressed, again on a dual ground: suppressed by virtue of the actual satisfaction of needs; and

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secondly, suppressed by a massive scientific manipulation and administration of needs, namely by a systematic social control not only of the consciousness, but also of the unconscious of man: a control which has been made possible by the very achievements of the greatest liberating sciences of our time, in psychology mainly psycho-analysis and psychiatry. That they have become - that they could become at the same time powerful instruments of suppression, one of the most effective engines of suppressions, is again one of the terrible aspects of the dialectic of liberation.

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This situation, this divergence between the objective and the subjective need changes, I suggest, completely the basis, the prospects and the strategy of liberation. Namely, this situation presupposes the emergence of new needs, qualitatively different and even the opposite of the prevailing aggressive and repressive needs. The emergence of a new type of man, with a vital, biological drive for liberation, and with a consciousness capable of breaking through the material as well as ideological veil of the affluent society. In other words, liberation seems to be predicated upon the opening and the activation of a depth dimension of human existence, this side of and underneath the traditional material base. In other words, not an idealistic dimension, over and above the material base, but a dimension even more material than the material base: a dimension underneath the material base. I will illustrate presently what I mean.

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The emphasis on this new dimension is not replacing politics by psychology, but rather the other way around. It is finally taking account of the fact that society has invaded even the deepest roots of the individual existence, even the unconscious of man. That we must get at the roots of society in the individuals themselves, the individuals who, because of the social engineering, constantly reproduce the continuum of repression even through the great revolution.

Now this change is, I suggest, not an ideological change: it is dictated by the actual development of an industrial society which has introduced factors which our theory formerly could correctly neglect.

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It is dictated by the actual development of industrial society, by the tremendous growth of its material and technical productivity, which has surpassed and rendered obsolete the traditional goals and preconditions of liberation. Here we are faced with the question: Is liberation from the affluent society identical with the transition from capitalism to socialism? (The answer I suggest is: It is not identical, if socialism is defined merely as the planned development of the productive forces, and the rationalisation of resources; although this remains a precondition for all liberation.) It is identical with the transition from capitalism to socialism, if socialism is defined in its most utopian terms: namely, among others, the abolition of labour, the termination of the struggle for existence - that is to say, life as an end in itself and no longer as a means to an end - and the liberation of human sensibility, sensitivity, as a force for transformation, not as a private factor, but as a force of transformation of the human existence and of its environment. To give sensitivity and sensibility their own right is, I think, one of the basic goals of integral socialism. These are the qualitatively different features of a free society. They presuppose, as you may have already seen, a total trans-valuation of values, a new anthropology. They presuppose a type of man who rejects the performance principles governing the established societies; a type of man who has rid himself of the aggressiveness and brutality that are inherent in the organisation of the established society, and in their hypocritical, puritan morality; a type of man which is biologically incapable of fighting wars and creating sufferings; a type of man who has a good conscience of joy and pleasure, and who works, collectively and individually, for a social and natural environment in which such an existence becomes possible.

The dialectic of liberation, as turned from quantity into quality, thus involves, I repeat, a break in the continuum of repression which reaches into the depth dimension of the organism itself, or we can say that today qualitative change, liberation, involves organic, instinctual, biological changes at the same time as political and social changes.

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The new needs and satisfactions have a very material basis, as I indicated. They are not thought out, I would claim, they are the logical derivation from the technical, material and intellectual possibilities of advanced, industrial society; they are inherent in, and the expression of, the productivity of advanced industrial society, which has long since made obsolete all kinds of inner-worldly asceticism, the entire (work) discipline on which the Judaeo-Christian morality has been based.

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Why ^{is} this society ~~is~~ surpassing and negating this type of man, the traditional type of man, and the forms of his existence, as well as the morality to which it owes much of its origin and foundations? / This new, unheard of and not anticipated, productivity allows the concept of a technology of liberations: a technology of liberation. And here I can only briefly indicate what I have in mind: Such amazing and indeed apparently utopian tendencies as the convergence of technique and art, the convergence of work and play, the convergence of the realm of necessity and the realm of freedom: How? No longer subjected to the dictates of capitalist profitability and of efficiency; no longer to the dictates of scarcity, today perpetuated by the capitalist organisation of society; socially necessary labour, material production would and could become - we see the tendency already - increasingly scientific. Technical experimentation, science and technique would and could become a play with the hitherto hidden - methodically hidden and blocked - potentialities of men and things, of society and nature.

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This means one of the oldest dreams of all radical theory and practise, it means that the creative imagination, and not only the rationality of the performance principle / - that creative imagination would become a productive force applied to the transformation of the social and natural universe. It would mean the emergence of a form of reality which is the work and the medium of the developing sensibility and sensitivity of man.

And now I throw in the terrible concept: it would mean an aesthetic reality - society as work of art. This is the most utopian, the most radical possibility of liberation today.

What does it mean concretely? I said, we are not concerned here with private sensitivity and sensibility, but sensitivity and sensibility, creative imagination, play becoming forces of transformation. As such they would guide, for example, the total reconstruction of our cities and of the countryside; the restoration of nature after the elimination of the violence and destruction of capitalist industrialisation; the creation of the internal and external space for privacy, individual autonomy, tranquillity; the elimination of noise, of captive audiences, of enforced togetherness, of pollution, of ugliness. These are not - and I cannot emphasise this strongly enough - aesthetic and romantic demands. Biologists today have emphasised that these are organic needs of the human organism, and that their arrest, their perversion and destruction by capitalist society actually mutilates the human organism, not only in a figurative, but in a very real and literal sense.

I believe that only in such a universe man can be truly free, and truly human relationships between free beings can be established. I believe that the idea of such a universe guided also Marx's concept of socialism, and that these aesthetic needs and goals must from the beginning be present in the reconstruction of society, and not only at the end or in the far future. Otherwise, the needs and satisfactions which reproduce a repressive society would be carried over in the new society. Repressive men would carry over their repression into the new society.

Now, at this farthest point, the questions: How can we possibly envisage the emergence of such qualitatively different needs and goals as organic, biological needs and goals and not as superimposed values? How can we envisage the emergence of these needs and satisfactions within and against the established society, that is to say, prior to liberation? That was the dialectic with which I started, that in a very definite sense we have to be free from in order to create a free society.

Needless to say, the dissolution of the existing system is the precondition for such qualitative change. And the more total and the more efficient the repressive apparatus of the affluent societies operates, the less likely is a gradual transition from servitude to freedom. The

fact that today we cannot identify any specific class or any specific group as revolutionary force, this fact is no excuse for not using any and every possibility and method for arresting the engines of repression in the individuals. To the total character of the advanced capitalist society, corresponds precisely the diffusion of the potential opposition among the entire underlying population. The internal contradictions of the system are as grave as every before, and likely to be aggravated with the violent expansion of capitalist imperialism. The contradictions - not only the most general contradiction between the tremendous social wealth on the one hand, and the destructive, aggressive and wasteful use of this wealth on the other; but far more concrete contradictions such as the need, the necessity for the system to automate, the continued reduction of the human base in physical labour power in the material reproduction of society, thereby the tendency to the draining of the sources of surplus profit, and so on - these are real contradictions; finally the threat of technological unemployment which even the most affluent society may no longer be capable of compensating by the creation of evermore parasitarian and unproductive labour: all these contradictions exist. As reaction, and because of their contradiction, suppression, manipulation and integration are likely to increase. But ~~the~~ fulfillment is there, the ground can and must be prepared, the mutilated consciousness and the mutilated instincts must be broken; and the sensitivity and the awareness of the new transcending, antagonistic values - they are there. And they are there, they are here, precisely among the non-integrated, the still non-integrated social groups and among those who, by virtue of their privileged position, can pierce the ideological and material veil of mass communication and indoctrination - namely, the intelligentsia.

We all know the fatal prejudice against the intelligentsia as catalyst of historical change in the labour movement practically from the beginning. It is time to ask a question, whether this prejudice

against the intellectuals and the inferiority complex of the intellectuals resulting from it, was not an essential factor in the development of the capitalist as well as the socialist societies; in the development and weakening of the opposition. The intellectuals usually went out to organise the others, to organise in the communities. They certainly did not use the potentiality they had to organise themselves, to organise among themselves, not only on a regional, not only on a national, but on an international level. That is, in my view, today one of the most urgent tasks. Can we say that the intelligentsia is the agent of historical change? Can we say that the intelligentsia today is a revolutionary class? The answer I would give is: No, we cannot say that. But we can say, and I think we must say, that the intelligentsia has a decisive preparatory function: not more, and I suggest this is plenty. By itself it is not and cannot be a revolutionary class, but it can become the catalyst, and it has a preparatory function - certainly not the first time, one only has to read, that is in fact the way all revolutions started - but more, perhaps, today, than ever before. Because, and for that too we have a very material and very concrete basis, because this group, it is this group from which the holders of decisive positions in the productive process will be recruited, in the future even more than before. I refer to what we may call the increasingly becoming scientific or intellectualisation of the material process of production, by virtue of which the role of the intelligentsia changes. It is the group from which the decisive holders of decisive positions will be recruited, scientists, researchers, technicians, engineers, even psychologists - because psychology will continue to be a socially necessary instrument, either of servitude or of liberation.

This class, this intelligentsia has been called the new working ~~class~~ class. I believe this term is at best premature. They are - and that we should not forget - today the pet beneficiaries of the established system. But they are also at the very source of the glaring contradiction between the liberating capacity of science and its repressive and enslaving use. / To activate the repressed and manipulated contradiction

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to make it operate as a catalyst of change, that is the task of the opposition today - one of the tasks of the opposition today. It remains and must remain a political task. ~~It is~~

It is education that is our job, but it is education in a new sense. Being theory as well as practice, political practice, education today is more than discussion, is more than teaching and learning and writing. Unless and until it goes beyond the classroom, until and unless it goes beyond the college, the school, the university, it will remain powerless. Because education is political, education political practice today in as much as it must involve the mind and the body, reason and imagination, the intellectual and the institutional needs; because all of these, our entire existence, have become the subject/object of politics, of social engineering. I emphasize, it is not the question of making the schools and universities, of making the educational system political. The educational system is political already. I only remind you of the incredible degree to which - I am speaking of the U.S. - universities are involved in huge research grants, you know of which nature in many cases, by the government and the various quasi-governmental agencies. The educational system is political, so it is not we who want to politicise the educational system: what we want is a counter-policy against the established policy. And in this sense we must meet this society on its own ground of total mobilisation. We must confront indoctrination in servitude with indoctrination in freedom. We must each of us - and try to do it in others - generate the instinctual need for a life without fear, without brutality, and without stupidity. And we must see that we can generate the instinctual and intellectual revulsion against the values of an affluence which spreads aggressiveness and suppression throughout.

I would like, before I conclude here, ^{we} since practically everybody has done it so far, to say my bit about the Hippies. Because it seems to me rather - and there I agree for example with John Gerassi - it seems to me ^a serious - I can't help it - it seems to me a serious phenomenon if we are talking of the emergence of an instinctual revulsion against the

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values of the affluent society, I think at least here is a place where we should look for... Now I give you my own image and experience. It seems to me that the Hippies, like any nonconformist movement on the left, that they are split. That there are two parts, or parties, or tendencies; much of it is mere masquerade and clownery on the private level, and therefore indeed, as Gerassi suggested, a completely, harmless, very nice in many cases and charming, but that is all there is to it. / But that again is not the whole story. / There is in the Hippies, and especially in such tendencies of the Hippies as the Diggers and the Proves, there is an inherent political element, and perhaps in the U.S. even larger than here. It is the appearance indeed of new instinctual needs and values. This experience is there. Also there is a new sensibility against efficient and insane reasonableness. / Also there is the refusal to play the rules of a rigid game, (of a game of which one knows that it is rigid from the beginning,) and the revolt against the compulsive cleanliness of puritan morality, and of the aggression bred by this puritan morality as we see it today in Vietnam among other things.

At least this part of the Hippies, in which sexual, moral and political rebellion somehow are united, is indeed a non-aggressive form of life: a demonstration of an aggressive non-aggressiveness which at least achieves, potentially, the demonstration of qualitatively different values, a transvaluation of values.

Now I come to the end I mentioned, I emphasised, that all education today is therapy: therapy in the sense that it is a question of liberating man with all available means from a society in which, sooner or later, he is going to be transformed into a brute, even if he shouldn't notice it any more, that would be the end of it. Education in this sense is therapy, and all therapy today is political theory and practice. What kind of political practice? That depends entirely on the situation. It is hardly imaginable that we should discuss details of this here - I only remind you of the various possibilities of demonstrations, of the finding out of flexible modes of demonstration which can cope with the

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use of institutionalised violence, of boycotts, of many other things - anything goes which is such that it indeed has a reasonable chance of strengthening the forces of the opposition.

We can prepare for it as educators, as students. Again I say, our role is limited. We are no mass movement, I do not believe that in the near future we will see such a mass movement.

I want to add one word about the so-called Third World. I have not spoken of the Third World because my topic was strictly liberation from the affluent society. I agree entirely with Paul Sweezy, that without putting the affluent society in the framework of the Third World it is not understandable. I also believe that here and now our emphasis must be on the advanced industrial societies, not forgetting to do whatever we can and in whatever way we can to support, theoretically and practically, the struggle for liberation in the neo-colonial countries, which, if again they are not the final force of liberation, at least contribute their share - and it is a considerable share - in the potential weakening and disintegration of the imperialist world system.

Our role as intellectuals is a limited role. But if we should not succumb to any illusions, it is even worse to succumb to the widespread defeatism which we witness. The preparatory role today is an indispensable role, and I believe I am not too optimistic - usually I have not the reputation of being too optimistic - when I say that we can already see the signs, not only that They get afraid, not only that They get worried; but you see that there are far more concrete, far more tangible manifestations of the weakness, of the essential weakness of the system. Therefore let us continue whatever we can, no illusions but even more, no defeatism.

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